



CO - CATHEDRAL OF
ST. ROBERT BELLARMINE
Roman Catholic Diocese of Trenton

June 3, 2018

My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

On December 1, 2018 I will begin my 10th year as your pastor. I am always grateful for the many blessings you, the Faithful of Saint Robert Bellarmine have been to me as a priest. Together we have done many good things to build up the Church in our community.

One aspect of the liturgical life that has not developed as well as I would have liked is the celebration of First Holy Communion. Although our children have been well prepared and their parents have been very supportive, I realize that the growing number of family and friends who do not participate regularly in Mass has caused a growing lack of reverence during Mass, at the celebration of First Holy Communion.

In recognition of this reality, and in keeping with Church teaching, as set forth in *Redemptionis Sacramentum*; (Instruction on the Eucharist, April 23, 2004)

- The celebration of the Mass, as the action of Christ and of the Church, is the center of the whole Christian life for the universal as well as the particular Church, and also for the individual faithful, #36
- Another day should be chosen instead, such as a Sunday between the Second and the Sixth Sunday of Easter, or the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, or the Sundays of Ordinary time, since Sunday is rightly regarded as the day of the Eucharist. #87

Since the Day of the Lord, Sunday, is the day the community gathers to celebrate the Holy Eucharist, it is fitting that we admit to the Altar of the Lord those children prepared to receive Christ in Holy Communion.



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To accomplish this, those children preparing for their First Holy Communion will participate in the weekend Masses during the Easter Season, beginning with the Second Sunday of Easter until all have received this holy Sacrament.

I realize this will be a major change for some. It is my hope that by including these young children, and their families, in our Weekend Masses we will draw them into the mystery to which the Church invites all her children, to participate in Mass at least once a week. I also believe that for the assembly the witnessing of a First Holy Communion will stir in them the memory of their first encounter with the Eucharistic Lord.

Please understand that this decision was made prayerfully and reflectively and is final. I will work with our Office of Religious Education to work out the details. Be assured of my continue prayers for all the people of Saint Robert Bellarmine.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Msgr. Sam