

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Will the children have a chance to try the host?

Yes. At our First Communion practice, children will practice receiving unconsecrated hosts. Please let us know in advance of any food allergies you think might be an issue for your child with regard to receiving Communion. Please note that we do have low gluten hosts for any child or other person receiving during the Mass, if this is the case for your child or any Catholic attending the Mass with you that day, please contact us at least a week prior to Mass.

### Is there a dress code we need to follow?

#### GIRLS

- White Dress that is floor or knee length. Straps must be a minimum of 2" in width. *(No spaghetti straps, halter or strapless dresses will be accepted without a jacket or sweater worn over.)*
- White veil or floral wreath
- White tights or socks *(optional)*
- White shoes or white sandals
- White gloves *(optional)*

#### BOYS

- Suit or pants in black, navy, or dark grey *(no wild designs on jackets)*
- White shirts
- Tie – dark to match pants *(no wild designs)*
- Shoes – black or brown
- Arm Ribbon/Band *(optional)*

NO HATS OF ANY KIND CAN BE WORN IN CHURCH

**After the First Communion Mass, please make sure to take your child's banner home along with their First Communion certificate. These will be handed out at the end of Mass.**

## Holy Rosary † St. Mary's Catholic Church Community Hilmar & Stevinson

### First Communion Parent Guide



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Our **FIRST RECONCILIATION-FIRST COMMUNION** program is carefully designed to uphold the quality guidelines set for the by the Catechism of the Catholic Church, as well as considering the needs of families. This program is a two-year program broken down into two years of instruction required for Sacramental Preparation in the Diocese of Fresno, of which we are a part, and in our parish.

### **FIRST YEAR OF PREPARATION:**

The focus is on the importance of community, the gathering of God's people for teaching, praise and worship and prayer. God is depicted as a loving father and creator of all things. The children learn that they are the recipients of God's love and explore a way in which they can be the loving hands of God within their families and to others.

### **SECOND YEAR OF PREPARATION:**

Class further delves further into the mystery of God's love for us as is evident in the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus, for the salvation of all those who will accept him. It is in this realization that we present the sinful nature of man and the need for forgiveness that is present in the Sacrament of Reconciliation because of God's infinite mercy that enables us to be forgiven, the children learn about salvation through the new covenant that was established through the death and resurrection of Jesus. It is in Jesus; body that was broken and his blood that was poured out, that the children gain their heritage in eternal life. Thus, First Communion is celebrated as a response to Jesus' command to remember Him and proclaim His victory over sin and resurrection into life.

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### **FIRST COMMUNION MASS PRACTICE**

Practices are in the new church and at least one parent or adult needs to attend with each child. During the practice, we will walk through the Mass and children will practice receiving the host. The host is not consecrated for practice.

### **BANNERS**

Each child makes a banner. Banners are due no later than April 29<sup>th</sup>. We will provide templates for the banners but encourage each family to be creative and put a personal touch to theirs. A banner handout will be provided with more information.

### **BAPTISMAL CANDLE**

At the end of the First Communion Mass, each child will light their Baptismal Candle (*given to them at their baptism*) and process out of the church. If you cannot find your child's baptismal candle, make sure to purchase one beforehand so your child has it with them.

### **PICTURES/VIDEOS**

We welcome families to take pictures BEFORE or AFTER Mass. In order to preserve the sacred nature of the Mass, no photos or videos are to be taken during the Mass, which begins when the children process in and ends after the end of the sending forth hymn. Please make sure to share our photography guidelines with everyone who is attending. As a courtesy, the Director of Religious Education will be seated in the front pew and will discreetly photograph each child as they receive their First Communion. These photos will then be emailed to the parents.

Stephen Browning will be taking professional photographs of the children and/or families before each Mass. An order form will be provided to place your request for pictures. Order forms are due no later than April 29<sup>th</sup>. Once photo orders are received picture times will be slotted for each participant and/or family. A group photo will be taken 15 minutes BEFORE the Mass. If you are not taking individual or family photos, please make sure that your child is at the church 20 minutes before the Mass times so they can be included in the group photo.

Fr. Isaque will be available to take photos with your child immediately after the Mass. To save time, the Director will also be taking photographs at this time and will email these to the families as well. This also enables families to take photos with Father and have everyone included.