

Dear Families,

We hope you are enjoying good health, summer activities and the Holy Protection of Our Lord Jesus Christ and your Guardian Angels.

Our opening Class Mass is Sunday, September 13th at the 9:00 am Mass. Due to the fact that we have a limited seating capacity of 70 people, we ask that you join us via live stream that day. Father Mirek and Father Ralph will be speaking directly to parents, children and catechists that day. We will be inviting catechists to join us in person for a blessing, since it's Catechetical Sunday.

All weekend Masses will be live-streamed. A link to access live-streamed Masses will be provided in a future email once the system is made active. Access to the link will also be on our website: stthomasnorwalk.org.

Please note, each class will have a Mass for their own grade level held on a Sunday. All Class Masses will be held early in the year prior to flu season. Class Masses will be held in the gym from 10:15 am – 11:10 am during normal class time. Following mass, there will be a 20-minute homily activity from 11:10 am – 11:30 am that will fulfill workshop requirements. We ask that only one parent and child of that grade be in attendance. The schedule is listed below.

- Grade 1 → Sunday, November 11th
- 1st Reconciliation/Communion → Sunday, November 1st
- Grade 3 → October, 25th
- Grade 4 → October, 18th
- Grade 5 → September, 20th
- Grade 6 → September, 27th
- Grade 7 → October, 4th
- Grade 8/Confirmation → To be announced

As per our previous email, we will follow the State, Norwalk Public Schools and Diocesan Protocols. Here is our reopening plan for the 2020-21 Religious Formation Year.

We will implement:

- Full in-person learning plan
- Hybrid in-person/remote learning model (this may be necessary if changes from the State, Norwalk PS and/or Diocese come in)
- Full remote learning model. (**Time may vary from the normal day and class time**)
- Full time remote learning option for those who opt out of in-person remote learning. (**Time may vary from the normal day and class time**). Please email ASAP if you are opting for this option.
- The plan is remote learning on Monday.
- **All Sacramental classes must be done in-person (please contact Michelle O'Mara, DRE to discuss any challenges @ stthomasnorwalkreled@gmail.com)**

**Families may determine to opt into or opt out of an in-person or remote learning at any point during the course of the year. Correspondence with the Religious Education office is a MUST prior to making the changes.*

Social Distancing/Sanitizing Procedures:

- All Children will wipe their feet and sanitize their hands upon entrance to the building
- Children will go to their assigned classrooms keeping the 6-foot social distancing procedure
- Hand sanitizer will be provided in every class – students will sanitize their hands upon leaving their classrooms
- All classrooms, gym, kitchen, hallways and materials will be sanitized
- Students will be given their own personal supplies in a baggie with their names on it to use for the class each day. After dismissal, they will be sanitized
- Procedures will be put in place for social distancing and sanitation in the bathroom and surfaces will be cleaned frequently
- The Church will also be sanitized with the same procedures above

Families are to communicate with the Religious Education Office if their child(ren) have symptoms consistent to COVID-19.

Children and Catechists should stay home if they have felt sick within 3 days prior to class (cold, fever, stomach bug, etc.) or have recently had contact with a person with COVID-19 within 14 days.

- Make-up classes will be scheduled after communication with the Religious Education office.

**Parents and Students must adhere to procedures above
or the student will be required to attend class remotely.**

Our goal is to keep everyone safe and to follow State and Diocesan protocol.

In-Person Learning:

- Catechists will wear masks or face shields; stay 6 feet from students, when it is not possible, they will use appropriate PPE
- Catechists will be provided face shields and/or masks
- All students will be required to wear masks at all times
- Children will be seated 6 feet apart, including in the gym and all classrooms
- All rooms will be sanitized after each use
- Children will have the ability to use bathrooms (students will only be able to go in one at a time)
- There will be signage ensuring that catechists and children wash their hands, sanitize and keep social distancing

Remote Learning will be:

- Using zoom and/or Google Meets, Docs, etc.
- Time may vary from the normal day and class

Drop off: No parents will be allowed in the building (only specified volunteers)

- Child(ren) **Grades 1-7** must be dropped off at back door of the Parish Center with a mask on. The Parent is to drive up and the child(ren) is to get out of the car on the passenger side to be checked in and then be escorted directly to their room.
- **Grade 8** will have their classes conducted in the church. They are to be dropped off with their mask on and enter through the door (under the awning) between the rectory and the church. They will be checked in/and must sign in also.
- Temperature checks will be done at check in for all grades

Pick up: No parents will be allowed in the building (only specified volunteers)

- Sunday will be dismissed at 11:30 am
(please be patient with us as we improve the system)
 - Grades 1 and 2 will be dismissed first – children will line up in alphabetical order according to their last name. They will then be brought to the back door for parents to pick them up.
 - Grades 3 and 4 will follow the same procedure after Grades 1 and 2 are dismissed.
 - If you have an older sibling and younger sibling; the older sibling will be dismissed with Grade 1 and 2 students, according to the sibling's grade. The older sibling is to line up in the hallway beside their younger sibling
 - There will be markers on the floor/wall to keep appropriate social distancing.
 - Parents will sign out their child(ren) at tables that are outside the doors according to Grade and will be in alphabetical order – (similar to the system when you go to vote)
- Tuesday Classes will be dismissed at 7:30 am
(please be patient with us as we improve the system)
 - **Grade 5 and 6** will be dismissed first – children will line up in alphabetical order according to their last name. They will then be brought to the back door for parents to pick them up.
 - **Grade 7** will follow the same procedure
 - If you have an older sibling and younger sibling the older sibling will be dismissed with the Grade 5 and 6 students according to the sibling's grade. The older sibling is to line up in the hallway beside their younger sibling
 - There will be markers on the floor/wall to keep appropriate social distancing.

- Parents will sign out their child(ren) at tables that are outside the doors according to Grade and will be in alphabetical order – (similar to the system when you go to vote)
- **Grade 8** will have their classes conducted in the church. They are to be picked up and parents are to enter through the door under the awning between the rectory and the church to sign out their child. Children will be dismissed with appropriate social distancing protocols in mind

Class Mass Procedure: Entering the Building

- One parent and child(ren) will park behind the Parish Center and enter through the kitchen door
- If you have children in different grades, then you may enter through the kitchen with all your children. One will stay with the parent for Mass and the others will be escorted to their classroom. While waiting to be escorted to the classroom, they must remain standing beside the parent.

Class Mass Procedure: Exiting the Building:

- Child and parent will be dismissed intermittently so that families can leave 6 feet apart through the kitchen door.
- If you have children in different grades, they will be escorted to you in the gym. The child(ren) must remain standing beside the parent until they are dismissed to exit.

We want to thank you for your patience and understanding as we prepare to reopen for the 2020-21 Religious Formation year. May God bless you and keep you all healthy and safe.

Blessings, Michelle