

## Sacrament Preparation Information

### Sacrament Preparation Policy

Children preparing for the Sacraments of First Eucharist, Reconciliation or Confirmation are still dependent upon their parents. They learn primarily from the attitudes, words and behavior of their parents. For this reason parents have the primary responsibility for the education and preparation of their children for celebrating these sacraments.

Sometimes, for various reasons, the parents are unable to fulfill their role as the primary educators in preparing their children for the sacraments. In such cases alternatives are possible. They can delay the preparation and celebration of the sacrament until they are able to fulfill their role. They can delay the preparation and celebration until the child is mature enough to fulfill the responsibilities on his/her own. Or they can select an adult sponsor for the child who would fulfill the role ascribed to the parents.

The preparation programs for the Sacrament of First Eucharist, Reconciliation and Confirmation will be separate from the Expanded Religious Education Program (including weekly sessions for elementary aged children and Faith UNwrapped for all ages.) The sacramental policies below outline the responsibilities of both the parents and the candidates wishing to celebrate a sacrament.

### First Eucharist

Eucharist is a sacrament continuing the process of initiation begun at Baptism. It is the sacrament in which the Christian community comes together to celebrate Christ's presence among us. As we are fed by the gift of Jesus in the Eucharist and by the people gathered together, we go forth to serve others as Jesus did.

Candidates for the celebration of first Eucharist are to:

- be at least seven years of age and baptized.
- attend and fully participate in at least two years of formal Religious Formation or its equivalent.
- attend Sunday Mass regularly.
- attend First Eucharist sessions unless excused by the Director.

Parents of the candidates are to:

- see that their children attend Sunday Mass regularly.
- register for the First Eucharist program.
- attend the Parent Meeting and all First Eucharist sessions unless excused by the Director.
- Work with the child at home with the support of (and in cooperation with) the Religious Formation staff.

The First Eucharist preparation program consists of one parent information/registration meeting, one rite of Enrollment Mass, four parent/child sessions at the parish and completion of the First Eucharist sacrament book.

## **First Reconciliation**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is the outward sign by which we celebrate a merciful and forgiving God and renew our relationship with Him and the community. It celebrates the fact that we can be forgiven at all times. First Communion candidates are to be prepared and to celebrate Reconciliation prior to celebrating First Communion.

Candidates for First Reconciliation are to:

- be at least seven years of age and baptized.
- attend Sunday Mass regularly.
- attend and participate in a formal Religious Formation program.
- attend all First Reconciliation sessions unless excused by the Director.

Parents of the candidates are to:

- see that their children attend Sunday Mass regularly.
- register for the First Reconciliation program.
- attend the Parent Meeting and all First Reconciliation sessions unless excused by the Director.
- Work with the child at home with the support of (and in cooperation with) the Religious Formation staff.

The preparation program for First Reconciliation consists of one parent information/registration meeting, one Rite of Enrollment Mass, two parent/child sessions at church and completion of the First Reconciliation sacrament book.

## **Confirmation**

As a Sacrament of Initiation, Confirmation is closely related to Baptism and Eucharist. Christians are reborn in Baptism, strengthened by Confirmation and nourished and sustained by the Eucharist. Confirmation renews and strengthens the baptismal call to responsibility as a member of the community, responsibility to bring the Good News, and responsibility to serve others and take part in Jesus' mission.

Candidates wishing to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation are to:

- have participated fully in a cumulative, formal religious formation program or its equivalent through the 7th grade.

- attend and participate in a formal Religious Formation Program
- attend Sunday Mass regularly.
- attend all Confirmation sessions unless excused by the Middle School Formation Director.

Parents of the candidates are to:

- see that their children attend Sunday Mass regularly.
- register for the Confirmation preparation program.
- attend parent meetings and sessions unless excused by the Middle School Formation Director.
- Work with the candidate at home with the support of (and in cooperation with) the Formation staff.

The Confirmation preparation program consists of one parent/candidate information and registration meeting, commitment to service, one full day of reflection, three two hour sessions (1 with the candidate's sponsor), rehearsal, and Confirmation Mass.