

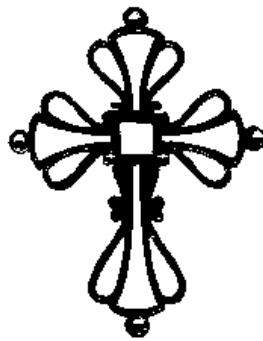
First Communion  
Parent Packet  
2016



A prayer for those who are preparing  
children for their First Holy Communion

O Jesus, you love us with such a great love  
that you give us the indescribable gift of the Holy  
Eucharist,  
Stir up within us with a burning enthusiasm to glorify you  
by preparing worthily the little children  
who are to approach your holy table for the first time.  
Protect, O Sacred Heart of Jesus,  
these young souls from the assaults of evil,  
strengthen their faith,  
increase their love and endow them  
with all the virtues that will make them worthy to receive  
you.

Amen



# Meeting Agenda

- I. Opening Prayer
- II. History/Purpose of the Eucharist
- III. Faith Sharing Group for Parents
  - a. interested? Contact Miss Lee  
Marybethl@mountcarmelschool.net
- IV. Retreat—Friday, April 29; 10:00 to 2:00
- V. Family Letter
  - a. DUE: Thursday, April 21
  - b. \*Please keep this a SECRET\*
- VI. Details of April 30<sup>th</sup>
  - a. Individual Lifetouch pictures @ 9:00 a.m. in front of fountain **\*\*Lifetouch order forms will be distributed the week prior to First Communion\*\***
  - b. Students need to be in room @ 9:30 a.m. sharp
  - c. Mass @ 10:00 a.m.
- VII. Dress Code: See packet for details
- VIII. Reception—Hosted by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade
- IX. May Crowning—May 4<sup>th</sup>
  - a. Come to school in communion outfit; bring uniform to change into
  - b. 2<sup>nd</sup> Graders will be in procession

# A Brief Introduction to the sacrament of Eucharist

Eucharist is our coming together as a community to “give thanks” to our loving God in Jesus. In the Eucharist, Jesus living and present gives himself to us under the appearance of bread and wine. In receiving him we become one with him and all believers.

Eucharist is the center of our faith as believers in Jesus. It is the great act of worship for the God we love, given to us by Jesus at the Last Supper. The word “Eucharist” means “thanksgiving.”

Through the Eucharist, we are one with Jesus, all members of the Body of Christ. Gathering together is a reminder that Jesus is present with us, uniting us as brothers and sisters. Eucharist is a meal, spiritual and emotional nourishment taken in the company of one another.

Jesus’ sacrifice of the Cross, his total gift of self in love to God for us, is made present in each Eucharistic celebration. In the Eucharist, Jesus is present in his loving offering to God and to us. We can unite our lives with his in our own loving offering to God for others.



# First Communion Retreat

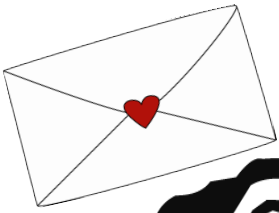
April 29, 2016  
10:00 to 2:00

- At least one adult relative or godparent needs to be present
- Family members and children will participate in station rotations all focused on Eucharist

Detailed schedule of events will be provided on the day of the retreat



# Family Letter



The family letter is a letter that parents and, if you wish, other family members and Godparents write to your children. It is a letter of congratulations and of your feelings to your child during this special time in his/her life.

*These letters will be given to each child during a special time at our retreat, on May 1 Please return the family letters no later than April 21<sup>st</sup>.* It is very important that each child has one, and as we get closer to the date, I may not remember to remind you, so please don't wait until the last minute!

This is a **SECRET** and your child doesn't know anything about these letters. To keep it a secret you can seal them in an envelope with your child's name and then put them in another envelope addressed to me, or you can drop them off in the office and Mrs. Madlem will give them to me.

As always, I appreciate your help during this very special sacrament for your child!

Miss McElfresh



# Family Banner

This year, the First Communion Family Banner will be made at home. Please use white felt (9"x12"). Your child's name along with any First Communion symbol should be placed on the center of the banner. Your family name should be written on the bottom. A straw or dowel is used at the top. Any type of ribbon can be used. Add any symbols you would like to make this project significant to your family.

See the next page for symbol ideas. Materials such as puff paint, flowers, photographs, etc. may be used. Craft stores or fabric stores carry these items. Have fun and be creative.



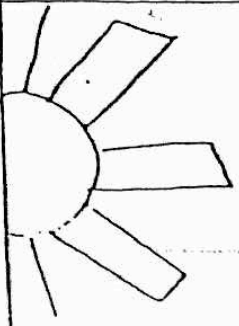
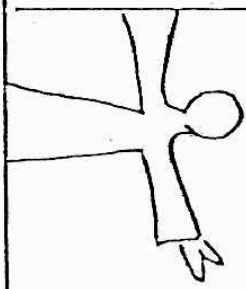
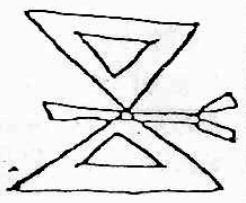
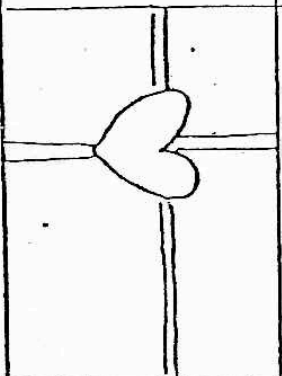
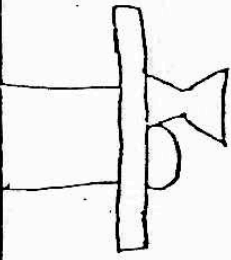
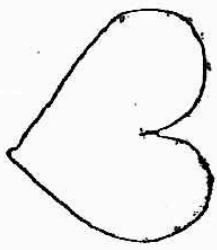
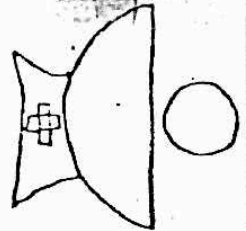
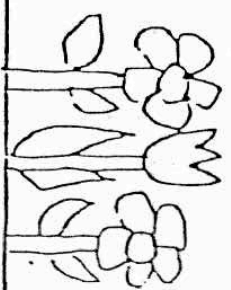
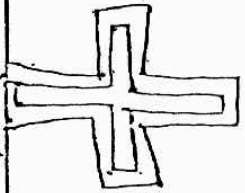
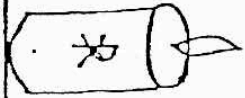
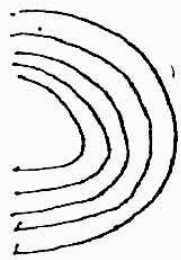
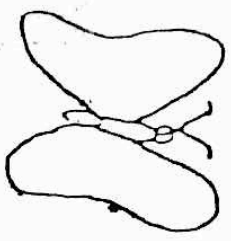
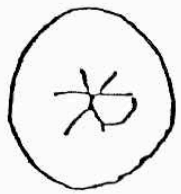
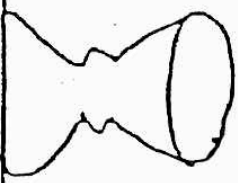
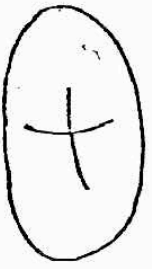
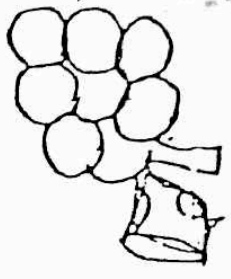
Banners are due to Miss McElfresh  
no later than:

Monday, April 25<sup>th</sup>





# SYMBOLS and IDEAS





# The Big Day!

## First Communion Day—of Details

April 30, 2016

10:00 a.m.

- Individual pictures by Lifetouch at 9:00 a.m. in front of fountain **\*\*Bring form\*\***
- Children need to be in the classroom by 9:30 a.m. sharp!
- Group pictures at 9:45 a.m. by fountain
- Mass will begin promptly at 10:00 a.m.
- All students who have returned the RSVP form will have a part in the Mass, you are responsible for practicing with them at home.
- Seating arrangements are as follows:
  - Find your seat by banner
  - 1 pew for family—student sits at the end, close to the aisle
  - Extra room in the back or side chapel
- Communion will be received by 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students first, then family and friends
- Reception—Hosted by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in the Parish Hall





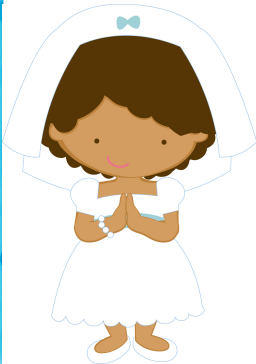
# First Communion Dress Code

## Girls:

- ✧ White dress (any length)
- ✧ White socks or tights
- ✧ White shoes
- ✧ Veils or flowers, hair decorations are fine (use bobby pins to secure)
- ✧ Please no strapless or spaghetti strap dresses (unless covered by a sweater)

## Boys:

- ✧ Suits or nice dress slacks
- ✧ White button down shirts
- ✧ Tie
- ✧ Dress shoes



# What can parents do?

As children prepare for their first Eucharist, their significant adults' own faith in Jesus and understanding of the Eucharist is vital to the children's growth in faith that Jesus is present in the Eucharist.

Here are some suggestions to help you help your child in preparation for his or her first Eucharist:

- **Think about your own experience of Eucharist:** How does Eucharist affect your life? Is it central or somewhere out on the edges? How will you help your child prepare for and celebrate this sacrament to make it a meaningful experience?
- **Eat together:** The celebration of Eucharist happens in the context of a meal. Make every meal an opportunity for sharing and caring.
  - ✧ **Start with a blessing:** If your family has a traditional blessing, use that; otherwise, your child has two different meal blessing that they have used at school!
  - ✧ **Create special meals:** Use your creativity to celebrate special feasts and seasons. When you gather for a meal include mention of something special happening, possibly a special blessing and some symbols of the event
- **Attend Mass together:** Essential to your child's preparation is experience of attending and participating in the Mass. After Mass, talk about what went on and what the readings were about.
- **Share your stories:** Your story is a part of your child's story. Share the memories you have of your First Communion. How did you feel? Where was it? Who was there?
- **Pray together:** Make time each day to pray with your children. Keep it simple but familiar with both memorized prayers and prayers of petition and thanksgiving.
- **Learn together:** Devote some time every few days or each week to reading the Bible together. Make this a special time for quiet and sharing. If your child does not already have a Bible, buy one just for him or her.

# One Final Note from Miss McElfresh

Dear parents,

Thank you so much for allowing me to prepare your children for this very special sacrament. I remember my First Communion very clearly and I feel honored to be a part of this memory for the students. I'm sure that you might have many questions come up over the next several weeks leading up to the big day. Please do not hesitate to contact me any time. I am happy to be of assistance in any way! I wish all of you joy and happiness during this special sacrament with your children.

Kind regards,

Miss McElfresh

