

Session 5

Receiving Holy Communion

Preparing Your Heart

Think back to a time when you were physically hungrier or thirstier than you had ever been before. What did it feel like to be that hungry? What was the emotional impact of being in such need of food or water?

Food and water are such basic needs that lacking either one can quickly become all-consuming. The body makes its needs known, and they are hard to ignore. But what about the soul? What is it like to hunger and thirst for God himself?

Read and reflect on the following passages from the Psalms. What stands out to you? What do you think it means to hunger and thirst for God?

“As a deer longs for flowing streams, so longs my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold the face of God?”

—Psalms 42:1–2

“O taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!”

—Psalms 34:8

“I am the LORD your God, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it... I would feed you with the finest of the wheat, and with honey from the rock I would satisfy you.”

—Psalms 81:10, 16

Jesus said, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied” (Matthew 5:6). God wants to fill us with every good thing—first and foremost by giving us himself in the Eucharist. Are you hungry? How do you prepare yourself for the feast?

At a Glance – Session Overview

Section	Activity	Purpose	Supplies	Key Words
Connect Activity (as students arrive)	Saint Paul Writes about the Eucharist Place stickers on a coloring sheet showing Saint Paul writing to the Corinthians.	To get students thinking about Saint Paul teaching the Corinthians and us about the Eucharist.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sticker Sheets • Student Activity Book • Crayons 	
Let's Pray and Introduction (5-10 minutes)	Read the opening prayer and introduction to the session.	To relate to the idea of making special preparations for special days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Guide 	
Let's Watch (10 minutes)	Jesus Is Really Present (3:30 min.) Watch a video teaching about the gift of the Eucharist.	Help students prepare to receive Jesus in the Mass.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A device to show the video segment. 	
Let's Read God's Word (5 minutes)	Saint Paul Writes about the Eucharist (1 Corinthians 10:14-17) Have someone read aloud this passage summary, and then discuss the questions in the Teacher Guide.	To learn what Saint Paul taught the church in Corinth about the Eucharist.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Guide 	
Let's Learn about Our Faith (10-20 minutes)	Preparing for Holy Communion Read this section together, and then discuss the questions in the Teacher Guide.	To better understand why it is important to prepare for Holy Communion, and how to prepare. Also to understand the graces we receive when we receive Communion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Guide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State of Grace • Reverence • Mortal sin • Eucharistic Fast
Did You Know? (as time permits)	What is a Host? Consecrated Additional information for the student to read.	An explanation as to what the Host is. To explain what Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is all about.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monstrance • Adoration
Let's Do Activities (10-20 minutes)	God's Special Gift Follow the path and choose which steps you should do when preparing to receive the Eucharist. Graces Tic-Tac-Toe Mark the graces we receive from the Eucharist in a game of Tic Tac Toe.	To review the things we should do to prepare to receive the Eucharist. To review the graces we receive when we receive the Eucharist.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Guide • Colored pencils, pens, or fine tip markers 	

Section	Activity	Purpose	Supplies	Key Words
Let's Recall and Reflect (5 minutes)	Discuss two questions to make connections with what they have learned.	To help students remember main points from the session.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Guide 	
Let's Recall and Reflect (5 minutes)	Discuss five questions from the Teacher Guide.	To review the key point from this session with your students.		
Story of a Saint (5-10 minutes)	Saint Anthony of Padua Read a brief story about a saint, and discuss the questions in the Teacher Guide.	To show how God is present in the lives of the saints.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Guide 	
Let's Pray (5 minutes)	Practice the Memory Verse together, and then close in prayer.	To encourage students to plant or ponder God's Word in their hearts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Guide 	
Let's Read a Story (as time allows, or take-home)	Ducks Read a modern story that follows the theme of something appearing different on the outside than what it really is on the inside, and then discuss using questions from the Teacher Guide.	To connect the lesson to modern life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Guide 	
Students' Take-Home Page: Let's Live It!	Preparing to Receive Answer the True/False questions about preparing to receive Communion. Dear Jesus Write a special prayer to Jesus and draw a picture of spending time with Jesus.	To help students remember key points from the lesson and connect what they've learned to their own lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Activity Book 	
Family Take-Home Pages	Parents can read and discuss the Scripture with their children, pray together, and go to Adoration together.	To equip parents with tools for family faith building and involvement with the lesson.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Activity Book 	
If-You-Have-Time Activities	Share the Love of Jesus Relay Race Run a race with hearts. First Communion Banner (Cont.'d): Jesus Knows My Name Continue working on banners. Song for First Communion Mass Learn another verse of <i>Pange Lingua</i> . Flash Cards Memorize key terms.	To reinforce the lesson objectives to meet a variety of learning styles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relay Race See page 115 • Banners See page 115 • Song Lyrics See page 116 • Flash Cards See pages 213-216 	

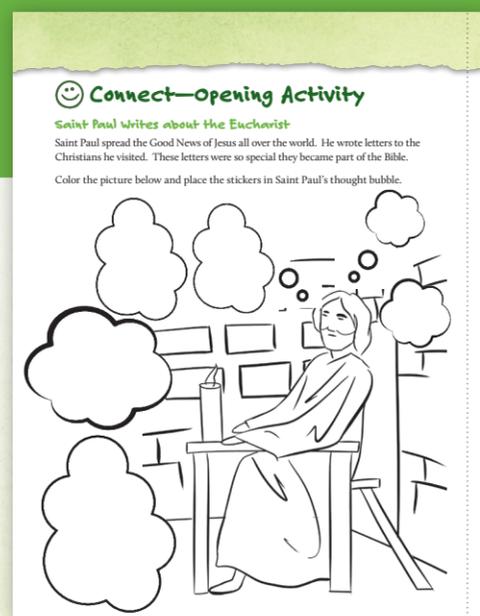
Main Objectives

After this session, students should recognize that:

- Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist—Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity—in every drop of the precious Blood and in every crumb of the Host.
- Receiving the Eucharist at Mass is so important that we should do some special things to prepare our bodies and our souls.
- We prepare our bodies to hunger for Jesus by fasting from food and drink for one hour before receiving Holy Communion. We prepare our souls by going to Confession if we have committed a mortal sin so we can receive Jesus in the state of grace.
- We can receive the Host on the tongue or in the hand,

where we have made our hands like a throne for Jesus.

- We receive special graces when we receive the Eucharist: we have a very special union with Christ and with his Church, our Baptismal graces are increased and renewed, our venial sins are washed away; and we grow in love of God and of others.



Connect—Opening Activity

Saint Paul Writes about the Eucharist

This activity and the stickers are in the Student Activity Book. Direct the students to get started on this as they enter and wait for others to arrive and get settled.

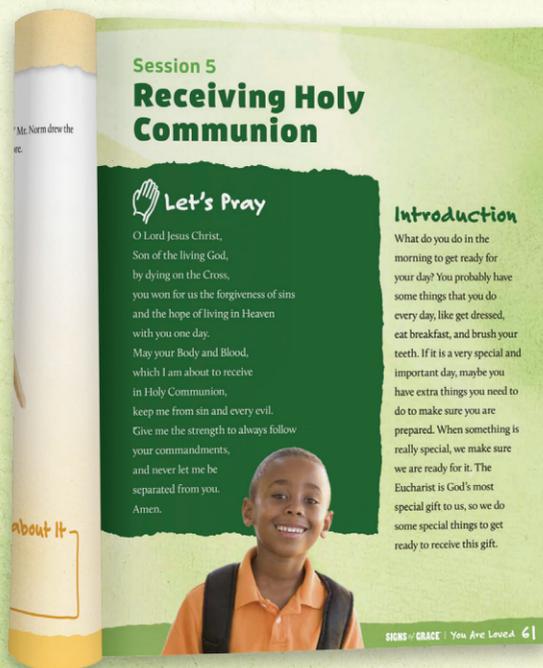
As students work, ask them to share what they already know about the early Christian Church and the Apostles. What did the Apostles do to spread the Word of God? Also ask them if they remember what the memory verse was for last session.

Review Memory Verse

As students are working, ask them if they remember what the memory verse was from the last session.

“I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live for ever.”

—John 6:51



Digging Deeper: Teacher Prep

Read the following background information as you prepare for this session. The Eucharist is so special, we do some special things to prepare to receive it.

It is commonly said that practice makes perfect. A slightly less popular—but more accurate—version is this: only perfect practice makes perfect. This holds true for preparing for First Holy Communion, and the effects of such practice have the potential to be not just life-long, but eternal.

If we really believe that the Eucharist is the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus, then we have to act accordingly. How would you prepare to receive a special guest into your home? Would you clean house and be ready to give them

your full attention when they arrive? Should we do any less for our Lord when he comes to us in Holy Communion?

Part of teaching the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist is teaching how to show reverence for that presence. If we show reverence toward the sacrament in our words and actions, then we will build up and nourish our belief in the Real Presence. But speaking and acting irreverently can actually undermine our own faith, as well as cause scandal for others. The preparations we make for receiving the sacrament (every time we receive, not just First Communion!), and our attitude, behavior, and dress at Mass, are all ways that we express our faith in and gratitude for the incredible gift of the Eucharist.

Let's Watch

Jesus Is Really Present (3:30 minutes)

The video segment can be viewed at any time during the session. Here are the main teaching points in this session's video:

- God, from the beginning, desires to have a very special friendship with us. Jesus gives us the Eucharist as the ultimate gift of his friendship.
- Transubstantiation is the change of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.
- At every Mass, we really enter into what Jesus did at the Last Supper.
- We need to prepare ourselves at Mass to receive Jesus and to offer ourselves back to him.

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways does Jesus want to be your best friend?

Jesus wants to be our best friend in that he loves us more than anyone else could ever love us. Not only did Jesus create us out of love and save us from our sins, he wants to be as close as possible to us every day. The Eucharist shows us in a special way just how much Jesus wants to be our best friend and be close to us because Jesus makes himself really present in the Eucharist so we can receive him at every Mass.



2. Why is Mass so amazing?

The Mass is amazing because we get to really enter into what Jesus did at the Last Supper—when he gave himself totally to us in the Eucharist! The Mass is also amazing because all of the angels and saints gather with us as the one family of God to worship God and Jesus in the Eucharist—heaven and earth come together at every Mass.

3. What can we do to prepare to receive Jesus at Mass?

We can really work hard to pay attention at Mass and listen to the readings and prayers. We especially want to prepare ourselves to give ourselves totally to Jesus when we receive Holy Communion. Jesus is giving himself totally to us, so we want to give everything back to him!

Digging Deeper: Teacher Prep

Read the following background information in preparation for this session.

Saint Paul founded the church in Corinth on his second missionary journey, and he stayed with the people there for a year and a half. But after he left, various problems arose in the community. Some of those problems had to do with how the Christians in Corinth celebrated the Eucharist. Some of them were still engaging in idolatrous actions while also attending Mass and receiving the Eucharist. And some of them seemed to reject other members of the Christian community rather than accepting them as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Saint Paul wrote to his beloved spiritual children in Corinth to correct these problems. He reminded them that the

Eucharist brings us into a deeper union with the one, true God—and so we must always reject all false gods. For the Corinthians this meant not participating in pagan religious practices. This probably isn't a problem for most of us today, but if we put anything before God in our life, that is also a kind of idolatry.

Saint Paul also reminded the Corinthians that the Eucharist doesn't just unite us with Christ—it unites us with one another in a very real way. An easy visual demonstration of this would be to have one student stand in the middle of the room and the rest spread out around the room. As students move closer to the student in the middle, they also move closer to one another. In the same way, when we come closer to Jesus, we come closer to everyone else who is also drawing closer to Christ.

Let's Read God's Word

Saint Paul Writes about the Eucharist From 1 Corinthians 10:14–17

Have someone read aloud the LET'S READ GOD'S WORD passage in the Student Guide on page 62. Pause as necessary to help students understand the key words as they are introduced throughout the session. Definitions are in the Student Guide.

After reading the Scripture section, students should recognize that...

- Saint Paul wrote to the church in Corinth about the Eucharist.
- We were made for God and must not worship any false gods.
- Worshipping God draws us closer to God and to each other.
- The cup of the Eucharist lets us share in the Blood of Christ.
- The bread of the Eucharist lets us share in the Body of Christ.
- The Eucharist unites us to Jesus and to each other.



Let's Talk about It

Discussion Questions

Following are questions you can ask your students to help them understand the LET'S READ GOD'S WORD material in more depth.

1. How does Holy Communion unite us together in Christ?

Some answers might include that the Eucharist is the Body of Christ; when they receive the Eucharist, they are united with their sisters and brothers in the Faith.

If you have time, here are some additional questions to discuss in class:

2. Saint Paul had already taught the Corinthians about the Eucharist when he was in their city. Why do you think he also wrote to them about the Eucharist in a letter?

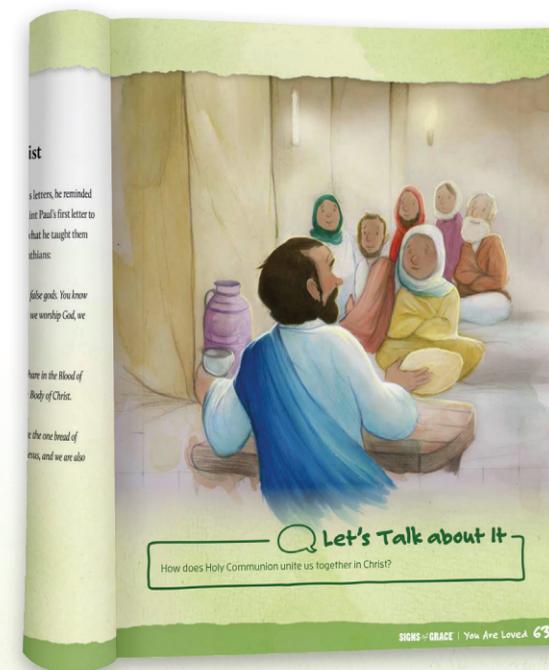
He wrote about the Eucharist because it is so important that we need to hear the truth about it over and over. He didn't want the Corinthians to forget anything he had said, and he knew they needed to be reminded. What he says in his letter is what the Corinthians really needed to hear again. And because this letter is Scripture, it is also exactly what the Holy Spirit wanted Saint Paul to write, and it is exactly what we need to hear over and over again.

3. According to Saint Paul, when we worship God, how does it affect our relationship with God? With other Christians? Why do you think this is?

When we worship God, we draw closer to him, and we also draw closer to one another. Our worship tells God how much we love him, and it allows us to receive his love. When we are worshipping God, we are doing the same thing that other Christians are doing, and we are doing what God wants us to do. This brings us all closer to each other.

4. What does Saint Paul say that the cup and bread of the Eucharist really are? What do we do when we receive the Eucharist?

He says that the cup is really the Blood of Christ and the bread is really the Body of Christ. When we receive the Eucharist, we are sharing in the Body and Blood of Christ. This makes us all one body—the Body of Christ.



Digging Deeper: Teacher Prep

Read the following information as you prepare for the session.

How important is God? How would we even begin to put our answer into words? Yet that is precisely how important the Eucharist is. And because the Eucharist is so indescribably special and important, the way that we prepare to receive the Eucharist is incredibly important as well.

At Mass we pray together the words of the Centurion: “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed” (see Matthew 8:8). None of us are worthy of the great gift of the Eucharist, but we are asked to do our best to prepare ourselves to receive it.

Saint Paul warns us that receiving the Eucharist when we know we are not prepared is a very serious matter. He says, “Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord” (1 Corinthians 11:27). To profane something that is holy is to treat it without the respect it is due. So to receive when we have not prepared ourselves by confessing any mortal sins or by observing the Eucharistic fast is to fail to show God the reverence that he deserves.

In addition to making sure we are in a state of grace and observing the fast, the *Catechism* points out that “bodily demeanor (gestures, clothing) ought to convey the respect, solemnity, and joy of this moment when Christ becomes our guest” (CCC 1387). How we dress for Mass and how we behave at church are part of the preparations we make for receiving Christ in Holy Communion.

We prepare ourselves carefully to receive the Eucharist because in doing so we express our love for our Lord. But our preparation is also important because the better prepared we are, the more open we are to the grace of the sacrament and its transforming effect in our lives.

The graces of the Eucharist are an objective reality. They are fully present and available, whether or not we recognize them or are ready to cooperate with them—just as the Eucharist is really Jesus’s Body and Blood, whether or not someone believes in the Real Presence. But if we are properly disposed to receive the graces of the sacrament, then they will bear greater fruit in our lives. The Eucharist is a gift that we do not earn, but we can appreciate and enjoy the gift much better when we have taken the time to prepare to receive it.

Let’s Learn about Our Faith

Preparing for Holy Communion

Have someone read aloud the LET’S LEARN ABOUT OUR FAITH in the Student Guide on pages 64-66. Pause as necessary to help students understand the key words as they are introduced throughout the session. Definitions are in the Student Guide.

After reading the LET’S LEARN ABOUT OUR FAITH section, students should recognize that...

- The Eucharist is so special that we need to do special things to get our bodies and our souls ready to receive it.
- We need to be in the state of grace to receive Communion.
- We fast from all food and drink for one hour before receiving Communion.
- We can receive the host on our tongues or in our hands, shaped like a throne to receive Jesus.

- When we receive the Precious Blood, we must hold the chalice carefully with both hands and take a small sip.



Let’s Talk about It

Discussion Questions

Following are questions you can ask your students to help them understand the LET’S LEARN ABOUT OUR FAITH material in more depth.

1. Why is it important to be in a state of grace when receiving Holy Communion?

Some answers might include that if they have separated themselves from Christ through sin, they should reconcile with Christ through Confession before receiving him in Holy Communion.

If you have time, here are some additional questions to discuss in class:

2. What does reverence mean? Why is it so important to show proper reverence for the Sacrament of the Eucharist?

Reverence means respect, especially for something that is holy. It is important to show the proper reverence for the Eucharist because it is not only holy—it is Jesus himself! If we don’t show reverence for the Eucharist, that is like telling God that we have no respect for him.

3. What is one special grace from the Eucharist that you are really excited about? Why?

The Eucharist increases our union with Christ and with his Church—it is exciting to draw closer to God, and it’s exciting to be closer to our friends and family than is humanly possible. It also makes us close to people all over the world and from all time—it makes you close to your favorite saints. The Eucharist protects, increases, and renews the life of faith we received in Baptism. This is exciting because most of us don’t remember our Baptism, but when we receive the Eucharist it connects back to our Baptism and increases those graces. The Eucharist separates us from sin. It washes away past venial sins and helps us choose not to sin in the future. This is exciting because it does something for us that we can’t do on our own. It makes us clean and new, and it makes us stronger than we could



ever be without it. The Eucharist helps us grow in love. This is exciting because we get special strength that helps us love more than we ever could on our own.

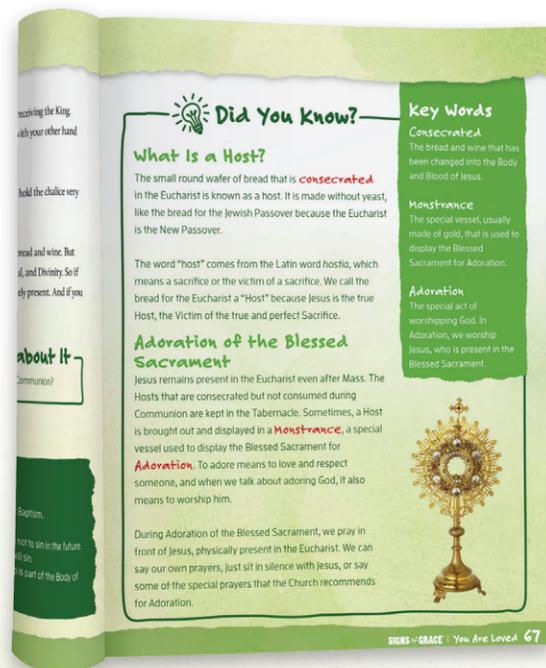
4. If you could only receive a tiny piece of a Host or only receive the Precious Blood, would it change the grace you receive from the Eucharist? Why or why not?

Only receiving the Host or only receiving the Precious Blood doesn’t change the graces we receive from the Eucharist, because every drop of the Precious Blood and every piece of the Host is all of Jesus’s Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. A bigger Host isn’t more of Jesus, and receiving both the Host and the Precious Blood doesn’t give us more of Jesus than just receiving only one or the other. However, we are encouraged to receive Communion under both species whenever possible in obedience to Jesus’s command at the Last Supper.

Did You Know?



Ask a student to read aloud the DID YOU KNOW? section on page 67 in the Student Guide.



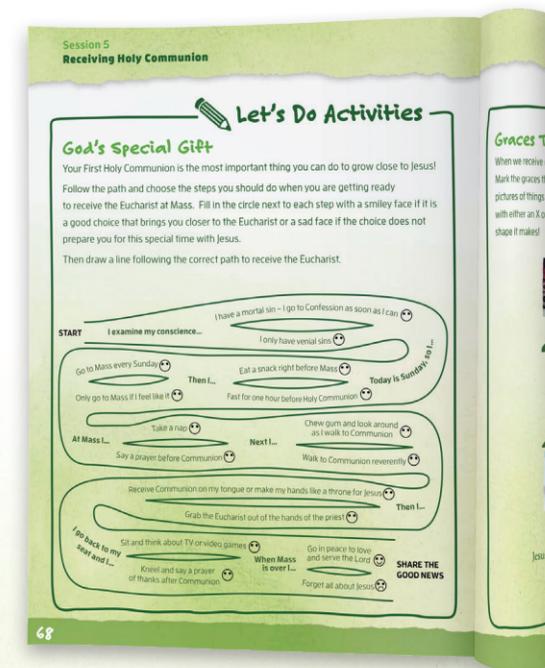
Let's Do Activities

God's Special Gift

Read aloud the instructions for this activity from page 68 of the Student Guide. If time permits, let students work alone or in pairs before going through the activity together.

Through this activity, students should...

- Recognize that receiving the Eucharist at Mass is so important that we should do some special things to prepare our bodies and our souls.
- Consider ways that we prepare ourselves physically and spiritually for Jesus before receiving Holy Communion.
- We prepare our souls by going to Confession if we have committed a mortal sin so we can receive Jesus in the state of grace.



Flash Cards

Flash cards can be found starting on page 213. You can find these cards in the Student Activity Guide for your students and in the back of your Teaching Guide.

Use the master Flash Cards with the definitions on the back for the Key Words for this session. These cards could be used along with the cards from other sessions in order to review important concepts and to help student learn and understand important Catholic terms and the language of the Faith.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of the flash cards on card stock

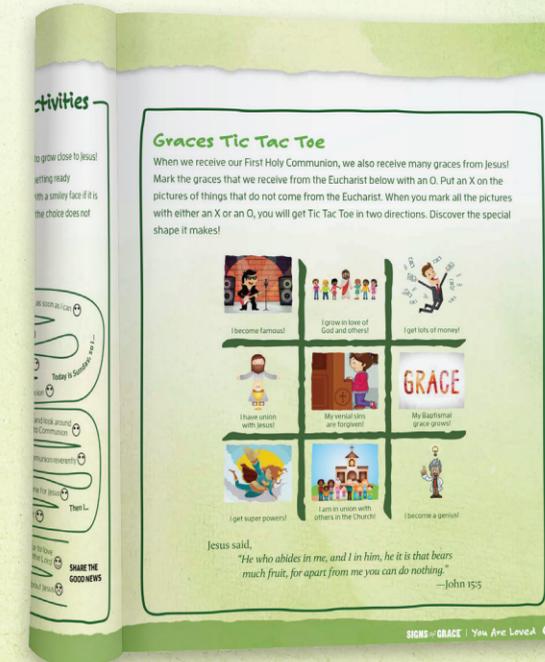
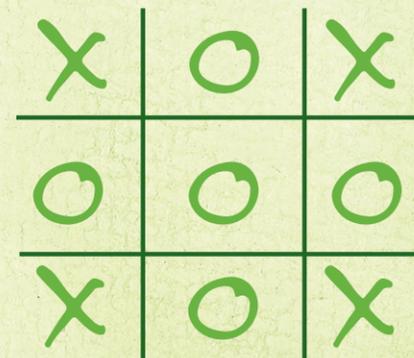


Graces Tic-Tac-Toe

Read aloud the instructions for this activity from page 69 of the Student Guide. If time permits, let students work alone or in pairs before going through the activity together.

Through this activity, students should...

- Be reminded of the special graces we receive through the Eucharist, and put these gifts in perspective with other things we often value in life.



Let's Recall and Reflect!

Reinforce students' knowledge of the main points of this session by encouraging them to make personal connections.

1. Why is the Eucharist our most important food?

It is our most important food because it is Jesus himself, and receiving the Eucharist unites us to Jesus—which is our most important goal in life. It doesn't just give us physical life like regular food; rather, it gives us grace, which is God's own divine life within us.

2. Why do we do special things to prepare to receive Holy Communion? What are some things you can do to prepare your heart to receive Jesus?

We do special things to prepare to receive Holy Communion because it is so important and so special. We want to make sure we are ready so we can show the proper reverence for the sacrament, because it is Jesus himself. Two important ways that we should prepare our hearts to receive Jesus are to make sure we are in a state of grace by going to the Sacrament of Reconciliation and confessing any mortal sins, and fasting for one hour before receiving the Eucharist. Other ways include paying attention during Mass and saying a prayer before Communion, asking God to prepare our hearts to receive him.

Review these key points with your students:

1. What is the Eucharistic Fast?

The Eucharistic Fast means not eating or drinking anything except for water or medicine for at least one hour before receiving Holy Communion.

2. Why must we be in the state of grace to receive Holy Communion?

We must be in the state of grace to receive Holy Communion in order to show reverence to Jesus and to be prepared to be united with him in the sacrament.

3. What is the Host?

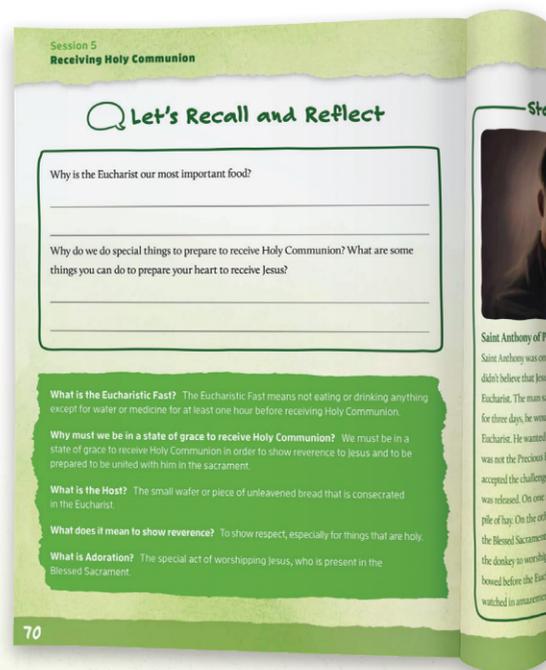
The Host is a small wafer or piece of unleavened bread that is consecrated in the Eucharist.

4. What does it mean to show reverence?

Showing reverence means showing respect, especially for things that are holy.

5. What is Adoration?

Adoration is the special act of worshipping Jesus, who is present in the Blessed Sacrament.



Story of a Saint

Saint Anthony of Padua

Have one of your students read aloud the STORY OF A SAINT on page 71 of the Student Guide. Following are questions you can ask your students.

Discussion Questions

1. What can we learn from the donkey in this story?

Jesus is really present in the Eucharist, so the Eucharist is more important than anything! And because Jesus is really present, we need to show reverence and worship him in the Eucharist.

2. The donkey recognized Jesus in the Eucharist without being distracted by the hay. What are some things that might distract us from Jesus?

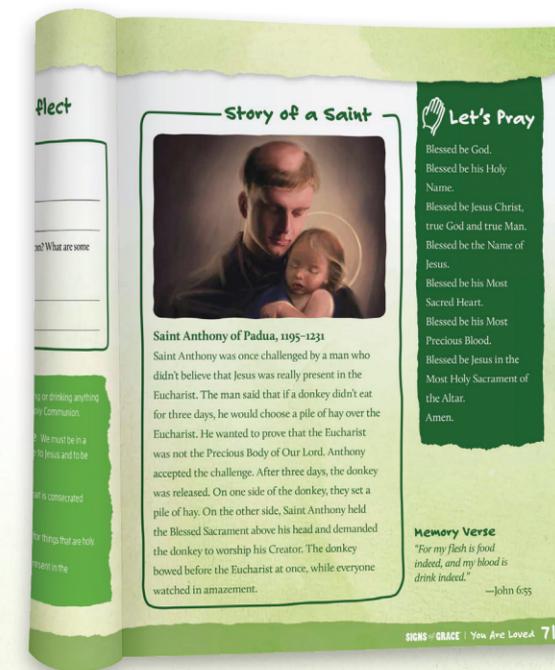
Both good and bad things can be distractions—books, video games, sports, friends, school, etc., or problems, fears, or worries. These things become a distraction if they take time that we should be giving to God, or if we think about them so much that we don't think about God.

3. We want to always recognize Jesus, like the donkey in the story did. What can we do to get past the distractions in our lives?

The best thing to do is ask Jesus to help us keep our focus on him! And if we set apart special time for God and make that a priority, it will help protect us from getting distracted. For example, we might set a special prayer time every day, go to Mass every Sunday, pray before every meal, etc.

If time permits, review these additional key points with students:

- In the Eucharist, we share in the Body and Blood of Christ.
- We need to be in the state of grace to receive Communion.
- We fast from all food and drink for one hour before receiving Communion.



- Jesus is completely present in every drop of the Precious Blood and every crumb of the Host.
- We receive special graces when we receive the Eucharist: we have a very special union with Christ and with his Church, our Baptismal graces are increased and renewed, our venial sins are washed away, and we grow in love of God and of others.

Let's Pray



Direct students to the Memory Verse on page 71 of the Student Guide and read it together. Then end the session with the LET'S PRAY closing prayer. You can ask a student to say the prayer or have them read along with you.

Let's Read a Story

If time permits, read this story to the class or ask a student to read it. Then discuss the questions on the next page, which relate to the content of the session before closing in prayer.

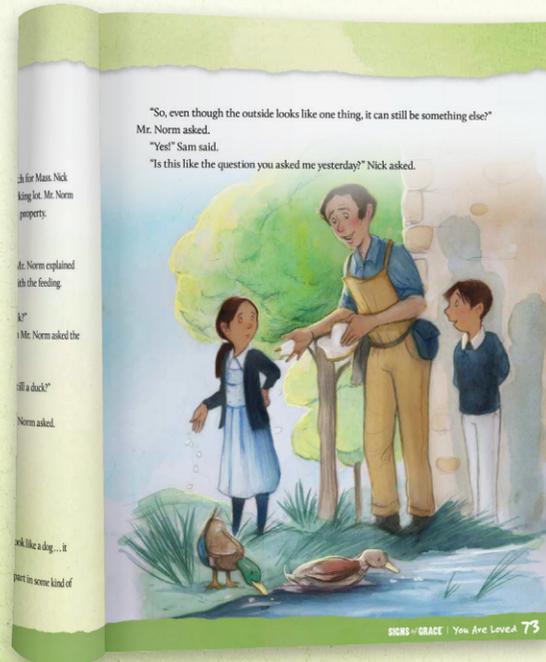
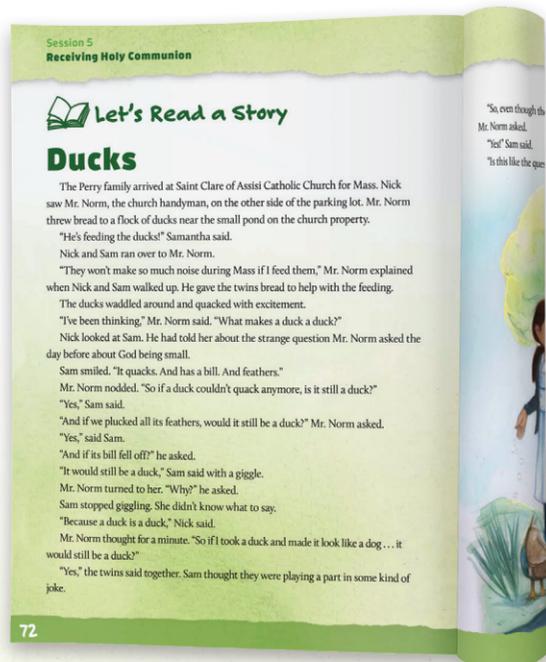
Otherwise, point out the story, which begins on page 72 of the Student Guide, and have students read it during the week with their family.

Ducks

This is an engaging fictional story that illustrates a content point from the session in a relatable and applicable way.

Theme:

With turning water into wine, Jesus took one thing and made it into another. With the loaves and fishes he took ordinary things and did something extraordinary with them. And even though he looked like a normal guy, he was God. The Eucharist looks like bread and wine, but is really the Body and Blood of Christ.



Let's Talk about It

Discussion Questions

Following are questions you can ask your students to help them understand the LET'S READ A STORY material in more depth.

1. Which is more important: what something looks like on the outside, or what it really is on the inside? Why?

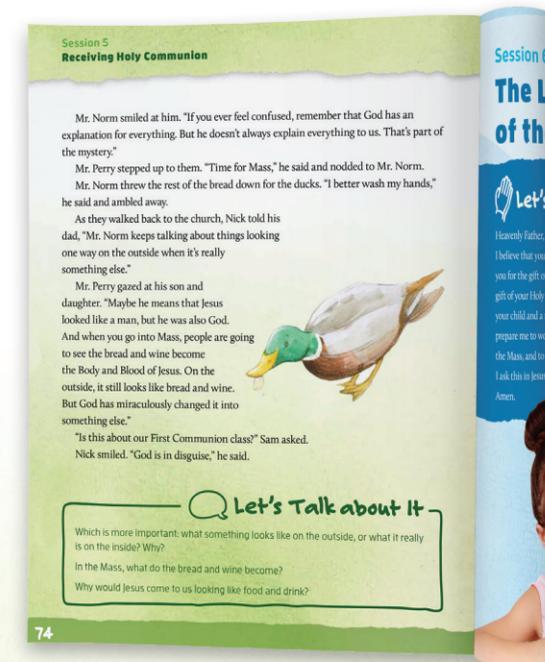
What something really is on the inside is more important than what it looks like on the outside. Outside appearances can change easily, but that doesn't change what something is on the inside—the reality of the thing. What it really is on the inside is the deeper reality than what something looks like.

2. In the Mass, what do the bread and wine become?

They become the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of our risen Lord, Jesus Christ.

3. Why would Jesus come to us appearing as food and drink?

One reason is to remind us that we need him to give us strength and his own life, and we need him even more than we need regular food and drink. Just as regular bread feeds our regular life, the Bread from Heaven, Jesus, gives us his heavenly life.



Remind the students to do their Take-Home Pages. These are found in the Student Activity Book.

Student Take-Home Page

The Student Take-Home Page provides activities for students to complete before the next session. These will reinforce the objectives of the lesson and allow the student to continue to process and apply them throughout the week.

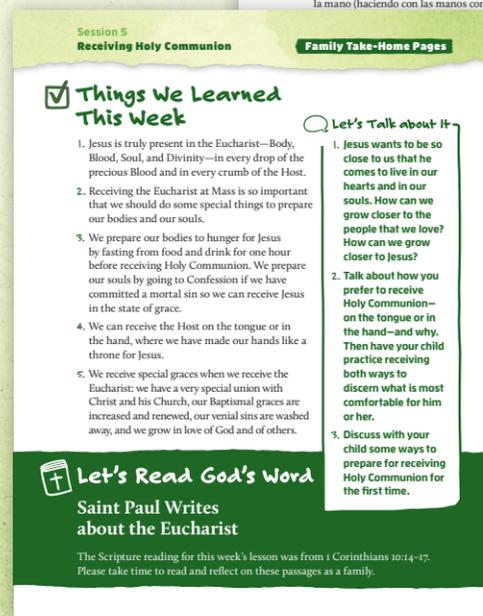
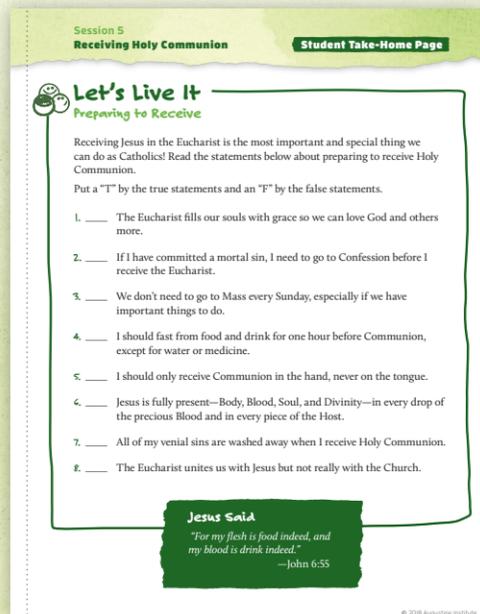
Answer Key for “Preparing to Receive.”

1. T
2. T
3. F
4. T
5. F
6. T
7. T
8. F

Family Take-Home Page

Also provided is an activity for students to take home and complete with their families. This will help equip parents to reinforce the objectives of the lesson in the context of the domestic church, as well as to grow in faith together as a family.

A Spanish version of the Family Take-Home Page is on page 267 of this book. You can make as many copies as needed to send home with students.



If-You-Have-Time Activities

Share the Love of Jesus relay race

Materials Needed:

- 2 paper plates glued to tongue depressor to represent the paten
- 2 red balloons with a heart drawn on each.

Discuss with the students that Jesus loves us all so much that he wants to share his whole self with us. He wants to give us all that he has just because he loves us so much! Here is a way to lead into this conversation:

- What would you do if you had a million dollars? What fun stuff would you buy for yourself?
- Would you try to give your loved ones things that would make them truly happy? Would you want them to know how much you love them?
- Jesus gives us himself completely in the Eucharist so that we can know his love and so that we will have the grace to give Jesus's love to others.

Explain that in this game, the red heart or balloon represents the love of Jesus that we receive when we receive Holy Communion. The paten cardstock cut-out, or plate, represents the paten that the Priest carries the Host on.

Help students form two teams and line up on one end of the room or hallway. The first person in each line will walk to the opposite end of the room, touch the wall, and return carrying the heart of Jesus on the paten, spreading the love of Jesus to the next person in line until every student has had a turn. There's only one rule: anyone who drops a heart has to try again!

First Communion Banner (Continued) Jesus Knows My Name!

Materials Needed:

- Permanent markers or fabric markers
- Stencils for letters (optional)
- Scissors
- Glue
- Stiff felt pieces of various colors

Discuss with the students that this session is focused on preparing yourself to receive the Eucharist. Connect the project with these key points:

- Jesus loves you so much that he wants to give himself totally to you—Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity.
- He wants to come into your heart and have a close relationship with you. You are his child and his special creation, and he has had a plan for you and loved you from the beginning of the world!
- Today, you will put your name on your First Communion banner. This is special because God knows every one of us by name! He wants you to stay close to him always, and the Eucharist is an important way we are able to have such a close union with him.

Have the students put their names on the front of their banners. They can do this by writing neatly with markers or by tracing letter stencils onto felt pieces and cutting them out and gluing them to their banners. A good place for this is along the side or the top or bottom in a straight line. Just be sure to leave a little room for the last three pieces.

If-You-Have-Time Activities

Song for First Communion Mass

Pange Lingua verses 3–6 (focus on verse 6)

This week we will be discussing the meaning of the words of verse 6 of *Pange Lingua*.

Verse 6:

To the everlasting Father,
And the Son Who made us free,
And the Spirit, God proceeding,
From them each eternally,
Be salvation, honor, blessing,
Might and endless majesty.

This week we have been talking about receiving Jesus in the Eucharist. Did you know that Jesus is really God? As Christians we believe in the Holy Trinity—Trinity starts with Tri, which means three. The Holy Trinity is three Persons in one God. That is another hard miracle for us to understand! God the Father is God; God the Son, Jesus, is God; and God the Holy Spirit is God—they are the three Persons of the Holy Trinity. Three Persons in one God. It's a miracle! Just like the miracle of Jesus being really present in the Eucharist, it is hard to understand, but we have faith so we believe all that God has revealed to us!

This last verse of our song is about the Holy Trinity and how much God loves us! Let's look at the last verse on our song sheets.

To the everlasting Father: Who is the everlasting Father? It is God the Father, who created the whole universe. He was always here, and he will always be here. That's pretty amazing! He is everlasting!

And the Son Who made us free: Who is the Son, and how did he make us free? Jesus is God the Son, who made us free by dying on the Cross to free us from our sins!

And the Spirit, God proceeding: Who is the Spirit? It is God the Holy Spirit who *proceeds* from the Father and the Son. That means he *comes from* the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is sent to guide the Church and her members and to live in each of our hearts to be with us always!

From them each eternally, Be salvation, honor, blessing, Might and endless majesty: This verse is talking about the amazing qualities and blessings that come from each Person of the Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit! Remember: the Trinity is *three Persons* in *one* God! And that holy, awesome, powerful, everlasting God loves you so much and wants to be so close to you in the Eucharist! Isn't that so awesome?!

Then practice singing the whole song and encourage students to really try to think about the meanings of the words as they sing! You can direct students to their Student Activity Books for the lyrics.

Thomas Aquinas (1227–1274)