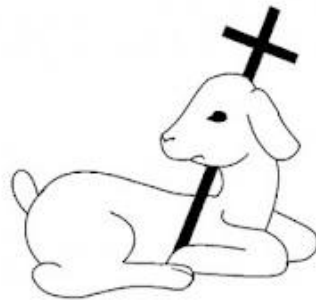


First Communion and First Reconciliation Information & Guide Booklet

2nd and 3rd Grade Students



***First Reconciliation & First Communion
Parent and Student Schedule***

2018

Parent Meeting

Tuesday, January 21, 2018

The Meeting will be held in the St. Thomas Church at 6:30p.m. ****Please bring a copy of your child's Baptismal Certificate to the meeting. If your child made their Baptism at St. Thomas, St. Casimir or Immaculate Conception you do not need a copy of their Baptismal certificate.**

Sacrament of First Reconciliation

Sunday, March 4, 2018

It will be held at 2p.m. in the church. Arrive 15 minutes before, the program will begin promptly. **All students must attend and at least one parent must be present.** There will be a **Pasta dinner** served after as part of the celebration of this Holy Sacrament. **Families are welcomed and asked to bring their favorite dessert dish to share with everyone.**

Mini Retreat

Saturday, March 18, 2018

Snow Date (March 24^h)

The retreat will take place in the church hall from 10a.m. to 2p.m. The family banner and Parent letter are due at the retreat. **Please arrive 15-20 minutes before to sign in and receive a name tag.** Parents are needed to help.

First Communion Practice

Thursday April 26, 2018

Practice will be held in Church with parents

All students and at least one parent must attend!

All Students at 6p.m.

First Holy Communion

Saturday April 28, 2018

11 a.m. Special Mass for only First Communion Celebration

Please **arrive 30 minutes early** for preparation and pictures.

Parents Responsibilities and commitments

1. Parents are required to attend all scheduled meetings on preparation for the sacraments.
2. Parents are required to make sure that their child/children learns the necessary prayers and formats needed to receive the sacraments. Even though they are also learning in Religious Education, these prayers need to be reinforced at home.
3. Parents are encouraged to attend Mass with their child/children. By attending Mass regularly your child will become familiar with the context of the liturgy, the purpose of the Eucharist and this will make their learning easier when they attend class.
4. Parents will see that their child/children attends Religious Education regularly so that they do not fall behind on the preparation and knowledge of the sacraments.

Any questions:

Contact Lucy Santopietro

Office -860-283-4296 Cell -860-307-7604

Email: Lucysant@sbcglobal.net

Stc-lucy@sbcglobal.net

Check the web

www.stthomasthomaston.org

Preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation

It is the policy of the Roman Catholic Church and the Archdiocese of Hartford that the Sacrament of Reconciliation be received before the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

To help prepare for the sacrament of Reconciliation there are a few guidelines listed below that will make it easier for your child/children.

1. Help your child form a conscience . It is the voice that whispers, “choose love, Choose Life, Do Good, Shun Evil.
2. Help them to know the difference between right and wrong. What is sin and what is accident and how to say I am sorry. By doing this with your children, you instill good Christian values that they will carry with them for the rest of their life.
3. Practice their prayers with them. Bed time is a perfect time. The prayer that they are learning to memory is the Act of Contrition.
4. Why do we tell a priest our sins? This is a question that most children ask. The reason is that the Priest is a representative of Jesus here on earth. We are Catholics. When we sin we hurt the body of Christ. We should be in a state of Grace before receiving communion. When we reconcile and receive absolution we become healed. And receive grace. Priest take a vow to keep all confessions a secret. This is called the Seal of Confession.
5. Review the examination of conscience on the following page This will help the children know the 10 commandments and how different sins can fit under each commandment. These are considered mortal sins.

An Examination of Conscience For Children

I. I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.

Do I give time every day to God in prayer?

Do I put my trust in superstitions, good luck charms, rather than God alone?

Have I rejected any Church teaching or denied that I was a Catholic?

II. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

Have I used the words "God" or "Jesus" in anger or irreverently?

Have I used foul or ugly language? Have I wished evil on another?

III. Remember to keep holy the Lord's day.

Have I missed Mass on Sunday or any holy day of obligation?

Do I arrive at church late or leave early?

Do I make Sunday a day of prayer or rest?

IV. Honor your father and your mother.

Do I respect and obey my parents?

Have I dishonored or mistreated them by word or deed?

Am I willing to help around the house or must I be nagged a hundred times?

Do I try to get along with my brothers and sisters? Am I a tattletale or bully?

Do I give a good example, especially to younger siblings?

Do I respect others in authority: priests, nuns, police, old people, baby-sitters?

V. You shall not kill.

Do I beat up others or hurt their bodies?

Do I say cruel things, or make fun of others to hurt their feelings?

Do I say mean things about others behind their backs?

Have I stopped speaking to anyone? Do I encourage others to do bad things?

Do I try to love all people, born and unborn?

VI. You shall not commit adultery.

Do I treat my body and other people's bodies with purity and respect?

Do I look at television shows, movies, or pictures that are bad?

Am I modest in my speech and the clothes I wear?

VII. You shall not steal.

Have I taken things that were not mine from a store or another person?

Have I destroyed or misused another person's property for fun?

Do I return things that I borrow? In good condition?

VIII. You shall not commit false witness against your neighbor.

Am I honest in my school work?

Do I tell lies to make myself look good?

Do I tell lies to protect myself from punishment?

Do I tell lies that make another person look bad or get them in trouble?

IX. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

Do I allow my parents to spend time with one another, or do I get jealous and want them to pay attention only to me?

Are there kids I will not play with or be mean to because they look different?

X. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

Am I jealous or envious of the things or abilities that others have?

Am I thankful to God and my parents for what they have given me?

The Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation
Guide

Go into the Reconciliation room or space that is set aside for the Sacrament.

Make the Sign of the Cross.

Say: "Bless me Father for I have sinned, this is my First Confession."

Talk to the priest about the sins you have made.

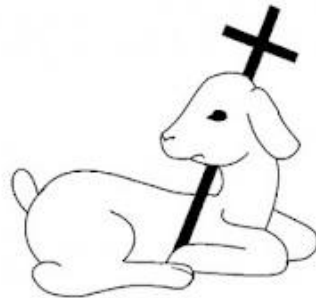
The priest will give you a penance.

You will now say an Act of Contrition:

**My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.
In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good,
I have sinned against you whom I should love above
all things.
I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin
no more
And to avoid whatever leads me to sin.
Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us.
In His name, my God have mercy.
Amen.**

First Reconciliation Events of the Day and Attire

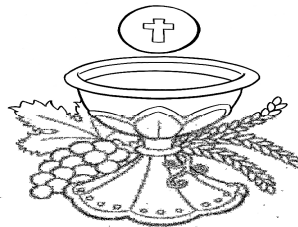
1. Students should dress neatly as they would to attend Mass for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. No jeans or sneakers.
2. The sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated together both Sunday and Tuesday classes. It is on Sunday March 4, 2018 at 2p.m in the church.
3. It is followed by a Pasta Dinner in the church hall. Parents can bring a dessert to share. Pasta , meatballs, salad, bread, drinks provided by St. Thomas.
4. If your child is unable to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation on the scheduled date, arrangements will be made to have the sacrament completed on another day.



The Sacrament of First Holy Communion

To help prepare your child/children for this sacrament here are some guidelines that will help make learning about and receiving this sacrament a positive experience.

1. When you go to mass show your child how to genuflect to the Tabernacle.
2. Show your child how to kneel in the pew and say prayers before Mass starts.
3. Show your child how to follow along in the misslettes. Turn to the songs to be sung.
4. If you are going to receive communion, allow your child to walk up with you and watch you as you receive. Practice saying Amen and opening their mouth to receive.
5. Remember you should fast one hour before receiving Communion.
6. This is a holy time, make sure to always eat the Holy Eucharist. It should never be taken out of the mouth or played with. Remind them that this is the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ.
7. Have them kneel with you. Encourage them to say a prayer to Jesus. They can speak to the Lord about anything when praying.
8. Remind them to stay kneeling until the body and blood of Christ is put back into the Tabernacle.



Parents letter to their Child

Please write a letter to your child in celebration of their First Holy Communion. In this letter, please write about the following:

- His/Her preparation for First Holy Eucharist
- Your hopes and wishes for his/her future

A personal blessing for your child

1. Place the letter in a sealed envelope.
2. Write your child's full name, teacher's name, and class day on the envelope.
3. Return this letter to me at the Mini Retreat (March 21).

This letter will be given to your child on the day of First Holy Communion.



Family Banner

Please work together with your child and make a communion Banner for your child that will be displayed at the entrance of each pew per each student.

This banner should be:

1. 8 1/2” wide x 22” long so that it will fit at the pew entrance
2. It should have your child’s name on it
3. It could have any decorations that symbolize Communion or God’s love
4. Writings that mean something special to you, for example:
Jesus loves me, the body of Christ, God is everything, lamb of god
Etc.— Use your imagination.
5. Please hand in on the day of the Retreat (March 21)



First Holy Communion Attire

Girls:

Should wear white dress, dress shoes, tights or fancy socks, some kind of head piece (flower, crown, veil etc.)

Gloves are not required but can be worn.

Boys:

Should wear a suit, can be any color (blue, black, brown or Grey), dress shoes (no sneakers), white dress shirt and white communion tie.

The day of First Holy Communion arrive 30 minutes early for pictures. Please come downstairs to the church Hall.

After taking pictures please leave your child with the teachers in the church hall and take your seat up stairs in the Church at your child assigned pew.

Each Student will have one family pew reserved for parents and family to sit at. All other seating will be first come first serve basis.

The seats will have an envelope with your child's certificates, a First Communion gift, a copy of the communion song words that they will perform at the end of mass.



FIRST COMMUNION VIDEO DVD/PICTURE

The children of St. Thomas Church will be receiving their First Holy Communion on Saturday April 28, 2018

Please remember that there is NO Picture or Video taking allowed during Mass. We will have someone taking a video of the mass. A professional photographer will also be there before mass for posed picture taking.

DVDs – DVD will be created for the entire Communion Mass. This will be a gift given to each student. If you have any questions please feel free to call me or text (860) 307-7604.

Pictures – Will be taken by Litchfield Photography order forms will follow. Payment and orders can be made on First Communion Day.

Special note: pictures will be taken the day of First Holy Communion in the Church Hall. You should arrive 30 minutes before the First Communion Ceremony begins.



First Communion Mini Retreat

It is a requirement that all students who will be receiving the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist attend this retreat.

The retreat is held on Saturday March 18, 2018 from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

This program is a fun learning experience for the children. They make the Communion class banner for the Church, bake unleavened bread, do a community service project, sing, pray, and do other fun activities and crafts that prepare them for the sacrament.

- 1. A bagged lunch**
- 2. A wallet size picture of your child for banner**
- 3. A letter written by you for your child (for First Communion day)**
- 4. Your child's First communion banner for the pew**
- 5. A \$5.00 fee**
- 6. A package of individual wrapped Easter candy (these will be used for a service project for the Ecumenical Pantry)**

Parents are welcomed to stay and help. We will be in the St. Thomas School Café.

