

The Family Rosary Way of Grace

Parent Preparation Guide to Eucharist: Accepting Our Invitation to the Banquet

Dear Parents or Guardians,

Thank you for taking an active role to help prepare your child to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist, or Confirmation. This is a special time for your family to pause and reflect on where your family is on the path God called you to walk when your child(ren) was baptized. This is also a great time for your family to pray about any changes you may need to make to remain on the path.

Below you will find links to Holy Scripture, information about the Sacrament being studied, and helpful items to gather that will help during the home sessions.

May your whole family find peace and joy in this Family Rosary Way of Grace!

Sacrament of The Eucharist:

- The Eucharist is one of three Sacraments of Initiation (with Baptism & Confirmation)
- The Last Supper was the institution of the Eucharist
- Transubstantiation (no longer ordinary bread and wine). Conversion of bread & wine to the Body & Blood of Christ. Christ is truly present, in all his divinity and his humanity, in the Eucharist.
- Children should be able to “distinguish the body of Christ from ordinary food.”
- The Mass (Divine Liturgy) is the source and summit of our entire church life.
- Christ, the eternal high priest of the New Covenant, acting through the ministry of a validly ordained priest, offers the Eucharistic sacrifice to God the Father through the Holy Spirit.
- Memorial of our Lord’s death & resurrection (this central event of salvation becomes truly present.)
- The Eucharist is a source of communion with the Trinity, forgives venial sins, and helps us avoid mortal sins. The Eucharist effects and strengthens the unity of the Church as the Body of Christ.
- As Catholics, we are obligated to attend Mass every Sunday (or Saturday evening) & other Holy Days of Obligation. We are also obligated to receive the Eucharist at least once a year, more often is definitely encouraged.

Symbols of The Eucharist used during Mass and in Christian Art:

- Wheat/bread (Jesus used unleavened bread at the Last Supper; symbolizes Jesus as the Bread of Life.)
- Host (Host comes from *hostia*, a Latin word meaning a sacrificial lamb; Jesus is the sacrificial lamb.)
- Grapes/wine (symbolizes the blood of the covenant, shed for the forgiveness of sins for all.)
- Chalice (symbolizes the vessel holding the wine which becomes the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus originally used at the Last Supper)
- Altar candles (symbolizes the presence of the Holy Spirit)
- Altar (Table where the Eucharistic sacrifice is celebrated; symbolizes the Eucharist.)
- A basket of loaves (Jesus feed 5,000 with five loaves (Mt 14:17; Mk 6:38; Lk 9:13; Jn 6:9).)
- Pelican (A mother pelican was thought to shed her own blood, sacrifice herself, to feed her starving chicks; symbolizes Jesus’ sacrifice for us.)

Resource about The Mass:

Learning about the Mass is central in preparing to receive First Communion. Here are some helpful links:

- [Church Liturgical Objects & Terms](#) (Printable PDF)
- [Do This in Remembrance of Me](#) (includes an overview of the Mass)
- [My Booklet of New Mass Responses](#) (Printable PDF from the Diocese of Portland, Maine)
- [Order of the Mass](#) (From the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops)

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Optional Items to Gather to Help with Home Sessions:

- Bible to look up scripture.
- Computer or smart TV with YouTube for session 2.
- Ingredients to make “Bread-in-a-Bag” for session 2.
- Photos, memorabilia from parents/older children’s First Communion, before session 3.

Scripture References:

Here are the scriptural links to the full story for each mystery in these home sessions. Please consider reading and sitting with the bigger story prior to each home session.

Home Session 1: Luminous Mystery - The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God ([Mark 1:14-15](#))

Home Session 2: Luminous Mystery - The Transfiguration ([Matthew 17:1-8](#))

Home Session 3: Luminous Mystery - The Institution of the Eucharist ([Matthew 26:26-29](#))

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Home Session: **Eucharist 1** *Accepting our Invitation to the Banquet*
Luminous Mysteries: Proclamation of the Kingdom of God

Parents, please read this aloud with your child(ren):

Holy Scripture: *After John had been put in prison, Jesus went to Galilee and preached the Good News from God. "The right time has come," he said, "and the Kingdom of God is near! Turn away from your sins and believe in the Good News!"* [Mark 1:14-15](#)

Prayer: (Sign of the Cross) Heavenly Father, please bless, inspire and guide our family as we grow in our faith. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen. (Sign of the Cross)

Story: For many generations, the Israelite people awaited God's promised one, the one the prophets had prophesied about, and the one John the Baptist had proclaimed and prepared the way for. As John's public ministry ends by being put in prison, Jesus knew it was time for the world to know about him. As we heard in the reading, "Jesus went to Galilee and preached the Good News of God." This third Luminous Mystery of the Rosary, the Proclamation of the Kingdom of God, is all about Jesus! God so loved the world, that he sent his only Son, into the world to set us free from the slavery of sin! Jesus is the Good News of God!

The Word of God is proclaimed at every Mass during the Liturgy of the Word. The Liturgy of the Word begins after the Introductory Rite, the special gathering prayers to prepare our hearts and minds to participate in the Mass. We usually sit to listen to a first reading from the Old Testament (or the Acts of the Apostles during Easter,) a responsorial psalm from the Book of Psalms, and a second reading from the New Testament. We stand with respect for Jesus' presence in the Book of the Gospel (which contains the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.) After a priest or deacon proclaims the gospel, we sit and listen to the homily as a priest or deacon helps us understand the words we just heard. We stand for the Profession of Faith in the Nicene or Apostles Creed, and the Liturgy of the Word ends with the Prayers of the Faithful.

An important part of Mass that connects the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist, is the Concluding Rite. As the priest proclaims the words to end Mass, we are blessed and sent to take and share Jesus by how we live our daily lives and love our neighbor! Thanks be to God!

Biblical Person: *"One of [John the Baptist's disciples, who decided to follow Jesus after John pointed at him saying, "Behold the Lamb of God,"] was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother."* [John 1:40](#). Andrew believed Jesus was the Messiah that Israel had waited for. Jesus was such Good News, Andrew wanted to share it, just like we are invited to do after every Mass. With great love, Andrew eagerly invited his brother, Simon Peter, to come and meet Jesus! St. Andrew, please pray for us to be good witnesses and evangelizers of Jesus' love too! Amen.

Discussion/Reflection:

Everyone: Name your favorite Bible story. How does it feel to hear it proclaimed at Mass?

Response: This next Sunday, pay special attention to the Prayer after Communion, and the words the priest says to end the Mass. Share what you each hear in the car on the way home.

Family Prayer this Week: As a family, please pray the Our Father and the Hail Mary every day this week. Also, on the day your family chooses, please pray 1 decade of the Rosary, meditating on (thinking about) this week's mystery: 1 Our Father, 10 Hail Marys, 1 Glory Be, & 1 Fatima (Oh my Jesus) Prayer. [Click here for help with prayers.](#)



Luminous Mystery #3: Proclamation of the Kingdom of God (Photo Credit: usccb.org/how-to-pray-the-rosary)

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Home Session: **Eucharist 2** *Accepting our Invitation to the Banquet*

Luminous Mysteries: The Transfiguration

Parents, please read this aloud with your child(ren):

Holy Scripture: *As [Peter, James and John] looked on, a change came over Jesus: his face was shining like the sun, and his clothes were dazzling white. Then the three disciples saw Moses and Elijah talking with Jesus. [Peter spoke up, and] while he was talking, a shining cloud came over them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased - listen to him!"* [Matthew 17:2-3,5](#)

Prayer: (Sign of the Cross) Heavenly Father, please bless, inspire and guide our family as we grow in our faith. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen. (Sign of the Cross)

Story: The fourth Luminous Mystery of the Rosary, the Transfiguration of Jesus, happens on top of a mountain. Peter, James, and John were invited by Jesus to journey up to a mountain top where he transformed in front of them into his glory; shining brightly. Jesus' appearance changed on the outside to match who he is on the inside, fully divine and fully human.

During the Mass, when the priest prays the words of consecration over the bread and wine, the Holy Spirit changes them into Jesus' own body and blood, even though we cannot see or taste the difference. This changing of the substance, the inside of the host and wine, into the Body and Blood of Jesus is called transubstantiation: the substance changes although the appearance and taste have not! Consecrated hosts and wine, the Body and Blood of Jesus, is not the same as regular food. At Communion, the consecrated host is held up and the words, "Body of Christ," are proclaimed. We respond, "Amen," which means, "so be it" and to show we believe in the true presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

The role of the priest in the Mass is so important that we cannot have Mass without a priest. Every priest studies to learn how to serve Jesus and us in this special vocation before he is ordained. As the priest prays the words of consecration, he becomes a visible form of Jesus. We remember Jesus' Last Supper, death and Resurrection in such a way that they become real to us during the Mass! All of heaven, angels and saints, join us in Mass for the Liturgy of the Eucharist - the holiest part of Mass! Eucharist means "thanksgiving," and it is such an honored and important Sacrament it is "the source and summit" of the Christian life.

Biblical People: In the transfiguration story, Moses represents the law and Elijah represents the prophecy of the Old Testament. Both had revelations from God on mountain tops. They appear with Jesus as witnesses to the fulfillment of the law and the prophets taking place in the person of Jesus as he appears in glory. Biblical patriarchs Moses and Elijah, please pray for us.

Discussion/Reflection:

Everyone: Share about a time or moment when you felt very close to Jesus.

Responses: Please pray this week for religious vocations for our diocese and the world.

Also, please consider watching this short film together, [The Veil Removed](#):

<https://youtu.be/OOLZDaTqlaM>. It is good to watch before attending Mass together.

Family Prayer this Week: As a family, please pray the Our Father and the Hail Mary every day this week. Also, on the day your family chooses, please pray 1 decade of the Rosary, meditating on (thinking about) this week's mystery: 1 Our Father, 10 Hail Marys, 1 Glory Be, & 1 Fatima (Oh my Jesus) Prayer. [Click here for help with prayers.](#)



Luminous Mystery #4: The Transfiguration (Photo Credit: usccb.org/how-to-pray-the-rosary)

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Home Session: **Eucharist 3** *Accepting our Invitation to the Banquet*
Luminous Mysteries: **Institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper**

Parents, please read this aloud with your child(ren):

Holy Scripture: *While they were eating, Jesus took a piece of bread, gave a prayer of thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples. "Take and eat it," he said; "this is my body." Then he took a cup, gave thanks to God, and gave it to them. "Drink it, all of you," he said; "this is my blood, which seals God's covenant, my blood poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."* [Matthew 26:26-29a](#)

Prayer: (Sign of the Cross) Heavenly Father, please bless, inspire and guide our family as we grow in our faith. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen. (Sign of the Cross)

Story: This week we focus on the final Luminous Mystery of the Rosary, the Institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper. The night before dying for us on the cross, Jesus celebrated the Jewish Passover meal as he and his disciples had done so many times before. This time, however, Jesus made some BIG changes. He changed the meaning of the meal as well as the bread and the wine. For many years, this celebration had helped the Jewish people relive the freedom God gave them from their slavery in Egypt. That night, Jesus transformed this meal into a new way of reliving the most perfect gift of freedom from slavery to sin, fear, and isolation.

Each time we gather together to celebrate the Holy Mass, we enter into this celebration with Jesus at his last supper. We remember and relive his sacrifice on the cross and the freedom of new life his resurrection brings! We bring our whole selves to the altar; our joys, sorrows, worries, needs, and gratitude. Through the priest, we join Jesus in offering himself to God the Father as the only perfect sacrifice. Then we receive from the Father, through the Holy Spirit, the gift of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. In the Eucharist, we are strengthened and united as the Body of Christ, alive and active in this world, preparing for eternal life in heaven.

Because Jesus did all this and asked us to continue doing this in remembrance of him, we gather to celebrate the Mass EVERY Sunday (or Saturday evening), on the day of his resurrection. This is so important to us as Catholic Christians that the Church has made it an obligation to keep us strong enough to live lives in God's grace each day.

Holy Person: Blessed Carlo Acutis was only a teenager when he died. During his short life, he came to love Jesus in the Eucharist very much. Every time he went to Mass he would spend extra time in prayer before Jesus in the Tabernacle. This love he had for Christ showed up in his daily life as well. He listened to kids who were struggling and defended kids who were being bullied. He spent 4 years creating a [website of Eucharistic miracles](#). He also liked playing video games! Blessed Carlo Acutis, please pray for us.

Discussion/Reflection:

Everyone: What words do you pray, or will you pray, to thank Jesus after Communion?

Parents & Older Siblings: Please share a memory from your first communion.

Response: Please consider doing one or both of these activities as a family this week:

["Bread in a Bag"](#) [Agape Prayer Service](#)

Family Prayer this Week: As a family, please pray the Our Father and the Hail Mary every day this week. Also, on the day your family chooses, please pray 1 decade of the Rosary, meditating on (thinking about) this week's mystery: 1 Our Father, 10 Hail Marys, 1 Glory Be, & 1 Fatima (Oh my Jesus) Prayer. [Click here for help with prayers.](#)



Luminous Mystery #5: Institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper (Photo Credit: uscgb.org/how-to-pray-the-rosary)