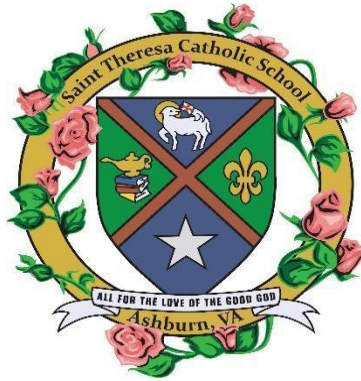


Saint Theresa Catholic School



Volunteer Handbook 2025-2026

“ Remember that nothing is small in the eyes of God. Do all that you do with love.. ”—Saint Therese of Lisieux



Dear Saint Theresa Family Volunteer,

Welcome to St. Theresa Catholic School! We appreciate you sharing your time and talents with our community. Your enthusiasm to volunteer for our community further enhances the mission of our school and shows your commitment to the well-being of your child(ren) and all of our students.

Every family plays a vital role in strengthening our school community and we look forward to offering a wide variety of opportunities for our families to be involved. We look forward to working with you to promote the value of service as we all join together in teaching the ministry of our Catholic faith. It is through you, our volunteers, that students learn the joys of stewardship and serving their community.

We ask that you take time to review this handbook and become familiar with our policies and procedures. Our volunteer procedures may develop throughout the school year, and we **encourage feedback** on our volunteer program. **All volunteers are required to sign the Volunteer Acknowledgment form found on the school website under Volunteer Resources and on the last page of this handbook.**

We **thank you** in advance for your hard work, dedication, and positive spirit. It is through your **valuable service** that we continue to fulfill our mission of *educating tomorrow's Catholic leaders*.

Sincerely in Christ,

Mr. Danny Costa
Principal

MISSION STATEMENT

Guided by the teachings of Christ, Saint Theresa Catholic School is dedicated to Educating Tomorrow's Catholic Leaders. We partner with families in the spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical development of every child.

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

The primary function at our school is to continuously strengthen our identity as an **outstanding Catholic school**. Everything we teach is in accordance with the traditions and doctrines of our Roman Catholic faith, and is rooted in the teachings of Jesus.

In addition, students need to feel safe and welcomed at school and in every classroom. They need to know that all faculty, staff, and adults care. We are here to educate the whole child. At Saint Theresa Catholic School, we want every student to succeed, and we are committed to working with our community to ensure a safe and supportive environment.

We look forward to another strong year working together to make this school year our best! Thank you for your support.

PHILOSOPHY

St. Theresa Catholic School, as part of the St. Theresa Parish community, formally educates students in the life and teachings of Jesus and the traditions and doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. Our students are given the opportunity to know and affirm that they are children of God and the school is committed to modeling and teaching Catholic Christian morals and values. St. Theresa Catholic School offers a caring, safe, disciplined, and respectful environment for children. We promote academic excellence and foster a love for learning across all curricular areas. Our students develop the skills to acquire knowledge with an integrated curriculum that takes into account different learning styles and abilities. We believe that each child is a unique person with a God-given purpose in life. We encourage students to develop their individual talents and skills to reach their highest personal level of potential. Along with their parents, the students' primary educators, we prepare our students to become productive and serving members of the global community.

VOLUNTEER PREPARATION AND ORIENTATION

SAFETY

The majority of the volunteer opportunities at STCS are at the school with the school children. **We are committed to creating a safe environment** which begins by ensuring that those volunteers with substantial contact with minors are compliant with the child protection policies

of the Diocese of Arlington. All volunteer service on the school campus or with children off campus is contingent upon successfully completing the online *Office for the Protection of Children and Young People (OPCYP)* application, background check and *VIRTUS: Protecting God's Children* safe environment training within 45 days of submitting the online application. The OPCYP application and background compliance is not required for volunteer service completed off campus and not with children.

OPCYP APPLICATION PROCESS

Instructions for completing the OPCYP application are on the STCS website under the Parents/Parent Links tab on the Background Compliance page. St. Theresa Parish Child Protection Coordinator, Mrs. Connie Gilligan (connie@sainttheresaparish.com, 703-729-3714), can help you with the next required steps. These steps include completion and signature of the Code of Conduct, Social Media Policy, completion of VIRTUS training, and successful completion of a mandatory background check. Any volunteer not completing the entire process will not be permitted to volunteer at St. Theresa Catholic School.

GRATUITOUS SERVICE

Volunteers at St. Theresa Catholic School volunteer without expectation of anything in return. Serving in the ministry of Catholic education is a privilege and not a right. The Principal reserves the right to discontinue the services of any volunteer.

FAMILY SERVICE PROGRAM

St. Theresa Catholic School has a 16 hour family service hour requirement per year. The student obligation of service hours is not included in the family service requirement. Families are encouraged to continue recording service throughout the school year, even beyond the 16 hours.

Service opportunities are available predominately on the Track It Forward website, through the PTO, and through room parents and teachers. Some signups are published in the emailed school newsletter and some are emailed by the various coordinators as they become available. We expect families to do at least 1-2 hours of their service hours volunteering for lunch and recess.

We encourage ALL families to participate at some level in the Family Service Program. Families that do not participate will be charged a **\$480 fee through FACTS**. Families that have partially completed their service hours at the end of the school year will be charged a prorated fee (**\$30 per unserved hour) through FACTS**. Unpaid Family Service Program fees are subject to the School Tuition Policies.

Family Service Program Guidelines

- All service hours must be completed by parents, guardians, or close family members 16 years of age or older who are background compliant. Volunteers must be background compliant in order to volunteer on the school campus and when with students. Background compliance is not required for volunteer opportunities off campus and not with students.
- Family service hours may be earned by volunteering for any St. Theresa Catholic School sponsored activity. Grade specific fundraisers are **not** eligible for service hours. Parish activities such as teaching religious education, helping with the parish picnic, etc. do **not** count towards STCS service hours. Volunteering in the STCS after-care program does **not** count towards service hours.
- Service hours may be earned by volunteering for events on the Track It Forward website and for assisting with various PTO sponsored activities, music productions, Student Council events, etc. This list is not inclusive. Throughout the year there will be opportunities to earn service hours in the individual classrooms.
- Parents/guardians who are the moderator of a club, band parent coordinator, head scout leader, head coach of any St. Theresa CYO sport, or assistant coach of any St. Theresa CYO sport may count their time for the Family Service Program.
- Families who help out with a sport (line judge, score-keeper, etc.), scout/club or band event may NOT count this time towards their service hours since these activities are required for your son/daughter to participate in the sports/club/band/scout program.
- All service hours must be submitted online exclusively using **Track it Forward** and should be submitted on a monthly basis.
- There will be no automatic hours given for any position. Each person must submit his or her actual service hours.
- Hours may only be submitted if you actually volunteered at the event (i.e. If you are scheduled to volunteer at BINGO and BINGO is canceled, you cannot submit service hours for this event).
- Bringing small children to volunteer at school should be carefully considered. We rely on our parent volunteers to support school programs, help maintain safety at school, and aid our faculty and staff, as well as build community. We also want to be sure when there are opportunities for supervising in a volunteer role in our school or classroom, the focus is on the role.
- This year the year for counting service hours is **June 11, 2025 to June 10, 2026**. Any hours earned starting on June 11, 2025 will count towards the 2025-2026 school year. **Service hours must be completed and entered into Track It Forward by June 10, 2026 at 5pm. Any families leaving the school (graduating out/withdrawing) must complete and submit their service hours by May 22, 2026 at 5pm.**

SCHOOL'S RIGHT TO AMEND

The Administration of St. Theresa Catholic School is accountable for facilitating, monitoring, evaluating, and providing continuity for the success of the volunteer program. The Administration reserves the right to amend the Volunteer Handbook at any time and commits to the communication of any changes to volunteers.

SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS

The Principal is responsible for the total school operation. All volunteer positions within St. Theresa Catholic School have an administrator, faculty, or staff representative that is assigned to oversee all who serve in a volunteer capacity including duties, events, clubs, organizations, meetings, etc. All meetings, events, clubs, organizations must communicate with the administrator, faculty, or staff representative for anything related to St. Theresa Catholic School. **Volunteers are not permitted to plan any event or fundraiser without the approval of the Principal.**

SCHOOL HOURS

St. Theresa Catholic School classes are 7:55 AM – 3:00 PM, Monday - Friday. The school doors are open for students at 7:35 AM. The school office is open on all school days from 7:30 AM – 3:30 PM.

VOLUNTEER RIGHTS

As a volunteer you have the right to:

- Be welcomed as a valued member of our community
- Be assigned to a volunteer area where you feel comfortable and confident
- The respect of our community
- Have your questions related to assigned volunteer tasks answered clearly and promptly
- Receive necessary information related to volunteer assignment

VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

It is important for all volunteers to understand and appreciate the following responsibilities and/or conditions for volunteering at St. Theresa Catholic School:

- Volunteers are expected to support the Catholic teachings of the Church and refrain from expressing any opinion that varies from Church teaching.
- Volunteers must always be positive role models.

- Volunteers are asked to enhance the professional atmosphere of the school by dressing appropriately. Please refer to the volunteer dress guidelines.
- All volunteers must support the authority of the administration, faculty, and staff.
- Volunteers are expected to uphold all school policies and procedures.
- Volunteers are expected to log their hours in Track It Forward for the Family Service Program.
- Volunteers will wear the school check-in badge.
- **Volunteers must be aware of all emergency procedures.**

SIGN-IN PROCEDURE

All School visitors (volunteers, parents, etc.) must enter the school through the main office. For safety and security reasons, all visitors are required to sign in at the main office. All visitors and/or volunteers are required to wear a designated badge or sticker upon entering the building and signing in at the main office reception area. Visitors and/or volunteers are to return to the main office and sign out at the time of departure. If leaving after regular school office hours, the volunteer is to communicate with the faculty/staff liaison that is in the building.

DEPENDABILITY

The school relies on your support. Please follow through on commitments and scheduled times for duties. Volunteers should remove themselves from signups if they must cancel. They should notify the school office if they cancel the day of their volunteer commitment.

DRESS GUIDELINES

As a Catholic school we have dress codes for students, and professional dress standards for teachers. Please be mindful of your attire, please and wear clothing appropriate for a professional Catholic school. We recommend *not* wearing tanks, yoga pants, or shorts (weather dependent: i.e., field day - modest shorts).

CONFIDENTIALITY

Volunteers operate in positions of trust. Any personal information pertaining to students that is obtained or observed must be kept confidential. Students' actions, responses, behavior, progress, or problems at school are not for sharing in the community. Conversations between parents, students, faculty, and staff in the school are confidential. Volunteers should not discuss these conversations outside of school. Please refer any concerns to the Principal. **All volunteers are**

required to sign the Volunteer Acknowledgment form found on the school website under Volunteer Resources and on the last page of this handbook.

TECHNOLOGY

Any photographs and/or statements made on a Volunteer's social networking site may be cause for dismissal of services and separation of the volunteer from the school. This includes defamatory comments made about the school administration, faculty, staff, students, parents, etc. Volunteers should never take photographs of students during school sponsored activities unless a specific request is made by the school for use by the school. This includes, but is not limited to field trips, fine arts performances, etc. Posting of pictures and videos to public social media sites could be a violation of students' confidentiality and privacy (FERPA – Family Education Rights and Privacy Act).

FINANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The administrator, faculty, or staff member must be the approval signature on all Purchase Order requests. All purchases must follow the Finance Office policies and procedures. For questions related to any Finance Office policies and procedures please contact Angelita Lupetaliaami at lupea@sainttheresaparish.com.

PURCHASES

All purchases should be made through the Business Office. Forms are in the school office and are verified by the Principal.

MONEY COLLECTION

All money collection by volunteers must follow all Business Office policies and procedures. Money collected on campus may never leave campus for any reason. Two unrelated individuals (husband/wife are considered related individuals) must always accompany money. **The school prohibits use of cash collection apps such as Venmo, Paypal, Zelle, etc for any purpose.** Use of personal cash collections apps such as Venmo, Paypal, Zelle, etc to collect funds is also strictly prohibited. The School Office should always have advance notification via email that funds are being collected for any purpose.

CONTRACTS AND VENDOR RELATIONSHIP

Volunteers are not permitted to negotiate, authorize, or execute any contracts on behalf of St. Theresa Catholic School at any time. **Only the Pastor is permitted to sign contracts on behalf of St. Theresa Catholic School.** All vendor relationships will be maintained by St. Theresa Catholic School. Invoices for any purchases are to be sent to the school address (no personal physical address or personal email addresses are permitted).

TOBACCO AND E-CIGARETTE FREE CAMPUS

Smoking, any other tobacco use, and e-cigarette use is prohibited on St. Theresa Catholic School's campus and at all St. Theresa Catholic School events.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Any student reporting illness or injury should be referred to the supervising faculty or staff member immediately. In an emergency, bring the student to the clinic or main office immediately.

CHILD ABUSE LAWS

St. Theresa Catholic School abides by the Child Abuse laws of the State of Virginia. This law mandates that all cases of **suspected** abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services. As a volunteer, if you become aware of a suspected abuse and/or neglect, you must report it immediately to the Principal, or another member of the Administration.

VOLUNTEER DRIVERS

All volunteer drivers are required to follow the policies and procedures as outlined by the Office of Risk Management at the Diocese of Arlington, when driving students to official school sponsored activities. Driving opportunities will only be available as permitted by the Principal for official school sponsored events (i.e. field trips, retreats, etc). All appropriate Volunteer Driver forms, which are available in the school office, must be completed and signed by Volunteer before permission will be granted to transport students.



VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES / PROGRAMS / ORGANIZATIONS

(This is not an exhaustive list)

ADMISSIONS & ADVANCEMENT OFFICE

- **1st grade Grandparents Day Celebration**
- **FOSTS**
- **New family events**
- **Open House**
- **Parent Ambassador Program**
- **STCS Alumni events**
- **Thunder Appeal**

CLUBS AND EVENTS

- **Art Shows**
- **Band/Choir Ice Cream Sales**
- **Band Parent Coordinator**
- **Band Trip Leaders**
- **Battle of the Books**
- **Book Fair Volunteer**
- **Career Week**
- **Choir Chaperone**
- **Choir Help**
- **Community Christmas Project Coordinator**
- **Cub Scouts (Leaders Only)**
- **CYO Sports (Coaches Only)**
- **Life Savers**
- **Lions Screening Test**
- **Math Club Help**
- **Music for Mass**
- **Picture Day**

- **STCS Basketball (Coaches Only)**
- **Thunder Runners (Coaches Only)**
- **Volleyball Head Coach**

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION - ptopresident@stsashburn.com

- **Auction**
- **Back to School Social**
- **Birthday Bulletin Board**
- **Buddy Picnic Day**
- **Bulletin Board**
- **Catholic Schools Week**
- **Discover Catholic Schools Week**
- **Fall Festival**
- **Family Bingo**
- **Hospitality Events**
- **Lost and Found**
- **Night at the Movies Volunteer**
- **Partnering with Parents Speaker Events**
- **PTO Board**
- **PTO Spirit Night Events**
- **Spirit Wear**
- **Spiritual Committee**
- **Sprouts School Supplies**
- **Stock the Teachers' Lounge (1 hr per \$30 donations)**
- **Trunk or Treat Volunteer**
- **Used Uniforms Sales**

ROOM PARENTS / TEACHERS

- **8th Grade Graduation**
- **Art Class Help**
- **Buddy Bingo**
- **Christmas Pageant**
- **Class Helpers**
- **Computer Lab Help**
- **Dance Chaperones**
- **Field Day**
- **Field Trips**
- **First Holy Communion Breakfast**

- **Junior Achievement**
- **Kindergarten Graduation Reception**
- **Library Help**
- **Room Parent**
- **School Play**
- **Science Fair**
- **Veterans Day Reception**
- **Wash Art Smocks**
- **Wash Lab Coats**
- **YearBook**

OFFICE & CAFETERIA

- **Lunch and Recess Volunteer**
- **Morning Drop-off**
- **School Office Help**

SAINT THERESA CATHOLIC SCHOOL
VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

PARENT/GUARDIAN

I have received a current copy of the St. Theresa Catholic School Volunteer Handbook. I have reviewed this document. I acknowledge and agree to the policies obtained therein.

I also realize during my child's enrollment at the school I will be informed from time to time, formally or informally, of various changes in the school and/or Diocesan policies. I understand the school and/or Diocese reserves the right to change policies at any time with or without advance notice. I further understand it is required for me to sign this form in order to continue my child's enrollment at the school.

(Parent's Signature)

(Printed Name)

(Date)

Child(ren)'s Full Name(s) & Grade (ex 1B)
