

The Eucharist - Holy Communion

After all that has been said, it shouldn't come as a surprise to hear that attending Sunday Mass is not an option for any Catholic: it is an obligation and a privilege, because through the Mass we come into the presence of the God who created us and chose us as His.

At Mass not only do we come into His presence, but we enter into communion with Him by receiving the Eucharist which is truly the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Our Lord, Jesus Christ. Therefore, in the Eucharist, Jesus gives Himself to us as a real gift. St Alphonsus Liguori once said:

Of all the sacraments, the adorable Sacrament of the Altar is the most excellent. The other sacraments contain gifts of God, but the Holy Eucharist contains God himself.

Your child's First Holy Communion represents an important event in his or her life. If you want great things for your child, you will want them to be united to the Eucharist their whole life; for if they are united in communion to Our Lord Jesus Christ, they will truly do great things!

United with God, great things become possible!

KEY DATES FOR 2025-2026 PROGRAMME.

Friday 26th September, 3 pm
Parents' Information Session in school

Registration forms available at this meeting. Please return completed registration forms to Fr Christopher after Mass either on Saturdays at 6 pm or Sundays at 10 am.

Sunday 12th October 2024
Registration closes

Sunday 19th October 10 am Mass
Enrolment Mass, Passports distributed

Sunday 16th November 10 am Mass
We Pray

Sunday 25th January 10 am Mass
We Listen

Friday 27th February 3pm
Parents' Session—Reconciliation 1

Sunday 1st March 10 am Mass
We Follow

Friday 6th March 3pm
Parents' Session—Reconciliation 2

Thursday 12th March 6.30 pm
First Reconciliation

Friday 27th March 3pm
Parents' Session—Communion

3 Weekends for First Holy Communion
25/26 April; 2/3 May; 9/10 May

Sunday 7th June 10 am Mass
Parish celebrates with the children who have made their First Holy Communion this year



First Reconciliation and First Eucharist Programme 2025-2026

Preparation for First Confession and First Holy Communion

Information for Parents

Sacred Heart Presbytery, 8 Lord Street, Westhoughton. BL5 3SE

(01942) 812174
SRCDT Reg. Charity no. 250037

Welcome, and thank you for showing interest in our parish Sacramental Programme!

Many years ago you chose to bring your child to the Church, the place where God's family comes together, and in that Church, through the sacrament of baptism, your child was 'born again' to eternal life and became, through the grace of God, a member of His holy family.

During baptism, each of you made a solemn promise, before your family, but most importantly before God, to bring your child up in the practice of the faith. This means you promised to show your child WHAT it means to be a Catholic as well as HOW to be a Catholic.

It is important that you remember that God and His Church takes your promise seriously! The Sacramental Programme builds upon the grace that God has freely given your child at baptism. The Sacrament of Baptism welcomes us into God's family, and the Sacraments of Reconciliation (Confession) and the Eucharist (Holy Communion) help us to understand and deepen our place in God's wonderful family; the Catholic Church.

The Sacramental Programme is aimed at BOTH you and your child, and it requires commitment.

The Programme is deliberately aimed at you, because as a family, as the Church, we desire to equip you with the necessary tools to help you continue to bring your child up in the practice of the faith. The programme aims to help your child realise the importance of the Catholic faith, and how to live it and share in it through the sacramental life of the Church.

Being a Catholic is not a part-time, weekend-only, commitment, it is a life long vocation, calling us to real holiness. It is not just a part of who we are, it is who we are - beloved children of God.

The sacraments keep us focused on that vocation which we all share. Therefore it is important to remember that for Catholics, the sacraments are not optional extras to our faith, they are not boxes to tick, or rituals 'to do': rites of passage, yes, but a passage into something new and wonderful, to be lived with joy and celebrated every day. The sacraments are in fact the heart-beat of our Catholic faith - as Catholics we are sacramental people - the sacraments are the means through which we celebrate together as God's children and family, and we continue our call to holiness, as we meet and encounter God.

How can I help my Child?

Let's keep this really simple:

1. Come to Mass
2. Come to Mass
3. Come to Mass - get the idea? At Mass we put time aside and allow God in: we listen to the Word of God, the story of what God has done for His people in the past and what He continues to do for us now, and we celebrate the saving act of Jesus' passion, death and resurrection.
4. Teach them how to make the sign of the cross, how to genuflect when we come into Church (and why!). Ensure they can say the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the Glory Be, and know the Act of Contrition.
5. Discuss with your child what s/he is learning about God, the Church and the sacraments, just as you would for any other subject.

During the Sacramental Programme your child will prepare for and celebrate the Sacraments of Reconciliation (Confession) and Eucharist (Holy Communion)

Reconciliation - Confession

Sadly, fewer people today come to this wonderful sacrament, but that doesn't mean people have stopped sinning! Perhaps they no longer take their sins as seriously as they should. The classic definition of sin is *that which separates us from God and each other*. We only need to watch the news or open a paper to know sin is real. But we are mistaken if we think sin is something that only other people commit - it is something we all do. Yes, it can be hard to admit this even to ourselves, but it is true! The good news is that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is not about dwelling on our sins, but rather it is focused upon releasing us from the guilt and shame of sin. It brings us healing and can strengthen our resolve. God, through this sacrament, shows his love for us, He liberates us, forgives us and invites us to truly live the lives we were created for.

Confession is important for all Catholics because through the sacrament we are freed and forgiven so that we may take our rightful place in the Church and worthily receive the Lord in the Eucharist.