

**ST. MARY MAGDALEN PARISH
FIRST RECONCILIATION
RETREAT REGISTRATION**

Retreat to be held on **Saturday, October 13, 2018**
in the Church Hall from 9:00 AM to 10:40 AM

Child's Name: _____

Phone No.: _____ Emergency Phone: _____

Parent e-mail address: _____

Allergy or Diet Restrictions: _____

I understand that one parent is required to be with my child for the retreat, and that part of the retreat will involve my modeling reconciliation with my child.

Parent Signature: _____

RETURN TO RELIGIOUS ED. OFFICE BY Tuesday October 9th

September 19, 2018

Dear Second Grade Parents:

Although First Communion still seems a long time from now, we would like you to consider the various options being made available by the parish and select a date which works best for your family.

This year, our parish will be offering the choice of having your child receive First Communion during two special Saturday morning liturgies on May 4th or May 11th, both at 11 AM.

Please review your options listed below, mark your 1st and 2nd choice and **RETURN to the RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE by Thursday, November 15th**. For those of you trying to arrange family parties the next day, remember that Sunday May 11th is Mother's Day! We are hoping to provide final dates before Thanksgiving so you can inform extended families (and maybe make it a big combined celebration!)

CHILD'S NAME: _____ **YOUR email:** _____

YOUR phone number _____

Please mark your 1st choice and 2nd choice:

1st choice

2nd choice

Saturday, May 4, 2019 11:00 a.m._____

Saturday, May 11, 2019 11:00 a.m._____

Rehearsals will be held the Wednesday evening prior to the date chosen at 6:30 PM. Rehearsal is an important part of the process – it will help your child to be more comfortable and able to concentrate on the sacrament rather than thinking “O my God, what do I do next?” Rehearsal is in play clothes, but for the sacrament girls are in white/off-white dresses and boys in jacket/tie/dress pants and no sneakers!

Thank you for your cooperation! Peace to you! –Karen & Cindy

IMPORTANT DATES FOR FIRST RECONCILIATION

First Reconciliation Retreat – Saturday October 13th

9-10:40AM

Completed reconciliation books to be returned for review no later than:

Monday, November 12, 2018.

Celebration of First Reconciliation on:

***SATURDAY, November 17, 2018 10:00 a.m. in the Church for
ALL students, those attending St. Mary Magdalen School,
Ursuline Academy, and the Religious Instruction Classes***

**Children will sit with their classmates for the group prayer portion
of the Rite of Reconciliation, but go individually
to the priest for Reconciliation.**

This is a PERSONAL sacrament. Please take any photos from a distance!

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

Mark your calendars for a series of two (2)

First Communion Parent Meetings on

Wednesday, January 30, 2019 and February 13, 2019

A morning and evening meeting choice will be offered for both dates!

FIRST COMMUNION RETREAT SATURDAY FEBRUARY 23rd

ACT OF CONTRITION

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 do penance,
To sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.**

**Our Savior, Jesus Christ, suffered and died for us.
In His name, my God, have mercy!**

STANDING STILL

Children Will Listen

There are horrible images on the television these days: shootings, riots, and even videos of evil people doing horrible, violent things to other people. Parents plead for the release of their children and, instead, those same children are forced into the desert and executed.

People are not born wanting to do that.

I cannot imagine anyone, as an infant or toddler, desiring on his or her own to hurt another, to cause pain, or to intentionally inflict harm. Even a pre-teen or a teenager doesn't wake up one day and suddenly – without cause or influence – decide to be evil.

No, people are not born wanting to do that.

We, the grown ups, teach the children. We teach patience or intolerance, kindness or how to be a bully. We teach compassion or indifference, integrity or deceit. We teach decency or impropriety, acceptance or disapproval.

What will we teach this week?

Will we, as the song asks, "Cry the Gospel with our lives"?

Will we, as the saint challenges, conduct ourselves "in a way worthy of the gospel of Christ"?

Or will we teach them that "I" comes before "you" and that life itself is disposable?

As I think about the week ahead, I remember a conversation I had with my dad. He asked how the children were and I joked that they never listen.

"They don't listen," he chided. "They watch."

What they see this week is up to me. I pray they see how to be good, to be kind, to be righteous, to be holy. I hope they see how to pray and give thanks.

But in the end, it's up to me.

Because children are not born knowing how to do that, either.

(Written by Patrick Donovan, CYM Office, in his weekly newsletter 9/22/14)

SACRAMENTS FOR REAL LIFE

At their infant son Michael's Baptism, Tom and Sally stood at the altar with their son's godparents and their 3-year-old daughter, Katie. As part of the baptismal rite, the priest invited all of them, including Katie, to mark Michael's forehead with the sign of the cross.

"For me, that moment was a brush with the divine," Sally remembers. "Katie's loving touch, her simple symbolic gesture, so clearly united the two of them in the world with God in heaven. The idea of her loving him, and the two of them showing God's care and tenderness to each other through the many phases of life they would share, was so palpable and so clearly an act of God. It was as forceful as lightning for me. That day will always be an example of what a sacrament can and should be. It's one of the greatest moments of my life."

Children's sacraments offer a second chance to learn, listen, and be open to the movement of God. Some parents say they weren't ready to hear about sacramental grace when they were preparing for the sacrament themselves, but now, with more life experience, they see value where before they saw tedium

"In the 30 years between my own first reconciliation and my son's first reconciliation, I didn't go to reconciliation at all," says Jeff, father of two. "I felt like, why should I confess my sins to a priest? I can say I'm sorry to God directly. But as I've seen how sin breaks relationships and tears apart families, I understand that there is something powerful about naming my sin out loud. Reconciliation changes me in a way that private prayer cannot. I didn't understand that when I was younger."

A child's wonder at receiving a sacrament can jump start an adult's faith. "In the weeks leading up to my daughter's first communion, she was so focused on it," says Bethanny, mother of two. "At first I thought that maybe it was about the dress, but it was really about her true belief that Christ was coming to her in a way she had not experienced before. She saw it as a tremendous privilege. I hadn't been thinking very much about going to communion before that, and she moved me from taking it for granted to appreciating it."

- From *At Home with Our Faith*, Annemarie Scobey

TEACHING BY EXAMPLE

How did you learn to cook, drive a car, or create a garden? Certainly good teachers, instructional books, and lots of practice were in the mix. But most of us would also admit that much of our learning has been secured and enhanced by the examples set by others.

During this season of saints, you can take advantage of them! First, use the examples set by the saints to introduce or reinforce the meaning of personal holiness. Then lead children to discover and value the powerful example their own holiness can offer to others.

Skill Development: Whose example helped you?

- Tying your shoe
- Catching a ball
- Learning to read
- Developing good manners

Jesus particularly valued the example of children! We are told in the book of Matthew that unless we become like little children, we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven! Discuss with your children how their example might positively affect friends, neighbors, family – even strangers!

FOUR REASONS TO GO TO MASS

Sometimes people ask, "What's the use of going to church?" You might have doubts of your own, but when you have kids who must be dressed and combed and bribed and shushed the debate intensifies. A few possible answers:

#1 YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT'S GETTING THROUGH. My daughter, Mary Kate, who is just 5, has begun singing church songs with great gusto, not only in church but around the house. One of her favorites is the responsorial psalm, "Shepherd me, O God, beyond my scares, beyond my hopes, from death into life." Last week the two of us were driving around town with her cousin, Liam, 4 years old, who had become a big brother only the day before. They had been

taking turns: One used the child car seat, while the other rode in the big kid seat and used the seat belt. At the last stop each of them refused to get into the car seat. After a few mild threats I said, "Well, let me know when you figure out who's going to ride there. I can wait." I pulled out a newspaper and began to read. Silence descended on the car. Then, after a minute or so, I heard Mary Kate heave herself into the car seat.

"Liam, I'm doing this for you," she said, "because I know you don't want to sit here even though it is your turn."

Then, realization dawning, she cried, "Mom! It's just like in the song, isn't it? Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants!"

#2 YOU NEVER KNOW WHO MIGHT NEED A PRAYER

When my son, James, was a preschooler, each Sunday after going up to Communion he and my husband would walk over to the vigil lights to light a candle. One year as Christmas approached, they made their stop and my husband asked the usual, "So who do you want to pray for this week?" James named the standard assortment of grandmas, aunts and uncles, finishing up with, "and for King Herod." Herod stayed on the prayer list for several months thereafter. I don't know what effect those prayers had on him, but they did help me to expand my own list of who is worth praying for!

#3 YOU NEVER KNOW WHO IS PAYING ATTENTION

In recent years I have become good friends with Alice, a retired professional woman in our parish, whom I cajoled into serving on the board of our Catholic school. We often attend the same Mass, which means that my son James, now 11, is sometimes one of the altar servers. Alice and James have a nodding, polite acquaintance. One night while I was driving her home from a school board meeting, Alice remarked how much she enjoyed seeing James do a good job of serving Mass. Then she said, "I don't know if you know this, but my husband and I had a son named James too, and he was killed in Vietnam. So your son has a very special place in my heart."

#4 YOU NEVER KNOW WHO'S A BUDDING THEOLOGIAN

Car-ride conversation:

Mary Kate, at age 4: "So mom, can you explain something to me?"

Mom: "Sure, what?"

Mary Kate: "Tell me again how it is that God lives forever but Jesus came to earth and died."

Don't sell your kids short. They may not understand the whole Mystery (who does?) but that doesn't mean that Mass isn't helping them to grow in faith, hope and love.

- Catherine O'Connell-Cahill for Living Faith