

OUR LADY OF THE LAKE PARISH COMMUNITY

RECONCILIATION AND FIRST EUCHARIST PREPARATION PROGRAM

Our Lady of the Lake Parish is pleased to partner with your family in preparing your child for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. Though the primary responsibility for educating children in the faith belongs to parents, the Church has an obligation to guide and support you in this important work.

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 parish Religious Education program and be currently enrolled in order to begin Sacramental preparation. In other words, two full years of catechesis are required as preparation for these sacraments.

1. *CLASS ATTENDANCE: This is an important 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 about 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 absences may 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 RE office at 269-699-5870, ext. 135. You will also need to discuss the necessary make-up work with the catechist.

2. MASS: There is an essential correlation between participation at Mass and preparation for First Eucharist. All First Eucharist candidates must attend Mass regularly. As pastor, Fr. Joe is the one who presides over the celebration of sacraments, and he expects to see a pattern of active participation whenever sacraments are involved.

3. * PARENT ATTENDANCE: Parents are required to attend a preparation meeting for Reconciliation, a preparation meeting for First Eucharist, and a portion of the Retreat Day. At his discretion, Fr. Joe might also request a Parent-Pastor meeting.

4. BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE: A copy of your child's Baptismal Certificate must be submitted to the RE office by December 31st. If your child was baptized at Our Lady of the Lake Parish, please communicate this to Sylvia Dillon.

***PLEASE CONSULT THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CALENDAR.**

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

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

- Our Father
- Hail Mary
- Glory Be (Doxology)
- Act of Contrition (to be used for First Reconciliation)

Additional Home Preparation:

This will be accomplished through the workbook you have been given. Also, please look carefully at the communication folder your child brings home each week, since this is an important way for the catechist to communicate with you. Specific materials may be assigned to be completed at home to facilitate class activities, and they should be sent back in the folder with your child for the next class.

Participation in the Mass:

Please encourage your child to participate in the Mass. Sitting up front, where he/she can see what is happening helps to facilitate involvement and understanding. Explain and encourage the following practices:

- Making the sign of the cross with holy water upon entering the church
- Genuflecting before the tabernacle upon entering the pew
- Remaining in quiet prayer before Mass to prepare a peaceful “frame of mind” for Mass
- Signing themselves at the Gospel
- Taking Offertory gifts forward
- Bowing while in line with a parent for Communion (with arms crossed)
- Participating by saying appropriate prayers and responses
- Kneeling reverently 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 materials, please contact Sylvia Dillon at 269-699-5870, ext.135 or email - dillonsolol@gmail.com