**PREPARING CHILDREN & YOUTH FOR SACRAMENTS**

SACRAMENTS ARE A JOINT EFFORT BETWEEN THE PARISH AND THE SCHOOL

* Celebrations are to include all children from various programs together
* Catechists must be fully initiated to teach the classes and give witness to the faith
* A common textbook series if possible is to be used and approved by the Archdiocese of San Francisco
* Program materials that are age appropriate using sound catechetical principles and adopted to each culture and parish
* Take home materials and resources should be supplied for parents/guardians & families
* Parish, Home Schoolers and Catholic School must have joint parent meetings

SACRAMENTS & DETERMINING READINESS

* The child must be in the program and faith life of the community for two years or more for each: Reconciliation, Eucharist, Confirmation
* Parish provides an opportunity for the parish representatives, parents and child to assess readiness within an interview process
* If the child is not ready for the sacrament s/he should not be forced to receive
* A child who wishes to receive the sacrament is not to be refused simply because of age
* First Reconciliation
	+ Awareness that God loves them
	+ They know right from wrong and our relationship with God & others can be broken through sin
	+ They need to be able to put into their own words what they did wrong and try to say why they did it
	+ They need to be sorry for what they did wrong
	+ They need to want to tell Jesus they are sorry and want to make amends
	+ Know a simple Act of Contrition in language they use at home and at church
	+ An understanding that the Sacrament of Penance is a special sign of God’s forgiveness
* First Eucharist
	+ The candidate must demonstrate an active, regular life of prayer
	+ Candidates must participate regularly in Sunday Liturgy
	+ Understand the Real Presence & parts of the Mass
	+ Participate in faith formation classes on a regular basis
	+ Have a desire to receive Jesus in the Eucharist
	+ Demonstrate a Christian life of virtue and service
* Confirmation
	+ The candidates must be 8th grade or older
	+ The candidate must demonstrate an active and regular life of prayer
	+ Candidates must participate regularly in Sunday Liturgy and the life of the parish community
	+ Understand the role of the Holy Spirit and discipleship in their lives
	+ Have a desire to receive the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and act with them for mission
	+ Demonstrate a Christian life of virtue and service
	+ Service projects/Acts of Justice are required both as group projects and individuals with theological reflection as integral

SACRAMENTS & THE CELEBRATION

* The child needs to have received Baptism in the Roman Rite and proof needs to be recorded
* The celebration happens within the context of the parish community – not the school
* The Liturgy Committee of the parish should be a vital part of the planning
* The community provides the celebration for those receiving first sacrament therefore the children should not acts as lectors, gift bearers, cantors, etc.
* First Reconciliation
	+ Communal celebration with individual Confession
	+ The child should be familiar with the confessional setting
	+ A simple Act of Contrition in the language the child understands should be used
	+ Parents should be invited to receive the sacrament as an example
	+ Children should be encouraged to receive the sacrament often
	+ No sacramental certificate is given and no permanent records are maintained
	+ The Sacrament of Reconciliation must be celebrated before First Eucharist with ample time between the sacraments to distinguish between the two
* First Eucharist
	+ First Eucharist does not happen during Lent
	+ Registration of the sacrament is made in the parish sacramental registry
	+ First Eucharist certificates should be given
* Confirmation
	+ The pastor requests the date from the Office of the Archbishop
	+ Confirmation does not happen during Lent
	+ Registration of the sacrament is made in the parish sacramental registry
	+ Confirmation certificates should be given

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS – Adapted for Children

* For all those over the age of 7
* Many rites can be done privately
* Parents must be involved in process and committed to bringing child to Mass and instruction
* Later children should participate with their peers in their respective programs for First Reconciliation, Eucharist (it just won’t be their *first*), and Confirmation (youth receive a blessing at Confirmation Mass and are not reanointed).