



Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Religious Education Program
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*"Listen. . .
Receive. . .
Go Forth. . ."*

March 11, 2010

Dear Parents of First Communicants:

What an exciting time for your family! A wonderful retreat is being planned for the children in the Religious Education Program who will celebrate First Eucharist on May 8, 2010. Through storytelling, banner making and a number of interactive experiences, this retreat invites parents and communicants to explore themes of belonging, sharing a meal, and serving others—themes that are central to our understanding of the Eucharist. This retreat will take place on the following dates/times depending on your child's catechist in **McDonnell Hall**:

- **Tuesday, March 23, 2010 @ 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm**
Pat Nold & Rose Regan
Jon & Michele Reeve
Katherine Nimrod & Kristina Trevino
Jennifer Harty - Family TREE Program
- **Wednesday, March 24, 2010 @ 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm**
Cindy Rourke
Jim Mann
Holly Jehle
Julie Sullivan
- **Thursday, March 25, 2010 @ 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm**
Maria Grable & Melissa Brady
Theresa Jedzaniak
Tina Russell

Every effort should be made to attend the First Eucharist Retreat you have been assigned to. However, if you are unable to, please make arrangements to attend on another evening.

Also enclosed in this envelope, you will find a Certificate of Service. As mentioned in the 2nd Grade Eucharist Parent's Meeting, as part of the preparation to receive Eucharist, I ask that your child choose something special to do to help or serve someone. The children may choose to do something by themselves or with the family. When they have chosen something and completed the service, please complete the enclosed Certificate and put a picture of the children involved with the service on it as well. These certificates should be returned to your assigned practice as they will be used in the First Communion Liturgies. In this service activity, help your child to understand that when they help other people, they are serving the Lord. Jesus taught us this and through service we all have the responsibility to help come to know Him. Actions speak louder than words. Point out to your child his or her loving actions will also help others to know Jesus.

Throughout the preparation for First Communion, your child is growing in his or her understanding that the parish community is our family within the Catholic Church. Together, we can help the children appreciate that just as all families need to spend time together and celebrate important events together, so too, their parish family comes together to celebrate God's love and blessings. Your commitment to this weekly time of worship is perhaps one of the greatest gifts you can give to your child.

Children preparing for First Eucharist are also still at an age when believing is uncluttered with multitudes of questions. Theirs is a simple, childlike faith. When we share with them that the consecrated Bread and Wine of the Eucharist is really and truly Jesus, they believe. What a wonderful gift is the simplicity of a child's faith. Please know that you have done a wonderful job as the primary educator of your child. Your dedication has made this a time of wonder and awe for your child. We feel privileged to be a part of this special time in the life of your child and of your family. Remember that the parish is here to help and serve you. If you have any questions or concerns at all, feel free to call on us.

Value the time as your child's First Eucharist grows closer, as a time for your family to grow closer to Jesus.

Blessings,

Cherie DiCesare

Director of Religious Education

NOTE: The reference to "sharing a meal" does not imply a "meal" will be served. The "meal" I am referring to will be the sharing of the "Eucharistic meal" at the table of the Lord. While there will be light snacks for the children on these evenings, no dinner will be served.