

Catholic Churches

First Communion Policies & Guidelines

God calls us to actively seek Him and His Word as we continue to build an on-going relationship with Him.

1. Parent / guardian, please read this list of policies & guidelines.
2. Roman Catholic families should live God's Third Commandment: "Keep holy the Lord's Day." Priests everywhere will agree that **attendance at Sunday Masses (Sat. Vigil Masses)** and on **Holy Days of Obligation** is the first step in living the faith-filled life to which God calls us. Families who are new to our faith communities are encouraged to pick up a current schedule of the Masses celebrated here at St. Martin De Porres and Our Lady of the Lake Churches.
3. *Although most children make their First Confession and First Communion in grade 2, it is not unusual for an older child to enroll in the sacramental preparation program.* All candidates must enroll in and attend religious education classes for their appropriate grade level. Parents/guardians for older candidates must come to a catch-up class in the summer and then attend class learning for 2nd Grade preparation for the Sacraments. After they have received the Sacrament of Holy Confession & Holy Communion then they can return to their respective class with their peers.
 - A) **Attendance Policy:** All candidates are expected to attend on-site classes regularly and **promptly**. Enrollment in a sacramental preparation program places even more emphasis on **perfect attendance!**
 - B) **Absence Policy:** (1) A doctor's excuse or a parent's handwritten excuse must be submitted to Mrs. Stephanie Fremin as soon as possible after an absence. A death in the immediate family or medical are the only excusable absences.
 - (2) Due to the volunteer nature of our teachers, any material from the classes missed will be the responsibility of the parent / guardian.
 - (3) Extenuating circumstances (lengthy illness / hospital stay) will be discussed with the Director on a case-by-case basis.
4. **Mass Attendance:** Spiritual preparation for one's faith involves going to Mass every weekend and every Holy Day of Obligation for a practicing Catholic. At every baptism a **promise** is made to raise our children in the faith. The formation of every Catholic's faith involves "**full, active, conscience, participation**" at Mass.
5. If the candidate was not baptized at St. Martin De Porres or Our Lady of the Lake Churches, **you must submit a photocopy of a Church certificate of Baptism as soon as possible.** A fax of a certificate is acceptable.
6. All First Communion candidates should **display a sincere desire** to learn more about our Catholic faith and **an age-appropriate knowledge** of the Sacraments of first Confession and first Communion **before** receiving the Sacraments.
7. Regardless of their age or grade level, **all** First Communion candidates must **memorize and recite the prayers identified for grades 1-2** on the grade level Expectations sheet from the Bishop. Several of those prayers are used in the preparation for, during, or in the assigned penances after Confession, and must be memorized and recited **before** First Confession on April 10, 2027.

Memorized Prayers for all First Communion Candidates:

Grade 1 Prayers: The Sign of the Cross, Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, Glory Be, and Angel of God.

Grade 2 Prayers: The 10 Commandments, Apostles' Creed, Brief Examination of Conscience, Act of Contrition, Prayer before Meals, and Bless me Father. (For Confession)

Dress Code for First Confession: (All candidates in grades 2-12)

Acceptable: Nice slacks or jeans, dress shirt or polo shirt, modest skirt and blouse with sleeves; modest dress with sleeves, socks or stockings; clean shoes.

Unacceptable: Distressed jeans, capris, shorts, t-shirts, athletic clothing, or flip-flops.

Dress Code for First Communion: (All candidates in grades 2-12)

Girls: Modest white dress with sleeves, white Communion veil (optional), white socks or stockings, white dress shoes. (**Note:** No purses, gloves, or dangling earrings. (Only a very light application of makeup is allowed.)

Boys: Black dress pants, white button-down dress shirt (long or short sleeve), black socks, black dress shoes, solid black tie. (Neutral Colors of suits accepted: Black, Navy, & Gray)

All Candidates are required to attend the **practices for each Sacrament. Both will take place at the B.J. Center. The dates and times are:**

Confession Practice: Thursday, April 8, 2027 7:00 am – 8:00 am at B. J.

Communion Practice: Thursday, April 15, 2027 7:00 am – 8:00 am at BJ

Communion Practice: Saturday, April 17, 2027 10:00 am at OLOL Church

First Confession:

Day/Date: Saturday, April 10, 2027

Time: 10:am – All Candidates must be present at 9:45 am

Place: St. Martin De Porres Church

First Communion:

Day/Date: Sunday, April 18, 2027

Mass Time: 11:00 AM

Place: Our Lady of the Lake Church

Photos will be taken at 9:45 am

FIRST COMMUNION TERMS

These are terms that your First Communion candidates must understand before they receive the Sacrament of Confession on April 10, 2027. It is your duty and responsibility to review these terms periodically with them. The 2nd grade CCD teachers have begun reviewing these terms with the candidates who are attending classes.

Free Will: God's gift to us that allows us to make choices.

Reminder: There is a difference between an **accident** and a **choice**. When things are out of **our** control and we must do something that God does not like, it is not a sin. However, when we have a chance to do something that God would like us to do, but **still** **choose** to do (or not to do) something that God would not approve, then it is a sin.

Conscience: God's gift that helps to know right from wrong.

In movies, we often see images of a good and bad angel sitting on each shoulder of a person trying to lead them in making a choice; good or bad. We really don't see those images in real life, but our conscience still works the same way. God gave us a conscience to help us determine what the "right thing" really is, so that we can choose the "thing" that God would want us to do.

Sin: A thought, word, or deed that we **freely** commit even though we know that it is wrong.

Mortal: serious sin; it **breaks** our friendship with God; we lose our share in His Grace.

Venial: less serious sin; it **hurts** our friendship with God but we still share in God's Grace; makes it easier to commit venial sins again; makes it easier to commit mortal sin.

Contrition: Being very sorry for our sins and promising not to sin again.

Read and memorize the words of the "**Act of Contrition**" prayer.

You will have to recite it during Confession.

Mercy: God's compassionate forgiveness and unconditional love.

Sacrament: A special outward (natural) sign given to us by Jesus that brings Grace.

Sacrament of Confession: Also called the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of Penance, because we confess our sins to God our Father, through the person of the priest, and ask Him for His forgiveness. And, through the person of the priest, we receive absolution and are reconciled with God. We receive our penance and go out and fulfill it.

Absolution: God's forgiveness of our sins and reconciliation with Him through the person of the priest in the Sacrament of Confession.

Penance: A prayer, a combination of prayers, and/or an act of kindness or service (assigned to us by the priest) that we must do to make up for our sins and to help us grow in our relationship with God.

Transubstantiation: The transformation of the **substance** of the Eucharistic elements into the body and blood of Jesus Christ at consecration; only the appearances of bread and wine still remaining.

Guide to First Confession

1: Make a Good Examination of Conscience.

Suggestion: use “Examination of Conscience” sheets below.

2: Go into the confessional.

You have the choice to kneel at the screen or sit to talk face-to-face with the Priest.

The Priest should welcome you kindly and warmly.

Make the Sign of the Cross, and say these words:

Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. This is my first confession. These are my sins...

Tell all your sins openly and honestly, including the number of times each sin was committed.

Then, listen to the Priest and follow his instructions.

You may also ask any questions about faith or how to grow in holiness.

Then the Priest will ask you to pray the Act of Contrition.

ACT OF CONTRITION

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You, and I detest all my sins because of Your just punishment, but most of all, because they offend You, my God, Who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Your Grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. AMEN

The Priest will then ask you to do a “penance.”

Usually some prayers, to show you are truly sorry for your sins.

This is done after you return to your pew.

If the Priest assigns a good act, it should be done soon after you leave the church.

Then the priest, acting in the person of Jesus Christ, will absolve (forgive) you of your sins with the following words:

God, the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son, has reconciled the world to Himself, and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you of your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

You, then, make the Sign of the Cross, and say: Amen.

After you return to your pew, do the act of penance the Priest assigns you.

Tell God that you are thankful for the grace of reconciliation that you have just received.

Our Lady of the Lake

St. Martin De Porres

Catholic Churches

Treasury of Prayers

(Revised June 2011)

1st Grade

The Sign of the Cross

In the Name of the Father; and of the Son; and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. AMEN.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary full of Grace! The Lord is with You; Blessed are You among women, and Blessed is the Fruit of Your Womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. AMEN.

Glory Be

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. AMEN.

Angel of God

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom His love entrusts me here, ever this day be at my side to light and guard, to rule and guide. AMEN.

Catholic Churches

Treasury of Prayers

(Revised June 2011)

2nd Grade

Prayer Before Meals

Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive from Thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. AMEN.

The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell, on the third day He arose again from the dead. He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I 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. AMEN.

Brief Examination of Conscience

What sins have I committed of thought, word, deed, and omission against Almighty God, neighbor, and self?

The Ten Commandments

Almighty God gave these to Moses on Mount Sinai.

1. I am the Lord your God; you shall not have any other gods before Me.
2. You shall not take the Name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You, and I detest all my sins because of Your just punishment, but most of all, because they offend You, my God, Who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Your Grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. AMEN

