

St Leonard's Church  
Naremburn



St Philip Neri Church  
Northbridge



St Thomas' Church  
Willoughby



## Catholic Parish of Lower North Shore

2nd July, 2009

**Subject: First Holy Communion 2009 Programme (St Leonards and St Philip Neri)**

Dear Parents,

I am writing to you regarding the preparation programme for **First Holy Communion** this year.

The programme is parish and family based. It involves weekly activities at home, at Mass on Sunday and in small discussion groups. The weekly schedule of activities and discussion topics are set out below.

### **Enrolment**

I would be grateful if you could complete the attached form "First Communion Enrolment Form" and return it to the parish office **by Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> July, 2009** (ie. the beginning of the week back at school after the holidays). Alternatively, you can complete the electronic version of the form, located on the parish website.

A payment of \$25 is required to cover the cost of worksheets, literature, Mass book, medal, certificates and postage. Please make cheques payable to **Catholic Parish of Lower North Shore**.

### **Parents' Meeting** *(parents only)*

The parents meeting will be held on **Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> July, 2009 at 7.45pm in St Philip Neri Church**. Fr Rex and I will introduce the preparation programme at this meeting. You will be provided with a parents' booklet. This provides an introduction to the preparation programme; prayers, rituals and activities for home during the preparation period; and a reflection on each of the four small group discussion sessions. The parents' meeting provides the opportunity to explain the context of the preparation programme and answer any questions regarding the preparation and the celebration itself. It is essential that at least one parent attends this meeting.

### **Presentation Mass** *(all children and families)*

The programme commences with the presentation of candidates to their local parish community at the Presentation Mass, to be held on **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2009 at 9.00am at St Philip Neri Church, Northbridge**.

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### **Leaders' Meeting** *(parents only)*

A meeting will be held for the leaders of the groups on **Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2009 at 7.45pm at St Philip Neri Hall**. During this session, leaders will receive a leaders' handbook and a set of homepages. The material for this year's First Communion is based on the new diocesan sacramental preparation programme. The nature of the programme, the materials and the processes used are different from previous programmes. It is essential that all leaders attend this meeting.

### **The Programme** *(children and parents)*

The new diocesan preparation programme is based on four integral components each week over a four week period – (1) small group discussion sessions, (2) home sheet activities, (3) home rituals, and (4) special rituals at Sunday Mass on the 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of August and 6<sup>th</sup> September. These Sunday rituals will be incorporated into the regular 9am Sunday Masses at Northbridge. The possibility of similarly incorporating them into the 8am or 10:30am Masses at Naremburn will be discussed at the Parents' Meeting. Children will be called forward during the course of the Mass. Each of the four components of the preparation programme is designed for the participation of both parents and children. We ask that groups arrange suitable times and places to meet in the week beginning Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August for Session 1. Session 4 should be completed by Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September.

<b><u>Week beginning</u></b>	<b><u>Sunday Mass Activity</u></b>	<b><u>Focus At Home</u></b>	<b><u>In Groups</u></b>
Sunday 9 August	Recall our baptism	<i>Praying at a meal</i>	<b>The Table</b>
Sunday 16 August	Gather around the Book	<i>Reading the Bible</i>	<b>The Book</b>
Sunday 23 August	Prepare the Table	<i>Preparing a meal</i>	<b>The Meal</b>
Sunday 30 August	Community blessing	<i>Following Jesus</i>	<b>Footsteps</b>

### **Rehearsal** *(children and parents)*

There are two rehearsals, one for each church - St Leonard's and St Philip Neri. The rehearsals are scheduled to be held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2009 at St Philip Neri Church and Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2009 at St Leonard's Church. Each rehearsal will begin at 3.30pm and conclude no later than 4.30pm. During this time, children will practice songs, penitential rite, prayers, offertory procession, and Gospel procession and will taste un-consecrated hosts. At least one parent should attend.

### **Family Participation**

The First Communion Mass is a very special occasion for the whole family. Many parishioners give their time to help make it so. Should you or any family members wish to assist in the decoration of the church and ministry in the liturgy, please indicate this on the Enrolment Form.

### **First Communion Day**

The First Communion celebrations of the Eucharist will be held on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September, 2009 at 11.00 am at St Philip Neri and on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2009 at 10:30 am at St Leonard's.

### **Dress code**

Children should be dressed in appropriate neat and tidy clothes. There is no requirement that children must wear "traditional" dress. A sash will be provided to each candidate.

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### **Photography**

You are most welcome to take photographs and videos on the day, avoiding flash photography during the readings and prayers. Last year a few families availed themselves of the services of a professional photographer. If anyone is interested in organising a photographer this year, please indicate this on the information sheet.

### **Before the First Communion Mass**

Before the children make their First Holy Communion it is anticipated that they receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. For children attending St Philip Neri School, the opportunity will be given to them during school time, by Fr Rex. All other candidates are encouraged to attend either St Leonard's, after 9am Mass on Saturday, or St Philip Neri from 5pm on Saturday, in the two weeks prior to their Communion day.

Certificates, medals, sashes and mass books will be available for collection prior to the First Communion Mass from 10.15am in the St Philip Neri Hall. At St Leonard's, these will be available in the St Leonard's Hall.

### **Seating Plan**

You may choose to attend either at St Leonard's or St Philip Neri. It is worth bearing in mind that generally fewer children attend the ceremony at St Leonard's and the church is much bigger. A less rigid seating plan will be available for St Leonard's. I will draw up a seating plan for St Philip Neri Church after final numbers of children are confirmed. Last year, one row was available for each family. This leaves only the small area upstairs for other guests.

### **After the Mass**

After the First Communion Mass, celebrations will continue with morning tea and a celebration cake in the parish halls. Volunteers from the Year 4 parents at St Philip Neri School will host the morning tea.

### **Conclusion**

I look forward to seeing you at the Parents' Meeting on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> July. Additional copies of the programme and information sheet will be available at each parish church and on the website. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me through the parish office.

God bless you and your family,



Paul Mason  
Pastoral Associate

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