

104 Eucharist

104 EUCHARIST

[Additional Sacramental Guidelines for First Eucharist \(PDF\)](#)

Eucharist is the third sacrament of initiation. It completes the initiation sacraments. It is essential to nurture the proper understanding that it is the Eucharist, not Confirmation, which completes initiation. This can be particularly challenging when the sacraments of initiation are not celebrated in the Restored Order -Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist-, but nevertheless, it is imperative to communicate that Christian Initiation is ordered to the Eucharist. In other words, the faithful should “put the sacrament of the Eucharist at the center, as the goal of the whole process of initiation” *Sacramentum Caritatis* §18.

Each time we share in the Eucharist, we are initiated more deeply into the paschal mystery. Our participation in this sacrament renews our commitment to live as disciples and carry on Christ’s ministry in the world.

104.1. THOSE WHO ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE AT THE EUCHARISTIC TABLE AND THEIR PREPARATION

Unbaptized adults -including children older than 7 years old- who participate in the Rite of Christian Initiation process will be fully initiated at the Easter Vigil (or at another time determined by pastoral needs). At that time, having been baptized and confirmed, the individual will receive Holy Communion for the first time. The catechumenate journey prepares the unbaptized to participate in the Eucharist.

Adults baptized in other Christian traditions -including children older than 7 years old, or those baptized as infants in the Catholic faith, but who had not been catechized, will participate in the Rite of Christian Initiation,

adapted for the baptized. After a suitable time of formation and preparation –to be decided by the individual and the pastoral formation team. The journey of continuing conversion prepares the baptized to participate in the Eucharist.

Children baptized as infants in the Catholic faith can be prepared to receive the Eucharist after they have attained the age of reason.

104.1.1.

Policy:

The parents, those who take the place of parents, as well as the pastoral formation team share the responsibility of preparing the child for First Communion.. CIC, Canon 914 They are responsible for assessing the readiness of the child to receive First Communion. National Directory for Catechesis, no. 36 A.3a

Procedures:

a.Catechesis for First Communion will provide age and developmental-level appropriate catechesis on the Mass and the mystery of the Eucharist that helps the child to participate actively and consciously, in an informed and reverent manner, as directed by the framework provided in Directory of Masses for Children, no. 12

b.Children belonging to the Eastern Churches will follow the procedures for first reception of Eucharist called for by their traditions, which call for the infant to receive Eucharist at the same time of Baptism and Chrismation.

Although there might be occasional instances where the Sacrament of Reconciliation is delayed for children baptized Catholic as infants, this is not the norm. “In the Latin Church, children must receive the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation for the first time prior to their first reception of the Eucharist. Since the celebration of First Confession precedes First Communion, Catechesis for the sacrament of Reconciliation is to precede First Communion and must be kept distinct by a clear and unhurried

separation. This must be done so that the specific identity of each sacrament is apparent and so that, before receiving First Communion, the child will be familiar with the revised Rite of Reconciliation and will be at ease with the reception of the sacrament.” National Directory for Catechesis, no 126

104.2 FREQUENCY OF PARTICIPATION

104.2.1.

Policy:

Those who have been initiated into the Eucharist should receive Holy Communion at least once a year, during the Easter season CIC, Canon 920. However, weekly participation in Mass is still expected.

104.3 MINISTER OF THE EUCHARIST

104.2.1.

Policy:

The ordinary minister of holy communion is a bishop, presbyter, or deacon. The extraordinary minister of holy communion is an acolyte or another member of the faithful designated according to canon 230 §3. CIC, Canon 910.