

FAMILIES WISHING TO GET STARTED ON THEIR JOURNEY OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH

Individuals who wish to begin the journey of becoming Catholic should contact the parish office at either Holy Name, Esher (esher@abdiocese.org.uk) or Our Lady of Lourdes, Thames Ditton (thamesditton@abdiocese.org.uk), as appropriate.

Following an initial enquiry, the parish will ask the family to confirm that they meet the programme requirements and provide the information needed to complete the child's registration including:

- That they are already part of the Catholic Church community within the Parish of Weybridge or, if not, that they are willing to now join and be registered as Parishioners
- That they already attend Mass regularly in the Parish of Weybridge or, if not, that they are committed to future attendance
- Where it is the child who wishes to join the Catholic Church, that one or both parents are Catholic or, if not, that the child has a Catholic godparent who commits to providing support throughout the child's faith journey
- Where it is the child who wishes to join the Catholic Church, that the child has demonstrated a willingness to begin the necessary Sacramental Preparation Programme process as part of their faith journey
- Referrals from primary schools or other relevant educational staff to support their request.

The request to begin the journey of becoming Catholic will then be considered by the relevant Priest, who will confirm whether the requirements outlined above have been met and advise on the next steps. The Priest's decision will be final.

In the absence of such a Priest at any point, the Chair of the Catholic Churches of Esher & Thames Ditton Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) will consider the family's request. In this circumstance, should a family wish to appeal the decision of the PPC Chair they may request that the matter be escalated to the Parish of Weybridge Priests in Solidum. The decision of the Priests in Solidum will be communicated to the family and will be final.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION PROGRAMMES

Where the request to join the Catholic Church has been successful, the Catholic Churches of Esher & Thames Ditton will then include the family in the appropriate Sacramental Preparation Programme(s). These Programmes are held each year for children of catechetical age preparing for Baptism, First Holy Communion or Confirmation, and for adults preparing to join the Catholic Church.

Details of the Programmes for children are attached (it is unlikely that a Confirmation Programme will be held in 2027 as the current one is being realigned to comply with the agreed approach of the Parish of Weybridge).

For adults intending to join the Catholic Church, Alpha and RCIA Programmes will be offered.

Conclusion

We look forward to welcoming families who are interested in discovering our Catholic faith and supporting them and their children as they begin this journey. We hope this guide has been helpful as you consider whether becoming Catholic is the next step that you and/or your child wish to take.