

MMWYC Training Program

Make Money With Your Camera

Lesson # 2

First Communion Photography

By

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Foreword

Welcome to your second MMWYC lesson!

The buzz on MMWYC training program has been incredible! And I'm very excited that you're excited. One member's email to me kind of sums up what everyone's been writing in to say...

“Ed, all I can say is WOW! and then WOW! backwards, LOL!”

Listen, it's only gonna get **better and better** as we go along. I've got so much to share over the coming weeks of this program that I just can't wait to let out of the bag. But we'll get there.

I know you can't wait to get started with this week's lesson, but there is something I need to address and announce before we dive in.

It has to do with questions related to the individual lessons, I simply **cannot answer questions** related to the lessons. I'll be happy to support anyone having technical needs as always, but I just don't have the time to answer questions related to applying the content of the lessons.

Here's why-

Even if the question is “Ed, do you think this is a good idea?” and all I did was type in “*yes or no*” answers (which is not the response you'd be looking for) there simply isn't enough time to read and respond to 1,000 of them, nor is it a good idea for me to farm it out to some unqualified staffer.

Do the math: If it just took ONE MINUTE to read and respond to an email, it would take me almost **17 hours** to answer 1,000. And that's nothing but “*yes or no*” answers. If I spent FIVE MINUTES on each and typed a short paragraph response, it would take over **80 Hours** per week just to answer emails. I just can't do it.



Now, just to be clear, it's not an issue with the content. I'll always make the content straightforward and understandable and if anything needs clarifying, I'll be happy to do it for the entire group.

The type of questions that I am talking about are, "Ed, here's my background, which of these markets should I choose?" or "Ed, what do you think of this background for this job?" or Ed, should I photograph this situation indoors or outdoors?" I'm talking about specific questions for specific people. I just can't answer them due to the volume of the members.

*But, after thinking things through, I've decided to create a **MMWYC Inner Circle** personal coaching program for the first 50 members who Join. The price is \$97 per month. If you are someone who would like some "hand holding" as we make our way through each lesson, then check out the details at <http://.makemoneywithyourcamera.com/Innercircle.html> (It includes your own private message board where we will communicate, assistance with your lessons and actual one-on-one interaction with me.)*

Again, I will always make the lessons themselves very clear (even "newbie-friendly") so there isn't going to be any kind of problem there. But, if you want **personal access**, I do have a limited number of coaching spots available, First come, first served. Fifty only.

Now, having said all of that , let's dive into this week's goodies...

Note: Most lessons will be between 3-7 pages in length (not including the cover page, legal page, and foreword) but the first few lessons will be a bit longer due to some of the preliminary organization and set-up of some of the resources.

Note: Download links for previous lessons will be at the close of each PDF file in case you missed or misplaced an earlier edition.

Note: Photo samples will now be viewed in a gallery for the lesson we are working on. You will be given the link to the gallery later in this lesson. You will also be given a new password for every lesson to get access to the galleries. You will get a new gallery, and password to that gallery every lesson.

WATCH YOUR INBOX FOR UPCOMING BONUS MOVIES AND TEMPLATES



Introduction

In today's lesson we're going to learn about how to photograph First Holy Communion.

This is a very large market and one that I think is a little easier to get into because there is not quite as much competition.

We will be going over photographing on location on the day of the Communion, and also photographing them in your studio or home studio setup. So, like I said in the first lesson, if you need equipment, training, or other resources, check the resources page that I e-mailed you (that will now be listed on the website).

Steps You Need To Know To Profit From First Communion Photography

“Decide who your customers are and how to contact them”.

The First Communion Market is another large market, and one that has involvement by a large part of the community. Now this market is a little different from the sports market which we went over in the first lesson. It is a one time event for 7 and 8 year olds which are in the second grade. For location work it is also a seasonal business taking place any time from the end of March to the beginning of May. For Studio or in home studio appointments it can really be anytime, but most of our studio appointments run during the Spring season.

Your market is primarily Catholic Churches that host these events, or families with children who are going to receive their First Communion. Now you can make appointments to visit these churches and speak with the person that teaches the CCD or First Communion classes and tell them you would like to photograph the individual children and groups the day of the First Communion. Explain that you will donate either a 5x7 or 8x10 of each group that you photograph to the church. The churches usually have 2-4 groups on different days, with 10-30 children in each group.

They usually like to present this to either the parent groups, the church administration, or both. So they like to have a sample of your price list (I will have a sample for you in the paperwork and forms section), and a sample of your work (if you do not have any then get in touch with a family member or friend who has someone that will be doing their First Communion and have them pose for you, using one of the poses in our posing section).



If your just starting and want to do formal First Communion photos, then again, get in touch with family or friends and see if they would let you photograph their child for free, using our poses and ideas in posing and sample photo sections. Then if you feel as if your ready to do formal photos, then you can advertise in your local paper, make a flyer of the child you photographed and put an ad in the church bulletin or the bulletin board at the back of the church. If the church has a website, you could offer to buy an ad on the website. (I am going to do a movie tutorial as a bonus to show you how to create an ad for the web)

You can use any method to advertise that we discussed in this lesson or the last lesson,

but I think the best method is to meet with the person in charge. By the way, once you get one of these churches, it gets a lot easier to get others. The profit potential in this market is huge once you break into it. You should be able to make \$100-\$1500 per day

when you work on location for around 1-4 hours of work. When you take formal photos, you should be able to make \$100-\$800 for an hour or less of work.

“Samples Of Photos And Products”

On this page I will show some samples of the photos’ that we take for both the location

shots and formal shots. Some of the different images are below, but also go to the image gallery at the link below where there are more images and also better quality. Use the images in the gallery as a reference to help you with your posing.









The above pictures are different variations of how to take your photos', whether on location or at your studio. Some are taken on the altar and some are taken with props and a setup, both work great.

For more samples and posing ideas visit:

<http://thzn.ifp3.com/>

After you get to the site, you want to sign in at the upper right corner of the site where it

says **SIGN IN** and enter the information below:

USERNAME: module2 PASSWORD: firstcommunion3

The galleries are password protected so you will not see the current gallery until you sign in and enter the username and password.

Equipment Check List



Nikon D300



Nikon D40x



D300 on Bracket



Tripod



Pistol Grip



Bracket with Flash



Camera Cards



Softboxes



Studio



Telephoto Lens



Wide Angle Lens



Flash Meter

All the equipment above is equipment that you will want to have with you when you are on location or in the studio. You will also need a background setup similar to the one above in the photo samples.

“What Photos and Poses Should You Take”

As you can see from the sample photos and products section above, when you are on location you always want to get the group picture of the class together with the priests.

When you take the individual shots at the church, we like to get the child full length in a prayer pose. The parents have usually spent quite a bit of money on these outfits, so full length shows them the best (you can always crop in later if they insist). This will

also keep your exposures consistent and make it easier for you later on when you are preparing the images to print.

When you take formal communion photographs you need to get more involved and give your customer more time and variety. Your lighting also needs to be more than just an on camera flash (I will explain more about that in “Tips and Secrets” section. Feel free to use my gallery images as a guide to your posing, especially the formal photographs that you will be taking.

“Tips and Secrets for the day of the Event”

If you are photographing the whole group at the church then it is very important that you have planned the timing of everything properly. It seems most First Communion are held on Saturdays and Sundays, and usually a morning session and an afternoon session. This means you need to be all set up and ready one hour before the children go down the church aisle.

So you need to coordinate with whoever the person is in charge, and make sure that the children and their parents know to be there an hour in advance. This gives you time to get all the individuals (and we get quite a few that like to have family shots taken during this time also) and the group just before everything starts.

Try and do everything beforehand instead of after the First Communion Ceremony. It just gets too crazy after the ceremony to try and coordinate everyone, and it is stressful for everyone. We have done it both ways, and believe me before is much better and you will have more people participate and buy from you beforehand.

If you are photographing them as a formal portrait, then you do not have the time and coordination restraints. Like I said, use my gallery as a guide for your posing and I will send you a basic lighting diagram that we use in our studio. (Watch for the diagram within 3 days. I will e-mail it to you).

“What Forms and Paperwork Do You Need”

The address for the PDF below contains the form that we use for all our First Communions, it also contains our pricing.

http://www.makemoneywithyourcamera.com/members/StRich_MaryComm08.pdf

We usually give these to the person in charge who distributes them to all of the children who are going to be involved in the First Communion Ceremony.

We also give them envelopes along with the paperwork and pricing, so that they may place their payment and ordering info inside the envelope.

“What Do I Price My Work And Products At”

The location work done at the church on the day of the First Communion is priced exactly as you see it in the PDF paperwork above. If you are just starting, then you can offer these same prices for your formal studio portraits, but later on when you become more experienced you can charge from your portrait price list (which we will learn about in a future lesson).

When we do these location shoots we just offer different packages of the individual shots, and throw in the group shot for everyone who buys individual pictures, they can also order the group shot separately if they choose to not get individual photos.

Aside from the products above, you can also offer all kinds of other variations of the group and individual shots from Shutterfly, (who we introduced you to in the first lesson, see their list of products in lesson 1). When you are doing formal portraits, you will also want to offer larger prints, canvas prints, oil canvas prints and framing. I will continue to add different resources on the resource page pertaining to these and other different products that you can offer your clients.

“How Do You Present Photos For The Clients To View”

The photos taken on location are picked out by us when we prepare them for production. The clients have already paid us for what they feel they need or want beforehand. Now if your clients want to reorder photos after you deliver the initial order, then you can either use Shutterfly, or have them mail or e-mail any additional orders. Again, in future lessons we will learn about other alternative ways to present your work. Please feel free to e-mail us at any time with any ideas you may have heard about and we will research and make a bonus lesson showing how to use them.

I have all kinds of methods that I want to teach you about when it comes to

presenting and selling your work, but want to start with the most user friendly methods first.

When you are presenting your formal portraits which are usually taken at your studio or home studio, it is great if you can show them on your computer as soon as you are done photographing them. You will get your best sales this way, because this is when there is the most excitement and interest in the event.

Photoshop is a great way to present your work if you do not have a point of sale Studio selling software. My wife Susan is an expert at Photoshop and will be presenting a lot of movie tutorials for you in the future. Feel free to go to her site at; <http://www.photoshopsolutions.com> Here you will find a lot of free tutorials to help you with your photography.

“What Time Frame Should You Deliver Your Work Within”

You are going to want and deliver these photos as quick as possible, but tell them to expect them no later than three weeks from the date they were photographed. Because this is a limited season kind of market it is best to get them out quickly in order to get more reorders while it is still fresh in their mind.

Quick delivery also makes the person who hired you look good and sets you up good to repeat next years class and any future work they may have.

Try and do the same with formal portraits, but understand that it takes longer when you do formal pictures because there will be retouching, artwork, and framing involved because it is a more custom kind of work.

“Workflow and Image Preparation”

On location, you need three people working to make things go smoothly. You need one person to pose, one person to collect money and number the paperwork, and you need a photographer.

The first person is set up at a table to either side of the area where the photos are being taken. They will have a sample picture display for the clients to look at and additional paperwork, because people always forget theirs or say they never were given any paperwork. They answer any questions that the client may have, collect money and make change, and write the frame numbers from the camera on the paperwork.

The second person poses the individuals, families, and the big group in the end. This person makes sure that the children are posed properly, that their hair is not in their face, and that their clothing looks right (you do not want clothing bunched up or crooked). They will also assist the person at the table if necessary.

The third person is the photographer who will be taking the photographs. They will obviously make sure that everything is done correctly as far as exposure and

composition. It is also very important that they communicate with the table person to make sure that the numbering is kept in sequence.

The numbering sequence is very important and needs to be checked very frequently between the photographer and the table person. These are the numbers that are on the back of the camera and show up after each photo is taken. We usually take two photographs of every individual, starting at #1 to whatever, and these are the numbers written on the paperwork so we know who is who. If the numbering sequence gets messed up, then so does the identity of the people being photographed, so that is why you want to check it all the time.

When the job is done, then you just need to select the best image of each individual or group and prepare it for printing. This is done in Photoshop and was explained in the first lesson.

“Delivery and Customer Service”

When you get your orders, get them to your customers as soon as possible whether it be by mail or delivering them to the church. I assume your photography will be perfect, and if you followed all of these steps and delivered in a timely manner, then you will have these customers for life. They will be someone to get a testimonial from and you will have lots of new potential customers for future markets.

That's it for today. See you at the next lesson.

Ed Mercer
Publisher, MMWYC Training Program

P. S. Don't forget the personalized coaching positions that are available at <http://www.makemoneywithyourcamera.com/Innercircle.html>

Coming Up Next...

Module #3: “Proms and Dance Recitals

In this lesson we will go over how to get into this market, show you a new gallery packed with great poses and ideas to help you shine in this market. We'll show you everything you need to know to get into one of the most lucrative markets in photography.

Also coming in the next couple of lessons: Little League Baseball and Softball and 2 lesson about the Wedding market. These lessons alone will be worth the entire years worth of lessons. I'm excited, we have so much more to teach you.

“Previous Modules”

<http://www.makemoneywithyourcamera.com/members/module1-sbh.pdf>