

Sacramental Preparation Policy

In the Diocese of Raleigh First Reconciliation and First Eucharist are usually celebrated in Second Grade and Confirmation is usually celebrated after Tenth Grade. **The Diocese requires that all sacramental preparation last two years.** The Catholic Community of St. Thomas More is ensuring that this requirement is met for all students. If in the previous year students have participated in Faith Development in another parish, they will be registered in the second year of the program upon receipt of a letter to this effect from their former parish. **Children preparing to receive the sacraments must be baptized Catholic. Evidence of Baptism is required for sacramental preparation even if baptized at St. Thomas More.**

FIRST RECONCILIATION AND FIRST EUCHARIST

Children should begin preparation for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist in First Grade (Year 1) to receive the sacraments in Second Grade (Year 2). Children or Youth older than First Grade who would like to receive these sacraments will be placed in a separate Sacramental Preparation program, with Elementary aged children meeting on Sunday mornings and Junior High and High School aged youth meeting on Sunday evenings. Junior High and High School youth will also prepare to celebrate Confirmation. All children or youth will celebrate the sacraments only after completing their second year of sacramental preparation.

Sacramental preparation requires weekly Mass attendance, parent meetings, family retreats. in addition to regular attendance at Faith Formation classes. **No more than 5 classes can be missed during each sacramental preparation year.**

If your child is enrolled in St. Thomas More School, sacramental preparation for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist is provided by the school and parish Faith Formation classes are not necessary.

CONFIRMATION

The Confirmation Faith Formation program prepares candidates to fully understand the meaning of this Sacrament. It invites candidates to deepen their relationship with God, affirm their faith, and live their faith in the world.

Sacramental preparation for Confirmation usually begins in 9th Grade (Remote Year) in order to receive the sacrament after 10th Grade (Immediate Year). Youth older than 9th grade with no prior sacramental preparation for Confirmation will be placed with a Remote Year class. All youth will celebrate Confirmation only after their second year of sacramental preparation.

To receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, candidates must be in 10th grade or above, have a sincere desire to receive this sacrament, attend Faith Formation classes regularly, provide community and parish service, and participate in retreats and family meetings.

WHAT IF MY CHILD HAS NOT BEEN BAPTIZED OR WAS BAPTIZED IN ANOTHER DENOMINATION?

Children who have reached age seven, up to age eighteen, are regarded by the Church as responsible persons with free will and a capacity for personal faith. Therefore any unbaptized child of seven years or more is expected to approach the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist) through the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults adapted for Children (RCIA-C). A child or youth older than seven already baptized in another denomination will spend two years of preparation in the separate Sacramental Preparation Program.