

Sacramental Preparation



2024 - 2025

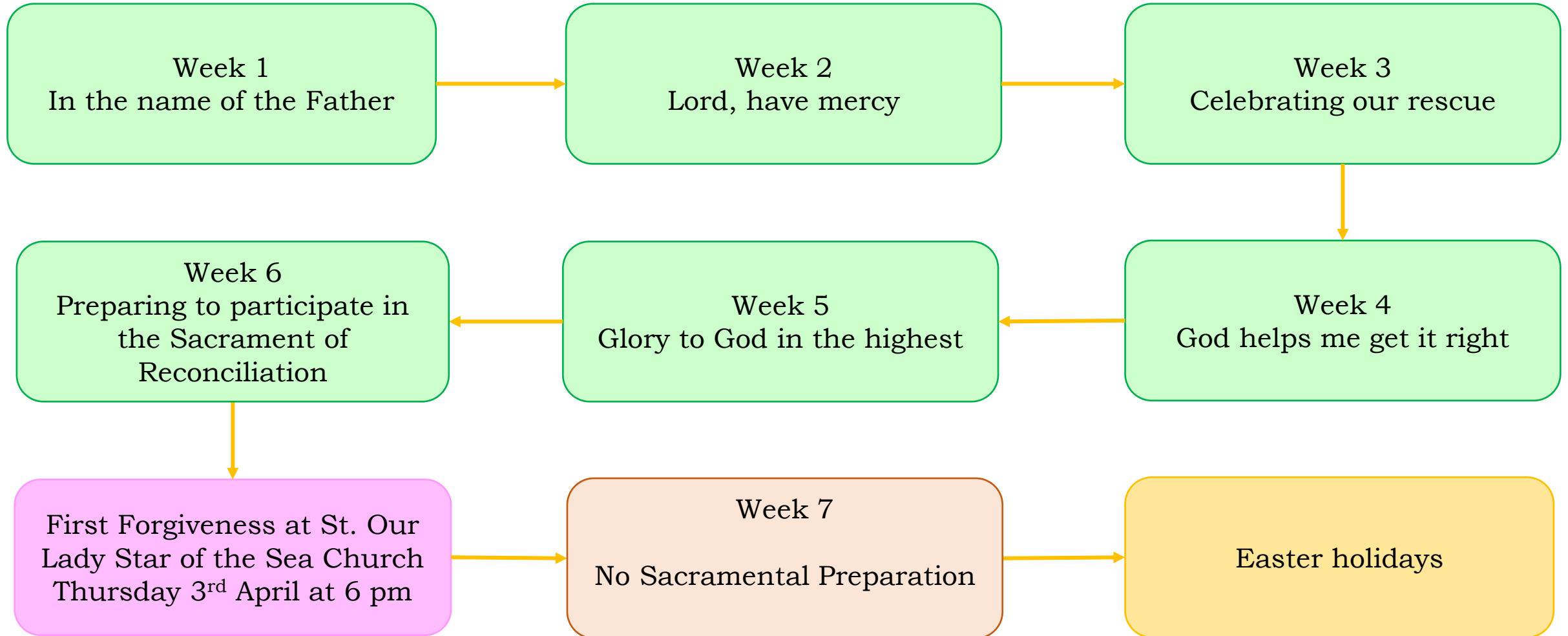
How to support your child at home

In these notes you will find a timeline with the Weeks your child will take part in as they prepare to receive Jesus for the first time in the Sacrament of Holy Communion, as well as weekly readings, short reflections and prayers that can be shared at home as a family.

Please, spend some time with your child each week reflecting on the work we have done in school and praying together in order to support them at this important point on their faith journey.

Following the reflection for Week 6, you will find an Examination of Conscience as well as an Act of Contrition. Your child can use these as often as they want to – this will help them prepare to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation on the 23rd of April.

Reconciliation Preparation Journey



Gospel: Luke 3: 21-22

Reflection

God knows each of you by name. Because of your baptism you are a child of God. He is your Father. As you prepare for your Holy Communion, remember how much God loves you and how special you are to Him.

Prayer

Father, we know you love us very much. Thank you for sending Jesus to us. Thank you for the gift of baptism. Help me during the coming months as I prepare for my First Holy Communion. Amen.

This week I need to know... where I was baptised and what the name of the priest was. I will need to bring this information to school.

Week 1 - Tuesday 25th February

In the name of the Father

Gospel: Luke 3: 21-22

When all the people were being baptized by John, Jesus also was baptized. While Jesus was praying, heaven opened, and the Holy Spirit came down on him. The Spirit was in the form of a dove. Then a voice came from heaven and said, “You are my Son and I love you. I am very pleased with you.”

Gospel: Luke 15: 11-32

Reflection

We are like the prodigal son when we don't act as children of God. We come to our senses when we start behaving like God's children, and God always welcomes us, and we come up smelling of roses! Always remember you are a beloved child of God.

Prayer

Father, we thank you that you are always looking out for us with love. We thank you for your merciful love. We thank you that no matter how silly or unkind we have been, you still love us and we are still your children. Help us always to act as beloved children, because that is what we are. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

Gospel: Luke 15:11-32

Then Jesus said, “A man had two sons. The younger son said to his father, ‘Give me my share of the property.’ So the father divided the property between his two sons. Then the younger son gathered up all that was his and left. He travelled far away to another country. There he wasted his money in foolish living. He spent everything that he had. Soon after that, the land became very dry, and there was no rain. There was not enough food to eat anywhere in the country. The son was hungry and needed money. So he got a job with one of the citizens there. The man sent the son into the fields to feed pigs. The son was so hungry that he was willing to eat the food the pigs were eating. But no one gave him anything.

The son realized that he had been very foolish. He thought, ‘All of my father’s servants have plenty of food. But I am here, almost dying with hunger. I will leave and return to my father. I’ll say to him: Father, I have sinned against God and against you. I am not good enough to be called your son. But let me be like one of your servants.’ So the son left and went to his father. While the son was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. He felt sorry for his son. So the father ran to him, and hugged and kissed him.

The son said, 'Father, I have sinned against God and against you. I am not good enough to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Hurry! Bring the best clothes and put them on him. Also, put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get our fat calf and kill it. Then we can have a feast and celebrate! My son was dead, but now he is alive again! He was lost, but now he is found!' And so they began to celebrate.

The older son was in the field. As he came closer to the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. So he called to one of the servants and asked, 'What does all this mean?' The servant said, 'Your brother has come back. Your father killed the fat calf to eat because your brother came home safely!' The older son was angry and would not go into the feast. So his father went out and begged him to come in. The son said to his father, 'I have served you like a slave for many years! I have always obeyed your commands. But you never even killed a young goat for me to have a feast with my friends. But your other son has wasted all your money on prostitutes. Then he comes home, and you kill the fat calf for him!' The father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me. All that I have is yours. We had to celebrate and be happy because your brother was dead, but now he is alive. He was lost, but now he is found.'"

Gospel: Luke 15: 4 - 7

Reflection

Our Heavenly Father looks after us every minute of our lives, and cares for us every moment of every day. Next time you are hurt, think about the love of God and remember that He is always with you.

Prayer

Father, thank you for your great love for us, which never changes no matter what we do or where we go. Help us to be full of love too, and rescue us from evil, so everyone will know we are your children. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

Gospel: Luke 15:4-7

Then Jesus said, "Suppose one of you has 100 sheep, but he loses 1 of them. Then he will leave the other 99 sheep alone and go out and look for the lost sheep. The man will keep on searching for the lost sheep until he finds it. And when he finds it, the man is very happy. He puts it on his shoulders and goes home. He calls to his friends and neighbours and says, 'Be happy with me because I found my lost sheep!' In the same way, I tell you there is much joy in heaven when 1 sinner changes his heart. There is more joy for that 1 sinner than there is for 99 good people who don't need to change.

Gospel: Luke 19: 1-10

Reflection

God sent His son Jesus to show us how to live and love. Jesus believed in Zacchaeus, he wanted to know him before he changed and helped Zacchaeus to ‘get it right’. Remember that God doesn’t love us only when we ‘get it right’ – He loves us the way we are.

Prayer

Dear God, we thank you that You are always looking out for us with love. We thank you for your merciful love. We thank you that, no matter how silly or unkind we have been, You still love us, and we are still Your children. Help us to act as beloved children, because that is what we are. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

Gospel: Luke 19: 1-10

Jesus was going through the city of Jericho. In Jericho there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a wealthy, very important tax collector. He wanted to see who Jesus was, but he was too short to see above the crowd. He ran ahead to a place where he knew Jesus would come. He climbed a sycamore tree so he could see Jesus. When Jesus came to that place, he looked up and saw Zacchaeus in the tree. He said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down! I must stay at your house today.”

Zacchaeus came down quickly. He was pleased to have Jesus in his house. All the people saw this and began to complain, “Look at the kind of man Jesus stays with. Zacchaeus is a sinner!” But Zacchaeus said to the Lord, “I will give half of my money to the poor. If I have cheated anyone, I will pay that person back four times more!” Jesus said, “Salvation has come to this house today. This man truly belongs to the family of Abraham. The Son of Man came to find lost people and save them.”

Gospel: Luke 2: 8-20

Reflection

This week we have been thinking about all the glorious things you have given us. Like the shepherds, we want to listen to the Good News of the birth of Jesus, and we want to feel in awe of all the wonders around us: the beauty of the world, our family and friends, all the celebrations and moments of joy and happiness in our lives.

Prayer

We thank you for the glory of the world, and the glory of our lives. We thank you for the quiet glory of the stars, the sudden glory of a rainbow, the magnificent glory of fireworks. We thank you especially for your glorious love, which you showed by sending Jesus to be our Saviour. 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

Gospel: Luke 2:8-20

That night, some shepherds were in the fields nearby watching their sheep. An angel of the Lord stood before them. The glory of the Lord was shining around them, and suddenly they became very frightened. The angel said to them, “Don’t be afraid, because I am bringing you some good news. It will be a joy to all the people. Today your Savior was born in David’s town. He is Christ, the Lord. This is how you will know him: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a feeding box.”

Then a very large group of angels from heaven joined the first angel. All the angels were praising God, saying:

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth let there be peace to the people of good will.”

Then the angels left the shepherds and went back to heaven. The shepherds said to each other, “Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened. We will see this thing the Lord told us about.”

So the shepherds went quickly and found Mary and Joseph. And the shepherds saw the baby lying in a feeding box. Then they told what the angels had said about this child. Everyone was amazed when they heard what the shepherds said to them.

Mary hid these things in her heart; she continued to think about them. Then the shepherds went back to their sheep, praising God and thanking him for everything that they had seen and heard. It was just as the angel had told them.

Preparing for the Sacrament – Examination of Conscience

Reading: Colossians 3: 12-17

Reflection

The 3rd of April is an important day: you will open your heart and soul to God, and like Zacchaeus and many others you will ask for His forgiveness. Read the letter of St Paul to the Colossians and have some quiet time with God as you reflect on the questions in the Examination of Conscience in preparation for tomorrow. To conclude, make an Act of Contrition using the prayer below.

Prayer – Act of Contrition

Heavenly Father, I am very sorry for the times I have not followed in the steps on Jesus. This is not because I fear punishment, but because I know you LOVE me with never ending, never changing love, and I want to love you the same way. With the help of your grace, I promise I will try to sin no more, to forgive everyone around me and to share your Good News in everything I do and say. Amen

Reading: Colossians 3: 12-17

God has chosen you and made you His holy people. He loves you. So always do these things: show mercy to others; be kind, humble, gentle, and patient. Do not be angry with each other, but forgive each other. If someone does wrong to you, then forgive him. Forgive each other because the Lord forgave you. Do all these things; but most important, love each other. Love is what holds you all together in perfect unity. Let the peace that Christ gives control your thinking. You were all called together in one body to have peace. Always be thankful. Let the teaching of Christ live in you richly. Use all wisdom to teach and strengthen each other. Sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Everything you say and everything you do should all be done for Jesus your Lord. And in all you do, give thanks to God the Father through Jesus.

Examination of Conscience

† Responsibilities to God

- Have I prayed every day?
- Have I thanked God for all the gifts that I have received from Him?
- Have I recognised the voice and face of Christ reflected in all others around me?
- Have I asked the Holy Spirit to help me whenever I have been tempted to sin?
- Have I asked the Holy Spirit to help me do what is right?

† Responsibilities to others

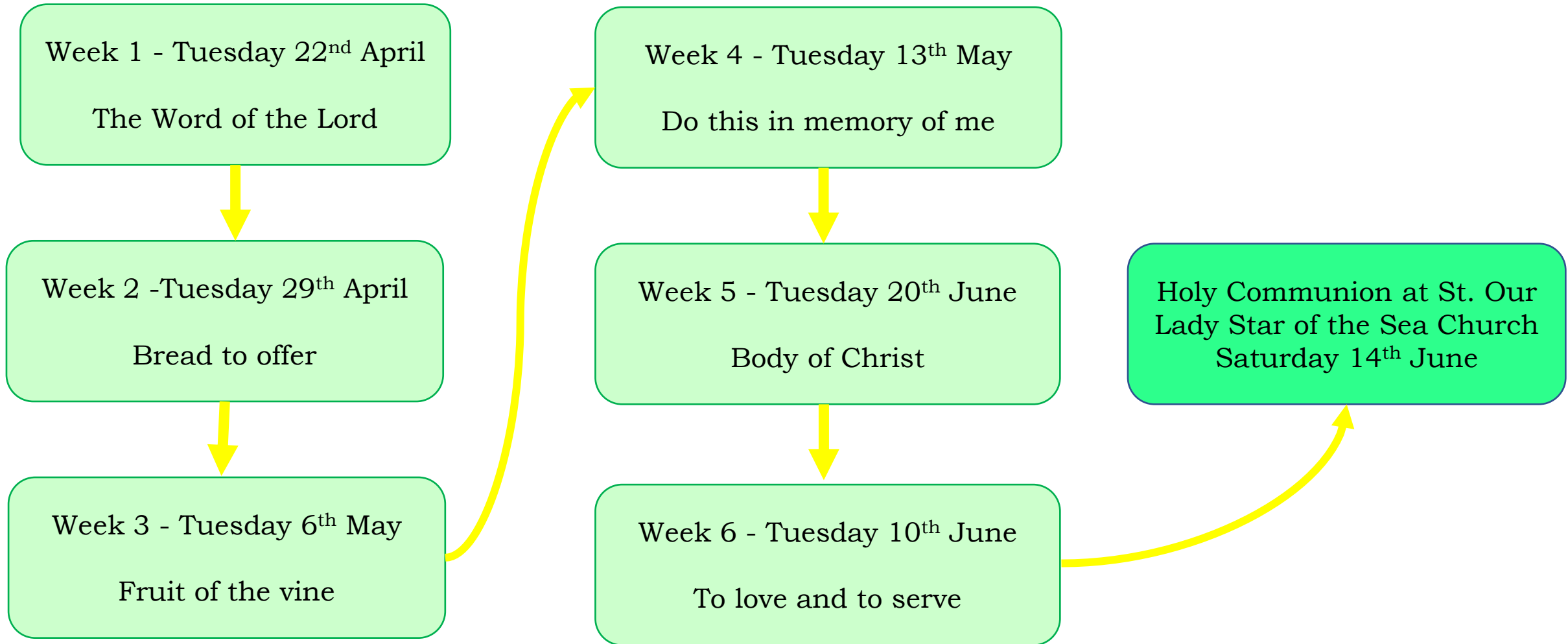
- Have I been respectful to everyone around me?
- Have I lied? Have I tried to tell the truth?
- Have I been selfish? Have I put my wishes before the needs of others?
- Have I gotten angry easily? Have I hit anyone?

Examination of Conscience

† Responsibilities to others

- Have I forgiven others every time they have asked for forgiveness, no matter how difficult it could seem?
- Have I treated other children with respect, or have I made fun of them and called them names?
- Have I stolen anything? Have I returned it?
- Have I performed my responsibilities, such as homework and household chores?
- Have I been helpful and affectionate toward my family?
- Have I been kind and generous with my friends?
- Have I looked after our planet and God's Creation, or have I littered, wasted energy, or done other things that can be harmful to our world?

Holy Communion Preparation Journey



Reading: 1 Samuel 3:1-10

Reflection

This week we have been thinking about listening and how important it is. In our frantic, busy world, it is becoming harder and harder to listen to one another, to pay attention to what those next to us have to say. Sometimes we get distracted, but it is important that we allow ourselves to LISTEN, to find the voice of God in everyone and everything around us.

Prayer

Father in heaven, we thank you for all the wonderful sounds we hear. We thank you for the sound of splashing water, for the sound of birds singing, for the sound of friendly words we hear at home and school. We thank you especially for listening to us when we talk to you, and for sending us Jesus, as you answer to our prayers. Amen.

Reading: 1 Samuel 3:1-10

The boy Samuel served the Lord under Eli. In those days the Lord did not speak directly to people very often. There were very few visions. Eli's eyes were so weak he was almost blind. One night he was lying in bed. Samuel was also in bed in the Lord's Holy Tent. The Ark of the Covenant was in the Holy Tent. God's lamp was still burning.

Then the Lord called Samuel. Samuel answered, "I am here!" He ran to Eli and said, "I am here. You called me." But Eli said, "I didn't call you. Go back to bed." So Samuel went back to bed.

The Lord called again, "Samuel!" Samuel again went to Eli and said, "I am here. You called me." Again Eli said, "I didn't call you. Go back to bed." Samuel did not yet know the Lord. The Lord had not spoken directly to him yet.

The Lord called Samuel for the third time. Samuel got up and went to Eli. He said, "I am here. You called me." Then Eli realized the Lord was calling the boy. So he told Samuel, "Go to bed. If he calls you again, say, 'Speak, Lord. I am your servant, and I am listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in bed.

The Lord came and stood there. He called as he had before. He said, "Samuel, Samuel!" Samuel said, "Speak, Lord. I am your servant, and I am listening."

Modern parable: “Share”

Reflection

Every day God looks after us with His unending love. He gave us the sun and the rain so that we can have our daily bread. This is why it is important for us to care for the beautiful world He has given us - the plants, rivers, oceans, animals and people. Without these, we would go hungry not only physically, but also emotionally and spiritually. We share and give our love to God and others, and He transforms it into food for our heart and spirit. Only by caring for all of God’s gifts we will never go hungry again.

Prayer

Our Father, Our Father, who art 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.

Modern parable: “Share”

Once there was a group of friends. Matthew had a tent for his birthday and they decided to play camping in one of their gardens. They each had warm clothes, a torch for the night and a picnic for their evening meal. They had great fun all day, playing games and all sorts of interesting things.

When evening came, they were very, very hungry. Matthew thought no one else had any food, so he kept his hidden. He thought he would eat it when everyone was asleep. Samantha knew she only had enough for herself, so she kept her food hidden as well. All the children kept their food hidden away, in case they had to share it. It got darker and darker, and the children got hungrier and hungrier. At last, Robert couldn't stand it any longer. He went into the tent and brought out his crisps and orange drink. Laura laughed and she went into the tent. She brought out some sandwiches. All the children began to laugh. They rushed away and brought out all sorts of goodies: sausage rolls, peanuts, jam tarts and much, much more.

They sat down in a circle and had the best picnic they had ever had in their lives.

Reading: John 2:1-12

Reflection

Think about the importance of drinks at a party. At Cana, they thought it was water, but it was wine. At the Eucharist it looks like wine, but it is Jesus. Just like a meal is not complete without drinks, we need the wine to fully receive Jesus – the spiritual food that gives us strength to fulfil God’s mission for us, and the spiritual drink that allows us to live life to the full in a fresh, loving and faithful way.

Prayer

Father, we thank you for caring for us all. We thank you for our daily food and drink which give us strength for the hard times of life, and which help us enjoy the good times. We thank you especially for Jesus, who is soon to become our spiritual food and drink, when we receive him in the Holy Eucharist. Help us to prepare for this special meal which we are going to receive for the first time in just a few weeks’ time. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading: John 2:1-12

Two days later there was a wedding in the town of Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there. 2 Jesus and his followers were also invited to the wedding. 3 When all the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine." Jesus answered, "Dear woman, why come to me? My time has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you to do."

In that place there were six stone water jars. The Jews used jars like these in their washing ceremony.[a] Each jar held about 20 or 30 gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled the jars to the top. The servants took the water to the master. When he tasted it, the water had become wine. He did not know where the wine came from. But the servants who brought the water knew. The master of the wedding called the bridegroom and said to him, "People always serve the best wine first. Later, after the guests have been drinking a lot, they serve the cheaper wine. But you have saved the best wine till now."

And so, in Cana of Galilee, Jesus did his first miracle. There he showed his glory, and his followers believed in him.

Reading: John 2:1-12

Reflection

Think about all the picnics and barbecues, takeaways and parties you have enjoyed. The Last Supper that Jesus had with his friends before he died was a celebration, and the disciples enjoyed spending all that time with him. Every time we celebrate the Eucharist, we take part in that wonderful meal that Jesus shared with his disciples and receive him into our hearts.

Prayer

Father in heaven, you gave us Jesus to be the bread of life and the cup of salvation. We thank you for your great love, and we ask you to make us loving too. Help us understand more and more how much Jesus loves us, and how wonderful it will be to receive him into our hearts when we make our First Holy Communion. Amen.

Reading: Matthew 26: 26-29

While they were eating, Jesus took some bread. He thanked God for it and broke it. Then he gave it to his followers and said, “Take this bread and eat it. This bread is my body.”

Then Jesus took a cup. He thanked God for it and gave it to the followers. He said, “Every one of you drink this. This is my blood which begins the new covenant that God makes with his people. This blood is poured out for many to forgive their sins. I tell you this: I will not drink of this fruit of the vine again until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

Reading: Luke 24:13-35 (adaptation)

Reflection

When we receive Jesus in Holy Communion, we are united with him in a very special way. We are so close to him that together we become the body of Christ. This means that although on the outside we may look just the same as before, by receiving Holy Communion we are changed. We have the risen life of Christ in us. We are the Body of Christ.

Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank you for the gift of the Eucharist. It is in the Eucharist that we recognise you, just like the two disciples did when you broke the bread in Emmaus. Help us prepare, open our hearts to this mystery of faith, so that we are ready for the wonder of the change we cannot see. Amen.

Reading: Luke 24:13-35 (adaptation)

Two friends of Jesus were running away from Jerusalem. They were very upset that Jesus had died. They thought Jesus was going to be a great leader, like Moses or King David! As they were walking along, a stranger joined them, and asked what they were talking about. They told him all about Jesus dying, and how disappointed they were that Jesus had not freed the people.

“Oh you foolish people!” said the stranger, and he began to explain the Old Testament, and how it linked up with Jesus. The friends listened excitedly to everything the stranger said. When they got to the village, they didn’t want the stranger to leave them. “Stay here with us for the night,” they said. “It’s getting dark.”

While they were at the table, the stranger took bread. He blessed it and broke it and gave it to them. All at once they recognised him. It wasn't a stranger. It was Jesus – alive with his new risen life.

As soon as they recognised him, Jesus disappeared. But the friends were no longer afraid. “We should have realised!” they said. “All the time he was talking to us along the road our hearts were burning inside us. Jesus looks different on the outside with his new risen life, but inside it is the very same Jesus.”

Straight away the two friends hurried back to Jerusalem and joined the rest of the disciples there.

“It is true!” everyone said. “Jesus has really risen from the dead!”

Gospel: John 21:1-17 (adapted)

Reflection

In this Bible story, Jesus asks Peter to feed his lambs and sheep. The lambs and sheep of Jesus are the poor, weak people of the world, anyone who is in need. Jesus asks his disciples to look after them all. Think about all the ways you can love and serve the Lord by helping the people around you: your family, neighbours, friends... Following Jesus doesn't mean doing great things all the time, but about doing small things with great love.

Prayer

Christ has no body now on earth but ours, no hands but ours, no feet but ours. Ours are the eyes through which is to shine out Christ's compassion on the world. Ours are the feet through which he is to go about doing good. Ours are the hands with which he is to bless all people now. Please, help each one of us, Jesus, to be your body here on earth. Thank you. Amen.

Reading: John 21:1-17 (adaptation)

Gathered by the Sea of Tiberias were Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James, John, and two other disciples. Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They answered him, "No." He said to them, "Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. Then John said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Peter heard that, he jumped into the sea. But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land. When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught."

So Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish.

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Peter, "Peter, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." A second time he said to him, "Peter, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Peter, son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep."