



THE ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH OF SAINT MARY AND SAINT PHILIP NERI

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Wednesday 3 September

FIRST COMMUNION PROGRAMME 2025-6

Dear Parents/Carers,

As your children have now started in Year Three, they will be able to enter the programme of preparation for First Holy Communion in 2025-6. This is an important moment in their faith journey – they are growing as members of the Catholic Church, and this coming year will help them to deepen their understanding and practice of the religion which you chose for them in baptism. Your support is vital – you are still the “first educators of your children in the ways of faith”, and for them to get the most out of this year will require your working together with Church (and School).

Registration

Attached to this letter is a registration form for First Holy Communion next year. If you wish your child to celebrate this sacrament, please fill in the form and return it to **Church** before **Monday 22 September**. You **MUST** attach a copy of their baptism certificate. If you have lost this you will need to contact the church where your child was baptised and request a copy asap.

Please note that if your child is not yet baptised but you wish them to join this year's programme, you must speak with Mrs Gerrard asap. The children **MUST** have a baptised Catholic parent.

Introductory Meeting

Our introductory meeting takes place on **Wednesday 1st October at 6pm**. This is part of the registration process so if you are unable to attend this your child will need to wait until next year to join the programme. The meeting will last for approximately 40 minutes. This **MUST** be attended by one parent and the child joining the First Communion Programme. The children will meet their catechists, who will be working with them throughout the coming year, and Father Brady will explain the main themes and method of the programme to parents.

Presentation

The programme itself will begin on the weekend of **11/12th October** and run until First Communion Masses in May later next year. A key element of the programme will be attendance at Sunday Mass each week. Our Masses here are at 5.30 p.m. on a Saturday and 9.00 a.m. and 10.30 a.m. on a Sunday.

There will be three meetings and three celebrations before First Communion in May. The other dates will be given to you at meeting one.

- ❖ **Monday 22 September:** Registration forms and baptism certificates to be returned to church.
- ❖ **Wednesday 1 October at 6pm:** Meeting One – Welcome to the programme. (Child and parent **MUST** attend this)
- ❖ **Weekend of 11/12 October:** Presentation Celebration at weekend Masses. (Child and parent **MUST** attend this)

Children will celebrate their First Confession during the school day in the Season of Lent. First Communions will take place on two chosen Saturdays in May - dates will be decided once registration is completed and we know how many children are in the programme this year.

I sincerely hope that you will help make the most of this special year for your children: when you had them baptised you made a promise that you would “bring them up in the practice of their Catholic faith.” The special moments of this coming year are an ideal way of keeping that promise, and of deepening your own faith too. I look forward to sharing this journey with you.

With prayers and best wishes,

Fr Philip Brady and *Mrs R Gerrard*
(Parish Priest) (Head of School)