

**ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
**MARTINSVILLE, VA**  
**(276)638-4779**

## **FIRST HOLY COMMUNION**

### **DIOCESAN POLICY**

*In a recent communication from the Catholic Diocese of Richmond, we were given the required Diocesan policies for the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. St. Joseph's is in compliance with these general principles and policies that have been mandated. Participation in the sacraments is a shared responsibility of parents, catechists, and the church itself, which is the assembly of believers united in Christ. The following is a general overview of how this process occurs within our parish. In the event that your young person has not completed preparation and/or received a particular sacrament, and you are concerned, you should contact the assigned coordinator. It is your responsibility to contact these individuals for further instructions.*

**FIRST RECONCILIATION and FIRST HOLY COMMUNION** - Children preparing for these sacraments should be concurrently enrolled in Christian Formation classes. Preparation for sacraments is offered in addition to the above mentioned faith formation. Please see Christian Formation calendar for specific dates. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church "Children must go to the sacrament of Penance before receiving Holy Communion for the first time." (CCC 1457) Readiness for children to **begin** preparation for these sacraments is determined in part by:

#### **(For Reconciliation)**

- Has been baptized
- Has reached the age of reason (7 years old)
- Can distinguish between right and wrong
- Can distinguish between mistakes and accidents
- Is able to express sorrow for sin
- Has the ability to forgive others
- Prays at home and at Mass
- Is able to relate to Jesus as one who forgives

#### **(For First Holy Communion)**

- Has been baptized
- Has reached the age of reason (7 years old)
- Is interested in receiving the sacrament
- Feels like they belong to the Catholic community
- Participates in Sunday Mass
- Prays at home and at Mass
- Has the ability to relate to Jesus as one who loves
- Has prepared for and received the Sacrament of Reconciliation

