

# The Sacrament of First Holy Communion



Preparation Booklet 5

## Gathering Around the Table of the Lord

God calls all of his Christian family, the Church, to gather together to celebrate Mass every Sunday.

Mass is a SACRED meal that we share together around the table of the Lord, the altar.

We are invited to Mass because we became part of God's family when we were baptised.



### We Participate at Mass

- We gather together with friends and family .
- We say a "sorry" prayer to God. "I confess ..."
- God talks to us and we listen (through the Readings).
- The priest gives a homily which helps us to live our Christian lives.
- We sing hymns and say prayers of praise, petition and thanks.
- We bring bread and wine to the table.
- The priest says special words to bless the bread and wine.
- The actual words of the Last Supper are said and the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Jesus.
- We make the sign of peace with each other.
- We say the Our Father.
- We eat and drink the body and blood of Jesus at Holy Communion.
- We are sent out at the end of Mass to live our Christian lives and tell others about Jesus.

## Mass, A Sacred Meal

Mass is a sacred meal because everything that happened at the Last Supper is made present again. Jesus is with us at Mass. Jesus asked his disciples to "Do this in memory of me". Every time Mass is celebrated, **all** of the events of the Last Supper and Jesus' death on the cross are re-presented. The Church all over the world is able to take part and give thanks for Jesus' sacrifice.

Easy to understand ...



When we go to Mass we go as one big family of the children of God. The altar is a table and we gather round it. Eucharist means *thanksgiving*; we give thanks at Mass because Jesus died on the cross for us.

Think deeper ...



Jesus told his disciples to repeat the events of the Last Supper. At Mass, then, the ordinary bread and wine become Jesus' own flesh and blood **and** Jesus offers himself as a sacrifice.

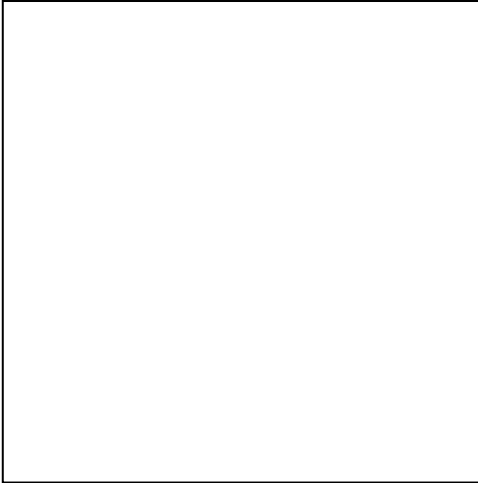
This does not mean that we should see blood at Mass, though. The power of God makes it possible to re-enact these events at Mass.

During Mass, the power of God works through the **priest** who acts in the person of Jesus.

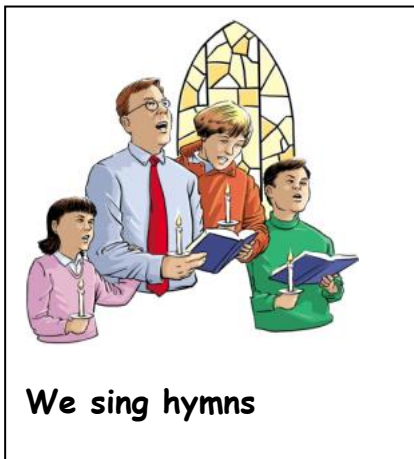
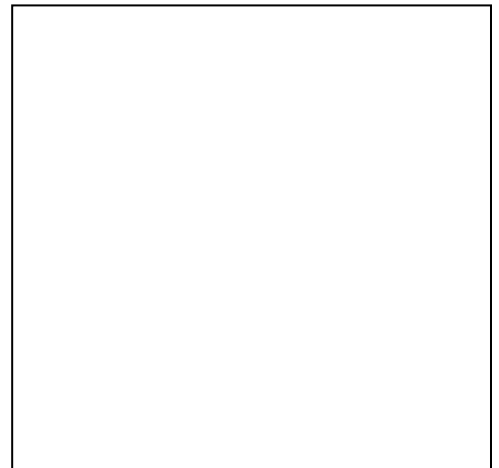
This is why Mass is a sacred meal and why we call Holy Communion The Blessed Sacrament.

# What do I remember ...?

*In the empty boxes, draw some of the other things that happen at Mass.*



**The bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ.**





## First Communion Key Words Challenge

*How many of the key words can you and your partner find in 10 minutes?*

T N G T T D O C O T B E Y O B  
H G N R V S Q T A F R L A T H  
S U P P E R I B B T E C H X I  
O B Z J C X E R S M A A V D U  
B W B H B R M O A Y D R Q O L  
V F D Y N U H Y R H E I L W H  
W P C A T E T O A S C M P F Y  
X Z C Y V Q M L P S U U D O H  
L L A S T E T D Q R B S E O T  
E T N E M A R C A S I O E D E  
K F Q K R T S T G V V E D J N  
D O O L B T U U L R S C S Y I  
L E Y P P A W S Y B V X O T W  
E Z F I Q G N G T Q L P Q Q Z  
S F B D Y T E X P F T L M H S

ALTAR  
EUCCHARIST  
LAST  
SUPPER  
MIRACLE  
WINE

BLOOD  
FOOD  
MEMORY  
JESUS  
PRIEST  
BREAD

BODY  
HOST  
SACRAMENT  
TABERNACLE

## First Holy Communion Preparation Booklet 5

### Worksheet 1      Gathering Around the Table of the Lord      **15 minutes**

This sheet highlights the fact that we are all part of God's Christian family and we gather together to worship and give thanks to God as one family. You should take time to let the children talk about their parish, what time they go to Mass, if they go to Children's Liturgy, etc. Underline the community and participatory aspects of Mass: we gather together, we pray and sing together, we give the responses together. You should tell the children that they are part of the universal Church and that people all over the world form part of God's family too. Tell them that the same readings are heard at Masses all over the world on the same day.

### Worksheet 2                      Mass, a Sacred Meal                      **15 minutes**

This sheet explains why Mass is a sacred meal. Explain that "sacred" means very special/blessed/holy, etc. It is sacred because Jesus becomes present to us at Mass, and the events of the Last Supper and the cross are re-presented/re-enacted. The aim of the Easy to Understand/Think Deeper section is to underline the Real Presence and the sacrifice of Jesus (discussed in previous booklets as well) and to explain the role of the priest in persona Christi. Read through these sections and stop to explain as you go along. It is a tricky section but children should pick up the gist and others will pick up more.

### Worksheet 3                      What do I Remember?                      **20 minutes**

This activity simply revises what happens at Mass.

### Worksheet 4      First Communion Key Words Challenge      **20 minutes**

This activity revises some key words to do with Mass and Holy Communion. You could check that they know the meaning of each word and ask them to work individually or in pairs to do the wordsearch. Alternatively, this sheet could be done at home.