

GUIDELINES

REVISED JULY 2025



Sacramental Preparation

For Young
People



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INTRODUCTION

The Guidelines for Sacramental Preparation have been developed to provide Pastors, Pastoral Associates and Catechists in the Diocese of Saskatoon with a framework for preparing children and youth for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation.

Preparing for the Sacraments is an occasion for evangelization and an opportunity to share the joy of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

The Office of Evangelization & Catechesis exists to provide support, resources and training to parish leadership in the delivery of catechetical and initiation processes that are deeply informed by the New Evangelization.

The Directory for Catechesis tells us:

“Catechesis participates according to its own nature in the effort of evangelization, in order that the faith may be supported by an ongoing maturation and express itself in a way of life that must characterize the very being of the disciple of Christ.”

Families, parishes and Catholic Schools each have a specific role in preparing children and youth for the sacraments:

PARENTS

Parents as the primary teachers of faith for their children; it is strongly recommended that parents attend sessions with their child.

PARISHES

Parishes as the church community where sacraments are celebrated and lived.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Catholic Schools as a special venue for religious formation and education.



The Office of Evangelization & Catechesis is committed to assisting those involved in Sacramental Preparation to:

- Provide an experience that will help children, families and parishes to grow in their faith
- Ensure that sacraments are pivotal life changing events for all Catholics
- Encourage missionary discipleship

QUESTIONS? Contact:

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ORDER OF INITIATION

In the Diocese of Saskatoon, the Sacraments of Initiation are celebrated in the following order:

- Baptism
- Eucharist
- Confirmation

Children who are baptized as infants usually receive their First Eucharist around the age of 7 or 8 years. Part of the preparation for First Eucharist includes preparing for and celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation (first Confession).

Grade 6 or age 11 has been established as the normative year for the Sacrament of Confirmation, beginning in 2021.

- For older children who have not been baptized, recommended preparation is the RCIA process adapted for young people. Please call the Office of Evangelization & Catechesis for more information.
- For older children who have been baptized and wish to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation, special consideration should be given to determine how they can best be accommodated. It is important to be sensitive to the unique dynamics of all families.

*"Baptism, the Eucharist, and the sacrament of Confirmation together constitute the '**sacraments of Christian initiation**,' whose unity must be safeguarded. It must be explained to the faithful that the reception of the sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace. For 'by the sacrament of Confirmation, [the baptized] are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.'"*

Catechism of the Catholic Church #1285

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION PROCESS



Information and Registration Session

Sacramental Preparation takes place in the parish where the family worships. When children attend a Catholic School whose associated parish is different than the family's place of worship, the family's parish is responsible for preparing the child.

An information session can be conducted before families register their child in the preparation process. The information session has the following aims:

- Empower and encourage parents to be the primary educators in the faith of their child.
- Illustrate for parents the different ways they can be authentic faith witnesses
- Describe the basics of the sacrament to parents and sponsors
- Explain the process of preparing children for the sacraments
- Outline what is expected from the family and the sponsor
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of the parents, the parish and the Catholic School

Consider holding more than one information session to ensure that you are reaching all parents. Consider advertising the information sessions in:

THE PARISH
Parish Website
Parish Bulletin



THE SCHOOL
School Website
School Newsletter



THE COMMUNITY
Local or community newspaper
Community bulletin boards



"The family is, so to speak, the domestic church. In it parents should by their word and example, be the first preachers of the faith to their children."

Second Vatican Council,
Lumen Gentium, 11



SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION PROCESS



Welcoming Mass

A welcoming Mass is a good way to begin the formal sacramental preparation process and is an opportunity for:

- Children to be introduced to the church community
- Children to receive a blessing from the Priest
- Parish community to offer support and prayers for the children and their families
- Fellowship and welcoming following Mass

Faith Formation

Faith Formation includes religious education through Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and for parishes who are not associated with a Catholic School, catechism classes held in the parish for Kindergarten and up.

*See Recommended Resources for Kindergarten & Up (Appendix A)

Sacramental Preparation is done in the parish and may include:

- 4-6 sessions for Reconciliation, 4-6 sessions for Eucharist and 4-6 sessions for Confirmation
- Resources to be used at home
- Resource material to be used in the sessions
- Retreat (Confirmation Retreats are offered in several rural and urban parishes across the diocese during Lent. Please contact the Office of Evangelization & Catechesis for more information)
- A teaching Mass

*See Recommended Resources for Sacramental Preparation (Appendix A)

Catechesis

We recognize the great responsibility placed upon Catechists who prepare children and families to receive the sacraments and we want to offer support and resources. We want to ensure that Catechists in our Diocese feel equipped and supported in their call to sow the seeds of faith in their students.

TASKS OF CATECHESIS



Catechesis has many dimensions. To help Catechists in imparting thorough, life-giving catechesis, the new **Directory for Catechesis** lists five **Tasks of Catechesis**. All five tasks should be considered in the preparation of children to receive the sacraments.

Leading to Knowledge of Faith

- Introducing and deepening knowledge of Sacred Scripture, of the Church's living tradition and fosters knowledge of the Creed
- Children will learn the symbols of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist; will recognize the Bible as the Word of God; appreciate being actively involved in a gathering

Initiating into the Celebration of the Mystery

- Taking part in and understanding the Liturgy of the Church and the Sacraments
- Children will learn to see the Church as the place of liturgy; appreciate the sacred meaning of symbols

Forming for Life in Christ

- Demonstrating how to walk in the footsteps of Christ through a life of conversion in accordance with the teaching of the Beatitudes
- Children will learn what the Bible says and how to apply it to personal life; appreciate God's forgiveness and know what sin means

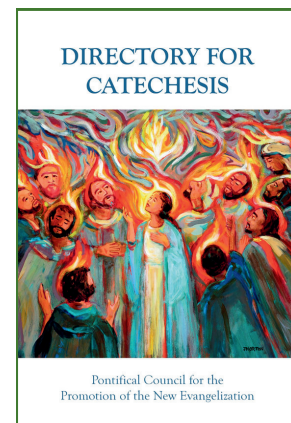
Teaching Prayer

- Experiencing contemplation and prayer, adoration, praise and thanksgiving
- Children will learn prayers as well as responses at Mass

Introduction to Community Life

- Professing, celebrating, expressing and living in community, as an integral part of Christian life, of witness and evangelization
- Children will experience and develop a sense of belonging to the Church; experience a sense of ecclesial co-responsibility, contributing as active participants to building up the community and as missionary disciples

On March 23, 2020, Pope Francis approved the new Directory for Catechesis which we have the honor and the responsibility of presenting to the Church. It represents a further stage in the dynamic renewal that catechesis carries out.





TASKS OF CATECHESIS

see Directory for Catechesis, paragraphs 79–89

Passing on the Faith

- The five tasks of catechesis are universal. The implementation can be adapted to suit the culture, demographics and circumstances of the children being catechized.
- Catechesis must be age appropriate, welcoming and motivating
- Jesus Christ is the teacher; catechists are his disciples leading children to a deeper relationship and intimacy with Him
- The role of a catechist is that of a facilitator
- The Holy Spirit is our Helper – call on Him!
- The most powerful way catechists sow the seeds of faith is by being authentic living witnesses of their own faith and sharing stories about their personal relationship with Jesus and how he is working in their lives
- Programs should assist the faithful in preparing to receive the sacraments fruitfully
- Care should be taken to ensure that programs are accessible to all



"§2. According to their respective roles in the Church, both pastors of souls and the other members of Christ's faithful have a duty to ensure that those who ask for the sacraments are prepared for their reception. This should be done through proper evangelisation and catechetical instruction..."
(Canon Law 843)

CATECHIST SUPPORT AND TRAINING

The Office of Evangelization & Catechesis and Rural Catechesis can provide parishes with:

- recommendations for resource materials
- practical tools and ideas
- spiritual support, prayers and retreats
- training workshops

Training and Faith Formation Workshops: Full-day and half-day workshops are available upon request. Please call at least three weeks in advance to book sessions in your parish. Whenever possible, workshops will be held in a central location in a deanery. Every effort will be made to ensure that every parish will have the opportunity to take part in a workshop.



MAKING FAITH FUN

Sacramental Preparation can be fun!

- practical hands-on sessions
- catechists will take home one or two tools that are session ready
- learn how to engage parents to be the primary teachers of faith in their family



FAITH FILLERS

Be filled with the Holy spirit for your journey as a catechist

- focused on your personal formation and deepening your faith
- catechists will have the opportunity for reflection on the Word and our Baptismal call to be disciples of Christ



CATECHIST CONNECTION

A one-hour digital gathering designed to build community and foster connections among catechists through out the diocese. Each session includes a brief teaching on a relevant topic to enhance your ministry, followed by open discussion and the sharing of best practices. Together, we support and strengthen one another in our catechetical efforts.

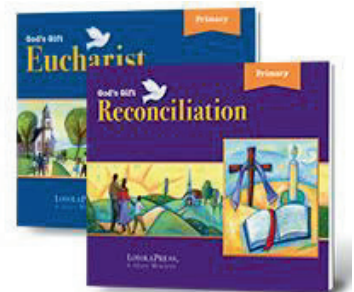
To inquire about a workshop, call Marilyn 306-659-5836 or Quin 306-659-6857

FIRST RECONCILIATION & FIRST COMMUNION

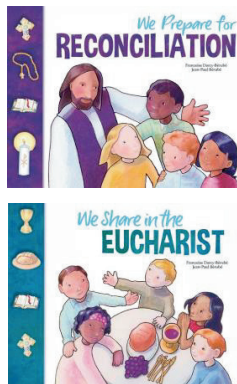
APPENDIX A: LIST OF RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

The following resources can be ordered through the Office of Evangelization & Catechesis

God's Gift: Reconciliation and Eucharist offers powerful, meaningful lessons to help children and their parents understand, prepare for, and celebrate the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. Engaging children's hearts and minds through prayer opportunities, active learning and compelling videos, God's Gift leads children to a life of faith and discipleship.



The following resources can be ordered through Universal Church Supplies
437 Second Ave. N. Saskatoon SK S7K 2C1 306-384-1924 www.ucsask.com



This newly revised edition of **We Share in the Eucharist** and **We Prepare for Reconciliation** features attractive, contemporary new design, built around colour-coded, easy-to-follow themes. Still present are the short, thought-provoking, colourful sidebars that invite children, parents, and catechists to enter the mysteries of faith more deeply, to pray more often, and to experience the sacrament of The Holy Eucharist more fully as joy-filled encounters with Jesus Christ. Includes additional 16-page pullout Family Guide

GROWING UP CATHOLIC is an eResource product that includes six sessions of preparation for First Eucharist and six sessions for First Reconciliation. It is designed to coach parents alongside their children, utilizing effective handouts, explicitly bringing the faith home and helps children and parents enter into a deeper relationship with Christ.



For information on how to order Growing-Up Catholic, please visit:
<http://www.growingupcatholic.com/sacrament-prep-sessions.html>

CONFIRMATION

The following resources can be ordered through the Office of Evangelization & Catechesis:



Confirmed in the Spirit is a comprehensive, flexible, Confirmation preparation program that speaks with relevance to the hearts and lives of young people. Through Scripture, prayer, in-depth content, and age-appropriate opportunities for reflective and active experiences, **Confirmed in the Spirit** prepares young people for Confirmation and the next phase of their lives as Catholics.

The following resources can be ordered through Universal Church Supplies
437 Second Ave. N. Saskatoon SK S7K 2C1 306-384-1924 www.ucsask.com

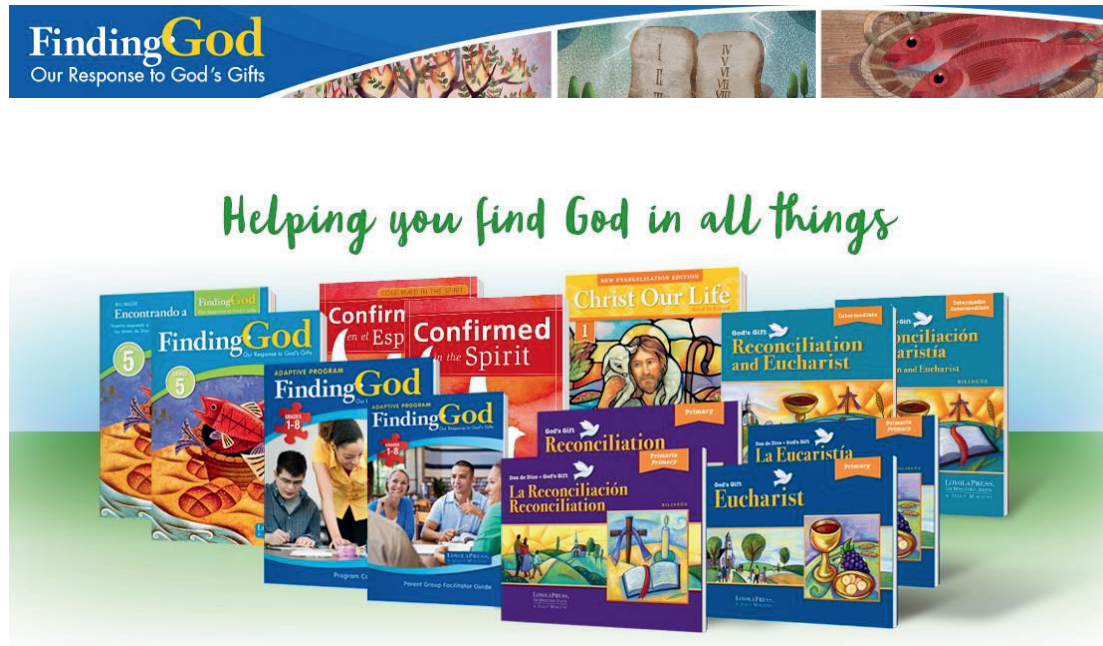


A contemporary guide for parish catechists who are preparing candidates for Confirmation and provides everything the catechist needs to deliver the program with ease and confidence. This program includes six sessions on living out a Christian life and the sacraments with an end-of-session retreat. Candidate's book leads young people through the major principles of their faith and their vocation to live the faith and serve God's people.

To order materials, please contact Marilyn Jackson 306-659-5836
mjackson@rcdos.ca OR Quin Kleiboer 306-659-5857 qkleiboer@rcdos.ca

ONGOING FAITH FORMATION FOR CHILDREN

APPENDIX A: LIST OF RECOMMENDED RESOURCES



Forming Disciples of Jesus

Covering the full and authentic teachings of the Catholic Church and rooted in Scripture, Church Tradition, and Ignatian spirituality, Finding God: Our Response to God's Gifts™ starts children out on a life of intentional discipleship. This faith formation program for Kindergarten through Grade 8 helps foster a lived relationship with God through Jesus.

Embracing the spirituality of St. Ignatius of Loyola, Finding God provides all the tools to engage the whole child—mind, heart, and soul—uniquely guiding children to engage with Scripture, practice prayer and reflection, and to find God in all things.

To order materials, please contact: Marilyn Jackson 306-659-5836
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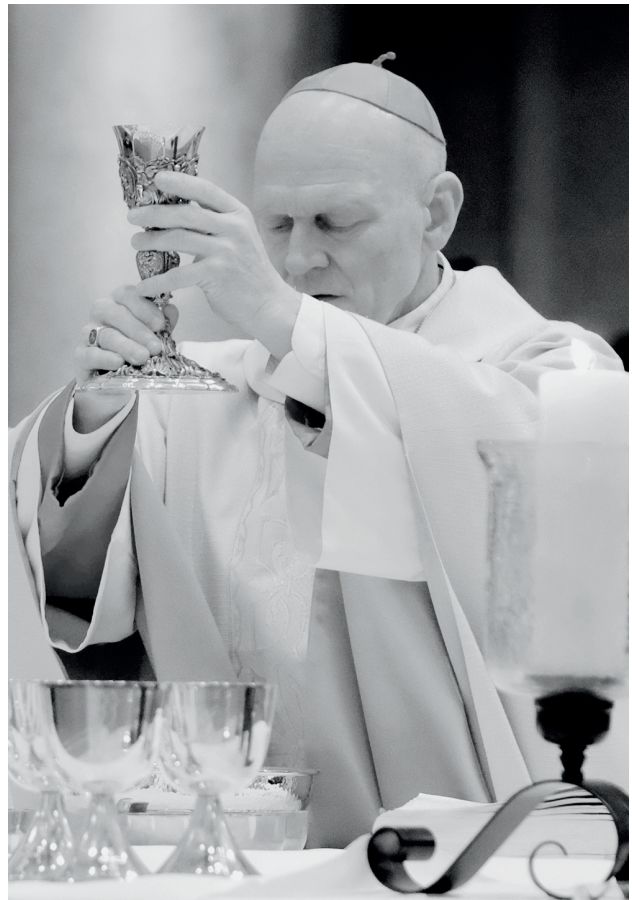
CONFIRMATION REMINDERS

The schedule for Confirmation is created by the Bishop's Office and will be distributed every year early in January. To secure a date for your parish celebration with the Bishop, please ensure that your **PARISH CONTACT LIST** is up to date with contact information for your catechists. This form is available annually at Admin Day.

Reminders and information regarding Sacramental Prep and celebrations is emailed to the parish, the Pastor and the catechist(s).

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A magazine entitled **MEET OUR BISHOP**, is available for all young people celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation. It is a resource filled with fun facts about our Bishop, an opportunity to pray with him by scanning a QR code, and other fun activities. To get copies for your families, please call Marilyn 306-659-5836

ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SASKATOON

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