

TEMPLATE  
(Name of parish)  
Sacramental  
Programme  
Within the  
Parish of .....,

**(Name of Parish) Sacramental Programme**

**Parent Information**

Date



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Eucharist



Reconciliation

# Initiation Sacraments of the Catholic Faith

Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist are the Sacraments of initiation into the Catholic faith. Through these Sacraments God welcomes us into the Christian community and gifts us with His grace and blessing, opening to us the Way to Jesus. Within the ..... Diocese the practice is to receive the sacrament of confirmation before the sacrament of first communion/ or local practice.

## Baptism

In Baptism we become Christians. Most people are baptised as infants or children and are supported in their early faith journey by their families. Baptism, at any age and into any denomination, brings us into relationship with God and Jesus.

## Confirmation

In the Sacrament of Confirmation the Holy Spirit comes to live in us. We receive the gifts and the fruits that help us to grow and mature as we travel the journey of our Catholic faith.

## Reconciliation

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is not a sacrament of initiation. It prepares us for the next sacrament of First Eucharist and should continue to be celebrated as an ongoing choice in our journey. Reconciliation gives us an opportunity to reflect on our journey of faith and love. We acknowledge that at times we could do better and make a commitment to be kinder, more loving and compassionate so that we can further develop our relationship with God. (or the practice of the parish/diocese)

## First Eucharist

“When two or three are gathered in my  
name I am there with them.”

Matthew 18:20

Eucharist is when we, as a community of God’s people, gather together to listen to the story and nourish our minds, hearts and bodies as we receive the consecrated bread and wine

# About .(name of school/parish's) approach



The preparation and the experience of the Sacramental program is designed to support the parents in their role of being the primary educators of their children in their Christian faith. Preparation lessons for the Sacraments will take place at ..... The children will have three preparation sessions for each of the sacraments familiarising them with the concepts of the liturgy and what to expect. Lesson will comprise of stories, songs, role plays, Gospel readings and exploration of the meaning of each of the sacraments and for the understanding of the students. Each week we will send you an overview of the session along with some ideas that you can follow up at home.

The four concepts we will teach the children to associate with the sacraments are the light of Jesus, symbolised by a candle; the oil of life and God's blessing, symbolised by aromatic oils; the experience of renewal, symbolised by water that washes us and refreshes us, and the coming of the Holy Spirit, signified by wind and by breath.

We have a candle for you to take home for your child and we ask that you set up a sacred space in your home and spend a little time each day leading up to the sacraments, praying and talking with your family. There are some prayers you can use included in this booklet.

At ..... our vision for the Sacramental programme is that of a joint preparation between school and home so we encourage you to read all the material that is in the parent folder and to contact us if you have any questions.

On a practical level, each of the celebration liturgies will take place at school during the school day (or the practice of the parish). We have found, over the last few years, that the children are more comfortable in a familiar setting rather than the sometimes daunting local church. For the same reason we have them come in their school uniform/or usual practice..

The liturgies will be held in the .....

Following Confirmation and First Eucharist we will invite you to join us for a celebration morning tea at which there will be a celebration cake for the children to cut together and share. First

Reconciliation has a quieter feel whilst we will not have a celebration or cake with the children there will be some light refreshments for parents and friends following.

Bishop ..... will preside over the sacrament of Confirmation and Father ..... will lead us in the Reconciliation and First Eucharist sacraments.

## DATES OF SACRAMENTS 20....



Sacrament	Lessons	Ceremony	Officiator
Confirmation			
First Reconciliation			
First Eucharist			

This time is a special celebration of your Child's growing relationship with God and we invite you to encourage family and friends to be a part of this special time in your child's life and being a part of the celebration ceremonies for the sacraments of confirmation and First Eucharist.

(Name of Parish)

## CONFIRMATION 20.. – .....

**To be completed by parent of candidate:**

Candidate's FIRST NAME: .....

Candidate's SURNAME: .....

Date of Birth: ..... Age: .....

Phone Number: ..... Mobile: .....

Address: .....

Father's Full Name: .....

Mother's Full Name & Maiden Name: .....

Place of Baptism: .....

Date of Baptism: .....

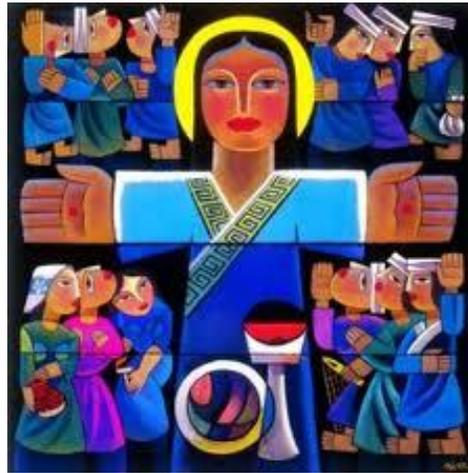
Confirmation Sponsor: .....

Confirmation Name: .....

Copy of Baptism Certificate attached

YES / NO

# Cost of Sacramental Programme 20....



We ask for a contribution towards the running costs associated with the sacramental programme. This goes towards the purchase of the candles, medals, certificates and celebration cakes as well as teaching materials.

The cost is .... to cover all three sacraments.

Please send the contribution in to school via your child's bag marked: Attention ....., Sacramental Programme.



Please find enclosed ..... for the ..... sacramental programme.



Name of Child: .....



# **(name of parish/school) Sacramental Programme 20..**

## **Preparation of the Children**

### **Lessons**

Every student undertaking the sacramental programme at ..... is seen as an individual and as such, every child's preparation may differ slightly according to their needs.

Preparation at ..... will be through lessons, comprising sensory experiences, activities based around the relevant sacramental symbols, singing songs and reading gospel and other relevant stories using visuals and sign to enhance the children's understanding. The same strategies used in classrooms to encourage participation and enhance communication and understanding will be used in the sacramental lessons.

All children will have the opportunity to participate in the sacramental celebrations, depending on their level of comfort in performing a given role.

### **Preparation for Confirmation**

The main goal in preparing the children for Confirmation is that they come to know how much God loves them. We want them to know the abundance of that love and learn to see the many ways this is expressed to them. Our second goal is for them to feel comfortable in worship and prayer times and to enjoy the experience of singing, seeing the candles lit, having water scattered and feeling in some way that these are signs of God's presence.



We know that God reaches out to them and brings them joy and comfort and that they can experience this more readily if they are familiar with what is happening and begin to see it as a beautiful and predictable routine.

By giving them the experience of being blessed at each preparation session by ..... prayers and lying on of hands, we hope to strengthen their awareness of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The concepts they will be taught in the preparation for Confirmation are:

1. That through Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes to us to strengthen, guide and comfort us; that we can ask the Holy Spirit to help us and that we can be sure He will; that the symbols of the Holy Spirit are the presence of 'wind' and their own breath, and the signs of the dove and fire.
2. That Jesus is the light of the world; that Jesus is in every one 'who comes into the world' and that we light a candle as a sign of the presence of God and of Jesus
3. That God blesses us in our daily lives, sometimes in ways we do not see, and that the oil with which we are 'anointed' in confirmation is the symbol of God's blessing
4. That we prepare ourselves to be blessed by clearing our minds of everything except thoughts of God and that the symbol for preparing ourselves to be refreshed and renewed is washing with water

This year the songs the children learn for their Confirmation are:  
Together as One,  
Holy Spirit Rock,  
Halle Halle,  
Kum-ba-ya,  
The Blessing Song  
Rejoice in the Lord. (Or other hymns of choice)

## **Preparation for Reconciliation**

The focus of our preparation of the children for reconciliation is to help them move forward in their own spiritual growth: in love, generosity, and kindness to others and in make loving choices.

The important point of preparing for the sacrament of Reconciliation is that children participate in the practice of making good choices. The way the children express they are sorry, their choices and desires will be enhanced by signing, photos and visuals. The sorry prayer during the Sacrament will be 'Jesus I am sorry and I want to be good'.

The symbol we will use in preparing the children for the sacrament of Reconciliation is that of the growing flower, we will give each child their as part of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The plant of each child will be on the altar at their First Communion, and they will then get to take it home. It is vital that each child has a sponsor or a parent with them during the Sacrament of Reconciliation who can help them interact with the Priest and help them identify the choices they wish to work on.

The songs used in the Reconciliation Liturgy are:

"Together as One"

"Saying Yes",

## **Preparation for First Eucharist**

The children will be told that the Eucharist is a meal that we share with others who are apart of Gods family. As a part of this sacrament the children will practice receiving an unconsecrated host or small parts of a host and we will send some home for you to practice with your child.

The songs used in the First Eucharist liturgy are

Together as One,

Saying Yes,

These Hands,

Halle Halle,  
Kum-bay-yah,  
Clap your hands,  
The Blessing Song  
God's Family.



# Prayers used in preparation for the Sacraments

Below are the prayers that will be used at school in preparation for each of the sacraments. We would love you to use the same prayer at home before each sacrament.

## Confirmation

Hello God,  
This is ..... (child's name)  
I love you  
I know you love me  
Let your Spirit be in me  
Help my love to grow  
Amen

## Reconciliation

Hello God,  
This is.....  
I love you  
I know you love me  
Help me to be sorry when I do the wrong thing  
Help me to choose the loving thing to do  
Help my love to grow  
Amen

## First Eucharist

Hello God,  
This is .....  
I love you  
I know you love me  
I think of you when I eat your bread  
I know you are with me always  
Help my love to grow  
Amen

## Final Words

Thank you for trusting us to help you with the preparation of your children for the sacraments. We hope you will find it an opportunity to enrich your child's experience of the spirituality that is in the simplest acts of life: in sharing a meal at home, in lighting a candle and saying a prayer together, in watching water flow, and in seeing the light that is everywhere, in the sunshine of the day, in the sunset and in the stars at night. Your child is gifted in spirit.

The sacraments are an invitation from Jesus to your child to be open to the Holy Spirit and God's love shown through others.

May God be with your family at this special time of preparation, and always.

