

To enroll in First Eucharist Classes in the Arkansas Valley Parishes:

Rocky Ford contact Connie Fernandez 719.254.4600

At Fowler contact Betty Bigler 719.263.4394

At Ordway contact Elisa Love 719.469.8990

For Adult Candidates:

Call Marilyn Marinelli 719.254.6095

Documents are needed to establish eligibility for the formation classes:

When you come to register, please have ready a Xerox of your candidate's baptismal certificate.



St Peters Catholic Church

1209 Swink Avenue
Rocky Ford, CO 81067

Phone: 719 245 3565
Fax: 719 254 3921
E-mail: sprockyford@centurytel.net



Serving the
People of God

First Eucharist at Arkansas Valley Parishes St. Peter's, Rocky Ford St. Peter's Ordway, Mary, Queen of Heaven, Fowler



St Peters Catholic Church

729.254.3565
www.arkvalleyparishes.org

Requirements of the Program

The Diocese of Pueblo guidelines reflect the Code of Canon Law regarding the earliest age at which one may make their First Eucharist, also known as "First Communion" .

- All candidates must have a copy of their baptismal certificate on file with the Coordinator of Religious Education, as well as be registered for the classes before the second week the sacrament preparation module.
- To be admitted to the class, all candidates must demonstrate that they know their prayers, Mass Responses, and the Ten Commandments.
- All candidates for first communion must have already made their First Reconciliation or as it is also known, "First Confession" or "First Penance".
- The candidate must be at least 7 years old to make their First Reconciliation and subsequently their first communion.
- Sacrament Formation for First Eucharist usually begins in the Winter (after January 1) for First Eucharist. Note: formation for First Communion may not be done simultaneously with First Reconciliation.
- The first communion course of study required parental involvement, and a module of no less than 20 clock hours of classes for both parents and children.
- There is a morning Retreat for Parent(s) or sponsors and the Candidate at the end of the course of study
- All candidates must attend 5/6ths of classes.
 - Parents can prepare their children at home for First Communion, but the candidates must still take part in the retreat and Parents and candidates must participate in a Parent night for Home-Schoolers. Readiness for reception will be by interview/examination without parent present.
- All candidates are required to pass the interview with the pastor to be admitted to reception of their First Communion.
- Just before reception of First Eucharist, the candidate will need to celebrate again the sacrament of Reconciliation.
- First Eucharist is celebrated with the whole class at an anticipated or regular Sunday Mass, usually in May. Families are expected to join each of their children at the class celebration of First Eucharist.

Celebrating First Eucharist Is A Whole Family Affair!

The context of first Eucharist is familial. The Parish Family and the candidate's family come together as the family of God to celebrate the first reception of Holy Eucharist for each and every child, adolescent and adult. This celebration is a part of the trilogy of the Rites of Christian Initiation. In the Initiation of a child to the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, we welcome him or her to an adult celebration of the Mystery of the cross, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Since the time of Pope Pius X, the church has conferred this 'adulthood in the church' on children having attained the age of 7 years. At this age, they know right from wrong. Having attained the use of rudimentary reasoning, they become responsible for their actions, both graced and sinful, which includes their attendance at Sunday Mass and all the Holy Days of Obligation.

Sacraments are not isolated events intended for individuals. Sacraments are by their nature communal, that is they belong to and must be celebrated by a people. So, Eucharist is the expression of a people, united in Christ through a common baptism, salvation, and system of sacramental life that "names us Catholics."



Because they belong to a people, the people, through their leaders called Bishops set the parameters for who may and may not receive them.

One has to be a Catholic to receive Eucharist

One has to be a member of the Catholic Church in order to be admitted to the sacraments. Thus, Baptism has been named the "gateway sacrament" through which admission to the other 6 sacraments and indeed, the life in Christ is gained. A great theologian once said, (and I paraphrase) one cannot simply be a musician without making music. Likewise, one cannot simply "be" a Catholic, one must do the things that Catholics do, else there is no meaning in their Catholicism. Being a member of the Catholic Church is given meaning when one fulfills the basic requirements. Roman Catholics

- Attend Sunday Masses and Holy Days of Obligation,
- Go to confession and receive Eucharist regularly and worthily
- Live a life in accord with the Teachings of Jesus as enshrined in the Laws of the Church, especially regarding marriage and appropriate use of one's body,
- Obey the 10 Commandments
- Pray privately or with their family at least before Bedtime and meals
- Know and can pray traditional Catholic prayers such as the Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Grace before Meals, Apostle's Creed, the Rosary, Eternal Rest (prayer for the dead), and the Responses at Mass

These outward signs or practices also identify you a Catholic. So, parents who want to enroll their children for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist, must have taught their children how to pray and what the 10 Commandments are and how to live them. Children will be quizzed to see if they can do these minimum things as part of the admission process. Parents AND their candidates for First Eucharist must attend Holy Mass every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation to maintain

their membership in the classes for First Eucharist. Help for Difficult Situations in which parents find themselves

We understand that some parents are single parents, and some parents are currently in marriages not blessed by the Church. This does not inhibit the child either from being a candidate or from enrolling and making their First Eucharist. However, even these Catholic parents are still under the obligation to attend Mass every Sunday, even though they may not be able to receive the sacraments until their marriages are made Church Marriages. If your marriage needs to be blessed by the Church, please contact a Deacon or the Priest as soon as possible so that we can help you to return to the Sacraments. Every Catholic is under the obligation, if marrying someone, to do it before a Catholic Priest.


A Note About Divorced Parents

Divorced and Single parents are often misinformed about the Church's teaching on reception of the sacraments when one is divorced. Though for people who find themselves in this situation, it is a tragic situation, filled with pain and sorrow, anger and disappointment, the Catholic Church does not turn her back on these. As long as one maintains a chaste life, in and outside of marriage, one can still go to the Sacraments. One is inhibited from receiving the sacraments ONLY WHEN a divorced person is looking for another love-relationship or is already in another love-relationship without the benefit of the Church's judgment that the Sacrament of Marriage could not have existed in your case (this is properly called a decree of invalidity or less-properly known as a church annulment).

People with Special Circumstances & Needs

Children or adults who are delayed in their ability to learn can still make their First Reconciliation and First Eucharist, and fall under a different set of rules because of their disability. Please talk to the Religious Education Coordinator, a Deacon or the Pastor to discuss your situation.

Those who have allergies to either wine or wheat products can often times still receive Eucharist. Usually this is done under one or another form of Communion: The Precious Blood or the Host only. Persons with gluten intolerance can purchase special altar breads that are made of low or no-gluten wheat. These can be given to the Celebrant of the Mass just before Mass begins to be consecrated with the rest and given at the regular time for the reception of Communion. The Sacred Congregation for Worship and the Sacraments has ruled that only these exceptions can be made with regard to the hosts. Alcohol-free wine (Mustum) may not be used. Therefore, where people who suffer from the addiction of Alcoholism wish to approach the Sacrament, they may want to only receive the Eucharistic species of the Host to prevent relapse.

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