



St. Monica's Presbytery,
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Dear Parent/ Legal Guardian,

Hope you all had a great Summer. In a change from previous years, this year children from 4 and year 5 are eligible to receive their First Holy Communion and Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession).

Please note that the Sacraments of Holy Communion and Reconciliation are only available for Children who are already Baptised Catholic.

This year, we will be following a different Parish led programme which prepares children and their families for First Holy Communion and the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession).

Over the school year, there will be **4 Parent/Guardian and Child Sessions**, in Church.

Please note that **Attendance is required at all 4 sessions.**

In addition, the children are **required to attend the weekly Saturday 4.30pm evening Mass or Sunday 9.30am morning Mass.**

So, what's it all about?

God loves spending time with us. He loves it when we take a few minutes each day to talk to him. He loves it when we come to visit him at church on Sunday. He loves spending time with us. Sunday is God's favourite day.

Sunday is a special day. So don't waste a single one. Make every Sunday a special day. One of the beautiful things about Sunday is it happens every week.

Sunday is the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a special day of rest and worship. We all need to take a break from time to time to rest. Each night we rest by sleeping. And once a week, God wants us to take a special rest so that we can be filled with joy and share that joy with everyone who comes into our lives.

Sunday (or Saturday night) is also a day of worship. We go to Mass to worship God. There are many ways to worship God, but one way we can do this every day is by thanking him for the many ways he has blessed us.

One of the things that make Sunday a special day is that we go to church. We praise and thank God by going to Mass each Sunday.

Why do we go to church every Sunday? Lots of reasons. But one very important reason is to say thank you to God for all the ways he has blessed us this week. Every blessing comes from God and God has blessed us with so many gifts. Going to Mass on Sunday is a great way to show God that we are grateful.

What are the benefits of receiving Holy Communion?

Your child's journey with God is a great spiritual journey. Along the way they will have many decisions to make. Some will be big and some will be small. Every decision they make changes who they are forever. This is just one of the many reasons that God wants to help you child become a fabulous decision maker. You child will be preparing for First Communion. Receiving Jesus in the Eucharist is one of the greatest blessings of all of our lives. But Holy Communion is not just a one time blessing. It is a lifelong blessing. Receiving Jesus in the Eucharist each and every Sunday at Mass will fill your child and us with everything needed to live a fabulous life.

Jesus gives himself to us in the Eucharist. He gives us his encouragement so that we can persevere in times of difficulty. And he gives us his wisdom so we become a great decision maker.

After your child's First Communion they will be able to receive Jesus in the Eucharist every Sunday for the rest of their lives.

Holy Communion strengthens our union with Jesus; He lives within us in a special way. It increases our love of God and neighbour. If we give God a chance, He will help us experience the tremendous benefits of the Mass.

There will be an initial short meeting on **Monday, 16th October at 2.45.pm. in St Monica's School** so I can explain what is required in order for your child to receive their First Holy Communion in 2024. If you are unable to attend this meeting, **it will be repeated on that same evening, Monday, 16th October at 6.00.pm. in St. Monica's Church.**

Registration forms will be given out at this meeting, and the completed forms must be returned to me, **by posting them through the letterbox of St. Monica's Presbytery (not to school), along with their Baptism Certificate(s) no later than Monday, 23rd October, 2023.** Once I have received your completed forms, you will receive a letter with the dates and times of the sessions held in St Monica's church.

IMPORTANT— If for any reason your child does not wish to receive their First Holy Communion at this time, please let me know. I would like to emphasise that the decision to go through the programme and receive the sacraments must come from your children.

Warm wishes and every Blessing,

Fr Ged Callacher