



BURLEIGH HEADS
CATHOLIC PARISH

Sacramental program for baptised children

*.....continuing the journey through the Sacraments
of
**Penance,
Confirmation
and
Eucharist***

*“There are three dimensions to Catholic faith life - **word, sacrament and community**. A sacrament is always a celebration in and of the parish faith community. A sacrament without its connection to the practising parish faith community makes no sense” Fr J. Speekman.*



**Policy
Program
Journey.....**

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Burleigh Heads Catholic Parish

Sacramental Policy

The Archdiocesan of Brisbane Sacramental Policy, May 1997:
“The preparation and the celebration of the sacraments for school-aged children are ideally family focused, parish based and school supported.”



Family Focused

The family is the basic unit of the parish faith community. Children are presented by their parents for initiation into the church at Baptism and the parent's role in fostering a child's life of faith is so crucial, that nothing else can replace it. That is why the responsibility for continuing the initiation of children into the church through the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist belongs first and foremost with the parents.

Indeed, it is within the family that faith is received and nurtured, hence the family is the primary focus for the parish's sacramental preparation. Therefore, times of sacramental preparation are moments of grace for nurturing the faith of not only the family but of the whole parish faith community.

Parish Based

The parish recognises the importance of the family as faith educators and sees the initiation process of a child as part of a life-long faith journey. It is within the parish faith community that children are welcomed; their initiation into the faith celebrated; and their journey into Christian maturity nourished and sustained.

Therefore families are encouraged to be full and active members of the parish faith community, particularly through the presence of parents and children at Mass.

Children's Liturgies of the Word and Children's Masses are some of the opportunities that the parish provides to support parents in the faith formation of their children.

The parish co-ordinates the activities involved in preparing the child for the sacraments of Penance, Confirmation and Eucharist. Working with the family, the sacramental team, the parish priest and the schools, the parish provides supportive **information sessions for parents**, followed by **family based workshops for the children**



School Supported

In schools, there is always the underlying respect for the primary role of parents in the faith education of their children, while at the same time offering support for them in that role.

The Parish Primary School provides support through the Religious Education Curriculum, while children who attend other schools, within the parish, receive catechesis through the Religious Education in State Schools Program or other Christian programs.



Burleigh Heads Catholic Parish

Sacramental Program

Eligibility:

Children who are baptised and aged about 7 years (the age of reason) or older are eligible to enrol. Families must be members of the Burleigh Heads Parish and live within the parish boundaries. It is at the discretion of the parish priest in consultation with the parents as to the readiness of the child to prepare for the sacraments.

Signing of mass cards provides an opportunity for the discussion of this. Parents of children with special needs or disabilities should approach the parish priest regarding the full initiation of their child.

First Phase- Two Parent Sessions:

Two sessions are provided in order to assist parents in supporting their children's faith development towards completing the initiation they began at Baptism. It is essential that all two sessions for parental involvement are attended by at least one close mentor for each child in order to progress to the second phase of the program.

The topics covered will provide an adult perspective on the church's current teaching in matters relating to the understanding and celebrating of the sacraments.

Second Phase- Four Family Workshops:

These workshops are organised in family groups and the catechists who conduct these workshops attend the same parish mass centre as the families. This enables ongoing support for the family before, during and after the sacramental program. Participation in all workshops is essential for the preparation of the children and their families.

- Baptism will be the focus for the first workshop and the children are prepared to be formally enrolled as candidates for the sacraments at the week-end parish liturgies in the mass centre they usually attend. This enables each parish faith community to be involved in and to nurture the faith development of the not only the child but the family.
- The Sacrament of Penance is prepared for and celebrated in a simple 2nd rite of celebration with other members of the family.
- Confirmation -Teaching about the Holy Spirit and the gifts and the practical preparation for the reception of this sacrament.
- Eucharist- Teaching about the sacrament and the reverence required in the reception of Holy Communion.

Reception of the Sacraments:

Archdiocesan policy states: **Confirmation is celebrated together with or just prior to the reception of Eucharist.**

In Burleigh Heads Parish all the candidates celebrate Confirmation with one of our Bishops or delegated priest (Canon Law 884) during the week prior to the children receiving Eucharist. Children receive their first Holy Communion with the support and welcome of their usual parish faith community on the following week-end.



The Sacramental Journey in Burleigh Heads Catholic Parish



Step 1: Baptism: This is the beginning.

When parents present their child for Baptism, they take the first step of the initiation of their child into a relationship with Jesus and with the parish faith community.

Step 2: The faith journey continues.

Through the presence of families at mass each Sunday, the child is formed in this relationship with Jesus and the parish faith community.

Step 3: Readiness for Confirmation and Eucharist

Once the child is 7 years (age of reason), he/she may be ready to confirm the faith the parents shared through Baptism and complete his/her initiation into the parish faith community through Eucharist. (Holy Communion)

Step 4: The Connecting Phase.

The parents contact the parish office about being part of the Parish's Sacramental Program. (Baptismal certificate or parish record will be required.) Families are required to fill in a mass card as a means of connecting with the parish priest, so he can get to know the family and discuss the child's readiness with the parents.

Step 5: Discussion Phase.

After several weeks of discussion, it is at the discretion of the parish priest in consultation with the parents as to the readiness of the child to be part of the Parish Sacramental Program. (There are two a year)

Step 6: Preparation Phase.

First phase-Two sessions for parental involvement in preparing children for the Sacraments. Attendance at both sessions is essential for the progression to the next part of the program.

Second phase- Four workshops to prepare children for the reception of the Sacraments are organised in family groups. All must be attended. (Week 2 of this program is the Sacrament of Penance which the child celebrates with the priest and his/her family.)

Step 7: Sacraments of Confirmation & Eucharist.

Confirmation is held as a group on a Friday night ideally with one of our Bishops, while each child receives first Holy Communion where he/she has been celebrating the week-end mass as part of the parish faith community.

