

1 Everyone arrives for Mass

We Gather as God's Family

We are united.
We belong here.
All are welcome.
We come to thank
God.
We share Jesus'
Body in the
Eucharist.



We Gather Together

- Baptism begins our journey of Growing up Catholic
- Reconciliation heals us through forgiving our sins
- Confirmation will make us stronger in our faith
- Eucharist makes us a full member of the Church
- The Sacraments unite us and give us grace

We are the People of God!

Parent lesson
plans for page
one of the first
lesson.

Follow the numbers.

1 Your child is about to enter into a very important part of his or her life. Receiving Holy Communion for the first time completes a **journey of faith** which was begun at baptism. We hope your child will develop a love and devotion for the Eucharist which will last a lifetime.


You play a very big role in this. Your child will follow your lead. If you show a love for the Eucharist, then your child will follow suit. If you are indifferent, then your child will be also.

2 Make sure your child understands all the **words** on this page. Four of the seven sacraments are mentioned here.

3 Ask your child – and share with him or her – **memories** of times when people arrive at your home. Think of times such as a big dinner for the holidays, or a birthday party. Talk with your child about why people gather – because we need each other. We can't live alone!

4 Now **tell your child about each of these four sacraments in your own life.** When and where did you receive them? Tell the story! Sharing like this with your child helps him or her see how you experience your own faith, which is very important to a child.

Session 1: First Eucharist Child Text Growing Up Catholic



Prayer Celebration:
Growing up Catholic means we
Gather with God's People

A Prayer to be Sorry for our Sins

*Everyone begins by making the Sign of the Cross
 In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Leader: Jesus, we know we have sinned and hurt you.
 All: We are sorry for our sins.

Leader: Thank you for loving us without end.
 All: We are sorry for our sins.

Leader: Thank you for inviting us to Holy Communion.
 All: We are sorry for our sins.

Please listen to the Reader now.
 Reader: A reading from the Gospel of Luke (6:27-31)
 (At the end of the reading: The Gospel of the Lord
 All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Please listen to the leader.
*When the time comes, please bring up your slip of paper with your promise to Jesus
 written on it. Place it here on this table.*

Let us pray together
(please pause after each line)

Oh Jesus,
 we know that you love us very much.
 You want us to love each other
 as much as you love us.
 Please make us strong
 and help us follow you.
 We pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Parent lesson plans for page two of the first lesson.
 Follow the numbers.

1 Pray this with your child, helping them find their way through it as the leader guides you.

When the time comes, help them write **the one way in which they will try to follow Jesus more closely.** You should also write one way for yourself. These will be brought forward when called for by the leader. But before going forward, you and your child should share what each of you wrote.


2 This prayer reflects **the opening Penitential Rite of the Mass** when we pause to call to mind our sins. Help your child understand this. Even though your child has recently gone to Confession, this part of the Mass helps us prepare our souls for what we are about to do.


3 Explain to your child that when we come to Mass, we must first “kiss and make up” for **anything that separates us from each other.** Take a minute now to do this with your own child. Tell each other one way you are sorry for something that may have gone wrong at home in the past week or so. Say you’re sorry. And don’t worry, this will stay between you and your child. You will not be asked to share it in the group.



What Happens at Mass?

**When we Catholics come to Mass, we are Church.
What do we do at Mass?**

Fill in the missing words in the story below.
Tell what the words in **BOLD** mean.

On Saturday night or Sunday morning, we all dress up and we go to our **parish**  _____

We arrive and we **genuflect** or **bow** by our pew and we all sit together. Someone lights the _____
There are usually two _____
but sometimes more. _____ 

When everyone is ready, the Mass starts with a **song**. Then the priest **greet**s everyone and we hear someone _____
from the: _____
_____  _____
_____ 

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Parent lesson plans for page three of the first lesson.
Follow the numbers.

1 In this and the next two pages, we are going to review the parts of the Mass with your child. **You will be the leader.**

Help your child fill in each missing word. We'll give you the answers here.

The first word is "Church." For each word, tell your child **one added detail**. For the word "church" you could tell your child when you joined this parish, for example, or why.


2 The second word is "candles." Here explain what it means to **genuflect**. If your child is unfamiliar with this custom, demonstrate it for him or her. We genuflect to show special reverence when we enter and leave the church building because the Blessed Sacrament is present in the Tabernacle. The candles add to this reverence.

3 The third word is "read." The fourth is "Bible." Here explain to your child about the **Liturgy of the Word**. At the beginning of Mass, after the Penitential Rite (just described in the previous page), we listen to readings and the homily.

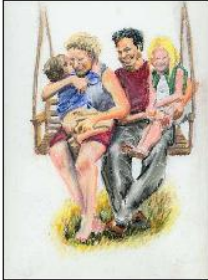
4 Your child may have his or her own Bible (from the preparation process for their first Confession) but if not, this would be a good time to **give him or her one as a gift**.

Then everyone who is **prepared**,
receives


H O L Y



After Communion, the priest or deacon says a prayer and then he **sends us back** to where we live. Because we all shared in the Mass, we try to have more



We take care of each other and we also take care of everyone who needs us because we **share in the life** of



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Parent lesson plans for page five of the first lesson.

Follow the numbers.

1 The next word is "Communion." We have supplied the clue "Holy."


Explain here that only those who are **prepared** should receive Holy Communion at Mass. This may be a difficult concept for a child, but it is important to understand. By "prepared," the Church means (1) we must be Catholic (under most circumstances), (2) we must believe what the Church teaches, (3) we must be free of serious sin, and (4) we must come to Communion of our own free will and not be forced to do so.

2 The next word is "love." Explain to your child that as Mass ends, the Priest sends us back home with the command to **"go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life."** Explain that this means we must be loving toward each other, more so because Communion changes us. We receive Jesus and he goes home with us in a special way.

3 The final word is "Jesus." As the text says, we share in the life of Jesus in a special way because of Holy Communion. As your child prepares for this, it is important to grow in a **love of the Eucharist and a devotion to it.**

4 The chief way you can show this to your child is by **creating a loving home**, filled with the things that marked Jesus' own life: forgiveness; generosity; love; concern for the sick, the poor, and anyone needing help; prayerfulness; and a connection to your parish.

Session 1: First Eucharist Child Text Growing Up Catholic



Meeting Jesus in the Bible
 As we prepare to receive Holy Communion, we want to know Jesus as a close friend and love him dearly.

Jesus Feeds Everyone


One day Jesus was with his friends,
 and he was teaching them.
 A very large crowd came to hear Jesus.

After a while, Jesus' friends told Jesus,
 "This is a big crowd
 and everyone is hungry.
 We should send them all away
 so they can get supper for themselves."
 But Jesus told them no.
 "You feed them," he said.

Jesus asked them,
 "How much food do you have?"

They checked and told him,
 "We have five loaves of bread,
 and two fish."

Then he told them to have
 everyone sit down.
 Jesus blessed the bread and fish
 and told his friends
 to feed everyone.
 They did and there was enough
 for all!
 They even had leftovers!



(Based on Mark 6:30-44)

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Parent lesson plans for page six of the first lesson.

Follow the numbers.

1 Begin by showing your child a **Bible**. Open it to show them this passage.

2 Tell them that we are going to read this story in words that we understand better.

3 Then close the Bible and ask them to read this passage aloud. Help them when needed.

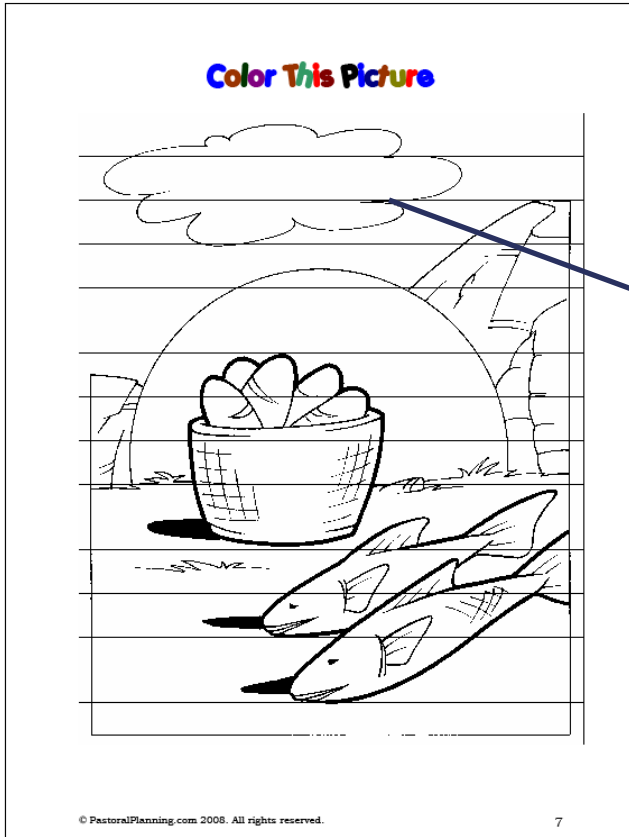
4 Ask your child to tell this Bible story in his or her own words. Help them do it. Prompt them for the next part of the story, if needed. The picture will help.

5 The main point of this story of Jesus is that because Jesus blesses us, we have enough for everyone – enough food for all, enough time for each other, enough love in our hearts to love everyone. Ask your child to tell you why he or she thinks Jesus fed the people. Why did he give thanks first? (Because we thank God for everything we have.) Explain that the word “Eucharist” means “Thanksgiving.”

6 Make sure your child understands that Jesus was acting here out of his love for us. He gives us himself at Mass for the same reason, because he loves us. **The food we have at Mass is Jesus himself.**

Parent lesson plans for pages 7 & 8 of the first lesson.

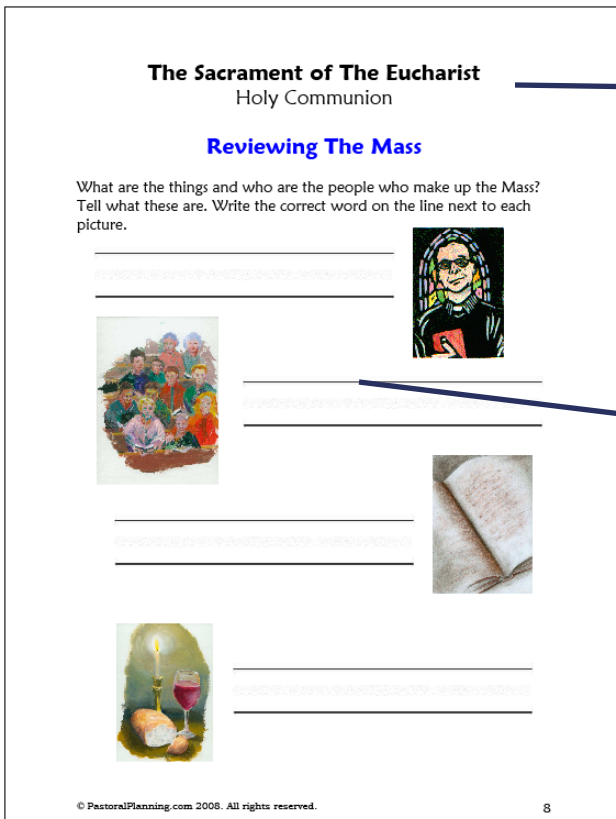
Follow the numbers.



1 Time for a break! Help your child enjoy coloring this image of the fish and the loaves.

Coloring time is a good time to be close to your child without necessarily talking about faith.

Don't be afraid to put your arm around your child during this time. Affirm your child often for his or her work.




2 This review page will help your child be aware of the four elements that are essential in our celebration of the Mass. Christ is present in each of these, but in a special way in the Bread and Wine.

3
The 1st word is "Priest"
The 2nd is "People"
The 3rd is "Word" or "Bible"
The 4th is "Bread & Wine"

Help your child be familiar with all of these elements.

Session 1: First Eucharist Child Text Growing Up Catholic



At home this week
Work on this together at home as a way of continuing the process of preparing for the Sacrament of the Eucharist

You can continue to help your child at home to grow up Catholic and prepare for Holy Communion – by creating a loving household where meals are shared and you savor life. This week, build each of these things into your schedule. Use this graph to set times and make plans. All the resources to support this household activity are found at www.GrowingUpCatholic.com.

Your Household Activity	When and where
Have supper on as many nights as possible. Sit at the table and turn the TV off.	
Pray before all meals using the traditional Catholic meal prayer – but add one line each time to be thankful for other gifts.	
Before bedtime, say night time prayers together; then bless your child, saying “Good night. God bless you. We love you.”	
Prepare for Sunday Mass and attend together as a household.	
Spend time this week reviewing the formation in this session of Growing Up Catholic. Make sure your child understands this session before moving on.	

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Parent lesson plans for page nine of the first lesson.

Follow the numbers.

1 This exercise to be done at home during the coming week is a very important one. Make a firm plan to help your child prepare to grow up Catholic by **adding or strengthening these household practices.**

2 There are also certain prayers that every Catholic child should know by heart – and, of course, you as parent or guardian should know them, too. You’ll find these at the web site:

www.growingupcatholic.com

3 When helping your child **memorize prayers**, take them one line at a time. Rehearse your child until he or she knows it, and then return to each prayer every day for practice.

4 **How to have supper.**

For many of us, having supper at home is a lost art. Here are five hints to make it possible in your home.

1. **Manage your time.** Turn off your TV. Try to plan a time when everyone can be at the table at the same time. This might mean you don’t do certain other things to make time for supper.
2. **Keep it simple.** If you try to make every meal as special as Thanksgiving dinner, you’ll soon grow weary. Keep the meals simple.
3. **Add something special.** Maybe light a candle, or have a special centerpiece. Use your good dishes as often as possible! Set the table and teach your children how to do that!
4. **Cook and clean up together.** Make this a household project. Give everyone a small job and do it with joy. Have music playing in the house – quiet music that enhances the supper. It will help you linger a bit longer during clean-up.
5. **Have a conversation.** Try to talk together during supper about the events and people of the day just ending. Everyone will grow to love these moments.