



HOLY FAMILY PARISH

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September 17, 2024

Dear **Grade 4, 5 & 6** Parents /Guardians,

We recognize that it's possible your child was unable to receive the sacrament of First Communion over the COVID years. **If your child was not able to receive First Communion when they were in grade 2 or 3** and you would like them to receive this sacrament, we are happy to invite your child to prepare for the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion this year! We are offering a specifically designed class for older children in grades 4, 5 & 6.

There are two steps to registering your child; please start by completing the **Online Registration as soon as possible** so we can have you in our First Communion database and then plan to attend the **Required** Parent Registration/Information Night in order to complete & validate your child's registration. Details below.

PARENT INFORMATION/REGISTRATION NIGHT WILL BE HELD ON

Only Parents are required to attend. These are the only two dates, if you are unable to attend your assigned Information / Registration Night please attend the other night. ****Note the date and school changes from the letter sent back in June.**

Tuesday November 5th at 7:30pm for St Mark's, St Matthew, Public, all Other Schools & Home.

Thursday November 14th at 7:30pm for St Bernard, St Paul and St Theresa Schools.

***IMPORTANT! - Registration Steps**

- 1) Please locate your child's BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE NOW.** If you cannot locate it, you will need to contact the parish where your child was baptized (*there may be a small fee*), or your child's school for a copy. **You will be required to bring it with you on Registration/Information Night.**
- 2) Visit our website at holyfamilywhitby.ca and click on 'First Communion'. There, you will find the Online Registration Form.
- 3) Complete the ONLINE REGISTRATION FORM** and press 'submit'. This will prompt an email notification with a PDF attachment to be sent to the email account that you used to register.
- 4) When you receive the email notification, please **print the PDF attachment** as you will be required to hand it in on the night of registration.
- 5) Attend the REGISTRATION NIGHT** (*see dates for your child's school above*) and bring with you the following:
 - A printed copy of the email notification from the online registration you did.
 - Your child's original Baptismal certificate along with a copy for the office.
 - The \$75.00 registration fee (*only cash or cheque please*).
- 6) IF you are not already a registered parishioner of Holy Family Parish, please print the '**Holy Family Registration Form/Change of Address**' form (*which can be found on the First Communion page of our website*) and bring the completed form with you when you register.

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BAPTISED IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Your child must be baptized in the ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH in order to receive the Sacraments. If your child was baptized in another Christian denomination or has not been baptized yet, arrangements will need to be made **as soon as possible** for your child to be either Baptized or 'Received' into the Catholic Church. We ask that you please contact the parish as soon as possible to make arrangements. Or simply visit the **Baptism Page** of our website for step-by-step instructions at holymfamilywhitby.ca/baptism-3/

FAMILY-CENTERED FAITH FORMATION & PARENT SESSION

Parents, you are the most important teachers of the faith for your child. You fulfill this role by your example, by bringing them to church, by praying with them, by learning along with them...by sharing the faith together - Your participation is what makes all the difference! We have been moving towards Family-Centered Faith Formation here at Holy Family. We made the decision a couple of years ago to replace our parent sessions and instead, have you, the parent, attend ALL the First Communion Prep Sessions with your child! This has been a huge success and has proven to be most fruitful for your child's spiritual growth. Your child's First Communion Catechist, will be available to support & walk with you and your family as mentor during this preparation time and beyond. More information about how we can support you will be discussed at the Registration/Information night.

FIRST COMMUNION SESSIONS & HOME STUDY – GRADES 4 TO 6.

Our First Communion Program for the grade 4 to 6 will follow the exact same format and use the same material as the grade 2/3 but the sessions will be taught at a more age-appropriate level on a different day & time (TBA). **NOTE:** *If you have a child in grade 2 or 3 also preparing for First Communion this year, you will be given the option during the online registration to choose whether you want your children to attend the sessions together (with the younger children on Saturdays) or attend the grade 4-6 program which will take place on a different day.*

The program consists of a combination of **4 First Communion Prep Sessions** at the church as well as an **at-home component before and after each parish session**. You & your child must attend all four of these sessions and complete the First Communion Prep Workbook at home in order to be eligible to receive First Communion this spring. Of course, the most important and visible way to witness one's faith is to actively participate. **It is expected, therefore, that you & your child also attend Sunday Mass regularly.** Our **HFkids Time Travellers** on Sundays for kids in grades 2 to 6 (*during the 9:30 & 11:00 Masses*) will help your child grow in love and friendship with Jesus and learn how God's Word can help them to make wise choices throughout their lives.

INSCRIPTION CEREMONY

All children receiving First Holy Communion in May 2025 are **ALSO** required to be enrolled in a public **Inscription Ceremony** which takes place during a Sunday Liturgy on the **weekend of November 16 & 17**. This ceremony will mark the **Official start** of your child's preparation towards the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Please ensure parent(s) & child attend one of the Masses on the Inscription Weekend. Your child will be invited to come forward during a special Inscription liturgy at which time the child will present the completed **Inscription Ceremony Form** to the presiding priest. If needed, additional Inscription forms can be found on our website on the First Communion webpage.

The best preparation efforts by the school or parish will not bear fruit if YOU, the parents, do not reinforce, by example, what the children hear in the classroom or at church. I want to assure you of my fullest support and I encourage you to seek my assistance whenever you encounter difficulties in preparing your child for these very important Sacraments. Please do not hesitate to call me if you need assistance. It is with faith and love for our children that we begin this very special journey together.

With prayerful best wishes,

Rev. Fr. László Nagy
Pastor