
ST. JAMES CHURCH

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October 4, 2024

Re: First Reconciliation and First Communion

Dear parents and guardians:

For those preparing to receive the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion, St. James Parish is pleased to offer the choice to do sacramental prep either in-person or online.

For candidates electing to do in-person sacramental prep, classes will take place on Saturday afternoons from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm on the following dates: Feb. 1st, 8th, 22nd; March 1st; April 5th and 12th, 2025. Classes will be held at St. James Church in the parish hall.

Attached to this correspondence, please find important information regarding your child's First Reconciliation and First Communion, a First Communion Registration Form, Examination of Conscience for Young Children, a guide to making a First Confession, and a Parish Registration Form.

Here are the available dates for **First Reconciliation**:

Date	Time	Location	Event
Mon. March 17, 2025	7:30pm	St. James Church	First Reconciliation
Mon. March 24, 2025	7:30pm	St. James Church	First Reconciliation

*Please note that First Reconciliation will begin at 7:30 pm following evening Mass.

Here are the available dates for **First Communion**:

Date	Time	Location	Event
Sat. May 10, 2025	10:30 am	St. James Church	First Communion Mass
Sat. May 17, 2025	10:30 am	St. James Church	First Communion Mass
Sat. May 24, 2025	10:30 am	St. James Church	First Communion Mass
Sat. May 31, 2025	10:30 am	St. James Church	First Communion Mass

The registration deadline is **Fri. January 17, 2025**.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the parish office at stjamesco@archtoronto.org or 905-936-4266.

Yours in Christ,



(Rev.) Eric Mah

First Reconciliation and First Communion – IMPORTANT INFORMATION

What is First Reconciliation?

Our parish prepares children for the Sacrament of First Reconciliation prior to their First Holy Communion. Jesus Christ, in His abundant love and mercy, established Confession so that we as sinners can obtain forgiveness for our sins and reconcile with God and the Church. The sacrament “washes us clean,” and renews us in Christ.

What is First Communion?

The three Sacraments of Christian Initiation—Baptism, First Communion, and Confirmation—together form the process of sacramental initiation into the Church. The First Holy Communion marks a wonderful beginning of receiving the Body of Christ and sharing at the table of the Lord.

What are the dates for First Reconciliation and First Communion?

Here are the available dates for First Reconciliation:

Date	Time	Location	Event
Mon. March 17, 2025	7:30pm	St. James Church	First Reconciliation
Mon. March 24, 2025	7:30pm	St. James Church	First Reconciliation

Please note that First Reconciliation will begin at 7:30 pm as listed above because we have evening Masses on those dates which begin at 7 pm.

You are free to choose whichever date is most convenient for you and your families. If you are unable to attend either day, please contact the office.

Here are the available dates for First Communion to coincide with the regularly scheduled 10:30 am Mass at St. James Church:

Date	Time	Location	Event
Sat. May 10, 2025	10:30 am	St. James Church	First Communion Mass
Sat. May 17, 2025	10:30 am	St. James Church	First Communion Mass
Sat. May 24, 2025	10:30 am	St. James Church	First Communion Mass
Sat. May 31, 2025	10:30 am	St. James Church	First Communion Mass

Please note: there is a maximum number of 32 First Communicants per date. The dates will fill up on a first-come, first-serve basis. The date you choose will be secured once the registration paperwork and registration fee are provided to the parish office.

We recommend:

- Students from Father F.X. O'Reilly attend First Communion on Sat. May 10 or Sat. May 17
- Students from Msgr. Ronan attend First Communion on Sat. May 24
- Students from St. James attend First Communion on Sat. May 31

That said, you are free to choose whichever date is most convenient for you and your families.

Both First Reconciliation and First Communion will be held at St. James Church.

What if I would prefer to attend another date for First Reconciliation and/or First Communion?

For those wishing to receive First Reconciliation and/or First Communion with their classmates, please note which school corresponds to the dates noted earlier. That said, you are free to choose whichever date is most convenient for you and your families.

Candidates who attend schools other than Msgr. Ronan, St. James, and F.X. O'Reilly are welcome to attend any date for First Reconciliation and/or First Communion.

How do I register for First Reconciliation and First Communion?

To register for First Reconciliation and First Communion, please do the following:

- (a) complete either the in-person or online sacramental prep program;
- (b) submit the First Communion Registration Form to the parish office;
- (c) submit a copy of the candidate's baptismal certificate;
- (d) submit a Parish Registration Form, if necessary; and
- (e) pay the registration fee.

What is the registration deadline?

The registration deadline is **Fri. January 17th, 2025.**

How will sacramental prep be done this year?

We are offering two options to prepare for First Reconciliation and First Communion. Please indicate on the First Communion Registration Form which sacramental prep program you wish to choose.

(a) OPTION #1: IN-PERSON CLASSES

If you elect for in-person classes, the course will consist of six sessions which will be held at St. James Church on Saturday afternoons from 1:30pm to 3:30pm on the following dates:

Date	Time	Location	Event
Sat. February 1, 2025	1:30pm – 3:30pm	St. James Church	Session 1
Sat. February 8, 2025	1:30pm – 3:30pm	St. James Church	Session 2
Sat. February 22, 2025	1:30pm – 3:30pm	St. James Church	Session 3
Sat. March 1, 2025	1:30pm – 3:30pm	St. James Church	Session 4
Sat. April 5, 2025	1:30pm – 3:30pm	St. James Church	Session 5
Sat. April 12, 2025	1:30pm – 3:30pm	St. James Church	Session 6

Candidates **must** attend all six sessions in this case.

(b) OPTION #2: ONLINE CLASSES

Instead of the in-person classes, candidates can choose an online program called “The Way” offered by HopeStone which consists of six videos: each of which is approximately 20 to 30 minutes long. Candidates will have to finish each pre-recorded video before moving onto the next session.

How do I register for the online course?

Let the parish office know that you are opting for the online course by submitting the First Communion Registration Form indicating that you are choosing the online option.

After First Communion registration closes on Fri. January 17th, 2025, the parish office will provide HopeStone will your email so they can set up an account for you. The parish office will send you an email notifying you that your contact information has been provided to HopeStone. You will then receive an email from HopeStone (please check your junk box) with a prompt to click a link and set up your password. Please contact the parish office if you don’t receive an email link from HopeStone in a timely manner.

When you login, you will see “The Way” Program! Once you have set up your password, you can login simply by clicking this link: virtual.hopestone.ca.

After logging in, click the “Program” icon, which will make the sacramental prep program accessible. The first three sessions cover First Reconciliation, and the following three sessions will cover First Communion. Videos cannot be skipped or fast-forwarded.

What if I miss one of the in-person sessions for sacramental prep?

If you are unable to attend a particular session, please inform the person teaching the course to arrange for the material to be made up in some way.

What is the registration fee?

The registration fee is \$30.

How do I pay the registration fee?

Payments to the parish office may be made via cash or cheques payable to "St. James Parish." Debit/Credit payments can be made in person at the office or over the phone.

You can leave the money or cheque in a sealed envelope with your full name in the drop box located on the side of the parish office at St. James. Please also indicate on the envelope that the payment is for First Communion registration.

You can also drop off your payment in person during office hours (Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 2 pm to 5 pm).

If you cannot afford the registration fee, please contact the parish office.

How should I assist my child in preparing for First Reconciliation?

Besides the preparation that will take place through the in-person classes or online course, please review with your child the attached "Examination of Conscience" and "Going to Confession: Step-by-Step" handouts.

If our family regularly attends another parish besides St. James, St. Mary's, or St. Francis Xavier, can my child still receive the sacraments here?

Yes. You only need to complete a Parish Registration Form and return it to the parish office. You will not need a letter of permission from the parish that you attend.

There is no need to complete the Parish Registration Form if St. James, St. Mary's, or St. Francis Xavier is your closest parish.

If I don't attend any of the elementary schools attached to the parish, can I still receive the sacraments at the parish?

Yes. However, if St. James, St. Mary's, or St. Francis Xavier is not your closest parish, you will need to complete a Parish Registration Form.

Is there a limit to the number of people who can attend the First Reconciliation and First Communion ceremonies?

There is no limit to the number of people who can attend the First Reconciliation.

There is, however, a limit on the number of attendees at the First Communion ceremonies. There will be 32 children receiving their First Communion on each of the provided dates, so due to the capacity of the Church, we will need to cap the number of attendees. Each First Communicant is allowed to invite **10** people (the First Communicant is not included in those who are invited - so in total, 11 people from each family can attend). If you have a family member with mobility issues that requires a seat, we invite you to please come early since seating in the main congregation will be on a first-come-first-serve basis. Please be aware that due to limited capacity in the main congregation, family members may be directed to the choir loft or overflow seating in the Church hall.

Will there be reserved seating?

There will be designated seating for First Communion candidates and their immediate family (ie. parents and siblings). Each First Communicant will have a reserved pew for immediate family and any other family who can fit in the pew. Remaining family will be asked to sit in the choir loft or the hall.

What should my child wear to their First Communion?

There is no set requirement for a specific dress code.

What time should my child arrive on the date of their First Communion?

Candidates should arrive at least 30 minutes before the start time of the Mass.

How will my child come up for First Communion?

When it is time to receive Holy Communion, the priest will ask the First Communion candidates and their parents to come up together to receive Communion before the rest of the congregation.

What if I have further questions or concerns?

If you have further questions or concerns, please contact the parish office at stjamesco@archtoronto.org or 905-936-4266.

ST. JAMES CHURCH

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FIRST COMMUNION REGISTRATION FORM (REGISTRATION DEADLINE: Fri. January 17, 2025)

PART ONE: PARISH INFORMATION

Name of Parish: _____ City: _____

- I currently live within the territorial bounds of the parish.
 I currently **do not** live within the territorial boundaries of the parish.

(If you do not live within the territorial boundaries of the parish, please complete the Parish Registration form included in the First Communion package.)

PART TWO: CANDIDATE'S INFORMATION

Full legal name:

First Name	Middle Name(s)	Last Name
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Male Female

Date of Birth: _____

Date of Baptism: _____

Church of Baptism: _____

City of Baptism Church: _____

First Communion preparation preference: in-person online

School: St. James Monsignor Ronan Father F.X. O'Reilly

Other: _____

We recommend that your child receives First Reconciliation and First Communion on the specified dates, according to the school he/she attends. You are not restricted to that date and may request one of the other options. If your child attends a different school than those listed, then please select any one of the available dates.

School	First Reconciliation Date	First Communion Date
Father F.X. O'Reilly	Mon. March 17, 2025, at 7:30pm OR Mon. March 24, 2025, at 7:30pm	Saturday May 10, 2025 OR Saturday May 17, 2025
Monsignor Ronan	Mon. March 17, 2025, at 7:30pm OR Mon. March 24, 2025, at 7:30pm	Saturday May 24, 2025
St. James	Mon. March 17, 2025, at 7:30pm OR Mon. March 24, 2025, at 7:30pm	Saturday May 31, 2025

Please indicate your preferred date for First Reconciliation:

- Monday, March 17, 2025
- Monday, March 24, 2025

Please indicate your preferred date for First Communion:

- Saturday, May 10, 2025
- Saturday, May 17, 2025
- Saturday, May 24, 2025
- Saturday, May 31, 2025

Please note: there is a maximum number of 32 First Communicants per date. The dates will fill up on a first-come, first-serve basis. The date you choose will be secured once the registration form, Baptism certificate, and registration fee are provided to the parish office.

PART THREE: MOTHER'S INFORMATION

Full legal name and maiden name:

First Name	Middle Name(s)	Last Name	Maiden Name
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Religion: Roman Catholic Other: _____ None

Present address: _____

Street	City	Postal Code
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Phone: _____ Email: _____

PART FOUR: FATHER'S INFORMATION

Full legal name:

First Name	Middle Name(s)	Last Name
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Religion: Roman Catholic Other: _____ None

Present address: Same as mother's

Street	City	Postal Code
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Phone: _____ Email: _____

PART FIVE: DECLARATION AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Would you like to receive email notifications about future parish events and programs?

Yes No

Would you like to receive email notifications about parish Youth Ministry events?

Yes No

I, the undersigned, declare that the information on this form is true and accurate.

Name (please print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE (YOUNG CHILDREN)

1. I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before Me.

- Do I give time every day to God in prayer?
- Do I put my trust in superstitions, good luck charms, rather than God alone?
- Have I rejected any Church teaching or denied that I was a Catholic?

2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

- Have I used the words "God" or "Jesus" in anger or irreverently?
- Have I used foul or ugly language?
- Have I wished evil on another?

3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

- Have I missed Mass on Sunday or a holy day of obligation (Dec 25th or Jan 1st in Canada)?
- Do I arrive at church late or leave early?
- Do I try to be reverent and pay attention during Mass?
- Do I avoid unnecessary work on Sunday?
- Do I make Sunday a day of prayer or rest?

4. Honor your father and your mother.

- Do I respect and obey my parents?
- Have I dishonored or mistreated them by word or deed?
- Am I willing to help around the house or must I be nagged a number of times?
- Do I try to get along with my brothers and sisters?
- Do I give a good example, especially to younger siblings?
- Do I respect others in authority: priests, nuns, principals, teachers, police, old people, baby sitters?

5. You shall not kill.

- Do I beat up others or otherwise hurt their bodies?
- Do I say cruel things, or make fun of others to hurt their feelings?
- Do I say mean things about others behind their backs?
- Have I stopped speaking to anyone?
- Do I encourage others to do bad things?
- Do I try to love all people – whether born or unborn?

6. You shall not commit adultery.

- Do I treat my body and other people's bodies with respect?
- Do I look at TV shows, websites, movies, or pictures that are bad?

7. You shall not steal.

- Have I taken things that were not mine from a store or another person?
- Have I destroyed or misused another person's property for fun?
- Do I return things that I borrow?
- Do I make sure that, when I return borrowed items, they are in good condition?

8. You shall not commit false witness against your neighbor.

- Am I honest in my school work?
- Do I tell lies to make myself look good?
- Do I tell lies to protect myself from punishment?
- Do I tell lies that make another person look bad or get them in trouble?

9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

- Do I allow my parents to spend time with each another, or do I get jealous and want them to pay attention only to me?
- Do I get mad when I have to share my friends?
- Are there kids that I will not play with or be mean to because they look different?

10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

- Am I jealous or envious of the things or abilities that others have?
- Am I thankful to God and my parents for what they have given me?
- Do I share the things I have with my family, friends and poor people?

ACT OF CONTRITION

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.

I have sinned against You whom I should love.

I intend, with the help of Your grace, to do penance, and to sin no more and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.

Amen.

GOING TO FIRST CONFESSION (STEP-BY-STEP)

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Bless me Father, for I have sinned. This is my First Confession and here are my sins.

Confess your sins to the priest.

After confessing your sins, you can say:

For these and all my sins, I am truly sorry.

The priest may give you some advice. He will then give you something for penance, and then ask you to make the Act of Contrition.

ACT OF CONTRITION

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.

I have sinned against You whom I should love.

I intend, with the help of Your grace, to do penance, and to sin no more and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.

Amen.

The priest will then give you absolution for the forgiveness of your sins.

*The priest may then mention that you can go by saying: **Go in peace.***

*Response: **Thanks be to God.***

You may then go outside of the confessional and do the penance that was given.