

## **FIRST EUCHARIST INFORMATION LETTER**

September 2006

Dear Parent:

The purpose of this letter is to give you some important information regarding your child's First Eucharist.

- All of the First Eucharist celebrations are held in the context of Sunday liturgies (including the Saturday 5 PM vigil liturgy). Because Sunday is the day of the resurrection, it is the basis for our new life in Christ. The Eucharist is a sacrament of initiation into this "new life" of Jesus and it is most appropriate to celebrate this sacrament on Sunday. In addition, sacraments of initiation are parish events. On Sunday, the parish community gathers to give thanks and praise to God. Since our children are being initiated into the Catholic community, it is essential that the community be present.
- In 2007, St Gerard Majella Parish will celebrate First Eucharist on the weekends of April 21/22, April 28/29, May 5/6 during the Saturday 5:00pm and Sunday 9:00am and 11:00am Masses. Using a **random lottery** system, your child's session, or your Home-Taught child will be assigned a date and a time for First Eucharist. These assignments are made in December. A schedule with rehearsal and celebration dates will be mailed to you at the end of December. ***We are unable to give you a celebration date before that time, and we appreciate your patience in waiting for this schedule.***
- The Rite of Continued Growth will be celebrated during liturgies the weekend of November 25/26, 2006. In this Rite, we recognize that your child is being called by God to experience God's love in the sacraments. This Rite of Continued Growth is the public pronouncement that your child is preparing to enter a relationship with God that is ritualized in the Church Community's sacramental life. Your son or daughter will be assigned a liturgy along with the other members of his or her session in which to participate in the Rite of Continued Growth. I hope you plan to attend this important part of your child's preparation for First Eucharist.
- We ask that you include a wallet-sized photo of your child with the name slip, which will be found on the following page. These photos of the First Eucharist children will be cut up and made into a collage, which will be displayed in the lobby during our First Eucharist celebrations.

There are some expectations during your child's final year of preparation for First Eucharist:

1. Your child will begin sacramental preparation for Eucharist during the week of January 8, 2007. Please review the material that your child brings home from his or her session.

2. First Eucharist Parent and Child meetings will be held on Tuesday, March 13 or Wednesday, March 14, 2007. You will receive a notice about this in the coming months. It is at this important meeting that you and your child will receive the First Eucharist banner kit.
3. First Eucharist rehearsal prior to your child's First Eucharist liturgy is mandatory. Please plan to attend.
4. It is imperative that you bring your child to Mass regularly as he or she completes their final preparation for the sacrament. Your child should be familiar with the Mass and able to participate in the Mass if even on a minimal basis. Your child also needs contact with the worshipping community in order to understand what it is to be a Catholic Christian. In addition, once your child receives Eucharist, he or she has an obligation to be present at our Eucharistic celebrations on a regular basis.

The children will be preparing for the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance, Confession) this year, as well as First Eucharist.

We will be preparing a First Eucharist certificate for your child. Please complete the form at the end of this letter and send it back to us by **February 1, 2007**. We will issue the certificate EXACTLY as you print the information on the form, so be sure to include a middle name if you want one on the certificate, and the last name.

There is a First Eucharist fee of \$30.00. This helps defray the cost of banners, flowers, copyrights, printing, certificates, etc. Please submit this fee to the Office of Christian Formation with the certificate form, by **February 1, 2007**. If this fee is a problem for you, please do not hesitate to call me to make other arrangements.

If you have any other questions or concerns, please call me at the Office of Christian Formation. I will be happy to help you in any way I am able.

Sincerely,

Frances Bursztyn, Coordinator  
Christian Formation Program

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Please PRINT your child's name clearly, EXACTLY as you would like it to appear on the First Eucharist certificate. The Office of Christian Formation must receive this form by **February 1, 2007**. If we do not receive the form by 2/1/07, we will use your child's name as it appears on the mailing label.

First Eucharist  
Child's  
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Sacrament Fee of \$30.00  
included with name slip \_\_\_\_\_

Wallet sized photo  
included with name slip \_\_\_\_\_