

***St. Thomas the Apostle***  
***Religious Education ~ Detailed Topics Covered by grade***  
***A Guide for the Catechists & Parents***

**GRADE 1 & 2**

**Year One in our Two-year Sacramental Formation Program - This is a PRE-REQUISITE for the Second Year of Sacramental Preparation.**

We share in the belief of the Catholic Church that parents are the primary educators of their children in matters of faith and morals. By what they say and do, parents provide a faith model for their children. They are the most effective teachers of prayer to their children. To be most effective, our Catechists will work with parents as a team to ensure what is taught at church is reinforced at home. Communication by email is a primary source of information between Church and home.

We cannot emphasize enough the importance of families worshiping together on a weekly basis. If that component is missing in a child's religious education, it will have a negative impact on their faith formation. What students learn in Grade One about attendance at Mass becomes the foundation of their faith. When children observe an ongoing, working relationship between church and home, faith becomes a way of life. Instead of being regarded as an obligation, attending Mass becomes a cherished event.

When students learn to participate in small Christian faith communities as part of their religious education, they are more likely to continue practicing their faith even after they receive their sacraments.

In the second year of our program, once children reach the age of reason, they are better able to know the difference between right and wrong. When children talk about what is right and wrong, they often look for forgiveness from others. They learn about God's unconditional love for His children and about the importance of receiving God's forgiveness when we ask for it. To help students better understand, God's love is compared to a parent's love for a child. Lessons about God's love, sacrifice, and forgiveness prepare students for the sacrament of Reconciliation, when they will be confessing their sins and doing penance.

Regular attendance at Mass is a child's first introduction to their faith. Students should attend weekly. By learning prayers said during Mass, children are using those words to communicate with God. They also become a witness to the community of believers gathered to worship. Observing parishioners as they receive the Body and Blood of Christ, young children become eager to be included in the sacrament. This best prepares them. Those students receiving the Eucharist for the first time are introduced to the healing powers, love, and joy found by those who receive the Body and Blood of Christ. Baptism is the first Sacrament of Initiation into the Church. Eucharist is the second.

**(Student must have completed the first year of formation in Grade One.)**

**GRADE 1**

**Specific concepts to be covered in *Grade One* include:**

God in all creation

The Trinity

The Holy Family

Jesus and His teachings

What is Prayer?

The Sign of the Cross

The Lord's Prayer and Hail Mary (parents practice at home)

Bible stories: Children learn as a group to listen to stories from the Old & New Testament

Thanksgiving Lesson: students join together as a community to focus on thanking God for all the good things in their lives



## **GRADE 2**

### **Grade Two – Year Two in our Two-Year Sacramental Formation Program**

**(Student must have completed the first year of formation in Grade One.)**

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### **Grade 2 - Specific concepts to be covered include:**

Forgiveness  
God's unconditional love  
Act of Contrition  
The Mass  
What a sacrament is  
Baptism  
Reconciliation (confession and penance)  
Eucharist and receiving Holy Communion  
The Lord's Prayer  
The Hail Mary

### **Grade 3 - Specific concepts to be covered include:**

The miracles, death and resurrection of Jesus, Assumption of Mary  
Beliefs contained in the Apostles Creed  
Church as One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic  
Pentecost and the Holy Spirit  
The Ten Commandments  
Thanksgiving Lesson: students thank God as a community  
Stations of the Cross

## **GRADE 4-5-6**

Accustomed to classroom settings, children in Grades 4, 5, and 6 are capable of sitting attentively and listening. At an appropriate age to introduce devotion to the Blessed Mother, children receive introduction to the Rosary. Students at this age have a heightened sense of right and wrong and will benefit from learning about saints.

### **Grade 4 - Specific concepts to be covered include:**

**The Beatitudes**  
**Parables**  
**Order of the Mass, Seasons of Faith, Free Will**  
**The Seven Sacraments**  
**All Saints Lesson**  
**Thanksgiving Lesson: students thank God as a community**

### **Grade 5 - Specific concepts to be covered include:**

**Sacraments – Community of Jesus established through Church**  
**Seasons of Faith**



God as Creator and Father and as Son of God and Son of Mary  
Gifts of the Holy Spirit  
Vocations – Called to lived like Jesus  
All Saints Lesson  
Students and teacher will learn & pray the Rosary  
Meeting Jesus in the Eucharist, Reconciliation, Penance

**Grade 6 - Specific concepts to be covered include:**

Sacraments  
Jesus' teachings  
Social Justice  
The Profession of Faith  
Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy  
Examination of the Apostles' Creed  
Moral Decisions/Choices  
Holy Trinity  
Theological Virtues (Faith, Hope, and Love)  
Seasons of Faith

**Grade Seven**

Adolescents want to be treated like adults and welcome the chance to talk about world issues, to ask questions, and express opinions. Emotional and physical changes are an incentive for teaching them about respect for others and God's plan for them.

**Specific concepts to be covered in *Grade Seven* include:**

The life of Jesus as described in the Gospels  
John, Mark, Matthew, Luke, and Paul  
Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy  
Life in Jesus/Living life as a Christian, co-worker with God  
Living in Holiness, Worship  
Jesus forgiveness and healing, role as Son of God  
Death and Resurrection, Salvation  
Sacraments  
The Trinity  
Christian morality and chastity – teaching The Truth, Christian choices  
**Chastity** curriculum –  
Catholic Social Justice – shelters and soup kitchens

**Grade Eight (Prerequisite to Two-Year Confirmation Program)**

Students continue to develop both emotionally and physically. Relationships define them. During this transition period from child to adult, students are establishing their identity and place in the world. As abstract reasoning develops, their relationships with God are on a more spiritual level. As students learn about Jesus and His friends, they develop better understanding about Church history. Catholic message is taught regarding relationships with peers and dating situations.

**Specific concepts to be covered in *Grade Eight* include:**

God's Revelation – Holy Spirit as our guide – The Good News  
Church History/Renewal: Then and Now  
Catholic Social Justice  
Questions and answers about faith



### **Grades 9 and 10**

Preparation for Confirmation is a **Two-Year Program**, beginning in Grade 9 and concluding with the conferring of the Sacrament in Grade 10.

Students in Grade 9 and 10 must perform 10 hours of community service per year for a total of 20 service hours, all of which must be completed prior to Confirmation. Service hours earned by students for their public school requirement **may not be used toward Confirmation service.**

**Class attendance is mandatory.** Students must make up any class that is missed in a timely fashion. They may attend an EXTREME North event (see attached) in place of a missed class. In addition, in order to demonstrate acceptance as a candidate for Confirmation, **Grade 10 students** must attend the following:

1. 4-hour retreat
2. Presentation of Candidates
3. Reconciliation
4. Confirmation Rehearsal(s)
5. Confirmation ceremony.

### **Specific concepts to be covered in Grade 9 and 10 include:**

Adoration and Guided Meditation

Old Testament and New Testament

Triduum – three holiest days of the year

Rosary – power of the prayer to Mary

Saints – picking a Confirmation name – do the research on your saint

Initiation into the Catholic Church

Sacraments

Personal relationship with God

Understanding of the Holy Spirit

CONFIRMATION is not the END. It is meant to bring together the entire person – physically, emotionally, spiritually – as each candidate completes their initiation process into the Catholic faith. It is the beginning of the young person's role as defender of their faith.

