



Policies of the Diocese of Kansas City ~ St. Joseph

Policy # 120.13

Diocesan Policy for the Celebration of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist

Approved By: Most Reverend Raymond J. Boland, DD

Approved: March 2000

Effective: March 2000

Revised:

The responsibility of providing adequate preparation before reception of the sacraments is spelled out in Canon 777.

The catechesis and celebration of First Reconciliation must precede the catechesis and celebration of First Communion. (cf. Canon 914)

A child is to receive adequate preparation for the sacrament of First Reconciliation before a child receives the catechesis for First Communion. The catechesis of the two sacraments should be distinct and separate from each other so that the uniqueness of each sacrament may be fully celebrated.

The usual preparation for First Reconciliation is in the primary grade levels. The parents of the child are encouraged to participate in the preparation with their child at home and in appropriate family or parent sessions. After the necessary catechesis is completed the sacrament is to be scheduled and celebrated in the local parish. Parents should be encouraged to join their children in celebrating the sacrament of Reconciliation.

The decision about a child's readiness for First Reconciliation is made by the pastor/pastoral administrator, religious educators and parents. If it is determined that a child is not ready, no coercion should be made to keep the child with his/her "group" or "class". This decision is a personal one for the family. If the decision is made to delay the sacrament of Reconciliation then the celebration of First Communion is to be delayed until after first Reconciliation is sacramentally celebrated.

First Communion should also involve separate and distinct preparation for the celebration of this sacrament. Family and parent sessions are encouraged with preparation for the child occurring both at home and in sacramental preparation classes. The celebration is to be scheduled in the local parish at an appropriate liturgical time. If there are concerns about a child's readiness to celebrate this sacrament, again no coercion should be used to keep the child with his/her "class". (cf. Canon 913:1)