



St. Mary's Parish Community

Our Lady of the Assumption Church

133 Murray St. Brantford, ON N3S 5P8

(519) 753 7316, marybrantford@gmail.com

www.marybrantford.com

January 22, 2019

Welcome to the Sacraments of Initiation Programme for Children 2019, Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion!

WHO CAN JOIN OUR PROGRAM?

Our Program is open to children in Grade 2 or older who have been baptised Catholic. The registration form and a copy of the child's baptismal certificate is required. The registration form is attached to this letter. It is also available from our website, and/or from the parish or school office.

We invite all children from the Catholic Elementary Schools associated with St. Mary's Parish: Jean Vanier, Holy Cross, St. Peter and children who attend St. Mary's church but are from other schools.

Sunday Mass is the most important way to prepare children to receive Communion for the first time. Please continue to attend Sunday Mass on a regular basis.

WHY IS FIRST COMMUNION IMPORTANT?

WHAT IF MY CHILD HASN'T BEEN BAPTISED YET?

On the day of Baptism parents and godparents made a promise to bring the child up in the Catholic Faith. The reception of the Eucharist for the first time, First Holy Communion, is an important step on this journey of faith. After Baptism the Eucharist is considered the second Sacrament of Initiation with the sacrament of Confirmation to follow. Baptism can be arranged if your child is not baptised or baptised in another faith. Please contact our church office. You can find information on our website: <http://www.marybrantford.com/downloads.html>

WHY DO I NEED TO ATTEND SUNDAY MASS?

There is no better way to prepare your child for First Holy Communion than bringing him/her to church for Sunday Eucharist. Sunday Mass is an obligation for every Catholic and it is the best way to introduce your child to this most sacred of all our faith celebrations. We have 3 Sunday Masses at our church with one on Saturday evening at 5:00 p.m. and two on Sunday morning 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. The full schedule and some current updates are also on our website: www.marybrantford.com

WHY IF MY CHILD DOES NOT ATTEND A CATHOLIC SCHOOL?

Parents are the first faith educators for their children. Please contact Joyce Young, Pastoral Minister, at pmmarybrantford@gmail.com or 519-753-7316 for more information on how to prepare your child to receive the sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation.

WHAT IS ENROLMENT SUNDAY AND THE ART PROJECT?

Children are asked to prepare an art project for the Enrolment Sunday, Feb. 16/17, 2019. The art works should depict how the child sees “Jesus giving them bread – Holy Communion”. You are asked to attend any of the Sunday Masses that weekend. The children will be officially presented as the First Communion Candidates to the Parish Community and will give their art work to Father as part of the Mass. The art work presented by the children at Mass will be displayed in the church.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE FIRST CONFESSION DAY?

First Confession is scheduled on Wednesday, March 27, 2019 at 7:00 pm. in the church. The celebration of the sacrament begins with a short prayer service followed by confession for children and their families and anyone else who would like to make their confession. We strongly advise parents and teachers to practice the form for confession beforehand. You can also help your child make an examination of conscience. We have attached some aids we usually use before school confessions. It is important that the child is not stressed about confession. There is full confidentiality about every confession and the child needs to know it. If your child has problems concentrating, the child can write down some points about sins and read it to the priest during confession. There is no special dress code, just as always when attending church for the Holy Mass.

On the weekend of March 30/31 all the children are asked to attend one of the Masses to celebrate **JOY SUNDAY**. At this time the entire parish community will celebrate with them the joy of having received Confession for the first time.

WHO WILL BRING CHILDREN TO THE REHEARSAL?

We will meet for the final rehearsal on Friday, May 3, 2019 at 10:00 am in the church. Students will be bussed to the church from Jean Vanier, Holy Cross and St. Peter. A permission form will be sent home. We ask children who are not from our schools to be present also. The parents of these children will need to provide their own transportation.

WHAT IS THE FIRST COMMUNION DRESS CODE?

Traditionally girls wear a white dress for the First Communion Mass, which is a symbol of purity and a reminder of their Baptism. However, we do not require a white dress or a veil. We accept other colours of the dress, and also flowers, ribbons or a tiara instead of the veil, or nothing on the head.

Boys are not to purchase a suit, but boys are free to wear it. Make your boy look elegant. Try to dress him in a shirt with a collar. A tie is good, but not required. Dress pants, or nice Dockers are fine. No specific colour of pant, shirt or tie is required however the usual colour is white for shirt and black for pants. If your child doesn't have “dress shoes” that is ok but then let them wear the best shoes they have.

WHEN WE NEED TO COME TO CHURCH ON FIRST COMMUNION DAY?

On the day of First Communion, Saturday, May 4 at 5:00pm for Holy Cross students, or Sunday May 5, 2019 at 11:00 am for Jean Vanier and St. Peter students. Children not attending one of these schools can choose either. Realizing that there may be conflicts for some families, please contact the parish office to make alternate arrangements. Children and their families will be seated with the rest of the parish community. We ask the families to arrive early and sit at the front of the church. We ask that the parents or guardians stand behind their child and receive Communion together, first the child, then the parents and family. If for some reason you cannot receive communion, please ask for the blessing, crossing your hands over your chest.

WHO AND WHEN CAN TAKE PICTURES?

There will be a designated photographer who will take a group picture for each school, and the children from other schools will be grouped together. The photographer will take individual pictures in the church as well as during the ceremony. You can choose to order those pictures later, we will provide information. You are welcome to take your individual pictures after the Mass in the church. However, we **strongly ask** you not to use any digital device with a camera (camera, cell phone, tablet etc.) during the Mass. We must respect the sacredness of this moment!

HOW YOU CAN EXPRESS YOUR GRATITUDE?

There will be monetary collection taken during the Mass as it is usually done on Sunday. We will greatly appreciate your gift for our church. Children will bring this collection in the offertory procession to the altar.

WHAT I NEED TO KNOW AFTER FIRST COMMUNION MASS?**Weekend of May 11/12 Blessing of First Communion Gifts.**

Bring First Communion Gifts to any weekend Mass for a blessing.

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

Receiving Eucharist for the first time is an amazing blessing in your child's faith journey. However, for the graces of the sacrament to continue to grow regular attendance at Sunday Mass and reception of Eucharist is necessary.

Looking forward to meeting you at our Mass.

God Bless you,

Fr. Luke Kopaniak Sac

St. Mary's Pastor



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Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion Events Schedule 2019

Enrolment Sunday

Weekend of February 16th/17th at any Mass

* Bring the art work with you for display in church

First Confessions

Wednesday, March 27th at 7pm in the church

Joy Sunday

Weekend of March 30/31 at any Mass

Children who have just received the sacrament of first Confession come to celebrate this great joy with the rest of the parish community

Rehearsal

Friday May 3th at 10am

Bussing provided from Jean Vanier, Holy Cross and St. Peter.

Children not from these schools need to arrange transportation

First Holy Communion Masses

Saturday May 4th, 2019 at 5pm and

Sunday, May 5th, 2019 at 11:00am

Please arrive at the church at least thirty (30) minutes before.

First Holy Communion Blessing of Communion Gifts

Weekend of May 11/12

Newly received Communion gifts will be blessed at all Masses



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First Holy Communion Registration Form

Student's Full Given Name

Home Street Address

City Postal Code

Home Phone Number

Email

Father's Given Name

Mother's Given and Maiden Name

School's Name

Teacher's Name

Baptism's Date

Religious Denomination of Baptism

Name of Church of Baptism

Town/City, Province of Church of Baptism

**Please submit a copy of the baptismal certificate with this application form!

I wish my child to be admitted to the program of preparation for the Sacraments of First
Confession and First Holy Communion.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Please return this form to the school or the church office!