



## Instructions for Final Sacramental Preparation

As we look to the day when we will be able to assemble again in community, the following guidelines are provided to ensure that students in sacramental years receive appropriate support for their formation:

### 1. Review guidelines for "immediate preparation"

Those currently supporting faith formation at home (principals, catechetical administrators, teachers, catechists) should review diocesan curriculum guidelines for "immediate preparation", or the core curriculum required for reception of the sacraments. The content of immediate preparation is found in the religion curriculum guidelines for grades 2 and 8. These outlines will be helpful because the content addresses what is most essential. To view these guidelines, go to [www.diopitt.org](http://www.diopitt.org) under Offices - Religious Education – Support for Leaders, or ctrl/click below:

- [Immediate Preparation – Reconciliation](#)
- [Immediate Preparation – First Communion](#)
- [Immediate Preparation - Confirmation](#)

### 2. Continue to support remote religion formation

As teachers/catechetical administrators now continue to provide support for faith formation at home, they should give priority to immediate sacramental preparation over unrelated content in texts. To help instructors locate supplemental resources for faith formation at home, the Department for Catholic Identity has created a "[Master List](#)" of free online resources; this list is available on the diocesan website under Offices – Religious Education – Support for Leaders. Additionally, a new webpage entitled "[Faith at Home](#)" has been created also on the diocesan website that parents can directly access for their use.

### 3. Regroup and assess remaining needs – at school and/or parent meeting

When public assembly is once again permitted, teachers/catechetical administrators should assess what portions of the immediate preparation students may still need to learn, given that gaps are likely, due to variance in home implementation. (This may be a special concern for First Communion classes as some programs may not have the begun/completed catechesis for this sacrament.) If schools reconvene before the school year is over, their assessment will take place in the classroom. If the school year is ended without reconvening, students should report to the parish where they will receive their sacraments. The parish then will assess the needs of CCD and school

students. The simplest way to do this might be to host a parent meeting to learn from families how their home catechesis progressed, identifying those catechetical areas that may yet need to be strengthened. After this assessment, the catechetical administrator can make plans for what/how final preparation will take place. (See item 5 below.)

**4. Schedule date/s for sacraments**

The Bishop's office will contact parishes regarding Confirmation. Scheduling Reconciliation and First Communion is the jurisdiction of parishes under the direction of the pastor/administrator. It is recommended that sacraments be provided sooner rather than later as students benefit most when there is continuity between sacramental formation and sacramental reception. (Other practical concerns include the possibilities of children forgetting what they have learned should the delay be very long, and their outgrowing attire, a hardship for disadvantaged families especially.)

**5. Review and refocus – mini-retreat or other**

Final preparation will be given by the parish before sacramental reception. A simple way to tie up loose strings might be to host a morning/evening of reflection (ex: "Jesus Day") where catechesis can be finalized and families can gather in a spirit and anticipation and joy. Confirmation programs may also find it helpful to provide such a time of review, reflection and prayer to assist the students in refocusing on the important sacramental moment to take place. Catholic school staff are welcome to participate in these experiences, as well as in the celebration of the sacraments proper, but are not obliged to do so if such occurs in the summer. Additional time may be needed for practices.

**6. Celebrate the sacraments**

After a period of prolonged instability, the sacramental moments of our students will be happy celebrations for the entire parish community. Parishes should encourage these moments to be special times of thanksgiving and praise for the renewal the life and heart of our family of faith.

Note: A new page at [www.diopitt.org](http://www.diopitt.org) entitled "Support for Catechetical Leaders" (referenced above) has been created to host the resources mentioned in this guide, as well as other pertinent materials for long-distance ministry. Go to Offices – Religious Education – Support for Catechetical Leaders or [click here](#).