



SAINT THOMAS THE APOSTLE

CATHOLIC CHURCH 2312 EAST CAMPBELL AVENUE PHOENIX, AZ 85016

May 2008

To: St. Thomas the Apostle Parishioners with High School age children
Re: Parish Verification

After much consideration and thought I determined and established a Parish Verification Guideline for practicing Catholics in order to receive reduced tuition at Diocesan High Schools. These guidelines have appeared in the parish bulletin (see attached) and have already been applied to our Parish School families.

If a family fails to qualify as an “active and contributing parishioner”, as defined below, they will not receive the needed signature for reduced tuition at a Diocesan High School.

Registration

- The parent must be officially registered as a parishioner of St. Thomas the Apostle, as recorded in our parish database.
- If recently registered at St. Thomas the Apostle (within past 6 months), a statement from the former parish of “active and contributing parishioner” status at the parish will be accepted to qualify for tuition discount until regular parishioner status can be established at St. Thomas the Apostle.
- The registration requirement applies to the custodial parent/guardian of child.

Regular Attendance

- Catholics are obliged to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. “The Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice. For this reason the faithful are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on days of obligation, unless excused for a serious reason (for example, illness, the care of infants) or dispensed by their own pastor. Those who deliberately fail in this obligation commit a grave sin.”

(CCC 2181) Parents of Catholic students should be particularly aware of this teaching of the Church, as they have solemnly promised God to raise their children accordingly to the law of Christ and His Church.

- Evidence of attendance at Sunday Mass is difficult to ascertain. The easiest way to demonstrate one's attendance at Sunday Mass is by participating in the parish envelope system.
- To qualify for the discounted tuition rate the receipt of at least two envelopes per month is required. Those families signed up on monthly auto withdraw for their tithing will need to place a contribution envelope in the collection at least twice a month. Envelopes dropped off or mailed to the parish office are accounted for but do not fulfill the requirements of attending Sunday Mass, nor for receiving the reduced tuition rate.

Financial Support

- The reason a discount is offered to an "active and contributing parishioner" is because they are already financially supporting the parish by way of the Sunday collection. The level of financial support will vary from family to family depending on the family's income. The biblical tradition of a tithe is 10% of one's income. Failure to support the parish financially would make a tuition discount unjust.

We will continue to evaluate each family on a semester basis. On this basis a family may either gain or lose qualification for "active and contributing" reduced tuition. This information will be given to the High Schools accordingly.

Rev. John Ehrich, S.T.L.
Pastor