



**RE & Confirmation
PARENT HANDBOOK 2023-2024**

Revised August 30, 2023

15 Indianola Rd.
Des Moines, IA 50315
Phone: 244-4709 (Monday-Friday) ♦ Phone: 243-1874 (Class Day)
♦ stanthonysm.org

Dear Parents,

On behalf of the catechists and volunteers who make this program successful, I want to welcome you and your family to St. Anthony's RE & Confirmation Program. It is a great blessing and privilege to be a part of your child's faith formation and sacrament preparation!

When you baptized your child in the Church, you made a promise before God and the community that you would be your child's first teacher in the faith. The community then prayed that you would also be their best teacher. Our program is designed to provide an orderly, progressive method of imparting the basic precepts of our Catholic Faith. It is impossible for us to do that in 1 1/2 hours of classroom work. Much more is required. The only way a child can truly acquire a full appreciation of the great gift that is our faith is by experiencing it at home. The way you live out your own faith commitment will have the most profound effect on your child's faith development.

The Church expects you to:

- Worship at Sunday Mass as a family.
- Participate in your child's homework.
- Give priority to your child's RE/Confirmation Program.
- Show respect and cooperate with your child's catechist

Please read this handbook for important information about your child's Program and keep it along with the calendar for reference during the school year. For your convenience, a copy of this handbook is posted on our website.

May God Bless You,

Diana Balmaceda
Director of Religious Education
dbalmaceda@stanthonydsm.org

Lizeth Contreras
Director of Confirmation Education
lcontreras@stanthonydsm.org

Class Schedule and Times

Classes: Sundays from September through May.

Time: 9:45 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

The calendar is provided at registration, also found on the parish's website (stanthonydsm.org), RE Facebook page, and available upon request.

Parents are expected to take their student(s) to the classroom.

Communication

Primary modes of communication:

- Facebook: St. Anthony Religious Education
- Email: it's the parents' responsibility to have an updated email address on file
- Web Site: stanthonydsm.org

In the event of inclement weather, cancellations will be posted on Facebook.

Registration/Enrollment

Completed registration forms, required documentation, and the registration fee are necessary prior to your child attending his or her first class.

Registration is open until September 24th. After this date no further registrations will be accepted.

You must be a registered parishioner to participate in our Program.

Students are to be re-enrolled every year.

New to the Parish or Transferring

Students transferring from another parish's religious education program or from a Catholic school must supply the following when registering:

- A copy of your child's baptismal certificate.
- Documentation of prior religious education or Catholic school completion (letter of verification, including attendance record) Students who enter the program without having celebrated the sacraments of initiation, and who are beyond the usual age for reception of these sacraments, may need additional formation.

Catechetical Volunteers

In this ministry, catechists work as assistants to the parents who are the primary catechists. Our catechists are members of the parish who volunteer their time to help. Our role is to help, not to replace, the vital role parents have as the primary catechists. It is our role to help the parents' journey with their children as they deepen their faith and love for our Lord.

This ministry can be challenging, but, as many catechists state, it is a rewarding calling and ministry, like no other. If anyone wishes to become a catechist or classroom assistant, please contact the RE Director or the Confirmation Director.

Parent Participation

To participate in our program, we ask ALL parents to participate in the events that the RE Program has throughout the academic year.

This is an opportunity to show our children our active participation in our faith and parish.

Attendance

Regular attendance is important to the ongoing faith formation of students and should always take precedence over all extra-curricular activities. The sessions are built on each other and carry a central focus throughout the year.

Much like attendance in elementary/middle school, absences can have an adverse effect on your child's growth.

The student must complete all class work and homework. If a student is ill, the parent should notify prior to class to report their absence. To report absences message us through Facebook or email ZGarcia@stanthonydsm.org.

Students in First Communion preparation (2nd year) may not miss more than 3 scheduled classes to be considered ready for reception of the sacrament.

Non-Sacramental students may not miss more than 4 classes for the year to be counted.

Students in 2nd year Confirmation preparation may not miss more than 1 scheduled class to be considered ready for reception of the sacrament.

Students in 1st year Confirmation preparation may not miss more than 2 scheduled classes to be considered ready for reception of the sacrament.

Please contact us immediately if there is a family situation that will impact your child's attendance.

Tardiness

Please arrive on time. Parents and children who arrive late not only miss out on important information and class time, but they also disrupt the class.

Late arrival and early dismissal are very disruptive. It is suggested that every child come to class each week prepared to fulfill their class time obligation. Late arrival/early dismissal is counted toward attendance and will impact their overall attendance record. **2 late arrivals/early dismissals are the equivalent of 1 absence.**

Learning Environment

A welcoming and respectful environment is necessary to provide an atmosphere that is conducive to sharing and learning. Courtesy and cooperation are expected of each and every person and respect for the catechist, assistant, and fellow students is required.

Students are required to follow the rules and regulations discussed herein, as well as the rules set forth in their respective classrooms.

- Cell phones/ electronic devices (includes headphones) **Not** allowed during class. Students will be putting their phones in hanging organizers in their classroom. If there are issues with phones parents will be notified. St. Anthony's is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones or other electronics.
- Appropriate dress is encouraged. NO hats or hoodies.
- No food or drink allowed in classrooms.
- No chewing gum.
- No toys or games.
- Students may not write on white boards unless it's part of classroom instruction/activity.
- Students may not enter a classroom without a catechist, assistant, or other staff member or volunteer present.
- Care must be taken of classroom property: tables, desks, chairs, walls, posters, books, projects, etc.

Discipline

Most of the children in our program are interested in learning about their faith. At times, some children are unable to control their behavior, and disrupt the class. All students are expected to come to class willing and eager to learn.

If a child displays behavior that is inconsistent with the rules and values established in their classroom and/or the program for the good of all, their behavior will be redirected in a positive manner. Catechist and/or staff members shall have a conversation with the child, modeling positive behavior and encouraging positive alternative choices and virtues.

Continued behavior concerns (even over multiple class sessions) may necessitate the catechist to request intervention by the Director to discuss with the student possible solutions to the problem.

If a catechist refers a student to the Director a second time (even over multiple class sessions), the parents will be notified, and the parent and child will meet with the Director in order to address the behavior and resolve the situation. The parent will be required to attend class with their children until the behavior is amended.

If the disciplinary problem cannot be resolved and the student cannot control his/her behavior, an alternative setting for the child's learning experience will be recommended.

Mass Attendance

Attending Mass is the primary way in which children and adults learn about their faith. During Mass, we hear the word of God proclaimed, and participate in the heavenly banquet that is the Eucharist.

Every family will be required to place a tithing envelope in the Sunday collection basket each weekend. A monetary contribution is not required. Envelopes will be recorded to track Mass attendance. A weekly report will be provided to the Pastor.

Academic Expectations for Each Grade Level

The children will be expected to memorize specific prayers and have a good knowledge of other prayers at each grade level. Please pray with and encourage your child to say these prayers frequently to foster the memorization process.

<p><u>Kindergarten</u> Sign of the Cross Great Commandment</p>	<p><u>First Grade</u> Same as Kindergarten, plus Our Father Hail Mary Glory Be to the Father</p>
<p><u>Second Grade</u> Same as Grades K-1, plus Grace Before Meals Act of Contrition</p>	<p><u>Third Grade</u> Same as Grades K-2, plus Prayer to the Holy Spirit</p>
<p><u>Fourth Grade</u> Same as Grades K-3, plus Corporal Works of Mercy</p>	<p><u>Fifth Grade</u> Same as Grades K-4, plus Stations of the Cross Apostle's Creed Seven Sacraments 10 Commandments</p>
<p><u>Sixth Grade</u> Same as Grades K-5, plus</p>	<p><u>Seventh Grade</u> Same as Grades K-6, plus</p>

Beatitudes Rosary Hail Holy Queen	Nicene Creed
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Sacraments

Each Sacrament requires two consecutive years of preparation.

First Communion Preparation

The best preparation that the child can receive is by accompanying their parents and family each week to Mass as they grow to have a sense of community and understand the importance of the Mass in the life of a Catholic.

It is a **requirement to attend Mass** as a family every Sunday, and days of obligation.

Each Sacrament **requires two years of preparation**; therefore, First Communion preparation begins in the first grade. For example, if child misses first grade they will receive the Sacrament in third grade.

Children must **receive First Reconciliation before** First Communion.

All children are **required to attend retreats** and parents **all meetings and classes** prior to First Communion.

Parents are required to attend the parent classes.

Confirmation Preparation

Each Sacrament **requires two years of preparation**; Confirmation preparation usually begins in the 8th grade (“Year I”).

A meeting for parents and students to enroll in the Confirmation process is scheduled in the Fall. Attendance at this meeting is required for all students in order to be considered as candidates for Confirmation.

It is a **requirement to attend Mass** as a family every Sunday, and on days of obligation.

Confirmation Sponsors need to have already been confirmed and will be expected to attend a retreat. According to Cannon Law, sponsors who are not members of the parish will need to provide a letter from their Pastor stating they are in good standing.

Students must **attend all meetings and retreats** before confirmation.

Second year confirmation students must complete **10 hours of volunteering**, 5 hours in the parish and 5 hours outside the parish. These hours can’t be with a family member, can’t be paid and must be aligned with our faith.

Young people are confirmed in their faith by being incorporated into a community of believers. This is an on-going process in which the adult community plays a vital role. These young people must witness a community that learns, shares, worships, and serves together. It is the

responsibility of parents and other adult members of the community to help those who are newly confirmed to understand that Confirmation marks the beginning of their renewed commitment to the Church.

**CONFIRMATION IS NOT A GRADUATION!
CONFIRMATION MARKS THE
BEGINNING OF A COMMITMENT TO LIVE
AS A DISCIPLES OF CHRIST**

Youth Group

The youth group “SAY412” meets every first and third Wednesday of the month in the parish music room at 6:00pm. We invite your student (grades 9-12) to participate in this group.

Adult Faith Formation

Parents and all adult Catholics are encouraged to strengthen their own faith. We cannot pass on a vibrant faith to our children if ours is not strong. Check our website frequently for adult faith opportunities (stanthonydsm.org).

Social Media Disclaimer

Our program may take photographs of students, these photographs document learning and activities of the students. Please be advised that your child’s photo may be included on communications, which may include but is not limited to programs, newsletters, flyers, parish bulletin, parish website, newspapers, etc. If you have a concern about this, let us know.

Family Commitment Prayer

God our Father, through the sacred sacrament of Marriage, you have blessed us and given us the gift of families, all of them different. You created The Family image of love and unity revealed to us by the Most Holy Trinity. Our family is committed to setting an example of that love and unity throughout our daily lives and all our personal relationships. Guide us in our walk as we read your holy Word and reflect on it. Your Word to us transforms so that, through our witness, we can become the yeast that transforms the world.

We pray to the Holy Spirit, who dwells in us by virtue of our baptism, enlighten and be present in our family relationships and our meetings with other people.

We ask that all the families of our parish listen and follow your Word, so that our parish family reflects the love and unity of the Blessed Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, forever and ever.
Amen

Handbook Agreement Form

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AGREEMENT

I have read the entire content of the 2023-2024 Parent Handbook and accept the policies, regulations, directives, and procedures contained in the Manual and agree to abide by them.

Social Media

Our program may take photographs of students, these photographs document learning and activities of the students. Please be advised that your child's photo may be included on communications, which may include but is not limited to programs, newsletters, flyers, parish bulletin, parish website, newspapers, etc. If you have a concern about this, let us know.

I understand that the policies and procedures contained herein may be subject to change after the printing of this document.

Parent Name(s) _____

Student Name(s) _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____