



# St. Thomas the Apostle Parish Family Catechetics Newsletter

November 2017

## Catechetics Office Staff

**Josette de Sousa**  
Catechetics Teacher

**Lisa Leahy**  
Catechetics Administrator

Thursdays 9434 1246

**Other times by  
appointment only**

**Parish Secretary:** Mary  
Gargan

**Catechetics office  
email:**  
[cagbn@vic.chariot.net.au](mailto:cagbn@vic.chariot.net.au)

**Deanery Website:**  
[www.diamondvalleydeanery.com](http://www.diamondvalleydeanery.com)

**Postal Address:** Family  
Catechetics Co-ordinator,  
St Thomas the Apostle  
Parish Centre,  
251 Diamond Creek  
Road,  
Greensborough North Vic  
3088



**Mass Times:** Saturday  
6:00pm Sunday 10:30am

**Dear Parents,**

Our second last newsletter for the year! Oh, what a month it has been.....lots happening here at the Catechetic centre, with our children getting confirmed, the other group of children preparing in all earnestness for their First Holy Communion coming up this month.....and Lisa and I trying to get stuff organised, in order that you can have your calendar for the following year, with all the sacramental dates.

## Confirmation Celebration

Congratulations to each of our 13 children here, who were confirmed by Monsignor Bennett at St Patrick's Cathedral, last Sunday. I am sure that you will all agree with me that it was a very memorable occasion indeed. It was more so for your precious children, as they confirmed their promise to follow Christ.

A very big and heartfelt thank you to the parents of each candidate and also to their individual sponsors, who will continue to guide and nurture them in their faith and life journey.

*On the day of Rehearsal at the Cathedral*



The celebration of the sacrament at the Cathedral was reverent and went very well. All this would not have been possible without your support and cooperation. A lot of effort goes into making this time very special and adhering to follow the new guidelines for Confirmation. And once again, I thank you for your wholehearted support and your role in preparing your children for this significant Sacrament.

*The newly confirmed candidates at St Patrick's Cathedral*



## **First Holy Communion**

As mentioned earlier here, we are now busy preparing for the Sacrament of First Holy Communion, for our children in the St Thomas Catechetics Program. Parents of these children would have received an email from us, outlining the information necessary for preparing your children for this beautiful sacrament. Please make it a point to go through it all with your child.



As Catholics, we know that the Holy Eucharist is the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Pope Francis has called it the "Sacrament of Love". And this is so true! Jesus comes to us in a unique way in the Eucharist. When He comes, we receive Him into our body and our soul. This is so beautiful and intimate. The child preparing for this sacrament is going to be profoundly united with Jesus in a way that they never have before.

Our next meeting for the First Holy Communion group is on 9th November at 6.30 pm. The last session before the administering of the sacrament, where we will go into the church to rehearse for the day, will be on 23rd. More information regarding this will follow. Parents, please take note of these dates.

## **First Year Group**

Our little ones (grade 2 students) are going well with their catechism and always amaze me with the questions they ask and little examples that they share in the group. They are truly a wonderful lot, so eager to learn and experience the faith. Having Mum or dad by their side makes it so much more comfortable for them. So thank you, dear parents, for your ongoing commitment to this program. This group will be ready for their Sacrament of Reconciliation, early next year. Lisa and I hope to have the calendar ready and emailed out to as soon as possible.

Also I would like you to know that from next year, there will be a few changes. In consultation with Father Steve Rigo and the Religion Coordinator of the school, it has been decided that from 2018, the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be administered to the children, while they are in grade 2. This will make it necessary for us, at the Catechetical Program to have this Sacrament twice next year, once for this year's group (which will most likely be in March or April) and the second time, for the new group that enrolls next year. From then on, Reconciliation will always be administered in grade 2. Thus, we would then be on par with St Thomas Primary School and consequently, we would be able to share common dates with them, such as Sacramental Information Nights for parents and Commitment Masses for the children. However, we will not be joining them for the Sacrament of First Holy Communion, which we will always try to celebrate on the feast of Christ the King, in November. This has been a long standing tradition and we are not about to change it. More information on this will follow before the end of this year.

Should you need any more information or clarifications, please do not hesitate to contact us, either through email or on the number displayed on the front page of this newsletter. We are generally in, on a Thursday.

Before I end, I would like to make a brief mention of the importance of the month of November, for us Catholics. This month is dedicated to the Souls in Purgatory, whose feast is celebrated on November 2nd. All Souls Day is a holy day set aside for honoring the dead. The Church has always taught us to pray for those who have gone into eternity. So this month, let us make some time to pray for our dear departed.

***Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.***

Another significant feast that we celebrate this month is the feast of Christ the King. On this Sunday, we celebrate the all-embracing authority of Christ as King and Lord of all things. It is celebrated on the final Sunday of Ordinary Time, the Sunday before Advent. This year, the feast falls on November 26th. It is on this day, that our catechism children here at St Thomas Parish, will be receiving their First Holy Communion. Let us keep them in our prayers.

Thank you, dear parents. Do enjoy this lovely month of November and all the fun and beauty of this season.

Regards,  
Josette de Souza