

RESTORING THE ORDER OF THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION IN THE DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD, IL

As a result of the 2017 Synod, all parishes within the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois are restoring the Original Order of the Sacraments of Initiation during the years 2019-2025.

The 2017 Synodal Declaration #6 (Statue n. 80) states:

- *The Sacraments of Christian Initiation shall be offered in the proper sequence (Baptism, Confirmation & Eucharist) for **children** as well as for adults.*
- *To promote discipleship and stewardship as a way of life from an early age, those who are baptized as infants are to receive the Sacraments of Confirmation & Eucharist at about the age of reason, which in this Diocese will normally be in their 3rd grade of elementary school, after they have been properly prepared and have made sacramental confession.*

Currently in this Diocese, we offer the Sacraments of Initiation for children as:

- Baptism – infancy
- Eucharist - 2nd grade
- Confirmation - 8th grade

This will be restored to the original order:

- Baptism - infancy
- Confirmation & Eucharist - 3rd grade.

Note: This restoration is just for the **children**. The RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for **Adults**) has always utilized the original order of the Sacraments of Initiation and will continue to do so.

Restoring the order of the Sacraments of Initiation for children will be implemented over several years.

FUTURE – How will we do this?

The bishop has provided a timetable for implementing the original order by the spring of 2025.

- **1 - Spring 2019** (*No students receive 1st Eucharist this year.*)
 - 2nd Grade – Prepare for and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation
 - 8th Grade – Prepare for and receive the Sacrament of Confirmation
- **2 - Spring 2020 - Spring 2024** (*Begin 3rd Grade receiving Confirmation & 1st Eucharist & gradually Confirm those students older than 3rd grade during their 8th grade year.*)
 - 2nd Grade – Prepare for and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation
 - 3rd Grade – Prepare for and receive the Sacraments of Confirmation & Eucharist
 - 8th Grade – Prepare for and receive the Sacrament of Confirmation
- **3 - Spring 2025 and beyond**
 - 2nd Grade – Prepare for and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation
 - 3rd Grade – Prepare for and receive the Sacraments of Confirmation & Eucharist

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IMPLEMENTATION AT ST. CECILIA – *How does this affect my family?*

We will implement Step 1 of the timetable beginning our preparations in August of 2018:

- **1 - Spring 2019** (*no students receive 1st Eucharist this year*)
 - 2nd Grade – Prepare for and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation
 - 8th Grade – Prepare for and receive the Sacrament of Confirmation

Next year (2019-20), we will implement Step 2 of the timetable.

Although the bishop has provided this timetable, exceptions to the process are allowed. *Since we are a small parish, our step 2 of the implementation timetable may be shortened. If the class size allows, we may choose to Confirm more than just the 8th grade class in the Spring of 2020. This decision will be made during the Summer of 2019.*

HISTORY – *Why are we doing this?*

In the early Church, the person was immersed into the waters of Baptism, anointed with Chrism, and shared in the Eucharistic meal as part of a single event.

Over time, and for many reasons, the celebration of these 3 sacraments became separated from one another.

In the renewal stemming from the Second Vatican Council, the Church was asked to set forth more clearly the intimate connection of Confirmation with the whole of Christian initiation.

- BAPTISM – Brings new life in Christ.
- CONFIRMATION – Strengthens our new life with the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- EUCHARIST – Nourishes us with the Body and Blood of Christ.

This original order also helps us recognize that sharing in the Eucharist completes our initiation into the Church and that it is Eucharist which is the “source and summit of our faith.”

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

More information can be found in the FAQ document, which contains frequently asked questions and answers concerning restoring the original order of the Sacraments of Initiation.

Please contact Fr. Gibbons, Deacon Jerry, or Paula Raffaele if you have any questions about restoring the original order.