

Welcome parents and students.

It is time to begin a new journey together.

One of the greatest blessings we ever experience in this life is the Eucharist. So this journey we will take together towards your child's First Communion is very important.

Throughout our lives we will experience great Catholic moments we call Sacraments. Each of them is a blessing. These great moments are created and designed to help us live a good life here on earth.

Each of us is blessed in so many ways. Every blessing we experience flows from God.

Let's review the two Sacraments you have received.

Baptism:

Before Jesus began his ministry he visited his cousin, John the Baptist. John was baptizing many people in the Jordan River to prepare them for the coming of the Messiah.

John encouraged everyone he met to turn back to God, acknowledge their sin, and seek God's forgiveness.

When Jesus arrived at the Jordan River, he asked John to baptize him. At first John refused him because Jesus was without sin, but Jesus insisted.

Jesus did not need to be baptized like us. We need to be baptized for the forgiveness of sins, but He wanted to lead by example. He was always fully human. Jesus always demonstrated great love and respect for our humanity.

Do you remember your baptism? _____

Baptism is the beginning of your new life with Jesus. This is when we become a member of God's Church.

The next Sacrament you received was your

FIRST RECONCILIATION:

We all make mistakes or do things that we know we shouldn't do. We may not think it's too serious, but we do offend God and hurt others. We call this sin, and the thing about sin is that it makes us unhappy and it separates us from God. When we separate ourselves from God we are never truly happy. The Sacrament of Reconciliation brings us back to God and fills us with joy and love again.

Do you remember the day you received your First Reconciliation?_____ Have you had the opportunity to go again?_____ Your First Reconciliation was a great blessing and it is a blessing that we can go as many times as we need to for the rest of our lives. God will give you peace, courage and love to get through anything and everything.

GOD LOVES TO CELEBRATE:

We celebrate special days in our Church. We celebrate Easter and Christmas, we celebrate Feast days, and we share with God and one another. We celebrate both in our Church families and in our own families. We love to celebrate!

FAVORITE DAYS:

Every day is special in its own way because our life is special. Every day should be treasured. Life is precious. Life is so special. We have learned that each one of us was created by God and He loves us. We, however have our favorite colors, favorite songs and favorite foods.

What are your three favorite days of the year?

1: _____

2: _____

3: _____

God gives everyone a very special day of their own each year! We call this your birthday. What do you like to do on your birthday?

Share your favorite birthday memory?

THE FIRST TIME:

The first time you do anything is important. You never get to do it again. Throughout the Gospels we often hear stories about the first time people meet Jesus. One of my favorite stories is about a man names Zacchaeus. He was a tax collector who was known as being dishonest.

One day when Jesus was walking, a huge crowd of people began to follow him, making it really difficult for anyone to see him. Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus so badly that he climbed a tree just to see Jesus.

The first meeting with Jesus completely changed his life forever. He wasn't dishonest anymore and did his very best to make up for all the wrong things he had done.

As we prepare for your First Communion, let's remember that you will never have this very first again. When you attend Mass you will receive Jesus in the Eucharist. There is something very special every time but the first time is even more special. So it's important you pay attention to everything you're going to learn at home about the Eucharist. This is a very special event in your life. You will never have this first again. Parents and children cherish it forever.

LETTER TO JESUS

Dear Jesus,

I am excited to receive you in the Eucharist for the First time because.....

(write a letter to Jesus or draw a picture of you with Jesus)

What Makes Sunday Special?

Make every Sunday special!

What are three ways we can make Sunday a special day?

Go to Church, spend time with our families, and relax.

We call Sunday the Sabbath day and it's a special day. We all need to take a break and make one day different from all the rest. We have God's day. He wants us to take a special rest so that we can be filled with joy and share that joy with everyone who comes into our lives the rest of the week.

Sunday is a day of worship. We go to Mass to worship God. There are many ways to worship God, but one way we can do this every day is by thanking him for the many ways he has blessed us.

What are you most thankful for today?

One of the things that make Sunday a special day is that we go to Church. We hear children, and some adults too, ask "Why do we have to go to church every Sunday?" There are so many reasons but one very important reason is to say thank you to God for all the ways he has blessed our lives during the week. Remember, every blessing comes from God!

Have you ever given a gift to someone and they didn't say thank you? Or they just pushed it aside like it didn't matter? How did it make you feel? God blesses us with so many amazing gifts each and every day. Going to Mass on Sunday is a great way to show God that we are grateful.

God at Mass:

Have you ever wondered what God was really like? What does He look like?
I love asking the Confirmation students that question.

We do know that God is love. We know that we can talk to Him about anything.
We know He keeps His promises. We know God cares about every single person
in the world. We know God knows everything. We know that God is holy.

At the beginning of Mass I ask: “God, open my heart and help me to be focused
during the Mass and to guide me during the week to be a better me”.

At Mass God speaks to all of us. God speaks to us through the readings, through
the priest, and through other people. And He speaks to us in our hearts. God
wants to speak to you too. Each Sunday is a new day and God has a new message
He would like to share with us.

Each time we attend Mass there are many things that happen. Behind each
prayer and each action is a huge meaning: everything in Mass happens for a
reason. Each time we attend Mass we learn or hear something new, even
grownups.

The Mass is made up of four parts:

- 1: The Introductory Rite
- 2: The Liturgy of the Word
- 3: The Liturgy of the Eucharist
- 4: The Concluding Rites

There are two words for us to pay very special attention to:

Rite and Liturgy.

What is a Rite?

A rite is something that is said or done that exact same way every time for the same reason. For example, the Sign of the Cross is a rite. We do it the same way every time.

“In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen”

Each rite has a reason

What is a Liturgy?

Liturgy is a prayer we participate in as a community. During the Mass we experience two types of liturgy: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

During the Liturgy of the Word we listen to readings from the Bible and a homily from the priest or deacon, then, we pray the Creed together.

During the Liturgy of the Eucharist we offer our lives and our gifts to God, prepare the altar, pray the Eucharistic Prayer, and receive Holy Communion.

Liturgy is a beautiful way to spend time with God and our parish family.

Each time we attend Mass we remember Jesus' life, death, and Resurrection and the most amazing thing that happens, something that doesn't happen anywhere else: the priest changes bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus.

How can he do this? God gives priest special gifts, or powers. At your First Reconciliation God forgave your sins through the priest. During Mass God transforms (changes) the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus through the priest.

We are so blessed we are able to receive Jesus in the Eucharist. What an amazing blessing.

When we go back to our seat after receiving Jesus, we kneel down, close our eyes and pray.

This is a very special moment. We have Jesus with us all the time now.

PART 1 OF THE MASS

INTRODUCTORY RITES

The Mass begins with the procession. The priest, deacon, readers, and altar servers all walk together in procession toward the altar.

Once the priest is at the altar he begins the Mass with the Sign of the Cross: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.”

(Remember this is a rite!)

Then we say we are sorry in a prayer. God loves when we say we are sorry for things we have done. Sometimes we forget to say sorry. Sometimes we hurt our friendship with God.

How do you feel if a friend hurts your feelings and doesn’t say “I’m sorry”? That’s why, after the Sign of the Cross, the first thing we do at Mass is say sorry to God. We want him to know that we are His friends and that we want to be really good friend to Him.

We say sorry to God and ask for forgiveness at the beginning of Mass with a simple and beautiful prayer:

Priest:	Lord Have Mercy	People:	Lord Have Mercy
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Priest:	Christ Have Mercy	People:	Christ Have Mercy
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Priest	Lord Have Mercy	People:	Lord Have Mercy
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Then we say or sing the **Gloria to God**. At different times in life we pray for different reasons. Sometimes we ask God for help and sometimes we want to thank God for all the ways He has blessed us.

After the Gloria, the priest reads the opening prayer. Then the people together respond “Amen”, which means **“So Be It”** .

Liturgy of the Word (Part 2)

This part of the Mass is called the Liturgy of the Word. We listen to the Word of God. The Liturgy of the Word includes readings from the Bible, the homily, the Creed, and intercessions.

At Mass on Sunday we listen to four readings from the Bible:

- 1: The First Reading, from the Old Testament
- 2: The Responsorial Psalm (most of the time this is sung)
- 3: The Second Reading, from the New Testament
- 4: The Gospel Reading, from one of the four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke
And John.

Each reading connects with a theme that the Church wants us to reflect on that week. And guess what? Every Catholic Church reads the exact same readings every Sunday.

After the Gospel, the priest or deacon says the homily. During the homily, he explains the readings, helping us to understand how they can inspire our lives. Sometimes the readings are difficult for children to understand, they use big or difficult words. The priest or deacon tries to explain what the readings are telling us, about how we are supposed to live our lives. So try your best to listen 😊

WE BELIEVE

THE CREED: We stand and say what we believe together. Everyone believes something. We believe in God, we believe God loves us, we believe God has blessed us, and we believe in the power of prayer. But there are so many other things we believe. In our Creed is a summary of the core beliefs that make up our Catholic faith.

LITURGY OF THE EURCHARIST (Part 3)

We are so blessed to be Catholic. There are so many reasons but the greatest one is the Eucharist. We get to receive the Body and Blood of Jesus. The Eucharist is special to Catholics.

Now, this may seem a little confusing... but the Liturgy of the Eucharist is broken up into 3 parts:

1: The Offering - 2: The Eucharistic Prayer - 3: and the Holy Communion

1: During the Offering a family from the parish usually brings the bread and wine, along with any money that was collected for the Church and poor. During this time we should be bringing our struggles or concerns to God and ask for His help. Or you can ask Him to help with a situation.

2: The Eucharist Prayer is so beautiful and powerful. This is the moment when the bread and the wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus. This is an incredible moment. It's so special we kneel down during the entire Eucharistic Prayer. Whenever we are kneeling during the Holy Mass we know it's a sign that something amazing is about to happen.

Do you remember right before Easter we heard the story of Jesus and His disciples at the Last Supper? If you listen closely you will hear the words Jesus used said during the Last Supper.

***“This is my Body, which is given up for you;
This is my Blood of the new and everlasting covenant,
Do this in memory of me.”***

After the priest says these words, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus. The consecration of the Eucharist is one of the great mysteries of our faith. At the end of the prayer we say AMEN! It is our way of say, “Yes! Jesus, I believe in you”

OUR FATHER (THE LORDS PRAYER)

We all stand to say or sing the Our Father together.

After the Our Father we are ‘usually’ asked to give each other the sign of peace. We are praying that everyone will have Jesus’ peace in their hearts. God wants to fill you with His peace so that you can go tell everyone you are a follower of Jesus.

We are currently asked not to give the sign of peace while in Church. We can, however, pray for those around us and in the world that they will have their hearts and lives filled with God's love and peace.

3: When we receive Holy Communion Jesus is giving himself completely to us. Remember, throughout the Mass we have heard through the Liturgy of the Word and through the Liturgy of the Eucharist that Jesus gave His life for us because He loved us so much. It's so important for us all to remember that everything He did for us 2,000 years ago He did because He already knew he loved us. He never wants us to feel bad that He died for us. His love is so great. One of the greatest passages in the Bible is:

John 3:16

"For God so love the world that he sent his only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but have eternal life."

So receiving Holy Communion is an incredible GIFT! It should never be taken for granted. First Holy Communion is just that, your FIRST ... BUT your second, tenth, thousandth are just as incredible.

When it is time for you to receive Jesus, you will stand before the priest (Father Ivan) and he will raise the host (Jesus) and say,

"The Body of Christ." You will respond ***"Amen"*** (I believe). Then consume the host. That means put the host in your mouth. You are to ALWAYS consume the host IN FRONT of the priest, deacon, or Minister of Holy Communion.

(Your 1st Communion day will have specific directions)

Parents: If you would like to read about The Last Supper to your children, I would suggest Matthew chapter 26 Verses 26-30

PRAYER

**God, our loving Father,
thank you for all the ways you bless us.
help us to be aware that every person, place,
and adventure we experience is an opportunity to love you more.
Fill us with a desire to change and to grow,
and give us the grace to become the
best we can be every moment of our lives. Amen.**

CONCLUDING RITE (Part 4)

After we received Jesus we sit quietly and pray to Jesus.

Then we will receive the final blessing. This means we will be SENT FORTH...

What does that mean? What are we supposed to do?

We are supposed to do God's work in the world. We have just received Jesus' word and body, now we have to do something really wonderful.

I know you are probably thinking you are too young. But you can bring God's love and joy everywhere you go. Your smile to brighten someone's day. A friendly hello to someone when you are with your parents and you see someone who looks sad.

You are blessed and God wants you to go out and share your blessings with others

The Final Prayer and Blessing:

**Priest: May Almighty God bless you, the Father, and of the Son, and
of the Holy Spirit.**

Congregation: Amen

Priest (or Deacon): Go forth. The Mass is ended.

Congregation: Thanks be to God

Your child's First Holy Communion

August 15, 2020 (Bilingual Sessions) 10am or 12:00pm

Please arrive 20 minutes early so we can review

Please keep social distancing outside as well as indoors.

Please call or email the office to reserve which session you would like to attend. We are under strict guidelines which we follow for the safety of everyone.

We will not be able to accommodate more than 18 children at each session.

Guidelines for First Holy Communion:

- Who can attend with your child?

Whoever lives in the home only; Parents and siblings! We must limit the amount of people in the church per the regulations for the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved.

Every family will ONLY have one pew which holds eight people.

- Are masks necessary?

Absolutely! Everyone, this includes the children, must wear a mask as they enter the Church. Everyone that enters the Church must sanitize their hands prior to entering the body of the church.

- Where do we sit?

Our pews are clearly marked, every other pew is available for use. We will not put the children together due to the current situation. Each child will sit with their family at the end of the pew and their family next to them.

- Receiving Communion: PLEASE PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO THIS

The current guidelines state that everyone must approach the priest wearing their mask and keep their mask on. I spoke with Father Ivan and he is going to make **an exception for the children only** during First Holy Communion.

The Children will come up, one at a time, following the 6' rule (they will see the FEET on the floor to follow). The girls CAN NOT have gloves on to receive Jesus.. AND for this day only children can take off their mask to receive Jesus. Leave it at your seat (if you want your child to wear it then absolutely, wear it!).

Put one hand under the other. Look at Father, and he will say, "The Body of Christ, and your response will be "Amen". Consume (put the host in your mouth) right there, then go back by the side isle to your seat.

The adults & immediate family members will then come forward. Please follow these guidelines that have been put in place by the Archdiocese of Hartford. Stand 6 feet behind the person in front of you UNLESS it's your family member. Families can stand closer. Please use the FEET that are placed on the floor to keep you moving forward properly distanced.

Everyone must wear their masks when going to communion. When you are in front of Father, keep your mask ON. Father will say "The Body of Christ" Your respond is "Amen". Then walk to the designated spot on the side (I will show everyone THAT DAY) and at that time pull your mask down and consume (eat) the host, then continue back to your seat.

Final Remarks

Parents, I hope you enjoyed doing this packet with your children and you were able to pray together as a family.

I would like to offer my help to any family who needs it. I understand and respect how busy your lives can be. So if you need my help or you have any questions at all please reach out to me personally. kimberleedonahue@hotmail.com
Be sure to put 1st Communion in the subject... just in case it goes into my junk mail.

You can always call our office and leave a message. We'll do the best to get back to you as soon as possible.

Please do your best to watch the weekend Masses on Facebook Live OR effective July 4th weekend we will be able to attend Masses. I believe it is important the children get back into the routine of Holy Mass. We would appreciate you doing your best.

We will have a banner and supplies ready for you upon the completion of this packet.

As for the First Communion, as stated before, there will be no practice, however, please be arrive at least 20 minutes before the Mass starts.

Please remember: Sign up is MANDATORY!

SOCIAL DISTANCING must be practiced outside and inside the church.

We are all in this together!

God bless!

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 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.

Glory Be to the Father (Doxology)

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.