

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

The further sacraments of Reconciliation (Confession) and Holy Communion, are celebrated during the ages of 7 years and upwards where the family and young person show real commitment and a willingness to grow in faith. They are grace-filled sacraments, NOT just rites of coming of age or part of the school curriculum, but within our parish school there is some instruction given, which is complimented by parish and school cooperation in additional formation. Parents are also expected to come to sessions and learn with their children. If a child is not in a Catholic school additional classes are also provided.

Sacramental preparation this year has been taking place online, towards first confessions, and then First Holy Communion in June. Confirmation was not celebrated last year here. Our parish policy is now to support the young people as they grow in their faith and commitment beyond the change to secondary school, with the discernment of the Parish Priest and those leading Youth Work assisting the families in this process. A group has been doing Youth Alpha together and will soon move on to further preparation towards Confirmation with Bp William on Saturday 9th October.

All enquiries, please talk to Fr David



MARRIAGE

If one or both of a couple is Catholic and both are free to marry in the Catholic Church we are very happy to talk about possible plans, preferably at least 6 months in advance. We will need information about your Baptism and Confirmation and first you will meet with Fr David to fill out forms and start talking about your plans. Between 9-12months in advance you will also need to approach the Registrars about your plans. We can marry in the Church with authority delegated by the Registrars to Fr David, but the process takes some time, and it is essential that the blue forms giving that permission are with him at least two weeks before the wedding.

Marriage preparation is given by Marriage Care, on days with other couples held here at St Joseph's and other churches around the area. You will also meet with Fr David to talk more about the meaning of Marriage as the Church understands it, and to plan your wedding in more detail.



BAPTISM

Baptism is the first Sacrament of Initiation, and in believing Catholic families it is a gift to give to a new member of the family, to open up Christian life to them and bring them into the family of the Church. Please come along to mass and introduce yourselves and your new child, and we will find a

form and ask you to get some basic details down on paper. Christine, one of our catechists, will arrange a time with you for a preparation session, at her home or yours, and when a date is fixed we will also arrange a short practice near to the day so that you are confident about what you will be doing and saying. Baptisms are sometimes celebrated during mass, but more usually at about 12.30pm on Sundays. Of course some people are not baptised as infants, so you may be coming along as an enquirer seeking baptism as a child, teenager or adult. More preparation is needed and a real commitment and practice of faith is expected before we can ask permission from the diocese to baptise you. Adults follow the RCIA course for at least 6 months and are usually baptised at Easter. In a real emergency anyone can baptise, but in other less urgent but exceptional circumstances the preparation can be varied. Please do contact Fr David with all your enquiries.

