

**CELEBRATIONS AND MEETINGS IN PREPARATION
FOR THE SACRAMENTS OF FIRST RECONCILIATION AND HOLY COMMUNION
2017-2018**

We hold all of these parish based activities **as essential elements of this preparation.**

PARENT INFORMATION MEETING Thursday, October 12, 2017 - 7:00 p.m. at St Mary of the Visitation Church
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This meeting is for Parents only and will be a sharing on information upon the Sacramental Preparation for this coming year including family activities and participation in Lord's Day Mass.

PREPARATION PROGRAM

While the celebration of Sacraments are a ritual, living them out is about a relationship. An essential aspect of preparation for the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and Holy Communion is participation in the Lord's Day celebrations of Mass for it is here that the relationship is nourished. Young people preparing for these Sacraments are encouraged to be a part of **Visitation Kids** a program exclusively for them held during the 9:30a.m and 11:30am. Mass each Lord's Day. **Participation in this weekly activity is an essential element of your's child's preparation for First Holy Communion**

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS AT SUNDAY MASS

The family of each child preparing for the reception of the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion is given an opportunity to present the offertory gifts at a Saturday evening or Sunday Mass. The rite of carrying up the gifts (bread, wine and offerings) continues the spiritual value and meaning of the ancient custom when the people brought the bread and wine for the liturgy from their homes. Each child will be given the opportunity during the year; a schedule will be developed and shared.

PARENT AND CHILD GATHERING Thursday, January 18, 2018 - 7:00 p.m. at St Mary of the Visitation Church
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The aim of this meeting is for BOTH parent(s) and children. It will be to inform parents of the immediate preparation being undertaken on behalf of their children for First Reconciliation, and will provide activity stations which both children and parents can participate in. *Sign in will take place at the start.*



CELEBRATION OF RECONCILIATION

Parents and children are invited to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation on **Saturday, February 24, 2018 at 11:00 am OR at 1:30 pm.** *Please register on our website and select one celebration no later than November 1, 2017.*

PARENT AND CHILD GATHERING
Thursday, March 1, 2018
7:00 p.m. at St Mary of the Visitation Church

The aim of this meeting is for BOTH parents and children. It will be to inform parents of the immediate preparation being undertaken on behalf of their children for First Holy Communion, and will provide activity stations which both children and parents can participate in. *Sign in will take place at the start.*

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

The children are invited to celebrate the Sacrament of First Holy Communion with their families on one of the following dates. **Participation in these celebrations is based on *successful completion of parish based preparation activities and not based on school registration.***

Saturday, May 5, 2018 - 5:00pm - Children attending St Elizabeth School

Saturday, May 12, 2018 - 5:00pm - Children attending St Gabriel School

Saturday, May 26, 2018 - 5:00pm - Children attending Our Lady of Fatima School

RETREAT

All young people who will be receiving their Holy Communion will gather together for a half day retreat in our Parish Centre **on Saturday, April 21, 2018 from 9:00am-Noon.** Parents are not required to remain during the retreat.

FIRST COMMUNION PHOTOS

Individual and Group Photos will be taken by a professional photographer. *These will take place at St Mary's Church in the evening.* Individual photos will be in the Parish Centre beginning at 6:00p.m. and the Group Photo will take place in the Church at 6:30p.m. A group photo will be taken of all *receiving their Holy Communion* within our parish school groups:

Thursday, May 3, 2018 - Children attending St Elizabeth School

Thursday, May 10, 2018 - Children attending St Gabriel School

Thursday, May 24, 2018 - Children attending Our Lady of Fatima School

A Time to Deepen and Renew

This is a precious time in your child's young faith life and we wish you all of God's blessings as you prepare for these sacraments as a family. If you are not already an active member of our parish: this time of Holy Communion will often be a natural "comeback" moment for families, as children have reached the age where they can have a deeper understanding of spiritual things. We encourage you to use this preparation period as a time of faith renewal. Let's ensure that the day of First Holy Communion will mean more than a nice memory and a photo in a dusty album: rather, let it be the beginning of your child's frequent encounter with Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. We pray that your child's experience of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion will be a time of blessing and thanksgiving for your entire family.