

POLICY 2.3.1 Catechetical Norms for First Reconciliation

- According to Church law and practice, (Canon 914) the sacrament of Reconciliation must be received before the child receives the Eucharist for the first time. This is normally to be prepared for and celebrated in grade two, or at about age seven.
- The child is to be assured that this sacrament is not fearsome. The concepts of sin and harm to others are easily understood by children, who have an innate sense of justice and harmony.
- It is understood that First Reconciliation is celebrated in the church in an atmosphere that is peaceful and welcoming for children. The celebration of the sacrament should include a communal celebration with individual confession and absolution. This is also an ideal occasion to provide opportunity for parents and family members to celebrate the sacrament at the same time.
- Children in our Catholic schools are to be offered the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year, preferably during the season of Lent. This may happen either at the school or in the parish church.
- Children are to be reminded that as they receive other sacraments in the Church (First Communion, Confirmation, Marriage, Sacrament of the Sick, etc.), the celebration of Reconciliation is integral to their moral and spiritual readiness to receive these.
- The program and text for the preparation for this sacrament in the archdiocese is We Prepare for Reconciliation, published by Novalis (June 30, 2009). Other suggested resources and support materials are available from the Diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis.

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