



*Your child's
First Holy Communion*



Parent Booklet

Loving God

*We thank you for the gift of our children
who bring so much love and light to our lives.*

*We are grateful for this opportunity to nurture
and further grow our child's faith.*

*Each day, through both word and deed,
help us to lead by genuine example.*

*And may we teach our child to
seek you, to know you and to love you,*

Jesus, Bread of Life!

Amen



Your child is such a gift and you know this most of all. You have held them in your arms; you have enjoyed their earliest attempts to walk, to dance, to climb, to learn. You have delighted in their developing sense of humour and in their personality. You love them and they are a daily reminder of the joyful gift of life itself!

Passing on the Church's faith in the love of God and the values taught to us by Jesus Christ, are among the most important things you can do as a parent. Sharing the faith with your child, helps them to become the person that God has created them to be. The home is the primary place where faith is cultivated. Parents are their child's primary example of how to live as a Christian and you remain instrumental to your child's spiritual formation throughout life. As expressed in the words of every baptismal liturgy, the handing on of the faith is primarily the responsibility of parents and you are described as the first and best teachers of your children in the ways of faith. You are not alone in this role - you have the parish and your school to guide, support and encourage you.

May God bless you and your family abundantly at this special time in your child's faith journey.

Regards,

B. M. Smith (Headteacher)

The Eucharist: What We Believe

The Mass is a memorial of the sacrifice Jesus offered God the Father at the Last Supper. During that meal, Jesus instituted the Eucharist and told his followers, "Do this in memory of Me."

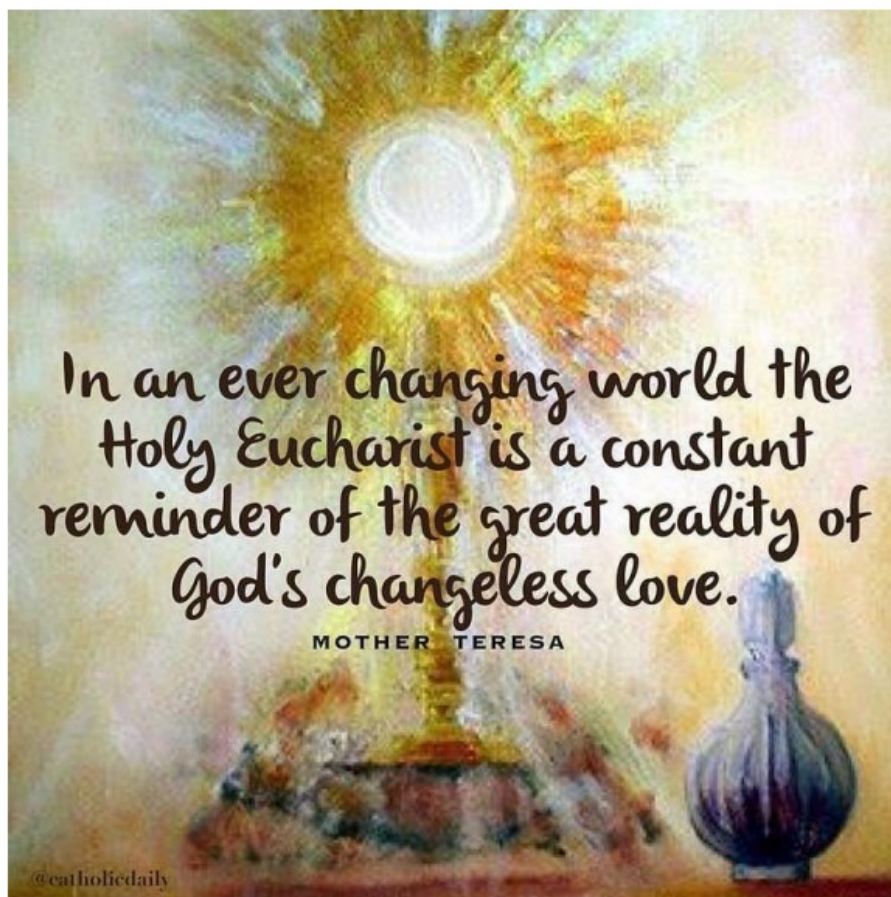
Although the Eucharist is a mystery, we, as Catholics, accept in faith, the fact that bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus, because Jesus told us this is so. "The whole Christ is truly present, body, blood, soul, and divinity, under the appearances of bread and wine." The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life; it is Jesus himself (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1324, 1374).

The Eucharist is Jesus' true presence here on earth. At Mass, we come together as a community, the Body of Christ, to worship and to receive His presence into ourselves.

First Eucharist - First Holy Communion

The word 'communion' means 'to be united with' and the word Eucharist comes from a Greek word meaning 'thanksgiving'. In this sacrament, Christ is really present as the bread of life and the cup of eternal salvation nourishing us on our pilgrim journey. The Eucharist completes the Christian Initiation. In the Eucharist, Christ is truly present among us, especially through the change of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood. By sharing in the body and blood, we are united more deeply with Christ and become his presence in the world.

Eucharist is the sacrament that completes the process of initiation (along with Baptism and Confirmation) and is when one can fully participate in the Eucharist by receiving Holy Communion. Eucharist is unique among the sacraments as it is at the heart of our faith. For Catholics, the Eucharist, or Mass, is the most powerful way we encounter the real presence of Jesus Christ. Each weekend we gather to celebrate the Eucharist, the ritual in which, by the power of the Holy Spirit, bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ. We who celebrate are also transformed, becoming Christ's presence to others, and recognising the presence of Christ in others.



What happens during Eucharist?

The Eucharist (Eucharist is a Greek word that means “thanksgiving”) is the whole ritual that has come to be known as the Mass. The Eucharist is therefore a holy moment which includes the consecration of the body and blood of Jesus.



The Eucharist includes:

- the sharing of the Word from scripture
- offering of prayers
- doing what Jesus did at the Last supper taking, blessing, breaking and sharing his body and blood
- being sent forth to live and proclaim the Good News

Symbols of Eucharist

Bread – Wheat is grown and ground, transformed by human work to make bread. Bread is a staple food of life.



Wine – Grapes are grown and crushed, transformed by human work to make wine. Wine symbolises joy and celebration.

Bread and wine symbolise the Creator who gives life, the one who nourishes us.

At the Last Supper Jesus gave himself in the form of bread and wine.



Jesus is present in the Eucharist?

We cannot see Jesus, but there are many things in life we do not see, but they exist and are essential. For example: we do not see our reason, yet we have reason. We do not see our intelligence and we have it. We do not see our soul and yet it exists and we see its effects, because we can speak, think and make decisions. We do not see an electric current, yet we see that it exists. We do not see the very deepest things, those that really sustain life and the world, but we can see and feel their effects. So it is with the Risen Lord: We do not see him with our eyes, but we see that wherever Jesus is, people change, they improve and a greater capacity for peace, for reconciliation and for love is created. Therefore, we do not see the Lord himself, but we see the effects of the Lord and can know that Jesus is present. The invisible things are the most profound and the most important.

Going to Mass and receiving Communion

Bread is a basic source of nourishment; and when Jesus called himself 'the Bread of Life', the bread stands for all nourishment. As we need to nourish our bodies in order to live, so we also need to nourish our spirits, our souls and our wills. As human persons, we do not only have bodies but also souls; we are thinking beings with minds and wills. We must nourish our spirits and our souls, so that they can grow, develop and truly attain their fulfilment. We really need God's friendship, which helps us to make the right decisions. We need to mature as human beings. In other words, Jesus nourishes us so that we can truly become mature people who can build a good life for ourselves and others.



Tips for Parents

1. Understand that you already have been preparing your child for first Communion since the day your child was born. Eucharist is about the absolute love of God for each one of us. The ways you have loved, cared for and modelled forgiveness, all speak of the unconditional love of our God. Our most intimate experiences of God's presence with us often occur within the everyday moments, interactions and relationships of family life. The challenge is that sometimes we are so busy that we miss them! Family life is holy and sacred. Family life is where God is.
2. Talk together. Tell stories about your God times. Use scripture stories and answer their questions, even the ones they're not asking!
3. Stress the connection of Baptism and Eucharist. Get out your photo albums and recall your child's baptism. Unpack the baptismal garment and tell its history: when and where you bought it or who made it and who else wore it. The sacraments of Christian initiation – Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation – lay the foundations of every Christian life. We are born anew by Baptism, we receive the food of eternal life in the Eucharist and we are strengthened on the journey by the Sacrament of Confirmation.
4. Try to use family meal times to remind children of the connection of the family meal to the Eucharist. Let your child decorate the table for an evening meal. Talk about special meals your family has shared. The basics of the Eucharist include four actions: 1. Take 2. Bless 3. Break and 4. Share. Every meal, whether in the home or the church, should be deepening our faith in Jesus Christ and in his mission. Jesus' basic mission was to serve the poor. When we eat and drink the Body and Blood of Christ, we stand for Christ. We stand for mission. We stand for justice. Christian meal sharing, if it is to be a celebration of Jesus Christ, is always about living out Gospel values in our everyday life.
5. Pray with your child and as a family. Pray often and as a natural part of family life: mealtimes, bedtimes, happy times, worrisome times, after an argument, when someone is in trouble, and on special occasions. Make prayer a natural part of your family life.
6. Make Mass a family event. For Catholics, one of the most important things we do is coming together to celebrate Mass each week. The Eucharist is the heart and soul of our worship of God. It is the celebration that gives us the strength we need to live a Christian life. God doesn't call us to church on Sunday because he has a need for us all to fall down and worship him at nine o'clock each Sunday morning. It isn't designed to help him; it's designed to help us. The Mass is filled with riches. It is an unfathomable gift. Point out one or two things each week for your child to watch for at Mass. Talk about the homily on the way home. Before the liturgy talk with your family about who you want to pray for during the General Intercessions; and what you want to thank God for during the Eucharistic Prayer.
7. Grow together in appreciation of God's Word. Read the scriptures you will hear at Mass. What is God saying to your family this weekend?
8. Take a tour of the church. Point out to your child where he or she was baptized, show him or her the altar up close, the tabernacle, the oils, etc.
9. The Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us the Eucharist commits us to the poor (#1397.) Get your children involved in being bread for others - make a meal for a neighbour in need, sort through toys and clothing for gifts to the poor, visit a nursing home, give to a charitable donation.
10. Keep First Communion in perspective - it is of course very special because it is 'first', however it hopefully will be the first Communion and not the last! It is important that children have an opportunity to attend Mass regularly. Their Holy Communion day will be the first of a lifetime of coming to the Lord's Table of Love. Remember to keep things in perspective—the most important thing for you and your child to focus on is the sacrament of the Eucharist, nothing else.
11. Discuss the Eucharist as a gift. Special occasions remind us of an important time in our lives. Gifts sent at a time of sadness remind us that we are not alone, but are supported by the love of others. Farewell gifts are important to us and are greatly treasured. A gift which is given by someone we love, but from whom we are now separated is a constant reminder of the love we knew and still feel. Seeing that gift, we feel united with the person who gave it. The gift reminds us that even though we are now apart, our love still lives on.

Prayers that the children must know

Prayer Before Communion

Lord Jesus, come to me.

Lord, Jesus, give me your love.

Lord Jesus, come to me and give me yourself.

Lord Jesus, friend of children, come to me.

Lord Jesus, you are my Lord and my God.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.



Prayer after Communion

Lord Jesus, I love and adore you.

You're a special friend to me.

Welcome, Lord Jesus, O welcome.

Thank you for coming to me.

Thank you, Lord Jesus, O thank you

For giving yourself to me.

Make me strong to show your love wherever I may be.

Be near me, Lord Jesus,

I ask you to stay,

Close by me forever and love me, I pray.

Bless all of us children in your loving care,

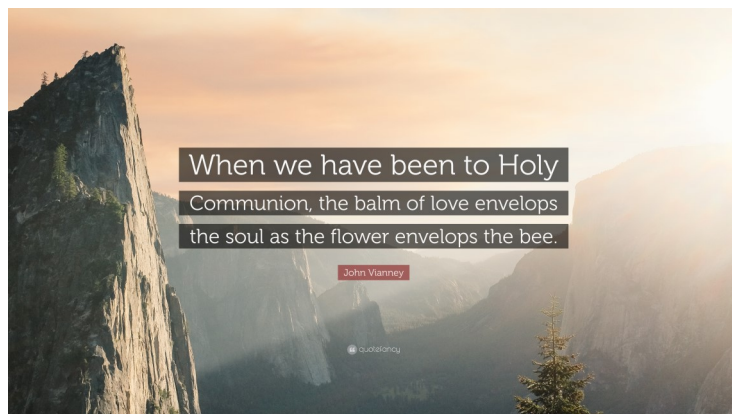
And bring us to heaven to live with you there.

I'm ready now, Lord Jesus,

To show how much I care.

I'm ready now to give your love,

At home and everywhere. Amen.



Fill in the Blanks

love

Jesus

come

God

Lord

Praise

Prayer Before Communion

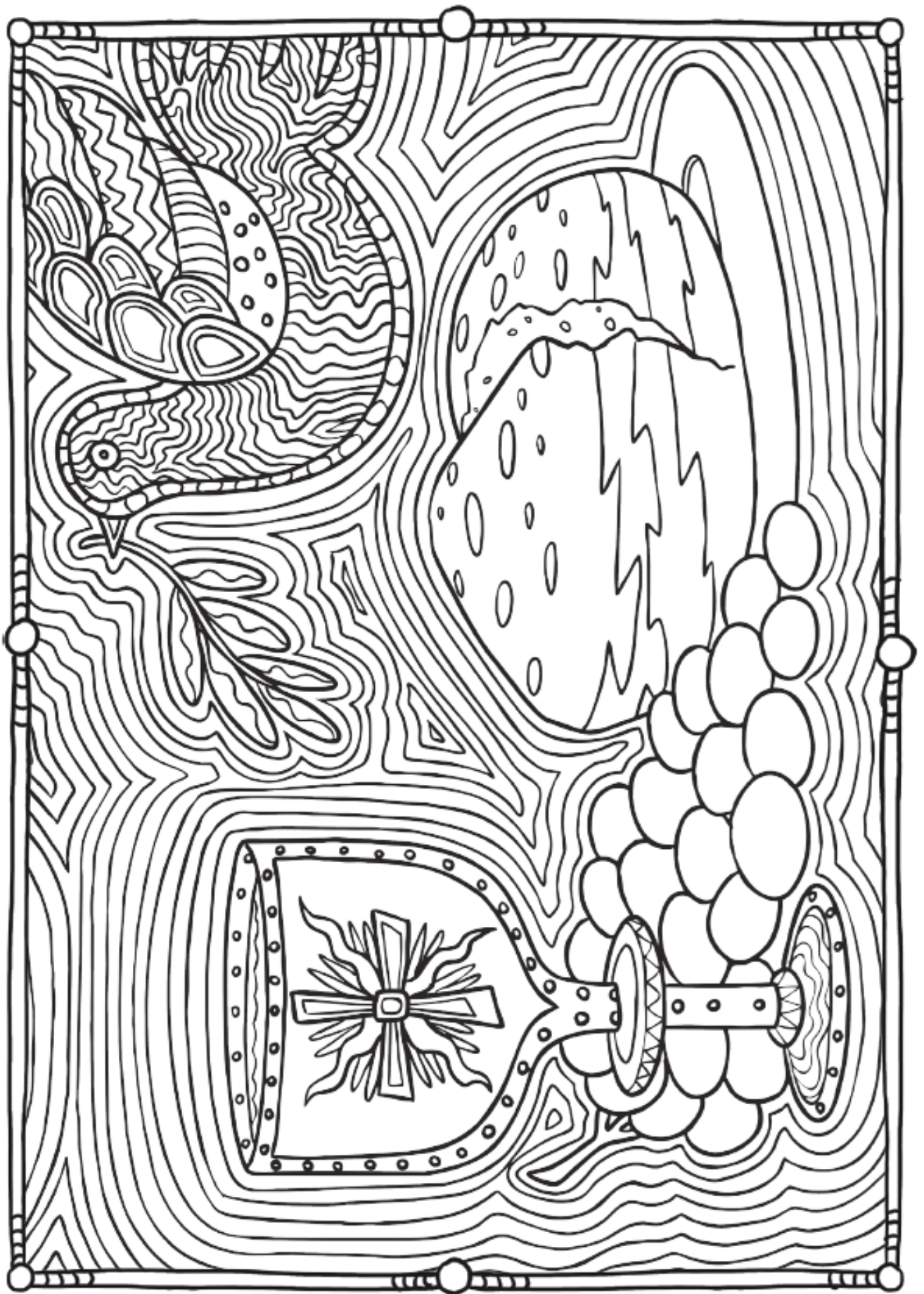
Lord Jesus, _____ to me.

Lord, Jesus, give me your _____.

_____ Jesus, come to me and give me yourself.

Amen.





FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AND RECONCILIATION PROGRAMME

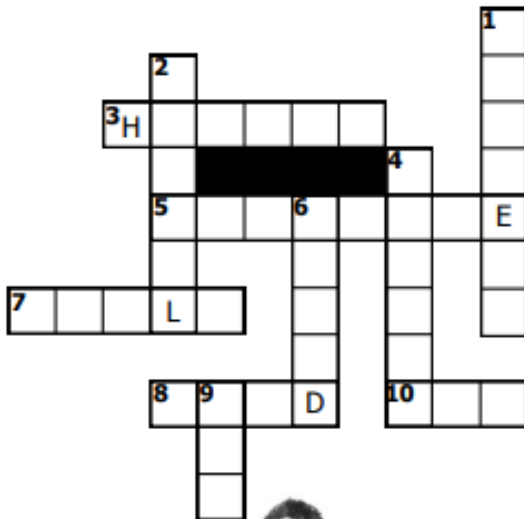


**UNIT
14**

**THE LITURGY OF
THE WORD**



WE LISTEN ...



Fill in this crossword. The clues are here below:

ACROSS:

3. The short talk by the priest to explain the readings.
5. We must put the Word of God into _____.
7. At the Liturgy of the Word we read from this Book.
8. The first part of the Mass is called the Liturgy of the _____.
10. The second reading is usually taken from the _____ Testament.

DOWN

1. The last part of the Liturgy of the Word is when we read the Bidding _____.
2. The stories of Jesus and his life are found in this text.
4. We must _____ carefully to the readings.
6. A statement we say in church beginning with the words "I believe".
9. The first reading is usually taken from the _____ Testament.



JESUS SAID:

"My mother and brothers are those who hear the Word of God and obey it."

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AND RECONCILIATION PROGRAMME



UNIT
15

**THE LITURGY OF
THE EUCHARIST**



TAKE THIS AND EAT

Join the black dots by drawing lines to match the words in both columns.

Bread becomes ●

The Eucharistic Prayer is ●

Wine becomes ●

The Last Supper was ●

Jesus said ●

● a special prayer during Mass

● the Blood of Jesus Christ

● "This is my body; This is my blood"

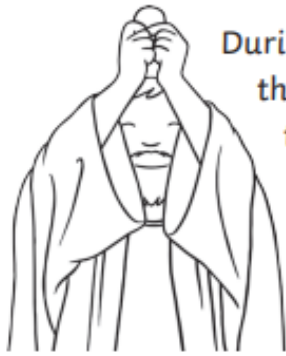
● the Body of Jesus Christ

● the first Mass



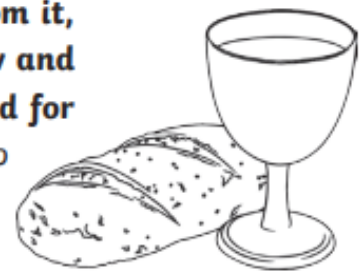
Draw the bread and wine and the apostles with Jesus around the Last Supper table.

Do This in Memory of Me



During mass, the priest says the Eucharistic prayer. The priest asks the Holy Spirit to come down upon the bread and wine. They then become the gift of the risen Jesus, the bread of life. We then remember the Last Supper. At the Last Supper, Jesus said, **'Take this, all of you, and eat of it, for this is my Body, which will be given up for you.'**

Afterwards He said, **'Take this, all of you, and drink from it, for this is the chalice of my Blood, the Blood of the new and eternal covenant, which will be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.'** Jesus told His friends to **'Do this in memory of me.'** This is why we come together at Mass, to do what Jesus asked us to, in memory of Him.



Draw a picture of yourself at the table with Jesus and His friends. This shows that you want to share the bread of life too.