Saint Gregory the Great Parish
Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Communion FAQ

Introduction: In the Roman Catholic Church the Sacraments form an integral part of our worship of God. We at Saint Gregory the Great Parish and our parish schools take delight in preparing our young people for reception of the Sacraments and thus witnessing their growth in their Christian faith. We have prepared this simple FAQ to answer some of the questions that parents may have. As we can't foresee all the questions, our parish staff in conjunction with our school staff are available to address any inquiries not covered in this document.

What is a Sacrament? The Catechism of the Catholic Church states: 'The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us. The visible rites by which the sacraments are celebrated signify and make present the graces proper to each sacrament.' (1131) In receiving a Sacrament we are brought closer to God and God is brought closer to us by His gift of grace.

What are the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist? The Sacrament of Reconciliation (commonly called Confession or Penance) is a sacrament that celebrates God's forgiveness. It is one of two healing sacraments, the other being Anointing of the Sick. In this sacrament we focus on God's mercy, how we forgive among our family, friends, and community, and how we ourselves celebrate forgiveness. As we seek forgiveness of others so too do we seek forgiveness of God. The peace of mind and soul which this sacrament imparts to us is one for which there is no substitute. It is a peace that flows from a certainty, rather than from an unsure hope, that our sins have been forgiven and that we are right with God. First Reconciliation is the first celebration of this sacrament which is repeatable throughout a person's life.

The sacrament of Eucharist is the second of three "initiation sacraments" in the Roman Catholic Church. Baptism and Confirmation are also initiation sacraments. In the Sacrament of the Eucharist we are welcomed to the Table of the Lord to partake in the very body and blood of His Son and we are doing so following Jesus' instruction to "Do this in memory of me."
As Catholics, we believe that the Holy Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith: it is the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Pope Francis has called it the "Sacrament of Love":

> "The Eucharist is at the heart of 'Christian initiation', together with Baptism and Confirmation, and it constitutes the source of the Church's life itself. From this Sacrament of love, in fact, flows every authentic journey of faith, of communion, and of witness." Pope Francis

The Eucharist is the high point of the Holy Mass and the Holy Mass is the high point of a Catholic's spiritual life. First Communion is the first celebration of this sacrament which is repeatable throughout a person's life. First Communion is traditionally a festive occasion for families of the First Communicant. Traditions surrounding First Communion may include large family gatherings and parties to celebrate the event.

Who can receive First Reconciliation and First Communion in the Roman Catholic Church? A person baptized Roman Catholic or received into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church through a Declaration of Faith may present themselves to receive these two sacraments. In our Catholic school program, students in grade two are prepared for reception of these sacraments.

My child was baptized in an Eastern Rite Catholic Church (Examples: Ukrainian Catholic, Chaldean) – Can they receive the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Communion in the Roman Catholic Church? In the Eastern Rite Catholic Churches, a child usually receives First Communion when they are baptized thus they cannot receive "first" communion a second time. The child's baptism certificate should show that first eucharist was conferred. Your priest in the applicable Eastern Rite Catholic Church can provide any clarification if needed. A baptized Eastern Rite Catholic is welcome to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation in the Roman Catholic Church.

We completed a Declaration of Faith. Can my child receive First Reconciliation and First Communion? Yes, as when you made a Declaration of Faith you have expressed your willingness to have your child became a Roman Catholic and be received into full communion with the Catholic Church by reception of the Eucharist.

Our child was baptized in a denomination of Christianity other than Roman Catholic or Eastern Rite Catholic (I.E. Anglican, United, Presbyterian.) or has never been baptized. Can they receive First Reconciliation and First Communion? First Reconciliation and First Communion are Roman Catholic sacraments. In order to receive them one must be Roman Catholic. You must speak with our Pastor to discuss the possible options of baptism or making a declaration of faith. You should contact our parish office **as soon as possible** to discuss this.

What is my child to wear for First Reconciliation and First Communion?

For First Reconciliation, children should be dressed neatly as though they were attending Sunday Mass.

For First Communion there is a tradition of girls wearing white dresses and boys wearing some form of a suit either dark coloured or white. First Communion traditional dress is just that – a tradition. There is NO requirement imposed by the Church or school other than the children be dressed neatly as for First Reconciliation.

Registration

You are asked to fully complete the form, attach your child's baptism certificate if required and deliver it to the parish church either in person, by mail or electronically at stgreg@rogers.com. ***We ask that you complete the registration process as quickly as possible.***

What are the important dates?

Parent Meeting	**October 21st, 2026**	**6:30pm**	**Saint Gregory's Church**
First Reconciliation	**March 3th, 2027**	**6:30pm**	**Saint Gregory's Church**
First Communion	**May 1st, 2027**	**11:00am**	**Saint Gregory's Church**

Rev: Oct/26