

St Michael the Archangel Parish
2nd Grade Sacrament
Parent Handbook
2018-2019

Coordinator: Julie Sutton
330-492-3119 x 219
julie@stmichaelcanton.org
www.stmichaelcanton.org/1stcommunion

INTRODUCTION

"A Sacrament is a festive action in which Christians assemble to celebrate their lived experience and to call to heart their common story. The action is a symbol of God's care for us in Christ. Enacting the symbol brings us closer to one another in the Church and to the Lord who is there for us."

WELCOME, PARENTS, to a significant and important time in the faith development of your child and your family. Saint Michael's Sacrament Preparation Program is a program designed to help you and your child realize more fully the importance, necessity and benefit of participating in the sacramental life of the Church.

This is an exciting and growth-filled time in the life of your child. It is a time of enlightenment and discovery of the presence of God in your life and the life of your family. This handbook is provided to help you and your child prepare for the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of Eucharist.

SACRAMENT POLICY

It is diocesan policy that the celebration of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist be held during the second grade of school. A preparation program for parents and children is to be part of the religious education at the parish.

Children are required to participate in Sacrament preparation classes before receiving the Sacraments.

Likewise, it is diocesan policy that parents participate actively in the preparation of their children for the Sacraments.

Saint Michael Parish requires that parents attend three (3) parent meetings and the family Rite of Enrollment at a Sunday liturgy in February, in preparation for the celebration of the Sacraments. Other than the first meeting, all sessions will be for parents and their second graders. The meetings are as follows:

Program Introduction: Parent meeting for families new to the Sacrament program.

Parent/Child: Reconciliation Meeting (November)

Parent/Child: Rite of Enrollment at Sunday Liturgy (Feb)

Parent/Child: Eucharist Meeting (February/March)

It is expected that parents, and children preparing to celebrate the sacraments for the first time, are regularly attending Mass, are active members in the Religious Education Program of the parish, and will continue to be active beyond the second grade year.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Preparation

Instruction on the meaning and way to celebrate reconciliation is an important part of the Religious Education curriculum in second grade. In the first semester, religion classes will treat the Sacrament of Reconciliation and its implications in the life of the child, family and church.

Parent Meetings

A Parent Meeting for the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be held in the month of November for St Michael School students and Families Growing in Faith students. Meetings are on weekday evenings. Baby-sitting will be available. Attendance is necessary.

Celebration of the Sacrament

The celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is held in January on a weeknight. The celebration begins at 7:00 PM and lasts about 90 minutes. Parents and family members are encouraged to attend. Procedures concerning the celebration are explained at the parent meetings. Appropriate dress for the celebration is school clothes or Sunday clothes.

SACRAMENT OF EUCHARIST

Preparation

The second semester of instruction will treat the Sacrament of Eucharist. The children will explore the meaning of Eucharist in their lives and the importance of it in the life of the Church.

They will also be taught how to receive Eucharist and how to display the proper reverence toward the Eucharist.

Parent/Child Meetings

Sessions for the Sacrament of Eucharist are held in February or March. These meetings are for both parents and children together. The sessions center on the meaning of Eucharist for family life and consist of activities for the child and parent together. Meetings are on weekday evenings and attendance is necessary. Baby-sitting is available for the parent/child meetings. Each family will pick one date to attend.

Rite of Enrollment

The rite of enrollment will take place during a Sunday morning liturgy and is an important demonstration of the very real connection between the First Communicants and their families and the larger parish community.

Celebration of the Sacrament

The celebration of the Sacrament of Eucharist is during the weekend liturgies in the month of May and early June.

All families will be invited to choose a Mass beginning in November. We ask that there would be no more than ten families per Mass.

Dress

Boys:

Boys are to wear a shirt and tie, dress pants and dress shoes. (Sports jackets and suits are optional). Please avoid clothes that are uncomfortable or hot. It is advised to dress the child in an outfit that can be worn again.

Girls:

Girls should wear dresses. Plain white dresses with or without a faint print, and white shoes are most common. Please remember that dresses with lace, ruffled sleeves, etc. are generally uncomfortable. Veils or flowers in hair are optional, however if used, they should be simple and comfortable. It is advised to dress the child in an outfit that can be worn again. Accessories such as purses and gloves are not recommended.

Family First Communions

Families will select a weekend Mass in May or early June to celebrate their child's first Eucharist. Children will be invited to participate by gathering around the altar. Since children will be receiving communion with their families, this form of celebration emphasizes the family nature of faith, which brings children to experience the gift of Eucharist.

Procedures for Family First Communion

- Please be in church at least 15 minutes before the Liturgy begins to check in with the priest.
- Sit in the pew marked with your family name. Pews are reserved alphabetically, one per family. If relatives come 15 minutes before Mass there will be adequate seating behind the reserved pews.
- Names of the First Communicants will be announced at the Liturgy.
- The priest will direct your child throughout the Mass. Just follow his instructions.
- Eucharist will be offered under both forms (bread and wine), first to the child and then to parents and siblings. Please decide before hand if your child will receive under both species. If you child will receive the wine, you should have him/her taste some wine at home first.
- ***To maintain the reverence of the liturgy we ask that photos be taken only from your pew.*** After Mass is over you are welcome to take photos in the sanctuary or on the grounds

Fee

There is a First Eucharist fee of \$30 for all children. This fee covers the costs of materials for two family projects, the certificate, and a remembrance. A group picture can be ordered at an additional charge. (Fees will not be collected until March.) If the fee is a hardship it can be waived.

- The photo for school 2nd graders will be taken on the day of the May Crowning in late May at around 8:00 am (before the school Mass)
- The photo for Families Growing in Faith (Families Together and Family Faith with Classes) will be on the last day of classes at about 10:30 before the 11:00 Mass.

Gifts and Parties

The question is often asked about appropriate gifts for First Eucharist. The following suggestions might be helpful: A children's Bible, a book about the saints, a plaque, or a children's book from a religious store.

Celebrating First Eucharist is an important event in the life of the child and the family. We encourage a simple family dinner or party that keeps in perspective the event celebrated and reflects the values and culture of your family.