

First Reconciliation / First Eucharist Team

The First Reconciliation / First Eucharist 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 Parents	of all our communicants
Bishop David O'Connell, CM	Bishop of Trenton
Very Rev. Damian McElroy, V.F.	Pastor
Rev. Jack Bogacz	Parochial Vicar
Deacon Edward Heffernan Deacon David Papuga Deacon John Bertagnolli, D.O. Deacon Thomas Kolon, M.D. Deacon Thomas D. Begley III	Deacons
Dr. Linda M. Dix, D.Min.	Director of Religious Education
Mr. Stephen J. Lucasi	Director of Sacred Music
Dr. Carla Chiarelli	Principal, Our Lady of Good Counsel School
Ms. Laura J. Kowalick	Office Manager
Mrs. A. Jean Kutteroff	Registrar

Teachers and Assistants

Our Lady of Good Counsel School

Kelly Ann Mulholland Sandra Prokop

Religious Education Program

Matthew Amberg	Annamarie Robenhymer
Tara Card	Diane Roberts
David Grabowski	Linda Russo
Heidi LaRusso	Cathryn Walsh
Susan McChesney	

First Reconciliation / First Eucharist Program

Religious Education of children and their preparation to receive the sacraments is the responsibility of parents, pastors, and catechists. Parents have the privilege, right, and duty to be intimately involved in preparing their children for the reception of the Sacraments.

(Diocese of Trenton: Parish Religious Education Administration Manual 403A: November 2012)

The parents are the primary educators of their child and are entrusted with the serious responsibility of all sacramental preparation as well as ongoing catechesis formation.

(Diocese of Trenton: Parish Religious Education Administration Manual 403G: November 2012)

The parish supports parents in their role as primary catechists of their children. An outline of the First Reconciliation / First Communion process at Our Lady of Good Counsel is listed below.

Diocese of Trenton Guidelines

- First Reconciliation
- First Eucharist

First Reconciliation:

- Family Mass, Breakfast and Retreat
- Parent Participation
- Sacrament of Reconciliation Format
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First Eucharist:

- Family Mass, Breakfast and Retreat
- Parent Participation
- Practice Schedule
- Information Form
- Sacrament of Eucharist Format
- Sacrament of Eucharist

*Please contact the Office of Religious Education
for questions and details regarding
First Reconciliation and First Eucharist*

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Our Lady of Good Counsel
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Phone: (856) 235-7136; FAX: (856) 235-2354
e-mail: reprogram@olgcnj.org

*Please visit our parish website for
First Reconciliation and First Eucharist information:
www.olgcnj.org*

Diocese of Trenton Guidelines: First Reconciliation and First Eucharist

First Reconciliation

Immediate preparation for the reception of First Reconciliation takes place in the first semester of second grade. Instruction and an opportunity to celebrate the sacrament must precede and be separate from instruction for the reception of Holy Eucharist.

Catechesis for the Sacrament will continue throughout the Religious Education program, recognizing that instruction in moral responsibility should continue throughout one's life.

Children should be encouraged to approach the Sacrament on a regular basis. Opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation are made available within the religious education program, the parish school, and the parish.

Before entering the immediate preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, children should have a basic knowledge and understanding of the following: *(Grade 1 Curriculum at Good Counsel)*

- God, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- God's personal love for each person
- The Church as the People of God
- The Sacrament of Baptism
- Prayer as a response to God's love
- Traditional Prayers: Our Father, Hail Mary, Sign of the Cross, and Act of Contrition

Immediate preparation will include the following concepts: *(Grade 2 Curriculum at Good Counsel)*

- The Two Great Commandments – Love God and others
- Sin as a refusal to love God, others, and ourselves
- God is always ready to forgive us
- It is within the Church, God's family, that we publicly acknowledge God's forgiveness through the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- Understanding the meaning of the sacramental encounter with Jesus
- Helping children look at their choices – not only their actions, but the attitudes behind their actions
- Knowing how to receive the Sacrament and be able to articulate an Act of Contrition
- Experience the Sacrament of Reconciliation as a prayerful experience
- Informing the children and parents that the Sacrament may be celebrated differently in other parishes and in other settings so that they will be comfortable celebrating the sacrament wherever they may be.

(Diocese of Trenton: Parish Religious Education Administration Manual: First Reconciliation: 406: Policy, A, B, C, November 2012)

First Eucharist

Immediate preparation for reception of First Eucharist takes place in the second semester of second grade and is to be kept separate from and follow preparation for first reception of Reconciliation.

The child will be led to understand that the Eucharist is special, and that the Eucharist is then received on a regular basis.

The child's reception of First Eucharist should be preceded by the reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Immediate preparation will include the following concepts:

- To know who Jesus is and the main events of His life
- To realize that Jesus is present in the Eucharistic Bread and Wine
- To indicate a desire to receive the Eucharist

(Diocese of Trenton: Parish Religious Education Administration Manual: First Eucharist: 407: Policy, A, B, C, November 2012)

First Reconciliation

Family Mass / Breakfast / Retreat

This meeting will cover the details of First Reconciliation as well as provide the opportunity to update and renew the adult's theology and faith regarding the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Father Damian will celebrate liturgy, preach and offer to you the spiritual guidance we all hunger for in raising our families. Dr. Dix will present specifics in preparing the children for the celebration of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. Coffee, juice, and a picnic breakfast will be served in the school cafeteria.

Preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation includes having the children learn teach about the love of God, forgiveness of sins, and how to live a good Christian life. Interactive parent-child retreat kits will be available for the second grade children. This interactive retreat will be an enjoyable and important part of your child's sacramental preparation.

Date	Time / Place
Saturday, September 15, 2018	8:45am Church and School Cafeteria

Parent Participation

As primary catechists, parents have an active roll in their child's preparation for First Reconciliation.

Assessment of Child's Readiness

First Communicants should have a good understanding that in the Sacrament of Reconciliation we express sorrow to God for our sins and are forgiven.

Preparation for the Celebration of First Reconciliation

- The parish provides families with First Reconciliation activity books. Parents are encouraged to work with their child in reviewing and discussing the material.
- Parents are asked to review the Examination of Conscience and Format for Reconciliation (found in this handbook) with their child.
- Parents are encouraged to discuss and share stories of Jesus with the child – especially those pertaining to forgiveness (*The Forgiving Father, The Lost Sheep, Zacchaeus, etc*).

Sacrament of First Reconciliation

First Reconciliation is celebrated in the Spring of the second grade year.

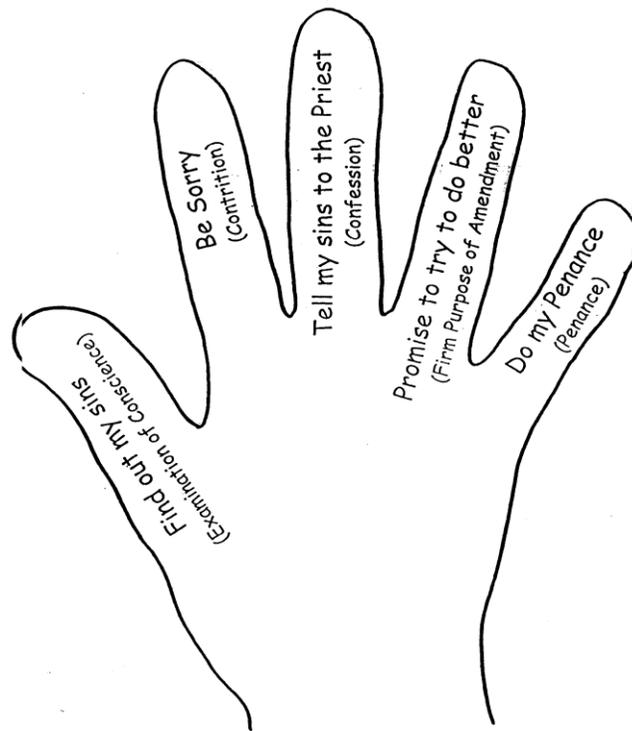
Children attend with their families. (Alternate date: Any Saturday, February 9, or later, 3:30 pm, Chapel)

Date	Time / Place
Saturday, February 9, 2019	10:00am – OLG School students 12:00noon – Religious Education students Main Church

*****Please note: No penitential service or confession shall be recorded, photographed, or videotaped.***
Diocese of Trenton: Celebration of the Sacraments: Policy: 404 Parish Religious Education Administration Manual, November 201

Sacrament of Reconciliation Format

This hand helps me to remember what I need to do to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.



Format for Reconciliation:

You say: ***Bless me Father, for I have sinned.***
Father, I.....
(begin on a positive note, by expressing something good about ourselves)

Priest says: For your penance.....
(for example: say one Our Father or help your parents today)

You say: Act of Contrition

O my God, I am sorry for my sins.
In choosing to sin, and failing to do good,
I have sinned against you and your church.
I firmly intend, with the help of your Son,
To make up for my sins, and to love as I should.

Priest says: I absolve you of your sins, in the name of the Father and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. God bless you.

You say: ***Thank you Father and God bless you.***



First Eucharist

Family Mass / Breakfast / Retreat

This meeting addresses the specifics of First Eucharist and will provide the opportunity to update and renew the adult's theology and faith regarding the Sacrament of Eucharist.

JMT Productions will be presenting "*O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree*" as a First Eucharist preparation retreat for our second graders, their families, and parishioners of all ages. Through the use of puppets, clowning, storytelling, music, and drama, children will learn about the gifts of Jesus and the Eucharist. This retreat will be an enjoyable and important part of your child's sacramental preparation program. **Parents attend retreat with their child.**

Date	Time / Place
Saturday, December 8, 2018	8:45am Church / School Cafeteria / Gym

Parent Participation

As primary catechists, parents have an active roll in their child's preparation for First Eucharist. This includes:

Assessment of Child's Readiness

First Communicants should have a good understanding that at Mass the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus.

Preparation for the Celebration of First Eucharist

- The parish provides families with First Eucharist activity books. Parents are encouraged to work with their child in reviewing and discussing the material.
- The child should be participating in weekly Mass for a better understanding of liturgy, preparation for Eucharist, and community involvement.
- Parents are asked to review the format for receiving the host with their child (found in this handbook) and the responses.
- Parents are encouraged to discuss and share stories of Jesus with their child – especially those pertaining to Eucharist (*Wedding Feast of Cana, Loaves and Fishes, Last Supper, etc*).

Please note:

Immediate preparation for Eucharist includes children being given unconsecrated hosts during class time and at special practices.

Parents are asked to notify the Religious Education Office of any known gluten or related allergies.

“Special Parish Touch”

Children will make special banners during class time to decorate individual Family Pews on First Communion day.

Practice Schedule

Our Lady of Good Counsel School Students:

Practices will be held during regular school hours.

Religious Education Students:

Practices for the Saturday and Sunday liturgies will be during class time.

Practices will also be held the *Friday before* First Communion, in Church.

Practice Date	Practice Time
Friday, May 3, 2019	4:00pm – 4:30pm (for Saturday 5/3/19 - 10:30am liturgy) 4:30pm – 5:00pm (for Saturday 5/3/19 - 1:00pm liturgy)
Friday, May 10, 2019	4:00pm – 4:30pm (for Saturday, 5/11/19- 1:00pm liturgy)

First Eucharist Dates

Our Lady of Good Counsel School Families:

Date	Liturgy
Saturday, May 11, 2019	10:30am – Ms. Mulholland and Ms. Prokop

Religious Education Families:

Parents in the R.E. Program request the First Communion Liturgy for their child.

Forms are sent home in mid-August with return date indicated.

Parents are notified of their assigned date as soon as the forms are processed.

Date	Liturgy
Saturday, May 4, 2019	10:30am and 1:00pm
Saturday, May 11, 2019	1:00pm

Sacrament of Eucharist Format



Please remove any gloves at The Sign of Peace

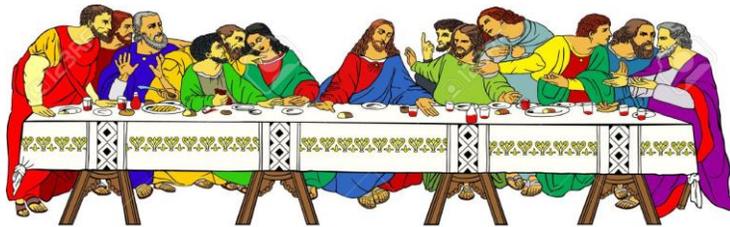
Approach the Bread Minister:

- Approach altar in procession
- Make a table with your hands
- **Priest / Eucharistic Minister:** “The Body of Christ”
- **Response:** (Bow head) / “Amen.”
- Take host with bottom hand and place in mouth.

Approach the Cup Minister:

- **Deacon / Eucharistic Minister:** “The Blood of Christ.”
- **Response:** (Bow head) / “Amen.”
- Take the cup with both hands, sip, and return to minister.

Sacrament of Eucharist – Discussion Questions



“The First Ever Holy Communion”

Father Damian often engages in a dialogue with the children, sharing the story of the “First Ever Holy Communion”. We invite you to share this story with your children.

The first communion was at the Last Supper.

Jesus extended the invitation to his friends, the 12 apostles.

The meal was held in the city of Jerusalem, in the Upper Room.

During the meal, Jesus broke, blessed, and shared the bread saying:

“This is my body.”

Jesus then blessed and shared the cup saying:

“This is my blood.”

When we celebrate Mass together, we are following Jesus’ command, “Do this in memory of me.”

Details regarding First Reconciliation and First Eucharist

- **Baptismal Certificate:** (*Collected at registration.*) A copy must be presented and verified before First Eucharist may be received. Please attach to form, if certificate was not given at registration.
- **First Communion Sacramental Register Form / Grade 2 Expenses Fee:** To be completed and submitted to RE Office in a sealed envelope by September 28. The fee of \$50 is to cover the cost of retreats and additional expenses, namely: First Reconciliation / First Eucharist Parent Handbook, First Reconciliation and First Eucharist Family Activity workbooks, My Mass books, September and December Retreats: Breakfast and Puppet Shows, Sacrament of Reconciliation: liturgy booklets, gifts: sheep, Sacrament of Eucharist: liturgy booklets, banners, certificates, and flowers.
- **Liturgical Ministers:** We ask any family with an OLC parish commissioned altar server or Eucharistic Minister who would like to participate in the liturgy to notify the RE Office by mid-January. After this date, ministers are assigned.
- **Visiting Clergy:** Any family who has a priest or deacon family member or friend who they would like to concelebrate the First Eucharist liturgy, or assist at First Reconciliation is asked to notify the parish office as soon as possible. “Any Roman Catholic clergyman who does not possess the faculties of the Diocese of Trenton must present a ‘Testimonial of Suitability’ to the Bishop of the Diocese of Trenton prior to exercising any ministry in the Diocese. This is a requirement in all dioceses in the United States in compliance with the spirit and guidelines of the ‘Charter for the Protection of Children and Youth’ which was promulgated by the Bishops of the United States in 2002.” *Rev. Msgr. Thomas J. Mullelly, J.D., LL.M., Vicar for Clergy and Consecrated Life, Diocese of Trenton*
- **Disability Seating:** Any family requiring disability seating (wheelchair, walkers) are asked to contact the R.E. Office *no later than mid-January, when Family Pews are assigned*. Strollers, infant seats, unattended wheelchairs or walkers may be stored in the prayer room, so aisles are not blocked. Staff members are available to assist families. Disability seating is assigned to accommodate guests with special needs, allow for distribution of the Eucharist, and to insure that fire codes regarding unblocked aisles are met.
- **Communicants Seating:**
 - **Good Counsel School:** Communicants sit together in front pews. Family / guests sit in assigned family pews behind children.
 - **Religious Education:** Communicants sit with their families in assigned pews.
- **Family / Guests Seating:** A family pew will be reserved for each child. We estimate 9 family members will fit comfortably. Any guest who cannot be accommodated in the family pew will be invited to the general seating pews or the simulcast in the chapel. Due to fire codes, no one is permitted to stand in the aisles.
- **Attire:** Girls usually wear white dresses, although pastels are acceptable. If gloves are worn, please have children remove after the procession. Boys wear suit jackets dress shirts, and tie, in the color of their choice.
- **Reverence:** Families are expected to observe a reverent demeanor in church during all liturgies.
- **Pictures:**
 - **Reconciliation:** No penitential service or confession shall be recorded, photographed, or videotaped. *Diocese of Trenton: Celebration of the Sacraments: Policy: 404 Parish Religious Education Administration Manual, November 2012*
 - **First Communion:** Flash photography is not permitted. Only photograph your child without interrupting the flow of the liturgy. Pictures of children other than your own may not be posted to social media. Following the celebration, pictures may be taken with priests around the altar. Parents are asked to convey this policy to guests. Professional photographers follow the parish policy for photos during mass.
- **First Communion Certificates:** Will be in the family pew at the First Eucharist liturgy.
- **Donation of Communion outfits:** Families are invited to donate their child’s gently used First Eucharist outfits to the parish’s outreach effort with needy inner-city parishes in Philadelphia.

Catholic Prayers to Know

Our Father

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.

Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Act of Contrition

O my God, I am sorry for my sins.
in choosing to sin,
and failing to do good.
I have sinned against you
and your Church.
I firmly intend,
with the help of your Son,
to make up for my sins
and to love as I should.



***Please return this form and Grade 2 Expenses Fee of \$50.00
in a sealed envelope to the RE Office by September 28, 2018.***

Sacrament of Eucharist: Information Sheet

Name of child to receive First Holy Communion (Baptismal Name):

First

Middle

Last

Record of Birth of child to receive First Holy Communion:

City / State of Birth: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Record of Baptism of child to receive First Holy Communion:

Church of Baptism: _____

City / State: _____

Date of Baptism: _____

Parents' Name: (Conforms to information listed on child's baptismal certificate)

Father: (Legal Name): _____

Mother: (Include Maiden Name): _____

Child's age at time of First Communion: _____ (April 2018)

Residence: ____ Moorestown, NJ ____ Mt. Laurel, NJ ____ Other: _____

Parent's Signature: x _____

All above information is complete and correct.

*Please note: Any variation from original baptismal certificate, documentation needs to be presented.
Please send directly to Dr. Linda Dix.*

For use by Office of Religious Education:

Baptismal Certificate Verified: _____ Grade 2 Expenses Fee: _____ First Communion Date: _____

