I enthusiastically welcome Symbols of Faith because it is rooted in the conviction that our brothers and sisters with learning disabilities are indispensable parts of the One Body.

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster

Symbols of Faith offers parents, priests and catechists creative insights and ideas on the faith formation and sacramental preparation of people with learning disabilities, which is in keeping with Church teaching. It recognises the gifts and talents of people with learning disabilities. The materials are adaptable, flexible and appropriate to their ability, to help them come to know the person of Christ, who leads us to the Father through the Holy Spirit.

This CD provides additional resources and unlimited use of activity sheets to complement the sessions.

The author, Diana Klein, has worked in the area of catechesis and pastoral theology as a catechist, catechetical adviser, lecturer, writer and editor. The book was developed and trialled in collaboration with St Joseph’s Pastoral Centre whose principal aim is to support families who embrace members with learning disabilities in parishes.

Symbols of Faith

Diana Klein

in collaboration with

Caritas
St Joseph’s

faith formation and sacramental preparation for people with learning disabilities
Symbols of faith
faith formation and sacramental preparation for people with learning disabilities

Diana Klein
in collaboration with
Caritas
St Joseph’s
Acknowledgements

These materials were written in collaboration with the team at St Joseph's Pastoral Centre: John Coleby, Sue Day, Gail Williams, Finola Ryan and Sue Pratt.

We acknowledge, with thanks, the significant contribution to this project made by the Jerusalem Trust and to the St John Southworth Fund and Jar Trust for their contributions.

The illustrations in this participant’s book have been provided by Kim Blundell and Diana Klein.

St Joseph's Pastoral Centre is grateful to the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA for the use of the New Revised Standard Version Bible: Catholic Edition copyright ©1993 and 1989. All rights reserved.

Widgit Symbols (c) Widgit Symbols 2002-2014 www.widgit.com

Nihil obstat: Fr Anton Cowan, Censor
Imprimatur: His Eminence Cardinal Vincent Nichols,
Archbishop of Westminster
Westminster, Feast of St Alban
20 June 2013

The nihil obstat and imprimatur are a declaration that a book or pamphlet is considered to be free from doctrinal or moral error. It is not implied that those who have granted the nihil obstat and imprimatur agree with the contents, opinions or statements expressed.
Welcome to Symbols of Faith

Welcome to this CD of additional resources. These are for you, so that you will have different things to choose from, which will help you get the most out of your sessions.

Photocopy anything you need, and remember, God is with you in everything you do.

Symbols of Faith is all about Jesus, who came to tell us that God loves us very much, one of the most important messages you will ever hear.

Jesus invites us to follow him, to know him, to love him and to be like him. We can do that because he sends his Holy Spirit to help us.

God bless you!

Diana Klein, January 2015
A note to the parents, priests and catechists

These additional resources on CD are aimed at providing you with ready-made pages to complement the sessions in the *Symbols of Faith* book. It can be used in at least three ways:

- If you are photocopying it on paper, it can become a keepsake for the candidate.
- Alternatively, you can photocopy a particular page and use it as a hand-out for your session.
- If you are using it on the computer, you can personalise each activity to suit your candidate. For example, you can include photos of your candidate and his/her family, at their baptism, and so on; you could adapt the activities about the church by using images of their parish church.

Make activities up; they are not meant to be followed slavishly. Use them to be creative – or don’t use them at all. You may find that the activities suggested in the book for the sessions is sufficient. These additional resources will simply give you another tool to use to communicate with your candidate.

Remember, the aim of catechesis is to come to know Jesus or to know him better. This is what Christian formation is really all about.

I hope you will find these materials helpful.

May God bless you in this important work!

Diana Klein, January 2015
# Table of Contents

Letter to the participants ........................................................................................................3
Letter to parents, priests and catechists ..................................................................................4

Section 1: Baptised in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Session 1: Belonging to God .................................................................................................7
- Session 2: Belonging to Jesus (and the sacrament of baptism) ...........................................8
- Session 3: Living in the Holy Spirit ......................................................................................9

Section 2: About the Church
- Session 4: The church is a holy place ................................................................................10
- Session 5: We are the Body of Christ ..................................................................................12

Celebration: Accepting the invitation ....................................................................................13

Section 3: Preparing to be confirmed
- Session 6: My Spirit will help you ..................................................................................14
- Session 7: The gifts of the Holy Spirit ..............................................................................15
- Session 8: Being anointed ................................................................................................16

Section 4: Meeting Christ in the sacrament of reconciliation
- Session 9: Making loving choices ..................................................................................17
- Session 10: What would Jesus do? ....................................................................................18

Celebration: Jesus helps us see what’s in our hearts ..........................................................19

Celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation: a leaflet .........................................................20
Section 5: Meeting Christ in the Mass: Preparing to celebrate the Eucharist

Session 11: The Mass: We gather and prepare ..........................................................22
Session 12: The Mass: We listen to God’s Word .......................................................23
Session 13: The Mass: We offer bread and wine .....................................................24
Session 14: The Mass: We take and eat .................................................................25
Session 15: The Mass: We go out ........................................................................26

Preparing to celebrate the sacraments of initiation

Preparing to celebrate baptism ..................................................................................29
Preparing to celebrate confirmation ........................................................................30
Preparing how to receive Holy Communion .........................................................31
Celebrating the Eucharist .......................................................................................32

Catholic prayers ........................................................................................................37

Resources to help with responses and participation .................................................38
Session 1. Belonging to God

**Focus**

God calls us by our names; we belong to him.

Children belong to their family; and their family belongs to them. Parents call their children by their names.

---

Jesus says: “God calls us by name; we belong to him.”

Cut this name tag out and put your name on it.

I have called you by your name

you are mine

Diana Klein © 2013
Session 2. Belonging to Jesus

Focus

We are marked to show how we belong to Jesus in baptism.

We mark our belongings to show they belong to us.

And, in baptism, we are marked to show that we belong to Jesus.

Jesus says to us: “I love you just as the father loves me. You belong to me.”
What does love look like?
Does it look like a heart?
Does it look like a hug?

Just as love is invisible, the Holy Spirit is also invisible. We sometimes draw the Spirit like a dove; you can do that if you want to.

Jesus tells us: “The Holy Spirit is in us and helps to bring my love to everyone.”
Session 4. The church is a holy place

Focus  
We come to church to pray.

Just as we use special plates and food when we have visitors, we use special (sacred) things in the church to make it a special place, a holy place. Cut pictures out and put them in the church.
Session 5. We are the Body of Christ

Focus
Everyone in the church is needed. We all have a part to play.

Just as each piece of fruit in a fruit salad contributes to the whole fruit salad, each person contributes to the Body of Christ. Fill this Body of Christ with smiling faces!

Jesus says to us: “All of us together make up the Body of Christ; each of us has a part to play.”
Jesus invites us to follow him, and in this celebration, we accept his invitation.

Simon says: “Follow the leader!” He says: “touch your ears”, “touch your eyes”. Now, “touch your mouth”.

Jesus says to us: “Will you come and follow me if I call you? Will you do as I say?”

We wear crosses to show we have accepted the invitation; and we are followers of Jesus, our leader.
Session 6. My Spirit will help you

Focus

To see how God has sent the Holy Spirit to help us.

How do you help others with your hands?

Jesus says to us: “The Holy Spirit will teach you everything you need to know and will remind you to help others as I taught you.”
Session 7. The gifts of the Holy Spirit

Focus

To find ways of loving by using the gifts of the Spirit.

Which of your gifts do you want to put in this box?

- Good Listener
- I am good at singing
- I am helpful
- I care
- I am good at drawing
- I share
- I am kind
- I am good at dancing
- I am patient
- I am good at making things
- I am fun to be with

Jesus is telling you today: “There are many gifts but it is the same Holy Spirit who gives them all.”
We are anointed with holy oil to help us do our jobs as followers of Jesus.

Kings and queens are anointed with holy oil to help them do their work.

We, too, are anointed with holy oil to strengthen us and to help us do our jobs as followers of Jesus. What jobs will you do? How will you let the Holy Spirit help?

Jesus promises: “I will send my Holy Spirit to help you do your job as my followers.”
Session 9. Making loving choices

To introduce God’s “laws” about making loving choices.

Write your name on the prize ribbon if you are good at following rules

Diana Klein © 2014

Jesus says to us: “Do as I say: make loving choices.”
Session 10. What would Jesus do?

Focus

Asking the question “What would Jesus do?” and choosing to do as he would.

Would you be willing to wear your WWJD bracelet to remember to ask what Jesus would do?

Jesus said: “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.” Zacchaeus was very happy to welcome Jesus and have him to stay.

Jesus says to us: “Today I want to come to your house.” What is your answer? Yes or no?
Celebration: Jesus helps us see what’s in our hearts

The rite of the scrutiny or celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation.

We say or do things to one another and we hurt each other. Sometimes we cannot see that we are in the wrong.

Remember: when you speak to the priest, you are speaking to Jesus. Jesus is there with you.

Jesus says to us: “I will help you see what you need to change so that you can become more like me.”
Preparing for the sacrament

We meet Jesus in the person of the priest when we celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation.

When we talk to the priest, we are talking directly to Jesus, and Jesus speaks to us through the words of the priest.

Remember that God loves us unconditionally, even when we are not as loving as he wants us to be.

Before going to speak to the priest, we should prepare ourselves by sitting quietly for a little while to think of the times we have not been as loving as Jesus; to think of what we could do to follow Jesus better? These questions may help:

Love is kind: Have I been unkind?
• by not letting others join my group
• by calling people names
• by saying nasty things
• by fighting and quarrelling

Love is not selfish: Have I been selfish?
• by not sharing with my friends
• by not helping at home
• by wanting everything for myself

Love is truthful: Have I been truthful?
• or have I told lies?

Love is patient: Have I been patient?
• or have I lost my temper?
• or have I used angry words?

Celebrating the sacrament

First, the priest welcomes you. Greet him and make the sign of the cross together.

Next, the priest will read from the Holy Book. It is Jesus speaking to us so we listen carefully.

Now you will tell the priest about times when you have not been as loving as Jesus wants you to be. You are talking to Jesus when you talk to the priest.

The priest will ask you what you think you can do to be more like Jesus. He will give you some advice. Listen to him; remember, Jesus is talking to you through him.
God is like the father in the story of the prodigal son. He loves us unconditionally and, when we do wrong, he is always willing to forgive us (Lk 15).

Celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation

Next, the priest will ask you to do something to show that you want to be more loving and he will ask you to say a 'sorry prayer'. He will help you:

O my God, I am sorry that I am not always as loving as you want me to be. With your help, I know I can put things right and be more loving. Amen.

The priest will tell you that God loves you very much and he forgives you.

Say “thank you” to the priest and go back to your place.

And, afterwards . . .

Say the prayer or do what the priest told you to do.

Think about what the priest said to you and think about what Jesus may be saying to you through him.

Thank God for loving you so much that there is nothing you can do that will separate you from his love.

Make up your mind to celebrate this sacrament often.

Do you ever break God’s Law of Love?

Yes, I do sometimes.

God is like the father in the story of the prodigal son. He loves us unconditionally and, when we do wrong, he is always willing to forgive us (Lk 15).
Focus

Jesus is really with us when we gather and prepare for Mass.

When we prepare for a special meal, what do we put on the table?

And, when we prepare for Mass, what do we see on the altar? Draw those things in on the altar.

Jesus says to us: “When you are with two or three others in my name, I am really there with you.”
Jesus speaks to us when we listen to the Holy Book.

Jesus says to us: “The most important thing is to be with me and to listen to what I have to say.”

Listening is a way of getting to know people.
We listen to Jesus to get to know God.
Session 13. The Mass: We offer bread and wine

Focus

Just as we offer the bread and wine, we also offer ourselves.

All these things change: caterpillars into butterflies, wheat into bread, grapes into wine; and bread and wine into Jesus.

Jesus says to us: “If you offer yourself to me, I can change you just as I change the bread and wine into my Body and Blood.”
Session 14. The Mass: We take and eat

To hear Jesus tell us that he feeds us so that our faith can grow; just as ordinary food helps our bodies to grow.

How many slices can you get from a cake if you are willing to share?

In this story, we hear how a little becomes a lot in Jesus’ hands because the boy was willing to share.

Jesus says to us: “I am the bread of life and I am willing to share myself with you.”
Session 15. The Mass: We go out

Focus

Jesus sends us out at the end of Mass to be like him in the world.

What’s best at helping me feel and know the love and friendship of Jesus?

- stories about Jesus
- meeting friends
- hearing my name
- acting out Bible stories
- lighting the candle
- being asked to help
- music and singing
- songs with signing
- time for quiet prayer
Jesus says to us: “Go out at the end of Mass: walk in my shoes and tell others about me.”
Using the template of the church on page 11, here are the Widgit words you will need to ‘play out’ a baptism:

- priest
- welcomes
- everyone saying
- “What is
- the baby’s
- (or child’s)
- name?”
- “Everyone
- welcomes you!”
- A cross marks you
- the parents
- godparents
- Jesus
- church
- help
- teach
- yes
- listen
- Holy Book
- oil
Preparing to celebrate baptism

you are baptised
in the name of the Father
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit
“Do you believe what the Church teaches?”
The parents say
“yes” and you’re
anointed again and
given a white garment
and a candle,
a special blessing
and a party with
brothers and sisters
grandma and
grandpa
friends and
neighbours
a special cake
then all go home
Preparing to celebrate confirmation

Focus

Learning about what happens when we are confirmed.

We use ointment and cream to heal us,
and to protect and strengthen our bodies.

The bishop anoints
us with holy oil to heal
us, and to protect and strengthen us spiritually.

Jesus says: “I am going to leave you and go back to my
Father in heaven; but I will not leave you alone.
I will send my Holy Spirit to help you and guide you.”
Preparing to receive Holy Communion

Learning how to receive Holy Communion.

There are many slices in this loaf of bread, but only one loaf.

You can choose whether to receive Holy Communion on your tongue or in your hand.

Jesus says: “I am the bread of life. Eat this bread, and I will live in you and you in me.”
Celebrating the Eucharist: We gather

Focus  
Jesus said: “Come” and we come together for Mass.

Using the template of the church on p. 11, here are the Widgit words you will need to follow the Mass:

- Jesus said: “Come”
- follow
- me.
- We gather
- Welcome
- hymn book
- bless ourselves
- genuflect
- The priest
- sign of the cross
- we sing a hymn
- musicians play
- We say
- sorry
- “Glory to God!”
Celebrating the Eucharist: We listen

Focus

Jesus said: “Listen” and we hear him speaking to us.

- Jesus said: “listen”
- reader reading
- Holy Book and we
- greet the Gospel
- the priest
- reads the Gospel
- and preaches
- we pray
- for all
- God’s
- people
- in
- the church
- and in
- all
- the world
Celebrating the Eucharist: We give thanks

Focus

Jesus gave “thanks”, and we give thanks.

"Eucharist" means to give thanks.

We offer bread and wine and offer money. We say the Prayer of Thanksgiving. And, just as Jesus broke bread, the priest breaks the bread.
Celebrating the Eucharist: We take and eat

Focus

Jesus said: “Take and eat”, and we take and eat.

The bread and

wine has become

Jesus’ body

and blood.

We

offer

each other

the sign of

peace.

We pray

the Our

Father.

Jesus

told his friends

to eat and drink
Celebrating the Eucharist: We go

Focus

Jesus said: “Go” and we go out to glorify him with our lives.

At the end of the Mass, the priest blesses us. He says: “Go out into the world and glorify God with your life by loving and serving others.”
You will find traditional Catholic prayers on the Widgit website (www.widgit.com) that you can download free into A5 booklets. These are the prayers you might want to print off so that you can join in with people at Mass:

The sign of the cross
In the name of the Father and of the Son

The Hail Mary
Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now,
and at the hour of our death, Amen.

The Lord’s Prayer
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.

Angel of God
Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God’s love commits me here. Ever this day (night) be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.
Resources to help with responses and participation
to enable communication of people with learning disabilities in this programme

These materials can be used in a variety of ways by people of all ages and abilities to help people communicate and share the Good News. They are particularly useful for those who have very limited verbal skills and people with autistic spectrum disorders and communication difficulties. For example, symbols cards can be used to enable the participants to respond in a meaningful way; to express their opinion, for example, about the session. You might print off the symbols onto laser card so that the participants can choose the card that best explains what they want to say.

- Was the session good?
- Was it very good?
- Was it the best?
- Yes
- No
- Quiet!
The cards in the pack can also be used when choices are to be made about which activity everyone likes the most, or which one they want to repeat.

For example, do they like arts and crafts? Do they like chatting with their new friends the best?

When it comes to scripture, to the religious dimension of the sessions, do they like dressing up and acting out the Gospel?

What is it about coming to the sessions they like the best? Is it the feeling of being welcome?

Is it meeting new friends?

Is it taking care of each other?
These cards fulfil the same purpose. As people progress through their faith formation and become more and more aware of how they are trying to be like Jesus, using a deck of cards like this will help them compare what they are doing to what Jesus did and does. I’ve just made up a few cards to show this; you can make as many as you wish – and you might like to include a picture of the person/people you are working with on the “me” cards.

This resource has been designed as a mediated learning experience tool. It is intended to provide enjoyable and anxiety free opportunities to mediate to people the events, people, meanings and messages of the Good News, and relate them to their lives today.

Throughout this book, these symbols have been used to encourage responses or help people follow through a Rite of the Church. You may want to access the whole pack so that you can make the most of these opportunities, particularly for people who are non-verbal, whilst using and enjoying the materials. You will find the pack on the St Joseph’s Pastoral Centre website (www.stjoseph.org.uk).
I enthusiastically welcome Symbols of Faith because it is rooted in the conviction that our brothers and sisters with learning disabilities are indispensable parts of the One Body.

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster

Symbols of Faith offers parents, priests and catechists creative insights and ideas on the faith formation and sacramental preparation of people with learning disabilities, which is in keeping with Church teaching. It recognises the gifts and talents of people with learning disabilities. The materials are adaptable, flexible and appropriate to their ability, to help them come to know the person of Christ, who leads us to the Father through the Holy Spirit.

This CD provides additional resources and unlimited use of activity sheets to complement the sessions.

The author, Diana Klein, has worked in the area of catechesis and pastoral theology as a catechist, catechetical adviser, lecturer, writer and editor. The book was developed and trialled in collaboration with St Joseph’s Pastoral Centre whose principal aim is to support families who embrace members with learning disabilities in parishes.

Diana Klein

faith formation and sacramental preparation
for people with learning disabilities

in collaboration with

Caritas
St Joseph’s

redemptorist publications