



St. Hedwig Catholic Church

First Communion Preparation Process Information

Revised October 12, 2009

“Children’s preparation for first reception of the Eucharist begins in the home. The family has the most important role in communicating the Christian and human values that form the foundation for a child’s understanding of Eucharist...The catechesis offered should help parents grow in their own understanding and appreciation of the Eucharist and enable them to catechize their children more effectively.”

(from the *National Directory for Catechesis*, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005)

The following guidelines are for families with children, ages 6-13:

The requirements for participation in the two year process are:

- The child is baptized
- Enrollment of the child in religious education, either in the school or SRE, for two consecutive years
- Registering for First Communion Preparation in the Family Life Ministries Office
- Providing a copy of the child’s baptismal certificate to the FLM Office

Together with the catechists and teachers, supported by the pastor and the entire parish community, the parents/guardians actively participate in discerning when the child is ready to receive First Communion. They journey with and support the child in:

- Knowing who Jesus is
- Experiencing prayer as a part of daily life
- Participating in Sunday Mass
- Knowing the difference between the bread and wine and the Body and Blood
- Desiring to receive Jesus

There are many different opportunities offered in the parish that support the experience of families journeying with children being prepared to receive First Communion. Family Catechesis sessions scheduled during the year invite them to share a meal and faith formational activities together with other families in the parish community. Adult faith formation events, including the Parish Mission, encourage parents/guardians into active and conscious participation in their own faith formation...an ongoing commitment in the life of a follower of Christ. Parents/guardians can choose to participate in any or all of these events during each year of preparation. During the second year, parents/guardians and the child in preparation are asked to attend a First Communion Retreat together at the Heart of Jesus Retreat Center in Santa Ana.

The children are prepared to come to the Sacrament of Reconciliation before receiving Eucharist. First Reconciliation Services are scheduled in January of the second year of preparation. The practice here at St. Hedwig is that children receive First Communion within the context of the Sunday Liturgy. All First Communions take place at a Sunday Vigil on Saturday or Sunday Masses during the Easter Season.

The practicalities and record keeping of this process are handled by the Family Life Ministries Office.

Please contact the FLM Office to register for the two year process, more detailed information, questions and concerns at (562) 296-9040 or by email to kluckey@sainthedwigparish.org

The FLM Office is located in the same building complex as Quinn Hall. The outside entrance is around the corner, behind the brick wall, toward the playground of the school. There is a mail slot for your convenience. Walk-In Office Hours are Monday and Wednesday from 10am to 6pm.