

**First Reconciliation  
and  
First Eucharist**

**Parent Handbook  
2022-2023**



**Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish**  
Moorestown, New Jersey

# **First Reconciliation and First Eucharist Timeline**

**Tuesday, October 11, 2022**

Parent Meeting

**Monday, October 31, 2022**

Sacramental Register Form, Grade 2 Fee and baptismal certificates due

**Saturday, November 19, 2022** – OLG School

**Sunday, November 20, 2022** – RE Summer Program

**Saturday, March 18, 2023** – RE Monday – Mrs. Mansfield

**Saturday, March 25, 2023** – RE Monday – Mrs. Graham

**Saturday, April 15, 2023** - RE Tuesday – Mrs. Blanch

**Saturday, April 22, 2023** – RE Tuesday – Mrs. Miller

Sacrament of Reconciliation – Outdoor classroom – 1pm to 3pm

**TBD**

Student Retreat

**Saturday, April 29, 2023** 1030am - OLG School

**Saturday, April 29, 2023** 1230pm - RE Summer Program

**Saturday, May 6, 2023** 1030am - RE Monday classes

**Saturday, May 6, 2023** 1230pm - RE Tuesday classes

Sacrament of Eucharist



# First Reconciliation / First Eucharist Team

The Parents	of all our communicants
Bishop David O'Connell, CM	Bishop of Trenton
Rev. James J. Grogan, Sr.	Pastor
Rev. Jack Bogacz	Parochial Vicar
Deacon Edward Heffernan Deacon John Bertagnolli Deacon Thomas Kolon Deacon Thomas D. Begley III	Deacons
Mrs. Cynthia Robinson	Parish Catechetical Leader
Mrs. Cynthia Smith	Principal, Our Lady of Good Counsel School
Dr. Veronica Lye	Sacred Music Ministry
Ms. Laura J. Kowalick	Office Manager / Registrar
Ms. Sandra Prokop	Teacher
Mrs. Amanda Duncan Mrs. Christine Mansfield Mrs. Kate Graham Mrs. Hope Blanch Mrs. Danielle Miller	Catechists



# **First Reconciliation / First Eucharist Program**

## **Diocese of Trenton Guidelines**

- First Reconciliation
- First Eucharist

### **First Reconciliation:**

- Parent Meeting
- Parent Participation
- Sacrament of Reconciliation Format
- Sacrament of Reconciliation

### **First Eucharist:**

- Parent Meeting
- Parent Participation
- Retreat
- Sacramental Register 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*

Mrs. Cynthia Robinson, Parish Catechetical Leader  
Our Lady of Good Counsel, 122 West Main Street, Moorestown, NJ 08057  
Phone: (856) 235-7136  
E-mail: [reprogram@olgcnj.org](mailto:reprogram@olgcnj.org)

*Please visit our parish website for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist information:  
[www.olgcnj.org](http://www.olgcnj.org) (Religious Education / Sacramental Preparation)*

# Diocese of Trenton Guidelines: First Reconciliation and First Eucharist



**Before entering the immediate preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Eucharist, 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 for First Reconciliation 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)*

**Immediate preparation for First Eucharist will include the following concepts:**

*(Grade 2 Curriculum at Good Counsel)*

- To know who Jesus is and the main events of His life
- To realize that Jesus is present in the Eucharistic Bread and Wine
- Understanding the meaning of the sacramental encounter with Jesus
- To indicate a desire to receive the Eucharist
- Knowing how to receive the Sacrament
- Experience the Sacrament of Eucharist 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 Eucharist: 407: Policy, A, B, C, November 2012)*



# First Reconciliation

## Parent Meeting

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 Jim will offer parents the spiritual guidance. Mrs. Robinson will present specifics in preparing the children for the celebration of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist.

## 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

- Children are provided with First Reconciliation workbooks. 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 on various dates prior to First Eucharist. Parents select date and attend with their child. Reconciliation will be celebrated in the outdoor classroom.

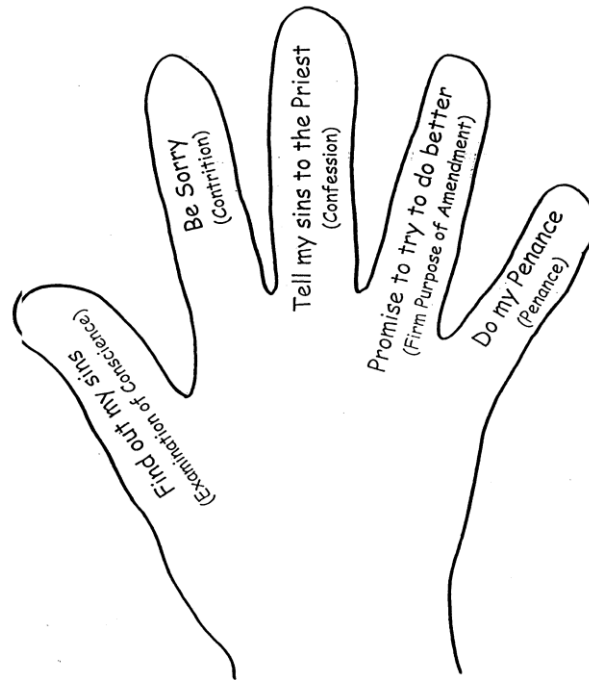
Date / Time	
Saturday, November 19, 2022 Sunday, November 20, 2022 1pm to 3pm	OLGC School students RE Summer Program students
Saturday, March 18, 2023 Saturday, March 25, 2023 Saturday, April 15, 2023 Saturday, April 22, 2023 1pm to 3pm	RE Monday – Mrs. Mansfield's students RE Monday – Mrs. Graham's students RE Tuesday – Mrs. Blanch's students RE Tuesday – Mrs. Miller's students

***\*\*Please note: No penitential service or confession shall be recorded, photographed, or videotaped.***

*Diocese of Trenton: Celebration of the Sacraments: Policy: 404*

# 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.....***

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

## Parent Meeting

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.

## 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

- Children are provided with First Eucharist workbooks. 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*).

### **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.

## Retreat

Students will participate in a retreat prior to celebrating the Sacrament of Eucharist.

## First Eucharist Dates

Date	Liturgy
Saturday, April 29, 2023	10:30am – OLG School students 12:30pm – RE Summer Program
Saturday, May 6, 2023	10:30am – RE Monday classes 12:30pm – RE Tuesday classes



## Sacrament of Eucharist Format

When it is time to receive communion, I step in to the aisle with my hands folded in prayer. I form a line called a “communion procession”. I am reverent as I approach the altar.



When I reach the priest / minister, they will hold up the consecrated host and say “The Body of Christ”. I bow my head and respond “Amen”.



I make a table with my hands. The priest / minister places the host in my hands. With my bottom hand, I take the host and immediately place in my mouth.



I return to my pew with my hands folded in prayer. I kneel and talk to Jesus for a few minutes. I sit when the Tabernacle is closed.



## Details regarding First Reconciliation and First Eucharist

- **Baptismal Certificate:**  
(*Collected at registration.*) A copy must be presented and verified before First Reconciliation and First Eucharist may be celebrated.
- **First Communion Sacramental Register Form / Grade 2 Expenses Fee:**  
Submitted to RE Office through *Parish Giving*. The fee covers sacramental-related expenses, namely: First Reconciliation and First Eucharist workbooks, Mass books, parent handbook, retreat, Sacrament of Reconciliation expenses: liturgy booklets, gifts, Sacrament of Eucharist: liturgy booklets, certificates, and flowers.
- **Liturgical Ministers:**  
We ask any family with an OLG parish commissioned altar server or Eucharistic Minister who would like to participate in the liturgy to notify the RE Office by mid-January.
- **Visiting Clergy:**  
Any family who has a priest or deacon family member 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 clergy member outside of the Diocese of Trenton, is to present their Letter of Suitability to the Parish Office.
- **Disability Seating:**  
Any family requiring disability seating are asked to contact the R.E. Office *no later than mid-January, when Family Pews are assigned*. 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. Staff members are available to assist families.
- **Seating:**  
A family pew will be reserved for each child. We estimate 9 family members will fit comfortably, along with the child. 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:**  
Boys wear suit jackets dress shirts, and tie, in the color of their choice. Girls usually wear white dresses. If gloves are worn, please have children remove after the procession.
- **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*
  - **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. Parents are asked to convey this policy to guests.

# Catholic Prayers to Know

## Sign of the Cross

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

## 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.

## 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.



## Parent Pledge of Commitment

**I** affirm my commitment to the Catholic Church  
to be a supportive force in my child's life  
as I raise my child a Catholic.

**T**hrough my lived example,  
my child shall be reminded that  
I am the first and foremost catechist in the home.

**T**hrough me, my child shall come to understand  
Catholic values and attitudes  
by showing love for Christ and His Church.

**F**inally, I pledge to nurture the faith of my child  
by faithfully attending Mass each week together,  
by reverently receiving the Eucharist  
and living in its spirit,  
and by fostering justice and love  
in all our relationships as a family.

