

TLM First Communion Frequently asked Questions

Q: Who can receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist (First Holy Communion) in the Latin Rite at St. Martin de Tours (SMDT)?

A: Those who are members of the Latin Mass community at SMDT (regular attendees receiving pastoral formation from Father Vidrine) or parishioners of SMDT are eligible to receive their First Holy Communion at St. Martin de Tours Church.

Q: What do I need to do to have my child receive his First Holy Communion at SMDT?

A: Parents, as the primary teachers of the Faith, should prepare their children to receive their First Holy Communion through instruction, example, family prayer, and faithful attendance at Holy Mass on all holy days of obligation.

Traditionally, children receive the Sacraments of Penance/Reconciliation (or Confession) and First Holy Communion at the age of reason, or in the second grade. Parents should prepare their child to receive his First Holy Communion using *The New St. Joseph First Communion Catechism*. When the child is ready to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion, the parents should contact the church office to notify Father. Father's designee will obtain the information the church needs from the parents and answer questions not covered in this document. The office phone number is (337) 394-6021.

Q: Will my child be required to take a test in order to receive the Sacraments?

A: No. A test will not be administered to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. Father will, however, meet with the parents to discuss the child's formation and readiness.

Children preparing for these sacraments should have mastered recitation of the following prayers: Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, and the Act of Contrition. Children should be in the practice of daily examining his conscience in order to be well prepared for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Additional prayers your children should be learning are: the Creed, the Act of Faith, the Act of Hope, the Act of Love, the Saint Michael prayer, and the Holy Rosary.

Q: Is there a scheduled date to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion for the first time?

A: Yes. First Holy Communion is scheduled on Saturday, April 20 at 10am. A child who is ready can make his First Confession any time Confessions are offered at SMDT. If needed, an appointment can be scheduled with Father.

If parents choose, First Holy Communion can also be administered individually on a date coordinated with the parents and Father Vidrine.

Q: What is the dress code for First Communion?

A: Young ladies are to wear a white head covering and a modest white dress that covers the knees and the shoulders. Young men are to wear dress pants and a white oxford shirt, and black tie. The dress pants may be black, navy, grey, or khaki.

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Q: What should the First Communicant bring to Holy Mass on the day he is receiving his First Holy Communion?

A: To Holy Mass, the First Communicant should bring the candle he received at his baptism and a Brown Scapular if he will be invested/enrolled in the Brown Scapular.

Q: What if my child does not have his baptism candle?

A: If your child does not have his baptism candle, SMDT may have a candle that can be given to you. If not, a candle can be purchased at a religious store. If given to the church in advance, Father can bless the candle before the day the sacrament is administered.

Q: What does my child need to do during Mass to receive his First Holy Communion?

A: Those receiving their First Holy Communion will have reserved seating in the front pews on the right of the center aisle (epistle side of the church). The First Communicants will be the first in the congregation to receive Holy Communion at the communion rail.

When Father begins distributing the Holy Eucharist to the altar servers who are kneeling at the foot of the altar, the First Communicants should approach the communion rail, carrying their baptism candles, and kneel at the rail.

After Father finishes distributing Holy Communion to the altar servers, Father and two altar servers will approach the First Communicant at the rail. The First Communicant should hold up his candle above the communion rail, which will then be lit by an altar server. The First Communicant should hold the lit candle at a comfortable and safe height and distance to receive Holy Communion. Father will then distribute the Holy Communion to the First Communicants. After receiving the Holy Eucharist, the First Communicants return to their pews to pray their thanksgiving.

Q: How long should the candle remain lit?

A: The candle can remain lit through the end of Holy Mass, but can be extinguished at any time after receiving the Holy Eucharist. If there is a concern about melting candle wax, parents may want to insert the bottom of the candle into a cardboard ring to catch any dripping wax.

Q: What does the First Communicant do to be enrolled in the Brown Scapular?

A: If the First Communicant desires to be enrolled in the Brown Scapular, Father should be notified beforehand in order to prepare. Family members or others present may also be enrolled at this time. The enrollment will take place after Holy Mass. Enrollment takes about 5 minutes.

After Mass, Father and an altar server will return to the Sanctuary for the enrollment. Those being enrolled should approach and kneel at the communion rail with their Brown Scapular in their hand. At the designated time, Father will receive the Brown Scapular from

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the First Communicant and place the Scapular over the head and shoulders of the First Communicant. Father will then do the same for other enrollees.

Note: In order to obtain the Sabbatine Privilege through the Brown Scapular, the enrollee must 1) wear the Brown Scapular continuously, 2) observe chastity according to one's state in life, and 3) either: a) daily recite the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary, b) abstain from meat on Wednesdays, Friday, and Saturdays, OR c) with the permission of a priest, say 5 decades of the Holy Rosary.

For information about the Brown Scapular, visit the following link. <https://www.sistersofcarmel.com/faqs-the-brown-scapular/#brown-scapular-promise>

Q: Is it required for the First Communicant to be enrolled in the Brown Scapular?

A: No. It is not a requirement to be enrolled in the Brown Scapular, but it is highly recommended.

"Whoever dies invested with this Scapular shall be preserved from the eternal flames. It is a sign of salvation, a sure safeguard in danger, a pledge of peace and of my special protection until the end of the ages."

~ Our Lady of Mount Carmel to St. Simon Stock

Q: Will there be a practice in the church for the First Communicant to prepare prior to the reception of the Sacrament?

A: No. There will be no organized practice for the reception of this sacrament. Parents are welcome to visit the church any time it is open to walk their child through the motions listed above.

Q: Can photographs be taken when my child receives his First Holy Communion?

A: Yes. Photos can be taken as long as it is done reverently and discreetly. Photos must be taken while standing in the side aisle area of the church. Standing in front of the column on the right end of the first pew (next to the side aisle) is an ideal position for taking photos. The photographer will be discreet and well positioned to take photos of the First Communicant as he/she receives First Holy Communion. At no time is the photographer permitted to be front of the sanctuary and pews.

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When the First Communicant leaves his pew to approach the communion rail to receive Holy Communion, the designated photographer should also leave his pew and position himself to take the desired photos, according to the instructions above.

Q: When do we receive the certificate of my child's First Communion?

A: After enrollment in the Brown Scapular, or after Holy Mass (if not enrolling in the Brown Scapular), Father will come out of the sacristy to bring the certificate to the family.

Q: Can my child have a photograph taken with Father Vidrine?

A: Yes. When Father brings the certificate to the family following Mass, a photo can be taken with Father. You may want your child to hold his baptism candle in the photo. The candle can be re-lit using one of the nearby prayer candles in the church.

Q: Is it possible to have pews reserved for guests attending Holy Mass?

A: Yes. Pews can be reserved for family and guests of the First Communicant by contacting Stephanie Armbruster at (337) 288-4173 or stephanie@arm-assoc.com.

Q: I have a question not answered here. Who do I contact?

A: E-mail:

Stephanie Armbruster: stephanie@arm-assoc.com

St. Martin de Tours Church Office: parish@saintmartindetours.org