



# LORI SMITHE

## Social Worker

### About Me:

I have been the school social worker at St. Thomas of Villanova since 2014. I graduated from Saint Mary's College in 2001 with a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Spanish. I worked as a Child Welfare Specialist at Catholic Charities in Chicago before returning to Loyola University Chicago to obtain my MSW in 2004. I am a licensed clinical social worker with a specialization in schools and have almost 20 years of experience with children and teens from preschool through high school. I believe in collaborating with parents and teachers and other health care professionals in an effort to see and address the whole person and their various outlets for support.

### Religion:

In addition to working with students individually and in small groups, I have the privilege of visiting all PK-8 classrooms about 1x/month. We spend a lot of time talking about and identifying feelings and coping strategies as well as the way in which we interact with each other. As we explore these strategies and ways of living, I try to draw a parallel to our faith and the way in which community and prayer can be a strength and support. The Golden Rule also holds great value as we learn healthy and effective ways of playing, communicating, and building relationships.

### Special Units & Projects:

The **Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning** addresses five core competencies, including *Self-Management, Self Awareness, Social Awareness, Relationships, and Decision-Making*. In addition to utilizing a social thinking curriculum and various other materials, over the years, students have participated in showing kindness and support to a local charity (Coming Up Rosies), voted for their favorite coping skill in a March Madness Tournament of Coping Strategies, completed learning and/or career interest inventories, and survived various social emotional Escape Rooms, etc.

### About St. Thomas of Villanova School:

It is wonderful to be a part of the faculty/staff at St. Thomas of Villanova. Specifically, while I am only in the building a short time each week, it is my hope that this presence and learning provides the opportunity for social emotional learning to happen throughout the building and throughout the week so that it provides a strong foundation at home and beyond. I am also blessed to be a parent at the parish and the school. The community is welcoming and supportive and makes us all feel like we are at home! My children; all students are treated like family at St. Thomas of Villanova.