

Archdiocesan Policies

First Communion

Readiness

Policy 21

Pastors, in consultation with parents, the director of the parish catechumenate or sacramental program, catechists, and other appropriate ministers, are to determine the readiness of the candidates to receive their first communion in keeping with the goals of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* and the norms of the *National Catechetical Directory*. This readiness must include a sufficient familiarity with the nature of the Eucharist in order for the candidate to participate actively and with awareness (Canon 913).

Celebration

Policy 22

At first communion, communion should be offered under both forms, i.e., the consecrated bread and wine.

Procedures:

1. Children and parents need to be catechized on the significance of both forms as part of sacramental preparation to faithfully appreciate the gift of the Eucharist.
2. Parishes should offer communion under both forms as a regular practice each Sunday. Children celebrating their first communion, as well as adults should be able to receive from the cup on this occasion and on every Sunday.
3. Pastors/pastoral administrators should see that the parish is regularly catechized on the significance of offering both forms; and the proper means for receiving communion.

Policy 23

First communion is best celebrated as a parish celebration on Sunday. Parishes are encouraged to celebrate this event at a regularly scheduled Sunday Mass whenever possible rather than at a separate time.

Parishes are free to celebrate first communion in ways other than one large group to encourage wider parish participation.

A parish celebration of first communion more fully integrates the children into the eucharistic assembly. Those preparing the liturgy should avoid adapting the Mass solely as a Mass for children since large numbers of adults are also present and worshiping (*Directory for Masses with Children*, Chapter II).