**Letter to First Communicant Families 2014**

Praised be Jesus Christ!

The time for 1st Communion preparation has come!!!! Who’s excited???? I know the children are! And I know I am! Are you???? With your help and of course the help of the Holy Spirit, we will be taking the next few months to embark on the unforgettable journey toward reception of The Most Blessed Sacrament! We will travel through lessons on Prayer, Vocations, The Last Supper and The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. We will learn words like Chalice, Ciborium, Paten, Consecration and Transubstantiation. We will enter into the lives of Saints who loved the Eucharist and we will learn about a few Eucharistic Miracles. We will learn how to make our hearts a home for Jesus and I pray, I pray, I pray, that with the help of the Holy Spirit, we will all fall more deeply in love with Jesus’ true presence in The Most Blessed Sacrament!!!!

A few things before we begin:

1. Do NOT get stressed out over the work involved for this time of preparation!!!! By doing a little bit of preparation homework each day, we will be learning a healthy spiritual routine that will set an example for the children for the rest of their lives. This is a great way to give God time each day!!! Say a little prayer with your child before beginning the assignments, asking Jesus to reveal Himself in a very special way!!! Ask and you shall receive!!!

2. Please be praying with your child everyday!!! And share stories of your own First Communion experience or that of an older sibling, aunt, uncle, grandma, grandpa, etc. Encourage your child to ask questions!!! Please be bringing your child to Mass every weekend, Ash Wednesday and the Holy Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday Service & Easter Sunday). Help them follow along with the Mass parts and the Readings as needed in the Missalette. Your child should be actively participating in singing, praying and listening. Be a good example to them!

3. Beginning February 5th, the children will be encouraged to check out an additional learning supplement for First Communion Preparation. These are extra things to be brought home and played, watched, read or listened to and to be brought back the following week. The following items will be on the “Check Out” table: The Eucharistic LIFE game, The Mass Vessel Memory Game, Catholic Go Fish, The Mass Unveiled DVD, Sr. Joseph Mary teaches How to prepare to receive Holy Communion DVD, Sr. Joseph Mary teaches How to properly receive Holy Communion DVD, Pope Benedict XVI speaks to children about 1st Holy Communion book, The Weight of the Mass book, a Holy Heroes CD and booklet, and a Glory Stores CD and coloring page.

4. Lastly, in the next few months we will be offering 2 opportunities for your child to have more involvement before and during the Mass…more details to follow…

A. Gift Bearing: The whole family will have the opportunity to choose a Mass or 2 in which you will present the gifts of bread and wine to the priest during the Offertory at Mass. A list of dates and detailed instructions will be sent home in the weeks ahead so you can conveniently choose a Mass that fits your schedule. This is a small way for your child to be more involved in the Mass as he/she prepares for First Holy Communion. This is not required, but strongly encouraged!!!

B. Helping to lead the Rosary before Mass: Please be practicing the Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be with your child at home, making sure your child is enunciating clearly and speaking slowly. We will be practicing decades during class so that we are all set to go once our date is chosen. We will have index cards with the prayers on it in case we get a little nervous! More information to come soon!

5. We hope to have Father Girotti lead us through a Walk Through the Mass during class again this year. We also hope to have Deacon Tom Mahoney visit our classroom to teach us about the life of a Deacon and how it differs from a Priest.

Thank you most kindly for your patience, I am probably forgetting something…I’ll keep you posted!
Know of my prayers for each of you!!!! To the summit, we shall ascend!!!!

Our Lady of Good Help, St. Joseph, St. Francis Xavier….pray for us!!!
God bless you,