

Sacramental Programs - Grades 2 and 8 Participation in the Celebration of the Paschal Mystery (Mass) Attendance Reference Sheet

Dear Candidates and Parents,

I ask God's Blessing on you in a special way during this year in which you prepare personally, academically, and spiritually to receive another Sacrament of Initiation.

Saint Kateri Tekakwitha parish has a rich tradition, since it's foundation by Bishop Dominick Lagonegro and continued by Monsignor Belford, of requesting all those students preparing to receive sacraments to show their faithfulness by attending weekly Mass. The Mass is the center of our Faith, where we pray as a community and experience Jesus' physical presence in the Eucharist. In the Eucharist God expresses His great love for us, and we, in turn, show how much we need and appreciate that love. That is why the most precious gift a parent can give to their children after the gift of life is the loving presence of Christ in the Eucharist. We rightfully call the Mass the center of our Faith.

The policy was established in this parish that candidates preparing to receive sacraments must note their faithfulness in attending Sunday Mass every week. This is an expectation of all baptized Catholics, and the hope is that this policy will help the candidates to establish a valuable pattern to be followed for the rest of their lives. Parents are critical not only in accompanying their children to Mass, but also in giving them an example of how meaningful the Mass is in our lives.

I am happy to continue this policy for Saint Kateri Tekakwitha parishioners. We call our program "Faith Formation" instead of Religious Education, because it shows that we have to do more than just impart knowledge. We have to "form " our young people in the faith life, which includes prayer, Christian practice, knowledge of the Faith, service to community, a sincere love for the Eucharist and participation in the community gathered at Mass. I enjoy seeing our students and families at Mass each week, as we allow Jesus to form us into the Catholic Christian Community, experience His love together and obtain the strength to continually renew ourselves in the Faith.

The practice of weekly Mass attendance has great benefits for all. You will not only be rewarded by the Lord and receive the grace of the sacrament, but also develop more fully your baptismal relationship with Jesus and the Catholic Church Community and become living signs of Jesus' presence in our world. Our community and, indeed, the whole world need your Christian goodness to be put into caring service for others. We really can make a difference.

Yours in Christ,
Msgr. Desmond O'Connor

"Participation in the communal celebration of the
Sunday Eucharist is a testimony of belonging and
of being faithful to Christ and to his Church"

-Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2182

Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Church Mass Times:

Saturday: 5:00 pm.
Sunday: 9:00 am, 10:30 am, 12:15 pm, 5:30 pm (Teen Mass)

See reverse side for information on how this policy is implemented.

Procedures for Implementation of the Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Mass Attendance Policy

1. Your child has been given a set of five cards of a color specific to his or her grade, day or school. **Please keep and use these same cards throughout the year.** (We advise keeping them someplace where they won't be forgotten, such as a glove compartment, Mom's purse, etc!) Please do not substitute white cards.
2. Prior to attending Mass this weekend, your child should complete the lined side of the cards as follows, printing clearly and in large letters:

First Name, Last Name
Last Name of Catechist or Teacher
Class name (e.g. 2M-B1 or 8T-A)

3. Your child is expected to be present at the beginning of Mass each weekend. At the conclusion of Mass, your child is to give **one** card personally and directly to the celebrating priest or attending deacon. Do not leave the card on a table or with anyone else. Our clergy want to get to know you before Sacrament day!
4. The Office of Faith Formation will record Mass Attendance and return the cards to the catechist or teacher, who will, in turn, redistribute them to the children to be used again. (Five cards, therefore, should be more than enough.)
5. In the event that your child is away for the weekend, he or she is to obtain a church bulletin from the Roman Catholic parish attended and have it signed by the celebrating priest or attending deacon. (This procedure may also be followed in our parish if the card is forgotten, but please try to avoid this as a practice, as it is inconvenient for our priests and deacons.) **Be sure to add the child's name, teacher and grade to the front of the bulletin.** These bulletins should be brought to the faith formation or parochial school class the following week and given to the catechist or teacher to return to the Office of Faith Formation.
6. Please remember that participation at Sunday Mass is not only an important part of being Catholic, but also the best way to prepare for the Sacraments, become better Christians and feel a part of our growing parish community.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation in this matter.