

## Diocesan Policy

Catechesis for First Reconciliation is to be kept separate from catechesis for First Communion.

It is recommended that sacramental preparation be separate from a religious education program.

The candidate must receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation before receiving Holy Communion for the first time. The candidate must also meet the following requirements:

- ◇ Must have attained the age of discretion, usually around seven years of age or above.
- ◇ Before they can receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and First Communion, candidates ***MUST*** present a copy of the record of their baptism from the church where they were baptized.
- ◇ Be properly instructed.

**ST. NICHOLAS CATHOLIC CHURCH**

Tel: 907.488.2595

## First Reconciliation and First Communion

*Go forth & set the world on fire... St. Ignatius*

**ST. NICHOLAS CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
2018 - 2019 Sacramental Preparation



*Our Lady of the Arctic Snows*

**DIOCESAN POLICY AND PARISH GUIDELINES**

## Important Pastoral Considerations

**INTERVIEWS:** Prior to and separate from the celebration of the sacraments, the DRE is to arrange to meet with the parents and the child preparing for the sacrament.

**PLEASE NOTE:** All children and their families are required to attend Mass. The pastor will give an oral exam to determine if each child will receive Holy Communion. Beginning in 2019, all children receiving Sacraments must have actively participated in Sunday RE the previous school year.

Those third thru fifth grade students who are already baptized but who have not had the opportunity to attend a regular RE program and need to receive First Reconciliation and First Communion will attend their age-appropriate class on Sundays as well as the monthly classes for sacramental preparation.

**HOME SCHOOLED CHILDREN:** If parents request to Home School for the Sunday Religious Education component of the program, materials are available. *Reception of the sacraments will be celebrated in the family's parish of registration.*

**CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** Children with developmental or mental disabilities are encouraged to receive the Sacraments at the appropriate time. *The Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Program* is currently used at St. Nicholas Parish.

### Sacramental Preparation Calendar

September 9-12	Initial Interviews
September 15	Reconciliation #1
October 27	Reconciliation #2
November 17	Reconciliation #3
November 18-21	Sacrament Readiness Interviews
December 1	First Reconciliation Retreat First Confessions
December 2	First Confessions
January 26	Communion #1
February 23	Communion #2
March 23	Communion #3
April 7-10	Communion Preparedness Interviews
April TBD	Final Test with Fr. Jonathan
April 27	Communion Retreat & Practice
May 4	First Communion Mass



Six of the Seven Sacraments

# Important Guidelines for the Sacraments

## Guidelines for First Reconciliation:

Readiness for reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation includes knowledge of the person of Jesus and the Gospel message of forgiveness; knowledge of sin and its effect; and an understanding and experience of sorrow, forgiveness, and conversion. A candidate is ready to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation when the parents, the DRE, and the catechist have discerned that the candidate:



- ◆ Is aware that God loves us unconditionally
- ◆ Understands that Jesus died for our sins
- ◆ Recognizes good and evil, our personal capacity for both, and the importance of right choices
- ◆ Understands and can express sorrow for sin and forgiveness of others.

**We need to reconcile with God.**

Which means the candidate can:

- ◆ Understand how to confess
- ◆ Recognize his need for forgiveness, not only from parents and others close to him, but from God,
- ◆ Is ready to turn to Christ and the Church for sacramental forgiveness and reconciliation,
- ◆ Understand that sacramental Confession

is a means offered to children of the Church to obtain pardon for sin, and furthermore that it's necessary if one has fallen into serious sin.

Additionally, it means the candidate can recite from memory the following prayers:

- ◆ Our Father
- ◆ Hail Mary
- ◆ Glory Be
- ◆ Act of Contrition

**Consistent attendance is required at Sunday Mass,** Sunday morning RE classes, special monthly Sacramental Prep classes (both parent and child), and the Sacramental retreat.

## Guidelines for First Communion:

A candidate for First Communion is required to have sufficient knowledge and careful preparation so as to understand the mystery of Christ according to his capacity and can receive the Body of the Lord with faith and devotion. A candidate is ready to receive the Sacrament of First Communion when the parents, the DRE, the catechist, and the priest have discerned that the candidate:

- \* Understands that the Holy Eucharist is truly the Body and Blood of Christ under the appearance of bread and wine. The Eucharist is not ordinary bread and wine. What appear to be bread and wine are actually His living Body and Blood.
- \* Understands that the Eucharist is the commemoration of Christ's last meal with His disciples and a memorial of His sacrifice for our salvation.
- \* Understands that by sharing in this special meal, we become brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ

on earth.

- \* Has an appreciation of how to participate actively and consciously in the Mass and can in an informed and reverent manner receive Christ's Body and Blood.
- \* Understands the presence of Jesus in the Word, in the people assembled, and in the priest.

**Consistent attendance is required at Sunday Mass,** Sunday morning RE classes, special monthly Sacramental Prep classes (both parent and child), and the Sacramental retreat.

## Guidelines for the Parents:

Since the family is intimately involved with the formation of a child's moral conscience and ordinarily integrates the child into the wider church community, parents should be involved in the preparation of their children for this sacrament so that they can affirm and reinforce frequent participation in the sacraments. They orient the child toward God and encourage continual growth in the understanding of God's mercy and love. Parents have the right and the responsibility to:

- Consistently participate in the Sunday Mass with their children.
- Consistently bring their children to Sunday morning RE classes and special monthly classes for First Reconciliation and First Communion.
- **Be directly involved in the preparation of their children for the Sacraments:**
  - ◇ **Parents must attend special classes offered monthly to assist them in their role as primary educators of their children in the matters of faith.**



**Not symbols of Christ, but Christ Himself!**

- ◇ **Work, pray, and study with their children so they are properly prepared to receive the Sacraments.**
- ◇ **One or more parents must participate in the First Reconciliation Retreat and the First Communion Retreat.**
- Model a Christian commitment of prayer, community worship, and service.
  - ◇ Catholic parents should set an example by frequent reception of the sacraments of Reconciliation and Communion.
  - ◇ Where irregular marriage situations prevent reception of the sacraments, parents should work with the pastor to have their marriage blessed in the Church.
  - ◇ Pray for and with their child.
  - ◇ Share their faith story with their child.
- Discern (with the DRE and the pastor) their child's readiness to receive the Sacraments or, in extraordinary circumstances, (discerned with the DRE) designate another adult to fulfill the responsibility.



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