

SACRAMENTAL TIMELINE COVID

Grade 2 -

September -General sacramental information; Dates/options distributed for First Communion celebrations; Prep books distributed to be distributed at a later date in early November

Late November - Early December -Completed prep books returned to Religious Ed office

- **Reconciliation retreat** for parent and child - parts will be virtual, packet will be distributed prior to the retreat

First Communion celebration selection made (this way we can give dates out before family get-togethers at Thanksgiving!)

January - First Reconciliation Celebration in Church - due to COVID, this is something we will have to figure out!

January/February - **TWO** parent gatherings to discuss First Communion Sacramental understanding; celebration and prep details, retreat info, Prep books distributed and banner materials given

End of February/beginning of March - **First Communion retreat** (dependent on COVID - if back to normal it will be a Saturday morning)

April - Completed books and banners due one month before the First Communion celebration date
Virtual Student interviews and completed prep book review

May - First Communion Celebrations (generally **first 2 Saturdays**)
Rehearsal held on prior **Wednesday** evenings

For Catholics, the Eucharist is "the source and summit" of our lives. Together with the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, it completes and fulfills our initiation into the church. It is the only sacrament of initiation that we are privileged to receive as many times as we like. Its roots are in the Last Supper that Jesus shared with his apostles; while the defining moment in Jewish history is the Exodus, which is remembered each year at Passover, our defining moment as Christians is the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord, celebrated in the Triduum during Holy Week. Jesus gave new meaning to the blessing of the bread and wine, and to the sacrificial lamb. During that meal he also charged us to a life of service by washing his disciples' feet. Our Eucharistic celebration also echoes the Jewish Sabbath in its structure; we begin always with the Liturgy of the Word, where the readings are read and then "cracked open" by the homilist. Jesus, as the Word of God, is opened to us, and then sacrificed for us in the Liturgy of the Eucharist. It is not just a memorial in the sense of remembrance; as Catholics, we believe that Jesus is made present in the sacrament. His sacrifice is connected to the sacrifice of all church members, reminding us of the need for sacrifice in our lives. Through it we are connected with all of our members, on earth and in heaven; the communion of saints. This sacrament is to be received in a state of grace - without serious sin - which is why for many years you were required to attend Reconciliation prior to its reception. We are also asked to fast from food or drink for one hour prior to receiving, as a sign of our willingness to be part of the sacrifice. Regular reception of Holy Communion gives us strength, or grace, to keep us from mortal sin. **Since it is expected to be transformative, we are expected to participate - to not just be a body in the pew, but to be part of the transformation.**