

St Peter's Church First Communion Programme 2017-18

Notes for parents

Welcome to our First Communion programme. We hope that this year will be a special time for both you and your children.

Preparation for First Holy Communion is based on the programme 'God's Greatest Gift'. This programme includes a children's work book and notes for parents.

The children will be given their work books at mass following the first class on October 7 so that you can work through Chapters 1 and 2 **before** the November class.

Our classes will follow the chapters in the work book with the addition of an introductory enrolment session:

Oct 7	Introduction and enrolment
Nov 4	Chapters 1 and 2 ' <i>The Gift of Creation</i> ' and ' <i>A Very Special Gift</i> '
Dec 2	Chapter 3 ' <i>The Gift of Baptism</i> '
Dec 8	Advent Service
Jan 6	Chapter 4 ' <i>The Gift of God's Word</i> '
Feb 3	Chapter 5 ' <i>The Gift of Friendship</i> '
Mar 3	Chapters 6 and 7 ' <i>The Gift of Forgiveness</i> ' and ' <i>The Gift of Peace</i> '
Mar 9,10,16,17	First Confessions (the Sacrament of Reconciliation)
Apr 21	Chapter 8 ' <i>The Gift of Joy</i> '
May 19	Chapter 9 ' <i>The Greatest Gift</i> '
Jun 9, 10, 16	First Communions (the Sacrament of the Eucharist)
Jul 7	Chapter 10 ' <i>Our Gift to God</i> '

Classes are held each month on a Saturday morning, during which we review and consolidate what the children have been studying the previous month with their parents, and prepare for masses the following day (or on Saturday evening), when the children participate in the bidding prayers and offertory procession.

The programme involves parents as well as children, so parents need to help their children read and understand the relevant chapter in their work book each month **before** the Saturday class. So, for example, during October you study the first two chapters, '*The Gift of Creation*' and '*A Very Special Gift*', ready for the November class.

Your parents' notes explain what the themes are all about and suggest ways in which you might help your child.

To help you guide your child through the programme we shall be holding three instructive parents' evenings:

- Monday 27 November - 'The Mass'
- Monday 26 February - 'The Sacrament of Reconciliation'
- Monday 30 April - 'The Eucharist'

Please make a note of these dates and try to attend. The meetings start at 8pm and last one hour.

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There are two Saturday classes: one from **9.00am to 10.30am**, and another from **11.00am to 12.30pm**. You will have been allocated a class for your child who should always attend at the same time each month. Children will be divided into five groups for each class.

Please bring your child to the church hall 10 minutes before the class starts, and be in the Link to collect them at the end of class. If you are unable to collect your child please make arrangements with another parent to do so. But please be assured that if you are unavoidably delayed a catechist will stay with your child at the church until you arrive. If you want your child to walk home alone you **must** give the catechists a signed note to say so.

The children should bring their completed work book and a set of colouring pens to every class.

You are asked to choose one mass that you will regularly attend on the class weekend each month. The reason for this is so that the catechists can organise a rota for bidding prayer readers and helpers in advance.

On the Sunday (or Saturday evening) following each class please bring your child to church 10 minutes before mass starts and check in with the catechist at the back of the church. **THIS IS IMPORTANT** because children take turns to read and help at mass and we need to know they are present before mass starts. If you arrive late, and your child was due to read, you may find that we have chosen a substitute reader.

First Confessions (the Sacrament of Reconciliation) will take place during a special service in March. You may choose from four available times: Friday evening 9 or 16 March, or Saturday morning 10 or 17 March. Parents are expected to attend with their children but there is no need to 'book' a date, just turn up at whichever time suits you best

First Communions will take place at 11.30am on Saturdays 9 and 16 June, and on Sunday 10 June. After mass we hold a short celebration for the children and their families in the church hall.

Information about the First Communion programme will be posted on the notice board in the church porch and on the parish website:

www.stpeters-hove.org.uk/sacramental/first-communion/

If you feel you need more support or have any questions as you prepare your child for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion, please do speak to Fr Jerry or one of the catechists: Jane Noble, Kate Fryer, Kathy Crook, Charlie Clark and Vincent Joyce.