

January 5, 2018

Dear Parents,

This is an exciting year for your children as they prepare to receive the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. We begin with their preparation for First Reconciliation (Confession), which is required before First Eucharist (Communion).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 2223) reminds us that “Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children” and that parents have “the responsibility and privilege of evangelizing their children. Parents should initiate their children at an early age into the mysteries of the faith of which they are the ‘first heralds’ for their children. They should associate them from their tenderest years with the life of the Church. A wholesome family life can foster interior dispositions that are a genuine preparation for a living faith and remain a support for it throughout one’s life” (CCC 2225).

With this in mind, the programs of preparation for the two sacraments are introduced by the parish and directed by the parents. All parents who desire for their children to receive these sacraments at Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church, including those who attend a Catholic school, Christian school or home school, are required to participate in these programs. Participation begins with a Retreat for students and parents, continues with at-home instruction between parents and child, and draws to a close with the return of the completed work to the Faith Formation office and a “practice” session for the sacrament. The students should then be fully prepared to receive the sacrament. On the back of this letter are the dates for each portion of the First Reconciliation preparation program.

If you have any questions or are unable to attend the Reconciliation Retreat scheduled for Sunday, January 21, from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. in the dining room, please contact Tanya Watterud, Faith Formation Coordinator, at 839-6834 or [education1@olgminot.org](mailto:education1@olgminot.org) or text 701-219-3194. Also, please see the back of this letter for additional information.

We look forward to working with you and your children as they prepare for these sacraments.

In Christ’s service,

Fr. Bruce Krebs  
Pastor

## **Sacramental Preparation Programs for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist**

*In the Diocese of Bismarck, of which Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church is a part, children typically receive First Reconciliation and First Eucharist in their second grade year. However, students in higher grades who have not yet received these sacraments are encouraged to participate in these programs, as well, or to contact us regarding an individualized program of preparation.*

### **Schedule: Preparation Program for First Reconciliation (Confession)**

**Sunday, Jan. 21, 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.:** Reconciliation Retreat, dining room. *Child and at least one parent must attend.* A Make-up Retreat for those unable to attend on Jan. 21 will be held Thursday, Jan. 25, from 6:30-8:00 p.m. in the dining room.

**Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 27-28:** We have the Rite of Enrollment for the children at all Masses this weekend. The children are invited to stand at whichever Mass they attend so that the congregation may pray for them.

**Jan. 21 through Feb. 11:** Parents work with their children at home on the sacramental preparation workbook entitled "My Booklet about God's Love and Forgiveness". (Those who attend Faith Formation classes have already been working on this.) If the child has difficulty with writing, parents may help, but please encourage as much work on their part as possible. It is OK if you only discuss the "Discussion" sections (without writing the answers), but please ask your child to write out the answers and draw pictures, etc., in all of the "Activity" sections of the workbook. Many children like to complete every answer in the workbook (both in the "Discussion" and "Activity" sections), so please allow them to do so if they'd like.

**Feb. 11 through 21:** Completed workbooks should be returned during this time to the Faith Formation office (classroom 4 – please slide it under the door if Tanya is not in) or to the child's teacher so that the workbooks may be reviewed for completion. On the day the children receive the sacrament (Feb. 24), the workbooks, with positive comments regarding their work, will be given back to the children.

**Sunday, Feb. 11, at 9:35 a.m. or Wednesday, Feb. 21, at 4:05 or 5:35 p.m.:** During Faith Formation classes, students practice with Fr. Bruce to receive the sacrament. Parents whose children are not in the parish Faith Formation program are asked to choose the practice time listed that works best for their child, and to RSVP to the Faith Formation office so that we are prepared for the correct number of students. RSVP to Tanya Watterud, Faith Formation Coordinator, at [education1@olgminot.org](mailto:education1@olgminot.org), 839-6834 (office), or text 701-219-3194. If your child is in a Faith Formation class, there is no need to RSVP. *Parents may attend practice, but are not required to do so.*

**Saturday, Feb. 24, 9 a.m. or 10:30 a.m.:** The children receive the sacrament of First Reconciliation at Our Lady of Grace in one of two separate prayer services. Times will be assigned. *Parents should be present to help join in the celebration of this sacrament.*

**Note about email communications:** If you did not receive this letter via email prior to receiving it in the mail, please contact Tanya and provide us with your email address. Reminders about different portions of the sacramental preparation process are sent by email and we want to make sure you receive all of the communications. Thank you.