

Home Study Programme for “I Belong”

What is “I Belong”? The ‘I Belong’ programme moves through 7 key points in the Mass as a way of preparing the children for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. The 7 key points are as follows:

1) Gathering Rite, 2) Reconciliation, 3) Gloria, 4) Liturgy of the Word, 5) Liturgy of the Eucharist, 6) Communion Rite, 7) Dismissal.

The children’s book, ‘I Belong’, is a beautifully presented, colourful resource. It guides the children through their own experience, passages of scripture, teachings of the Church and links to the mass as they become ready to receive both Sacraments.

What will my child do with the book? There are pages where the children can write their personal thoughts, colour in pictures and insert pictures and photos. The book provides a wonderful opportunity for individual study time where the child and adult can explore the material together at their own pace. ‘I Belong’ is really suited to this one-to-one work where the adult can help with reading, as well as explaining vocabulary and discussing the child’s own ideas.

How can I help my child? The parent helpers/catechists have prepared a series of lessons, activities and celebrations to build on and consolidate the children’s understanding as they move towards a closer friendship with God. **Your contribution as parents and carers is an essential part of the children’s preparation.** We need you to have worked through the ‘I Belong’ book with your child before the children come together for the preparation lessons and activities. Experience from previous years has shown that if the children have a good foundation before coming together as a group, then their preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion becomes much more meaningful.

We will also be running three evenings to help parents with preparing their children. The first evening in January will outline the course, help to answer any questions you may have, and look at the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The next evening in March will look at the Sacrament of First Communion.

Please see overleaf for the timetable of events and the Home Study guide.

Timetable for the Home Study programme

Parents' session Wednesday 10th January	Introduction to the programme	<i>Reconciliation</i>	St Mary's Parish Centre 7.00pm
Home study 22 nd -26 th Jan	Theme: Gathering Rite	<i>In the name of the Father</i>	Pages 1-10
Enrolment Mass 28th January	10.30am St Mary's Church		
Preparation Session 1 28th/29th January	28 th Jan – Sunday group 29 th Jan – School group		
Home study 30 th Jan - 17 th Feb	Theme: Gathering Rite	<i>Lord, have mercy</i>	Pages 11-20
Preparation Session 2 18th/ 19th Feb	18 th Feb – Sunday group 19 th Feb – School group		
Parents' session Tuesday 27th February	Theme: Reconciliation		St Mary's Parish Centre 7.00pm
Home study 20 th Feb – 1 st March	Theme: Reconciliation	<i>Celebrating our rescue</i>	Pages 21-32
Preparation Session 3 3rd/4th March	3 rd March – Sunday group 4 th March – School group		
Home study 4 th – 8 th March	Theme: Reconciliation	<i>God helps me to get it right</i>	Pages 33-44
Sacrament of Reconciliation 9th March	11.00am St Mary's Church		St Mary's Church
Home study 11 th -15 th March	Theme: Gloria	<i>Gloria to God in the highest</i>	Pages 45-54
Preparation Session 4 17th/ 21st March	17 th March – Sunday group 21 st March – School group		
Parents' session 21st March	The Eucharist FAQs about the FHC Masses in May	Holy Communion	St Mary's Parish Centre 7.00pm
Home study 25 th -28 th March	Theme: Liturgy of the Word	<i>This is the Word of the Lord</i>	Pages 55-66
Home study 1 st – 5 th April	Theme: Liturgy of the Eucharist	<i>Bread to Offer</i>	Pages 67-78
EASTER WEEK			
Home study 15 th – 19 th April	Theme: Liturgy of the Eucharist	<i>Fruit of the vine</i>	Pages 79-92
Preparation Session 5 21st April/ 22nd April	21 st April – Sunday group 22 nd April – School group		
Home study 22 nd – 26 th April	Theme: Liturgy of the Eucharist	<i>Do this in Memory of me</i>	Pages 93-104
Preparation Session 6 28th April/ 29th April	28 th April – Sunday group 29 th April – School group		
Home Study 6 th May – 10 th May	Communion Rite	<i>Body of Christ</i>	Pages 105-116
First Holy Communion rehearsals and Masses 11&12th / 18th & 19th May	4.00pm Rehearsal (Sat) 10.30am Mass (Sun)		St Mary's Church
Home study: To do together the week after your child has made their First Holy Communion	Theme: Dismissal	<i>To Love and Serve</i>	Pages 117-128
First Holy Communion certificates & party 10.30am Mass 9th June	10.30am Mass		St Mary's Church