



POLICIES REGARDING SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Winchester, VA **St. Bridget's Chapel, Berryville, VA**

Sacramental Preparation Generally

Sacraments are actions of the whole Church and not private devotions (CCC 116). Accordingly, it is the responsibility of the Pastor, in accord with the norms established by the bishop, to provide for the catechesis of all the faithful and to ensure that each Catholic is properly prepared for the reception of the Sacraments (CCC 773-776).

It is the canonical responsibility of the Pastor to determine that all students have been properly prepared for the reception of the Sacraments. Even though Canon Law states the minimal requirements for the reception of the Sacraments, it also provides that pastors are to ensure "suitable preparation" which may take many forms.

Although parents are the primary educators of their children, they are not the only educators of their children. Since the reception of the Sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation are Sacraments of Initiation, they are ecclesial or parish events rather than only personal or private events. For this reason they involve the parish in preparing children for these important sacraments. The parish program, therefore, is an important complement to religious education by the parents in the "sacramental years." It begins to insert a child organically into the life of the Church beyond the family or "domestic church" (*Catechesi Tradendae* 37).

As Saint John Paul II stated, "*It is true that catechesis can be given anywhere, but I wish to stress, in accordance with the desire of very many Bishops, that the parish community must continue to be the prime mover and preeminent place for catechesis...Family catechesis, therefore, precedes, accompanies and enriches all other forms of catechesis*" (*John Paul II Catechesi Tradendae* 67).

The texts in use in our curriculum have been approved by the Diocesan Office of Catechetics and carry the Imprimatur of the Church as well as the certification that they are in conformity with the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Outside the Sacramental Years

If a family wishes to homeschool their children outside the sacramental preparation years, the parents must ensure that the curriculum and texts are identical or equivalent to those in use by the parish religious education program. If they are not, the Pastor or Director of Religious Education may give approval.

If a family chooses to homeschool their children in the non-sacramental years, the family must still register the student with the Religious Education Office so that we can be assured that religious instruction is occurring outside the “sacramental years.”

During the Sacramental Years

All students of the parish are subject to the same requirements of attendance at all classes and specific prerequisites (Confession before First Holy Communion, interviews, etc. before Confirmation), whether the students are attending public or private schools or are being homeschooled in other years.

Confirmation in the Extraordinary Form

Any family wishing to participate in the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Extraordinary Form when offered by the Bishop, must complete all the prerequisites of our two year Confirmation program before they can be certified as properly prepared by the Pastor.

As approved on August 3, 2015 by Rev. Paul F. deLadurantaye, S.T.D.
Diocesan Secretary for Religious Education and the Sacred Liturgy


Rev. Stanley J. Krempa
Pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus

7/27/2015
Date