

Sacraments of Initiation for Older Children

Baptism, First Communion,
Confirmation



BURLINGTON-LYONS
CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

ST. MARY • ST. JOSEPH • ST. CHARLES

Reverend Sergio Rodriguez, Pastor

Reverend Timothy Wysocki, Associate Pastor

Parish Offices:

St. Mary: **Julie Mermal**

jmermal@ourblcc.org 262-763-1500

St. Joseph: **Tami Koenen**

tkoenen@ourblcc.org 262-763-2050

St. Charles: **Jami Morrow**

jmorrow@ourblcc.org 262-763-2260

Children 7 years of age and younger

For a child **7 years old or younger**, Infant Baptism is scheduled after the family attends a preparation class. If the child is under age 7, First Communion and Confirmation can be received with peers at the appropriate age. For a child that is 7 years old, First Reconciliation and First Communion *might* be delayed an appropriate amount of time to allow for adequate preparation. Confirmation could be received along with peers, after age 16 and adequate preparation.

Please refer to our Baptism Brochure for more information.

Children over 7 years of age

Children of catechetical age are those who have reached the age of reason, which is generally considered to be age seven. In the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, it is considered to be after the first day of 2nd Grade. The category of "children of catechetical age" extends up to the fourteenth year. Children of catechetical age are old enough to hear and understand the call of Christ, and to respond with faith at their own age level. For an unbaptized child 8 years old or older, Infant Baptism is not an option. Instead, they participate in the following 4-stage process:

1st Stage: Inquiry - Faith exploration within the church community

The child should be enrolled in Catholic school or religious education class. The parents support the child and an appropriate sponsor/godparent is chosen. A support team (*teacher, classmates, friends, family, etc.*) is assembled to help the child explore the Catholic Faith. This stage may last weeks or months, depending on the age and faith of the child. When the child expresses a firm desire to receive the sacraments, an interview takes place. The child will talk about the Catholic faith and demonstrate an eagerness to grow closer to God. The Rite of Welcome is scheduled to celebrate the child moving to the next stage.

2nd Stage: Catechumenate - Learning from the support team

The family attends weekly Mass and is apprenticed by the rest of the support team. The child participates in catechesis and experiences developed by the support team. The team develops a unique plan for each child; ideas include service projects, weekly discussions about Mass readings and book studies. Communication between the child, parents and team is very important!

For the Child

What Should I be Doing?

Your family should be attending weekend Mass every week!

Make sure that you are attending your religion classes and doing all your work.

Every day, you should be praying to God!

Read about God in the Bible or watch videos about Jesus to learn His story.

Think about the questions you have and ask your parent/teacher/sponsor those questions.

Spend time helping others in your family and community.

Contact Ellie Schultz with any questions
eschultz@ourblcc.org



3rd Stage: Lent - Final Preparation for the Sacraments of Initiation

The family attends **Ash Wednesday** Mass and decides how they will fast, pray and give during Lent. A **retreat** experience will be provided by the support team. Some participation in rituals may be appropriate. The Child receives Baptism, Confirmation and First Communion at the **Easter Vigil** Mass. There is a rehearsal earlier in the day that should be attended by the child and one adult.

4th Stage: Mystagogy - The Weeks after Easter until Pentecost

The child will attend and participate fully in Sunday Masses. Preparation for First Reconciliation will be given, and that sacrament will be offered on the weekend of Pentecost. The support team will celebrate with the child afterwards.

Common Questions

What if my child was baptized in another Christian denomination?

The Catholic Church recognizes the validity of Baptism by other Christian ecclesial communities when the proper **matter** (water is poured on the baptized, or they are immersed) and **form** (the minister says, *"I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit"*) are used, and when both the baptizing minister and the person being baptized (or their parents and godparents if infants) have the proper intention - simply "to baptize" and "to be baptized." Examples of valid baptisms include Lutheran, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, and many others. Proof of valid baptism is required to continue with conversion to Catholicism.

Do I have to be Catholic in order for my child to celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation?

No! We welcome all parents to bring their child forward for the sacraments and encourage them to support their child's conversion by bringing them to classes and the Mass.

Does the preparation for receiving the Sacraments of Initiation cost anything?

No! We do not charge a fee for this program.

How do we choose a Sponsor/Godparent?

The child should choose a Sponsor or Godparent who is a confirmed, practicing Catholic, age 16 or older. Who would provide the best example of Catholic living? If the Sponsor/Godparent is married, they should be in a valid Catholic marriage and in good standing with the Church. Catholic Sponsor/Godparents will be asked to complete a form and have it signed by the pastor where they are registered parishioners.