

Children's Paths toward Initiation Sacraments

In the Diocese of Portland Confirmation and first Communion are conferred in one celebration at the age of reason (around age seven). The reception of these two sacraments may only be separated for grave reasons. All children should be prepared to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation. Only those already validly baptized are to be given opportunities to celebrate this sacrament with a priest in the parish.

| Baptismal Status | Sacraments Needed | Formation Required | Where Celebrate | Celebrant |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Baptized Catholic Child seeking Confirmation and first Communion (ages 6-12) | (Reconciliation) Confirmation and Eucharist | Two - Year Process Involving Parents <i>Year One & Two Sacrament Preparation with peers</i> | Parish Celebration with Bishop | Bishop |
| Baptized Catholic Teen seeking Confirmation (first Communion) (ages 13 or older) | (Reconciliation) Confirmation (Eucharist) | Participate in at least 6 months of youth formation and preparation for Confirmation (and first Communion if needed) | Diocesan Celebration with Bishop | Bishop |
| Baptized Non-Catholic Child seeking Confirmation and first Communion* (age – 6 or younger) | (Reconciliation) Confirmation and Eucharist <i>*See page 2 for notes about reception into the Church</i> | Two - Year Process Involving Parents <i>Year One & Two Sacrament Preparation with peers</i> | Parish or Diocesan Celebration with Bishop | Bishop |
| Baptized Non-Catholic Child seeking Confirmation and first Communion (age - 7 and older) | (Reconciliation) <i>Rite of Reception Required</i> Confirmation and Eucharist | RCIA Candidate - Participate in age and time appropriate formation adapted for children upon completion of 6 to 12 months of formation | Parish when determined to be ready | Pastor/Admin |
| Unbaptized Child seeking Confirmation and first Communion † (age – 6 or younger) | Baptism <i>Order of Baptism for Children</i> Confirmation and Eucharist | Parent and child prepare for baptism Two - Year Process Involving Parents <i>Year One & Two Sacrament Preparation with peers</i> | Parish as soon as possible Parish Celebration with Bishop | Priest or Deacon Bishop |
| Unbaptized Child seeking Confirmation and first Communion (age - 7 and older) | <i>Rite of Acceptance, Rite of Election, at least 1 Scrutiny</i> Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist | RCIA Catechumen Participate in age and time appropriate catechumenate adapted for children <i>typically 12+ months</i> | Easter Vigil, Sunday of Easter | Pastor/Admin |

* **Baptized (not Catholic) children younger than seven** (if they do not yet have the use of reason to request the sacraments on their own) **whose parents are being received into the Catholic Church do not participate in the catechumenate process.** They are received into the Church on the same date as their parents with **no rite required** of them, though a profession of faith adapted for children is appropriate. Notation of their reception and record of the date and place of their baptism should be made in the parish baptismal register at the time of their parents' reception. They are to participate in catechesis for the sacraments and are to receive the remaining sacraments of Initiation with their Catholic peers.

* **Baptized children younger than seven** (if they do not yet have the use of reason to request the sacraments on their own) **who were baptized in another Christian Denomination and whose parents are Catholics,** are considered to be received into the Church at the time of their reception of Confirmation/First Eucharist, with **no rite required** of them. At the same time, a profession of faith adapted for children would be appropriate. The date of their Confirmation/First Eucharist should be noted in the parish baptismal register as their date of reception into full communion. A record of the date and place of their Baptism should also be entered. They are to participate with their Catholic peers in catechesis and the reception of the sacraments and need not take part in a formal catechumenate.

† **Unbaptized children below the age of seven** (who do not yet have the use of reason) are to be baptized according to the *Order of Baptism for Children, Second Edition* which is the rite used for infant baptism. Their Confirmation and Eucharist will be conferred according to diocesan policy. In the Diocese of Portland that will be around the age of seven or older when the parish celebrates Confirmation/First Communion. The reception of these two sacraments may only be separated in different liturgies for grave reasons.

NOTE: Only a pastor who has direct, personal knowledge of a catechumen or candidate has the authority to make decisions about the readiness to receive or necessity to defer reception of a sacrament. Such decisions should be made in consultation with those involved in the child's formation, though the final determination cannot be made by a sacrament coordinator or initiation team alone.