

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

SACRAMENT REGISTRATION AND PREPARATION

Why is there a separate form for First Communion registration?

For all Catholics, it is the Baptismal parish that maintains Sacrament records. Saint Peter Chanel is responsible for contacting each of these parishes and informing them of the dates that your child celebrated his or her Sacraments. The information you provide us on the Sacrament Registration form helps us to expedite this process.

What if my child was not baptized in the Catholic Church?

If this happens to be the case, please make sure to fill out the appropriate page on the Sacrament Registration. Once we have this information, we will contact you about arranging a “Profession of Faith” for your child. Please know that the Catholic Church recognizes Baptisms from many other denominations. This does, however, require a special awareness and consent from your child called a “Profession of Faith.” This profession affirms the child’s desire to practice the Catholic Faith and declares Saint Peter Chanel the child’s church of record for subsequent sacraments. This profession will be witnessed by you, and considered sponsored by your child’s religious education teacher. A certificate listing the date of this profession will be included in your child’s First Communion certificate.

Does registration in PSR automatically register my child for the Sacrament Program?

No. The Sacrament Registration is needed because the PSR registration forms do not require the information we need to properly record the Sacraments.

My child attends Catholic school. Why must my child participate in the program at Saint Peter Chanel?

Archdiocesan guidelines state that Sacraments are conferred by the parish community and not through the schools. In order for all the children to feel connected to our parish family we have a few events that all the children, both Catholic School and PSR, attend.

FIRST RECONCILIATION

How is First Reconciliation celebrated at Saint Peter Chanel?

The celebration of First Reconciliation is held on a Saturday morning. It follows the format of a penance service. We usually have many visiting priests to aid in the celebration. The Penance Service begins with the Liturgy of the Word followed by an age appropriate Examination of Conscience. The children are then ushered to the priests for the sacrament. There is no closing rite so after the children celebrate their First Reconciliation, they may be dismissed.

Is my child assigned to a specific priest?

Children are not assigned to a particular priest or area, instead we ask each child if they have a preference. If they do not, we usher them to the shortest line. If they want to see a particular priest, we take them there. Typically our own parish priests will have the longest line so if time is an issue for your child, please recommend that he or she not be set on a particular priest.

How long is the First Reconciliation service?

The First Reconciliation service usually lasts one to one and a half hours.

What Act of Contrition should my child learn and does it need to be memorized?

There is no one Act of Contrition that is preferable to any other. However, we as a parish have chosen to teach the following:

*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.*

Although it is important for your child to know the prayers of our faith, please consider his/her readiness to memorize them. Incorporating the Act of Contrition, the Hail Mary, and the Our Father, into your everyday family life will assist your child with the learning of these prayers. Please know that every child will be given a copy of the Act of Contrition at First Reconciliation.

FIRST COMMUNION

How does Saint Peter Chanel celebrate First Communion?

First Communion is celebrated at four Masses on two different Saturdays during the Easter season, typically in the month of May. These Masses are usually held in the morning and early afternoon and do not fulfill your Sunday obligation.

How are we assigned a First Communion Mass?

After you and your child have completed the Sacrament Preparation program, you will receive a Mass request form. Complete the form with your first, second, and third Mass choice and return it to the Religious Education office. The Masses are filled on a first come, first serve basis. You will receive a confirmation of your Mass shortly after you return your form.

How long is the First Communion Mass?

The First Communion Mass usually lasts one and a half hours.

Is there a dress code for the First Communicants?

While we hope your child's attire reflects the significance of the occasion, there is no required dress code for First Communion. Your child should wear clothing that makes him or her feel good about the way he or she looks. Typically for First Communion, boys will wear a white shirt, tie, and dark colored slacks. Blazers are optional. Girls may wear a white dress, flowers, ribbons, a veil, or nothing on their head. Rosaries, Mass books, flowers and other sacramentals are not to be carried at any time during the Mass. Please put these items aside so that they do not become a distraction for your child. We also ask that the girls do not wear gloves at the First Communion Mass.

Who do I contact with any questions or concerns?

If you need to speak with someone concerning a specific question or situation that is not covered above, please contact our Sacrament Coordinator, Rosemary Potts, at the following phone or email:

678-832-1236 or rpotts@stpeterchanel.org