

IMPORTANT NOTES FOR PARENTS

1. Please set up a time for your First Communion Candidate to put his/her handprint on the First Communion Altar Cloth, no later than Thursday, April 27, 2023.
2. The Digital Retreat must be completed by Monday, April 24, 2023.
3. Participating in either the in-person retreat on April 15, 2023 or the digital retreat is a requirement for receiving First Communion.

Dear Parents,

In April of 2020, we created a digital version of our First Communion Retreat families could use at home. The retreat provides you and your children the opportunity to dive deeper into how the Eucharist can take root in our hearts in a new way. It is designed so the whole family can participate. Doing the retreat together as a family gives the Holy Spirit room to speak to you as a family. Sharing and reflecting together can help you connect with each other in a new or different way. Praying together will draw you closer to God and each other.

This retreat was designed with input from parents. These were the most important elements parents suggested to make this activity family-friendly and easy to use.

1. **Provide each family with the ability to do the retreat activities at their own pace.** Families can do the sessions from anywhere as long as they have access to Wi-Fi. No section of the retreat needs to be completed in a single sitting.
2. **No Zoom meetings.** The only media platform employed is YouTube. Video presentations average 4- 7 minutes in length. This ensures your family is not sitting in front of screens for extended periods.
3. **Provide clear instructions, introductions to each session** outlining the concepts to be presented, **discussion prompts and tips for how to make the teaching moments engaging.** Parent notes are detailed. Better to have too much information than not enough. I hope that they will save you from having to do your own research on some of those very imaginative questions kids sometimes ask!
4. **Keep the activities simple.** Make sure the supplies needed for the craft projects can be found in most homes.

Based on the feedback we received from the families who used the retreat, we updated the retreat, and gave new options for families who did the digital retreat in 2020 or 2021.

You will find each session presented as a PDF file, broken down into manageable bite sized pieces. Access the PDF files from our parish website, www.holyfamilyparish.org . Once at the main page, click on Sacraments, choose First Communion from the drop down menu, and look for the First Communion Family Retreat. We hope you and your family will find the Retreat as beneficial as other families who have used the digital version. If you have suggestions for how to improve the experience, let us know. If you have, any questions or concerns please contact Dr. Peg Hanrahan, phanrahan@holyfamilyparish.org or Karen McHale, kmchale@holyfamilyparish.org,

Sincerely,

Dr. Peg

Dr. Peg Hanrahan,
Director of Family & Teen Faith