

Level 1 Sacramental Preparation

Areas of Focus:	Complete:
1) Do I participate in almost every Sunday Mass and Holy Day of Obligation?	<input type="checkbox"/>
2) Do I pray every day? How do I live my relationship with Jesus on a daily basis?	<input type="checkbox"/>
3) Have I memorized the “Our Father,” “Hail Mary,” “Glory Be,” “Bless us O’ Lord,” and “Angel of God”?	<input type="checkbox"/>
4) What is my understanding of the Trinity?	<input type="checkbox"/>
5) Why did Jesus die on the Cross?	<input type="checkbox"/>
6) Why is the Sign of the Cross important?	<input type="checkbox"/>
7) Do I know how and why I genuflect?	<input type="checkbox"/>
8) What is the Body of Christ?	<input type="checkbox"/>
9) What is the Church Militant?	<input type="checkbox"/>
10) What is the Church Suffering?	<input type="checkbox"/>
11) What is the Church Triumphant?	<input type="checkbox"/>
12) How do we enter God’s family / The Church?	<input type="checkbox"/>
13) What is Baptism? When was I baptized?	<input type="checkbox"/>
14) What are the sacraments?	<input type="checkbox"/>
15) Can I list all 7 sacraments?	<input type="checkbox"/>
16) What is grace?	<input type="checkbox"/>
17) What is sin?	<input type="checkbox"/>
18) Am I sorry for my sins and have I asked Jesus to forgive me?	<input type="checkbox"/>
19) Why should I pray to Mary the Mother of Jesus?	<input type="checkbox"/>
20) Have I watched some of the children videos on formed.org ?	<input type="checkbox"/>
21) Have I read one or more of the children books from the Lending Library in the back of Church?	<input type="checkbox"/>
22) Do I have a rosary?	<input type="checkbox"/>
23) Do I have a crucifix in my home (living room or bedroom)?	<input type="checkbox"/>
24) Do I have Holy Water in my home?	<input type="checkbox"/>
25) Do I know what Holy Water is for?	<input type="checkbox"/>
26) Can I name the Liturgical Seasons and their colors?	<input type="checkbox"/>
27) Do I love Jesus and Mary?	<input type="checkbox"/>
28) Have I attended the parish sacramental preparation retreat?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Family Name: _____

Child Name: _____

Mentor Name: _____

Mentor Signature _____

Date Completed: _____

Please return sheet into the Parish Office upon completion.

Sacramental Preparation Bonus Activities

(not required)

	Task:	Complete:
1	Memorize the “Our Father”, “Hail Mary” and “Glory Be” in Latin.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Pray the Stations of the Cross on Fridays and during Lent.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Participate at week day Masses.	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Make short visits to the Blessed Sacrament.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Participate at Adoration, even if just for 10 to 20 minutes.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Go on pilgrimage to any shrine or church: i.e. Cross In The Woods, which is a great place to pray the outdoor Stations of the Cross; Our Lady of the Assumption (Mio), which is a great place to learn more about some of Mary’s apparitions; Bishop Baraga sites (e.g. Holy Cross on Beaver Island, St. Ignatius in Good Hart). It would be good to read about Bishop Baraga online before going.	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Learn and practice the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy (will be discussed during Retreat for level 3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Prepare to altar serve by learning the names and purposes of the items used for Mass and by shadowing the other altar servers.	<input type="checkbox"/>

LEVEL 1 SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Below is a suggested timeline on when and how to learn or build on the topics and questions in Level 1. It is not required that you learn these things in this order, rather this acts as a guide in assisting you so you are continuously learning about the sacraments throughout the year.



Things to Learn at Mass

These topics below can be learned and witnessed as you attend Mass.

- Why is the sign of the cross important?
- Why did Jesus die on the cross?
- Do I know how and why I genuflect?

Bonus Activities

- Memorize the "Our Father", "Hail Mary" and "Glory Be" in Latin
- Pray the Stations of the Cross on Fridays and during Lent
- Participate at week day Masses
- Make short visits to the Blessed Sacrament
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- Learn and practice the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy (will be discussed during Retreat for level 3)
- Prepare to altar serve by learning the names and purposes of the items used for Mass and by shadowing the other altar servers.

Level 1 Questions & Answers

1) Do I participate in almost every Sunday Mass and Holy Day of Obligation?

This is a simple yes or no question. It is extremely important we put into practice the third commandment to “Keep Holy the Sabbath” and Jesus’ command at the Last Supper to “Do this in memory of me”. On the Sabbath (Seventh Day) the Israelites were asked to rest from work in order to acknowledge their relationship with God as being the priority. It was a day of thanksgiving to God for all of His blessings.

Since Jesus Christ is the fullness of blessings given to all of us, the day of His resurrection (Lord’s Day or Sunday) becomes the privileged day to remember and to celebrate our covenant with God. We rest from work to make God the priority and we fulfill Jesus’ words “Do this in memory of me” by renewing our covenant with Him in the celebration of the Eucharist. In the Eucharist we give thanks for Jesus, sacrificed for us and re-presented to us on the Altar. We come together as the Family of God, united by His Word and by His Body and Blood.

The importance of making it to Sunday Mass cannot be emphasized enough! It is a personal and family covenantal moment the Church defines as the “source and summit of the Christian life”. (CCC 1324) It is such an important encounter wanted by Jesus, that to miss it without good reason constitutes sinfully grave matter. Jesus gives Himself to us and we give ourselves to Him. With Jesus on the Altar we are asking the Father to look upon His only Begotten Son and pour down grace upon all of us.

For a more in-depth explanation please read the CCC 2168-2195 and *Dies Domini (Keeping the Lord’s Day)* by John Paul II.

2) Do I pray every day? How do I live my relationship with Jesus on a daily basis?

We cannot have a relationship with Jesus without prayer. Prayer is anytime we give our hearts and minds to God. It can be a simple conversation with God in which we listen and speak to Him as His children and as His friends. It is being mindful of His loving presence, in which we thank Him, love Him, petition His help and offer to Him all our actions.

With this question we are trying to make sure the child is able to spontaneously talk with Jesus and through this dialog to open themselves up to His presence. As Jesus becomes their best friend, they will begin to see all the ways He takes care of them and that they can trust Him. Their love for Him will grow and they will naturally desire to meet Him more fully in the Sacraments.

Spontaneous prayer should also extend as a conversation to the angels and saints, above all to Mary as our Heavenly Mother wanting to help us love her Divine Son.

Spontaneous Prayer should always be present, from our waking to our sleeping. Children should be taught to say “good-morning” and “good-night” to Jesus, to tell Him “thank you” and “I love you” throughout the day, to ask for help before beginning difficult tasks, before beginning to drive in the car, when they see someone in need, when they hear the siren of an ambulance, before meals, when passing a Catholic Church or cemetery, etc... The prayers need not be long, only from the heart.

3) Have I memorized the “Our Father”, “Hail Mary”, “Glory Be”, “Bless Us O’ Lord”, and “Angel of God”?

This is a simple yes or no question, either they have them memorized or not.

(Can be learned at Mass or by reciting the Rosary)

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.

(Can be learned during the recitation of the Rosary)

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.

(Can be learned during the recitation of the Rosary)

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.

(Can be learned during recitation before meals)

Bless us, O Lord! and these Thy gifts,
which we are about to receive from Thy bounty,
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Can be recited before driving, when in need of help, when we hear a siren, before a sports activity, before falling asleep, etc.)

Angel of God,
my guardian dear,
To whom God's love
commits me here,
Ever this day,
be at my side,
To light and guard,
to rule and guide. Amen.

4) What is my understanding of the Trinity?

With this question we would like the child to know that there is only one God. This one God is three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

God is omnipotent: meaning He is all powerful. He is all-knowing, even our thoughts and feelings. He is all-present, both in Heaven and on Earth and therefore He is always close to us. He created everything and created each one of us. He made everything to be good.

This can be explained every time a child asks a question about God and how close He is to us.

The image of the sun is sometimes used as an example to explain this mystery: the Father is like the gases burning, the Son is like the light, and the Holy Spirit being like the heat. Fuel, light and heat all make up the Sun. They cannot be divided, yet they are different.

The image of the family is also used as an example to explain this mystery: just as the Holy Spirit is eternally generated from the love of the Father and Son, so too, children are born from the love of mom and dad.

5) Why did Jesus die on the Cross?

Jesus died on the cross because He loves us! He died to forgive us for all our sins and show us how much He loves us. Because of this we should never doubt His love for us. Every time we look at Jesus on a cross we should thank Him for loving us so much.

This can be learned by the child during moments of prayer when we thank Jesus for loving us enough to die for us. When the child makes a mistake we can also explain that Jesus is merciful and forgives us for all our sins.

6) Why is the Sign of the Cross important?

The Sign of the Cross is important because with it we remember how much Jesus loves us and we entrust ourselves totally to Him.

To sign ourselves means to mark ourselves with the sign of our redemption. We are sealed and purchased by the Blood of the Lamb of God. We mark ourselves as belonging to Christ. We often do this with Holy Water to remember our baptism, which was the special moment we officially gave ourselves (or were given) to God. It is the physical gesture by which we say to God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) that we belong to Him through the saving love of Jesus on the cross. Every time we make the sign of the cross, with or without Holy Water, we are giving ourselves to God by renewing our covenant with Him.

The child should be able to explain that the Sign of the Cross is important because it signifies that we belong to Jesus. It can be learned every time we begin a prayer or bless ourselves with Holy Water.

7) Do I know how and why I genuflect?

In the Latin Rite of the Catholic Church we show our love and devotion to Jesus present in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist (also called Communion) by touching our right knee to the ground.

For example, we genuflect to Jesus present in the Tabernacle or when He is present on the Altar.

The genuflection can be learned every time we enter a Catholic Church and search out the Tabernacle and then reverence Jesus present there.

8) What is the Body of Christ?

The child should be able to explain that the Body of Christ is the entire family of God. We become members through baptism. Jesus is the Head of the Body; the more we belong to Jesus, the more we are part of His Body and part of His family. (CCC 781-795)

We need to explain to the child that many people love God and belong to His family. God wants all of us to be His children and to love each other.

9) What is the Church Militant?

The Church Militant is the part of God's family still on earth, still walking toward Heaven.

10) What is the Church Suffering?

The Church Suffering is the part of God's family in purgatory, being purified (cleaned up) in order to enter into Heaven.

"All Souls Day" is a day (Nov. 2) set aside when we pray for all those family members that may need our prayers. Traditionally it is a day to visit the cemetery and pray a Rosary or Divine Mercy Chaplet for all those in need. The entire month of November is ideal for visiting the cemetery. Visiting the cemetery also fulfills the Spiritual Work of Mercy to pray for the dead.

11) What is the Church Triumphant?

The Church Triumphant is the part of God's family that are triumphantly in Heaven, in the fullness of Communion with God.

We celebrate the Church Triumphant every time we celebrate the Feast Day of a Saint, but we celebrate all of them together on "All Saints Day" (Nov. 1). We gratefully rejoice because they have made it to Heaven, there they glorify God and they pray for us. All Hallow's Eve or The Eve of All Saints Day (Halloween) can be a day to remember the Saints by dressing up like them. The child should be helped to pick out a Saint they want to imitate and ask for help.

12) How do we enter God's family / The Church?

We enter God's family, the Church, through baptism.

There are three types of baptism: baptism by water, baptism by desire, and baptism by blood. (CCC 1257-1261)

This can be explained every time we witness a baptism and every time we talk about how to get to Heaven. We get to Heaven by living our baptism, in other words, by continuing to give ourselves to Jesus.

13) What is Baptism? When was I baptized?

It is enough for the child to know that baptism was the moment they were given (entrusted) to God. They promised (through their parents) to be good friends with Jesus. They also should know the date of their baptism and learn to celebrate it like a birthday. It was the day Jesus fully entered their hearts and they entered the family of God.

Baptism is the way we make our covenant with God. Jesus gave Himself to us through baptism (immersion). He immersed Himself in our reality by becoming man, by embracing our sinfulness in the Jordan river and by immersing Himself in His blood on the Cross. We give ourselves to God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) through baptism, immersing ourselves in water. The immersion in water is symbolic of 1) the drowning of our sins, 2) the washing of our sins, and 3) the new life given to us in Jesus Christ.

This can be taught in preparation to celebrate the child's baptismal day. It can also be talked about on the Solemnity of the Baptism of our Lord (the date changes, but is in the beginning of January), when He entered the Jordan River and promised to redeem us. By entering the water, He gave the waters of baptism the power to cleanse us of all sin.

14) What are the sacraments?

The sacraments are places we encounter God and receive His grace. Jesus Himself instituted the sacraments to continually give Himself to each one of us.

This can be explained and reiterated to the child every time we receive a sacrament. We can explain which gift we will receive from Jesus in each sacrament (i.e. mercy, Body and Blood) and how we need to prepare for each one (i.e. contrition, prayer, hour fast, etc...).

15) Can I list all 7 sacraments?

Sacraments of Christian Initiation: **1) Baptism, 2) Confirmation, 3) Eucharist.** They initiate us into the life of Christ.

Sacraments of Healing: **1) Reconciliation / Confession, 2) Anointing of the Sick.** They heal us both spiritually (our heart) and physically (our body).

Sacraments at the service of communion and mission of the faithful: **1) Holy Orders, 2) Marriage.** "They are directed towards the salvation of others; if they contribute as well to personal salvation, it is through service to others that they do so." (CCC 1534)

We can explain to the child that Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist make us Christians; they unite us to Jesus. Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick are for healing our souls (hearts) and bodies when they need it. Holy Orders and Marriage are ways God calls us to love and serve others.

We can also use the image of a gift. The first group is how we receive the Gift of God; the second group is how we clean the Gift if it gets dirty or if we need strength to hold it; the third group is how we share the Gift with others.

16) What is grace?

Grace is a gift from God. It is "the free and undeserved help that God gives us to respond to his call to become" His children. (CCC 1996) "Grace is a participation in the life of God" (CCC 1997) To be in the

State of Grace means to be in communion with God, to be good friends with Jesus. When we commit a mortal sin we sever our relationship with God until we repent and ask His forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

We can talk to the child about grace every time we receive a gift from God. There is no better time to talk about grace than at Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and Corpus Domini. At Christmas we receive the greatest gift (grace) of all: Jesus. He comes to save us and to be our friend. At Easter Jesus gives us His life (grace), all of His love. At Pentecost we receive the grace of the Holy Spirit, who is the Love of God wanting to live in our hearts. At Corpus Domini (Body of the Lord) we celebrate the gift (grace) of Jesus in His Precious Body and Blood.

17) What is sin?

“Sin is an offense against God.” (CCC 1850) It is enough that the child can express that it is something that hurts our relationship with God. It is when we do not love God, our neighbor, ourselves, or creation as we should. They should also be able to explain the difference between mortal and venial sin.

“Sin is an offense against reason, truth, and right conscience; it is failure in genuine love for God and neighbor...” (CCC 1849)

“Mortal sin destroys charity in the heart.” (CCC 1855) Three conditions are necessary: 1) grave matter; 2) full knowledge; 3) complete consent. (CCC 1858-1860)

Venial sin wounds our relationship with God and others, “it offends and wounds charity”. (CCC 1855)

Sin can be explained to the child every time they do something hurtful to Jesus, to themselves and to others. The Season of Lent is a very appropriate time to explain sin to children because it is a time for letting go of the tendencies which prevent us from belonging to God. Getting rid of sin can be likened to breaking the chains that hold us back from God and others.

Though avoiding sin is important, clinging to Jesus and His grace is even more important. The more Jesus’ love fills our hearts, the more sin is simply pushed out. We become the person God desires, beautiful and happy; sin loses our interest as Love fulfills our hearts.

18) Am I sorry for my sins and have I asked Jesus to forgive me?

It is important for the child to learn to ask Jesus for forgiveness whenever they do something bad. Is the child sorry for the moments they may not have been a good friend to Jesus and to others (parents, siblings, classmates, teammates, etc...)? Have they asked for forgiveness, in their own words, of Jesus and others?

“Contrition is “sorrow of the soul and detestation for the sin committed, together with the resolution not to sin again.” (CCC 1451)

“Contrition is called “perfect” (contrition of charity)” “when it arises from a love by which God is loved above all else.” (CCC 1452)

“Contrition is called “imperfect” (or “attrition”) is also a gift of God, a prompting of the Holy Spirit. It is born of the consideration of sin’s ugliness or the fear of eternal damnation and other penalties threatening the sinner (contrition of fear).” (CCC 1453)

A nice moment to teach the child to ask pardon for all of their sins is as they get ready for bed. They can thank the Lord for all the blessings of the day and ask forgiveness for any wrong they may have committed.

19) Why should I pray to Mary the Mother of Jesus?

It is enough that the child understand Mary to be the Mother of Jesus, that she never sinned, that she loves Jesus more than anyone and that she wants to help us love her Son. She is always interceding for us. Jesus gave her to each one of us while He was on the Cross so that she might help us to receive His love and forgiveness.

We are blessed to have a number of beautiful feast days dedicated to Our Blessed Mother. Each feast day offers us an element of reflection and celebration regarding Mary. The months of May and October are dedicated to Mary. It would be good to teach the child prayers to Mary during these months.

20) Have I watched some of the children videos on formed.org? (Access code: DPR7NN)

This is a yes or no question. If they want to they can tell you what video they liked. There are a good selection of videos.

21) Have I read one or more of the children books from the Lending Library in the back of Church?

This is a yes or no question. The Lending Library is meant to be of assistance to parents that might have difficulty finding good formative books for their children. If they have similar books at home that is fine. The child can explain which book they like the best.

22) Do I have a rosary?

This is a yes or no question, but it would be good for them to know which beads represent the “Our Father” and which ones represent the “Hail Mary”. The Month of October is dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary (Her specific Feast Day is Oct. 7th) and would be a great month to obtain a Rosary and learn how to use it. Often people will recite a family Rosary together in the evenings or while driving. Sometimes people like to just hold their Rosary, as a sign of holding Our Blessed Mother’s hand and asking her to guide and protect them.

23) Do I have a crucifix in my home (living room or bedroom)?

This is a yes or no question, but it would be good for them to know why it is important to have a crucifix in their home.

When we love someone we want a picture of them and objects that remind us of them. We also treasure moments and things they may have given us. On the Cross Jesus gave us all His love, so the crucifix reminds us of how much He loves us. It also reminds us that we need to love Him with all our heart, mind and actions. The crucifix is therefore a concrete sign that our lives and our homes belong to God.

A nice moment to put a crucifix up is during the blessing of the home. As the priest blesses the home and the crucifix, the crucifix is hung on the wall as a concrete sign that the home has been entrusted to Jesus.

If your home has not been blessed, please contact the parish office to schedule a house blessing with the priest.

24) Do I have Holy Water in my home?

This is a yes or no question, though it would be good if the child knows where to find Holy Water in the Church and where it is kept in the home.

We have Holy Water bottles available at the little Book Store in the Gathering Space at the Cathedral. The child can then go with their family to the baptismal font and fill it up.

25) Do I know what Holy Water is for?

The child should know that Holy Water was used for baptism and so we use it to renew our baptismal promises to belong to God, to love Him and to live for Him. When we bless ourselves with Holy Water we are re-entrusting ourselves to God. When we bless our homes or other objects that belong to us with Holy Water we are entrusting them to God and asking that they might be used for His Glory.

Throughout the ages, some parents use Holy Water to pray and bless their children before putting them to bed. They wet their thumb or finger with Holy Water and then trace the Sign of the Cross on the child's forehead. With this prayer and gesture the parents entrust their children to God and ask His protection from evil.

26) Can I name the Liturgical Seasons and their colors?

Advent (violet); **Christmas** (white); **Lent** (violet); **Easter** (white); **Ordinary Time** (green).

The **Triduum** (literally "three days") refers to the evening of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday.

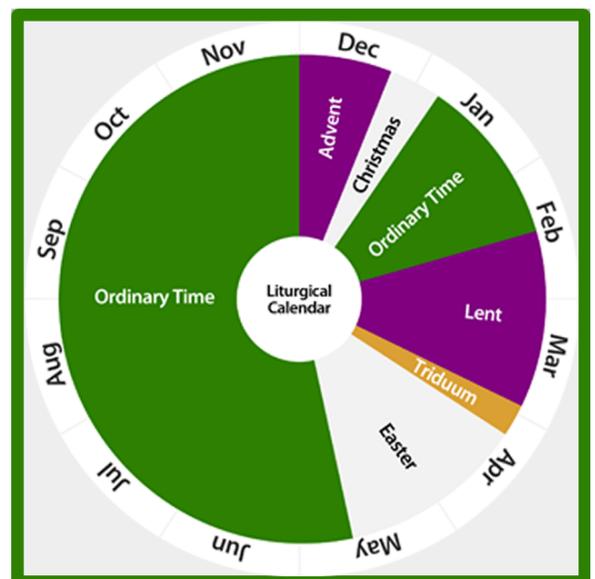
Violet: symbolizes penance, preparation and sacrifice.

White: symbolizes purity, joy, light and glory.

Green: symbolizes hope, life and anticipation.

Rose: symbolizes rejoicing and anticipation (used on Gaudete and Laetare Sunday).

Red: symbolizes blood, fire and passion.



The Liturgical Calendar revolves around the life of Jesus. Since we are members of Jesus' family we need to unite ourselves around the life of Jesus. The Holy Spirit leads us as the Body of Christ to celebrate the principle mysteries of Jesus' life. He works through the events we celebrate to conform us ever more fully to Jesus. The more we study and live the Liturgical Calendar, the more we open ourselves up to the many graces God wants to give us.

St. Paul indicates this mystery when he writes: "If we have died with him we shall also live with him; if we persevere we shall also reign with him." (2 Tim. 2:11-12)

The Catholic All Year Compendium by Kendra Tierney will be distributed to parents at registration. It is a great resource to help make our Faith livable and fun, and is meant to be a supplemental tool. If this is followed then assimilating the Faith will come naturally.

Another resource for living our Faith in the context of the liturgical year is pbgrace.com (peanut butter & grace).

27) Do I love Jesus and Mary?

This is a simple yes or no question. Love needs to be what motivates us and what our Faith is all about.

As humans we need to see, to hear, to touch, to taste and to smell. Jesus is God made visible to us; He is the concrete presence of God that touches our humanity. Because of this, it is most beneficial for our own growth in the love of God to love the God we can see, hear, and touch: Jesus.

Mary is the greatest help we have to receive Christ and to draw near to Him. She continually gives Him to us and as our Mother and Sister she intercedes for us and leads the way. Mary can never be loved "too much" because Jesus wants us to love her as He does.

28) Have I attended the parish sacramental preparation retreat?

The child is required to attend the parish retreat for each year they are in the sacramental preparation program; a minimum of two retreats are needed. Please see schedule for the retreat dates.