**FIRST RECONCILIATION AND FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PREPARATION is a two-year program that begins in the 1st grade.**

As Jesus Christ taught in the Gospel of John (Jn 6:53-56), and the Catholic Church has faithfully handed down through his Apostles (cf. 1 Cor 11:23-29), Holy Communion (the Holy Eucharist) is the very body, blood, soul, and divinity of Jesus Christ given by him to us as his Supreme Gift.

Because the Diocese of Kalamazoo recognizes that Holy Communion is the most intimate expression of love that Christ gives us, the diocese requires a two-year program of preparation for children receiving the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. **Parents should enroll their children to begin preparation for the reception of First Holy Communion when they enter the first grade.**   
  
Students who complete the two-year preparation requirements will receive First Reconciliation (also known formally as the Sacrament of Penance or informally as "confession") in the Spring of the second year of the program before their reception of First Holy Communion. See the below 2023-24  Calendar *(in progress)* for the date schedule of all children's faith formation sessions.    
  
**What if my child did not receive their first reconciliation (i.e. the sacrament of penance/confession) and First Holy Communion in 2nd Grade?**  
Children who are "off-cycle", that is, beyond the usual age for receiving first reconciliation and First Holy Communion a determination will have to be made as to how to proceed. **If your child is in this situation, please contact us at faith@stcatherinesiena.org.**   
  
**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

We are seeking volunteer **catechists**, catechist **assistants**, **substitutes**  and hall monitor/drop off/pick up Safety/Traffic Guards. If you can lend a hand, please contact the Faith Formation Director at 269-978-2347. We cannot run the program without your help!   
  
**INFORMATION ON OUR CHILDREN'S FAITH FORMATION TEXTS**

[**Allelu!**](http://www.allelu.com/vision.html)**is used for our Pre-K & K faith formation program. It is published by Our Sunday Visitor and purchased courtesy of our local Knights of Columbus Council #6980.**

* Built upon the same 7 catechetical themes as the older children's curriculum, [**Alive in Christ**](https://aliveinchrist.osv.com/aicinfo/overview/parish), and includes Revelation, Trinity, Jesus Christ, the Church, Sacraments, Morality, and the Kingdom of God.
* [**Allelu!**](https://www.allelu.com/vision.html)  incorporates the latest research in child development and specifically includes child-initiated activities in every lesson.
* Provides a seamless transition to our older child (grades 1-5) textbook series, [**Alive in Christ**](https://aliveinchrist.osv.com/aicinfo/overview/parish)

The [**Alive in Christ**](https://aliveinchrist.osv.com/aicinfo/overview/parish)series is used for CFF programming in grades 1-5. It is also published by Our Sunday Visitor and purchased courtesy of our local Knights of Columbus Council #6980.

* [**Alive in Christ**](https://aliveinchrist.osv.com/aicinfo/overview/parish) is a comprehensive religious curriculum that leads students and their families to understand and live a Catholic life of discipleship. We will use the Parish edition, which invites children into a personal relationship with Christ while helping them to discover the beauty of their Catholic Faith.