

I. INTRODUCTION

WELCOME

On behalf of the Faculty, Staff, and Administration, welcome to St. Therese School. When you enrolled in St. Therese School, you became a part of the rich history of education in the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

For more than 50 years, St. Therese School has a tradition of academic excellence and spiritual enrichment for children. We are proud to be both a community of families with shared values and a partner with parents in their child's education.

VISION STATEMENT / DEPARTMENT FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The Vision for the Department for Catholic Schools is to promote and to sustain Catholic Schools of unparalleled quality, which integrate faith into every aspect of life and culture, producing graduates who continually strive for human and Christian perfection.

PHILOSOPHY OF ST. THERESE SCHOOL

The St. Therese School community believes that the school's reason for existence is to promote Gospel values. The school is a Christ-centered, safe, and protected learning environment. The message of Jesus Christ is rooted in worship, fidelity, and social justice. A sense of service builds the Kingdom of God. The school welcomes any student regardless of religion, race, national, or ethnic origin. The gifts and talents of each student are respected and developed. The best practices in education drive our child-centered instructional program. The skills taught daily will equip students with tools to become faith-filled leaders and responsible citizens. Family, school, and Church are partners in educating the whole child.

MISSION

The mission of the St. Therese School Community, in the spirit of the Little Way of St. Therese, strives to instill in its students a depth of knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the Catholic faith, the integration of Catholic values, and a sense of responsibility and accountability that leads to service, leadership, and the courage to make a difference in our ever-changing world.

THE LITTLE WAY OF ST. THERESE

The world came to know Therese through her autobiography, Story of a Soul. She described her life as a "little way of spiritual childhood." She lived each day with an unshakeable confidence in God's love. "What matters in life," she wrote, "is not great deeds, but great love." She lived and taught a spirituality of attending to everyone and everything well and with love. She believed that just as a child becomes enamored with what is before her, we should also have a childlike focus and totally attentive love. Therese's spirituality is of doing the ordinary, with extraordinary love.

HISTORY OF ST. THERESE SCHOOL

The parish school is usually second only to the church as the center of parish activities. St. Therese parish is no exception. The construction and maintenance of our excellent parish school is a source of great pride to the parishioners of St. Therese.

Construction of our parish school was completed in 1954. On August 21, 1954 Bishop Dearden blessed St. Therese School, and officiated at a Mass, the first Mass celebrated in the basement of the new school. Opening day took place on Tuesday, September 7, 1954, for 237 students in grades 1 through 4 with six Sisters of Charity and one lay teacher. Construction of the Activities Building was started in August 1962, and the building was dedicated in August 1963.

The Little Flower Preschool began a program for 4-year old children in September 1990 and a program for 3-year old children in September 1991. The parish can boast that thousands of students have gone through this spiritual and educational system better prepared to face the challenges of life.

A celebration for alumni, parents, teachers, friends, and parishioners in honor of the school's 50th anniversary took place on Sunday, September 12, 2004. It began with Eucharistic Liturgy at 2:00 followed by a school open house and ending with a dinner at the Georgetown Center.

Since the beginning of the school, many dedicated Sisters of Charity and lay teachers have ministered at St. Therese School and, in partnership with parents, have continually pursued traditions of excellence and fostered the faith development of many young people.

MIDDLE STATES ACCREDITATION

The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools accredits St. Therese School. Middle States accreditation is an expression of confidence in St. Therese School's mission, goals and objectives, performance and resources and validates publicly the excellence in education.

The Middle States Evaluation is an ongoing process requiring the submission of updated plans for continued accreditation. Our first accreditation date was April 1990 and our next accreditation, *Designing Our Future*, is scheduled for May 2011.

CATECHETICS (Religious Education)

Catechetics is the center of the Catholic school. A conscious effort is made to create a Christ-centered atmosphere by stressing Christian values in the classroom as well as throughout the school. A conscious effort is made to integrate catechetics into every aspect of the school curriculum.

Our belief in Jesus has drawn us to this school community. Our beliefs are expressed in and strengthened by daily communal prayer. Students develop an understanding and a

love for the Church's daily worship. Prayer includes a prayer service each morning with prayer before and after lunch and at the end of the day.

An introduction each morning briefly sketches the saint or feast of the day or some aspect of the liturgical season. Attention is also given to the seasons of the year, to the anniversaries of historical figures and peacemakers of our time, and to the civil holidays that have significance for our children.

Faith experiences are an integral part of catechetics. Opportunities for Eucharistic Liturgies, Reconciliation, Stations of the Cross, Rosary, classroom prayer, and service to others are included. Community is at the heart of Catholic education, not simply as a concept to be learned, but as a reality to be lived.

The principal, in conjunction with the Pastor and the Catechetical Administrator, work with the teachers in the religious development and sacramental preparation of the students. Parent Preparation Programs for Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation are held during the year. These are parish programs and involve all eligible children and parents of the parish.

STAFF CERTIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT

St. Therese School teachers are required to have valid Pennsylvania teaching certificates in their instructional area. In addition, teachers must receive sixty (60) hours of religious in-service training to be certified as catechists. Catechetical in-service training must be updated every three years. Teachers also receive thirty (30) hours of in-service training on the Catholic philosophy of education and methods to acquire Diocesan accreditation. As mandated by Act 48 of 1999, all certified educators must complete six college credits, six credits of continuing professional education courses, 180 clock hours of continuing professional education, or any combination of collegiate studies, continuing professional education courses or learning experiences equivalent to 180 hours every five years.

VISION AND VALUES PROGRAM

Teachers at St. Therese School participate in the Vision and Values in the Catholic School, a program involving the implementation of a Catholic value-oriented curriculum. It clarifies and expands the vision of integrating Gospel values within the total school. Activities focus on experiences and values of staff, future changes and need, realities of student life, the purpose of Catholic schooling, and the implications for living as Catholic Christians. Each year the staff chooses one value on which to focus for the school year. That value is presented to families at the beginning of each school year.

II. POLICIES AND PRACTICES

ADMISSIONS AND REGISTRATION

St. Therese School admits students of any religion, race or national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to all students formally accepted into the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of religion, race or national or ethnic origin in the administration of our educational policies,

admission policies, athletic or other school administered programs. Children who are not Catholic are expected to participate in religion classes and to attend all religious functions of the school/church.

Registrations are accepted once tuition is set for the following school year. Admission to St. Therese School (Preschool to Grade 8) will be granted in the following order of preference:

1. Children of registered parishioners.
2. Children of registered parishioners of Catholic parishes without schools.
3. Non-Catholic students are invited and welcomed. They are to participate in the religion programs of the school. They are further encouraged to be active members of their own church.

ADMISSION REQUIRMENTS

Age Requirement:

- A student entering preschool must be 3 or 4 years old before September 1.
- A student entering kindergarten must be five years of age before September 1.
- Students entering first grade must be six years of age before September 1.
- Those registering for grades 1-8 must fulfill the age requirement for the desired grade. Grade level and academic group determinations are made on the basis of school records.

Records Required

- Official certificates of birth and baptism are required at the time of registration.
- When a student transfers, a certified copy of the student's disciplinary record must be obtained from the school from which the student is transferring prior to admission.
- All parents and students are to sign the "Catholic School Memorandum of Understanding." (See appendix)

No student in grades 7 or 8 will be admitted unless their family has recently moved into the area.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Immunization records must be complete before any child may enter school. The requirements are as follows:

All Grades K - 12

- 4 doses of tetanus (1 dose after the 4th birthday); 3 doses if series started after 7 years of age
- 4 doses of diphtheria (1 dose after the 4th birthday); 3 doses if series started after 7 years of age
- 3 doses of polio
- 2 doses of measles
- 2 doses of mumps
- 1 dose of rubella
- 3 doses of hepatitis B

- 2 doses of varicella or written statement from physician/designee indicating month and year of disease or serologic proof of immunity

Grades 7 – 12

- 1 dose of tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis (Tdap)
- 1 dose of meningitis vaccine (MCV4)

Failure to have a child properly immunized or failure to produce immunization records may result in exclusion from the school.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance at school is a major factor in determining academic success. Students who are absent for more than thirty days during the academic year may be denied academic promotion. Schoolwork continues even though a student is absent. Making up work can never replace the teacher-pupil interaction that occurs while the subject matter is being taught. The St. Therese School calendar closely corresponds to the Diocesan School Calendar. Early dismissal days and free days are published for your convenience in scheduling appointments, trips, etc.

ABSENCE

Absences from school are defined as either “excused” or “unexcused” according to guidelines from the Pennsylvania School Code. Excused absences include illness, quarantine, impassable roads, recognized religious holidays, and urgent reasons, such as a death in the family or a court appearance. The state guidelines also permit an “Excused Absence for Educational Trips” if a request is sent to the school prior to the dates of the trip. If no prior notice is received, the absence is classified as “unexcused.”

Parents/Guardians should call the school office, 412-462-8163, by 8:00 a.m. on the first day that a child is absent from school. Messages can be left earlier by calling the school’s voice mail #220. Give the child’s name, homeroom teacher, and reason for absence. Unless the absence will be for an extended period of time, please make arrangements with another child to have assignments brought home.

Upon returning to school from an absence, a student must submit a written excuse signed by the parent or guardian to the homeroom teacher, stating the reason for the absence and the date or dates of absence as required by state law. If this excuse is not submitted within three days following the absence, the absence will be classified as unexcused. According to law, excuses for absences must be kept for the entire school year.

According to the Pennsylvania School Code, Section 1332, "The absence of any pupil who remains out of school with or without his parent's permission, and is not absent because of illness or for other urgent reasons, as defined in the School Code, shall be unexcused. Such absence will be recorded as 'unlawful-unexcused' for a pupil who is under the compulsory attendance age." Section 1333, "Any such child who has been absent three days, or their equivalent, during the term of compulsory attendance, without

lawful excuse...shall be given written notice. If, after such notice is given..., attendance is again violated by the person, such person shall be liable... for referral to the magistrate."

Parents and guardians of students who acquire excessive absences (ten days) may be required to provide documentation from a physician indicating that the absences are related to an existing medical condition.

To be excused from gym because of illness or injury, a student must bring a note to be presented to the homeroom teacher and the gym teacher. If the excuse from gym is for an extended period of time, a note from the doctor is required.

Assignments and tests missed during absences must be made up upon return to school. It is the student's responsibility to see each teacher about work missed and to see that it is completed within a reasonable time after the return to school.

TARDINESS

Students are tardy when not present in the classroom for the opening exercises. Tardy students register in the late book which is available in the secretary's office. A note should be sent from the parent or guardian with the reason for the tardiness.

APPOINTMENTS

Parents/Guardians should make every effort to schedule appointments at a time that school is not in session. However, if a child must have an early dismissal, he/she must have a written note for the principal's approval. For these dismissals, parents or an authorized adult must meet the child at the office and sign him/her out at the authorized time. Children who arrive later than 10:30 a.m. will be marked as absent in the morning. Children who leave school before 11:30 a.m. will be marked absent in the afternoon.

CAFETERIA

All students must bring or buy a lunch from the cafeteria. Those bringing lunch may purchase milk. Parents and guardians are not to bring food to the cafeteria during the lunch period.

Families qualifying for free or reduced lunches should apply through the school office.

The cafeteria is operated in accordance with U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, handicap, religion, or national origin.

EMERGENCY CARDS

At the beginning of each school year, parents/guardians are required to complete a Student Emergency Card. It is imperative that the school is able to reach you to inform you of illness or an emergency situation. It is also important to list the names of others who can be contacted should you be unavailable. Keep the card updated by notifying the office.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND CANCELLATIONS

If inclement weather or some other emergency requires that the school be delayed or closed, you may learn about it in the following ways:

1. Homeroom coordinators will initiate a phone chain to notify parents/guardians as soon as possible.
2. This information will be announced on KDKA, WTAE, and WPXI and on the following websites for viewers to scan: www.thepittsburghchannel.com; www.wpxi.com; www.kdka.com.
3. Call the school at 412-462-8163. There will be a message on the attendance Hotline #220.

Because of the number of public districts represented in our school, it is important that you listen for an announcement that identifies St. Therese School, Munhall.

When there is a severe weather delay or cancellation, St. Therese School will generally follow the Steel Valley School District's decisions.

Bus riders are to listen for delays/cancellations in their school district. If St. Therese School is in session at the usual time, it is the decision of the parent or guardian regarding transportation on these days.

When your local school district cancels morning kindergarten, bus transportation will not be provided at the end of our morning session. Half-day kindergarten students may stay for lunch and be dismissed at noon.

PLEASE NOTE: Because our attendance registers are legal indicators of a child's presence at the times we are in session, children who arrive late or are absent because of weather will be marked as Excused Tardy or Excused Absence.

EMERGENCY DISMISSALS

In the event that we would be required to dismiss school early, that information will be announced on the same stations noted above. Homeroom coordinators will initiate a phone chain to notify parents/guardians as soon as possible. However, because phone service may be interrupted in the school, some emergency situations may not allow for this option. Children will be dismissed as bus transportation is arranged. Prepare your child for an emergency early dismissal by telling him/her what to do when he/she arrives home if you are not there. This information is requested on the back of the emergency card. It will be reviewed with your child in the event of an unscheduled early dismissal.

EXTENDED CARE

St. Therese School offers an after school program for parents and guardians who need child care. Our after school program operates on school days only from 2:30 to 6:00 p.m. There is a registration fee, and the cost is based on a per-hour per-family payment. Parents/guardians should call the school office for the fee schedule and contact person if they plan to use this service.

FIELD TRIPS

Grades 1 to 8 are permitted field trips during the year. Guidelines for both students and chaperones are in effect for each field trip. Each student must have a signed permission slip before he/she is permitted to participate. Transportation, in accordance with diocesan directives, is provided by bus, and a fee is charged to cover costs. No eighth grade students may participate in the end-of-year field trip unless tuition is paid in full.

FUNDRAISING

The diocesan policy for funding in the elementary Catholic schools calls for each school to have fundraising activities to generate at least 10% of their total operating budget. St. Therese School has two ways to generate the fundraising goal, general and assessment fundraising.

GENERAL FUNDRAISING

School parents are expected to participate in the general fundraising events such as the Parish Festival, February Affair, Fish Fry and other VIP-sponsored general fundraising activities to the best of their ability through service, monetary donations, attendance, and purchases.

ASSESSMENT FUNDRAISERS

A list of assessment fundraisers and the profit amount is provided to parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year or as each fundraiser is planned.

New ideas for fundraising are always welcome. However, fundraisers must be presented to the VIP for approval.

THE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

- The assessment account is separate from the tuition account.
- A family assessment fee is set each year based on the 10% fundraising amount of the total operating budget and VIP budget for general fundraising events.
- Families have three options: direct pay the entire fundraising assessment by a specified date; direct pay the fundraising assessment in installments by specified dates; or participate in the assessment fundraisers.
- The amount applied to the family assessment account is the profit amount that is raised through the specific fundraisers.
- When the profit margin exceeds the designated amount, it is deducted from tuition.
- If the profit margin does not equal the designated amount, families pay the outstanding amount to the VIP.
- The assessment fee must be paid in full by mid April.
- An assessment coordinator tracks assessment profit and gives reports to families.
- The program begins in September and continues until mid April. However, Giant Eagle cards may be purchased at the rectory beginning in June for assessment credit.
- If a family transfers to another school during the school year, their assessment credit may not be reassigned to another family.

- When relatives or friends want a specific family to get assessment credit, the family name must be given at the time of the purchase or order.
- Assessment credit is not carried over to the following school year with one exception—a family who has a child in the four-year-old preschool may bank assessment credit to be applied to their assessment account the following school year. Assessment credit is not refunded.

THE SERVICE PROGRAM

The goal of the service program is to foster a greater sense of belonging, friendship, and shared interests within the school community by providing ways for all families to take an active role in helping the school meet the fundraising goal.

- All families are required to perform a minimum number of service hours during the school year. Of the required hours, a designated number must be worked in preparation for or during the annual festival.
- Only hours spent working at or planning VIP-sponsored fundraisers count toward a family's required hours. A list of the various VIP fundraisers is sent home for parents to sign up in advance.
- Anyone over the age of 21—aunts, uncles, grandparents, friends, another parent, etc. may work on behalf of a family provided they have met all diocesan safe environment requirements. They must notify the fundraising chairperson in advance.
- Another parent may serve on your behalf and have those hours credited toward your family's account if they notify the fundraising chairperson in advance.
- Hours may not be transferred to another family's account once they have been recorded.
- Each family is responsible for keeping track of their service hours. A service coordinator also tracks service hours and gives families a report.
- The service program begins on May 1 and ends on April 30.
- The chairperson for each fundraiser is responsible for recording the service time.
- Families that do not meet their service hours by April 30 will be assessed a fee based on the number of hours not worked. This amount must be paid to the VIP by May 15.
- Service hours are not carried over to the next school year.
- The Pastor sets a buyout amount for service hours annually.

Unpaid Assessment / Service Hours Not Completed

If the service hour commitment has not been met in full and/or assessment account not paid in full by the designated dates, it will be handled the same as unpaid tuition --- reports cards are withheld and the GradeBook account is locked. Registration for the next school year, final grades, and transfers of academic records will not be processed. Eighth graders will not participate in the field trip, awards ceremony, graduation, or other activities.

HOMEWORK

A reasonable amount of homework, according to grade level, is of great educational value. Assignments are not always written. Study and memory work are frequently

assigned. Homework is assigned on a regular basis to: enrich school experiences, provide practice and review, develop good study habits, teach responsibility, and foster originality.

Parents can assist students with home assignments in the following ways:

1. Provide a quiet spot away from the television, telephone, or other distracting elements;
2. Check to see what was accomplished during the designated study time regarding completeness, neatness, and correctness;
3. Be willing to listen to reading, spelling, and math facts and to explain procedures, but never do the assignment;
4. Consult the teacher and/or the student planner if the child uses the excuse "no homework" too often.

If a child cannot complete an assignment, the parent should inform the teacher by written note stating the reason. Arrangements should be made as soon as possible to make up incomplete assignments. The Diocese recommends the following time schedule for home study:

Primary (levels 1-3)	30 minutes;
Intermediate (levels 4-5)	45 minutes;
Upper Elementary (levels 6-8)	1 to 1 1/2 hours

At the discretion of the teacher, homework is not generally assigned on weekends. In case of a student's absence, requests for homework should be made by 8:00 a.m.

Students in grades 1-8 are expected to use a student planner. Planners teach students time management skills that ensure success, promote better communication among students, teachers and parents/guardians. Success builds greater self-esteem, which results in better grades for students.

INTERNET USE POLICY

This guideline is established to ensure understanding and application of St. Therese School Internet Use Policy. St. Therese School reserves the right to amend these guidelines at any time. It is understood that the administration of St. Therese School will inform parents/guardians of any changes made in these Guidelines via the school's monthly newsletter. Students' parents and/or guardians are required to review these guidelines with their child(ren) and complete and return a parent/guardian consent form. This guideline includes, but is not limited to, the following areas:

1. Information and news from a wide variety of sources and research institutions;
2. Public domain and shareware software of all types;
3. Discussion groups;
4. Access to any educational institutions and libraries.

INTERNET ETIQUETTE

1. Be polite when sending written messages to others.

2. Appropriate language is expected in all messages.
3. Anything pertaining to illegal activity is expressly forbidden.
4. Do not reveal access information, personal or otherwise.
5. Do not disrupt others' use of the Internet access.
6. All users should remember that deleted materials can be retrieved.

The following actions, which are not inclusive, are considered unacceptable actions by the administration of St. Therese School:

1. Placing unlawful information on the Internet;
2. Using the Internet for non-school related activities;
3. Sending messages that are likely to result in loss of the recipients work or systems;
4. Using the Internet for commercial purposes;
5. Using the Internet for political lobbying that does not support the expressed philosophy and tenets of the Catholic Church;
6. Sending or receiving copyrighted material without permission;
7. Plagiarism;
8. Using Internet access to send or retrieve pornographic material, inappropriate; file text, files dangerous to the integrity of the system, violent or threatening material or messages;
9. Circumventing security measures on school or remote computers or networks;
10. Vandalism;
11. Falsifying one's identity.
12. Using the Internet to harass another person or engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.

INTERNET USE AGREEMENT

See Appendix

NUTRITION POLICY

The Department for Catholic Schools Diocese of Pittsburgh promotes healthy students by supporting the Nutrition Guidelines for Competitive Foods in Pennsylvania as a part of the total learning environment. All diocesan schools are expected to provide a healthy environment where students learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. By facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity, schools contribute to the basic health status of students. Improved health optimizes student performance potential.

Suggestions for Classroom Treats

All foods available on school grounds and at school-sponsored activities during the instructional day should meet or exceed the nutrition standards. Keep this in mind if you are sending in treats for any special occasion including birthdays. For hygienic reasons, we request that only pre-packaged or individually wrapped treats be sent to school.

Children need healthy snacks. The suggestions listed below may help you choose a satisfactory treat that your child may bring to school.

- Fresh fruit and vegetables
- Nuts and seeds
- Lowfat popcorn
- 100% fruit juice
- Crackers
- Yogurt
- Animal crackers
- Granola bars
- Pretzels
- 100 calorie packs
- Trail mix
- Baked chips
- String cheese
- Small bagels
- Low fat snacks

Celebrate special events without food! Be creative and give special treats such as those listed below.

- Pencils
- Markers
- Glue Sticks
- Note Pads
- Crayons
- Stickers

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY

The Department for Catholic Schools Diocese of Pittsburgh promotes daily physical activity for all students in grades K-12 for the entire school year, and a physical education curriculum that engages students in moderate to vigorous activity during at least 50 percent of physical education class time. Each school is to provide recess for students that encourages moderate to vigorous physical activity through the provision of space and equipment.

Recess periods in the gym and outside are scheduled for each grade for daily physical activity. Students are to wear athletic shoes to school daily so that they may safely participate in this activity.

RIGHTS OF NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act gives full rights to each parent, unless the school has been provided with evidence that there is a court order, State's statute or legally binding document relating to such matters as divorce, separation or custody that specifically revokes these rights. Such an order is to be on file in the school and those persons responsible for the child(ren) are to be informed of the circumstances. Every effort is made to keep the non-custodial parent apprised of the progress of the child(ren) through reports, report cards and parent/teacher conferences.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

It is the policy of the Diocese of Pittsburgh and St. Therese Catholic School that students enjoy a learning environment free from all forms of discrimination including sexual harassment. All forms of sexual harassment in any learning area, activity area, or any other place under the permanent or temporary control of St. Therese Catholic School toward any student is strictly prohibited.

Any student who feels that he or she is, or has been, a victim of sexual harassment may bring the matter to the immediate attention of any teacher, administrator, principal, counselor, any parish priest or to the Superintendent of Catholic Schools. All reports of alleged sexual harassment will be investigated in as confidential a manner as possible. Upon the completion of such investigation, the parents or guardians of the student will be

advised of the findings, recommendations, and conclusions as to the accuracy of the charges alleged. In all cases where the investigation has verified the allegations and a decision has been made to take disciplinary action against the accused, the complaining student and his/her parents/guardians will be advised of such action.

In the event that it is determined that a student has intentionally falsely accused another student or school employee of engaging in sexual harassment, the student may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

For the convenience of families, supply lists are available on the school's website: www.sttheresemunhall.org. Students provide their own school supplies and are expected to comply with individual teacher requirements.

TESTING

Standardized tests, textbook tests, teacher-made tests are administered to students throughout the year. These assessments require students to synthesize information, apply what they have learned and demonstrate their understanding of what has been taught.

Achievement Tests: Students in grades 2-8 are administered a standardized test to measure progress from one year to another. A component of the standardized testing program is an aptitude test that helps to define the ability of a student in relationship to the results of the standardized test. If a child should be absent due to illness, every attempt will be made to enable the child to make-up the tests. However, since the tests must be mailed on the last scheduled test day, make-up testing often necessitates taking more tests daily than is ideal. To prevent this, we ask that you do not schedule trips or appointments during the time of standardized testing.

Performance Assessment: Each child in grade K-8 participates in Performance Assessments. These tasks allow students to respond to open-ended questions and to demonstrate their ability to use higher order thinking skills.

Teacher-made: Tests which are constructed by teachers to measure, evaluate and determine what students have learned.

Textbook Tests: Tests which accompany textbooks adopted for use with students in a particular area and are administered at the conclusion of a chapter and/or unit.

TRANSFER OF STUDENTS

In accordance with Pennsylvania Act 2008-61, the parent/guardian of a student transferring to another school shall provide a sworn statement of affirmation stating whether the student previously was suspended or expelled from any public or private school of the Commonwealth or any other state for an offense involving weapons, alcohol or drugs; for the willful infliction of injury to another person; or for any act of violence committed on school property. (See Appendix, Student Discipline Record A) A

certified copy of the student's disciplinary record shall also be obtained from the school from which the student is transferring. (See Appendix: Student Discipline, Record B)

TUITION

St. Therese School is an important, available parish ministry which emphasizes academic excellence within a value-oriented Catholic environment. Because significant expenditures are required to provide a quality elementary school education, it is necessary to charge tuition and to seek compliance with the payment schedule.

Because of the importance of maintaining a continuous cash flow to meet ongoing school expenses, it is necessary that following procedures enforce the payment plan

- a) If a family is temporarily burdened by a financial problem, it should contact the principal in advance of the due date. If such unusual circumstances exist, the pastor and/or principal will arrange for an alternate payment plan.
- b) When payments are delinquent, the parents will be asked to present a payment plan to the principal/pastor for approval.
- c) If payments are not made on schedule and parents have not contacted the school, the child(ren) may be asked to transfer at the end of the second quarter or at the end of year.

When tuition is in arrears, report cards are withheld and the GradeBook account will be locked until payment is made in full. Registration for the next school year, final grades, and transfers of academic records will not be processed if there is an outstanding balance. Eighth graders will not participate in the field trip, awards ceremony, graduation, or other activities if tuition is not paid in full. When preschool tuition is in arrears for two months, parents/guardians may be required to keep their child(ren) at home until payment is up to date.

The Pastor, Principal, and members of a Financial Advisory Team determine school tuition amounts. The fee schedule is given to each parent/guardian prior to the end of each school year, and families are required to reregister at this time. Each family pays a nonrefundable re-registration fee that is applied to the tuition for the following year if paid by a set date.

The Smart Tuition Program

The Smart Tuition Program facilitates the tuition process at St. Therese School. This program meets our needs by providing:

- Communication via emails or phone calls to remind families when payments are due.
- School-specific features that allow us to be in control at all times. We can deduct re-registration fees, the grants awarded through the Bishop's Education Fund and SOS, and fundraising assessment profit.

Smart Tuition offers a choice of payment options and plans.

- 11 monthly payments beginning in July to pay mail by the 10th or 20th of the month.

- 2 payments (July and January) or four payments (July, October, January, and April).
- Automatic monthly debit option by the 10th or 20th of the month.

Smart Online for Parents provides registered users with Internet access to their Smart account data. All information is updated daily. You need to register online and request a password -- www.smartontheweb.com

Families who choose to pay tuition in full in July or the two payment plan in July and January, do not have a Smart Tuition Account. Payments are made directly to St. Therese School.

TUITION SUBSIDY

Each year, all Catholic families must fill out a Pastor Verification Form to qualify for tuition subsidy. Catholic children must meet three criteria to be eligible for the Catholic tuition rate.

1. They are baptized.
2. The family is registered in a Catholic parish.
3. The family is practicing their faith through regular Mass attendance and regular use of the parish envelope system.

If approved by the pastors, the subsidized Catholic tuition rates are charged. Otherwise, each child in the family must pay the per pupil cost.

Because parents of non-Catholic children do not support the local parish as parishioners, it is understandable that their tuition rates reflect the per-pupil costs.

SCHOLARSHIP MONIES

1. The Scholastic Opportunity Scholarship (SOS) program is available to needy families. This diocesan non-profit organization serves as a clearinghouse for contributions from businesses that seek to take advantage of the Pennsylvania Educational Improvement Tax Credit Act.
2. The Bishop's Education Fund (BEF) is a tuition assistance fund for families in the Diocese of Pittsburgh without necessary resources to fund a Catholic education for their children.

Families submit The Private School Aid Service (PSAS) application for financial aid which must be completed by March 15. This one application is used for Scholastic Opportunities Scholarships and Bishop's Education Fund. Students with demonstrated need are eligible for tuition assistance grants. Application forms are available in the school office or may be downloaded on the diocesan web site: www.diopitt.org.

VACATIONS

Parents are encouraged to schedule vacations when school is not in session. If students are away from school on vacation, teachers may not be able to give all assignments before they leave. All work missed during the vacation time will be due within a reasonable time upon the student's return.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

ALTAR SERVERS

Students in grades 5 through 8 have the privilege of serving at liturgical services. Students who choose this privilege are expected to fulfill assigned responsibilities and be on time.

ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies are held for children throughout the school year. The assemblies are planned in conjunction with the principal, faculty, and the VIP with a focus on education.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Children's Choir

Beginning in grades 3 students may participate the Children's Choir. Practice is held one day each week after school. The children's choir sings at the 9:30 Mass during the school year, at all of St. Therese School Masses, and special liturgical celebrations.

Fine Arts

St. Therese students are encouraged to use their natural giftedness to develop skills in music, art, drama, and dance. After-school programs are offered to help talented and/or interested students an opportunity to explore the arts and to develop their creative talents.

Students in grades 5 to 8 may audition for the Spring Musical. Both the cast and stage crew will grow in confidence by performing for others and engaging in activities that make them well-rounded, self-directed, and service-oriented people.

Chess Club

Information is sent home each year about participation in the Chess Club held immediately after dismissal once a week. Chess teaches children forethought, planning, thinking ahead, independent study, abstract thinking, the ability to handle defeat, responsibilities for one's actions, mental discipline, and respect for the quality of other minds. Volunteers are needed to help

BAND

The diocesan instrumental music program is available for a fee for interested students from grades 4-8. The Diocesan Program dictates the monthly fee annually. The instruments are rented with the option to buy. Small group lessons are provided one period a week and practice is held once a week. The periods are rotated so the same classes are not missed too often. However, it remains the responsibility of the student to

make up missed work. A meeting is held at the beginning of each school year to provide more information for interested parents.

SPORTS PROGRAM

All coaches are required to be accredited, completed all requirements of the diocesan safe environment policy, and must follow the guidelines for the Diocesan Catholic Elementary Schools Sports Program.

All qualified students may try out for membership on sports teams and squads. St. Therese School is committed to providing everyone a fair chance to participate. The decision of the coach, in conjunction with the athletic director, in consultation with the principal, is final. Ordinarily, the principal will not intervene in non-selection decisions. Parents are encouraged to help their children understand that not everyone will be selected.

The education of the student is our primary concern. The faculty and administration of St. Therese School, along with the St. Therese Athletic Association (STAA), hereby agree to the following policy:

1. The student will be expected to maintain acceptable school behavior. Serious offenses may result in exclusion from one or more practices and games.
2. The student will be expected to maintain acceptable academic achievement in relationship to his/her ability.
3. Parents/Guardians will be contacted if students do not meet the above expectations.

Fundraising for all teams is provided entirely through STAA sponsored fundraising events and refreshments sold at games. The STAA has a general organizational meeting in the fall to acquaint parents and students with the programs.

BASKETBALL

Basketball is offered with separate boys' and girls' developmental, junior varsity and varsity teams.

CHEERLEADING

When the number of cheerleaders necessitates separate squads, cheerleading is offered with separate junior varsity and varsity squads

GOLF LEAGE

Golf can help a child get a real feeling of accomplishment and also teach him/her to think ahead. Once he/she realizes the structure of the game, he/she will start to plan and this is a lesson that can be applied to other areas of life. Information is sent home regarding registration for the golf league

PATROL/STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

Students are selected for bus patrol and volunteers from the middle school. Their selection is based on a willingness to strive for the following qualities: leadership,

reliability, good attendance, punctuality, interest in safety, obedience to rules, courtesy, respect for others, attitude of service, and an understanding of the limits of their authority.

The Safety Patrol helps students arrive at and leave school safely. It is never the Safety Patrol members' responsibility to act as "school guards." The job of the patrol is to help students find their busses or to assist them in boarding/deboarding in a safe and orderly manner. Monitoring conduct on the busses is the responsibility of the drivers.

Student Volunteers help with dismissal and arrival of younger children as needed. Other opportunities are presented to students to volunteer as needed.

SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

Students in grades 3 to 8 may join the school newspaper staff, *The Desktop Gazette*, which is written by the students for the students under the direction of a faculty member. The paper is published periodically throughout the school year.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The purpose of the student council is to develop leadership, pride, and responsibility and to be of service to St. Therese School. Council membership is open to Middle School students. The student council meets regularly with the Student Council Moderator to plan and implement school activities. They elect officers at the beginning of each year. Council members may raise questions and recommendations which are then forwarded to the administration through the council moderator.

The student council plays an important role in outreach activities by developing social consciousness and bringing life to the Gospel message of service. Throughout the school year, the student council assumes leadership in school-wide fundraisers to help the needy. Some of the fundraisers include food collections and support of the missions especially Chimbote.

TRANSPORTATION

It is important that we know the ordinary means by which each child arrives and departs daily. A note is to be sent when a change is necessary. For reasons of safety and insurance, each child is to ride his/her assigned bus.

BUS POLICY

Students who live more than a 1.5 mile radius from St. Therese School and less than 10 miles are eligible to be bused to the school if the local school district provides bussing. Those who travel along a route that has been declared "hazardous" are also eligible for bussing. The Board of Education Transportation Division determines "hazardous route" claims. The student transportation policies and procedures of the local educational agencies responsible for bussing students are applicable to all students in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Students are expected to maintain appropriate behavior while in route on the bus. Every bus follows the guidelines that are within our own discipline code. If the bus driver/company recommends that a student be removed from the bus, the principal will support it. This will result in the student losing bus privileges. The parent/guardian will then be responsible to make other arrangements for transportation.

Students are expected to remain in their seats at all times. This insures their safety and the safety of others. If improper conduct occurs, the driver prepares a report which is sent home to alert the parents to the problem. If the behavior persists, the bus company has the right to ask the school district to suspend the student's privilege of riding the bus, temporarily or permanently.

The following bus rules are to be obeyed:

1. Remain seated at all times until your stop has been reached. If the driver has assigned seats, these seat assignments are to be honored.
2. Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus. Do not put anything out the window of the bus.
3. In vehicles where seat belts are available, use them properly.
4. Do not ask to ride a bus other than the one to which you have been assigned or ask the driver to let you off at another stop. Only the Department of Transportation can authorize such changes.
5. Observe the same conduct as in the classroom. Quiet talking is permitted. Loud talking, etc. may distract the driver, prevent students from hearing instructions, or prevent the driver from hearing signals from emergency vehicles.
6. Be courteous; use no profane language.
7. Do not eat, drink, or chew gum on the bus.
8. Keep the bus clean.
9. Cooperate with the driver.
10. Do not be destructive.
11. The driver is in charge. Any directives of the bus driver in addition to the above are to be followed.

UNAUTHORIZED STUDENTS USING TRANSPORTATION

Students who are transported to and from school by bus occasionally request permission to have friends ride the bus. Because of the difficulty in keeping track of this type of activity, only those students who are assigned to a specific vehicle by the Department of Transportation are permitted to ride that vehicle. There are to be no exceptions to this rule. By adhering to this policy, we can eliminate potential problems that might occur in the event of an accident, etc.

MORNING ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Non-bussed children should not arrive at school before 7:45 a.m. Parents/Guardians should not assume that it is permissible to drop off children at school very early in the morning. We cannot be responsible for the safety of those children who arrive too early. When bringing your child to school, leave him/her at the designated drop-off areas.

Please do not accompany the child to the classroom. All children arriving between 7:30 and 7:45 are to go directly to the cafeteria. Walkers and car riders should not arrive before 7:45.

Expectations:

1. Arrive after 7:30 a.m.
2. Gather in the cafeteria –A teacher will be on duty in the cafeteria at 7:30 a.m.
3. Engage in quiet conversation.
4. Line up quietly when the school bell rings.

BUS RIDERS

Children will exit the buses at the drop-off area by the cafeteria.

CAR RIDERS (See diagram in appendix)

It is imperative that the traffic pattern for student drop-off be followed accurately since it is based on the safety of all children.

- Enter the parking lot closest to Steel Valley Middle School.
- Drop-off children between the school and activities building.
- Children in kindergarten to grade 8 enter by the two side doors of the school and go to the cafeteria if they arrive before 7:45.
- Kindergarten children arriving after 7:45 may be dropped off at the Early Childhood Building.

CAR RIDERS DISMISSAL PROCEDURE (See diagram in appendix)

All children who are picked up in cars must be met in the area by the gym. No cars will be allowed in the Church parking lot at this time. Please follow the traffic patterns as stated below:

1. All cars picking up children **must** park in the area by the gym.
2. Cars may enter the property by way of the road behind the school or beside the rectory by way of the high-rise.
3. Park facing the gym. Line up in rows in order of arrival. Display car number on the driver's side. (Contact the office for car numbers.)
4. Children will be dismissed from the side door across from the gym in the same order as cars are parked.
5. Follow the directions of the parking lot teacher monitors.
6. Exit to the right or left.

WALKERS

All walkers in grades 1-8 will be dismissed from the front door of the main school building. Kindergarten children will be dismissed by the side door of the Early Childhood Building

BUS RIDERS

Children will board the buses on the road between the school and church.

Please Note: Homeroom teachers must receive written notification from parent/guardian if there is a change in the manner in which the child is to go home. We are not responsible for the safety of those children who are not picked up at dismissal time

SCHOOL REGULATIONS –GENERAL

CHEWING GUM

Chewing gum is not permitted at any school related activity, including the bus ride. The rule is leave it at home.

CLOTHING IDENTIFICATION

Parents are strongly urged to mark their children's personal belongings with their names. Since children do not readily claim lost items, proper identification helps us to find the owner and save you the cost of replacement. The lost-and-found area is located in the cafeteria. You are encouraged to look for lost clothing items there. Other lost items, such as glasses, watches and purses, if found, are to be turned in to the office. Items that are not claimed by the end of each school year are donated to charity.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

All electronic devices including but not limited to radios, tape and compact disc players, gameboy-type portable game players, laser pointers and attachments, and telephone paging devices may not be brought to school. If a student is found with one of these devices, it will be confiscated and kept in the office until a responsible adult picks it up.

HALLWAYS

When in the hallways, students are to behave in an orderly fashion. No running, loud talking, pushing or shoving is permitted. When changing classes, students are to keep to the right, moving from room to room.

Students are permitted to return to homerooms to change books at specific times designated by teachers.

LOST AND FOUND

The school is not responsible for monies or valuable items brought to school by students. If your child is missing an article, he/she should check the lost and found table in the cafeteria.

PARTIES

The VIP sponsors treats for special occasions during the school year. No other instructional time should be used for parties without the principal's permission. With the exception of kindergarten, birthday treats are to be distributed in the cafeteria during

lunch. You are expected to follow the nutrition policy for treats as stated in this handbook.

PARTY INVITATIONS

Please do not send party invitations to school to be distributed. The only exception to this is if every boy or every girl or all students in your child's room are invited.

RESTROOMS

Regular recess periods are provided for Primary and Intermediate levels. Middle School students use the sign-out procedure in the school planner.

TEXTBOOKS

St. Therese School participates in Pennsylvania's Act 195/90 whereby the state purchases textbooks and instructional materials of non-religious items. A parent form with permission to have their child use these books is kept on file in the school office. **All books are to be covered at all times.** Students are responsible for the condition of the books given to them at the beginning of the year. Students will be required to pay for the book if it is damaged or lost. Books taken to and from school are to be placed in a bookbag.

TELEPHONE / CELL PHONES

No child is permitted to use a telephone in school. With the permission of a teacher or principal, the office will make the phone call home.

It is the school's responsibility to provide the best possible education in the best possible learning environment, which can be compromised by ringing phones. Camera phones pose many difficulties as they can be used to copy from students' papers or to make copies of exams. Pictures may be taken that are disrespectful and violate privacy. Cell phones may be used for game playing, Internet, e-mail access, or text messaging. **Therefore, students are not permitted to have cell phones in school.** If a student is found with a cell phone or if a school official hears a phone ringing, it will be confiscated and kept in the office until a responsible adult picks it up.

If there is a need for a student to be able to communicate with an adult after school, students may bring a cell phone to school and put it in the designated place assigned by the homeroom teacher until the end of the school day.

COMMUNICATIONS

The chief avenues of communication from the school to home are through the Parent/Student Handbook, the school newsletter, monthly envelope, and web site.

FAMILY ENVELOPE

The monthly calendar, lunch menu, and other timely notices will be distributed toward the end of each month. These items will be sent in a large envelope with the youngest child in every family. Parents/Guardians are asked to initial this envelope and return it to school the next day. Any information or fliers, etc. that a parent/guardian may want to

distribute must be approved by the principal. Parents/Guardians may return any necessary forms in the envelope. Since it is important that all families receive the information, which may contain notice of calendar changes, etc., we ask that you be on the lookout for the envelope and notify the office if it has not been received by the first week of each month.

SCHOOL NEWSLETTER/CALENDAR/MENU

The school newsletter is published monthly during the school year and is sent home in the monthly envelope. The deadline for submitting articles and information to our newsletter is the 20th of the month prior to publication. A monthly calendar and our monthly hot lunch menu are also included in the envelope. These two items should be saved for quick daily reference.

MESSAGES FOR TEACHERS

Positive communication between teacher and parent/guardian is vital to our total educational program. Any questions or concerns you have about your child should be directed to the teacher. Call the school office and the teacher will be notified to contact you. You may also call the school and dial the teacher's extension to leave a message or send an e-mail message via gradebook. The teacher will respond to you at his/her earliest convenience. The mailbox directory is listed on the back of each monthly calendar as well as the best way to contact a particular teacher, e.g. by voice mail, by e-mail or by note.

REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

Reporting student progress will be in accordance with diocesan regulations which combine parent conferences with written reports of a student's progress.

RIVER VALLEY SOFTWARE GRADEBOOK

The goal of the GradeBook program is to improve instruction, encourage data-driven decision-making, and provide greater opportunity for accountability, communication and involvement by all stakeholders in a child's education. This web-based application empowers parents by enabling them to obtain immediate access to their child's educational progress.

The parent/guardian of each student in grades K to 8 is assigned an ID, password and directions for accessing their child's subjects, teachers, and current grade average. Only persons with passwords may access student records and then only the records of their child(ren). In our electronic society it is essential that we take reasonable precautions to ensure that private information is secure. The User ID and password assigned to each child are designed to ensure maximum security. As such, not even the school administrator can change them.

If you do not have access to a computer with an Internet connection, notify the office so that arrangements may be made to keep you informed periodically about the academic progress of your child(ren).

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports are sent home on the dates announced on the monthly calendars. The purpose of the report is to communicate with parents/guardians regarding a student's performance especially if there is little or no progress in an academic subject.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be issued four times a year on the dates established on the official school calendar. Kindergarten students receive a report card three times a year.

CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled twice a year. Dates and times are posted on the yearly and monthly calendar. Conferences may be requested at other times throughout the year by parents/guardians or teachers.

TELEPHONE CONFERENCES

Telephone calls are one possible way for teachers and parents to maintain good communication for the benefit of the child. Because of the importance of class time, no teacher is to be called from class to talk with parents/guardians.

ROLE OF THE FAMILY

A close relationship between parents/guardians and teachers is essential. These two, the greatest influences in the life of a child, must work in harmony. If the home and school do not reinforce each other's Christian values, or worse yet, present opposing values, a child will become confused and disoriented. Practically speaking, a child must know that his/her family is important to the school, and that every phase of his/her life—education, spiritual, and social—is important to the parents/guardians.

Specifically, parents/guardians are expected to:

1. Communicate with the school. If you have a concern, early action can prevent a problem. Teachers should always be contacted first if the concern regards the classroom.
2. Be familiar with the school's policies and regulations. Show support and cooperation for these rules.
3. Take an active interest in the educational program and activities of the school.
4. Provide the time, place, and atmosphere for home study. Supervise and be interested in your child's homework and projects.
5. Attend school activities, especially liturgical, as often as possible.
6. Volunteer to help the teachers, to work on school activities, to donate "time, talent, or treasures" in any way possible for the good of St. Therese School.
7. Be active members of the VIP.

WEBSITE

Visit our school's website at www.sttheresemunhall.org.

III CURRICULUM

CATECHETICS / RELIGION FORMATION

The Catholic Church recognizes parents/guardians as the primary educators of their children. The role of St. Therese School is to supplement and complement the role of the parent. In the school, a formal catechetical program is taught daily. The Diocesan Catechetical Curriculum Guidelines, “Growing in God’s Covenant” contain a balance of doctrinal content, scriptural understanding, faith formation, prayer and worship experiences.

Goals and objectives are constant and consistent to enhance the spiritual formation and moral development of all students. A genuine, personal relationship with God and the response of worship and service are ultimate goals of the religious instruction. Liturgical and personal prayer are outcomes of the guidance and religious instruction provided. Opportunities for communal, as well as personal prayer are a daily priority. Careful planning and programming ensure a broad and deep understanding of authentic Church Doctrine. A variety of materials and resources are used to foster both spiritual growth and moral development.

Parents are encouraged to communicate in words and actions the Church’s teaching concerning human sexuality. When adults respond to their sexuality in a love-giving manner they enable their children to integrate the Church’s teaching concerning human sexuality into their own lives. The *Catholic Vision of Love* is the Diocesan mandated Sexuality Program.

Catholic teachers and parents can help young people to understand how their moral choices and their actions affect their own welfare as well as the welfare of others. Within this perspective, the challenge of HIV/AIDS education for children and young adults prepare them for a mature and responsible Christian life by developing attitudes of respect, trust, self-discipline and self-esteem. The program AIDS: *A Catholic Educational Approach to HIV* is the program used for instruction in the elementary schools. This is in conjunction with the *Diocesan Catholic Vision of Love Program*.

The Church, in her educational mission, embraces and fosters growth in all individual and social human dimensions (spiritual, moral, intellectual, emotional and physical) through a ministry embracing a message of faith, taught and lived in community and reaching out in service to others.

THE CONTINUOUS GROWTH APPROACH TO INSTRUCTION

The Catholic Schools located within the Diocese of Pittsburgh are committed to a program of education that seeks knowledge and practice of the Catholic faith, academic excellence, moral courage and the learning of the faith in the light of social teachings of the Church.

The Catholic School offers traditional curriculum. In the “Continuous Growth Program” of the Diocese of Pittsburgh students advance through a defined curriculum according to

their individual needs and abilities. In addition to meeting all the requirements of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the curriculum gives special attention to the integration of Gospel values.

Curriculum Guidelines for all subject areas are utilized by the Catholic elementary schools and provided through the Department for Catholic Schools. The guidelines give conformity to the teaching/learning process, and are geared to meet the individual needs of students.

Research indicates that children will achieve according to the expectancies placed upon them by their teachers and parents/guardians. Catholic school teachers place high expectation on all children so that all children are encouraged to achieve to the best of their ability. This is particularly true in the skill areas of Reading and Math. The curricula for these subjects are so designed that students can advance through defined levels of competency according to their needs and abilities. Student achievement is evaluated at the students' grade level.

The goals of the Continuous Growth Program in Language Arts and Math are:

- To recognize and provide for differences in each student's growth patterns.
- To provide an environment in reading and math classes that permits and encourages continuous progress.
- To adapt the math and reading curriculum to each child so as to challenge maximum individual development.
- To encourage students to exert effort so that they may experience success in their encounter with each school situation.

LANGUAGE ARTS

The philosophy inherent in the Language Arts curriculum is one of continuous growth which recognizes and nurtures the God-given potential and learning style of the individual. Language as communication enables one to become more perceptive through listening, observing and feeling. Language, as a skill, provides one with the important tools to speak fluently, to read and comprehend, to compose, to write legibly and to spell correctly. An awareness of the history of language and the continuous development of vocabulary also are important phases of skill development. An appreciation of literature enriches the student through the experience of skillful authors who vicariously open new worlds to the student.

MATHEMATICS

The mathematics curriculum presents numerous opportunities for the integration of faith, culture and life by developing an awareness of the Gospel values which should permeate real life problem solving situations.

It is our mission to enable all students to learn the skills, acquire the knowledge, and develop the attitudes in mathematics necessary for them to become morally and socially responsible citizens. The challenge is not only to meet and to exceed grade level

expectations but to excite students to explore topics on their own, to develop proof for answers and to learn from one another.

CURRICULUM GUIDELINES

In the Catholic schools, quality academic education is dependent on an organized plan of basic content with special attention given to the integration of Gospel values.

Curriculum Guidelines for all subject areas are utilized by the Catholic elementary schools and provided through the Department for Catholic Schools. The guidelines endeavor to give continuity to the teaching/learning process, and are geared to meet the individual needs of students and to guide the teaching/learning process.

Flexible pacing is an important component of the continuous growth concept. This provision places students at an appropriate instructional level and then allows them to move forward in the curriculum as they achieve mastery of content and skills. Students are not to be "locked" into an instructional group. Teachers will assess the abilities of students and allow for flexibility in instructional groups.

Teachers, recognizing different learning styles, vary their presentation and assignments so as to provide for the individual needs of each child. Critical thinking skills, problem solving and research techniques are a part of instruction. Enrichment activities are provided for all students, to broaden lessons presented.

SOCIAL STUDIES

In the Catholic School Social Studies provides many opportunities for teachers to help students understand, appreciate and learn how to live Christian social values.

The scope of the social studies curriculum includes elements of anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology with emphasis on global awareness and values. An integrated interdisciplinary approach helps students develop a sense of relationship among the various social studies disciplines. A clear understanding of current events helps students to integrate the past with the present and prepares them for the future.

The Social Studies curriculum begins in kindergarten with an introduction to community helpers. It progresses in the primary grades to the study of family and friends, and later encompasses a more in-depth study of the community. Beginning in fourth grade, the curriculum focuses on the study of the United States land regions and Pennsylvania history. At the fifth grade level, both United States history through the Civil War and a study of the United States geographical regions are studied. Sixth grade students study World Cultures and World Geography with an emphasis on the countries of the Eastern Hemisphere. Seventh grade studies United States history to the Reconstruction and eighth grade studies United States history beginning with the Reconstruction to the modern day. Map and geography skills are taught at all levels. Social Studies prepares students for the future by instilling the importance of a value-oriented life perspective.

WORLD LANGUAGES

Because the Church is universal and embraces all peoples regardless of race, nationality and financial status, the Catholic school encourages the study of world languages and other cultures. Language students learn the sounds and syntax of the language and work toward listening, speaking, reading and writing. A variety of materials and methods are used for instruction. St. Therese School offers Spanish in grades K-8.

SCIENCE

A respect for the sacredness of all life, the pursuit of peace and order in the world, an awareness of the responsibility to be co-creators of life-giving designs and protectors of the environment are primary goals of the teaching of science in the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

The science curriculum focuses on an inquiry-based process and fosters collaborative learning. Science education strengthens life skills such as creative problem solving, critical thinking, team cooperation, use of technology, and the value of life-long learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical education is a vital component of the curriculum. Recognizing the value of teaching students to establish healthy active lives and develop skills needed for present and future leisure, the Fit for Life curriculum guidelines have been adopted.

The Fit for Life Curriculum assists students in identifying their physical strengths and weaknesses and encourages students to build on their strengths to achieve personal goals. Students learn to follow rules and to respect the rights of others through games and physical activity. Learning to channel energies constructively helps students perform successfully in life.

HEALTH

The Health for Success curriculum presents information at each level of development that will help students make wise, moral decisions with respect for the God given gift of life. The health curriculum places holistic emphasis on wellness, fitness, behaviors, and skills for healthy, active living. Education and health for children are inextricably intertwined. Students then have the benefit of sustained learning for reducing health-risk behaviors and enhancing health-promoting behaviors.

FINE ARTS

The Fine Arts program is vital to all students. Students have the opportunity to deepen their awareness of God's gift of creation and to respond creatively to the beauty and goodness of the world through music, art and drama. Instruction in the Arts contributes to the development of the whole person; promotes individual expression; allows experimentation with diverse materials and elements; enables exploration and appreciation of the works of other students, major artists, and musicians; develops an awareness and sensitivity toward the environment and finally promotes a deeper understanding of heritage and culture.

The Fine Arts curriculum provides a holistic approach to education that incorporates many aspects of the core curriculum and can be integrated into the total educational experience.

COMPUTER

Computer instruction is essential in today's educational process. This instruction includes computer awareness and computer literacy. When this instruction and awareness are mastered, the computer becomes a basic tool for teaching logical thinking and problem-solving, creative writing, communication, the handling of information, and many other aspects of the curriculum.

Since the Continuous Growth Philosophy guides instruction in schools of the Diocese, students are led into phases of computer instruction according to needs and abilities.

Teachers of computer literacy look beyond hardware and develop an awareness of values such as relationships, collaboration, ethical conduct, responsibility and creative expression. As in all other areas of the curriculum, the integration of the Gospel values is a part of the teaching/learning process in the computer lab and classroom.

LIBRARY

In grades 1-3 books are checked out for one week. In grades 4-8 books are checked out for two weeks. A fine of 5 cents a day is charged for overdue books. At the end of the school year, students must pay for lost or damaged books.

ACT 89 SERVICES

REMEDIAL READING AND MATH

Intermediate Unit personnel work with and provide support to students who are not demonstrating grade level proficiency in reading and/or math. This service is a pull-out remedial program for eligible students based on teacher referrals, standardized test results, and parent approval. Alternate strategies are planned for students in accordance with individual instructional goals and in support of the classroom curriculum to help students develop mastery of basic skills.

SPEECH / LANGUAGE

This service offered through the Intermediate Unit screens and identifies students whose moderate or severe impairment of language, articulation, voice or fluency impacts academic performance. This program is a pull-out health related service that accommodates individuals as well as groups.

PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING

This service is an academic evaluation or a consultation for students not meeting expectations appropriate for grade or chronological age. The evaluation is to identify accommodations and adaptations that can be used in the classroom to help the student.

Psychological testing is available by parent/guardian request or at the recommendation of the teacher in consultation with the principal. Parents/guardians make the final decision. Parents/guardians request testing in writing through their school district. Results are formally reported to parents/guardians, principal and teachers along with a list of recommendations made by the psychologist. This information is kept confidential and not shared with anyone without parent/guardian permission.

COUNSELING

This service offered through the Intermediate Unit addresses school related issues. A certified counselor provides individual as well as group counseling sessions. School needs are a focus that the principal communicates to the counselor and appropriate sessions will transpire.

Children are referred by parents/guardians, principal, teacher and through self-referral. Individual counseling requires parent/guardian permission.

Throughout the school year, the counselor may visit classrooms to present lessons on topics including character education, conflict resolution, anger management, feelings, social skills, etc. The topics and grade levels chosen are based on the needs of the school determined by the principal and counselor.

GIFTED PROGRAM

Admission to the Gifted Program for students in the local school district is based on results of standardized academic testing, tests of cognitive skills, and academic performance. The parent/guardian submits a letter to the school district requesting testing. St. Therese School completes the necessary forms and forwards them to the school district. Students who are accepted attend classes in the local public school. They are responsible for making up missed classroom work.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Act 211 of 1990 mandates the Student Assistance Program (E-SAP) in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It is a comprehensive program of prevention, intervention, and support for students in grades K-12. The members of the Team are the principal and faculty members of the school who have received special training through approved agencies.

The program exists in order to promote the growth and development of the child. The team members work with students who are experiencing behavior difficulties which impact their social, emotional, and educational progress.

Faculty and/or parents/guardians make referrals for the program. Once the Team has received a referral, classroom teachers are asked to complete a form which helps identify the behaviors. The Team then makes informed assumptions as to what is needed to help the student. They convey this information to classroom teachers, parents/guardians and

evaluate the results. If necessary, after consultation with parents, appropriate referrals are made to outside agencies.

Team members must maintain all information regarding students and their families under safeguard of privacy and confidentiality. Access is limited to those who have a legitimate educational interest.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Pittsburgh are committed to a program of education based on the pedagogical concepts that all children are unique, learn at different rates and are to be challenged to their fullest potential. An educational plan of action based on the Policy for Admitting Students with Disabilities and recommendations from the Department for Catholic Schools may be created for a student identified with a special need such as slower patterns of learning, learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, performing below grade level, highly functional autism, or other learning challenges. If the school cannot meet the special needs of an individual child, every effort will be made to work with the parents/guardians in making proper placement.

IV. EXPECTATIONS & DISCIPLINE

The St. Therese School administration and faculty are committed to teach and model Gospel values to encourage students to live their lives as a reflection of Christ. The philosophy of the school strives to recognize and respect the dignity of each person and to offer a positive, Christ-centered, safe learning environment based on the Social Teachings of the Church. Discipline is considered an element of moral guidance not as a form of punishment.

Every teacher and staff member shares the responsibility to model appropriate behavior and to support the structure necessary for learning self-discipline. Students are encouraged to assume responsibility for their actions, develop self-control, and accept responsibility and consequences for inappropriate behavior.

A Christ-centered school environment fosters the following behaviors:

1. recognizing and fostering the uniqueness and dignity of each individual;
2. nurturing respect in all relationships;
3. developing a sense of rights and responsibilities and commitment to the entire school and community; and
4. teaching, modeling, practicing, and infusing social skills into daily life and experience.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following seven principles are the basis of Catholic Social Teachings and are the principles that guide us in all of our interactions.

- We believe in the life and dignity of the human person. Each person is sacred.
- We believe we are called to family, community, and participation. It is our duty to support each other by our actions.

- We believe that we have rights and responsibilities. Every person has the fundamental right to life and responsibility to and for one another.
- We believe that we have an obligation to the poor and vulnerable. We are called to put the rights of others before our own.
- We believe that we are called to care for God's creation. We are all stewards of the earth.
- We believe that solidarity is our call. We are one family regardless of our differences.
- We believe that workers have rights and that work has dignity. Work is a form of participating in God's creation.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

As a matter of safety, students are expected to avoid conduct unbecoming a Catholic School student at all times and to behave in the following manner:

In school:

1. Walk quietly through the halls.
2. Use proper language at all times.
3. Follow the dress code for school days and dress up/down days.
4. Respect school property and the property of other students.
5. Have a note from their parent/guardian if they change their mode of school transportation.
6. Refrain from bringing electronic devices including cell phones to school.

In the classroom:

1. Follow the classroom rules of each teacher.
2. Be responsible for submitting homework on time and making up missed assignments
3. Have a respectful attitude toward teachers and one another.
4. Be responsible for appropriate supplies.
5. Be honest in all communications.
6. Use computers and school equipment appropriately.
7. Refrain from chewing gum or eating food.
8. Do not remain in or enter a classroom at any time without a teacher or designated adult present.

After school

1. Follow dismissal procedures.
2. Walk to assigned place to wait until bus or car arrives.
3. Do not run or play games on the school grounds.
4. Leave the school grounds immediately.

At athletic events and assemblies

1. Practice good sportsmanship as spectators and participants.
2. Show respect towards coaches, referees, and visiting teams.
3. Maintain an appropriate silence during special performances.

Outside school

1. Behave responsibly off school property.
If the principal is made aware of misconduct off school property of a child recognized to be a student in St. Therese School, parents may be contacted; however, it is important to note that the school is not responsible for student's actions that occur off school property.
2. Principals will forward disciplinary notices given by public school bus drivers to parents to support the disciplinary report of the bus driver.

LUNCH TIME EXPECTATIONS

The use of good manners is encouraged and, therefore, the following cafeteria rules are to be observed:

During lunch

1. Remain seated unless disposing of trash, etc. until finished eating and teacher on duty gives directions.
2. Refrain from abusing food; your own or that of others.
3. Walk while in the cafeteria.
4. Refrain from shouting or screaming; enjoy the company of those nearby.
5. Be courteous and respectful to all those helping during the lunch period.
6. Do not take food from the cafeteria.
7. Clean up, pick up all papers, scraps of food, etc., and dispose of them properly.
8. Obey all monitors.

During recess

1. Do not re-enter the building unless for an emergency.
2. Display good sportsmanship and exercise self-control.
3. Play in assigned areas only.
4. Stay on school grounds at all times. This includes not retrieving a ball that has gone off school grounds.
5. Obey the directives of playground monitors, courteously and promptly.
6. Rough games, water guns, snowballing, footballs, and frisbees are not permitted.
7. Stop playing and walk quietly to designated line when the bell rings.

Every school day, weather permitting, the students enjoy an outside break supervised by volunteer monitors. Organized play is encouraged. Rough games, water guns, snowballing, footballs, and frisbees, are not permitted.

Students are never to leave the playground area without the permission of the principal and the knowledge of the playground monitor. In case of illness or accident, the student is to report to the school office.

Lunch monitors have the responsibility of enforcing rules. They are to be obeyed and treated respectfully. When the bell rings to end the playground session, the students will be met by their homeroom teacher and brought to their classrooms.

If inclement weather makes it necessary to stay indoors at lunchtime, classroom rules are to be observed:

1. Stay in homeroom.
2. Engage in quiet activities.

CONSEQUENCES

Please be aware that any disrespect, destructive act, or inappropriate behavior will be dealt with accordingly. If an individual student does not meet his/her personal responsibility for good conduct, the school may discipline the student.

The severity or repetitive nature of non-compliance to the above expectations will determine the appropriate consequences. To remediate unacceptable behavior, the following actions may be taken:

1. Teacher/student conference to develop a plan for remediation
3. Notification to parents/guardians
4. Administrative referral
5. Referral to the ESAP Team
6. School service required
7. Loss of recess
8. Detention
9. Denial of participation in school activities, including sports
10. School probation, or
11. Suspension

DETENTION

Discipline is the key to good conduct and to respecting the rights of others and is essential to learning. Classroom standards and expectations for student behavior vary according to age and are determined by the individual teacher. If behavior warrants action, any member of the faculty may issue a student detention. Depending on the severity, this detention may be served either during lunchtime or before or after school hours. If the detention is before or after school, parents/guardians are responsible for transportation.

A student may be issued a detention for the following infractions:

1. Being late for school or class without a written excuse
2. Loitering in the hall and/or restroom
3. Chewing gum or eating in class
4. Using a cell phone in the school buildings
5. Interrupting class; writing or passing notes in class
6. Name-calling, using "put-downs," teasing in a hurtful way
7. Failing to care for school property, such as computers, desks, books (including not covering books)

8. Violating personal property in desks
9. Dress code violations e.g. unkept appearance, short skirts, untucked shirts, pants not as waist
10. Fighting, violent or threatening behavior, harassment
11. Repeated incidents of bullying
12. Cheating, dishonest representation, cutting class
13. Profane or foul language, gestures, actions, or material
14. Stealing, destruction of property
15. Disrespect for any person, both those in authority or other students
16. Willful disobedience as determined by previous detentions
17. Conduct detrimental to the reputation of the school
18. Any other behavior which the principal deems to be contrary to the school values

Some infractions such as fighting or violent behavior will result in an immediate one-hour detention for the first offense and an in-school suspension for the second offense.

Considering that good behavior is the norm achieved by most students, middle school students will serve one-hour detentions after the accumulation of three lunchtime detentions. By not breaking school policy within a month, they may be granted the opportunity to change their detention record. Specific guidelines will be given to middle school students and their parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year.

Since participation in extra curricular activities is a privilege, restrictions may be placed on student participation if unacceptable behavior is not altered.

SUSPENSION POLICY

In the event of a serious act of misbehavior or repeated acts of misbehavior, a student may serve either an in-school or out-of-school suspension. Suspension may vary in length from one to ten days. No prior notice is needed. The parent/guardian will receive a written notice of suspension. This notice will explain why the student was suspended. It will also contain an agreement between the student/parents/guardians and the principal describing the student's future cooperation in a program designed to resolve the student's problems. If misconduct continues, a student may be asked to leave the school. These decisions rest with the administration and may be necessary for the benefit of the total program.

The following examples for suspension are illustrative but not exhaustive:

- Leaving the school grounds without permission
- Vandalism
- Theft
- Fighting (the second and any subsequent incidents)
- Truancy
- Continued instances of bullying

- Conduct judged by the principal as seriously contrary to the purpose of Catholic education, the goals of the school, the physical or spiritual welfare of the students or members of the school community

Suspensions should be held in school, and the student not marked absent, unless the offense is particularly excessive, in which case, out-of-school suspension is the remedy. Out-of-school suspensions follow the same guidelines as in-school suspensions except assignments are given in the various subject areas for home study. The parent/guardian will meet during this time of suspension with the principal and teachers to define expectations upon the student's return.

As a general rule, suspensions are to be served in school as soon as possible under the supervision of an adult supervisor paid by the student, parent/guardian. Students may not participate in lunch recess or in any school sponsored activities from the date of the incident until after the suspension is served. If further suspensions occur, the student will be on probation and in danger of expulsion.

EXPULSION POLICY

A student may be expelled for the following reasons:

- Chronic undesirable conduct detrimental to the physical and/or moral well-being of self or other students as evidenced by an accumulation of suspensions.
- A single serious incident, event, or situation involving disregard for a clear violation of a school rule or regulation, such as possessing a weapon on school property.
- Conduct judged by the principal as seriously contrary to the purpose of Catholic education, the goals of the school, the physical or spiritual welfare of the students or members of the school community.

The foregoing listings establishing reasons for disciplinary action are not all inclusive. It remains the duty of the principal, administration and staff to deal appropriately and proportionately with individual instances of attitude or conduct which may occur.

The following behaviors will result in immediate administrative referrals and can result in referrals to law enforcement or other government agencies:

- Violations of weapons policy
- Violations of the drug/alcohol policy
- Any purposeful action that results in bodily harm to another

The pastor/principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may use discretion in the implementation of these policies. In the case of all suspensions and expulsions, diocesan procedures are followed.

DRESS CODE

St. Therese School is a Catholic elementary school which maintains the right to establish a uniform dress code for its students. It is recognized that proper school attire and good grooming are conducive to a student's educational and social development. The dress code was developed to promote a Christian atmosphere, free children for academic concentration, de-emphasize competition among children regarding clothing, allow more economical dress for school, and provide some choice to accommodate individual differences.

It is expected that all students in grades one through eight follow the dress code. This policy is intended to maintain a standard of dress that is neat, economical, modest, and attractive.

The dress code at St. Therese School for students in grades 1-8 is the school uniform worn properly at all times. It is the obligation of the parents/guardians to see that student dress is according to the guidelines and the spirit for which the uniform was adopted.

If items are not purchased at Schoolbelles, they must look exactly like the uniform purchased there. Shop online at www.schoolbelles.com (School Code S1870) or visit Schoolbelles at 7440 McKnight Road, Ross Township, 412-630-8480. Toll-free phone orders: 1-888-637-3037.

UNIFORM OPTIONS

Sweatshirts & Fleece Jackets

- Navy or Red --with school monogram
- Sweatshirt, Zippered Front Sweatshirt, Hooded Sweatshirt, Fleece Pullover, Fleece Jacket

Sweaters

- Navy or Red --with school monogram
- V-Neck Pullover (Boys only), V-Neck Pullover Vest Sweater, Crew Neck Pullover, V-Neck Cardigan

Knits

- Navy, Red, White
- Pique Knit 3-Button Short and Long Sleeve
- Ribbed Bottom - Short and Long Sleeve with School Monogram
- Turtleneck

Blouses

- White Long and Short Sleeve Round Collar

Slacks

- Navy/Khaki Dress Slacks worn at Waist Level

Note: "Dress slacks" means that sport pants, jeans or jeans-type may not be worn. Extra zippers and patch pockets are **unacceptable**; only internal pockets may be worn.

Shorts

- Navy and Khaki Knee-Length Walking Shorts worn at Waist Level
Walking shorts may be worn from April 15th through October 15th

Jumpers

- Navy/Khaki Plaid Drop Waist Shift Jumper

Skirts

- Navy/Khaki Two Kick Pleated Skirt, Wrap Around Kilt Skirt, Split Skirt, Flat Front Skirt
 - Navy Wrap Around Kilt Skirt
 - Navy/Khaki Flat Front Skirt
- Skirts must be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee

Shoes

- Solid white or dark colored athletic shoes are to be worn everyday—No lights, wheels, etc. on shoes

ADDITIONAL DRESS CODE REQUISITES

- Blouses and shirts must be tucked in at waist with the exception of the banded shirts.
- Wear solid color crew or knee socks (red, navy, white), stockings, or tights-- sport socks are not acceptable.
- Athletic shoes may be worn every day—laced and tied—no wheels or lights
- All pants and shorts must be worn at the waist. If they have belt hoops, a belt must be worn.
- Hair on male students can be no longer than the top of the shirt collar.
- Only white T-shirts may be worn under shirts.

NOT PERMITTED

- Excessive or large jewelry, hoop earrings, excessive make-up
- Extreme hair colors or fad hairstyles, hair colored or shaved in whole or part, body glitter, bandannas, headscarf, jean-style pants, sweat bands, body piercing
- Flip flops or open heeled shoes

Students who are out of uniform will receive a written warning, may lose recess time, and/or may call home for a change of clothes.

GYM WEAR

Students in Grades 6 to 8 wear a gray T-shirt and red mesh shorts with school logo. Gym wear must be purchased at Schoolbelles. (contact information is listed above.)

NO UNIFORM DAYS

Attire must be clean, neat, and modest; nothing tight, ripped, torn, or ragged may be worn. Only long shorts (2-3 inches above the knee) are permitted. Athletic shoes, jeans or sweat pants, and T-shirts are permitted. T-shirts with appropriate logos and words may be worn. If clothing is inappropriate, a student may not be permitted to participate in future dress-down days.

DRESS-UP DAYS

Students are to wear modest attire equal in formality to the uniform or better. Above guidelines are to be followed for length of skirts.

UNIFORM EXCHANGE

Once each month at a designated time parents are invited to the school for uniform exchange. Times are posted in the monthly newsletter. The VIP parent organization sponsors the exchange program.

V. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

VOLUNTEERS

The help of volunteers is always needed in the school and at school-sponsored events. Please consider using some of your time and talent to help enhance our quality program. The possibilities are endless. At St. Therese School parents play an integral role in the education of their children through the VIP, Advisory Council, athletics, fund-raising activities, playground/lunchroom monitors and field trip chaperones. This partnership is invaluable to the success of our school. (See Safe Environment Policy)

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

St. Therese Catholic School is an expression of the educational mission of the parish and the diocese. The School Advisory Council assists the principal and pastor for the good of the school community. Membership on the Council gives one the opportunity to participate significantly in an important aspect of the Church's ministry.

The pastor in accord with diocesan policy establishes the Council. The Advisory Council is consultative and assist the pastor and principal in those areas defined in the diocesan policy. In view of the many demands on the Catholic school principal, assistance from a group of people who are committed to St. Therese School and are willing to work for the good of the school and parish are paramount.

A VARIETY OF INTERESTED PEOPLE (VIP)

The purpose of the VIP is to work cooperatively with the school administration and related school and parish organizations by supporting the school, its functions and activities. The goal of this association is the advancement of Catholic education in cooperation with the philosophy of St. Therese School and the welfare of all the children in our school.

The VIP has the responsibility for supplementing the school income through fund raising activities. The VIP officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer) and chairpersons of various committees meet monthly with the Principal. All meetings are posted on the monthly calendar. Information concerning general meetings is provided in the monthly newsletter.

ST. THERESE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATIONS (STAA)

All sport programs are the responsibility of the Pastor/Principal. The Athletic Director is accountable to the Pastor/Principal. Coaches are selected by the Athletic Director and approved by Pastor/Principal and serve on a volunteer basis. The Diocesan Guidelines for

Elementary Catholic Schools Sports programs guide the policies. Parent interest and willingness to serve on the Board are vital to the continued success of the program.

The executive board consists of the Principal, Athletic Director and the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Monthly meetings are scheduled and posted on the school calendar.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Dates for the Advisory Council, VIP, and STAA meetings are on the school calendar. Any parent/guardian may attend these meetings. If you wish to address a specific topic, you must have your agenda item to the president 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting.

VI. HEALTH AND SAFETY

In the continuing effort to insure the safety and security of all Catholic school staff and children under our care, the Diocese of Pittsburgh has provided each school with A Catholic School Safety and Security Manual. This manual covers every possible crisis, including natural disasters, which could be a threat to the safety and welfare of the children and adults in the school. The principal of St. Therese School verifies each year that the manual is complete and up-to-date and that the staff is fully aware of emergency procedures.

ACCIDENT AND INJURY

In the case of accident or illness at school, parents are contacted to take the child home, to the doctor, or hospital. It is important for your child's safety and comfort, as well as the effective operation of the office, that emergency information needed to locate parents is available for each child and that this information is kept up-to-date by parents.

Parents of children who have any type of physical disorder should contact the principal, school nurse, or teachers to make them aware of the problem.

DENTIST/DENTAL HYGIENIST

The Dentist/Dental Hygienist makes routine visits to our school and is responsible for maintaining all dental records. The Pennsylvania School Health Law requires dental examinations for students entering grades K, 3rd and 7th. These grades were selected because they represent critical periods of growth and development in a child's life.

We recommend that your family dentist do these examinations. School dental health evaluations will be provided for students who do not furnish proof of a private dental examination within the last six months. These forms are given out to the students before school ends so that appointments can be scheduled over the summer.

FIRE DRILLS/ EVACUATION

Fire drills are held monthly. Exit directions, which are posted in prominent places in each room, are to be followed. No one--teacher, student or other personnel--may remain in the

building during fire drills. When the students hear the bell, they are to leave the room quickly and quietly in single file and go to church. Students remain there until summoned back to class. Students are to remain in absolute silence during all fire drills. Misconduct of any nature is to be reported to the principal. This is a very serious offense and will be dealt with immediately.

ILLNESS

It is often difficult to decide if your child should stay home from school when complaining of illness. An objective sign is an elevated temperature. It is recommended that a child be kept home from school until the temperature has remained normal (below 100 degrees) for 24 hours.

If a child has a temperature of 100° or more, skin rash, pink eye, diarrhea/vomiting, strep throat, or evidence of head lice, the child will be sent home. Parents are asked to use discretion in sending their children to school if they display any of these symptoms. Please inform the school office if your child becomes sick with a contagious illness. Notes will be sent home with the other children to warn parents of contact and incubation of communicable diseases.

MEDICATION

Whenever possible, medicine is to be given at home, and parents are to request the physician to adjust the schedule for administration so that it can be given before and after school hours.

If medicine must be administered at school, the following guidelines apply:

1. The medication must be delivered to the school by a responsible adult along with a physician's written request for distribution by school personnel.
2. Medication brought to school must be in a container labeled by a pharmacist or doctor. The label must include the student's name, the name of the physician, date of prescription, dosage, and frequency of administration.
3. Parents must sign an Indemnity Agreement which has been prepared by the Legal Office and distributed through the school office. (See appendix)

NURSE

One school nurse is assigned to St. Therese School by the Steel Valley School district each year and is present in the building only to fulfill her responsibilities. She is available in any emergency situations. The responsibilities of the school nurse include:

- Keeping updated health records for all students.
- Screening students for hearing—grades K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 7th.
- Assuring the completion of a physical examination before entrance to kindergarten and in the 6th grade
- Screening students for vision—yearly.
- Scoliosis screening—grade 7.
- Recording height and weight for students—yearly.
- Recording required immunizations.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY

The Diocese of Pittsburgh is committed to assuring that children are protected by maintaining a safe environment by employing adequate screening of all those who have regular contact with children under the auspices of the Church. To achieve this end, the Diocese of Pittsburgh has a centralized diocesan database which fulfills the mandate of the Church in the United States as outlined in the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and the clear requirements of 2004 diocesan policy, and also meets the requirements of state and federal law. This centralized database is vital in sustaining a safe environment for our children.

All school volunteers must complete all four steps. Detailed information on completing these requirements is available by calling the office. You may also download directions by clicking on the Instruction Card under the Data Application on the left hand side of the diocesan homepage www.diopitt.org.

Step 1: Complete the online application at www.diopitt.org. The access code is protect. This application will automatically send for the Nation Wide Criminal clearance.

Step 2: A copy of your PA Child Abuse History clearance must be on file in the office. Notify the school office that you need the Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance form and we will download it from the diocesan database and send it to you. Fill it out and return it to the office. We will download a copy of your Pennsylvania State Police Response for Criminal Record Check, attach it to your Child Abuse Clearance request and send it to be processed by the state. When we receive your clearance, we will send you a copy.

Step 3: Read The Code of Pastoral Conduct and sign an acknowledgement of receipt of the Code. Copies are available in the school and rectory offices. You may also download one by logging onto the diocesan website: www.diopitt.org, Scroll down to Current Events on the home page, and click on Diocesan Sexual Abuse Prevention Effort.

Step 4: Attend a Protecting God's Children seminar. This seminar is offered at parishes throughout the diocese. For a complete list of sessions and registration information log onto www.diopitt.org/newsabuse.php and click on link for Protecting God's Children Workshops.

SAFETY PLAN

If an emergency occurs, such as on September 11, we will keep the children in classes as long as possible to try to maintain a normal environment. If parents arrive to take their children home, they must sign them out as for any other early dismissal. If buses are to take the children home early, a general notice of the early dismissal will be made through the media.

We will follow the directions you gave on your emergency form. If you indicated that your child was to stay here in the case of an early dismissal, we will keep him or her until

you arrive. Your child will be released only to you or the person you designated on your emergency form.

If it is necessary to evacuate the building, we will follow the procedure for fire drills.

1. Go immediately to church.
2. Roll will be taken.
3. Teachers will remain with the students at all times. They will have a copy of the emergency forms with them.

If it is deemed unsafe to keep the children in church, the teachers will be notified to escort the students to an alternate site. Alternate sites provide a safe haven in close proximity to the school. They must be within walking distance. Our evacuation sites are St. Therese Plaza and Munhall Borough Building. If there is a need to evacuate the Munhall area, we will follow the Steel Valley School District Evacuation Plan. Transportation will be provided to the Elizabeth Forward School District. Evacuation partner grades are assigned to assist young children: Eighth grade and preschool; seventh grade and kindergarten; sixth grade and first grade.

Dismissal procedures are as follows:

1. Students will only be dismissed to the authorized individuals as indicated on the Emergency Forms.
2. Parent/Appointee must report to the homeroom teacher for dismissal so that each teacher may document to whom the child has been released.

SECURITY

All doors to the school will be closed and locked during school hours. Parents/guardians and visitors should enter the main school door to gain entrance to the building.

School or parish property does not belong to the student. The school/parish is co-tenant of desks and lockers and reserves the right to search them at any time without notice.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

The Department for Catholic Schools recognizes that chemical abuse is a serious problem. We believe that chemical dependency is a life-threatening illness that affects individuals in all areas of their lives, emotionally, spiritually, intellectually and socially. It is therefore, the intent of this policy to prevent and to prohibit the possession, use, sale, distribution and/or intent of distribution of any illegal or controlled mood-altering medication or chemical. These are prohibited on school property and at any school sponsored event.

Violations of this policy may result in the following consequences:

- a. appropriate disciplinary response consistent with each individual school's philosophy
- b. notification of parent/guardian
- c. notification of municipal authorities when appropriate

- d. suspension or expulsion from school
- e. referral of students to appropriate drug and alcohol agency

This policy will be implemented through the cooperative efforts of administration, faculty, parent/guardian, staff, student and community.

TEACHER/STUDENT CONFIDENTIALITY

Teachers will keep a student's confidence so long as no one's life, health or safety is involved.

VISITORS

For security reasons, anyone entering St. Therese School is to report to the secretary's office immediately regardless of the purpose of the visit. For the safety of all students, a visitor's badge must be worn. Communication with teachers and students will be handled by the school office and will be done in a manner that does not disrupt the educational process in the school.

Any articles or items to be left for a student will be left in the school office or with the secretary. This will eliminate any unnecessary interruptions to classes and instruction.

WEAPONS POLICY

No person other than public officers in uniform in the exercise of their duties shall bring any weapon as defined in Section 912 of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code, 18 Pa. C. S. 912, onto school grounds or in any school building or vehicle even though they may have a legal permit to carry such weapon.

Any person carrying a weapon, look alike weapon, or any object which might simulate a weapon onto school property, including, but not limited to, a school building, outdoor areas, outdoor facilities, vehicles used to transport students, or school related activities poses a clear and present danger to other students and staff. For the purpose of this policy, a weapon is defined to be a gun, knife or any other article which could be used to cause injury. Such person in possession of a weapon violates state criminal statutes and school regulations and will be subject to the following discipline and penalty:

1. If a student is found to be in possession of a weapon, his/her parents will be notified immediately.
2. The matter will be referred to local police authorities.
3. After a review of the facts concerning the particular incident, the
4. Administration of the school will decide upon the appropriate disciplinary measures to be taken.

Any student or employee found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action and reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency for criminal prosecution under 18 Pa. C. S. 912. Non-school students who violate this policy shall be prosecuted as trespassers.

WEATHER EMERGENCY DRILLS

Weather emergency drills are practiced twice a year. Teachers follow the policy governing weather emergencies for student safety. Students must maintain silence at all times during a weather emergency drill. Staff assists handicapped students.

HANDBOOK AMENDMENTS

The Pastor and Principal reserve the right to amend the Handbook for just cause. Parents/guardians will be notified if changes are made.