

RECONCILIATION AND FIRST EUCHARIST PREPARATION PROGRAM

Our Lady of the Lake Parish is pleased to partner with your family in preparing your children for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. When church and families work together we are able to build a wonderful foundation of our Catholic faith in our youth. A faith which will allow them to develop and build on and to call upon it throughout their lives.

WHAT BASIC REQUIREMENTS NEED TO BE SATISFIED?

All students must have completed at least one full year of religious education either in a Catholic school setting or in Christian Formation and be currently enrolled in order to begin Sacramental preparation.

1. CLASS ATTENDANCE: This is a wonderful time for learning not only about Jesus' love for us, but also about the traditions of the Catholic faith. Faith formation is not just about storytelling and checking for understanding. It is also about being together as a Catholic community, praying together, singing together, learning about ourselves as gifts from God, and how we can carry out Jesus' work here on earth. Attending Mass and class regularly gives your child the opportunity to fully experience the richness of our faith. **Attendance is therefore essential.** Students with more than 3 unexcused absences will be required to delay first Eucharist until the following year. If your child must miss class due to illness, or an essential family engagement, you must contact the program coordinator at 269-699-5870 ext. 32. You will also need to discuss with the catechist what make up work needs to be done.

2. MASS: All First Eucharist candidates must attend Mass regularly. We also ask that families take up the Offertory as part of preparation. This is wonderful experience just asking an usher when you come to Mass. More information can be found on the parent table.

3. PARENT ATTENDANCE: Parents are required to attend a preparation meeting for Reconciliation, a preparation meeting for First Eucharist, a Parent-Pastor meeting, and Retreat.

4. BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE: A copy of your child's Baptismal Certificate must be submitted to the Program Coordinator by December 31st. If your child was baptized at Our Lady of the Lake please speak with program coordinator.

Suggestions to Help your child Prepare for First Eucharist and First Reconciliation

Praying: Please say the following prayers daily with your child:

- Our Father
- Hail Mary
- Glory Be (Doxology)
- Act of Contrition (to be used for First Reconciliation)
- A prayer of Thanks created by your child/parent
- A prayer of Petition asking God's help for others
- A prayer of Intersession asking for God's guidance and help for yourself

Additional Home Preparation:

Additional work at home may be necessary. Please look carefully at any notes and work that your child brings home, as this is a great way for the catechist to communicate with you! In addition, specific materials may be assigned to be done at home to facilitate class activities.

Participating in the Mass:

Please work with your child to participate in the Mass. Sitting up front, where he/she can see what is happening may facilitate involvement and understanding. Please help your child understand and use the following practices:

- Making the sign of the cross with holy water upon entering the church
- Genuflecting toward the tabernacle upon entering the pew
- Remaining in quiet prayer before Mass to help enter into a peaceful “frame of mind” for Mass
- Signing themselves at the Gospel
- Take Offertory gifts forward
- Bowing while in line with a parent for Communion (with arms crossed)
- Following along with the missalette and participating with the prayers and responses
- Kneeling appropriately during the Liturgy of the Eucharist
- Saying a prayer before and after Communion

Remember that we are here to assist you in any way we can. If you have questions or concerns about any of the requirements or suggestions, please contact the program coordinator at 269-699-5870, ext. 32.