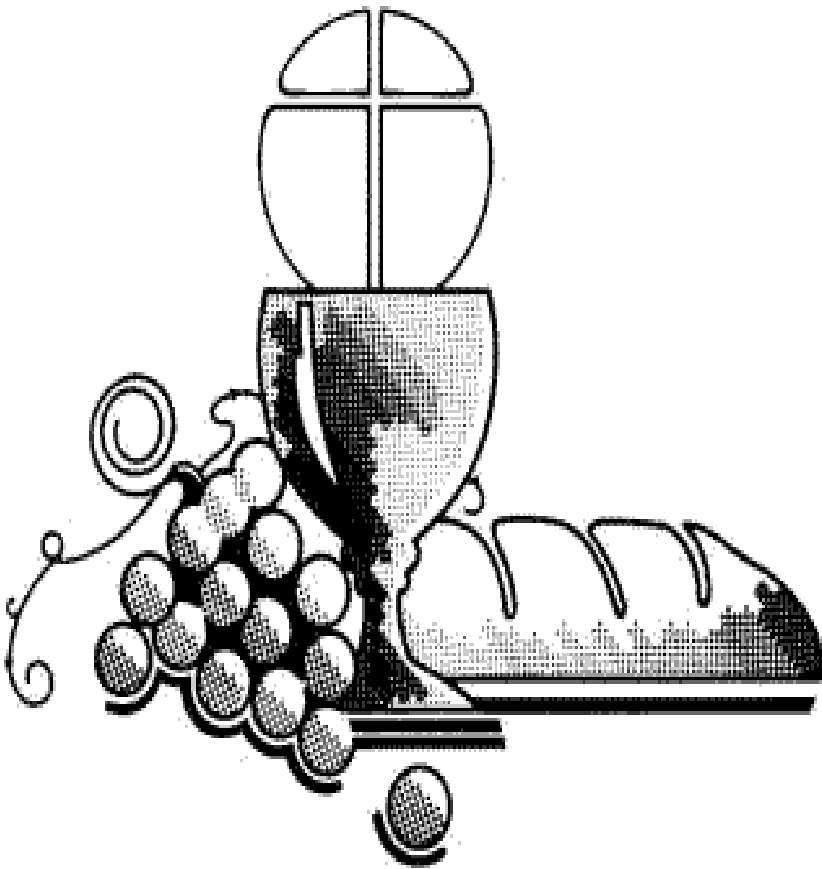


First Reconciliation &  
First Holy Communion  
Handbook  
2024-2025





## St. Christina Religious Education

*Fostering your Child's Religious Education from K thru 8th grade*

### **Welcome First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion Class of 2024-2025**

Dear Parent and Guardians,

At St. Christina, the Holy Communion Program is the first opportunity for our children to receive our Blessed Lord in the Holy Eucharist. Students typically receive their First Holy Communion during second grade, but we also welcome older children who have not yet received their First Holy Communion.

Preparation involves a two-year commitment. The reason that we require a two consecutive year program is because celebrating a sacrament should involve becoming familiar and comfortable with our parish community and faith life. It includes class participation, Reconciliation, parent meetings, and attendance at Mass. A student must attend one year of class at St Christina School or through our Religious Education program, prior to the year they will be celebrating the sacrament. The first year of class participation is considered "Level I Sacramental Prep." The second consecutive year of class participation involves more detailed sacramental preparation. This is referred to as "Level II Sacramental Prep". Class participation and regular church attendance are important parts of our program. Students who attend our classes have the opportunity to meet peers and share their faith. They will also have opportunities to meet our priests, and develop relationships with their teachers and catechists.

Communion will be on Saturday, May 10, 2025. St. Christina School Communion Mass will be at 10AM. Religious Education Communion Mass will be at 1PM. Please request your days off in advance if you are scheduled to work that day. If you have any questions, please contact me at 773-780-1438 or [pamwaldrom.stchristinare@gmail.com](mailto:pamwaldrom.stchristinare@gmail.com).

God Bless,

Pam Waldrom  
Coordinator of Religious Education

## **What is Holy Communion?**

First Holy Communion is one of the most important events in early life for a Catholic, along with Baptism, Reconciliation and Confirmation. The First Holy Communion is a sign of Christian unity and a symbol of a Catholic's faith and devotion. First Holy Communion is typically celebrated when a child is about seven years old.

## **What is Reconciliation?**

Reconciliation offers grace and the remission of sin to whoever receives it, and at whatever age. Each person's approach to Reconciliation is different. Depending on age, stage of life, and development, people often adapt Reconciliation to a particular milestone or stage of life rather than adapting themselves to the Sacrament Reconciliation.

If the time assigned to your child is difficult for your family, please contact Pam Waldrom as soon as possible so she can decide how to accommodate you with the Mass that better fits your needs.

## **Parent & Student Orientation Information Sessions**

Reconciliation & Communion Orientation Session: The Parent & Student Orientation meeting will be on **Tuesday, October 1, 2023** at 6:00 p.m. at St. Christina Church. Kathryn McNicholas will explain the importance of the Sacrament of Reconciliation & Communion. Pam Waldrom will explain how your child will receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and appropriate dress attire.

There will be a Communion Information Night for all parents on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 6PM. Religious Education Families will stay after the information is discussed and will then directly begin their Communion Retreat with their Communicants following the brief meeting.

**We ask that at least one parent and the communicant are present for both of these meetings.**

### **Reconciliation**

**Tuesday, November 12 from 5:30 -6:30pm for the 10am Communion Group for St. Christina School**  
**Tuesday, November 12 from 6:30-7:30 for the 1pm Communion Group for Religious Education**

The children and their parents will meet in the Church at their Mass time to have their Reconciliation. We will have a communal celebration. This will include a welcome and a reading from the Bible. We will do an Examination of Conscience and say the Act of Contrition as a group. The communicants will then go to the priest for individual confession of their sins and receive individual absolution. Family members are welcome to receive reconciliation and are encouraged to participate. After you and your child have completed your penance in your pews you may leave. There will not be a formal dismissal or final song. Each child will receive a certificate of Reconciliation in class the following week.



## Bless Me Father For I Have Sinned.

### **Practice the Sacrament of Reconciliation with Your Child**

1. Explain to your child that Reconciliation is a Sacrament of healing in which our sins are forgiven and in which we are reconciled with God and the Church.
2. Teach your child that God is a loving merciful Father who is waiting for us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
3. Explain that Jesus granted the apostles and their successors (priests) the authority to forgive and retain sins.
4. Teach your child how to make an examination of conscience and have them make it at the end of the day as part of their night prayers.
5. Make sure your child learns and memorizes the **Act of Contrition** and that they understand Reconciliation as a way of preparing their soul to receive Jesus in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist.
6. Emphasize that the priest will never tell anyone their sins

## The Act of Contrition

My God,  
I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.  
In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good,  
I have sinned against You  
whom I should love above all things.  
I firmly intend, with Your help,  
to do penance, to sin no more,  
and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.  
Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us.  
In His Name, my God, have mercy.  
Amen.



## Procedure for Receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation

1. When your child is ready to receive the Sacrament, they will be asked to step forward by an usher or teacher.
2. Teachers will direct your child to an available priest.
3. When each child approaches the priest, they begin with the Sign of the Cross and say, "Forgive me Father for I have sinned, this is my first Reconciliation."
4. The priest will guide them through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
5. When the Sacrament has been received, your child will be given a simple penance, which they are asked to say in the pew while kneeling

## Examination of Conscience for Children

1. When I make choices, do I sometimes forget about what God wants me to do?
2. Do I pray every day?
3. Do I pay attention at Mass?
4. Do I try to see God in others?
5. Do I listen to my parents and teachers or do I ignore them?
6. Have I made fun of my brothers and sisters or my classmates?
7. Am I selfish at school, do I share what I have with others?
8. When I am angry, do I say or do things to hurt whoever has hurt me?
9. Do I say, "I'm sorry" to the person I have hurt and "I forgive you" to the person who has hurt me?
10. Do I play fair or do I ever cheat at school or games?
11. Have I taken something that does not belong to me?

## First Holy Communion Retreat

Tuesday, March 4, 2025	<b>St. Christina School will be during the School Day</b>	St. Christina Church, Parish Center, Gym
Tuesday, March 4, 2025	Communion Information Session 6PM-6:30PM	St. Christina Church
Tuesday, March 4, 2025	<b>Religious Education Retreat 6:30PM-7:30PM</b>	St. Christina Church, Parish Center, Gym

*This Retreat is a part of the preparation for receiving the Eucharist.*

**Religious Education:** This is a mandatory Retreat for your child and you. We encourage that both parents attend, however, we also understand if there are other children at home who need supervision. This Retreat is designed to help teach your child the meaning of Eucharist. There are several activity stations each offering a different yet related experience.

**St. Christina School:** This is a mandatory Retreat for your child. The school will conduct the retreat during the school day with the St. Christina staff. The Communion Informational Meeting at 6PM will be a brief review of how Communion will work, what to expect, and answer any questions.

## St. Christina First Holy Communion Practice and Mass

<b>10 AM COMMUNION</b>		
Thursday May 8, 2025	<b>Holy Communion Practice</b> <b>10AM Communion Group for St. Christina Students</b> Communicant and Parent <b>5pm-6:30pm</b>	St. Christina Church
Saturday May 10, 2025	<b>Holy Communion Mass 10:00am</b> <b>10AM Communion Group St. Christina Students</b> Holy Communion Pictures from 8:30 am – 9:30 am Holy Communion Pictures 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.	St. Christina Church
<b>1 PM COMMUNION</b>		
Thursday May 8, 2025	<b>Holy Communion Practice</b> <b>1PM Communion Group for Religious Education</b> Communicant and Parent <b>6:30pm-8pm</b>	St. Christina Church
Saturday May 10, 2025	<b>Holy Communion Mass 1PM</b> <b>1PM Communion Group for Religious Education</b> Holy Communion Pictures from 11:30am – 12:30pm Or Holy Communion Pictures from 2pm-3pm	St. Christina Church, Gym

**At least one parent must be at the practice with the communicant.** Your child will be better prepared and understand what to do at the Communion Celebration so please have them present for their practice time. Important information is provided and final details explained so it is important for both parent and child to attend.

## Seating for Communion

You will receive your Communion seating assignment at the Communion Information Meeting, which is on March 4, 2025 at 6PM in St. Christina Church. Communicants will sit with their parents or guardians. If the child would prefer to have their Godparents or someone else sit with them, they are allowed 2 adults. There will be 2 Communicants per pew. Each Communicant will sit on the end of the pew. Seating will look like this:

Communicant, Parent, Parent

Parent, Parent, Communicant

## Communion Protocol

After all the communicants and their 2 adults receive communion, all other guests will be invited to receive the sacrament. Please remind those that are not Catholic to not receive the host. They are welcome to come up to the priest and receive a blessing, by crossing their arms over their chest.

## Dress Attire for First Holy Communion

### Boys

White shirt  
Choice of tie  
Dark pants  
Dark dress shoes - no sandals  
Suit coat optional

### Girls

White dress and veil  
White gloves – optional for **pictures only**  
White socks  
White shoes – no sandals or flip-flops

## Photographs

Art Lynn Photography will be taking professional pictures in the parish center the day of Holy Communion. There will be a fee sheet and order form sent home later before Communion. The completed order form and payment should be brought with you to the photo session on First Communion day.

***During the Mass, the photographer will take a beautiful picture of every child receiving Holy Communion. There will also be a professional video taken during the Mass. This picture and video are a gift from St. Christina Parish.*** If you have any specific questions regarding the purchase of pictures, please contact Art Lynn Photography directly at 708-425-8080.

Photo Session Times: You may come to photos at the time that best fits your schedule.

Holy Communion Pictures from 8:00AM – 9:30AM

Holy Communion Pictures 11:30AM – 12:30PM

Holy Communion Pictures 2PM – 2:45PM

**St. Christina Parish**  
**2023-2024 First Holy Communion Calendar**

Date	Event	Location
Tuesday, October 1, 2024	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Reconciliation &amp; Communion Informative Meeting at 6pm</b></p> Parents & Communicants meeting regarding the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Communion	St. Christina Church
Sunday October 27, 2024	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Second Grade Mass at 10:30am</b></p> Honoring all children preparing for Reconciliation and Holy Communion	St. Christina Church
Tuesday, November 12, 2024	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Reconciliation for Parents and Communicants</b></p> for 10am Communion Group 5:30-6:30pm For 1pm Communion Group 7-8pm	St. Christina Church
Tuesday, March 4, 2025	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Communion Retreat for St. Christina School</b></p> During the School Day	St. Christina Church, Parish Center, Gym
Tuesday, March 4, 2025	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Communion Information Meeting at 6pm</b></p> St. Christina Parents and Religious Education Parents and Communicants (RE Retreat will begin right after)	St. Christina Church
Tuesday, March 4, 2025	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Communion Retreat for Religious Education at 6:30pm</b></p> Communicant and Parent(s)	St. Christina Church, Parish Center, Gym
Thursday, May 8, 2025	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Holy Communion Practice for Parents &amp; Communicants</b></p> For 10am St. Christina Communion Group 5pm-6:30pm For 1pm Religious Education Communion Group 6:30-8pm	St. Christina Church
Saturday May 10, 2025	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>St. Christina School Holy Communion Mass 10:00am</b></p> Holy Communion Pictures from 8:30 am – 9:30 am Or Holy Communion Pictures from 11:30am-12:30 pm	St. Christina Church, Gym
Saturday May 10, 2025	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Religious Education Holy Communion Mass 1:00pm</b></p> Holy Communion Pictures from 11:30pm-12:30pm Or Holy Communion Pictures from 2:00pm-3:00pm	St. Christina Church, Gym



**St. Christina Parish  
Communion Information Form**

**A COPY OF YOUR CHILD'S BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE MUST BE ATTACHED  
TO THIS FORM.**

In accordance with the Archdiocese of Chicago, it is **required** that the information requested below is verified and recorded prior to Reception of the Sacrament. All areas of this form must be completed in full. Please print clearly.

Child's Full Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last) (Middle) (First)

City of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ M/F Country \_\_\_\_\_

**BAPTISMAL INFORMATION**

Please provide a copy of the Baptismal Certificate with this completed form.

Child's Name on Baptismal Cert. \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Baptism: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ City of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Church of Baptism \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN INFORMATION**

Father's First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mother first name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Maiden Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE completed this entire form. Attach a copy of your child's Baptismal Certificate This form must be returned on **December 1, 2024**. St. Christina students, turn this into your teacher. Religious Education students, turn this into your RE teacher or the rectory. Thank you.

**SPECIAL REQUESTS FOR ST. CHRISTINA COMMUNION**

Dear Parents,

Please fill this form out ONLY if this applies to you. This must be turned in no later than February 1, 2025. If you have special request needs for a member of your family at the Communion Mass on May 10, 2025, we are now in need of that request so seating charts can be prepared. Please turn into your teacher or scan and email directly to Pam Waldrom at pamwaldrom.stchristinare@gmail.com

God bless,  
Pam Waldrom  
Coordinator of Religious Education

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**Special Needs Request for Communion Mass**

Communicants Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mass Time: 10AM 1PM

1) Yes, I will need special seating for wheelchairs or those disabled. Please explain:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2) There is another Communicant that is an extended family member and both families request to be seated together.

Name of other Child: \_\_\_\_\_

*Check here if you have twins or more than one child is making Communion\_\_\_\_\_ . Seating will remain the same format, but you will have the option of 2 additional adults sit in the pew:*

PEW: Communicant, Adult, Adult Adult, Adult, Communicant – All one family

3) Does your communicant need a Gluten Free Host. \_\_\_\_\_ Does any other family members that will be invited need a gluten free host? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_

Other, special situation. Please explain:

\_\_\_\_\_