


# Celebrating the Mass

RCL Benziger's *Eucharist* child's book contains the section "Celebrating the Mass." This section, which is divided according to the major rites, or parts, of the Mass, fosters the children's full, conscious, and active participation in the celebration of the sacrament by familiarizing the children with the ritual actions, prayers, and responses of the Mass. This section is correlated to the chapters of RCL Benziger's *Eucharist* child's book and catechist guide.

**Ritual actions** are clearly identified by the use of photographs.

At the Last Supper Jesus gave us the Eucharist. The Eucharist makes Jesus' sacrifice of the cross present with the Church. At the Eucharist Jesus acts through the ministry, or work, of the priest. We recall what happened at the Last Supper. We share in the one sacrifice of Christ. The bread and wine become the Body and Blood of the Lord through the power of the Holy Spirit and the words of the priest. Jesus is truly and really present under the appearances of bread and wine.



After we do what Jesus asked us to do at the Last Supper in memory of him, we proclaim our faith in Jesus. We join in saying aloud or singing the **memorial acclamation**.


**Priest or deacon:** The mystery of faith:  
**People:** We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

We remember Jesus' passion, death, resurrection, and ascension. The priest prays that God the Father accepts the Church's offering that we be filled with the Holy Spirit and become one with Christ. He then prays for the Church. He prays for the living and the dead and that we may one day live in heaven.

The priest leads us in proclaiming our praise of God by saying aloud or singing the **doxology** to conclude the eucharistic prayer.

**Priest:** Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever.

**People:** Amen.



**COMMUNION RITE**  
We prepare our minds and hearts to receive the Lord's Body and Blood.

**Lord's Prayer**  
Jesus often told us about his love for his Father and his Father's love for us. In this prayer we call God "Father" as Jesus invited us to do. We tell God how much we love him and ask him for the grace we need to live as children of God. The Lord's Prayer is a summary of the Gospel.

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**Priest:** Deliver us, Lord, from every evil . . .

**People:** For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever.

**Sign of Peace**  
We prepare ourselves to receive the one bread and drink from the one cup. We share a sign of peace. We pray for peace and unity for the Church and the whole human family.

**Priest:** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**People:** And with your spirit.

**Priest or deacon:** Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

**Breaking of the Bread**  
At the Last Supper Jesus broke bread and gave it to his disciples. At the time of the apostles the Eucharist became known as the "breaking of bread." The priest breaks the consecrated bread so it can be shared with others. Joining with him, we sing or say:

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.**

**Introductions** provide background for the catechist and parents, giving them a brief summary of the doctrinal and liturgical context to facilitate their going through the Mass with the children.

**Photographs** visually depict the liturgical rites.

**Prayers and responses of the assembly** are provided for easy memorization where appropriate and printed in color for easy identification.

# My Daily Prayers


The "My Daily Prayers" section of RCL Benziger's *Eucharist* child's book fosters the continuing development of the children's prayer life. It contains traditional prayers for group and individual use. Prayers included are:

- Sign of the Cross
- Grace Before Meals
- Glory Prayer
- Grace After Meals
- Lord's Prayer
- Morning Prayer
- Hail Mary
- Evening Prayer

The Apostles' Creed and Nicene Creed are included in the "Celebrating the Mass" section.

**My Daily Prayers**

**Sign of the Cross**  
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



**Glory Prayer**  
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

**Lord's Prayer**  
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

**Hail Mary**  
Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you! Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

We come to the bishop with our sponsor. The bishop places his hand on our head. He greets us by name. As he anoints our forehead with chrism he says,

“Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.”

We respond, “Amen.”

The bishop then says,  
“Peace be with you.”

We respond, “And with your spirit.”

The sacrament of the Eucharist is the third Sacrament of Initiation. It joins us most fully with Jesus, the Son of God, and with all the members of the Church. It strengthens us to live as sons and daughters of God.

### What happens at Confirmation?



#### TOGETHER AS A FAMILY

Share responses to the question on this page. This week talk about what it means to belong to the Church. Take time to pray the Apostles' Creed as a family. The Apostles' Creed is found on page 72 of this book.

We Belong 11

## CONSIDER THIS . . .

### Christian Initiation

In the early Church the Sacraments of Initiation were celebrated together as a single event. The person was immersed into the waters of Baptism three times, anointed with chrism, and invited to share in the eucharistic meal. Over time, and for many reasons, the celebration of the three Sacraments of Initiation became separated from one another. In the renewal of the liturgy that was discussed and promulgated at the Second Vatican Council, the Church was invited to restore the celebration of the sacraments of Christian initiation to this original order. This restored order helps us recognize that sharing in the Eucharist completes our sharing in the life of Christ and belonging to his Body, the Church. At the present time there is still a variety of practices in the Church. Some dioceses have restored the ancient order and celebrate Confirmation before Eucharist. In other dioceses the more recent custom of celebrating Confirmation after Eucharist is still maintained.

# Additional Activities



## Letter to Godparents

In Baptism we profess our faith in Christ Jesus. When the Church baptizes infants, the baptismal promises are made in the infant's name by their parents and godparents. Parents and godparents together guide and help a child grow stronger in the practice of their faith. Explain the role of godparents at Baptism to the children.

Have the children write a letter to their godparents, thanking them for being their godparents. Suggest that the children tell their godparents that they are now preparing to receive First Communion. The children can also include what they have learned about Baptism and how important Baptism is to them.



## Make a Triptych— the Sacraments of Initiation

In groups of three, have the children make a triptych for the Sacraments of Initiation. Assign one of the three Sacraments of Initiation to each child in the group. Provide drawing paper and brightly colored markers and crayons and have each child create a symbol or picture for the sacrament they have been assigned. When each child in the group has completed their drawing, tape the drawings together, forming a triptych of the Sacraments of Initiation. Display the completed triptych for all to see. Invite volunteers to discuss their drawings.



## Baptism

One way to help children understand Baptism is to reenact the rite of Baptism in the classroom. The children will learn about Baptism and will enjoy taking the various parts as they role-play a baptism ceremony. You will need a table, a doll to "baptize," a large bowl of water, a small bowl of oil, a baptismal candle, and a white baptismal garment. Make signs for the children to wear that identify them as the main participants in the baptism ceremony: mother, father, godmother, godfather. The remaining children can be the family members and the assembly. You should take the role of the priest or deacon presider. Use the prayers from the *Rite of Baptism*, which you can borrow from the parish priest or the religious education library, and explain each part of the sacrament of Baptism to the children before or after you perform the actions and say the words. You may wish to role-play the baptism several times so that many children may take part in the baptism.

## *Sending Forth Ritual*

*Play the recording of the instrumental version of an appropriate hymn from RCL Benziger's Eucharist music CD. Then invite the children to gather in the prayer area. Once the children are settled, begin the ritual.*

- ALL:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
- LEADER:** God, our loving Father,  
we thank you for the gift of new life  
you have given us in Baptism.  
May the Holy Spirit help us live  
as followers of Jesus.  
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.



The priest leads our church family in the celebration of Mass. The Mass begins as the priest and other people walk in procession into the church. Everyone stands and sings a hymn. We remember that we all belong to our church family.

The priest greets us, saying, “The Lord be with you.” We respond, “And with your spirit.” We believe that God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are present with us.

At Mass we worship God. We give adoration and honor to God. Together with Jesus we thank God the Father for his mercy. We praise God for his love. We ask God to help us live as his children. We are now ready to listen to the word of God.

**Why do we gather for Mass?**



### TOGETHER AS A FAMILY

Share responses to the question on this page. Remind your child that God is present with your family, right in your home. Use the words “The Lord is with you. And also with you” to begin family prayers and family discussions. Use “Celebrating the Mass” on pages 62 and 63 of this book to help your child learn the responses for the introductory rites of the Mass.

We Gather 19

## CONSIDER THIS . . .

### Sing to the Lord

Song fills the hearts of children. From our earliest years, our life is nurtured by song. Singing simple lullabies or humming melodies bond parents with their children, nurturing a deep feeling of belonging and of peace. As children learn to walk and talk, they soon play games that involve singing songs such as “London Bridge” and rounds such as “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” that bring people together. Music and song also give expression to the identity and unity of a people, a nation, a college, and so on. There seems to be an irresistible natural urge in the human heart and soul to express our joys and fears, our dreams and longings, our beliefs and our very identity in song. No wonder, then, that music and song are so integral to the liturgy of the Church.

# Additional Activities



## Invitations

Celebrating sacraments for the first time is a very important event for the children. Have the children make cards inviting their parents to join them in the celebration of their First Communion. Include on the card the time of the Mass and the name of the parish church. Provide brightly colored construction paper, crayons, markers, scissors, and paste for the children to make their invitations. Encourage the children to decorate their cards by drawing symbols of the Eucharist on different colored paper, cutting these symbols out, and pasting them on their cards. Allow the children to be creative in artistically expressing their excitement for their First Communion celebration. If time permits, they can also make cards for other family members.



## The Telephone Game

To emphasize good listening skills, have the children work with a partner to make a string telephone. Provide two heavy paper cups and a long piece of string to each pair of children. Help the children punch a hole in the bottom of each cup and thread one end of the string through the bottom of one cup and the other end of the string through the bottom of the other cup. Demonstrate how this can be used as a string telephone.

Encourage each pair of children to play a game of telephone with the cups and strings. Have one child tell their partner something on the telephone that they have learned about Eucharist. The other child must listen very carefully and repeat the message over the telephone. Then reverse roles. Allow time for both partners to tell and listen to several messages.



## Sing a Song

Practice singing the song "Alle, Alle, Alleluia" (Song 4 on RCL Benziger's *Eucharist* music CD) or another appropriate song or hymn. Use this song to reinforce that the Bible is God's word to us. It is important to listen to God's word in the Bible.

## *Sending Forth Ritual*

*Play the recording of the instrumental version of an appropriate hymn from RCL Benziger's Eucharist music CD. Then invite the children to gather in the prayer area. Once the children are settled, begin the ritual.*

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

**LEADER:** *Proclaim Mark 10:13–14 from a Bible. If a Bible is not available, you may wish to use this adapted version.*

People were bringing little children to Jesus. When the disciples tried to send the children away, Jesus said to them, "Let the little children come to me. Do not stop them."

*(Based on Mark 10:13–14)*

The gospel of the Lord.

God has spoken his word to us.

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

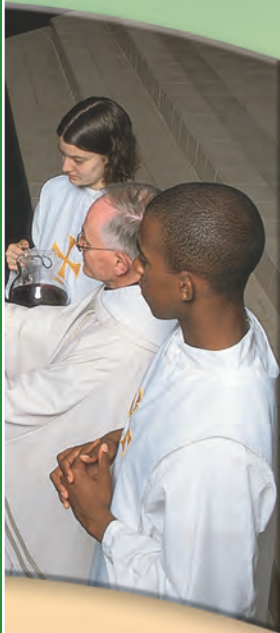
May he give us the courage to live  
as his children.

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

**ALL:** Amen.

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

**ALL:** Thanks be to God.



We begin the Liturgy of the Eucharist by singing a hymn. As we are singing, some members of our church family carry our gifts of bread and wine in procession to the altar. The priest takes our gifts of bread and wine and prays two blessing prayers. Blessing prayers tell God we believe that everything we have comes from him.

The priest invites us to give thanks to God. We stand and pray:

**Priest:** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**Response:** It is right and just.

Together we sing to God. We sing, "Holy, Holy, Holy Lord."

### Why do we thank God during the Liturgy of the Eucharist?



### TOGETHER AS A FAMILY

Share responses to the question on this page. This week pray a blessing prayer at family meals. For example: Model your prayer on the blessing prayers at the beginning of the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Also use pages 66 and 67 in this book to help your child learn the Mass responses for the preparation of the altar and gifts and the preface.

We Give Thanks 35

## CONSIDER THIS . . .

### Acclamations

Music and song are integral parts of the rites used for the celebration of the Eucharist. The New Testament contains brief hymns and doxologies that became part of the earliest forms of the liturgy celebrated by the Church. Acclamations, which are joyful professions of faith, are one of the types of liturgical song. The acclamations integrated into the rites of the Mass include (1) the Alleluia and gospel acclamation, (2) the Holy, Holy, Holy at the preface, (3) the memorial acclamation during the institution narrative, and (4) the Great Amen that concludes the eucharistic prayer. While the directives in the Roman Missal permit saying these acclamations aloud, singing them with joyful and thankful hearts gives a resounding attestation to our faith and our thanks and praise to God. The *Sanctus* (Holy, Holy, Holy . . .) is an intrinsic part of the eucharistic prayer. Select a version of this acclamation that is used by your parish. Teach it to the children and help them lift their hearts up to God in praise and thanksgiving.

# Additional Activities



## Eucharist

Write the word *eucharist* on the board or on newsprint. Have the children use the letters in *eucharist* to come up with ideas of how we give thanks to God at Mass. They may need help from you, but this will be a fun activity for the children.



## Making Bread

Here is an easy recipe you can use to make bread with the children. Have the children work together to locate the verses in the Bible and identify what the ingredients are for making bread.

### BIBLE BREAD

Mix:

2 cups	Genesis 18:6	(flour)
2 tablespoons	Jeremiah 6:20	(sweet cane or sugar)
1 tablespoon	Exodus 12:19	(leaven or baking powder)
1/2 teaspoon	Leviticus 2:13	(salt)

Mix in:

1/2 cup	Psalms 55:21	(butter)
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Add:

1	Luke 11:12	(egg)
1/2 cup	Job 10:10	(milk)

Knead on lightly floured surface. Pat into a 1/2 inch thick square. Cut into 9 squares. Bake on an ungreased cookie sheet at 450 degrees for 20 minutes.

Split open and serve with Amos 8:1 (fruit) and whipped cream.



## Role-play a Bible Story

Invite the children to role-play the Bible story of Jesus feeding the five thousand. Have the children read the story found in Luke 9:10–17 and include various details in the role-play. Assign the roles of Jesus, the twelve disciples, the boy with the loaves and fish, and the crowd to the members of the class. Encourage the children to improvise the dialogue for the story. The teacher can serve as the narrator to help keep continuity to the story. You can even make some simple costumes and props, using items that are found in the classroom and at home.

## Sending Forth Ritual

*Play the recording of the instrumental version of an appropriate hymn from RCL Benziger's Eucharist music CD. Then invite the children to gather in the prayer area. Once the children are settled, begin the ritual.*

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

**ALL:** Amen.

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

**ALL:** Thanks be to God.

# Opening Ritual

## Remembering Jesus

### Gathering

Gather the children in the prayer area. Play a recording of instrumental music or an appropriate hymn. Invite the children to settle themselves and to become aware of God's presence among them. Place grapes and bread on the table in the prayer area.

**LEADER:** Let us begin as we were baptized by praying the Sign of the Cross.

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

**LEADER:** God, our loving Father,  
be with us as we gather to remember  
your Son, Jesus.  
Open our hearts to be aware of  
your presence with us.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**ALL:** Amen.

### Scripture Reading

Read aloud or invite a volunteer to read aloud the Scripture story "The Last Supper" (Luke 22:17–20) from the Bible. An adapted version of the Scripture story is found on page 40 of the child's book.

**LEADER:** God is with us in a special way when we listen to his word, the Bible. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to help us listen to the word of God by making the sign of the cross on our forehead, lips, and over our heart.

**READER:** A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke.

**ALL:** Reverently sign their forehead, lips, and heart with the sign of the cross and then say,  
Glory to you, Lord.

**READER:** Read the story aloud to the group.  
Conclude the reading, saying,  
The gospel of the Lord.

**ALL:** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

### Ritual Praying: The Memorial Acclamation

Explain that when we gather as a community for Mass, we come together to remember Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. We share stories from Scripture and we share in the Body and Blood of Christ. Then we go out to continue Christ's work in the world. When we gather for Mass, we pray or sing the memorial acclamation. Invite the children to repeat this acclamation after you.

**LEADER:** When we eat this bread.

**ALL:** When we eat this bread.

**LEADER:** When we drink this cup.

**ALL:** When we drink this cup.

**LEADER:** We proclaim your Death, O Lord,

**ALL:** We proclaim your Death, O Lord,

**LEADER:** and profess your Resurrection  
until you come again.

**ALL:** and profess your Resurrection  
until you come again.

### Closing Prayer

**LEADER:** God, our loving Father,  
today we gather to remember your Son,  
Jesus Christ.

We know that Jesus is always with us.

Send us the Holy Spirit  
to help us remember and live  
what Jesus taught us.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**ALL:** Amen.

# Additional Activities



## Placecards for Dinner

Invite the children to make placecards for each of their family members. The placecards can be made for a special family celebration or for a regular meal that the family shares together. Instruct the children to fold a sheet of paper in half, creating a placecard. Have the children write the name of the family member on one side of the placecard. Have them decorate the other side of the placecard with words and pictures that describe that family member.



## Bible Story

In pairs, have the children review the story of the Last Supper. They can do this by first reading together the story of the Last Supper either from the Bible or from their book. To reinforce the story, have each child tell the other the events of the Last Supper. You can also have the children draw a picture of the Last Supper. Invite the children to include themselves in their picture of the Last Supper.



## Helping Coupons

Brainstorm with the children some of the ways that they help the other members of their families. List their responses on the board or on newsprint. Then give each child several index cards. Have them design each card as a coupon indicating one thing that they will do to help another person in their family. Encourage them to colorfully decorate these coupons. Invite the children to take their coupons home and give them to family members. Remind the children that they will have to do what they wrote on the coupons when the family members redeem them. Tell the children that as they do these

things, they are doing them for love of one another. The children are learning what it means to make sacrifices and share in all that Jesus did.



## Altar Hanging

Have the children work together to make an altar hanging that can be used in the celebration of First Communion. One way to decorate the altar hanging is to have each child draw a candle on the cloth and print their name on the candle. The candles could also be made from pieces of felt and then glued to the altar hanging. Cut out letters for the words "Jesus Is the Light of the World" and glue this phrase as a heading for the altar hanging. Use the completed altar hanging at the First Communion celebration.

## *Sending Forth Ritual*

*Play the recording of the instrumental version of an appropriate hymn from RCL Benziger's Eucharist music CD. Then invite the children to gather in the prayer area. Once the children are settled, begin the ritual.*

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

**LEADER:** Let us proclaim the mystery of faith.

**ALL:** When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus, until you come in glory.

**LEADER:** By his death and resurrection Jesus  
has shown God's great love for us.  
May the love of God fill our hearts.

**ALL:** Amen.

**LEADER:** May the Holy Spirit help us  
share our love with others.

**ALL:** Amen.

**LEADER:** May almighty God bless us, the Father,  
and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**ALL:** Amen.

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

**ALL:** Thanks be to God.

# Additional Activities



## Communion Banners

Have each child create a banner to be used at the celebration of First Eucharist. Take a large piece of felt material to make each banner. Use other craft supplies or materials to decorate the banners. Encourage the children to put their names on the banners in large letters. Decorate the banners with eucharistic symbols. Use the banners to decorate the church for the First Communion celebration.

strips of paper and write what they did on the strip of paper. Have them attach their strips of paper together creating a chain of the peacemaking activities. Hang the chain somewhere in your meeting space to remind the children of our call to live as peacemakers in our world. Encourage the children to see how long the chain will become as a result of their good choices.



## Peace Poster

Invite the children to work with partners to make peace posters. Distribute a piece of felt or poster paper large enough to trace the outline of both their hands. Have each child trace the outline of both their hands and then cut out the outlines. Tell the children to print their name on each outline of their hands. Next give each child a sheet of paper and have them paste one of their own handprints on the paper. Next have each child exchange their other handprint with their partner. Have each child paste their partner's handprint on their poster with both hands touching as if they were giving the sign of peace. Invite the children to decorate their poster with words and symbols of peace.

## *Sending Forth Ritual*

*Play the recording of the instrumental version of an appropriate hymn from RCL Benziger's Eucharist music CD. Then invite the children to gather in the prayer area. Once the children are settled, begin the ritual.*

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

**LEADER:** God, our loving Father,  
you give us food from heaven,  
the Bread of Life.  
May the Lord bless us and keep us.

**ALL:** Amen.

**LEADER:** May his face shine upon us,  
and be gracious to us.

**ALL:** Amen.

**LEADER:** May he look upon us with kindness,  
and give us his peace.

**ALL:** Amen.

**LEADER:** May almighty God bless us, the Father,  
and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**ALL:** Amen.

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

**ALL:** Thanks be to God.



## Peace Chain

Encourage the class to work together to make a peace chain. Provide the children with strips of brightly colored construction paper. Tell the children that each time they act as a peacemaker at home, in school, or on the playground they are to take one of the



At the end of Mass the priest asks God to bless us. We hear the words, “Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.” We respond, “Thanks be to God.” We thank God for making us disciples of Jesus. We share the gift of peace that God has given us.

Jesus told us that when we help people we are helping him. Filled with the Holy Spirit, we bring the good news of God’s love to people. We tell others about Jesus. The Holy Spirit helps us to live as lights in the world.

**What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus?**



### TOGETHER AS A FAMILY

Share responses to the question on this page. Have each family member name one way your family can show it is a community of Jesus’ disciples. Choose one suggestion and do it together. Use page 71 to review the Mass responses said during the concluding rite of the Mass with your child.

We Live 59

## CONSIDER THIS . . .

### We Are Sent Forth

The deacon or priest dismisses the assembly, using one of three dismissals: “Go forth, the Mass is ended,” or “Go in peace,” or “Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.” Two of the forms of the dismissal contain the word *peace*. As described in Chapter 6, there is a close link in meaning between *peace* and *communion*. The peace God gives is rooted in living in communion with God. Help the children understand that the dismissal calls them to live out their faith through their actions.

# Additional Activities



## The Presence of Jesus

Share with the children that Jesus taught he is always with us. Read aloud Matthew 25:31–40. When we treat people with kindness, we are treating Jesus with kindness. Invite the children to create a large mural of the many ways that living our faith in Jesus' presence can make a difference. On a long sheet of butcher paper have the children illustrate the ways that people can feed the hungry, visit the sick, and so on. Have the children work in small groups to illustrate each of these ways on the one large mural. Display the completed mural in a place where other people can see it.



## Favorite Bible Stories

Recall with the children the many Bible stories that were read as they prepared for First Communion. Encourage the children to look at the illustrations on the Scripture cards to remember the details of each of the Scripture stories. Read aloud the Scripture quote on the back of the cards to focus on the main point of the story.

Invite the children to retell their favorite Bible story in their words. A favorite story could be retold to a partner, in a small group, or before the entire group. Perhaps the group could also work together to decide on one story which is the favorite for the entire group.



## Living as a Disciple of Jesus

Have the children work in groups of three or four to create a skit that shows an example of living as a disciple of Jesus. Encourage the children to depict a situation that they would encounter in their everyday life. Invite the children to make puppets to use as they role-play their skits. The children can draw and decorate a puppet character on a piece of construction paper. Cut out the puppet and attach it to a craft stick. Have the children present their skits to the other members of the group.

## *Sending Forth Ritual*

*Play the recording of the instrumental version of an appropriate hymn from RCL Benziger's Eucharist music CD. Then invite the children to gather in the prayer area. Once the children are settled, begin the ritual.*

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

**LEADER:** May the Holy Spirit be with us as we live our life every day.

**ALL:** Amen.

**LEADER:** May almighty God bless us, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**ALL:** Amen.

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

**ALL:** Thanks be to God.

# Celebrating the Mass

Use “Celebrating the Mass” on pages 62–72 of the child’s book to help the children participate fully and actively in the celebration of the Mass. This section of the child’s book includes the prayers and responses used during the Mass. It also contains an explanation of the various rites of the Mass.

## Celebrating the Mass

Sunday is the main day for the celebration of the Eucharist. Sunday is the Lord’s Day. It is the day of Jesus’ resurrection.

### INTRODUCTORY RITES

The Holy Spirit calls us to gather as the community of the Church. The Church is the People of God, the Body of Christ. We gather with Christ and one another. We prepare to listen to the word of God and to celebrate the Eucharist.



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### Entrance Procession and Gathering Song

We stand as the priest and other ministers enter the assembly. The priest presides over the celebration of the Mass. We sing a gathering song. The priest kisses the altar as a sign of reverence. The altar reminds us of Jesus and his love for us. The priest then goes to the chair where he leads us in praying the Sign of the Cross. We declare that Jesus is present with us.

### Greeting

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

**People:** Amen.

**Priest:** The grace and peace of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**People:** And with your spirit.

### Rite of Sprinkling with Holy Water

On some Sundays we are blessed with holy water to remind us of our baptism. We ask God the Father to help us be faithful to the Holy Spirit whom we have been given at Baptism. The Holy Spirit helps us live as children of God and followers of Jesus.

### Penitential Rite

We admit our failures to live our baptism. We bless God for his mercy.

**Priest:** Lord, have mercy.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Priest:** Christ, have mercy.

**People:** Christ, have mercy.

**Priest:** Lord, have mercy.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

### Gloria

On some Sundays we praise God the Father and Jesus, the Lamb of God, for the grace given us by the Holy Spirit. We celebrate that we share in the life of the Holy Trinity—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

**Gloria to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.  
We praise you, we bless you,  
we adore you, we glorify you,**

**we give you thanks for your great glory.  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father,  
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
Son of the Father, you take away  
the sins of the world, have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer; you are seated  
at the right hand of the Father,  
have mercy on us.  
For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

### Opening Prayer

We observe a moment of silence. We remember that we are in God’s presence. We lift up our minds and hearts to God. We remember what God has done for us. We ask God the Father to help us live as children of God and followers of Jesus. The priest leads us in prayer.

**Priest:** Let us pray . . .

**People:** Amen.

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Here are some suggestions of ways that you can incorporate these pages into your teaching.

- Review the Mass with the children as they begin their immediate preparation for First Communion. This will help you find out what the children already know about the Mass so that you can build on and reinforce that knowledge.
- Explain the prayers, responses, and actions of the Mass so that the children understand what is happening throughout the Mass. This will help the children participate more fully and consciously in the celebration of Mass.
- Refer to the appropriate section of "Celebrating the Mass" as you teach each chapter. This will help integrate the children's familiarity with the prayers, responses, and actions of the Mass into their celebration of the Mass.

## Liturgy of the Word

The Liturgy of the Word is always celebrated at Mass. God speaks to us. We remember the story of God's love for us. Christ is present to us through his own word.

### First Reading

We sit and listen as the reader reads from the Old Testament or from the Acts of the Apostles.



At the end of the reading the reader says:

Reader: The word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

### Responsorial Psalm

The song leader leads us in singing a psalm. We make God's word our own.

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### Second Reading

The reader reads from the writings of the New Testament, but not from the four Gospels. At the end of the reading the reader says:

Reader: The word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

### Alleluia or Gospel Acclamation

We show our reverence for Jesus, the Word of God. In Jesus, God most fully told us about himself and his love for us. We stand to honor Jesus present with us in the Gospel. The song leader leads us in singing "Alleluia." During Lent, we do not sing "Alleluia." We sing another Scripture verse.

### Gospel

Priest or deacon: The Lord be with you.

People: **And with your spirit.**

Priest or deacon: A reading from the holy gospel according to (name of gospel writer).

People: **Glory to you, Lord.**

The priest or deacon proclaims the Gospel.



At the end of the Gospel, he says:

Priest or deacon: The gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

The priest or deacon then kisses the Book of the Gospels.

### Homily

The priest or deacon helps the whole community understand the word of God proclaimed to us. We choose ways to live as followers of Jesus.

### Profession of Faith

We stand and profess our faith. Faith is accepting God's invitation to believe and trust in him. We pray the Nicene Creed or the Apostles' Creed (see page 72).

A creed is a prayer that tells what we believe. When we pray the Creed at Mass, we say that we believe in the Holy Trinity. The Holy Trinity is the belief that there is one God in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. Each Person of the Trinity helps us live as children of God.

### General Intercessions

The priest or deacon or another person leads us in praying for all people. We pray for the needs of the Church, for public authorities, for the salvation of the world, for people oppressed by any need, and for our local church community.

We can respond to each prayer in several ways. For example, after each prayer, we might respond:

People: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

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## Liturgy of the Eucharist

Celebrating the Eucharist is the center of our Christian life. We join with Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit to give thanks and praise to God the Father.

### Preparation of the Altar and Gifts

The gifts of bread and wine are brought to the altar. The altar is the table of the Lord. We sit as the altar table is prepared and the collection is taken up. The song leader may lead us in singing a hymn.



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The priest lifts up the bread and prays:

**Priest:** Blessed are you, Lord,  
God of all creation.  
Through your goodness we have  
this bread to offer,  
which earth has given and  
human hands have made.  
It will become for us  
the bread of life.

**People:** Blessed be God for ever.

The priest lifts up the chalice, or cup, of wine and prays:

**Priest:** Blessed are you, Lord,  
God of all creation.  
Through your goodness we have  
this wine to offer,  
fruit of the vine and work  
of human hands.  
It will become our spiritual drink.

**People:** Blessed be God for ever.

- Have the children examine the photographs of the Mass. Relate what is happening in the photographs with the prayers and explanations. Point out that although there may be some differences in the way each parish celebrates Mass, the main rites of the Mass—the responses, prayers, and actions—always remain the same.
- Review the parts of the Mass in relationship to each other. This will help the children see that all the parts of the Mass fit together as one whole prayer.

The priest invites us to pray.

**Priest:** Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters),  
that my sacrifice and yours  
may be acceptable to God,  
the almighty Father.

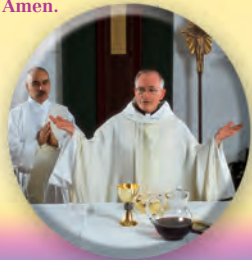
We stand and pray.

**People:** May the Lord accept the sacrifice  
at your hands  
for the praise and glory  
of his name,  
for our good,  
and the good of all his holy  
Church.

### Prayer over the Gifts

The priest leads us in praying the prayer over the gifts.

**People:** Amen.



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## EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

We pray the Church's great prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification.

The priest invites us to give praise and thanks to God the Father. We join in saying aloud or singing the **preface**.

**Priest:** The Lord be with you.

**People:** And with your spirit.

**Priest:** Lift up your hearts.

**People:** We lift them up to the Lord.

**Priest:** Let us give thanks to the Lord  
our God.

**People:** It is right and just.

After the priest says or sings the preface, we join in saying aloud or singing the **acclamation**.

**All:** Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of hosts.  
Heaven and earth are full of  
your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name  
of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

- Encourage families to use the “Celebrating the Mass” section at home.
- Take the children to the church. Show them and increase their familiarity with the things that are used in the celebration of the Mass. Let the children see and touch the vestments, books, and vessels, and other items used for the celebration of Mass. Allow the children to stand at the altar, the ambo, and the presider’s chair so that they can experience the church from that perspective.
- Integrate RCL Benziger’s *Eucharist* music CD into your use of these pages. The appropriate songs for each part of the Mass are indicated on the “Overview” page for each chapter.

At the Last Supper Jesus gave us the Eucharist. The Eucharist makes Jesus’ sacrifice of the cross present with the Church. At the Eucharist Jesus acts through the ministry, or work, of the priest. We recall what happened at the Last Supper. We share in the one sacrifice of Christ. The bread and wine become the Body and Blood of the Lord through the power of the Holy Spirit and the words of the priest. Jesus is truly and really present under the appearances of bread and wine.



After we do what Jesus asked us to do at the Last Supper in memory of him, we proclaim our faith in Jesus. We join in saying aloud or singing the **memorial acclamation**.

**Priest**  
or **deacon:** The mystery of faith:

**People:** **We proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
and profess your Resurrection  
until you come again.**

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We remember Jesus’ passion, death, resurrection, and ascension. The priest prays that God the Father accepts the Church’s offering that we be filled with the Holy Spirit and become one with Christ. He then prays for the Church. He prays for the living and the dead and that we may one day live in heaven.

The priest leads us in proclaiming our praise of God by saying aloud or singing the **doxology** to conclude the eucharistic prayer.

**Priest:** Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, for ever and ever.

**People:** **Amen.**



## COMMUNION RITE

We prepare our minds and hearts to receive the Lord’s Body and Blood.

### Lord’s Prayer

Jesus often told us about his love for his Father and his Father’s love for us. In this prayer we call God “Father” as Jesus invited us to do. We tell God how much we love him and ask him for the grace we need to live as children of God. The Lord’s Prayer is a summary of the Gospel.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**Priest:** Deliver us, Lord, from every evil . . .

**People:** **For the kingdom, the power  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever.**

### Sign of Peace

We prepare ourselves to receive the one bread and drink from the one cup. We share a sign of peace. We pray for peace and unity for the Church and the whole human family.

**Priest:** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**People:** **And with your spirit.**

**Priest**

or **deacon:** Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

### Breaking of the Bread

At the Last Supper Jesus broke bread and gave it to his disciples. At the time of the apostles the Eucharist became known as the “breaking of bread.” The priest breaks the consecrated bread so it can be shared with others. Joining with him, we sing or say:

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins  
of the world: have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins  
of the world: have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins  
of the world: grant us peace.**

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## Communion

The priest drops a small piece of the consecrated bread into the consecrated wine. The priest raises the consecrated bread, or host, and proclaims that this is the Lamb of God. It is Jesus who takes away the sins of the world. We respond together by praying a prayer from the Gospel.

**People:** Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

The priest receives Holy Communion. The faithful join in singing the communion hymn. We walk in procession to the altar to receive Holy Communion, the Body and Blood of Christ.

**Priest:** The body of Christ.

**People:** Amen.

We receive the consecrated bread in our hand or on our tongue. We reverently chew and swallow the consecrated bread.



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If we are to receive the consecrated wine, the Blood of Christ, the minister offers us the cup.

**Priest:** The blood of Christ.

**People:** Amen.

We reverently take the cup in our hands and drink from the cup.



- Use the “Celebrating the Mass” section to review all the prayers and responses used at Mass as a final preparation for the celebration of the sacrament. If you have a rehearsal, you will find this section an excellent tool. RCL Benziger’s *Eucharist Program Director’s Manual* contains “Celebrating the Mass” handouts that you can photocopy and distribute to the children.

## Period of Silence or Song of Praise

We return to our seats. We remember Jesus. We have received the gift of Jesus, the Bread of Life. We praise God for this wonderful gift.

## Prayer after Communion

We stand as the priest invites us to pray. He prays that we are truly nourished and strengthened by our sharing in the Eucharist.

**Priest:** Let us pray.

**People:** Amen.



## CONCLUDING RITE

### Greeting

We stand. The priest greets us.

**Priest:** The Lord be with you.

**People:** And with your spirit.

### Blessing

The priest blesses us in the name of the Holy Trinity. We remember that God loves us and shares his life and love with us now and for ever.

**Priest**

**or deacon:** Bow your heads and pray for God’s blessing.

**Priest:** May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**People:** Amen.

### Dismissal

The priest or deacon sends us forth to live the Great Commandment.

**Priest**

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

**People:** Thanks be to God.

The priest kisses the altar as a sign of reverence. He and the other ministers leave in procession. Everyone sings a hymn of praise.

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# Nicene Creed

## Apostles' Creed

Here are some suggestions that will help you understand and teach the creeds to the children.

- The word *creed* comes from two Latin words that mean "I give my heart to." In the creed we believe in, or give our heart to, God.
- The Apostles' Creed is one of the earliest creeds of the Church. It is called the Apostles' Creed because the teachings in this creed date back to the main beliefs that the Church has professed since the days of the apostles.
- Have the children pray the Apostles' Creed as a group, with one half of the group praying the first sentence and then alternating each sentence between both groups.

## Receiving the Eucharist

This page in the child's book summarizes what the Catholic Church teaches about the Eucharist. Take the time to review it with the children.

Remember that the manner of receiving Holy Communion may vary somewhat according to local customs. Be sure to adapt and explain this page, keeping your local parish traditions in mind.

### Nicene Creed

I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Only Begotten Son of God,  
born of the Father before all ages,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us men and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate  
of the Virgin Mary, and became man.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,  
he suffered death and was buried,  
and rose again on the third day  
in accordance with the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead  
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,  
the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,

who with the Father and the Son  
is adored and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.  
I confess one Baptism for the  
forgiveness of sins and I look  
forward to the resurrection of the dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

### Apostles' Creed

I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand  
of God the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge  
the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.  
Amen.

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## Receiving the Eucharist

### The Eucharist

Celebrating the Eucharist is the center of the life of the Church. The Catholic Church teaches that:

- The Eucharist is truly and really the Body and Blood of Christ.
- Only baptized Catholics may receive Holy Communion.
- Catholics are required to fast for one hour before receiving Holy Communion. This means that we are not permitted to eat food or drink anything, except for medicine and water.
- Catholics are encouraged to receive Holy Communion each time they go to Mass. Catholics are required to receive Holy Communion at least once a year during the Easter season. The Easter season begins at the Easter Vigil and ends on Pentecost Sunday.
- Catholics must be forgiven any mortal sins through the sacrament of Reconciliation before they receive Holy Communion.
- Receiving Holy Communion frees us from venial sins.

### How to Receive Holy Communion

Follow these directions or the directions the teacher or catechist gives you:

- Walk in procession to the altar, singing the communion song, to receive Holy Communion from the priest, deacon, or eucharistic minister.
- You may receive Holy Communion either in your hand or on your tongue.
- You bow and the consecrated bread, or host, is offered to you with the words "The body of Christ." You respond, "Amen."

- If you choose to receive Holy Communion in your hand,
  - place one hand underneath the other hand,
  - hold your hand out with palms facing up, and
  - receive the consecrated bread in the palm of your hand.
  - Step to the side and briefly stop,
  - slowly and reverently take the consecrated bread from the palm of your hand, using the hand that is underneath the other, and put the consecrated bread in your mouth.
  - Chew and swallow the consecrated bread, the Body of Christ.
- If you choose to receive Holy Communion on your tongue,
  - fold your hands and open your mouth and put your tongue out to receive the consecrated bread.
  - Chew and swallow the consecrated bread.
- You may also receive the consecrated wine, the Blood of Christ. The cup of consecrated wine will be offered to you with the words "The blood of Christ." You respond, "Amen."
- If you choose to receive the Blood of Christ at Holy Communion,
  - take the cup of consecrated wine firmly in both hands,
  - using both hands, reverently bring the cup to your mouth,
  - take a small sip of the consecrated wine from the cup, and
  - carefully give the cup back, using both hands.
- Reverently return to your place, singing the communion hymn.
- Spend some time in quiet prayer and reflection after you have received Holy Communion.

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