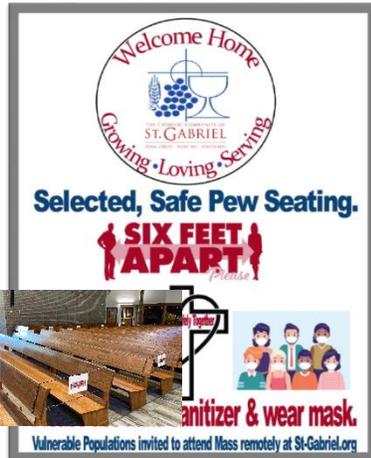


FAQ Regarding First Communion

What is the parish doing to help reduce the spread of Covid19? We are currently following the guidelines received from the Diocese and our Governor.



We ask that everyone wear a mask, if able, and use hand sanitizer upon entering Church and after receiving Communion.

In an effort to follow social distancing guidelines, we have marked off every other pew in the church and sanitize after each Mass.

There will be a single line for Communion and we ask that you allow for social distancing while in line. We have taken other steps to keep everyone safe.

We will continue to monitor the guidelines and make changes where needed. One thing that has remained a constant throughout this entire time is that things change, sometimes daily. We need to stay flexible and be open to what is best for our community. We will certainly keep you up to date as we go along.

[Click here](#) to watch a video of Sunday Mass. Please attend Mass with your family before First Communion. This will help your family to know what to expect. Please continue to attend Mass after First Communion. That is even more important.

I feel like my child is not prepared for his/her First Communion.... Children learn what they live. The more you attend Mass the deeper they will understand. Although we could not celebrate the First Communion Retreat, the videos we have sent home, your working on the Journal and your family attending Mass will help your child prepare their heart for receiving First Communion and all those which follow. At your child's baptism, you promised to be the first teachers of your child in the ways of the Faith. God chose you as the parent for your child. Do your best to share your faith and all will be well.

My children have not left the house since St. Patrick's Day. They haven't even played with the neighbor kids. We aren't ready to come to church yet... If you haven't left the house and don't feel your family is ready to return to Mass yet, you are welcome to wait until you feel it is time for your child to make their First Communion. There is no time limit on the Sacrament. Just call and we can work something out.

Why aren't we doing the Large Group First Communion Masses?

With Social Distancing, we could only accommodate 16 families in the main part of the church. St. Gabriel has 100 families in our preparation process.

We didn't want to limit the number of family members and guests that could attend the First Communion Mass, so we limited the number of communicants at each Sunday Mass with unlimited guests for each family at Mass.

Sacraments are communal and take place in the context of the parish. Although our children attend various faith formation programs (Day School, PSR, Good Shepherd) Sacraments are celebrated in the context of the parish community. We hope that families will continue to celebrate Eucharist in the context of the parish. First Communion is not a one and done. First Communion is the beginning of weekly Mass attendance and Communion.

Why couldn't we just have added more Masses and had a couple of smaller 'Large Group' communions with just the First Communion Families?

We really can't schedule any more Masses due to sanitizing the Church in between Masses. Again, sacraments are celebrated in the context of the parish community.

Our children wanted to be with their friends when they make their First Communion. Your child can be with his or her friends as they support their friends by attending the Mass at which they make their First Communion. The best part of receiving your First Communion, is that your second and third Communions can be with your friend's at their First Communion.

I'm afraid that a mask will terrify my child...Masks are requested by the Health Department (in stores, gatherings and other public places). It takes some practice to wear the masks. As your family slowly ventures out of the house, your child will become accustomed to wearing a mask.

How do we receive Communion with a Mask?

[Click Here](#) to view a video on how to receive communion with a mask on.

Will all the First Communion Masses be Video recorded? We don't have the staff to video each Mass. We are encouraging people to come to Mass when they feel ready.

When will we have our religious articles blessed? There will be a special blessing of the First Communicants and any religious articles during the final blessing at Mass.

What are the First Eucharist Dress Guidelines?

Boys wear dress pants, dress shoes, and a shirt and tie (jacket is optional).

Girls wear a white dress, dress shoes, tights or dress socks (veil and gloves are optional; if wearing gloves, please remove before coming up for communion).

At this time, facemasks are required.

When can we take Pictures?

As usual we will ask you and your guests not to take pictures during Mass so that you can participate in the sacredness of the Liturgy and receive Jesus into your hearts.

You may take pictures at the Shrine before and after Mass or at any time. Currently, no pictures can be taken in the church before or after Mass due to the need to sanitize the church between Masses.

There will be a dedicated time that the church will be available each month for pictures. You can sign up for pictures in the Church [HERE](#). The need to sanitize the church requires us to schedule all picture times.

Again, if you have any questions, please reply to this email or call 440-352-8282 ext 105.

Know that you remain in our prayers.

Peace,
Deacon Bob