

Sacramental Preparation



Sacraments are celebrations of our faith life. Through signs and symbols, we attune ourselves to God's presence in a special way; focusing on a particular way we have experienced God in relationship with others.

Preparation programs or processes for sacraments are designed to help people focus on the meaning of the sacrament and their readiness for celebration. In preparation, we look at who God is and who we are in relationship to the meaning of the sacrament. We look at the meaning of signs and symbols used in the sacrament to express our relationship with God. We provide an environment for people to discern – make a decision in the context of prayer – his or her readiness to celebrate a particular sacrament. We look at the role of the faith community in nurturing one's relationship with God. Finally, we provide participants with an opportunity to reflect on their personal relationship with God and how they would like to continue the lifetime process of falling in love with God.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

Purpose:

Growing in relationship with God in the company of other adult seekers of God and members of the Catholic Faith Community.

Who:

- people who have never been baptized,
- people baptized in another Faith Community,
- people baptized in the Catholic Faith, but with little other formation in the Catholic Faith Community,
- people who are part of the Catholic Faith Community who journey with those preparing to become Catholics (sponsors)



What do you do in R.C.I.A.?

We come to know Jesus Christ more deeply -- through:

- sharing our stories: our experiences of God in our lives;
- sharing the Story: our Scripture, the Bible;
- sharing our story as disciples of Christ: the Tradition of the Catholic Church;
- sharing our ongoing story of relationship with God: prayer

How long does it take to become a Catholic?

It takes as long as it takes -

- to get to know others on this journey,

- to fall in love with God, this Faith community and our way of expressing our belief in God,
 - and to prepare for a lifetime commitment of loving and being loved in the Catholic Faith Community --
- this is what joining the Catholic Church means!

On a time line, this translates into usually not less than nine months to usually not more than eighteen months. Developing a life-long relationship takes time! However, this relationship may have begun long before one participates in this process; thus, we use the word "usually" in determining the length of the process.

How often do we meet?

Participants usually meet weekly. Since the process is designed to meet the needs of the participants, the team works around work travel schedules and vacations.

Who will meet with me?

- Team Members: Mary Beth Farrell, Karen Hodel, Fran Orchard, Bette Russell, Phil Strong, and Debbie Vasicek
- others seeking to join the Catholic Church
- Catholics who will journey with you.

How do I begin?

The process is offered year-round. You can begin any time!

Whom do I call?

Debbie Vasicek, Faith Formation Director at Pax Christi Parish
303-799-1036

Adult Confirmation Preparation



This preparation process is for adults:

- who are 21 years of age and older,
- who have celebrated Baptism and Eucharist (First Communion),
- who have participated in religious education classes (in the parish or in Catholic school), who attend Mass regularly,
- and who are interested in celebrating this sacrament.

Please call Debbie Vasicek at the parish office for further information and to register.

Initiation of Young People (R.C.I.A. Adapted for Children)

Purpose:

Growing in relationship with God in the company of other young people seeking initiation (celebration of Baptism and/or Confirmation and Eucharist) and peers of the Catholic Faith Community.

Who:

Children age 7 and older who have participated in at least one year of Religious Education classes and :

- have never been baptized,
- were baptized in another Faith Community,
- were baptized in the Catholic Faith, but with little other formation in the Catholic Faith Community,
- are part of the Catholic Faith Community who journey with those preparing for Initiation (companions).



What do you do in I.Y.P.?

We come to know Jesus more deeply through:

- sharing our experiences of God in our lives;
- sharing our Bible;
- sharing our story as disciples of Christ (Catholic Tradition);
- sharing our ongoing story of relationship with God through prayer.

How long does it take to become a fully initiated Catholic?

It takes as long as it takes:

- to get to know others on this journey,
- to fall in love with God, this Faith community and our way of expressing our belief in God,
- and to prepare for a lifetime commitment of loving and being loved in the Catholic Faith Community -- this is what joining the Catholic Church means!
All of this is, of course, age-appropriate.

How does my child begin?

Register in the parish, if you have not done so and register your child(ren) for Religious Education classes.

Let Sue Giudici, the Director of Religious Education, know that you are interested in this process for your children for the following year.

How often do we meet?

Parents of children will meet periodically beginning in the fall. Their children will continue to come to their regular Religious Education classes beginning in the fall. They will begin to meet weekly for this immediate preparation process in January.

Who will work with me and my child(ren)?

Director of Faith Formation: Debbie Vasicek

Coordinator of IYP: Karen Hodel

Team member: Pat Bolin

Infant Baptism Preparation



The Baptism Preparation process ...

... is designed to assist parents and godparents in their growing understanding of:

- why the Catholic Faith community celebrates Baptism;
- what the Sacrament of Baptism celebrates;
- the responsibilities parents and godparents commit themselves to fulfill in celebrating Baptism with infants and young children;

- and the role of the Faith Community in which Baptism is celebrated.

Baptism preparation is a process for reflecting on what we are celebrating, why we celebrate this ritual, and what it means for parents, for godparents, for an infant, and for the larger Faith community. We focus on several questions which often come to mind as one thinks about celebrating Baptism for their child:

- What is Faith and why do we want our children to have Faith?
- Why do we need a ritual anyway?
- Do we still believe in original sin? Limbo? Hell?
- Why are we celebrating Baptisms during Sunday Masses?
- What role do godparents play?
- Why do we use oil in Baptism?
- During this celebration, what are parents promising God and the Faith community that they will do?
- What is the Faith community promising God they will do?

The celebration of Baptism is a Faith community event. It is an awesomely wonderful venture of relationship!

GENERAL NORMS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM

- Children infant through six-years old
- Parent(s) of child to celebrate Baptism is a (are) parishioner(s) of Pax Christi Parish
- Attendance by parent(s) weekly at Sunday Mass

- One Godparent must be a fully initiated Catholic (having celebrated the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist), in good standing with the Church, who participates in weekly Sunday Mass with a Roman Catholic Faith community.
- Parents and, if possible, godparents are to attend the two-evening preparation process, 1 1/2 hours each evening.

First Reconciliation and First Communion Preparations

Since Sacramental Celebration is a Faith community event and since the family is the core of the Faith community, sacramental preparation needs to take place in both settings. Parents are primary educators of their children in developing their image of who God is, in developing their relationship with God and in seeing the place God has in their everyday lives. The Church, the larger Faith community is responsible for supporting parents in nurturing their child's Faith in providing ongoing catechesis in doctrine developed through Scripture and Tradition. It is an awesomely wonderful venture of relationship!



General Requirements for Sacramental Preparation for First Communion and First Reconciliation

According to Canon law #914 and to the norms of the Diocese of Colorado Springs, First Reconciliation is to be celebrated prior to First Communion. Ultimately, parents are the primary decision makers concerning their child's readiness for immediate preparation and celebration of Reconciliation or Communion.

- Children age seven or older
- Attendance weekly at Sunday Mass
- Participation in Religious Education classes or Catholic school for at least the prior year before beginning immediate preparation
- At least four months between immediate preparation classes and celebration of First Reconciliation and First Communion
- Parent participation in a session for immediate preparation
- Parent and child participation in *at least one evening* of learning centers

Process of Preparation for First Reconciliation...



- Children continue to attend regular Religious Education classes or Catholic School, where they continue to learn Catholic teaching on the sacrament of Reconciliation. This sacrament is studied every year according to the child's ability to comprehend sin, its consequences in relationship and God's forgiveness.
- Parents attend a session on Reconciliation:
 - To focus on our adult understanding of this sacrament,
 - How to relate everyday family life to the meaning of Reconciliation
 - and to obtain materials to work with their children at home for immediate preparation.
- Parents and children participate in one evening of using learning centers to focus on the meaning and rituals within the celebration of Reconciliation.

Readiness Signs for First Reconciliation...

- Children are beginning to experience a sense of guilt.
- Children are beginning to hold a grudge.
- Children have a basic understanding of forgiveness, being sorry and trying to do better.
- Children are beginning to make a distinction between deliberate and accidental actions.



Process of Preparation for First Communion....

- Children continue to attend regular Religious Education classes or Catholic school, where they continue to learn Catholic teaching on the sacrament of Eucharist. This sacrament is studied every year according to the child's ability to comprehend Real Presence in the Eucharist, the Sacrifice of Jesus, and being sent to live the Eucharist.
- Parents attend a session on Eucharist:
 - To focus on our adult understanding of this sacrament,
 - How to relate everyday family life to the meaning of Eucharist
 - And to obtain materials to work with their children at home for immediate preparation.
- Parents and children participate in two evenings: one evening they use learning centers to focus on the meaning and rituals within the celebration of

Eucharist, and one evening they focus on the particulars of celebrating First Communion.

Readiness Signs for First Communion...

- Children are beginning to express a love for Jesus through prayer and active participation in Sunday Mass
- Children are beginning to express an understanding of Jesus' presence in Eucharist
- Children are expressing a need for a greater sense of belonging through full participation at the Table of the Lord.



Youth Confirmation Preparation



Since Sacramental Celebration is a Faith community event and since the family is the core of the Faith community, sacramental preparation needs to take place in both settings. Parents are primary educators of their children in developing their image of who God is, in developing their relationship with God and in seeing the place God has in their everyday lives. The Church, the larger Faith community is responsible for supporting parents in nurturing their child's Faith in providing ongoing catechesis in doctrine developed through Scripture and Tradition. It is an awesomely wonderful venture of relationship!

General Requirements for Sacramental Preparation for Confirmation

- Young people age fifteen or older
- Attendance weekly at Sunday Mass and Holy Days of Obligation
- Participation in Religious Education classes or Catholic school for at least the prior year before beginning immediate preparation
- Participation in Religious Education classes during the year of immediate preparation
- Parent participation in one parent session for immediate preparation
- Parent, candidate and sponsor (if possible) participation in one session for immediate preparation

Process of Preparation for Confirmation...

- Young people continue to attend regular Religious Education classes or Catholic School, where they continue to learn Catholic teaching. Confirmation is studied every year according to the child's ability to comprehend the connection between the Sacraments of Initiation, the Holy Spirit, the Gifts of the Spirit, and the Fruits or Works of the Spirit.
- Parents attend a session on Confirmation:
 - To focus on our adult understanding of this sacrament,
 - How to relate everyday family life to the meaning of Confirmation
- Parents, young people and sponsors (if possible) participate in one session:
 - to focus on the meaning of Confirmation;
 - to learn about additional sessions offered to assist them understanding the sacraments of Initiation, the Holy Spirit, Gifts of the Spirit, Fruits or Works of the Spirit, Stewardship, and the Triduum;
 - and to obtain a booklet for the young person to complete with their parents and/or sponsor during the year of immediate preparation
- Candidates need to participate in at least one parish youth activity, such as: Faith Factor, social events for youth, retreats for youth, service projects with youth
- In addition, candidates and their sponsors and/or parents need to:
 - complete a booklet for Immediate Preparation reflecting on the Sacraments of Initiation, the Holy Spirit, the Gifts of the Spirit, the Fruits or Works of the Spirit, Stewardship and the Triduum
 - participate in an initial interview and a final interview with the Coordinator for Confirmation
 - Participate in the Triduum
 - Participate in rehearsal for celebration
- Candidates and their sponsor and/or parent are also encouraged to attend monthly sessions reviewing Church teaching on the Sacraments of Initiation, the Holy Spirit, the Gifts of the Spirit, the Fruits or Works of the Spirit, Stewardship and the Triduum

Readiness Signs for Confirmation...

- Young people are expressing a desire to celebrate the sacrament of Confirmation.
- Young people are willing to discern their readiness for celebrating this

sacrament

- Young people have a basic understanding of the main tenets of our Faith, appropriate for their age.