

# SACRAMENTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



First Penance  
First Eucharist  
Confirmation



Diocese of Salina  
2020

DIOCESE OF SALINA

# GUIDELINES FOR THE SACRAMENTS OF

FIRST PENANCE  
FIRST EUCHARIST  
CONFIRMATION



## I. PREFACE

The parish is challenged today to be a visible part of the life of its members. Parishes are called to be evangelizing, to be vibrant and fruitful. The parish plays an important role in each member's life.

For most Catholics, the parish is their primary experience of the Church. It is where they gather for weekly worship, celebrate their most joyous occasions, and mourn their deepest losses. There they are called to repentance and renewal, finding and celebrating God's forgiveness and reconciliation. Embracing the dying and rising of Jesus in their lives, they are challenged to holiness and strengthened for self-giving love and Christian service.

*(Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us #114)*

One of the primary works of evangelizing parishes is catechesis. The evangelizing parish is the setting for faith formation. The purpose of *Sacraments for Young People* is to present a vision for the whole parish for preparation and celebration of the sacraments. Sacraments are special times in the life of the parish. These are times of ritual experience in which we encounter God and are drawn to community. The celebration of a sacrament presents both a challenge and a gift to the parish as it prepares and celebrates each occasion. The role of the faith community is essential. The preparation of the candidate, the family and the parish to enter into celebration is paramount.

The parish assists its members to encounter God and develop a continuing relationship with Jesus. Sacraments involve the whole community at prayer. Sacraments are celebrated in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They are the work of the Spirit and they are a gift and call to everyone who receives them. We are invited into a deeper relationship with Jesus through the celebration of ritual. Through the celebration we engage people in the mystery of the Trinity and upon reflection we understand what it means to be followers of Jesus. Ongoing conversion is the work of an evangelizing parish when preparing for the celebration of sacraments.

*Sacraments for Young People* is meant to help parishes of the Diocese of Salina revitalize sacramental catechesis and the celebration of sacraments. The parish community acts as the focus for catechesis and celebration. Each parish is an evangelizing community that provides catechetical formation for those preparing for celebration of the sacraments. All preparation for celebration of sacraments should provide assistance for parents/guardians in assuming their responsibility to prepare their children to celebrate the sacraments. The active involvement of all in the life of the parish when preparing for sacraments can lead to a richer church community.

DIOCESE OF SALINA

GUIDELINES FOR

THE RECEPTION OF

THE SACRAMENT OF

FIRST PENANCE



# The Sacrament of Penance

## Introduction

As sinners we not only recognize our human limitations and failures, but also believe in God's limitless love for us. God loves and forgives us, and the sacrament of reconciliation makes this gift of forgiveness a reality in the life of the sinner. We are restored to a proper relationship with God through the forgiveness of our sins, and we are once again made whole and holy.

*"On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, Jesus showed himself to his apostles. He breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'"*  
(CCC 1485)

The Sacrament of Penance is one of two sacraments of healing. It is the sacrament that brings spiritual healing for Catholics who have distanced themselves from God by sin. This involves four parts:

1. The penitent's contrition for sin
2. Confession to a priest
3. Absolution by the priest
4. Satisfaction for the wrong committed. Completion of an act of penance and reparation  
(CCC 1450)

Through penance, the faithful receive pardon through God's mercy for the sins they have committed. At the same time they are reconciled with the Church community. The confession or disclosure of sins frees us and facilitates our reconciliation with others. *"The celebration of this sacrament is thus always an act in which the church proclaims its faith, gives thanks to God for the freedom with which Christ has made us free, and offers its life as a spiritual sacrifice in praise of God's glory, as it hastens to meet the Lord Jesus."*  
(Rites p. 531)

## Norms

In regard to sacramental preparation for First Penance, a candidate must have attained the use of reason and be of catechetical age (normally seven years of age) and must meet the following requirements.

1. The child must be baptized - baptismal certificate is a requirement.
2. Any child baptized in a Christian tradition other than the Catholic tradition must be formally received into the Church by a profession of faith and an act of reception.  
(RCIA 490-492)
3. The child must be properly instructed for the reception of the sacrament.
4. The child must celebrate his/her first Penance prior to the reception of First Eucharist.

Basic catechesis for the Sacrament of Penance must be provided for every child in the second grade. It is understood here that children preparing for this Sacrament in the second grade have already begun their religious education in the first grade. The principle is to allow the children's first notions of God to be those of love and relationship before notions of forgiveness and rebuilding of relationships are introduced.

## Diocesan Guidelines

1. A Record of Baptism must be presented to the Parish Office before the candidate receives the Sacrament of Penance.
2. Parent/guardian participation sessions are an integral part of preparation for each sacrament. Children's preparation begins in the home. The family has the most important role in communicating the Christian and human values that format the foundation for a child's understanding of forgiveness and reconciliation.
3. Appropriate catechesis for parents should be provided as part of the preparation process for the reception of the sacrament. Sufficient catechesis should be provided for the parents that will cover the content of the sacrament. This catechesis should include: an understanding of the unconditional love by God our creator, the nature of grace, sin and forgiveness, the call to conversion, and the Rite of Penance and Reconciliation.
4. The pastor, along with the parents and catechist(s) of the child are to determine the readiness of the child to participate in this sacrament.
5. The celebration of the Sacrament of Penance for the first time takes place ideally during the season of Lent or Advent.
6. Penitents must always have the right of an anonymous Confession with the use of a private screen. (CIC 964)
7. The candidate for the Sacrament of Penance is expected to participate in yearly ongoing faith formation to assure a continuous, systematic, and age appropriate catechesis. When this is not the case the candidate should complete at least one (school) year of formal catechesis either in a parish faith formation program or parish school prior to the time of the reception of the sacrament.
8. The Catholic school, faith formation program, and home-schooled child must participate in his/her parish sacramental preparation programs.
9. The formational component for the Sacrament of Penance (i.e. parent sessions, retreats, etc.) is distinct and separate from parish religious education, Catholic school, or home schooled curriculum.
10. Children are expected to continue their faith formation process by participation in parish religious education programs or Catholic school after the reception of the Sacrament of Penance.

11. Regular reception of the Sacrament of Penance and participation at Sunday Mass is necessary to grow ever more deeply in the mysteries of God's love and mercy within a communal environment.
12. In the Diocese of Salina catechetical preparation for the Sacrament of Penance requires that all catechetical materials and textbooks must be approved by the USCCB. These materials are found to be in conformity with the Catechism of the Catholic Church. For a current listing go to *[www.usccb.org/catechism](http://www.usccb.org/catechism)*.

## References

CCC - Catechism of the Catholic Church  
CDF - Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith  
CIC - Code of Canon Law  
CSL - Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy  
GDC - General Directory for Catechesis  
IRB - Instruction to the Rite of Baptism, Rites, Vol. 1  
NDC - National Directory for Catechesis  
RCIA - Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

DIOCESE OF SALINA

GUIDELINES FOR

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THE SACRAMENT OF

FIRST EUCHARIST





# The Sacrament of the Eucharist

## Introduction

The Eucharist, one of the sacraments of initiation, is the core of the Church's sacramental life. Through this sacrament, *"we unite ourselves to Christ, who makes us sharers in his Body and Blood to form a single body."* (CCC 1331) Every facet of the Church's life has its birth in the Eucharist. Children who are brought to eat and drink at the Eucharistic table continue the process of initiation that began at their Baptism.

## Norms

In regard to sacramental preparation for the reception of the Sacrament of the Eucharist for the first time, a candidate must have attained the use of reason and be of catechetical age (normally seven years of age) and must meet the following requirements:

- a. The child must be baptized - baptismal certificate is a requirement. Any child baptized in a Christian tradition other than the Catholic tradition must be formally received into the Church by a profession of faith and an act of reception. (RCIA 490-492)
- b. The child must be properly instructed for the reception of the sacrament.
- c. The child must celebrate the Sacrament of Penance prior to reception of the Eucharist for the first time.

## Diocesan Guidelines

1. Children beginning sacramental preparation are encouraged to attend and participate at the Sunday Mass with their families.
2. Parent/guardian participation sessions are an integral part of preparation for each sacrament. *"Children's preparation . . . begins in the home. The family has the most important role in communication the Christian and human values that format the foundation for a child's understanding of the Eucharist."* (NDC 126)
3. Appropriate catechesis for parents should be provided as part of the preparation process for the reception of the sacrament. Sufficient catechesis should be provided to parents that will cover the content of the sacrament. This catechesis should include an adult understanding of the Theology of the Eucharist and its connection to everyday Christian living, and a review of the order and the meaning of the Mass. Ideally, preparation for the parent and the child takes place in the parish of the registered family.
4. The pastor, along with the parents and catechist(s) of the child, are to determine the readiness of the child to receive the Eucharist for the first time.

6. The candidate preparing for the reception of the Sacrament of the Eucharist for the first time is expected to participate in ongoing faith formation to insure a continuous, systematic, age appropriate catechesis. When this is not the case, the candidate should complete at least one (school) year of formal catechesis either in the parish faith formation program or parish school prior to the reception of the sacrament.

7. The Catholic School, faith formation program and home-schooled child must participate in his/her parish sacramental preparation programs.

8. The formational component for the Sacrament of the Eucharist (i.e. parent sessions, retreats, etc.) is distinct and separate from parish religious education, Catholic school, or home school curriculum.

9. Children are expected to continue their faith formation process by participation in parish religious education programs or Catholic school after the reception of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. Attendance at Sunday Mass is also required so the child and family may continue to grow deeper into the mysteries of faith in a personal and communal environment.

10. In the Diocese of Salina catechetical preparation for the Sacrament of the Eucharist for the first time requires that all catechetical materials and textbooks must be approved by the USCCB. These materials are found to be in conformity with the Catechism of the Catholic Church. For a current listing go to [www.usccb.org/catechism](http://www.usccb.org/catechism).

## **Record of First Eucharist**

- \* The names of those receiving the Sacrament of the Eucharist for the first time should be recorded in the First Communion Register at the parish where the sacrament was celebrated.
- \* Notification must be sent to the Parish of Baptism.

## **Pastoral Note**

In the Diocese of Salina a common courtesy practiced by pastors is to notify each other if a parishioner's intent is to receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist for the first time in a parish other than his/her home parish.

Parents who have been away from the practice of the faith, or who are not fully initiated into the life of the church, should be encouraged by their pastors to see their child's reception of First Holy Eucharist as an opportunity to be welcomed back to the worshiping community and/or complete his/her initiation process. These situations should be dealt with a high level of pastoral sensitivity, sincerity and honesty.

