

Stage 1
Pre-Sacrament Year

The *year before* preparing for the Sacrament of Reconciliation is a time for parents and child to grow in an understanding of God's plan of Salvation History, from creation, through the Old and New Testaments, to the life of the Church. The child is drawn to the divine Persons of the Holy Trinity, especially coming to know Jesus by listening to the Word of God, learning to pray with the Bible, learning other forms of prayer. By living and praying these lessons they are invited to come to encounter God more fully when they receive the sacraments.

You may begin this preparation with your child when you believe he/she is ready and **at least one year before immediate preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) begins.**

Stage 2
First Reconciliation

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Divine Physician of our souls and bodies. He willed that His Church, in the power of the Holy Spirit, should continue His ministry of healing and salvation. Therefore, He instituted the Sacrament of Reconciliation for all sinful members of His Church (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1421 & 1446.) The Sacrament of Reconciliation—also known as Penance or Confession—is the ordinary means by which Christ's faithful who are aware of serious sin are reconciled to God and His Church after Baptism. Every Catholic after attaining the age of discretion is bound by obligation to confess serious sins at least once a year (Code of Canon Law, cann. 960 & 989).

Stage 3
**Confirmation and
First Holy Communion**

Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace. By the Sacrament of Confirmation, the baptized are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Those who are confirmed are more firmly obliged to be witnesses to Christ by word and deed and to spread and defend the faith (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1285).

First Holy Communion

Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life. At the Last Supper, our Lord Jesus Christ instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of His Body and Blood in order to perpetuate the Sacrifice of His Cross throughout the ages until He comes again. The Lord Himself urges us to receive Him in the Sacrament of the Eucharist: *"Truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you"* (John 6:53).

Stage 1 Expectations Pre Sacrament Year

First and foremost, preparation for the Sacraments begins with the regular practice of the Faith by the family. The very necessary minimum for prayer and moral effort for all the faithful is as follows.

The Precepts of the
Catholic Church:

1. Attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation and rest from servile labor,
2. Confess one's sins in Confession at least once a year,
3. Receive the Eucharist at least once a year during Eastertime,
4. Observe the days of fasting and abstinence as defined by the Church, and help to provide for the needs of the Church through stewardship

Parent completes and submits the annual "Request for Sacramental Preparation" form by the registration deadline along with the program/materials fee.

Stage 2 Expectations First Reconciliation Year

Complete all preparation for Stage One and register by the deadline.

1. Child must be Catholic and be open to receiving the Sacrament.
2. Child must be at least seven (7) years old.
3. Child is concurrently enrolled in and attending the monthly Family Faith Formation program with at least one parent; or attending Catholic school or homeschool (submit curriculum in use)
4. Fully engaged in Sacrament Formation events.
5. Child is attending weekly Sunday Mass with parents and knows how to participate in the celebration of the liturgy.
6. Child should know basic prayers: *Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Act of Contrition, Spiritual Communion.*

Stage 3 Expectations Confirmation & First Eucharist

Complete Stages One and Two, interview with the pastor and/or DFF, and register by the deadline.

1. Complete Stages One and Two including reception of First Reconciliation.
2. Child must be Catholic, be open to receiving the Sacraments, and be properly disposed according to [Diocesan guidelines](#).
3. Child is concurrently enrolled in and attending the monthly Family Faith Formation program with at least one parent; or attending Catholic school or homeschool (submit curriculum in use) &
4. Fully engaged in Sacrament Formation events
5. Attends weekly Sunday Mass with parents and knows how to participate in the celebration of the liturgy.
6. Knows and professes the Apostles & Nicene Creeds