



MARY IMMACULATE PARISH EAGLE VALE NSW

2 November 2023

Dear Parents,

2024 Parish Sacramental Program

For us Catholics, the reception of Holy Sacraments constitutes the climax of a spiritual journey which always leads us to Jesus Christ. Through Baptism we immerse ourselves in Christ; through Reconciliation we seek His forgiveness; Eucharist invites us into a deeper communion of life with Him, and in Confirmation the Holy Spirit empowers us to cling to Christ even more closely, and to bring him to others. Hence, people who ask for Sacraments are those who have encountered the Lord or have matured enough to make a personal and conscious decision to become His committed followers.

One of the most important tasks the Parish Community has is to help the candidates to prepare well for the reception of Sacraments, so that it is Jesus Christ they seek and find.

On the day of your child's Baptism, you solemnly promised to 'make it your constant care to bring your children up in the practise of the faith, to keep God's commandments by loving God and your neighbour, so that the divine life could grow always stronger in their hearts.' Now as your children wish to take a step forward on their Christian journey, we, the Parish Community at Mary Immaculate Church, are willing to help you to prepare them for another sacramental event.

The Parish based program means all children of our Parish, irrespective of the school they go to, will attend instructions at the Parish; that parents will be asked to be actively involved; and that the Program will be centred around the Sunday Mass which, for us believers, is the 'source and summit of Christian life'.

To ensure the candidates get as much as possible out of the program, we believe that the sacramental preparation should be offered to children no younger than Year 3. Our experience tells us, that sometimes, it is beneficial for children to undergo the sacramental program later in life, even if it is one or two years later. It is up to you, the parents, to determine when you believe your child is mature enough to receive the following sacraments but the earliest, they can receive them in our parish is as follows:

- a. Candidates for Reconciliation need to be in Year 3 or above.
- b. Candidates for 1st Holy Communion need to be in Year 4 or above
- c. Candidates for Confirmation need to be in Year 6 or above.

It should also be stressed that the reception of sacraments is optional, and that it is a moment when a person celebrates their newly formed or renewed relationship with Christ. Consequently, sacraments should not be a 'box to be ticked' or a requirement for enrolment in a Secondary Catholic School.

Please note that there are some changes to the registration process and timing of the reception of sacraments this year.

If you wish to proceed, please refer to the attached Frequently Asked Question sheet which includes sacrament dates for 2024.

If you have any further questions, feel free to contact the team by email: eaglevaluesacraments@dow.org.au .



Fr Leo Mifsud OMI

Parish Priest



MARY IMMACULATE PARISH EAGLE VALE - SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM 2024

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why is our sacramental program parish based?

This model of sacramental preparation is designed to support parents/guardians who are the foremost educators in their child's faith journey. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that, "parents are called to be the first teachers of their children in the ways of faith".

Your local parish community supports, encourages and welcomes you and your child in their faith journey. This includes preparation and your ongoing sacramental participation. The program is parish based with all preparation conducted outside school hours.

2. What are the main requirements of the program?

At least one parent/guardian and the candidate need to participate in all aspects of the program including:

- Registration
- 4 small group learning sessions
- Reception of the Sacrament
- A practice session for those who are being confirmed.

3. Do I belong to Mary Immaculate Parish?

Yes, if you attend weekend Mass at Mary Immaculate, Eagle Vale.

4. What if I am a parishioner of another parish?

Parish based sacramental programs are available at all surrounding parishes and we recommend that your child's sacramental preparation and reception be done in your local parish.

Contact details for enquires about sacramental programs for surrounding parishes are shown below:

Mt Carmel Parish, Varroville: www.olmcvarroville.org.au

Parish Contact Tel: 9603 7373

St Mary MacKillop Parish, Oran Park: www.marymackillopparish.org.au

Parish Contact Tel: 4648 2226

St John's Parish, Campbelltown: www.stjohncampbelltown.org.au

Parish Contact Tel: 4625 8044

5. When can my child receive the sacraments?

It is up to parents to determine when they believe their child is ready to receive the following sacraments, but the earliest they can receive the sacraments in our parish is as follows:

- Candidates for Reconciliation need to be in Year 3 or above.
- Candidates for 1st Holy Communion need to be in Year 4 or above.
- Candidates for Confirmation need to be in Year 6 or above.

6. What documents do I need to provide?

All sacraments require presentation of a copy of the child's Baptismal Certificate, obtained from the parish where the child was baptised.

7. What will be the cost of the program?

\$30 per child to cover the costs of the program.

We will provide you with the information to make an electronic direct deposit for payment.

8. How long do the sessions run for?

1 hour

9. Who will run the sessions?

A team of trained and experienced leaders will run the sessions using the 'Gratia Series Sacramental Program'.

10. When do I register my child for sacraments for next year?

Registration for all sacraments will be on line. There is a link on the parish website. You will find it under the 'Sacraments' tab.

Registration is now open and will close on 30th December. Due to staffing and admin arrangements, late applications cannot be accepted.

If you miss these dates you will need to wait until the following year.

o How do I book in for sessions and sacrament dates?

o You will be able to book into the learning sessions as part of registering on line.

o You will be sent a link to choose your sacrament time (reception in the church) after the first learning session.

o Is the program optional?

The candidate's and parent's **attendance at all four sessions and any sacrament practice is mandatory**. Missing a session without notifying the coordinator will mean that a candidate has resigned from seeking a sacrament.

o Why are we advising you of sacramental dates this early?

We would like to give you early notification of the dates and times for the 2024 sacramental program, so that you can take them into account when you are planning for next year.

o Do I need any further information?

If you have any further questions, please email eaglevaluesacraments@dow.org.au

Important Sacrament Program Dates and Activities for 2024 Steps Required:

- **Register on line via the links on the parish website for the reception of Sacraments. The website address is mipeaglevale.org** You will find the links under the 'Sacraments' tab.
Registration is now open and will close on 30th December. Due to staffing and admin arrangements, late applications cannot be accepted. If you miss these dates you will need to wait until the following year.
- **Provide an electronic copy of candidate's Baptismal Certificate, and**
- **You will be asked to make an electronic payment of \$30 fee approximately two/three weeks before classes for your sacrament begin. You will be sent an email with information about how to do this at this time.**

DATES OF SACRAMENTS

- **First Reconciliation Dates:**
Session 1: Tuesday 13 February at 3.30pm OR 6.30pm
Session 2: Tuesday 20 February at 3.30pm OR 6.30pm
Session 3: Tuesday 27 February at 3.30pm OR 6.30pm
Session 4: Tuesday 5 March at 3.30pm OR 6.30pm
Reception of Reconciliation:
Monday 11 March 6.00pm or Tuesday 12 March 6.00pm
- **First Communion Dates:**
Session 1: Tuesday 7 May at 3.30pm OR 6.30pm
Session 2: Tuesday 14 May at 3.30pm OR 6.30pm
Session 3: Tuesday 21 May at 3.30pm OR 6.30pm
Session 4: Tuesday 28 May at 3.30pm OR 6.30pm
Reception of 1st Communion:
Saturday 1 June at 3.30pm or Sunday 2 June at 11.30am
- **Confirmation Dates:**
Session 1: Tuesday 6 August at 3.30pm OR 6.30pm
Session 2: Tuesday 13 August at 3.30pm OR 6.30pm
Session 3: Tuesday 20 August at 3.30pm OR 6.30pm
Session 4: Tuesday 27 August at 3.30pm OR 6.30pm
Practice: Tuesday 3 September at 6.00pm OR 7.30pm
Reception of Confirmation: Friday 6 September at 6.00pm or 7.30pm (date to be confirmed)