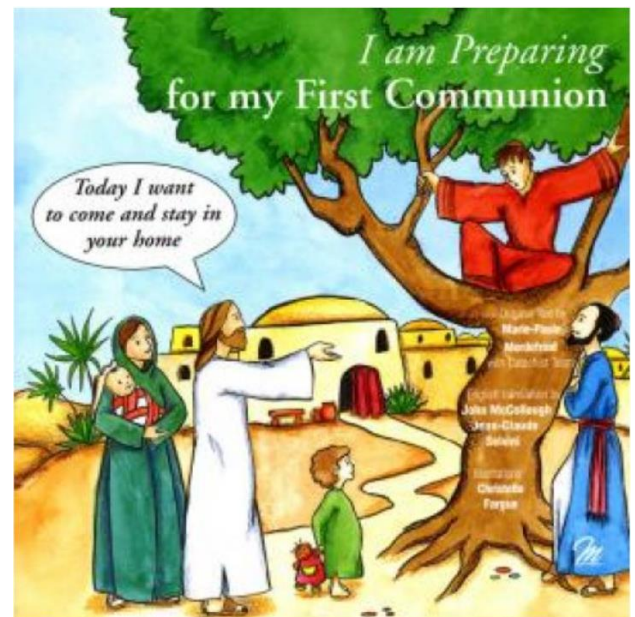
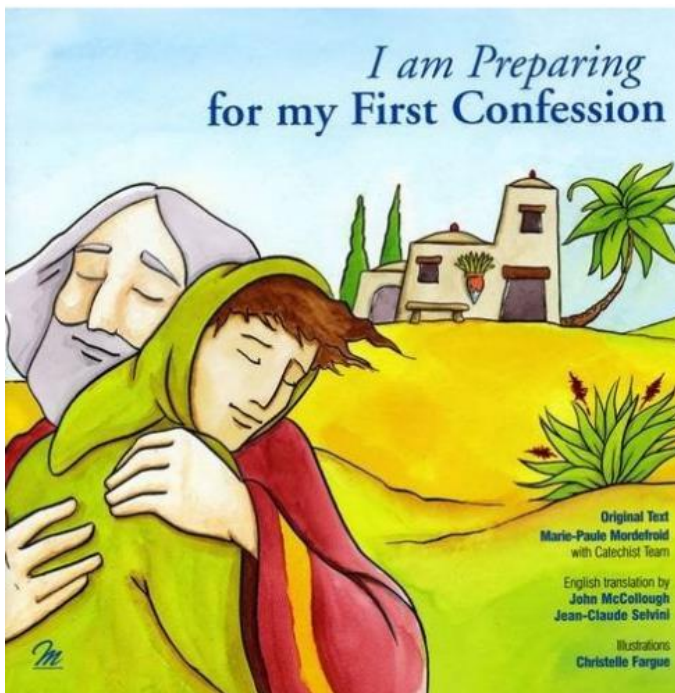


# THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY OLD HARLOW



## First Reconciliation & First Holy Communion Handbook

2025

## The Assumption of Our Lady



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Dear Parents,

Welcome to the parish of The Assumption of Our Lady, First Holy Communion Programme 2025.

First Holy Communion Day is **Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2025.**

This is an important stage in your child's faith journey and together we will hopefully make it a fulfilling experience for them.

Each session will begin at 9.00am and end at 9:45am. Cooperation between the catechist and parents is an important part of the programme. We are always available to help you with any queries. The catechist is Clem Williams.

Weekly Mass attendance is obviously a 'must' for the catholic parent and their children, but on certain Sundays (as indicted on the schedule) the expectation is 10am Mass.

We look forward to working with you and your child this year and don't hesitate to contact me with any questions which you might have.

Fr Jon Ravensdale

Parish Priest

## The Sessions

It is essential that the children attend all the sessions as they provide a complete programme of instruction for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. **If they miss sessions their reception of the sacraments may need to be delayed to the next year.** For this reason, we have avoided school holidays.

If your child has to miss a session through illness, please let us know in advance if possible, but certainly as soon as possible afterwards so that alternative arrangements can be made. A comprehensive list of this year's dates can be found at the back of this booklet.

## HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD PREPARE FOR COMMUNION.

Parents must:

- 1 Attend weekly mass with your child. (Our Mass times are Sunday at 10am and 6pm).
- 2 Bring the child's baptismal certificate to the office (unless the child was baptised here at The Assumption of Lady) so that we can take a copy. If you are a member of a parish other than The Assumption of Lady, we will need a letter or email from the priest of your parish, saying that it is okay for your child to receive the Sacraments here at The Assumption of Lady.
- 3 Attend the First Reconciliation service with your child.
- 4 Attend the rehearsal for First Communion with your child.
- 5 Help prepare your child for First Reconciliation and First Communion by completing the relevant sections of their books. This could be done as a family activity.
- 6 Help your child learn their prayers (The Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, Glory be etc.) before the course begins.

Children Must:

- 1 Be Baptised.
- 2 Attend Weekly Mass and get the attendance card signed.
- 3 Be faithful in attending the children's sessions.
- 4 Complete their programme books
- 5 Attend the First Reconciliation service
- 6 Attend the rehearsal for First Communion.
- 7 Learn your prayers (The Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, Glory be etc.)

# First Holy Communion Day

What is the dress code:

Boys: White Shirt, Black or Dark Grey Trousers, Black Shoes, Red Parish Tie.

Girls: White dress with or without a headdress. Don't feel that you have to have a full gown and it's worth remembering that if you have a full skirt there is less space in the bench for the other First Communion Children.

## Photographs

The parish appointed photographer is the only person authorised to take during the service. The photos will be available to purchase at a very reasonable cost after the day.

## Costs

The majority of the costs of the programme are borne by the parish but we do ask parents for a contribution towards the books and materials etc. This year the cost is £20 and in order that we can properly account for the money received, the cheque or cash should be placed in an envelope with the child's name written on the front and handed to Fr Jon.

## First Holy Communion Day Flowers

The parents are to arrange their own florist to decorate the church for the First Communion Day. The flowers are displayed for the whole weekend as a way of celebrating with the parish community.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**In our experience there are some FAQ's so here are some of the answers in advance:**

### **How many guests can we have on First Communion Day?**

In short, each family is usually given one bench in the church on that day for immediate family. The benches are allocated in a draw prior to the day. At the First Communion Mass the children will all sit together as a group.

### **Why do the children need to be at the special 10:00am Masses throughout the programme?**

We expect that you would be at the 10:00am or 6:00pm Parish masses each Sunday, not just the Special Celebrations. These are a chance for the children to become familiar to the parish community, so that they can pray for them and share in the journey your children are on.

### **What about after the Mass on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2025?**

We have found, in past years, that most families want to have their own celebrations after the Mass, so the group has arranged a party in the hall after the Going forth Mass which this year will be on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

### **What if we unavoidably miss a session?**

While it is important that all children attend all sessions, we do realise that there will be situations such as illness where it is unavoidable that they can't. Please let us know in advance, if at all possible. If you, or your child, miss two sessions in the programme, then it will not be possible for them to complete the course, therefore the First Communion will be deferred to the following year. It is very important that if your child misses a session, they catch up on the work they have missed before the next session.

### **Is there Homework between sessions?**

Yes, the children will have work to do between sessions, which will involve writing, colouring and puzzles. It is helpful in the weeks running up to the First Communion Day, that you re-read the Bible stories in the programme book, to help refresh and prepare the children. I will from time to time be reviewing your child's workbook.

### **Do I have to show you a Baptism Certificate?**

If your child was baptised at The Assumption of our Lady, we can look it up in the registers. Otherwise, I will need to see their Baptism certificate before their first Reconciliation.

### **My Child has some special medical, educational or dietary needs should I let you know?**

Please tell us as it will not only allow us to help your child get the most out of the program, but also in terms of medical needs it is important for safety reasons.

### **If I have any other queries not mentioned above?**

Just email [harlowold@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:harlowold@dioceseofbrentwood.org) and I will get back to you as soon as possible.

# PRAYERS FOR FIRST COMMUNICANTS

First Communicants should have a proficient knowledge of the following prayers

## The Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## Glory Be

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

## Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace!  
The Lord is with thee.  
Blessed art thou among women,  
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
Pray for us sinners,  
Now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

## Our Father

Our Father, who are in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy Name:  
Thy Kingdom come;  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
And forgive us our trespasses  
As we forgive those who trespass against us;  
And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil. Amen.



## First Communion Programme Timetable 2025

For each session the Children will meet at 9:00am in the Church Hall

### First Reconciliation

<u>Session 1</u>	God is love/Jesus Son of God	Sunday 26 January 2025
<u>Session 2</u>	Prodigal Son / Jesus loves me	Sunday 2 February 2025
<u>Session 3</u>	Forgiven	Sunday 9 February 2025
<u>Session 4</u>	Preparation	Sunday 2 March 2025
<u>Session 5</u>	Sacrament of Reconciliation	Sunday 9 March 2025

### First Holy Communion

<u>Session 6</u>	God our Father/words of Jesus	Sunday 16 March 2025
<u>Session 7</u>	I am the Bread of Life/ Every Sunday	Sunday 23 March 2025
<u>Session 8</u>	Forgiveness	Sunday 6 April 2025
<u>Session 9</u>	Praise God our Father/ Listen to the Word of God	Sunday 13 April 2025
<u>Session 10</u>	Offering/Mystery of Faith	Sunday 8 June 2025
<u>Session 11</u>	Rehearsal	Sunday 15 June 2025
<u>Session 12</u>	<b>First Holy Communion</b>	Sunday 22 June 2025
<u>Session 13</u>	Go in Peace	Sunday 29 June 2025

**First Reconciliation – Sunday 9th March 2025**

**First Holy Communion – Sunday 22 June 2025**

**Going Forth Mass and Party – Sunday 29 June 2025**