

## **Sacred Heart Parish**

### **Reconciliation & Holy Communion Programme 2009/10**

#### **Parents Meetings**

Our parents' meeting help us all explore what this particular bit of our faith means to us. We will have the opportunity to explore questions that are important to the parents. We can't pass it on to children if we haven't thought about why it matters to us. We can also have a chat, which helps us all to get to know each other better as Christians. Each year we have had parents who are not Catholics or who were not brought up Catholics and we welcome their valuable contribution.

#### **The Process.**

Parish catechesis supports the "teaching of religion" in school, allowing us, children and parents/guardians to live and practice our faith. First Holy Communion is not only about learning things, but also about doing things together: praying together, sharing faith together, doing things for others together because of our faith.

#### **Who does this?**

First and most significantly, the parents/guardians. They pass on their faith to their children and this is the most important way that children receive faith in God. The parish is there to help parents to do this and the catechists, with the support of the clergy try to organise the programme that will help.

#### **What we want to achieve.**

We start with Reconciliation:

- A greater awareness of self.
- A deeper understanding of God's unconditional love and acceptance of each person.
- A realisation that what we do affects others.

We hope that at the end of the programme you will have helped your child to:

- A greater awareness of the mass: several different themes exist within our Eucharist Programme explaining the parts of the mass.
- A recognition that communion is more than just bread and wine.
- An awareness of the parish community as supportive and prayerful.

#### **Structure:**

We concentrate on Reconciliation from September to December, and Eucharist from January to June.

Each month we have the parent and children's session on the Saturday morning followed by a special mass on the Sunday. There are also special activities at key times of the year, particularly Holy Week and Easter when all the children of the Parish can join in.

#### **Attendance:**

It is important that parents and children attend all the sessions. There may be times during the year when due to illness or an unexpected serious event within the family you are not able to attend. If this happens then one of the catechists will ensure you are given an individual session so you don't miss out.

#### **Sponsorship:**

We like every child to have a prayer sponsor from the parish but if you would prefer to have a member of your family then that is fine.

#### **Books and money:**

We use the 'I Belong' book for both programmes. A Parent's Guide will be lent to you to help you work through the book with your child(ren). Since the course incurs expense we ask parents/guardians to make a contribution to the cost of £20.00. Please make cheques payable to The Sacred Heart Church, and **enclose with your enrolment form**. In the case of hardship, please talk to Rita Garner, Deacon Paul or Father Carl.

#### **Parent and Children's Meetings**

Our Parent and Children's Meetings start at 9:30am **SHARP**. Registration will be in the Parish Room accessible from Norton Rd or Hova Villas. A register will be kept and each child and catechist will receive a name tag so that we can get to know each other's names. The children will be in groups of five or six and we will try to get each child with a friend but this is also about meeting with new friends.

Parents will meet in the Parish Room but spend their session in another room. We will agree with the parent group the questions they want to cover. In this way we hope to ensure that the programme is useful to you. If at any time you wish to have a private interview with Deacon Paul or Father Carl you are encouraged to make a separate appointment. The parents session will finish about 10.15.

Through the diocese we have support to ensure that all children can take part in the First Holy Communion Programme. We have been assured that no matter the nature of the child's special needs together with the parents/guardians, we will find a way for them to receive the sacraments.

The children will be in the Parish Room with catechists. The catechists will talk to the children about the theme for that particular session. During the session the children have a break with a drink and biscuit – always very popular!

All the children will get a chance at the various jobs and we never force a child to do something they don't feel confident to do or don't want to do.

At 10.30 Parents collect their children. We will not allow any child to leave without you being there to pick them up but please be on time as the catechists will want to leave on time too.

### **Sunday Mass 9.30 am**

A place will be reserved for you and your child at the front of the church.

During the first Mass of the programme the child with one parent will be asked to come to the front of the church to be formally received onto the Programme and will receive a copy of the *I Belong* book. Thereafter, the 9.30 Sunday Masses following the Saturday sessions will be dedicated to your children with them doing readings and bidding prayers. Please be sure to sit at the front in the reserved seats.

### **Proof of Baptism**

Fr Carl needs to be assured that all children have been baptised before they receive their First Holy Communion. You will need to show us the Baptism Certificate or the date and place of Baptism so the Parish Records can be checked.

### **Catechists**

We are parishioners who have volunteered to help organise the Reconciliation and Eucharist programmes. We are all from different backgrounds but one thing we have in common is a wish to build up our parish community so that our children - all our children - will grow up knowing what it means to be a Catholic Christian and experiencing what it means to be *church*.

These days we all realise that it is not enough for our children to learn *about* their faith in school. They need to understand how it can be lived and parents are the people to do this. So really, you will be doing the work with them this year and we (the Catechists) will be giving them and you an experience of being part of a parish.

We all work or are busy in retirement so our time, like yours, is limited. However, we know that lots of parents find the preparation for the sacraments quite a challenge - so much seems to have changed in the past few years - and we are always there to help. Please speak to us at the sessions or phone or email Rita Garner. Tel 07823 886837 or [rita.garner@ntlworld.com](mailto:rita.garner@ntlworld.com)  
This begins what we hope will be a great and enjoyable year. God Bless

**SACRED HEART PARISH**  
**RECONCILIATION and EUCHARIST PROGRAMME 2009-10**

Please fill in the enrolment form and post it to Rita Garner, 92, Old Shoreham Rd, Hove BN3 6HL with a cheque for £20 payable to Sacred Heart Catholic Church.

**Enrolment Form**

Child's Name.....(as you wish it to appear on the  
First Communion  
Certificate)

Name child is known as for badges during session.....

Age.....

Date of Birth.....

School.....

Parents/Guardian.....

.....  
(First Names & surnames please)

Address.....

.....  
Post Code.....

Tel No:.....

E-mail Address .....

(We may wish to email you details)

If you live outside of the Sacred Heart's Parish boundaries please state which Parish this is.

Any other special details that you would like to inform us about you child

Baptism date and Parish.....

(please bring proof of baptism early in the programme)

Signed

Name

Date