

**ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
WIMBORNE ROAD, POOLE
ST. ANTHONY of PADUA
BROADSTONE**



**FIRST RECONCILIATION
&
FIRST HOLY COMMUNION
2023 / 2024**

Parent's Information Pack

POINTS OF CONTACT

All co-ordinators and catechists can be contacted via the parish office.

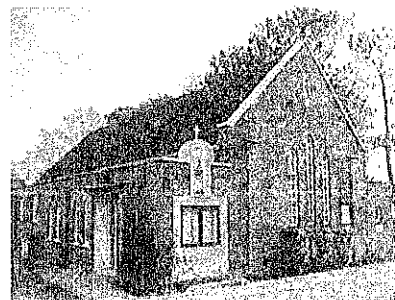
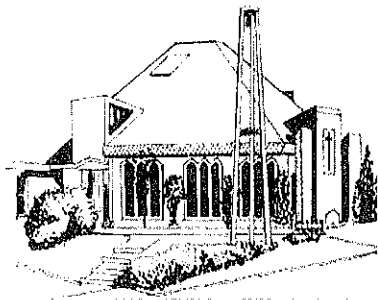
St Mary's Church Office: 01202 675412

Email poole-stmary@prcdtr.org.uk

Open Monday to Friday 9.30am – 2.30pm

On Saturdays or Mondays for the FHC Sessions only:
Mob number 07483 335875

Parish Clergy – Parish Priest Fr John Webb
Priest Fr James Barber
Deacon Nick Johnson
Deacon Declan McConville
Deacon Robin Watson



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the updated Parent's Information Pack for the 2023 / 2024 St Mary's and St Anthony's First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion Course.

God has given us many gifts, like peace, hope and joy. But the greatest gift is **Jesus the Lord**.

In close association with the Diocese and parish we have devised our own unique programme for you and your children.

We encourage active participation in their preparation for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion and we hope this will be an inspiring and faith filled experience for you all.

As you consider embarking on the next stage of your child's Journey of Faith, please take time to read through this booklet. It gives you all the information about the course, important dates and points of contact.

Fr. John

ASK YOURSELF



1. IS YOUR CHILD READY?

This has nothing to do with age, some children at this age are very aware of their faith; others need a little more time. We often have children celebrate their first Sacraments at an older age.

2. DOES YOUR FAMILY HAVE A REGULAR COMMITMENT TO THE CHURCH?

*During the course, your child will explore their relationship with God, the church, and their wider faith community. They therefore need to feel part of their Christian family and **regularly attend Sunday mass.***

3. IS THIS THE RIGHT TIME?

The course is spread over nine months and involves sessions for your child a family afternoon session with Mass. Plus various liturgies and services.

These are the questions you need to be asking before you commit your child and yourselves to the programme.

If you have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact Fr. John, Fr James or Deacon Nick via the parish office.

COURSE OUTLINE

The course is divided into interactive chapters, which we will deliver in either 22 one-hour Monday sessions or 12 one and a half hour sessions

The sessions will be held on Saturdays **in the church, not the hall**, and you have a choice of either:

9:00am to 11:30am

Or

2:00pm to 3:30pm

Or on a Monday at 6.30pm to 7.30pm

Whilst it may be possible in an emergency to swap between a Saturday morning and Saturday afternoon session, it will not be possible to swap between a Monday and a Saturday session as the children will be at different stages of the programme.

The children need to attend all of the sessions. If your child happens to be unwell on the day of a session, please contact us and alternative arrangements will be made. Under such circumstances parents will need to attend this catchup session.

We try to spread the sessions out evenly, and we make every effort not to clash with school holidays.

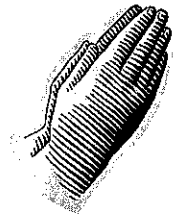
SPECIAL NEEDS

Our FHC is open to all children whatever their ability or learning needs. Please let us know if your child has any particular needs however small as we have trained Catechists who can help them during the course.

THE PARISH COMMUNITY

The parish communities of St Mary's and St Anthony's will be praying for you and your children during the time of the course, and the children will have regular opportunities during the Saturday (at St Anthony's) and Sunday Masses to share their journey of faith with the wider community.

PRAYER PARTNERS



Whilst your child prepares to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion we will link them with at least one parishioner who will pray for your child every day. Your child will be given the name of their Prayer partner and a prayer to say daily for them.

St Anthony's children will be linked with a prayer partner from St Anthony's Parish.

FIRST RECONCILIATION

This will take place during a family service on Tuesday 27th February starting at 6.00pm but we ask you to arrive by 5:45 pm

There will be a short service before the children receive the Sacrament. The children will then, celebrate Reconciliation individually with Fr. John, Fr James or another priest from Poole. Each child will then light a candle and will be encouraged to pray a short prayer of penance. **More details will be sent nearer the date.**

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION MASSES

The First Holy Communion Masses will take place on 16th June, 23rd June and 30th June. You will have a choice of which date you would prefer. St Anthony's children will make their First Holy Communion at St Anthony's date to be confirmed.

Please note while every effort will be made to give you the date of your choice this may not be possible as we must have an even split across the three Sundays.

During the course the children will be prepared for their special day.

DRESS CODE

We feel that it is important to stress to your child that it is not the clothes they wear, but it is the receiving of the Sacrament itself which is the most important part of the day. However, we appreciate that many of you like to plan in advance.

✠ **GIRLS:** A simple white dress in keeping with the day, headdresses are optional, **no gloves to be worn.** This is to enable your child to receive the host in their hand.

✠ **BOYS**

A plain white shirt, dark trousers and a red tie are the norm. Red ties can be bought at the school uniform shop. We will provide a blue sash for the boys to wear; this is because we are a Marian parish.

Margaret in St Mary's Parish shop has some FHC dresses and ties available to hire, with all profits being used to support Parish projects

Please contact us if you have any questions.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Please note reminders regarding dates/times of the sessions listed below **will not** be circulated again in paper form, but email notices about services or any changes will be sent on a regular basis. We do not send email reminders for the Saturday Sessions. For your information dates/times of children's sessions and any changes will also be on the parish website:

<http://www.stmaryspoole.org.uk/sacraments/#communion>

CHILDREN'S DATES: See sheets given separately

First Reconciliation

Tuesday 27th February – Service for whole family
5.45pm for 6.00pm prompt start

Stations of the Cross

Stations of the Cross – Service for whole family
Friday 17th March – 5.45pm for 6.00pm prompt start

Family Thanksgiving Day

Saturday 6th July – details to follow.