



Sacramental Preparation

To explore and explain sacramental formation for children (7-10) to receive Confirmation and Communion



www.sjwest.org, see "Sacraments Tab"



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**Why do you
want your child
to receive a
sacrament?**





Is that all you
want?

*“At the heart of our faith is not a mere idea, however noble or inspired, but rather an encounter with Jesus Christ, our Savior. And by the word ‘encounter,’ I do not mean merely a chance meeting or casual relationship, but something more akin to a meeting of minds and hearts. An encounter with Christ is that moment when, in the power of the Holy Spirit, we truly open our hearts to our Savior, understand the depth and beauty of his love for us, and **find ourselves forever changed and transformed by Him.**”*

– Archbishop Lori, Light Brightly Visible 2.0





**Sacraments are the power of the star
breather given to us.**

Assumptions about Sacraments

★ It's all about requirements

Over time, sacramental formation slowly shifted toward attendance, requirements, and checklists—often accompanied by an unspoken fear that falling short might mean missing the sacrament. While participation is critical to formation, it is not the sole metric for determining a child's readiness to receive a sacrament.

★ Parent Role: Driver, Reminder, Form-Signer

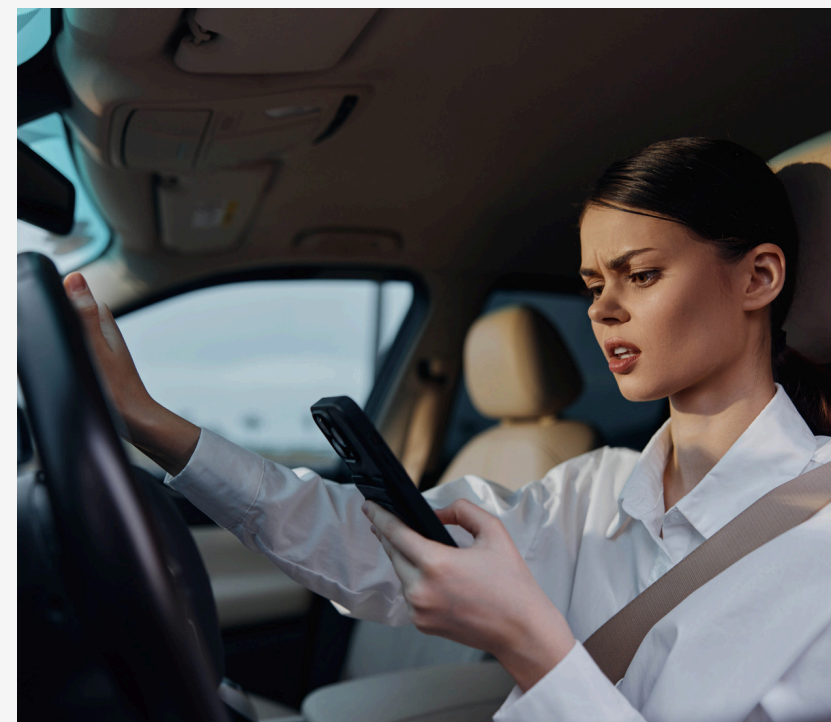
Churches often talk about parent involvement, but it can feel limited to driving, scheduling, and paperwork.

The Church calls parents the primary catechists of their children. While logistics matter, our goal is to equip and support you to form faith in your home, not just manage a schedule.

★ Your kids attend “a class”

A classroom forms minds. Sacramental preparation forms hearts. While learning matters, our aim is encounter with God, which requires presence, participation and engagement.

This is not a passive experience.



Rethinking Sacraments

The CCD model of faith formation emerged in the 16th century as a response to the Protestant Reformation, emphasizing instruction and clarity of belief. In the 21st century, we are called to a renewed model of formation—one that draws on what we now understand about the human person and invites real encounter with the eternal God.

★ Spiritual Growth

Our formation process is designed to help you understand where your child is spiritually and to give you practical tools to support their growth.

Faith is caught as much as it is taught. When parents grow spiritually, children grow too.

★ Spiritual Readiness

Sacramental formation has often been reduced to completing a checklist. But the goal is not completion—it is transformation.

Think of sacramental preparation not as a process to earn a sacrament, but as a journey of discernment—helping families recognize when a child is ready to receive the grace God desires to give.

★ Parent Involvement

Parents are the most influential presence in a child's life—even when it doesn't always feel that way.

Most formation happens in the ordinary rhythms of home life, supported by simple resources we provide. There is no required homework, but you will be invited to reflect, pray, and be attentive to how faith is growing in your family.

★ Hands On Learning

Jesus formed His disciples through lived, hands-on experience. Modern learning confirms the same truth: we learn best by doing. Our formation sessions include brief keynote teaching, but they also invite active participation through hands-on activities, discussion, prayer experiences, and games.

When you arrive for an in-person session, come ready to be fully present and fully engaged.

Our Formation Experiences

These experiences are short and intentional—meant to prepare, not replace, a life of faith. Formation grows as families live their faith daily and engage in ongoing formation on their own.

Oxygen

Four Mini retreats designed to help children ages 7–10 and their parents prepare for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion.

Fire Fellowship

Six family-based sessions—including a single-day retreat—designed to help children ages 9–12 and their parents prepare for Confirmation.

Other Needs?

If your child needs to be baptized or is older than these ages, reach out to us! We will help you find the best way for your child to receive their sacraments



Oxygen

First Holy Communion is often associated with “2nd grade,” but the Church does not recognize sacraments by grade level—only by age. The earliest a child may receive Communion is age 7. However, being eligible by age does not automatically mean a child is ready. Readiness includes an understanding of the sacrament, a personal desire to receive it, and a family commitment to regular participation in the Eucharist.



Four Mini Retreats

We offer a Fall Track and a Spring Track, each with four components



Sacraments Received During Each Track

Fall 2026: October 10th is Reconciliation & November 15th is Communion

Spring 2027: February 13th is Reconciliation & April 25th is Communion



Age Specific Content

Children and parents each have their own content with meaningful moments shared together.

A VERY BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

Many thanks to Fr. Paul Turner for sharing his expertise in this subject matter.

In the Early Church:
Sacramental anointing
occurs in tandem with
Baptism & First Eucharist

Adult initiation is typical, as is
initiation of entire families at once.

1200s-1800s: Both age & sequence are fluid.

- Infant Baptism remains typical.
- First Eucharist is celebrated around age 10-14.
- Confirmation is celebrated no earlier than age 7.
- Confirmation becomes an occasion for catechesis.
- The tradition of Confirmation names appears during this period.

1960s-1980s: The Second
Vatican Council calls for reviving
the practice of the Early Church.

- This leads to the development of the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults, or RCIA (now called OCIA, the Order of Christian Initiation for Adults)



400s-1200s AD:
In the West, a
separation develops:

- Baptism and First Eucharist are celebrated in infancy, while Confirmation is now celebrated in childhood.
- The Bishop is now understood as the ordinary celebrant for Confirmation.

1910:

Pope Pius X's decree *Quam singulari* sets the universal age of
First Eucharist at age 7.

- No mention is made of Confirmation, which remains at a later age in many locations per local tradition.

1976: The AOB sets the age of
adolescent Confirmation at grades 8-10.

- This age is reaffirmed in subsequent AOB documents on Confirmation (1983 and 2000).

Canon 891: "The sacrament of confirmation is to be conferred on the faithful at about the age of discretion unless the conference of bishops has determined another age..."
The USCCB failed to come to a consensus on a nationwide age and instead permits a range ("age of discretion to about sixteen years") as determined by the local ordinary.

Fire Fellowship

Confirmation is not graduation—it is the gift of the Holy Spirit, strengthening the grace of Baptism for lifelong discipleship.



5 Formation Sessions

We offer a Sunday 3:30 - 5:30 pm track and a Monday 5:30 - 7:30 pm track that meets 1x a month



Day Retreat

April 11th from 9:30 - 4:30 pm. Please plan to carpool. This retreat is required.



Sacraments Received in May

May 4th is our Confirmation Rehearsal

May 6th is our Confirmation Mass

At Home Tools

Most of your effort in sacramental preparation will be strengthening your practice of your faith at home. Here are some of the resources we will have at your disposal.

★ Hallow

Many adults struggle with their own prayer life—and with praying alongside their children. Hallow is the world's #1 Catholic prayer app, and a free premium account is included as part of your sacramental preparation.

You will receive a link to activate your account when you register.

★ Spiritual Growth Tool & Habit Tracker

The Spiritual Habit Tracker is a personality-style tool that helps identify where your child can grow spiritually. It then offers practical activities and simple ways to reflect on progress, successes, and challenges.

★ Adventure Catalyst

Adventure Catalyst is our Confirmation sponsor-only formation tool. Offered entirely online, it guides sponsors through planning a meaningful pilgrimage with their candidate, completed on their own schedule.

★ Base Camp

Basecamp is designed to help parents recognize how God has been speaking in their lives. It moves beyond the idea of God only speaking in a “booming voice in the clouds” and instead helps uncover the everyday moments that shape our faith and why we believe.



Faith needs a next step.

Pause. Find your bearings.

Choose what interests you.

Grow closer to Christ along the way.

CURRENT WAYPOINTS

ST. MICHAEL'S LENT

August 12–September 29

HOLY CHEMISTRY

September 18–December 11

JESUS: THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE

September 20–November 22

FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY

September 23–November 18

Choose what fits your season of life.

ST. JOHN YOUTH MINISTRY

A place to belong. A faith to make your own.



MIDDLE SCHOOL

THURSDAYS • 5:15–6:30 PM

Serious faith. Seriously fun.

Games, friendships, and Catholic faith formation designed for middle schoolers.

- Most Thursdays in the Portico

FAITH THEY CAN UNDERSTAND • COMMUNITY THEY CAN FEEL



HIGH SCHOOL
LIFE TEEN

Ages 14–18

SUNDAYS • MASS AT 6 PM

Life Night • 7:15–8:45 PM

The friendliest place to spend Sunday night.

Spectacular food • interactive games • a great talk
deep small groups • powerful prayer

- Most Sundays in the Portico

MIDDLE SCHOOL + HIGH SCHOOL • FRIENDSHIP • DISCIPLESHIP • PRAYER



**Be Intentional
About Your Faith**

NEXT STEPS

What should you be doing right now?





Questions?



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