

First Reconciliation & First Holy Communion Preparation 2017-2018

A GUIDEBOOK FOR CANDIDATES AND PARENTS

St. Elizabeth of Hungary



Prayer for Parents

Heavenly Father, make me a better parent.

*Teach me to understand my children,
to listen patiently to what they have to say,
and to answer all their questions kindly.*

Keep me from interrupting or contradicting them.

Make me as courteous to them as I would have them be to me.

*May I never laugh at their mistakes, or resort to ridicule
when they displease me.*

*Bless me with the confidence to grant them all their
reasonable requests and the courage to deny them
privileges I know will do them harm.*

*May I not rob them of the opportunity to think, to
choose, and to make decisions for themselves.*

Make me fair and just and kind.

*And fit me, O Lord, to be loved and respected and
imitated by my children.*

Amen.

By: Cary C. Meyers



FIRST RECONCILIATION

February 25, 2018 12:00p.m.

What can you do as a parent to help your children prepare for First Reconciliation?

- ✚ Let this be an opportunity for you to renew your own faith!
- ✚ Ask for the graces to be a good parent for your child. In the days and weeks leading up to First Penance try to say the special prayer on the cover.
- ✚ Take some time and read some stories from the Bible together.

Talk about the meaning of the Sacrament

- ✚ Most children are nervous or afraid (at least a little) about going to confession. Talk to your child about that. Assure him/her that it's okay to be nervous, but that everything's going to be fine.
- ✚ Encourage your child to think about what is happening spiritually in this sacrament: he/she is going to MEET JESUS!
- ✚ Help your child to understand the sacrament on his/her level. Here are two different ways of explaining it:

First View: STAINS



When we are baptized, our souls are made pure and holy (like a brand new white shirt). But when we commit a venial sin we stain our souls. Receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation is like washing your soul. God's grace is so powerful that all the stains can come out!



Second View: BEST FRIENDS

Best friends love to be together. But what if your best friend is mad at you and said something mean to you? Your feelings may be hurt and your friendship may be damaged but you are still friends. Once your friend apologizes, everything is fine. That's like venial sin. When we commit a venial sin we hurt God's feelings and our friendship with Him is damaged, but it is easily repaired when we ask for forgiveness. When we go to Confession, He forgives us and heals our friendship.



Review Basic Terms

There are many terms that your child should be familiar with. (They should have at least heard these terms and the definitions.)

- ✓ Penance, Reconciliation and Confession: These are all names used for this sacrament.
- ✓ Mortal Sin: a very serious sin that completely breaks our relationship with God.
- ✓ Venial Sin: a smaller sin that damages but does not destroy our relationship with God.
- ✓ Absolution: the forgiveness of sins given by the priest.
- ✓ Contrition: true sorrow for our sins.
- ✓ Firm Purpose of Amendment: the intention to not commit the sin again.
- ✓ Confessor: the priest who hears someone's confession.
- ✓ Penitent: someone going to confession.
- ✓ Penance: a prayer or good work assigned to the penitent.

Examination of Conscience

- Did I miss Mass on purpose on a Sunday or Holy Day?
- Was I late for Mass on Sunday through my own fault?
- Did I laugh or talk in church when I shouldn't have?
- Was I disobedient to others?
- Did I talk back to them?
- Did I fight with someone?
- Did I use angry words?
- Did I try to get even with someone?
- Did I use bad words?
- Did I steal something?
- Did I tell any lies?
- Was I unkind to others?
- Did I call anyone bad names?
- Was I mean to others?
- Did I tease someone unkindly?

How to Make a Good Confession

1. The priest *welcomes you*, you make the Sign of the Cross.
2. You confess your sins. You say:
Bless me Father, for I have sinned, this is my first confession. My sins are: *tell the priest your sins.*
(Examples: “I fought with my brother...I told lies...I talked back to my mom or dad...I did not do my chores, etc.)
3. When you are done, you *say*: **I am sorry for my sins.**
4. The priest will talk with you. Try to listen carefully. He will give you *penance*- prayers to say or something to do.
5. Recite the Act of Contrition – **O my God.....**
6. The priest will pray the prayer of Absolution and Blessing.
7. You will say: **Amen – and make the Sign of the Cross.**
8. Return to the pew or altar rail and say your *penance*- prayers.



Act of Contrition

My God,
I am heartily sorry
for having offended you.
I detest all my sins
because of your just punishment,
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 occasions of sin.
Amen



FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

May 5, 2018 10a.m. Mass

What can you do as a parent to help your children prepare for First Holy Communion?

Ask the Holy Spirit for help. He can give you the words and the insights you need to teach your children and help them to spiritually prepare for First Holy Communion.

Help your children to focus on the spiritual meaning of First Communion. There should be a clear sense in your home that First Holy Communion is about more than getting dressed up, receiving gifts and celebrating with family. All these things are important ways to make this event special, but you must be clear with your children that first and foremost Communion is a personal encounter between them and the Lord Jesus.

Sit down and talk to your children. Read the Bible story of the Last Supper (Luke 22: 7-20). Discuss this passage and the meaning of the Eucharist with your children. Ask them what they think the Apostles felt like at the Last Supper?

Teach your children the importance of Sunday Mass. The Sunday Mass is the cornerstone of our lives as Catholics. Once a person has received First Holy Communion it is a serious sin for them to miss Sunday Mass (without a very serious reason, such as illness).

Help your children to participate at Mass. Help them to understand that they are not just little children anymore who can zone out at church, or even just observe as others participate in the Mass. In receiving Holy Communion, they take a major step forward in their journey of faith. They need to be actively engaged in the prayer of the Mass.

At home practice is a great way for you to explain to your children the respect and reverence that you expect from them, and also a great way to help them to be less nervous. At class the children will practice going to Communion, but that doesn't keep you from practicing at home too. Explain to your children the proper way to show respect to Him:

- ✠ When entering the church bless your self with Holy Water
- ✠ Genuflecting when they enter and leave the church
- ✠ Being quiet in church
- ✠ Walking reverently as they go up to receive communion
- ✠ Bowing before they receive the Eucharist (as we are all required to do now)
- ✠ Reverently placing the host in their mouths
- ✠ Reverently eating the host
- ✠ Sitting quietly and praying after they have received Communion themselves

It is the family's responsibility to help their child learn their prayers.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

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.

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.

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.

Communion – Attire:

Boys: navy blazer, khaki pants, white dress shirt, navy tie and tie pin (both supplied by St. Elizabeth), dress shoes (please no boat shoes or sneakers)

Girls: white dresses (no floor length ball gowns or dresses above the knee), veils, white dress shoes & white anklets, knee socks or tights (no stockings).

The children will not carry or wear: flowers, gloves, armbands, bibles, rosaries etc. in the procession, nor should they be in their seats. Please keep all such articles with you so that they are not lost. Father will be available after the mass to bless any articles and for photos.

Photographers:

We will have a professional photographer, Expressive Image Photography of Wall, for First Communion. The children will receive a complimentary group photo and you may choose additional photos if you choose to purchase a package. An information packet will be sent home with your child detailing the packages offered. **NO** other photographers will be allowed in the Church during the services. Family members may take pictures from their seats during the services.

Altar Servers and Ushers:

If a member of your family is a Priest, Deacon, Reader, Altar Server or an Usher and wishes to help with the ceremony, please call Mrs. Carol Freda at 732-774-4089 ext. 205.

