

Requirements for receiving First Reconciliation and First Communion at St. Michael's

During this year your child will receive the two sacraments that the Catholic faith holds up to us as the surest and quickest way to holiness, the Eucharist and Confession. These sacraments give us grace to live out our life but it is important that we work with that grace to grow. Your child is entering into this sacramental preparation and so is taking the next step in their faith. Their faith is one that you as parents have given them. The greatest lesson we can teach our children is by living out our faith on a daily basis. God through His Church gives us some expectations to help us understand what is needed to have a good relationship with our Heavenly Father. These expectations are called the "precepts of the Church". These precepts are the bare minimum our Church asks of us to be considered full and active members of the Catholic Church. By living out the precepts we cooperate with God and His grace guarantees us in the sacraments. Unlike the 10 Commandments that tell us what not to do in our attempt to live a holy life, these precepts tell us what we should do in order to grow in holiness.

1. You shall attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation and rest from labor.
2. You shall confess your sins at least once a year.
3. You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least once during the Easter season.
4. You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.
5. You shall provide for the needs of the Church.

Beyond living our faith at home and in the public, the requirements for receiving first communion and first reconciliation here at St. Michael's involve attending one of our religious education options. The students must consistently be present for their preparation through either our school, Wednesday night religious education, Family Formation, or participate in the St. Thomas religious education. For those families in Family Formation, we ask that no more than two classes are missed. We certainly understand that life will come up during the course of the year and so we ask that you do your best to participate as fully in religious education as is possible. In addition to the classroom requirement we also have four other dates that student and families need to attend.

First reconciliation practice will be on **Saturday, March 4th at 10am** in the church. We will prepare for receiving first reconciliation. The student along with one guardian will need to attend. The meeting will last at most an hour.

First reconciliations will take place during normal confession times. A sign up will be sent out after practice on March 4th for families to sign up for a time.

First communion practice will be on **Saturday, April 15th at 10 am** in the church. The student along with a guardian will need to attend the one hour practice. After the practice, individual pictures will be offered in the church for those who would like an individual picture taken.

First communion will take place on **Saturday, April 22nd at 10 am** in the church. If you wish your child to be in the group picture you will need to plan to be there at **9:15**. Students will need to meet **in the narthex hallway at 9:30** to line up for Mass.

Following First Communion we will send out pictures from first communion and the individual photos free of charge to each family.