



Saint Patrick
Parish School of Religion
2019-2020
Sacramental Program

This year you will be helping your child to prepare for two sacraments, First Reconciliation and First Communion. The information in this packet is meant to help you. Please review these materials carefully, and if you have any questions please feel free to contact us.

October 3 7:00 PM Social Hall	Meeting for parents in preparation for Celebration of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist.
October 12-13 All Masses	Sacramental Commissioning Ceremony
December 4, 5:00 PM & 6:45 PM School/Church	Prayer Service and Practice for First Reconciliation during Regular Class. Parents Invited!
December 5, Thursday 7:00 PM Church	Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Wear clothing appropriate for Church (No jeans or shorts).
February 20, 2020 Thursday, 7:00 PM Social Hall	Meeting for parents in preparation for Celebration of First Eucharist. Parent Prayer Service (Only Parents, no children please)
April 18, 2020 Saturday, 9:30 AM Church	Prayer Service and Practice for First Communion. Parents Invited!
April 29, 2020 5:00 PM & 6:45 PM	Additional Practice During Class
May 2, 2019 Saturday 1:00 PM Church And/or May 3 2019 Sunday 2:00 PM Spanish	Celebration of First Communion. Please deliver children to the Social Hall by 12:30 pm. Girls: Traditional white or pastel dress and optional veil. <u>NO</u> purses, gloves, corsages, prayer books or rosaries. Boys: Solid white shirt with tie and solid dark or khaki dress pants.



St. Patrick Parish School of Religion

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October 3, 2019

Dear Parents,

Your home is the major influence on the religious education of your child. Vatican II clearly states: "The parents' role is so decisive that scarcely anything can compensate for their failure in it." Together with the priests and teachers of the parish, you are being invited to take an active part in your child's training for First Reconciliation and First Communion. We firmly believe that parents, teachers, and priests should work together in giving your child this vital preparation. Alone we may feel inadequate; together, with the help of the Holy Spirit, we can succeed in nourishing the love of God in our children's hearts.

The sacrament of reconciliation is an important part of our lives as Catholics living together as a community. It is the sacrament of forgiveness and peace. Through reconciliation we are filled with the strength and grace to become the people we are called to be, the People of God.

Preparing children for the sacrament of reconciliation is an important element in their spiritual formation. As parents, you have the awesome responsibility of helping your child form a good conscience; distinguish between right and wrong, good and evil. It is through your efforts that your child establishes a system of values and a code of morality. It is through your lives that he or she comes to understand forgiveness. It is in witnessing your faith in Christ that your child comes to know Jesus.

Participation in the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of our Catholic faith. The obligation to participate in the Mass each week is not merely a duty, but a compelling reminder of how deeply the Eucharist shapes our identity. The parish community gathers to celebrate in liturgy what it is in life: the Body of Christ. The Eucharist, like all sacraments, is three-dimensional. At Mass, we celebrate the memorial of Christ's Passion, recalling all of salvation history. We celebrate Christ's presence with us in the here and now under the form of the sacred Bread and Wine. And we look to a future beyond all imagination - the heavenly banquet we will celebrate in the fullness of God's kingdom.

When children celebrate their first communion, they are celebrating another sacrament in their initiation into God's family. From this moment on, they will be full and active participants in the liturgy. The family is primarily responsible for forming children in the faith and bringing them to the table. You must be strong role models for them. The children learn from example - from our singing and praying at Mass - what is important about our faith. It will be especially important to provide an example by sharing in communion each week.

By word and example, may we all - parents, teachers and priests - wisely lead our children in celebrating the wonderful sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist.

Blessings,

Peggy Webb, CRE

Parents and Reconciliation



The role of parents preparing their children for reconciliation begins before a child starts school. Forgiving and reconciling are continuing processes in all loving families.

Parents, consciously and unconsciously, are instilling in their children a hierarchy of values, right and wrong, an understanding of the words “sorry”, “apology”, and “forgiveness”. All of these concepts are fundamental in preparing for everyday life in our families and communities. They are also important elements in a child’s preparation for the sacrament of reconciliation.

Teachers in a classroom cannot replace parents as guides in this all-important development. In fact, it is impossible to teach a child in school what “sorrow” really means if a child has never been forgiven at home. It is also difficult for a child to learn how to apologize if that child has never witnessed an apology situation in his or her home. Parents help children experience apology situations by letting children witness a loving sincerity of words and actions when spouses apologize to one another. Parents should not hesitate to apologize to their children when the occasion arises.

Moral codes are communicated very effectively in the home. Honesty, fairness, kindness, generosity, and integrity are lessons *taught* during school time but are *caught* at home through Christian family living.

Parents should try to evaluate what they have done toward the moral development of their child. Where is the emphasis placed in terms of values? What is considered “good” or “bad” in their home. How are contrition and forgiveness expressed in the family?

Unfortunately, the words “I’m sorry” have taken on a superficial meaning in our society. How are we as parents teaching our children the meaning of “I’m sorry”?

- As magic words that can get people out of trouble by simply saying them?
- As a way of showing what polite children you have?
- As an automatic tape to be played back when something happens?
- As a response to a stimulus? (along with “Thank you “ and “Excuse me”)
- As an expression having some meaning that they have to think about?

In learning what it means to be truly sorry, children must be helped in gradually coming to understand that if a person is sorry, that person:

- Tries to change his/her behavior
- does something about the action (the wrong he/she committed)
- makes promises or resolutions to try not to repeat the action.

I'm so
sorry!



The Sacrament of Reconciliation

(In the Communal Celebration you will listen to God's Word and pray the Act of Contrition together with the assembly.)



- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you remember your sins. Examine your conscience and think about the choices you have made. Tell God you are sorry for your sins.
- Enter the reconciliation area and sit facing the priest (or kneel behind the screen).
- Greet the priest and Pray the *Sign of the Cross* together.
- Father may read a story from the Bible that tells how Jesus loves his friends.
- Say “ Bless me Father this is my First Confession” (Or, “The last time I confessed was...ago”).
- Tell your sins to Father. This is called your *confession*. You may talk to Father about anything that is troubling you or that you don't understand.
- Listen to Father. He will ask you to do something special to show Jesus that you are sorry for your sins. This is called your *Penance*.



- You say a prayer telling God that you are sorry for your sins. This prayer is called an *Act of Contrition*.
- Father will pray for you and say the words of forgiveness. This is called *Absolution*. You will make the sign of the cross and say “*Amen*”.

- If Father says “Go in Peace” or God bless you”, respond by saying “Thank you, Father”.
- Leave the reconciliation area and pray the prayer you were given for penance.
- Smile and feel proud. You have just received God's loving gift of *forgiveness*.



Examination of Conscience

An important part of preparation for confession, whether it is first or fortieth, is an examination of conscience. It is easy though, to be distracted or forgetful while doing an examination of conscience. For this reason, recommended lists of questions or meditations are created. The basic outline always follows the Ten Commandments. These also provide a good framework for teaching your child about confession and teaching a early or simple definition of sin. The following is an examination of conscience created for children, source unknown.

Responsibilities to God.

- Have I prayed every day?
- Have I prayed my morning and night prayers?
- Have I prayed with my parents and family?
- Have I been moody and rebellious about praying and going to church on Sunday?
- Have I asked the Holy Spirit to help me whenever I have been tempted to sin?
- Have I asked the Holy Spirit to help me do what is right?

Responsibilities to others

- Have I been obedient and respectful to my parents?
- Have I lied or been deceitful to them or to others?
- Have I been arrogant, stubborn or rebellious?
- Have I talked back to parents, teachers or other adults?
- Have I pouted and been moody?
- Have I been selfish toward my parents, brothers and sisters, teachers or my friends?
- Have I hit anyone?
- Have I held grudges or not forgiven others?
- Have I treated other children with respect or have I made fun of them and called them names?
- Have I used bad language?
- Have I stolen anything? Have I returned it?
- Have I performed my responsibilities: Have I done my homework? Done my household chores? Have I tidied up my room and my toys when asked?
- Have I been helpful and affectionate toward my family?
- Have I been kind and generous with my friends

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.



FAMILY PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

Reader:

Jesus taught us something very special when He told us to pray *The Lord's Prayer*. Whenever we pray the *Our Father*, we ask God to forgive us as we forgive others.

We gather here as a family to ask God and each other for forgiveness. After each prayer I read, we will all say:

Forgive us, Lord and help us to love and forgive one another.

~

Reader: For the times we were selfish, lazy, or greedy, we pray...

All: Forgive us, Lord and help us to love and forgive one another.

Reader: For the times we hurt one another by our words and actions, we pray...

All: Forgive us, Lord and help us to love and forgive one another.

Reader: For the times we did not try to do our best as parents, children, brothers, or sisters, we pray...

All: Forgive us, Lord and help us to love and forgive one another.

Reader: For the times we were not honest with ourselves and each other, we pray...

All: Forgive us, Lord and help us to love and forgive one another.

Reader: For being impatient, angry, or mean, we pray...

All: Forgive us, Lord and help us to love and forgive one another.

Reader: For not doing our part to make this a happy family, we pray...

All: Forgive us, Lord and help us to love and forgive one another.

Reader: For all our sins, we pray...

All: Forgive us, Lord and help us to love and forgive one another.

Reader: Our Father,

All: Who art in Heaven...

Reader: O Lord, lead us not into temptation and keep this family protected from all evils. We ask this in your name.

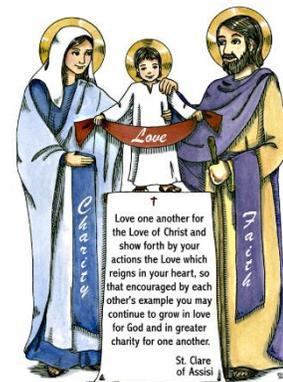
All: Amen.

Reader: (Blessing) May God bless all of us and watch over us, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Reader: Jesus came to bring peace. He said to His apostles and friends, "Peace I leave you. My peace I give you."

We will end this prayer by giving each other a peace-hug.





Let the Children Come to Me

Leader: We take this opportunity to look into the Gospel and find a message for parents today.

Reader: A Reading from the Gospel, Mark 10: 13-16.
People were bringing little children to Jesus in order that he might touch them: and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

All: Praise be to Jesus Christ, now and forever!

Leader: Centuries after Jesus walked this earth with His disciples, parents are still trying to find ways to bring their children to Jesus. In this day and age there are new obstacles in the way. Despite all obstacles, let us pray that we may bring our children to Jesus to be blessed.

All: Bless the children, O Jesus. We thank You for letting them come to You. Teach them to follow You as they walk the path of life. Give them the faith to understand their purpose in life. In all that they do and in every challenge they face, help them to know the difference between right and wrong. Lead them in obedience on a straight path to a worthy goal. Teach them that duty is a friend and not an enemy. You have given them their bodies, gifts of Your wonderful creation; make them wise enough to keep it free from harmful substances. Keep them healthy and strong. Open their minds to the truth and fill their hearts with love. Help them keep their honor bright and teach them that integrity of character is a priceless possession. Grant that they may do their best each day, while continuing to strive to do better every tomorrow. Never let them give up hope, their trust in You. Take care of our children, Lord, now and in the next life.



Leader: May the blessings of Almighty God be upon us and our children.

All: Amen.