

*Saint Andrew the Apostle
Roman Catholic Parish
800 Taylor Drive, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635*

First Holy Communion Parent Handbook

2025-2026



**“If angels could be jealous of men, they would be so for one reason:
Holy Communion.”**

St. Maximilian Kolbe – martyr of Auschwitz

Welcome

First Communion time is here! You remembered, you signed your child up for First Communion classes. You may be reminiscing on your special day, wearing a beautiful white dress, or a smart suit. This is important. You know it. And we praise God that you're here!

This year is more important than most of us probably realize. Holy Communion is one of the greatest gifts we have been given, second only to Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection to open the gates of Heaven for us. Are you ready for this? This is not so much about "getting First Communion done" or a rite of passage. This is about preparing your child for a life changing union with God Himself in the Holy Eucharist. And it provides an opportunity to renew and refresh your relationship with Jesus in Holy Communion as you walk alongside your child. Are you ready to let God enter into your lives in a new way?

Expectations

By registering your child for 1st Communion classes at St. Andrew's, you are committing to:

- 1) Attend Sunday (or Saturday Vigil) Mass Weekly
- 2) Attend class regularly (80% attendance is expected)
- 3) Read the Bible and pray together at home

1. The Mass

The Mass is the "source and summit of our faith" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* # 1324-1327). It's where we receive Holy Communion. We'll prepare your children to understand what is happening in the Mass, and its great importance in our spiritual life, but it won't make sense to your child if they are not attending Mass regularly. We recommend a book like *The Mass for Children*, if it's been a while since your child has attended Mass.

2. Attendance

When you sign your child in for class, you will write what Mass you attended the previous weekend. ***After 2 weeks of absences from class, I will call you and we'll have a conversation. 4 or more absences, and your child is at risk of not being fully prepared to receive Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist.***

3. The Bible: "*Ignorance of Scripture is Ignorance of Christ.*" // St. Jerome

Read the Bible. Read children's Bibles, and watch Bible story videos on Youtube (Ex. "Super Book") with your kids. Get into the Word so that the Word of God can get into you and change your lives.

Resources:

The Catholic Mass for Kids by Winkler: <https://a.co/d/ekR2lQu>

My Catholic Children's Bible by Saint Benedict Press: <https://a.co/d/c9QWLY9>

SuperBook Bible stories on Youtube: <https://youtu.be/4dzjD5FxJPg?si=xr3g4cAsW6CQJ-ME>

Bible in a Year Podcast: <https://ascensionpress.com/pages/the-bible-in-a-year-podcast>

First Communion Classes

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd First Communion classes for 2nd (and some 3 rd) graders	Tuesday OR Wednesday evenings from 5-6:30 PM.
Family Sacraments Class First Communion classes for 4th – 8th graders	Sunday mornings from 8:30-9:45 AM, one parent must attend class with his/her child.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Program

Tuesdays or Wednesdays 5-6:30 PM: 2nd and 3rd graders

This Montessori-based, hands-on class is entirely built on the Scriptures and the Mass. The classroom is called the “Atrium” as it provides an entryway, a space set apart to learn about and encounter God. Students need to be familiar with Bible stories including: *The Annunciation, the Visitation, the Nativity (Birth) of Jesus, the Presentation in the Temple, Jesus' healings, parables, the Good Shepherd, His Last Supper, Passion, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, and Pentecost*. Familiarity with these stories will greatly help them soak in everything they can from their work in the Atrium classrooms.



Family Sacraments Class

Sundays 8:30-9:45 AM: 4th – 8th graders and parents

This class is designed for older students and their parents. This is a powerful opportunity for kids and parents to discuss faith together. Sessions often begin with parents and kids praying and learning together. Then the parents will be engaging in adult formation on the same topics their kids are learning about, learning and supporting each other in community. Every class will end all together discussing what we learned, and a time of prayer, in time to walk over for the 10 AM Mass.

Before classes start on September 7th:

- Check the Faith Formation calendar and coordinate your vacations for class breaks.
- Discuss and choose the Sunday Mass that you will be attending regularly.
- Find a Mass Children's book, and a Catholic children's Bible.
- Pray bedtime prayers with your kids starting tonight, start adding the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be.
- Pick up your Bible, or the “Bible in a Year with Fr. Mike Schmitz” on your favorite podcast App, and start reading to/listening to the Bible.

Contact: DRE Genevieve Rivera at genevieve@standrewsv.org or 520-305-9301

PRAYERS TO BE MEMORIZED by February 28th

Sign of 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.**

Doxology (Glory Be)

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.**

Fatima Prayer *(to be familiar with)*

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of Hell. Lead all souls to Heaven, especially those most in need of Thy mercy. **Amen.**

Before Holy Communion I should:

1. Be free of mortal sin.
2. Fast for one hour.
3. Ask Jesus to come to me.

After Holy Communion I should:

1. Thank Jesus for coming to me.
2. Tell Jesus how much I love him.
3. Ask Him to continue to help me.

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**

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.**

The Apostles' Creed *(to be familiar with)*

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell; on the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. **Amen.**

How to go to Confession (Feb or March)

Prayer Before Confession: *Come Holy Spirit, give me Your light to see my sins, and give me Your help to be sorry for them. Show me why I sinned. Help me never again to sin on purpose.*

Beginning Confession: Kneel behind the screen, or sit in front of the priest. Make the Sign of the Cross with the priest.

Say: **Bless me, Father, for I have sinned, this is my first Confession (or it has been _____ long since my last Confession)**

Name your sins (examples: I got angry with my sister, I am grumpy when my parents ask me to do something often, I cheated on a test...)

Say: **For these and for anything else that I've forgotten, I'm sorry.**

The priest will give you a penance, a few prayers to pray AFTER you leave the Confessional. Then he will say, "Please make a good Act of Contrition"

Say: **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.

The priest will raise his hand over you and say the prayer of absolution, "I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

Say: Amen. Thank you Father.

Leave the Confessional, kneel in the pews and pray the penance the priest gave you.

Prayer after Confession: *"Thank you Lord for healing and forgiving my sins. Help me never to offend you again. I love You Jesus."*

Examination of Conscience

1st Commandment: I am the Lord your God, you shall not have strange gods before me.

- Have I put effort into learning my Faith and learning my prayers?
- Do I pray every day?
- Am I superstitious instead of trusting God?

2nd Commandment: You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain.

- Have I used the name of God, or the name of Jesus carelessly, without thinking of Him?
- Do I speak disrespectfully of holy things or prayers?
- Have I used bad language or bad words?

3rd Commandment: Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

- Did I miss Mass on Sundays and Holy Days due to my own fault?
- Do I do unnecessary work on Sunday?
- Do I talk, laugh, or distract others at Mass?
- Do I try to participate in the Mass, by singing and saying the Mass parts from my heart?

4th Commandment: Honor your father and your mother.

- Do I obey my parents, teachers and people in authority, or do I talk back to them?
- Do I talk badly to my parents, or about my parents?
- Have I been respectful and helpful toward my siblings?

5th Commandment: You shall not kill.

- Do I say mean things to others, or talk unkindly about them behind their backs?
- Do I deliberately hurt others, in words or physically?
- Do I lose my temper or fight?
- Do I bully others?

6th Commandment: You shall not commit adultery.

- Have I listened to, watched, or read anything that is impure?
- Do I make fun of people, disrespecting who they are as boys or girls?
- Do I respect my body as a Temple of the Holy Spirit?
- Do I dress in a way that does not show I am a son or daughter of God?

7th Commandment: You shall not steal.

- Do I take what does not belong to me?
Do I damage the property of others?

- Do I give back what I have borrowed?
- Do I accept a gift I know was stolen?
- Do I try to return articles I found to their owner?
- Have I cheated on a test, or let someone cheat off of my test?

8th Commandment: You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

- Am I truthful and kind when I speak about others?
- Do I show respect for the good name of others?
- Do I lie and hurt the good name of others by telling negative stories?
- Do I hang out with people who are not a good influence on me?

9th Commandment: You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

- Have I purposely thought of impure things?
- Have I read or watched things that are impure, or are disrespectful toward people's bodies?

10th Commandment: You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

- Have I been jealous or unhappy when someone has something I want?
- Do I feel happy when someone loses something they have?
- Do I boast or brag about something I have, or can do that other people don't have?
- Do I take more food, or other things, than I need, simply because I want more?
- Do I share, or do I have trouble sharing my things?
- Am I thankful for all God has given me?
- *Are there any other sins I may need to confess?*