

# St. Paul Catholic Church

## Sacramental Guidelines

Last Updated February 2020

## Baptism

“Baptism not only purifies from all sins, but also makes the neophyte a new creature, an adopted son of God, who has become a partaker of the divine nature, member of Christ and co-heir with Him, and a temple of the Holy Spirit... the whole organism of the Christian’s supernatural life has its roots in Baptism”. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1265-1266*)

Baptism is the first sacrament all Christians receive and is the first step towards full membership in the Body of Christ. It, along with Confirmation and Eucharist, are known as the Sacraments of Initiation because they are the foundation of the Catholic life.

The requirements for Baptism are as follows:

1. At least one parent must be Catholic
2. Be a registered member of St. Paul Catholic Church
3. Contact the parish office to schedule the Baptism
4. Contact the Director of Faith Formation to schedule the Baptismal Preparation class
5. Fill out all necessary paperwork

The preparatory class consists of a meeting between the Director of Faith Formation and the parents of the child to be baptized. It is not required that both parents attend together, but it is suggested. The class consists of watching a video and walking through the process of the Baptism itself. It takes about an hour.

Your child must have at least one godparent, though two is more common. If there are two, there must be one male and one female. At least one godparent must be Catholic. The requirements for the Catholic godparent are as follows:

1. Has received the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation)
2. Be above the age of 16
3. Lead a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on. A “life of faith” included marriage within the Church and being a practicing Catholic in good standing.
4. Not be the father or the mother of the child to be baptized.

Baptism may take place within or outside of Mass. Baptisms may occur throughout the liturgical year except for:

1. The weekends immediately before and after Christmas
2. The weekend immediately before Easter (Palm Sunday)
3. Holiday weekends

\* Please note that during Lenten Baptisms will only occur outside of Mass.

## First Reconciliation and First Communion

“To receive communion is to receive Christ himself who has offered himself for us.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1382*)

First Reconciliation and First Communion preparation coincide, as penance is required before receiving the Eucharist.

The requirements for First Reconciliation and First Communion are as follows:

- a. Be baptized in the Catholic faith
- b. Be at least 7 years old (2<sup>nd</sup> grade)
- c. Be a registered member of St. Paul Catholic Church
- d. Send an official copy of the Baptismal certificate to St. Paul (if not baptized at St. Paul)
- e. Attend all required preparatory classes

First Reconciliation will occur at St. Paul’s during the Lenten Penance Service. First Reconciliation is required before receiving First Communion.

First Communion usually takes place on the first Sunday of May at 10:30 a.m. Mass.

## Confirmation

“Confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit... in order to be more capable of assuming the apostolic responsibilities of Christian life.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1309*)

Confirmation is the last of the Sacraments of Initiation. It completes and fulfills the graces an individual has received in Baptism and the Eucharist to be fully prepared to face the daily challenges of the Catholic life. Confirmation is held every other year.

The requirements for Confirmation are as follows:

- a. Be in the 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grades
- b. Received Baptism and Eucharist
- c. Choose a Catholic sponsor (see below for guidelines)
- d. Attend all preparatory classes, the retreat, and service project
- e. Interview with the pastor
- f. Write a letter to the bishop

Like Baptism, Confirmation requires a sponsor to talk alongside the confirmandus (person receiving Confirmation) to ensure that he/she is maturing in the faith and realizing its significance. To be a sponsor, one must meet the following requirements:

- a. Be a practicing Catholic in good standing
- b. Received all the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation)
- c. Attend all preparatory classes

## Sacrament of Holy Matrimony

Engaged couples are welcome to call the parish office, 601-636-0140, to inquire about the availability of dates for their weddings. However, the date will not be reserved until you have made an appointment and met with Father Vincent.

**IMPORTANT:** You must contact St. Paul a **MINIMUM OF SIX MONTHS IN ADVANCE** of your anticipated date.

When you meet with Father Vincent, he will determine if you are able to get married at St. Paul, the date and time, and the type of ceremony. When both parties are Catholic, it is common for them to celebrate with Liturgy of the Eucharist (Mass). If one is non-Catholic, the celebration is usually the Liturgy of the Word (scripture service) and the Rite of Marriage. Both options are equally valid to fulfill the sacrament.

Fr. Vincent will walk the couple through all marriage preparation requirements. They are briefly as follows:

- a. The couple will be required to participate in a formal marriage preparation program. Father Vincent will schedule these appointments with you.
- b. Complete the FOCCUS pre-marriage program
- c. Pre-nuptial investigation required by the diocese
- d. Engaged Encounter retreat weekend

For more information regarding the requirements and guidelines for a nuptial Mass at St. Paul's, please see our Wedding Policies Booklet. This can be found on our website or can be acquired through the parish office.

## Funerals

The Parish family extends our sympathy and our prayers to you.

To schedule a funeral, please call the parish office. Fr. Rusty will schedule all necessary events with you, as well as give you the necessary materials for planning the funeral liturgies, including a packet for optional readings.

Funeral Masses cannot take place at the following times:

- a. Sundays
- b. Major holidays
- c. At the same time as a previously scheduled Mass

Because a funeral is an official ritual (ceremony) of the Roman Catholic Church, guidelines for music for the Liturgy are to be followed. Music is to follow the liturgical norms for Catholic Liturgy and should be appropriately selected so that singing can be shared by all in attendance.

Each piece of music in a Funeral Mass has a specific liturgical purpose, and so the music selected for those places must fulfill that purpose; for example: Responsorial Psalm, Alleluia Response, The Great Amen.

All hymn selections and musicians need to be coordinated with the parish organist. Only songs within our parish hymnal will be permitted during the Funeral Mass.

During a Funeral Mass, three or four hymns may be selected:

- 1) Processional (Entrance) hymn
- 2) an Offertory solo (organ music or a preferred “congregational” hymn)
- 3) a Communion hymn, a solo, or a sung refrain from an appropriate Eucharistic hymn
- 4) Recessional hymn

Please take note: The parish organist is under contract and therefore is the chosen organist for all parish events.