



September 12, 2018

Dear Parents of our First Holy Communicants:

Your children are in the midst of preparing for the Sacrament of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. We know that this year is a very special one for you and your child. Below is a description of the upcoming events for this year.

**Please see your child's personalized letter for their dates and times of each event listed below.**

Visit our website for the First Communion online calendar and a copy of this packet:

<http://www.saintmichaelcc.org/first-holy-communion-first-reconciliation>

**First Reconciliation MANDATORY Review and Church Tour** --Please meet in the Family Center.

Children will join their catechists and class and be given a "tour" of the Reconciliation Room and the Church. Class catechists will be teaching their class. Parents are required to attend the parent session during this class. Parents meet in the Family Center.

**\* Wednesday or Thursday classes will attend their First Reconciliation Review and Church Tour during their class.**

**\* Sunday classes: see your letter for assigned day/time.**

**\* Catholic School/Home School students: see your child's letter. Children are to join a PSR Class for the tour.**

**First Reconciliation Retreat**--Please meet in the Family Center.

**Children will make their First Reconciliation during this retreat.** There will be two, two hour sessions.

- Please see the letter for your child's session.
- Activities during the retreats will be focused on the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Activities include: review of the Rite of Reconciliation, skit, games, crafts, snacks.
- If siblings are also making their First Reconciliation this year and are scheduled in different sessions, please contact us so we can assign them to the same session.
- The children are expected to be at their assigned session so they will feel more comfortable surrounded with their classmates and catechists.
- Since we will be scheduling by class, we will be unable to accommodate switching between sessions for individual students except for special circumstances-please contact us.
- If your child is unable to attend due to sickness or other special circumstances please contact the RE Office to make other arrangements.

**\*\*If your child has any special needs or allergies please contact their catechist and Elizabeth Bonutti.**

**PARENTS: All parents are required to attend a special session just for parents during this time in Room 101-103.**

**First Holy Communion Practice--MANDATORY**--Please meet in the Family Center Children will join their class and process into the Nave. We'll review how to receive the Body and Blood of Christ by using oyster crackers and unsweetened cranberry juice. They will also practice by using unconsecrated hosts. Parents are required to attend the parent session during this class.

- Please see your letter for your child's session.
- If your child is unable to attend due to sickness or other special circumstances please bring them to another session.
- Please bring your banner to the Family Center. If you forget to do so, bring it to the Mass.
- Children will be receiving their First Eucharist on the tongue while kneeling.
- The children will be seated with their class and Catechists at the front of the Church.
- Parents: consider having your child take a tiny sip of wine at home. This will best prepare them for the taste of the Precious Blood at Communion.
- If siblings also receiving their First Holy Communion this year are scheduled in different sessions, please contact us so we can assign them to the same session.

\* **Wednesday and Thursday classes will attend their First Holy Communion practice during their class.**

\* **Sunday classes: see your letter for assigned day/time**

\* **Catholic School/Home School students: see your child's letter.** Children are to join a PSR Class for this session.

**\*\*If your child has any special needs or allergies please contact their catechist and Elizabeth Bonutti.**

## **First Holy Communion Masses**

- There will be two First Holy Communion Masses this year.
- **The children need to be in the Family Center one hour before Mass.**
- Parents will escort their child to the Family Center where their catechists (teachers) will be waiting for them.
- Children are not to carry any items or wear gloves.
- The parents are then free to go to the Nave and find their seats. Your banner does not designate which pew you are to sit in. It is only for decoration. Your family can sit in any pew.
- Mass is usually an hour and a half long.
- The children will be seated with their class and Catechists at the front of the Church.
- Since the children will be expected to attend the Mass with their class we will be unable to accommodate any time changes for an individual child except for special circumstances-please contact us.
- If siblings are scheduled at different Masses, please contact our office so we can assign them to one Mass.

**11:00 AM Mass: The children should be in the Family Center by 10:00AM.**

**2:30 PM Mass: The children should be in the Family Center by 1:30PM**

## **Ministry needs for each of the Masses:**

If you are a current member of these Ministries at St. Michael's and would like to serve at your child's Mass you'll be able to sign-up via an email that will be sent out in March.

Lector

Extra-ordinary Minister of Communion

Altar Server

Usher

**\*\*Please let us know in advance if you have a visiting relative/friend that is a priest or deacon and would like to serve at your child's Mass. They need to send Fr. Larry a letter of their intent to serve at the Mass and please copy me on the letter.**

## **FAMILY BANNER:**

**\*\* Your child's banner does not reserve a row.**

- Family banners are used to decorate the pews during your child's First Holy Communion Mass.
- The banners are placed randomly on the end of the pews. **It is not necessary to sit where your child's banner has been placed.**
- Please take your child's family banner home at the end of Mass.
- A "blank" banner is provided for you to personalize. They are all the same size so they can be hung easily on the ends of the pews.
- Any design you like that depicts the Eucharist can be used. Perhaps a host and chalice, wheat sheaves and grapes, loaf of bread and cup of wine, flowers and cross, etc. can be used. Be creative. Use various materials.
- **Please securely attach any heavy items (plastic grapes fall off). Please do not use glitter (too messy).**
- You may incorporate your child's name, family name, and or date if you'd like. Please do not lose this banner, extras are limited.
- For decorating ideas search internet images: "First Holy Communion banners". View some images on our website: <https://www.saintmichaelcc.org/first-holy-communion-first-reconciliation>

**Your family banner should be brought to your child's class or to the Religious Education Office the week prior to your child's First Holy Communion Mass. The banner must be marked clearly with the child's first and last name and class day and time on the back, (permanent marker or masking tape work best).**

## **PHOTOGRAPHY**

**We will not have a photographer at the Mass. All photography and videos during Mass is prohibited.**

- A group picture will be taken 30 minutes prior to Mass.
  - The children will assemble on the Sanctuary steps with their catechists and the presiding priest.
  - You are welcome to take photos at this time.
- The group pictures will be emailed to you.
- You are welcome to return at the conclusion of Mass for family photos. The priests will make themselves available for photos after Mass.

## **CERTIFICATES**

- Certificates will be available on a table in the Narthex before and after your child's Mass.
- These certificates are only commemorative. In the future if you would need a copy you need to contact the parish office at the parish your child was baptized for official certificates.
- The Religious Education Office does not provide additional copies of the commemorative certificates.

## CLOTHING

“Sunday best” is appropriate attire. No tennis shoes. Children should not be given anything to carry (rosaries, prayer books, bibles, wrist corsages, purses, etc.). Too often these items are left behind, become distractions during Mass, and prove difficult to return to their owner.

Girls \*Dresses should be worn; traditionally white or off-white, short/long sleeves are preferred.  
\*Veils or bows are optional  
\*No gloves should be worn

Boys \*Dress slacks should be khaki, black or navy blue; no jeans. \*White suits are fine.  
\*Dress shirts, preferably white, should be worn with ties; jackets are optional.

## **ALL PARENTS:**

The Sacrament of the Eucharist is the supreme gift of God to His Church. Therefore, we ask your family to help prepare your child by doing the following:

1. **Attending weekly Mass.** Use the Mass booklets. (Class does not take the place of Mass).
2. Ensuring they miss no more than 4 classes and work missed is made-up
3. Ensuring they complete all class assignments on time
4. Ensuring they come to class on time, eaten and visited the restroom prior to class.
5. Attending their Reconciliation Retreat. Review the Reconciliation booklet.
6. Ensuring they have memorized several basic Catholic prayers, particularly the Act of Contrition preferred by Fr. Larry for their First Reconciliation. A prayer booklet is included in this packet.
  - **The Sign of the Cross**
  - **Glory Be**
  - **Our Father**
  - **Hail Mary**
  - **Act of Contrition**

*As with all of us, faith formation continues throughout our lives-it never ends. We joyfully anticipate seeing your children continue their faith formation in Religious Education classes. By continuing their faith formation in the years to come you will be nurturing their young faith, knowledge, love of God and deepening their personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Providing your child with continuous faith formation from grades 3 through 8 will give them a solid base upon which they will be able to confidently enter the two year Confirmation Prep program beginning in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade.*

Please contact Elizabeth Bonutti in the Religious Education Department if you have any questions.

Yours in Christ,

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