



# Parent Handbook :

## Sacramental Preparation



**First  
Reconciliation  
And  
First Eucharist**

The Precepts of the Church describe *the minimum effort* we must make in prayer and in living a moral life. All Catholics are called to move beyond the minimum by growing in love of God and love of neighbor.

1. Attendance at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation
2. Confession of serious sin at least once a year
3. Reception of Holy Communion at least once a year during the Easter season
4. Observance of the days of fast and abstinence
5. Providing for the needs of the Church



## OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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**September 2021**

Dear Communion Parents,

With great joy we welcome you and your child into our First Holy Communion Preparation Program! Communion is a sacrament in which those who have been Baptized receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist for the first time. This Sacrament will bring your children in further *communion* with the Holy Catholic Church as they will soon be able to partake at the feast of the supper of the lamb.

Some expectations this year include making their First Reconciliation, attend Mass regularly, attend all class sessions, learn their basic formal prayers, and show a desire to receive First Holy Communion.

The enclosed information in this packet will help explain the many components to our Communion Preparation Program. We hope you will take a few moments to review the important requirements needed by your youngster to receive the child in order to receive the Sacrament of First Holy Communion.

May the Lord bring you peace through Mary!

In Christ,

Mrs. Nicole M. Kristensen  
Director of Religious Education

# Parent commitment statement

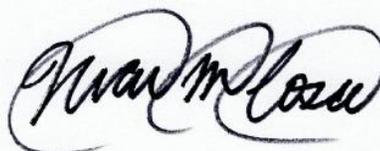
Dear Parents,

As you know, there are a number of requirements which must be met by each Communion student in order for that student to receive First Holy Communion in our parish. These requirements include healthy class attendance, learning the basic formal prayers, complete the Sacrament of First Reconciliation, and most importantly, consistent Mass attendance throughout the Communion year.

Our students cannot fully complete all these requirements **without your help and support**. Therefore, we ask that you sign the Parent Commitment sheet below signifying your commitment to assist your child through this year's journey. *This commitment also includes getting your child to Mass each week.*

**Your child will not be able to attend the first class without this signed Parent Commitment Form.**  
**By signing this commitment form, you are acknowledging responsibility for fully participating in the preparation of the Sacrament of First Holy Communion with your child.**

In Christ,



Mrs. Nicole M. Kristensen  
Director of Religious Education

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## Communion Parent Commitment Statement

I, \_\_\_\_\_ commit to support my child \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent's Name) (Student's Name)

through the process of Communion Preparation. This commitment includes bringing my child to Mass each weekend throughout their year of preparation, getting them to the retreat, attending all class sessions, and completing the Sacrament of First Reconciliation.

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Parent's Signature

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Date

## Roles & Commitment to the Program

A sacrament of initiation The Eucharist is the ritual, sacramental action of giving thanks and praise to the Father. It is the sacrificial memorial of Christ and his body, the Church, and is the continuing presence of Christ in his Word and in his Spirit

- The National Directory of Catechesis

### **The Role of Family in Preparation:**

The Christian family is ordinarily the first experience of the Christian community and the primary environment for growth in faith. Because it is the 'church of the home,' the family provides a unique locus for catechesis. It is a place in which the Word of God is received and from which it is extended. Within the Christian family, parents are the primary educators in the faith and 'the first heralds of the faith with regard to their children'

- The National Directory for Catechesis (29, D)

### **Part of a Parish Community:**

Through its faithful witness to the Gospels, the parish is called to help the children to understand the nature of what it means to be members of God's family – coming together in One Body, One Spirit to share the story of our faith through word, symbol and action. The entire parish are invited to walk this journey of preparation with your children through prayer and intention.

### **The Role of the Catechist (Religion Teacher):**

At St. James, preparation for First Sacraments is first and foremost, family centered, calling upon the parent's responsibility accepted at the time of their children's Baptism to raise their children in the faith.

The catechist/religion teacher is a partner with the parent, offering opportunities in the classroom setting to enhance and reinforce lessons learned at home – the Domestic Church.

### **Workbook:**

Children will be asked to bring their workbooks to class on a regular basis to help provide further conversation. We are using the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Finding God book, and for our make up class we will be using Knowing our Catholic Faith. Each child will also take home a My Picture Missal which contains the Mass responses. Please bring the Mass booklet to Mass each week to help them follow along.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Theme & Objective

- Jesus nourishes us, and strengthens God's life, grace, within us.
- To present Jesus as the model for Christian living, and to introduce the sacraments of Baptism, Penance and Eucharist.

You can find the detailed version of the Archdiocesan Guidelines via this link:

<https://www.nyfaithformation.org/documents/2016/8/GuidelinesGrade2-English.pdf>

## An Overview of the Year 2020-2021 *Modified*

**September – January:** Classes begin/continue

- Workbooks completed throughout the year at home and in class
- Good CLASS ATTENDANCE
- Students will be reviewing prayers from first grade
- Students will be focusing on the Sacrament of Penance
- Attend Mass either in person or online (whichever you choose as long as we receive the reflections each week)

**February** – First Reconciliation

- Takes place during **CLASS TIME**
- Students will be focusing on learning more about the Eucharist and Mass
- Review the booklet on the Mass responses each week during Mass
  - Bring the booklet with them to Mass each week to follow along

**March – April:** Continued preparation on the Eucharist

- Classes end in April
- Continue to work at home to further prepare for Holy Communion:
  - By going to Mass
  - Practicing prayers before bed or when you wake up
  - Watching **Formed.org** videos
  - Practicing how to receive Communion

**May** – First Holy Communion

- Each session is assigned a unique day to celebrate the sacrament
- We will hold rehearsals for the students

## Five steps in receiving the Sacrament of Penance

1. Review the Ten Commandments to remember what sins you have committed.
2. Be truly sorry for your sins.
3. Make up your mind not to sin again.
4. Tell your sins to the priest.
5. Remember the Penance (the prayers, sacrifice, or other instructions) the priest gives you and complete the penance as soon as you can.

## How to go to confession *first Penance*

Please rehearse with your child the steps for going to confession.

1. Make the Sign of the Cross upon entering the confessional.
2. In a serious, quiet voice say: "Bless me Father, for I have sinned, this is my first confession." (After the first confession, you say, "my last confession was...")
3. Tell your sins to the priest. (Review the Ten Commandments and use the examination of conscience attached.)
4. Listen to the words of the priest. He will tell you what he wants you to do as a penance for your sins. Remember what he tells you to do or what prayers he wants you to say and how many times he wants you to say each prayer.
5. The priest may ask you to pray the Act of Contrition.
6. The priest will recite the prayer of forgiveness (Absolution) and will say, "Go in Peace".
7. You reply, "Thank you, Father".
8. Finally, go to your seat, kneel, and say your penance. Pray to Jesus for help to know the right things to do. Remember to ask yourself, "What would Jesus do?" when you are tempted to do something wrong.

\*Confession will be behind the screen due to COVID, unless face to face is requested by the parent.

\*Msgr. Marchitelli will ask for the Act of Contrition to be recited as a group for First Confession only.

## An Examination of Conscience

1. Have I used God's name in an unkind way or have I used curse words?
2. Have I missed Mass on Sunday or on Holy Days through my own fault?
3. Have I failed to do my homework and chores through my own fault?
4. Have I been failed to pay attention at Mass or when saying my prayers?
5. Have I disobeyed or acted disrespectfully toward my parents, teachers, or other adults?
6. Have I acted disrespectfully toward my brothers, sisters, classmates, or others?
7. Have I been cruel (mean or hurtful) to anyone or any living thing?
8. Have I caused another person to sin?
9. Have I stolen or destroyed property that belongs to someone else?
10. Have I told lies, repeated gossip, or injured another person's character?
11. Have I been greedy, jealous, or unkind to others?
12. Have I allowed myself to become uncontrollably angry?
13. Have I cheated?
14. Have I argued with or purposely hurt anyone?
15. Have I refused to forgive or refused to tell a sin?
16. Do I make a point of "getting even" with people when they hurt me?
17. Have I been too proud to say, "I am sorry," when I am wrong?
18. Did I make my Easter duties?

Easter Duties: It is a Precept of the Church that the sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist must be received at least once a year between the first Sunday of Lent and Trinity Sunday; however, Catholics should receive Holy Communion often and go to confession regularly.



# First Holy Communion/Eucharist Preparation

When a child who has not yet made First Communion attends Mass, they can still receive a blessing from the Priest or Deacon by crossing their arms like so:



## Requirements for First Eucharist:

- Parents are required to check their emails/Google Classroom for communication.
- Students must receive First Reconciliation before Communion.
- Students are to attend Mass regularly whether it be in person or online.
- Students are to attend all practices.
- Students are to know their prayers, sacrament definitions, and the proper procedures for the reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist.

## \*\*\*\*\*Please make sure your child knows how to genuflect:\*\*\*\*

- Genuflection is an act of reverence or respect. One should genuflect when walking in front of the Tabernacle or when entering a church pew.
- To genuflect, one must kneel with the right knee all the way to the floor. While kneeling, one should make the Sign of the Cross with the right hand.
- **\*\* For First Communion they will bow before the altar.**
- **Genuflection is important for them to learn for weekly and daily Mass.**

## Reception of the Eucharist:

Will be taught to receive with hands. [Parents may teach at home to receive on tongue.]

Fasting an hour before receiving Jesus on Communion day.

### Prayer Hands:



### Communion Hands:



### Communion on Tongue:



# Mass Attendance Is Required

## for 2020-2021 — Online attendance is acceptable

**Mass attendance is required** for the reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Eucharist. It is important for us to “take Mass attendance” because celebrating the Holy Mass is central to our faith as Catholics. It is ONLY during Mass that we receive Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. The Sacrament of First Holy Communion is **THE** celebration of Holy Mass, so it is also important that your child/family become as familiar with it as much as possible.

*“The Eucharist is “the source and summit of the Christian life.”*  
– Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1324

This year students will have to complete an easy, “Mass Reflection” which can be submitted online in their Google Classroom each week. It will consist of a simple exercise of drawing or writing to show that they participated, watched and hopefully learned something new!

I humbly implore you to make a point to go. I understand that things happen. We are extremely sensitive to that fact. If there are any questions or concerns surrounding this, a meeting should be scheduled with the DRE and Pastor.

### **SATURDAY:**

4:00 PM At OLL/MC  
5:00 PM At St. James

### **SUNDAY:**

8:00 AM At St. James  
9:00 AM At OLL/MC  
10:00 AM At St. James  
11:00 AM At OLL/MC  
12:00 PM At St. James  
12:30 PM Polish OLL/Mt. Carmel



- If you attend Mass at another parish for whatever reason, you **MUST** hand in a bulletin to us with the *priest's signature* for proof of attendance.
- If you are not sure where you can attend Mass while away, check out [www.masstimes.org](http://www.masstimes.org)

*\*Please do NOT hand this in the church collection basket, bring this in to class every week\**



**My Name is:** \_\_\_\_\_

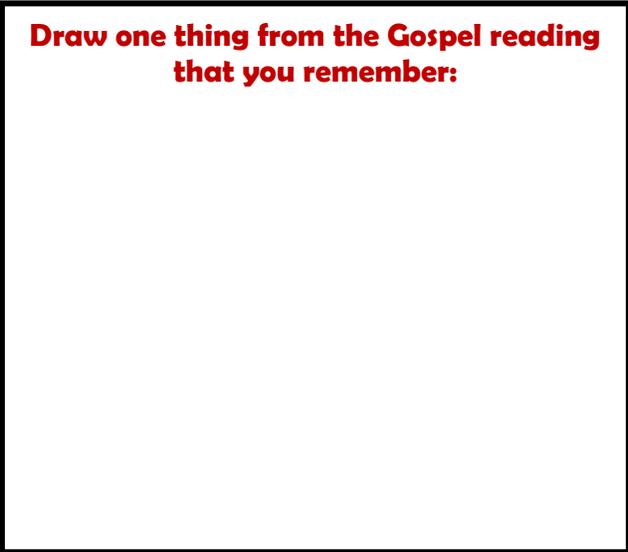
**I Attended Mass on:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Priest Saying Mass:** \_\_\_\_\_

**We are in the Church season of:**

- Ordinary Time (Green)**
- Advent (Purple)**
- Christmas (White/Gold)**
- Lent (Purple)**
- Easter (White/Gold)**
- Pentecost (Red)**
- Marian Feast Day (Blue)**

**Draw one thing from the Gospel reading that you remember:**



**The Priest said this in his Homily:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

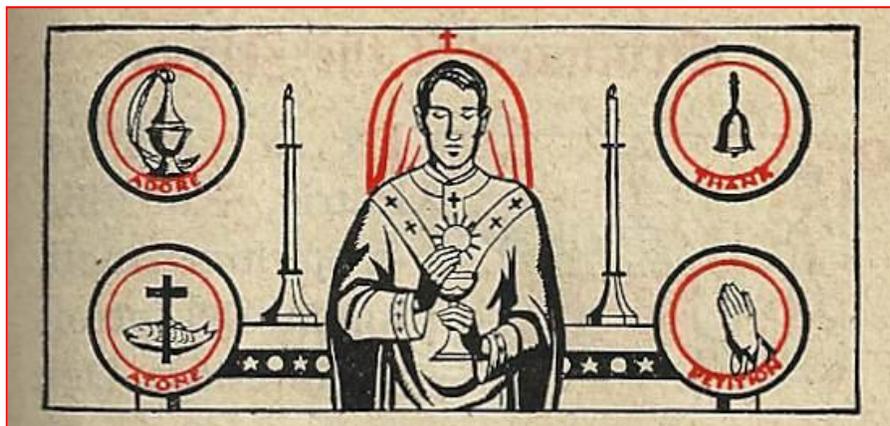
**Today, I want to pray for:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# 10 Quotes That Will Change the Way You Attend Holy Mass

by [Dr Taylor Marshall](#)

1. When the Eucharist is being celebrated, the sanctuary is filled with countless angels who adore the divine victim immolated on the altar. ~ St. John Chrysostom
2. The angels surround and help the priest when he is celebrating Mass. ~ St. Augustine
3. If we really understood the Mass, we would die of joy. ~ Saint Jean Vianney
4. The celebration of Holy Mass is as valuable as the death of Jesus on the cross. ~ Saint Thomas Aquinas
5. Once, St. Teresa was overwhelmed with God's Goodness and asked Our Lord "How can I thank you?" Our Lord replied, "ATTEND ONE MASS."
6. "My Son so loves those who assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass that, if it were necessary, He would die for them as many times as they've heard Masses." Our Lady to Blessed Alan.
7. When we receive Holy Communion, we experience something extraordinary – a joy, a fragrance, a well-being that thrills the whole body and causes it to exalt. ~ Saint Jean Vianney
8. There is nothing so great as the Eucharist. If God had something more precious, He would have given it to us. ~ Saint Jean Vianney
9. When we have been to Holy Communion, the balm of love envelops the soul as the flower envelops the bee. ~ Saint Jean Vianney
10. It would be easier for the world to survive without the sun than to do without Holy Mass. ~ St. Pio of Pietrelcina



# Basic Required Prayers Checklist

## Sign of the Cross

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

## Our Father (Lord's Prayer)

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.

## Glory Be (Doxology)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

## 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. Amen.

\*It is recommended that you pray night with your children before they go to bed. A good practice to begin with your child is to pray The Act of Contrition together.

