

ST AGNES CATHOLIC CHURCH

# FIRST PENANCE FIRST COMMUNION HANDBOOK

2022-2023





# ST. AGNES CATHOLIC CHURCH

## ST. AGNES PARISH

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Parochial Vicar

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## MISSION STATEMENT

Called by our Lord Jesus Christ, and strengthened by His Word and Sacraments, we strive to be faithful missionary disciples in Jesus Christ, sharing His love with one another and all in need.

## CORE VALUES

**Communion:** Uniting ourselves with Jesus and other baptized Christians in the Church, which has its source and summit in the Eucharist.

**Holiness:** Embracing the "light, love and limitless possibility" communicated by the Holy Spirit and consecrating ourselves to doing God's will by uniting ourselves to His Son, Jesus Christ.

**Joy:** Delighting in the peace that comes from knowing God's love and manifesting His love to others in the hope of sharing in His glory.

**Service:** Promoting the dignity of the human person by sharing our God-given time, talent and treasure with others.

**Discipleship:** Recognizing that conversion is a gradual and lifelong process, we commit to fostering a deeper relationship with God, living a fully sacramental life, sustaining our faith through ongoing catechesis and witnessing to the love of God through Jesus in our words, actions and relationships, and passing this on to our children.

Dear First Holy Communion Parents

This preparation time for First Penance and First Eucharist marks an important step in your child's formation in the Catholic faith. What a wonderful privilege it is for you to talk to your son or daughter about your relationship with Jesus; to teach them how much God loves them and waits for them in the Sacrament of Penance; and how Jesus, the Bread of Life, sustains us for the Christian journey!

Passing on the Church's faith in the love of God and the values taught to us by Jesus Christ, are among the most important things you can do as a parent. As children grow and learn, they make mistakes. It is all part of learning. Teaching your child forgiveness and humbly asking for forgiveness are important lessons in shaping them to become the person that God has created them to be. The Sacrament of Penance is an encounter with the merciful love of Christ that lets children know that there is nothing that they can ever do that will make God love them less. He waits for them with great love in the Confessional to offer His mercy and healing.

As parents, we nourish our children with good food to help them grow strong and healthy. As Catholics, we truly believe Jesus' words in John 6:53-55: "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink." When we receive the Eucharist, we receive Jesus Himself - Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity - in both the literal and spiritual sense of the word. Jesus, who takes the form of bread and wine, comes to us to nourish us, strengthen us, and unite with us so that we may be one with Him and the Father and the Holy Spirit, and be empowered to live out our mission. The Holy Eucharist truly is the "source and summit of the Christian life." (CCC 1324)

This is the gift your child receives at First Communion. At every Mass, Jesus becomes entirely and absolutely present among us. Jesus Christ is God's total and absolute Love made flesh. As human beings we can't love like this. Yet, in the Eucharist, we receive Christ's Body and Blood so that we can experience this kind of infinite love. The love that we desire more than anything at all is given to us, to become one with us through eating and drinking, to change us forever, into this very same gift of love for the world.

The home is the primary place where faith is cultivated. Parents are their child's primary example of how to live as a Christian and you remain integral to your child's spiritual formation throughout life. By living a fully sacramental life, availing of the Sacrament of Penance regularly and the Eucharist every Sunday, you model the trust, love and faith you desire for your children in their relationship with God. As expressed in the words of every baptismal liturgy, the handing on of the faith is primarily the responsibility of parents, and you are described as the first and best teachers of your children in the ways of faith. You are not alone in this role. We, at St. Agnes, are ready to guide, support and encourage you as you lead your family to become intentional disciples of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessings,

Lisa Orosa  
Director of Faith Formation  
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## OUR MISSION & VISION

*At St. Agnes, we believe in the inherent dignity of every person, created out of love and for love, in the image and likeness of God.*

*The goal of St. Agnes Religious Education is to provide opportunities for students and families to have a profound encounter with Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, in the Sunday liturgies, the Sacraments, the Word of God and joyful service to become intentional disciples and ambassadors for Christ.*

*By living a grace-filled life, nourished by prayer, strengthened by the Sacraments, and transformed by the Word of God, our students and families are empowered to grow in the Faith, deepen their relationship with God, and live out their mission to be the loving and courageous presence of Jesus Christ in a world in need of hope.*

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**"Be who God meant you to be, and you will set the world on fire."**

**- St . Catherine of Siena**

# 1ST COMMUNION AT ST. AGNES

## 2ND GRADE REQUIREMENTS

### TAKE HOME WORKBOOKS

Students must complete two workbooks: Penance & 1st Communion. These workbooks are sent home to encourage parents to be more involved in their child's faith formation & grow together in the Faith.

**DUE DATES:** 2/3/23 (Penance WB) & 4/21/23 (Communion WB).

### HOLY CARDS

*Attending Sunday Mass is the most important preparation to receiving First Communion.*

Students are required to collect holy cards from the presiding priest at the end of each Mass or turning in bulletins in exchange for a holy card, if they did not attend at St. Agnes.

### PARENT RETREATS & INVOLVEMENT

This special time of preparing children to receive Jesus in the Most Holy Eucharist becomes more meaningful and memorable with the parents' active involvement in their child's preparation. With the Flipped classroom approach, students are able to prepare for their Religious Education classes beforehand through My Catholic Faith Delivered, and the catechist devotes more time in delving deeply into the Faith, allowing for more creative learning and liturgical celebrations in the classroom. Parents are expected to be more actively

involved with the formation of their children by working through online lessons and workbooks with their children.

In addition, mandatory attendance in First Penance retreat for Parents allow parents to reflect on their experience with the Sacraments so as to better prepare their children to receive Penance and the Eucharist. A parent-student retreat for First Communion allows parents to share their faith with their children while participating in meaningful shared experiences. **SAVE THE DATE:** February 4, 2023 (Penance Retreat for Parents Only)

### FIRST PENCE

Students are required to attend a mandatory First Penance retreat which culminates in the reception of their First Penance. This retreat shall take place one month after the mini Penance retreat for parents.

**SAVE THE DATE:** March 11, 2023 (Student Retreat & 1st Penance)

### FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

Students must attend a First Communion retreat and practice with at least one parent in preparation for their special day of receiving Jesus in the Most Holy Eucharist. This shall take place 1 day prior to First Holy Communion

**SAVE THE DATE:** April 29, 2023 (Student & Parent Joint Retreat)

### OTHER KEY DATES

Online registration & fees: October 28, 2022  
Start Holy Cards Collection: October 15, 2022  
First Communion Liturgy: April 30, 2023





# FIRST PENANCE/COMMUNION

## IMPORTANT CALENDAR DATES

**2022**

**September  
20**

RE CLASSES  
BEGIN

**October  
04**

2ND GRADE  
PARENT  
MEETING

**October  
15**

HOLY CARD  
COLLECTION  
BEGINS

**October  
28**

APPLICATION,  
POLICY & FEE  
DUE

**November  
1**

ALL SOULS  
HOLY DAY OF  
OBLIGATION

**December  
8**

IMMACULATE  
CONCEPTION  
HOLY DAY

**December  
25**

CHRISTMAS  
HOLY DAY OF  
OBLIGATION

**2023**

**January  
1**

MARY, MOTHER  
OF GOD  
HOLY DAY

**February  
3**

1ST PENANCE  
WORKBOOK DUE

**February  
4**

1ST PENANCE  
RETREAT FOR  
PARENTS

**March  
11**

1ST PENANCE  
FOR STUDENTS

**April  
21**

1ST COMMUNION  
WORKBOOK DUE

**April  
29**

1ST COMMUNION  
RETREAT  
PARENTS/STUDENTS

**April  
30**

1ST HOLY  
COMMUNION  
MASS

# THE EFFECTS OF HOLY COMMUNION

