

First Communion information:

First Communion is a Sacrament of Initiation. This will be their first time receiving the precious body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. They will spend a great deal of time learning about the Eucharist: what it means and how it changes us. They will also receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation this year. This is usually done in a group setting on a Saturday morning following daily Mass (which we will attend) in January or February. I will have more information on dates and how to talk to your child about these Sacraments.

Please note that you are signing your child up for a Sacramental preparation class and it is expected you will attend Mass as a family. It is difficult for them to grasp the Eucharist without participating in the Mass. It won't mean very much to them either if they aren't regularly attending Mass. If you have a former spouse who does not support your child's participation in this class and will not bring them to class or Mass while in their custody, please talk to me before you register. If you have other issues, such as work or transportation issues, that may prevent regular attendance please talk with me before you register. We don't want to deny your child the Sacrament but if their attendance is going to be sporadic it will be difficult for them to build community and fully understand what they are preparing for.

If your child is homeschooled we do ask that they attend First Communion classes this year. For no other reason than to build community with the other children and so we can get to know your family. Being Catholic is about being part of a community.

I will have parent classes throughout the class year which at least one parent (preferably both) will be required to attend. I will give you plenty of advance notice of these classes and they will take place during your child's faith formation class. Also please keep a copy of the schedule handy and note all dates which pertain to First Communion. **First Reconciliation, parent classes, and First Communion rehearsal are MANDATORY.**

This is a special year in your child's faith journey and I hope you will make it a priority. This is a crucial year in their faith development and many of them are so excited and joyful about their faith. Take advantage of their excitement and enthusiasm and pray with your children often, try to come to adoration, pray the Rosary as a family, read a book about a Saint (I have several if you want to borrow one), do one or more corporal works of mercy together, make Advent and Lent centerstage. There is so much about our faith to learn and experience. Please don't hesitate to ask your child's Catechist or myself if you need any guidance or materials.

As time gets closer in the spring they will be practicing how to receive the host and wine. They may even be given unconsecrated hosts and wine to taste. If your child has any sensory issues or gluten allergies or other issues that may make them hesitant about receiving please let your child's Catechist know.

If your child is on any kind of ADHD medication and is removed on weekends, or has Asperger's syndrome or other issues that may require special attention please address them with your child's Catechist. Also if gluten allergies will require a special host, please note that on the registration.

Thank you and God Bless,
Leslie McGowan