

*faith  
first*

Legacy Edition  
PARISH



PREPARING  
FOR **FIRST**  
**EUCCHARIST**

Using Faith First  
Legacy Edition / Parish  
Grade 3



# PREPARING FOR FIRST EUCCHARIST

## Using Faith First Legacy Edition / Parish Grade 3

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# Contents

---

How to Use This Booklet . . . . . 1

## PREPARING FOR FIRST EUCCHARIST: LESSONS

---

### Using Chapter 1

God Speaks to Us . . . . . 2

### Using Chapter 7

The Holy Spirit—A Scripture Story . . . . . 4

### Using Chapter 8

We Are the Church . . . . . 6

### Using Chapter 12

Celebrations of God's Love . . . . . 8

### Using Chapter 13

We Celebrate the Eucharist

Part 1: The Last Supper, Introductory Rites,  
Liturgy of the Word. . . . . 10

Part 2: The Liturgy of the Eucharist  
and the Concluding Rites. . . . . 12

## REFLECTIONS

---

Suggestions for a Eucharist Retreat . . . . . 14

## PREPARING FOR FIRST EUCCHARIST: LETTERS TO PARENTS

---

Parent Letter, explaining  
*Preparing for First Eucharist* . . . . . 15

Parent Letter, Chapter 1 . . . . . 16

Parent Letter, Chapter 7 . . . . . 17

Parent Letter, Chapter 8 . . . . . 18

Parent Letter, Chapter 12 . . . . . 19

Parent Letter, Chapter 13

Part 1 . . . . . 20

Part 2 . . . . . 21

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# How to Use This Booklet

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The immediate preparation for First Eucharist is a grace-filled time. *Preparing for First Eucharist* will guide you through the steps to use **Faith First® Legacy Edition / Parish** Grade 3 to prepare children for receiving Eucharist for the first time. This *Preparing for First Eucharist* booklet has been written to be used in conjunction with the **Faith First® Legacy Edition / Parish** Grade 3 catechist guide.

There are five chapters in the child's text that can be used in the immediate preparation for First Eucharist. These chapters provide the children with a review of the Church's teachings on God, faith, Scripture, community, and the liturgical life of the Church. These chapters are essential for a clear understanding of the celebration of Eucharist.

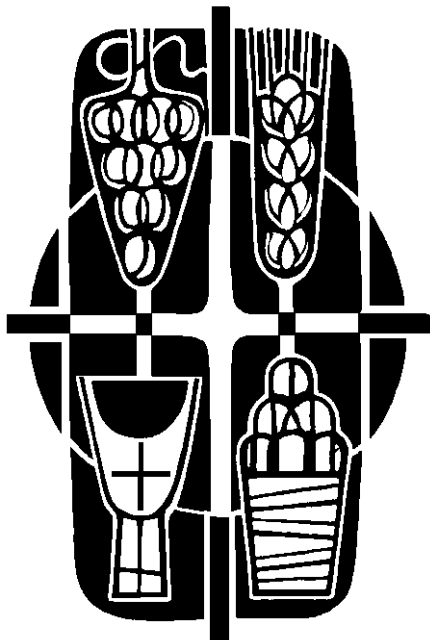
Chapter 1 should be taught at the very beginning of the year as it lays a strong faith foundation for the children by presenting to them the concepts of the Holy Trinity, the Creed, Sacred Scriptures, and the Church community. This chapter could be reviewed prior to the immediate preparation for First Eucharist. Chapters 7, 8, 12, and 13 should be taught immediately prior to First Eucharist. Chapters 7, 8, and 12 review the concepts of God, faith, Church, worshipping community, and the sacraments. Chapter 13 is divided into two parts. Part 1 focuses the children on why we as Catholics celebrate the Eucharist, the Introductory Rites, and the Liturgy of the Word. The focus of Part 2 is on the Liturgy of the Eucharist and the Concluding Rite. Presenting the chapters in this order provides the children with sound catechesis for sacramental preparation, prepares the children with a fuller understanding of Eucharist, and invites them into full communion with their parish family by sharing in the Eucharist.

*Preparing for First Eucharist* is simple, clear, and easy to use. It consists of a two-page spread for presenting each of the five chapters that are used for the immediate preparation of the children for First Eucharist. There are also seven parent letters that are designed to be photocopied and sent home with each child. The first letter introduces the program to the parents. The remaining letters correspond to each of the five chapters. The booklet closes with ideas for a spiritual retreat which can be held prior to the reception of First Eucharist.

On the first page of each lesson plan, you will find a brief explanation that places the chapter in the context of immediate preparation for First Eucharist. Specific objectives are named. These objectives will help you focus on teaching the chapter to the children. There is a list of additional resources, along with practical suggestions, that you might want to use to help the children prepare for First Eucharist. The opening page of each lesson contains a blessing for the children, which we encourage you to pray as you close each of the lessons.

The second page of the lesson plan is a step-by-step process for teaching the lesson. This page clearly identifies the parts of the regular **Faith First® Legacy Edition / Parish** Grade 3 catechist guide that you should use. This page also contains additional information not found in the guide.

## Using Chapter 1: God Speaks to Us



*What a special time in the lives of your third grade students! They are preparing to receive the sacrament of the Eucharist for the first time. Chapter 1 helps prepare them by reviewing some of the foundational teachings of the Catholic Church, namely, the mystery of the Holy Trinity, Sacred Scripture, and the mystery of the Church. An understanding of these mysteries of faith will enable them to participate in the celebration of the Eucharist. At the Eucharist the Church, joined to Christ and through the power of the Holy Spirit, listens to the word of God and gives praise and thanksgiving to God the Father. This year the children will be invited to join with the faithful in gathering around the table of the Lord and receive Jesus, the Bread of Life, in Holy Communion.*

### *Blessing for the Children*



*Jesus Christ, Bread of Life,  
be with these children  
as the day they will receive  
First Eucharist draws closer.  
May their excitement become an  
eagerness to learn more about you  
and your holy sacrament.  
Amen.*

### **Objectives for First Eucharist Preparation**

- State what we believe about God in the Nicene Creed.
- Explain that God revealed himself through Sacred Scripture.
- Identify the New Testament as teaching the story of Jesus.
- Explain how Jesus calls us to be members of his community, the Church.

### **Additional Resources**

- Grade 3, **Faith First** Video, segment 1
- **Faith First** interactive calendar for Eucharist
- Parent Letter, found on page 16 of this booklet
- Grade 3, **Faith First Legacy Edition / Parish Additional Activities** booklet, pages 1 and 1a
- Book to read:  
*The Bee Tree* by Patricia Polacco. New York, NY: Philomel Books, 1993.  
God's word is sweeter than honey.

### **Getting Ready for First Eucharist**

- As the children's catechist and teacher, it is important that you check that the children have been baptized by verifying their baptismal certificates. The parish or school secretary may be able to help you with this.
- Communicate to the children's parents the date for the celebration of First Eucharist, specific times and dates for meetings, practices, day of prayer, and all pertinent sacrament information.

## Begin the lesson . . .

### Guide Page 49

#### Student Page 13

- In Catechist Guide (CG) use **PRAY** and **DISCOVER**.
- Direct the children's attention to the cover of the student text and explain that the cross is called a Jerusalem Cross. Explain that the four crosses around the central cross are symbols of the four corners of the earth. They are a reminder of our call to tell others about Jesus. Point out to the children that when they receive First Communion, they will be nourished by Jesus and sent forth to do good works in his name.
- Discuss with the children why trying to get to know God better is important as they prepare for First Communion. Emphasize that getting to know God better helps us to understand the great gift God gives us in the Eucharist. Emphasize that the Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Jesus. The Eucharist is really and truly Jesus.

### Guide Page 50

#### Student Page 14

- In CG use **FOCUS** and **DISCOVER**.
- Explain that the Holy Trinity is a mystery of faith—something we could never know about God unless he revealed it. It is through faith that we come to know and believe in the Holy Trinity, the mystery of three divine Persons in one God.
- Explore the work that we attribute to each of the divine Persons in the Holy Trinity, namely, God the Father and Creator; Jesus, the Son of God and Savior; and the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier and Giver of Life.
- Invite the children to share what they believe their special relationship with Jesus will be this year.

- Continue with **REINFORCE** and **INTEGRATE**.

### Guide Page 51

#### Student Page 15

- Use **FOCUS** and **DISCOVER**. Clarify that God tells us about himself through the Holy Trinity and the Bible.
- Reinforce that Sacred Scripture is God's word to us. Ask the children why it is important to read Sacred Scripture and to listen to it when it is read to us at Mass. Emphasize that it is important because it is God's own word to us.
- Continue with **REINFORCE** and **INTEGRATE**.

### Guide Page 52

#### Student Page 16

- Use **FOCUS** and **DISCOVER**.
- Ask the children to explain what they think the sentence "They broke bread together" in the Scripture story means. If necessary, clarify responses, for example, Jesus' disciples ate their meals together and celebrated the Eucharist in his memory as he asked them to do at the Last Supper.
- Clarify that Catholics today gather together at Mass to "break bread" and share in the celebration of the Eucharist.
- Continue with **REINFORCE** and **INTEGRATE**.
- Have the children recall the ways that God has revealed himself through Sacred Scripture, Jesus Christ, and the Church.

### Guide Page 53

#### Student Page 17

- Use **HIGHLIGHT** and **DISCOVER**.
- Invite volunteers to share with the whole class images they have in their homes of the faith of the Church, for example, a crucifix and Bible.

- Continue with **INTEGRATE**.
- As time permits visit the church with the children and have them notice the statues, stained-glass windows, and other pieces of sacred art. Call special attention to images that depict the Eucharist. Discuss with the children what each image tells us about God the Father, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and Mary and the other saints.

### Guide Page 54

#### Student Page 18

- Use **HIGHLIGHT** and **RESPOND**.
- Point out that the children are disciples of Christ. As Jesus' first disciples were, they, too, are called to help others come to know God better. Tell the children that doing this is an important part of preparing for Eucharist.
- Use **CHOOSE**.

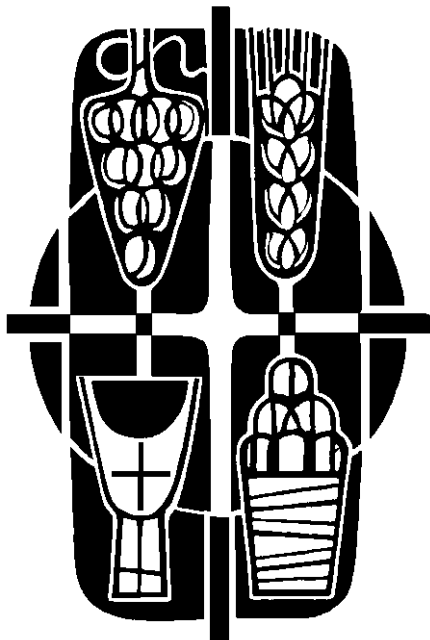
## Conclude the lesson . . .

### Guide Page 55

#### Student Page 19

- Use **WE REMEMBER** to review and reinforce the students' understanding of the key teachings presented in this chapter. Answer any questions the children may have.
- Distribute copies of the chapter 1 parent letter on page 16 of this booklet and remind the children to share it with their parents. Also point out the "With My Family" page at the end of chapter 1 in the student text. Have the children tear out the page, take it home, and discuss it and do the activities with their family.
- Have the children profess their faith using **WE PRAY**. End the prayer with the "Blessing for the Children" on page 2 of this booklet.

## Using Chapter 7: The Holy Spirit—A Scripture Story Part 2: The Liturgy of the Eucharist and the Concluding Rites



*Chapter 7 invites the children to deepen their understanding of and faith in the Holy Spirit. At the Last Supper Jesus gave his followers the gift of the Eucharist and promised that the Holy Spirit would come to them and help them understand all that he had taught. Help the children come to a deeper appreciation of the unique presence of Jesus in the Eucharist under the appearances of the bread and wine that have become his Body and Blood. The priest prays over our gifts of bread and wine, asking God the Father to send the Holy Spirit to make our gifts holy that they may become the Body and Blood of Christ. Through the words of the priest and the power of the Holy Spirit, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ.*

### Objectives for First Eucharist Preparation

- Explain the special gift that Jesus gave his followers at the Last Supper.
- Identify that the fruits of the Holy Spirit are signs that the Holy Spirit is working through the baptized, building up the Church.
- Understand that through the words of the priest and the power of the Holy Spirit, the gifts of bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus.

### Additional Resources

- Grade 5, **Faith First** video, segment 2
- **Faith First** interactive calendar for Eucharist
- Parent Letter, found on page 17 of this booklet
- Grade 3, **Faith First Legacy Edition / Parish Additional Activities** booklet, pages 7 and 7a
- Book to read:  
*Badger's Bring Something Party* by Hiawyn Oram. New York, NY: Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Books. Come to the banquet, and bring your best self.

### Getting Ready for First Eucharist

- Take the children for a tour of the sacristy. Show them a chalice, the unconsecrated eucharistic bread and wine, and a ciborium. Let the children touch and hold these objects. Tell the children that these are the same objects that will be brought to the altar during the procession of the gifts. If possible, take the children into the church and show them the tabernacle. Point out the sanctuary light near the tabernacle. Explain to the children that when the light is lit, the Blessed Sacrament is present in the tabernacle. Jesus is present with us.

### *Blessing for the Children*



*Jesus Christ, Bread of Life,*

*be with these children*

*as they learn of the great love*

*you have for all people.*

*Help the children truly believe*

*that the gift you offer*

*to them, the Eucharist,*

*is your Body and Blood.*

*Amen.*

## Begin the lesson . . .

### Guide Page 121

#### Student Page 61

- In CG use **PRAY** and **DISCOVER**.
- Invite the children to suggest why flames of fire as pictured on page 61 are a good image for the Holy Spirit. Explain that they will learn why during this session.

### Guide Page 122

#### Student Page 62

- Use **FOCUS** and **DISCOVER**.
- Ask the children what Jesus did at the Last Supper. Call for responses and list the key ideas on the board.
- Explain that at the Last Supper, Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would come to the disciples after he returned to the Father. Jesus told the disciples that the bread and wine they shared were his Body and Blood. Jesus gave his disciples the gift of his Body and Blood.
- Help the children come to a deeper appreciation that Jesus gives us the gift of his Body and Blood at Mass. Also point out that the Holy Spirit is with us at Mass. Emphasize that through the words of the priest and the power of the Holy Spirit, the bread and wine become Jesus' Body and Blood.
- Continue with **REINFORCE** and **INTEGRATE**.

### Guide Page 123

#### Student Page 63

- Use **FOCUS**. Tell the children that the Scripture story they are about to hear takes place in Jerusalem. Explain that Jerusalem was the most sacred city for Jesus, his disciples, and all Jewish people.

- Before reading the story, tell the children to listen for a clue that explains one of the symbols of the Holy Spirit.
- Share “The Spirit Comes on Pentecost,” using **DISCOVER**.
- Help the students recognize that fire is a symbol of the Holy Spirit.
- Continue with **REINFORCE** and **INTEGRATE**.

### Guide Page 124

#### Student Page 64

- Use **FOCUS** and **DISCOVER**.
- Invite the children to recall when they first received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Emphasize that the Holy Spirit came to them in a special way when they were baptized and that the Holy Spirit is always with them as Jesus promised.
- Ask the children to suggest ways in which the Holy Spirit can help them as they prepare for First Eucharist. Possible responses might include: The Holy Spirit helps us pray. The Holy Spirit guides us to make good choices to live as Jesus taught. The Holy Spirit helps us learn about Jesus and increase our desire to follow Jesus' teachings.
- Continue with **REINFORCE** and **INTEGRATE**.

### Guide Page 125

#### Student Page 65

- Use **HIGHLIGHT** and **DISCOVER**. Write the list of the fruits of the Holy Spirit on the board, namely, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, and chastity.
- Read and briefly explain each of the fruits of the Holy Spirit to the children and invite volunteers to name someone they know—either personally, through the media, or from reading about

them—who is an example of one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Encourage the children to be as specific as possible. For example: “Our neighbor is kind because when my mother came home from the hospital, she brought us dinner so that my mom would not have to cook.”

- Emphasize that when we are kind, joyful, patient, and so on, we are showing that the Holy Spirit is at work in our lives.
- Continue with **INTEGRATE**.

### Guide Page 126

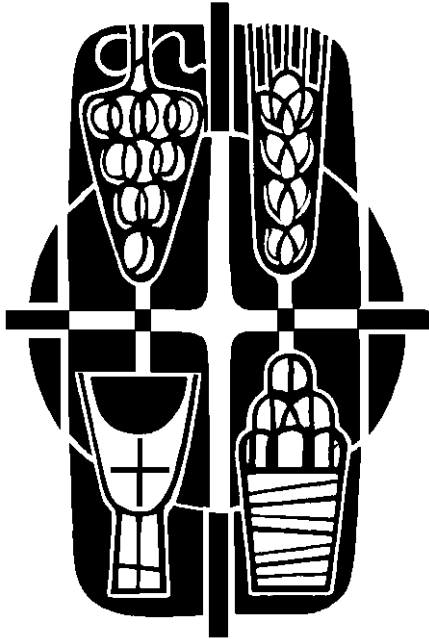
#### Student Page 66

- Use **HIGHLIGHT** and **RESPOND**.
- Reinforce that receiving Holy Communion strengthens us to cooperate with the Holy Spirit who helps us live as followers of Jesus.
- Continue with **CHOOSE**.

## Conclude the lesson . . .

- Use **WE REMEMBER** to review and reinforce the students' understanding of the key teachings presented in this chapter. Answer any questions the children may have.
- Distribute copies of the chapter 7 parent letter on page 17 of this booklet and remind the children to share it with their parents. Also point out the “With My Family” page at the end of chapter 7 in the student text. Have the children tear out the page, take it home, and discuss it and do the activities with their family.
- Celebrate the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives by using **WE PRAY**.
- Close by extending your hands over the children and praying aloud the “Blessing for the Children” on page 4 of this booklet.

# Using Chapter 8: We Are the Church



*Chapter 8 explores the mission of the Church in the world. The children will learn that the Church is the Body of Christ, the Temple of the Holy Spirit, and the new People of God. They will discover that through Baptism we receive the gift of sanctifying grace and are made sharers in the life of the Holy Trinity. We are anointed with chrism and strengthened to live as followers of Jesus and to share with others the good news of God's love revealed in Jesus Christ. As you work with the students, provide them opportunities to deepen their appreciation for their incorporation into the Body of Christ, the Church. Help the children recognize that receiving Christ, the Bread of Life, in Holy Communion nourishes their relationship with Jesus and with all the members of the Church and strengthens them to follow him more closely.*

## *Blessing for the Children*



*Jesus Christ, Bread of Life,  
travel beside these children  
as they take their final steps  
in their journey to your table.*

*Help them recognize you  
in the Blessed Sacrament,  
in your people, and in themselves.*

*Draw the children close to you so they  
may radiate your love to others.*

*Amen.*

## **Objectives for First Eucharist Preparation**

- Describe things Catholics do together.
- Identify the work of the Church in the world.
- Demonstrate ways to live a holy life as followers of Jesus Christ.

## **Additional Resources**

- Grade 3, **Faith First** video, segment 2
- **Faith First** interactive calendar for Eucharist
- Parent Letter, found on page 18 of this booklet
- Grade 3, **Faith First Legacy Edition / Parish Additional Activities** booklet, pages 8 and 8a
- Book to read:  
*Miss Rumphius* by Barbara Cooney. New York, NY: Puffin Books, 1985.  
Spread thanks and tell about the kingdom.

## **Getting Ready for First Eucharist**

- Practice the songs that the children will sing with the assembly at the celebration of First Eucharist.
- Talk with the children about the preparations they are making at home with their families for their First Communion. Help them understand that receiving Holy Communion for the first time is the most important event of that day. It is the reason for everything else their families will do to celebrate that day.



## Begin the lesson ...

### Guide Page 133

#### Student Page 69

- Use **PRAY** and **DISCOVER**.
- As you discuss the final question, help the students recognize that Catholics worship, serve God and others, and try to follow Jesus' example in their daily lives together.

### Guide Page 134

#### Student Page 70

- Use **FOCUS** and **DISCOVER**.
- Explain to the children that the Church is not just a building. The Church is the Body of Christ and the new People of God.
- Use the "Background: Doctrine" box at the bottom of page 134 of the catechist guide to help the students better understand that the Church is the Body of Christ.
- Continue with **REINFORCE** and **INTEGRATE**.
- Invite the students to recall that they learned in chapter 1 (page 16) that in the early Church, Jesus' followers prayed together and broke and shared bread together. Point out that in the early Church the term *breaking bread* was used for the Eucharist.
- Discuss that bread is food and nourishes us.
- Point out that Jesus called himself the Bread of life (see John 6:34–51). Then make the connection to the Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Jesus, which the Church also calls the Bread of Life. Emphasize that receiving Holy Communion regularly nourishes our relationship with Jesus and with the other members of the Church and strengthens us to follow him more closely.

- Ask the children to share their thoughts about receiving Holy Communion for the first time.

### Guide Page 135

#### Student Page 71

- Use **FOCUS** and **DISCOVER**.
- Remind the children that the Holy Spirit is always with us and helps us prepare our minds and hearts to receive Jesus, the Bread of Life, in Holy Communion.
- Continue with **REINFORCE** and **INTEGRATE**.

### Guide Page 136

#### Student Page 72

- Use **FOCUS** and **DISCOVER**.
- Emphasize that receiving Jesus in the Eucharist joins us more closely to Jesus and strengthens us to share with others the good news of God's love revealed in Jesus Christ.
- Continue with **REINFORCE** and **INTEGRATE**.

### Guide Page 137

#### Student Page 73

- Use **HIGHLIGHT** and **DISCOVER**.
- If possible, show the children a photograph of your bishop. Tell them how many parishes are in your diocese.
- Continue with **INTEGRATE**.
- Discuss the photographs on page 73 of the student text. Ask the children to explain what the photos portray, namely, they show people working to build a kind, just, and peaceful world.

### Guide Page 138

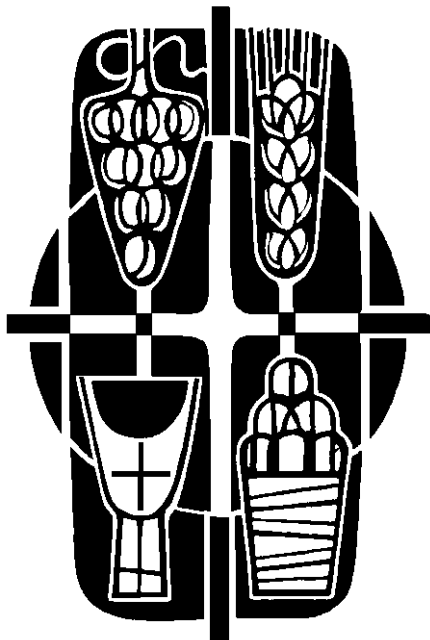
#### Student Page 74

- Use **HIGHLIGHT** and **RESPOND**.
- Emphasize that sharing in the Eucharist nourishes us to live holy lives as followers of Jesus.
- Continue with **CHOOSE**.

## Conclude the lesson ...

- Use **WE REMEMBER** to review and reinforce the students' understanding of the key teachings presented in this chapter. Answer any questions the children may have.
- Distribute copies of the chapter 8 parent letter on page 18 of this booklet and remind the children to share it with their parents. Also point out the "With My Family" page at the end of chapter 8 in the student text. Have the children tear out the page, take it home, and discuss it and do the activities with their family.
- Celebrate being members of the Body of Christ, the Church, using **WE PRAY**.
- Close the session by extending your hands over the children and praying the "Blessing for the Children" on page 6 of this booklet.

# Using Chapter 12: Celebrations of God's Love



*Chapter 12 focuses on Baptism and Confirmation, which are two of the three Sacraments of Christian Initiation. The seven sacraments instituted by Christ are signs of God's love that make us sharers in the Paschal Mystery of Christ. In this session the children will learn that Baptism and Confirmation join us to Jesus and strengthen us to live as children of God the Father and followers of Christ. In addition to the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, the children will learn about the sacramentals the Church gives us. Sacramentals are objects and blessings that remind us of God's presence with us. The children will learn about the sacramentals that Catholics use in worship and prayer. Help the children understand the meaning of the sacramentals that they may receive as First Communion gifts.*

## Objectives for First Eucharist Preparation

- Identify the seven sacraments.
- Recognize that Jesus gave us the sacraments.
- Describe the rite of the sacrament of Baptism and of Confirmation.
- Learn why and how Catholics use sacramentals.

## Additional Resources

- Grade 3, **Faith First** video, segment 2
- **Faith First** interactive calendar for Eucharist
- Parent Letter, found on page 19 of this booklet
- Grade 3, **Faith First Legacy Edition / Parish Additional Activities** booklet, pages 12 and 12a
- Books to read:
  - The Sacraments* by Inos Biffi, Franco Vignazia (Illustrator). Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994. An age-appropriate overview of the sacraments.
  - A Walk Through Our Church* by Gertrude Mueller Nelson. Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1998. An illustrated guide to the symbols, furnishings, and sacred spaces of the parish church.

## Getting Ready for First Eucharist

- Practice the Mass responses and the hymns that will be sung at the First Eucharist celebration.
- Have the children practice the proper way to genuflect, kneel, stand, sit, and process at Mass. As time allows, take the children to the church and practice processing into and out of the church.

## Blessing for the Children



Lord Jesus,

Watch over these children,

help them grow in faith,

and fill their hearts

with love for you.

Amen.

## Begin the lesson . . .

### **Guide Page 185** **Student Page 105**

- Use **PRAY** and **DISCOVER**.
- Ask the children to share experiences of attending family Baptisms. Invite them to describe in detail what they recall about these celebrations.

### **Guide Page 186** **Student Page 106**

- Use **FOCUS** and **DISCOVER**.
- Direct the children's attention to the photograph on page 106 of the student book. Invite a volunteer to describe what is happening in the photograph, namely, a woman receiving the Eucharist. Remind the children that the Eucharist is one of the three Sacraments of Christian Initiation.
- Continue with **REINFORCE** and **INTEGRATE**.
- Explain to the children that we take part in the celebration of the sacraments throughout our life. Help the children appreciate that every time they take part in the celebration of the sacraments they are made sharers in the life and love of God and are expressing their faith in God's love for them.

### **Guide Page 187** **Student Page 107**

- Use **FOCUS** and **DISCOVER**.
- Use the photographs on page 107 to walk the children through the rite of Baptism. Explain the significance of each part of the rite:
  - The pouring of water is a sign that God is sharing his life with the person being baptized and the person is receiving the gift of new life in Christ.

—The anointing with the holy oil called chrism is a sign that the Holy Spirit strengthens the newly baptized to live as a follower of Jesus Christ.

—The receiving of the baptismal candle, which has been lighted from the Easter candle, reminds the newly baptized to keep the flame of faith alive in their heart and in the world.

- Continue with **REINFORCE** and **INTEGRATE**.
- Using the props that you have brought to class, have volunteers role-play a baptism.

### **Guide Page 188** **Student Page 108**

- Use **FOCUS** and **DISCOVER**.
- Tell the children the age or grade of the candidates when Confirmation is celebrated in your parish.
- Walk through the rite of Confirmation with the class, role-playing the words and actions of the bishop. Have volunteers act as the confirmation candidates and sponsors.
- Continue with **REINFORCE** and **INTEGRATE**.
- Clarify the relationship between the Sacraments of Christian Initiation. Explain that Baptism begins our initiation into the Church, Confirmation strengthens the graces of Baptism, and Eucharist most fully joins us to Christ and the Body of Christ, the Church.

### **Guide Page 189** **Student Page 109**

- Use **HIGHLIGHT** and **DISCOVER**.
- Remind the children that the Church uses sacramentals as reminders of God's presence with us and to help us celebrate the sacraments.

- Continue with **INTEGRATE**.
- Tell the children that they may receive as gifts some sacramentals on the day of their celebration of First Eucharist. Discuss with them how they are to treat and use these sacramentals.

### **Guide Page 190** **Student Page 110**

- Use **HIGHLIGHT** and **RESPOND**.
- Use **CHOOSE** and invite the children to decide how they will show they are followers of Jesus Christ.

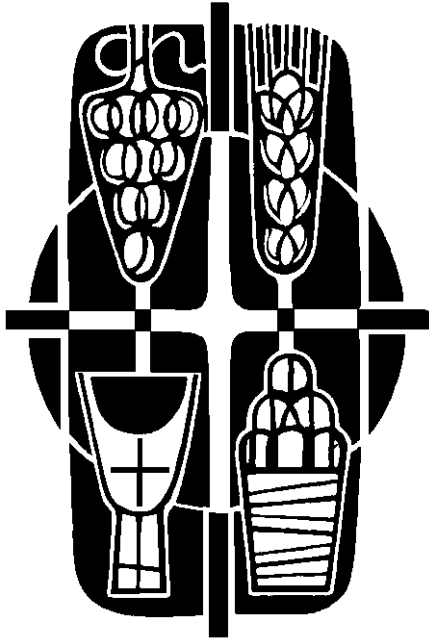
## Conclude the lesson . . .

### **Guide Page 191** **Student Page 111**

- Use the **WE REMEMBER** activities to review the content presented in the chapter. Answer any questions the children may have.
- Distribute copies of the chapter 12 parent letter on page 19 of this booklet and remind the children to share it with their parents. Also point out the "With My Family" page at the end of chapter 12 in the student text. Have the children tear out the page, take it home, and discuss it and do the activities with their family.
- Use **WE PRAY** and lead the children in the meditation.
- Close by extending your hands over the children and praying aloud the "Blessing for the Children" on page 8 of this booklet.

# Using Chapter 13: We Celebrate the Eucharist

## Part I: The Last Supper, Introductory Rites, and Liturgy of the Word



*Chapter 13 presents the Gospel story of how Jesus gave us the Eucharist and reviews the Introductory Rites and the Liturgy of the Word at Mass. The children need to listen to the story of the Last Supper as they prepare to receive First Eucharist. The more familiar the children are with this story, the more they will be able to connect the celebration of the Eucharist with what Jesus said and did at the Last Supper. This will help the children come to believe more deeply that the Eucharist is Jesus truly and really present with them.*

### Objectives for First Eucharist Preparation

- Explain the Gospel narrative of the Last Supper.
- Discover what Jesus said and did at the Last Supper.
- Understand that when the Church celebrates the Eucharist, we are doing what Jesus asked us to do at the Last Supper and we receive the gift of his Body and Blood.
- Present the Introductory Rites and the Liturgy of the Word of the Mass.

### Additional Resources

- Grade 2, **Faith First** video, segment 7
- **Faith First** interactive calendar for Eucharist
- Parent Letter, found on page 20 of this booklet
- Grade 3, **Faith First Legacy Edition / Parish Additional Activities** booklet, pages 13 and 13a
- Books to read:
  - The Table Where Rich People Sit* by Byrd Baylor, Peter Parnall (Illustrator). New York: Atheneum, 1994. Come to the feast. Come to the table of plenty.
  - The Bee Tree* by Patricia Polacco. New York, NY: Philomel Books, 1993. God's word is sweeter than honey.

### Getting Ready for First Eucharist

- Use the Lectionary and the Book of the Gospels to show the children the readings for the different Sundays of the liturgical year. Point out that the readers who read the first and second readings use the Lectionary and the deacon or priest proclaims the Gospel reading from the Book of the Gospels.
- Review good listening techniques with the children. Have the children listen attentively as you proclaim a Gospel reading. After you proclaim the Gospel passage, invite volunteers to briefly restate the reading in their own words. Conclude by asking the children to think about how the Gospel passage might help them live as followers of Jesus Christ.

## Blessing for the Children



*Jesus Christ, Word of God,  
fill the children with  
your love for them  
and with ways they can express  
their love for you.  
Open their ears and their hearts  
as they listen to your word.  
Amen.*

## Begin the lesson . . .

### Guide Page 197

#### Student Page 113

- Use **PRAY** and **DISCOVER**.
- Ask the children to describe why wheat and bread are symbols for the Eucharist. Explain that bread is a food made from wheat. The Eucharist is the Bread of Life, the Body and Blood of Jesus.

### Guide Page 198

#### Student Page 114

- Use **FOCUS** and **DISCOVER**.
- Write the terms Last Supper, Lord's Supper, night before Jesus died, and Eucharist on the board. Help the children see the connection between these terms.
- Continue with **REINFORCE** and **INTEGRATE**.
- Invite the children to share with their partner why they want to receive the Eucharist.

### Guide Page 199

#### Student Page 115

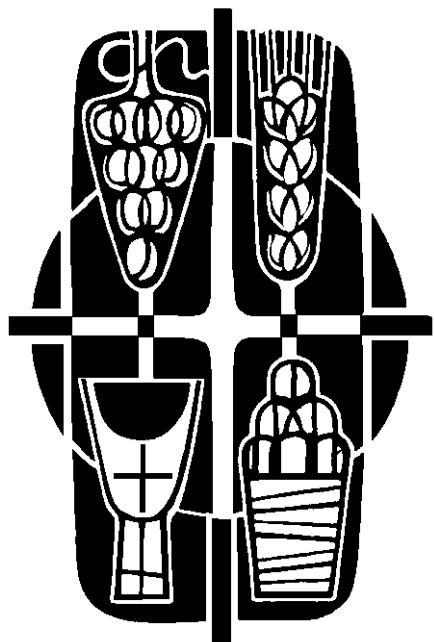
- Use **FOCUS** and **DISCOVER**. Have the children read only the first two paragraphs on page 115 of their text. The last paragraph will be presented during the next session when you study the Liturgy of the Eucharist.
- As you discuss the Mass, have the children turn to the "We Celebrate the Mass" section, which begins on page 291 in the text. Call attention to what happens during the Liturgy of the Word and walk through each part of the Liturgy of the Word with the class.
- Explain that the faithful who gather for Mass are called the worshipping assembly and that the priest who leads the celebration is called the celebrant.

- Talk with the children about what will be different about the way they take part in the Mass on the day of their First Communion. Help them appreciate the significance of their joining the faithful in receiving Holy Communion, the Body and Blood of Christ.
- Ask the children to name things the worshipping assembly does as they participate in Mass, such as, standing, kneeling, processing, listening, responding, singing, and bowing. Practice each of these gestures with the class.
- Invite the children to identify the people other than the priest, whom they see assisting at Mass, namely, the deacon, the readers, the extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, the cantor (song leader), choir, and altar servers. Discuss the role of these individuals in helping us celebrate the Eucharist.
- Lead the children in practicing the responses the assembly prays during the Liturgy of the Word.
- Give each child a paper cross and have them write the response to the Gospel reading at Mass: "Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ."
- Discuss the importance of listening attentively to the homily. Emphasize that the homily helps us understand both the meaning of the Scripture readings and how to live God's word.
- As you discuss the Profession of Faith, have the children turn to the Nicene Creed on page 284. Review the words of the Nicene Creed with the class. Encourage the students to begin to memorize the Nicene Creed so that they can participate more fully in the Mass.
- After describing the Prayer of the Faithful, work with the class to write petitions for a prayer of the faithful to use as this session's closing prayer. Include a special petition asking Jesus' help for those preparing to receive First Communion. Write the petitions on the board for all to see.
- Reinforce the children's understanding about different parts of the Mass by having them begin to create "We Celebrate the Mass" booklets.
  - Have the children decorate a cover page on a full sheet of construction paper.
  - Then have them create a booklet page for the Introductory Rites and another page for the Liturgy of the Word.
  - Invite the children to use pictures and words to describe what happens during these parts of the Mass.
  - Have them write their names on the cover page and collect the booklets so they can be completed in part 2 of chapter 13.

## Conclude the lesson . . .

- Invite the children to take their paper crosses home and talk with their parents about why we join with Jesus to give praise to God the Father at Mass.
- Distribute copies of the chapter 13 parent letter on page 20 of this booklet and remind the children to share it with their parents.
- Pray aloud the petitions the children created.
- Conclude by extending your hands over the children as you pray the "Blessing for the Children" on page 10 of this booklet.

## Using Chapter 13: We Celebrate the Eucharist Part 2: The Liturgy of the Eucharist and the Concluding Rites



*In the previous lesson we read the story of the Last Supper and reviewed the Introductory Rites and the Liturgy of the Word. In this lesson we continue studying Chapter 13 and review the words and actions of the Liturgy of the Eucharist and the Concluding Rite of the Mass. The more the children are able to recognize and understand the rites of the Mass the better they will be able to participate actively in the celebration of Mass and take their place at the Table of the Lord.*

### Objectives for First Eucharist Preparation

- Explain that at the Eucharist the Church joins with Christ, the Head of the Church, to give thanks and praise to God the Father.
- Describe that during the Liturgy of the Eucharist the Church says and does what Jesus said and did at the Last Supper.
- Discover that sharing the Eucharist changes us and gives us the strength to live as children of God the Father and followers of Jesus Christ.
- Understand that the Concluding Rites both ask God to bless us and send us forth to live our faith in Christ.

### Additional Resources

- Grade 3, **Faith First** video, segment 3
- **Faith First** interactive calendar for Eucharist
- Parent Letter, found on page 21 of this booklet
- Grade 3, **Faith First Legacy Edition / Parish Additional Activities** booklet, pages 13 and 13a
- Book to read:  
*Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge* by Mem Fox, Julie Vivas (Illustrator). Brooklyn, New York: Kane/Miller Book Publishers, 1989.

### Getting Ready for First Eucharist

- Demonstrate the proper way to receive Holy Communion. Use the guidelines in “The Communion Rite” on page 295 of the student text, adapting them as needed to the guidelines of your diocese and parish.
- Practice receiving from the cup. Use water as you practice. Check with the parents to verify which children will be receiving from the cup.
- Explain the guidelines for fasting from food and drink, except water and medicine.
- Go over the details of what will happen on the day of First Communion. If you have scheduled a rehearsal, remind the children of the place, date, and time.
- Spend time in prayer this week, praying for the children, their families, and the whole parish community.

### *Blessing for the Children*



*Jesus Christ,  
Gift of the Father,  
open the minds and hearts  
of these children to your great love.*

*Strengthen their faith  
in your Son, Jesus,  
the Bread of Life.  
Amen.*

## Begin the lesson . . .

### Guide Page 199 (continued) Student Page 115

- Remind the children that in part I of chapter 13, they learned about the Liturgy of the Word. Tell them that in this session, they will learn about the second main part of the Mass, the Liturgy of the Eucharist.
- Continue with **DISCOVER** by reading the third paragraph on page 115 with the children.
- Write the word *consecration* on the board. Explain to the children that the word *consecrate* means “to make holy.” The Church uses the word *consecration* to name what happens at Mass, namely, through the words of the priest and the power of the Holy Spirit the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ.
- Explain that although the consecrated bread and wine still look and taste like bread and wine, they are the Body and Blood of Christ.
- Tell the children that the words the priest speaks over the bread and wine are the words Jesus spoke at the Last Supper.
- Have the children turn to “The Liturgy of the Eucharist” beginning on page 293 in their text. Walk through each part of the Liturgy of the Eucharist with the class.
- As you review the parts of the Liturgy of the Eucharist, have the children repeat the responses they will pray with the assembly at Mass.
- Continue with **REINFORCE** and **INTEGRATE**.
- Have the children complete the “We Celebrate the Mass” booklets that they began in the previous session.

- Invite them to add three pages to the booklet: the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the Communion Rite, and the Concluding Rite.
- Remind them to use words and pictures to illustrate what happens during these parts of the Eucharist.
- Encourage the children to bring their Mass booklets to church on Sunday to help them identify each part of the liturgy and take part more fully and consciously and actively in the celebration.

### Guide Page 200 Student Page 116

- Use **FOCUS** and **DISCOVER**.
- Explain that the term *the faithful* in the first sentence on page 116 refers to the worshipping assembly.
- Continue with **REINFORCE** and **INTEGRATE**.
- Practice with the children the proper way to receive Holy Communion, using and adapting the guidelines on page 295 to the guidelines of your diocese and parish.
- Help the children understand how Eucharistic breads are made by opening the “Kids Clubhouse” page on the Faith First Web site at [www.FaithFirst.com](http://www.FaithFirst.com). Click on “Kids’ Clubhouse Grades K-3,” then on “Faith First Activities.” Scroll down to Grade 2, open “Chapter 8,” and click on “Where Do Hosts Come From?” If you do not have access to a computer in your classroom, print out the pages in advance and paste them on tagboard to show the children.

### Guide Page 201 Student Page 117

- Use **HIGHLIGHT**, **DISCOVER**, and **INTEGRATE**.

### Guide Page 202 Student Page 118

- Use **HIGHLIGHT** and **RESPOND**.
- Emphasize that in the Concluding Rites of the Mass, we are sent forth to live as followers of Jesus. Remind the children that the work of Jesus continues through our loving words and actions.
- Continue with **CHOOSE**.
- As time permits, distribute ruled writing paper and invite the children to write a prayer of thanksgiving to Jesus for their many blessings, especially the Eucharist. Tell the children that they will have an opportunity to pray their prayers at the end of the session.

## Conclude the lesson . . .

### Guide Page 203 Student Page 119

- Use **WE REMEMBER** to review the key teachings in this session. Answer any questions the children may have.
- Distribute copies of the chapter 13 parent letter on page 21 of this booklet and remind the children to share it with their parents. Also point out the “With My Family” page at the end of chapter 13 in the student text. Have the children tear out the page, take it home, and discuss it and do the activities with their family.
- Gather the children. Use **WE PRAY**. Encourage volunteers to read aloud the thanksgiving prayers that they wrote.
- Close by extending your hands over the children and praying aloud the “Blessing for the Children” on page 12 of this booklet.

# Suggestions for a Eucharist Retreat

*For the past weeks you have spent much time preparing your students for the celebration of First Eucharist. Here are some suggestions that can be adapted to fit your needs for planning a time of spiritual reflection or a retreat as a final preparation for First Eucharist. Such a celebration can be as simple as one hour of faith sharing or it can be as elaborate as a full-day retreat that includes both the children and their parents.*



## **PRAYER TABLE**

The focal point of the spiritual reflection or retreat can be the prayer table. Cover the table with a white cloth and place the following items on the table: a candle, grapes or a chalice or cup of grape juice and a loaf of fresh-baked unleavened bread or an unconsecrated host.

## **GATHERING PRAYER**

Gather the children for prayer by saying, “We gather to celebrate Jesus who comes to us as Living Bread.” Have the children respond, “Come into our hearts, Lord, Jesus.” Sing an appropriate song or hymn that the children are familiar with. Read the Emmaus Story (Luke 24:13–31) or read the account of the Last Supper (Matthew 26:26–28) and discuss it with the children. After you have completed faith sharing, have all the children pray the Our Father. Conclude the prayer by extending your hands over the children and blessing them. You may use one of your favorite blessings or one of the blessings from this booklet.

## **EMMAUS STORY ACTIVITY**

After reading the Emmaus story give each child a piece of paper on which you have drawn a picture of a man dressed in a robe walking down a road. Provide crayons or markers and ask the children to draw a picture of themselves walking down the same road with the man. Then tell the children that the man in the picture represents Jesus. Tell them to look at the picture of Jesus and them walking down the road together. Encourage them to tell Jesus what they feel in their heart about receiving Eucharist for the first time. Allow the children to have a few moments of silence. Ask children to volunteer to share their thoughts.

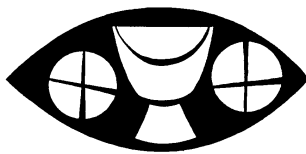
## **THE LAST SUPPER**

After reading the account of the Last Supper, invite the children to imagine that they are with Jesus and the disciples at the Last Supper. Have the children role-play the story of the Last Supper. You may want to use a children’s version of the Bible for the story of the Last Supper. Use simple props.

## **CRAFT ACTIVITY**

Give each child a sheet of yellow construction paper with the outline of a chalice drawn on it and a sheet of white construction paper with the outline of a host drawn on it. Have the children cut out the chalice and the host and paste them on another sheet of construction paper with the host above the chalice. Have the children print their names near the base of the chalice. Discuss with the children that the chalice holds the wine that becomes the Blood of Jesus and the host becomes the Body of Jesus. Remind the children that Jesus gives them the gift of himself each time they receive the Eucharist. Remind the children that receiving Communion strengthens them to be followers of Jesus. As followers they must use their gifts and talents to help others get to know Jesus. Let several children volunteer to share their gifts and talents and discuss how these gifts can be used to help others know Jesus. Ask each child to write or draw their special gift on the construction paper next to the chalice. Punch two holes at the top of each sheet of construction paper and tie yarn through the holes, making a banner. Tell the children to bring their banners home and hang them where they can be seen. This will remind them to use their gifts to live as followers of Jesus.





*Dear Parent,*

*What an exciting time for your family as your child begins to prepare for First Eucharist. During this year we will be inviting you and your child to be involved in a series of six lessons in preparation for your child's first reception of the Eucharist. It is our hope that by communicating with you as your child begins each new lesson we will be able to help one another grow spiritually and appreciate this grace-filled time for your child, your family, and the parish community.*

*Your child will bring home a letter similar to this one at the beginning of each of the six lessons. Each letter will contain background information on the topic of the week's lesson and help you know what your child is learning in class. It will also include activities that you and your child can do together during the week. These activities will help your family set aside time to focus on this very important time in your child's and your family's life. During the final weeks of preparation, we will also be enlisting your help in some of the preparations that need one-on-one attention or extra practice.*

*Please know that you have done a wonderful job as the primary educator of your child. Your continued dedication will make this a time of wonder and awe for your child. We feel privileged to be a part of this special time in the life of your child and your family. Remember that the parish is here to help and serve you. If you have any questions or concerns at all, feel free to call on us.*

*We are keeping you and your child in our prayers. We hope you will do the same for us. May the Lord guide us as together we bring the children to a deeper friendship with Jesus, the Bread of Life.*

*Sincerely,*



*Dear Parents,*

*We begin this year by working on chapter 1, “God Speaks to Us,” found on pages 13–20 in your child’s text. This chapter lays a strong foundation for the study of Jesus and the Eucharist. The children will meet Jesus as the second Person of the Holy Trinity. They will come to a realization that every time they bless themselves, they are professing their belief in one God in three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The children will learn that through the Scriptures God tells us about himself and his love for us. Finally, they will examine what it means to be the community of Jesus’ followers and what it means to them, as third-grade students, to be members of their parish community.*

*This year is also a good time to purchase a children’s version of the Bible if you don’t already have one in your home. You can present this Bible to your child at a family meal. Take time once a week to sit with your child and read from the Bible. It is through listening to Scripture that your child can come to a better understanding of Jesus, whom they will receive in the Eucharist.*

*By presenting this lesson at the very beginning of the year we are providing time for your child to get to know Jesus better, to grow in faith, to profess the faith of the Catholic community, to live that faith, and to know what it means to be a child of God and a member of the Catholic Church. Be involved with your child’s journey to First Eucharist. Together you can renew and strengthen your faith.*

*Have a wonderful year. Remember we are praying for one another.*

*Sincerely,*



Dear Parents,

We begin our immediate preparation for First Eucharist with chapter 7, “The Holy Spirit: A Scripture Story,” found on pages 61–68 in your child’s text. The goal of this lesson is to help the children discover the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church and how the Holy Spirit helps them to be followers of Jesus. Chapter 7 opens by recalling the special gift that Jesus gave his followers at the Last Supper—the promise to send the Holy Spirit. Discuss with your child the importance of making and keeping promises. Jesus kept his promise to his followers—on the feast of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came to them as Jesus promised.

This would be a good time to read the story of the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts of the Apostles 2:1–41) with your child. Remind your child that the Holy Spirit is always with him or her and that the Holy Spirit helps your son or daughter learn and understand the things that Jesus said and did. Remind your child that at Baptism he or she received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Talk to your child about the fruits of the Holy Spirit, which are named on page 65 in your child’s text.

While Chapter 7 provides the opportunity to talk about the gift of the Holy Spirit, it also reminds us that each of us is both a gift to God and to one another. Spend some time this week identifying the special gifts of each family member. Encourage each family member to think of one way they can share their gifts with one another and with someone at work, at school, in your neighborhood, or in your parish community. Encourage each family member to write a short prayer thanking God for the gift of Jesus. Use these prayers throughout the week when the family gathers for a meal.

Have a wonderful week. Remember, we’re praying for you.

Sincerely,



Dear Parents,

This week your child is working on chapter 8, “We Are the Church,” found on pages 69–76 in your child’s text. In this chapter we talk about what it means to belong to the Church. We learn that the Church and her members are the Body of Christ, the new People of God, and the Temple of the Holy Spirit. We discuss some of the things Catholics do together and discover that through Baptism we became members of the Church. The children will deepen their understanding that, as followers of Jesus, they have the responsibility to help others come to know Jesus and to join with other members of the Church and work at building a kind, just, and peaceful world.

This chapter provides you with an opportunity to continue to develop your child’s sense of belonging to the Church. One important way that you can do this is to participate regularly in the Eucharist as a family. Regular participation in the Eucharist joins us more closely to Christ and to one another, and strengthens us to live as faithful followers of Christ and as the adopted children of God the Father. As we celebrate together, we discover that the Lord is calling us to know, love, and serve God and one another.

When you take part in Mass as a family, sit where your child has a good view and can see and hear what is taking place. Help your child stay focused by gently whispering what the priest or other ministers are saying or doing. Point out what part of the Mass is being celebrated.

Encourage your child to join with you and the assembly to pray the responses and sing the hymns. When it is time for the faithful to receive Holy Communion, invite your child to process alongside you and to observe how you reverently receive the Body and Blood of Christ. After Mass, talk with your child about what your family has just celebrated. All of these activities will increase your child’s desire to receive the Eucharist and prepare him or her to actively and consciously take part in the celebration.

May the peace and blessings of our Lord, Jesus Christ, be with you and your child as you continue to prepare for your child’s First Eucharist.

Sincerely,



Dear Parents,

*This week your child is working on chapter 12, “Celebrations of God’s Love,” found on pages 105–112 in your child’s text. The focus of this chapter is on the sacraments, the seven special signs of God’s love that make Jesus present to us and make us sharers in the life of the Holy Trinity.*

*This week your child will learn more about the rite and meaning of Baptism and Confirmation, which are two of the three Sacraments of Christian Initiation. Set aside time this week to talk with your child about the day he or she was baptized. Explain that at that baptismal celebration, you made special promises of faith for him or her. You professed faith in the Holy Trinity—one in three divine Persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Discuss with your child what it means to be a person of faith.*

*Share with your child family pictures and other mementos of his or her Baptism, for example, the baptismal certificate, the baptismal candle, and the white garment.*

*As you continue to help your child prepare for the reception of First Eucharist, spend some time talking about how the Eucharist nourishes you and helps you live your faith. You might use your child’s understanding of a family meal to help him or her better come to understand the Eucharistic celebration. For example, point out that at family meals you share stories about your day and at Mass we listen to Scripture stories.*

*This week continue to take time to pray with your child. Share some of your own memories of the celebrations of the sacraments that you have received, especially your First Communion. Together, pray that your family will always follow Jesus.*

*Let us pray for one another, always knowing that in the midst of our preparation, Jesus is with us, showering us with his love.*

Sincerely,



Dear Parents,

This week's lesson presents the first part of chapter 13, "We Celebrate the Eucharist," found on pages 113–115 in your child's text. Chapter 13 begins with the account of the Last Supper, found in the Gospel of Matthew. Each time we listen to or read this Gospel story we rediscover the depth of God's love for us. Take the time this week to reread with your child the adaptation of the story of the Last Supper on page 114 in your child's text. Share how you would have felt if you had been there, and invite your child to do the same.

When Jesus and his disciples gathered for the Last Supper, they were taking part in and continuing an important tradition of the Jewish people. Your child is beginning to understand the meaning of and to look forward to celebrating family traditions and the traditions of the Church. Discuss your family traditions. Ask your child what parts of celebrating those traditions they most enjoy. Share how important celebrating your child's First Communion Day is to your family. Invite your child to help plan your family's celebration of that day.

This week's lesson also focuses on the celebration of Mass. The Introductory Rites and the Liturgy of the Word will be discussed. The children will become familiar with the prayers of these rites of the Mass and they will practice the responses to these prayers. We encourage you to review and practice these responses at home.

Sometimes it may be difficult for a young child to listen to the readings and the homily. One way to help your child listen attentively is to talk about the Scripture readings before going to church. After Mass discuss the readings and the homily as a family. Such conversations are wonderful moments of faith sharing.

Enjoy your week. We can all feel the sense of excitement mounting as the celebration of the children's First Eucharist draws near.

Sincerely,



*Dear Parents,*

*This is an exciting week. It is the final week of preparation for First Eucharist. This week your child is working on pages 115–120, the second part of chapter 13, “We Celebrate the Eucharist.” In this lesson your child will learn about the Liturgy of the Eucharist and the Concluding Rite of the Mass.*

*It is important that your child understand that the Eucharist is truly spiritual food. Explain that just as we need to eat regular food for our physical health, we need to share the Eucharist on a regular basis to nourish our life in Christ. Point out to your child the importance of regularly reading Scripture, praying, and receiving the Eucharist. Emphasize how doing these things strengthens the new life in Jesus that he or she received in Baptism. Continue to help your child develop the regular practice of these traditions of the Church.*

*At the end of Mass the presider or deacon dismisses the assembly, giving this or a similar command, “Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.” Join with your child in fulfilling this command in simple ways each day. Help your child understand that helping other people, as Jesus taught us to do, is showing love for and serving the Lord. Explain to your child that every Christian has the responsibility to help others come to know Jesus. Join with your child in fulfilling this command in simple ways each day. Make the effort to regularly point out to your child his or her loving actions and how these actions help others come to know Jesus.*

*This week say a prayer praising God for the gift of the Blessed Sacrament and for the gift of our children. What a privilege to bring these two great gifts together.*

*Sincerely,*



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