



St. Ann Catholic Church

Handbook for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist

This Handbook Belongs to _____.

2016-2017 Checklist:

- My parents have attended a Parent Class on September 26 or October 16.
- My parents have turned in a copy of my Baptismal Certificate (if not St. Ann) to the DRE by December 12.
- I have completed my Examination of Conscience and celebrated my First Reconciliation on March 10.
- I participated in both a First Reconciliation Retreat and a First Eucharist Retreat.
- I have attended PRE or school Religion Class regularly.
- I participate in Sunday Mass weekly.
- My clothes for my First Eucharist follow all guidelines.
- I practiced for my First Eucharist on Thursday, May 4 at 6:30 p.m.
- I am excited to receive the gift of Jesus in the Eucharist for the first time on Saturday, May 6, 2017

Helping Your Child Prepare For and Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation



At Home

Talk with your child about all that has happened in their lives since the last time they received the Sacrament of Reconciliation. *Help them think* over the ways they may have sinned. You may want to look over and talk about the Beatitudes or the Ten Commandments to *assist them in praying and reflecting* on those things they feel that they need help with in order to love God more fully.



At Church

1. Encourage your child to kneel in prayer prior to receiving the sacrament.
2. On entering the confessional or reconciliation room, your child will be greeted by the priest and following this, they should make the sign of the cross saying: **“In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”** The priest then invites the child to have trust in God and the child should reply: **“Amen.”**
3. The priest may read a story from the Bible telling about God’s mercy and calling us to turn away from sin. Your child will then tell the priest how long it has been since their last confession and then confess his/her sins. Encourage your child to speak openly with the priest and not to be afraid. The priest represents God’s loving forgiveness and they will not be met with anger or disappointment. God knows how good we are. And He also knows how hard it can be to be good.
4. Your child then recites the Act of Contrition (see prayer pages) and receives absolution. During the prayer of absolution, the priest will normally extend his hand over the child’s head.
5. Following the prayer of absolution, the priest and your child gives thanks to God for forgiving us. The priest will suggest a suitable penance (i.e., prayer or act that will help your child reflect on God’s loving forgiveness and how important it is to God that we make every effort to love Him) and your child will be dismissed.

HOW TO RECEIVE THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

1. When you enter the church, before going to Confession, kneel in a pew and make an “examination of conscience” – recalling how you have offended God and others, and what sins you need to confess. What do you want to tell the priest?

Examination of Conscience

1st Commandment

- Have I refused to believe anything which the Holy Catholic Church teaches? What was it?
- Have I failed to learn my catechism: the Apostles Creed? The Ten Commandments? The seven sacraments? My prayers?
- Have I failed to study my in my religion class?

2nd Commandment

- Have I taken the name of God in vain?
- Have I spoken disrespectfully of a priest, nun, deacon or other holy things?
- Have I used other bad language?

3rd Commandment

- Have I missed Mass on Sunday through my own fault?
- Have I misbehaved in church?
- Have I paid attention to my prayers?

4th Commandment

- Have I been disobedient or disrespectful to my parents or teachers?
- Have I made them angry?

5th Commandment

- Have I had any fights or quarrels?
- Have I made fun of anybody or called them names?
- Have I picked on anyone or tried to pmake them mad?

6th Commandment

- Have I done or thought of anything impure?

7th Commandment

- Have I stolen anything?
- Have I harmed anyone's property?
- Have I cheated anyone?
- Have I helped others to commit sin in any way?

8th Commandment

- Have I lied about anyone?
- Have I told other lies? To whom?
- Have I talked behind other people's back?
- Have I kept bad company?

9th Commandment

- Have I purposely thought of dirty or impure things?

10th Commandment

- Have I desired to have for myself what belongs to another?

Other sins

- Have I been guilty of boasting or bragging?
- Have I ate too much or wasted food.
- Have I used drugs without permission?
- Have I failed to study or do my other work?
- Are there any other sins I may need to confess?

2. Quietly stand in line and wait for the person in front of you to complete their confession.

3. As soon as you sit or kneel by the priest, **make and say the Sign of the Cross.**
4. Father will greet you and you say: **“Bless me Father for I have sinned. This is my first confession.”**
5. **Tell** Father the things you have done or failed to do for which you need forgiveness.
6. Father will talk to you and ask you to pray or do something to show you are really sorry for your sins. What you do is called your penance and should be done as soon as possible after you leave the priest.
7. Father will tell you to say the **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. Amen**

8. Father will now forgive you in God’s name: **the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.** You say: **“Amen”.**
9. Father will tell you to **go in peace.** You say: **“Thank you, Father.”**
10. Return to your seat, say your penance and thank God for his forgiveness.

Thanksgiving Prayer after Confession

Dear Jesus, thank you with all my heart for pardoning my sins.
You always forgive me and give me another chance!
Give me the grace to avoid breaking any of your commandments again.
Thank you, Mother Mary. Help me to be good.
Thank you, guardian angel.
Please guide me away from sin lead me towards heaven all of my life.



ST. ANN FIRST HOLY EUCHARIST
Process for Receiving

1. **Whole Pew Stands:** All children in a pew will stand at one time when directed by teacher or usher.
2. **Kneelers Up:** Upon standing, children should quietly place their kneeler in upright position.
3. **Hands Folded:** Once standing, hands are to be folded near chest with fingertips facing upward as you approach Father Russ.



4. **Slight Bow and Hands:** When the child before you receives the Blessed Sacrament, bow and then make an altar with your hands at chest level (left over right).



5. **Step Up:** When the child in front of you steps aside, step close to Father Russ with your "hand altar" prepared and ready to receive.
6. **Answer "AMEN":** As Father Russ holds up the host and says, "The Body of Christ," you look him in the eye and answer out loud, "Amen".
7. **Receiving and Consuming the Body of Christ:** Father Russ will place the host in your top hand. Pick the Blessed Sacrament up from your "hand altar" gently with your right hand and immediately, but reverently place the host in your mouth, chewing gently.
8. **Fold Hands Again and Approach the Cup:** Go to the Minister of the Cup on the side that would be on your way back to your seat. Bow slightly as you approach the Minister of the Cup.
9. **Answer "AMEN":** When the minister says, "The Blood of Christ," you will say out loud, "Amen".
10. **Receiving and Consuming the Blood of Christ:** Use both hands to take the cup from the minister by placing one hand underneath and one hand around it. Take a small sip and hand the cup back to the minister.



More on back...

11. **Fold Hands and Return:** Reverently return to the pew with hands folded near chest with fingertips facing upward.
12. **Stand Reverently:** Wait with hands folded in pew until your whole pew has returned. Once your pew has all returned, your teacher will direct you to quietly bring down your kneelers, kneel, and say a prayer of thanks to God.



13. **Sit Reverently:** Continue to kneel and pray quietly until all of the First Eucharist children **on your side** of the church have completed receiving communion, then your teacher will tell you to quietly sit down.



14. **Wait Respectfully:** Sit with your hands quietly in your lap while everyone in the church has an opportunity to receive Jesus.

Important Notes:

- This is about receiving Jesus! Let your behavior and posture show forth your love of Jesus.
- Make sure you place the Host in your mouth while at the altar. The Host should not be out of your mouth once you have received and placed it there. Chew reverently and swallow.
- Please, do not make a face while receiving. We will practice to help you get used to the taste.
- Parents who prefer to have their child receive on the tongue please email the DRE for instructions.
- According to Father Russ, crossing one's self, as well as kneeling, when receiving the Eucharist is an act of personal piety and is not part of official instruction on receiving. Therefore, neither will be instructed as a part of our First Holy Eucharist Celebration. This will allow all to receive uniformly as an outward sign of our communion with one another. It is not, however, wrong to do either.



Parents, remember... You are the Domestic Church and the Primary Catechists of Your Children.

**Practice with your children during the coming weeks,
and let them watch and learn from you
as you regularly attend Mass and receive Communion.**



ST. ANN FIRST HOLY EUCHARIST
Process for Receiving on the Tongue

1. **Whole Pew Stands:** All children in a pew will stand at one time when directed by teacher or usher.
2. **Kneelers Up:** Upon standing, children should quietly place their kneeler in upright position.
3. **Hands Folded:** Once standing, hands are to be folded near chest with fingertips facing upward as you approach Father Russ.



4. **Slight Bow and Hands:** When the child before you receives the Blessed Sacrament, make a slight bow and keep your hands folded.
5. **Step Up with Hands Folded:** When the child in front of you steps aside, step close to Father Russ.
6. **Answer “AMEN”:** As Father Russ holds up the host and says, “The Body of Christ,” you look him in the eye and answer out loud, “Amen”.
7. **Receiving and Consuming the Body of Christ on Your Tongue:** With hands folded, you open your mouth wide and extend your tongue out fully so that the host can be placed on the tongue.
8. **Close Your Mouth and Step Aside Chewing Gently**
9. **Keep Hands Folded and Approach the Cup:** Go to the Minister of the Cup on the side that would be on your way back to your seat. Bow slightly as you approach the Minister of the Cup.
10. **Answer “AMEN”:** When the minister says, “The Blood of Christ,” you will say out loud, “Amen”.
11. **Receiving and Consuming the Blood of Christ:** Use both hands to take the cup from the minister by placing one hand underneath and one hand around it. Take a small sip and hand the cup back to the minister.



More on back...

12. **Fold Hands and Return:** Reverently return to the pew with hands folded near chest with fingertips facing upward.

13. **Stand Reverently:** Wait with hands folded in pew until your whole pew has returned. Once your pew has all returned, your teacher will direct you to quietly bring down your kneelers, kneel, and say a prayer of thanks to God.



14. **Sit Reverently:** Continue to kneel and pray quietly until all of the First Eucharist children **on your side** of the church have completed receiving communion, then your teacher will tell you to quietly sit down.



15. **Wait Respectfully:** Sit with your hands quietly in your lap while everyone in the church has an opportunity to receive Jesus.

Important Notes:

- This is about receiving Jesus! Let your behavior and posture show forth your love of Jesus.
- Chew reverently and swallow.
- Please, do not make a face while receiving. We will practice to help you get used to the taste.
- According to Father Russ, crossing one's self, as well as kneeling, when receiving the Eucharist is an act of personal piety and is not part of official instruction on receiving. Therefore, neither will be instructed as a part of our First Holy Eucharist Celebration. This will allow all to receive uniformly as an outward sign of our communion with one another. It is not, however, wrong to do either.



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First Eucharist Dress Code:

GIRLS

- White, knee or calf length dresses. PLEASE, NO FLOOR LENGTH DRESSES
- White veil, shoulder length or shorter
- White shoes with socks or hose
- **NO** gloves

BOYS

- Dark or khaki dress pants. NO JEANS OR SHORTS
- Long –sleeved white shirt (if they are not wearing a sport or suit coat)
- Dark tie
- Dark dress shoes. NO TENNIS SHOES, SNEAKERS, OR ATHLETIC SHOES
- Dark sport coat or suit coat (optional)

Please strive for simplicity in your child's outfit. The focus should be on the Sacrament.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO TAPING

The celebration of your child's First Eucharist is a an exciting family event and a milestone for your child in their spiritual growth as a Catholic, however it is important to remember that this event is first and foremost a sacrament celebrated during Mass and thus should be attended and participated in with reverence.

To preserve the reference of the Mass, please abide by the following policies regarding photos and video taping:

- **No** pictures should be taken in the gathering rooms or as the first Communicants are lining up.
- **No** flash pictures or high intensity light videos may be taken during the liturgy.
- **Any** video cameras must be set up in the back **of the church**.
- **NO ONE SHOULD LEAVE THEIR SEAT OR PEW TO TAKE PICTURES OR VIDEOS DURING THE LITURGY.**

PLEASE ASK YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS TO ABIDE BY THESE POLICIES.

Non-flash pictures and videos may be taken from one's seat during the liturgy.

The church will remain open after Mass for posed, flash pictures and videos.

Please treat all areas of the church, especially the altar and tabernacle, with reverence.

As described below, a professional photographer approved by the parish to take a picture of your child as he/she receives the host. You will be able to purchase copies of this photo if you wish. **NO ONE ELSE IS PERMITTED IN THE ALTAR AREA OR AISLES.**

PROFESSIONAL FIRST EUCHARIST PHOTOGRAPHS

As stated above, no flash pictures or high intensity light videos are permitted during the first Eucharist Mass. **We also ask that parents and family members remain in their seats and do not attempt to take pictures from the aisles.**

Clarence Neal, a professional photographer, will be present to take a picture as your child receives Communion and will also be available for portraits. You will receive information and pricing for his services in the upcoming weeks. You may also visit his website at cmnealphotography.net.

