

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION SACRAMENT MASS Q & A

Q: When is the First Holy Communion Mass?

A: Students will receive First Holy Communion at each of our Parish Masses on the weekend of April 29 & 30, 2023. A sign up will be sent via email to families the beginning of November. You will be able to select which Mass your family would like to attend. If you do not select one, one will be assigned to you. *Space is limited at each Mass.*

Q: Will there be a practice?

A: Yes, we will have a Practicum Retreat on Sunday, April 23 at 1:00 PM or 3:00 PM at St. John the Baptist Parish. You will be able to select the retreat you would like to attend with your child closer to the date.

Q: Which Practicum Retreat does my student attend?

A: There will a sign-up opportunity to select one of the two retreats that best fits your schedule.

Q: What will happen at the Practicum Retreat?

A: Your student and one parent will attend the retreat. We will be covering how to process into the church, where to sit, how to receive communion, how to line up for a group picture and how to process out. We will also be handing out banner kits for students to take home and complete. The banners will be hung on the end of the pew your family will sit in.

Q: Who should attend the Practicum Retreat?

A: The First Holy Communion student and at least one parent.

Q: What is a banner kit?

A: We have a tradition of students making a banner to celebrate their First Holy Communion. The kit includes all the materials need to decorate a banner. Students add their name to the banner. The banner is hung on the end of their assigned pew at the mass were they receive First Holy Communion.

Q: What should my student wear for their First Holy Communion mass?

A: What your student wears (clothing and shoes) to Mass should reflect noble simplicity. It should be an expression of love for the Lord. During the First Holy Communion Masses, ***all students will wear an alb over their clothes.*** The alb will be provided by the parish for the Sacrament Mass and will be returned after the Mass. The alb is a liturgical vestment and reminds us of the "new and immaculate clothing"¹ that we have received through baptism. It is also a symbol of the sanctifying grace received at baptism and purity of heart we all strive to achieve through our faith journey.

¹ [Liturgical Vestments and the Vesting prayer.](#)

Q: Can my daughter wear a veil and gloves?

A: A traditional First Communion veil that resembles a bridal veil and gloves are not to be worn. These are not required of the Sacrament and are not appropriate to be worn with an alb. If this is a custom in your family, please remove the veil and/or gloves before putting on the alb.

Q: Can my daughter wear a chapel veil or mantilla?

A: Yes. A chapel veil is a sacramental worn at mass as a sign of reverence and devotion to the blessed sacrament.

Q: Does my student need any other accessories, like a bible or candle?

A: No. These are not required of the Sacrament. If this is a custom in your family, please hold them for your student during the Sacrament Mass or leave them at home.

Q: Does my student need a sponsor for First Holy Communion?

A: No, sponsors are not needed for First Holy Communion.

Q: What do we do with the banner we made after the Practicum Retreat?

A: Bring the banner to your Sacrament Mass. Hang the banner over the end of your assigned pew. It should be visible while walking up the center aisle.

Q: When should students arrive at church on the day of First Holy Communion and where should they go when they get to the church?

A: Please arrive at the church 45 minutes before your assigned Mass is to start. Students must check in with a volunteer in the gathering space. After checking in, students should go to the Coffee Room to put on their alb. If your student is wearing a suit coat, we will ask that it be left on the hanger that was holding the alb. We will have volunteers helping with the albs. Students will have a specific alb assigned to them. After the alb is on, you are welcome to take pictures of your student anywhere in the church, time permitting.

Q: Will we have assigned seating in the church?

A: Yes, you will have one center pew assigned to your family. Your student receiving First Holy Communion should sit on the end closest to the center aisle. If you need more room than one center pew, please use the side pews or pews behind all the other First Holy Communion reserved pews. If your family does not fill up the pew, please allow other Parishioners to sit in the pew with you, especially at the 11:00 AM Mass. We will give you your assigned pew at the Practicum Retreat.

Q: Can we take pictures of our students during Mass?

A: No. We know that everyone wants to capture this special moment. You are welcome to take pictures before and after the Mass. The parish hires a professional photographer to take a picture of each student as they receive the sacrament. To honor Jesus and to maintain the integrity of the liturgy, please leave the picture taking to the photographer. A group picture with Father Tilley will also be taken at the end of Mass by the photographer. You are welcome to snap a group picture with your own camera. The pictures taken by the professional photographer will be made available to you for download at no cost.

Q: Will the Masses be live streamed?

A: Yes

Q: When will students receive their First Holy Communion Certificates?

A: After each Mass, students will process out. They will walk to the Coffee Room to return their alb. After they have returned their alb, they will be given their Certificate and a small gift from the parish. You can meet your student in the gathering space.

Q: Will there be a reception after each Mass?

A: YES! Please plan to celebrate with your parish family for a short time after each Mass. Food and drink will be provided.