



PARENT INFORMATION BOOKLET

# First Holy Communion

*Sacrament of Love*



*Our Lady of the Mission*  
Whitford Parish

"Where two or three meet in my name,  
I am there among them." Matt 18:20

Our Lady of the Mission Parish Sacramental Programme

# from our priests



Dear Parents,

We, as priests, would like to commend you for the willing support and guidance you have given to your child on their faith journey and for the sharing of your faith with them. It is this love, this sharing of your faith, that will encourage and inspire them to grow in their own faith.

In enrolling your child for the Sacrament of Eucharist, you are beginning a wonderful journey, for you, your child and for the entire parish community.

In saying "Amen" for the first time to the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, your child will become one with Jesus in a new way, becoming joined more deeply to the Body of Christ, His Church. In faith you are bringing your child not just to the one moment of First Communion but also to a new life with Christ.

The whole parish community walks with you on this journey in both prayer and practical support: teachers, catechists, parish staff, ministry coordinators and all parishioners. However, your role in this process is crucial.

The following are some simple things you can do to lead your child to the Eucharist:

- Model active participation in the Mass every week
- Go to Reconciliation with your child
- Pray out loud for your child at meal times, bed times or any time your family is gathered together
- Reminisce with your child about your own First Communion
- Share with your child your beliefs about the Eucharist
- Encourage godparents and grandparents to discuss the sacrament with your child
- Be sure to highlight the spiritual aspects of the celebration not just the "milestone"



If you do not feel confident in teaching your child about the Sacrament or in praying with and for them, there are many resources available to you. Ask teachers, catechists, grandparents and older family members and friends to share their wisdom, knowledge and faith.

This booklet contains important information about the process of preparation and the actual First Holy Communion Celebration. During the priest visit in class, students will have an opportunity to go through some practical matters around receiving communion. They will have an opportunity to ask questions of the visiting priest.

Please read all the information carefully.

We pray for each family, that this time of preparation will be deeply fruitful for you and your children.

Yours in Christ,

**Father Cyprian Shikokoti**

Parish Priest



# frequently asked questions

## DRESS REQUIREMENTS

There are no set dress requirements for Communion, other than the children should be dressed neatly and appropriately in keeping with the importance of the occasion. Having said that, most girls wear a white dress and many choose to wear a veil but this is by no means compulsory. We would ask you to choose something modest and suitable for church. Some boys choose to wear a suit but again this is entirely your decision as a pair of long pants and shirt would be just as acceptable. We would suggest a dress shirt rather than a T-shirt with a logo or emblem.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

We would ask you and your family to recognise the reverence of the occasion and refrain from taking photographs during the Mass. A professional photographer will be available 45 minutes before each Mass, stopping half an hour before the start of Mass to take family portraits if you wish. This photographer will also be taking some photos during the Mass. All photos are free to view and download online after your child's First Holy Communion weekend.

## SEATING

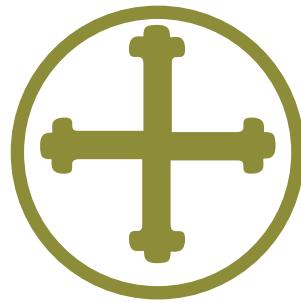
There will be reserved seating for students and their immediate family. Extended family and friends will need to arrive early enough to secure a seat. We would ask that all students arrive at least 30 minutes prior to Mass time and register at the back of the church. After processing in with the priests, the children will join their families.

## RECONCILIATION

It is appropriate that the children receive the Sacrament of Penance in the weeks leading up to their First Communion. Please see the parish Reconciliation times in this booklet and take your child along, this could be an opportunity for the whole family to celebrate Reconciliation together. The children will be given the opportunity to receive Reconciliation with their class groups in the week prior to their First Communion. If your child missed their first Reconciliation in Year 3, this will be their first Reconciliation. A certificate will be issued and parish records will be updated.

## RETREAT DAY

Each school will arrange a retreat day in school time. The children in the Parish Religious Education Program will have a retreat day on a Saturday towards the date of their sacrament.



## COMMITMENT MASS

When your child was baptised, the following words were used as part of the Rite of Baptism, "You have asked to have your child baptised. In doing this, you are accepting the responsibility of teaching your child the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring your child up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us by loving God and our neighbour. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?" You answered, "We do." During the Commitment Mass, you will, again be asked if you are willing to fulfil this responsibility. Please complete a Commitment Card which your child will hand to Father during any of the Commitment Masses.

## PARENT / STUDENT WORKSHOP

This workshop is designed to assist and support families in the preparation for the Sacrament and will be held over two evenings at 5.00 pm at WCPS and PCPS. Please check the calendar and mark it in your diary. It is essential that all students together with at least one parent or guardian attend the workshop.

## FAMILY PRAYER

The Christian family is the first place of education in prayer; the family is the place where God's children learn to pray and to persevere in prayer. When we pray, we may want to count the blessings of our families and thank God for them. In some instances, we may want to forgive past hurts and harms done.

Some traditional prayers are listed below for your use.

### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father,  
Who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who  
trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil.  
Amen.

### *Hail Mary*

Hail Mary,  
full of grace,  
The Lord is with thee.  
Blessed art thou  
among women  
and blessed is the fruit  
of thy womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
Pray for us sinners now  
and at the hour  
of our death.  
Amen.

### *Glory Be*

Glory be to the Father  
and to the Son,  
And to the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the beginning,  
is now and ever shall be,  
world without end.  
Amen.

# mass times

## AT OUR LADY OF THE MISSION



### WEEKEND MASSES

*Saturday Vigil*  
6.30 pm

*Sunday*  
8.00 am, 10.00 am & 5.45 pm

### WEEKDAY MASSES

*Tuesday – Friday*  
7.00 am & 9.00 am

*Saturday*  
8.00 am

### RECONCILIATION

*Saturday*  
5.00 pm – 6.00 pm

### PARISH OFFICE HOURS

*Tuesday – Friday*  
9.00 am – 4.00 pm

### PRIEST

Parish Priest

**Fr Cyprian M Shikokoti**



### PARISH SACRAMENTAL COORDINATOR

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