

# 1. We are Part of One Family, God's Family



If you are reading this book, it is likely that a child in your family is preparing to celebrate his/her First Holy Communion, or First Eucharist. Congratulations! This is a special and important time for you and your child. It is another step on the journey that you began on the day that you presented him/her for the sacrament of Baptism. It was then that you promised to be your child's 'first and best' teacher in the ways of faith. By helping him/her to prepare for First Holy Communion, you are doing just that.

This book is divided into eight parts, each of which focuses on a different aspect of the Mass. Each part of the book ends with a 'PJ Prayer' to be said before bed. We include this so that children learn that Mass is not the only place where they can pray, or talk to God. Certain Mass responses are highlighted throughout the book, and a full list of prayers for the Mass is given at the end.

It is our hope that this book will help you to understand the celebration of the Mass better yourself, and in doing so to be more confident in explaining it to your child. However, the *best* way to teach children about the Mass is to celebrate it with them, as a family, in the context of your own parish community. Our aim is not just to teach children what happens at Mass, it is to help them to grow in understanding and appreciation for it, so that they will be better able to participate in it.

## **A Prayer for Parents and Families**

Loving God,

We thank you for the gift of our faith.

Thank you for the generations gone before us, who passed on their faith to us.

Help us to encourage \_\_\_\_\_ (*your child's name*) in his/her journey of faith, especially during this special time of preparation for First Communion.

We all have a family that we belong to, but every family is different. **Who is in your family?**

Stick a photograph of your family here, or draw a picture.



We are also part of a much bigger family. This family is made up of millions and millions of people spread all over the world. Can you guess what family this is? It's **God's family!** God is like the father or mother of our big family, and we are all God's children – like brothers and sisters of one another.

You became part of God's family on the day you were **baptised**. Find out about this day:

Who was there on the day of your Baptism?

Who chose your name, or names, and why?

Who were chosen to be your godparents?

Why were they chosen as your godparents?

As children of God, and because God loves each one of us, we can always talk to him. **The word we use for talking to God is 'praying'**. We pray to God to thank him for all the things we have, to ask for his help and to ask him to bless other people.

**We can pray to God anywhere and at any time.** We can use our own words or we can say the prayers we have learned at home and in school, which other people also pray. Praying to God helps us to get to know God better and to feel his great love for us.



## PJ Prayer

Loving God,  
Thank you for my family.  
Help us to take care of one other, and to show  
our love for one another.  
Keep us all safe through the night.  
Amen.