

Family Guide
Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise
Primary 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

- Recognize that a sacrament is a special sign of God’s love.
- Name the effects of the Sacrament of Baptism.
- Identify the three Sacraments of Initiation.

Materials Needed:

- *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* primary-level child’s book
- Chapter 1 activity sheet, downloaded from the website
- Drawing paper and markers or crayons

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.
- **Eubank, Patricia Reeder.** *Just Where You Belong* (Ideals Publications, 1-800-586-2572 or www.idealspublications.com). In this story Little Bear discovers that everybody belongs to somebody.

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.
- Ask your child to name the different groups or teams to which they belong. Discuss what it feels like to be part of a group.
- Read “A New Family Member” together and discuss the first question. Emphasize that Baptism welcomes us into the Body of Christ, the Church.
- Invite your child to draw a family portrait. Point out that each person in your family is a member of the Church and a child of God.

Share the Scripture Story

- Read together “Jesus Welcomes the Children” 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.

Explore Catholic Teaching

- Read “Signs of Belonging” 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 description of Baptism. Then turn to page 70 and read aloud Statement 1 about the Blessed Trinity. Remind your child that we pray to the Blessed Trinity each time we make the Sign of the Cross.

Complete the Activity

- Help your child to complete the activity on page 10.
- Discuss the “Parish Connection.” Have your child identify where the holy water fonts are placed in your church.
- Review the chapter by having your child complete the chapter 1 activity sheet.

Celebrate

- Involve other family members in the prayer service on page 11. Invite your child to choose who will proclaim the three readings.
- 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* primary-level child's book
- Drawing paper and crayons or 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.
- **Stanton, Sue.** *Child's Guide to the Mass* (Paulist Press, 1-800-218-1903 or www.paulistpress.com). This book is a wonderful child's look at why we gather for Mass and what happens there.

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 question. Help your child to appreciate the importance of family meals.
- Have your child complete the drawing activity on a separate piece of paper. When finished, invite them to describe the significance of the family meal they drew.

Share the Scripture Story

- Together read “Christians Gather” 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 follow along as you read “Christians Today” on pages 16 and 17. Practice with your child the responses to the words prayed in the Introductory Rites.
- Ask your child to read aloud “We Celebrate.” Explain that the word *mercy* means “loving forgiveness.”
- Have your child complete the activity on page 17.
- Turn to “A Little Catechism.” Review the Introductory Rites on pages 76 and 77.
- Summarize learning by reading aloud “This We Believe” on page 17.

Complete the Activity

- Read aloud the introductory paragraph on page 18
- Have your child complete the activity. Emphasize that the best way we can show our love for Jesus is to treat one another like a loving family.
- Give your child time to complete the crossword puzzle on the chapter 2 activity sheet. Review responses and make corrections as necessary.
- Read aloud the “Parish Connection.” If your child has difficulty thinking of a favorite gathering song, suggest a few familiar hymns you often sing at Mass.

Celebrate

- Before beginning the prayer on page 19, point out the response refrain: “Glory to God in the highest.” Help your child to create a joyful gesture to accompany this response.
- Engage family members in the closing prayer. Ask your child to select the readers. If others are not available, proclaim the readers’ parts alternatively with your child.
- When the words “Glory to God in the highest” are prayed, perform the gesture you chose.
- Pray together the Gloria on page 77.
- 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 the 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* primary-level child’s book
- Drawing 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.
- **Sweetland, Nancy.** *God’s Quiet Things* (Eerdmans Publishing Company). This book explores the quiet and subtle gifts from God.

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 first question. Then ask your child to draw a picture of their favorite story.

Share the Scripture Story

- Ask your child to listen as you read aloud “Listening 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 and have your child complete the 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. Then return to page 25. Review what happens in the Liturgy of the Word by reciting together “This We Believe.”
- Read aloud “Catholic Practices.” 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 “Listen and Act” 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 chapter learning 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. Work with 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, invite your child to proclaim the petitions you wrote together. 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* primary-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.
- Tell your child that they are going to read a story about a girl who thinks that God has given wonderful abilities to everyone except her. Together read, "Kelly's Worry."
- Discuss the questions. As your child talks about the gifts they have received from God, emphasize that God wants us to take care of the gifts He has given us.

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.
- Affirm your child's willingness to give praise and thanks to God.

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 Eucharistic Prayer by turning to "A Little Catechism" on page 79. Review the responses and sing or repeat the "Holy, holy, holy" acclamation.
- Explain the directions to the activity on page 33 and have your child complete it.
- Recite the "This We Believe" statements together. 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 learning 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 your child names and their ideas for thanking God for their gifts.
- 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 Thanksgiving Prayer" 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 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* primary-level child’s book
- 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.
- **Ballman, Snawee.** *The Very First Lord’s Supper* (Concordia Publishing House, 1-800-325-3040 or www.cph.org). This book tells the Last Supper Gospel in rhyme.

Family Lesson Plan

Get Started

- Pray together the verse from Luke on page 37.
- Share with your child a happy family memory. Then read “Family Memories” aloud.
- Invite responses to the questions. Point out that all families have happy memories they like to recall and share again and again.

Share the Scripture Story

- Explain that on the night before Jesus died, he and his followers shared a special meal in which they remembered something wonderful God did for them. Then ask your child to listen closely to the story to learn about this memory.
- Read aloud “Remembering” on pages 38 and 39. Have your child underline in the book the memory Jesus and his friends shared at the Last Supper (God saved the Jewish people from slavery and gave them a new life).
- Discuss the “Let’s Talk’ questions. Emphasize that at Mass the bread and wine become the real presence of Christ—his Body and Blood.
- Invite your child to repeat “The Word of God” verse after you.

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. Turn to page 72 in “A Little Catechism” and read together Question 5. Ask your child to restate the response in their own words to make sure they understand what Catholics believe about the Eucharist.
- 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 have your child read it aloud. Turn to the “Lord’s Prayer” on page 88 and review it together. Explain that we also call this prayer the “Our Father.” Remind your child that Jesus taught us this special prayer.
- 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 who will proclaim the four acclamations. Each time the words “Amen, alleluia, amen!” are recited, encourage all to raise their arms overhead as a sign of giving thanks to God.
- 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* primary-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.
- **Celebrating Eucharist with Children** (Liguori Publications, 1-800-325-9521 or www.catholicbooksonline.com). This video helps prepare young children for the lifetime reception of the Eucharist.
- **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.
- Ask your child to recall a school field trip they have participated in. Then read "The Lunch" together. Invite your child to name the problem in the story (Katie left her lunch at home).
- 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.
- Invite other family members to join you in reading the play, “Sharing with Others.”
- Discuss the story using 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.
- Emphasize that when we say, “Amen” as we receive the Eucharist, we are saying we believe that it is Christ himself that we are receiving in Holy Communion.
- Reinforce our belief in the true presence by reading together the “This We Believe” statements.
- Turn to page 70 in “A Little Catechism.” Read aloud Statement 9. Emphasize that through the Eucharist, we become the Body of Christ. Then turn to page 80 and review the Communion Rite.
- Use the activity on page 49 to help your child practice receiving Holy Communion.
- Help your child review the Lord’s Prayer by completing the chapter 6 activity sheet.

Complete the Activity

- Have your child complete the activity on page 50. Encourage your child to share with others as a sign of their readiness to receive the Body and Blood of Jesus.
- Discuss the “Catholic Practices” statements. Emphasize that receiving Eucharist at Mass makes us one with Jesus and the Church. Tell your child about the ways in which your parish brings Communion to the sick, elderly, or those in hospitals.

Celebrate

- Light a candle as a sign of Jesus’ presence with you.
- Slowly read through the prayer, phrase by phrase, asking your child to echo each line. 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* primary-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.
- **Cronin, Gaynell Bordes and Bellina, Jean.** *Together at Mass* (Ave Maria Press, 1-800-282-1865 or www.avamariapress.com). This book introduces the Mass to children, including the command “to go forth and serve.”
- **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 Picnic” 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 page 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 together in the Glossary on page 90.
- 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. Then discuss their responses. Praise them for looking for ways to help and serve others as Jesus did.
- 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 any other family members participating in the prayer.
- 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* primary-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.