

St. Patrick's Religious Education
2022 -2023 First Sacraments Preparation

Important Dates for Students and Parents

All activities are in the Parish Center unless otherwise noted

Tuesday, Sept. 27— First Penance/Communion Parent Meeting 7:30pm

Sunday, Oct. 2— Eucharistic Procession 2:00 pm (Watch for details)

Saturday, Nov. 13— Family Mass and Extended Retreat Day – 10 – 2

Sunday, Dec. 4 - Family Mass and Activity Day 10:00 – 12:30

Sunday, Jan. 8 - Family Mass and Activity Day 10:00 – 12:30

Sunday, Feb. 5 - Family Mass and Activity Day 10:00 – 12:30

Saturday, March 11—FIRST PENANCE 10:30 am CHURCH

Sunday, March 12— Family Mass and Extended Retreat Day - 10 – 2

Sunday, April 16— Family Mass and Activity Day 10:00 – 12:30

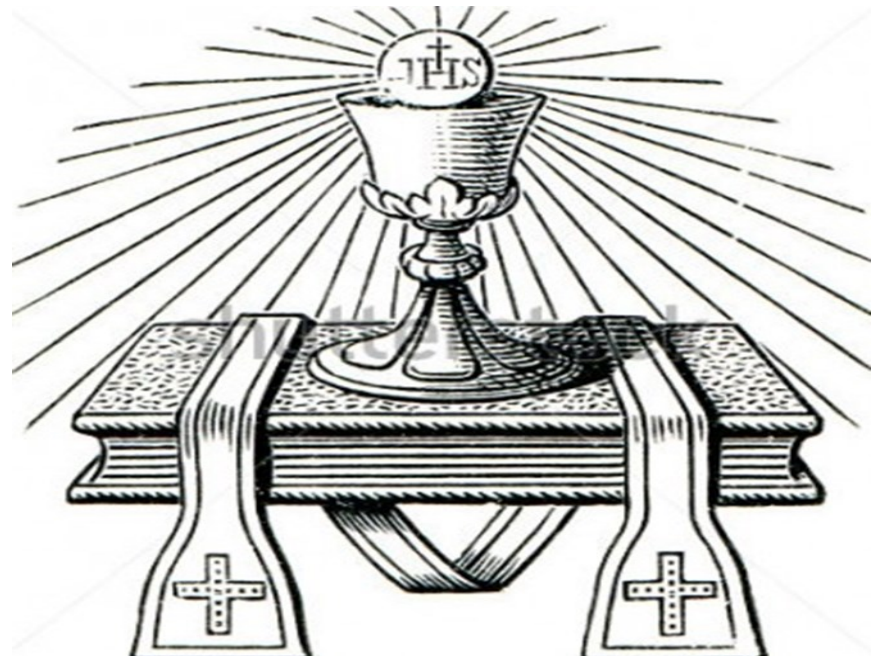
Wednesday, May 3—Rehearsal 6:30 pm

Saturday, May 6— First Communion Mass – 11:30

Wednesday, May 10—Rehearsal 6:30 pm

Saturday, May 13— First Communion Mass– 11:30

**FIRST PENANCE
AND
FIRST EUCHARIST**
St. Patrick's Parish
Sacrament Preparation Information
2022-2023



Welcome...

...to your child's First Penance and First Communion year!

"He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink." (John 6:54-55)

What a graced and glorious time this is for your child and your entire family. St. Patrick Religious Education Program is grateful to be able to travel on this journey with you.

The following will be your guide throughout the year as you prepare for these two important sacraments.



First Communion Rehearsals

Children will have opportunities to practice receiving Holy Communion at the Retreat Day, in class, and the Wednesday evening before their First Communion.

- Wednesday, May 3, 6:30 pm—Church
- Wednesday, May 10, 6:30 pm—Church

First Communion Mass

A Sign-Up Genius form is emailed will be emailed so that you will have the opportunity to select the First Communion Mass of your choice:

- Saturday, May 6, 11:00 am
- Saturday, May 13, 11:00 am



"Let the little children come to me, and do not prevent them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." (Matt 19:14)

First Eucharist

After making their First Penance, the children will receive a First Communion workbook to be completed with their parents at home. Again, this booklet should be returned on the date indicated in the corresponding schedule. They will also be given a banner to decorate and return to our office. This will be used to decorate the church for the First Communion Masses.

What do the children need to know for this sacrament? While there are no memorization requirements per se, the children need to be very familiar with the Mass. It is critical that parents and children come each week to experience the mystery of God the Father's love for us through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Know that the Lord desires your presence at Mass *every week*. Children want to learn about what He is doing in the Mass and may surprise you with behavior better than you imagined (with a little help.)

Children learn how to conduct themselves in church by being there and watching their parents and the people around them. And don't worry, the Lord has a special crown in heaven for parents who wrangled their children during Mass!

Family Preparation



Because parents are the first teachers of their children it is critical that the First Sacraments be taught in the home. Yet many parents feel ill equipped in explaining the faith to their children. Often the busyness of our lives causes us to feel that Mass is just one more thing to fit in. This is an understandable fruit of the culture in which we live and in some instances of the poor catechesis many parents themselves may have received. Factor in a pandemic in which many avoided Mass attendance due to concerns about the Coronavirus. As a result, some children may have a hard time understanding the instruction we are giving.

In response to these realities St. Patrick Religious Education provides a Mass Reflection Worksheet which will focus the whole family on the readings and homily of Mass. Hopefully this will provide a catalyst to make the Mass more meaningful for all.

St Patrick has instituted "Sacrament Sundays" for our First Penance/First Communion families. These are seven Sundays, once a month, throughout the school year in which the families come together for Mass, fellowship, and reflection for parents, and an activity for the children. The morning begins with 10:00 Mass, then a gathering in the Parish Center for a reflection and activity. The morning will run from 10:00 – 12:30 (plus two extended retreat days.)

First Penance



Second grade children in both St. Patrick School and Religious Education as well as those in Private and Home-school will receive a *First Penance Booklet* that they can work through at home. A schedule of completion will be attached to assist families in staying on track with the booklet. This will complement the work being done in class. The booklet should be turned in on the date indicated.

St. Patrick uses a “readiness” model in our preparation for the Sacraments and children are expected to memorize the following:

- Prayers: Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Act of Contrition
- The Ten Commandments, the Greatest Commandment
- Steps to Confession
- 4 Ways to Know the Will of God

We will conduct oral “check-ups” to see where their strengths and weaknesses are. Parents will be notified regarding areas where their children need extra help.

Because memorization is required, we understand that occasionally a child may need more time than others. Please do not be concerned about this requirement. Your child WILL make his/her First Penance. When necessary we give some children extra time to prepare so that they are *completely* ready to receive the sacrament. Once the child is ready a new date is scheduled. There may be several children who will need this accommodation. It is not uncommon so please be at ease about this.

We have found that children who do not have their prayers memorized or who are unsure about how to go to confession have greater anxiety about the sacrament. The ability to say their prayers on their own increases their confidence and delight in this beautiful encounter with Christ. The priests are very gentle and accommodating and will help the children as they recite their Act of Contrition in the confessional.

