

# FAMILY OF FAITH

PARENTS RESOURCE 26/27



# **Introductory session**

**Welcome and thank you for joining us. We are truly thankful for your faith and commitment to raising Spirit-filled children and forming holy families that we believe will change the world.**



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## **WHY WE ARE DOING IT THIS WAY?**

It has been proven over and over that our way of bringing people to the sacraments needs to change. The model of a one-size-fits-all programme that doesn't allow for individuals to grow at their own pace meant that often, children were not ready, but were swept up into a big celebration day anyway. We are hoping that this way, which is preparation for the sacrament of the Eucharist, serves that purpose but also offers so much more for the whole family.

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## **IS THIS JUST FOR 1<sup>ST</sup> HOLY COMMUNION**

The hope is that even after your child has made their 1<sup>st</sup> Holy Communion, you will continue to come and encourage other families joining the programme and enjoy building a community that supports and nurtures you, your children and your faith journeys.

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## **YOUR ROLE AS A PARENT**

We simply ask you to come to the sessions as often as you can, to engage with the material at home as well as in the session. And if you can, help with any of the practical aspects of running this, teas/ coffees/ chairs etc, we would be very grateful. There will be a sign-up list, it doesn't have to be a job for life, but once or twice a year.

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## **DO I HAVE TO COME TOO?**

Yes, at least one parent is has to attend each session along with their child. You, as parents, are the first and most important teachers of your children in the ways of faith—not the church or school! The adults have a separate space to talk together and support each other in nurturing the faith life of the whole family.

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## **WHEN DOES MY CHILD MAKE THEIR 1<sup>ST</sup> HOLY COMMUNION?**

This year we have one weekend allocated with all five Masses available. This is a guide; however, it is perfectly ok to choose a later date if you feel your child isn't ready or your family can't make that date. The only difference is that the music and style of the Mass will be focused on the young people. Please do talk to us if you wish a later date.

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## **WHAT HAPPENS AT FAMILY OF FAITH?**

We gather and share some refreshments. The children go to a separate space for games, crafts, and to learn about the day's topic. The adults have their own separate input and times of discussion. This is the perfect time to share what's worked well for you with others and an opportunity to get ideas and support from other families.

# CALENDAR 2026/27

## Autumn Term

- 6<sup>th</sup> Sep Introduction to new families
- 27<sup>th</sup> Sep Coming to Church
- 11<sup>th</sup> Oct Who's who
- 1<sup>st</sup> Nov From penance to glory
- 15<sup>th</sup> Nov Scripture
- 29<sup>th</sup> Nov God made flesh
- 13<sup>th</sup> Dec Advent

## Spring Term

- 10<sup>th</sup> Jan The Creed pt 1
- 24<sup>th</sup> Jan The Creed pt2
- 7<sup>th</sup> Feb Intercession
- 28<sup>th</sup> Feb Living lent
- 14<sup>th</sup> Mar Offertory

## Summer Term

- 11<sup>th</sup> Apr Resurrection
- 25<sup>th</sup> Apr Prayer
- 9<sup>th</sup> May Eucharist
- 23<sup>rd</sup> May Corpus Christi procession
- 30<sup>th</sup> May Communion
- 13<sup>th</sup> June Go in Peace
- 4<sup>th</sup> July First holy Communion Weekend

## **Safeguarding**

We take the safety of your children very seriously. All the volunteers are DBS checked, and no one should be alone with your child during these sessions. We will not take any photographs or videos without your permission, and these will be exceptional events. Please report immediately any concerns you have to any member of the Clergy, or our safeguarding officer Jane Ranaboldo  
[psr.stosmund.salisbury.catholics@cliftondiocese.com](mailto:psr.stosmund.salisbury.catholics@cliftondiocese.com)

## **Reconciliation**

The 'how to' will be covered in Session 4

These are dedicated dates especially for F of F Children and parents after the 10am Mass at St Osmund's

**7<sup>th</sup> November**

**13<sup>th</sup> March**

**19<sup>th</sup> June**

"The family is called to welcome, radiate and show the world the love and presence of Christ."

Pope Benedict XVI



## ◐ READINESS



### Who decides if my child is ready to receive the Eucharist?

You do, as parents. Along with your child, of course! The parish would expect the family to have been part of Family of Faith for at least a year, and to have attended at least 12 sessions. But when it comes to readiness, you are in the best position to know when your child is ready. You're primarily responsible for their education and formation in the faith; you will hopefully be discussing it with them frequently throughout the year and will be able to notice when they begin to deepen their interest, understanding, and desire to receive Jesus in the Eucharist. To help you, we lay out a few simple guidelines of what to look for, such as—

- The family has got into the habit of coming to Mass every Sunday.
- The child is attentive, knows what the Eucharist is, & desires to receive Communion. They also know their basic prayers & Mass responses.
- The parents talk about God to their children, and the family prays together at home.

Nothing complicated!

## ◐ Prayers your child should know

- Our Father
- Hail Mary
- Glory Be
- Some Mass responses

## ◐ Readiness for Reconciliation

Encouraging your child to take responsibility for their actions is a vital part of their growth. Help them understand the importance of saying "I'm sorry" and genuinely asking for forgiveness when they've made a mistake. You can make this more meaningful by praying together an 'examination of conscience,' celebrating their first confession as a beautiful milestone in their spiritual journey.. Make it a regular practice to attend confession together, and be sure to set a positive example by going yourself.

- Understanding the difference between right and wrong
- Able to tell the difference between mistakes/ accidents and deliberately choosing to do wrong
- Willing to forgive others, as they are forgiven.
- Knows that Jesus is a forgiving person and that God loves them
- Understanding that the sacrament is a way for our sins to be truly forgiven and where we can receive grace.
- Express sorrow and describe wrongdoing in his/her own words.

## ◐ Prayers your child should know

- Our Father
- Hail Mary
- Glory Be
- Act of contrition ( can be written on a sheet)

# BRINGING THIS HOME

## Activity

Each session will contain an activity to do together at home. This week, we invite you to create a home altar in a chosen space within your house.

Use a crucifix, a Bible, and holy statues, whatever you may have, along with candles and cloths to make it your own special place of devotion. Choose as a family the best place and create it together. We will ask you to send in Photos for the children to show to their peers.

## Creative ideas

Here we will make suggestions that you might want to follow up on, ideas on celebrating feasts and solemnities, and ways to bring the session's content into real life and your domestic church. This week the Church celebrates the Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary, on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September. Could you have a little birthday party for Our Lady? Maybe a cake with some candles after dinner, a decade of the rosary, or a discussion on what gifts Mary would like to receive from us.



## Questions for in the car/ over dinner

During each session, we will provide some questions to help start conversations. Last year, families were amazed to find that their general discussions at home began to revolve around God and faith, topics that had never been brought up before. Your child will have a similar but simpler version of the same questions.

So this week's are

- 1.What parts of the Mass seem more special to you?
- 2.What are the parts you don't understand much about?
- 3.Do you know that God loves you?
- 4.What things about your life show you that ?



## Show me your virtues!

Consciously following your faith as a family will foster growth in all sorts of virtues for you all, not just your children. When appropriate, we will bring these to mind. Today's is Courage ! You've all taken a huge, brave step coming today.

## Special feast days

If there is a special feast day or solemnity, we will give you the story or meaning behind it. This way, you can celebrate as a family all these small or big events along with the worldwide, universal church, and become part of the bigger story.

## SAINT OF THE WEEK

The saints are a great source of encouragement and witness to living a life of faith. These stories of bravery are great, but so are the stories of struggle and difficulty and real-life failures. These were real people who know what it is to live in the world. We will provide you with a saint each week to discuss with your children and to be inspired by.



## CHILDRENS REFLECTIONS

In your children's sheet for each session will be a space for them to consider where they have been blessed, could have done better and things they want to bring to Jesus. This is a really important first step to learning the basics of personal prayer. Please encourage your child to either discuss it with you or to write it themselves.

## SCRIPTURE OF THE WEEK

This is just for you parents to engage with a small piece of scripture that will be relevant to the sessions subject. Share it with your child if it seems appropriate, or take it to prayer for your own growth and understanding.

## PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Each session we will ask you to learn a prayer or mass response with your child. This week, here is a lovely bedtime prayer. There are no tests, but the offer to build a library of prayers, especially for those times when you aren't sure what to say. This weeks prayer

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here,  
ever this day be at our side to light and guard,  
to rule and guide. Amen

## KEEN FOR MORE?

Here we will offer you links and suggestions to follow up if you are keen for a bit more, please let us know if you find some gems yourself or have found something helpful to share with the group.

### For the Adults

<https://www.wordonfire.org/articles/fellows/domestic-church-hold-on-its-just-a-family/>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7V085JAWfso&ab\\_channel=CatholicDioceseofSiouxFalls](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7V085JAWfso&ab_channel=CatholicDioceseofSiouxFalls)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_XvIdPeTANU&ab\\_channel=AveMariaPress](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_XvIdPeTANU&ab_channel=AveMariaPress)

### For the Children

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=acM4eHap\\_os&ab\\_channel=ChristineInAction](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=acM4eHap_os&ab_channel=ChristineInAction)

<https://www.youtube.com/@catholicprouts2580>

