

Sacraments: Preparation & Living the Faith

There are seven sacraments in the Catholic Church grouped into three categories:

- ⇒ **The Sacraments of Initiation.**
- ⇒ **The Sacraments of Healing.**
- ⇒ **The Sacraments of Service.**

Here we intend to provide guidelines for sacramental preparation. These guidelines are not only beneficial for those learning about the sacraments for the first time, but also for those who seek to live a vital, spiritual life rooted in an ever-deepening faith.

Much of this information is from <http://formed.org/>, a Catholic platform subscribed to by our parish and available free to all parishioners. The content includes informative videos, multi-lesson Bible studies, audio books, and streaming movies. You are encouraged to explore the site to find not only those resources listed here on the sacraments, but also the wide-ranging content aimed at strengthening your understanding of our Catholic beliefs, traditions, and practices. Whatever your stage in life or your learning preferences, you're sure to find a good fit!

Simply go to <http://formed.org/>, find "St. Thomas Redmond" and set up your own personal account with an email and password. Then explore at your own pace, searching out areas of interest to you.

Included in our preparation guidelines for the sacraments is additional context provided by the Diocese of Baker documents:

- ⇒ **Pastoral Guidelines.**
- ⇒ **Catechetical Guidelines and Norms for Sacramental Preparation.**

Sacraments of Initiation

The sacraments of initiation provide a foundation for the “vocation to holiness and to the mission of evangelizing the world” that all of Christ’s disciples have (CCC 1533).

We follow the [Baker Diocese Pastoral Implementation for Sacraments of Initiation](#). Children prepare for the sacraments through religious education, youth group, and preparation programs. Adults prepare by participating in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (R.C.I.A.). The specific plan for preparation is determined based on a range of factors as outlined in the pastoral guidelines for the diocese, including whether the person has the use of reason, and whether they should be baptized or catechized.



Confirmation

“The sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace” (CCC 1285). Linking back to Pentecost, through Confirmation, candidates receive an “outpouring of the Holy Spirit” (CCC 1302). Confirmation “roots us more deeply in the divine filiation, [...]; unites us more firmly to Christ; increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us; renders our bond with the Church more perfect; [and] gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross” (CCC 1303).

Aside from Confirmation as part of the R.C.I.A. process, we have a program that prepares youth for Confirmation with a one-year process for those in grades 6-12. We encourage youth who have been engaged in faith formation through the religious education program for grades K—5 to prepare for Confirmation as near to 6th grade as possible, but certainly before graduation from High School.

Confirmation preparation at St. Thomas Redmond requires that youth pass an oral exam (English or Spanish by appointment) covering basic faith questions and register before the end of September. Additionally, regular attendance at Mass of your choice (weekly), Monday Sacrament Class (1—2 times per month October—May from 6:30—7:45 p.m.), and Wednesday night Youth Group (7:00—8:15 p.m. with social time 6:30—6:50 p.m.). A supplemental resource on **Confirmation** is [Part 2: Session 1 in the Symbolon series](#).

Minutes 25 – 40 address the Sacrament of Confirmation as the natural extension of the graces received at Baptism.

