

St. Timothy Catholic Church

Office of Religious Education

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Handbook for First Penance &

First Holy Communion

2026 - 2027



ST. TIMOTHY CHURCH

Fr. Andrew Fisher

Pastor

Reverend Sunny Joseph

Reverend Parthi Soosai

Reverend Mauricio Portillo

Reverend Sean Nypaver

Parochial Vicars

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE

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Office Hours

Monday - Thursday 8:00am - 4:00pm

Friday, Saturday & Sunday Closed

(703)378-9143

ccd@sttimothyparish.org



FIRST PENANCE/CONFESSION DATES

First Penance service will begin at 10:30 am in the Church. Arrival time for students is 10:15am.

January 30, 2027

St. Timothy School classes

February 6, 2027

Religious Education classes

There are NO GROUP PRACTICES for 1st Penance. In preparation for 1st Penance, in addition to class lessons, the children will go to the church as a class to see the confessionals before their First Confession. Parents are encouraged to do the same with their children.

Please make sure that your child knows the Act of Contrition and “How to make a good confession” on page 44 in The New Saint Joseph First Communion Catechism.

Dress Code and Appearance for the Sacraments

First Penance -“Sunday best”: pants and nice shirt.

First Communion - No jeans or sneakers

Boys: Suit, blazers or dress sweaters, dress slacks and dress shoes. Ties **MUST** be worn.

Girls: Traditional white dress and a head piece (veil, circle of flowers, etc.) - **NO** slacks or pants.

*Please contact the Religious Education Office if you are experiencing financial difficulties.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION DATE

The Masses for the sacrament of 1st Holy Communion will begin at 10:30am. Arrival time for students is 10:00am in the school.

Saturday, May 1, 2027
Saturday, May 8, 2027

St. Timothy School classes
Religious Education classes

PRACTICE

(In the Church)

Friday, May 7th at 6:00pm Religious Education Students

*Practice for students in the school takes place during the school day.



REQUIREMENTS FOR FIRST PENANCE AND FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

1. A Copy of a Baptismal Certificate and Birth Certificate **MUST** be submitted to the Religious Education office.
 - *Students in the Religious Education Program:* Certificates are required at the time of the child's first registration in the program.
 - *Students in St. Timothy School:* Certificates are collected at the school, who will give them to the Religious Education Office.
 - Any students that were baptized at St. Timothy Catholic Church must still submit a baptismal certificate, which can be requested from the parish office.
2. Students need to memorize the following prayers:

The Ten Commandments
Act of Contrition
Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory Be
The Communion Prayer recited during Mass:
“Lord I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.”
3. Students should study, The New Saint Joseph First Communion Catechism in its entirety. This text is designed to help prepare your child for the sacraments of Penance and reception of the Eucharist.
4. First Communion candidates should regularly attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of obligation.
5. The students are strongly encouraged to accompany their family when going to Confession. In preparation for your child's First Communion, it is important for them to go to confession. Confessions are heard in the Church each Saturday at 3:30P.M. and Wednesday 11:00A.M. & 7:00P.M. Check the parish website for extra times during Advent & Lent.

6. Attendance is mandatory for all children in sacramental preparation classes. This includes grades: 1,2 & 7, 8 and Missing Sacrament classes. Students preparing for a sacrament who miss 3 or more unexcused classes will not be recommended to the Pastor for the reception of the sacrament.

An absence is considered excused when a parent contacts the Religious Education Office and the student completes any missed work at home. To report an absence, call the Religious Education Office at 703-378-9143, leave a brief message on the answering machine after hours or send an email to reattendance@sttimothyparish.org

7. A sacramental fee of \$30 is charged to defer the cost of supplies in preparation for the Sacrament of First Holy Communion. This fee is paid at the time of registration.

PHOTOGRAPHY

We are requesting that **NO PHOTOGRAPHY** take place during Mass. The holy sacrifice of the Mass is a most sacred time in which Christ is present. It is a time where all attention should be focused on Our Lord in the Eucharist. Remember that your child will be receiving the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ. Movement in the church is a distraction, not just for the children but for everyone in the church.

CLASS PICTURES

There will **not** be a professional photographer for the sacraments. Individual teachers might organize their class for a picture in the courtyard.

BASIC STEPS FOR RECEIVING THE EUCHARIST

To help prepare your child to receive the Eucharist reverently on the day of their First Holy Communion, please review the following.

Receiving the Host on the tongue is the method taught in religious education classes.

All First Communicants are expected to receive on the tongue at the First Holy Communion Mass.

1. Bow before you walk to the priest. Keep your hands folded in prayer.
2. When the Priest or other ministers will hold up the Blessed Sacrament and say “The Body of Christ”.
3. You reply “Amen”. This “Amen” means you believe the Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Jesus.
4. Then, tilt your head slightly back, open your mouth wide and extend your tongue.
5. The priest or minister will place the Sacred Host on your tongue.
6. Wait until the Sacred Host is safely placed on your tongue before you return your tongue inside your mouth and close it.
7. Make the Sign of the Cross and walk back to your seat in the pew.
8. Once back in your pew, kneel down and say a prayer, thanking God.



THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Below are some suggestions for you to use in helping your child prepare for the Sacrament of Penance.

1. Help your child to learn the Ten Commandments. Please use the St. Joseph First Communion Catechism book to go over the Commandments, the examination of conscience and how to make a good confession as often as you can.
2. Work with your child to learn the basic prayers, especially the Act of Contrition, Our Father and the Hail Mary.
3. Role-play “going to Confession”. (Don’t use real sins when role playing; make up some false sins).
4. Teach your child that to sin is to consciously say “No” to God. Make sure your child understands the difference between a mistake or accident, temptation, and sin by talking about some typical situations to help illustrate these occurrences.
5. Remind your child how loving God is and how much He is overjoyed when anyone comes to Him to confess their sins. It is through confession that we receive graces from God to help us resist future temptation and sin.

ACT OF CONTRITION

Oh my God, I am deeply sorry for having offended You. I detest all my sins because of Your just punishments, but most of all because they offend You, my God, Who are all good and deserving of all my love.

I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen.

**CHILDREN'S FORM FOR
CONFESSION**

Child: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Bless me, Father, for I have sinned.

It has been _____ weeks since my last Confession. (Or this is my first Confession.

These are my sins:
(Name the sins.)

When finished, say:

For these sins and the sins of my whole life, I am sorry.

Priest: Gives words of advice and suggestions.

Asks child to say a penance (prayers to be said in Church after Confession.

Child: Say the Act of Contrition
(See page 6 of this handbook)

or

An Act of Contrition you have memorized.

Child: Thank you Father.

Priest: Gives Absolution (the prayer which removes one's sins)

**CHILDREN'S EXAMINATION OF
CONSCIENCE**

Taken from the New St. Joseph
First Communion Catechism p.43

Did I miss Mass on purpose on a Sunday or Holy Day?

Did I play or talk in Church?

Was I disobedient to others?

Did I talk back to them?

Did I fight with someone?

Did I use angry words?

Did I try to get even with someone?

Did I use bad words?

Did I steal something?

Did I tell any lies?

Was I unkind to others?

Did I call anyone bad names?

Did I tease someone unkindly?