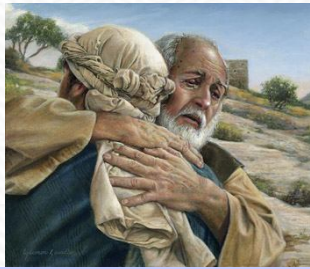




First Reconciliation

St. Peter The Apostle Parish
Serving the people of God

- First Reconciliation
- The Context of Reconciliation
- Who Can Receive the Sacrament?
- Special Needs and Situations



To enroll in First Reconciliation Classes

Rocky Ford contact Connie Fernandez 719 254 4600

At Fowler contact Betty Bigler 719 263 4394

At Ordway contact Elisa Love 719 469 8990

Adults can contact Marilyn Marinelli 719.254.6095

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

The Diocese of Pueblo guidelines reflect the Code of Canon Law regarding the earliest age at which one may make their First Reconciliation, also known as First Confession or First Penance .

- 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 Reconciliation 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.
- Sacrament Formation for First Reconciliation usually begins in the Fall for First Reconciliation. Note: formation for First Communion may not be done simultaneously with First Reconciliation. There is also a make-up series offered beginning in January.
- The First Reconciliation 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 Saturday 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 Reconciliation 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 by the Pastor without parent present.
- All candidates are required to pass the interview with the pastor to be admitted to reception of their First Reconciliation.
- First Reconciliation is celebrated with the whole class at a reconciliation service, usually in December. Families are expected to join each of their children at the class celebration of their First Reconciliation.

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To contact us:



1209 Swink Avenue
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The Context of Reconciliation

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The context of our first understanding of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is couched in the life of the family. It is in the family that we learn of the major themes of this wonderful and healing sacrament.

- In the family we learn that our selfishness has a bad effect on those with whom we live.
- In the family we learn that our actions, both good and bad have consequences.
- In the family we learn that we need to ask forgiveness and that we need to give it when it is requested.
- In the family, we also learn that there are rules for living in society that must not be broken, but that when they are broken, we need to view one another with compassion and love, even though there is some reparation needed.

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 to the Church, 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 in the context of God's People. So, Reconciliation reinforces our responsibility not only to ourselves, but to God and His family. It is the expression of our common need for grace and forgiveness, not only from God, but from the Church Which is the Body of Christ. We, the Church, through a common baptism share the responsibility to show by our lives our faith and the Gospel that is so much in contrast to a selfish and sinful world.

Because we belong to a people, the people, through their leaders called Bishops set the parameters for who may and may not receive the sacrament of Reconciliation.

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web: www.arkvalleyparishes.org



Who Can Receive the Sacrament?

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This is an example of a free-standing confessional, very popular in Europe and some older Churches in the US

One has to be Baptized to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

One has to be a member of the Body of Christ through Baptism in order to be admitted to Reconciliation. This sacrament, and the Anointing of the Sick are the only two other sacraments that any Baptized Christian can receive. Thus, Baptism has been named the "gateway sacrament." What is true for Catholics regarding sin, is true for all the Baptized—we have a responsibility to "give witness" to our faith and to not bring the Gospel of Christ into contempt by our lives. And we also need forgiveness. That is why the Bishops have allowed even non-Catholics to receive Reconciliation.

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

Readiness for the Celebration of the Sacrament is indicated when the Candidate:

- Attends Sunday Masses and Holy Days of Obligation,
- Goes to confession and at the appropriate time, begin to receive Eucharist regularly and worthily
- Lives 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.
- As a rule, obeys the 10 Commandments
- Prays privately or with their family at least before Bedtime and meals
- Knows 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.

Baptism is the "Gateway Sacrament for access to all the other Sacraments"

These outward signs or practices also identify you as a Catholic. So, parents who want to enroll their children for First Reconciliation 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.

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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 Reconciliation. 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.

Often we encounter people who have special needs that come from their situation, are physical issues, or developmental issues, that need special care. Each case needs to be brought to the pastor's attention.

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

Persons who are delayed in their ability to learn can still make their First Reconciliation, 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.

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