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Date: Thursday, 10 June 2021



Education and Families

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Dear Parent/Carer

**ARRANGEMENTS FOR FIRST HOLY COMMUNION FOR CHILDREN CURRENTLY IN
PRIMARY 4 AND 5
ST. COLUMBA'S PARISH**

We would like to provide you with an update and details of the arrangements for the Sacrament of First Holy Communion for all children who are currently in Primaries 4 and 5.

Firstly, we would like to thank you for your patience during a period where it was very difficult to come to a final decision about the Sacraments due to COVID-19 and the church renovations as well as restrictions placed upon numbers.

If you have attended Mass in your parish lately (and the Bishops of Scotland have still lifted the obligation to attend Sunday Mass in person due to COVID-19) then you will know that things are very different. The Bishops' Conference of Scotland have put in place very strict and stringent Health and Safety Procedures to ensure that people are safe and that churches do not contribute to the spread of the virus.

Following discussions between Fr Bogan and myself, it has been agreed that First Communion will take place on Saturday 18th September. There will be two Masses on this day.

CHILDREN IN P5 NEXT YEAR AND WILL MAKE THEIR FIRST COMMUNION ON 18TH SEPTEMBER AT 12 NOON IN ST. COLUMBA'S CHURCH.

CHILDREN IN P6 NEXT YEAR AND WILL MAKE THEIR FIRST COMMUNION ON 18TH SEPTEMBER AT 1:30pm IN ST. COLUMBA'S CHURCH.

Further information will be circulated nearer the time, due to the changing nature of the situation. However, to allow you to begin to make plans, please note the following:

- Due to number restrictions, a maximum of 15 children can make their First Holy Communion at any one of the Masses.



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- Children will be seated in the Sanctuary area of the Church, near the Altar for the duration of the Mass.
- Each child can have a **maximum 6 people to join them (including siblings)**. Everyone must be from the same household or bubble. This means the child plus 6 family members.
- Fr. Bogan will make arrangements to hear confessions prior to the celebration of First Communion. Confessions will be heard during the school day during the week beginning 13th September.
- Please note that we are guided by the most recent Government and Church guidelines and that this may change between now and 18th September.

First Holy Communion is a sacred encounter with the Lord Jesus and, as such, is a very special occasion for our families, our school and our parish. We will continue to work alongside Father Bogan and St. Columba's Parish as we move towards this special day for the children.

We have to be prepared for things changing – this could be that they ease further and we may be able to have more people in the church. Equally, this could be that restrictions are tightened again and we need to reduce the number of people in the church. We pray that the latter is not the case!

CHILDREN WHO REQUIRE MAKE THEIR FIRST RECONCILIATION

If your child missed the opportunity to make their First Reconciliation (Confession) in P3, please do not worry. Father Bogan will hear the Confession of all children prior to their First Communion during the week beginning 13th September 2021.

I trust that this information puts your mind at rest and that you can now look forward to this special day.

With renewed good wishes,

Mr K Thomas
Head Teacher

Fr G Bogan
Parish Priest