



First Reconciliation Communal Penance Service
Friday, December 4
7-8:30pm

Dear Parents,

First of all, the priests and staff wish to commend you, parents, for this undertaking! Participation in the sacramental life of the Church is central to who we are as Catholic Christians. You are preparing your child for a lifetime of celebrating the sacramental life of the Church. We hope that your entire family is growing in faith, hope, and love through the sacrifice and commitment you have made to each other and to God.

A few reminders and helpful information...

Before you arrive:

1. Students should know the story of the **Prodigal Son** (workbook p. 38.)
2. **Review** the Communal Rite of Reconciliation (pp.57-63) so you and your child will know what to expect.
3. **Review** the examination of Conscience (pp. 64-69) with your child ahead of time so that children understand the meaning of sin (not an accident or a mistake.)
4. **Bring the completed workbook with you to the ceremony.** Fill in your child's name on the blank certificate in the back of the workbook. The priest will sign it on the day of the ceremony.
5. This is the celebration of a sacrament; **dress should be appropriate.** All family members are strongly encouraged to participate in both rites.

When you arrive:

1. **Sign-in** and get a colored numbered ticket.
2. **Bring your child's completed workbook.** The Communal Rite for Reconciliation (pp. 57-63) will be closely followed, except individual confession will take place after the Concluding Rite.
3. **Find a seat towards the front of the church** with your entire family. Last minute instructions and questions will be answered before we begin the ceremony. Cameras are welcome.
4. **After the Concluding Prayer, individual confession will take place.** Your colored ticket matches the confessional sign and waiting area where you will sit while waiting your turn to talk with a Priest. You will be ushered to the priest in numerical order. Parents and older siblings are invited to go to individual confession first. Please use this "waiting time" to examine your conscience, review the book, and pray with your child....quiet and respectful of those around you who are also praying.
5. **When it is your child's turn,** parents will bring their child (and workbook) into the Confessional and introduce him/her to the Priest and then leave the room. The Priest will sign the certificate in the back of the book at the end of confession.
6. **The priest gives us a penance.** We say or do our penance as soon as possible after celebrating the sacrament. Doing penance is a sign that we want to change our lives. We want to repair or heal the hurt we have caused by our sins.
7. **Prayer Stations.** After your family is finished with individual confession and penance. There are 2 prayer stations to go to. Station 1 is at the baptismal font. Station 2 is in the Narthex. Your family is then free to leave. Have a wonderful night!

Congratulations to you and your child!