

Rite of Commitment for First Confession and First Holy Communion (Sunday of Lent, Primary 4)



For a good number of years we have celebrated rites or ceremonies in preparation for children receiving the Sacraments completing Christian Initiation.

The faith journey of these children is brought to the attention of the parish community, which commits itself to a more intense period of prayer during the proximate preparation for the reception of the Sacraments.

The *Rite of Commitment for First Confession and First Holy Communion*, should take place at a Sunday Mass near the beginning of Lent.

In this *Rite* the children commit themselves to using the days of Lent to prepare for the Sacraments, and to praying the Lord's Prayer. The parents are invited to renew the commitment they made at their child's baptism. The parish community is invited to pray for the children and to support them and their families as they try to live the way of love shown by Jesus.

During this *Rite* the children are presented with a copy of the *Our Father*. This reminds them of how Jesus taught the apostles to pray, the example given for us all. As they prepare for First Confession they are reminded through the Lord's Prayer of the need to seek God's forgiveness; as they prepare for receiving the "Bread of the Lord's Sacrifice" they pray that the Father will give them their "daily bread".

The following is necessary for the celebration: one copy per child of the *Our Father* to be presented to them.

(After the Gospel and Homily)

The Children are invited to STAND

Priest: Lent is an important time for the Church. Each year during Lent we prepare through prayer and sacrifice for the great mystery of Easter. Jesus died on the cross and on the third day he rose from the dead. This is our great feast and we rejoice that God has loved us so much.

This is also a very important time for you. During Lent this year, in your First Confession, you will celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation for the first time, and you will prepare to receive the Holy Eucharist when Jesus will come to you for the first time in Holy Communion.

To help you to prepare well, I am going to give you a copy of the Lord's Prayer, the *Our Father*. Jesus taught this prayer to his friends and disciples. It reminds us that we need to ask God to forgive us and that we need to forgive other people. It also reminds us to pray every day to God the Father for "our daily bread"; that God will give us all the help that we need.

So now I'm going to ask you to make a commitment that during Lent you will try your best to prepare well for the sacraments that you are to receive.

With the help of your parents and teachers, will you use these days of Lent so that you will be ready to receive Jesus in Holy Communion?

Children: I will

Priest: Will you try to pray every day the *Our Father*, the prayer that Jesus wants his friends and disciples to pray?

Children: I will

The Parents are invited to STAND

Priest: At your child's baptism, you made a promise to bring them up in the practice of the faith. As your child prepares for First Confession and First Holy Communion, will you continue to be faithful to the commitment you made at your child's baptism?

Parents We will

Priest: And to this parish community of _____
Will you support, by your prayer, these children and their parents as they use these days of Lent to draw closer to the Lord?

All: We will

Priest: I now invite our candidates, who will soon make First Confession and First Holy Communion, to come forward to receive the Lord's Prayer.

Each child receives a copy of the Our Father and returns to his/her seat.

Priest: Father, we thank you for the way Jesus taught us to pray. We ask that these children, to whom we have presented the *Lord's Prayer*, will always know you as their loving Father. May they always turn to you and follow your way of love. We ask this through Christ Jesus.

All: Amen

(The Mass continues as usual with the Creed and Prayers of the Faithful)