

SAINT JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH

ERIE, MICHIGAN

FIRST RECONCILIATION

FIRST EUCHARIST

FORMATION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to another year of religious education and faith formation at Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Erie, Michigan. As a parish family we are excited to see you and your child taking the next step in our journey of faith.

We encourage you and your child to practice the prayers found within this booklet at home. Frequent participation in the Mass and faith formation classes is a necessity for a holistic sacramental preparation program. As parents, you are the primary catechists of your child. We as a parish community are here to help guide and assist as throughout the program.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

St. Joseph Roman Catholic Parish, a welcoming community centered on the Eucharist, courageously embraces the call to discipleship and evangelization through the sacraments, faith formation and service.

IMPORTANT DATES

First Reconciliations

St. Joseph Church

First Communion Learning Centers

St. Joseph School Dining Hall

First Communion Mass

St. Joseph Church

Children must arrive no later than 10:30 am

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARENTS

The Catholic Church calls upon parents to help suitably prepare their children for reception of the sacraments. The home is where the faith is developed and lived out. Each parent models to their child what the life of faith looks like. The following will help you to properly assist your child in this time of sacramental preparation.

- * Attend Sunday Mass and Holy Days of Obligation with your children.
- * Provide proof of Baptism to the parish.
- * Attend parent sessions.
- * Have your child attend the sacramental retreat.
- * Do home lessons and tasks with your child to foster love and understanding for the Faith.
- * Make sure your child attends the religious education sessions offered by your parish and does any assigned homework.
- * At home, work on memorizing prayers. Explain the meaning of the prayers to your child.
- * Have family prayer time together daily.
- * Have a Bible and a *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, as well as religious articles such as a crucifix, holy water and sacred images in the home.
- * Go to Reconciliation on a regular basis. Parents model this by their personal participation in the sacrament. We recommend that once your child has made their First Reconciliation, that your family go back and receive this grace and forgiveness at least once a month.

Saint Joseph Catholic Church Mass Times

Saturday Mass:	4:30 pm
Sunday Mass:	7:30 am, 9:30 am, 11:30 am
Tuesday:	6:00 pm
Wednesday-Thursday:	8:00 am
Friday:	8:30 am

Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Saturday: 10:00am

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Your child's second grade year is an opportunity for parents to reaffirm their commitment to the Catholic faith and to become refreshed and renewed in their faith life. This renewed commitment involves developing genuine desire to participate in the Eucharist and the sacramental life of the Church as well as a commitment to uphold the Precepts of the Church.

1. To attend Mass and rest from servile labor on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation
2. To receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year, especially if aware of committing a mortal sin.
3. To receive Holy Communion at least once a year, between the First Sunday of Lent and Trinity Sunday.
4. To observe the fast and abstinence days established by the Church.
5. To contribute to the material support of the Church

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

From the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

In the paragraphs below from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, we learn the following:

1485 "On the evening of that day, the first day of the week," Jesus showed himself to his apostles. "He breathed on them and said to them: 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained'" (Jn 20:19,22- 23).

1486 The forgiveness of sins committed after Baptism is conferred by a particular sacrament called the sacrament of conversion, confession, penance, or reconciliation.

1487 The sinner wounds God's honor and love, his own human dignity as a man called to be a son of God, and the spiritual well-being of the Church, of which each Christian ought to be a living stone.

1488 To the eyes of faith no evil is graver than sin and nothing has worse consequences for sinners themselves, for the Church, and for the whole world.

1490 The movement of return to God, called conversion and repentance, entails sorrow for and abhorrence of sins committed, and the firm purpose of sinning no more in the future. Conversion touches the past and the future and is nourished by hope in God's mercy.

1491 The sacrament of Penance is a whole consisting in three actions of the penitent and the priest's absolution. the penitent's acts are repentance, confession or disclosure of sins to the priest, and the intention to make reparation and do works of reparation.

1493 One who desires to obtain reconciliation with God and with the Church, must confess to a priest all the unconfessed grave sins he remembers after having carefully

examined his conscience. the confession of venial faults, without being necessary in itself, is nevertheless strongly recommended by the Church.

1494 The confessor proposes the performance of certain acts of "satisfaction" or "penance" to be performed by the penitent in order to repair the harm caused by sin and to re- establish habits befitting a disciple of Christ.

1495 Only priests who have received the faculty of absolving from the authority of the Church can forgive sins in the name of Christ.

1496 The spiritual effects of the sacrament of Penance are: - reconciliation with God by which the penitent recovers grace; - reconciliation with the Church; - remission of the eternal punishment incurred by mortal sins; - remission, at least in part, of temporal punishments resulting from sin;- peace and serenity of conscience, and spiritual consolation; - an increase of spiritual strength for the Christian battle.

Not all sins are equal

When a person goes to confession, all mortal (grave) sins must be confessed. Venial (lesser) sins do not need to be confessed, but it is recommended to do so. When only venial sins are confessed, the person is making a devotional confession.

Other practical spiritual benefits from going to confession:

It helps us to grow in self-knowledge.

St. Augustine and many other saints and doctors of the Church have taught that knowing ourselves is essential to having a healthy spiritual life. Self-knowledge helps us to appreciate our need for God's ongoing help and grace in our lives. Frequent Confession reminds us that we need to depend on God in order to overcome temptations and sin.

It helps us to overcome bad habits and sin in our lives.

The grace we receive from the sacrament helps us to win the battle against bad habits or vices. Bad habits are acquired with the repetition of bad actions. Bad habits may be broken more quickly and effectively when we go to confession regularly.

The conscience is purified

The conscience, if well formed, teaches us what is right or wrong. Sin often distorts the conscience or makes it insensitive to the truth. Confession purifies our conscience so that we can recognize God's will in the circumstances of our daily lives. Confession enlightens and purifies our conscience.

It helps us become more like Christ.

It imparts grace to our souls. Grace strengthens us to become more conformed to Jesus Christ in word and deed. Every canonized saint in the Church went to confession not only with the desire to overcome sin and sinful tendencies, but also to become more loving and Christ-like. Confession is the launching pad for a life of authentic holiness.

It strengthens our will.

God strengthens our will with his grace. Through confession, we gain self-control and grow in our desire and commitment to resist the temptations that cross our path in life. We become more determined to do God's will and not our own. Self-will, self-absorption and self-seeking are the road map to sin that leads us away from the Will of God.

Priests take very seriously the seal of the confessional. Canon law strictly prohibits any priest from discussing anything uttered during sacramental confession, and many priests throughout the world have chosen to be imprisoned or killed rather than violate the sacred seal.

CHILD'S PREPARATION FOR RECONCILIATION

Classroom Preparation

All students in second grade discuss Reconciliation in their classroom sessions or through parish religious education classes.

Preparation at Home

Take some time to talk with your child about Reconciliation. It is very common for children to be nervous or scared before First Reconciliation, but they typically feel extremely peaceful and relieved afterward. Share your own experiences of Reconciliation: How did you feel the first time you went? How do you feel when you go now?

FAMILIARITY WITH THE RITE OF PENANCE

Students should be familiar with the Rite of Penance in order to feel more comfortable during their first confession.

Rite of Penance

Penitent: *Bless me Father, for I have sinned. This is my first Reconciliation. (In future confessions, say, "It has been [approximate length of time] since my last confession.)*

The penitent now lists the sins that s/he can remember, especially, all mortal sins.

The priest will counsel you and perhaps give you advise for how to avoid these sins in the future. He will give you a penance, which will be either an action or some prayers. Ordinarily, he will then ask you to make an Act of Contrition. During first Reconciliation, we will pray this prayer (the Prayer of Sorrow) together.

Penitent: *(Pray the Act of Contrition/Prayer of Sorrow) O 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 the help of your grace, to sin no more and to avoid whatever leads to sin Amen.*

The priest then and pronounces the Word of Absolution, and the penitent makes the Sign of the Cross.

Thank the priest and go do your penance.

SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE PELICAN



The mother pelican feeding her baby pelicans depicted above and is rooted in an ancient legend that existed before Christianity. The legend says that in times of famine, the mother pelican struck her breast repeatedly with her own beak until she bled. She would then feed her young with her own blood to prevent them from starving. In another version of the legend, the mother pelican fed her dying baby pelicans with her own blood to keep them alive, but she would lose her own life in the process. With this rich symbolism, it is no wonder that the early Christians adapted it to represent or symbolize Jesus Christ, our Lord. The pelican symbolizes that Jesus, our Savior and Redeemer, gave His life to save us from sin and death. The new life we possess comes through His death on the cross and the pouring out of His Precious Blood. As you prepare your child for First Penance and First Communion, you may want to teach your child about the legend of the pelican. It should serve as a reminder that Jesus suffered and died for us so that we may gain eternal life. In a totally selfless act of love, our Lord accepted an agonizing death for each and every one of us. The Eucharist, of course, is connected to Christ's sacrifice on the cross. It is not merely an image of Christ's sacrifice on the cross; it truly is Christ's sacrifice! The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches us that the same Christ Who offered Himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and offered in an unbloody manner on the altar in the Mass (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 1367).

From the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

From the paragraphs below in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, we learn the following:

1324 The Eucharist is "the source and summit of the Christian life." The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Pasch."

1337 The Lord, having loved those who were his own, loved them to the end. Knowing that the hour had come to leave this world and return to the Father, in the course of a meal he washed their feet and gave them the commandment of love.¹⁶³ In order to leave them a pledge of this love, in order never to depart from his own and to make them sharers in his Passover, he instituted the Eucharist as the memorial of his death and Resurrection, and commanded his apostles to celebrate it until his return; "thereby he constituted them priests of the New Testament."¹⁶⁴

1338 The three synoptic Gospels and St. Paul have handed on to us the account of the institution of the Eucharist; St. John, for his part, reports the words of Jesus in the synagogue of Capernaum that prepare for the institution of the Eucharist: Christ calls himself the bread of life, come down from heaven.¹⁶⁵

1339 Jesus chose the time of Passover to fulfill what he had announced at Capernaum: giving his disciples his Body and his Blood:

Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. So, Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover meal for us, that we may eat it. . . ." They went . . . and prepared the Passover. And when the hour came, he sat at table, and the apostles with him. And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you I shall not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." . . . And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And likewise, the cup after supper, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the New Covenant in my blood." ¹⁶⁶

1340 By celebrating the Last Supper with his apostles in the course of the Passover meal, Jesus gave the Jewish Passover its definitive meaning. Jesus' passing over to his father by his death and Resurrection, the new Passover, is anticipated in the Supper and celebrated in the Eucharist, which fulfills the Jewish Passover and anticipates the final Passover of the Church in the glory of the kingdom.

"Do this in memory of me"

1341 The command of Jesus to repeat his actions and words "until he comes" does not only ask us to remember Jesus and what he did. It is directed at the liturgical celebration, by the apostles and their successors, of the *memorial* of Christ, of his life, of his death, of his Resurrection, and of his intercession in the presence of the Father.¹⁶⁷

1342 From the beginning the Church has been faithful to the Lord's command. Of the Church of Jerusalem, it is written: They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. . . . Day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts.¹⁶⁸

1343 It was above all on "the first day of the week," Sunday, the day of Jesus' resurrection, that the Christians met "to break bread."¹⁶⁹ From that time on down to our own day the celebration of the Eucharist has been continued so that today we encounter it everywhere in the Church with the same fundamental structure. It remains the center of the Church's life.

1406 Jesus said: "I am the living bread that came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live forever; . . . he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life and . . . abides in me, and I in him" (Jn 6:51, 54, 56).

Understanding Transubstantiation

"Transubstantiation" is a theological term that describes the complete change of the substance (what something is in its deepest being) of bread into the substance of Jesus Christ. While the substance changes, the accidents (external features) remain the same. What looks like a wafer, tastes like a wafer, and breaks apart like an ordinary wafer is actually the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ.

Effects of the Eucharist in the life of Catholic

- An increased and deepened union with Jesus
- Forgiveness of venial (lesser) sins
- A strengthening to avoid future mortal (serious) sins
- A reinforced union with all other believers, who are the Church
- A preparation of the body for bodily resurrection

How Can I Help My Child Prepare for the Eucharist?

The most important thing you can do to help your child prepare for the sacrament of Eucharist is to know, love, and receive the sacrament yourself. The whole purpose of Eucharist is for your child to grow in his or her relationship with Jesus Christ. All the sacraments have this as their purpose. You can help by being a good witness to your child. If you have not gone to Mass in a long time, the simplest way to remedy the situation is to start going again (be sure to go to Reconciliation before receiving Eucharist again). If you don't know exactly what to do, approach a priest and explain the situation. If children see that their parents have

a strong connection with their church and takes their faith seriously, they will naturally follow.

The second most important thing you can do to help your child with this sacrament is to take time to talk to them and teach them. Explain in your own words what the sacrament of Eucharist is. Then ask them how they understand the sacrament. Help them to learn the responses at Mass. Practice together. Do a Church tour. Help them memorize prayers to prepare them to receive the Eucharist and make a thanksgiving afterward (samples are given in the resources section).

For more information, read the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* sections which cover the sacrament of Holy Eucharist (CCC 1322-1419).

Family Circus, 1/14/12



1-14
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"Billy says he doesn't hafta go to church anymore 'cause his phone has an app for that!"

By
and
JEFF
KEANE

A WALK THROUGH THE MASS

The Holy Mass

We come together as a family to worship God in praise and thanksgiving in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The Mass is the celebration of the Eucharist that Jesus instituted at the Last Supper, when He commanded His apostles, "Do this in memory of me." (Lk 22:19) The Mass begins with a brief introduction. After this, we then listen to, reflect on and allow the Word of God to transform us. The culmination of the Mass is the sacrifice of the Cross made present to us in the Eucharist. Finally, we share in these fruits and take them out into the world.

The Introductory Rites

Sign of the Cross

We begin the Mass with the Sign of the Cross. We sign ourselves in the form of the cross invoking the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, to be with us and to bless us. There is also an introductory greeting in which the priest greets the people and the people respond by saying, "And with your Spirit." This response acknowledges the Holy Spirit's work through the priest during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

The Penitential Rite

We prepare for an intimate meeting with God by acknowledging and asking for forgiveness for the times we have offended Him. There are several options to this prayer in the Mass. Sometimes we pray the prayer which begins "I confess". At other times the priest leads us in a shorter formal way of responding as we say, "Lord have mercy" / "Christ have mercy."

Glory to God

The words from the "Glory to God" come from the song of the angels when they announced the Good News of the birth of Jesus Christ to the shepherds in the field, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased." (Lk 2:14) Have you ever noticed that we do not sing the "Glory to God" during Advent or Lent? This is because the "Glory to God" gives us a sense of the present mystery of the Incarnation and Resurrection each Sunday Mass. During Advent we are in a time of anticipation of Christ to come again and during Lent it is a time of penance.

The Collect

After the “Glory to God” the priest invites us to pray. He “collects” our prayers and prays that all our intentions are joined and offered to the Father in the Mass. This concludes the Introductory Rites.

The Liturgy of the Word

Prior to the people being nourished by the Body of the Lord in the Eucharist they are nourished from the Word of God proclaimed in the Holy Scriptures. During a Sunday Mass we hear two readings, a Psalm, and a reading from one of the Gospels.

Readings

Most Sunday’s of the year the first reading is from the Old Testament. The exception is after Easter when we read from the Acts of the Apostles. In the Old Testament we hear the story of Israel and how God prepares His people to receive His Son, Jesus Christ.

Knowing the stories of the Old Testament helps us to see the unity of the Bible and gives us a clearer understanding of the New Testament.

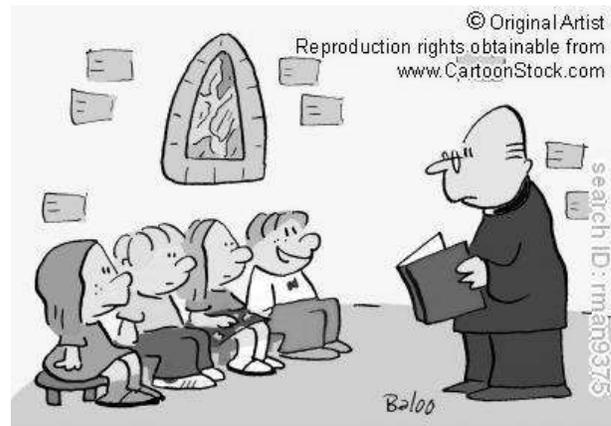
After we hear the First Reading we respond not by our own words but by the beautiful words which King David sung to God in praise and thanksgiving from the book of Psalms.

The Second Reading comes from the New Testament. This reading reflects on the saving work of Jesus Christ and the meaning it has for our life.

Gospel

The Gospel has a special place because we hear the actual words of Jesus Christ. This

is why special reference is made before we hear the words of Christ; we stand, the ambo is revered and we sing “Alleluia”, which is a Hebrew expression of joy. The priest or the deacon addresses the people in a dialogue: “Lord be with you,” to which we



**"Tell us the story of Moses again
— I like the chase scene!"**

respond, “And with your Spirit.” The Gospel reading is announced, and we trace the sign of the cross on our forehead, lips, and heart as the priest (or deacon) does the same. By this ritual we consecrate our thoughts, words and actions to the Lord asking that His Word be always on our minds, on our lips and in our hearts.

Homily

After the proclamation of the Gospel, we sit and listen to the bishop, priest or deacon, as he reflects and teaches us about the readings we just heard and how to live them in our daily lives. The word “homily” means “explanation” in Greek. The successor of the apostles, the bishop, and his collaborators, his priests and deacons, have the responsibility to proclaim the Gospel and to pass on what Jesus has taught.

The Creed

The Creed, a summary statement of our beliefs, is professed.

The Prayer of the Faithful

The conclusion of the Liturgy of the Word is the Prayers of the Faithful. Here we ask for intercession for all our needs and the needs of the Church.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

In this part of the Mass, the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross is made present by the priest. The priest carries out what Jesus did at the Last Supper and what He commanded the apostles to do in His memory. It is during this part of the Mass that the bread and wine are offered, and then consecrated and changed into the Body and Blood of Christ.



The Preparation of the Gifts

In this part of the Mass the gifts of bread and wine are brought

forward. Traditionally, the gifts also were meant to symbolize the offerings of the people from the field and were made by hard work and labor. This is why the presentation of the gifts is also representing our giving of ourselves to God as gifts. On our behalf the priest offers the gifts of bread and wine to God.

The Mingling of Water and Wine and the Washing the Hands

As the priest mixes the water and wine, he says, "By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity." This prayer symbolizes the Incarnation: Christ through His divinity (the wine) elevates our humanity (the water).

The Eucharist Prayer

Through this prayer the priest recalls the saving acts of Jesus and asks God's blessing to come down upon us, as the climax of the Holy Mass is about to happen.

Holy, Holy, Holy

The "Holy, Holy, Holy" comes from Isaiah 6:3, when the prophet Isaiah had a vision of angels surrounding the throne of the Lord, adoring Him and singing, "holy, holy, holy." This prayer helps us to see the reality that in the liturgy we are taken spiritually to heaven to adore the Lord, as He is about to be brought down to us in the consecration of the bread and wine.

Consecration of the Bread and Wine

This is the climax of the Mass, when the priest, acting in the person of Christ, changes the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. When Jesus said to the apostles at the Last Supper, "Do this in memory of me," He told them to celebrate the Last Supper as a liturgical memorial. This means that the sacrifice of Jesus is made present to us. So, by this act we are made sacramentally present to the events that happen in the Upper Room and on Calvary. This is why we refer to the Mass as a sacrifice. It unites us more intimately with Jesus and His act of self-giving love for our salvation.

The Communion Rite

There is a brief preparation for the reception of Holy Communion.

The Lord's Prayer

We start the prayer that Jesus taught us in a very intimate way: we refer to God as "Our Father." We recall the special relationship we have with God who in a few moments will come to us.

The Sign of Peace

At the Last Supper Jesus said to the apostles, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you." (Jn 14:27) This peace is a deeper, longer lasting peace than the world can give, rooted in Jesus Christ and placed in our hearts to endure any kind of trial for the sake of the Kingdom of God. In unity and charity, we greet one another with this kind of peace, not a worldly peace, not a "good morning" but the peace of Jesus Christ. This symbolic action shows the unity of the Church as the Body of Christ, those visible around us, the souls in purgatory and the saints in heaven.

Lamb of God

The priest breaks the Eucharistic host and in a symbolic action places a small piece in the chalice, expressing the unity of the faithful and their bishop.

While the priest is performing this action, the people are saying or signing the “Lamb of God.” In this prayer we again are taken right up to the throne of God and repeat the words of the angels as they worship the Lamb on the throne (as we read in the book of Revelation). The priest then brings this to mind as he says, “Behold the Lamb of God.”

At this point we recognize in all humility that this is pure gift and that we, in our sinful humanity, are not worthy. We repeat the words of the centurion who told Jesus that he was not worthy that Jesus should come under his roof to heal his servant. With great faith he said that he believed that whatever Jesus said would come true. The centurion said, “only say the word and my servant shall be healed.” Jesus praised this man for his faith.



Holy Communion

At this time the faithful are invited to come forward to

receive the Body and Blood of the Lord in Holy Communion. This is where Jesus comes to us most intimately.

If a person is not Catholic they should not come forward for Holy Communion until they have been properly prepared and have made a formal commitment to the Church. The same is true for Catholics who have committed mortal sins, such as skipping Mass on Sunday. Mortal sin offends God, but Jesus has given us a way to make us right again with God through the sacrament of Reconciliation.

After Holy Communion is a time when we pray and reflect on this great gift of intimacy that has just been given to us and how we desire to become more like Jesus.

The Blessing and Dismissal

An interesting fact about the dismissal is that this is where the Mass gets its name. The Latin words, "Ite missa est," mean "Go, you are dismissed." The word "missa" really means a "sending forth." You are now given a blessing and are being dismissed to go forth and be a disciple of Jesus. To live the Christian life and bring forth fruit in your life and give to others what has been given to you.

After Mass it is a good time to say a prayer of thanksgiving for all that has just happened in the Mass; which is your salvation.

Parent

tip

On the Way Home from Mass

The drive home from church can be a good time to quiz your child about what they saw and heard at Mass. For example, what color was Father wearing? Does the color mean anything? Green means a time of hope (Ordinary time), white is a celebration (the time of Christmas and Easter), and purple is a time of waiting and of penance (during Advent and Lent.) You can also ask if your child remembered anything from the readings or the homily. If you make this a family tradition, your child will begin to have a deeper understanding of what is going on at Mass and will likely be more attentive.



RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION

Stay United to Jesus in the Eucharist

The Eucharist truly is the “source and summit” of the Christian life. As such, your child’s First Eucharist represents an important event in his or her life. If you want great things for your child, you will want them to be united to the Eucharist their whole life; for if they are united to the Eucharist, they will do great things. Look, for example, at the life of Saint Teresa of Calcutta, known during her life as Mother Teresa. One cannot consider all the good works she accomplished without taking into account the fact that her day, from beginning to the end, was centered on the Eucharist. The same can be said for all the saints. Your child may or may not accomplish great works that everybody can see and appreciate like those of Saint Teresa, but a child in love with God can become great in that he or she loves as Jesus loves. What’s more, they will be on their way to heaven.

Requirements for Reception

To receive the Eucharist, we must prepare ourselves by examining our conscience. Anyone conscience of grave sin must receive the sacrament of Reconciliation before going to Holy Communion. We must also observe a one-hour fast before receiving Holy Communion (we cannot eat or drink anything other than water).

How to Receive the Eucharist

“Of all the sacraments, the adorable Sacrament of the Altar is the most excellent. The other sacraments contain gifts of God, but the Holy Eucharist contains God himself.”

- St. Alphonsus Liguori

As you approach for Holy Communion, make a sign of reverence to the Eucharist. It is a universal norm that the faithful are to make a simple bow with the head.

The Church has approved two ways for receiving the Eucharist, on the tongue or in the hand. Be sure to practice both ways with your child. When receiving on the tongue, make sure you open your mouth wide and the tongue is extended out. When receiving on the hand, place one hand over the other. After the host is placed on your top hand, pick up the host reverently with the bottom hand and place it in your mouth. Be sure your hands are washed and clean.

DRESS GUIDELINES FOR FIRST COMMUNION LITURGY

Girls:

- White or off-white/ivory
- Sleeveless dresses are ok; spaghetti straps, tank-top styles, or strapless tops will need to be covered with a sweater during Mass
- Socks or stockings should be work with appropriate dress shoes
- No purses or gloves during Mass
- Veils or wreaths are acceptable; no hats, please
- Veils and/or ribbons from the headpiece should be manageable for your daughter, fingertip or shorter
- Warning: Sprayed in sparkles can flake into a girl's eyes and cause distress and tears
- Children should not carry anything (prayer books, rosary, ...) into church

Boys

- A suit or suit coat is not required
- White or off-white/ivory dress shirt
- Dark color dress pants
- White, off-white/ivory or dark color tie
- Socks must be worn with appropriate dark color dress shoes
- It gets warm in church when it is filled with people. It is ok not to wear a t-shirt under the dress shirt and to take off a suit coat if your child becomes too warm
- Children should not carry anything into church

BASIC PRAYERS

Sign of the Cross

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Our Father

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 art 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.

Prayer to My Guardian Angel

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

Acknowledgement: Portions of this text were adapted from a sacramental preparation manual from the Diocese of Fargo.