

First Eucharist and First Reconciliation



About the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Reconciliation is one of the seven sacraments (signs of the presence of Jesus in our world) of the Catholic Church. This sacrament is also called Confession and Penance. We use the term **Reconciliation** to emphasize the positive and joyful aspects of “going to Confession”. We celebrate the forgiveness which reunites the repentant sinner with God, the church and the community.

Parents should be involved in determining their child’s readiness to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation for the First time. Children should not be forced to “go to Confession”. For First Reconciliation we have a communal rite with individual Confession and Absolution. It is then the parent’s responsibility to bring their children to the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation should normally be celebrated prior to the reception of First Eucharist. Instruction for this sacrament must precede First Eucharist and be kept separate from it. This is done to teach children the specific identity of this sacrament and to help them feel comfortable with it before receiving First Eucharist.

About the Sacrament of Eucharist

As Catholics we come together weekly with our parish family to celebrate the Eucharist (also called the Mass or Liturgy). We gather as a faith community to publicly thank God for the gift of Jesus and to share in His body and blood through Communion.

A child who receives the Sacrament of the Eucharist for the first time is being initiated into the Sacramental life of the whole church. Through your family involvement in the parish (your presence at weekly Eucharist, religious education classes, participation in parish activities etc.) your child is connecting with the church family and beginning to accept your faith as his or her own.

Here at St. John Vianney we celebrate your child’s First Eucharist as a family / parish community during parish liturgies. These celebrations enable the faith community to share in this special time, as your child takes another step in their faith journey.

About the First Reconciliation and First Eucharist

Preparation Programs:

At St. John Vianney Church, our First Reconciliation and First Eucharist preparation programs are parish-based programs. Children who attend our Parish Religious Education classes, as well as those in a Catholic school, come together to prepare for these Sacraments. Before a child can be registered, the following criteria should be met:

- Family must be registered in St. John Vianney Parish.
- Child must be Baptized Catholic. (A copy of the Baptismal Certificate must accompany the registration form.)
Unbaptized children who are 2nd grade level or above should contact the Sacrament Coordinator for more information.
- Child must be currently registered in Catholic Religious Education classes or a Catholic school.
- Child must have attended at least one year of Catholic Religious Education or a Catholic school, the year preceding sacrament preparation.
- Child must be currently in 2nd grade or above.
- Family must be willing to be actively involved in their child’s preparation.
- You must be able to attend the gatherings and Liturgical Rites (see the back page for schedule).

Children may be registered for either or both of the Sacrament preparation programs. While the 2nd grade level is the minimum accepted, some families may choose to prepare for these Sacraments at a later time. Children who have received First Eucharist but not First Reconciliation, only need to attend the Reconciliation component of the process.

Our parish program for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist will include the following:

- Attendance at weekly Mass (Children’s Liturgy of the Word at 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM Mass every Sunday).
- Attendance at Faith Formation classes or a Catholic school.
- Family conversation with a member of the parish pastoral staff.
- Parent / Child Faith Formation gatherings and Liturgical Rites.
- Home study packets to be completed by child with parent help and guidance.

If you have any questions, please call Marie Walton, at (925) 939-7911 Ext.106 or mwalton@sjvianney.org