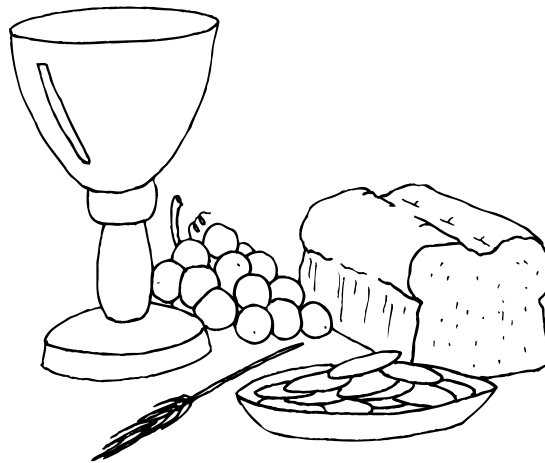


Family Guide

For Sharing the
We Celebrate the Eucharist
Gold Book



Holy Family Parish
2017-2018

Suggested Timeline:
Theme 1 - October
Theme 5 - November
Theme 2 - December
Theme 3 & 4 - January
Theme 6 & 7 - February
Theme 8 - March
Theme 9 - March & April

also available on the parish website

Theme 1—The Eucharist Is About Belonging

Your Goal:

To lead your child to understand:

- The importance and joy of belonging to a family.
- That through Baptism he or she belongs to the Christian family.
- That Christians – followers of Jesus – are called by God to love one another.

Parent Reflection:

Our membership in a family was born out of the need two people expressed for each other in an act of love. In and through the family we gradually discover our need for others and their need for us. Belonging to a family is the life experience that most clearly parallels the experience of being a Christian. In fact, we say we belong to the “Christian family, the Church”. Like membership in our own family, our membership in the Christian family, the Church, is the result of an act of love by God.

Before you begin working with your child on theme 1, think about: what family means to you; what it means to present your child as a candidate for First Holy Eucharist; why you want your child to belong to God’s family.

Family Time:

1. *The positive value of belonging:* Begin on p. 2 – discuss the photos – add a photo of your child or your family. Read together p. 3 – complete the sentences and talk about the responses and how much love is found in the family. Complete the page and have your child tell the story of his/her picture – who are the people; name something nice about each person; where are you; name one thing that makes you happy to belong to your family.
2. *Sharing the Word of God:* Read together the story on p. 4-5; perhaps have your child retell the story in his/her own words. Reflect together on the story with questions like: where was Samuel; what did Samuel do in the temple (light burning – a ministry); what are some ministries in our church; how did God call Samuel; how does God call us today?
3. *Belonging:* Explain that all families everywhere belong to one large family – the family of God; this is why we are all brothers and sisters and God cares for all of us and knows each of us by name. Explain that he/she belongs to this family, too, because you wanted him/her to belong to the Christian community and brought him/her to church to be baptized. Tell your child what you remember about his/her Baptism. Read and complete together p. 6 (baptismal name of child, Baptism). Discuss the illustration on p. 7. Share a photo of your child’s Baptism, if possible.
4. *I Love Because I Belong:* Read together p. 8. Together underline all the words that are ways that show we belong to God. Allow the child to finish p. 8 and discuss his/her responses. Complete p. 9 and have the child tell the story of his/her picture and what he/she has learned about Baptism.
5. *Prayer:* Close your time by saying the following prayer lines, having your child repeat after you: In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Lord, you love me. Lord, you call me by name. Lord, I thank you for your great love. Lord, I’m glad I belong to your family. Amen.

Theme 2—The Eucharist Is About Celebrating

Your Goal:

To lead your child to understand:

- That each week – on Sunday – your whole family is invited to celebrate the day of the Lord.
- How important it is for a family to take time every week to celebrate the love and unity that exist among its members.

Parent Reflection:

Celebrations are an important part of human existence. They serve a real human purpose. They fulfill the needs of each of us who participate in them and who share something with others. From the earliest times, Christians have gathered together to celebrate their call to be a community in the Lord. This is something of what the Eucharist is about. Particular expressions in the Eucharistic celebration signify that this gathering is more than a mere crowd of people. In the Eucharist we join together to celebrate our freedom and new life that God, in Jesus, has granted us. We celebrate our membership in the Christian family through Jesus who, we believe, is present today in the gathered community, the word, and the bread. And we celebrate our hope that God's unconditional love for us, a love that has given us life, will give us "life to the full".

Family Time:

1. *The joy in celebrating:* Begin on p. 10 – discuss the photos and the joy found in celebrating. Read together p. 11 – complete the sentences and talk about the responses and how much love is found in the family. Complete the page and have your child tell the story of his/her picture.
2. *Sharing the Word of God:* Read together the story on p. 12-13; perhaps have your child retell the story in his/her own words. Reflect together on the story with questions like: what happens at Cana; who was invited to the wedding, what happened to the wine while the guests were there; how do you think the headwaiter felt; what did Mary do and what does that tell us about Mary; what does Jesus do; how do you think the guests and waiter and Mary felt after they saw the new wine? Discuss how the presence of Jesus made a difference to the people at the wedding and name ways we know Jesus is present in our lives.
3. *Celebrating:* Discuss ways you and your child celebrate life. Read together p. 14. Explain that every week, Jesus invites us to gather as one family to celebrate our faith in him, the risen Lord. The special place is called our church. Discuss the picture on p. 15 and what ways the people share their gifts to celebrate their faith.
4. *We celebrate because we believe:* read together and complete p. 16-17. Ask your child to share about his/her drawing.
5. *Prayer:* Close your time by saying the following prayer lines, having your child repeat after you: In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Lord, you have given us life and love and joy. We thank you and we love you. To show our thanks we will share our joy with those we meet. Amen.

Theme 3—The Eucharist Is About Listening

Your Goal:

To lead your child to understand:

- That he or she can listen to God's spoken word in the Liturgy of the Word.
- That he or she is called to live what God tells us.

Parent Reflection:

In our world of competing sounds, listening is more than ever an activity demanding discipline and focus. It requires perception, patience, and trust to sort out and harmonize our world's widely scattered sounds. Few activities are as important to us Christians as listening, for we believe Jesus lives and speaks to us today. To be attentive to Jesus' words is indispensable if we are to become his followers and make a difference in this world of so many disparate voices.

In the Eucharistic celebration we are called to listen, remember and respond. Through the readings, we hear the word of God and seek to make it our own. We welcome the good news of Jesus in the gospels. The homily that follows helps us to understand the word of God as an expression of love for us and a call to respond to this word in love. Hearing God's word throughout the Eucharistic celebration is our best preparation for God's continuing action of love for us – the gift of Jesus in the Eucharist.

Family Time:

1. *The importance of listening:* Discuss the photos on p. 18 and other things we hear. Complete p. 19 together and then discuss your child's picture.
2. *Sharing the Word of God:* Introduce the Bible – that it's a book that tells of God's great love for us; it has 2 main parts – the Old Testament and New Testament. Share the story on p. 20-21. Discuss the importance of listening based on this scripture story.
3. *Listening:* Explain to your child that every week, God invites us to listen to the good news about Jesus. We hear the good news during the Liturgy of the Word at our mass. Read together p. 22. Review the order of the Liturgy of the Word (a reading from the Old Testament tells of God's love for us, our response to that reading shows that we have truly listened to God's word, a reading from the New Testament tells us how to live the teachings of Jesus, our acclamation before the gospel is our welcome to Jesus' good news, the gospel proclaims the good news of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection and finally the homily is instruction on how to live the teachings of Jesus).
4. *Responding to God and Others:* read together and complete p. 24-25. Ask your child to share about his/her drawing.
5. *Prayer:* Close your time by saying the following prayer lines, having your child repeat after you: In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Lord, open my ears to your words. Lord, open my heart to your words. Lord, help me to live your words. Amen.

Theme 4—The Eucharist Is About Caring

Your Goal:

To lead your child to understand:

- That in helping others the Spirit of Jesus works through us in our lives.
- That when people care for others we can have a happy family and a happy neighborhood.

Parent Reflection:

A song from a popular musical includes the line “People who need people are the luckiest people in the world”. In fact, we do need people to nourish our life as we grow. The Church community in particular is a community of mutual care in which each member serves the needs of others. It is not so much who has what service to offer, but that each person offers what he or she has, and that all work together for the common good.

Jesus is the expression of God’s care for us. Jesus is so much at one with us – his depth of love so great – he tells each person who would follow him, “Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me” (Matthew 25:40). When we celebrate the Eucharist, we nourish the life we received through Baptism and celebrate a shared life – a life in which we care for each other.

Family Time:

1. *Caring in a family:* Begin on p. 26 – discuss the photos and how caring is happening in each. Read together p. 27 – complete the sentences and talk about the responses. Complete the page and have your child tell the story of his/her picture.
2. *Sharing the Word of God:* Read together the story on p. 28-29; perhaps have your child retell the story in his/her own words. Reflect together on the caring in the story. Discuss times you and/or your child has shown care and whether there is someone that you or he/she would like to bring to Jesus.
3. *The needs of People:* Think together of people who take care of our needs like nurses, letter carriers, etc. Talk together about people who are not well cared for – homeless children, families destroyed by war, etc. Point out that Jesus came to show us how to love and care for others. Read together the first 3 paragraphs on p. 30. Explain that whenever we celebrate the Eucharist, we pray for those who need our love and care. Explain that the Prayer of the Faithful (petitions, intercessions) reminds us of the many people who have no one to care for them and who need our prayers. It also names the Holy Father, our bishops and priests, and the leaders of our country. Now pray together the Prayers of the Faithful on p. 30. Discuss the picture on p. 31.
4. *We care:* Read p. 32 together and complete p. 32 and 33. Discuss the reading and responses.
5. *Prayer:* Close your time by sharing your own Prayers of the Faithful.

Theme 5—The Eucharist Is About Making Peace

Your Goal:

To lead your child to understand:

- The positive values in forgiving and making up.
- That to make peace, we must be at peace.
- That because we belong to God's family, our hearts are filled with the Spirit of Jesus.
- That reconciliation with our brothers and sisters brings joy and peace.

Parent Reflection:

In the Eucharistic celebration we gather together to renew and celebrate our bond of community in the Lord. Throughout the liturgy, several elements demonstrate our need and desire to heal the breakdown of this community – to make peace – so that community becomes a reality. For example, we pause to share the Sign of Peace, a pledge of our mutual love before we share in the one bread. In a world at once more united yet more fragmented than ever, a love willing to make peace remains the essential ingredient to fulfill the dream of Jesus. On the night before he died, Jesus prayed “that they may all be one” (John 17:21), and his words to his closest friends were, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you” (John 14:27).

Family Time:

1. *Making peace with others:* Begin on p. 34 – discuss the photos and the story that might be behind them. Help your child to learn and appreciate the different ways of saying I'm sorry and of making peace. Remind him/her of the joy we create when we make peace in our family, school and neighborhood. Read together p. 35 – complete the sentences and talk about the responses. Complete the page and have your child tell the story of his/her picture.
2. *Sharing the Word of God:* Read together the story on p. 36-37; perhaps have your child retell the story in his/her own words. Reflect together on the story with questions that help your child understand the joy that results when we make peace.
3. *Penitential Rites:* Read together p. 38 and relate the actions, prayers and songs in which we ask forgiveness of God and one another during mass. Discuss the picture on p. 39.
4. *Being at peace with others:* read together and complete p. 40-41. Ask your child to share about his/her drawing. Help your child to understand that love is a gift and that God wants us to share that gift with others by making peace.
5. *Prayer:* Close your time by saying the following prayer lines, having your child repeat after you: In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Lord Jesus, you love and forgive us. You want us to love and forgive others. Help us to forgive. Amen.

Theme 6—The Eucharist Is About Giving Thanks for Creation

Your Goal:

To lead your child to understand:

- How to show thanks for the countless gifts God has given us.
- That humanity is the masterpiece of God's creation.
- That Jesus is the greatest of all God's gifts.

Parent Reflection:

Christians give and receive love daily. From the first pages of Scripture, all of creation appears as an expression of God's love for us. Scripture also describes the appropriate response for such a gift. This response – thankful praise to God – is the foundation of the Eucharistic meal. The object of thanksgiving is the wonderful gift of creation God has given us to share.

Family Time:

1. *Awareness of Creation:* Begin on p. 42 – discuss the photos and that God has given us the work of art of creation and that we are to take care of it. Read together p. 43 – complete the sentences and talk about the responses. Complete the page and have your child tell the story of his/her picture.
2. *Sharing the Word of God:* Read together the story on p. 44-45; perhaps have your child retell the story in his/her own words. Reflect together on the story known as the "Poem of Creation" and that it was written to express the wonder and gratitude of the author for God, the creator of all.
3. *Presentation of Gifts and the Eucharistic Prayer:* Explain to your child that when people love others, they often give gifts and that to show us how much God loves us, God gave us Jesus. Explain that during our celebration of the Eucharist, we present our gifts to God. We give money during the collection to show that we are willing to share what we have with others and to reflect on how blessed we are. We also present bread and wine. God changes our gift of bread and wine into a new gift – Jesus – and gives it back to us. Read together p. 46 and explain that it is the Eucharistic Prayer, our community's prayer of thanks and praise to God for creation. Ask your child to listen to it and respond in mass. Discuss the picture on p. 47.
4. *We celebrate because we believe:* read together and complete p. 48-49. Ask your child to share about his/her drawing and decorating.
5. *Prayer:* Close your time by each of you sharing several things or people you are grateful for and responding to each with, "We give you thanks, Lord."

Theme 7—The Eucharist Is About Giving Thanks for New Life

Your Goal:

To lead your child to understand:

- That through the course of human development, we often experience “dying” in some form.
- That limitations, failures, and even death can lead us to grow and live more fully.
- That by giving to others – sharing our life with them – we share in a new life with Jesus.

Parent Reflection:

Prejudice, hatred, and violence are all obstacles to growth and development. These sometimes unconscious forms of dying take place in passing from one stage of life to another – in leaving behind the former self to take on a new self. Whatever we experience as dehumanizing is death in a minor form. Love alone is capable of overcoming death. Only love makes it possible to risk letting go of something to reach for something new – to grow, no matter how painful or difficult the situation.

Nowhere is the power of love more obvious than in Jesus. In him we encounter God’s love for us in a form so absolute that it is capable of overcoming death in all its forms. In the Eucharist, the risen Jesus becomes present to us in the bread and wine. Jesus gives himself to us with uncommon humility and love. He offers us his body and blood, a sacrifice in which we participate. And in the Eucharist we give thanks that through Jesus it is life, not death that has the final say.

Family Time:

1. *Love in families gives life:* Begin on p. 50 – discuss the photos and the new life in each one. Read together p. 51 – complete the sentences and talk about the responses and help them appreciate the new life they have received and give to others. Complete the page and have your child tell the story of his/her picture.
2. *Sharing the Word of God:* Read together the story on p. 52-53; perhaps have your child retell the story in his/her own words. Reflect together on Jesus now living in a new way and that he overcame sin and death; also discuss how Mary Magdalene’s faith is affected by her experience of the risen Jesus.
3. *Consecration and Great Amen:* Discuss that during all his life, Jesus showed love and concern for others. Explain that Jesus gave his life for us and this is what we call the sacrifice of Jesus. At the Last Supper, shortly before he died, Jesus promised to be with us always and everywhere. He gave himself to us in a special way in the Eucharist. Explain that every time we gather at our celebration of the Eucharist we do what Jesus did with his friends the night before he died. Read together p. 54 and then tell your child that these words of consecration are said by the priest at every celebration of the Eucharist and the words tell us that Jesus is present with us and continues to give his life for us. Discuss the picture on p. 55.
4. *Giving life and love to others:* read together and complete p. 56-57. Explain that the words in red are what we call the Memorial Acclamation because with the words we remember that we believe that Jesus is with us in the Eucharist. Ask your child to share about his/her drawing.
5. *Prayer:* Close your time by saying the following prayer lines, having your child repeat after you: In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Lord Jesus, you loved and cared for others. Lord Jesus, you gave your life for us on the cross. Lord Jesus, you give yourself to us in the bread of life. Lord Jesus, you are with us always. Amen.

Theme 8—The Eucharist Is About Sharing A Meal

Your Goal:

To lead your child to understand:

- That he or she will receive the bread of life.
- That this personal communion with Jesus makes possible an even deeper union with him and with others.

Parent Reflection:

Eating and drinking are not merely activities necessary to sustain life. They can and do become times of companionship and unity. This certainly is true of the Eucharistic meal. When we share in the bread and wine, we share in Jesus' own death and resurrection. The bread and wine are signs of the unity we have because of what God has done for us in Jesus. They also are a source of unity because by sharing in them, we participate in the events by which we have been saved.

Family Time:

1. *Sharing meals with family and friends:* Begin on p. 58 – discuss the photos and lead your child to understand that preparing and sharing a meal brings people together in a special way. Eating together is a sign that we share friendship and love. Read together p. 59. Complete the page and have your child tell the story of his/her picture.
2. *Sharing the Word of God:* Read together the story on p. 60-61; perhaps have your child retell the story in his/her own words. Convey that Jesus revealed himself to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus in both the breaking of the word (Scripture) and the breaking of the bread (Eucharist). Talk about the illustrations.
3. *Receiving Communion:* Explain that Jesus enjoyed sharing meals with his friends and did it often in his life. The night before he died, Jesus shared a very special meal with his closest friends. That meal is called the Last Supper. When we celebrate the Eucharist together, we remember what Jesus did and said at the Last Supper. We remember by doing it. Read together p. 62. Explain that every week, we express our faith by participating in this prayer and receiving communion. Also, explain that when we receive the Eucharist, we see only bread and wine, but the Eucharistic Minister says, "The body of Christ," and "The blood of Christ." We answer, "Amen". This means "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are present in the Eucharist."
4. *Preparing to receive the Eucharist:* read together and complete p. 64-65. Ask your child to share about his/her drawing. Talk with your child about the hosts being the bread and perhaps describe the taste to him/her. Also, if you choose, perhaps allow your child to taste a sip of a red wine to alleviate his/her anxiety about receiving from the cup.
5. *Prayer:* Close your time by saying the following prayer lines, having your child repeat after you: In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Jesus, you come to us in your word. Jesus, you come to us in the breaking of the bread. We thank you, Jesus, for staying with us. Amen.

Theme 9—The Eucharist Is About Going Forth to Make a Better World

Your Goal:

To lead your child to understand:

- His or her Christian commitment to people and to the world.
- That he or she can make the world a better place to live in.

Parent Reflection:

Much of our life is spent waiting. Sometimes we wait simply to accomplish an insignificant but functional task. Sometimes our waiting precedes a special event in the life of a loved one. Then our anticipation is filled with joy.

Scripture, more than once, directs the followers of Jesus to wait. In John's gospel, what is awaited is that time when all people will possess life to the full – eternal life. That time will be a time of great rejoicing, and its joy is something we already share while we wait. This spirit of waiting, so characteristic of Christian life, is apparent in the brief but important dismissal rite that summarizes what we are to do during this time of waiting. The community is told to "Go in peace to love and serve the Lord" – to spread the joy and hope that has symbolized our waiting to everyone we meet.

Family Time:

1. *People who make the world a better place:* Begin on p. 66 – discuss the photos and the ways of making the world a better place. Read and complete together p. 67.
2. *Sharing the Word of God:* Read together the story on p. 68-69; perhaps have your child retell the story in his/her own words. Reflect together on the story by discussing that Jesus lives in all people and that the Christian community is called to respond to the cries for justice and love that rise from any of the members of the body of Christ.
3. *Dismissal Rite:* Explain that after all the members of the Christian community have received the Eucharist we keep silent for a few moments. This gives us time to reflect on the gift of Jesus we have received and to thank God in our hearts. We are then blessed by the presider. Read together p. 70, emphasizing that we leave the celebration full of joy because we have been given Jesus in the bread of life and the cup of blessing. We carry our joy out to all we meet and try to make the world a better place.
4. *Responding to God's call to make a better world:* share p. 72-73 by explaining that this drawing shows one artist's vision of God's holy city – a city of peace and love. This vision was described by John, a friend and follower of Jesus, in the Book of Revelation in the New Testament. Our understanding is that when we are very happy in this life it is only a small taste of the happiness we will share with God in the holy city. Until that day, God wants each of us to do our part to make the world a better place. God gives us Jesus and the Spirit of Jesus to help us.
5. *Prayer:* Close your time by saying the following prayer lines, having your child repeat after you: In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Lord, you have given us life and love and joy. We thank you and we love you. To show our thanks we will try to make the world a better place. Amen.