



# Diocese of Manchester Secretariat for Catholic Formation

## Parent Guide for Sacramental Ministries in the Home



**Restore • Renew • Proclaim**  
*the Hope that is Christ*



## **Parish Information**

**Parish Name:**

**Churches within the parish:**

**Parish Phone Number:**

**Pastor:**

**Parochial Vicar:**

**Parish Catechetical Leader:**

**Phone number:**

**Mass Schedule:**

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**Restore•Renew•Proclaim**  
*the Hope that is Christ*



# Introduction

As Catholics, we believe the sacraments are at the core of our faith. We celebrate some of them at pivotal moments and celebrate others regularly. As you use this Parent Guide, notice that what you are engaged in are referred to as “Sacramental Ministries”. This term reflects the sacred role you willingly accepted at your child’s baptism; namely, to pass on the faith to your child. This involves more than what you learn at meetings for parents and families or what is in this guide. The Sacramental Ministries are threefold: *prepare* for, *celebrate* and *live* the mysteries of the sacraments each day of our lives. It is our hope that this guide will assist you in incorporating these Sacramental Ministries into your family life.



Dear Parents,

These next two years are a special time for you and your child as you help them to prepare for, celebrate and live the sacraments of Reconciliation and Penance, Confirmation and First Holy Communion. Through these sacraments, we pray that your child will come to a deeper knowledge of his or her sanctification and the personal love of God.

The sacrament of Reconciliation and Penance is the sacrament of the Lord's merciful love and His forgiveness of our sins. Each of us needs to be aware of the reality of sin and God's mercy, even at a very young age. We all need the Lord's love and forgiveness. It is our hope that you will accompany your child on this journey of grace and that your family will renew the practice of celebrating the sacrament of Confession regularly and often, demonstrating that sin is "not the end of the world", but a bad choice that God can forgive; then we can start over.

As you know, here in the Diocese of Manchester we have restored the original order of the Sacraments of Initiation, meaning your child will receive Confirmation before the reception of First Holy Communion. Therefore, at a young age your child will be a fully initiated member of the Catholic Church and, consecrated to God, the gifts of the Holy Spirit will be at work within them, assisting them to grow in faith as disciples of Jesus Christ.

The Eucharist is the heart of the Christian life. Your child will prepare to receive the Body and Blood of Christ for the first time. Out of pure love, Jesus desires to be with us and invites us to return to Him in the Eucharist as often as possible. The Eucharist nourishes us so we can grow in grace and holiness (truly a Holy Communion between the soul and our Lord).

Receiving the sacraments of initiation is not the end of your child's formation in the faith but the beginning of a new and important chapter in his/her faith formation. The gift of faith is what you asked for your child when you presented him/her for Baptism and promised to raise your child in the faith. Certainly you and your family will come to a deeper intimacy with Jesus through the work of the Holy Spirit during these special years and remain close to Him through the Eucharist for the rest of your lives.

This handbook is provided to assist you to prepare, celebrate and live these sacraments. In it, you will find resources and tips to help you in your role as a Catholic parents.

We pray that the gift of faith will grow in your child and in your family. We pray for you as you begin to enjoy the experience of preparing your child for these sacraments. May God bless you and your family as you celebrate and live the sacraments each day.

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Pastor Signature

## Why Celebrate Confirmation Before First Holy Communion?

The Diocese of Manchester is in the process of continuing to strengthen and renew faith formation in our parish, school and home school communities. Through this process we are being called anew to “Restore, Renew and Proclaim the Hope that is Christ.”

The goal is to make lifelong faith formation a priority and a reality throughout the diocese. This requires a few things:

- Making adult faith formation a priority in our parishes, which includes formation of catechists, parents and the entire adult community.
- Strengthening our youth ministry programs to include all teens of high school age.
- Reimagining our sacrament preparation processes to include a return to celebrating the sacraments of initiation in their restored order: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist.

### FAQ's

Included here are some frequently asked questions regarding the celebration of the sacraments of initiation in the restored order. (*This is also referred to as “original order,” “traditional order,” or “proper order.”*)

**1. What are the Sacraments of Initiation?**

The sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist are interrelated and all three are required for full Christian initiation.

**2. What does restored order of the Sacraments mean?**

Restored order means returning the three sacraments of Christian initiation to the logical order in which they were designed to be celebrated: first Baptism, then Confirmation, then Eucharist. During the first five hundred years or so of the history of the Church, it was always the case that the sacraments of Christian initiation were celebrated in this sequence.

**3. Why is the Diocese of Manchester changing the age of Confirmation?**

By placing Confirmation at this age, the Diocese of Manchester will be following the natural sequence of the sacraments of Christian initiation. In addition, by placing Confirmation prior to the reception of First Communion it makes it easier to view the Eucharist as the summit of Christian initiation.

**4. How is the celebration of Confirmation going to change in the Diocese of Manchester?**

The standard age of Confirmation is going to be third grade, and Confirmation will be celebrated at the same liturgy as First Holy Communion. As a result, the preparation and reception of the sacraments of initiation throughout the Diocese of Manchester will be Baptism in infancy, Confirmation and Eucharist in third grade. Although not a sacrament of initiation, the Sacrament of First Penance & Confession will be received in the second grade.

**5. What are the benefits of restored order?**

First, it will highlight that the Eucharist, not Confirmation, is the culmination of Christian initiation. Secondly, with the reception of grace of the Holy Spirit at a younger age, it will give children greater courage and guidance in facing the increasing difficulties of living a Christian life. Finally, it will allow for more opportunities for parents to take their rightful

place as the primary educators of faith formation. It places sacrament preparation at an age when children are naturally more open and receptive to participating with their parents.

**6. Does the Church require a certain age for Confirmation?**

Both the *Rite of Confirmation* and the *Code of Canon Law* (Canon #891) set the age of discretion (age 7) as the age for Confirmation. In 2002, the USCCB designated the age for Confirmation to be between the age of discretion and age 16, and gave local bishops the ability to determine their own policies within that range.

**7. How will children be able to make an adult commitment to the Church if they are confirmed prior to First Communion?**

This question reflects a common misconception that the Sacrament of Confirmation signifies maturity and adult commitment to the Church. The maturity that is required for receiving any of the sacraments of Christian initiation is only what is age-appropriate. The Church expects interior dispositions of readiness, such as understanding and freedom, that are realistic at any given age, nothing more. To celebrate Confirmation requires nothing more by way of age-appropriate maturity than to receive the Eucharist. An authentic, mature commitment to Christ and the Church is expressed in lifelong participation in the Eucharist and apostolic life of the Church.

**8. How can a young child know everything about the faith?**

It is impossible to know everything about the faith. Faith Formation is a lifelong process. All youth, kindergarten through high school, are expected to be engaged in faith formation. Adults need to continually learn about the faith, read the scriptures, receive the sacraments, and serve the church and the world through acts of mercy.

**9. If children are confirmed earlier, won't they drop out of faith formation?**

They might. It depends on their parents. Confirmation has been misunderstood and often viewed as graduation from faith formation. Growth in the understanding and living out of our faith is the result of a lifelong effort. Parents have the first responsibility of being an example of Jesus Christ to each other and living the Gospel each day. Children will stay in faith formation if they see their parents striving to grow in holiness through family prayer, scripture reading, Sunday Mass, regular Confession, and living a life of service and charity.

**10. How will restored order affect youth ministry?**

Restored order provides great opportunities to revitalize youth ministry. The sacrament of Confirmation can be misused as a carrot to motivate attendance. Instead of drawing teens by our own creative efforts and quality ministry, we easily fall into requiring them to be present. This can lead teens to feel they are captives and being forced to attend meetings. Also, because the sacrament tends to be the focus and goal, few teens stay involved once Confirmation is celebrated. The sacrament is an initiation into Christian discipleship. By confirming at the time of First Holy Communion, we make it very clear that Confirmation is not the end but the beginning, not graduation but initiation into a life of continued growth in the faith. Parish based Youth Ministry is to have the mission of the church as its purpose. Youth ministry teams must evangelize, build teens up through formation, and send them out to minister as disciples of Jesus Christ.



**11. Will curriculum materials and guidelines be provided?**

Yes. Catechetical curriculum materials used are to be from the USCCB Conformity List <http://www.usccb.org/about/evangelization-and-catechesis/subcommittee-on-catechism/upload/Current-Conformity-List.pdf>. This is a listing of materials reviewed by the USCCB Subcommittee on Catechism and found in conformity with the Catechism. In addition, five publishers currently offer sacramental preparation materials for restored order reviewed by this USCCB Subcommittee. Other publishers expect to have restored order sacramental preparation materials available in the fall of 2017.

A caution: if a parish attempts to create its own curriculum or uses a published curriculum not on the USCCB Conformity List, it is stepping outside the diocesan-wide process and needs to submit the curriculum to the Secretariat for Catholic Formation for approval.

**12. When will this transition happen?**

There will be no change in the celebration of the sacraments of initiation during the first year, June 2017- June 2018. This will be a diocesan-wide year of preparation. The Directors in the Secretariat for Catholic Formation will be available for staff meetings, parish and/or parent presentations tailored to parish needs and all age groups.

**13. How will this transition happen?**

There will be a three-year implementation process, June 2018 – June 2021. Pastors and parish staff members will determine their own timeline for the transition. Possible models for this transition will be provided to pastors and parish staffs. The goal is that the normative age for Confirmation and Eucharist will be third grade by 2021.

*Many dioceses generously offered us input from their experience of implementing the restored order of celebrating the Sacraments of Initiation. We are grateful for the time, resources and encouragement they shared. Their contributions enhanced this FAQ resource as well as the other resources we developed.*

# The Role of Parents/Guardians

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*“How precious is the family as the privileged place for transmitting the faith!” Pope Francis*

The Diocese of Manchester calls upon parents/guardians to help prepare their children for reception of the sacraments. The home is where faith is developed and lived out. Each parent/guardian models to their child what the life of faith looks like. The following practices will help them:

- Participate in Sunday Mass and help your child learn responses.
- Participate in a family conversation with pastor, clergy, pastoral staff, catechetical leader or catechist.
- Teach your child prayers by praying them often at home and explaining their meaning.
- Teach and encourage your child to use his/her own words to pray.
- Pray with your child at meals and bedtime.
- Read Bible Stories with your child.
- Bring your child to regular faith formation sessions and complete home activities with your child to foster love and understanding of their faith.
- Participate in the special sessions planned for parents/guardians to attend together with your child each year.
- Place and use a Bible and other religious articles such as a crucifix, holy water and sacred images in your home.
- Once your child has made their First Confession, we encourage you as a family to receive the grace of forgiveness in the sacrament regularly.
- Once your child has been confirmed and received First Holy Communion continue as a family to support their faith formation by attending weekly Mass.

*“Parents/Guardians are the first and best teachers of their children in the ways of faith, and we depend on their faith as the primary models and motivators of their children.” CCC #1212*

## **Understanding Your Child**

### **Characteristics of a 6-7 year-old child**

Children of this age:

- Are growing away from egocentric social behavior toward an awareness of other people.
- Are entering into peer-group activities with zest.
- Need guidance in learning to handle playtime conflicts and to exercise the social skills needed to establish and maintain friendships.

Their skills include:

- Learning to give and take and to share responsibility with peers.
- Learning appropriate gender-sex identification.
- Learning to read and to write, and other related intellectual skills.
- Understanding a story and retelling it from beginning to end.
- Some are even capable at this stage of finding hidden meaning or discovering the moral in a story.

Note: The children's sense of self-worth is quite fragile at this stage. It is imperative that the catechist be sensitive to this fragility. When a child fails, it is the behavior rather than the child that needs to be corrected. This correction should be handled in such a way that the child's emerging self-image is not damaged or hurt.

### **Faith Development Needs**

Six/seven year-old children, in order to develop holistically (spiritually, emotionally, physically, intellectually, socially):

- Need to be loved so as to love. Faith has its roots in love.
- Need to be recognized, appreciated, and praised for the unique person each one is, created in the image and likeness of God. They need the resulting sense of security and belonging which is essential to their growth.
- Need to see and experience how to share.
- Need models from real life, from Scripture and the lives of the saints and, especially, from the most familiar adults in their lives. Through them, they begin to see faith in action.
- Need to appreciate others as special persons who are good and loved by God, regardless of social strata, race, physical disabilities, etc.
- Learn to value children different from themselves.

- Need to experience a climate, an atmosphere in which self-discipline can be fostered by giving them real responsibilities, and gradually to learn that all actions have consequences, either positive or negative.
- Need to be involved in group prayer and related religious activities.
- Should continue to experience brief moments of silence in which to communicate with God, to wonder, to reflect, to imagine; e.g., the story of Samuel.

## **Implications**

Because children relate readily to the language of symbols and gestures and begin to acquire the spiritual attitudes which the gestures express, families should provide frequent opportunities for them to engage in ritual: processions, offerings, praising and thanking God in prayer and song.

To help the children move from a moral stage known as self-interest, families should endeavor to awaken in them an awareness of the needs and feelings of others, inviting them to reach out to others in love and concern. Even at this early age, children can tell others about Jesus.

One way six/seven-year-old children acquire their image of God is from the stories they hear. These images later become more mature concepts and feelings about God. Therefore, Scripture stories which emphasize the love and providence of God and God's faithfulness should be used.

Because the little child tends to imitate, the parent must be an exemplar, one who is conscious of God's presence in the world and in her or his life, one who is joyful, and one who is striving to follow Christ more closely.

Some children know at an early age what God calls them to be. Contact with a priest or religious as a role model may encourage these particular vocations.

To become wholly oneself requires the development of both the natural and the supernatural virtues. The parent is to be aware that genuine love always respects the other person in his/her integrity and should, therefore, recognize in the child the right to be himself/herself as called by God.

*Should parents need assistance in any way, they should not hesitate to contact the Faith Formation staff. We are here to serve you.*

## **Characteristics of a 7-8 year old child**

Children of this age:

- Are beginning to expand socially. They enjoy involvement in group activity such as singing, recitation and other learning experiences that are activity and story-oriented.
- Can learn to respect others as good, created and loved by God.
- Have become more cognizant of right and wrong and of their power to choose.
- Begin to develop a set of action patterns based on those they observe in adults they admire.
- Have a short attention span (about 10-20 minutes) and tire easily if lesson segments are too long or if too many ideas are presented at once.

Their skills include:

- Memorizing simple prayers, phrases from the Psalms and Scripture, as well as other prayer forms such as a response to a litany.
- Thinking in the abstract is very limited. They still learn best through concrete experiences.
- Grasping concepts like “unity” and “belonging” from doing things such as sharing, listening, eating together, conversing, giving, thanking and celebrating.
- Showing interest in how things are made, especially living creatures. This interest readily transfers to prayers of praise, wonder, awe and thanksgiving.

## **Faith Development Needs**

Seven/eight year-old children, in order to develop holistically (spiritually, emotionally, physically, intellectually, socially):

- Need not only the freedom to make choices, but also help to realize the effects of their personal choices, especially how these affect their relationship with God and with others.
- Should be taught the value of prayer as a means of deepening their relationship with God.
- Need to know that experiencing the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Penance, Confirmation and Holy Communion deepens this relationship with God.
- Learn by doing and by listening.
- Need to be taught how to listen and how to engage in activities such as role-playing, dramatization, story-telling, singing and celebrating in religious ceremonies.
- Need help to understand and handle constructively their feelings and emotions. Reassurance and encouragement, praise and reward, direction and love from the catechist, parents, and other adults whom they admire foster their growth in becoming whole persons in a Christian community.

## **Implications**

In helping children form their consciences, parents and catechists should be careful to react consistently to an action, incident, or situation. Thus the children will realize that there are differences between what is dangerous, what is improper, what is annoying, what is accidental, and what is sinful.

As parents and catechists help to prepare the children to receive the forgiveness of God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, concentration should be placed on the reality of God's love rather than on the enormity of sin or the magnitude of human failure.

Because 7-8 year olds are still limited in their sense of history and time, they tend to confuse past and present experiences. The parents and catechists need to bear this in mind and repeatedly clarify the differences. Pointing out relationships between current events and those of the past help the children. Parents and catechists should bear in mind the children's limited sense of time and history when introducing them to the examination of conscience. Children live in the present, generally. When they remember past sinful actions, it is frequently true that they mix what happened years or months ago with what happened last week. They need assistance in sorting out what is real and relevant to the current examination of conscience.

The child begins to be aware of the imbalance between what he or she wants (the will and the sense appetite) and the need for tempering these drives by knowledge (reason). The child needs to recognize situations that have cause and effect, and be responsible for the effects of his/her actions.

Parents and catechists are instrumental in cultivating the moral and theological virtues according to the age level of the child.

For children to understand their personal value of being created in the image and likeness of God, parents and catechists must show them respect and love in action and attitude, consistently building them up with praise, recognition, and appreciation.

Parents' and catechists' personal relationships with God in prayer, his/her appreciation of the sacraments manifested through frequent reception and his/her relationship with others will be a criterion on which the children form their values.

SOURCE: Office for Catechetics, Diocese of Sioux Falls

## WHY SHOULD I PRAY?

As a parent, you have a very special and unique relationship with your child. In order for this relationship to continue growing and developing, you and your child need to keep the lines of communication open. Without communication, relationships suffer. God wants to be in communication with his children, just as any parent does. Your relationship with God, just as your other relationships, requires communication to remain healthy. Another word for this communication with God is **prayer**.

To help your child develop a lifelong practice of prayer, it is important to set an example through your own prayer life. For this reason, it is helpful for you to nourish and strengthen your own relationship with God through a life of prayer. Then you can more confidently assist your child as he or she enters into a deeper relationship with Jesus and the Sacraments.



### Understanding Prayer

God is always reaching out to you and inviting you to come to know him. When you pray, you are responding to God. You don't need special words. Talk to God as if you were talking with a friend. God knows you and understands; he listens to you because he loves you as a parent loves a child. Prayer is more than talking with God, it is also time we spend aware of God's presence. Through daily prayer we develop the practice of acknowledging God's presence in every aspect of our life. For many of us, traditional prayers and Sunday Mass are the most familiar forms of prayer. In addition, the church also teaches a wide variety of ways to pray. There is no one way to pray.

### Here are four ways we can respond to God in prayer:

THANKSGIVING	Thank God for all the good things you have and experience
PETITION	Tell God what your needs are
INTERCESSION	Pray for the needs of others
SORROW	Ask God's forgiveness for the times you haven't acted the way he would want you to

**Ways to Pray.** You can pray with others in communal prayer, such as the Mass; you can pray alone, in your own words; you can pray silently or aloud; you can pray kneeling, standing, bowing, folding your hands; you can pray while you are relaxing, working, walking, playing.

**How do you build a practice of praying every day?** You build practices simply by doing something over and over again until it becomes second nature. Set aside a certain time in your day to pray. Don't view it as a chore to complete, but rather as a gift – a chance to be with God. You don't have to prove yourself to God, he is simply looking for you to seek him so that you can come to recognize the gift of grace that he offers you. Remind yourself that you are the one who needs prayer, not God. Be present to God and allow him to work in you.

## Praying as a Family

### Thank you, sorry, please - Teaspoon Prayers



Perhaps the most simple way of structuring a prayer is to use the words thank you, sorry, please. Have a short time of chat and discussion focusing on what the family might want to say to God using these words. Finally, have a short time of open prayer, or mom or dad could weave together all the topics mentioned in a closing prayer. TSP, the first letters of Thank you, Sorry, Please, remind us of the recipe book abbreviation for teaspoon. It can be helpful to give younger children a plastic teaspoon to remind them of these three basic categories for prayer.

### Flame Prayers

Cut simple flame shapes from yellow, orange and red paper. Give each person a flame shape and explain to them that when God's Holy Spirit first came, it was as if tongues of fire were reaching out and touching all the people. It wasn't the kind of flame that burned people but more like a flame that filled people with the warmth and love of God, a flame which fired up their hearts with courage and enthusiasm. God sent His Holy Spirit to help people live as Christians. Today, the Holy Spirit can help people pray and praise. He can help people tell others about Jesus. God sent us His Holy Spirit to dwell in us and to be our special helper. Encourage everyone to use their flame shapes to write a prayer thanking God for His wonderful gift. Stick the finished prayers onto a dark background to look like one big flame. Explain that as the Holy Spirit helps us, more and more people can be fired up with the love of God. This can also be done by inviting everyone to draw around their hand on yellow, orange or red paper, cutting them out and writing a short prayer on the hand. Stick the finished prayers onto a dark background to look like one big flame. Read the prayers before or after dinner. Stick the poster to the refrigerator or to the family bulletin board.



### Happy and Sad Times



You will need a large face that looks happy on one side of the paper and sad on the other.

Show the happy face first and ask what events have made people happy during the last week and make a list of them. Pray about the list or say a one-line thank you prayer for each one. Then, turn the paper over and ask if anything sad or worrying has happened in the past week, and make a list of them, too. Perhaps there are family members or neighbors who are ill who need praying for. Pray for this list. Finish by thanking God that He always knows how we feel, whether we are happy or sad, and thank Him for being just as close to us in the good times as in the bad.



## Light Triumphs

You will need candles that relight themselves (joke candles). Light the candle. Explain that Jesus was the light of the world and when He died, the devil thought that he had put out the light. Blow the candle out. As it relights, explain that Jesus' power was greater than the darkness, and He came back to life.

*"The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overpowered it."*  
(John 1)



## Prayer Candles

You will need a candle and cardboard circle for everyone. Invite family members to write or draw on their circle things they want to pray for. You might need to suggest events or someone who is ill, etc. Invite them to write something they want to ask God about for themselves. Then, insert the candle in its cardboard circle holder. The candles can be lit and a general prayer said. These prayer candles might be used regularly at home each evening, at dinner, or every Sunday.

## Prayer Tree

This is a great visual prayer for all family members. For the family tree, you will need a large branch or a few branches arranged in a big vase. Give each family member a leaf shape and ask them to write or draw their prayer. It can be personal, or they can write or draw something in God's creation for which they would like to say thank you. Pierce a hole with a hole puncher and, using wool or thread, or with a spot of glue on one end of each leaf, stick them to the branches of the tree. Some of the prayers (leaves) can be read out loud to help the children to focus.



*I am the vine, you are the branches. Without me you can do nothing. If you love me and follow my teachings, you can ask for anything and it will be given to you. Remain in my love. (John 15)*

## Bubble Prayers

Materials: bubble solution and wands

*"I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father."* Jesus promises to hear our prayers and act on them. As we call on Jesus, we can be sure that Jesus hears our prayer.

*(Think of a child you know who needs your prayers (Ex. James who is teased because he has difficulty learning; Katie whose mom is in the hospital; Shondra who is going on vacation). Blow a bubble and say: "Jesus, be with (name)."* Watch as the bubbles rise, just like our prayers rise to God).



# First Confession



# First Confession

## PREPARE

### Scripture References

Set aside some time each week to read, reflect and talk about the following Scripture passages with your child/children. If possible, invite your child/children's godparent to share in this prayerful preparation for Reconciliation.

**Prayer Corner:** Select a quiet place in your home. Involve your child/children in preparing the space. Some things to consider for this prayer corner are a plant, a candle, a Bible and comfortable seating. Depending on the Scripture passage you will be reading, you may want to add a symbol that relates to the meaning of the passage.

#### Parables of Mercy

Luke 15: 1-7 - Lost Sheep

Luke 15: 8-10 - Lost Silver Pieces

Luke 15: 11-32 - Prodigal Son/Forgiving Father

#### Jesus Forgives Sin

Luke 7: 36-50 - Penitent Woman

Luke 19: 1-10 - Zacchaeus

Mark 2: 1-12 - Paralytic at Capernaum



# Preparing your Child for First Confession

## Examination of Conscience

Before celebrating your first confession, take time to examine your conscience. Think about the things you have done and the things you should have done but didn't. Here is a simple examination of conscience. Remember that God is merciful and always ready to forgive us if we are truly sorry for our sins.

### Responsibilities to God

Have I loved God in my life?

Do I show respect to God by remembering and following his commandments?

Have I tried to pray even when I sometimes didn't want to?

Did I have a good attitude about going to Mass?

Have I asked the Holy Spirit to help me do what is right?

### Responsibilities to Others

Have I been disobedient or disrespectful to my parents or others in charge of me?

Have I lied to my parents or others in charge of me?

Have I shown love to my family and others?

Have I pouted, lost my temper, held grudges or not forgiven others?

Have I been a good friend to others?

What have I done to my family or friends that I knew was wrong (hitting, shoving, made fun of others, said mean things behind their back)?

Have I used bad language?

Have I performed my responsibilities such as chores and homework?

Have I stolen anything or cheated on my homework or a test?

## CELEBRATE

# Practicing with your Child for First Confession

This year your child will celebrate his/her first confession. Confession is one element of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Penance. The sacrament also includes an expression of sorrow, absolution and penance. Your child will talk to one of the parish priests but really, they will be talking to Jesus, because Jesus is present in this sacrament. It is Jesus who forgives our sins, through the priest. When we receive this sacrament, we say certain things in a certain order. This is called a Rite. It isn't too hard but your child will need your help to practice. Not to worry, the priest will help if they forget.

## Examination of Conscience

To prepare for confession, we examine our conscience. During the weeks before your child makes his/her first confession, help him/her reflect on the Examination of Conscience provided on page 19.

## The Communal Rite of Reconciliation and Penance

### Introductory Rites

Song  
Greeting  
Opening Prayer

### Celebration of the Word of God

We listen attentively to the Word of God and homily. There may be several readings but there is always a reading from the Gospel. As we listen, the Holy Spirit invites us to think about God's love and mercy and to be sorry for our sins.

### Examination of Conscience

Together we reflect on how we are living as children of God. We ask the Holy Spirit to help us be sorry for our sins and to give us courage to live as Jesus taught us.

### Individual Confession

Go into the confessional and either sit (face to face) or kneel (behind a screen).

### Confession of Sins and Acceptance of a Penance

When I tell my sins to the priest, he will never tell anyone. When we confess our sins, we show that we trust God always loves us. We must confess serious sins. We may confess lesser sins.

**Child:** Make the sign of the cross and say,

**“Bless me Father for I have sinned. This is my first confession. These are my sins:”**

After we confess our sins, the priest talks to us. He names some ways we can live a holy life. He gives us a penance. We accept and promise to do the penance. He may give you prayers to pray or something to do. Doing the penance is a sign that we want to change our lives and repair any hurt we have caused and try to do better.

## **Prayer of Sorrow and Absolution**

Our prayer of sorrow shows we are truly sorry for our sins and that we will try do better.

**Child:** 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 confess my sins, to do penance, to sin no more,  
and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.

**Priest:** The priest extends his hands over our head as he prays:  
God, the Father of mercies,  
through the death and resurrection of his Son  
has reconciled the world to himself  
and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins;  
through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace.  
+ and I absolve you from your sin  
in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Child:** Amen.

**Priest:** Your sins are forgiven, go in peace.

**Child:** Amen.

Leave the confessional. Go into a pew and pray your penance if the priest assigned prayers as penance. If he assigned something else, take a moment to reflect on your confession and how you will carry out your penance.

## **Concluding Rite**

**Proclamation of Praise for God’s Mercy**

**Concluding Prayer**

**Blessing and Dismissal**

**Song**

\*\*\*\*\*

## Individual Rite of Reconciliation and Penance

**Penitent:** Make the sign of the cross and say,  
“Bless me Father for I have sinned. It has been \_\_\_\_ days/weeks since my last confession.  
These are my sins:”

After you confess your sins, the priest may take some time to talk to you about your confession. He will give you a penance, which may be prayers or recommended actions.

## Prayer of Sorrow and Absolution

Our prayer of sorrow shows we are truly sorry for our sins and that we will try to improve.

**Penitent:** Act of Contrition

**Priest:** The priest extends his hands over our head as he prays:  
God, the Father of mercies,  
through the death and resurrection of his Son  
has reconciled the world to himself  
and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins;  
through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace.  
+ and I absolve you from your sin  
in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Penitent:** Amen.

**Priest:** Your sins are forgiven, go in peace.

**Penitent:** Amen.

Accept the penance that the priest gives you and complete it as soon as possible.

# First Confession

## LIVE

### Family Activities

#### Three envelopes

Some people start out by being rather shy about praying out loud. In this case why not pin up three envelopes labelled "Thank you" "Sorry" and "Please" and let group members write their prayers on slips of paper and put them in the appropriate envelope. Don't forget to check the envelopes from time to time to let everyone share in the joy of the thank you prayers and to find out how the please prayers have been answered.



#### Thank you, sorry, please - teaspoon prayers

Perhaps the most simple way of structuring a prayer is to use the three words thank you, sorry, please. Have a short time of discussion focusing on what your family might want to say to God using these three words. Finally have a short time of open prayer where family members can mention the items discussed, in a closing prayer. TSP, the first letters of Thank you, Sorry, Please, remind us of the recipe book abbreviation for teaspoon. It can be helpful to give younger children a plastic teaspoon to remind them of these three basic categories for prayer.

#### Wipe away my sins

Use a small whiteboard. Write "I'm sorry, please wipe away my sins." Invite family members to list/write things which they are sorry about: being greedy, not helping someone in need etc. Explain that God wants to forgive us for all our wrongdoings and give us the opportunity to make a fresh start. All we have to do is say sorry to God and really mean it. Read Psalm 51 and say a simple prayer telling God you are sorry for all the things on the list. Then produce the kitchen towel and invite someone to wipe away the words. When we say sorry to God he not only forgives us but wipes the slate clean.





# Confirmation



# Confirmation

## PREPARE

### Scripture References

Read, reflect and talk about the following Scripture passages with your child/children. Invite their sponsor to share in this prayerful preparation for Confirmation.

**Prayer Corner:** Select a quiet place in your home. Involve your child/children in preparing the space. Some things to consider for this prayer corner are a plant, a candle, a Bible and comfortable seating. You may want to add a symbol that relates to the meaning of the Scripture passage.

John 14: 15-17 - Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit

Acts 2: 1-4 - The Holy Spirit's coming at Pentecost

1 Corinthians 12: 4-11 - The Spirit as the source of Christian service

Romans 8: 26-27 - Description of the Holy Spirit's intercession

Isaiah 11: 1-9 - The gifts of the Spirit

Galatians 5: 22-25 - Paul's description of the fruits of the Spirit

Romans 8: 14-17 - The Spirit's presence within us



# Talking to Your Child about the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

## WISDOM

Knowing the right choice to make to live a holy life. This gift of the Holy Spirit helps us to avoid the things that lead away from God and know the right choices to make to live a holy life.

**Discuss:** How do you keep God central in your life?



## UNDERSTANDING

Ability to grasp the meaning of the teachings of the Church. This gift of the Holy Spirit helps us to be tolerant and sympathetic of others. It helps us sense when someone is hurting or in need of compassion.

**Discuss:** Do I understand and help when someone else is hurting?

## KNOWLEDGE

Allows us to see the circumstances of our lives the way God sees them and to choose the right path that will lead us to God. This gift of the Holy Spirit helps us to determine God's purpose for our lives and avoid obstacles that will keep us from him.

**Discuss:** How do I know that God loves me?

## FORTITUDE

The power to stand up for our faith in Christ. This gift of the Holy Spirit helps us overcome any obstacles that would keep us from professing and practicing our faith.

**Discuss:** Do I talk about Jesus with my friends?

## COUNSEL

Enables us to discern (judge) between right and wrong (to avoid sin and live as God would want us to live), especially in difficult situations. This gift of the Holy Spirit helps us make choices to live as faithful disciples of Jesus.

**Discuss:** What do I do that shows I want to love Jesus?

## PIETY

Enables us to have respect for God, and to rely on him completely. This gift of the Holy Spirit inspires us to joyfully want to serve God and others.

**Discuss:** What is your favorite way to pray?

## FEAR OF THE LORD

An awareness of God's infinite grandeur and glory. This gift of the Holy Spirit moves us to so love God that we do not want to offend him by our words or actions.

**Discuss:** What makes me know that God is there?

# Fruits of the Holy Spirit Game

If you see apples on a tree, what kind of tree is it? What if you see oranges? Similarly, the fruits of the Holy Spirit show the work of the Holy Spirit. The fruits of the Holy Spirit give us a slice of heaven right here on earth. This taste of heaven is given to us and everyone that we encounter. In other words, people who do not know Jesus can come to know Him by meeting someone who is living like Him as his witness and disciple.



There are 12 fruits of the Holy Spirit (see Galatians 5:22-23 and/or the Catechism of the Catholic Church 1832). Learning the meaning of each of these will help nurture them in our lives. You can help your child learn about these fruits with this game.

**Materials:** a picture of a tree

Piece of cardstock with the names of the fruits on them (one for each fruit).

Make sure the fruits are removable from the tree, since they will be used more than once.

**Objective:** to help your child become familiar with the 12 fruits of the Holy Spirit

## How to play:

You can review 3-4 fruits several times a week or you can review all the fruit at one time. Name the fruit (ex. joy). Have a discussion about what this fruit is. Ask your child to give an example of a time when they experienced joy or an example of what they understand joy to be. When your child answers correctly, place the fruit on the tree. At the end of the week, the goal is to have all the fruit on the tree. The following week, take down all the fruit and start again in a different order.

Alternative: Talk about the different fruits. When your child has an experience that reflects a particular fruit, have them place that fruit on the tree. The goal is to see how many fruits he/she can place on the tree in one week. The following week, take down the fruit and start all over.

Remember: Even as adults we will not practice all the fruits of the Spirit every day or even every week. However, we can recognize those areas in which we need to work harder.

## 1. Charity (love)

Loving God above all things and loving all other people. Charity is the sign that you love God as your good Father and others as Jesus loves you. Your love is so great that you show selfless service to other by your prayers, words and actions.

**Example:** When your Mom asks you to help clear the table and you help without complaining and have a smile on your face, you are exercising charity.

A time when I showed **charity**\_\_\_\_\_.

## 2. Joy

Interior, unshakable happiness. Joy is deep and constant gladness in the Lord that cannot be destroyed by other people or things. It comes from a good relationship with God and others, a relationship of genuine love.

**Example:** You smile even when you lose the game you are playing because you know inside your heart that it's just a game and God is with you no matter if you win or lose.

A time when I showed **joy**\_\_\_\_\_.

## 3. Peace

Not only the absence of fighting and violence, but also an internal feeling resulting from a friendship with God and His family, the Church. Peace comes from knowing that everything will be okay because God is with us. A disciple faithful to God's will is calm, not anxious or upset.

**Example:** Your grandparent is sick. You have peace in your heart because you trust God and His plan for your grandparent. Whatever happens, it will be okay.

A time when I showed **peace**\_\_\_\_\_.

## 4. Patience

Seeing things and waiting in God's time. Patience is love that is willing to endure life's sufferings. It means not giving up when it is hard to act like Jesus. We trust that God is in control and wait for Him.

**Example:** You have to wait for it to snow before you can make a snowman. You do not complain each morning when you wake up and see no snow yet. You are exercising patience.

A time when I showed **patience**\_\_\_\_\_.

## 5. Kindness

Acting as God acts towards others, forgiving others even when they hurt us. Kindness is showing we care and doing good to others. It is showing Jesus' love to all.

**Example:** Your classmate fell off his bicycle and is crying. Instead of laughing at him, you go and help him off the ground, asking if he is okay. You show him kindness.

A time when I showed **kindness**\_\_\_\_\_.

## 6. Goodness

All the qualities and virtues which make us what God wants us to be. Goodness is a sign that we love all people without exception and do good to them. Goodness comes from God's great love.

**Example:** Seeing a friend drop and spill his or her snack, you go over and help him or her clean it up and offer to share yours with your friend. You are exercising goodness.

A time when I showed **goodness**\_\_\_\_\_.

## 7. Generosity

Willingness to give all that we have received to God and others. Generosity is giving and sharing without asking or wanting something in return. It finds ways to make others happy.

**Example:** You hear about a family whose house burned down. They lost all their belongings. You take some of your toys and ask your parents to give them to the family. You are exercising generosity.

A time when I showed **generosity**\_\_\_\_\_.

## 8. Gentleness

Acting towards others with the recognition that you cannot make them follow Jesus, they need to decide for themselves. Gentleness is really strength softened by love so we can be gentle and kind. A gentle person has the power to forgive instead of getting angry.

**Example:** Your big brother is upset and is yelling at you. You decide not to yell back or break something of his. You are exercising gentleness.

A time when I showed **gentleness**\_\_\_\_\_.

## 9. Faithfulness

Following Jesus in every way. You are faithful when you show loyalty to God, trusting and obeying Him.

**Example:** You arrive early at Mass and there is time to go to Reconciliation. You decide to go. You are exercising faithfulness.

A time when I showed **faithfulness**\_\_\_\_\_.

## 10. Modesty

Dress or conduct that respects yourself and others. Modesty is moderation in all our actions, especially how we dress, talk and behave with others. Modesty is a sign that we give credit to God for our talents and successes.

**Example:** You scored the winning goal for your team but you decide not to show-off by doing a big victory dance. You are exercising modesty.

A time when I showed **modesty**\_\_\_\_\_.

## 11. Self-control

Temperance, knowing when enough is enough, right control over ones' desires. Self-control means controlling our thoughts, words and actions. We control our emotions and desires instead of letting them control us. We decide to be good.

**Example:** You are at the cake table and you decide to take the smallest piece because you know you will be too full if you eat any more. You are exercising self-control.

A time when I showed **self-control**\_\_\_\_\_.

## 12. Chastity

Purity in thought, word and action. Chastity helps us to be pure in mind, heart and body. It helps us respect ourselves and others.

**Example:** You see a pop-up of a naked lady or man on your iPad. You close it right away and tell your Mom or Dad.

A time when I showed **chastity**\_\_\_\_\_.



# Helping Your Child Choose a Confirmation Sponsor

Discuss with your child about whom to pick for a sponsor. It is important to choose a good sponsor to serve as a role model in the Christian life and to help your child follow Jesus Christ as best as they can. Parishes may have a form to fill out in order to have a sponsor approved.

## **Do I really need a sponsor?**

Yes. Everyone needs help living the Christian life. Sponsors, along with parents, have a duty of helping you to follow Jesus Christ. Because it is good for you, the church makes it a requirement for Confirmation.

## **Who can be a sponsor?**

A sponsor must be willing and able to help you live your life as a Christian. Do they love Jesus with their whole heart? Do they love others? Who is your godparent from Baptism?

If your godparent is doing a good job following Jesus, it is recommended that you have him/her be your Confirmation sponsor to continue in the role they began at Baptism.

Specifically, the church requires that sponsors:

- Must be at least sixteen years old
- May not be the natural or adoptive parents of the one to be confirmed
- Must be fully initiated into the Catholic Church (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist)
- Must be a practicing Catholic.

From these qualities, you can see that sometimes a best friend or favorite relative is not the right choice for being a sponsor. Not everyone can be a sponsor. (See Sponsor Certificate Form in the appendix.)

## **How do I ask someone to be my sponsor?**

Just ask. Let them know why you are asking them. Your parish might schedule some sponsor sessions that they will need to attend or have other paperwork to fill out.

Once your sponsor has been chosen, invite them to be involved with your preparation. Go to Mass together; invite them to class, pray with and for one another, attend the retreat together, etc.

## **CELEBRATE**

Confirmation and First Reception of Holy Communion are celebrated during the same Mass. (See *Celebrate: Practicing with Your Child for Confirmation & First Holy Communion*, p. 40)



# Confirmation Family Activities

The Spirit of God is within each of us and, as Saint Paul tells us, in the Spirit “we live, and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28). During this year try to become more conscious of the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life. Notice His presence in the everyday events of your life, in your family, and in your friends and neighbors. Here are some concrete ways to become more aware and responsive to God’s Spirit.

## Remembering Baptism

We celebrate the presence of God’s Spirit within us in baptism. Confirmation is the sealing of this presence within us. Take some time to look at pictures or video from the baptism of your child/children. Talk about the whole experience: the kind of day it was; how you were feeling; who was there; the actual baptism celebration. Most importantly, tell them why you chose their name (see *The Name Book* in the resource page) and why you chose baptism for them. Celebrate the baptism anniversary of each person in your family. Decorate with pictures of the celebration and bring out the baptismal candles you received. Display baptismal certificate, garment, make signs with the person’s name and its meaning and include a prayer of thanksgiving.

There is a tradition in the church of taking the name of a saint for confirmation. Although this is still a practice, we are encouraged to consider choosing to affirm our baptismal name. At baptism we were given a name, became an adopted child of God and received the Holy Spirit. Talk with your child about the close relationship between baptism and confirmation and how the gifts of the Holy Spirit are strengthened within them at confirmation.

## Signs of the Holy Spirit

Take time to reflect on the good qualities you see within yourself and within your child/children. Then talk with your child/children about those qualities. Start by having each person make a list of the good things you see in each other. On a cut out flame with the name of each person on it, take turns writing these good qualities (no repeats) until the flame is full. Say a prayer of thanks to God for all these signs of the Holy Spirit within your family as you place the flame on the refrigerator.

## A Sign of Love

Through baptism, we are members of the church and disciples of Jesus. In confirmation, we seal this reality. Talk about ways that you and your child/children can become clearer signs of the love and care that Jesus showed those He met. Consider making a family covenant where you promise one another to try harder to be signs of Jesus’ love and care. You may also want to talk about how your family could more consciously reach out to those in need.

## Storytime with Grandparents

Grandparents can be a wonderful part of this preparation time. They can share stories of the parent as a child. This is a witness that the child can cherish and it is also a very strong connection in all that makes you “family.” If grandparents are close enough, be sure to include them during this time of preparation for confirmation. A special dinner with them and then story time can enrich your appreciation of God’s Spirit in your midst. If they have passed, maybe you could use their pictures or tell stories of things they used to do or say.

## Including Sponsors

Invite your child/children’s sponsor(s) to help with some of the activities listed above.



# First Reception of Holy Communion



# First Reception of Holy Communion

## PREPARE

### Scripture References

Set aside some time each week to read and talk about the following Scripture passages with your child/children. The following are New Testament passages all refer to the Eucharist.

Matthew 26: 17-30 - Last Supper

Mark 6: 34-44 - Feeding the Five Thousand

Luke 11: 1-13 - The Lord's Prayer

Luke 24: 13-34 - On the Road to Emmaus

John 6: 1-13 - Multiplication of the Loaves and Fish

John 6: 25-58 - Bread of Life

1 Corinthians 10: 16-17 - A Cup of Blessing



## PREPARE

# Vestments & Vessels

Below are some images and definitions. Help your child to recognize these vessels and vestments by playing a game. The point is not to have your child memorize each item, rather, the idea is to have them recognize the items as something that is part of the church or Mass.

- Take some time to go over these items with your child several times a week.
- The next time you go to Mass, you can ask your child, “What color was Father’s chasuble today?” or “Where/when did you see\_\_\_\_\_?”
- You can also take these pages and cover up the definition. Ask your child to name the item in the picture.

**Alb:** A white robe with long sleeves worn by the priest under his chasuble and the deacon under his dalmatic. Altar servers also wear an alb. The design of the alb is based on the typical Greek and Roman clothing worn in the first century. The word *alb* comes from the Latin *albus*, which means *white*—a color symbolizing purity.



**Cassock:** A full-length, black robe worn by boys or men who serve at the altar; also worn by bishops and priests in celebrations outside of Mass. The pope’s cassock is white.

**Chasuble:** The sleeveless outer vestment worn by the priest over all other garments when he celebrates Mass. The poncho-like garment covers his entire body with only an opening for the head. There are different colors which match the Liturgical season or special day.

**Purple:** Lent and Advent

**Rose:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent; 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent

**Red:** Good Friday, Pentecost, Confirmation, feasts of the Holy Spirit, martyrs

**White:** solemnities (like Christmas and Easter), weddings, baptisms

**Green:** ordinary time



**Cincture:** A long, rope-like cord with a tassel or knot at the end that is tied at the waist over the alb. It is usually white, but the color may vary according to the liturgical season. The cincture is symbolic of chastity and purity. Cinctures may be worn by priests, deacons or altar servers.



**Stole:** A stole is a strip of cloth about seven and-a-half to nine feet long and three or four inches wide. The priest wears the stole over the alb with the center around the back of the neck and the two ends hanging in front. The deacon wears the stole over his left shoulder and it drapes across his body, clasped on the right side. Stoles are often decorated in some way and are the same color as the chasuble.

**Chalice:** A cup used to hold wine that will be consecrated at Mass. Chalices come in different styles, sizes and materials. Many of them are made of gold and decorated with engravings, jewels and precious stones. A priest often has his own chalice, which may have been given to him as a gift.



**Ciborium:** A covered container that holds unconsecrated hosts (bread) and consecrated hosts (Body of Christ) at Mass, and in the tabernacle. Usually made from either gold-plated brass or silver and lined with gold.

**Corporal:** A white linen cloth about 20 inches square on which the chalice, paten and ciboria are placed on the altar during Mass.

When not in use, the corporal is folded three times each way so as to form nine equal squares, and may be placed in a burse. The corporal takes its name from the Latin word *corpus* meaning *body*. A clean corporal is used at each Mass.





**Cruets:** Small pitchers, often with toppers, that contain the water and wine used during Mass. They are typically made of glass so the water and wine can be easily distinguished. If they are made of metal, a V (*Vinum* - Wine) and A (*Aqua* - Water) are inscribed to identify its contents.



**Lavabo Set:** Lavabo is the ceremonial washing of the hands in the liturgy. A lavabo set includes a vessel for water and a dish. At Mass, the priest washes his hands after the offertory. The word *lavabo* means *I shall wash* in Latin.

**Pall:** A small square of stiffened linen, or of cardboard covered with linen, used to cover the chalice to prevent dust or other matter from falling into it.



**Paten:** The paten is used in the celebration of the Mass. It's a round shallow dish with thin edges made of gold or silver. The upper surface must be at least gold plated. The paten usually holds the large host (bread) to be consecrated.

**Purificator:** The purificator is the white linen cloth used to purify the chalice and other cups after the celebration of the Eucharist. Purificators are also used to wipe the edge of the people's cups after each person receives the Blood of Christ.



Taken from [www.massexplained.com](http://www.massexplained.com)

For more information about vestments & vessels, games or an app go to [www.massexplained.com](http://www.massexplained.com)

## PREPARE

# Gift Suggestions

The celebration of Confirmation and Eucharist is a very special event for your child and your family. Your extended family and friends will celebrate this event with you and your child. Gifts will be a consideration and there are many options for you to consider and suggest to those who will be celebrating with you.

Please consider suggesting gifts that have a definite connection to this event and reality. Many people may want to offer a monetary gift. This is a generous gesture but where will this kind of gift be in a few years? Will your child have any memory of that person's presence on this special occasion once the money is spent or out of sight?

Years from now, what mementos will your child have of this special day and those who celebrated with him/her? Here are some alternate gift ideas that have potential to be a more lasting remembrance of the day. They can be inscribed, engraved and saved as a lasting reminder.

- A child's Bible
- A plaque
- A Crucifix
- A Medal of the Holy Spirit
- A Mass book
- A prayer book
- A patron saint medal
- A statue
- A book of Bible stories
- DVDs about Jesus or Bible heroes/heroines
- A book about Saints
- A Rosary
- A special candle decorated by the giver
- A cross and chain

You can find these items and more in the following locations:

- Your local Church store
- [www.catholicchildrenscompany.com](http://www.catholicchildrenscompany.com)
- [www.aquinasandmore.com](http://www.aquinasandmore.com)
- [www.christianbook.com](http://www.christianbook.com)



## CELEBRATE

# Practicing with your Child for Confirmation and First Holy Communion

This year your child will celebrate their Confirmation and First Holy Communion within Mass. Bishop Peter Libasci or a delegate will be the minister of the Sacrament of Confirmation. Your child will need your help to understand and practice for these two important sacraments. Please note the words and actions in red that you can talk about and practice with your child. The order of celebration for Confirmation within Mass is as follows:

## The Order of Celebration of the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Holy Communion

### Liturgy of the Word

#### Sacrament of Confirmation

- **Presentation of the Candidates**  
The pastor (or the Catechetical Leader) will present the candidates as a group to the bishop after the Gospel is proclaimed.
- **Homily**  
The bishop or his delegate gives a homily connecting the readings and the sacraments. He will engage children and parents by asking questions. Encourage your child to raise their hand to answer, stand if called upon, and answer in a loud voice.
- **Renewal of Baptismal Promises**  
Children will reaffirm their faith by answering “I do” to 5 questions.  
**Practice answering these questions with your child.**

**Bishop:** Do you reject Satan, and all his works, and all his empty promises?

**Candidates:** I do.

**Bishop:** Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?

**Candidates:** I do.

**Bishop:** Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

**Candidates:** I do.

**Bishop:** Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who today through the Sacrament of Confirmation is given to you in a special way just as he was given to the Apostles on the day of Pentecost?

**Candidates:** I do.

**Bishop:** Do you believe in the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

**Candidates:** I do.

**Bishop:** This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**All:** Amen.

- **The Laying on of Hands**

The Bishop then extends his hands over the candidates asking the Holy Spirit to come upon them bestowing His gifts. Encourage your child to listen to the prayer, hear the names of the gifts and respond, “Amen”.

**Bishop:** Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who brought these your servants to new birth  
by water and the Holy Spirit, freeing them from sin;  
send upon them, O Lord, the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete;  
give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and fortitude, the spirit of knowledge  
and piety;  
fill them with the spirit of the fear of the Lord.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
**All:** Amen.

- **The Anointing with Chrism**

The bishop makes the sign of the cross on their forehead with the sacred chrism and imposes his hand on the head of the anointed. Therefore, encourage them to move up close to the bishop.

**Bishop:** (Name), be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.

**Candidate:** Amen.

**Bishop:** Peace be with you.

**Candidate:** And with your spirit.

- **Universal Prayers** include intercessions for the newly confirmed, their families and their sponsors.

## Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Mass continues as usual.

- **Communion Rite**

To help your child be comfortable receiving Communion for the first time, it is important that you practice with them so they are comfortable with the words and movements, and can focus on what is really happening --they are receiving Jesus.

**OPTIONAL:**

**How to receive Jesus in Holy Communion**

I walk to the priest **with my hands joined**, thinking about Jesus, whom I will receive.  
**I bow my head, step forward and the priest raises the host and says, "The Body of Christ."**  
**I respond, "Amen".**

If I choose to receive the host in my hand, **I cup my left hand on top of my right hand.**  
(or the opposite if I am left-handed).

After the host is placed in my hand,  
**I step to the side and carefully place the sacred host in my mouth. I consume it and return to my seat, singing the Communion hymn\*.**

If I choose to receive the host on my tongue,  
**I hold my head up, open my mouth and gently put out my tongue.**  
**After the host is placed on my tongue, I step to the side, consume it, and return to my seat, singing the Communion hymn.**

**\*If I am going to receive the Precious Blood from the chalice, I have first consumed the host and then I approach the minister who is holding the chalice.**

**I bow my head.**

The priest\*\* says, "Blood of Christ". I respond, **"Amen"**.

Then, **I take the chalice carefully, holding on tightly, take a sip, give it back to the priest\*\* and return to my seat, singing the Communion hymn.**

**Spend some time in quiet prayer. Now is the time where we understand where Holy Communion gets its name. We are going to commune with Jesus Christ, whom we have just received. We talk to him and he speaks to us through this sacrament which is truly a Holy Communion between Jesus and me.**

**\*\*This may be a priest, a deacon or an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion.**

- **Concluding Rite**

The bishop gives a special Blessing and Prayer over the People at the end of Mass.

# First Reception of Holy Communion

## Family Activity and Prayer

### LIVE

#### The Blessing Cup

The blessing cup is a family tradition you can begin in your home to build upon strengthening family bonds. Select or decorate a glass cup, or one made out of pottery (at a pottery studio). Keep it in a special place in your home. Use it when you gather as a family, especially during special times. Pray around the blessing cup, selecting a leader of prayer and someone to proclaim the Scripture reading. Let the filling of the cup be a special privilege. Fill it with a favorite beverage all can share.

#### Opening Prayer and the Sign of the Cross

We walk together in the light of God's blessing, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Scripture Reading:** Matthew 26:26-28

#### Petitions

1. We are grateful for the bread of life you give us. With joy, we pray.  
**R. Lord Jesus, you are the bread of life.**
2. We pray that we all may be filled with the grace and power of your Spirit. In a special way we pray for \_\_\_\_\_ who will receive your Holy Spirit in a special way, that s/he may joyfully serve the Church. With joy, we pray.
3. We thank you and praise you for the gift of Eucharist. In a special way we pray for \_\_\_\_\_ and all those who will receive your most precious body and blood for the first time. With joy, we pray.
5. We pray that all of us will be living examples of Christ's life for each other. With joy, we pray.

#### Collect

Blessed are you, Father, for all the works of your goodness, but most especially we thank you for one another in the sharing of this blessing cup. May it be a true sign of our love for one another, as we proclaim your goodness to the ends of the earth.

#### Sharing of the Blessing Cup

We, now, carefully pass around the blessing cup for all to share, a sign of our love and service to one another.

#### The Lord's Prayer

# Prayers for Young Children

Please help your child learn the following prayers.

## **Sign of the Cross**

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

## **Morning Offering**

Oh my God, I offer you this day, every thought, word and act of today.  
Please bless me my God and make me good today. Amen.

## **Our Father**

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.

## **Hail Mary**

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among  
women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary,  
mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and  
at the hour of our death. Amen.

## **Glory Be**

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.

## **Grace before Meals**

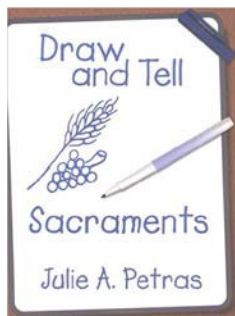
Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts which we are  
about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **Simple Phrases (examples)**

Jesus, I love you. Thank you, Father. Help me, Jesus.

## Family Resources

Although many of these resources appear to be for use with young children, children of all ages in the household can benefit from participating in the activities and the discussions.



### Draw and Tell Sacraments

#### **From Our Sunday Visitor**

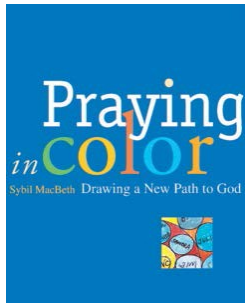
With only a large sheet of paper and marker (or a dry-erase board or chalkboard), you can easily share with your students what the Catholic Church teaches about the seven sacraments. As you read a story about someone who is receiving a sacrament, you draw a line, put in a squiggle, add a swirl. (The book tells you when!) By the end of the tale, your final picture shows a symbol of that sacrament.

### First Sacrament Family Posters

#### **From Our Sunday Visitor**

Reinforce classroom study by bringing the "textbook" home in the form of this colorful, engaging poster that can be referred to often as it hangs proudly on the fridge or bedroom wall. In addition to the personalized color front, the back side is filled with helpful summaries of classroom teaching, family prayer, and how-to for the entire family! Comes in packages of 10. Also in Spanish.





### **Praying in Color**

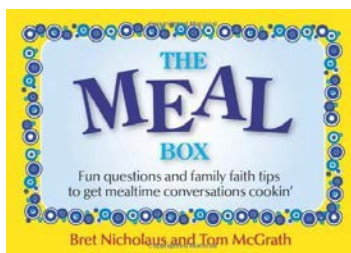
**By Sybil MacBeth, at Paraclete Press**

Wonderful book that provides an alternative way to pray through drawing/doodling and coloring. A good tool for helping children and adults alike reflect on Scripture, pray the Psalms, or simply pray to God.

### **Mealttime Matters**

**Published by Loyola Press**

An attractive, full-color handout from Loyola Press that informs parents of the benefits of eating together and offers parents positive suggestions on how to make it a positive experience. Loyola Press has many other resources for families to purchase, as well as articles and activities available online.



### **The Meal Box**

**Published by Loyola Press**

Fun questions and family tips to get mealttime conversations going. Fifty-four cards each containing fun questions to discuss on one side and a meaningful "Food for Family Thought" on the other. Also available in Spanish.

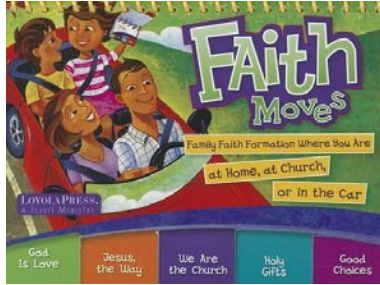
### **Keep Talking: Daily Conversation Starters for the Family Meal**

**Published by Liguori**

Here are 288 discussion points for mealttime with your family. This book is best with older elementary and middle school students.







### **Faith Moves: Family Faith Formation Where You Are**

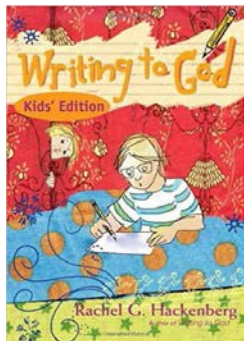
**Published by Loyola Press**

A practical and fun, spiral-bound booklet that provides opportunities for parents to have faith conversations with their children, followed by a game or an activity to drive the message home. Keep this in your purse or glove compartment for use anywhere.

### **Gabbit—Family Faith Edition**

**At Saint Mary's Press**

An electronic device with hundreds of family-friendly questions. There are no rules, no instructions—just pick.



### **Writing to God—Kids' Edition**

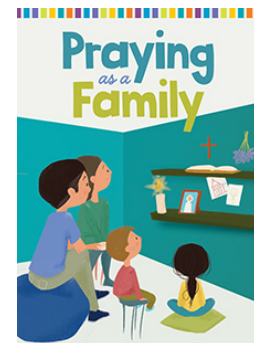
**Published by Paraclete Press**

Offers guidance to kids that parents can also appreciate: It teaches them how to pray to God creatively through their pens (or pencils, or crayons). In 35 days, kids learn how to pray to God using their senses, reflecting on their feelings, in light of Bible verses, looking at nature, to understanding the ordinary events of life, using new words and pictures for God, and writing to God as a way to say "thanks."

### **Praying as a Family**

**From Twenty-Third Publications**

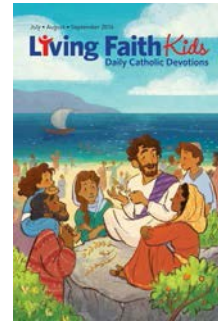
"Pray always," the apostle Paul exhorts us. Sounds good, but how do you make it happen? This book provides some excellent guidance in an easy-to-follow way that will appeal to parents and children alike. From waking up in the morning to going to sleep at night, this little book has a prayer that will fit the bill—all presented in a colorful, engaging format. The book also includes simple family activities and reflections that will enrich the prayers and make prayer time an integral part of family life.





### **Living Faith Kids**

Features daily devotions based on the daily Scripture readings from the Catholic Mass. Each quarterly issue helps children 8-12 develop the habit of daily prayer and build their relationship with Jesus and the Church. *Living Faith Kids* is the daily Scripture-based prayer companion for Catholic children and an invaluable resource for parishes, families and schools.



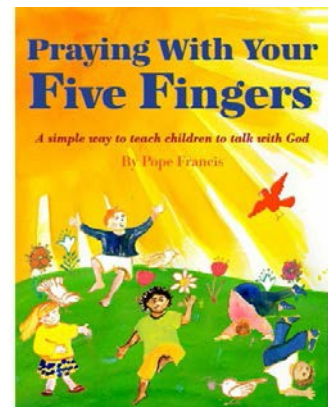
### **Ten Commandments Learning Cube**

A new, full color "magic cube" from Paraclete Press to help ages 4-8 learn the Ten Commandments and the Our Father. Easy to use and tactile, it has the ability to continuously unfold to reveal each commandment or each part of the prayer with illustrations that are relevant for kids  
<http://www.paracletepress.com>



### **Praying with Your Five Fingers**

Introducing a new 8 1/2 x 11, laminated prayer card, designed for pre-kindergarten through second-grade children to help them learn the prayer method taught by Pope Francis. Each finger on their hand represents a person to pray for - from family and friends to world leaders and those who are ill. This creative form of prayer has been around for a long time and is often credited, especially today, to Pope Francis when he was the Archbishop of Buenos Aires. Perhaps, it even existed prior to Pope Francis. Either way, it is a powerful way to pray—and to teach our children to pray—which the Holy Father has often utilized in his ministry. This prayer card makes a perfect end of vacation bible school send-off gift, a start of year gift, or a gift for First Confession, Confirmation or First Holy Communion.  
<http://www.paracletepress.com>



## **Your Child's First Confession and First Holy Communion**

### **From Liguori, written by the Redemptorists**

This easy-to-read magazine-style guide is designed to help the priest or catechist work with children by involving parents. Illustrated with color photographs throughout, it helps parents clarify their own approach to the sacrament and provide support for their child during the preparation period. It features a question-and-answer section that deals with issues such as children's fears, parents who cannot receive the sacrament, a non-Catholic parent, changes in the sacrament, and more.



### **Catholic Parent Know-How**

#### **From Our Sunday Visitor**

Parents can be empowered with the faith-building activities and ideas in this affordable eight-page tool. Parents can gain involvement in their children's growth and even give them some spiritual nourishment of their own. The series include an edition for first reconciliation, first Holy Communion and the Catholic sacraments. All are in Spanish as well.

## **Take Out: Family Faith on the Go**

### **From Our Sunday Visitor**

Simplify family life with the help of your Catholic faith. Part magazine, part newsletter, this is a brand new, one-of-a-kind combination activity guide and support tool designed and written for busy families. The eight-page, monthly mini-magazine offers insightful, creative solutions to real-life issues and interesting, fun ideas for living your faith. Start making new family connections with a positive approach today!





## **At Home with our Faith**

### **From Claretian Publications**

Your source for everyday wisdom from real Catholic parents, the newsletter offers down-to-earth, creative ideas and tested strategies for parents to hand on a living faith to their children, while deepening their own faith in the process. Published nine times per year (monthly September through May).



### **10 Things That Make for a Great Catholic Family**

#### **From Our Sunday Visitor**

Today's families come in all shapes and sizes. Amid all those differences, one thing is certain: maintaining a strong family takes a lot of time, energy, and work – oh, and a good dose of prayer! Looking at who we are through the eyes of our faith, we see that, although we may not be the image of the perfect family every day, we are holier, indeed "greater," than we think.



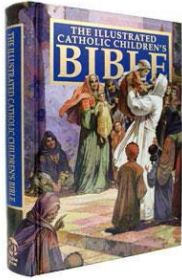
### **The Mass Explained for Kids**

Adults aren't the only ones who want to know what happens at Mass and why. *The Mass Explained for Kids* enables children to understand what we do and say at Mass and why. Liturgical texts are linked with corresponding explanations. This colorful booklet helps kids become fully active and enthusiastic participants at Mass. Features the official texts of the new translation. Includes accurate, kid-friendly, engaging explanations of the Liturgy. Ideal for ages 7-11.

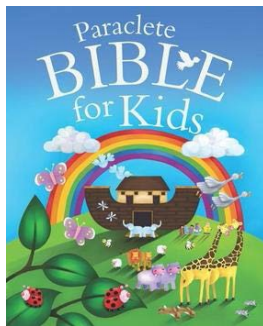


<http://store.pauline.org/english/books/catpageindex/2/free1/daten0/productid/3658.aspx#gsc.tab=0>

### **Illustrated Catholic Children's Bible**



This hardcover children's Bible has full-color illustrations throughout its 432 pages. The Bible stories are based on the NAB version of the Holy Bible. A perfect gift for a special child or a great resource for family story time. The Bible stories are retold by Anne deGraaf, an award-winning author of over 80 children's books. This impressive children's Bible contains over 250 traditional stories from the Old and New Testaments, as well as a full-color presentation page for the owner's name, who gave the gift, and the date of the occasion.



### **The Paraclete Bible for Kids**

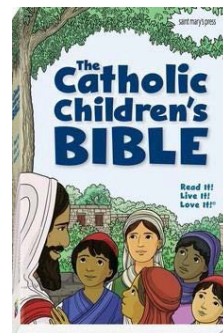
Perfect for any child ages 1-6. Here are the most essential stories from the Old and New Testaments, from Creation and Noah's flood through Abraham, Moses, David, and Daniel, to the Nativity of Jesus and the very first Easter. Bright, simple maps and rich illustrations combine with simple language to become a child's first, treasured introduction to the Word of God.

<http://www.paracletepress.com/paraclete-bible-for-kids.htm>

### **The Catholic Children's Bible**

**Published by Saint Mary's Press**

- Children will know and understand God's saving plan revealed through 125 featured stories highlighting key Bible passages.
- Vibrant illustrations and borders immediately engage children and allow them to dive in to Scripture and become immersed in the stories.
- Understand It! Live It! and Tell It! sections help bring God's Word to life for the youngest of readers.



Apps for iPhone and iPads are available for purchase, as well.

## Family Films

Jesus often used stories (parables) from everyday life to communicate His message. Today, movies are probably our most popular form of storytelling. Viewing a movie with your children, followed by a short discussion, is a good way to help them explore themes related to Reconciliation: temptation, dealing with consequences, doing the right thing, real love, redemption and repentance. Some suggested films to watch and discuss with your child:

**The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe**, based on the story by C.S. Lewis, is a classic film dealing with the themes of trust and redemption.

**Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory**, the screen version of Ronald Dahl's classic children's tale, shows that greed and selfishness get their just desserts and that goodness is eventually rewarded.

**Beauty and the Beast** (Disney or any other version) shows that we have a second chance, a chance to change, especially through the love of another.

**The Secret Garden** illustrates the transforming power of love.

**Pinocchio** deals with temptation, lies, bad companions, conscience formation and new life.

**The Selfish Giant** is a classic tale about selfishness, the consequences of choices and starting over.

### **Mulan – Theme: Courage; Honor; Respect**

The Huns invade China and the army calls up its best soldiers. Mulan's father is on the list, but she can see that he's too weak to fight. Instead of staying home to find a husband, Mulan dresses like a man and heads off to war, taking her father's place.

1. What makes Mulan a role model?
2. What are some things you've done, knowing it was the right thing to do?
3. What gifts of the Holy Spirit did you see Mulan live out?

### **The Lion King – Theme: Selflessness; Community**

Simba "just can't wait to be king." His evil Uncle Scar, bitterly jealous of Mufasa, wants to be king, so he arranges for Mufasa to be killed and makes Simba think he's responsible. Simba runs away, thinking that he has escaped his past, but his childhood friend Nala finds him and tells him that, under Scar's leadership, the tribe has suffered badly. Simba is left with a decision to stay or return.

1. What was Simba's purpose?
2. What does Simba learn about himself from his father?
3. What examples of the gifts of the Holy Spirit did you see in Simba?

**Cloudy With A Chance of Meatballs – Theme: Integrity, Choices, Temptation, Sin, Acceptance**

Flint decides to try his latest invention, a machine that can turn water into food, when the community comes upon economic crisis. Something goes wrong and the machine ends up in the atmosphere, where it starts raining food. The shifty mayor tries to use this as a way to help their community, but when Flint senses something wrong, the mayor convinces him to ignore it.

1. Why does Flint try his latest invention? What were his intentions?
2. How do the townspeople turn things around?
3. What do you do when things go wrong? What choices do you make?

**How the Grinch Stole Christmas – Theme: Better to give; Conversion; Community**

It's the day before Christmas, and all the Grinch can think about is how much he hates the whole Christmas season. The Grinch hates the Whos in Whoville, who decorate and celebrate, so he hatches a plot to stop Christmas from coming. But can he stop Christmas from coming? And can the love that Christmas embodies save his shriveled heart?

1. Why does the Grinch have a change of heart? What made his heart grow? In what ways does Jesus in the Eucharist help our hearts to grow?
2. The Grinch was welcomed into the Who community. How do we welcome others at Mass?
3. The Grinch tried to stop Christmas from coming. What gets in the way from allowing Jesus to enter our hearts?

**Finding Nemo – Theme: Selflessness; Community**

After his son is captured in the Great Barrier Reef and taken to Sydney, a timid clownfish sets out on a journey to bring him home. Lots of great characters and “people helping people.”

1. How did the characters help each other? How did this help to get Nemo back?
2. What are some things we do as family and as our Church family to help others?
3. How important is Nemo to his Dad? How important do you think you are to God?

**Ice Age – Theme: Community; Trust; Doing the Right Thing**

The story is set when glaciers covered much of the earth, 20,000 years ago. A clever, funny, and touching story of an unlikely trio of animals who band together to return a human baby to his family. They don't like or trust each other very much, at the beginning, and the journey becomes one where they share experiences and confidences that make them see each other and themselves very differently.

1. Why do the animals want to return the human baby? How do they work together?
2. What do the animals experience together in the movie? How does their experiences affect them?
3. How does working together help Jesus?



## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### A

**Absolution** This prayer, spoken by the priest, grants the penitent the forgiveness of sins. Absolution is a necessary part of the Sacrament of Penance.

**Act of Contrition** A prayer that expresses sorrow for our sins. Prayed by penitent at Sacrament of Penance.

**Altar** The table in the church on which a priest offers the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

**Angel** A spiritual being who worships God in heaven and serves as God's messenger. There are many kinds of angels (guardian, archangel, etc.)

**Anointing** A blessing of people or things with oil that dedicates them to the service or care of God.

**Apostle** One of twelve men who accompanied Jesus in his ministry and were witnesses to the Resurrection. Apostle means "one sent." They were sent by Jesus to preach the Gospel to the whole world.

### B

**Baptism** The sacrament that gives us new life in Christ and makes us members of the Church

**Bible** The written revelation of God's love for His people, also called sacred Scriptures. These writings are inspired by the Holy Spirit and written by human beings. It includes 46 books in the Old Testament and 27 books in the New Testament.

**Bishop** A priest chosen by the pope to lead and teach a particular diocese.

**Blessing** A prayer that calls for God's power and care upon a person, place, thing or activity.

### C

**Chalice** The special cup used by the priest at Mass to hold the wine that will become the Blood of Christ.

**Chrism** Oil scented with balsam and consecrated by the Bishop at the Chrism Mass during Holy Week; this oil is used in conferring the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Ordination, and when blessing a new church and altar.

**Church** The people of God throughout the whole world, or diocese (the local Church), or the community of those gathered together to worship God.

**Confession** The act of telling our sins to a priest in the Sacrament of Penance or Reconciliation. The sacrament itself is sometimes referred to as Confession.

**Conscience** An inner feeling or voice viewed as acting as a guide to the rightness or wrongness of one's behavior. We can think of it as God's voice in our minds and hearts that tells us an action is right or wrong.

**Creation** God's act of making everything that exists outside himself. The story of the creation of the world and its inhabitants by God is told in the book of Genesis.

**Concluding Rites** The final part of the Mass, during which we are blessed and sent forth.

**Confirmation** The sacrament that seals us with the gift of the Holy Spirit and strengthens our relationship with Jesus and the Church.

**Consecration** When the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit and the actions of the priest.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Contrition** The sorrow we feel when we know that we have sinned (done something wrong), knowing in our hearts that we have hurt God, ourselves and others, followed by the decision not to sin again. Contrition is a necessary part of our celebration of the Sacrament of Penance. This is also known as “sorrow for sin”.

**Creed** A statement of our beliefs.

### D

**Deacon** A man ordained through the Sacrament of Holy Orders to assist the bishop and priests through a ministry of charity and service. They help by proclaiming the Gospel, preaching, assisting at the altar and through service in the parish and the community. Deacons can celebrate Baptism and witness weddings; they can preside at funerals outside of Mass.

**Disciple** A person who studies and accepts Jesus’ message of salvation, who then tries to live as He did and continues his mission.

**Dismissal** The part of Mass where the priest or deacon dismisses us, inviting us to serve God.

### E

**Eucharist** The sacrament that nourishes us with the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

**Eucharistic Prayer** The Church’s great prayer of thanksgiving to the Father. It includes the consecration of the bread and wine. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, at the consecration, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus.

**Examination of Conscience** Prayerfully thinking about what we have said or done, or failed to do, that may have hurt our relationship with God or with other. It is an important part of preparing for the Sacrament of Penance.

### F

**Faith** Strong belief in God or in the doctrines of a religion, based on spiritual apprehension rather than proof. The theological virtue by which we believe in and come to know God.

**Forgiveness** The act of pardoning those who have hurt us. Because God always forgives us when we are sorry, we forgive others in the same way.

### G

**Genuflect** To touch one knee to the floor as an act of adoration in the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

**God** The Supreme Being who is, was, and always will be; the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—one God in three distinct persons. God has created all that exists, saves all people from sin and death, and sanctifies (blesses with His life, truth and love) all creation.

**God the Father** First person of the Trinity who is creator of heaven and earth.

**Gospel** The good news of God’s mercy and love that we experience in the stories of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection. There are four Gospels in the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

We listen to a reading from one of the four Gospel at every Mass.

**Grace** The gift of God, given to us without our earning it. Grace is the Holy Spirit alive in us, helping us to respond to His call, to choose love, to do good, and to avoid evil.

### H

**Heaven** Union with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in life and love that never ends. Heaven is a state of happiness and the deepest wish and ultimate goal of the human heart.



## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Holy Communion** The Body and Blood of Jesus, which we receive in the Eucharist.

**Holy Spirit** The third person of the Trinity, who was sent to us as a helper and guide through the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation; the Holy Spirit fills us with God's life and love.

**Holy Water** Water that has been blessed and is used as a sacramental to remind us of our Baptism.

**Homily** An explanation by the bishop, priest or deacon of the Word of God proclaimed at Mass. The homily relates the Word of God to our lives as Christians.

**Host** The name given to the bread used at Mass that will become the Body of Christ. It comes from Latin "hostia," which means victim and remembers Jesus' sacrifice on the cross.

**Hymn** A song we sing during the Mass.

### I

**Incarnation** When Mary said yes to God's invitation to be the Mother of his Son, the Word of God took on human flesh in Mary's womb so that Jesus could be born and be one like us in all things except sin.

**Intercessions** Prayers or petitions asking God to help others.

**Introductory Rites** The beginning part of the Mass, during which we are welcomed and we pray for God's mercy.

### J

**Jesus** The second person of the Trinity (also known as the Son or the Word of God), who became a human being and was born of the Virgin Mary. He lived like us in all ways except sin, and suffered death and was buried. He rose from the dead and ascended into heaven so that we can live with God forever.

### K

**Kingdom of God** The power of God's love reigning over the world and our lives.

### L

**Last Supper** The last meal Jesus had with His disciples on the night before He sacrificed Himself for us on the cross. At the Last Supper, Jesus took bread and wine, blessed them, and said that they were His Body and Blood. Every Mass is a remembrance of this last meal.

**Laying on of Hands** Gesture that is a sign of the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. The priest extends his hands over us at Baptism, Confirmation and Penance. Before the consecration of the Mass, the priest extends his hands over the bread and wine. At Ordination, the bishop lays hands on the candidates for diaconate or priesthood.

**Lectionary** The book that contains all of the Scripture readings used at Mass during the Liturgy of the Word.

**Liturgy of the Eucharist** The second main part of the Mass, during which we praise and thank God, the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus, and we receive Holy Communion.

**Liturgy of the Word** The first main part of the Mass, during which the Word of God is proclaimed.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Lord** Old Testament title for God; one of the titles given to Jesus in the New Testament.

**Lord's Prayer** The prayer that Jesus taught His disciples; it is also called the "Our Father."

### M

**Mary** Mother of Jesus. She is called "blessed" or "full of grace" because God chose her to be the mother of His Son.

**Mass** The most important sacramental celebration of the Church established by Jesus at the Last Supper as a remembrance of His death and resurrection. At Mass, we listen to God's word from the Bible and receive the Real Presence of Jesus in the consecrated bread and wine.

**Miracle** A sign or act of wonder that cannot be explained by natural causes but can only be attributed to God.

### P

**Parable** A type of story told to teach important lessons.

**Pastor** A priest who is responsible for the spiritual care of the members of a parish community. This leadership is entrusted to him by the bishop. The word "pastor" means "shepherd."

**Penance** An action that the priest asks us to do after he absolves us from our sins in Confession, and which expresses our desire to change our lives by turning away from sin and live how God wants us to live.

**Pentecost** The fiftieth day after Jesus was raised from the dead. On this day, the Church was born as the Holy Spirit was sent upon Jesus' apostles, Mary, and other disciples.

**Penitential Act** A prayer during the Introductory Rite at Mass in which the Church community reflects on areas in our lives that are in need of healing. We ask for God's forgiveness and are reminded that God is loving, merciful and forgiving.

**Pope** The successor of St. Peter, Bishop of Rome and leader of the Roman Catholic Church. Because he has the authority to act in the name of Christ, the pope is called the Vicar of Christ.

**Prayer** Raising our hearts and minds to God. We are able to speak to and listen to God in prayer because He teaches us to pray. Prayer is private, communal, or liturgical.

**Priest** A man who has accepted God's call to serve the Church by guiding it and building it up through the ministry of the Word and the celebration of sacraments. Through Holy Orders, men receive a permanent sacramental mark that calls them to minister in the Church.

**Psalm** A prayer in the form of a poem written to be sung in worship. The Book of Psalms in the Bible contains 150 psalms that include every expression of human prayer.

### R

**Reconciliation** The renewal of friendship after that friendship has been broken by our hurtful action or lack of action (sin). In the Sacrament of Penance or Reconciliation, we are reconciled (reunited) with God, the Church and others because of God's mercy and forgiveness.

**Religious Life** A way of life for men and women who freely respond to a call to follow Jesus by living the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience in community with others.

**Rosary** A set of beads on which prayers are said (the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, and Glory Be), while meditating on the mysteries of Jesus' and Mary's lives.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### S

**Sacramental** An object, a prayer, or a blessing given by the Church to help us grow in our spiritual life. Some well-known sacramentals are blessings by a priest, holy items such as water, ashes and palms, blessed medals, scapulars, and rosaries.

**Sacraments** Seven holy signs that Jesus gave to the Church, which give us a share in God's life. The Seven Sacraments are Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance and Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Matrimony, and Holy Orders.

**Sacraments of Christian Initiation** The Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist, which begin our lives in the Church, the family of God.

**Saint** A holy person who lives in union with God and God's will and laws. A person who has manifested heroic virtue during his/her life and who is officially honored by the Church after his/her death as one who has entered heavenly glory.

**Sign of Peace** Ancient gesture which we offer to one another before receiving Holy Communion at Mass, reminding us that we are to be a people united with one another in the peace of Christ who is present among us.

**Sin** Ignoring, injuring or rejecting our relationship with God or others. A deliberate thought, word, deed, or failure to act that offends God and hurts our relationship with other people. Some sin is mortal (serious or deadly) and needs to be confessed in the sacrament of penance, also called reconciliation. Other sin is venial (less serious).

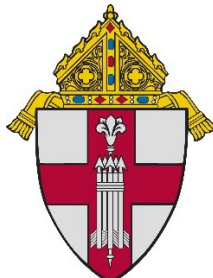
**Sponsor** Confirmation sponsors bring the candidates to receive the sacrament, present them to the minister for anointing, and will later help them to fulfill faithfully their baptismal promises under the guidance of the Holy Spirit whom they have received.

### T

**Temptation** Feelings, people, or things that try to turn us away from God's love and living a holy life.

**Ten Commandments** Laws or rules handed down to Moses by God on Mount Sinai.

**Trinity** The mystery of one God existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.



## **DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER**

153 Ash Street  
Manchester, NH 03104  
(603) 669-3100

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