



DIOCESE OF JEFFERSON CITY

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

19 June 2024

Dear Parents & Guardians of our First Communicants,

Thank you for nurturing your child's faith and accompanying them to receive Christ in the Eucharist. First Holy Communion is a special milestone in the raising of our children in the faith, and this year I invite you to make it particularly memorable by bringing your First Communicant to one of our events for the Eucharistic Pilgrimage.

In preparation for the National Eucharistic Congress, four teams of pilgrims have begun walking from the edges of the United States, carrying the Blessed Sacrament. From July 1-5, a team of Western pilgrims will process through our diocese, and we will have many opportunities to encounter the Lord throughout the week. The full diocesan schedule can be found at <https://diojeffcity.org/eucharisticrevival/>.

I would like to invite your First Communicant to join me at our closing Eucharistic Pilgrimage Mass and Procession. On Friday, July 5th, I will celebrate Mass at 8 am at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Jefferson City, and I would like all First Communicants who are present to join me in the procession that will begin at the end of Mass from the altar to the doors of the Cathedral and beyond. There will be a public Eucharistic Procession from our Cathedral to the Proto-Cathedral of St. Peter downtown, approximately two miles away. Your First Communicant would be invited to drop rose petals on the path the Eucharist will take. You, your First Communicant, and other family members are welcome to join for a portion or all of the procession. Your children's experience of receiving their First Communion offers us a chance to be inspired by their faith, and we want to give all the opportunity to be inspired by them as well. As we see in the lives of young people like St. Jose Luis Sanchez del Rio, Sts. Jacinta and Francisco Marto, and Blessed Carlo Acutis, the faith of children is a powerful witness to the world.

For those planning to join us on July 5 for the Mass and procession, please arrive in the vestibule of the Cathedral at least 15 minutes before Mass begins to receive instructions and a special lanyard that signifies this special honor. First Communicants are encouraged to be well hydrated, and are invited to wear comfortable clothing and good walking shoes.

I hope you can join us on July 5th, and I wish many blessings upon you and your family.

Most Reverend W. Shawn McKnight
Bishop of Jefferson City