

# Eucharist

Family Guide



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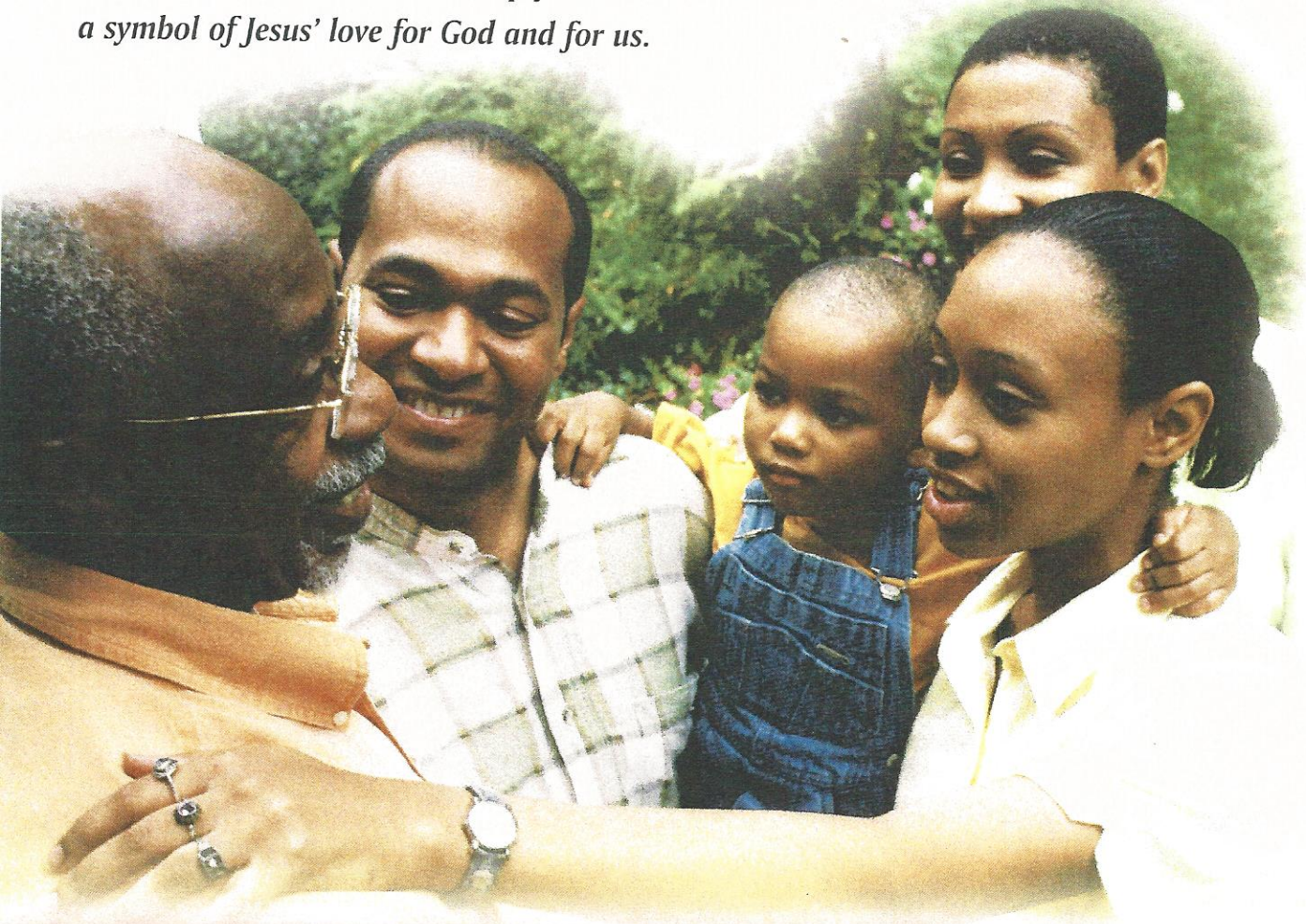
# We Gather

*Every week we gather at Mass to worship God. We gather because we, the baptized, are the Church. Baptism does not call us to go to church; Baptism calls us to be Church. The Church is the People of God, the Body of Christ, and the Temple of the Holy Spirit. We are the community of the followers of Jesus.*

*We, the Church, make Christ visible in the world. We continue Christ's work. Through the community of the Church our faith is nurtured and flourishes. Together we strive for a deepening of faith and conversion to live as children of God.*

*The Church uses many signs and symbols to express its faith. Among these signs and symbols are the cross and the crucifix. At Mass we sign ourselves with the cross and we see the cross carried in procession and placed where everyone can see it.*

*Through this lesson you can help your child see the cross as a symbol of Jesus' love for God and for us.*



# Overview

## What We Will Learn

*In your time together your family will deepen its understanding and living of the Church's faith.*

*The faith theme of this lesson is:*

God calls our church family together to celebrate Mass. At Mass we worship God. We give thanks to God, listen to God's word, and break bread as the first Christians did.

## What We Will Do

*Follow these simple steps to help your child prepare for the celebration of the sacrament. The details of this process are found on page 18 of this family guide.*

- **Preparation:** Read and reflect on the background essay on page 16. Look over the "Overview" page.
- **Step One:** Celebrate and share your experience of the ritual action of processing behind a cross. The ritual is found on page 19 of this family guide.
- **Step Two:** Retell and share your understanding of the Scripture story "The First Christians" (Acts of the Apostles 2:41–47). An adapted version of this Scripture story is found on page 16 of your child's *Eucharist* book.
- **Step Three:** Discuss and share how your family can participate more fully in the Introductory Rites of the Mass. The Church's teaching on the Mass as the celebration of our church family is found on pages 18 and 19 of your child's *Eucharist* book.
- **Step Four:** Choose to make a difference in your own lives and the lives of others by living as followers of Jesus. Suggested activities are found on pages 20 and 21 of your child's *Eucharist* book.
- **Conclusion:** Pray together for help to live as children of God. A suggested prayer is found on page 18 of this family guide.

## What We Will Need

*These are the items you will need for this lesson. Take the time to gather them in advance of meeting with your child:*

- RCL Benziger's *Eucharist* child's book
- A crucifix or cross
- Family Bible or a children's version of the Bible
- Scripture card "The First Christians"
- Pencils

## Looking for More

*These are some additional resources that will help you enrich or extend the lesson:*

- RCL Benziger's *Eucharist* music CD, Song 2, "Table of Plenty."
- **Children's Books**
  - Birthday Blizzard* by Bonnie Pryor (Morrow Junior Books). A huge blizzard cancels a birthday party, but unexpected visitors arrive to create a winter picnic.
  - Child's Guide to the Mass* by Sue Stanton (Paulist Press). An engaging guide through the parts of the Mass to help children understand and appreciate the Mass.
- **Children's Videos**
  - Amanda Goes to Mass* (Twenty-third Publications).
  - Mass for Young Children, Parts 1 and 2* (St. Anthony Messenger Press/Franciscan Communications).
  - My Father's House* (St. Anthony Messenger Press/Franciscan Communications).
- RCL Benziger's *Eucharist* interactive calendar.



Visit the RCL Benziger sacraments web site by following the link titled "Sacraments" at [www.FaithFirst.com](http://www.FaithFirst.com).

# Sharing Together

## STEP ONE

### Celebrate the Ritual

- Celebrate the ritual "Gathering at the Cross."
- Invite everyone to share what it was like to experience the family ritual. Be sure to affirm all responses.
- Open the child's book to pages 14 and 15. Ask your child to describe what they see happening in the photographs.
- Read, discuss, and complete the rest of page 15.

## STEP TWO

### Share the Scripture Story

- Look at the illustration on pages 16 and 17. Ask your child to describe what they see happening in the illustration.
- Point out the "Faith Focus" question. Ask your child to listen for the answer as they listen to the Scripture story.
- Read, discuss, and complete pages 16 and 17. Explain that the first Christians did not have churches like the ones we have today. Instead they gathered in homes. Pay special attention to "Together as a Family."

## STEP THREE

### Discover the Faith of the Church

- Look at the photographs showing the Introductory Rites of the Mass on pages 18 and 19. Ask your child to describe what they see.
- Read the "Faith Focus" question. Ask your child to listen for the answer as you read these pages.
- Read, discuss, and complete pages 18 and 19. Pay special attention to "Together as a Family."
- You might like to use pages 62 and 63 of your child's *Eucharist* book to help your child better understand and become familiar with the rites and prayers of the Introductory Rites of the Mass.

## STEP FOUR

### Make a Difference

- Read, discuss, and complete page 20. Encourage everyone to share a faith choice.
- Read, discuss, and complete page 21. Then choose one activity from "Sharing Together" that will help you live your faith as a family.
- Turn to the back of the child's book and punch out the Scripture card "The First Christians." Talk about the card and where you can keep it to serve as a reminder of this lesson and your time together.



## Closing Prayer

*Conclude your time together by using this prayer or one of your own choosing. Begin by blessing yourselves, saying,*

**ALL:** In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**LEADER:** Let us pray.  
God, our Creator,  
we praise you for your generous  
love for us.  
We thank you for sending us  
your Son, Jesus.  
Send us the Holy Spirit  
to help us live as your children.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ  
our Lord.

**ALL:** Amen.

**LEADER:** Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by  
your life.

**ALL:** Thanks be to God.

# Gathering at the Cross

## Ritual Entrance Procession

*With a leader holding a cross, invite the entire family to process through the inside or the outside of your home to the place where you will gather for prayer. Invite everybody to settle themselves and to become aware of God's presence. After a moment of quiet, begin the celebration of the ritual.*

## Gathering

*Alternative: Place a cross on a table you have prepared for the ritual. Invite your family to come forward silently and gather around the cross. Ask them to settle themselves and become aware of God's presence. After a moment of quiet, begin the celebration of the ritual.*

**LEADER:** Let us begin by praying the Sign of the Cross, which reminds us of our Baptism.

**ALL:** *Making the sign of the cross, say,*  
In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**LEADER** God, our loving Father,  
we gather around the cross of your Son,  
Jesus.  
Send the Holy Spirit to open our hearts  
to your word.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son.

**ALL:** Amen.

## Scripture Reading

*Proclaim or invite someone to proclaim the Scripture story "The First Christians" (Acts of the Apostles 2:41–47) from your family Bible. An adapted version of the Scripture story is found on page 16 of your child's Eucharist book.*

**LEADER:** Let us listen to the Word of God.

**READER:** A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

**READER:** *Proclaim the Scripture. Conclude the reading, saying,*  
The word of the Lord.

**ALL:** Thanks be to God.

## Closing

**LEADER:** God, our loving Father,  
today we gather around the cross  
of your Son, Jesus Christ.  
Send us the Holy Spirit  
to help us remember to follow Jesus  
every day.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**ALL:** Amen.

## Ritual Recessional Procession

*Invite everyone to once again follow the cross in procession around the inside or the outside of your home.*