

Coming into Full Communion

Activity & Conversation Companion

For baptised Christians preparing for Reception

USE BESIDE THE PREPARATION BOOK

Use with Coming into Full Communion A Catholic Preparation Book for Baptised Christians. The book supplies the Catholic teaching. This companion helps a mentor or sponsor begin with the person, make the teaching concrete and accompany a free, sincere response.

THE METHOD

Start with the person

Do something concrete

Open the preparation book

Talk honestly

Check the central truth

Pray and act

A BAPTISM ALREADY RECEIVED

A candidate for Reception is already baptised. Valid Baptism is never repeated. Confession normally precedes Reception; Confirmation, when needed, and Holy Communion ordinarily follow within the celebration. The priest establishes the correct pathway.

St Mary's • St John Bosco • St Edward's Parish

Mentor • Sponsor • Priest edition

cathparishmje.co.uk

How to use this guide

ACCOMPANY AN EXISTING CHRISTIAN LIFE

Begin with gratitude for the faith, prayer and Christian witness already received. Full communion brings a real acceptance of Catholic faith, sacramental life and communion with the Church's pastors.

For each conversation

1. Make the Sign of the Cross. Ask the opening question and listen before explaining.
2. Try the activity together. All cards can be handwritten as you meet; every activity can also be spoken.
3. Open the matching conversation in the preparation book. Read REMEMBER and the teaching slowly, pausing for the candidate's questions.
4. Talk together. Check the central truth, then use THE ESSENTIALS in the book to clarify understanding. Ask for ordinary words rather than a recitation.
5. Pray the printed prayer and choose one realistic action. Return to it when you next meet.
6. Repeat, combine or divide conversations as needed. Twelve conversations are not twelve compulsory meetings; progress follows readiness.

Simple materials

The preparation book, this guide, paper and a pen are enough. A crucifix or church visit may help, but is optional. No prepared talk, craft kit, separate workbook or internet search is required.

FOR THE MENTOR

You listen, pray, explain simply, introduce parish life and help the candidate bring questions to the priest. You do not decide canonical matters or certify readiness. Use the preparation book for the teaching; seek help when a question needs more than you can give.

An opening conversation

Use this before beginning the twelve conversations. Let the candidate speak about their own Christian life and their present hopes.

Listen to the person

1. “What has helped you know and follow Jesus so far?”
2. “What draws you towards full communion with the Catholic Church?”
3. “What do you most want to understand, and what gives you concern?”
4. “Is this a decision you freely wish to explore?”

ESTABLISH THE CORRECT PATHWAY

Use Appendix A with the priest early. Clarify evidence of Baptism, any previous Catholic status, Confirmation or chrismation, Eastern Christian background and all marriage history. The priest investigates uncertainty and directs the proper route. A mentor does not decide validity.

Make accompaniment possible

Agree how to meet and communicate. Ask about language, reading, disability, work and caring responsibilities. Introduce the candidate to parish people and help them attend Sunday Mass, taking part in prayer without normally receiving Communion before Reception.

BEGIN WITH ONE REAL QUESTION

Write or say the candidate’s main question and one next step. Allow the question to develop. Do not promise a Reception date because a set of pages can be completed.

Sensitive family matters and personal sins belong in a confidential conversation with the priest, not in a group or mentor’s record. Establish suitable sponsor support with parish guidance.

The Call to Full Communion

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Connect gratitude for Baptism with a free desire for full Catholic communion.

QUICK PREP

Paper with two headings: GIFTS RECEIVED and FULL COMMUNION.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “What has God already given you in your Christian life, and what now draws you towards the Catholic Church?”

DO SOMETHING

Receiving a gift and taking a step

1. Under GIFTS RECEIVED, name Baptism, faith in Jesus, Scripture, prayer or Christian witness. Give thanks without evaluating every earlier experience.
2. Under FULL COMMUNION, write FAITH, SACRAMENTS and PASTORS. Read how the book explains these three bonds.
3. Ask what becoming Catholic would change in belief, worship and parish belonging. Identify one genuine hope and one question.
4. Write “One Baptism”. Explain that Reception honours the Baptism already received; it is a new step into full communion, not another Baptism.

NOW OPEN THE PREPARATION BOOK

Read Conversation 1. Use Appendix E if the candidate wonders whether Reception requires dismissing every grace received before.

The Call to Full Communion

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “What are you moving towards in becoming Catholic?”
- “What would help you make this decision freely and sincerely?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Will valid Baptism be repeated? No. It is received only once.

What is full communion? Visible unity in Catholic faith, sacramental life and communion with the Church’s pastors.

Must the decision be free? Yes. No one should be pressured into a profession of faith.

USE THE BOOK’S QUESTIONS

Use THE ESSENTIALS in the matching conversation. Choose the questions that best reveal understanding; let the candidate answer in their own words before checking the book.

PRAY TOGETHER

Lord Jesus, thank you for the grace of my Baptism and for everyone who helped me follow you. Deepen my faith and lead me freely into the unity you desire. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Name three graces already received and one reason you feel drawn towards full Catholic communion.

FOR THE MENTOR

Listen for the person’s own desire. Gratitude for earlier Christian life and acceptance of the fullness of Catholic faith belong together. Do not ask the candidate to disparage family or former fellow Christians.

Scripture Tradition and the Magisterium

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Show how the one apostolic faith is handed on and faithfully interpreted.

QUICK PREP

Three handwritten cards: SCRIPTURE, TRADITION, MAGISTERIUM.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “If sincere Christians interpret the same biblical passage differently, how can the Church remain one in truth?”

DO SOMETHING

A message received and handed on

1. Place SCRIPTURE: the inspired written Word of God. Ask what the candidate already values about the Bible.
2. Add TRADITION: the living transmission of the apostolic faith. Distinguish this from ordinary customs that may change.
3. Add MAGISTERIUM: the Pope and bishops in communion with him guard and interpret what was received. They serve God’s Word.
4. Use this case: two readers claim that one passage proves opposite teachings. Read the book’s explanation and ask why private certainty alone does not resolve the disagreement.

NOW OPEN THE PREPARATION BOOK

Read Conversation 2, especially the common source of Scripture and Tradition. Use Appendix E on “Bible alone” if helpful.

Scripture Tradition and the Magisterium

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “What is the difference between Apostolic Tradition and a parish custom?”
- “What real question about Catholic teaching authority needs further explanation?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Is Scripture inspired? Yes. It is God’s written Word.

Are Scripture and Tradition rivals? No. They hand on the one apostolic faith together.

Is the Magisterium above God’s Word? No. It serves, guards and authentically interprets it.

USE THE BOOK’S QUESTIONS

Use THE ESSENTIALS in the matching conversation. Choose the questions that best reveal understanding; let the candidate answer in their own words before checking the book.

PRAY TOGETHER

Holy Spirit, give me love for Scripture and humility before God’s Word. Help me receive the apostolic faith faithfully and seek its meaning honestly. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Reread the REMEMBER paragraph in Conversation 2 and bring one actual question about Scripture, Tradition or authority.

FOR THE MENTOR

Do not set Scripture against the Church or describe Tradition as permission to invent doctrine. Let the candidate name a difficulty precisely. Use the book’s explanation before introducing further material.

The Creed and the Mystery of Salvation

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Connect the Creed with the saving work of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

QUICK PREP

The Apostles' Creed printed at the end of this guide; a pen, optional.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “Which part of the Creed is familiar to you, and which would you like to understand more deeply?”

DO SOMETHING

The faith I can explain

1. Read the printed Creed slowly. Pause at the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit rather than treating it as a memory exercise.
2. Choose one familiar phrase and one difficult phrase. Let the candidate explain what each seems to mean before opening Conversation 3.
3. Follow the movement: creation, human sin, the Son's Incarnation, Cross and Resurrection, the Spirit's work and eternal life.
4. Ask what Christian hope would lose if the Resurrection meant only that Jesus' ideas survived. Keep bodily Resurrection and our need for grace clear.

NOW OPEN THE PREPARATION BOOK

Read Conversation 3. Use the Creed here for learning and prayer; the approved rite supplies the actual profession used at Reception.

The Creed and the Mystery of Salvation

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “Why do we need salvation rather than only moral improvement?”
- “How does belief in the Resurrection change the way we face death?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Who is God? One God in three divine Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Who is Jesus? The eternal Son made man, true God and true man.

What do Christians hope for? Christ’s return, the resurrection of the body and eternal life with God.

USE THE BOOK’S QUESTIONS

Use THE ESSENTIALS in the matching conversation. Choose the questions that best reveal understanding; let the candidate answer in their own words before checking the book.

PRAY TOGETHER

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, deepen the faith I received at Baptism. Help me understand your saving work and live by the truth I profess. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Pray the printed Creed slowly on three occasions. Bring one phrase you cannot yet explain to the next conversation.

FOR THE MENTOR

A candidate may already know the Creed well. Explore understanding without starting from nothing. Keep one God and three Persons, Christ’s divinity and humanity, and real bodily Resurrection precise; avoid misleading analogies.

The Church Christ Founded

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Make the Church's spiritual life, visible unity and apostolic authority concrete.

QUICK PREP

Four cards: ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC, APOSTOLIC.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: "What do you think Christ intended his Church to be, and how would that be visible?"

DO SOMETHING

Four marks of one Church

1. Arrange the cards. Use Conversation 4 to give a brief meaning for each: unity, Christ's holiness, fullness and universal mission, apostolic faith and succession.
2. Add PARISH, BISHOP and POPE below them. Trace how a local parish belongs to the wider Church in communion.
3. Use this case: a Catholic leader behaves badly. Ask why wrongdoing must be confronted without concluding that Christ's gifts have disappeared.
4. Read the paragraph about the Pope. Distinguish the ministry of unity and defined conditions of infallibility from personal opinions or freedom from sin.

NOW OPEN THE PREPARATION BOOK

Read Conversation 4 and, where useful, Appendix E on the Pope and legitimate differences of opinion.

The Church Christ Founded

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “Why does visible unity matter alongside personal faith?”
- “What concern about the Church’s authority or history needs an honest conversation?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

What are the four marks? One, holy, catholic and apostolic.

Who is the Church’s Head? Jesus Christ.

Is every papal statement infallible? No. Infallibility has defined conditions.

USE THE BOOK’S QUESTIONS

Use THE ESSENTIALS in the matching conversation. Choose the questions that best reveal understanding; let the candidate answer in their own words before checking the book.

PRAY TOGETHER

Lord Jesus, give me love for your Church, fidelity to the apostolic faith and humility towards those entrusted with her care. Help us become holy in your grace. Amen.

THIS WEEK

At Sunday Mass, listen for prayer for the Pope and diocesan bishop. Ask how the parish shares in the wider Church.

FOR THE MENTOR

Never excuse wrongdoing or imply that every opinion of a Church leader is doctrine. Help the candidate understand the Church’s actual claim. Listen seriously to painful experiences and involve appropriate parish support when needed.

Mary the Saints and the Communion of Saints

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Distinguish adoration from veneration and explain intercession and prayer for the dead.

QUICK PREP

Two headings: GOD ALONE and PRAY FOR US. No image is required.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “Which Catholic belief about Mary, saints or prayer for the dead has been hardest for you, and why?”

DO SOMETHING

One communion in Christ

1. Under GOD ALONE, write ADORATION. Under PRAY FOR US, name asking another Christian to pray. Explain that every intercession depends on Christ.
2. Read Conversation 5 on asking saints in heaven to intercede. Ask how their being alive in Christ matters.
3. Read Mary’s privileges in the book: Mother of God, Immaculate Conception, ever Virgin and Assumption. Connect each with Christ and grace; Mary remains a creature.
4. Use this distinction: purgatory is purification of someone already in God’s friendship, not a second chance after rejecting him. Pray briefly for someone who has died.

NOW OPEN THE PREPARATION BOOK

Read Conversation 5. Use Appendix E on Christ’s mediation, images and private revelation if those are the candidate’s actual questions.

Mary the Saints and the Communion of Saints

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “How does honouring Mary point towards the truth about Jesus?”
- “What is the difference between asking a saint’s prayer and adoring God?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Whom do Catholics adore? God alone.

Why is Mary Mother of God? The Son she bore according to his humanity is truly God.

What is purgatory? The final purification of those who die in God’s grace and friendship.

USE THE BOOK’S QUESTIONS

Use THE ESSENTIALS in the matching conversation. Choose the questions that best reveal understanding; let the candidate answer in their own words before checking the book.

PRAY TOGETHER

Lord Jesus, unite us in your love with all who belong to you. Mary, Mother of God, and all the saints, pray that we may persevere in faith and reach eternal life. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Reread one of Mary’s privileges in Conversation 5. Explain how it concerns Christ and his grace, then pray for someone who has died.

FOR THE MENTOR

Do not insist on a favourite private devotion or dismiss a real concern as prejudice. Explain Catholic distinctions carefully. Never pronounce on the eternal state of a particular deceased person.

Grace and the Seven Sacraments

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Explain sacraments as Christ's effective gifts and clarify the candidate's sacramental history.

QUICK PREP

Seven handwritten cards using the sacrament names below.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: "What changes when a sacrament is understood as something Christ does, rather than only something we express?"

DO SOMETHING

Gifts for a whole Christian life

1. Arrange the cards in three groups: INITIATION: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist; HEALING: Penance, Anointing of the Sick; SERVICE OF COMMUNION: Holy Orders, Matrimony.
2. Choose Baptism. Explain the visible sign, new birth, forgiveness and permanent character. Thank God for the candidate's Baptism already received.
3. Choose Confirmation. Read how the Holy Spirit strengthens baptismal grace and leaves a permanent seal. Valid Confirmation or chrismation is not repeated.
4. Name what is known about earlier sacraments and what needs the priest's investigation. The activity records questions; it does not establish validity.

NOW OPEN THE PREPARATION BOOK

Read Conversation 6 and Appendix A. The priest determines what Confirmation is required from the person's actual sacramental history.

Grace and the Seven Sacraments

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “Why are sacraments more than reminders?”
- “Which sacramental gift do you most want to understand or receive?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

How many sacraments are there? Seven.

What do they do? Signify and truly communicate Christ’s grace.

Can valid Baptism or Confirmation be repeated? No. Each gives a permanent sacramental character.

USE THE BOOK’S QUESTIONS

Use THE ESSENTIALS in the matching conversation. Choose the questions that best reveal understanding; let the candidate answer in their own words before checking the book.

PRAY TOGETHER

Lord Jesus, thank you for the sacramental life of your Church. Make me receptive to your grace and help me receive your gifts with faith and gratitude. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Learn the seven names and their three groups. Give the priest any missing information about Baptism, Confirmation or chrismation.

FOR THE MENTOR

Never assume that all earlier sacraments are invalid. Eastern Christians need particular attention to valid sacraments and their proper ecclesial heritage. Leave reception procedure, Church membership and faculties to the priest and competent guidance.

The Eucharist and the Holy Mass

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Connect the Real Presence, Christ's one sacrifice and visible communion with the Church.

QUICK PREP

A crucifix, optional; three headings: PRESENCE, SACRIFICE, COMMUNION.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: "What do you understand Catholics to believe happens at Mass?"

DO SOMETHING

What Christ gives at Mass

1. Under PRESENCE, read how the whole substance of bread and wine becomes Christ's Body and Blood while the appearances remain: transubstantiation.
2. Under SACRIFICE, place the crucifix if available. Explain that Christ's one sacrifice is made sacramentally present; he is not crucified again.
3. Under COMMUNION, name union with Christ and visible unity in Catholic faith, sacramental life and pastors. Discuss why the candidate normally waits until Reception.
4. Name ways to take part now: hear the Word, pray, offer one's life with Christ and give thanks. Choose one intention for the next Sunday Mass.

NOW OPEN THE PREPARATION BOOK

Read Conversation 7. Keep sacrifice, Real Presence and ecclesial communion together. Use Appendix E on the Mass and waiting for Communion.

The Eucharist and the Holy Mass

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “Why is Communion more than a private expression of devotion?”
- “How can you unite your life to Christ’s offering while preparing for Reception?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Who is present in the Eucharist? Jesus Christ, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity.

Does Christ die again at Mass? No. His one sacrifice is made sacramentally present.

What does Holy Communion express? Union with Christ and visible communion with his Church.

USE THE BOOK’S QUESTIONS

Use THE ESSENTIALS in the matching conversation. Choose the questions that best reveal understanding; let the candidate answer in their own words before checking the book.

PRAY TOGETHER

Jesus, Bread of Life, increase my faith in your Real Presence. Prepare me to receive you worthily and to offer my life with your one perfect sacrifice. Amen.

THIS WEEK

At Sunday Mass, pay attention to the Eucharistic Prayer. Afterwards name one thing you understood about sacrifice, presence or communion.

FOR THE MENTOR

Listen for belief beyond “special bread” or a merely symbolic meal. Use the book’s precise explanation; do not imitate consecration. Support prayerful participation while referring any exceptional sacramental question to the priest.

Conversion and the Sacrament of Penance

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Prepare the baptised candidate peacefully for Confession before Reception.

QUICK PREP

Appendix B; six headings: BEGIN, CONFESS, LISTEN, CONTRITION, ABSOLUTION, PENANCE.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “What do you hope for, or worry about, when you think of meeting Christ in Confession?”

DO SOMETHING

A calm walk through Confession

1. Put the headings in order using Appendix B. Explain examination of conscience, sorrow for sin and a genuine intention to change with God’s help.
2. Practise this opening: “I am preparing to be received into full communion, and this is my first Catholic Confession.” The priest will guide the person.
3. Use an invented example, such as a person deliberately cheating another. Discuss speaking simply and making restitution; never practise with the candidate’s actual sins.
4. Read the Act of Contrition printed here. Explain absolution and penance without acting as a confessor. Arrange private preparation and an appointment with the priest.

NOW OPEN THE PREPARATION BOOK

Read Conversation 8 and Appendix B. Because the candidate is baptised, Confession normally belongs before Reception.

Conversion and the Sacrament of Penance

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “How is a genuine intention to change different from promising never to fail again?”
- “What would help you approach the sacrament with trust?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

What is contrition? Sorrow for sin with a real intention to turn away from it.

What does absolution do? Christ forgives through the priest and reconciles the penitent with the Church.

Should Confession normally precede Reception? Yes. The priest prepares and arranges it.

USE THE BOOK'S QUESTIONS

Use THE ESSENTIALS in the matching conversation. Choose the questions that best reveal understanding; let the candidate answer in their own words before checking the book.

PRAY TOGETHER

Merciful Father, give me honest sorrow for sin and confidence in your mercy. Help me make a good Confession and begin again in your grace. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Use Appendix B privately for a peaceful examination of conscience. Arrange Confession with the priest rather than leaving it until the last moment.

FOR THE MENTOR

Do not ask to hear, record or review the candidate's sins. The priest alone receives sacramental Confession. Explain the absolute seal and avoid anxious demands for perfect recall. Personal or complex concerns should be taken privately to him.

The Moral Life Freedom Conscience and Virtue

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Connect God's initiating grace with free cooperation, formed conscience and virtue.

QUICK PREP

Three headings: GIFT, RESPONSE, FRUIT.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: "What is the difference between following conscience and forming conscience?"

DO SOMETHING

Grace becoming a changed life

1. Under GIFT, name God's grace. Under RESPONSE, name free cooperation. Under FRUIT, name love, obedience and good works made possible by grace.
2. Use this case: a person says an unfair business practice is acceptable because they feel no guilt. Ask what truth must be considered beyond the feeling.
3. Read the book's definition of conscience. Name ways to form it: Scripture, prayer, truth and the Church's teaching.
4. Choose a virtue for the case: prudence, justice, fortitude or temperance. Discuss one habit that could help the person act rightly. Add faith, hope and charity as the theological virtues.

NOW OPEN THE PREPARATION BOOK

Read Conversation 9 and Appendix E on faith and works. Keep grace first and the real transformation of life clear.

The Moral Life Freedom Conscience and Virtue

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “Why are good works the fruit of grace rather than a purchase of God’s love?”
- “What is one way you can form conscience more carefully?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Do we earn salvation independently of grace? No. Salvation is God’s gift; living faith bears fruit in love.

What is conscience? A judgement of reason about the moral quality of a concrete act.

Must conscience be formed? Yes. We must seek and receive the truth.

USE THE BOOK’S QUESTIONS

Use THE ESSENTIALS in the matching conversation. Choose the questions that best reveal understanding; let the candidate answer in their own words before checking the book.

PRAY TOGETHER

Lord Jesus, form my conscience in truth. Heal my freedom by your grace and teach me a faith that becomes love, obedience and good works. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Choose one ordinary decision. Ask which virtue named here could help you act rightly, then take one practical step with God’s help.

FOR THE MENTOR

Respect the candidate’s freedom while explaining the duty to seek truth. Do not turn sincerity into permission to invent morality. When a complex personal case arises, help the person seek confidential pastoral guidance.

The Moral Life Love in Concrete Life

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Make the dignity of the person and the demands of Catholic moral teaching practical.

QUICK PREP

Paper with headings: LIFE, MARRIAGE, TRUTH, JUSTICE, CHARITY.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “Which Catholic moral teaching most needs explanation for you, and what good does the Church say it protects?”

DO SOMETHING

The good that love protects

1. Use a case: a family treats a dependent elderly relative as a burden. Discuss dignity, care and why life must never be treated as disposable.
2. Use a case: an employer knowingly withholds a worker’s pay. Discuss justice and the concrete obligations of love.
3. Read the whole of Conversation 10, including chastity, marriage, care for life, truth, work and the common good. Do not omit a difficult area.
4. Under one heading, name a teaching that needs further discussion and one act of charity that can begin now. The candidate need not reveal private details.

NOW OPEN THE PREPARATION BOOK

Read Conversation 10. Bring marriage history or any personal situation affecting sacramental life to the priest early, using Appendix A.

The Moral Life Love in Concrete Life

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “Why does love require more than strong feelings?”
- “How can we explain a demanding teaching while showing charity towards every person?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Why protect human life? Every person has God-given dignity, from conception to natural death.

What is Christian marriage? A lifelong, exclusive covenant of a man and a woman, ordered to their good and the gift and education of children.

What is the highest moral virtue? Charity: love of God and neighbour for God’s sake.

USE THE BOOK’S QUESTIONS

Use THE ESSENTIALS in the matching conversation. Choose the questions that best reveal understanding; let the candidate answer in their own words before checking the book.

PRAY TOGETHER

God of truth and mercy, teach me to love what is good. Give me courage where conversion is demanding and generous charity towards every person. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Bring one genuine moral question to the mentor or priest and choose one concrete act of care or justice.

FOR THE MENTOR

Let the candidate ask the real question. Explain reasons as well as duties. A mentor does not resolve a marriage bond or demand personal disclosure. Keep compassion, the fullness of Catholic teaching and appropriate pastoral referral together.

Prayer and the Ordinary Catholic Life

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Build a sustainable pattern of worship, prayer, parish belonging and charity.

QUICK PREP

A diary or paper; the basic prayers printed at the end of this guide.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “What simple rhythm of prayer and Sunday worship could still be part of your life five years from now?”

DO SOMETHING

A rule that can be lived

1. Write DAILY, SUNDAY, REGULARLY and PARISH. Under DAILY, choose one of the printed prayers and a short time for morning or evening prayer.
2. Under SUNDAY, plan Mass and any practical help needed. During preparation, participate prayerfully while normally waiting until Reception for Communion.
3. Under REGULARLY, plan continuing formation and Confession as arranged with the priest. Under PARISH, name a person to know and a way to serve.
4. Read the book on the liturgical year, sacramentals and devotions. Choose a helpful devotion without allowing it to replace Mass or become a burdensome private programme.

NOW OPEN THE PREPARATION BOOK

Read Conversation 11 and Appendix G. Catholic formation and conversion continue after Reception.

Prayer and the Ordinary Catholic Life

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “What existing prayer habit can you carry into Catholic life?”
- “What support would help this simple rule survive work, tiredness or family demands?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

What is the weekly centre? Sunday Mass.

Do devotions replace the liturgy or sacraments? No. They support Catholic life.

Does formation finish at Reception? No. Learning, conversion and service continue.

USE THE BOOK’S QUESTIONS

Use THE ESSENTIALS in the matching conversation. Choose the questions that best reveal understanding; let the candidate answer in their own words before checking the book.

PRAY TOGETHER

Father, teach me to pray. Make Sunday worship the anchor of my life and help me remain faithful in ordinary work, relationships and service. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Begin the small rule you have chosen. Pray one printed prayer daily and keep your plan for Sunday Mass.

FOR THE MENTOR

Adapt to capacity and circumstances without losing the substance of Catholic life. Teach the Church’s actual obligations; do not impose personal devotional tastes. Arrange parish relationships that extend beyond meetings with the priest.

Profession Reception Confirmation and Eucharist

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Prepare a sincere profession and calm participation in Reception and the sacraments.

QUICK PREP

Appendix C; four cards: PROFESSION, RECEPTION, CONFIRMATION IF NEEDED, EUCHARIST.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “Can you freely and sincerely intend to believe and live as a Catholic Christian? What still needs attention?”

DO SOMETHING

Words I can mean and gifts I will receive

1. Read the profession: “I believe and profess all that the holy Catholic Church believes, teaches, and proclaims to be revealed by God.” Ask what its words mean.
2. Arrange the cards using Appendix C. Explain Reception, Confirmation when needed and sharing the Eucharist in full communion. No valid Baptism is repeated.
3. Practise only the responses and movements directed by the priest. Rehearse “Amen” before Communion without using a practice host or imitating sacramental actions.
4. Name an unresolved question to bring to the priest, confirm practical arrangements and put a meeting after Reception in the diary. Preparation follows sincere readiness, not pressure to meet a date.

NOW OPEN THE PREPARATION BOOK

Read Conversation 12 and Appendices C and F. The approved rite and the priest govern the profession, actual celebration and readiness.

Profession Reception Confirmation and Eucharist

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “How is a question seeking understanding different from a teaching you knowingly reject?”
- “What will help you continue Catholic life after the celebration?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

What faith do you profess? The Catholic faith as a whole, freely and sincerely.

What normally follows? Reception, Confirmation if needed, and sharing fully in the Eucharist.

Who judges readiness? The priest, following the Church’s rite, law and diocesan directions.

USE THE BOOK’S QUESTIONS

Use THE ESSENTIALS in the matching conversation. Choose the questions that best reveal understanding; let the candidate answer in their own words before checking the book.

PRAY TOGETHER

Lord Jesus, give me faith to profess your truth freely, humility to keep learning and charity to live in full communion with your Church. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Use Appendix F with the priest. Name any point you cannot yet profess sincerely and confirm how accompaniment will continue afterwards.

FOR THE MENTOR

Do not rehearse past a difficulty the candidate cannot honestly resolve. Reception need not await a fixed annual course or treat the person as a catechumen. The priest establishes the appropriate rite and timing and clarifies previous Confirmation or Eastern chrismation.

The journey at a glance

Use this to explain the pathway, not to promise a timetable. The priest directs particular circumstances and the approved celebration.

Baptism and pastoral circumstances

Use Appendix A early. Establish Baptism, previous Catholic status, Confirmation or chrismation, Eastern Christian background, marriage history and participation needs.

Formation and belonging

Work through the conversations at the person's pace. Join Sunday Mass, pray, ask honest questions and develop parish relationships.

Readiness and free profession

Use Appendix F with the priest. Seek sufficient understanding and sincere acceptance of Catholic faith, with a real intention to live it.

Sacrament of Penance

Prepare privately and normally celebrate Confession before Reception. Use Appendix B and the priest's guidance.

Reception and sacramental communion

Make the approved profession. Reception is followed by Confirmation if needed and participation in the Eucharist.

Continuing Catholic life

Maintain Sunday Mass, prayer, Confession, charity, formation and parish belonging. Arrange accompaniment after Reception.

A DISTINCT PATHWAY

The already baptised candidate is not a catechumen. Do not repeat valid Baptism or add rites proper to the unbaptised. Reception may take place at Easter or another suitable time as the priest directs.

Readiness in faith and freedom

Use with Appendix F for a calm conversation. These prompts help the mentor accompany discernment; they do not certify readiness.

FREE INTENTION

The person freely seeks full communion and understands that this is a real commitment to Catholic faith and life.

CATHOLIC FAITH

The person understands the central truths according to capacity and background and can sincerely accept the Catholic faith as a whole.

AUTHORITY

Scripture, Apostolic Tradition and the Magisterium are understood sufficiently for a free acceptance of the Church's teaching authority.

REAL QUESTIONS

Difficulties are named honestly. Questions seeking understanding are welcomed; known rejection of a doctrine to be professed needs attention before Reception.

CONVERSION

The person intends to live Catholic moral teaching, seeks grace and is honest about areas requiring conversion or pastoral help.

WHEN MORE TIME IS NEEDED

Name the teaching clearly, read what the Church actually means and continue accompaniment. Do not force a date or encourage a profession made with a reservation the person knows they cannot accept.

Readiness in sacramental life

THE PATHWAY IS ESTABLISHED

The priest has clarified Baptism, previous Catholic status, Eastern Christian background and what Confirmation is required.

PASTORAL MATTERS

Marriage history and other canonical matters affecting sacramental life have been discussed with the priest and appropriately addressed.

SACRAMENTAL FAITH

The candidate understands Baptism, Confirmation, Penance, the Eucharist and the Mass in ordinary words according to capacity.

PENANCE

The person is prepared for Confession and normally celebrates it before Reception, with suitable private guidance.

PRACTICE AND SUPPORT

Sunday Mass, prayer and parish belonging are developing. Suitable sponsor or Catholic support and any practical adaptations are arranged.

CONTINUING LIFE

There is a realistic plan for Catholic life and accompaniment after Reception, including a further meeting.

Readiness is not perfect memory, a polished testimony or a claim never to sin again. The priest makes the final pastoral judgement following the approved rite, Church law and diocesan direction.

Practical preparation with the mentor

Confession

Read Appendix B privately. Practise the opening and the Act of Contrition, using only invented cases for discussion. The priest will help with the real confession. A mentor never asks for an account of what was confessed.

Profession and movements

Read Appendix C with the priest. Make sure the candidate understands the profession and knows where to stand with the sponsor. Practise the spoken responses and movements only; leave sacramental actions to the real celebration.

Receiving Holy Communion

Practise the response “Amen” and the approved parish manner of receiving. The Sacred Host is consumed immediately. The ordinary Eucharistic fast is one hour before receiving Communion, except water and medicine; ask the priest about illness or any relevant exemption.

Prepare for worthy reception in a state of grace. Anyone conscious of mortal sin should normally receive sacramental absolution before Communion. Refer questions about swallowing, gluten, mobility or other adaptations to the priest early.

A PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Lord Jesus, thank you for giving yourself to me. Keep me close to you, strengthen me in charity and make my life a faithful offering to the Father. Amen.

CONFIRM THE NEXT MEETING

Before the celebration, agree when the mentor and newly received Catholic will meet again. Give continuing parish support a person, a place and a practical next step.

The Apostles' Creed

Use for learning and prayer alongside Conversation 3. The approved rite supplies the profession and responses used at Reception.

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God
the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge
the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.

Pray with understanding

Pause where a phrase needs attention. “He descended into hell” here refers to Christ’s descent to the realm of the dead. Bring a real question to the mentor or priest rather than hiding it.

Prayers for ordinary life

The Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Our Father

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

The Glory Be

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.

An Act of Contrition

O my God, because you are so good, I am very sorry that I have sinned against you, and by the help of your grace I will not sin again. Amen.

A morning offering

Father, I offer you this day through Jesus Christ. Guide my words, work and choices. Help me love you and serve my neighbour. Amen.

An evening prayer

Father, thank you for your gifts today. Forgive my failures, show me how to begin again and keep me in your peace. Amen.

After Reception

Use Appendix G with the newly received Catholic. Ask how the sacraments and parish belonging are shaping ordinary life; do not require a dramatic emotional experience.

Sunday and daily prayer

Keep Sunday Mass at the centre. Continue a small, faithful pattern of prayer and Scripture, supported by the parish and the printed prayers here.

Mercy and conversion

Receive Confession regularly, repair harm where possible and begin again when needed. Seek guidance about worthy Communion rather than withdrawing into anxiety.

Belonging and service

Name parish people who can offer friendship and one realistic way to serve. Include family, work, money and care for the vulnerable in Christian charity.

Learning and Christian unity

Continue formation and bring new questions. Pray for other Christians and speak with gratitude and charity about earlier Christian life.

PRAY AFTER RECEPTION

Lord Jesus Christ, thank you for leading me into the full communion of your Church. Keep me faithful in the Eucharist, humble in Confession, attentive to your Word and generous in charity. Make my life a witness to your unity and holiness. Amen.

FOR THE MENTOR

Keep the next meeting. Review one grace, one question and one practical need. Accompaniment continues through real relationships, prayer and ordinary Catholic life.

Final word for the mentor

Let the candidate bring a real question. Use the activity to make the teaching concrete, then open the preparation book for the Catholic answer. Listen for understanding that is becoming faith, prayer and a changed life.

KEEP THE PERSON IN VIEW

Welcome what is already known and lived. Explain what needs clarification, recognise sincere growth and give time for questions. Preparation should help the candidate make a profession that is freely and honestly meant.

KEEP THE NEXT STEP CONCRETE

End with one action the person can realistically take: a prayer, a conversation with the priest, Sunday Mass, a work of charity or a question to revisit. Begin the next meeting by asking how it went.

CONTINUE THE RELATIONSHIP

After Reception, help the new Catholic belong to the parish, grow in sacramental life and remain open to learning. Friendship, prayer and steady encouragement matter beyond the celebration.

When a question needs help

Use the preparation book to establish what the Church teaches. Bring an unresolved doctrinal difficulty to the priest. Canonical questions, personal marriage circumstances and private sins belong with him in an appropriate confidential setting.

St Mary's • St John Bosco • St Edward's Parish
cathparishmje.co.uk

References for the priest and mentor

This guide follows the twelve conversations of *Coming into Full Communion A Catholic Preparation Book for Baptised Christians*. Use that book for the full teaching and its appendices for particular questions.

Appendix A

Baptism, previous Catholic status, Confirmation or chrismation, Eastern Christian background, marriage history and participation needs.

Appendices B and C

Private preparation for Confession and the outline of Reception.

Appendices D and E

Central truths to understand and common questions from other Christian traditions.

Appendices F and G

Readiness and a simple rule of continuing Catholic life.

Appendix H

Primary sources, ecclesial authority and particular care for Eastern Christians.

Primary Church sources

Catechism of the Catholic Church, especially the sections on revelation, the Church, sacramental life, moral life and prayer.

Code of Canon Law, especially canons 204–205, 842–845, 879–896, 916 and 919. The approved Rite of Reception, Order of Confirmation and Roman Missal govern the celebration in England and Wales.

The preparation book's Appendix H supplies fuller references. Current diocesan direction and the priest's pastoral judgement govern each person's actual pathway and readiness. This guide supplies activities and accompaniment, not a substitute liturgical rite.

St Mary's • St John Bosco • St Edward's Parish
cathparishmje.co.uk