

# CATHOLIC PARISH OF ST OSMUND, SALISBURY

ST OSMUND'S, EXETER STREET ✠ ST GREGORY & THE ENGLISH MARTYRS, BEMERTON

23 September 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians of Children in Years 2 - 5,

I hope you are well and enjoyed a lovely summer.

Every year, we write to invite the parents of pupils in Year 3 to enrol their children on the parish programme of preparation for First Holy Communion. But we have come to realise that our existing model does not always give families the full support that they need to pass on the Faith to their children. So this year we're trying something that has proved successful in other parishes.

*Family of Faith* will be a community of families who will meet together on Sunday mornings after Mass, to support and encourage both parents and their children in their faith. It is a model of discipleship and formation for the whole family, because we want our church to be a place where families can come to spend time together, make friends, pray, and learn in a safe and welcoming environment.

This year, therefore, there will not be a separate 'First Communion' (FC) programme, as we would previously have offered to Year 3 children. Preparation for that Sacrament will be to come along to *Family of Faith*. However, it is also open to children in Year 2, who might be making their FC next year; and to those children in Years 4 & 5 who have already made their FC, but want to keep learning and deepening their relationship with Jesus through prayer and Scripture.

*Family of Faith* sessions will be both for parents and children. The parents will have input and discussion among themselves, while the children will have activities related to the topic of the month, and the Gospel of the year. The sessions will run fortnightly on Sundays, starting with Mass at 9am in St Osmund's or St Gregory's churches, and followed by community time at the Parish Centre, on Exeter Street, from 10:30 to 11:45. A full list of dates will be published shortly in our Parish Planner (available on [salisburycatholics.org](http://salisburycatholics.org)).

For those children who are preparing to make their First Communion, there will not be an automatic enrolment at the end of the course. Rather, we will ask families to come forward when they have been part of *Family of Faith* for at least 1 year, and when they feel that their child is ready to receive the sacraments of Confession and Communion for the first time.

We are really excited about this new approach, and hope that for many families it will be a welcome and helpful addition to our parish community offering. If you would like to be part of *Family of Faith* this year, we are inviting you to join us for an information evening, via Zoom, on Thursday 3 October at 7.30pm. To join the meeting, please go to [zoom.us/join](https://zoom.us/join). Meeting ID: 815 9497 0018 // Passcode 487244

In the meantime, if you do have any questions about how it is going to work, please feel free to ring the parish office on 01722 562703.

Kind regards,

Fr Anthony Paris, Fr Joseph Columba Meigh, and all the team at the Parish of St Osmund  
P.S. Turn over the page to find a colouring in for your child(ren)!

*Based on Matthew 19:14 Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."*



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