

<https://katholisch-im-hamburger-westen.de/kirche-in-vielen-lebenslagen/erstkommunion/>

Dear parents,

You would like to register your child for First Communion in our parish of St Mary. We are very happy about this. You can start at any time after attending an information evening.

In the celebration of Holy Mass, we encounter Jesus Christ in many different ways. In order for your child to discover this for themselves, your co-operation as parents is essential.

Holy Mass is at the centre of our preparation for First Communion. We therefore invite you and your child to at least 15 Holy Masses in the churches of our parish. Attendance at the masses must be confirmed in an accompanying booklet.

There are also two compulsory evening events for parents, which will focus on the Bible and the celebration of Holy Mass. These events will be led by the pastoral team of our parish. The two themed parents' evenings will be offered repeatedly. You are free to choose the date of your participation.

You are also cordially invited to take part in additional programmes for children and parents in the communities.

You can arrange the date for your child's First Communion celebration with the parish office in Maria Grün. You can, of course, organise the celebration with other families.

Please come to an information evening, which takes place several times a year. We will present the preparation for communion to you in detail there. You can then register your child at one of the parish offices. (We only require a baptismal certificate if your child was not baptised in our parish). When you register, you will also receive the starter pack for €30 with all the necessary materials.

To summarise briefly:

- 1. Participation in the information evening**
- 2. Registration and purchase of the starter kit**
- 3. Participation in two theme evenings for parents**
- 4. At least fifteen Mass attendances in our parish**
- 5. Arrange the date of First Communion with the parish office in Maria Grün.**

Best regards

The pastoral team of the parish of St. Maria

Questions and answers on preparing for communion (as at: 06 January 2024)

Prerequisites

When can your child go to communion?

Children usually receive Holy Communion for the first time at around the age of nine.

If a child has a regular practice of faith and worship in their family, it may be appropriate for them to receive their first Holy Communion a little earlier.

If you as a family have little experience of church services, it makes sense to first gain experience of the faith of the church and the celebration of the service.

First Communion does not have to be celebrated at the age of 9. You decide when the preparation should begin for you and your child.

The registration

Will you be contacted personally for communion preparation?

You will not receive a personal letter. We provide continuous information about our parish's communion concept via the parish newsletter and the parish website (<https://katholisch-im-hamburger-westen.de>) under Sacraments and Pastoral Care / Eucharist (Communion Preparation) <https://katholisch-im-hamburger-westen.de/kirche-in-vielen-lebenslagen/erstkommunion/>.

You can find the current (date) information on our homepage.

How do you register your child for communion preparation?

Registration for communion preparation can only take place after attending an information evening for parents, which takes place several times a year.

You will also receive the registration form there!

(Current dates for the information evening can be found on the parish homepage).

What documents are required to enrol your child?

- The registration form - completed and signed.
- A copy of the baptismal certificate if your child was not baptised in our parish of St. Maria.

(The parish of St. Maria includes the parishes of Maria Grün, St. Marien, St. Bruder Konrad and St. Paulus-Augustinus).

If necessary, you can obtain a baptism certificate from the parish office of the place of baptism.

Where does the registration go?

You hand in the signed registration form and (if necessary) a copy of the baptismal certificate at one of the four parish offices of our parish during the respective opening hours (to be found on the back of the parish newsletter or on the homepage).

Your child can only be registered for communion preparation if the documents are complete!

What else is included in the registration? The starter pack.

A fee of €30 is payable upon registration. In return, you will receive a starter pack with materials for preparing for First Communion in the family.

When is the registration deadline?

There is no longer a registration deadline. You can register your child at any time (see below "How is communion preparation organised in our parish?").

By registering, the parish of St Mary has registered that you are preparing for your child's First Holy Communion.

The preparation

How is communion preparation carried out in the parish of St Mary?

You will receive information on preparing for First Communion at an information evening for parents and also on the parish website.

What is the role of parents?

Parents take part in two themed evenings that take place several times a year (current dates on the homepage). Participation is a mandatory part of the children's preparation for communion.

The events focus on the following topics a) the Bible and b) the Holy Mass.

In addition, the parents support their child by attending Holy Mass together and in concrete practice (e.g. sign of the cross, basic prayers, behaviour in church).

You should be open to questions that arise - from your children and from yourself. Find out about the activities of the parish, especially with regard to the projects for children (homepage, parish newsletter). They seek contact with the parish of their choice.

What is the role of the godparents?

The godparents have no additional duties. They continue to support their godchild in prayer, in matters of faith and in practical contact with the church and parish.

The child would like to receive communion but has not been baptised.

Baptism always takes place before receiving communion. If the child has not yet been baptised, please contact Pastor Wolfgang Bruns (040 4128 3995) before registering for communion preparation. Baptism is celebrated in a separate service.

The child is baptised a Protestant, but would like to take communion in the Catholic Church.

The child does not have to be baptised again, but must change denomination/church membership. Please contact Pastor Wolfgang Bruns before registering for communion preparation.

Does the child have to go to confession before communion?

In our parish, children are not prepared for the sacrament of penance and reconciliation (confession) as part of the preparation for communion.

This takes place later as part of the preparation for Confirmation.

If you and your child wish to have an individual sacramental confession before the first communion, this will of course be made possible. Please contact Pastor Wolfgang Bruns for this.

The celebration of first communion

In which of the four parishes of our parish does the child go to communion?

The child can go to First Holy Communion in any parish in the parish of St Mary; you can arrange the church and the time of the service with the parish office in Maria Grün towards the end of your preparation time.

On which day does the child go to First Communion?

On most Sundays of the year, it is possible to receive first Holy Communion in the parish services. It is not possible during Lent and Advent, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost.

Can the whole family be there with their guests?

All are welcome to celebrate Holy Mass with the local community. It is the Sunday service of the congregation, therefore no seats are kept free for guests.

Family members and guests with little or no experience of church services are asked to respectfully follow the celebration as a religious event (see below photography, filming and mobile phone use).

Can several families celebrate First Communion in one service?

Yes, but no more than 6 families in Maria Grün, 4 families in St Marien and 2 families in St Paulus-Augustinus and St Bruder Konrad.

Seats are reserved for the communion children, parents and siblings.

What role does the child play in the celebration of their first Holy Communion?

The First Communion service is no different from a normal Holy Mass. The priest will briefly talk about this important moment in the service.

The child receives communion together with their family. Those who do not wish to receive communion can be blessed.

What does the child need to bring to the fair?

The child brings either their christening candle or a new communion candle and a corresponding candlestick.

Please also provide a drip catcher so that the wax does not drip onto your hands, clothing or pews.

Are there any dress codes?

The child should wear clothing appropriate to the occasion in which it feels comfortable.

Is photography/filming possible during the communion service?

Photography and filming during the service is not permitted in the church for data protection reasons! Please also inform your guests of this!

Photos can also be taken in the church after the service.

Where can I buy communion gifts?

You will find a selection of

Communion candles

Drip catchers

Candlesticks

Songbook

Rosaries

Crossing

Bibles and books on the church year suitable for children

and other gifts

e.g. in the bookshop "geist+reich", Am Mariendom 5, 20099 Hamburg

or online e.g. at

<http://www.shop-katholisch.de/shop/>

<https://www.vivat.de/shop/>

<https://www.st-benno.de/shop/>

For further questions

... please contact the municipal offices.