



2018 CATHOLIC MINISTRIES DRIVE

Making Christ A Home In Your Heart

100% of your gift supports 14 ministries like **Sacramental Preparation!**

In our Diocese, the Sacraments are provided to anyone wanting a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. These Sacraments—Baptism, First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, Confirmation, and Matrimony—are made available in every parish with the help of Lay Sacrament Teams who tirelessly give their time and talent year-round.

A story of Faith, Hope & Charity.

In 2016-2017, the following Sacraments were received by children and adults throughout our eight-county Diocese.

- 949 individuals began their faith journey through **Baptism**, becoming members of the Catholic Church.
- 893 found forgiveness and understanding of Christ's dying and rising through **First Reconciliation** and **First Eucharist**, and are now active participants in the Mass.
- 961 received **Confirmation**, having their faith sealed with a gift from the Holy Spirit to be called as witnesses of Jesus Christ to the world.
- 401 participated in **Marriage** Preparation, investing time and energy not for a day, but for a lifetime together with Christ.

Baptism, Reconciliation, the Eucharist, Confirmation, Holy Matrimony, Holy Orders, and the Anointing of the Sick—as Catholics we are familiar with the sacraments, and see them as mileposts in our lives.

Pope Francis energetically reminds us, they are not simply observances; they are portals through which the Lord brings us all the power and graces that flow from his death and Resurrection. And wonderfully, each sacrament opens us to a personal encounter with Jesus. (Introduction of *Meeting Jesus in the Sacraments* by Pope Francis)

"The Sacraments are not mere appearances, they are not rituals; they are the power of Christ; Jesus Christ is present in the Sacraments." - Pope Francis

Your support today will assist your parish's efforts to provide opportunities for anyone to receive one or all sacraments. Preparation for each of the Sacraments takes effort, time, volunteers and materials. This ministry is an important part of parish life and every Sacrament is a cause for celebration. The Sacraments confirm, strengthen and increase our faith and closeness with the community of Christ.

Your gift can be mailed to the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, P.O. Box 409, Hollidaysburg, PA 16648; placed in your parish offertory; or made online at www.dioceseaj.org

