

Some practical ideas for your family

Prayer

Let prayer be a natural part of your family. Develop and nurture your own family customs and special family occasions. Let your child see you pray. Pray together as a family. Begin the custom of prayer before meals and night prayer. Before your child goes to bed invite them to make the sign of the cross. Set aside regular times for family prayer and take turns to lead it.

Attending Mass

Attend weekly Sunday Mass together as a family. Read and talk about what happens. Use the Bible readings as a point of conversation. Your child will follow your lead, sensing if you really value Mass or not. Show them that it matters to you. Impress on them that this is the most important time in your family's week.

Read the Bible

Invest in a family bible if you don't own one. There are various Bibles, suitable for different ages, in our parish resource centre at the back of church. Read the Bible together and see what God might be saying to you. Use it at family gatherings. If Jesus is a valued guest in your home, your child will come to know and to love him as you do. By reading stories from Scripture, we can all learn more about the words and actions of Jesus.

Make Sunday special

Observe Sunday as a special day. It is a special day because it is the day our Lord rose from the dead. Sunday is a day for celebrating and we are obliged to attend Mass. It is also a day for prayer, rest, family and relationships.

Reach out

Show your child that as Christians we need to be engaged in works of mercy. Reaching out to those in need and responding as a family can be an invaluable witness. We can help in different ways, for example, visit our elderly neighbours and relatives, donate food and clothes to charity, visit the sick in hospital or home, and help those who need help.

Be active in our parish

Belonging to a parish can be more enriching if we get to know other parishioners. Join the parish for social and other events and volunteer to help out in some way. Although your child's Confirmation is a special moment for your family, it is not just a family affair; it is a celebration for the whole parish. At Baptism we become members of a community of believers. That is why your child's Confirmation will take place within a regular parish Mass.

"Actions speak louder than words"

Nothing speaks more to children than the witness and influence of their parents. This time of getting ready to celebrate your child's Confirmation is an opportunity for the whole family to reflect on your relationship with God.

Learn about your Faith

Adults don't stop learning once they leave school. Our knowledge and faith can grow and develop as we get older. Consider trying to deepen your knowledge of the Catholic faith and your spiritual life. An excellent resource is Sycamore (www.sycamore.fm). There are lots of apps these days that can be fun for children to explore and learn about their faith. Forming your child in faith is part of the challenge and decision to bring them up in the Catholic faith and is a good opportunity to refresh your own faith.

May God bless you and your family



Father Paul



Mr. Cooke



THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF OUR LORD & ALL SOULS

The Catholic parish of Chapelfields & Earlsdon
Kingsland Avenue Coventry CV5 8DX



3rd October 2024

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION 2024/25

Dear parents

It wasn't that long ago that you saw your child initiated into the Catholic Church through Baptism. The Christian family welcomed your child into the Church, the community of faith. You will recall that this was only the *beginning* of this process of initiation. It was part of the formal path into full membership of the Church.

Receiving the Holy Eucharist for the first time was the next part of that journey a number of years ago.

A further important stage in a person's journey of faith is reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. The date of Confirmation at All Souls in 2025 is yet to be confirmed, but **we invite you to begin thinking with your child about whether this is a step in faith they wish to make.**

In Confirmation God the Holy Spirit is poured into our hearts. Your child will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit on the day of their Confirmation and become more fully a member of Christ's church. They are commissioned and equipped in Confirmation to be a *living* member of the Church and, under the guidance of the Spirit, to try to live like Christ, who came not to be served but to serve.

Presenting your child for the Sacrament of Confirmation affirms and deepens what you as a parent/guardian started in Baptism. It is also a public declaration of your faith and your wishes for your child. And very importantly, in stepping forward to be confirmed, **your child is choosing to make their own public declaration for Christ and his Church.** This is therefore a very special moment for them and for you. Finally the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation also affirms that growing in faith is a life-long journey.

May your child, through your guidance and example, come to know what a sacred and beautiful thing the Sacrament of Confirmation is, indeed what a sacred and beautiful thing our Catholic Faith is. I pray that through Confirmation your child will be drawn into a deeper relationship with Christ, take an active part in the life of the Church and offer a strong witness to Christ before other people. May Confirmation not be an end-point, but a milestone along the way of faith that continues to shape the rest of your child's life.

A STEP IN FAITH, NOT A RITE OF PASSAGE

Confirmation is an occasion of great joy for the parish and school and your family. Unfortunately, for many of us Catholics Confirmation has become simply a rite of passage. This becomes obvious when each year we see a large group of children receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, but then rarely, and sometimes never, see them again at Sunday Mass. The sacraments are a big deal, and so the Church does not admit a person to the sacraments simply because they have reached a certain age or a certain stage in their Catholic school education, but because they have made a considered faith-filled CHOICE to receive the sacraments and because they are READY and sufficiently PREPARED.

PRE-REQUISITES FOR ENROLMENT

Children should be baptised Catholics around the age of 10, and have a copy of their baptism certificate.

Parents or guardians should be able to commit:

to their children attending all the scheduled Confirmation classes (see below);

to the family attending Sunday Mass every week.

THE ROLE OF THE PARISH

Preparation for Confirmation is an opportunity for the entire parish to deepen its faith. Parishioners are encouraged to pray for all the children preparing for the sacraments and to offer their families encouragement in practising the faith. You may wish to choose a parishioner who will be your special support throughout this year of preparation.

It is the obligation of a parish priest to ensure that children in his parish are properly prepared for the sacraments by adequate formation over a period of time. It is also the duty of a parish priest to see that children who are insufficiently disposed to receive the sacraments are not admitted to the sacraments until they are adequately prepared and are able to receive the sacraments with faith and devotion.

CONFIRMATION PREPARATION PROGRAMME

Children, with their parents, will be required to take part in an 8-session preparation programme beginning in January 2025 (through to the end of May). The sessions will take place on **Monday evenings, 6.30-7.15pm** in the parish room. The dates of the sessions will be confirmed in due course.

The preparation programme is for all children in the parish who are preparing for Confirmation in All Souls parish.

The programme is led by parish catechists and Father Paul and comprises a series of sessions/classes with activities involving both children and parents.

If your child is unable to attend a session for any reason, please inform the Parish Office (02476674161 allsouls.covty@rcaob.org.uk) in advance. Your child's attendance will be taken into account as the programme progresses to determine whether they are adequately prepared to receive the sacrament.

READY AND PREPARED

A child is ready to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation when the parish priest, assisted by parish catechists and school teachers, has discerned that he/she, according to his/her capacity:

1. Participates actively and consciously in **Sunday Mass** on a regular basis.
2. Understands that after receiving Confirmation, they are **more fully members of the Body of Christ**, and are called to share in the community and mission of the Church.
3. Has shown a commitment to the Confirmation preparations classes in the parish.

DATE OF CONFIRMATION 2025

The date of Confirmation 2025 in the parish has not yet been confirmed. It is likely to be in June 2025. This will be confirmed in due course.

APPLICATION FOR CONFIRMATION

Applications for the Sacrament of Confirmation 2025 are now open. Application forms can be collected from the sacristy at Mass. Completed application forms should be returned to Father Paul at Mass **before 1st November 2024**. If your child was NOT baptised at All Souls, please also bring a copy of their Baptism certificate with the application form.

ACT OF COMMITMENT

On **Sunday 20th October** there will be a 'Liturgy of Commitment' during the 9.30am parish Mass. The purpose of this is for parents to present their children for entry into the Confirmation Programme, and to state their intention and commitment before God to continue the spiritual nurture of their children they began at their Baptism, including weekly attendance at Sunday Mass with their children.

PARENTS: FIRST TEACHERS OF FAITH

As parents, you shouldn't underestimate or downplay the importance of your role, your influence, your own experience and your responsibility in the preparation of your child for the sacraments. It is *your* example that your child will follow. **You are your child's first teachers in the faith and the most important of all teachers.** This year is a unique opportunity for you and your child to talk about your faith.

Faith is the most valuable gift that you can pass on to your child. Your words, attitudes and actions regarding the Faith and regular attendance at Sunday Mass will influence your child in a powerful way.

The year of your child's preparation for Confirmation is an opportunity for you to reflect on your own faith and deepen your understanding of the Catholic Faith too. Reigniting your own knowledge and understanding of the Faith will help you to guide your child in the way that brings fullness of life.

FAMILY AND FAITH

Your involvement in your child's preparation can enrich your whole family. It provides opportunities for any younger children in your family to be introduced to elements of our faith, and for any older children to deepen their understanding of the sacraments.

You yourself may not be familiar with many of the teachings of the Church. You may not be familiar with the sacraments. You may have drifted in your commitment to the regular practice of attending Mass. But God always enables us to make a clean start. Jesus assures us that God welcomes sinners with open arms, pardons us and rejoices over our return.

PREPARATION FOR PARENTS & FAMILIES

Preparation for Confirmation is a unique opportunity for parents to discover or renew their own faith. We encourage you to:

- participate every week in Sunday Mass with your child.
- be committed to help your child meet the attendance and formation requirements for the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- model a Christian commitment of prayer and service to the parish community.
- pray for, and with, your child.