

Preparing for FIRST EUCHARIST at St. Peter Parish



Preparing your child to participate fully in the Eucharist for the first time (First Eucharist) can be a time of joy and wonder for you and for your child. These guidelines will help ensure that you have the information you need to talk about this beautiful experience with your child, and to grow together in your understanding of the Eucharist and your love for Christ and the Church.

The Eucharist is the sacrament in which Christ comes into our life - into our body and our soul - as food and drink. Bread becomes His Body, and wine becomes His Blood. The ordinary is transformed by the presence of Christ into the food and drink of the Reign of God. There is no way to fully understand or appreciate this miracle of God's love for us, but there is great joy in seeking to understand as well as we can.

The Eucharist is celebrated in the Mass. Sometimes, people refer to the Mass as "the Eucharist." This is accurate, as it is within the Mass that we commemorate the Last Supper and with it the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. So to understand and love the Mass is to better understand and more deeply love the Eucharist.

The Eucharist, then, is the center of our life as Catholic Christians. We gather each week to offer praise and thanksgiving, and to be nourished by the Word of God and by the Food and Drink of eternal life. Even in our gathering itself, Christ is present.

Everyone who is prepared to celebrate a sacrament may do so. The preparation is not a way of "earning" the sacrament; rather, the sacrament is God's gift to us. Our preparation is the way we show gratitude for God's goodness, by striving to appreciate as best we can the gift we are given.

To ensure the best possible preparation for your child, you are asked to see that he or she know, understands, or is familiar with the following. The parish Faith Formation program, the First Communion materials, and your own formation will help you to have the information and tools you need to support your child's preparation for the Eucharist.

For questions and assistance in support your child's preparation for First Eucharist, please contact me at anytime.

God Bless,

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WORSHIP

- ◆ Weekly participation at Mass (Faith Formation class does not replace Mass, even though both are on Sunday) and Holy Days of Obligation.
- ◆ Develop an understanding of the Order of the Mass and responses - a general idea of the flow and meaning of the various parts.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE SACRAMENT

Your child should be able to respond in an age-appropriate way to these questions:

- ◆ What does the Eucharist (Holy Communion) mean to you?
- ◆ How might you be different, if you were able to receive Communion regularly?
- ◆ Why do you think Jesus wanted to give us the gift of His Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity?
- ◆ Why do you want to begin receiving Holy Communion?

Faith Formation classes will help your child, Adult Formation will help you, and the *Communion materials* will help both, to develop appropriate responses to the above questions.



PARTICIPATION

- ◆ Faith Formation, 3rd Sun. of the month (except Apr. is 2nd Sun.) from 9:15a to 1:15p
- ◆ Parent/Child Meeting, Sunday, October 14 at 9:30a
- ◆ Parent/Child Meeting, Sunday, January 13 at 9:30a
- ◆ Parent/Child Retreat, Saturday, March 23 from 10am - 2pm, includes lunch
- ◆ First Communion Masses will be Mother's Day weekend, May 11 & 12.

CATHOLIC LIFE

- ◆ Perform one service project of your choosing.

This includes acts of kindness, rooted in faith, in everyday life. The Corporal Works of Mercy serve as a guide, but parents will need to adapt these principles to apply them to children.

Feed the hungry
Shelter the homeless
Clothe the naked
Visit the sick and imprisoned
Bury the dead
Give alms to the poor

- ◆ Students should know many saints, and will be encountering them during Faith Formation. Please make an intentional encounter of these saints at home; *St. Augustine, St. Tarcisus, St. Ignatius of Antioch*.
- ◆ Students should know and understand the scriptures, and will be encountering them during Faith Formation and at Mass. Please make an intentional encounter with these readings at home; *Last Supper* (Lk 22:7-38, Mt 26:17-30, Mk 14:22-26), *True Vine* (Jn 15:1-10), *Bread of Life Discourse* (Jn 6:22-70).

PRAYER

Know common Catholic prayers. Ideal, pray together each day, perhaps at bedtime or on the way to school.

- ◆ Sign of the Cross
- ◆ The Lord's Prayer (Our Father)
- ◆ The Hail Mary
- ◆ The Doxology (Glory be...)