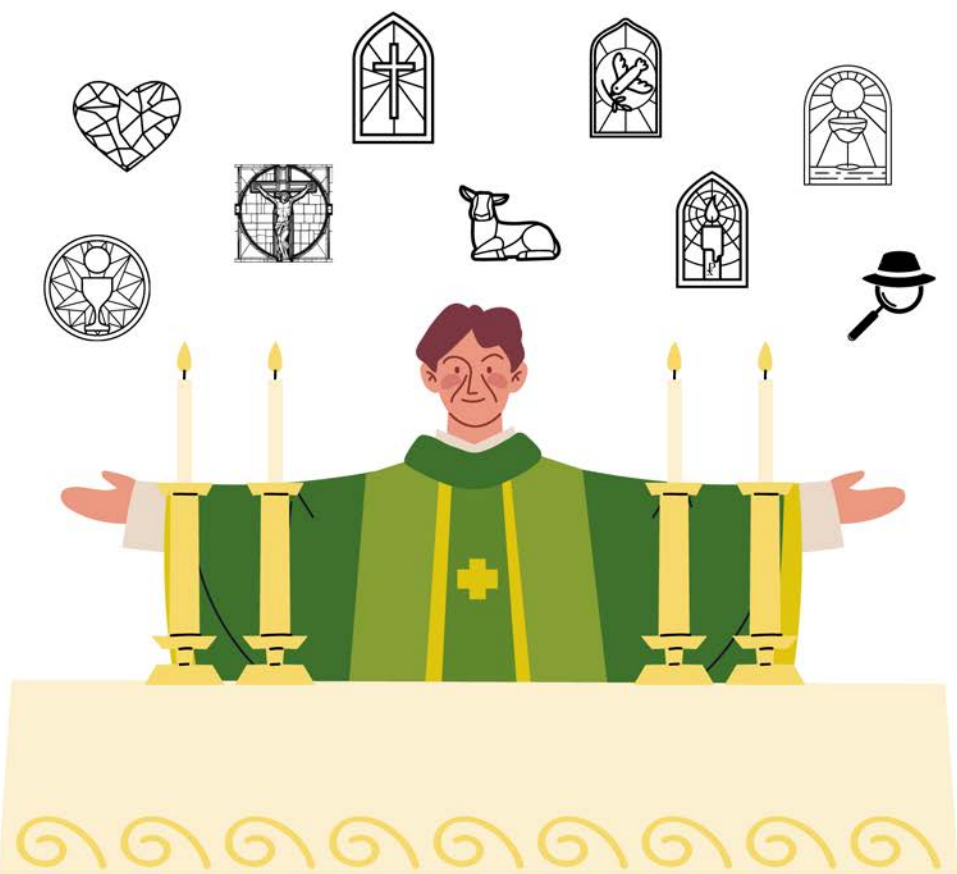


LITTLES' LENTEN PRAYER STUDY

THE MYSTERY OF THE MASS



HELP YOUR LITTLES DISCOVER THE
HIDDEN WONDER OF THE MASS

This Littles Resource Guide is designed for elementary children.

This guide is written by Sara Racicot and goes along with the Parish Lenten Study designed for adults: *Be Still: Entering into the Catholic Mass.*

Contact Sara Racicot at holydoods@gmail.com with questions or for speaking or teaching requests for this study.

How to Use this Resource Guide

MAIN ELEMENTS EACH WEEK

Lesson:

Read through and discuss the lesson (main theme). Teach the lesson at an age appropriate level **at the beginning of the week.**

Additional Practices:


Part of helping our Littles to love the Mass is helping them to break open the beauty present in various moments of the Mass through understanding, imagining, praying, and illustrating. Consider the options listed below and select practices that work well for your family.

- **Mass Part:** Teach the Mass part each week. Help your Littles pay special attention to this specific Mass part this week.
- **Prayer:** Read the prayer for your Littles to use their imagination to pray with the Mass part and to understand it using their “Eyes of Faith.”
- **Color:** Have your Littles illustrate the Mass part or color the picture related to it.
- **Saint Story:** Read the saint story (dinner time, bedtime, before Mass).
- **Games and Activities:** Play the game or complete the activity.
- **Mass Prayers:** These prayers were written for use before, during, and after Mass. (They are located on the next pages, have darkened edges to be easily found, and can be prayed all through Lent.)

THREE NOTES:

1. In an effort to make this guide a good resource for many different ages of Littles, there will be material that feels younger or older than the Littles you are instructing, please feel free to adjust as needed. However, do not underestimate the power of simplicity and imagination, even for older children.
2. Consider which aspects of the study will be most beneficial and doable for your family. This study is developed to be flexible for differing schedules, ages, and temperaments.
3. This guide is a Mass companion and should go to and from Mass with your child.

Lesson Overviews

Week	Theme	Mass Part
1	 <p>p. 16</p> <p>All Your Heart</p>	Preparation before Mass & Penitential Rite
2	 <p>p. 22</p> <p>Ritual & Symbols</p>	Sign of the Cross & Symbols in church
3	 <p>p. 28</p> <p>Liturgy: God's Gift</p>	Doxology
4	 <p>p. 36</p> <p>Sacrament: Visible & Invisible</p>	Consecration
5	 <p>p. 43</p> <p>A Mighty Mystery</p>	Offertory, Sanctus
6	 <p>p. 50</p> <p>Holy Sacrifice</p>	This is my body. This is my blood- poured out, given
7	 <p>p. 56</p> <p>What is a Memorial?</p>	"Do this in memory of me."
8	 <p>p. 61</p> <p>Heavenly Banquet</p>	

Planning Notes:

Planning Notes:

Planning Notes:

Mass Prayers

PRAYERS FOR ENTERING INTO THE MASS:

HEART, HANDS, EYES, AND EARS PRAYER:

This prayer will help your Littles to better prepare for Mass each time you go. If you don't do anything else, do this with your Littles before Mass! You can even **bring the prayer with you to Mass and do it with them before Mass starts in your pew or in your car.**

LITTLES' SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER/SONG:

For those who haven't received 1st Communion, teach your children this prayer/song and help them to pray it during Communion time. Encourage your Littles to close their eyes while they say it and put both hands on their heart. Don't be afraid to **bring it with you to Mass and help your Little during this time.**

COMMUNION HEART PRAYER:

Guide your Littles to talk to Jesus during this special time. Share with them what you do and say when you receive Communion. They can use the acronym HEART for ideas of what to do with Jesus during this very special communion with Him. This is their HEART time alone with Jesus! Remind them they might not be able to do all of these things but they can always come back to do it with Him again. **Have them bring this prayer with them to Mass!**

GO FORTH PRAYER:

This prayer is a good way to practice dialogue with God with your Littles. This is something you can do at the end of the Mass. **Have them bring this prayer with them to Mass!**

We are Going to Mass!

Body Prayer-Simplified

Heart, we are going to Mass.

*(hands on heart, help child to imagine Jesus also touching their heart)
Jesus, open my heart to receive You here.*



Hands, we are going to Mass.

*(hands folded, help child to imagine Jesus holding their folded hands)
Hold my hands and guide me near.*



Eyes, we are going to Mass.

*(hands on eyes, help child to imagine Jesus touching their eyes)
I will use my eyes to see You here today.*



Ears, we are going to Mass.

*(Hands on ears, help child to imagine Jesus touching their ears)
I will use my ears to hear what you say.*



Voice, we are going to Mass.

*(Hands on cheeks, help your child to imagine Jesus touching their cheeks)
I will use my voice to praise and worship too.*



Jesus, I am going to Mass!

*(Hands folded, help child to imagine Jesus welcoming them with a hug)
Thank you for inviting me to come to you.*



To help your children imagine any of the actions suggested in this prayer, use Mt 9:25 (for hands), Mk 8:25 (for eyes) and Mk 8:34 (for ears and voice)

We are Going to Mass!

Body Prayer

Heart, we are going to Mass.

(hands on heart, help child to imagine Jesus also touching their heart)

Jesus, calm my heart so I can be still.

Open my heart to receive its fill.

Wake my heart to notice what you do.

Heart, welcome Jesus who is coming to you.



Hands, we are going to Mass.

(hands folded, help child to imagine Jesus holding their folded hands)

Jesus, I give my hands folded here.

Hold my hands and guide me near.



Eyes, we are going to Mass.

(hands on eyes, help child to imagine Jesus touching their eyes)

Jesus, I will use my eyes to see miracles today.

I will look at the priest and see what he will do.

I will see the host and cup and know that it is you.



Ears, we are going to Mass.

(Hands on ears, help child to imagine Jesus touching their ears)

Jesus, I will use my ears to hear you speak to me.

I will listen at Mass attentively.



Voice, we are going to Mass.

(Hands on cheeks, help your child to imagine Jesus touching their cheeks)

Jesus, I will use my voice today to praise and worship you.

I know you hear me when I sing and it makes you sing too.



Jesus, I am going to Mass!

(Hands folded, help child to imagine Jesus welcoming them with a hug)

Thank you for inviting me as your special guest!

Prepare me well to worship you. I will give my best!

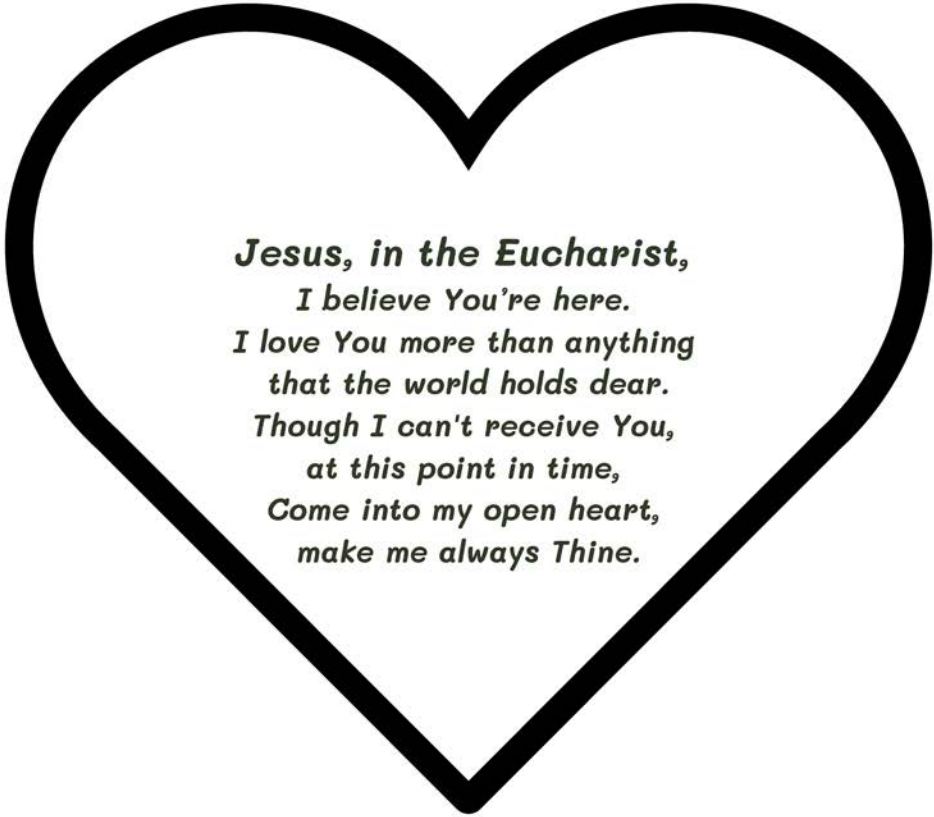


To help your children imagine any of the actions suggested in this prayer, use Mt 9:25 (for hands), Mk 8:25 (for eyes) and Mk 8:34 (for ears and voice)

Littles' Spiritual Communion Prayer



Encourage your littles to close their eyes while they pray this prayer and place both hands on their heart.




***Jesus, in the Eucharist,
I believe You're here.
I love You more than anything
that the world holds dear.
Though I can't receive You,
at this point in time,
Come into my open heart,
make me always Thine.***


(Written by the School Sisters of Christ the King)


HEART Communion Prayer


Use the acronym HEART to help you with ideas of how to spend your special communion time with Jesus.




 **H**e is **H**ere! Use your eyes of faith and imagination to acknowledge Jesus is truly with you! What does it feel like when He is with you? What does He say to you? How does He seem (excited, loving, strong)?

 **E**motions. Acknowledge how you are feeling right now with Jesus. What excites you? Share with Him all the things that excite you and make you happy. (Maybe it's Him!) Tell Him about fun things you have done or will do. He loves to share in your joy. Tell Him what is bothering your heart right now. Relate to Him your fears, worries, or needs. Jesus is there to comfort you, protect you, and take care of you.

 **A**round your heart room. Show Him around your heart room. What do you show Him? What do you and Jesus do together in your heart room?

 **R**equests: Do you have anything to ask Jesus? Anything you or your family needs? Trust that He cares so much about what you care about and wants to take care of you. Now ask Him if He has anything to request of you. Does He have any favors He wants you to do or anyone He wants you to love for Him?

 **T**hank Him and praise Him. Tell Him thank you for being so amazing. Tell Him what you love about Him. Tell Him what you think is amazing about Him. Thank Him for all the things He has given you and especially for wanting to be with you and loving you. How does He react when you thank Him and praise Him? Imagine it now and notice it!

Go Forth Prayer

For After Mass



Thank you Jesus for this Mass today.
I am about to go on my way.

I do not leave you here behind.
Stay in my heart, soul, and mind.

Help me bring You wherever I go.
Help me share Your Heart to all I know.

When I'm learning, when I'm playing,
no matter what I am saying...
Until tonight, when this day is done.
May I bring Jesus to everyone.





Intro Week:
Ash Wednesday



Week 1: Ash Wednesday

Lesson: All Your Heart

This study is all about discovering the hidden wonder of the Mass. For Littles, that means learning what the Mass is, how to receive at Mass, and learning why we do some of the things we do at Mass. Most importantly, it means helping Littles to experience God's presence and love in the Mass. The first step to discovering the hidden wonder of the Mass is to prepare our hearts for Mass so we can "go to Mass with all your heart."

Going to Mass with ALL YOUR HEART means:

- **We give God our BEST!** We try our very hardest to follow along, respond, sing, listen, and receive.
 - God LOVES when we give our best and He always gives His best to us!
 - How you engage Jesus at Mass is a gift you give to God. Giving Him your attention says, "I love you!"
 - When we struggle to pay attention or forget to give our best, we know that God still loves us and will always help us again.
- **We prepare well for Mass.** We settle our bodies, minds, and hearts to help us pay attention and get the wiggles out. This way we can better see and listen for Jesus. Ideas to help to settle down:
 - Take deep breaths slowly and listen for your heartbeat.
 - Notice the places that are "wiggly" and stretch or calm them.
 - Pray the "We are Going to Mass! Body Prayer" before each Mass with your littles.
- **We dress differently** to show that we know something special and sacred is happening when we go to Mass.
 - Talk about other times we dress differently. Why is the Mass so special?



Week 1: Ash Wednesday

Mass Part:

This week focus on the time BEFORE Mass that we can use to settle our hearts and prepare for Mass.

Prayer: Jesus created our imagination and loves to speak to us through it. One way we can give all our hearts at Mass is to use the imagination He gave us. A lot of miracles are happening each Mass but we can't see them. As we go on in our study of the Mass, pray using your imagination to see what is truly happening.

Imagine your heart as a gift that you give to Jesus. Hold your hands out. Imagine placing your heart in your hands ready to offer to Jesus. What does your heart look like? Does it shine? Is it beating with excitement? Is it warm? Imagine His hands at the altar ready to receive your Heart. They are strong and open to holding, receiving, blessing, and protecting your heart. He receives it. What does it feel like to have Jesus hold your heart? How does He react to your gift? Now, imagine Jesus showing you His heart and handing it to you. This is what happens at Mass! Does this excite you? How does it make you feel differently about what we are going to do at Mass?

Color: Color the heart on the next page and write one behavior during Mass they want to try in a special way to do really well today.

I Will Give All My



Heart at Mass!

Today at Mass I will try in a special way to:



Week 1: Ash Wednesday

Saint Story of the Week:

Exciting things are happening at Mass! We don't always see or understand it. Sometimes, that makes us think or feel that Mass is hard or boring to go to. That's just a sign that we need to keep uncovering the Mystery of the Mass so that our hearts are not bored by the greatest miracle of our lives!

Come along with the Saints to uncover the Mystery of the Mass!

Saint Clare of Assisi LOVED the Mass so much and she knew the power of Jesus in the Mass. She knew how strong Jesus was and how much He wanted to love her and protect her even when He was hidden in a little host!

One day, a ferocious army was ready to attack where she and her sisters lived. Clare was not afraid. Clare knew Jesus was stronger and His love more ferocious. Confidently, she placed Jesus in the monstrance placed on her convent walls. Suddenly, the fierce and fiery army became afraid and turned around. They never hurt Clare or her convent and Clare and her Sisters were not surprised that Jesus in the Eucharist had protected them.

Clare also loved the Mass so much and must have really understood how miraculous it was. When she would pray her face would shine and dazzle. Even when Clare was too sick to go to Mass, God would amazingly bring Mass to her bedroom so she could participate even though she couldn't go to where it was being celebrated.

She would say: "Totally love Him, who gave Himself totally for your love."

Clare, help me to uncover the mystery of the Mass this Lent so I can see how miraculous it really is!



Week 1: Ash Wednesday

Game: Give your Littles these scenarios and they have to show how they feel about something by their behavior *but without using words*.

- **Scenario One:** Imagine you are being handed an imaginary piece of pizza from your grandma and you want to show her how happy and thankful you are. Children act out receiving the pizza with a smile, begin pretending to eat it, maybe jump up and down.
- **Scenario Two:** Imagine you are waiting in a long line for something you really want to do like a fun roller coaster or a special movie. You want to show your parents that even though you are getting tired you are still excited to stay in line and don't want to go home. Children might act out standing up straight, smiling, and nodding their heads.
- **Scenario Three:** Imagine someone has asked you to do something you do NOT want to do. You want to show them that you are upset about it. Children might act out shaking their heads, crossing their arms, stomping their feet.
- **Scenario Four:** Imagine you are very bored and someone suggests you do something even more boring. You want to show them that you are bored. How might you act? Children might act out slumping shoulders, rolling eyes, frowning.
- **Scenario Five:** You are at Mass and you want to show Jesus that you are happy to be invited to His home and His table. You don't want Him to think you are bored or mad to be there. How do you act? Children might smile, fold their hands, kneel, open their eyes wide.
- Come up with your own!

The point of this game is to help your Littles to connect to the way that their bodies can send a message to others and to God either messages of dislike or messages of love. At the Mass, many of the priest's actions tell us how God feels about us. They too can use their actions to send God a message of love.



Week 2:
Ritual & Symbols



Week 2: Ritual & Symbols

Lesson: Rituals & Symbols

It is one thing to believe with all your heart in something, it is another thing to show with your body that you believe in something and to get to be a part of a story you believe. **Rituals** are ways that we get to be involved in what we believe and show it with our bodies. At Mass, we involve our bodies in many ways that show what we believe. Can you make a list of all the ways we show our belief with our bodies, our words? (Examples: Sign of the Cross, genuflecting, kneeling, standing, bowing)

In our churches and rituals, we also have symbols. **Symbols** can be pictures that help to represent something really exciting. In our churches, we see a lot of symbols. Can you hunt for any symbols in your church? Circle the ones you find! Look everywhere, they can be on the walls, books, the priests vestments (clothes), the tabernacle, everywhere!

- Alpha and Omega- the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet (God is the beginning and the end). Hint: Look for the Easter candle.
- Lamb- Jesus is the sacrificial lamb
- ✠ -A Chi Rho represents Christ
- IHS- Represents Jesus in the Eucharist
- Fish (Ichthus): Christianity
- Cross: Jesus' sacrifice and love
- Keys: Catholic Church and the Pope
- Dove: The Holy Spirit
- Candles: Jesus is the Light of the World
- Bread: Manna, Bread of Life, God's generosity and care, fruits of human hands, nourishment
- Wine: Joy, suffering, fruit of human hands
- Baskets: Giving, collecting



Week 2: Ritual & Symbols

Mass Part: Sign of the Cross

The Sign of the Cross is an example of a ritual that we get to do at Mass. When we enter church, we make the Sign of the Cross with holy water. When we begin Mass, we make the Sign of the Cross. Then, many times throughout Mass you will see the priest make the Sign of the Cross. Count how many times the priest or the people make the Sign of the Cross at Mass.

Why do we make the Sign of the Cross? The Sign of the Cross is SO special and powerful! We know that making the Sign of the Cross can protect us against temptation, danger, and evil. The devil is afraid of and hates the Sign of the Cross. We also know that the Sign of the Cross is a powerful reminder of who we belong to.

“With our right hand, we use either three fingers to represent the Trinity or five fingers to represent Jesus’ five wounds. We begin the prayer by placing our right hand on our forehead to acknowledge that God the Father is the one from whom all things originate. Next, we move our hand down to our stomach as a sign that Jesus proceeded from the Father. Lastly, we cross ourselves from left shoulder to right shoulder to show that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son and that He is the bond of love between Father and Son.”
(Summary from St. Francis de Sales, The Sign of the Cross)

Prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross and say “In the name of the FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT.” These are the three persons of the Trinity. Imagine what it would be like to not belong to anyone: no parents, no family, no friends, no school, no teams. What does it make you think? How does it make you feel? Now, make the Sign of the Cross. The Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit surround you and fill your heart. They say, “You are mine.” Imagine Jesus’ arms on the cross reaching out to hug you. How does it feel to belong to Him?



Week 2: Ritual & Symbols

When we make the Sign of the Cross, we also mark ourselves as part of Jesus' family, His team! Every time you make the Sign of the Cross imagine it's like putting your jersey on to be a player on His team to show everyone who you play for! Be proud of your jersey! It also tells the Enemy who you believe in and who you belong to. Jesus' cross is what saves us and it protects us when we are scared, sad, or tempted.

Make the Sign of the Cross now and imagine you are marking yourself with your jersey. How does it feel to belong to the Trinity's team? How does it feel to be counted in and chosen as part of God's family? What does this mean to you that you are on a team? When you walk around marked as a member of God's team, feel the pride and confidence and security of being a chosen child of God.

Chant:

The Father loves the Son, uh huh, uh huh

(Continuously touch your forehead like in the Sign of the Cross)

The Son loves Him back, uh huh, uh huh.

(Continuously touch your chest like in the Sign of the Cross)

Their love is amazing, it is the Holy Spirit!

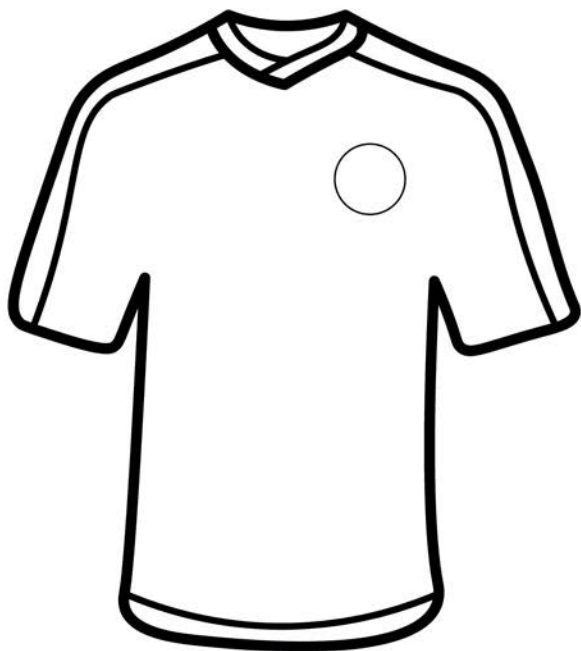
(Continuously touch your left shoulder then your right shoulder like in the Sign of the Cross)

*Scoop me up. Scoop me up. Scoop me up!

(Continuously either do a scooping motion with both arms or make the Sign of the Cross).

**Additional last line (to emphasize the jersey analogy) could be: Count me in! Count me in! Count me in!*

Color: Color and design the jersey you put on when you say the Sign of the Cross.



FRONT



BACK



Week 2: Ritual & Symbols

Saint Story: Saint Joan of Arc

This week we uncovered the power of the Sign of the Cross! We see how powerful marking ourselves with the Cross of Christ is and we understand better why we do it so often.

So many saints spent many important hours gazing at the Cross, learning from it, and imitating it. Have you looked at a Crucifix lately? Do you have one in your room? Your classroom? Your house? Have you really looked at it? Let your Little see a Crucifix this week. Perhaps, show them how to reverence it with a kiss or a touch. Ask them what they see and how it makes them feel.

Saint Joan of Arc loved the Cross. Her very last request was to be able to gaze on it. She took being chosen to be on God's team VERY seriously. Everywhere she went she knew who her coach and leader was and who she would follow.

Joan was a young, courageous girl who followed the call of God to do astonishing things, including leading armies into battle. She carried a banner in all her quests with the name of Mary and Jesus. At the end of her adventurous life, she was martyred by being burned at a stake. How brave she had to be to die because she wouldn't say anything bad about God, her coach, the one who loved her so much! She said, "In God's name let us go bravely!" and "I love Him with all my heart!"

When Joan was being burned she also said, "Hold the cross high so I may see it through the flames." May we love the Cross the way that Joan did and proudly walk with the Sign of the Cross as our jersey and reminder of who we play for at all times.

Joan, help me to "go forward bravely" with the Sign of the Cross as my protection.



Week 3:
Liturgy-God's Gift





Week 3: Liturgy-God's Gift

Lesson: Liturgy-God's Gift

Last week, we learned about rituals. The Mass is the most special ritual there is. It is given to us by God and is actually God at work. It might feel like humans are doing everything at Mass, but that's part of uncovering the mystery! We can use our eyes of faith to see that it's actually God giving a gift to us!




In the Mass, the priest is not acting as Himself. Instead, he is acting "in persona christi." This means Father is acting in the person of Christ. When He prays, Jesus prays. When He blesses, Jesus blesses. He is the voice, hands, and feet of Jesus. He actually wears very special clothes to help us to understand that He is putting on Christ before Mass even starts!

Look at all the priest puts on for Mass and learn about why he does in the following chart!

Vestment	Vesting	Priest's Prayer	Image
Amice	The priest begins vesting by putting on a white amice around his neck and shoulders.		
Alb	Then he puts on a white alb. These white garments represent purity of heart and recall the white garment which the priest received at his baptism.	As he puts on the alb, the priest prays, "Make me white, O Lord, and cleanse my heart; that being made white in the Blood of the Lamb I may deserve an eternal reward."	



Week 3: Liturgy-God's Gift

Vestment	Vesting	Priest's Prayer	Image
Cincture	After the alb, the priest puts on a cincture - the rope around his waist - which symbolizes the chaste celibacy he embraced at his ordination.	As he puts on the cincture, he prays, "Gird me, O Lord, with the cincture of purity, and quench in my heart the fire of concupiscence, that the virtue of continence and chastity may abide in me".	
Stole	He then puts on the colored stole, a narrow cloth which goes around his neck and over his shoulders. The stole is a sign of his priestly authority and sacramental power received at ordination. For this reason he wears it whenever he is administering a sacrament.	As he puts it on he prays, "Lord, restore the stole of immortality, which I lost through the collusion of our first parents, and, unworthy as I am to approach Thy sacred mysteries, may I yet gain eternal joy."	
Chasuble	Finally, he puts on a chasuble matching the color of the stole. The chasuble symbolizes charity, which "binds everything together" (Col. 3:14).	As he puts it on he prays, "O Lord, who has said, "My yoke is sweet and My burden light, grant that I may so carry it as to merit Thy grace."	



Week 3: Liturgy-God's Gift

Mass Part: The Doxology

A 'doxology' is a prayer of glory and praise! We gather up all our excitement and worship and praise God! This is the part of the Mass where we hear the priest say:

Through Him, with Him and in Him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever.

This reminds us that all of the Mass is done through the mighty power of God: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. At Mass, we get to participate in the work of God! So, we respond with all our hearts and excitement something we call the Great Amen:

AMEN!

Amen means "I believe"! But even more, it means, I trust God in this way and would stake my life on this belief. So, at Mass, say it with all your heart so God can hear you say that you believe He is there present on the altar and working through the priest!

Prayer:

Imagine you are at Mass. Picture the priest and what he does during Mass. Now, let the image change and the priest becomes Jesus! What is Jesus doing? Saying? What is Jesus doing for you and saying to you?

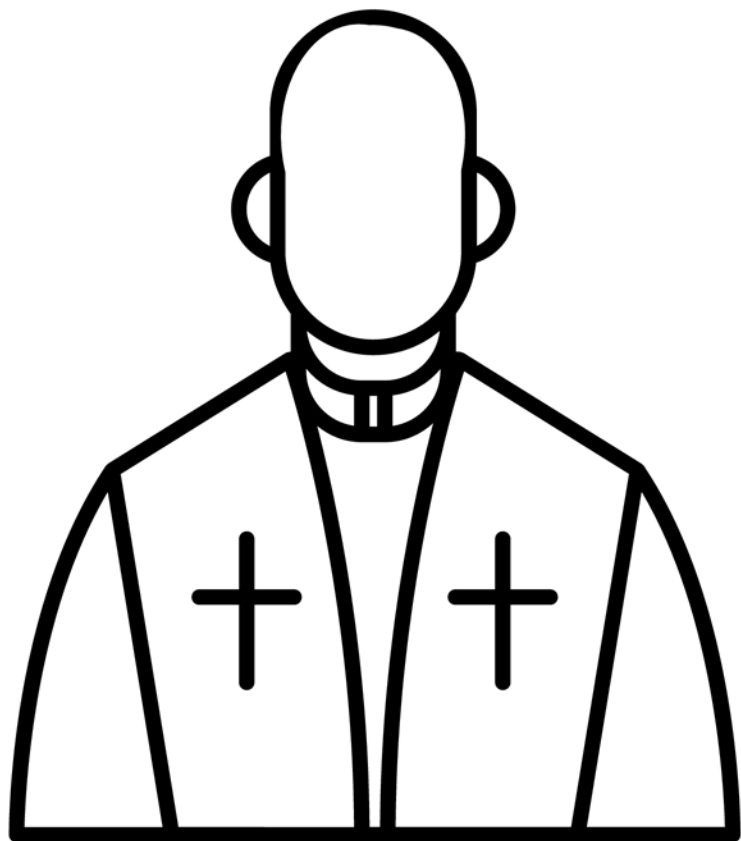
God gave us priests, so He could work through them. We can see Jesus' hands, hear His voice, and receive His gift through the priest.

Imagine Jesus giving you the priest at your church or another priest you know. How has he brought Jesus to you and your family? Thank Jesus for this gift. Ask Jesus to protect and strengthen His priests.



Week 3: Liturgy-God's Gift

Picture: Color the picture on the following page to look like a priest you know and write a thank you on the lines to that priest this week. Make sure you tear it out and give it to him! You can mention in your letter any prayers you are going to pray for him this week.





Week 3: Liturgy-God's Gift

EXTRA ACTIVITY:

Game: Amen Game

Help your little practice saying 'Amen' to other statements that they believe. Then, end it with the most exciting Amen for a truth about God.

You are a _____ Grader.	Any of your littles that are that grade, say Amen. Any of your littles that are not that grade, stay silent.
You are a boy.	Any of your littles that are that boys, say Amen. Any of your littles that are not boys, stay silent.
You love ice cream.	Any of your littles that do, say Amen. Any of your littles that don't, stay silent.
It is cold outside.	If they believe it is cold, they say amen. If it is not, they stay silent.
God is good.	All say amen.
God loves me very much.	All say amen.
Say doxology (found on previous page)	All say amen enthusiastically.



Week 3: Liturgy-God's Gift

Saint Story: Saint Padre Pio

Saint Padre Pio is a wonderful saint that lived not too long ago in Italy. He was a Franciscan Friar who experienced many miracles through being so close to Jesus.

When Saint Padre Pio would celebrate Mass, He was given the special graces to truly experience the Liturgy as God's work and God's gift within his body. Padre Pio would experience the pain of the sufferings of Jesus in his body and experience the longings of Jesus within his heart at each moment of the Mass. He could feel the scourging, the crown of thorns, and could even feel the crucifixion as he prayed the Mass. He was given the wounds of Jesus (called the 'stigmata').

Padre Pio is a special reminder that our priests act "in persona Christi" in the person of Christ.

Once Padre Pio was asked, "When you join Jesus in Holy Communion, what should we request the Lord for you?" He answered, "To let me be another Jesus, all Jesus, always Jesus."

Let's pray for our priests today.

Padre Pio, help our priests be another Jesus, all Jesus, always Jesus.



Week 4:
Sacrament



Week 4: Sacrament

Lesson: Visible & Invisible

"We recognize that the Sacraments have a visible and invisible reality, a reality open to all the human senses but grasped in its God-given depths with the eyes of faith. When parents hug their children, for example, the visible reality we see is the hug. The invisible reality the hug conveys is love. We cannot "see" the love the hug expresses, though sometimes we can see its nurturing effect in the child." - USCCB, Prayer and Worship

This week, we teach our Littles about how Sacraments always have both a visible and invisible reality. We are going to focus especially on what invisible realities are happening that they can see with their eyes of faith.

Part 1: Genuflecting and Bowing:

One ritual we use to show our worship to Jesus in the Eucharist is genuflecting when we see Jesus. We also bow after the consecration when the priest also genuflects. We bow or genuflect before Communion too. This is a special way to show that we believe that this is God present to us!

- When you come into a church immediately look for the tabernacle. This is where Jesus in the Eucharist stays with us. The tabernacle is like His special home. If you see a candle lit by the tabernacle. This is called the sanctuary lamp. It is like Jesus' porch light and tells us that He is home. Once you find the tabernacle and see that He is home, you should genuflect.
 - Help your Littles learn how to genuflect. Have them bend their right knee.
 - At the moment after consecration when the priest genuflects teach your Littles to bow and say a little prayer. Some examples include:



Week 4: Sacrament

- I love you, Jesus!
- Thank you, Jesus!
- Jesus, mercy!

Part 2: Communion

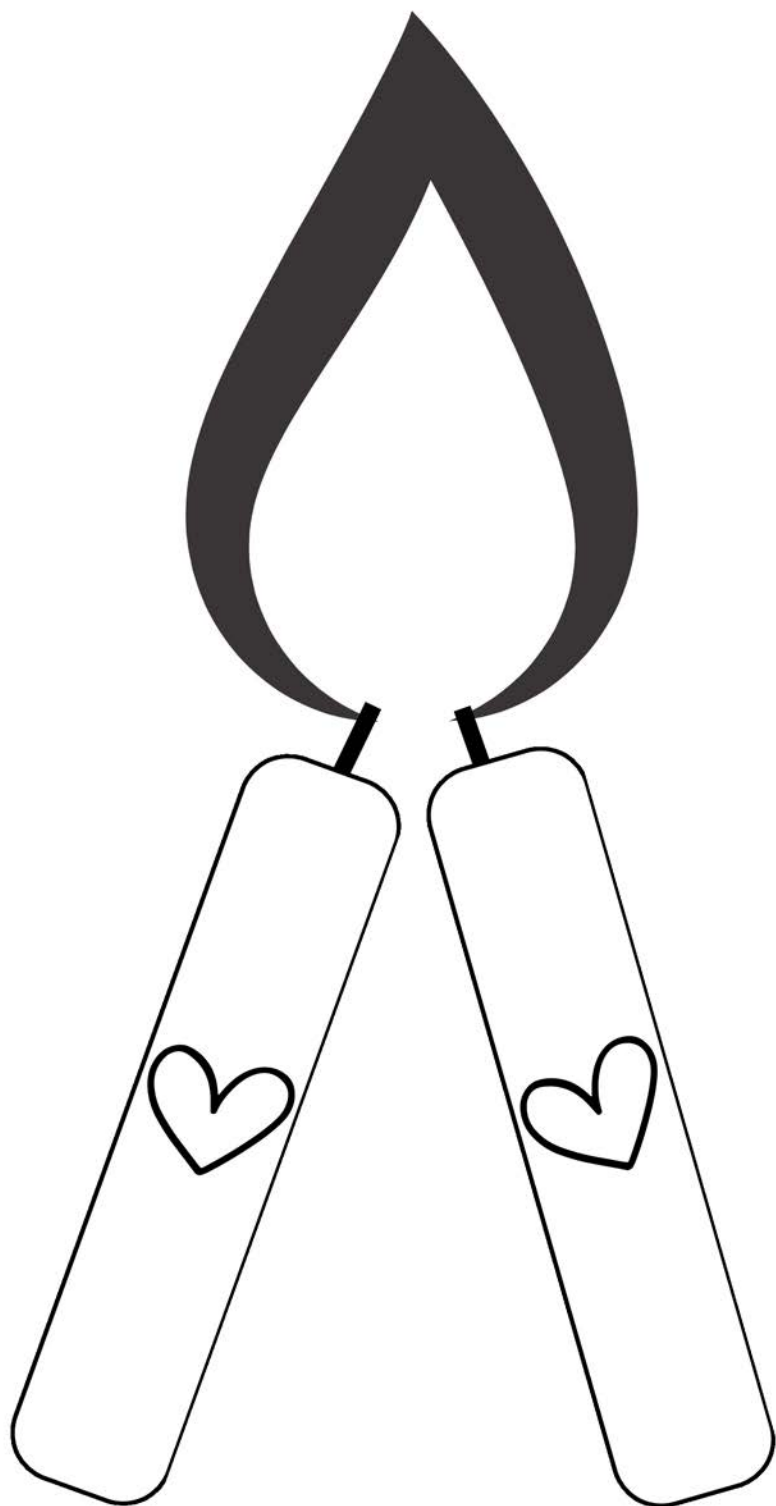
Jesus comes to us in the Eucharist at this moment of the Mass so that He can be so close to us and feed us with Himself because He loves us SO much He can't stand not being close to us. Padre Pio (our saint last week) tells us when you receive Jesus in Communion it is like two flames joining together. Imagine two candles leaning together and joining flames. They become one flame. There is no longer anyway to separate that flame. This is what happens in Communion with you and Jesus. You become one you are that close to Him!

Prayer:

Imagine the moment at Mass when the priest holds up the consecrated host and the chalice. He says, "Behold the Lamb of God." What visibly looks like bread and wine are actually the Body and Blood of Jesus. This is possible because Jesus is God—He is powerful enough and loves us so much that He can make this happen. Imagine the priest is holding up Jesus' Sacred Heart or that the face of Jesus is in the host. This is who Catholics believe is truly present. How does His heart feel about you? What is Jesus saying to you? How does He look at you?

Now, turn to the "HEART prayer" at the beginning of this booklet. Spend time working through each letter of the prayer. Imagine your heart joining with Jesus's Sacred Heart, just like the candles and flame they will color on the next page.

Picture: Color the two candles and the flame on the next page. Remember that Padre Pio says this is like your heart and Jesus' heart at Communion time becoming one.





Week 4: Sacrament

Saint of the Week: Blessed Carlo Acutis

Carlo Acutis was a kid who loved many things like video games, his friends, and his family, but his greatest love was Jesus in the Eucharist! Once Carlo received his first Communion he tried to go to Mass daily as often as possible and helped bring others (including adults) along with him.

Carlo used his love for technology and built a website all about Eucharistic miracles to help others become more excited and to better use their eyes of faith to understand that Jesus was truly present in the Eucharist.

Carlo had a lot to say about the Eucharist and receiving Communion:

The more Eucharist we receive, the more we will become like Jesus, so that on this earth we will have a foretaste of heaven.

The Eucharist is the highway to heaven.

By standing before the Eucharistic Christ, we become holy.

When we face the sun we get a tan... but when we stand before Jesus in the Eucharist, we become saints.

By the time Carlo died everyone knew that his greatest love was Jesus in the Eucharist.

Blessed Carlo, help me to use my eyes of faith and stay close to Jesus in the Eucharist like you did.



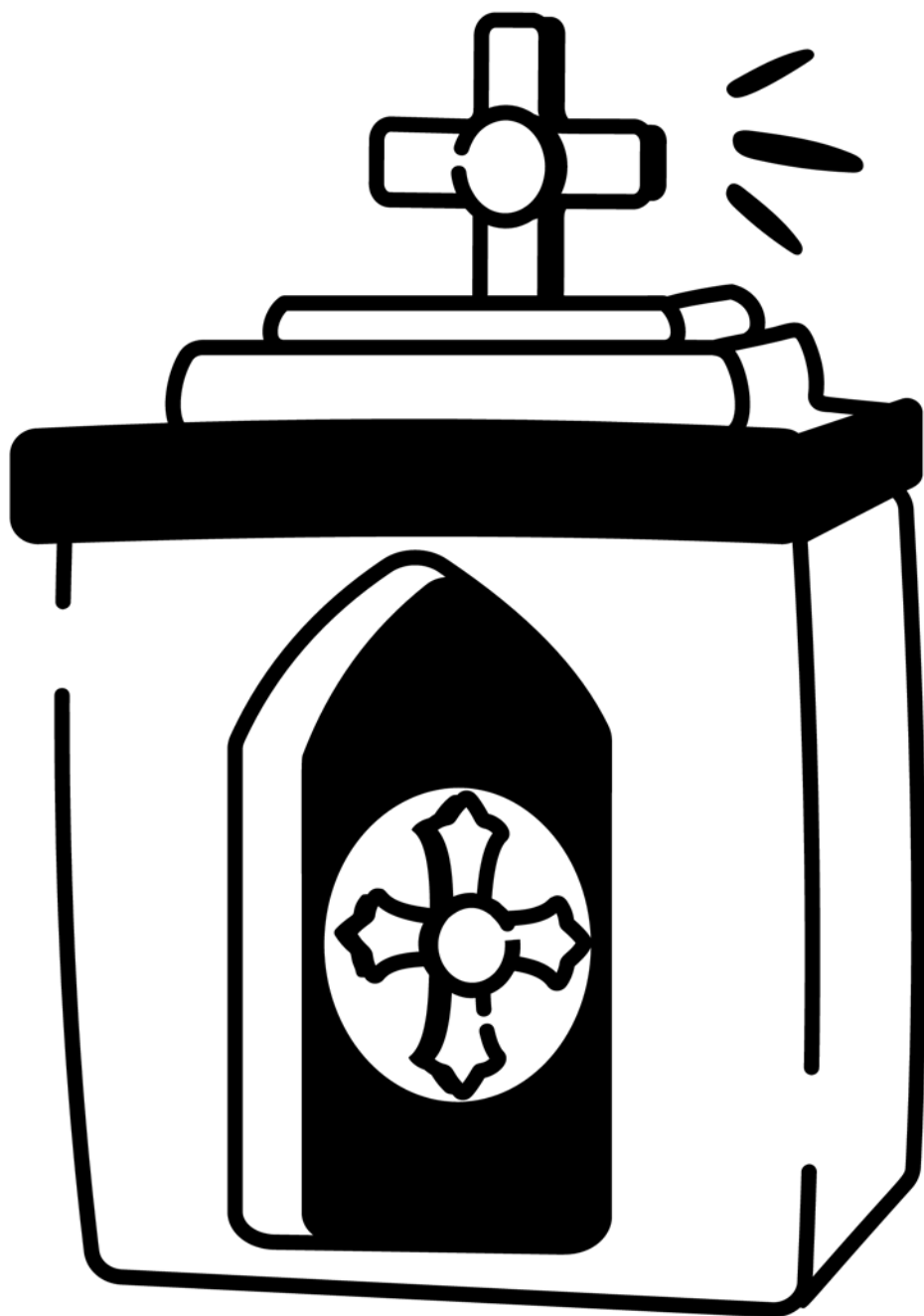
Week 4: Sacrament

Tabernacle Game:

Color the tabernacle on the next page and cut it out. (Explain that tabernacles are usually gold and have symbols like angels or crosses.)

Have your Littles close their eyes while you put the tabernacle in different spots in the room. Whenever they open their eyes their job is to look for the tabernacle. Once they find it, they can practice genuflecting with love.

Whoever finds it first can place it in a new spot the next time.





**Week 5:
Mystery**



Week 5: Mystery

Lesson:

While we are uncovering the mystery of the Mass in this study we also have to learn that the Mass is a mystery itself! What that means as a Catholic is that the Mass is so spectacular and so miraculous that we will actually never be able to stop wondering, learning, and understanding it. It is beyond our human understanding in its wonder!

This is like if we tried to swallow a wall! Can you swallow a wall? Why not? Of course, it's too big for our mouths and we can't quite bite it either, can we? But that doesn't mean we can't understand parts of it and learn more and more as we uncover the mystery of it all!

This week, let's learn about some of the mysterious, miraculous things that we don't always realize is happening when we go to Mass. Use your eyes of faith a lot this week!

Prayer Options:

Option 1: *Close your eyes and imagine you are at Mass. There are so many invisible things happening at Mass. Imagine what Mass would look like if you could see all the invisible realities (the Father, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, angels, guardian angels, saints, graces being given, hearts being filled by God's love). What would you see? What would you hear? What would you smell? What could you touch? Just because we can't sense them, doesn't mean they aren't real. In fact, this is what it means to see with the 'eyes of faith' and to believe in what God has told us. He has said these are true and we get to believe and trust!*

Option 2: *Imagine what it would have been like to meet Jesus at the Nativity. What would it have been like to play with Him when He was a boy in Nazareth? To watch Him heal someone? To watch Him die on the cross? To see Him after He had risen from the dead? What is amazing about Him? Talk to Him about it.*



Week 5: Mystery

The “Mass Parts” descriptions that follow are summaries of descriptions from The Holy Mass as revealed to Catalina.

Part One: The Offertory

When the time comes in the Mass for the gifts to be taken up for the offertory, we are to offer up our hearts and ourselves as well as our prayers for others too.

Our Guardian Angels, at this moment, emerge from our sides to take our hearts and prayers to the altar. They are so beautiful and shining. They are gliding down the aisle up to the altar with our gifts dazzling in golden vessels and they are so happy to take our hearts and prayers. They are sad if we don't give them something to take or if we are not paying attention.

Part Two: The Sanctus

This is the time in Mass when we sing with all our hearts: Holy, Holy, Holy!

At this time all the angels join in our song! Big angels, small angels, angels with large wings, small wings, and no wings, all singing together with us!

The saints also join us and all those in Heaven! Imagine your favorite saint joining in as we sing “Holy! Holy! Holy!” The saints all crowd in and sing along with us to praise God!

Picture: Use the next two pages to illustrate these two mysterious moments at Mass!

The Offertory

Holy! Holy! Holy!



Week 5: Mystery

Saint Story: St. Tarcisus

After practicing seeing the real mystery in the Mass and seeing Jesus in the Eucharist, let's read about a young saint who truly saw and believed that Jesus was present in the host at Mass and gave his life as a big "Amen" even when others couldn't understand the miraculous mystery.

St. Tarcisus was a 12 year old boy living in Rome during the 3rd century when Christianity was illegal and Mass was celebrated secretly in the Catacombs. One day after Mass, the Bishop celebrating had to chose someone to take the Eucharist to the Christian prisoners. Tarcisus offered himself; since he was so young, he thought he would be the least suspected.

Oh how happy and proud Tarcisus felt as he carried Our Blessed Lord so close to his heart! "Oh, dear Jesus, how I love you," he whispered. "How good you are to choose me as your little messenger. How willingly I would suffer and die for you, like these good people in prison. Perhaps one day you will let me lay down my life for you too."

Moving quickly, he was out of the catacombs now and on the high road. There he passed a group of his school comrades just about to start a game, but needing one more to complete the number to make up the team. Catching sight of Tarcisus they called him to stop and join them. "I am sorry," he said, "but I am on an important message." He hurried on, but the lads caught hold of him and would not let him go. "What have you there?" said one, seeing how tightly Tarcisus held his hands to his breast. "Let me see."

"No, no," cried Tarcisus, struggling to free himself. His anxiety made them all curious, and together they tried to pull away his hands. "My Jesus, strengthen me," whispered Tarcisus almost under his breath. But one boy heard his words and cried out to the others: "He is a



Week 5: Mystery

Christian. He is hiding some Christian mystery there.” This made the boys still more curious. They determined to see for themselves, so they struck him, stoned him and kicked him and did their best to pull away his hands, but they could not make him loosen his grip.

A man passing by asked what was the matter. “He’s a Christian, carrying some Christian mystery, and we’re trying to get it from him,” cried one of the boys. “A Christian, did you say?” said the man, and the boys giving Tarcisus one more cruel blow, threw him to the ground. At this very moment, a soldier, hastening towards the group, scattered them to right and left, and stooping down, lifted Tarcisus in his arms. “You cowards!” he said; “all setting on one little lad,” and he strode quickly down the street and hurried off into a quiet lane.

“Tarcisus, lad,” he said, smoothing back the curls from his pale face. Tarcisus opened his eyes and recognised the soldier as a Christian whom he had often met in the catacombs.

“I am dying,” he said, “but I have kept my God safe from them.” And he handed his precious treasure to the soldier, who placed it reverently inside his tunic. “Carry Him to the prison for me,” said Tarcisus, and with a gentle sigh he fell back into the soldier’s arms. His little soul was already with God, for whom he so willingly had given his life.

(myFirstHolyCommunion.com)

Saint Tarcisus, help me to love the Mystery of the Mass and the Eucharist as much as you did!



**Week 6:
Holy Sacrifice**



Week 6: Holy Sacrifice

Lesson:

This week we are learning about the most important part of uncovering the mystery of the Mass. We are going to learn about how the Mass is a Sacrifice.

Do you know what a sacrifice is? A sacrifice is a gift you give to someone that costs you something. A sacrifice in the Old Testament was often an animal raised with a family's hard work or crops they had grown. They would give these things to God as a gift. Who we give sacrifices to shows who we love and honor and especially value.

Sacrifices today might be ones we make during Lent. Maybe you have given up candy or television as a gift to God during that special time. Sacrifices can also be ones that your parents make for you. They might give up their sleep, their time, or their money to give you the best life, because they love and value you. Sacrifices can also look like when you share with someone something you wanted to play with yourself. Have you ever let someone play with one of your toys? It might have been hard to give it away for a time. You made a sacrifice!

At every single Mass, Jesus makes the biggest, best, and most important sacrifice for us, because He loves us and values us so much! He doesn't just give us some of His stuff. He gives us His whole self on the Cross. Jesus, in the Mass, gave us a way to make Him present to us whenever we attend Mass. And He's not just present—He makes present His moment on the cross when He is giving us His life! It doesn't happen again and again at every Mass, instead His original sacrifice



Week 6: Holy Sacrifice

on the Cross becomes present to us. We get to be on the hill of Calvary with Him as He is suffering and dying for us! How happy that must make Jesus to have us there to comfort Him.

Mass Part: The Consecration

This week we focus on the moment of the Consecration at Mass. This is the moment the priest says the words and the bread and wine change to Jesus' Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity.

*Take this, all of you, and eat of it,
for **this is my Body**,
which will be given up for you.
Take this, all of you, and drink from it,
for **this is the chalice of my Blood**,
the Blood of the new and eternal covenant,
which will be poured out for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this in memory of me.*

Challenge your Littles to pay special attention to these words this week at Mass. Explain that this is the special moment that they can use their eyes of faith.

Prayer:

Close your eyes. Imagine you are in your pew at Mass and kneeling on your kneeler. Your hands are folded and your eyes are trying to see what's going on with Father up at the altar.

*You hear the priest say the words, "This is my body given up for you."
He holds up the host for you to see.*

*Suddenly, you see the host transform into the Jesus on the cross.
Look at Jesus as He is nailed to the cross. Look at His face and His*



Week 6: Holy Sacrifice

eyes. Know that He is giving you His best sacrifice and going to die for you because He loves you so much. But, it is hard and it hurts. He loves having you with Him in this moment.

Imagine what He says to you. What do you say back to Jesus? How do you show Him with your body how much you love Him back?

Picture:

When the priest says the special words of consecration they can use their eyes of faith to imagine that the host and cup he holds up is no longer what it looks like. They can imagine Jesus because that is what is truly happening! Color the picture on the next page and illustrate inside the host what your eyes of faith see.



This is my body,
given up for you.



Week 6: Holy Sacrifice

Saint Story: Saint Therese of Lisieux

Saint Therese of Lisieux was a French little girl who desired to give Jesus all of herself. She knew the meaning of sacrifice but, just like us, she didn't always have BIG ways that she could sacrifice to Jesus. She wasn't asked to give her life and die as a martyr like our saints in past weeks (Saint Joan of Arc and St. Tarcicius), she wasn't a farmer who was sacrificing animals or crops, and she didn't have a lot of money to sacrifice much from her piggy bank.

So, Therese found a way to make holy little sacrifices to Jesus all day long. She called it her Little Way. She said, "Miss no single opportunity of making some small sacrifice, here by a smiling look, there by a kindly word; always doing the smallest thing and doing it all for love."

So Saint Therese wanted to give Jesus gifts all through the day by being on a **mission of love**. She would offer up small things that annoyed her instead of whining about them. She would give Jesus little kindnesses that she could do for those around her even if she wouldn't have normally cared. When small things were hard, she talked to Jesus about it and knew that He loved her anyways. She offered Jesus each of these small things knowing that He cared more about the love she could offer than the size of her offerings.

How can you be on a mission of love and follow Saint Therese's Little Way this week? This can be a beautiful response to thank Jesus for His big sacrifice of love at Mass.

Saint Therese help me on my own mission of love this week. Help me offer lots of little sacrifices for Jesus.



**Week 7:
Memorial**



Week 7: Memorial

Lesson: Memorial

This week is a very special week: Holy Week. In fact, it is THE most special week of the whole year for us as Catholics.

Every day is sacred and helps us to remember something very special about Jesus' passion, death, and Resurrection.

The three most special days this week are called the Triduum. They are Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Vigil. There is a special Liturgy that spans these three days that you can go to at our church!

Here is what we remember on each of these days:

Holy Thursday is the Last Supper and the day that Jesus gave us the Mass (and priests).

Good Friday is the day that Jesus suffered and died on the Cross for us.

Easter Vigil is when Jesus rose from the dead, conquered death, and saved us all!

Did you know that each Mass we actually make all of these events present again? Every time we go to Mass His passion, death, and Resurrection happens on the altar. It doesn't actually happen again, instead it is like these moments are taken from time and put in front of us on the altar and we get to be there for Jesus in these moments.

Mass Part: Do This in Memory of Me

The part of the Mass we can focus on this special Holy Week is Jesus' special command: Do this in memory of me. Jesus is asking us to remember Him. He knows He is about to suffer and die. He knows He will rise and ascend to the Father's arms in Heaven. So, He asks us to



Week 7: Memorial

continuously go to Mass and remember Him! But, he doesn't mean just to think about Him or look at pictures of Him, like we might do to remember someone else that is far away or in Heaven. He actually means to have a memorial, which means to make Him present and His passion death and resurrection. The only way we can do that is to go to Mass. When you hear this part at Mass this week, answer Him, "Jesus, I remember you."

Prayer:

Close your eyes and settle your body. Imagine Jesus and you sitting at a table with all your friends. He is eating with you. He tells you He is going to suffer and die tomorrow. How does this make you feel? What do you say to Him? How does He seem? Does He seem scared? Brave?

Jesus begins to say the first Mass and offers His Body and Blood for you by saying, "Take and eat, this is my body, given up for you. Take and drink, this is my blood, poured out for you." He says these words with such love. You feel that He is giving you the best gift you have ever received.

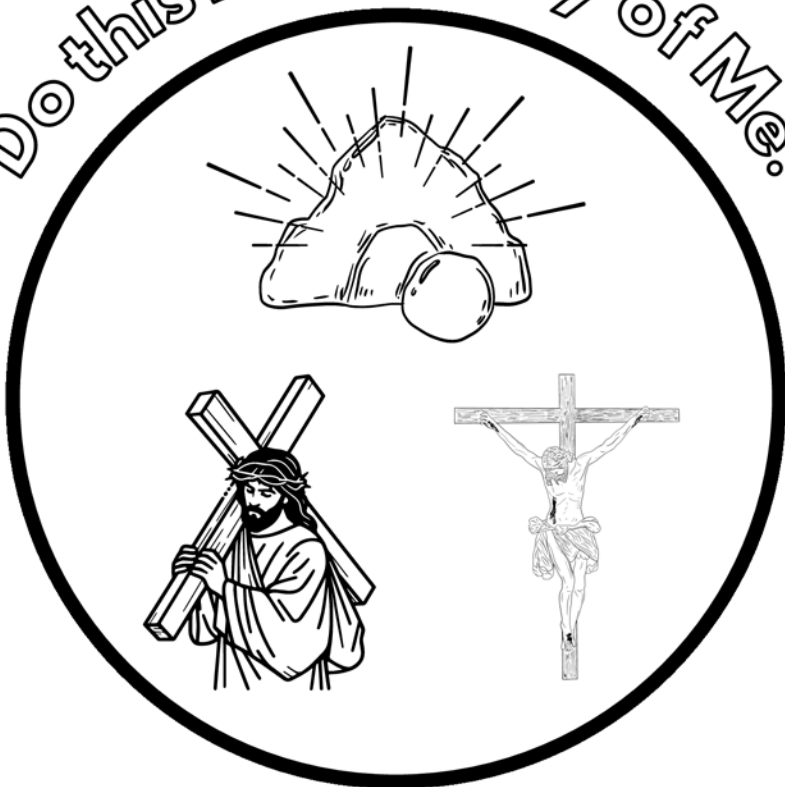
Then, he looks you in the eyes. How do you feel? What are you thinking? He tells you, "Do this in memory of me." He says your name and then asks you again to remember Him. How does He seem? How do you respond? What do you feel?

Next time you go to Mass, look for Him so happy that you are remembering Him and following His command.

Picture:

Color the picture that reminds us that on the altar at Mass, Jesus' passion, death and resurrection are made present to us in order that we might fulfill His command to "Do this in Memory of Me."

Do this in memory of Me.





Week 7: Memorial

Saint Story: Saint John the Apostle

One of the best saints we have to help us understand the Mass this week and to be our friend during Holy Week, is Saint John the Apostle.

Saint John lived during the time of Jesus and was often referred to as Jesus' beloved disciple, or "the one whom Jesus loved." You are also a beloved of Jesus. You and John have that in common!

John was close to each of the events that we make present at Mass: His Last Supper, His passion, His death, and His Resurrection.

John ate Jesus' Last Supper with Him. At the Last Supper it says that John reclined at Jesus' side and leaned back on His chest near His heart. (John 13). Do you think he could hear Jesus' Sacred Heart beating?

John was a faithful friend to Jesus even when it could be scary to stay near Him. When Jesus was suffering and carrying His cross up the hill to Calvary, John did not hide or run away. He followed Jesus the whole time.

When Jesus was dying on the Cross, that was so hard to see, but John stayed and comforted Jesus and Mary too. John knew it mattered that he was there and that Jesus wanted him there. That's how Jesus feels about when you are a faithful friend to Him too and come to be with Him at Mass, in adoration, or in prayer.

At the Resurrection, John ran to the tomb to see the good news! Let's run with excitement to Jesus this week to be a faithful friend, just like John! *Saint John, help me to be a good friend to Jesus always.*



Easter Week: Heavenly Banquet

*This week does not follow the same format as earlier weeks. It simply has a Lesson, Prayer, and Picture. It aims to give your Littles a chance to do a little reflecting on the whole booklet and their journey of uncovering the Mystery of the Mass.



Easter Week: Heavenly Banquet

Lesson: Footstep into Heaven

We have reached Easter after a long journey of uncovering the Mystery of the Mass! We have learned SO many things that have helped us to see the miracles happening at each Mass. We have practiced using our eyes of faith each week. What was your favorite thing that you learned about the Mass?

This week, as we celebrate Jesus' Resurrection and we celebrate His conquering all of our fears and death itself, let's use our eyes of faith to see how when we go to Mass we take a footstep into Heaven!

"The Mass is the moment when heaven and earth are united."
- St. Augustine

Jesus' Resurrection opened the gates of Heaven for me and for you! Mass is a footstep into Heaven. Let's celebrate the joy of the Resurrection and our own hope for Heaven!

Can you imagine Heaven? Ask the Holy Spirit to help you. What is it like when you try to imagine it? Are you ever worried it is boring? It is not! Heaven is where we will be full of joy and love forever! Think of all the things that are hard here on earth. Do you ever miss people? Everyone you love can be all together all the time in Heaven. You don't have to travel to see them or say good bye. Do you ever get bored? There's no boredom there. Do you hate getting sick or having pain? There's none of that there either. Do you ever wish you understood God better? Or could see Him? That's Heaven! Think of the most beautiful thing you have ever seen. God is more beautiful than that. Think of the most love you have ever felt. God loves you more. Think of the best party you have ever celebrated. Heaven is a bigger, more joyful, and more triumphant place! You are safest, most loved, and the happiest you will ever be in Heaven. Jesus did all that He did, coming to Earth, living, giving us the sacraments, suffering,



Easter Week: Heavenly Banquet

dying, rising, and ascending just so that you would join Him forever in Heaven some day.

Prayer:

Close your eyes, calm your body. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your imagination.

Imagine entering into a palace after a long journey. You are so tired and have worked so hard to reach the palace. You have climbed many hills and crossed many dangerous landmarks. You have been in the cold and the blistering hot. You finally are able to lay down all the bags you have been carrying at the door of the palace.

You enter into the throne room and you see Jesus there. He has been waiting for you. He runs to you! What does it feel like when He embraces you in a big, triumphant hug? What does your heart do? How does Jesus seem?

Imagine this is like entering Heaven. Who else do you see there? Any favorite Saints? Any relatives? Ask them to pray for you now to reach Heaven some day.

Thank Jesus for all He does to bring you back to Him in Heaven. Jesus looks at you in His arms and speaks into your ear, "Come to me at Mass, your footstep into Heaven. I will give you food for your journey back to Me. I will never leave you. You can always find me at Mass and in my Eucharist."

Stay in His embrace for a few moments.

Picture:

On the following page, try to illustrate your imagination of Heaven or what you experienced in the prayer we just prayed.

