

October 22, 2018

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Thank you for taking an active interest as your child prepares for First Reconciliation and First Communion this year. This is a special time of growth for your child and for your family. We ask you to encourage and support your child in his/her faith journey.

Pope Francis shared:

The Sacraments express and realize an effective and profound communion among us, for in them we encounter Christ the Savior and, through him, our brothers and sisters in faith. The Sacraments are not mere appearances, they are not rituals; they are the power of Christ; Jesus Christ is present in the Sacraments. When we celebrate the Eucharist it is the living Jesus who brings us together, forms us into a community, allows us to adore the Father. Each one of us, in fact, through Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist, is incorporated into Christ and united to the entire community of believers. Therefore, if on the one hand it is the Church that “makes” the Sacraments, on the other, it is the Sacraments that “make” the Church, that build her up, by generating new children, by gathering them into the holy people of God, by strengthening their membership.
General Audience Nov 6, 2013

During the Inscription Prayer Service, your child(ren) will receive the *With Jesus Always* book that goes through the order of the Mass, Steps for Reconciliation, and Prayers. The purpose of this resource is to be utilized at home, and it is a great resource to bring to Mass with you each week so your child(ren) can follow the Order of the Mass. Please take time after Mass to answer any questions your child(ren) may have regarding Mass. It might be helpful to discuss the Readings and/or the homily with your child(ren) to make sure there is a basic understanding.

Sunday Mass times at St. Theresa are:

Saturday: 5:00pm (vigil)

Sunday: 7:00am, 8:30am, 10:00am, and 11:30am

(once a month Sunday evening LIFT Mass at 5:00pm)

Please work with your child(ren) in learning the *Act of Contrition*, working on the Examination of Conscience, behavior in Church, and receiving Communion properly. Please call the Religious Education Office if you have any questions. The St. Theresa Parish Community will be praying for you and your family during this year of preparation and spiritual growth.

Through Christ's Love,

Elizabeth Vogt, Director of Religious Education

Important Dates for Sacramental Preparation

Mon, October 22, 2018 @7:00pm	Parent Sacramental Meeting in O'Brien Hall (lower level of school) (plan on 1.5 hours)
Thurs, November 8, 2018 @ 6:30pm	Inscription Prayer Service in Church (all classes and parents) (plan on no more than 1 hour)
Tues, December 11, 2018 @ 6:30pm	First Reconciliation in Church (all classes) (usually lasts about 1.5hours)
Sat, March 9, 2019 @ 9:00am	Jesus Day Retreat and Teaching Mass The morning will begin in church with Mass Parents Encouraged to join us! (9:00am – 12:00pm)
Tues, March 19, 2019	Tues RE – Reconciliation during class
Sat, March 23, 2019	Sat RE – Reconciliation during class
Mon, April 1, 2019	STS – Reconciliation during school
Tues, April 30, 2019 5:15pm – 6:45pm	<u>First Communion Rehearsal Group A</u> Mrs. Elter (STS Room 6) Ms. Thompson (RE Tues Room 6) Mr. Siemianowski (RE Sat Room 7)
Tues, April 30, 2019 6:00pm – 7:30pm	<u>First Communion Rehearsal Group B</u> Mrs. DelGiudice (STS Room 7) Mrs. Reckamp (RE Tues Room 7)
STS, RE, and Entire Group Photos will be taken 6:00pm – 6:45pm Please be on time and wear First Communion clothes to rehearsal.	
Sat, May 4, 2019 @ 9:00am arrive by 8:30am	<u>First Communion Liturgy Group A</u> Mrs. Elter (STS Room 6) Ms. Thompson (RE Tues Room 6) Mr. Siemianowski (RE Sat Room 7)
Saturday, May 4, 2019 @ 11:30am arrive by 11:00am	<u>First Communion Liturgy Group B</u> Miss DelGiudice (STS Room 7) Mrs. Reckamp (Tues RE Room 7)
Sun, May 5, 2019 @ 10:00am	Parish May Crowning during the 10am Mass

Examination of Conscience for Children

1. When I make choices, do I sometimes forget to think first about what God wants me to do? Have I done what God wants?
2. Have I used the name of God or Jesus in vain?
3. Did I go to Mass every Sunday?
4. Have I disobeyed my parents or those who take care of me?
5. Have I been angry or mean to others?
6. Have I forgotten to show respect for my body and the bodies of others?
7. Have I taken anything that is not mine or treated others unfairly?
8. Have I always told the truth?
9. Have I hurt someone by what I have said or done? Have I been jealous of others?
10. Have I refused to help people who are in need? Have I been selfish?



Reasons Why We Need Reconciliation

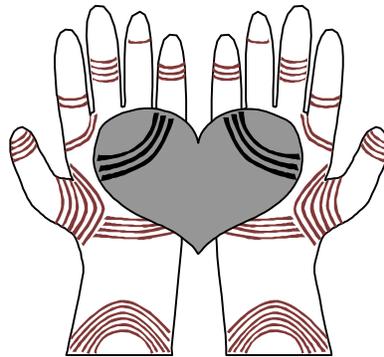
- 1) Reunites us with God
- 2) Restores Sanctifying Grace
- 3) Forgives Sins if truly sorry
- 4) Wipes away eternal punishment
- 5) Reunites Soul
- 6) Remits Eternal and part of Temporal Punishment
(debt owed to God for sins after forgiven – repairing the damage)
- 7) Restores Merits

What to Remember When Making A Reconciliation

- Speak clearly and distinctly, but whisper
- Don't tell anyone else's sins and don't mention names
- Don't make a general confession (confess at least one specific thing)
- Listen for penance and advice; ask questions if necessary
- Spend time after Reconciliation thanking God for His graces and mercy

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.



Steps for Reconciliation

1. Examination of Conscience

Prayerful self-reflection on our words and deeds in the light of the Gospel to determine how we may have sinned against God

2. Enter and make the Sign of the Cross

3. “Bless me Father for I have sinned.”

4. “It has been _____ (how long) since my last confession”

or

“This is my first time for confession.”

5. These are my sins: (confess all sins remember)

6. Listen to the priest for advice and penance

Penance is the means of obtaining forgiveness of sins

Interior: conversation of heart toward God and away from sin, which implies the intention to change one’s life because of hope in Divine mercy

Exterior: fasting, prayer, and almsgiving

7. Act of Contrition

Sorrow for the soul, hatred for the sin committed, and a resolution not to sin again

8. Absolution

The priest, by the power entrusted to the Church by Christ, pardons the sins of the penitent

9. Sign of the Cross and “Amen”

10. Penance and Thank God

First Communion Seating, And Altar Server Request

Please return this form no later than: March 16, 2019

First Communicants will be seated in pews with immediate family
(First Communicant, First Communicant's parents, and siblings)

Additional unreserved seating will be available for extended family, friends, and guests
(grandparents, godparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, friends, etc)

Name of First Communicant: _____

of Immediate Family Members: _____

Altar Servers for First Communion:

_____ Yes, there is a trained altar server in the family who is interested in serving as an altar server at the First Communion Liturgy (Names will be submitted for all interested and families will be contacted if chosen to serve for First Communion).

Trained Altar Server's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Trained Altar Server's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Trained Altar Server's School: _____

St. Theresa will be taking photographs during the special ceremonies and activities in preparation and receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Communion to be utilized in the parish bulletin, on the parish website, and other parish communication. If you do not want your child(ren)'s photograph taken, please contact the Religious Education Office.

(Parent Signature)

(Date)

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. For the First Communion Liturgy, the following dress code is suggested:

ALL: Because we are trying to tie together our Sacramental and prayer experiences throughout the year, we suggest that each First Communicant wear the cross pin which he/she will receive at First Reconciliation.

It is important that the children's hands are free to fully and actively participate in the liturgy. Please do not give gloves, flowers, rosaries, prayer books, etc. to your First Communicant to be carried during the mass. If you want to give these gifts to your First Communicant as a gift, please do so at home before or after the liturgy.

Girls: Dress and nice shoes (most girls wear white dresses, but this is not required)
veil or headpiece is optional

Boys: Dress slacks (no jeans), dress shirt, tie, nice shoes
suit coat is optional

2. Reminders:

- Fast for at least one hour before receiving Communion
- Remember to bow the head in reverence just before receiving Communion.
- The response when receiving Communion is "Amen."
The minister will say, "The Body (Blood) of Christ."
The First Communicant will respond, "Amen."
- Students may receive Communion either in the hands or on the tongue.
- Drinking from the cup is optional

3. Students will have an opportunity to practice receiving unblessed hosts in class before First Communion. Please inform our office if there is a wheat allergy.
4. Students will be sitting with immediate family members in reserved pews.
All additional seating will be open seating for extended family, friends, and guests.
5. Please allow 1 ½ hours for the liturgy. Remember to arrive a half hour before the liturgy to allow time for the First Communicants to get in place for the Entrance Procession.

*** First Communion Banner kits will be provided in the spring. Each First Communicant will make a banner as a memento of this very special occasion. These banners will be used on First Communion Day, so please remember to bring the banner with you to the First communion Mass. The banner-making project is designed as a creative activity for you and your child to enjoy together!