



## **First Reconciliation/First Confession**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a gift of God's forgiveness and peace. As children of a loving God, we are all invited to celebrate the healing grace that is offered through this sacrament.

Reconciliation is a powerful example of God's presence in our lives. In this sacrament we come to God with knowledge that we sin, that our sin hurts our community and ourselves, and that God is ready to forgive and heal our brokenness when we have a contrite heart. God is always waiting and welcoming us back to Him when we lose sight of God's way.

St. Mary's parish celebrates First Reconciliation (i.e., Confession, Penance) in the second grade in the month of January.

# First Reconciliation/First Confession

All children who are of the age of reason (age 7), and who have been baptized in the Catholic Church, are eligible to prepare for First Reconciliation (Confession) and First Holy Communion. Preparation for these sacraments in accordance with the Archdiocesan guidelines, includes enrollment and participation in either the Christian Formation classes offered at the parish or enrollment in the Catholic School for at least one year prior to the reception of the Sacraments. Students in second grade who have not been formally enrolled in a Christian Formation Program prior to second grade must complete the first-grade classes before preparing for the sacraments.

Preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) and the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist (First Holy Communion) is a two-year program.

## Preparation

- It is in the home that most of us learn to love, to forgive and to be forgiven.
- Daily prayer and regular Mass attendance is essential.
- Students are prepared for this sacrament by attending Christian Formation classes or by attending a Catholic school.
- Sacramental preparation begins in first grade and is continued in second grade.
- Parents commit to attending any parent meetings that are required.
- Parents need to submit a copy of your child's baptismal certificate to our Christian Formation Office only if your child was baptized at another parish.
- Parents need to become a registered member of St. Mary's Parish if you are not already a member. All sacraments are celebrated at the home parish where the family is registered.

St. Mary's registered parishioners with a child in second grade who either attend a Catholic School, or the parish Christian Formation classes will receive information about First Reconciliation as well as First Holy Communion through a sacramental newsletter that will be emailed to parents in late autumn.

## Sacramental Catch-up Program

If your child is a third grader or older who has had no formal religious instruction in the past, they will need to register in our Christian Formation Classes on the grade level they are in at in school and after completing one full year of classes, they may register for the Sacramental Catch-Up Program which begins in late Spring. This program will prepare your child for receiving the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion.