

St. Philip the Apostle Church

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www.stphilip.net

Dear parents,

Although this year has been a challenging one, some things are constant in the life of our church. The sacraments are the channels by which grace enters our lives. This year, your child seeks to receive the sacraments of First Penance and First Holy Communion. You are the primary teacher of your child in the faith. More than the priest, teacher, or religious education instructor, the parent is the one with the obligation to pass on the faith to your child.

As such, we are asking you to do some important work to ensure that your child is prepared for these milestones.

1. Daily Prayers: In order to be prepared for the sacrament of Penance (also known as Confession or Reconciliation) your child should know how to recite certain prayers. The basic prayers are attached to this email. Each night, before bed, you should gather your family and pray these prayers: Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, and the Act of Contrition. Praying with your child is more important than reading to your child, brushing their teeth, or making sure they are clean. (Of course, you need to do those things, too!) But prayer is even more essential to your child's well-being.
2. Meeting: We are having a Zoom meeting for all parents of children to receive First Holy Communion. For the beginning of the meeting, we would like your child to be present. The meeting will be held **March 3 at 6pm**. If you cannot attend the Zoom meeting, please let us know.
3. Signing up for First Penance:
Throughout March, we have various times available for your child to receive First Penance. Please choose a confession time that you will bring your child to. These are the times available:
 - a. March 10: 7-8pm
 - b. March 13: 4-4:30pm
 - c. March 20: 4-4:30pm
 - d. March 24: 7-8:00pm
 - e. March 27: 4:00pm

Please send an email to office@stphiliptheapostlechurch.org or call 301.423.4244 to let Mrs. Ehiem, our parish secretary, know when your child will be coming to receive the sacrament of First Penance. Come to the back of the church, where Fr. Lewis will be in the confessional, formerly the "cry room."

4. In preparation for the sacrament, please practice with your child how to go to Confession.

These are some resources to assist you:

<https://www.rcan.org/sites/default/files/files/8%20Guide%20for%20Children.pdf>

Here's a video, one in Spanish and one in English:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2dFxyrZmrc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gy0xSo1JnWs>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pvZSgRKnOkg>

PART II.

FIRST COMMUNION - Saturday, May 1 at 9:00am.

To receive First Communion at St. Philip's:

1. If you are a St. Philip's parishioner, your family must be registered with our parish. Go to www.stphilip.net to register.
2. If you are registered at another parish, but would still like to have your child receive at St. Philip's, we must have a letter from your pastor granting us permission for your child to receive here.
3. We must have a copy of your child's baptismal certificate by April 7, 2021.

We will have a Zoom meeting **April 21, 6:00pm** to focus on First Communion preparation, but even now it is the responsibility of the parents to teach the children what they need to know to receive. Whether your child is in Catholic school, learning from the Sisters, or both – *you*, as the parent, are the primary teacher of your child in the faith.

Explain these points to your children. These are points you should go over multiple times a week.

1. At Mass, bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus. When the priest says, "This is my body," "This is my blood," and the bell rings, they become the body and blood of Jesus. They are NOT merely symbols – but ARE truly the flesh and blood of Jesus.
2. Explain that Jesus wants to be our food because he loves us very much. His body and blood help us be good and go to heaven.
3. By your prayer at Mass or your visits to the Eucharist on Wednesday afternoons from 4-8:00pm, show your child that you believe in and love Jesus in the Eucharist.
4. To receive Jesus as our food is the closest to God we can be here on earth.
5. When we go in the church, we go down on one knee (genuflect) because Jesus is in the tabernacle. We know he is in the tabernacle, because the sanctuary lamp is lit.

6. Read and explain Matthew 26:26-30 (“This is my body”) and John 6 (“I am the Bread of Life”) to your children. Pray that your own faith in the Eucharist (which truly is the Body and Blood of the Risen Lord) might be strengthened.

We have posted a [page to our website](#) with helpful videos and information about preparing your child for his/her First Holy Communion.

Thank you for taking your child’s faith formation seriously. We look forward to walking with you through this process. I would also like to encourage you to set up an appointment with Deacon Kelley or myself, that we might get to know you and help you and your family walk on your journey of faith. Please email Fr. Lewis at pastor@stphiliptheapostlechurch.org or Deacon Kelley at dak@darrylkelley.com if you would like to set up an appointment.

God bless,

Fr. Lewis

Night Prayers for Families

What are you thankful for?

What or who do you want to pray for?

Sign if the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Father

Our Father, Who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, Full of Grace, The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Guardian Angel Prayer

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen

Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven, and the pains of hell; but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, Who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen.

Close with the Sign of the Cross

Prayer before Meals

Bless us, Oh Lord, and these thy gifts which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

An Examination of Conscience for Children

Using the 10 Commandments

1. I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.

Have I wanted more things, making things or money more important than God?

Have I made an idol of sports or entertainment figures?

2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

Do I use God's name carelessly?

Do I use God's name in anger?

3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

Did I attend Mass on Sunday?

Did my behavior make it difficult or impossible for my parents to get to church on time?

Have I remembered to pray daily?

4. Honor your father and your mother.

Do I obey my parents?

Have I done my chores without complaining?

Do I do my chores without being reminded?

Have I been disrespectful to teachers, coaches or others in authority?

5. You shall not kill.

Do I keep my patience or do I lose my temper?

Do I hold grudges and try to get even with others?

Have I been unfair to others, especially those who are different than I am?

6. You shall not commit adultery.

Do I show respect for my body?

Do I respect the bodies of others?

Do I avoid harmful things like drugs, tobacco and alcohol?

7. You shall not steal.

Have I taken something that belongs to someone else?

Have I "forgotten" to return something that I borrowed?

Have I used money responsibly?

8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Do I play fairly or do I ever cheat at school or games?

Have I been honest or have I lied?

Have I hurt someone by what I have said or done?

Have I copied someone else's homework?

9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

Have I been jealous of the friends that someone else has?

Have I tried to be kind to others?

10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

Have I been jealous of the things that my friends have?

Have I nagged my parents into buying things because my friends have them?

Have I helped others when they needed help?

Taken from *Seven Frequently Asked Questions About Children and the Sacrament of Reconciliation*,
written for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee by Kathleen D. Beuscher, 2010

Steps for making a good Confession:

1. Pray that the Holy Spirit will help you to know your sins.
2. Examine your conscience.
3. Express in prayer your sorrow for having committed these sins, or pray for the help to be truly sorry.
4. Resolve not to commit these sins again, and to avoid the situations that lead to sin.
5. Confess your sins to the priest.
6. Pray or perform the penance the priest gives you as soon as possible.

Prayer Before Confession

Come Holy Spirit into my soul. Enlighten my mind that I may know the sins I ought to confess, and grant me your grace to confess them fully, humbly and with contrite heart. Help me to firmly resolve not to commit them again. O Blessed Virgin, Mother of my Redeemer, mirror of innocence and sanctity, and refuge of penitent sinners, intercede for me through the Passion of Your Son, that I may obtain the grace to make a good confession. All you blessed Angels and Saints of God, pray for me, a most miserable sinner, that I may repent from my evil ways, that my heart may henceforth be forever untied with yours in eternal love. Amen.

Act of Contrition

O my God I am heartily sorry for having offended You, and I detest all my sins because Your just punishments, but most of all because they offend You, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin. Amen.

Guide for making an Individual Confession:

- Begin by making the sign of the cross and saying: **“Bless me Father for I have sinned. I have been (how long?) since my last confession.”**
- The priest may give you a blessing at this time. If he has already done so, continue by confession your sins, in kind and number, to the best of your ability: **“These are my sins...”**
- You may conclude by saying: **“For these and all my sins, I am sorry.”**

If you do not know how to confess, feel uneasy, or forget your sins, ask the priest to help you.

- The priest may offer some advice and will assign you your penance. He may then ask you to pray an

Act of Contrition

- The priest will then grant you *Absolution*:

God, the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to Himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Respond: **“Amen.”**

- The priest may say: **“Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.”**

Respond: **“His mercy endures forever!”**

Priest: **“Go in peace.”**

- After Confession, pray or perform your penance as soon as possible. It is a good practice to pray and extra prayer for your priest-confessor.

The Catholic Diocese of Peoria

Children’s Guide to Confession



Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these. (Matthew 19:14)

Examination of Conscience

The Ten Commandments:

I: I am the Lord your God: you shall not have strange gods before me.

- Do I tell God that I love Him?
- Do I thank God every day for all He has given me?
- Do I pray to God every day?

II: You shall not take the Name of the Lord your God in vain.

- Have I said God's name in a disrespectful way?
- Have I said bad words?
- Have I made fun of holy things?

III: Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

- Have I missed Mass on Sunday (or Saturday evening)?
- Do I pay attention and pray at Mass?
- Have I fasted an hour before receiving Communion?
- Have I misbehaved in Church, talked, played, or distracted others?

IV: Honor your father and mother.

- Do I obey my parents, teachers, and those who care for me quickly and cheerfully or do I have to be reminded?
- Have I talked back to my parents?
- Do I help my parents and do my share of the work at home without complaining?
- Have I treated any adult disrespectfully?
- Do I tell my parents that I love them?
- Have I broken any of the rules of my home or school?

V: You shall not kill.

- Have I treated anyone unkindly or disrespectfully?
- Have I hit, kicked, or fought with my brothers and sisters, or anyone else?
- Have I hurt someone's feelings by calling them names or making fun of them?
- Have I hurt someone's feelings by not playing with them or leaving them out of activities?
- Have I been angry and wanted to hurt someone?
- Do I forgive people when they apologize or do I stay mad at them?
- Do I take care of my body by eating the right food and going to bed on time?

VI: You shall not commit adultery.

- Have I watched bad thing on TV?
- Do I respect other people's privacy, especially members of my family?
- Do I knock at a closed door before entering?
- Do I close the door when I am in the bathroom or getting dressed?

VII: You shall not steal.

- Did I take something that didn't belong to me?
- Did I break or lose something that was not mine and not fix or replace it?
- Do I ask first if I would like to borrow something that does not belong to me?
- Do I return on time everything that I borrow?
- If I find money or something that does not belong to me do I try to find out who lost it?
- Have I been selfish and not shared my things with others?

- Have I wasted food or other things?

VIII: You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

- Have I lied?
- Have I said bad things about someone behind their back?
- Have I cheated on a test or in a game?
- Do I play fair?
- Have I talked about something that I should have kept to myself?
- Do I keep my promises?

IX: You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

- Am I jealous of someone because their parents let them do things that my parents don't let me do?
- Do I wish that I had different parents, brothers, or sisters?

X: You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

- Am I envious because others have things that I want?
- Am I greedy?
- Have I been upset or unhappy when someone got something I wanted?
- Have I been envious when something good happened to someone?
- Have I been too critical of others?
- Am I grateful for the things I have?