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The Significance of the First Holy Communion to a Young Catholic's Spiritual Growth
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Article published on April 4th 2012 | [Shopping](#)

Roman Catholics initially undergo three sacramental stages or "initiations" during their youth. These sacramental stages need to be observed before they can be considered fully-fledged members of the Church. Sacraments are rites which bestow grace to persons who are the subject of said rites. The three Sacraments are the Baptism, first Holy Communion, and the Confirmation. These are considered the foundations of Catholic life. These rites are part of the Church's ancient traditions and are usually attended by celebration among family members and friends.

The Church teaches that a Catholic is born anew in Baptism, is strengthened by Confirmation, and receives eternal life through Communion. After going through baptism, usually during the first year after birth, a child's next taste of the sacrament upon reaching the "age of reason" or seven years is the first communion which is also known as the Holy Eucharist. However, one cannot receive the first communion without first going to confession—the two must go together with the latter taking precedence.

Confession is when one asks forgiveness for sins through a priest who is authorized to give absolutions in accordance with Catholic teachings and beliefs. This is a prerequisite to receiving first communion—to be in a state of grace. Catholics are taught not to receive communion without having first gone to confession, at least for those who have committed serious or mortal sins.

Catholics must undergo religious training and education before they can receive their first communion or go through their first confession. For those studying in Catholic schools, this would be no problem, but for those enrolled in other schools, they must be provided with special religious instruction before they can participate in these rites. These are considered the most important initial steps to a young Catholic's spiritual development and make them ready to receive their first Communion gifts.

The first communicants are usually dressed in white for both girls and boys. This varies though from one country to another, as traditions and customs oftentimes dictate the participants' dress code. No matter what kind of clothes the first communicants wear, however, these children are also excited to receive their first Holy Communion gifts from guests and other relatives.

Participating in the rite of receiving the first communion is a special day for a Catholic child. Family members and friends usually prepare gifts consisting of medals of patron saints and other religious objects like rosary bracelets. These gifts provide added meaning and value to the first communicants. If you want further information on the subject, you may visit the following website: irishcelticjewels.com/first_holy_communion.htm.

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Article Keywords:

first communion gifts, first holy communion gifts, rosary bracelets

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