



**St. Padre Pio Parish**  
**Reconciliation and First Holy Communion**  
**Sacrament Preparation**  
*Registration Package*  
**2023-2024**



We are very happy that your child is preparing to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion at St. Padre Pio Parish. Please take some time to read through the registration package and mark all pertinent dates in your calendar. Before registering for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion, please ensure that:

- Your child is in Grade 2 or older.
- Your child is baptized in the Roman Catholic Faith.
- If your child has not been baptized in the Roman Catholic Faith or not baptized at all, please call the parish office and speak with Fr. George as soon as possible.

If you have any questions, please contact [stpadrepio.sacraments@gmail.com](mailto:stpadrepio.sacraments@gmail.com). Please note that this email is monitored by volunteers. If you require immediate assistance, please contact the Parish Office at (905) 893-7879. Thank you for your continued support.

## REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. Attend the **Reconciliation and First Communion Parent Information Meeting** on Wednesday, September 13, 2023 at 7:30 PM at St. Padre Pio Church.
2. Complete the **2023-2024 Reconciliation and First Communion Registration Form**, which can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3CKs1Eu>
3. Please confirm the spelling of all entries filled out on the registration form.
4. Bring the following items to the parish office, **no later than Friday, November 10, 2023**.
  - The completed **checklist** (*found on the last page of this package*).
  - A **COPY of your child's Baptismal Certificate**. Originals will not be accepted.
  - Payment of \$50** (cash or cheque payable to St. Padre Pio Parish; Memo: 2023-2024 First Communion - *Your Child's Name*)

## IMPORTANT DATES

### Reconciliation and First Holy Communion Parent Information Meeting

Wednesday, September 13, 2023 at 7:30 PM      Location: St. Padre Pio Church

### Reconciliation Celebrations

The Reconciliation Celebrations will be held at St. Padre Pio Church.

Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 6:30 PM      Pope Francis School

Thursday, February 29, 2024 at 6:30 PM      St. Stephen, St. Padre Pio & St. Andrew Schools

*Students in Public and Private Schools have the option to attend either date.*

### First Communion Rehearsals

The First Communion Rehearsals will be held at St. Padre Pio Church. Parents/Guardians must attend the rehearsal with their children.

Monday, March 4, 2024 at 6:00 PM      *Students who attended Monday Catechism Classes*

Thursday, March 7, 2024 at 6:00 PM      *Students who attended Thursday Catechism Classes*

## RECONCILIATION AND COMMUNION REQUIREMENTS

The Archdiocese of Toronto requires that students complete a certain degree of preparation in the school, home and Parish before receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. Below are the requirements outlined and explained.

1. Children must attend Sunday Mass regularly with their parents or guardians.
2. Students will be required to **complete a Weekly Reflection Question, and bring the completed task with them to Mass each weekend.** There will be a box available for students to place the completed reflection.
3. Attendance is required at all classes, the Reconciliation celebration, rehearsal, and First Communion. Students must attend all classes. If one or more class(es) are missed, you and your child will be asked to attend a meeting with Fr. George.
4. Children are expected to have learned the basic prayers (Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be and, Act of Contrition) by their First Reconciliation. Parents are encouraged to aid their children by setting an example, praying as a family at home, before meals, at bedtime, at other special times, and praying the Rosary.

## RECONCILIATION AND COMMUNION PREPARATION CLASSES

**All classes will be held at St. Padre Pio Catholic Elementary School from 6:00 - 6:45 PM on the dates listed below.** Students have the **option to attend the Monday or Thursday session.** It is mandatory for students to attend one class a week. If one or more class(es) are missed, you and your child will be asked to attend a meeting with Fr. George.

In the event that our YCDSB permit is cancelled due to inclement weather, students will be expected to attend virtually via Google Meet. This virtual option will only take place if school buses are cancelled at our permit location. All other classes must be attended in-person.

Session	Class Option #1	Class Option #2	Topic
1	Monday, January 15, 2024	Thursday, January 18, 2024	Why Am I Here? - We Are Part of God's Family
2	Monday, January 22, 2024	Thursday, January 25, 2024	Preparing for the Sacrament of Reconciliation & Celebrating Reconciliation
3	Monday, January 29, 2024	Thursday, February 1, 2024	The Last Supper & The Death and Resurrection of Jesus
4	Monday, February 5, 2024	Thursday, February 8, 2024	The Liturgy of the Mass
5	Monday, February 12, 2024	Thursday, February 15, 2024	The Sacrament of Holy Communion & Receiving the Eucharist

## FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CELEBRATION DATES

The First Communion Celebrations will be held at St. Padre Pio Church. Parents/Guardians and children should arrive at the church one hour before the Mass. Seating will be reserved for the children and parents only. Other children must sit with extended family members. Seating will not be reserved for extended family members.

Saturday, April 6, 2024	11:30 AM	Pope Francis School # 1
Saturday, April 6, 2024	2:00 PM	Pope Francis School # 2
Saturday, April 20, 2024	2:00 PM	St. Padre Pio School
Sunday, April 21, 2024	2:00 PM	St. Stephen School
Sunday, April 28, 2024	2:00 PM	St. Andrew and Public & Private Schools

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FIRST COMMUNION

### **MUST A CHILD RECEIVE THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION BEFORE HE OR SHE CAN RECEIVE FIRST HOLY COMMUNION?**

The Church teaches that it is “the place of parents, as well as the duty of pastors, to take care that children who have reached the use of reason are prepared properly and, after they have made sacramental Confession, are refreshed with this divine food as soon as possible” [canon 914]. The same canon of the Code of Canon Law teaches that it is “for the pastor to exercise vigilance so that children who have not attained the use of reason or whom he judges are not sufficiently disposed do not approach Holy Communion”. In the Archdiocese of Toronto, it is normative that children and adults preparing to receive Holy Communion for the first time also participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation beforehand, as a means to prepare themselves most appropriately, and to inculcate a desire for Reconciliation throughout their life.

### **WHAT IS THE EUCHARIST?**

The Eucharist is another name for Holy Communion or the Lord's Supper. The term comes from the Greek by way of Latin. It means "thanksgiving." When the priest consecrates the bread and wine, its substance becomes the body and blood of Christ. This process is known as transubstantiation. According to the New Testament, the Eucharist was instituted by Jesus Christ during his Last Supper. Days before his crucifixion he shared a final meal of bread and wine with his disciples during the Passover meal. Jesus instructed his followers that the bread was "my body" and the wine was "his blood." He commanded his followers to eat these and "do this in memory of me." The Eucharist is the source and summit of our Catholic faith.

## WHY MUST I TAKE PART IN A PARISH-BASED PROGRAM WHEN I AM ATTENDING A CATHOLIC SCHOOL?

Sacramental preparation in the Archdiocese of Toronto is rooted in three principles:

- All sacraments are ecclesial celebrations, i.e. celebrations of the Church;
- Parents are the primary educators of their children in the ways of faith;
- Catholic schools are an integral part of ongoing Religious Education, including preparation for the sacraments.

There are two types of preparation for sacraments, initial and immediate.

1. **Initial** (ongoing Religious Education) preparation encompasses:
  - Sunday worship;
  - Prayer in the family;
  - Education in a Catholic School system (or equivalent formation in the parish in Catholic doctrine and life-style);
  - Daily living of a Catholic life-style appropriate to one's age and spiritual development
2. **Immediate** preparation is the responsibility of the parents and parish and encompasses:
  - Sunday worship;
  - Prayer in the family;
  - Specific sacramental catechesis on the sacrament being anticipated;
  - Daily living of a Catholic life-style appropriate to one's age and spiritual development.

## HOW CAN PARENTS HELP CHILDREN PREPARE FOR RECONCILIATION?

This is a very important question that requires constant turning to Christ's presence especially in the Sacraments. Like every child, every family is unique. Parents are privileged teachers of the faith in the family, and this profound privilege requires you to 'walk the talk'. Before your child receives the Sacrament of Reconciliation, it's important they understand what it is and why we do it. Spend time talking with your child about this great healing Sacrament. Explain to your children that going to Confession is not about getting into trouble; it's about asking God for forgiveness and receiving God's Grace to do better. Listen to your child's questions and encourage them to learn more by asking more questions. Active participation at Mass on Sundays is always essential. In consultation with our parish, these ideas may help if you do them: being present at your children's parish preparation when appropriate; going to Confession regularly; praying for and with your children and blessing them; loving the Church, the people of God, publicly and privately.

## HOW CAN PARENTS HELP CHILDREN PREPARE FOR FIRST HOLY COMMUNION?

- Go to Sunday Mass with your children. Nothing is more important! Talk about what went on at Mass. Share how special it is to receive Jesus. Make Mass important and a valuable experience & not merely a “gotta go and get it done for the day” experience.
- Pray a special prayer daily as they prepare.
- Take the time to really go through your child’s catechism activities with them after class.
- Make visits to the Blessed Sacrament. Come early to Mass, or stay after, and pray before the Blessed Sacrament. Spend time in the Adoration Chapel
- When passing by a Catholic Church make the Sign of the Cross and say a prayer with your child.
- Talk about how God is working in your life and what the Eucharist means to you. Share the experience of your First Communion, and have grandparents and other family members share their experiences too.
- Discuss how receiving Eucharist every week impacts your life and helps you grow in your relationship with Christ. Read a book on the Eucharist. Help your child to know how to pray after Communion.
- Make it a priority to eat dinner together as a family. This helps them understand more clearly how the Eucharist is the family meal of the Church.
- Pray regularly for a greater love of Christ who is truly present in the Eucharist. For example: Jesus, as I prepare for my First Communion please help me love you more and do your will.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF I MISS A FIRST COMMUNION PREPARATION CLASS?

Enrolling in the Reconciliation and First Communion program means **commitment to taking part in all aspects of the preparation sessions.** If you are sick or have some other serious conflict, contact the coordinator of the program to arrange to make up the session. Absence from one or more classes will result in the candidate and his or her parents or guardians being invited to meet with Fr. George. Candidates who fail to participate without a valid reason may be required to withdraw from the program and delay receiving the sacraments to a later date.



**St. Padre Pio Parish  
Reconciliation and First Communion  
Sacrament Preparation**



***Registration Checklist***

*Please detach this page and bring it with you to the Parish Office*

In order to ensure that your child is successfully registered for Sacrament Preparation at St. Padre Pio Parish, please confirm the following:

- I have completed and submitted the the **2023-2024 Reconciliation and First Communion Registration Form**, which is found here: <https://bit.ly/3CKs1Eu>
- I have confirmed the spelling of all entries filled out on the digital registration form.
- I have brought the following to the parish office prior to **Friday, November 10, 2023:**
  - The completed **checklist** (*this page*).
  - A **COPY of your child's Baptismal Certificate**. Originals will not be accepted.
  - Payment of \$50** (cash or cheque payable to St. Padre Pio Parish; Memo: 2023-2024 Confirmation - *Your Child's Name*)

First Communion Candidate's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian Phone Number(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian Email Address \_\_\_\_\_