

Family Guide
Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise
Intermediate Level

Introduction to the Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise Family Guide

RCL Benziger's *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise Family Guide* will help you to prepare your child to celebrate First Eucharist. As you study the different parts of the Mass together, your child will come to understand that Catholics believe Christ is truly present in the consecrated bread and wine that we receive at Eucharist and that the Eucharist strengthens us to continue the work of Jesus through service to others.

Here are a few tips for using the Family Guide to prepare to celebrate Eucharist for the first time.

- Plan on completing one chapter a week.
- Set a regular and convenient time to meet each week. This will ensure that your learning sessions are a priority.
- Plan where you will meet in your home. Choose a place where you can work together without interruptions or distractions.
- Encourage all family members to participate in the prayer celebrations in every chapter.
- Download the weekly lesson plan and chapter activity for each lesson. Note: There is no activity sheet for chapter 8.
- Read the weekly lesson plan and the corresponding chapter in the child's book before your session.
- Gather the supplies you need to teach each week before the session. These are listed under "Materials Needed" in the family lesson plans.
- If you wish to incorporate the music, story books, and videos or DVDs suggested under "Additional Resources You Can Use" in the lesson plan, check to see if they are available from your parish Resource Center or local library. You may want to order your own Eucharist music CD from RCL Benziger. You can do this easily by calling 1-877-275-4725 and requesting item number B5205.
- Participate in weekly parish celebrations of the Eucharist as a family. This will help your child to recognize the importance of Eucharist in Catholic life and to begin to apply what they are learning about the Mass to the celebration of the liturgy.

Preparing your child for the celebration of First Communion is a once-in-a-lifetime event. Make the most of it! Remember that you are doing much more than teaching facts about our faith. Treasure this time as an opportunity to touch your child's heart and to inspire them to develop a lifelong love for the Eucharist and a desire to celebrate it often.

Chapter 1 Belonging

Dear Parent,

The three Sacraments of Initiation—Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist—are signs of the presence of Jesus in the lives of people of faith. Followers of Jesus know that because of our Baptism and Confirmation we have been called to a life of virtue and service, strengthened by the Holy Spirit. In the Eucharist, we are nourished in faith and sent forth to bring the message of God’s love to all.

As you begin the process of preparing for First Eucharist together, it is important that you help your child to deepen their sense of belonging to the Catholic Church. You can do this by helping your child to recognize that they are a unique and valuable child of God. Your love, acceptance and example will help your child learn how God and the Church cherishes and welcomes them.

Chapter Goals

After completing this lesson, your child will be able to

- Define the word *sacrament*.
- Name the effects of the Sacrament of Baptism.
- Identify the three Sacraments of Initiation.

Materials Needed:

- *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* intermediate-level child’s book
- Chapter 1 activity sheet, downloaded from the website
- Bible

Additional Resources You Can Use

- “Psalm 100: We Are God’s People” from the *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* music CD for use with the prayer service on page 11.
- **Marko, Katherine D.** *When Will I Ever Belong?* (Concordia Publishing House 1-00-325-3040 or www.cph.org). In this story a girl in foster care does not feel that she belongs.

Family Lesson Plan

Get Started

- Turn to page 5 in the *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* child’s book. Read aloud the chapter title and the verse from Galatians.
- Talk with your child about the importance of being loved by others. Explain that the story on page 5 is about a young man who hasn’t known much love in his life.
- Read “Mike’s New Family” together and discuss the questions. Help your child recognize the importance of unconditional love in our lives. Explain that God’s love for us is unconditional.

Share the Scripture Story

- Read together “A New Beginning” on pages 6 and 7.
- Discuss the “Let’s Talk” questions.
- Invite your child to prayerfully read “Word of God” aloud. Point out that at Baptism, God calls us each by name and welcomes us as members of the Church.
- Read “We Celebrate” and explain that these words are part of the Rite of Baptism.

Explore Catholic Teaching

- Read “Sacraments of Initiation” on pages 8 and 9 and have your child complete the activity.
- Emphasize that we celebrate the Eucharist each time we attend Mass.
- Summarize by reading aloud “This We Believe.”
- Turn to page 74 in the “A Little Catechism” section of the book. Review the descriptions of the three Sacraments of Initiation. Then turn to pages 70 and 71 and read aloud Statements 7 and 16. Point out that we first we receive the Holy Spirit at Baptism.

Complete the Activity

- Have your child complete the activity on page 10.
- Discuss responses to the activity. Encourage your child to put their faith into action in their daily life.
- Review the chapter by having your child use a Bible to complete the chapter 1 activity sheet.

Celebrate

- Involve other family members in the prayer service on page 11. Ask your child to divide the family members into Side 1 and Side 2.
- Play “Psalm 100: We Are God’s People” from the music CD and sing along using the lyrics on page 91.
- Conclude by reverently signing one another’s foreheads with the Sign of the Cross as a reminder of our Baptism. Ask everyone to recite the following words together: “Through Baptism, Lord, you have called us by name. We are your children.”

Share the Home and Family Page

- Read, discuss and complete page 12.
- Visit www.christjesustheway.com for online activities and articles to help prepare your child for Eucharist. Click on the whole parish link and choose sacrament preparation.

Chapter 2

Gathering

Dear Parent,

Catholics gather together at the Eucharist to worship as a community of faith joined as one voice raised in prayer. The assembly is a vital part of the liturgical celebration. We believe that Christ is present in the assembly of the faithful, gathered together in his name; he is present in his Word, when the Scriptures are read; in the person of the minister; and above all, in the Sacrament of Eucharist. When the assembly prays at Eucharist, we become signs of the presence of Jesus, to one another and to the world.

As you study this lesson together, build on your child's natural longing to be with others. Explain that Jesus wants us to follow him, but he knows that we need one another to do so. Jesus gives us our parish community so that we can come together to celebrate the Eucharist, to pray together, and to be a source of strength for one another.

Chapter Goals

After completing this lesson, your child will be able to

- Identify Sunday as the day Catholics gather to celebrate Mass.
- Explain why Christians gather for Eucharist.
- Describe what takes place during the Introductory Rites.

Materials Needed:

- *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* intermediate-level child's book
- Drawing or poster paper and crayons/markers
- Chapter 2 activity sheet, downloaded from the website

Additional Resources You Can Use

- "Gathered As One" from the *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* music CD for use with the prayer service on page 19.
- **Close Encounters with the Mass** (Oblate Media and Communication, 1-800-233-4629 or www.videoswithvalues.org). This video shows why Catholics celebrate Eucharist each Sunday.

Family Lesson Plan

Get Started

- Open the child's book to page 13. Prayerfully read the verse from 1 Corinthians.
- Read the story on page 13 and discuss the questions. Help your child to appreciate the importance of family meals.

Share the Scripture Story

- Together read "Gathering as Christians" on pages 14 and 15 and discuss the "Let's Talk" questions. Emphasize that when we gather for Mass today, we do many of the same things Jesus' first followers did.

- Read aloud “Word of God.” Point out that the Body of Christ is another way we describe the Church.

Explore Catholic Teaching

- Invite your child to read “Christians Today” on pages 16 and 17. Practice the responses to the words prayed in the Introductory Rites.
- Ask your child to read aloud “This We Believe.” Emphasize that by sharing in the Eucharist, we become the Church, the Body of Christ on earth.
- Have your child complete the activity on page 17.
- Turn to “A Little Catechism.” Review the Introductory Rites on pages 76 and 77. Pray the Gloria together on page 77.

Complete the Activity

- Read aloud the introductory paragraph on page 18.
- Discuss the questions together. Then have your child use drawing or poster paper to complete the activity.
- Give your child time to complete the puzzle on the chapter 2 activity sheet. Review their responses and make corrections as necessary.
- Read aloud “Catholic Practices” on page 18. Discuss who participates in the entrance procession at Mass.

Celebrate

- Before beginning the prayer on page 19, point out the response refrain: “Glory and praise to our God.” Help your child to create a joyful gesture to accompany this response.
- Engage family members in the closing prayer. Assign family members to Side 1 or Side 2.
- When the words “Glory and praise to our God” are prayed, perform the gesture you chose.
- Conclude by listening to “Gathered As One” from the music CD. The lyrics are found on page 96.

Share the Home and Family Page

- Read, discuss, and complete page 20.
- Visit www.christjesustheway.com for online activities and articles to help prepare your child for Eucharist. Click on the whole parish link and choose sacrament preparation.

Chapter 3

Listening

Dear Parent,

In this chapter, you and your child will learn about the Liturgy of the Word. The three Scripture passages—readings from the Old Testament, the New Testament letters, and the Gospel—offer opportunities to truly listen to and respond to God’s voice. Careful and attentive listening helps us to discover how and where God is leading us each day.

Your child is only beginning to learn how to be a good listener. Children are captivated by stories that interest them and are told by good storytellers. Jesus, our greatest storyteller, tells powerful stories to teach us about God’s love and how we are called to treat one another. As you work through chapter 3 together, help your child to develop the important skill of listening to God’s Word.

Chapter Goals

After completing this lesson, your child will be able to

- Identify the importance of listening to God’s Word.
- Explain that God’s Word is proclaimed at Mass during the Liturgy of the Word.
- Recognize that Catholics are called to listen to God’s Word and act on it.

Materials Needed

- *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* intermediate-level child’s book
- Blank paper and crayons or markers
- Chapter 3 activity sheet, downloaded from the website

Additional Resources You Can Use

- “Hear Our Prayer” from the *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* music CD for use with the prayer service on page 27.
- **What We Do at Mass** (Liturgy Training Publications, 1-800-933-1800 or www.ltp.org). This is a video for children on the importance of liturgy in the formation of a Christian.

Family Lesson Plan

Get Started

- Open the child’s book to page 21. Note the chapter title. Prayerfully read the verse from Luke.
- Read aloud “Stories” and discuss the questions. Explain that this week’s lesson will focus on the importance of listening and responding to God’s Word.

Share the Scripture Story

- Read “Listen to Jesus” on pages 22 and 23.
- Discuss the “Let’s Talk” questions. Help your child to appreciate that Jesus calls us to listen to God’s Word carefully and to live it in our daily lives.

- Point out the “Word of God” box. Explain that *hardening our hearts* means “to turn away from God’s Word.” Remind your child that we hear God’s voice today in the Bible, at Mass, in religion classes, and in the advice of parents or teachers.

Explore Catholic Teaching

- Read “God’s Word” on pages 24 and 25. Supply sheets of drawing paper for the booklet-making activity.
- Turn to “A Little Catechism” on page 78 and review the parts of the Liturgy of the Word. Practice the responses with your child.
- Read aloud “Catholic Practices” on page 25. Explain that a creed is a statement of belief. Work together to begin learning the Nicene Creed (found on page 89).

Complete the Activity

- Read aloud Jesus’ words at the top of page 26. Explain that the words tell us how Jesus wants us to treat others. Invite your child to complete the “Acting on God’s Word” activities.
- As you read the “Parish Connection,” assure your child that you will make a special effort after Mass next week to talk to a parish lector about their ministry.
- Review the lesson by having your child complete the chapter 3 activity sheet.

Celebrate

- Before praying the petitions on page 27, talk with your child about people or groups that are in need of God’s help and loving care. Invite your child to write two personal petitions for these people.
- Involve other family members in the prayer service. Allow your child to choose the readers. After the Reader 5 petition, encourage your child to proclaim the petitions they wrote. Have all respond, “Lord, hear our prayer” after each petition.
- Conclude your prayer by singing together “Hear Our Prayer” from the music CD. The lyrics are found on page 92.

Share the Home and Family Page

- Read, discuss, and complete page 28.
- Visit www.christjesustheway.com for online activities and articles to help prepare your child for Eucharist. Click on the whole parish link and choose sacrament preparation.

Chapter 4

Giving Thanks and Praise

Dear Parent,

Grateful people are graced by the loving presence of God in their lives and feel compelled to respond. As Catholics, we give thanks and praise to God for all that is good and we are invited to return God's goodness by reaching out to others in loving service. Through the celebration of the Eucharist we praise and thank the Father for all the good gifts we have received from him, especially the gift of Jesus Christ.

As a parent, your goal is to help your child develop the good habit of remembering to praise and thank God for all that we are and all that we have. You can do this easily by openly and naturally taking advantage of daily opportunities to express your gratitude to God and encouraging your child to do the same. Remembering to praise and thank God will develop in your child a deeper desire to participate more fully in the Mass.

Chapter Goals

After completing this lesson, your child will be able to

- Identify God's blessings in their lives.
- Recognize the celebration of the Eucharist as a great prayer of thanks and praise.
- Understand why the Church thanks and praises God.

Materials Needed:

- *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* intermediate-level child's book
- Chapter 4 activity sheet, downloaded from the website
- Incense and matches
- Fire-safe bowl

Additional Resources You Can Use

- "Malo, Malo" from the *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* music CD for use with the prayer service on page 35.
- *Prayer with Young People* (St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1-800-488-0488, www.AmericanCatholic.org). The "Prayer of Praise" segment in this video explains the purpose of praying prayers of praise and thanksgiving.

Family Lesson Plan

Get Started

- Pray together the Scripture verse from Psalms on page 29.
- Talk with your child about experiences of giving and receiving gifts. Then read "Gifts" together.
- Discuss the questions. Focus on the many blessings God gives us every day.

Share the Scripture Story

- Introduce the story on pages 30 and 31 by explaining that everything we are and everything we have are signs of God’s love for us.
- Read “All Good Gifts” and discuss the “Let’s Talk” questions.
- Encourage your child to recognize that God takes care of his children.
- Emphasize God’s desire to give us every good gift by reading together the “Word of God” verse.

Explore Catholic Teaching

- Read aloud “Thanking God” on pages 32 and 33. Have your child repeat the responses after you, including the response in “We Celebrate.” Remind your child to listen for these words at Mass.
- Reinforce the importance of the Liturgy of the Eucharist by turning to “A Little Catechism” on page 79. Review the responses on this page.
- Explain the directions to the activity on page 33 and have your child complete it.
- Have your child repeat the “This We Believe” statements with you. Explain that Jesus is our mediator because he gave his life on the cross to save all people from sin. We remember Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross each time we celebrate the Eucharist.
- Reinforce the content of this lesson by having your child complete the chapter 4 activity sheet.

Completing the Activity

- Explain the directions to the activity on page 34 and have your child complete it. Affirm the gifts you see in your child. Emphasize the importance of using our gifts in positive ways as an expression of gratitude to God.
- Read aloud “Catholic Practices.” Emphasize that the bread and wine we use at Mass are gifts of God’s creation.

Celebrate

- Involve other family members in the chapter celebration. Ask your child to decide which family members will be the Side 1 readers and which will be the Side 2 readers.
- Place several grains of incense in a small fire-safe bowl and light them. Encourage your child to watch as the incense rises. Emphasize that all our prayers, including our prayers of thanks and praise, rise to God and that God always hears them.
- Then pray “A Prayer of Thanksgiving” on page 35.
- Listen to “Malo, Malo” from the music CD. The lyrics for this song, found on page 92, are in 15 different languages to remind us that all people are called to give praise and thanks to God.

Share the Home and Family Page

- Read, discuss, and complete page 36.
- Visit www.christjesustheway.com for online activities and articles to help prepare your child for Eucharist. Click on the whole parish link and choose sacrament preparation.

Chapter 5

Remembering

Dear Parent,

At the Last Supper, Jesus showed his followers the depth of his love by instituting the Eucharist as the memorial of his death and Resurrection. He asked his friends to “do this in memory of me” until he comes again. Since then, Jesus’ followers have offered to the Father what he himself has given us: the gifts of his creation, the bread and wine, which by the words and actions of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit become the Body and Blood of Christ.

As you teach this chapter, focus on the great sacrifice Jesus made by accepting death on the cross. Emphasize that God showed his great love for Jesus and all people by raising Jesus to new life and giving us a share in that new life. Help your child to begin to appreciate that the Eucharist remembers and makes present again the sacrifice of Jesus. This is a great mystery and the heart of our Catholic faith.

Chapter Goals

After completing this lesson, your child will be able to

- Recognize the Eucharist as a meal of remembering.
- Identify the consecration as the time in the Mass when the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ.
- Understand that the Eucharist is a meal of sacrifice.

Materials Needed:

- *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* intermediate-level child’s book
- Paper
- Chapter 5 activity sheet, downloaded from the website

Additional Resources You Can Use

- “We Remember” from the *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* music CD for use with the prayer service on page 43.
- **Carlson, Melody.** *Benjamin’s Box* (ZonderKidz). This is a story of a boy who follows Jesus through Jerusalem, collecting mementos to remind him and others of Jesus.

Family Lesson Plan

Get Started

- Pray together the verse from Luke on page 37.
- Talk about happy family memories and how you keep those memories alive. Then read “The Photo Album” aloud.
- Invite responses to the questions. Point out that God gives us the gift of memory to help us recall all that he has done for us.

Share the Scripture Story

- Read “Remembering” together on pages 38 and 39. Discuss the “Let’s Talk” questions. Emphasize that at Mass it is Christ himself, acting through the priest, that offers the Eucharistic Sacrifice.
- List the words *Passover*, *consecration*, *Memorial Acclamation*, *Last Supper*, and *sacrifice* on a separate piece of paper. As these words are introduced on pages 38 to 41, help your child to understand their meaning by using the Glossary definitions on page 90.

Explore Catholic Teaching

- Read “A Sacrifice of Praise” on pages 40 and 41 together. Make sure your child understands that a sacrifice is something we do out of love for someone else. Ask your child to give an example.
- Clarify the sacrifice that Jesus made—dying for our sins.
- Use the text and the “This We Believe” statement to help your child understand why the Mass is a meal of sacrifice.
- Review the “We Celebrate” response on page 40. Then turn to “A Little Catechism” on page 79 and review the actions and responses found in the Eucharistic Prayer.
- Have your child complete the activity on page 41.

Complete the Activity

- Read aloud the introductory paragraph on page 42. Then explain the directions to the activity and have your child complete it. Praise your child for their unselfish choices.
- Point out the “Catholic Practices” box and read it aloud. Explain that through the Easter Triduum, the Church celebrates the Paschal Mystery—the Passion, death, Resurrection, and glorious Ascension of Jesus Christ.
- Reinforce chapter learning by having your child complete the chapter 5 activity sheet.

Celebrate

- Involve other family members in the chapter celebration. Invite your child to choose the three readers. Practice having everyone raise their arms overhead as a sign of giving thanks to God each time the words “Amen, alleluia, amen!” are recited during the prayer.
- Sing along to “We Remember” from the music CD. The lyrics are found on page 93 of the book. Then pray together the “We Remember and Give Thanks” prayer.

Share the Home and Family Page

- Read, discuss, and complete page 44.
- Visit www.christjesustheway.com for online activities and articles to help prepare your child for Eucharist. Click on the whole parish link and choose sacrament preparation.

Chapter 6 Sharing a Holy Meal

Dear Parent,

The heart of our faith and worship centers on the celebration of the Eucharist. We gather at the Lord's Table to share in the sacredness of the Lord's Supper. We gather as sisters and brothers in Christ and are nourished by the Word and the Bread of Life. The Eucharist brings us into a deep and profound union with Christ and with each other as we await the promise of eternal life.

As you work together to complete chapter 6, keep in mind that children can identify sacred, or holy, elements of an everyday meal they share at home with their families. However, it is important that your child understands that although family meals are special, the Mass is a very sacred meal and different from the ordinary meals we eat at home.

Chapter Goals

After completing this lesson, your child will be able to

- Recognize Jesus as the Bread of Life.
- Explain that the Eucharist is a meal of sharing.
- Identify the consecrated bread and wine as the Body and Blood of Christ.

Materials Needed:

- *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* intermediate-level child's book
- Candle and matches
- Chapter 6 activity sheet, downloaded from the website

Additional Resources You Can Use

- "Come to the Table" from the *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* music CD for use with the prayer service on page 51.
- **Grandma's Bread: A Eucharist Film** (St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1-800-488-0488 or www.AmericanCatholic.org). This video tenderly explains how the bread of Eucharist unites us all to Jesus and to one another.
- **Brown, Marcia.** *Stone Soup* (Aladdin). This book demonstrates how sharing a meal can bring a community together.

Family Lesson Plan

Get Started

- Open the child's book to page 45 and read aloud the chapter title. Together, pray the verse from Psalms.
- Read "The Cafeteria" together. Ask your child to name the problem in the story (Jason forgot his lunch money).
- Discuss the questions. Emphasize the importance of sharing with others.

Share the Scripture Story

- Ask your child to study the illustrations on pages 46 and 47 and describe what they think the story is about.
- Read “Sharing with Others” and discuss the “Let’s Talk” questions.
- Point out that Jesus was able to feed the crowd because he worked a miracle. Explain that a miracle is something that could not have happened without God’s help. Emphasize that Jesus performed the miracle because he knew the people were hungry and he wanted them to understand that he is God’s Son and truly divine.

Explore Catholic Teaching

- Read together “A Meal of Sharing” on pages 48 and 49. Explain that the bread and wine we share at Eucharist is different from the food Jesus shared with the crowd in the Scripture story; at Eucharist we share the real Body and Blood of Jesus.
- Practice the responses, emphasizing that when we say, “Amen” as we receive the Eucharist, we are saying we believe that we are receiving Christ in Holy Communion. Encourage your child to pray the “We Celebrate” response at Mass.
- Reinforce our belief in the true presence by reading together the “This We Believe” statements.
- Turn to page 80 in “A Little Catechism” and review the Communion Rite. Then read Question 5 on page 72. Ask your child to restate the response in their own words to make sure they understand what Catholics believe about the Eucharist.
- Use the activity on page 49 to help your child practice receiving Holy Communion.
- Reinforce learning by having your child complete the chapter 6 activity sheet.

Complete the Activity

- Have your child complete the activity on page 50. Discuss the connection between sharing with the poor and the Eucharist.
- After reading “Parish Connection,” identify how your parish brings Communion to the sick, elderly, or those in hospitals.
- Discuss the “Catholic Practices” statements. Clarify any questions your child might have about Eucharist fasting rules.

Celebrate

- Light a candle as a sign of Jesus’ presence with you.
- Slowly read through the prayer. After a moment of silent reflection, join hands and pray together the Lord’s Prayer.
- Conclude by listening to “Come to the Table” from the music CD. The lyrics are found on page 95.

Share the Home and Family Page

- Read, discuss, and complete page 52.
- Visit www.christjesustheway.com for online activities and articles to help prepare your child for Eucharist. Click on the whole parish link and choose sacrament preparation.

Chapter 7

Serving Others

Dear Parent,

In this chapter, your child will learn that we are challenged by receiving the Body and Blood of Christ to serve one another as Jesus did. When we receive the Eucharist, we say, “Amen.” This response is a sign that we understand that we are called to take on the mission of Christ and to live out his message of love. With the Eucharist as the center of our faith, we can follow Jesus’ command to “love one another as I love you” (John 15:12).

As you work together on chapter 7, help your child come to a deeper understanding of faith. Emphasize the connection between what we believe as Catholics to how we proclaim our faith through service to others, as Jesus did.

Chapter Goals

After completing this lesson, your child will be able to

- Identify Jesus’ act of humble service at the Last Supper.
- Recognize that all followers of Jesus are called to serve as Jesus served.
- Participate in the Eucharist’s call to bring Jesus to others through Christian service.

Materials Needed:

- *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* intermediate-level child’s book
- Chapter 7 activity sheet, downloaded from the website
- A bowl of water and a dry cloth

Additional Resources You Can Use

- “Go Make a Difference” from the *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* music CD for use with the prayer service on page 59.
- **Vollbracht, James.** *Small Acts of Kindness* (Paulist Press, 1-800-218-1903 or www.paulistpress.com). A story that shows how one act of kindness can lead to great acts of love.

Family Lesson Plan

Get Started

- Prayerfully read the verse from Galatians on page 53 together.
- Invite your child to name large parish events they have attended and how parishioners at the event served one another.
- Read “The Parish Carnival” with your child. Ask your child to respond to the questions. Emphasize that when we help others, we are following the example of Jesus.

Sharing the Scripture Story

- Ask your child to describe what they see happening in the illustrations on pages 54 and 55. Then read aloud “Loving Service.” Point out that by washing the Apostles’ feet, Jesus was teaching us that no act of service is too lowly for his followers.
- Discuss the “Let’s Talk” questions.
- Have your child recite the “Word of God” verse after you.

Explore Catholic Teaching

- Talk with your child about the connection between the Last Supper and the Mass. Recall that at Mass, we do what Jesus did at the Last Supper: we share in his Body and Blood in the Eucharist.
- Read “We Act Like Jesus” on pages 56 and 57. Ensure that your child understands the meaning of the words *mission*, *grace*, and *blessing* by looking them up in the Glossary on page 90.
- Use the “This We Believe” statement to emphasize that through the Mass Jesus helps us to love and serve others.
- Turn to page 81 in “A Little Catechism” and review the responses that are recited during the Concluding Rite.
- Give your child time to complete the activity on page 57.

Complete the Activity

- Explain the directions to the “Serving Others” activity on page 58 and invite your child to complete it. Discuss their responses. Praise your child for looking for ways to help and serve others as Jesus did.
- Discuss the “Catholic Practices” statements. Talk about the ways in which your parish serves the poor.
- Reinforce the lesson theme by having your child complete the chapter 7 activity sheet.

Celebrate

- Place a bowl of water on the table and a dry cloth. Begin the celebration by washing and drying your child’s hands and having them do the same for you and other family members participating in the prayer. Remind all that you are imitating the actions of Christ at the Last Supper.
- Pray together “We Love and Serve” on page 59.
- Conclude by singing along to “Go Make a Difference” from the music CD. The lyrics can be found on page 93.

Share the Home and Family Page

- Read, discuss, and complete page 60.
- Visit www.christjesustheway.com for online activities and articles to help prepare your child for Eucharist. Click on the whole parish link and choose sacrament preparation.

Chapter 8

Living Eucharist

Dear Parent,

Chapter 8 is designed to be presented after the children have celebrated Eucharist for the first time. Its purpose is to help the children reflect on their experience of sharing in the Body and Blood of Christ and to recall the different parts of the Mass and their meaning. This process is called “mystagogy,” a word that means “reflecting on the mysteries” of our faith. Mystagogy is a time when we grow in our understanding of God’s sacramental presence in our lives.

During this week’s lesson, you will lead your child in a guided meditation to help them recall the First Communion celebration. Through reflection and discussion, your child will be able to articulate from their own experience the meaning of Eucharist.

Keep in mind that First Communion is only the initial step in understanding the meaning of the Eucharist in our lives. In the coming months and years, help your child to deepen their love for Jesus’ gift of self in the bread and wine we share at Mass. Participate on a regular basis at parish Masses and talk with your child frequently about how they are growing in their love for the Lord and demonstrating that love through service to others.

Chapter Goals

After completing this lesson, your child will be able to

- Identify the main parts of the Mass.
- Describe Eucharist as mystery.
- Articulate the basic meaning of Eucharist.

Materials Needed:

- *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* intermediate-level child’s book
- A loaf of bread, cup of grape juice, a Bible placed on a white napkin or table cloth

Additional Resources You Can Use

- “I Send You Out” from the *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* music CD for use with the prayer service on page 67.
- **Koran, Jan.** *Miss Fannie’s Hat* (Augsburg Fortress Publishers). A story that shows how a donation to a church auction demonstrates sacrifice and community service.

Family Lesson Plan

Get Started

- Create an environment for reflection by placing a loaf of bread, a cup of grape juice, and a Bible on a table covered by a white cloth. Add any symbols that were used in the First Eucharist Mass in your parish.
- Pray the verse from Luke on page 61 together.

- Read aloud “A Day to Remember” and have your child complete the discussion sentences. You, too, can complete the sentences with your recollections.

Recall the Experience of Celebrating First Communion

- Consider playing soft instrumental background music as you lead the meditation on pages 62 to 65.
- Read “We Remember” on page 62.
- Slowly go through each element in the celebration of the Eucharist, pausing to allow your child to reflect and respond to each question. As an alternative, you may want to invite your child to draw some of their impressions of different parts of the Mass.
- Conclude with “Dismissal” on page 65. Help your child to appreciate that the celebration of the Eucharist does not stop at the end of the Mass. Explain that because we are part of the Body of Christ, we are called to continue Jesus’ work in the world.

Understand Our Mission

- Read “Your Mission” on page 66. Encourage your child to give concrete and practical responses to the questions.
- Assure your child that Jesus will help them to become more loving followers through frequent reception of his Body and Blood in the Eucharist.

Celebrate

- Call the family together for prayer. Choose a reader to proclaim the reading from Luke. Decide who will lead the prayer.
- Begin by singing along to “I Send You Out” from the music CD. The lyrics are found on page 95.
- Pray “A Great Banquet” together. Invite each family member to respond to the reflection question.
- Pray the closing prayer as an echo, with the leader reading a phrase and family members repeating it.
- Conclude by sharing a ritual meal of bread and grape juice in remembrance of your child’s First Eucharist.

Share the Home and Family Page

- Read, discuss, and complete page 68.
- Visit www.christjesustheway.com for online activities and articles to help prepare your child for Eucharist. Click on the whole parish link and choose sacrament preparation.