

# Middle School Social Studies and Religion Information

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## **Social Studies-**

6th - World Cultures. This class will be studying ancient civilizations from around the world. This will be a project-driven curriculum, with at least one project for every paper and pencil test. Be prepared to go back to ancient Egypt, learn about the Greeks and experience medieval times with your son or daughter.

7th - Geography. Geography is not just learning where in the world places are, but also about how they relate to one another, what the people of each region are like and how each culture is affected by environmental influences. Students will research countries, complete fact books and study maps. We will look at current events and how nations interact.

8th – United States History. Our country may only be 230 years old, but we have quite a history! This year focuses on our government, citizenship, and how our country has developed and changed since colonization. We will spend the first half of the year looking at the Constitution and our government and following the *We The People* curriculum. Part of this is looking at Supreme Court decisions, debating Constitutionality and gaining and understanding of the origins of our country. The section culminates with a mock legislative committee meeting involving a group presentation and question and answer panel with a panel of community members. The second half of the year will focus on U.S. history from the Civil War to modern times.

### *Homework:*

- ❖ Assigned most days, should take about 15-20 minutes.
- ❖ Daily assignments are usually worth 5-10 points.
- ❖ Most work is to be completed in Interactive Student Notebook (ISN) – front section of 3 subject notebook.

### *Grading:*

- ❖ Approximately 50% of trimester grade is based on daily/homework assignments.
- ❖ Approximately 25% of trimester grade is based on tests and quizzes.
- ❖ Approximately 25% of trimester grade is based on projects.

### *Projects:*

- ❖ Project due dates will be assigned when the project is explained. This will be part of an information/explanation sheet about the project.
- ❖ Projects may be individual, pair or group. This is part of the assignment.

## **Religion** –

I approach the religion curriculum with the goal of bringing our faith to life and incorporating it in our everyday lives. I believe our religion curriculum supports this. The Faith First website ([www.faithfirst.com](http://www.faithfirst.com)) provides chapter reviews for each textbook. Students must complete this chapter review before each test. If internet access is not available, paper copies can be printed out by request.

Service - All St. Therese middle school students will be required to complete a set number of service hours as part of their religion grade. There are many reasons behind this approach, including:

- The Catholic faith asks us to perform the Corporal Works of Mercy.
- St. Therese Parish is focusing on service this season, both in the form of direct service and social response.
- All of Portland's Catholic high schools require service hours to graduate.
- Most Confirmation classes require some community service.
- Community service is a bonus on high school applications.
- Studies on service learning have shown many benefits, not only in those being aided by the service, but in all who participate.

Each student needs to complete a minimum of 2 hours by the end of the first trimester, 4 by the end of the second trimester and all their hours by the end of the year. Hours above and beyond requirements (see below, by grade level) are encouraged. Students must also fill out 3 reflections sheets about their service experiences. I highly encourage you to take this as a chance to spend time together as a family.

Please contact me if you have any questions about the community service requirement.

6th - Focus on Scripture. To prepare us for learning more about our faith, we must understand the most basic text for our lives, the Bible. Please let your student know if you have a Bible that would be easy for them to use at home as this will save them from carrying Bibles back and forth to school. (6 hours of service required.)

7th - Focus on Jesus. This year we will be learning about Jesus, who He is, what He did, why He is important to us. We will also look into the mysteries of the Church. (9 hours of service required/3 per trimester.)

8th - Focus on the Church. Be prepared for a lot of questions about Catholicism. We will learn about the history of the Church, and how it relates to us everyday. We will also spend a couple months learning about morality and Church values. (9 hours of service required/3 per trimester.)

### *Homework:*

- ❖ Assigned most days, should take about 15-20 minutes.
- ❖ Daily assignments are usually worth 5-10 points.
- ❖ Most homework is to be written in the religion book or religion section of 3 subject notebook.

### *Grading:*

- ❖ Approximately 50% of trimester grade is based on daily/homework assignments.

- ❖ Approximately 45% of trimester grade is based on tests and quizzes.
- ❖ Approximately 5% of trimester grade is based on service requirement.