



Together in Jesus

**I Belong
to a
Community**



We Share Faith in Jesus

Interview a person in your parish community. Ask this person to finish the statement below.

I believe in Jesus because

Name: _____

The people of our parish believe in Jesus. Together we form a community of believers. Our parish is part of the Catholic Church. My parish community invites me to make my First Eucharist with them.

Come, _____, to Jesus' table.

I Belong to the Catholic Church

The Catholic Church is a community of people who follows Jesus Christ.
Jesus is God's Son, who became one of us to show us God's love.
Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah for whom the people of Israel waited.

We become members of our Church by receiving three Sacraments of Initiation.
These sacraments are Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist.
We receive grace in these sacraments. *Grace* means *gift*.
We receive the gift of sharing God's life and love in these sacraments.

Baptism



At Baptism parents ask members of the Church to welcome their child. They want their child to grow up as a follower of Jesus.

A priest or deacon pours water over the baby's head and says,
"_____, I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."
Parents promise to teach their children all that Christians believe. In Baptism we become children of God. We share the life of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Find the sticker showing a shell and water. Put it here.

My Baptism

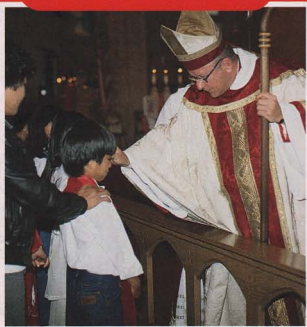
I, _____,
became a child of God and member of the Catholic Church
when I was baptized on _____,
at the church named _____ in _____.

The Subcommittee on the Catechism, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, has found this text, copyright 2011, to be in conformity with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*; it may be used only as supplemental to other basal catechetical texts.

Where appropriate, this text reflects the language of the *Roman Missal, Third Edition*.

Nihil Obstat: J. Michael Byron **Imprimatur:** Harry J. Flynn, Archbishop of St. Paul-Minneapolis, April 30, 2004
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Confirmation



Confirmation completes Baptism. A bishop seals us with the gift of the Holy Spirit. God pours out the Holy Spirit on us. The Holy Spirit urges us to love people the way Jesus showed us. The Holy Spirit makes Christians one.

Jesus made himself an everlasting gift for us when he loved us unto Death on the Cross. God raised him up to new life. Before he died, Jesus asked his followers to gather and share a meal to remember him.

At every Eucharist we gather as Jesus asked. A priest leads us in a prayer of remembering and giving thanks. *Eucharist* means *thanks*.

We remember and give thanks for Jesus' gift of himself on the Cross.

We remember and give thanks that God raised Jesus up to new life.

We remember how Jesus blessed bread and wine on the night before he died. He made bread and wine signs of his love for us that he lived out on the Cross. Jesus comes to us in every Eucharist.

We receive the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion.

Eucharist



We Gather and Celebrate

Leader: Children, do you wish to prepare for First Eucharist?

Children: Yes. Our parents have taught us how much God loves us. We are old enough to hear what Jesus asks of his followers.

Leader: Parents, we invite you to bless your children.

Parents: We bless you in your growing up and in your preparing for First Eucharist.

Leader: Children, receive this Bible. The Bible tells many stories about Jesus, his Father, and the Spirit. You will take parts and tell Bible stories as you prepare for First Eucharist.

Class representative receives the Bible.

Children: We will use our eyes to read the stories about Jesus. We will use our ears to hear all Jesus asks. We will use our bodies to act out the stories.



Leader: Receive this prayer which we call the Our Father. Jesus' first friends asked him how to pray. Jesus taught them this prayer.

Each child comes forward and receives an Our Father scroll.

Children: We will use our minds to learn this prayer. We will use our voices to pray this prayer often. We will open our hearts to live the words we pray.

Leader: Welcome to First Eucharist preparation. Together we will get ready to gather around Jesus' table, the altar, where you will receive Holy Communion for the first time.

Draw yourself receiving First Eucharist.



Together in Jesus

Our Community Remembers Jesus

Our faith community
gathers on Sundays.
We listen to stories about
what Jesus said and did.



Find the Advent
wreath sticker.
Place it here.

We Celebrate Jesus' Birth

During Advent we remember how the people of Israel longed for a Savior and how an angel asked a young woman named Mary to be Jesus' mother.

On Christmas we celebrate Jesus' birthday. We rejoice that in Jesus God became one of us. Jesus is the Savior of the world.



Together in Jesus



Jesus Gathers People Together

Find the Jesus
sticker. Put it
here.

One day a man named Zacchaeus heard that Jesus was coming to his town. Zacchaeus was a tax collector. Zacchaeus had no friends because he cheated people. He always collected extra money for himself. Zacchaeus could not see Jesus when he came by. The crowd was too big, and Zacchaeus was too short. Zacchaeus climbed a tree, so he could see Jesus. "Come down," Jesus said, when he saw Zacchaeus up in the tree. "I want to eat at your house today." After that Zacchaeus gave half his money to the poor. He wanted to be more like his new friend, Jesus.

Luke 19:1-10

How does Zacchaeus change in the story?

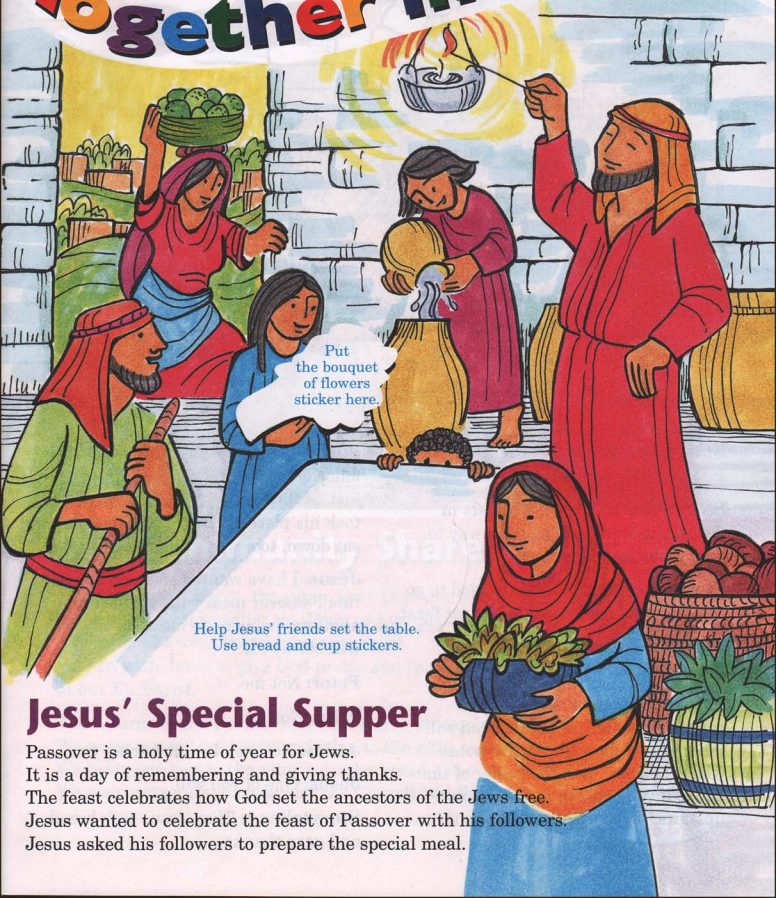
Why does he change?

How does eating together help people become friends?





Together in Jesus



Put
the bouquet
of flowers
sticker here.

Help Jesus' friends set the table.
Use bread and cup stickers.

Jesus' Special Supper

Passover is a holy time of year for Jews.

It is a day of remembering and giving thanks.

The feast celebrates how God set the ancestors of the Jews free.

Jesus wanted to celebrate the feast of Passover with his followers.

Jesus asked his followers to prepare the special meal.



Together in Jesus



Our Community Shares a Meal

I belong to the Church, the community that shares a meal as Jesus taught us.
We call our meal together the Mass or Eucharist.
Eucharist is a word that means *thank you*.
We join with Jesus to give God praise and thanks
at our Eucharist.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist begins with a procession.
We bring our gifts of bread and wine to the altar table.
We bring our love to the altar with the bread and wine.
We also bring gifts of money for the Church and the poor.

A gift I will give to God this week

We Share the Body and Blood of Christ



Blessed are the people
Jesus calls to share this meal.

My Thank-You Prayer

Thank you, Jesus,
for sharing your love with us.
I want your love to grow in me
and in all the people
of our Christian Church.
Amen.

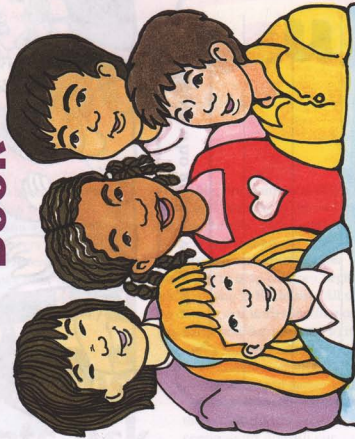
I will celebrate my First Eucharist with
my family and parish community on

(date)



Together in Jesus

My First Eucharist Book



Name _____



Together in Jesus

Q "How will my child benefit from using the *Together in Jesus* program?"



The title *Together in Jesus* expresses the aim of the program—to draw your child into

fuller and more active participation in the life of the Church. This means both in its life at Sunday worship and in the daily call to love one another.

Like every Catholic, your child will become one with Christ by receiving his Body and Blood. Eucharist is the sacrament that both nourishes the individual and creates the community that is the Body of Christ in the world—the Church. The effect of Eucharist is communion—the gift or grace of sharing God's life. *Together in Jesus* explores the traditions of the Church with your child.

■ Our Church welcomes new members through the Sacraments of Initiation—Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist (Lesson 1).

■ The Church remembers Jesus in the seasons and Sundays of the liturgical year (Lesson 2).

■ Jesus in his lifetime welcomed everyone, eating with sinners and feeding crowds of listeners (Lesson 3).

■ Jesus ate a special meal with his followers on the night before he died (Lesson 4).

■ Jesus' followers today gather for Mass and receive the Body and Blood of Christ (Lesson 5).

■ The children will celebrate their First Eucharist (Lesson 6).

Questions Parents Ask

About First Eucharist

by Joan Mitchell, CSI

Q "How can just six lessons teach children enough to receive the Eucharist?"



Indeed, *Together in Jesus* does offer children just six lessons of immediate preparation for receiving First Eucharist. In most parishes, however, First Eucharist preparation takes place in addition to a regular religion program for primary children.

Together in Jesus will make your child aware of the main events in

Jesus' life, the main parts of the Mass, and the roles children can take in liturgies, such as gift bearers and readers.

First Eucharist preparation aims only to help children begin participating in Eucharist. All of us deepen our understanding of Eucharist and our response to its meaning through taking part in the sacrament over time. The Church asks us to gather and celebrate Eucharist weekly so the sacrament can continuously nourish our growth as individuals and as members of the Church.

Q "What understanding of First Eucharist does this program present?"



Receiving First Eucharist is a growing-up moment. To receive First Eucharist, a child must have reached the age of reason and recognize Jesus is really present with us in the signs of his Body and Blood. Eucharist gives us our identity as Church. We who share the Body and Blood of Christ are to become the Body of Christ, the Church. We who drink the chalice pledge the pouring out of our lives as Jesus poured out his.

Pope John Paul II stressed the importance of Eucharist in the life of the Church: "The

Together in Jesus

FIRST EUCHARIST FAMILY FOCUS POSTER

Lesson 1: I Belong to a Community

The first community to which I belong is my family. These are their names: _____

I became a member of the Christian community when I was baptized. This community, the Church, believes in Jesus. This picture shows my Baptism: _____



Lesson 2: Our Community Remembers Jesus

The Christian community remembers and celebrates Jesus, and so does my family community.

How does our family remember and celebrate Jesus' birth? _____

How does our family remember and celebrate Jesus' Death? _____

Lesson 4: Jesus' Special Supper

My family celebrates special days with special meals. We feel closer to one another when we eat together.

On birthdays, we eat _____

On Christmas, we eat _____

On Easter, we eat _____

Jesus gives us the Eucharist to remember him and feel closer to him.

What special food does Jesus give us in the Eucharist? _____

Write a blessing here to use at a special meal with your family. _____

Lesson 5: Our Community Shares a Meal

Jesus shares his life with us at Mass. He shares his love for God the Father and Spirit. Jesus asks us to share with one another.

How do I share at home and in my neighborhood?

With whom do I share? What do I share?

Let some special people know you are thinking of them. This is _____

Make a card and send them a card. This is _____

card like this. _____
