

St. Thomas Aquinas School



Parent/Guardian-Student Handbook
2017-2018
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Policies of the Archdiocesan Faith Formation Commission and Archdiocesan Catholic School Board are referenced throughout this document. These policies can be found at the Archdiocesan website www.dbgarch.org. These policies are also available at the principal's office.

Parent/Guardian-Student Handbook 2016 — 2017

I. Philosophy

Mission Statement of the Educational Apostolate — Archdiocese of Dubuque

The mission of the Educational Apostolate of the Archdiocese of Dubuque is to promote lifelong faith formation which challenges individuals to:

- respond to God's continuous call for conversion to Jesus Christ
- form and be formed in Christian community life
- grow in knowledge of faith
- participate in liturgical celebrations and prayer
- collaborate in the Church's mission of evangelization

Mission Statement and Objectives of St. Thomas Aquinas School:

Mission: To provide a world-class education in the spirit of Jesus.

Objective I

St. Thomas Aquinas School will

- involve the lives of its students in the study and worship of God.
- involve the students in giving service to others.
- involve the students in initiating and experiencing Christian community.

Objective II

St. Thomas Aquinas School is committed to

- developing Christian respect for God.
- developing Christian respect for self.
- developing Christian respect for others.
- developing Christian respect for the world.

Objective III

St. Thomas Aquinas School is committed to

- meeting the individual needs of each student.
- recognizing the uniqueness of each student.

II. Catholic Dimension/Uniqueness

Catholic Atmosphere

Religious education at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School occurs in two major areas: the study of the Catholic faith and integrating faith experiences into the life of each student.

Besides classroom instruction in religion, liturgical and sacramental participation is part of our school program. Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, all school liturgies, and opportunity to participate in Mass are part of the spiritual life of the school.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to become aware of and encourage their child(ren) in his/her faith life. The school can only support what is taught and experienced at home.

Prayers, Practices, and Beliefs

A list of prayers and other basic beliefs and practices for students has been developed. Prayers may be introduced at one level and students may not be expected to have them memorized until the next year. However, students are expected to have an understanding of these prayers, and they will be a part of our prayer at school. We encourage you to also pray with your child at home.

Spiritual Program

The spiritual program of the school recognizes that “to provide a sound academic program which includes emphasis on Catholic teachings within the atmosphere of Christian living” cannot be gained in the formal classroom only. The formal classroom learning is the beginning.

Every Christian has the responsibility to use one’s gifts for the good of the community and to minister as Jesus did. This is the core of the Christian life.

Parents/guardians are always invited to the school liturgies School Masses are at 8:30 a.m. on Fridays; however, if there is a holyday, Mass is celebrated on the holyday at 8:30 and not on Friday.

Liturgical Celebration — Students and teachers plan and participate in liturgies. Parents/guardian are always welcome to attend. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is provided during Advent and Lent.

III. Admission Policies/Notice of Non-Discrimination

Admission

Children who are five years of age by September 15 are eligible to enroll for entrance into kindergarten. Children who are six years of age by September 15 are eligible to enroll for entrance into the first grade. Exceptions to this policy are not allowed. (ACSB Policy 5112)

Parents of children are charged tuition. St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School will accept students of any religious conviction. However, as a student, everyone is considered a part of the total school community and will be included and expected to participate in all activities scheduled as part of the class day, and all required classes even those of a religious nature.

Reserve Clause

St. Thomas Aquinas School recognizes that it may not be possible to do justice to all types of students. Therefore, the school reserves the right to dismiss a student if it is later determined that the student has needs which cannot be met by the school staff. This could include such things as medical, behavioral or learning needs.

Equal Opportunity

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School is an equal opportunity employer and school. No student will be discriminated against because of his or her race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, socioeconomic status, marital status, or disability. However, students are required to meet the school's academic and financial requirement(s). As a bona fide religious institution, educational programs governed by the Archdiocesan Catholic School Board may consider a student's religion, sexual orientation and/or gender identity a qualification for enrollment when such qualifications are related to a bona fide religious purpose.

IV. Academic Policies/Programs

Assessment

Students in grades K-6 take the Iowa Assessments. In addition, Universal Screening Assessments must be administered to all students three times a year to identify students who are reading on grade level and those students who need additional help in reading. The test given must be on the approved list by the Iowa Department of Education for these approved tests are deemed valid and reliable and must align with the MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) Data System.

One such test on the list of approved and which we will administer to students in pre-kindergarten through 6th grades is the FAST (Formative Assessment System for Teachers) which provides a suite of assessments that test students' performance in the following areas: Phonological awareness, sounds, words, text reading, and reading behaviors.

Copyright

It is the policy of the educational programs governed by the Archdiocesan Catholic School Board (AFFC/ACSB #2510) that all employees, volunteers, and students will abide by the federal copyright laws. Employees, volunteers, and students may copy print or non-print materials allowed by:

1. copyright law
2. fair use guidelines
3. specific licenses or contractual agreements
4. other types of permission

Employees, volunteers, and students who willfully disregard copyright law are in violation of Archdiocesan policy, and are doing so at their own risk and assuming all liability.

Field Trips

Field trips aid the instructional program by enabling the children to experience educational resources not found in the classroom. All students are expected to observe school policies when they are on field trips. Students are also expected to provide a signed permission slip from their parents/guardians. Students will leave school, remain, and return together with their assigned group and chaperone. They may not be excused to leave the group during the trip.

Guidance

Our counseling program complements the curricular offerings by offering support to students in a number of areas. Each classroom teacher directs the guidance activities for the class.

Homework

Homework is encouraged in order to teach students the importance of practice, review, and application. Teachers will try to assign homework in accord with the age of students. Parents/guardians should not have to instruct students but are encouraged to support the process through questions and suggestions when appropriate. The student and parent/guardian have a responsibility for the student's mastery of the subject matter. The learning process is a joint effort. Homework and/or individual study units will be discussed fully in the classroom so the parent is not required to give instruction. The teacher will provide instruction. All work must be completed as the teacher directs. Students who do not complete assigned work based on their ability may risk not being promoted to the next grade.

Parents should establish a learning environment in the home by 1) Showing a positive attitude toward education; 2) Taking an interest in school work; 3) Establishing good study conditions; 4) Monitoring study habits; 5) Exercising patience while working with their child.

Teachers provide instruction to each student so that mastery of the subject matter can occur. The assignment of homework is an outgrowth of that classroom instruction. Understanding that the nature of the subject matter lends itself to different "types" of homework, the following are examples of homework assignments given to students at St. Thomas Aquinas School: Independent practice of newly learned skills; expansion activities beyond the subject matter presented in class; and independent student projects, approved by the teacher.

The following considerations are made in assigning homework: 1) Homework will be relevant to classroom instruction. It will not be assigned for the sake of providing something for the student to do after school hours. 2) Skills taught in the classroom will first be guided and practiced in the classroom under the teacher's supervision. Independent practice of those skills can be assigned for outside the classroom. 3) Homework assignments of newly learned material will be as short as possible. 4) Classroom assignments not completed by the student during the school day can be required homework.

The general rule in terms of time assigned for homework is the grade level times ten; e.g. grade 5 time ten equals 50 minutes of homework each night.

Human Sexuality Program

Human sexuality instruction is integrated into the Religion program and is presented from the Catholic perspective in the context of total growth. Parental/guardian support and involvement is an essential component of this program. Information will be sent to parents/guardians as the time for this program approaches. An option is provided for students whose parents/guardians do not want them to participate in these classes. A request for exemption must be in writing to the principal. Parents are permitted to review the course materials at any time. Please refer to AFFC/ACSB policy #6141.11 for specific details.

Internet

It is the policy of educational programs governed by the Archdiocesan Catholic School Board to require the ethical use of the Internet and related technologies by all employees, volunteers and students. (AFFC/ACSB #2511, AFFC/ACSB #5144.3) Employees may not interact with any student using social media (cell phones, texting, Facebook, Blogs, etc.) at any time. Professional ethics requires that any communication be via the parent using the school phone or school email. Likewise, students may not text or request an employee to "friend" them on social media. Access privileges

may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action taken for any violation of the board policy, anything that is unethical or may constitute a criminal offense.

Media Center/Library

All classes are taken to Kendall-Young Library once a week to check out age appropriate books.

Multi-Cultural/Gender Fair/Global Education

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School offers a global, multi-cultural, gender fair approach to the educational program.

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School is committed “to a curriculum that fosters respect and appreciation for cultural and racial diversity and an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of each individual as a member of a multicultural, gender fair society.” (AFFC/ACSB #6144.2) The education program is one of permeation and action for the implementation of the global, multicultural, and gender fair elements of the students’ education.

Physical Education Waiver

A student shall not be required to enroll in either physical education or health courses if the student’s parent or guardian files a written statement with the school principal that the course conflicts with the student’s religious beliefs. (AFFC/ACSB #6144.3)

School Parties

Parties that consume valuable school time are discouraged. However, a student may bring birthday treats. If a student should wish to do this, the treats will be passed and shared. The student is not to distribute invitations to parties outside school functions without teacher permission. To avoid hurt feelings, all members of the class must be included. After school parties are the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Late evening parties are discouraged during the school week.

At the discretion of the teacher, there may be three classroom parties per year: Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine’s Day. At Christmas, student gift exchanges may be conducted in the spirit of giving. On Valentine’s Day, the student who brings valentines should provide one for each member of the class.

School Day

Students are to arrive by 8:05 A.M. Classes begin at 8:10 A.M. and dismissal is at 3:20 P.M. To provide security for the building, all doors will be locked at 8:10 a.m. Entrance to the school then is through the north door by the office only. Security cameras are in place at the Dubuque Street Entrance (Office) and the parish center entrance (Preschool). One must push the door buzzer to be identified via the camera in order to be allowed entry by the school/parish secretary.

Dismissal Procedure

1) Gates to the playground will be closed in the morning by 8:30 and opened again at 3:00 pm (On early dismissal days gates will be opened at 1:00 pm). Mrs. Engstrom’s PE classes meet on the playground up to 3:00 pm when the weather is favorable

2) Cars arriving to pick students up in the afternoon need to ENTER on Water Street (which is a one-way street) and proceed to the gate on Dubuque Street and stop. Cars will line up as they arrive single file. Cars need to be lined up gate-to-gate. Students will be able to leave school and go to the cars that are waiting. Cars not in the playground will be waiting to enter off Water Street. As the first group of cars is filled, they will proceed out the Dubuque Street gate. Cars should not drive around waiting cars but wait their turn to leave in order. The next group of cars may then enter and fill. Parents should not attempt to pick up their child in any other area.

- 3) This procedure eliminates cars backing, students running between cars and multiple rows of cars. Teachers will assist students to ensure a safe pick-up area.
- 4) Students who are walking will exit away from this procedure. Students should not be on the playground after school. This will eliminate the extra congestion of students all over the playground, especially at dismissal.

Special Services

The services of a social worker and speech therapist are available through AEA 8.

When your child has been referred for special education services, federal and state laws give you certain rights. Some of these are:

1. The right to be contacted and told what the school plans to do about your child's educational program. This must be done before your child is tested or placed in a program.
2. You have the right to consent. This means the school must have your permission prior to placing your child in a special education program.
3. The right to a full evaluation of your child's needs. If you don't agree with the school's findings, you may request an outside evaluation.
4. The right to see your child's records kept at school.
5. The right to privacy of information. With a few exceptions, no one may see your child's record without your permission, given in writing. Exceptions are people such as your child's teacher, or other school officials engaged in planning your child's educational program.
6. The right, as much as possible, to have your child in classes with children who are not in special education programs.
7. The right to be involved in the development of your child's IEP (individual education program).
8. The right to have someone present to help you in the development of your child's IEP. This could be another parent, a teacher, a lawyer, or an advocate.
9. The right to appeal decisions made by the school regarding your child's diagnosis or placement.

If you desire additional information, please contact your child's principal.

Substance Abuse Education

A substance education program is one component of the guidance program. It includes basic student education reinforcing activities/events, and utilization of appropriate community agencies.

Student Assemblies-School Liturgies

All school assemblies and liturgies are part of our school program. At school assemblies, the rules of courtesy apply. At school liturgies, the rules governing sacred places apply.

V. Communication

Catholic School Board

The Board ordinarily meets monthly at a time set by the Board. Patrons are welcome to attend these meetings. However, if one wishes to address the Board about an item or a concern, one must contact the Board president or principal so as to be placed on the agenda. A request form must be filled out.

Absence

Regular attendance is a key factor in the success of schoolwork. The value of the work missed is difficult to make up by out-of-class work.

We understand that doctor/dentist appointments cannot always be made after school hours or on free days. To be excused during school hours for an appointment, a written notification is to be given to

the teacher. A written request from the parent/guardian or a phone call is also required anytime a student needs to leave school before the usual time of dismissal. No child is released unless the principal or the secretary knows the reason for the release and the person to whom the child is released. The school accepts no responsibility for any child who leaves without the proper permission.

Parents/guardians are requested to phone the school between 7:45 am and 8:50 am if a child will be absent and inform the school of the reason for the absence. If a student will be absent for an extended period of time for any reason, the school must be notified.

The principal/secretary approves the dismissal of students who are ill. Parents or guardians are notified when the illness is detected and are to make arrangements for the child to be picked-up.

Dual Parent Reporting- Divorced/Separated Parents

According to AFFC/ACSB #5124, in the case of a student's whose parents' marriage has been dissolved or a separation of a parent from the home, the name and address of both parents should be on file.

Unless otherwise decreed by a court order, information commonly made available to parents of any student in attendance at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School (i.e. notices of school functions, progress reports, newsletters etc.) will be made available to both parents.

Complaints

The following policies of the Archdiocesan Catholic School Board (ACSB) should be followed when dealing with complaints. Copies can be obtained from the Administrator, Catholic School Board Chairperson, or the Office of Educational Services:

- Instructional Materials and Activities, AFFC/ACSB 1312
- Complaints Against Teacher/Employee, AFFC/ACSB 4119.4g
- Complaints Against Administrator, AFFC/ACSB 4119.4h
- Complaints Against Board Members, AFFC/ACSB 8252
Complaint Committee-Mary Engstrom, and Terry Meyers

Early Dismissals, School Closing and Late Start Procedures

St. Thomas Aquinas School follows the Webster City School District regarding school closings as the result of inclement weather. When the weather is questionable, listen to KQWC radio station or TV channel KCCI (channel 8) for official announcements. By providing the secretary with an email address, an email is also sent out to parents if time allows.

Parent/School Communications

Adequate and clear communication between school and home is essential for the success of the children. Parents should feel free to call the school or email teachers

(1stinitiallastname@stswc.com) e.g. dsiepker@stswc.com about student progress or other situations of concern. Parents are not to call employees on employees' personal cell phones.

School newsletters are published and placed on the school website regularly. Hard copies are sent home with students each Friday. Please take time to read the newsletters as a reminder of special dismissal times and dates school is not in session. To ensure that you receive the newsletters and other communications, your child will bring home a bright yellow FRIDAY FOLDER at the end of each week with pertinent communications inside. Have your child return the folder on the 1st day of the week.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Individual conferences are held in November and March. Either parents or teachers can schedule other parent-teacher conferences as the need is recognized. Parents may or may not choose to have their child attend these conferences.

Progress Reporting

The purpose of progress reporting is to communicate the individual student's learning growth. Effective communication is best established through parent-teacher conferences, appropriate phone calls/notes, and quality progress reporting. Such communications necessarily focus on the individual learner in order to determine the performance level in terms of the student's ability and background.

Because growth occurs best in a positive learning environment that enables success experiences for the student, progress in learning is reported and indicated in positive ways. Just as our learning programs are based on the Iowa Core essential skills and concepts, so too, reporting to parents/guardians needs to be in accord with the Iowa Core essential skills and concepts and in keeping with the student's abilities and needs. In such a way, reporting reflects evaluation of the individual's total growth in terms of potential and self-competition instead of competition against peers who differ in abilities and needs. Written progress reports are sent home at the end of each semester.

Student Privacy Act

In conformity with the Student Privacy Act, and AFFC/ACSB 5125, St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School does not send out student/graduate information to any outside organizations without written authorization of the parent.

Student Records

A permanent record of each student is kept on file at school in accord with AFFC/ACSB 5125. These records are private property and are submitted only when lawfully requested. Should parents/guardians wish to see the records of their child, they should contact the principal.

Telephone

The school telephone is for business calls. Necessary plans should be made with the student before leaving for school in the morning. Students are allowed limited access to the telephone and not allowed to call home for a forgotten assignment. If the parent wishes to speak with the teacher, a message will be taken and the call will be returned when the teacher has a planning time. Some students may possess cell phones for use outside of the school day. Students will not have access to their cell phones during the school day.

Visiting Classes

Times can and will be arranged for parents/guardians to visit school. We welcome your interest and support. Please call us and let us know what times would be convenient for you.

VI. Discipline Code

In order to provide and maintain an atmosphere which permits the orderly and efficient operation of the school and which encourages learning and helps students to develop a Christian code of personal conduct, school rules and regulations are in effect. The St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School Board and administration have established these policies and procedures in collaboration with St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School faculty. Their effectiveness requires the positive and voluntary cooperation of all concerned.

The knowledge of the rules and regulations, their processes, and their implementation are the responsibility and obligation of each St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic student. Neither ignorance nor lack of understanding of the rules and regulations will release a student or parent/guardian from responsibility to cooperate with the stated policies. All Archdiocesan policies and State of Iowa education laws, as they apply to St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School, are to be respected and followed.

Discipline Code

Discipline in a Catholic School is basically a self-discipline directed toward discipleship and service. Discipline is the responsibility of each individual student. It has the twofold purpose of providing for the common good and the individual good. Discipline helps all students contribute to a climate for learning and living. Guidelines are prepared and set by teachers in their classrooms in agreement with the total administrative policies. To assure adequate development and concern for each student, frequent communication with parents by teachers and with teachers by parents is encouraged. All procedures are based on the premises that parents and teachers must work together and support each other's efforts.

Unacceptable student behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Possession of a dangerous weapon
- Striking a teacher/school employee/another student
- Refusal to comply with a direct teacher/employee command
- Use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco
- Personal injury (bullying, fighting, calling names)
- Bullying/Harassment
- Vandalism
- Repetitive unacceptable classroom behavior
- Inappropriate bus behavior
- Truancy
- Repeated tardiness
- Habitual late/incomplete assignments

Consequences include, but are not limited to:

- In-school suspension
- Suspension from school for a definite time
- Suspension from school for an indefinite period of time
- Expulsion

All consequences shall be carried out according to the AFFC/ACSB 5144.1. (See also Gangs AFFC/ACSB 5133)

Fire Extinguishers

Any student handling or discharging a fire extinguisher at any time other than in an emergency will be fined \$50.00 and could face further disciplinary action.

Gangs

In accord with AFFC/ACSB 5133, if a student is suspected or identified as being a member of a gang, initiates or participates in any gang related activity, or is actively involved in recruitment for a gang, any or all of the following steps may be taken:

1. Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately and appropriate intervention initiated.
2. A behavior contract will be prepared stating the conditions for the student remaining in the school.
3. Students may be referred to counseling (personal and/or family).
4. Students may be referred to the Department of Human Services or other welfare or childcare agencies of the respective county.
5. Students may be referred to outside agencies or programs for treatment when use of drugs and/or alcohol is involved.
6. Students may be referred to the Task Force on Violent Crime (if applicable).
7. Police, Juvenile Court, and other appropriate authorities will be notified of violence and/or illegal activities.
8. Students may be suspended and/or expelled as outlined in the school/program/ Archdiocesan discipline policies.
9. Parents/students will be held liable and financially responsible for all forms of vandalism.

Bullying/Harassment

It is the policy of the Archdiocesan Catholic School Board and St. Thomas Aquinas School to maintain a learning environment that is free from any type of harassment/bullying. No student associated with the educational programs governed by the Archdiocesan Board of Education shall be subjected to any type of harassment/bullying while on school/parish property, at any school/parish function, or at a school/parish sponsored activity regardless of location.

It is a violation of policy for any school employee, volunteer or student to harass/bully a student through conduct or communications as defined below.

“Harassment” and “bullying” shall be construed to mean any electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or conduct toward a student which is based on any actual or perceived trait or characteristic of the student and which creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:

1) places the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property, 2) has a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health, 3) has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's academic performance, 4) has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the educational program. It includes but is not limited to 1) epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts; 2) written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group that is circulated within or placed on walls, bulletin boards, or elsewhere on premises where the educational program operates; and 3) name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, excessive teasing and hazing.

“Trait or characteristic of the student” includes but is not limited to age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status or familial status.

“Electronic” means any communication involving the transmission of information by wire, radio, optical cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means. “Electronic” includes but is not limited to

communication via electronic mail, internet-based communications, pager service, cell phones, and electronic text messaging.

The standard for determining whether verbal or physical conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create a hostile or abusive environment is whether a reasonable student in the same or similar circumstances would find the conduct intimidating, hostile or abusive. It is not necessary to show that the victim was psychologically harmed.

Any school employee, volunteer, parent, guardian or student who witnesses or becomes aware of conduct in violation of this policy should file a complaint in writing directly to the victim's or perpetrator's teacher, immediate supervisor, principal, or the Superintendent of Schools of the Archdiocese of Dubuque. The complaint shall describe the perceived violation, name the perpetrator and the victim, and identify any potential witnesses to the incident.

This policy is in compliance with Iowa Code Chapter 216 and 280.12(2) (f) and AFFC/ACSB policies 2515.1, 2515.11, 5144.3.

School Dress Code

Student's behavior and method of play is often determined by dress. With this in mind, the school encourages students to take pride in neatness and cleanliness. Modesty should be the guideline when determining the length of skirts. Girls in grades K-2 are encouraged to wear shorts under dresses.

It is a continuing belief that the rights and responsibilities of parents supersede those of the school. It is not our intention to punish or prohibit students from participating in recess because of dress, as the school believes parents have the responsibility to send the student to school dressed appropriately. All students are encouraged to dress appropriately for the weather. During the winter months when snow is on the ground, students dressed in boots and snow pants will have access to all areas of the playground during recess. Students without will be required to stay on a paved area where the snow will not penetrate shoes. Students who wish to change into a separate pair of shoes for recess will also be allowed full access on the playground. However, students are encouraged to also bring additional socks should the feet get wet.

The following articles of clothing are not accepted in the dress code: hats of any sort worn in the building; tank tops, sleeveless shirts/blouses or muscle shirts; torn, tattered or worn-out clothing; biking shorts; backless or halter-tops, spaghetti-strap or sun dresses; any clothing with references to alcohol, tobacco, drugs or violence; and flip flops due to their design are dangerous any time during the school day but especially for PE or recess play; and articles of clothing or shoes that are FADS and deemed inappropriate by the faculty and principal. Sandals are appropriate for school wear.

The school would like to keep the day of liturgies as our "dress-up" day. These clothes do not have to be Sunday best, but a little more special than everyday school clothes. So that clothes are not damaged on the playground, students are given the opportunity to change at an appropriate time.

Search and Seizure

It is the policy of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School Board to operate its educational programs in a Catholic, orderly environment. Recognizing that the presence of contraband on school property or on the person of a student attending school is not consistent with the above policy, St. Thomas Aquinas School adopts the policy as stated in AFFC/ACSB 5145.2 which refers to the rules relating to periodic inspection, to the search of students and/or to protected student areas.

Contraband includes substances or items which, if found on school property, violate the law and school regulations, or are detrimental to an orderly environment at school. Contraband includes by way of illustration, but is not limited to, drugs, narcotics, tobacco, liquor, weapons and stolen

property. It consists of substances or items which may cause a substantial disruption of the school environment, and/or which present a threat to the health and safety of the students and staff.

Tobacco, Drinking, Use of Non Prescribed or Illegal Drugs

Students are not to use, possess, sell, or be under the influence of non-prescribed or illegal drugs, beer, or other intoxicating beverages on the school grounds at anytime or while they are on a school sponsored activity off campus. The use or possession of tobacco on the school grounds is prohibited.

These are matters of state law and cannot be permitted in the school, in the immediate school area, or at school related activities, or on school buses. Student's possession of tobacco, drugs, and/or alcoholic products in school, or at school activities, results in confiscation and discipline. (See also AFFC/ACSB 5131.6, AFFC/ACSB 5131.61, AFFC/ACSB 5144 and/or AFFC/ACSB 5144.1 concerning Substance Abuse, Tobacco and Discipline).

Weapons and Dangerous Instruments

It shall be the policy of the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School Board that weapons and other dangerous objects are taken from students and others who bring them on to the school property or from students who are participating in any school-related activity away from school premises. Parents/guardians of students found in possession of a weapon or dangerous object shall be notified. Confiscation of weapons or dangerous objects will be reported to law enforcement officials and the student will be subject to disciplinary action. Students in possession of a firearm while on school property, or participating in any school-related activity away from school premises shall be expelled for not less than twelve months. Further reference can be found in AFFC/ACSB 5131.7a.

Corporal Punishment, Restraint, and Physical Confinement and Detention

State law forbids school employees from using corporal punishment against any student. Certain actions by school employees are not considered corporal punishment. Additionally, school employees may use "reasonable and necessary force, not designed or intended to cause pain" to do certain things, such as prevent harm to persons or property.

State law also places limits school employees' abilities to restrain or confine and detain any student. The law limits why, how, where, and for how long a school employee may restrain or confine and detain a child. If a child is restrained or confined and detained, the school must maintain documentation and must provide certain types of notice to the child's parent/guardian.

If you have any questions about this state law, please contact your school. The complete text of the law and additional information is available on the Iowa Department of Education's web site: www.iowa.gov/educate.

VII. Extracurricular Activities

Activity Options

Students have opportunities to participate in: Pen Pals Program, Thinking Cap Quiz Bowl, National Geographic Bee, Science Fair, parish prayer partners, Grandparent/Grandfriend and Woodman Speech Contest.

Public Conduct on School Premises

School sponsored or approved activities are an important part of the school program and offer students the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities not offered during the regular school day. School sponsored or approved activities are provided for the enjoyment and opportunity for involvement they afford the students.

Spectators will not be allowed to interfere with students participating, other spectators, or with the performance of employees and officials supervising the school sponsored or approved activity. Spectators, like the student participants, are expected to display mature behavior and sportsmanship.

Therefore the following provisions are in effect:

- Abusive, verbal, or physical conduct by spectators directed toward participants, officials, sponsors, or at other spectators will not be tolerated.
- Verbal or physical conduct of spectators that interferes with the performance of students, officials, or sponsors will not be tolerated.
- The use of vulgar, obscene, or demeaning language directed at students, officials, or sponsors participating in a sponsored or approved activity or at other spectators will not be tolerated.

If a spectator at a sponsored or approved activity becomes physically or verbally abusive, uses vulgar, obscene, or demeaning language, or in any way impedes the performance of an activity, the individual in charge of the event may remove the spectator from the event. The administrator may recommend to the board the exclusion of the spectator from future sponsored or approved activities.

Further reference can be found in Archdiocesan Catholic School Board Policy Manual, AFFC/ACSB 1251

Student Activities

We are all identified with St. Thomas Aquinas School. What students do outside of school and at school related events is not in all cases beyond the jurisdiction of the school.

Three-for-Me

All parents/guardians are expected to meet the requirement of our Three-for-Me policy. At the beginning of each school year, parents are to select from a given list three activities occurring during the school year and commit to volunteering for those activities. The activities are multiple and varied and the school needs your assistance in order to carry out such for the good of your child(ren).

VIII. Health/Safety Issues

Abuse

In compliance with School Laws of Iowa and AFFC/ACSB 4116.30a any certificated or licensed employee of St. Thomas Aquinas School who has a reasonable belief that a child under the age of 18 has been abused by a person responsible for the care of the child, as defined by law, shall report the suspected abuse verbally to Department of Human Services (DHS) within twenty-four hours and follow the verbal report with a written report on appropriate forms.

Employees will not commit acts of physical or sexual abuse, including inappropriate and intentional sexual behavior, toward students.

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School is committed to protecting all students from all types of abuse. If you believe that a student is suffering from any type of abuse, please contact the principal or Kim Hermsen, Superintendent of Schools, so that this can be reported to trained investigators. This policy is in compliance with Iowa Code 280.17, School Rules of Iowa 281-102.1— 15 (280) and AFFC/ACSB 4116.30a & AFFC/ACSB 4116.30b.

AIDS / Blood Borne Diseases

Children diagnosed as having any blood borne pathogen disease, or with laboratory evidence of infection with a blood borne pathogen associated virus (HILV-III/LAV) and receiving medical attention may attend classes in an unrestricted educational setting in accordance with AFFC/ACSB 5141.2.

Alcohol/Drug Policy

The St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School Board develops guidelines that are in accordance with AFFC/ACSB 5144 and AFFC/ACSB 5144.1 on student responsibility and discipline.

Asbestos

Federal regulations and AFFC/ACSB 7113 require us to inform you that there is asbestos in the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School building. A certified asbestos inspector has inspected the building and all the asbestos found has been sealed and encapsulated. The most recent inspection was conducted in 2013. The required six-month periodic surveillance was conducted 4/17.

Lead in Drinking Water

The drinking water monitoring for lead and copper was conducted on 9/21/2016. The analytical lead result in mg/L (milligrams per liter) was 0.002. The analytical copper result in mg/L (milligrams per liter) was 0.02. The lead action level is 0.015mg/L and the action level for copper is 1.3 mg/L.

Radon Testing

Radon testing of the preschool classroom and the 4th & 5th grade classrooms was conducted on 12/30/2016. The test results were within the range of 0.6 to 1.9 pCi/L. The action level is 4.0 pCi/L.

Chemical Right to Know Law

The Chemical Right to Know Law requires that all schools in the nation prepare a list of chemicals that are known to be present in their buildings and to maintain material safety data sheets (MSDS) on them. The law further states that all chemicals are to be appropriately labeled, storage areas are to be posted for the hazardous chemicals, and employees that work with the chemicals are to be trained in the safe handling of these chemicals. If you want to know what chemicals are used in the school and where they are stored, please contact the principal.

Emergency Numbers

The school must always be informed as to a work telephone number or emergency number in the event the student becomes ill or is injured at school and requires the parent's presence.

Should there be an emergency and the school is unable to reach the parent, the student will be taken to the Van Diest Medical Center and the doctor on call will be used for emergency treatment. **Remember to notify the school of any change of address or telephone number including cell phone number.**

Medication

Dispensing of prescription drugs will be administered by a nurse or designated party with training and with the written consent of parent(s). A physician's signed, dated authorization including the name of the student, physician, medication, dosage, and medication schedule must be given to the school in the original container. A record of each dose of medication administered will be documented in the pupil's health record. Students utilizing asthma or airway constricting prescription medication are allowed to administer their own dosage provided a completed consent form is on file in the school's office. Contraceptives will not be dispensed.

Dispensing of non-prescription drugs may occur, provided the parents have signed and dated an authorization identifying medication, dosage, and time interval to be administered.

Safety Drills

Announced and unannounced drills are conducted at various times during the year in accordance with Iowa codes. Students are expected to leave in an orderly fashion, without talking, according to the directions of the teacher and return the same way. State law requires four tornado drills and four fire drills each year.

Smoking / Smoke Free Building

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School has been designated a “Smoke Free Building.” At no time will smoking be permitted within the building or on school grounds.

Visitors:

Students who request to have a visitor attend school with them should:

On the day of the visit, check in at the office. Visitors are expected to abide by all school regulations and conduct themselves properly. Visitors must dress appropriately and in good taste.

Parents are to report to the office upon entering the building. Do not go directly to the classroom. If a message, medication, homework, lunch money, supplies, etc., are to be delivered to the student, go to the office first.

IX. Services

Breakfast/Lunch

St. Thomas Aquinas School provides a breakfast and lunch program. The preschool All Day 4’s may participate in the lunch program. Money for a breakfast/lunch ticket should be given to the classroom teacher. Prices are published prior to the beginning of the school year and also in the school newsletter. Separate milk tickets are available as well as tickets so students may have “seconds.” Parents must notify the school before 9:00 a.m. if eating lunch that day or the day before if eating breakfast. The ticket is to be purchased from the office. State regulations prohibit punching a student ticket for an adult breakfast/lunch. Students without money will be allowed to charge no more than two consecutive days. After that, the student will call a parent/guardian to make arrangements for that day.

Free and reduced lunches are available through the program. Applications are welcome anytime during the school year. The tickets are the same as all other tickets. St. Thomas Aquinas School is an equal opportunity provider.

Bicycles

Students are permitted to ride bikes to school. Bikes may not be ridden on school grounds or on sidewalks.

The school accepts no responsibility for bikes parked on school property. All bike riders bring bikes at their own risk. Students riding bicycles to school should put the bikes in the rack located by the south entrance of the school. Locks are recommended

Bus

Transportation is provided by the Webster City Community School District and through other arrangements. When the public school is not in session and St. Thomas has school, St. Thomas parents must provide a means of getting the child to and from school. Rules established by these agencies are to be followed as though they were rules of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School. A student may be suspended from bus transportation for inappropriate conduct. Transporting students

to school requires the cooperation of bus drivers, students, and parents to assure that high safety standards are maintained.

Lockers

Lockers are to be kept clean and orderly. Valuables should not be placed in a student locker. No decals, pictures, etc., are to be placed on the front of lockers. Interior locker decorations in good taste representing school values are acceptable. Lockers are subject to inspection by the administration.

Lost and Found

All students need to be taught to be responsible for their personal belongings. An effort is made to find the owners of articles of clothing, lunch boxes, play equipment, etc. There is a bench of found articles at the entrance to the kitchen if parents wish to check it. Periodically, any unclaimed items will be given to the needy.

School Supplies

A listing of school supplies recommended is included with the last newsletter in the spring, on the school website, and in the registration packet available during fall registration days. **Playground equipment is provided. Students are not to bring balls or toys from home for playground use**

Textbooks

Textbooks are provided to all students. Undue wear, damage, or loss will require payment at the end of the school year.

Transportation

To ensure the safety and protection of students, only parents, legal guardians, or individuals designated on the Emergency Information Sheet can authorize a change in how a student is to be transported home. The school cannot legally allow a student to be transported without this authorization. If needing to change transportation arrangements for the student, the school office must be notified by note or phone call.

Tuition Tax Credits

Expenses incurred by parents may qualify for tuition tax credits as part of their Iowa income tax reporting. Information is distributed annually, usually at the end of the calendar year.

Tuition Grants

No one should be denied a Catholic education because of financial need. Grants are available for those families who cannot pay their fees and/or tuition through the *Our Faith, Our Children, Our Future School Tuition Organization* and/or the *St. Thomas Aquinas Foundation*. Families can apply for financial assistance at any time during the school year by contacting the principal or secretary. Please ask the principal for further information. Confidentiality is maintained. (AFFC/ACSB 3240.1)

Tuition - Delinquent Accounts

Part I - Definitions

***Delinquent Account** An account is delinquent when any payment is not made within 30 days of the time such payment is due.

***Contract** Contract refers to the tuition contract signed by the parent/guardian(s) and any amendments thereto.

***Board** St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School Board

***Administration** The Administration is the administrative personnel of St. Thomas Aquinas School.

Part II - Delinquent Contracts

A. All St. Thomas Aquinas students will be registered and attend pursuant to a tuition contract which is to be signed by at least one parent or guardian of the student.

B. Changes in payment schedules on tuition contracts may be made by the administration and the parent/guardian(s) at any time, but only written modifications shall be effective and binding on the parties. All changes subject to approval by the Board.

C. When any account is delinquent for 30 days, the parent/guardian(s) shall be advised of said delinquency, in writing, by the administrator. This can be any simple form of notice bringing the delinquency to the attention of the appropriate parties and requesting that the delinquency be corrected or arrangements made with respect to the delinquency.

D. When an account is delinquent 60 days and no arrangements have been made on that account, the parent/guardian(s) shall be advised by the administrator by phone.

E. When an account is delinquent 90 days and no arrangements have been made on that account, the parent/guardian(s) shall be advised in writing on school letterhead.

F. If the school term ends and an account is more than 150 days delinquent and it is expected that the student will return the following Fall, a letter on school letterhead signed by the President of the Board shall be sent to the parent/guardian(s) advising that their child(ren) will not be permitted to continue enrollment at St. Thomas Aquinas unless the delinquency is corrected.

Part III - Enrollment of Students Where an Account is Delinquent

No student shall be permitted to enroll at St. Thomas Aquinas School if an account is delinquent, unless specific, written arrangements been made with the administrator and approved by the Board. It is the intention of the St. Thomas Board of Education that this policy be enforced in a fair, evenhanded and sensitive fashion, that, as much as possible, each factual situation be viewed upon its own circumstance; and that any form of favoritism or unfairly harsh treatment with respect to any person or parties be avoided.

X. Staff

Professional Staff:

All members of the St. Thomas Aquinas School teaching staff have graduated from an accredited college or university and have State of Iowa, Department of Education, and Licensure.

Volunteers

Volunteer are an integral part of our learning program. They are necessary to enable the teachers to work with small groups of students, take care of clerical duties, and a wide variety of tasks related to instruction. It is our goal to involve volunteer service to the school. A short training session will be provided for those who are volunteering for the first time. They are required to complete the VIRTUS training, sign an acknowledgment form indicating that they have received and read all Archdiocesan required notifications and to also authorize a criminal background check.

Administrative Office

If there is a regulation that is not understood, call the school office (832-1346). The principal will gladly explain the educational philosophy that prompted the policy. Any policy formed has sound educational theory behind it, is in accord with state regulations and the Archdiocesan handbook, and has been discussed by the Catholic School Board, principal, and pastor. Every effort has been made to do what is best for the students. The principal in accord with basic Catholic values and beliefs shall decide all ambiguities or issues not specifically addressed in the handbook.

Prayer, Beliefs and Practices

The following Prayers, Beliefs and Practices are found in the Compendium - Catechism of the Catholic Church ©2006 and the United States Catholic Catechism for Adults ©2006. Prayers are organized from the most foundational to more complex; Belief and Practices are alphabetized. The Prayers, Beliefs and Practices have been subdivided into the grades in which it is recommended that they are to be taught. While there is no definitive statement which assigns the Prayers, Beliefs and Practices to the various grade levels, the Prayers, Beliefs and Practices coincide with suggestions and recommendations as presented in “By Their Fruits You Shall Know Them. . .” (NCEA) and Sowing the Seeds of Faith (NCCL) which reflect developmentally appropriate levels.

This entire listing is also consistent with the following publications of the Archdiocese of Dubuque: the Catholic school religion standards/grade level expectations developed by the Office of Catholic Schools and the Basic Elements of Catholic Faith from the Office of Catechetical Services.

While other prayers of cultural/liturgical significance may be recommended and used as designated by the local site, students are expected to have an understanding of the Prayers, Beliefs and Practices contained herein, and they will be part of prayer in the school and religious education programs.

The sections are available in both English and Spanish and include:

- Prayers
- Beliefs and Practices
- Prayers, Beliefs and Practices by Grade Levels

Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Father/The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed are thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory Be

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning is now, and ever shall be world without end. Amen. (Traditional wording)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. (Found in the Liturgy of the Hours)

Angel of God

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

Grace Before a Meal

Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Grace After a Meal

We give thee thanks, for all thy benefits, Almighty God, who live and reign for ever. Amen.

Morning Prayer (younger children)

God, my Father, I give you today all that I think and do and say. I'll work and study, have fun and pray. Jesus be with me all through the day. Amen.

Morning Offering

O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer you my prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day for all the intentions of your Sacred Heart, in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world, for the salvation of souls, the reparation for sins, the reunion of all Christians, and in particular for the intentions of the Holy Father this month. Amen.

Act of Contrition

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy. Amen. (Alternate version from the Rite of Penance)

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of Thy grace to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen. (Traditional version)

Jesus Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Confiteor

I confess to almighty God
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned,
in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done
and in what I have failed to do,
through my fault, through my fault,
through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,
all the Angels and Saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Rosary

How to Pray the Rosary:

Make the Sign of the Cross.

Holding the Crucifix, say the Apostles' Creed.

On the first bead, say an Our Father.

Say three Hail Marys on each of the next three beads. Say the Glory Be.

Go to the main part of the rosary. For each of the five decades, announce the Mystery, then say the Our Father. While fingering each of the ten beads of the decade, say ten Hail Marys while meditating on the Mystery. Then say a Glory Be.

Announce the second Mystery and continue in the same way until each of the five Mysteries of the selected group or decades is said.

After saying the five decades, say the Hail, Holy Queen.

Mysteries of the Rosary

Joyful Mysteries (recited Monday and Saturday)

The Annunciation

The Visitation

The Nativity (birth of Jesus)

The Presentation

The Finding in the Temple

Mysteries of Light or Luminous (recited Thursday)

The Baptism of Jesus

The Wedding Feast of Cana

The Proclamation of the Kingdom, with the call to Conversion

The Transfiguration

The Institution of the Eucharist

Sorrowful Mysteries (recited Tuesday and Friday)

The Agony in the Garden

The Scourging at the Pillar

The Crowning with Thorns

The Carrying of the Cross

The Crucifixion

Glorious Mysteries (recited Wednesday and Sunday)

The Resurrection

The Ascension

The Descent of the Holy Spirit

The Assumption

The Crowning of Mary Queen of Heaven and Earth

Hail, Holy Queen

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy toward us, and after this exile show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Pray for us O holy Mother of God. R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ our Lord.

Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that your divine Son became man and died for our sins and that he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches because you have revealed them who are eternal truth and wisdom, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. In this faith I intend to live and die. Amen.

Act of Hope

O Lord God, I hope by your grace for the pardon of all my sins and after life here to gain eternal happiness because you have promised it who are infinitely powerful, faithful, kind, and merciful. In this hope I intend to live and die. Amen.

Act of Love

O Lord God, I love you above all things and I love my neighbor for your sake because you are the highest, infinite and perfect good, worthy of all my love. In this love I intend to live and die. Amen.

Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known, that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession, was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother. To thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

Angelus

V. The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit. Hail Mary

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it done to me according to thy word. Hail, Mary

V. And the Word was made flesh,

R. And dwelt among us. Hail, Mary

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray: Pour forth, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ, thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of his Resurrection. Through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Mary's Prayer (Magnificat)

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed: the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name. He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation. He has shown the strength of his arm, he has scattered the proud in their conceit. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has come to the help of his servant Israel for he has remembered his promise of mercy, the promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children forever. Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Come, Holy Spirit (Prayer to the Holy Spirit)

V. Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.

R. And kindle in them the fire of your love.

V. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.

R. And you shall renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray: O God, by the light of the Holy Spirit you have taught the hearts of your faithful. In the same Spirit, help us to know what is truly right and always to rejoice in your consolation. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Prayer of St. Francis/Prayer for Peace

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

and where there is sadness, joy.

Grant that I may not so much seek

to be consoled as to console,

to be understood as to understand,

to be loved as to love;

for it is in giving that we receive,

it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. In verdant pastures he gives me repose; beside restful waters he leads me; he refreshes my soul. He guides me in right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side. With your rod and staff that give me courage. You spread the table before me in the sight of my foes; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Only goodness and kindness follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for years to come.

Additional Prayers

Vocation Prayer (Archdiocese of Dubuque)

Lord Jesus, life is Your gift to us.

Through Baptism You invite us to
share the gift of our lives in service to others.

Give us the courage and generosity
to respond to Your call.

Through the Eucharist You fill us with Your
life-giving presence and strengthen us in holiness.
Give us the grace to make our efforts in Your service
fruitful in Your kingdom.

Through Confirmation You seal us
with the gifts of the Holy Spirit and send us forth.
Give us the strength to proclaim Your Word
and make known Your Will to all the world.

Open our hearts to Your service and
move the hearts of men and women to follow You as
Priests, Deacons, Sisters and Brothers.

Help parents, grandparents and teachers to share their
Catholic faith and to encourage our young people
to explore religious vocations.

Guide all people, Lord, in Your ways
of compassion, truth, and peace,
that we may find joy
in fulfilling our vocation. Amen.

Prayer of Discernment

Lord, God, we know that by baptism and the gift of the Holy Spirit, you reign in our lives, and you call us to holiness and truth. Renew us that we might be all that you want us to be, so that we live in accord with your desires. We strive to be attentive to your promptings. Help us do what is right. Grant us the gift of knowledge, to be informed; the gift of wisdom, to use our experience; the gift of understanding, to learn from one another; the gift of right judgment, to make good decisions; the gift of courage, to enact what we decide; the gift of faith, to trust You. We ask this in the power of your Spirit, and in the name of Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

Beliefs and Practices

Formulas of Catholic Doctrine

Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12)

- Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.
- Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.
- Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.
- Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
- Blessed are the clean of heart (or pure of heart), for they will see God.
- Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
- Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness (or righteousness' sake), for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.

Communion Regulations

- As Catholics, we fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when we receive Holy Communion. We are encouraged to receive Communion devoutly and frequently.
- In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, participants should be conscious of no grave sin and normally should have fasted for one hour.
- A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord without prior sacramental confession except for a grave reason where there is no opportunity for confession. In this case, the person is to be mindful of the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, including the intention of confessing as soon as possible (CIC, can. 916).
- A frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance is encouraged for all.

Communion Fast

- **We are expected to fast from food or drink for at least one hour prior to the reception of Holy Communion.**

Four Gospels

- Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John

Holy Days of Obligation - On these days, there is an obligation to attend Mass and to refrain from servile work as much as possible.

- Mary Mother of God - January 1
- Ascension of the Lord - 40 days after Easter or the following Sunday (celebrated on the 7th Sunday of Easter in the Archdiocese of Dubuque)
- The Assumption of Mary - August 15
- All Saints Day - November 1
- The Immaculate Conception of Mary - December 8
- Nativity of our Lord or Christmas - December 25

Liturgical Year

- Advent-Christmas Season (Christmas day until Sunday after Epiphany)
- Ordinary Time
- Lent (Ash Wednesday until Holy Saturday)
- Easter Season (Easter Sunday until Pentecost, 50 days after Easter)
- Ordinary Time

Parts of the Mass

Introductory Rites

- Gathering Song
- Greeting
- Penitential Rite (or blessing and sprinkling with holy water)
- Glory to God
- Opening Prayer

Liturgy of the Word

- First Reading (usually from the Old Testament)
- Responsorial Psalm
- Second Reading (usually from one of the letters of the New Testament)
- Gospel Acclamation
- Gospel
- Homily (an explanation of the readings)
- Profession of Faith (Creed)
- General Intercessions (Prayers of the Faithful)

Liturgy of the Eucharist

- Preparation and presentation of the gifts
- Prayer over gifts
- Preface
- Holy, Holy, Holy Lord
- Eucharistic Prayer (during this prayer the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus)
- The Great Amen
- **Communion Rite**
 - The Lord's Prayer
 - Sign of Peace
 - Breaking of the Bread
 - Lamb of God
 - Reception of Communion
 - Prayer after Communion

Concluding Rite

- Blessing
- Dismissal

Regulations for Fast and Abstinence

- Fasting is refraining from food or drink to some degree.
- Abstinence is refraining from eating meat.
- In the United States, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast and abstinence, and all Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence.
- The obligation to abstain from meat binds all Catholics 14 years of age and older. The obligation to fast, limiting oneself to one full meal and two lighter meals in the course of a day, binds Catholics from the ages of 21 to 59.

Seven Sacraments

- Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist
- Sacraments of Healing: Penance and Reconciliation; Anointing of the Sick
- Sacraments at the Service of Communion: Holy Orders and Matrimony (Marriage)

The Four Cardinal Virtues

- Prudence
- Justice
- Fortitude
- Temperance

The Four Last Things

- Death
- Judgment
- Hell
- Heaven

The Fruits of the Holy Spirit

- Charity
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness
- Goodness
- Generosity
- Gentleness
- Faithfulness
- Modesty
- Self-control
- Chastity

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

- Wisdom
- Understanding
- Counsel (Right Judgment)
- Fortitude (Courage)
- Knowledge
- Piety (Reverence)
- Fear of the Lord (Wonder and Awe in God's Presence)

The Golden Rule (cf. Mt 7:12)

Do unto others as you would have them do to you.

The Five Precepts of the Church

- You shall attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation and remain free from work or activity that could impede the sanctification of such days.
- You shall confess your sins at least once a year.
- You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least during the Easter season.
- You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.
- You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church.

The Seven Capital Sins

- Pride
- Covetousness
- Lust
- Anger
- Gluttony
- Envy
- Sloth

The Stations of the Cross

1. Jesus is condemned to death.
2. Jesus accepts his cross.
3. Jesus falls the first time.
4. Jesus meets his mother.
5. Simon helps Jesus carry the cross.
6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.
7. Jesus falls the second time.
8. Jesus meets the women.
9. Jesus falls the third time.
10. Jesus is stripped of his clothes.
11. Jesus is nailed to the cross.
12. Jesus dies on the cross.
13. Jesus is taken down from the cross.
- 14.** Jesus is placed in the tomb.

The Ten Commandments

1. I, The Lord, am your God. You shall not have other gods besides me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's day.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet neighbor's goods.

The Three Theological Virtues

- Faith
- Hope
- Charity

The Two Commandments of Love

- You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.
- You shall love your neighbor as yourself. (Matthew 22:37-39)

Works of Mercy

The Seven Corporal Works of Mercy

- Feed the hungry.
- Give drink to the thirsty.
- Clothe the naked.
- Shelter the homeless.
- Visit the sick.
- Visit the imprisoned.
- Bury the dead.

The Seven Spiritual Works of Mercy

- Counsel the doubtful.
 - Instruct the ignorant.
 - Admonish sinners.
 - Comfort the afflicted.
 - Forgive offenses.
 - Bear wrongs patiently.
- Pray for the living and the dead.

Prayers, Beliefs and Practices
Suggested/Recommended at Developmentally Appropriate Grade Levels

Kindergarten

- Sign of the Cross
- Grace Before a Meal
- Our Father/The Lord's Prayer
- Hail Mary

Grade 1

- Sign of the Cross
- Grace Before a Meal
- Our Father/The Lord's Prayer
- Hail Mary

New Prayers, Beliefs and Practices introduced at this level are:

- Grace After a Meal
- Glory Be
- Morning Prayer
- Angel of God

Grade 2

- Sign of the Cross
- Grace Before/After a Meal
- Our Father/The Lord's Prayer
- Hail Mary
- Glory Be
- Morning Prayer
- Angel of God

New Prayers, Beliefs and Practices introduced at this level are:

- Act of Contrition
- Communion Fast
- Communion Regulations
- The Ten Commandments

Grade 3

- Sign of the Cross
- Grace Before/After a Meal
- Our Father/The Lord's Prayer
- Hail Mary
- Glory Be
- Morning Prayer
- Angel of God
- Act of Contrition
- Communion Fast
- Communion Regulations
- The Ten Commandments

New Prayers, Beliefs and Practices introduced at this level are:

- Apostles' Creed
- The Rosary
- The Two Commandments of Love
- Liturgical Year

Grade 4

- Sign of the Cross
- Grace Before/After a Meal
- Our Father/The Lord's Prayer
- Hail Mary
- Glory Be
- Morning Prayer
- Angel of God
- Act of Contrition
- Communion Fast
- Communion Regulations
- The Ten Commandments
- Apostles' Creed
- The Rosary
- The Two Commandments of Love
- Liturgical Year

New Prayers, Beliefs and Practices introduced at this level are:

- Jesus Prayer
- Act of Faith
- Act of Hope
- Act of Love
- Seven Sacraments
- Beatitudes
- Mysteries of the Rosary

Grade 5

- Sign of the Cross
- Grace Before/After a Meal
- Our Father/The Lord's Prayer
- Hail Mary
- Glory Be
- Morning Prayer
- Angel of God
- Act of Contrition
- Communion Fast
- Communion Regulations
- The Ten Commandments
- Apostles' Creed
- The Rosary
- The Two Commandments of Love
- Liturgical Year
- Jesus Prayer
- Act of Faith
- Act of Hope
- Act of Love
- Seven Sacraments
- Beatitudes
- Mysteries of the Rosary

New Prayers, Beliefs and Practices introduced at this level are:

- The Stations of the Cross
- Morning Offering
- Memorare
- Hail Holy Queen
- The Five Precepts of the Church
- Parts of the Mass

Grade 6

- Sign of the Cross
- Grace Before/After a Meal
- Our Father/The Lord's Prayer
- Hail Mary
- Glory Be
- Morning Prayer
- Angel of God
- Act of Contrition
- Communion Fast
- Communion Regulations
- The Ten Commandments
- Apostles' Creed
- The Rosary
- The Two Commandments of Love
- Liturgical Year
- Jesus Prayer
- Act of Faith
- Act of Hope
- Act of Love
- Seven Sacraments
- Beatitudes
- Mysteries of the Rosary
- The Stations of the Cross
- Morning Offering
- Memorare
- Hail Holy Queen
- The Five Precepts of the Church
- Parts of the Mass

New Prayers, Beliefs and Practices introduced at this level are:

- The Seven Corporal Works of Mercy
- The Seven Spiritual Works of Mercy
- The Fruits of the Holy Spirit
- The Gifts of the Holy Spirit
- Four Gospels
- The Golden Rule
- Holy Days of Obligation

