

Sacramental Preparation Handbook



2024 - 2025

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FIRST SACRAMENTS OF RECONCILIATION AND EUCHARIST



Program:

Preparation for these two First Sacraments are offered each year at Our Lady of the Mountains Parish. First Reconciliation, which precedes First Eucharist, is offered in the fall and First Eucharist is offered in the spring. Each family and child, once the child has reached the age of reason (age 7), is invited into sacramental preparation. These letters of invitation are mailed out in September of each year to families registered in the parish.

Sacramental Preparation is done separately from the Sunday Faith Formation Program or Catholic School Religion Classes. It is family based with the majority done at home with parent and family involvement. The preparation for both sacraments consist of a parent meeting, parent/child mini-retreat, and celebration of the sacrament. The parent meeting provides all the necessary resources and information for this.

Program Guidelines and Requirements:

All Sacramental Preparation Programs at Our Lady of the Mountains follows the guidelines and requirements established by the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

In addition to the child reaching the age of reason (7), he/she must be baptized in the Catholic Faith and have completed a minimum of one full year in a formal parish Faith Formation Program or attendance in a Catholic School. This should precede the year prior to the preparation and reception of the sacrament. A child should have some basic knowledge of the Catholic Faith, Prayers, and Mass, and become familiar with their Catholic Church Community prior to preparing and receiving the First Sacraments.



Sacrament of Confirmation



Program:

Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation is offered each year at Our Lady of the Mountains Parish in the winter/spring. Each young person and family receive an invitation to participate in the preparation for this sacrament during their sophomore year of high school. By this age and grade level, they should have sufficient knowledge of the Catholic Faith and be capable of making the decision on their own to enter into the preparation of the sacrament.

Sacramental Preparation Programs are done separately from the Sunday Faith Formation Program or Catholic School Religion Classes. Confirmation Preparation consists of preparation sessions, service projects, retreats, a parent/candidate meeting, a session involving the sponsors, and the celebration of the sacrament. A Confirmation Handbook and Calendar is provided at the parent/meeting.

Program Guidelines and Requirements:

All Sacramental Preparation Programs at Our Lady of the Mountains Parish follow the guidelines and requirements of the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

Baptism in a Catholic Church and the reception of both the First Sacrament of Reconciliation and Eucharist must have been received before entering into Confirmation Preparation. A minimum of one full year's participation in a formal Parish Faith Formation Program or attendance in a Catholic School is required. Faith is a journey. As the young person enters high school, growth and understanding of the Catholic faith continues at a level that will help better prepare them to say "yes" to receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. This time is an opportunity to significantly grow their relationship with Jesus.



What other information should families/ parents/guardians know about Sacramental Preparation?

-Parents/Guardians and the family play a primary role in the faith development of their children and teens. You want the best for your children/teens, and we do too. What we do is secondary to your role in forming their faith. Always know that we are here to help and support you in any way that we can.

-Attend Mass as a family—The Eucharist is the source and summit of our Christian lives. Mass attendance and receiving the Eucharist grows the faith and grows the family. What better way to keep Jesus close to your heart and mind throughout your week.

-Pray—Keep prayer a significant part of your family life. Say the basic Catholic prayers every day (this will help teach your young children): The Sign of the Cross, Grace before Meals, the Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, and the Act of Contrition. Prayer can be as simple as a thought or a word. It can be as deep as meditation or reading scripture from the Bible. If your children/teens see others in the family finding time and different ways to pray, they will too.

