

# RECONCILIATION AND FIRST EUCHARIST PARENT HANDBOOK



***Sacred Heart Parish  
Groton, CT***

## **SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION TEAM**

The First Reconciliation and First Communion Team has the responsibility of assisting parents in preparing the children to live the faith of the Christian Community by living lives which profess the Lord's presence and salvation in the world. The team consists of:

The parents	of all our communicants
Rev. Dariusz Dudzik	Pastor
Dr. Soraya Calle	Principal, Sacred Heart School
Mrs. Marissa Mills	Director, Religious Education
Mrs. Pat Snyder	Music Director

### **Teachers**

Mrs. Kathleen Doyle  
Mrs. Doreen Wilson  
Miss Jill Holman  
Mrs. Bev Hanson



## **The Reconciliation / First Communion Program**

Children are expected to attend Religious Education classes before enrolling in the second grade First Communion program. The Reconciliation / First Communion program involves parent/guardian participation. In outline, our program is:

### **I. FIRST RECONCILIATION**

- Parent Meeting
  - Retreat
- First Penance

### **II FIRST HOLY COMMUNION**

- Parent Meeting
- Family Offerings (Feb – April)
  - Call to Eucharist
- First Communion Retreat
- First Holy Communion



## **FIRST RECONCILIATION**

### *1. Parent Meeting – October 27, 2010*

The Fall Parent Meeting will cover the details of First Penance as well as provide the opportunity to update and renew the adult's theology and faith regarding the Sacrament of Reconciliation

### *2. First Reconciliation Retreat – Saturday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2011*

### *3. First Reconciliation - Saturday, January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011*

As a parent, you are your child's primary religious educator. Your child watches what you do, absorbs your values, and looks to you for guidance. It is through you that your child learns to relate to God and other. Modeling for your child an openness to receiving the gift of God's unconditional love is perhaps the core of your parental responsibility as primary religious educator.

The Holy Spirit will guide your efforts as you help prepare your child to celebrate the sacrament and the Gift of Reconciliation.



## **FIRST HOLY COMMUNION**

### **1. Parent Meeting - *Thursday, March 3rd, 2011***

The February Parent Meeting addresses the “Call to the Eucharist” liturgy, the Family Offerings and the specifics of First Communion. This meeting will provide the opportunity to update and renew the adult’s theology and faith regarding the Sacrament of Eucharist.

### **2. Family Offerings**

Parents will have the opportunity to explore the faith journey with their children with a simple “at home” activity. As a witness to the parish and to come together to celebrate as a parish family, the activities will be collected and “offered” during an assigned monthly weekend mass. Families will be encouraged to volunteer at the weekend masses during the Offertory procession the weeks leading up to First Communion. (March - April)

### **3. A “Call to Eucharist” – *Sunday, March 27th, 2011 @ 8:30 am Liturgy***

The Parish is called upon to recognize and support the children who are preparing for First Communion and who desire to be united with the rest of the parish as receiving members of the Body of Christ. The celebration also gives parents and child an opportunity to make a more formal and public commitment to the proximate preparation period for First Holy Communion.



## CALL TO EUCHARIST

The “Call to Eucharist” component of the First Holy Communion Sacramental Program enables the parish community to also help initiate the children into the faith life of the parish. It is also an opportunity for the family together to commit themselves to the sacramental place within the context of the mass. After the homily, the priest/deacon will ask you and your children to renew your Baptismal promises:

### **Renewal of Baptismal Promises:**

**Priest:** Dear Parents, when you brought your children to church for the Sacrament of Baptism, you made promises in their name. As you prepare to bring your child to receive Holy Communion in May, we now ask you to renew those promises.

Children, now that you are beginning to understand those promises your parents made for you, we ask you to join in the Renewal of Baptismal promises. Please answer, “I do”.

**Priest:** Do you reject sin, so as to live in the freedom of God’s children”

**Parents and children:** I do.

**Priest:** Do you reject the glamour of evil, and refuse to be mastered by sin?

**Parents and children:** I do.

**Priest:** Do you reject Satan, father of sin and prince of darkness:

**Parents and children:** I do.

**Priest:** Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

**Parents and children:** I do.

**Priest:** Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

**Parents and children:** I do.

**Priest:** Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

**Parents and children:** I do.

**Priest:** God, the all-powerful Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and forgiven all our sins. May he also keep us faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ for ever and ever.

**Parents and children:** Amen.

After the renewal of Baptismal promises, each child will approach the altar with his/her parents for this simple "witness of Faith".

Priest: (to parents) What do you ask for your child?

**Parents: Holy Communion**

Priest : ( to child) Do you wish to receive Holy Communion?

**Child: Yes, Father, I do wish to receive Holy Communion.**

## THE INTERVIEW

Each child will have the opportunity to talk on a one-to-one basis about what First Communion means to him or her. These few minutes with the child are not to convey a pass/fail situation. The interviewer provides the opportunity for an informal dialogue. The child gets a sense of all that has been learned about how well simple truths of faith have been grasped by the child. This interview is also an opportunity to meet with members of the parish community who say to the child, "the parish is interested in you". Parents have the chance to get involved with the interview preparation with the child and another step to plan the seeds of faith along the faith journey that is afforded to the family.

### First Communion Interview

What does the word Eucharist mean:

***Answer: Eucharist means "giving thanks". In the Eucharist we give thanks to God.***

Why do we give thanks to God?

***Answer: We give thanks to God for Jesus, God's greatest gift to us.***

What did Jesus do for us?

***Answer: Jesus showed us how to live our faith. He died on the cross for us and rose again that we might have a new life.***

Do you know any stories about Him?

(suggest a story from the list below if the child hesitates. "Do you remember the story about ....What happened?....")

Loaves and Fishes          Wedding at Cana          Zaccheus          Last Supper

***Answer: (Told in Child's own words)***

When did Jesus give us the Eucharist?

***Answer: Jesus gave us the Eucharist at the Last Supper, the night before he died.***

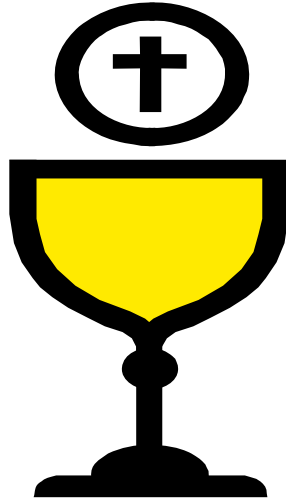
What happens to the bread and wine at Mass:

***Answer: By the power of the Holy Spirit and the words and actions of the priest, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ.***

Whom do we receive in Holy Communion:

***Answer: We receive Jesus, the Bread of Life.***

Recite a closing prayer ( the Our Father) with the child.



## FAMILY BANNERS

Each family will be asked to create a FAMILY BANNER. The requirements are simple. Please make it on an 11 x 17 piece of felt. (*\* The stiff felt pieces (EZFelt), work well.*) Please leave 3 inches from the top blank (to create pocket for dowel). We ask that the banners be vertical. Items relating to First Communion and/or a special meaning to your child may be added. In addition, the family name is a nice suggestion. We ask that the banner not be too heavy. These banners will decorate the end of the ‘family pew’ on First Communion Day. The banners must be turned in at the beginning of the retreat on April 26<sup>th</sup>. With the handing in of the banner, seating assignments will be drawn.

## RECONCILIATION SONGS

### **Refiners Fire**

Purify my heart.  
Let me be as gold and precious silver  
Purify my heart  
Let me be as gold, pure gold

**Refiner's fire,  
My heart's one desire  
Is to be holy, Set apart for You, Lord  
I choose to be holy  
Set apart for You, my Master  
Ready to do Your will**

Purify my heart  
Cleanse me from within  
And make me holy  
Purify my heart  
Cleanse me from my sin, Deep within

**Refiner's fire  
My heart's one desire  
Is to be holy, Set apart for You, Lord  
I choose to be holy  
Set apart for You, my Master  
Ready to do Your will**

Refiner's fire  
My heart's one desire, Is to be holy  
Set apart for You, Lord  
I choose to be holy  
Set apart for You, my Master  
Ready to do Your will

This Little Light of Mine

This Little Light of Mine,  
I'm gonna let it shine.  
This Little Light of Mine,  
I'm gonna let it shine.  
This Little Light of Mine,  
I'm gonna let it shine.

**Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.**

Ev'ry where I go,  
I'm gonna let it shine  
Ev'ry where I go,  
I'm gonna let it shine  
Ev'ry where I go,  
I'm gonna let it shine.

**Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.**

Jesus gave it to me,  
I'm gonna let it shine.  
Jesus gave it to me,  
I'm gonna let it shine  
Jesus gave it to me,  
I'm gonna let it shine

**Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine**