



First Reconciliation and First Eucharist
Family Guide
All Saints Parish
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IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

**1st RECONCILIATION – 1st EUCHARIST
PARENT/YOUTH
PREPARATION GATHERINGS**

September 6, 2017 – Parent Orientation, FH 6:30 pm

October 1, 2017 – 1st Reconciliation Parent/Child Preparation: FH 1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

November 12, 2017 – 1st Reconciliation Parent/Child Preparation: FH 1:30 p.m. -3:00 p.m.

November 13, 2017 – Deadline to hand in Sacrament Forms and Baptismal Certificates

December 5, 2017 - 1st Reconciliation: 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary

January 23, 2018 – Symbol Fair, Parents & Child in the Sanctuary: 6:30 p.m.

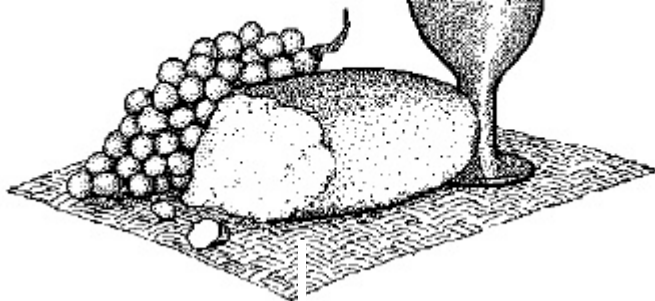
February 6, 2018 - Church Tour, Parents & Child in the Sanctuary: 6:30 p.m.

March 4, 2018 - Teaching Mass Parents & Child in the Sanctuary: 12:30 p.m.

April 29, 2018 - First Eucharist Parent/Child Preparation: FH 1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

May 11, 2018 - First Eucharist Practice in the Sanctuary: 6:30 p.m.

May 12, 2018 - First Eucharist 10:30 a.m. & 2 p.m. with a Reception to Follow in FH



INTRODUCTION

Soon your child will join your family and God's family at the Lord's Table for the first time. He/she will eat the Bread of Life and drink from the Cup of Life. Your child will learn in his/her preparation classes what a wonderful gift Jesus has given us in the Eucharist.

First Communion is considered one of the holiest and most important occasions in a Catholic's life. It means that person has received the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the Body of Jesus Christ. Celebrations of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist will be celebrated once a year at All Saints. Preparations for these sacraments will be coordinated through the All Saints Religious Education Office regardless of whether the child attends All Saints Catholic School or Sunday's Religious Education classes.

It is recommended that children who are baptized and are at least 7 years of age prepare for both the Sacrament of Reconciliation and First Eucharist. The Diocese of Dallas requires children attend a two-year preparation program prior to receiving First Eucharist (first and second Grade). The child preparing for the Sacrament of First Reconciliation and/or First Eucharist must be enrolled in the All Saints Religious Education Sunday classes, home school or All Saints Catholic School. *Parents may delay the reception of the sacraments of Reconciliation and/or First Eucharist if they feel their child is not ready.*

A parent must attend the 3-4 annual Parent/Youth Sacrament Preparation Sessions mandated by the Diocese.

Children in Religious Education classes who are preparing for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist but are habitually absent from class may have the sacrament delayed. It is expected that the youth will attend 75% of scheduled classes. The Pastor and Religious Formation Director will make this determination.

The best preparation parents can give their child is to practice and live the faith. One of the most important ways to do this is regular attendance at Mass. An integral part of our children's faith formation is participation in Sunday Liturgy. Talk with your child about Mass before you go and at appropriate moments during the actual celebration in church. Emphasize the Mass is God's family celebrating a meal. While completing the Sacrament lessons (attending Religious Formation class or All Saints Catholic School) is important for the practical knowledge that is learned, faith should also be experienced. To be part of the parish family and to worship together each Sunday is to be part of faith in action. Parents, we expect that you will give your child these experiences so they will be encouraged to practice and live his/her faith.

First Reconciliation and First Eucharist Requirements:

- Child preparing for First Reconciliation/First Eucharist must be registered in All Saints Religious Education Classes, home school or All Saints Catholic School (two-year preparation prior to receiving First Eucharist)
- Register and submit Sacrament materials fee with a copy of the child's Baptismal Certificate to the Religious Education office no later than Nov. 13, 2017
- Parents and Youth must attend the 3-4 annual Parent/Youth Sacrament Preparation Classes
- Attendance: 75% of Religious Education Classes, 100% Parent Youth Meetings, 100% Liturgical Celebrations (Symbol Fair, Church Tour, Teaching Mass)
- Completion of Banner
- Weekly Mass Attendance (complete Mass Attendance Record)
- First Reconciliation on Dec. 5, 2017, and Reconciliation just prior to First Eucharist

THE MISSION

The purpose or “mission” of this family-centered program is to prepare our second grade (and RCIC) children to receive the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist for their life of love and service for God, and their neighbor with the Eucharist at its center. Since you, as parents, are called to be the primary religious educators of your child, this program is designed to assist you with instilling the values and the meaning of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist.

Your child’s First Reconciliation and First Eucharist texts are **“Call to Celebrate Reconciliation”** and **“Call to Celebrate Eucharist”** published by Harcourt Religion Publishers.

The program will progress with you and your child offering the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Dec. 5, 2017, at 6:30 p.m. The program will conclude with you and your child’s Celebration of their First Eucharist on Saturday, May 12, 2018.

THE ROLE OF THE PARENTS

Parents, when your child was baptized, the priest addressed you saying: “You have asked to have your child baptized. In doing so, you are accepting the responsibility of training him/her in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring him/her up to keep God’s commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbor, Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?” And you responded: “We do!”

You, as parents, are the most meaningful adult Christians in the life of your child. You show your love for your child and give witness to your faith when you share your convictions about life. In particular, your personal responses to God’s love are showing your child that Reconciliation and Eucharist are part of daily lives - not something that happens as part of a special celebration day, but life’s very center.

Not only is the Church emphasizing your role as parents in your child’s religious education, but emphasizing the responsibility of our whole parish to help you fulfill your role. To assist you in this responsibility, we will provide additional information, guidance, and the confidence you need through our parent/youth gatherings and liturgical celebrations.

The Home Lesson Plans in your family guide will give you some theology on the sacrament of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist, and also provide you with helpful hints on discussing and understanding the faith concepts your child will be taught concerning these Sacraments.



PARENT/YOUTH PREPARATION

At least one parent of a child and the child preparing for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist shall attend the Diocesan Mandated Parent/Youth Preparation Sessions held on Sunday afternoons three- to four-times a year. The Parent/Youth Sessions will introduce catechetical teachings regarding the Sacraments with the main focus on First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. Parents will receive information and materials to assist them with the preparation of their child for the Sacrament of Reconciliation leading to a meaningful and joyful celebration of the sacrament, not only for the first time, but each time thereafter.

“Catechesis for the Eucharist recognizes the Eucharist as the heart of Christian life. It helps people understand that celebration of the Eucharist nourishes the faithful with Christ, the bread of Life, in order that, filled with the love of God and neighbor, they may become more and more a people acceptable to God and build up the Christian community with the works of charity, service, missionary activity, and witness (National Catechetical Directory #121).

Oct. 1, 2017 – 1st Reconciliation Parent/Child Preparation: FH1:30-3:00 p.m.

Nov. 12, 2017 – 1st Reconciliation Parent/Child Preparation: FH 1:30-3:00 p.m.

April 29, 2018 – First Eucharist Parent/Child Preparation: FH 1:30-3:00 p.m.

LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS:

Our Symbol Fair and Church Tour will combine the First Reconciliation and First Eucharist concepts being presented to your children both in the classroom and the parent/youth sessions. The great advantage of these workshops and Mass experiences is the benefit to your child of the witness and the faith of adults with whom they closely identify. The presence and participation of you, as parents, and other family members, is very important. The time at each of these will enable you and your child to better understand the concepts and symbols involved with each sacrament.

These event dates are:

Jan. 23, 2018 – Symbol Fair, Parents & Child in the Sanctuary: 6:30 p.m.

Feb. 6, 2018 - Church Tour, Parents & Child in the Sanctuary: 6:30 p.m.

March 4, 2018 - Teaching Mass, Parents & Child in the Sanctuary: 12:30 p.m.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION and MASS ATTENDANCE POLICY:

We feel that in order for someone to feel a part of the parish community, he/she must be regularly attending liturgies with fellow parishioners. The Church teaches that missing Mass is a mortal sin. Our students are taught in the classroom that it is a mortal sin. We feel it is very puzzling to children when they are told they are breaking their relationship with God by not attending Mass and then their parents do not regularly bring them to Mass. It confuses them and they do not know what to believe.

Parents are asked to attend Mass with their children weekly and on Holy Days of Obligation. The Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice and for this reason the faithful are obligated to participate in the Mass on Sunday and other holy days of obligation (C.C.C., #2180). For these reasons, regular attendance at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation here at All Saints is a necessary part of our students' religious education. At All Saints, we feel the only objective way to determine regular Mass attendance is through the use of the Mass attendance sheet or the use of children's envelopes. Before the youth leave Mass, they will have the usher, MC or a priest sign their attendance sheet. Attendance sheets should be used weekly and are required for all students receiving the Sacraments of First Eucharist and Confirmation. If your child is using an envelope to document Mass Attendance, please be sure his/her name is on the outside of the envelope. The envelope may contain a monetary donation, an intention or an act of kindness the child will perform for the week.

PARENT PARISH COVENANT RATIONALE

The Catholic Church takes most seriously the role parents play in the education and formation of their children in the ways of the faith. The Second Vatican Council addressed the role of parents in documents such as, The Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People #11 where we read that parents “are the first to pass on the faith to their children and to educate them in it. By word and example they form them.” The Church again reiterates this idea in another Council document, The Declaration on Christian Education # 3, which states; “Since parents have given children their life, they are bound by the most serious obligation to educate their offspring and therefore must be recognized as the primary and principal educators.”

This is why in the Code of Canon Law # 226 we read, “Because they have given life to their children, parents have a most serious obligation and enjoy the right to educate them; therefore Christian parents are especially to care for the Christian education of their children according to the teaching handed on by the Church.” And in Canon # 774.2 we read, “Parents above others are obliged to form their children in the faith and practice of the Christian life by word and example.” And so, when you presented your child for baptism, the priest read from the Rite of Baptism, “you are accepting the responsibility of training him (her) in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring him (her) up to keep God’s commandments as Christ taught us.” Simply put, children first learn the practice of the Catholic faith at home by the example of their parents. At the appropriate time the Church teaches that the parish should assist the parents by providing a more formal catechetical program that helps to educate and form their children in the Catholic Faith.

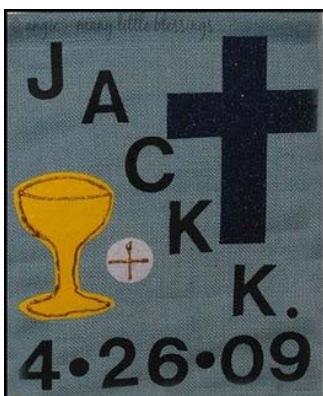
BANNER

Throughout your child’s preparation for the sacrament of First Eucharist, it is the goal to provide experiences of “unity” and “belonging.” In preparation for the First Eucharist Liturgy (May 12, 2018), each child with the help of parents at home will make a Banner. The completed Banner will be hung on the walls of Fellowship Hall on First Communion Day adding to the day’s Art and Environment and unity. During the Church Tour, materials and instructions will be distributed. Please use the white felt provided for the background.



The Banner will include:

- **Child’s Name**
- **Communion Date**
- **Symbols associated with First Eucharist**
- (A list of suggested symbols and meanings will be provided)
- **Supplies** (felt of many colors)
- **Please do not attach large or heavy objects as, it is our experience, those objects fall off**
 - **Please make sure the banner is completely dry before returning it to the Religious Education Office**



Please have your Banner back to the Religious Education Office no later than May 6, 2018.

The Banner is part of your First Communion memories to keep so please be sure to pick up your banner from the Fellowship Hall following the reception on May 12, 2018.



HOME SESSIONS

Each chapter in your child's textbooks introduces a theme that teaches a particular element of the Sacrament of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. We will be asking you to assist in helping your child reflect upon and share with the activities provided in the text. This "sharing" raises your child's awareness and appreciation of the relationship between Eucharistic celebration and the rest of their lives. In addition, All Saints has a Free Catholic Network Available to Parents: Call to Faith eConnect which is filled with Catholic faith resources, adult and children's activities, and more (password is available from the Religious Education Office – 972-778-0328 or kmcdermott@allsaintsdallas.org).

In the "domestic church" of your own home, you will continue the work you began at your child's baptism – the initiation of your child into the life of Christ through the sacraments of the Catholic Church. The Church, through the bishops of the United States, has affirmed your role as primary religious educator of your child.

"Parents also have the right and duty to be involved in preparing their children for First Communion. The catechesis offered should help parents grow in their own understanding and appreciation of the Eucharist and enable them to catechize their children more effectively."

The time you spend together will help your child to feel comfortable and joyful about the Sacrament she/he is about to receive.

LIST OF PRAYERS IN SECOND GRADE CURRICULUM

The children participating in the First Reconciliation/ First Eucharist program should have knowledge and understanding of these prayers: *

Sign of the Cross

Act of Contrition

Our Father

Glory Be

Hail Mary

*These prayers can be found in the back of your child's textbook.

An Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.

I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you.

Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

FIRST RECONCILIATION DAY

Dec. 5, 2017

All Saints Catholic Church

6:30 p.m.

Communal Service

- Parents and youth are to report to the All Saints Church no later than 6:25 p.m. so the celebration can begin on time.
- The Presider will lead us in a Communal Reconciliation Service. The youth will recite the Act of Contrition in a large group followed by individual confessions. Parents are invited to partake in Reconciliation after the youth.
- Dress code for the evening is church attire – please, no jeans or sport uniforms. This is a Sacrament and the youth should be dressed appropriately.
- No photos are allowed throughout the evening.
- We ask that all cell phones be turned off, and all conversation be brought to the Narthex in respect for the Sacrament. The church will remain a quiet environment for those to pray, reflect and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.



FIRST EUCHARIST/COMMUNION DAY



- A professional photographer will be available to take individual photos in the Music Room from 9-10 a.m. and 12:30-1:30 p.m. Varying packages are available for purchase.
- The youth must be signed into the Kamel Life Center Classrooms one hour prior to their scheduled First Eucharist Celebration.
- If you have a camera/video camera during the mass:
 - No flash
 - No lights
 - No leaving your pew during Mass to “get a better shot.”
 - Priests will be available after Mass for individual pictures.
- Seating — The youth will process into the church as a large group and sit in the reserved center sections. The rest of the church is available as open seating for all family and guests.
- A Dessert Reception will follow the Mass in the Fellowship Hall.

WHAT TO WEAR TO COMMUNION:

Boys:

- White dress shirt with dark dress pants.
- Optional items: tie and suits.
- No tuxedos please.

Girls:

- White or off-white dress, at least knee length with sleeves. No spaghetti straps.
- Nothing as elaborate as a wedding dress style.
- Veils (not covering face), bows or headband.
- White tights or socks with white dress shoes.
- Gloves may be worn. (VERY IMPORTANT to take them off prior to going up for Communion)



Mass Attendance

The most important thing you can do to help your child in the Sacrament of Eucharist is to know, love, and receive the sacrament yourself. The whole purpose of the Eucharist is for your child to grow in his/her relationship with Jesus Christ. You can help by being a good witness to your child. The best preparation for First Eucharist that you can give your child is **REGULAR ATTENDANCE** at Mass. Candidates are expected to regularly attend the **Sunday Eucharist and Holy Days** as well as participate in liturgical celebrations intended to mark the growth and renew the sense of the paschal mystery in the life of the candidate. Your child will know truly how wonderful the Eucharist is because he/she will experience Jesus' giving Love to others, through you. You could not hope to give your child a better lesson on the Eucharist.

Sunday/ Holy Day	Signature of Priest/Deacon/MC/Usher	Sunday/ Holy Day	Signature of Priest/Deacon/MC/Usher
Oct. 1		Jan. 14	
Oct. 8		Jan. 21	
Oct. 15		Jan. 28	
Oct. 22		Feb. 4	
Oct. 29		Feb. 11	
Nov. 1	All Saints Day	Feb. 18	
Nov. 5		Feb. 25	
Nov. 12		March 4	
Nov. 19		March 11	
Nov. 26		March 18	
Dec. 3		March 25	Palm Sunday
Dec. 8	Immaculate Conception	April 1	Easter Sunday
Dec. 10		April 8	
Dec. 17		April 15	
Dec. 24		April 22	
Dec. 25	Christmas	April 29	
Dec. 31		May 6	
Jan. 1	Solemnity of Mary	May 13	
Jan. 7			