



St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church

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January 3, 2017

Congratulations on your child's upcoming preparation and celebration of First Eucharist (Communion). We are excited to continue to walk with your family in this year's journey of knowing, loving, and serving the Lord.

Preparation for First Eucharist will be very similar to your child's preparation for First Reconciliation last fall, with workbooks and gatherings to support your family in this preparation time. As a parent, you can be a witness to your child by discussing your feelings concerning receiving Jesus in the Eucharist. You – with your experience, your faith and your commitment – are the best gift you bring to sacramental preparation. *No program or book can take the place of a parent's personal witness.*

In addition to attending our foundational faith formation programs or Catholic school, this period includes:

- The expectation that families **attend Sunday Mass** together regularly
- **Child workbooks and parent guides** that families work through and discuss at home
- **Parent/Child First Eucharist Retreat #1**, the beginning of the preparation time and when your family receives their workbooks
- A **Parent Workshop** to help you by exploring the sacraments at a personal and adult level. With a better understanding of your faith, you will be better equipped to help your child
- **Parent/Child First Eucharist Retreat #2**, a prayerful time to gather together for activities and final preparation for First Eucharist

Please review the following enclosed papers for dates, times, and locations of events:

- Schedule for Reconciliation and Eucharist Preparation (updated January 2017 with corrected dates)
- First Communion parent checklist
- First Communion Registration Form with Mass time request (due February 15, 2017)
- First Communion practice schedules

Participation in all workshops and meetings are essential to this period of preparation. If you are not able to attend a retreat or workshop, please contact Susan Bippley (616-392-6700, ext. 115 or sbippley@stfrancisholland.org) prior to the event.

Christian parenting is a holy vocation, a sacred responsibility of bringing your family to know and live the “good news” of Jesus Christ. We invite you each day to ask for the grace of the Holy Spirit so that you can be the heart and hands of Jesus for your family. We look forward to working with you during this time.

Blessings,

Susan Bippley

Coordinator of Children's Ministries

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