

Eucharist

Family Guide



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We Give Thanks

When our children are very young, we teach them to say, "Thank you." When we go to Mass, we give thanks to God. In fact, the word eucharist means "thanksgiving." The Eucharistic Prayer flows from a grateful heart. We begin the Eucharistic Prayer at Mass with the Preface. The celebrant or priest prays:

*It is truly right and just,
our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,*

Father most holy. Preface, Eucharistic Prayer II, Roman Missal

You can help your child prepare for the celebration of the Eucharist by helping them develop a grateful heart for God's many blessings and gifts. Help your child understand that God gives every person gifts or talents and that all blessings and gifts are from God. When we share our gifts and talents with other people, we give thanks to God.



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:

We worship God as the source of all goodness and blessings. God always loves and cares for us.

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 26 of this family guide.

- **Preparation:** Read and reflect on the background essay on page 24. Look over the "Overview" page.
- **Step One:** Celebrate and share your experience of the ritual action of sharing bread. The ritual is found on page 27 of this family guide.
- **Step Two:** Retell and share your understanding of the Scripture story "Jesus Feeds the People" (Luke 9:10–17). An adapted version of the Scripture story is found on page 32 of your child's *Eucharist* book.
- **Step Three:** Discuss and share how your family can participate more fully in the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The Church's teaching on the Liturgy of the Eucharist is found on pages 34 and 35 of your child's *Eucharist* book.
- **Step Four:** Choose to make a difference in your lives and in the lives of other people by doing one thing that shows you give thanks to God. Suggested activities are found on pages 36 and 37 of your child's *Eucharist* book.
- **Conclusion:** Pray together to thank God, the source of all our blessings, for all his gifts to us. A suggested prayer is found on page 26 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
- Several types of bread such as wheat, pita, rye, matzos, and soda crackers
- Basket for breads
- Family Bible or children's version of the Bible
- Scripture card "Jesus Feeds the People"
- Pencils and crayons or markers

Looking for More

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

- RCL Benziger's *Eucharist* music CD, Song 7, "Malo! Malo! Thanks Be to God"; Song 8, "Jesus, You Are Bread for Us."
- **Children's Books**
 - Badger's Bring Something Party* by Hiawyn Oram and Susan Varley (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books). Come to the banquet and bring your best self.
 - The Rainbow Fish* by Marcus Pfister (North-South Books). The most beautiful fish in the ocean learns the value of friendship when he gives away some of his most prized possessions.
- **Children's Videos**
 - Faith First** Grade 3 video, Segment 3, The Visual Bible™, "Loaves and Fishes."
 - Grandma's Bread* (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.

Sharing Together

STEP ONE

Celebrate the Ritual

- Celebrate the ritual "Sharing of Bread."
- Invite everyone to share what it was like to experience the family ritual. Be sure to affirm all responses.
- Open your child's book to pages 30 and 31. Ask your child to describe what they see happening in the photographs.
- Read, discuss, and complete the rest of page 31.

STEP TWO

Share the Scripture Story

- Look at the illustration on pages 32 and 33. 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 32 and 33. Pay special attention to "Together as a Family."

STEP THREE

Discover the Faith of the Church

- Look at the photographs on pages 34 and 35. Ask your child to describe what they see happening in the pictures.
- Read the "Faith Focus" question. Ask your child to listen for the answer as you read.
- Read, discuss, and complete pages 34 and 35. Pay special attention to "Together as a Family." Emphasize that all our blessings come from God.
- You might like to use pages 66 and 67 of your child's *Eucharist* book to help your child better understand and become familiar with the rites and prayers of the Preparation of the Altar and Gifts and of the Preface.

STEP FOUR

Make a Difference

- Read, discuss, and complete page 36. Encourage everyone to share a faith choice.
- Read, discuss, and complete page 37. 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 "Jesus Feeds the People." 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 thank God for the gifts he has
given us.

ALL: Thank you, Lord.

LEADER: For food,

ALL: thank you, Lord.

LEADER: For our family,

ALL: thank you, Lord.

LEADER: For our Church,

All: thank you, Lord.

LEADER: God is the source of all our blessings.

May he bless us with the Gifts
of the Holy Spirit.

May he fill our hearts with joy.

May God bless us,
the Father, and the Son,
and the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

Sharing of Bread

Gathering

Gather your family around a table where you have placed a variety of breads in a basket. Invite everyone to settle themselves and to become aware of God's presence. After a moment of quiet, begin the celebration of the ritual.

LEADER: Let us begin as we were baptized.

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,
you have called us to come together
in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ.
We give thanks for the love and care
you have for us.
We make our prayer through Jesus Christ
our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

Scripture Reading

Proclaim or invite someone to proclaim the Scripture story "Jesus Feeds the People" (Luke 9:10-17) from your family Bible. An adapted version of the Scripture story is found on page 32 of your child's Eucharist book.

LEADER: Let us make the sign of the cross on our forehead, lips, and over our heart and ask the Holy Spirit to help us listen to the Word of God.

READER: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

ALL: *Reverently make the sign of the cross on their forehead, lips, and over their heart, saying,*
Glory to you, O Lord.

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

ALL: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Ritual

Pass the basket of breads among family members and invite everyone to share the bread.

LEADER: Now we will pass the basket of breads around. When you pass the basket, offer it, saying, "Jesus is the Bread of Life." When you receive the basket, respond, "Thank you."

ALL: *Take a piece or several pieces of bread, pass the basket to another person, and then eat the bread.*

Closing

LEADER: God, our loving Father,
all our blessings are from you.
Today we celebrate your love.
We gather to share the love you give us
and to give you thanks.
Send us the Holy Spirit
to help us remember to give you thanks
every day.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

ALL: Amen.