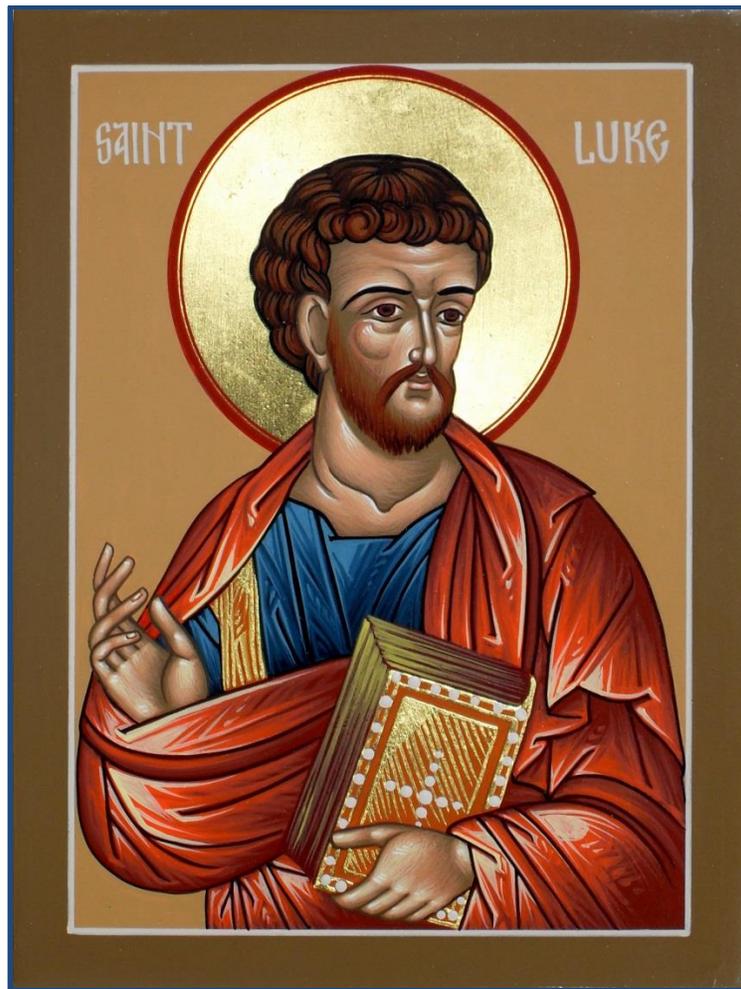


St. Luke Catholic Church

First Sacraments Handbook

(First Reconciliation & First Eucharist)

2018/2019



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INTRODUCTION

St. Luke Catholic Church Sacramental Preparation Program is a parish based religious education program for children desiring to receive the sacraments of First Confession and First Holy Communion. The Program offers an education within the Catholic intellectual and spiritual tradition, by which, and in cooperation with God's grace, the young are formed in the perennial wisdom and faith of the Church in order to receive God's sacraments in a dignified and worthy manner.

As a parent, you are the most important part of your child's faith formation throughout their entire childhood. Our parish is happy to assist you as you help form your child's faith. We ask that we work together in these ways:

- Please take your child to Mass each weekend, whether it is here or another Catholic church out of town. Mass attendance bestows graces and teaches our children about Jesus, community and forgiveness in ways which can't be duplicated elsewhere.
- Please ensure that your child regularly attends faith formation class and please review class material at home. Important concepts are covered at EVERY session and your child will miss material needed for his/her understanding of the sacraments. If for some reason your child cannot regularly attend class, please speak with a member of the Faith Formation team as soon as you are able.
- Please make every effort to attend the two parent sessions and family faith day events which will be offered this year. These sessions are designed to help you as an adult understand these sacraments more fully, to help you understand your child's faith development, and to help you develop your child's faith life. Your attendance is important as these are not items which can be covered with a note sent home.
- Please pray with your child on a daily basis, helping them to memorize and understand the meaning of the prayers assigned for this year. Your daily efforts now will help your child have a meaningful prayer life as he/she grows older.

DIOCESAN GUIDELINES

The Diocese of Saint Augustine has established the following requirements for the celebration of the sacraments of First Confession and First Communion:

- Ongoing remote preparation is essential prior to sacramental catechesis
- Remote preparation is ongoing enrollment in and consistent attendance in the Parish Religious Education Program or Catholic School or Home School Program during the year prior to reception of the Sacraments
- Readiness to enter the immediate Parish Sacramental Program is determined through consultation with parents, catechists, Pastor, DRE and candidates.
- **Immediate preparation for the sacraments involves formation for a minimum of six (6) hours, and a maximum of twelve (12) hours for each sacrament.**
- Since full initiation is the norm for all Catholics, persons with special needs (families with unique needs, including physical, emotional and mental disabilities but not limited

to these circumstances) are to be included within all formation, training and participation of sacraments

- **Parents and other role models are encouraged to act as witnesses by their regular participation in church life**
- The proper context for the celebration of the sacraments is within the **parish community**.

THE SACRAMENT OF FIRST CONFESSION

What is the sacrament of Confession (or Penance or Reconciliation)?

- The sacrament of Confession is the sacrament by which the sins committed after Baptism are forgiven and, at the same time, it reconciles the penitent with the Church.

Formation for the sacrament of Confession:

- Formation for the celebration of First Confession involves the cooperative efforts of parents, pastors, catechists and children. It is a time when a person is able to encounter a loving and merciful God. The focus of any formation must be on developing and growing a strong mature conscience. Because people grow in different ways and the awareness of sin becomes evident at different times in different people, the time of sacramental celebration should be based on personal readiness.
- The candidate should be prepared in such a way that the ritual celebration is a joyful celebration, more than a memorized experience.

Preparation for the Sacrament:

- Every child who has reached the age of reason (around seven) must be given adequate basic catechesis for the celebration of confession so that participation in the sacrament may be a free response of faith. No adequately prepared child may be denied the sacrament. On the other hand, no obligation to approach the sacrament may be imposed on the child, other than that which binds all Catholics, namely the consciousness of personal, serious sin.
- While catechesis for the sacrament of Confession is to precede First Eucharist, the principle of individual readiness for the celebration of the sacrament must be respected. The decision concerning readiness of a particular child rests with the parent and child along with the assistance of the parish pastor and catechetical leadership.

Readiness of the individual child includes:

- The ability of the child to distinguish between right and wrong
- The awareness of the need for forgiveness and trust in Jesus' forgiving love.
- The ability to express sorrow.

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- The ability of the child to describe wrongdoing in his or her own words.
 - The ability to ask for forgiveness

The celebration of the sacrament of First Confession:

The sacrament of First Confession will be held during a special First Confession Penance Service. The date will be announced ahead of time. All children are expected to attend this event.

Although your child will receive the Sacrament as an individual in confession with the Priest, it is recommended that this be a family event. This is a strong witness of your faith to your child, and an affirmation of your own understanding of the importance of the sacrament, and your belief in the graces received through the sacrament. This is very much a family affair, and not a 'class' or 'school' event.

Continuing Formation:

- Catechesis for the sacrament of Confession must continue throughout one's life in order to develop a fully mature conscience.
- Participation in the sacrament at frequent and regular opportunities contributes to one's overall growth in discipleship and maturity.

THE SACRAMENT OF FIRST COMMUNION

What is the sacrament of the Eucharist?

- The sacrament of the Eucharist is the "source and summit" of the Christian life because in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself.
- As a consequence of Christ's unique presence in this sacrament, those who participate are granted communion with God the Father, through Christ in the Holy Spirit.

Formation for the sacrament of the Eucharist:

- Immediate formation for the sacrament of Eucharist is to be short and focused on the preparation for the celebration of the sacrament. The goal of this catechesis is to help children participate in the Mass in a meaningful, reverent manner. The content of the preparation is to have at its core the format/structure of the Mass itself.

Preparation for the Sacrament:

- Parents are the primary educators of their child/children.
- "Parents have a right and duty to be intimately involved in preparing their children for First Communion.
- Catechesis aims to help parents grow in their understanding and appreciation of the Eucharist and participate readily in the catechizing of their children (NCD #121).
- Parish or school programs of religious formation assist parents in this most important responsibility but never usurp the rightful role of parents.

Readiness of the individual child includes:

- Is the child baptized and does he / she have the use of reason (about the age of seven)?
- Does the child express a desire to celebrate Eucharist?
- Does the child participate in the liturgy on a regular basis at the parish?
- Has the child been formed in faith in an age appropriate manner including basic knowledge of who Jesus is and what he has done?
- Can the child distinguish Eucharist from ordinary bread?

The celebration of the sacrament of First Holy Communion:

The sacrament of First Communion will be held during a First Eucharist Mass in the Church. Although the whole parish community is welcome at this Mass, in particular we encourage you to invite your family and friends to be present. The children will process in with the Priest and take their places in the front pews. Each child will proceed individually to receive First Communion. All other members of the Catholic Church will receive communion after all First Eucharist Children have received from the Pastor. All members of the family should be at least, dressed in their 'Sunday Best'. The Children should not be carrying anything with them when receiving the Eucharist, and if they wear gloves they must be able to remember to remove them prior to receiving the Eucharist. The boys who will be receiving the sacrament for the first time can wear suits, however, if they are in their less formal 'Sunday Best' we ask that they wear ties with button down shirts.

REGISTRATION

No child will be 'officially' registered for preparation to receive a Sacrament unless the registration package is complete.

A completed registration packet includes:

- Completed Registration form found online at: <http://www.stlukesparish.org/>
- Baptism certificate
- Program material fee of \$50.

Program Requirements:

- Attends Mass weekly and other days of obligation
- Has completed one year of Religious Education successfully, and will be enrolled and attending the Religious Education program concurrently with the First Sacraments Program, or is enrolled in a Catholic School or Home School for the previous year.
- Attends all of the regularly scheduled classes plus one retreat in each of the two semesters
- Each class is held on a Saturday morning and lasts for 1.50 hours. Attendance is necessary at all classes (pastoral discretion in extreme circumstances). Please plan your calendars for the coming year in a manner that recognizes the preeminent importance of the sacrament's and the preparation.
- Parents attend each of the two Parent Sessions

- There will be a rehearsal at the end of the full year Sacramental Preparation Program for the children. The parents will then join us as we rehearse for the reception of First Eucharist and make sure that everyone is clear as to the procedures.
- **Further important information:**
 - Classes will be held at the Annunciation School unless otherwise notified.
 - Class Rosters will be posted on classroom doors and emailed to families who are 'officially registered' in the program.
 - On the days that there are classes for both parents and children, please sign in when you arrive. Classes will be held in church parish hall, unless otherwise notified.
 - It is very important to arrive on time. Classes begin at 9:30am.
 - Calendars, information and updates are available at www.stlukesparish.org, Weekly bulletin or Church foyer.

SECOND GRADE PRAYER LIST

The following prayers are required:

The Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

All candidates must know how to make The Sign of The Cross correctly:

- 1. Which hand to use*
- 2. Where to place the hand while naming the persons of the Trinity as Sign of the Cross is made*

Our Father

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

Amen.

Glory Be

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.

Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace! The Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of Thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, mother of God,
Pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death.

Amen.

Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry
for having offended you,
and I detest all my sins,
because of Your just punishments,
but most of all because they offend You, my God,
who are all-good and deserving of all my love.
I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace,
to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin.
Amen.

The Ten Commandments

(Students in second grade are not required to recite the Ten Commandments. However, for their confession to be valid, students must be very familiar with the Ten Commandments to be able to examine their conscience.)

1. I am the Lord your God: you shall not have strange gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.



"As it is the parents who have given life to their children, on them lies the gravest obligation of educating their family. They must, therefore, be recognized as being primarily and principally responsible for their education."

-Vatican II Declaration of Christian Education