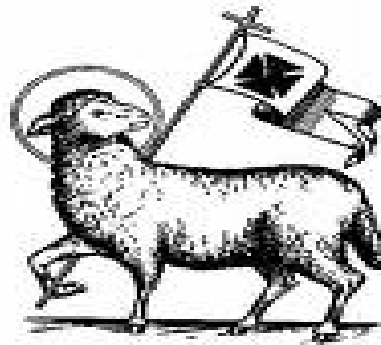


First Holy Communion



Saint Thomas More Parish 2016

Reverend Michael Yadron, Pastor
Miss Emily Hackett, Director of Religious Education
Mrs. Carolyn McGill, Administrative Assistant



October 2015

First Holy Communion

Dear Parents:

At the very heart of our Eucharistic celebration is forgiveness and love. At Mass we hear the narrative that Christ's blood was shed "so that sins may be forgiven." Throughout the Mass we acknowledge our sinfulness and ask the Lord for strength and mercy. It is in receiving the Sacrament of Penance and in understanding forgiveness of sins, which brings us into God's grace. Upon learning to prepare their hearts and minds for reconciliation with God, the children are now ready to proceed in their studies of First Holy Communion.

Sacraments are always joyous events. First Holy Communion is a very important time in your child's faith life. The children will begin studying in their First Eucharist book. This is a journey of learning to gather together as Catholics at Holy Mass, listening to the word of the Lord and proclaiming thanks and praise to God. Attending Holy Mass to experience the meaning of giving thanks and praise to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is essential to preparation of First Holy Communion.

It is important for your child to be familiar with Holy Mass. It is important for children to witness the sharing of a Holy Meal. It is significant for First Communicants to experience being a part of the unity of one body in Christ. The sharing at the Lord's Table should be witnessed by and familiar to the children before they receive their First Holy Communion. We request that you share Sunday Mass with your children. We will be preparing them in class but it is the parental responsibility to share Holy Mass with the children on Sundays. Parents are always the primary teachers of their children.

Please review the First Communion booklet with your child. This booklet is informational about the day of the sacrament and also meant for home study. Included in the booklet is a brief overview of vocabulary and meanings. Please help in preparing your child to receive Holy Communion. There is also a section on religious concepts. Your child should know and understand these concepts for the sacrament. Please review the Mass responses with your children. They need to be familiar with the Mass responses. This can be done easily by attending Mass each week. The children should also know their prayers: Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, and the Act of Contrition.

We look forward to sharing your child's journey in faith. If you have any questions please call the Religious Education Office. May God bless you as you prepare your children to come to the Lord's Table.

May God Bless You and Yours,

Emily Hackett
Director of Religious Education

Essential Dates

May 7, 2016

First Communion for STM School students
10:00 Liturgy, student arrival 9:30 a.m.

May 21, 2016

First Communion for Religious Formation students
10:00 Liturgy, student arrival 9:30 a.m.

This **First Holy Communion Mass** usually lasts about **90 minutes** ... so please plan your day accordingly.

Information regarding **practice for First Holy Communion** will be coming home soon. All Communicants are expected to attend practice.

Attire For First Holy Communion Day

Girls:

All white dress, veil, white socks, nylons or tights
No sleeveless dresses or spaghetti straps
White shoes

Please no floor length dresses

No purses, gloves, prayer books, rosaries, etc.

Boys:

White shirt with long sleeves (purchase this early)
Dark dress pants (blue, black, brown)
Matching long tie – solid color
Dark dress shoes

Suit or sports jacket will NOT be worn during the ceremony

Pictures and Videos

Due to the solemnity of the Mass, we ask that you NOT take any video or flash photographs during First Holy Communion. Please do not move around the church during the ceremony. We will hire a professional photographer to take a group photo and video to record the entire Mass.

Royce Photographer will be available in the gym to take First Holy Communion portraits after Holy Mass on the day of First Communion.





THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY EUCHARIST

Holy Eucharist is the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Jesus. It is an ongoing sacrament. In Eucharist, the faithful are nourished and strengthened. Through the sacrament of Holy Eucharist Catholics remember the past, celebrate the present, and place their hope in the future. At Mass, the family of God listens to us, and places their faith and trust in Him.

Families gather together to share a meal, to be nourished with food and filled with love for one another. At Mass, we gather together to celebrate the Lord's Supper. We partake in the Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Jesus. We are nourished with this spiritual food. We gather together at the altar to express our love for Christ and for one another.



Please read these Bible stories with your children

| | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| The Wedding Feast of Cana | John 2 |
| The Miracle of the Loaves and Fish | Luke 9, John 6, Mark 6, or Matthew 14 |
| Lord, I Am Not Worthy | Luke 7 |
| Jesus Is the Bread of Life | John 6 |
| The Last Supper | Luke 23, Matthew 26, or Mark 14 |
| Road to Emmaus | Luke 24 |



RELIGIOUS CONCEPTS

BELIEVE IN ONE GOD

We believe in one God. We believe that there are three persons in one God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We call these three divine Persons the Blessed Trinity.

JESUS CHRIST IS GOD'S SON

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Jesus is both fully human and fully divine. Jesus died on the cross for our sins on Good Friday. He rose from death back to life on Easter Sunday.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The risen Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to the world on Pentecost. The Holy Spirit brings seven gifts to our lives. These seven gifts strengthen us to live in peace. They are wisdom, understanding, fortitude, courage, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord.

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

God's love with His infinite mercy forgives us. The church celebrates God's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Penance. We examine our conscience to ask God's forgiveness and work toward a life of goodness. Celebrating the Sacrament of Penance places us in communion with God and community. This allows us to grow in faith, love and peace with God and neighbors.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

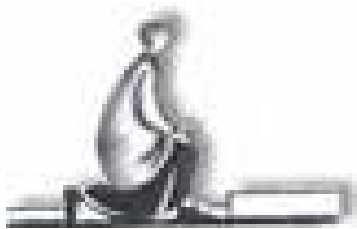
The Mass is our celebration of forgiveness, thankfulness and love. Eucharist means, "giving thanks." The Holy Mass is an encounter with the love and goodness of God. It is our time to experience and share in community prayer. We pray for others who are living and deceased and they pray for us. It is our time to be in relationship with God as a community. God offers us salvation as a community not as individuals.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION

We believe in transubstantiation. This is the changing of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. At Holy Mass we believe Jesus becomes present in the bread and wine through the Consecration. Therefore, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of the risen Jesus while retaining their physical appearance of bread and wine. This is a sacred mystery. Through receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus we are strengthened and nourished to live holy lives.

VOCABULARY FOR THE EUCHARIST

- Altar** The table around which Catholics gather to celebrate the Eucharist.
- Amen** A word meaning, “Yes, I believe.”
- Apostles** The close friends and followers of Jesus.
- Baptism** A sacrament of initiation. Baptism cleanses sin, give us a new life in Christ and brings us into the community of the Church.
- Bishop** The leader of a diocese who serves the people.
- Blessed Trinity** One God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Chalice** The chalice is a special cup containing the wine, which is changed into the Blood of Jesus at Mass.
- Ciborium** The covered bowl which holds Communion Bread or hosts.
- Holy Communion** Receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus in the Eucharist. The word communion means “unity with.”
- Cruets** Small bottles that hold the water and wine used at Mass.
- Disciples** Baptized people who freely choose to follow Jesus and His teachings.
- Eucharist** The Sacrament of Initiation which celebrates Jesus’ presence in Holy Communion. The word Eucharist means “thanksgiving”.



- Genuflect** To bend on one knee as a sign of respect for Jesus.
- Gospel** The Good News, which Jesus shared with all people.
- Grace** God’s holy grace fills us with his life and enables us to live as God wants us to live.
- Host** The Communion bread.



Parable A short story teaching a moral lesson. Jesus used parables to teach His followers.

Parish A community of Catholics who gather to worship and minister to others.

Sacrament Signs and celebrations of God's power and love. The sacraments give God's grace to the members of the Church.

Sacrifice Something precious offered to God out of love.

Savior A word that means "one who saves." Savior is another name for Jesus.



Sin Turning away from God and the community. Venial sin is choosing something that is wrong. Mortal sin is choosing something that is very seriously wrong. When we are truly sorry, we receive absolution for sin in the Sacrament of Penance.

Tabernacle The sanctuary where the consecrated hosts are placed in the church.

Temptation The pull felt toward doing something we know is wrong. Jesus showed us how to say no to temptation.

Vestments The special clothing worn by the priest and other ministers at Mass.

Word of God God's message told to us by Jesus and the prophets.

Miracle A supernatural sign of God's power and love at work in the world. The miracles of Jesus reveal God's power to heal, forgive, nourish, and strengthen.



*****Please Remember to attend Holy Mass each Sunday.*****

MASS RESPONSES : Please practice the Holy Mass responses with your children so they may participate and experience Holy Mass.

INTRODUCTORY RITE

Priest: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
People: Amen.

Priest: The Lord be with you.
People: And with your spirit.

Priest: ...through Christ our Lord.
People: Amen.

READINGS I and II

Reader: The Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL READING

Priest: The Lord be with you.
People: And with your spirit.

Priest: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to ...
People: Glory to you, Lord.
Make the sign of the cross on your forehead with your thumb and say, "The Lord be on my mind." Make the sign of the cross on lips and say, "on my lips." Make the sign of the cross on heart and say, "and in my heart."

Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.
People: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



OFFERTORY

- Priest: Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the Almighty Father.
- People: May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of His name, for our good, and the good of all His holy church.
- Priest: The Lord be with you.
- People: And with your spirit.
- Priest: Lift up your hearts.
- People: We lift them up to the Lord.
- Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- People: It is right and just.
- Priest: Through Him, and with Him, and in Him, O God, Almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is Yours, for ever and ever.
- People: Amen.



COMMUNION RITE

- Priest: Deliver us Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant us peace in our days, that, by the help of Your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.
- People: For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are Yours, now and Forever.
- Priest: Lord Jesus Christ, Who said to your apostles: "Peace I leave you, My peace I give you." Look not on our sins but on the faith of Your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will.
- People: Amen.
- Priest: The peace of the Lord be with you always.
- People: And with your spirit.

Priest: Let us offer each other the sign of peace.
People: (Turn and shake hands with the people near you.)

Priest: Behold the Lamb of God. Behold Him Who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the Supper of the Lamb.
People: Lord, I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

CLOSING

Priest: The Lord be with you.
People: And with your spirit.

Priest: May Almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy
People: Amen.
Spirit.

Priest: Go in peace.
People: Thanks be to God.

Please remind your children to fold their hands when walking up to receive Holy Communion. As the person in front of them is receiving, they should bow reverently. Children should place their dominate hand under their non-dominate hand, palms up to receive Holy Communion. This way, they can pick up the Host and place it in their mouth with their dominate hand. When the Eucharistic Minister says, "Body of Christ" the child should respond, "Amen". The same is true for the Blood of Christ.



Thank you for your family leadership in teaching your children our Catholic faith. It has been a pleasure sharing your family's faith journey. If we can be of any assistance please stop by or call the Religious Education Office 219- 836-8610.

May God bless you and your family as you prepare for this joyous sacrament!

**Miss Emily Hackett, Director of Religious Education
Mrs. Carolyn McGill, Administrative Assistant**