

SACRAMENTS AT SAINT THOMAS THE APOSTLE

FIRST COMMUNION

Parents and children preparing for First Communion this spring are encouraged to attend a scheduled session of prayer and information Sunday, **January 28**. The session begins promptly at 2:30 with prayer in the church proper. Please note the following parish policy regarding preparation for the sacrament:

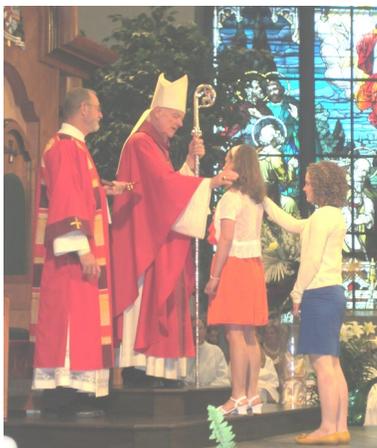


- * Candidate must be baptized and have received the Sacrament of Penance.
- * Parent(s) must be registered members of Saint Thomas the Apostle Parish (pastoral exception if cleared ahead of time with the pastor).
- * Parent(s) and candidate must regularly attend Mass.
- * Candidate must have participated in one full academic year of catechesis/religious instruction prior to the year of immediate catechesis/religious instruction and sacramental preparation for First Communion or Confirmation.
- * Candidate must participate in the sacramental preparation determined by the parish Director of Religious Education and Formation.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- April 27 Retreat 8:15 a.m.—3:00 p.m.
- April 29 Sacrament, Group A 3:00 p.m. Liturgy
- May 6 Sacrament, Group B 3:00 p.m. Liturgy

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION



“Lord, send us your Holy Spirit that we may grow in the strength of your love to the full stature of Christ. Amen”

Candidates and sponsors are reminded of the next session **Sunday, January 21**. Please meet in the lower level of church at 6:30 p.m.

Receive the gifts of Wisdom, Courage, Reverence, Wonder and Awe, Understanding,

Knowledge, and Right Judgment.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- Sun. January 21 & March 11, Candidate/Sponsor/Parent session 6:30-8:00p.m.
- Tues. March 20, Retreat At Aquinas College, 8:30 a.m.—3:00 p.m. with the Sacrament Mass—Cathedral of Saint Andrew, 7:00 p.m.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

All students in grades K-8 celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation twice per year, generally once in Advent and once in Lent. Reconciliation is celebrated in two separate forms, “Form A” and “Form B”, as allowable in the Roman Ritual of Penance. This practice began when Father Jim came to Saint Thomas as a way to introduce our students to a life-long process of self-reflection and reconciliation in an age appropriate manner. We feel this promotes a way of thinking which suggests that reconciliation is a regular part of our lives as Catholics rather than a “scary, one-time event which happens to you in grade school”.

Students receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time in Kindergarten and in subsequent years until fourth grade in “Form B”. “Form B” simply means that students gather as a class with Father Jim.



Father Jim reads to the children from the Word of God and the leads them through an examination of conscience which is age appropriate. The students then approach Father Jim individually for the confession of sin and individual absolution. For the final portion of the service, the students and Father Jim gather together once again.

In the fourth grade students do not receive this sacrament for the first time. For this reason we no longer call the fourth grade celebration “First Reconciliation.” Rather, we call it Reconciliation Celebration. During the fourth grade year, our students receive continued catechesis of reconciliation and are also taught what Father Jim commonly refers to as, “The art of examining oneself.” At this time they are introduced to the sacrament in “Form A”. “Form A” is individual (rather than group) preparation, examination of conscience, confession of sin, absolution, and penance. This is the first time that students at Saint Thomas complete this process entirely on their own, in the manner of adults. Students continue to receive the sacrament in this form through the eighth grade.

In addition to making reconciliation a natural and regular occasion in the lives of our Catholic children, this practice also fulfills the requirements of our Church with regard to this sacrament. The Catechism of the Catholic Church instructs, “Children must go to the Sacrament of Penance before receiving Holy Communion for the first time” (#1457.58)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Fourth grade students from the Religious Education Program will join with Saint Thomas School students on **Monday, March 12** to spend the day on retreat and then celebrate God’s love and mercy through the Sacrament of Reconciliation that evening. Public school students should be able to take an excused absence day as a Religious Education day. Thank you for keeping these children in your prayers.