

# About This Section

## PART SEVEN • Preparing Older Children

The *Eucharist* child's book for this sacrament preparation program was written for children, ages seven to nine. Part seven of the *Eucharist Program Director's Manual* is designed to include children ages ten to fifteen who are preparing for First Communion or Confirmation and Eucharist in the restored order.

The handouts for older children, the guide notes for catechists, and the guide notes for parents in this part of the manual include the same content and process as the child's book, catechist guide, and family guide. These materials have been adapted to be age-appropriate.

Since there may be only a few candidates of these ages in your program, you may want to cluster the age groups or provide a small group of fully initiated young people to join in this preparation period as peer mentors.

This section includes:

- **Initial Letter to Parents**
- **Handouts for Older Children**  
Copy these as needed. You may want to put the handouts in a small binder or folder for each participant.
- **Guide Notes for Catechists**
  - Copy the handouts for each catechist who will be working with the groups of older children.
  - Refer to part five of this manual to make sure catechists have the materials they need.
- **Guide Notes for Parents**
  - The guide notes for parents were designed to assist families who are also preparing their older children at home for the sacraments.
  - Copy the opening ritual for each chapter, found in part five of this manual, and distribute them to the parents.
  - Copy these guide notes and distribute them to the parents of the older children preparing for sacraments.

## FAITH FOCUS

How did Jesus show people God's love for them?

## Opening Ritual

In the opening ritual we shared a variety of different breads with one another. What was it like for

you when you were sharing bread?

## Jesus Feeds the People

### Bible Background

The writers of the Old Testament often used bread as a symbol. Some of the symbolic meanings for bread found in the Old Testament are friendship, hospitality, and God's loving care for people. God's feeding the Israelites with manna in the desert is the most well-known use of bread as a symbol in the Old Testament. Manna was a breadlike food that grew on plants that the Israelites ate during the Exodus (see Exodus 16:12–35). The sacred writers of the New Testament knew this Old Testament story and understood the use of bread as a symbol of God's faithful, caring love for his people.

#### Think About It

*What is your favorite bread story in the Bible? What does it tell you about God's love for you?*

### Reading the Word of God

Look up and read Luke 9:10–17 and discover how Jesus used bread to teach about God's love for people.

#### Think About It

*Jesus fed five thousand people. Why did Jesus feed the crowd?*

### Understanding the Word of God

All four of the evangelists tell about Jesus feeding five thousand people. The fact that all four evangelists included this story emphasizes that it had a very important meaning for the apostles and early Christians. Christians have come to understand that this gospel story contains many truths that Jesus revealed. Some of these truths are:

- God always cares for his people.
- Jesus is the Bread of Life (John 6:48). He is present with us in the Eucharist.
- Followers of Jesus are to feed (to share our blessings with) other people, especially people in need.

#### Think About It

*Jesus fed five thousand people to show God's love for them. How do you show people God's love for them?*

# The Liturgy of the Eucharist

All creation is a sign of God's love for us. God created everything and every person out of love. God's love is so wonderful that he gave us the gift of his only Son, Jesus.

## The Eucharist

The Eucharist is the heart of our Christian faith and life. The word *eucharist* means "to give thanks." At Mass we thank God for all his gifts and blessings. We do this during the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

The Eucharist is one of the seven sacraments of the Church. It is the sacrament in which we share in the Paschal mystery of Christ and receive Jesus, the Bread of Life, in Holy Communion.

### Think About It

*What is the meaning of the word eucharist? Why do you think it is important to take part regularly in the celebration of the Eucharist?*

## The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Liturgy of the Eucharist is the second main part of the Mass. At the Eucharist:

- Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ is really present under the appearances of bread and wine.
- We give praise and thanksgiving to the Father.
- We celebrate the memorial of Christ's sacrifice.
- We share in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

## Preparation of the Altar and Gifts

**Presentation of the Gifts**—We begin the Liturgy of the Eucharist by singing a hymn. As we are singing, the altar is prepared, and our gifts are collected and presented to the priest. Some members of our church family carry the bread and wine in procession to the altar. The priest receives our gifts of bread and wine and prays two blessing prayers. Blessing prayers acknowledge that God is the source of all our blessings and gifts. The priest then prays that God will accept our gifts.

**Preface**—After the prayer over the gifts, the priest invites us to prepare for the Church's great prayer of thanksgiving, the eucharistic prayer. We stand and join in singing or praying aloud. We call this prayer the preface. Together we pray:

**PRIEST:** Lift up your hearts.

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

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

**RESPONSE:** It is right to give him thanks and praise.

The priest continues praying the preface. The preface concludes with the whole assembly singing or praying aloud the acclamation "Holy, holy, holy Lord."

### Think About It

*How do we prepare to celebrate the eucharistic prayer?*

## FAITH FOCUS

What happens during the Liturgy of the Eucharist?

## WHAT WE SEE AND HEAR

At Mass we always use bread and wine as Jesus did at the Last Supper. Wheat is used to make the bread, and grapes are used to make the wine. The bread is unleavened bread. The dough used for making unleavened bread does not contain yeast.

# What Difference Does This Make in My Life?

God is the source of all of our gifts and blessings. The greatest gift God gives us is his Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life for us for the forgiveness of sins. At the celebration of the Eucharist we thank God for all his gifts to us, especially for the gift of Jesus.

*Think about all your gifts and blessings. Using the letters that spell the words Give Thanks, write the names of some of the gifts that God has given you. An example for the letter G has been given to help you get started.*

God's Love  
 G  
 I  
 V  
 E  
 T  
 H  
 A  
 N  
 K  
 S

## MY FAITH DECISION

Choose one of the gifts you named. Decide on one thing that you will do this week to express your thanks to God for that gift. Put your decision into practice and make a difference.

## TOGETHER AS A FAMILY

### Remembering Together

In this lesson you learned that it is important to give thanks to God. Our church family gathers and gives thanks to God at the Eucharist. Use these or similar questions to talk together about some of the ways that your family gives thanks to God for its blessings:

- How do we give thanks to God for all creation?
- How do we give thanks to God for Jesus?
- How do we give thanks to God for people?
- How do we give thanks to God for our family?

### Sharing Together

Choose one of these activities to do together or design a similar activity of your own:

- Jesus fed about five thousand people to show them that God loves and cares for people. Share God's love with others. Find out how your family can donate to a local food collection.
- Invite a guest to share a meal with your family. As you plan, talk about how your family can share God's love with your guest.

- Sharing our blessings is one way we show that we are thankful for God's blessings. Name the things that your family shares with one another.



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

### Praying Together

Pray this or a similar prayer at family meals or at other family prayer times this week:

God, our loving Father,  
today we gather to celebrate the love  
you share with each of us.  
We give you thanks for all your gifts.  
Send us the Holy Spirit  
to help us remember to  
give you thanks every day.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ  
our Lord. Amen.

### Getting Ready Together

Use "Celebrating the Mass," found in part four of this manual, to go through the ritual actions, prayers, and responses for the preparation of the altar and gifts and the preface. This will help your family participate more actively and fully in the celebration of Mass.

# We Give Thanks

## Background Reflection

*When young people are very young, we teach them to say, “Thank you.” At Mass, we give thanks to God. In fact, the word eucharist means “thanksgiving.” The eucharistic prayer, which we pray at Mass, flows from a grateful heart.*

*We begin the eucharistic prayer with the preface. The priest prays:*

*Father, all-powerful and ever-living God,  
we do well always and everywhere  
to give you thanks  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*Preface, Roman Missal*

*Prepare for the celebration of the Eucharist by nurturing in your family a grateful heart for God’s many blessings and gifts. Deepen your gratitude for your gifts or talents—for all your blessings which are from God. Remember that when we share our gifts and talents with other people, we give thanks to God.*

## Sharing Together

### 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’s *Eucharist* handouts for older children for chapter 4, “We Give Thanks”
- Opening family ritual for chapter 4
- Several types of bread such as wheat, rye, pita, and matzos; bread basket
- Bible

### 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 join with your son or daughter in preparation for the celebration of the sacrament.*

- **Preparation:** Read and reflect on the background reflection.
- **Step One: Celebrate the Ritual**
  - Celebrate the ritual “Sharing of Bread.”
  - Use the “Opening Ritual” section of the first page of the handout for chapter 4 to share what it was like to experience the family ritual.
- **Step Two: Share the Scripture Story**
  - Point out the “Faith Focus” question on the first page of the handout, and together discover the answer as you listen to the Scripture story.
  - Using the Scripture page, “Jesus Feeds the People,” read and talk about the “Bible Background.” Then read and share your understanding of the Scripture story “Jesus Feeds the People” (Luke 9:10–17). Use the “Think About It” questions to guide your sharing.
- **Step Three: Discover the Faith of the Church**
  - Use “The Liturgy of the Eucharist” page of the handout.
  - Point out the “Faith Focus” question. Then read and discuss this page. Use the “Think About It” questions to guide your sharing.
- **Step Four: Make a Difference**
  - Choose to make a difference in your own lives and in the lives of other people by living as followers of Jesus. Suggested activities are found on the “What Difference Does This Make in My Life?” page of the handout.
  - Enrich your time together. Read and discuss the “Together as a Family” page of the handout. Choose one activity from “Sharing Together” that will help you live your faith as a family.
- **Conclusion: Closing Prayer**
  - Conclude your time together with a family prayer of your own choosing.