

Dear Parents,

Below you will find a breakdown of the dress codes, times and expectation for both Sacraments along with an overview of in-class preparations. Please attend the parent's meeting April 9th. We will meet in the Church at 6:35pm. This will be a mandatory (but short) meeting. You are welcomed to stay at Church, following the meeting, while the children visit the confessionals with Fr. Ed.

The following (Monday) class dates are mandatory. Students and teachers will be reviewing important information in preparation for these Sacraments:

- APRIL 9th: (Monday) Reconciliation practice with Fr. Ed (The children will visit confessionals with Fr Ed) and a short MANDATORY parent meeting.
- April 30th: (Monday), Practice in Church
- MAY 14st: (Monday), Practice in Church

RECONCILIATION:

Date: April 21, 2018

Time: 9:45

Dress: Church Attire (Please dress appropriately, this is not a Mass but this is an important Sacrament and we should treat it as such.)

What to Expect:

We will randomly draw names for the order of Reconciliation.

A parent or guardian will need to escort their child to the confessional and wait for them to complete the sacrament. The children will then place their lamb on the board and return to the pew to do their penance.

The children will be making cards with the Act of Contrition on one side and they will add their list of sins to the other.

We will be praying the Rosary during confessions and we ask that each child join in after they complete their penance. After confessions, we will have a pizza party in the Youth Center.

This year we would like to continue the "**Pizza and Penance**" to replace the traditional ceremony that followed First Communion. Over the past years, we have noticed dwindling participation likely due to families having their own parties. We hope that this new tradition of "Pizza and Penance" will help not only ease any anxiety the kids may feel but also remind them that Reconciliation is a celebration of forgiveness. We hope that you will carry on this tradition with your families.

We will be collecting canned goods (multiple goods) for the offertory during First Communion. Please bring canned goods to Reconciliation on April 21nd and leave them in the box in the back of Church.

FIRST COMMUNION

Practice Date: May 19, 2018 (Mandatory) 10:00am to 11:30pm

Sacrament Date: May 20, 2017

Time: 10:00am Mass - **Meet in the Youth Center at 8:30am for Individual pictures** (9:15 for the group picture). Picture packets being sent home tonight.

Dress: The girls should wear a white dress with white stockings or socks and white dress shoes. A headpiece is optional. The boys should wear a white dress shirt with tie, long blue or black dress pants with dress socks and dress shoes.

What to Expect:

Every child will have a part in the ceremony, some will read while others will be involved in the procession or offertory. Readers will be chosen by soon and the readings will be sent home for them to practice. NO CHILD WILL BE MADE TO READ. Selection is based on volunteers.

We will practice for the ceremony during class and during the mandatory practice on May 19th.

First Communion Banners

It is customary that the students make a First Communion banner to be displayed during the First Communion Mass. This is optional and something that will be done at home. You can purchase the banner kit at www.catholicsupply.com for approximately \$15-18. I believe you can also find them at Party City.

Confession Guide for Children

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Did I pay attention at Mass?
Have I fooled around in Church?
Did I say my prayers every day?
Did I say mean things to my mom or dad?
Did I always say "Thank You" to people?
Am I hard to get along with (during school, at Grandma's, at home?)?
Did I do what my mom and dad told me to do? My teacher?
Was I lazy around the house?
Did I do my chores?
Did I hurt others people's feelings by calling them bad names?
Have I started fights with my brothers and sisters at home?
Have I blamed other people for things I do?
Did I get other people into trouble?
Do I hit people when I get mad?
Have I forgiven people? Or am I holding a grudge?
Have I cheated or been unfair in games?
Did I refuse to play with someone for no good reason?
Was I was lazy about my schoolwork?
Did I fail to do my homework?
Did I cheat in school?
How many times did I lie to my parents? My teachers? My friends?
Did I take anything that didn't belong to me?
Did I avoid medicine? Did I refuse to eat food I didn't like?

A GUIDE TO CONFESSION: *How to go to Confession*

1. You always have the option to go to confession anonymously, that is, behind a screen or face to face, if you so desire.
2. After the priest greets you in the name of Christ, make the sign of the cross. He may choose to recite a reading from Scripture, after which you say: "Bless me Father for I have sinned. It has been (state how long) since my last confession. These are my sins."
3. Tell your sins simply and honestly to the priest. You might even want to discuss the circumstances and the root causes of your sins and ask the priest for advice or direction.
4. Listen to the advice the priest gives you and accept the penance from him. Then make an Act of Contrition for your sins.
5. The priest will then dismiss you with the words of praise: "Give thanks to the Lord for He is good. You respond: "For His mercy endures forever." The priest will then conclude with: "The Lord has freed you from your sins. Go in peace." And you respond by saying: "Thanks be to God."
6. Spend some time with Our Lord thanking and praising Him for the gift of His mercy. Try to perform your penance as soon as possible.

Examination of Conscience for Children Using the Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.

How often do I think about God?

How often do I say my prayers?

Do I pay attention and participate at Mass?

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Am I kind to others?

Do I do what Jesus wants me to do?

Do I share with others?

Am I helpful to my family and neighbors?

Do I show respect to my teachers and classmates?

Give us this day our daily bread.

Do I remember to say thank you?

Am I sometimes greedy?

Do I appreciate the good things I have in my life?

Do I think of ways to help those who have no food, clothes, shelter or money? Do I take things that don't belong to me?

Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Do I say I'm sorry when I have been wrong?

Do I forgive and forget when someone does something bad to me?

Do I help solve problems between my friends or do I cause more trouble? Do I say bad things about people who have hurt me?

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Do I play fairly in sports and games?

Do I cheat in school?

Do I tell the truth?

Do I let other kids tempt me to do things I know I shouldn't do? Do I tempt others?

Taken from *Seven Frequently Asked Questions About Children and the Sacrament of Reconciliation*, written for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee by Kathleen D. Beuscher, 2010

Order of Reconciliation

The Priest welcomes the child and they both pray the sign of the cross.

“Bless me Father for I have sinned. This is my first reconciliation.”

“The Sins”

Words of Spiritual direction from the Priest.

Penance is given.

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.

Blessing from the Priest.

AMEN