

# Invited by Christ

*Preparing for First Reconciliation  
and First Eucharist*

Pflaum Publishing Group

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SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

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# Let's take the First Communion Bus together!





**STEP 5**

Invited to the  
Banquet

SECOND  
PARENT  
MEETING

**STEP 6**

At the Lord's Table:  
Celebration of First  
Eucharist

**STEP 7**

Entering into the  
Mysteries



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**STEP 2**  
**One Body**  
**in Christ**  
Communion Bus

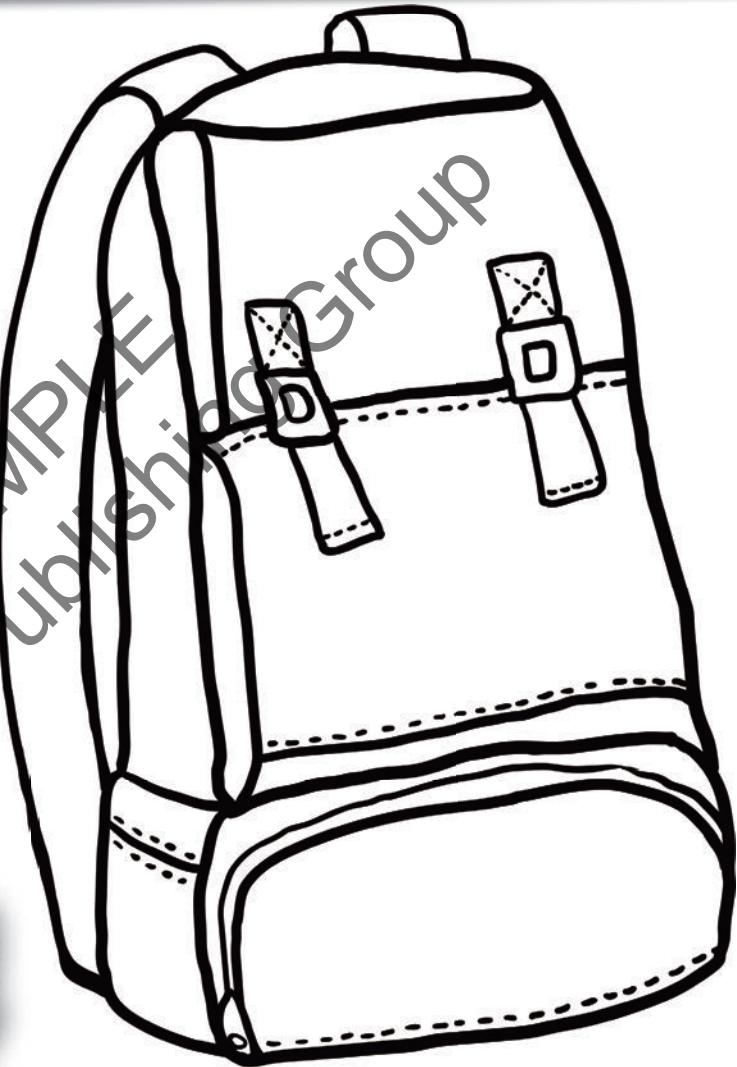


READY FOR  
THE TRIP?

**Word Bank:**

- PATIENCE
- ANGER
- TEAMWORK
- DISRESPECT
- FAITHFULNESS
- LISTENING
- COMPETITION
- COOPERATION
- SHARING

★ Using the Word Bank, choose several words that can help us as we travel together on this First Communion journey. Write them on your backpack; then decorate it.





From the Bible

## JESUS MEETS BARTIMAEUS

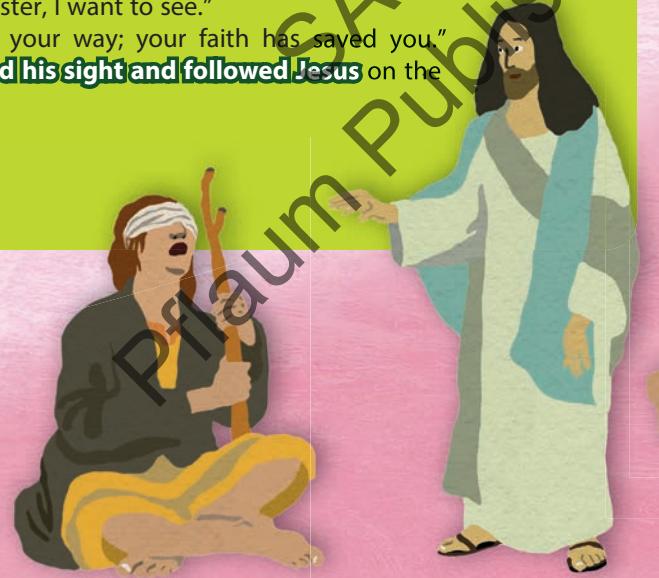
Mark 10:46-52

And as Jesus was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a large crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind man and the son of Timaeus, sat by the roadside begging. On hearing that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "**Jesus, son of David, have pity on me.**" And many scolded him, telling him to be silent. But he kept calling out all the more, "Son of David, have pity on me."

Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take courage; **get up, he is calling you.**"

He threw aside his cloak, sprang up, and came to Jesus. Jesus said to him in reply, "**What do you want me to do for you?**" The blind man replied to him, "Master, I want to see."

Jesus told him, "Go your way; your faith has saved you." Immediately **he received his sight and followed Jesus** on the road.





**Jesus asks each of us the question above. Create a short, personal prayer to Jesus, asking him to help you with something challenging in your life.**

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# PRAYER

When the people heard you had arrived in Jericho, they gathered.

Today we have heard you and we have come, too. Thank you, Lord, for your invitation.

Guided by the crowd, Bartimaeus approached. With our parents and the members of our parish community, we come together as your Church family. For those who are here with us, thank you, Lord.

Bartimaeus' eyes were opened and he was happy. He followed you. Guided by your Cross, we walk toward you. We thank you, Lord, for your love and for our lives. Amen.



## YOU'RE INVITED TO THE EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION!

The Church is not just a building. The **Church** is the Body of Christ gathered in the name of Jesus, who is the head of the body. Together, the People of God answer the call of the Lord, gathering at **Mass** each Sunday to celebrate the Risen Christ. We come to give thanks for the gift of the Eucharist, which is the center of the Church's life.

### The Order of Mass

#### *Introductory Rites*

- **ENTRANCE PROCESSION:** As everyone sings the gathering song, the altar servers carry the cross towards the altar, and the celebrant—a priest or bishop—follows.
- **SIGN OF THE CROSS AND GREETING:** At the altar, the celebrant welcomes us in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and we make the Sign of the Cross.
- **PENITENTIAL ACT:** We recognize that we are sinners and that we need Jesus to save us. We say, "Lord, have mercy."
- **GLORIA:** Because Jesus offers us forgiveness, we joyfully praise God by singing this hymn.
- **COLLECT:** The priest or bishop concludes with an opening prayer, called the Collect.

### Catholic Faith Words

**MASS**—The Catholic Church's central act of public worship.

**CHURCH**—The People of God gathered in the name of Jesus Christ.

**EUCHARIST**—The sacrament in which we receive Jesus' Body and Blood to nourish us and help us to become more like him.



WE'LL LEARN MORE  
ABOUT THE FIRST PART  
OF THE MASS IN STEP 3!



## WORD SEARCH

**★** Find these words hidden in the grid:

- FRIEND • LOVE • TOGETHER • COMMUNITY • JOY
- PLAY • JUSTICE • THANKS • PEACE • FORGIVE • SHARE
- PRAYER • MEALS • REST • SERVICE



Use the highlighted letters to form a word that reminds us of the reason for our trip this year. Write the word below.

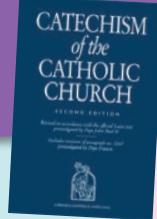
## CATECHISM Q&A

**Q**

What is the meaning of the Eucharist in the life of the Church?

**A**

The Eucharist is the source and summit of all Christian life: the highest form of worship. The Eucharist makes us one with Christ while also uniting us with the People of God (the Church). In the Eucharistic celebration, we receive a taste of what eternal life will be like (1324-1327, 1407).



WITH MY FAMILY

Discuss

With your child, identify words from the list that express what he or she is experiencing while preparing to receive the Eucharist. Next, select the words that describe what you share as a family. Give some specific examples to explain the words you have chosen. Then, select one or two that you would like to focus on in your family life. Ask the Holy Spirit for the strength to keep this promise.

## Baptism

The sacrament that makes us children of God and members of God's family, the Church.

## Church

The People of God gathered in the name of Jesus Christ.

## covenant

A commitment or agreement of faith and love between God and his people.

## Eucharist

The sacrament in which we receive Jesus' Body and Blood to nourish us and help us to become more like him.

## examination of conscience

Preparing for the Sacrament of Reconciliation by thinking about the sins we have committed.

## Gospels

The first four books in the New Testament that tell the Good News of Jesus' life, Death, and Resurrection.

## Liturgy of the Word

One of the two main parts of the Mass, during which we hear God's Word from the Bible and reflect on what it means for our lives.

## Liturgy of the Eucharist

The second part of the Mass, during which the bread and wine truly become the Body and Blood of Christ.

## Mass

The Catholic Church's central act of public worship.

## penance

An act that shows sorrow and repentance for sin.

## Real Presence

The bread and wine truly become the Body and Blood of Christ at Mass.

## Reconciliation

The sacrament in which we confess our sins, receive God's forgiveness, and do penance for our sins.

## sacraments

Visible signs of invisible grace instituted by Christ and given to the Church.

## sin

A free, deliberate choice to turn away from God's love, to break God's law, and to hurt others and ourselves.

## tabernacle

A small, locked box where the consecrated Hosts are kept. Nearby, a red sanctuary lamp is lit to show that Jesus is present.

## transubstantiation

The changing of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

## witness

A person who shows through words and actions that he or she is a follower of Christ.

## Word of God

Another word for the Bible or Scripture.

WHAT DOES THAT WORD MEAN?

LOOK UP THE DEFINITION!



# FAQ Questions Parents Ask about First Reconciliation



## What Are the Sacraments of Healing?



The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation (or Confession) and the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick continue Jesus' work of healing and saving the world through the power of the Holy Spirit.



## What can my child understand about sin and reconciliation at this young age?



The Church prepares and welcomes children to First Penance and First Communion when they reach the age of reason. They are at the right age to begin learning the commandments that make us God's people.

The Ten Commandments put us in relationship with God, who leads and loves us and who deserves our worship and thanks. The commandments call us to become people who respect one another's lives, reputations, marriages, and property. When we break one of the commandments or commit sin, we must heal our relationship with God through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This program stresses God's forgiving love by examining the Parable of the Lost Son, where children learn that God our

Father will welcome us back into his loving embrace when we show repentance for our sins.



## What is my part in preparing my child for First Reconciliation?



Both the family and the parish have important roles in preparing children for First Reconciliation. Parishes expect parents to do all they can to connect their child's understanding of following Jesus' teachings with keeping family rules.

For example, children need to understand that doing their chores is a way of keeping the Fourth Commandment to honor parents. Not going to bed angry is a family rule that flows from Jesus' teaching in his Sermon on the Mount about not going to the Temple to worship without first making up with an angry friend.

Parents can also help their children by modeling a willingness to say "I'm sorry." They can acknowledge when they are wrong or misread a situation among their children. They can help their children develop practical peacemaking skills at home. Parents can also help their children learn the Act of Contrition and the Lord's Prayer



## What help does *Invited by Christ* give me in my role as a parent of a child preparing for First Reconciliation?



*Invited by Christ* provides several sources of support and involvement for parents. This special parent appendix answers questions parents frequently ask and seeks to update them on the theology of Reconciliation.

Second, this book includes a "With My Family" section at the end of each step. Parents and their children can do these activities together as part of the child's preparation.



## Is my child required to celebrate First Reconciliation before celebrating First Eucharist?



The Church requires children to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation before receiving First Eucharist. Parishes prepare and celebrate this sacrament with children a significant length of time before they prepare children for First Eucharist, so children do not receive the impression they must go to Confession before they go to Communion each time.

# Questions Parents Ask about First Eucharist

FAQ



## What Are the Sacraments of Christian Initiation?

**A** Sacraments are signs instituted by Christ to give grace, which is a share in the life of God. The Church celebrates the sacraments through visible rites that make real what they signify. For example, the rite for Baptism includes the use of water and the reciting of the baptismal formula. This rite both cleanses a person of sin and claims the person for God. It brings about what it signifies.

Do you know what it means to be initiated into a club? It is to be welcomed into the club through taking part in a ceremony, such as raising the right hand and reciting a pledge. Three of the Church's sacraments are called Sacraments of Initiation because they welcome a person into the full life of the Church. These sacraments are Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. Through Baptism, a person begins a new life in Christ. Confirmation strengthens that new life. Through Eucharist, the person is nourished by Christ's Body and Blood in order to be transformed in Christ.

In the first centuries, when most new members of the Church were adults, all three sacraments were administered at the same time—first Baptism, then Confirmation, then Eucharist. In later centuries, however, when new members often were babies and as the Church grew, the three Sacraments of Initiation were celebrated at different times so bishops could continue to complete Baptism in the celebration of Confirmation.



## What Happens at the Eucharist?

**A** Unlike Baptism and Confirmation, the Eucharist is a sacrament that can be received again and again. In fact, the Church encourages Catholics to receive Eucharist every time they attend Mass. At the very least, they are required to receive Eucharist at least once a year, during the Easter season. Receiving Communion once a year is a Church rule. Attending Mass is a serious obligation that flows from the Third Commandment: a deliberate choice to miss Sunday Mass is considered a mortal sin. When you seek strength from Christ's Body and Blood during Sunday Mass, you become better at resisting serious sin during the rest of the week.

There is no other sacrament quite like the Eucharist. The *Catechism* calls it “the heart and the summit of the Church’s life.” The Eucharist is the heart because it is at the center of the Church’s life. It is the summit because it is higher than any other form of worship or prayer.

Receiving the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion is necessary for a healthy spiritual life. You need Eucharist as much as you need food and drink for a healthy physical life. What’s more, your presence at Mass is something God wants of you more than any other kind of thanksgiving or praise. Yes, morning and evening prayers are important. Yes, meal prayers are important. But more important than any of these is your prayerful participation in the Eucharist.

The word *Eucharist* means “thanksgiving” in Greek. When you attend Mass, you show your thanks to God for every good thing you enjoy in life. Neglecting to attend Sunday Mass is like taking all the good things your parents give you—food, shelter, clothes, education, health care, holiday gifts—and not once telling them “Thank you.” We also celebrate the Eucharist because Christ told us to keep his memory alive in this way. Every Eucharist is a remembrance of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus.

The Sacrament of the Eucharist always includes: (1) the reading aloud of Scripture, (2) prayers of thanks to God the Father for the gift of his Son, Jesus, (3) the consecration of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, and (4) the receiving of Christ’s Body and Blood.

Just as water is needed for Baptism and Sacred Chrism is needed for Confirmation, two things are needed for Eucharist. They are bread made from wheat and wine made from grapes. Just as Baptism and Confirmation Rites include special words, so does the Eucharist. The words used by the priest to consecrate the bread and wine are the same words Jesus spoke the night before he died: “This is my Body, which will be given up for you. ... This is the chalice of my Blood.”

Only a priest or bishop can consecrate the bread and wine for the Eucharist. Through the ministry of the priest, the Holy Spirit comes upon the bread and wine to change them into the Body and Blood of Christ.

# Prayers

## Hail Mary

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

## Sign of the Cross

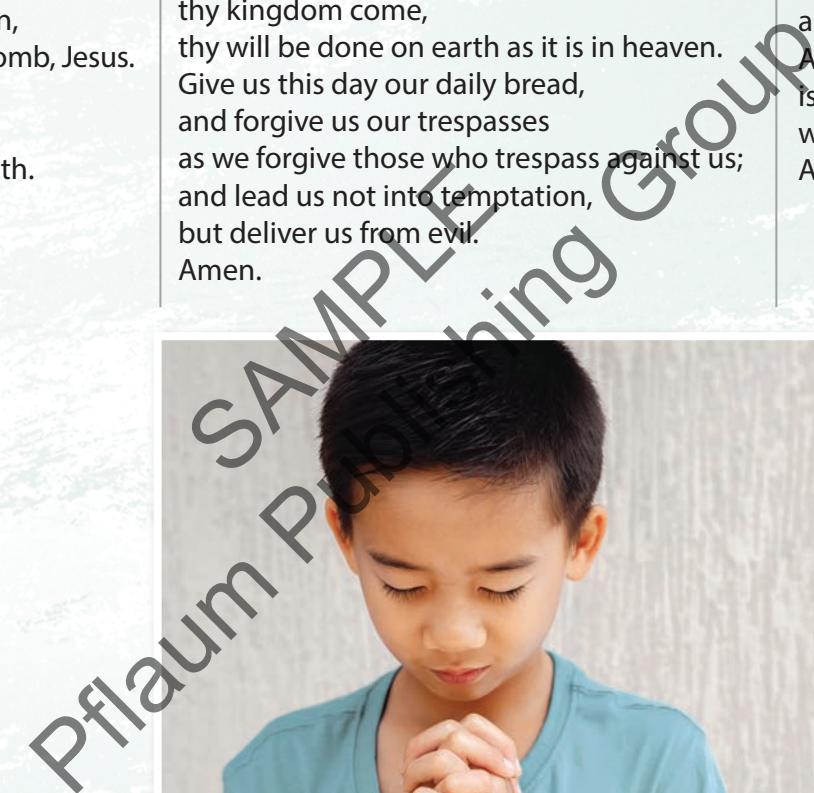
In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

## The Lord's Prayer (Our Father)

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.

## Glory Be to the Father

Glory be to the Father,  
and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the beginning,  
is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end.  
Amen.



# How to Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation



## Examination of Conscience

I love God and want to follow God's ways. I am sorry for my sins.

## Confession

I confess my sins. I tell the priest any ways I have failed to keep God's commandments. I tell the priest about my unloving actions.



# How to Receive the Eucharist



Before joining the Communion procession, pray an Act of Contrition.

When you are about to receive Communion, bow your head as a gesture of reverence.



To receive the Body of Christ in your hands: put your left hand in the palm of your right hand, palms up (or right hand in the palm of your left hand, if you are left-handed). The priest, deacon, or extraordinary minister of Holy Communion will say, “The Body of Christ.” You respond, “Amen.” The Body of Christ will be placed in your hand. Pick up the Host with your other hand and put it on your tongue. Close your mouth and swallow.