***Enrolment Ceremony outside of Mass***

**October 2023**

**Called and Chosen**

***Gathering Rite***

**Reader**Welcome everyone. Today marks the beginning of a very special journey for the children preparing to receive their First Holy Communion next May. As a parish community we extend a very warm welcome to these children and their families.

As you know, each one of us are called and chosen by God. We are called and chosen to enter into deep friendship with him, where we are loved unconditionally as we journey through our lives, trying our best each day to follow in the footsteps of Jesus – loving, caring and respecting all people even when this is challenging. Each of our faith journey and relationship with God began at our baptism, where we were welcomed into our faith community by our parish community, priest, parents, family and friends – who have committed to helping us reach our full potential and to nurture the gifts each one of us has from the Holy Spirit. With this in mind, we recall our baptismal vows now as we light the Paschal candle.

***Paschal candle is lit***

**Reader:** As we light the Paschal candle, may it symbolise God’s love for us shining in our lives.

**Priest: May God, who through water and the Holy Spirit has given us a new birth in Christ, be with you all.**

**All: And also with you.**

**PriestThis holy water reminds us of Christ, the living water. It also reminds us of our Baptism. Whenever we use holy water in blessing ourselves, as we enter the church or at home, we’re thanking God for the precious gift of life. We’re also asking for God’s protection.**

***Priest sprinkles holy water on the assembly***

**Priest:In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit**

**All:Amen.**

**Priest:** Loving God, you have chosen each one of us to be here today. During this special time of preparation for Holy Communion, open all our hearts and continue to draw us closer to your friendship. Help us to know your unconditional love for us. Help us become followers of Jesus by loving and serving one another in our homes, school and parish community. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All:** **Amen.**

**Reader:** We stand to listen to God’s word.

Alleluia, alleluia!

I call you friends, says the Lord,

because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father.

Alleluia!

***Gospel Reading***

**Priest***A reading from the Gospel of Matthew Matthew 21:28-32*

'What is your opinion? A man had two sons. He went and said to the first, "My boy, go and work in the vineyard today". He answered, "I will not go", but afterwards thought better of it and went. The man then went and said the same thing to the second who answered, "Certainly, Sir" but did not go. Which of the two did the father's will?' They said, 'The first'. Jesus said to them, 'In truth I tell you, tax collectors and prostitutes are making their way into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you, showing the way of uprightness, but you did not believe him, and yet the tax collectors and prostitutes did. Even after seeing that, you refused to think better of it and believe in him'.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**All: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

***Enrolment Ceremony***

**Reader:**Now we will have a short ceremony of enrolment for the children who are preparing for the first of many communions throughout their lives. In the *Grow in Love* programme, the children have been learning that, through our Baptism, each person has been called and chosen by God. Every time we gather as a circle of friends, as family, as a parish faith community, we do so in the company of our friend Jesus.

I invite the children who are engaging in this time of preparation for Holy

 Communion to stand. The response to each promise is *We do.* After the

 priest’s blessing, say *Amen*.

**Priest**: Girls and boys, you have been preparing to receive the gift of Jesus through Holy Communion since you were small. Next year you will celebrate the first of many times you will receive communion, to nourish and strengthen you in life. As you prepare in a special way in the coming months, do you promise to listen carefully to all the people who will help you learn about God’s love for us?

**Children:** We do.

**Priest:** Do you promise to try to get to know God better by praying at home with your family, by being a friend to Jesus and by coming to Mass?

**Children:** We do.

**Priest:** May you know God’s great love for you. May you experience much joy growing in love with Jesus. May this joyful love flow out to your families, friends and wider community.

**AllAmen**

**Reader:** Girls and boys, thank you. You may now sit down.

 I invite all parents and guardians to stand for their commitment.

**Priest:** God has called and chosen you to be parents and guardians. You have asked that your children continue the faith journey that they began at their Baptism. Do you promise to help your child grow in love with Jesus by praying together at home and by committing to engage in the *Grow in Love* homework with your child?

**Parents:** I promise to pray with and encourage my child’s faith in this year of preparation for Holy Communion.

**Priest:** Do you promise to love, support and pray with your children as members of this parish community through regular celebration of Sunday Mass?

**Parents:** I promise to pray with my child and I commit to accompanying my child to Sunday Mass.

**Priest:** May God bless you abundantly with wisdom, patience, joy and laughter. May you discover God’s love on this faith journey, more than you could ever imagine as your family grows in love.

**All: *Amen***

***Prayers of the Faithful***

**Priest:** Loving God, you call each one of us to be your friends. You choose each of us to be a sign of your love. We ask you now to hear the prayers of our hearts.

**Reader:** We pray for our faith leaders, especially Pope Francis and Bishop Ray, that through their care and guidance we will come to understand and respond to Jesus’ unconditional love for all people and creation. Lord, hear us*.*

**All**: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

**Reader**: We pray for peace in our world. We pray especially for people affected by war and conflict, may they be held in your loving care and protection from harm. Lord, hear us.

**Reader:** We pray for all who are sick, unwell or housebound in our community.That they may feel and experience the healing and loving presence of Jesus in their lives and through those that care for them. Lord, hear us.

**Reader**: We pray for all parents, that they will feel the tender love of God close to them as they nurture and love their children. Lord, hear us.

**Reader:** We pray for all children, especially the children in our parish who are preparing to receive their First Holy Communion, that they may know and share the wonderful gift of Jesus’ friendship. Lord, hear us

**Reader:** We pray for all our loved ones who have died. That they may experience eternal peace in the presence of the Lord. We remember especially ……

Lord, hear us.

**Priest:** Loving God who calls each one of us by name, look with kindness on

your friends gathered in your name today. Throughout this time of preparation for Holy Communion, may we continue to grow in love with you and with one another. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

**Priest:** Together we pray the prayer that Jesus taught us …..**Our Father**…

**Priest:** As friends of Jesus, let us reach out and offer one another a sign of peace.

**Priest:** May Christ’s light always shine brightly in your hearts, your homes, in our parish and in the world.

**All:Amen.**

**Liturgy of the Eucharist**

***Communion Reflection***

**Reader*:*** We have been given

 eyes to see and ears to listen.

 Tongues to speak for the innocent and the guilty,

 to praise, encourage and support,

to proclaim in season and out, the news that is good news.

Hands to reach out and strengthen the fearful,

to protect the weak and lift up the fallen,

to embrace the dying,

to share burdens, and wipe away tears …

to build up, not to tear down,

to fan the embers, not to quench the smoldering wick,

to bless, not strike,

to give, not to withhold.           *- A Prayer from Zimbabwe*

**Closing Song:** Grow in Love (Grow in Love pg. 138)