

# PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

2008-2009

## **St. Therese School**

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Dear Parents and Students:

Welcome to St. Therese Catholic School! In choosing St. Therese School, you have demonstrated a commitment to the values and philosophy of a Catholic education.

The faculty and staff look forward to working with you to promote academic excellence and spiritual development in the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Together let us pray that God, who has begun this good work in us, may carry it through to completion.

God bless you,

Mr. Roman Garcia  
Principal

# *St. Therese School*

St. Therese School is a pre-kindergarten through 8th grade Catholic Elementary and Middle School in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. The curriculum stresses academic achievement within a Christian community where the child feels that he/she is loved and respected by his/her peers and teachers. Vatican II texts are used so that our theology is in compliance with the bishops of the world. United with each other in meaningful liturgy and prayer, the students can further come to an understanding of the Christian life. At St. Therese, we are attempting to "teach as Jesus did."

The Archdiocesan curriculum guidelines, consistent with the State of New Mexico standards, are followed for the teaching of all secular subject areas. The curriculum is marked by current content and fresh approaches to methodology. We strive to offer a program which makes use of many sources of reading material, a wide variety of audio-visual and technology tools and a multi-text approach to the content areas.

## *History*

Classes at St. Therese School began for grades K—9 on September 15, 1947, with three nuns: Sister Imelda LeClair, Sister Theresa O'Donovan, and Sister Peter. Until a building was constructed, a Quonset hut was loaned to the school. A tent was also placed on the property and several classes were held there.

Sr. Imelda LeClair, Sr. Theresa O'Donovan, and Sr. Peter were the teachers for about 150 students. There were no chalkboards, no desks, and no drinking fountains; a garden hose provided water for the students. Eventually, a combination church and school was built. Desks were attached by hinges to the backs of the pews and lowered on Fridays for the weekend Masses. As the church grew, more buildings were added. In 1957, the ninth grade was discontinued. After serving the school and parish for 41 years, the nuns retired. The school has been run by lay persons ever since.

Currently, the school campus has two buildings that serve as classrooms for grades pre-kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup>. Additionally, students utilize the St. Therese Parish Community Center for physical education, sports, and the lunch program.

## *Archdiocesan Schools Mission Statement*

The mission of the schools in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe is the fulfillment of the educational ministry of the Roman Catholic Church. It has as its primary goal the ongoing formation of the Christian person. It aims to develop the individual's spiritual, intellectual, social, cultural and physical endowments.

## *Mission Statement of St. Therese School*

St. Therese School is a Catholic School dedicated to providing all students with Catholic academic, moral and spiritual experiences within a safe, nurturing environment that will empower them to reach their maximum potential.

## *Philosophy*

St. Therese School is dedicated to assisting families with passing on the Catholic faith, morals, and values to the students. The school is a community outside the home, where religious values and truths may be integrated with daily life. The school strives to

provide a quality education in a Christian environment and to help each student develop his/her own potential through creative expression, hands-on-learning, self-discipline, and the opportunity to participate in liturgy, prayer, sacraments, and community service.

### **Accreditation**

St. Therese School is accredited through the North Central Association and the State of New Mexico. The Catholic Schools Office of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe Catholic Center makes an annual visit to confirm that the school is performing according to Archdiocesan policies.

### **Admission Information**

St. Therese School admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, or athletic and other school-administered programs.

As openings become available, the following priorities will be used to accept students to St. Therese School:

1. Siblings of students already attending St. Therese School
2. Members of St. Therese parish
3. Members of other Catholic parishes
4. Non-Catholic students

Children entering pre-kindergarten must be four (4) years of age by September 1.  
Children entering kindergarten must be five (5) years of age by September 1.  
Children entering first grade must be six (6) years of age by September 1.

At the time of registration, all new students seeking admission to St. Therese School are evaluated on the basis of standardized test scores, report cards, and other available information. Requirements include:

- Verification of active parish affiliation/stewardship
- Health Records
- Birth Certificate (original)
- Baptismal Certificate (Catholic applicants only)
- Report Cards
- Standardized Test Results

Students applying for admission in Grades 1-8 must present a copy of the current report card and any standardized test results. These will be reviewed to determine whether the program at St. Therese School will meet the educational needs of the students. An interview with the student and the family is part of the admission process.

All new students will be given a trial period in which to prove himself/herself both socially and academically. If during this trial period there are any problems, a student may be asked to withdraw his/her attendance at St. Therese School.

Non-Catholic students whose parents accept the philosophy of St. Therese School will be accepted on a space available basis. Non-Catholic students are required to participate in all religious classes and activities provided by the school.

If a student has special needs beyond the scope of a regular classroom, St. Therese School reserves the right to determine whether the school can accept such a student.

**Financial Obligations**

Tuition rate per child .....	\$4100.00
Registration rate per child.....	\$ 250.00
<i>Registration rate after deadline for returning students.....</i>	<i>\$ 300.00</i>
Raffle tickets per family.....	\$ 300.00
Subsidy per child.....	\$ 300.00

Families with more than one child attending St. Therese School will pay tuition on a sliding reduced-fee scale. The first child is \$4100, the second child is \$3500, the third child is \$3300, the fourth child is \$3100, and the fifth child is \$2900. Each child thereafter may attend at no additional fee. Registration will not exceed \$1000 for any one family. (A family is defined as a single unit housed under one roof where children share the same parent/guardian who has legal custody and financial responsibility for the children.)

**Tuition Payment Options:**

- Pay in full by May 31, 2008 (receive a 3% discount), or
- Pay ½ annual tuition by July 2008 and the remainder by December 2008, by enrolling in FACTS® Tuition Management Service, or
- Enroll in the FACTS® Tuition Management Service with ten monthly payments which begin in July 2008.
- Please note that you may pay in full for one child and utilize FACTS® for another.
- To guarantee placement, the registration fee for returning students is due by February 3, 2008. After this date, the registration fee is \$300.00 for returning students.
- All registration fees are NON-REFUNDABLE.
- There will be a \$25 returned check fee for all checks made payable to St. Therese School that do not clear the bank.
- There is an annual non-refundable \$41.00 fee for enrollment in the FACTS® program per family. This fee will be collected by FACTS® – please do not make this payment to the school.
- All families not selecting the FACTS® tuition plan in their registration packet will be expected to make direct payment in full to St. Therese School no later than May 31, 2008.

**Withdrawal Policy**

- Families must notify the school in writing if a student is withdrawn from the school.
- Registered students who withdraw before October 1, 2008 are responsible for 1/3 of the full tuition amount.
- Registered students who withdraw before December 1, 2008 are responsible for ½ of the full tuition amount.
- Registered students who withdraw after December 31, 2008 are responsible for the full tuition amount.
- The school will not forward records for students who withdraw with an outstanding balance for tuition, fees, books, extended care, etc.

- No refunds will be issued for students who are disenrolled or withdrawn for disciplinary reasons.
- Please address all tuition questions to the school accounting office at 344-4479.

### **Dismissal Policy**

St. Therese School classes maintain an atmosphere that is conducive to learning for all students. Students may be denied re-registration or dismissed from St. Therese School if:

- They have educational needs beyond what we can normally provide.
- They have a history of disruptive behavior or disrespect that infringes upon another's right to learn.
- There is an unpaid balance for tuition, registration, and other fees.
- They are not responding to corrective measures.

### **Parent's Role in Education**

We, at St. Therese School, consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life—physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Your choice of St. Therese School involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.

Good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God, with each other, and with the Church community will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless these are nurtured by the example of good Catholic/Christian morality and by an honest personal relationship with God in your family life.

Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with us at St. Therese School, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years (Pre-K to 8), your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowments. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest of challenging, yet nourishing, the student to reach his/her potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. Division of authority between school and home will only teach disrespect. If there is an incident at school, you as parents must investigate the complete story as your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships.

It is essential that a child take responsibility for the grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects, and all other assignments. This responsibility also extends to times of absence.

Together, let us begin this year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to become the best person he/she is capable of becoming.

As partners in the educational process at St. Therese School, we ask parents to set rules, times, and limits so that your child:

- Gets to bed early on school nights;

- Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day;
- Is dressed according to the school dress code;
- Completes assignments on time;
- Has lunch money or a nutritional sack lunch every day.

Parents are also expected to:

- Actively participate in school activities such as parent-teacher conferences;
- See that the student pays for any damage to school books or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student;
- Notify the school with a written note when the student has been absent or tardy;
- Notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers;
- Meet all financial obligations to the school;
- Inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health;
- Complete and return to school any requested information promptly;
- Read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education;
- Support the religious and educational goals of the school;
- Support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school; and
- Treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems.

### **Home and School Association**

The Home and School Association (HSA) supports the school with fund-raising activities, parent participation efforts, community-building activities, and parent education activities. Dates and times of meetings are provided in the weekly newsletter. Any fees collected through the HSA are the sole property of the school and may be used in accordance with the school budget.

### **School Advisory Council**

The School Advisory Council (SAC) is a representative body of the community. The SAC works closely with the pastor and the principal for the purpose of supporting quality Catholic education. The SAC is governed by a constitution and bylaws. These documents are available in the school office. The SAC is a 12-member council, six elected by the parents, three appointed by the pastor, and the pastor, principal and the Home and School chairperson. The SAC meets on a regular basis; dates and times are published in the weekly newsletter. While anyone is welcome at the meetings, the president must be consulted for a parent to have an item placed on the agenda. The item needs to be submitted seven days prior to the scheduled meeting.

### **School Hours**

Pre-kindergarten through fifth grade school hours are 8:05 AM – 3:05 PM. Grades six, seven, and eight attend school from 8:05 AM – 3:10 PM. Students not in their homeroom by 8:05 AM are considered tardy.

The school grounds are opened for students at 7:45 AM. Students arriving before that time will go to the Extended Care Room until the first bell rings at 8:00 AM, calling for students to line up outside the building.

Parents are to make arrangements for their child(ren) to arrive at school on time and be picked up at dismissal time. Dismissal time is 3:05 PM for students in grades pre-kindergarten through fifth and 3:10 PM for middle school students. On Mondays, all students are required to attend School Mass which begins at 8:00 AM. Students are expected to be in the classrooms by 7:45 AM on Mondays so teachers can take attendance and walk the students to the church.

Students not picked up immediately after school will be sent to the Extended Care room. Parents are charged the hourly per child rate for using this program. Students who are enrolled in the Extended Care Program must pay a one-time \$35.00 fee per child at the time of registration. The rate for care is \$4.00 per hour per child. Rates are charged in increments of 15 minute periods. (Any child who is not registered in the program will automatically be assessed a one-time \$35.00 registration and an hourly fee when parents do not pick the student up at the appropriate time or if the student is dropped off before 7:45 AM.) The program is available as early as 7:00 AM and as late as 6:00 PM. A fee of \$1.00 per minute is charged for students who have not been picked up by 6:00 PM.

Parents are asked to pay for Extended Care in advance if at all possible. The Business Office will notify the parents of any student who accumulates more than a \$100.00 tab for Extended Care, advising them of the withdrawal of services until the tab is paid in full.

### **School Office Hours**

The school offices are open on all school days from 7:30 AM – 3:30 PM. Special arrangements to meet with the principal, the secretary, the finance officer or with a teacher after 3:30 PM may be made when necessary.

### **School Visitors**

School visitors (volunteers, parents, etc.) must report to the office. For safety and security reasons, each person is required to sign in at the office when he/she enters the building for any reason. All visitors and/or volunteers are required to wear a designated badge that may be picked up in the office. Visitors and/or volunteers are to return the badges and sign out at the time of departure. Any staff member may request to see a visitor's badge.

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers who help at school in activities such as playground supervision, office help, etc. must attend the Sexual Misconduct Prevention classes offered through the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. They must also submit to a criminal background check. It is the sole discretion of the principal to allow volunteers to serve the school.

### **Work Service Program**

Each family is responsible to complete twenty work service hours per year. Information regarding service opportunities will be provided at orientation and through the school newsletter. Failure to meet the minimum will result in a \$10 per hour assessment. If a family has not met the 20-hour service requirement by the end of the first semester, the principal may request certain tasks from families.

### **Closed Campus**

St. Therese School is a closed campus. No student is permitted to leave the school grounds after being brought to school unless he/she has a written permission form from the principal and the parent/guardian.

## **Right to Search**

The school principal has the right to conduct a search of anything on the school grounds, including student desks, student backpacks, and other items brought to school by students. Searches of a student's person will not be conducted unless the parent/guardian is present.

## **Attendance**

A student's absence from school interferes with his/her academic progress. When a student is absent from school, a parent should call the office by 9:00 AM each day of the absence. If the office does not receive a call, a parent will be contacted. This policy is for the protection of the St. Therese students.

A written statement giving reasons for the absence must be brought to the office upon the student's return. Should absence for any reason other than illness seem imperative, parents are requested to present a written explanation for the absence.

The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process. Missed assignments are the student's responsibility. Upon returning to school, students who are absent due to illness have one day for each day of absence to make up the missed assignments, quizzes or tests.

Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations, or other such reasons. No assignment will be given in anticipation of such absences.

Arrangements for regular classroom tests missed because of an absence due to illness are to be made with the individual teachers. These tests must be taken within one week of the original test date or shortly after returning to school from an absence due to illness.

Three tardies are considered a one-half day absence. Three early pick-ups are also considered a one-half day absence. Excessive tardies and early pick-ups will have a direct impact on a student's academic evaluation and promotion to the next grade.

Excessive absence days or the equivalent of 20 days including tardies/early pick-ups, can be cause for a student to be retained in the current grade for another year or fail certain courses. Therefore, when students have accumulated 8 tardies/early pick-ups or 4 absences within a semester, a parent conference will be required to determine a course of action.

Students needing medical appointments during school hours require a written note by the parent. Parents are required to sign out their child. If the child returns to school during the same school day, he/she must be signed back into school in the office. Parents are encouraged to make routine dental and medical appointments after school instead of during the school day.

**Students will not be eligible to participate in after school activities on days when they are absent.**

## **Curriculum**

The Archdiocesan curriculum guidelines, consistent with the State of New Mexico standards, are followed for the teaching of all secular subject areas. St. Therese School offers students opportunities for growth in the major subjects.

## **Religion**

Catholic doctrine and tradition, Bible study, social justice, and preparation for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist are provided at St. Therese School.

Liturgical services for the entire school community are held every Monday when school is in session. Students are also encouraged to attend the first Sunday of the month Mass at St. Therese Parish at 10 AM in dress uniform. This Mass is dedicated to the students and families of St. Therese School and the second collection is for the school. Additionally, students are asked to attend Sunday Mass on a regular basis with their families. Opportunities for participation in reconciliation will be provided at the school on a regular basis.

All students, regardless of the religious preference of the family, are required to participate in all religious activities provided by the school.

## **Language Arts**

Reading, English, Spelling, Vocabulary, Composition, Library Skills, Literature, and Speaking and Listening Skills comprise the Language Arts Curriculum.

## **Mathematics**

Mathematics Skills, Pre-Algebra, and Algebra I comprise the Mathematics Curriculum.

## **Physical Education**

Physical fitness programs appropriate for each grade are provided on a routine basis.

## **Social Studies**

History, Geography, Economics, New Mexico History, and Current Events comprise the Social Studies Curriculum.

## **Science**

General, Life, Physical, and Earth Sciences with Laboratory Experiences and Science Fair participation comprise the Science Curriculum.

## **Handwriting**

Students in grades 4 through 8 are expected to submit all handwritten work in cursive unless a word processing program is prescribed. All teachers will emphasize this requirement.

## **Fine Arts**

Music and art are taught by a special teacher.

## **Computer Literacy**

Word processing, databases, spreadsheets, and integration with curricular subjects provide the basis for the Computer Literacy Curriculum. Students are required to sign and to have their parents sign a computer/Internet usage agreement.

## **Sports/Athletics**

Students in grades five through eight are eligible to participate in after-school sports programs sponsored through the Parochial Inter-school League. A \$30.00 fee will be charged for each sport in which a student participates to supplement the fundraising efforts for team uniforms, cost of registering teams, referee fees, etc. All participants must have a sports physical on file prior to the first practice of any sport.

The League makes decisions about which sports will be available for the year to its members. All schools are to abide by the constitution and bylaws of the League which are on file with the principal and the athletic director.

The published rules received from the League are to be given to each coach, participating students, and his/her parent/guardian. A written statement, that these rules have been read by the parent/guardian and discussed with the student, is to be kept on file with the athletic director.

Conduct during practices and games must always be in line with the high standards set forth by St. Therese School. Any St. Therese School student who participates in athletics or who is an observer is subject to disciplinary action by the principal, including revocation of participating. Students who participate in sports must also maintain a grade average of 2.0 or higher. These averages will be based on progress reports and 9-week grades. If a teacher reports poor grades at any other time, the principal will be consulted to determine a student's eligibility for participation.

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide transportation to/from practices and to/from games or sports events. The school accepts no responsibility for athletic students' transportation. Parents/guardians must sign permission for their children to ride with others to the events/practices, naming the persons with whom the student may ride. When games and/or practices occur at the St. Therese School facilities, the athletes must wait at the school/extended care program until a coach can accompany them to the gymnasium/field.

## **Leaving Campus**

Students may not be released from school for any reason unless the parent/guardian is informed by a school official and the parent/guardian approves of the release first. Only persons who have legal custody or who are authorized by the parent/guardian of the student may take students from the school at the end of the school day or when a student is sick or has a doctor's appointment. The principal must be informed of any other reason for a student to leave campus.

## **Report Cards/Progress Reports**

Report cards are important tools for communication. Report cards will be given four times during the academic school year or every nine weeks.

Progress reports will be given mid-way between each nine-week grading period. Late work must be completed and submitted to the teacher within three days of the date that progress reports are distributed. No credit will be given for work not completed in this timeframe.

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of the first and third quarters. Conferences at other times may be scheduled by the parent or the teacher as deemed necessary.

### **Grading Scale**

First through eighth grades utilize letter grades based on the following scale:

97 – 100 = A+	77 – 79 = C+
93 – 96 = A	73 – 76 = C
90 – 92 = A-	70 – 72 = C-
87 – 89 = B+	67 – 69 = D+
83 – 86 = B	63 – 66 = D
80 – 82 = B-	60 – 62 = D-
	59 & Below = F

Other letter grades are used to indicate progress or behavior:  
E = Excellent, G = Good, S = Satisfactory, N = Needs Improvement, U = Unsatisfactory

Students should have a minimum of one grade per subject per week entered in the official grade book in order to determine grades on progress reports and report cards.

### **Homework**

Daily homework guidelines are as follows:

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten:	20 – 30 minutes
1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> grades:	30 – 45 minutes
3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> grades:	50 – 60 minutes
5 <sup>th</sup> through 8 <sup>th</sup> grades:	60 – 90 minutes

The purpose of homework is to provide essential practice skills taught during the regular school day, to train pupils in good study habits, to afford opportunities to enrich and extend learning, and to allow the parents/guardians to become involved in their child's learning. Some homework might involve long term work, such as science fair projects, and students may decide to spend some of their break time or weekend accomplishing these kinds of tasks.

### **Student Records**

St. Therese School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) regarding access to student records.

Students requesting records/transcripts/recommendations must make a five school-day request to the School Office. All forms should be submitted to the St. Therese School Office for distribution. Completed forms will be sent via the U.S. Mail. Special handling will require that all postal fees be paid by the parents.

No records will be sent to transferring schools of students whose financial commitment is in arrears.

## **Testing**

Students will not be permitted to retake a quiz or a test in order to improve their academic standing. Students may be given a maximum of three quizzes/tests per day.

The Iowa Tests of Basic Skills is given in grades 3, 5 and 8. The ACRE Test (Assessment of Catechesis Religious Education) is given to students in grades 5 and 8. Students will be tested periodically on the Star Reading and Math computer generated test program. NWREL Writing Assessments will be administered to students in 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades. These tests are administered by the teachers and graded by the particular testing company. As they become available, the results of the tests are distributed to the parents.

## **Promotion Policy and Retention Policy**

Advancement to the next grade in St. Therese School is based on a student's daily performance, test results, recommendations of teachers, and the student's ability to complete work successfully on a more advanced level.

Promotion to the next grade depends on successful completion of all subject areas. The principal may recommend the repetition of a grade, tutoring, or summer school classes as a requirement for promotion when, after conferences with teachers and parents, it is believed that such action will better prepare the student academically or emotionally for the next grade. When an eighth grade student is not being promoted, he/she may not participate in graduation ceremonies.

## **Academic Probation**

A student whose academic performance indicates serious deficiencies may be placed on academic probation. Academic probation may eventually lead to dismissal from St. Therese School. Teachers will recommend probation to the principal.

Academic probation can occur when:

- a student's report card has two or more Ds or Fs
- absenteeism exceeds 20 days

## **Field Trips**

1. Field trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals.
2. All classes do not always have the same number of field trips.
3. Field trips are permissible for all classes when advanced planning, location, and the experience insure a successful learning opportunity.
4. Individual teachers, in consultation with the principal, reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or poor conduct.
5. A written official permission slip, signed by the parent, is required before a child will be permitted to attend a field trip activity. Verbal permission cannot be accepted.
6. The field trip permission form is the only format that may be used to allow a student to leave school during school hours. If your child fails to bring his/her permission slip home, please call the office and a copy will be provided. Call the

school for information needed to complete the form. Note: A fax does not take the place of an original signature.

7. A telephone call will not be accepted in lieu of the proper field trip permission slip.
8. Parents may refuse to allow their child to participate in a field trip by stating so on the proper form.
9. Students who are participating in the field trip must ride the bus (or other school-approved transportation) to and from the field trip with their class.
10. All monies collected for the field trip are non-refundable.
11. Students are not allowed to take cell phones on field trips.

Drivers for field trips must be in compliance with the following:

1. Each driver is at least 21 years of age.
2. Each driver has a current, non-probationary driver's license, and no physical disability that would impair his/her ability to operate the vehicle safely.
3. Each vehicle has a current and valid registration and license plate.
4. Each vehicle is insured for a minimum of \$100,000 per person/\$300,000 per occurrence.
5. Each driver submits a signed Driver Information Sheet to the principal prior to the activity.
6. Each driver must have record of attending the Sex Abuse Prevention workshop provided through the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

### **Sacramental Program**

The sacramental life of the children of the Catholic tradition is an important component of the religion program at St. Therese School. Preparations for two sacraments, Reconciliation and Eucharist, form the core of our efforts in Grade 3. In accordance with the Archdiocesan guidelines, candidates for First Eucharist will receive the sacrament of Reconciliation prior to First Eucharist.

Parents are required to be active partners in the preparation of their children for these sacraments. The sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist are only conferred to students baptized in the Roman Catholic tradition.

### **Hot Lunch Program**

St. Therese School offers a hot lunch program. The hot lunch program is available to all students, staff, and parents. Students who meet the criteria for a free or reduced fee lunch can qualify through the application process for free or reduced fee lunches. All school families are required to fill out the application information regardless of the income level. All information remains confidential.

The full fee for a hot lunch during the 2008-2009 school year is \$2.65 per student. The reduced fee price per meal is 40 cents. Hot lunches are paid for in advance. It is recommended that lunches be prepaid by the week (5 lunches) or by the month (20) lunches.

Students who do not wish to participate in the hot lunch program may bring a sack lunch to school. Students should not bring drinks in glass bottles. It is recommended that students receive a nutritious sack lunch, avoiding an excess of sweets or junk food. There are no provisions for warming sack lunches.

The school recognizes that sometimes students leave their lunch money or their sack lunch at home. In the event that a student does not have money for lunch, the maximum of two charges are allowable. If the charges are not taken care of immediately thereafter, no further charges will be allowed. Students who can no longer charge and who fail to bring a lunch or the money to pay for lunch will be given a cheese sandwich until such time as all lunch debts are paid in full.

It is a privilege to participate in the lunch program, whether purchasing meals or bringing sack lunches. Students are expected to behave in the cafeteria and to take full responsibility for cleaning up after themselves when leaving the cafeteria. Failure to comply with these expectations could result in lunch detention. Lunch detention means that the student is separated from his/her peers for the duration of the lunch period. Other measures to correct unacceptable behavior may be taken at the discretion of the principal who has the final authority in this matter.

Prior to dismissal for lunch, classes will participate in mealtime prayers.

### **Dress Code**

All students must be in uniform every day. There will be out-of-uniform days which will be announced during the course of the school year (a dress code for such days is included in this section). If there is a time when the prescribed uniform cannot for some legitimate reason be worn, a note from the parent/guardian must be written to the principal. (The principal has the right to determine if the reason is legitimate.) Students who are out of uniform without this excuse will be sent to the office and the parent will be called to bring the proper clothing. There is a special uniform for physical education classes, grades 3 through 8, which must be purchased through the school.

St. Therese School sweatshirts, which can be worn with both the P.E. uniform and the regular school uniform, are ordered through the school.

Solid color closed-toe shoes are required at all times (oxfords, saddle shoes, loafers, and plain tennis shoes are acceptable). No sandals, no open-back shoes, no shoes with a heel over two inches, and no lighted tennis shoes are permitted. Plain white or navy blue socks or white or navy blue tights may be worn.

Hair should be neat with bangs above the eyes and trimmed around the ears. Boy's hair should be above and not touch the shirt collar. Fad haircuts are not acceptable. Scrunchies, hair clips, rubber bands, etc. must be in the hair, not worn on wrists. Extreme hair coloring and bleaching is not permitted. No cosmetics, lip-gloss, colored Chap Stick, nail polish, or artificial nails may be worn. No tattoos of any kind. No hologram contact lenses. No body piercing except pierced ears for girls only (one pair only). Jewelry should be simple. Watches with a beeping device should be disconnected during the school day. Watches that beep will be taken away and may be claimed on the last day of the school year. The uniform should be clean and pressed with all buttons attached and hems intact. Long shirtsleeves should remain buttoned and shirttails tucked in while a student is on campus.

All hemlines of jumpers, skirts, skorts, and shorts must be below the fingertips when students hold arms down to their sides.

Students, who repeatedly violate the uniform policy, will be denied participation in the next out-of-uniform day or will serve a detention (at the discretion of the principal).

## **School Uniform Requirements**

On regular school days, students are required to wear the regular school uniforms. On School Mass days and on other special occasions, students are required to wear the school dress uniforms.

The uniform requirements are:

- **Dress Uniform** (required for Mass days and other special occasions):
  - Girls PK-5—Jumper with white Peter Pan blouse and blue crossover tie
  - Girls 6-8—Plaid skirt with white Peter Pan or oxford cloth blouse and blue crossover tie
  - Boys PK-8—Navy slacks, white oxford cloth shirt, navy four in hand tie, stretch brown belt with navy or black leather
  - All students—Only Navy front button cardigan during cool/cold weather, closed toe solid color shoe, solid color navy or white bobby socks or knee high socks (girls can wear solid color navy or white tights in the winter)
- **Regular Uniform**
  - Note—Dress uniforms are acceptable on any school day
  - Girls PK-8—Navy skorts (Dennis Uniform purchase only), navy pants, navy walking shorts, light blue polo with St. Therese logo (no other polos allowed)
  - Boys PK-8—Navy pants, navy walking shorts, light blue polo with St. Therese logo (no other polos allowed)
  - All students—Only St. Therese navy sweatshirts may be worn over the uniforms during cool/cold weather. All students are required to wear belts with pants and walking shorts. All students must wear closed toe solid color shoes with navy or white bobby socks or kneehighs (girls can wear tights in the winter). Girls' hair accessories are limited to those provided by Dennis Uniform.

Students who violate the uniform requirements will be required to call home to obtain proper uniform. If a student accumulates more than five violations, a parent conference will be requested. Uniform violations can result in detention.

## **Out-of-Uniform Requirements**

Students may wear:

- jeans
- tennis shoes
- short socks
- shorts no shorter than three inches above the knee
- skirts no shorter than three inches above the knee
- skorts
- sweatshirts
- jogging suits
- dresses
- slacks

(There may be times when students are required to “dress up” and jeans, jogging suits, or shorts will not be appropriate.)

Students may not wear:

- sandals
- tank tops
- T-shirts with inappropriate writing, pictures, or symbols
- tennis shoes that convert to roller skates or have blinking lights
- biker shorts
- pajama pants
- make-up
- hats/caps (unless required for sunny day outdoor activities)

Good Rule: If you think you shouldn't wear it, you shouldn't. All uniform regulations and guidelines are subject to the discretion of the principal.

**Medication**

If a child must take any medication in school which is prescribed by a doctor, that medication must be sent to the School Secretary in the container received from the pharmacy and must have on its label the following information:

- a. Child's name
- b. Name of doctor prescribing the child's medication
- c. Frequency
- d. Dose
- e. Date

All non-prescription medication (cough drops, lip balm, etc.) should be taken to the School Secretary with the following information:

- a. Child's name
- b. Frequency
- c. Dose
- d. Date

A "Physician Order and Medication Authorization Form" is available in the School Office. All required information must be provided on this form before the school will administer medication for a student. The parent must provide written directions and permission to the school for administering medications to their children.

**Food Allergy Policy**

St. Therese School recognizes that life threatening food allergies are an important condition affecting many school children and positively welcomes all pupils with food allergies. In order to minimize the incidence of life threatening allergic reactions, St. Therese School requires parents/guardians to report students with allergies to the office and to provide specific directions for preventing allergic reactions. This information will be shared with all staff members and other students/parents as deemed necessary by the principal.

### Gifts

Students should not exchange individual gifts at school. This gesture only creates hurt feelings among other students. Invitations for slumber parties or birthday parties should be sent to the homes of students via the U.S. Mail unless an invitation is being given to every student in the entire grade. Only at special times of the year may the students be asked to voluntarily participate in gift exchanges.

### Parties

Students are permitted class parties during the year at the discretion of the principal. Room parents may assist the classroom teacher with these parties. Birthday treats may be brought to school for students prepared in individual servings. (Cupcakes are recommended.) Birthday treats can be brought the last 30 minutes of the day.

When students have been placed in detention or if they are on probation, they cannot attend school parties.

### Conduct

In accordance with the stated philosophy of the school, which emphasizes deep respect for the human dignity and uniqueness of every individual, each student will be considerate of the rights of others in all interactions. All students are expected to cooperate with the spirit and policies of the school, which are designed to foster mature development and personal responsibility. This requires courtesy in all personal relationships, promptness in fulfilling obligations, concern for the environment, and many other factors, which the students' sense of appropriateness will indicate to them.

Cell phone use is **never permitted in the school building during school hours**. All cell phones must be turned off upon arrival on campus in the morning and may only be turned on and used outside after 3:10 PM. During the school day, all cell phones must be off and secured in the student's backpack (forgetting to turn off the cell phone is not an excuse.) Due to privacy laws, no cell phone photographs or recordings are permitted at any time while on campus. Any violation of this policy will result in the phone being confiscated. When this happens the parent may retrieve the phone at school after one week. A second violation will result in the automatic loss of having a cell phone while on campus. **St. Therese is not responsible for any lost, damaged or stolen cell phones.**

Items such as, but not limited to, questionable books and pictures, white-out, knives, guns, matches, cigarettes, radios, toys, alcohol, drugs, laser lights, or any items that detract from a learning situation are not allowed at school at any time.

No portable entertainment/computer devices are allowed during school hours (8:00 AM – 3:10 PM). **St. Therese is not responsible for any damaged/lost/stolen entertainment or computer devices.**

The principal, in accordance with state laws, will determine the appropriate disciplinary measures to be taken concerning the presence of these items in the school. The principal reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of an action if any doubt arises.

### Cheating

Cheating of any type will not be tolerated. Students who choose to cheat face a failing grade, detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. Plagiarism is a form of cheating and will be treated as such.

### Detention

Detention may be issued for a breach of classroom and/or school rules. Any staff member of St. Therese School may issue a detention with the authority of the principal. Parents are given written notification of the detention. The day, date, and time of the detention are at the discretion of the principal who monitors the detention. Detention takes precedence over appointments, practices, lessons, ballgames, etc.

### **Suspension**

Students who are given an in-school suspension will be required to report to school each day and work with a substitute teacher paid for (\$60.00) by the suspended student's parents. Students who receive an out-of-school suspension will not be allowed on campus during the time of their suspension, and they will not be allowed to participate in after school activities, including sports. Students must complete all class work and tests from the days of suspension. An out-of-school suspension is considered an unexcused absence.

### **Expulsion**

Expulsion is an extremely serious matter. Students who pose a threat to themselves or to others may be expelled from St. Therese School. Students who have been expelled will not be allowed to return to the school. Students who have been expelled from other schools will not be accepted at St. Therese School.

### **Returning to School After Dismissal**

Students are not permitted to return to the school building after dismissal unless accompanied by a teacher or office personnel. Students, who choose to return to school after dismissal without a teacher, face detention, suspension, or expulsion.

### **School Safety/Harassment**

St. Therese School provides a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats (seriously or in jest) face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

Harassment of any type is not tolerated. The principal investigates all complaints of harassment. Students involved in harassing behavior face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

### **Drugs and Alcohol**

Students who possess, use, or are under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol at school or at any school function face suspension and/or expulsion.

### **Title IX**

St. Therese School adheres to the tenets of Title IX: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

### **Child Abuse Laws**

St. Therese School abides by the child abuse laws of the State of New Mexico. This law mandates that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services.

### **School Property**

The parent of a child who carelessly destroys or damages any furniture, equipment, buildings, or anyone's personal property is obligated to pay the full amount of repairs and labor or replacement. Textbooks must have a proper book cover. No writing in textbooks is permitted. The student will pay a fine or replacement fee for damaged or lost texts.

### **Transfer of Students**

Notice of withdrawal of a student should be made by the parent in writing to the principal in advance of the withdrawal date. This enables the school to prepare necessary information and settle accounts. No student records will be forwarded to another school until Finance Office accounts have been settled.

### **Office Records**

Parents/Guardians are requested to notify the School Office in writing of any change of address, home telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, business phone numbers, and/or phone numbers of emergency contacts. This will guarantee that office records are accurate, complete, and up-to-date.

### **Telephone**

Permission to use the telephone must be obtained from a teacher or the school secretary. Students must submit a note from their teacher before the secretary will allow a student who has left class to use the phone. The office phone is a business phone and students are permitted to use it only in case of an emergency. Forgotten homework, athletic equipment, etc. do not constitute emergencies. Arrangements for after-school visits with friends should be made at home, not via the school phone.

### **Emergency Drills**

State Law requires that fire drills be held regularly. During the drills, students should follow these regulations:

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds;
2. Close windows and doors;
3. Walk to the assigned place briskly, in single file at all times, and in silence;
4. Stand in a column, facing away from the building;
5. Return to building when signal is given.

### **Crisis Plan**

St. Therese School has implemented a "crisis plan" in case of a lockdown emergency. All teachers and staff are aware of the procedure to follow to keep your children safe. In the event of such an emergency, circumstances permitting, the building will be evacuated and students will be moved to St. Therese Church.

### **Weather Emergencies**

If it should be necessary to close the school because of weather conditions, an announcement will be made over local television stations. St. Therese School will follow the same closure or abbreviated schedule as the Albuquerque Schools follow.

### **Lost and Found**

Any items found in the school building or on the school grounds should be given to the school secretary to be placed on lost and found shelves in the east hallway of the main building. Items placed in lost and found remain there for 30 days. After 30 days, items are donated to charity.

### **Right to Amend**

St. Therese School reserves the right to amend this handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via the Thursday envelope.