

## **SACRAMENT POLICY-FIRST RECONCILIATION & FIRST HOLY COMMUNION**

The sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Communion are normally received in the second year of religious instruction. Two years of formal preparation are required prior to the reception of the sacraments. Children with learning difficulties may require extra help and/or time. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to contact the Director of Religious Education to request special allowances for their child.

All second grade candidates and their families are expected to take part in the formal Enrollment Ceremony, held in the Fall of each year. At this time the candidates and their families will give public witness of their intention in regard to the reception of these sacraments.

Parent/guardian is required to attend one preparation meeting for each sacrament that their child is preparing to receive. (This is a diocesan requirement and not up to individual parishes.)

Regular attendance at Sunday liturgy (mass) is expected by all families.

Each child must be able to demonstrate readiness for each sacrament, as detailed below.

### **Reconciliation Readiness**

1. The child must have an initial knowledge of
  - the person of Jesus
  - the Gospel message of forgiveness
  - sin and its effects
  - understanding and experience of sorrow, forgiveness, and conversion
2. The child freely desires to receive the sacrament.
3. The child must exhibit that personal prayer is a part of his/her life through knowledge of the basic prayers: The Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, The Glory Be (all taught in first grade), and the Act of Sorrow (taught in second grade).

### **Communion Readiness**

A child according to his/her capacity:

1. Has celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation prior to First Communion
2. Participates actively and consciously in Sunday Liturgy on a regular basis
3. Understands that (a) the Eucharist is truly the Body and Blood of Christ under the appearance of bread and wine and (b) that the Eucharist is the commemoration of Christ's last meal with his disciples before he died, and a memorial of his sacrifice for our salvation
4. Understands that by sharing in this special meal, we become brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ on earth