

# FIRST RECONCILIATION



*Through Jesus the forgiveness of sins  
is proclaimed to you.* Acts 13:38

HOLY FAMILY PARISH  
Parent Handbook  
2023-2024

# **FIRST RECONCILIATION \* 2023**

## **Calendar**

### **Sunday, October 22, 2023**

Sunday RE (2<sup>nd</sup> grade and ISP) First Reconciliation Parent Meeting  
8:30am Joseph & Mary rooms (door #4)

### **Wednesday, October 25, 2023**

Wednesday RE First Reconciliation Parent Meeting  
6:00pm in Joseph & Mary Rooms (door #4)

### **Monday, October 30, 2023**

Monday RE First Reconciliation Parent Meeting  
5:00pm in Joseph & Mary Rooms (door #4)

### **Monday, October 30, 2023**

Holy Family School First Reconciliation Parent Meeting  
6:45pm in Joseph & Mary Rooms (door #5)

### **Saturday, December 9, 2023**

Sacrament of **First Reconciliation**

9:30am – Church

***For Holy Family School and RE Monday***

### **Saturday, December 9, 2023**

Sacrament of **First Reconciliation**

11:00am - Church

***For RE Sunday – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and ISP and RE Wednesday***

The dress code for First Reconciliation is  
"Sunday Best".

No jeans, no gym shoes, no flip-flops.

# **FIRST COMMUNION \* 2024**

## **Calendar**

### **Sunday, January 21, 2024**

Sunday RE (2<sup>nd</sup> grade and ISP) First Communion Parent Meeting  
8:30am in Joseph & Mary rooms (use door #4)

### **Monday, January 22, 2024**

Monday RE First Communion Parent Meeting  
5:00pm in Joseph & Mary Rooms (use door #4)

### **Monday, January 22, 2024**

Holy Family School First Communion Parent Meeting  
6:45pm in Joseph & Mary Rooms (use door #5)

### **Wednesday, January 24, 2024**

Wednesday RE First Communion Parent Meeting  
6:00pm in Joseph & Mary Rooms (use door #4)

### **Saturday, April 27, 2024**

Sacrament of **First Communion**

**10:00am Mass**

**RE Sunday, ISP, RE Wednesday**

### **Saturday, May 4, 2024**

Sacrament of **First Communion**

**10:00am Mass**

**HF School, RE Monday**

*More information on First Communion and the forms needed will be distributed at the Parent Meeting in January. We will explain in detail what forms need to be filled out and when they are due. We will not accept any changes or forms until after the January Parent meeting. The forms in the First Communion packets must be used if you request a change.*

# *Holy Family Parish*

## *Religious Education Office*

### **SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**

#### **PROGRAM OUTLINE OF REQUIREMENTS**

#### ***ELIGIBILITY***

To be eligible to enter preparation to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at Holy Family Parish, students must meet the following qualifications:

1. Be a baptized Catholic.
2. Be a registered family in the School or Religious Education Program at Holy Family Parish.
3. Be a second grade student or older.
4. Have attended Religious Education classes or Religion classes for one year prior to the sacramental preparation year.
  - A. If transferring from outside the parish, enrollment in a Religious Education Program or Catholic School Religion class for one year prior to the sacramental preparation year is required.

#### ***PREPARATION REQUIREMENTS***

Preparation for Reconciliation consists of the following components:

1. Instruction in the faith through Religion classes or Religious Education classes.
2. Formation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation (conducted within class).
3. Testing by the Catechist or Teacher to insure that the student has a basic understanding of the faith.
4. Attendance/participation at the Parent Meeting (parents only).
5. An evaluation for Sacramental readiness by the Catechist, Teacher, Director of Religious Education, Principal and/or Pastor.
6. Attendance and participation at the practice for the Sacrament (conducted within class).

The Pastor, Principal and Director of Religious Education in cooperation with the Catechist or Teacher will meet to evaluate the readiness of each child. If any portion of these requirements is not met, the Sacrament of Reconciliation may be delayed until a later date.

# PROCEDURE FOR THE RITE OF RECONCILIATION

The following is the procedure the children learn to follow as they prepare for their First Reconciliation. **Large type/bold** is actual statements the children will say during Reconciliation.

CHILD: While sitting in the pew, take time to think about your sins. What are you truly sorry for? This is your EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE.

PRIEST: The priest greets the child.

PRIEST: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
*(Child makes the sign of the cross on themselves.)*

CHILD: *(child answers)* **Amen.**

CHILD: **Bless me Father for I have sinned. It has been \_\_\_\_\_ since my last confession. These are my sins.** *(Students can say this is their “first confession”. The child tells the Priest their sins.)*

PRIEST: The Priest talks to the child about their sins, gives them their penance and asks the child to say the Act of Contrition.

CHILD: **My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you, whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior, Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy. Amen**

PRIEST: The Priest says a prayer over the child and absolves them of their sins. The prayer will end with the Priest saying: **“I absolve you of your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”** *(The child makes the sign of the cross on themselves.)*

CHILD: *(child answers)* **Amen**

PRIEST: Go in Peace.

CHILD: **Thank you, Father.** *(Child goes back to their pew, kneels and prays their penance silently or says a prayer of Thanksgiving. Part of the penance may be an action that they do to show they are really sorry.)*

Accept one another as Christ accepted you.

*Roman 15*

# Heartpeace

Help those of us, O God,  
who need to listen to the rhythms of our heart,  
and hunger for the experience of joy again,  
who just want the hurt and pain to go away,  
and never return.

In other words,  
help those of us, dear God,  
who need to forgive.

Help those of us, too,  
who need to listen to the rhythms of our heart,  
and the struggle with the deeds we've done,  
which hurt both ourselves and others,  
who just want the guilt and pain to go away,  
and never return.

In other words,  
help us, dear God,  
who need to be forgiven.

Amen.

("The Catechism of the Catholic Church:  
Familystyle – We Celebrate – Vol. 2,"  
Thomas, Calnan, Thomas More Pub.)

# ACT OF CONTRITION

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all  
my heart. In choosing to do wrong and  
failing to do good, I have sinned against  
you, whom I should love above all things.  
I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance,  
to sin no more, and to avoid whatever  
leads me to sin.  
Our Savior, Jesus Christ suffered  
and died for us.  
In his name, my God, have mercy.

The following prayers are basic to our faith. These prayers should be memorized by the children before they receive the sacrament of Reconciliation.

**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 trespassed against us. 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

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| <p><b>Please post on your refrigerator. These prayers should be said daily so<br/>the child can easily memorize them.</b></p> |
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# EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

## FOR CHILDREN

1. When I make choices, do I sometimes forget to think about what God wants me to do? Have I done what God wants?
2. Have I used the name of God or Jesus in a bad way?
3. Do I worship God at Mass each Sunday?
4. Have I disobeyed my parents, teachers or other grown-ups who take care of me?
5. Have I been angry or cruel to others?
6. Have I forgotten to show respect for my body and the bodies of others?
7. Have I taken anything that is not mine or treated others unfairly?
8. Have I always told the truth?
9. Have I hurt someone by what I have said or done? Have I been jealous of others?
10. Have I refused to help people who are in need? Have I been selfish?



# **Why Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation?** **(Why not go *directly* to God?)**

## **Ten Good Reasons**

1. Of course, go to God in prayer. We should do so each day. The Sacrament of Reconciliation calls for personal reflection and private prayer, too.
2. There is Scriptural support for the Church possessing the ministry of forgiveness, including:
  - Matthew 16:19
  - 2 Corinthians 5:18-20
3. Writings and practices from the first generations of Christianity show a clear understanding of the Church as having the key role in conveying penance and reconciling the sinner with the community of faith.
4. Reconciliation to *whom*? To self, God *and* the community. Sin is not just about me and God. The priest represents the community (that has been fractured by one's sin) in his role as confessor.
5. Being alone in the examination of our sinfulness, we may be apt to rationalize sin away...as well as to sometimes judge ourselves too harshly.
6. The penance given in the Sacrament of Reconciliation serves as a reminder that sorrow and forgiveness needs to connect with actions that orient us to a new way of living.
7. The Sacrament of Reconciliation offers a decisive moment of forgiveness in the sacramental process.
8. Experiencing understanding and forgiveness through the priest is often powerfully healing and freeing. The priest may offer insights which can result in a more hopeful perspective going forward.
9. In the case of serious (mortal) sin, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is necessary to restore us to spiritual well-being (state of grace).
10. The Sacrament of Reconciliation conveys a grace that strengthens us for living our baptismal identity more faithfully.

Tom Quinlan, former Director  
Religious Education Office  
Diocese of Joliet

# Different types of sin:

## **Mortal Sin:**

- a serious offense against God
- destroys the virtue of charity within us
- involves serious immoral acts, or grave matter such as the Ten Commandments
- can cause eternal separation from God
- requires full knowledge and complete consent

## **Venial Sin:**

- less serious because they do not destroy our relationship with God
- wrong acts committed without full knowledge of just how wrong they are

## **Social Sin:**

- collective effect of sin over time, which corrupts society and its institutions by creating "structures of sin"
- racism, sexism and institutionalized poverty are examples

## **Capital Sins (Seven Deadly Sins)**

- lead to and reinforce all sorts of other sinful actions, thoughts and omissions
- increase the tendency to sin and cause us to turn away more and more from God
- Pride: believing you are better than others, disrespecting others
- Greed: hoarding money or things
- Envy: resentment we direct to others who have success, things, privilege
- Wrath: strong anger to seek revenge and prevents reconciliation
- Lust: undisciplined, unchecked desire
- Gluttony: excessive eating or drinking
- Sloth: habitual laziness, failing to put forth effort and take action

# **Ten Commandments** (adults)

## **Ten Commandments** (children)

1. I am the Lord your God; you shall not have strange Gods before me. **Love God more than you love anything else.**
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. **Always say God's name with love and respect.**
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day. **Honor the Lord by resting on Sunday.**
4. Honor your father and your mother. **Love and respect those who care for you.**
5. You shall not kill. **Never hurt anyone.**
6. You shall not commit adultery. **Always be faithful to your husband or wife.**
7. You shall not steal. **Don't take anything that isn't yours.**
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. **Always tell the truth.**
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife. **Respect your neighbor and friends.**
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods. **Be happy with what you have. Don't wish for other people's things.**

## EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

- A. Do I fully give myself to God?  
Am I seeking the Lord in a deeper, personal relationship?  
Do I reverence the Holy name of God at all times?  
Is my daily life a reflection of the gospel values?
- B. Do I truly love my neighbor?  
Do I see God in those whom I live and work with?  
Have I inspired my neighbor to seek a personal relationship with God?  
When did I last see Jesus in the least of my brothers and sisters?
- C. In what direction is my life going?  
Do the things I do for the good of others affect my surroundings?  
Am I a leader in bringing the gospel values to my community?

# **Examination of Conscience**

## **My relationship with God.**

What steps am I taking to help me grow closer to God and to others?  
Do I turn to God often during the day, especially when I am tempted?

Do I participate at Mass with attention and devotion on Sundays and holy days? Do I pray often and read the Bible?

Do I use God's name and the names of Jesus, Mary and the saints with love and reverence?

## **My relationship with Family, Friends, and Neighbors**

Have I set a bad example through my words or actions? Do I treat others fairly? Do I spread stories that hurt other people?

Am I loving of those in my family? Am I respectful of my neighbors, my friends, and those in authority?

Do I show respect for my body and for the bodies of others? Do I keep away from forms of entertainment that do not respect God's gift of sexuality?

Have I taken or damaged anything that did not belong to me? Have I cheated, copied others work for my own or lied?

Do I quarrel with others just so I can get my own way? Do I insult others to try to make them think they are less than I am? Do I hold grudges and try to hurt people who I think have hurt me?

# *Examination of Conscience*

We quiet ourselves to rid our minds of what we must do or what we must say.

We try to come with an openness to respond to what God has said: God's word and what God has done for us.

- \*Does my life reflect that I am a believer - a person of faith?
- \*Am I aware that my life can be a sharing of and a participation in the life of God?
- \*Do I really believe how important I am to God?
- \*Am I happy?
- \*Do I rejoice always in God's love for me?
- \*Where do I look for happiness?
- \*Do I carry around security blankets - thinking they are my salvation?
- \*How joyful it is to say from deep in our heart: God is my Savior.
- \*How do I react to the way God enters my life? ...through the Scriptures, ...through the Sacraments, ...through the Church?
- \*I am loved by God dearly and deeply. Does it make a difference to me?
- \*Do I forgive others as God has forgiven me?

## Adult Examination

This was submitted to a priest a long time ago. The author is not known.

*I have a prayer I want you to read. Maybe it will help you. Even if you can't say believe, just try reading it once in a while - and thinking about it. Just imagine that God is talking to you.*

You do not have to be clever to please me; all you have to do is want to love me. Just speak to me as you would to anyone of whom you are very fond.

Are there any people you want to pray for? Say their names to me, and ask of me as much as you like. I am generous, and know all their needs, but I want you to show your love for them and me by trusting me to do what I know is best.

Tell me about the poor, the sick, and the sinners, and if you have lost the friendship or affection of anyone, tell me about that too.

Is there anything you want for your soul? If you like, you can write out a long list of all your needs, and come and read it to me. Tell me of the things you feel guilty about. I will forgive you if you will accept it.

Just tell me about your pride, self-centeredness, meanness and laziness. I still love you in spite of these. Do not be ashamed; there are many saints in heaven who had the same faults as you; they prayed to me and little by little, their faults were corrected.

Do not hesitate to ask me for blessings for the body and mind, for health, memory, success. I can give everything, and I always do give everything needed to make souls holier for those who truly want it.

What is it that you want today? Tell me, for I long to do you good. What are your plans? Tell me about them. Is there anyone you want to please? What do you want to do for them?

And don't you want to do anything for me? Don't you want to do a little good to the souls of your friends who perhaps have forgotten me? Tell me about your failures, and I will show you the cause of them. What are your worries? Who has caused you pain? Tell me all about it and add that you will forgive, and be kind to them, and I will bless you.

Are you afraid of anything? Have you any tormenting, unreasonable fears? Trust yourself to me. I am here. I see everything. I will not leave you.

Have you no joys to tell me about? Why do you not share your happiness with me? Tell me what has happened since yesterday to cheer and comfort you. Whatever it was, however big, however small, I prepared it. Show me your gratitude and thank me.

Are temptations bearing heavily upon you? Yielding to temptations always disturbs the peace of your soul. Ask me, and I will help you overcome them.

Well, go along now. Get on with your work or play, or other interests. Try to be quieter, humbler, kinder, and come back soon and bring me a more devoted heart. Tomorrow I shall have more blessings for you.

*This prayer may help you grow in what is called mental or conversational prayer. It will also help set the stage for contemplation. Contemplating is simply thinking about the Lord, without words, or thoughts or symbols. It is essentially the spiritual enjoyment of God.*

# FIRST RECONCILIATION DAY

- Pews will be marked with a yellow RECONCILIATION FAMILY PEW sign. Please sit in these pews only. Some pews are not used because they are too close to the Priest and person going to Reconciliation.
- We will begin with a prayer service and a homily. After the homily the Priests will take their positions around the church. The RE Staff will come to each pew and tell you when to step forward. PLEASE WAIT WHERE THE CATECHIST ASKS YOU TO STOP so your child has a private conversation with the priest. **We encourage you to go to confession after your child.**
- After your child has finished their confession, return to your pew, **KNEEL** and have the child say their penance. The parents should also kneel and offer a prayer of Thanksgiving.
- Penance may be an action and not just prayers. **Please be quietly respectful of those still waiting to meet with the Priest.**
- After your child has finished their penance and you have offered your Prayer of Thanksgiving, please walk with your child quietly to the narthex. You will be presented with a cross to hang on them and also their Reconciliation certificate. A certificate will only be printed for you if you have returned the certificate form. At that time, you may leave the church. There is no closing prayer.
- Confessing sins are private conversations between the priest and the person confessing. God forgives all of our sins and transgressions when you are truly sorry for them.
- Please – no taking of photos.



## Closing Prayer

*Leader:*

+ Coming together as God's family, let us remember that God is full of gentleness and compassion. God knows us as we are, our good points and our weak points. God strengthens us to do good, but also forgives us when we fail.

*Leader:*

For the times that we forget that we are brothers and sisters who should respect one another and help one another. Lord, have mercy. **Everyone: Lord, have mercy.**

*Leader:*

For the times that we act selfishly, putting our own concerns before those of others. Christ, have mercy.  
**Everyone: Christ, have mercy.**

*Leader:*

For the times we have hurt one another with our angry words or actions. Lord, have mercy.  
**Everyone: Lord, have mercy.**

*Leader:*

Let us now resolve to love and forgive one another in Jesus' name. **Amen +**



# **First Reconciliation First Communion Certificates 2022-2023**

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**Please PRINT the name of your child as you want it to appear on their certificates.**

Return to the School or RE by ***December 2<sup>nd</sup>***.

A certificate WILL NOT BE PRINTED without this form.