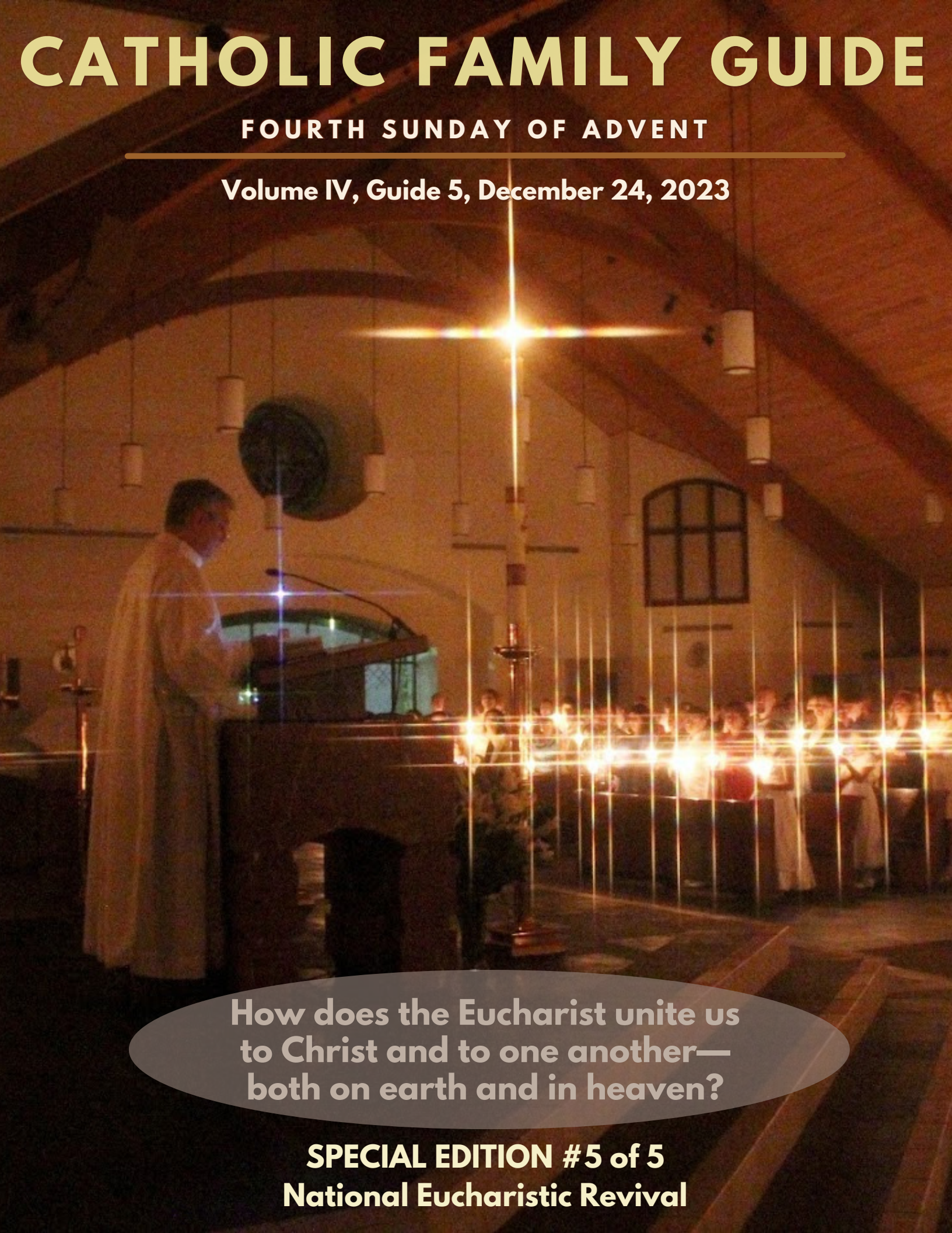


# CATHOLIC FAMILY GUIDE

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Volume IV, Guide 5, December 24, 2023



How does the Eucharist unite us  
to Christ and to one another—  
both on earth and in heaven?

**SPECIAL EDITION #5 of 5**  
**National Eucharistic Revival**





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**All underlined text in  
this Guide is linked!  
Just click!**



[eucharisticrevival.org](http://eucharisticrevival.org)

**How is this Guide working for you and your household or small group?**

Share a resource, activity, or picture/video of what you are doing in your Domestic Church.

For questions, comments, and feedback, please contact us at

**[discipleship@cgscc.church](mailto:discipleship@cgscc.church)**

# Welcome

## DISCIPLES OF JESUS!

During this holy Advent season, we present a very special series of Catholic Family Guides to help our parish families to grow in knowledge of the faith and deepen our relationship with Jesus as his disciples. On this Fourth Sunday of Advent, we welcome Father Christian Bui, pastor of St. Edward parish in Spring, Texas, who preaches for us on the Gospel for this week's Guide.



## This Week

### **Eucharist Brings Unity**

As a Catholic pastor, I am deeply inspired by the theme of Eucharistic revival. The Eucharist, or Holy Communion, is at the heart of our faith, and its revival is a call to deepen our understanding of this sacred mystery. St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians and the gospel of John offer profound insights that can guide us in our reflection on the Eucharistic revival.

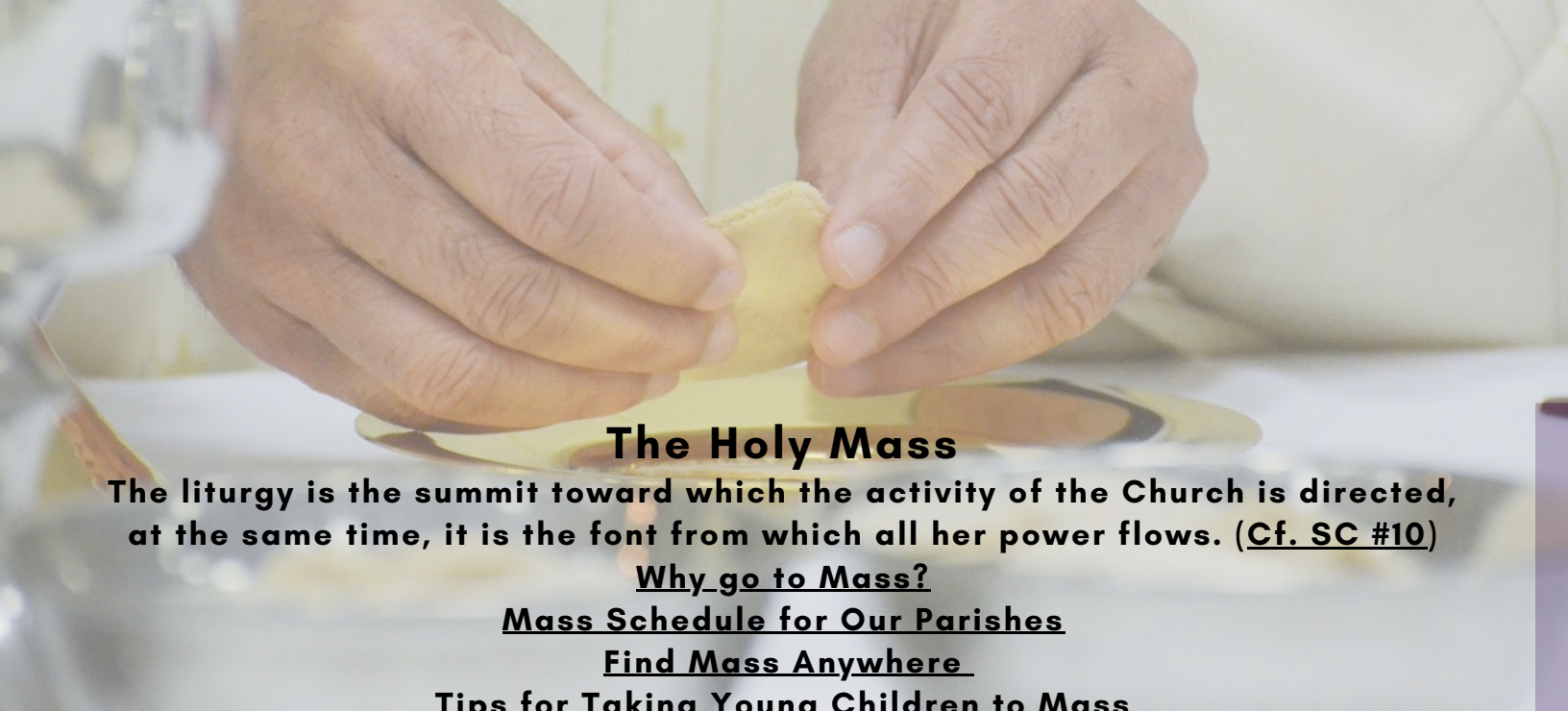
In Ephesians 5:21-32, St. Paul beautifully portrays the union between Christ and His Church as a reflection of the love between a husband and his wife. This passage reminds us that the Eucharist is not merely a ritual but a profound encounter with the love of Christ. Through the Eucharist, we are united with Christ, becoming one body. Just as the husband and wife become one, we, the Church, become one with Christ in the Eucharist. The Eucharistic revival calls us to recognize and appreciate this intimate union, drawing us closer to Christ and to one another.

John 6:60-69 presents a powerful moment in the life of Jesus when many of His disciples found His teaching about the Eucharist difficult to accept. Jesus asks the Twelve if they, too, will leave Him. Peter's response, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life," resonates deeply with the Eucharistic revival theme. It highlights that the Eucharist is not just a symbol or tradition but the source of eternal life. Like Peter, we must recognize that the Eucharist contains the very essence of Christ, the Word of eternal life, and cling to it with unwavering faith.

In this time of Eucharistic revival, we are called to rekindle our love for the Eucharist, recognizing it as the living presence of Christ in our midst. Let us remember the profound union between Christ and His Church, and let us echo the words of Peter, affirming our faith in the Eucharist as the source of eternal life. May this revival lead us to a deeper understanding of the Eucharist, strengthening our relationship with Christ and fostering unity within the Church, as we embrace the Eucharist with renewed reverence and devotion.

**Fr. Christian Bui**

**HOW HAVE YOU SEEN GOD PRESENT AND ACTIVE IN YOUR LIFE THIS WEEK?**



## The Holy Mass

The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed, at the same time, it is the font from which all her power flows. (Cf. SC #10)

Why go to Mass?

Mass Schedule for Our Parishes

Find Mass Anywhere

Tips for Taking Young Children to Mass

**We come to know, love, and serve Jesus Christ.**

## Scripture Readings for This Guide

Joshua 24: 1-2a, 15-17, 18b

Psalms 34: 2-3, 16-17, 18-19, 20-21

Ephesians 5:21-32 or 5:2a, 25-32

John 6:60 -69



## ADVENT PORTAL

Find readings and resources for Advent



# WE LEARN & BECOME DISCIPLES TOGETHER

Getting  
Started

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

How to manage a group discussion.

### Question of the Week

How does the Eucharist unite us to Christ and to one another—  
both on earth and in heaven?

#### CONNECT with our GOD through Prayer

- Let's start with the The Sign of Cross.
- As we gather to share our faith, ask the Holy Spirit to be present. Use your own words or offer a Prayer to the Holy Spirit.
- As someone reads out loud the Gospel for this Sunday, listen to the Lord speaking to you.
- Listen to one other as everyone shares what in the Gospel caught their attention.
- Pray for the Eucharistic Revival

The sacrifice that is offered in the Eucharist serves to amend the sins of the living and those who have died, who are waiting to be united with God in heaven. The Eucharist helps to strengthen one's relationship with God and one's care for others.

Points of Understanding  
Grade 11, #2.2.19

This week's Guide is based on the Gospel of John  
John 6:60-69  
excerpt from Christ's "Bread of Life Discourses"

#### CONNECT with our daily LIVES

- When have I felt closest to God?



## WHAT IS THE CHURCH'S TEACHING?

### POINTS OF UNDERSTANDING

Where they come from and ways to use them.



Choose from among the following Scriptures and teachings for reading, prayer, and discussion.

#### **In the HOLY SCRIPTURE we read:**

- Jesus has given us a new commandment: to love one another. John 13: 31-35
- Communal life is an expression of a Eucharistic-centered lifestyle. Acts 2: 42-47
- We are bound together as one through Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. 1 Corinthians 12: 12-31

#### **In the Catechism of the Catholic Church**

- In the Eucharist, Jesus unites us with the Communion of Saints. #1419
- Our relationship with our neighbor is a personal one. #2212
- The Works of Mercy allow us to encounter Jesus Christ in others. #2447



In the Universal Prayer or Prayer of the Faithful, the people respond in some sense to the Word of God which they have received in faith and, exercising the office of their baptismal Priesthood, offer prayers to God for the salvation of all.

General Instruction on the Roman Missal, 69

#### **Discuss**

1. Share your past experiences of going to Mass, both growing up and currently – what is confusing, exciting, attention grabbing, etc. to you?
2. How can you prepare for the celebration of the Mass to help you participate in the liturgy more fully?
3. Which Work of Mercy do you find most challenging? Why? How is the Lord inviting you to encounter him through it?

**Want more? Go Deeper!**

Be Transformed by the Eucharist



#### **Reflection Question**

- What areas of your life need to be transformed?



## CONNECT with OTHERS...

### Living the Gospel with commitment & action.

What is one thing I am willing to change in my life so that my prayer life, my friendship with Jesus, and my understanding of the Eucharist deepen?

#### Practical Activities



*For the Individual*

##### **Praying with a litany**

Make time to go to your parish when it provides Eucharistic Adoration and pray with one of these litanies: Holy Name of Jesus, Most Blessed Sacrament, or Most Precious Blood.



*For Couples*

**Watch: Take Heart, I AM | Bread of Life | Episode 2 on FORMED** (video, 6:01, free)

*After watching the episode, share and discuss:*

- What are the hardened spots of your hearts that keep you from fully embracing the Real Presence of the Lord in the Eucharist?

To access FORMED for free, [follow these instructions](#).



*For the Domestic Church*

##### **Create or update a home altar**

If your home does not have a prayer area that encourages the family to come together to pray and encounter the Lord, consider making one. If you have one, this resource ideas on how to adapt it depending on family needs.



*Missionary Mindset*

##### **Volunteer at local Food Pantry**

Find a food pantry near you. Contact them and find out what kind of items they are most in need of and ask when it would be a good day for you and your family to serve. Bonus: ask neighbors, friends, and family members to consider doing the same.



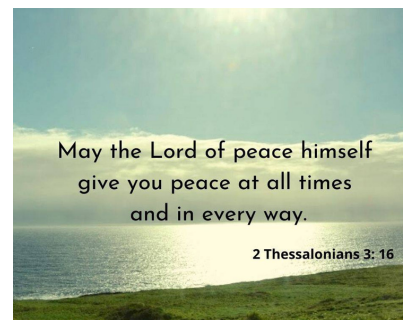
## Building Your Church at Home

Your household is where "church" begins. Your parish is here to help you with support, resources, small Faith Groups, and gathered activities on our campus throughout the year. Visit our website or contact us if you need help.

For more ideas on how to build your home as a Domestic Church, go to: [www.domestic-church.com](http://www.domestic-church.com) or visit *The Family Fully Alive*, sponsored by the Knights of Columbus, or [Tools for Building a Domestic Church](#) by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

## Closing Prayer

- We sign ourselves with the Sign of Cross.
- According to what we reflected on, or whatever is in my heart share a petition. At the end we all say: **Lord hear our prayer.**
- Then we can pray the Our Father, Hail Mary and the Glory be.
- As we finish, let us share a sign of peace with each other.



May the Lord of peace himself  
give you peace at all times  
and in every way.

2 Thessalonians 3: 16

"The Eucharist contains the very essence of Christ, the Word of eternal life." Fr. Christian



## Act of Love

**O my God, I love you above all things,  
with my whole heart and soul,  
because You are all good and worthy of all love.  
I love my neighbor as myself for the love of You.  
I forgive all who have injured me,  
and ask pardon of all whom I have injured.  
Amen.**

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### AT THE END OF THE LESSON OR END OF THE WEEK

From what you have learned, how would you now answer the Question of the Week?

**How does the Eucharist unite us to Christ and to one another—both on earth and in heaven?**



# WE ARE THE CHURCH

## What Makes us Catholic?

### The Magisterium

“In simple terms, the magisterium is the official teaching office — in the sense of role or authority, not a bureaucratic center — of the Church, which consists of the pope and the bishops in union with him. They are given the task of interpreting scripture and making judgments on “tradition” within the Church, making official statements as to the authenticity of such traditions.”

(Aleteia, Kosloski, 2020)

[Read the full article here!](#)



## Word of the Week - ENCOUNTER

Encountering a person is more than a simple “hi.” To encounter another person is to see them for who they are, to listen to their story without the need to speak back, to be changed by their presence and to recognize Jesus was present all along. The more we encounter the Lord through the Sacraments of Penance and Reconciliation and of the Eucharist, the more we will be able to recognize him in our neighbor. The more we are able to recognize him in our neighbor, the more we will practice mercy.

### Faith Groups



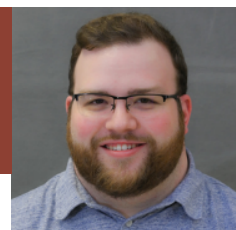
### Four Reasons Why Faith Groups are Vital

(Video, 2:49)

Join a small Faith Group or start one of your own! Contact your parish for more information.

### Saints of the Month

by Jeremy Hearne



Podcast each Tuesday!



Bring the faith alive  
at home with  
liturgical living tips!

# ADULT & FAMILY MINISTRY

## Adulthood


### Articles

- Thomas J. Eggleston, Houston Catholic Worker // [\*What Pope Francis Means By a Culture of Encounter\* \(2015\)](#)
- Joe Heschmeyer, Word on Fire // [\*How Do We Encounter Christ?\*](#)

**Guidelines for Receiving Holy Communion**

### Video


- [\*What is the National Eucharistic Revival?\* \(2:32\)](#)
- *Into His Likeness* Series by Dr. Edward Sri // [\*Episode 3: The Encounter\* \(36:00-free/instructions\)](#)
- Breaking the Habit // [\*Eucharistic Prayer and Communion, Understanding the Mass\* \(13:38\)](#)



## Deepening Understanding of the Eucharist

## Resources for Adults, Teens, and Children

Loyola Press



To pray a holy hour of Adoration of the Eucharist, all you need is a tabernacle with a lit sanctuary lamp, maybe a Bible or other reflective reading and/or prayers. Want more information on how to what to do during a Holy Hour check out the links below:

Aleteia// [A minute-by-minute guide for a Holy Hour of Adoration](#)  
Hallow// [How to Pray While Making a Holy Hour](#)  
USCCB// [Eucharistic Devotion](#)

## Catholic Apps



## Book Suggestions

[Adult Faith Formation](#)

[Young Adult & Campus Ministry](#)

[Sacramental Information](#)



[& Becoming Catholic!](#)



# FAMILIES WITH YOUTH

## Early Adolescence Jr.High, Grades 6-8



### Characteristics of Early Adolescents

**Question: How can my life nourish others as a result of the Eucharist?**

Why Believe? Volume 1 // [Chapter 12/Episode 2: Bread of Life \(5:18 FREE\)](#)

Why Believe? Volume 1 // [Chapter 13/Episode 1: The Body of Christ \(2:41 FREE\)](#)



**"Never omit the daily visit to  
the Most Blessed Sacrament, be it ever so brief.  
It is enough if it be constant."**

St. John Bosco

## Adolescence High School, Grades 9-12

### Characteristics of Adolescents

**Question: How can my life nourish others as a result of the Eucharist?**

Why Believe? Volume 1 // [Chapter 12/Episode 2: Bread of Life \(5:18 FREE\)](#)

Why Believe? Volume 1 // [Chapter 13/Episode 1: The Body of Christ \(2:41 FREE\)](#)



## Youth

See when youth meet at your parish!  
Young Adult and Campus Ministry.

Or contact your  
local parish.



# FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

## Nursery Pages

Gospel of the Week and  
Activity pages to do with your  
Toddler and Pre-schooler

## Birth to Age 2

The role of parents at this stage is to model the example of Jesus by offering God's unconditional love to their children and to others. Parents benefit from growing in their own faith so they are able to hand on the faith to the next generation.

## Early Childhood Ages 3-5

### Characteristics of Young Children

**Question: How is kindness an expression of God's love for others?**

- Catholic Stand // [How One Family Approaches Mass with Young Children](#)--article for parents.
- Catechist // [Prayer and Mass Resources for Families with Young Children](#)--article for parents.
- Allelu! by Our Sunday Visitor
  - [PreK3/Lesson 19: Jesus "Says Love Each Other"](#)
  - [PreK4/Lesson 19: Jesus Teaches Us About Love](#)
  - [Kinder/Lesson 17: Showing Kindness](#)



Photo by Ben White on Unsplash

### Characteristics of Children

## Childhood Elementary, Grades 1-5

**Question: How does the Eucharist help me grow in kindness?**

- Presence from Formed // [For Children: The Miracle at Every Mass](#) (11:00 free)
- [UK's First Statue of Blessed Carlo Acutis](#) (1:41 YouTube)
- [Coloring/Craft Activity from Catholic Icing](#)



Photo by Jimmy Dean on Unsplash

## For Parents



## Strong Catholic Family Faith

A project of Strong Catholic Families, Strong Catholic Youth Initiative



## Family Faith Practices



# GENERAL RESOURCES

## The Holy Bible

Online Bible via the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)

If you don't know much about the Bible or want to learn more: **Scripture Support**

Catholics use the **New American Bible Revised Edition** (NABRE) as the translation for Mass readings. There are many acceptable versions of NABRE as well as other approved translations. You may purchase from any vendor. Basic editions are available upon request at no charge. Pick one up at the parish office.



## Recommended Print Bibles

These are all by St. Mary's Press: Order directly from the publisher or search online for other vendors.

Catholic Family Connections Bible  
(digital version available)

Catholic Youth Bible (Adolescents & College)  
"Breakthrough" (Early Adolescents // Jr. High)

Catholic Children's Bible

## The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)

Online Catechism via the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)

NEW! Simplified version of the Catechism of the Catholic Church

If you don't know much about the Catechism or want to learn more: Catechism Support

## Formed Online

Our parish subscribes to a library of online resources called **Formed**. It is excellent and free for you to use. Register at [formed.org](http://formed.org) – Just click "Sign Up as a Parishioner." Need help? Watch this video.

## Counseling & Spiritual Direction

Our parish offers **Rejoice Counseling** for individuals and families for a variety of issues and needs. You may use this online form to contact them directly.

We also offer **Spiritual Direction** for anyone interested in a spiritual companion, discerning God's will in your life. Follow the links or inquire through the parish office.

## Prayers and Praying

The Divine Mercy Chaplet by Franciscan Friars of the Renewal (8:47 free)



Prayer Requests



**Common Prayers and Formulas to Learn by Heart**

and a chart showing at what age level they should be learned.



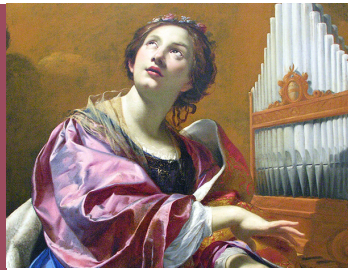
How to create a prayer table or prayer area in your home.

# ART & MUSIC

## Sacred Art on Formed

Parish subscription free for parishioners--register once, access all content.

[Formed.org](https://formed.org)



## Using Sacred Art to Bring the Faith Alive

[Sophia Institute](https://sophia.org)



## Sacred Art to Inspire You

### Cover Image

The People of God assemble, holding lighted candles, symbolizing the light of Christ and our shared communion with him and with one another.

The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception // [First Communion](#).

Theophile Emmanuel Duverger // [First Communion](#)

The Catholic Company // [Twelve Inspiring Religious Paintings and Their Meanings](#).

Eugene Delacroix // [Pieta](#) (1850)

## Pieta (after Delacroix)

by Vincent Van Gogh (1889)



Cover Image by  
Michelle Eisterhold

## Music to Move You

Matt Maher // [All The People Said Amen \(3:00\)](#)

[Matt Maher // Remembrance \(5:18\)](#)

“...live in love, as Christ loved us and handed himself over for us as a sacrificial offering to God for a fragrant aroma.

Ephesians 5:1-2

In what ways do art and music help strengthen your relationship with God?



# Meet Our Pastors

"The priesthood is the love of the heart of Jesus.  
When you see a priest, think of our Lord Jesus Christ."

— St. John Vianney, patron saint of parish priests.



**Rev. Tom Ponzini**

Prince of Peace

19222 Tomball Parkway, Houston, Texas 77070  
281.469.2686 \* [pophouston.org](http://pophouston.org)



**Very Rev. Norbert Maduzia Jr., E.V., D. Min.**

St. Ignatius Loyola

7810 Cypresswood Drive, Spring, Texas 77379-7101  
281.370.3401 \* [ignatiusloyola.org](http://ignatiusloyola.org)



**Very Rev. James Burkart**

Christ the Good Shepherd

18511 Klein Church Road, Spring, Texas 77379  
281.376.6831 \* [cgscchurch.org](http://cgscchurch.org)



**Rev. Christian Bui**

St. Edward the Confessor

2601 Spring-Stuebner Road, Spring, Texas 77389  
281.353.9774 \* [saintedward.org](http://saintedward.org)



**Our daily access to the  
Eucharist is possible  
because of our priests.**

Through their lives of  
dedicated service, we have  
access to the Mass  
and the sacraments.

Please pray for vocations to  
the priesthood, diaconal  
ministry, and religious life.  
Please pray for families, that  
they may nurture the lives of  
their children and raise holy  
men and woman who are  
ready to serve the Lord in  
whatever ways he calls.



The contents of this Guide are in accordance with the teachings of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the *Catechetical Framework for Lifelong Faith Formation* of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, under the pastoral care of Archbishop Daniel Cardinal DiNardo. Accordingly, the *Catechetical Framework* serves the definitive aim of catechesis which is to put people not only in touch with, but also in communion and intimacy, with Jesus Christ.

All parishes of our Archdiocese follow the same plan for catechesis. It is part of the unity of our Church.

# Meet Our Directors

Helping People to Know and Love Jesus Christ



## Prince of Peace

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**The  
CHURCH EXISTS  
IN ORDER TO  
EVANGELIZE**

...bringing all  
humanity to union  
with God; this is  
the missionary  
mandate  
of the Church.

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*Pope Paul VI in  
"Evangelii Nuntiandi"  
("Evangelization in the  
Modern World"), 1975.*

## About This "Special Edition" Series

These **"Special Editions" of the Catholic Family Guide** are a joint effort of our four parishes for the Sundays of Our Lord Jesus Christ the King through the four Sundays of the Advent season, 2023. They are written by our clergy and staff for our parishioners to come to know, love, and serve Jesus Christ during this Advent Season, culminating in the great Eucharistic Revival of 2024. Our pastors each desire their parishioners to know and love Jesus Christ in the Eucharist in a deeper and more profound way during this Eucharistic Revival. We want to demonstrate that, though we are distinct parishes, we are one Church of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston; we are part of something bigger than ourselves. It is up to us to evangelize the world so that many more people will come to the knowledge and love of God and receive the gift of salvation. We can accomplish great things when we work together and cooperate with the Holy Spirit.

Our priests and staff are excited to be working collaboratively and it is beautiful to see our pastors coming together and encouraging unity and fellowship among Catholics in our archdiocese. We want you to be a part of this because together, we are the Church--for the glory of God and the good of his holy people.

-Ivana Meshell

**Special thanks to our priests and staff who contributed to the creation of these Guides.**