

Navan Road Parish
First Communion
Ideas for Family Activities

*Simple things you can do together to make the waiting time for First Communion a special time.
You could print out a copy of these ideas.*

1

Go for a walk together. Look out for 5 things to notice that you are thankful for. Talk about them as you notice them. Go back over them at home – with a ‘thank you’ prayer to God for all these things.

‘Thank you, God, for this world we live in. Thank you for all the beauty in nature. Thank you for special things we notice when we pay attention. Thank you for people around us.’

You can do this more times.

2

Remember your Baptism – the first step in being a Christian. First Communion is the next big step. Can you find your Baptism candle? Look at the photos. Parents, tell your children about the day, who was there, stories etc. Tell them what you know about your own baptism, e.g. godparents, the church.

Say this prayer; *‘Dear God, we remember what you said to your son Jesus when he was baptised; ‘you are my beloved’. We stay quiet for a moment... we hear you say the same words to us, your daughters and sons; ‘you are my beloved’... Thank you God, I am your beloved, thank you.’*

3

Draw a picture (or painting) of a special moment when you felt love at home. Think what it might be. Take your time over it and when you are ready, show it to your family. Everyone sitting around – don’t say anything, let everyone look at it and think about it. Then all have a chat.

Prayer to say; *‘Dear Lord, thank you for love. Thank you for all the love between us. We pray for people we love, including our grandparents and our relatives. We pray for family members who are not well. Thank you too for the ones who have died. Help us to be more loving day by day.’*

4

A prayer together at bedtime. Think back on today. Say ‘thank you God for...’ As many of you as want to, say a prayer. Maybe also include other prayers e.g. for someone who is sick.

Finish with; *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.*

5

With a bowl of water (or holy water if you have some). Stand in a circle, first person dips their hand in the water, then makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of the person on their right, saying, ‘Thank you God for [name], who is so special. Amen’. Then this person takes their turn, and so on.

6

Say Pope Francis’ ‘5 finger prayer’;

- Our thumb is closest to our heart – pray for the people close to your heart, your family and your friends, the special people in your life
- Our forefinger gives directions – pray for people who lead us and point us in the right direction – teachers in school, coaches in sport, doctors/nurses
- Our middle finger is the tallest – pray for our leaders who guide us – pray for God to guide them and make them wise and strong
- Our ring finger is the weakest – pray for the weakest people in our society – people who are ill or suffering, poor and struggling
- Our little finger comes last – when we have prayed for other people, we pray for ourselves as well – we pray for God’s care and protection and strength

7

Have a ‘photo session’ with your family photo collection. Go back to the start, the earliest photos, your life since you were born up until now. Remember special family times. Tell stories. You don’t have to do it all at once – come back another day and go through another year or two.

And a prayer together; *‘Thank you, dear Lord, for our family. Thank you for all the special times we share. Thank you for special people who are part of our life. Thank you for all our memories. Thank you, you are with us in all the ups and downs of life’*

8

Arrange to have a chat with your grandparent(s) about First Communion – probably facetime or phone chat. Say you want to ask them what First Communion means to them. Ask them to tell you their favourite prayer.

Then

You could do this with your parents too. Share with each other your thoughts about what First Communion means to you, what it’s all about.

9

Have a “family meeting” to chat about making a special prayer space in your home. Talk about where it might be, e.g. a windowsill, or a corner, or on a wall. Think about what to have there, e.g. candle, picture, holy water, a precious photo. Then you could have a family prayer at that space every so often.

10

In the school ‘Grow in Love’ religion book, there is a home activity each week. Show that page to your parents and chat with them about what you’ve been doing this week, about your religion and your First Communion. Chat about what it all means.

11

When it’s nearer to First Communion day, when you’ve got your dress/suit... Prepare a little ‘display’. Can you find your baptism outfit or white garment? Put them beside the First Communion outfit. If parents have medals or prayer books or rosary beads from the past, add them too.

Say this prayer; *‘Dear Jesus, you are our constant companion. You were with us when we were baptised and you are with us every day. At First Communion you are with us in a special way. May our special friendship with you grow and grow and grow.’*

12

Write your own First Communion prayer. Not all at once, but over time. First, think of one thing you want to put in it, one line. Then add to it every so often. If you want, ask others in the family to write a line too, or to suggest an idea. If you have a family prayer space, you could keep the prayer there and take it out when you want to add to it.

When it’s complete, have a special occasion when you say the prayer.

13

Visit the church together. It is open during the day. It is a lovely quiet place to sit. Take time for that special prayer, where you’re still and silent, and you know that God is there with you. Light a candle and pray for special people and special intentions.

Visit again, as often as you like – you are always welcome; this is always your place!

14

Decide together as a family that you will say the grace before meals.

‘Bless us, O God, as we sit together. Bless the food we eat today. Bless the hands that made the food. Bless us, O God, Amen.’

Decide how often you will say it together.

And don’t forget to;

Keep in touch with the parish website updates – especially about the gospel of the week.