

# my Sacramental Journey

## EUCHARIST

### Parish Guide

Supporting parishes as they journey with children and their parents in preparing for the Sacrament of Eucharist

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*The Holy Eucharist is the meeting point in which Jesus Christ gives himself to you. In the Eucharist you receive his Body and Blood, by eating him we become the Body of Christ, that is to say, the Church.*

# WELCOME!

The new Directory for Catechesis calls the catechist a ‘witness of the faith’ and a ‘keeper of the memory of God’ who ‘introduces others to the mystery of God’ and accompanies them as they ‘mature in their Christian life and journey toward God’ (DC, 80-81, 2020).

If you find yourself reading this parish guide, then this is you! As a catechist or sacramental coordinator, you have an amazing opportunity to share the message of God’s love with children and their families, and to create opportunities for them to personally encounter this love for themselves.

Of course, the family is “where faith is learned and lived” which means parents, as the “first educators”, are the ones best placed to share this faith with their children. For this reason, our primary role as catechists is to equip and support parents so that they can engage their children in sacramental preparation that is rich and meaningful.

So, thank you! In the midst of the many tasks you will do along the way, we are praying for you and the families you walk with. We also pray that your own faith is enlivened and strengthened!

## THE SACRAMENTAL POLICY OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE

Regarding First Communion, The Sacramental Policy of the Archdiocese of Brisbane Christian Initiation for Children states:

### INTRODUCTION

Christian Initiation incorporates us into Christ and forms us into God’s people. In Baptism, God adopts us as children and makes us a new creation through water and the Holy Spirit. As we are signed with the gift of the Spirit in Confirmation, God brings us to the full stature of the Lord Jesus to continue his mission in the world. At the table of the Eucharist, we are fed on the Sacrament of Christ’s body and blood, and, with the whole Church, take part in the saving offering of Christ on the cross. In the Sunday Mass, those who have been initiated are continually formed by the word of God and affirmed in their belonging to the Church, the Body of Christ.

### FIRST COMMUNION

3. From the year when the children turn nine (Year Four), they are welcomed to the Lord’s Table and receive Holy Communion for the first time. This is the climax of their Christian initiation.

12. Ideally, the parish will schedule preparation for First Communion in the Easter season, with First Communion occurring at a parish Sunday Mass. Preparation formally begins with a rite of enrolment and involves prayer, discussion and activity in the home, supported by parish events and rituals (including the celebration of the second rite of the Sacrament of Penance).

7. Celebrations of the Sacraments are not isolated events. They take their place within a process of growth in faith from birth to adolescence. Discernment of a child’s readiness for the Sacraments by the parents and pastor is more important than the child’s age or year level and might mean that the Sacraments are celebrated earlier or later than the norm.

8. It is a collaborative process: parish-based, family-centred and school-supported.

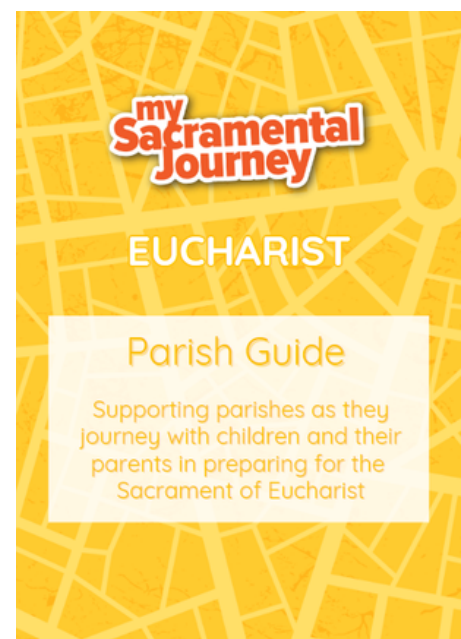
# RESOURCES TO SUPPORT PREPARATION FOR EUCHARIST

With this in mind, Evangelisation Brisbane has prepared the **My Sacramental Journey: Eucharist activity book** designed to help families prepare their children for the sacrament of Eucharist (First Holy Communion). The topics in this activity book include: Me & My Parish; Meals & Family; Feeding of the 5000; The Last Supper; When I go to Mass: The Liturgy of the Word; When I go to Mass: The Liturgy of the Eucharist; Receiving the Eucharist; Living the Eucharist; and Church Search.

The Eucharist activity book is accompanied by a Parent Guide and a Parish Guide which provide background information and further ideas.

Each topic in the Eucharist activity book is unpacked in the Parent Guide and Parish Guide with Background information, Scripture, Activities, Family Fun ideas, and Family Prayer ideas to accompany each topic.

These resources are designed to be a springboard for conversations and engagement as parents accompany their children through their time of preparation for the Eucharist.



# OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES

The Bible is used on a number of occasions throughout the children's preparation. The Contemporary English Version is most commonly used in the Children's Lectionary (the book of scripture readings used in children's masses and children's Liturgy of the Word on Sundays). The New Revised Standard Version is used in the Eucharist activity book. Both of these are appropriate choices for use in the context of sacramental preparation. Bible gateway is a helpful resource for accessing the scriptures online [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com).

The *Flame of Faith* resources were produced by Archdiocesan Ministries to support families and sacramental teams, especially during this time of preparation. The resource includes FAQs, and videos explaining each of the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, and Penance [flameoffaith.org.au](http://flameoffaith.org.au). Each parish and community in the Brisbane Archdiocese has its own login details, for further information please contact [childrenandfamilies@eb.catholic.net.au](mailto:childrenandfamilies@eb.catholic.net.au)

*Our Family Prays* is a resource produced by Liturgy Brisbane which outlines the Sacraments of Initiation and prayers you could use at home [liturgybrisbane.net.au](http://liturgybrisbane.net.au)

The *YOUCAT for Kids* is based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church and reproduced for children. It is particularly helpful for adults as they find ways to articulate concepts of faith in child-friendly ways [freedmpublishingbooks.com.au](http://freedmpublishingbooks.com.au)



Lastly, often accompanying our children through sacramental preparation can stir up questions for us as adults about our own faith and relationship with God. That's a great thing! *More with Jesus*, a 30-day faith exploration booklet can help Catholics reflect on the significance of their baptism. For information about More with Jesus, other adult faith resources and events or to talk to someone about deepening your faith, just contact the Evangelisation Brisbane office on 3324 3440 or [formation@bne.catholic.net.au](mailto:formation@bne.catholic.net.au)

# PARISH-BASED, FAMILY-CENTRED

The parish supports families as they make their way through the Eucharist activity book (supported by the Parent Guide) by:

- Facilitating an Information session for parents including theology and background of the Sacrament of Eucharist, and the organisation of the sacrament within the parish.
- Holding a Second Rite Reconciliation for the children as part of their preparation to receive Jesus' Body and Blood in the Eucharist.
- Encouraging families to set up a prayer space at home, including the child's baptism candle if possible.
- Providing resources and ongoing support to the families through a variety of means e.g. regular emails; family workshops; small group gatherings; Children's Liturgy of the Word.

It is suggested that parishes support families in using the Eucharist activity book (supported by the Parent Guide) in one of three ways:

- Over about five weeks, families make their way through the Eucharist activity book using the Parent Guide and support from the parish sacramental team. At the end of the preparation time, the parish facilitates a family workshop during which the content of the Eucharist activity book is reviewed and consolidated.
- Over about five weeks, families gather in small groups on a weekly basis and make their way through the Eucharist activity book. The families gather for the 45 minute session each week to discuss key content of each topic and complete the Eucharist activity book at home. At the end of the preparation time, the parish facilitates a family workshop during which the content of the Eucharist activity book is reviewed and consolidated.
- Three or four family workshops, run by the parish, are offered over a five week period. Each family makes their way through the Eucharist activity book during these sessions.

Each parish is encouraged to choose the format which best suits their families and the sacramental team.

# TOPIC 1

### Aim

In this topic, children use the spaces provided in the Eucharist activity book to share what they know about their parish community. They might include their parish priest and some of the people they know such as the sacramental coordinator, Children's Liturgy of the Word leader and other parishioners.



We acknowledge that these days some families do not have strong connections with their parish community. This topic provides an opportunity for them to strengthen this connection. It is also an opportunity to reflect on other people in their life who have shared the faith with them. These may include people in their family, teachers or even relatives who have passed away.

### Sacramental Team Background Information

Through the Sacrament of the Eucharist, we are brought into full communion with the Catholic Church. Therefore, as a Sacrament of Initiation, it's important to take some time to reflect on the community of faith the child is being initiated into.

Being initiated into the Catholic Church means to answer the invitation to be in relationship with God and with God's people that has been passed down to us from the time of Jesus.

When we come together for Eucharist, we are like a big family that gathers across time and space to enter into the Pascal mystery, that is, the mystery of Jesus' passion, death and resurrection. Remember, the angels and the saints and loved ones who have gone before us gather with us too!

### Family Prayer Idea

Give each family a small item to place in their family prayer space as a small gift from the parish community. It could be a small card of the patron saint of the parish or a message to say that the parish community is praying for them as they prepare for Eucharist.

Encourage them to say 'thank you' prayers to God for each person who has shared the faith with them throughout their life.

### Notes

Use this column to keep notes, ideas you may want to share with families or things you may want to change for future sessions.

# TOPIC 2

## Meals & Family

Page 4-5 of the Eucharist activity book

### Aim

This topic invites children and their parents to tap into that universal experience of sharing a meal and encourages them to think about special meals they have had with others.

It then connects this experience to the celebration of the Eucharist as the most significant way we as Catholics come together to encounter Jesus Christ, real and present in the consecrated bread and wine.

Parents and children have the opportunity to reflect on the 'table' we gather around when we celebrate the Eucharist.



### Notes

### Sacramental Team Background Information

When we share a meal together, we are strengthened and sustained, not only by the food we receive but also by the community we experience with others. Of course, Eucharist is so much more than just a meal, but it is a helpful place to start for families because the 'meal' is so much a part of daily life. The very human sustenance and community we experience in the daily meal is just a glimpse of the deep nourishment and communion we partake in through the Eucharist.

The Eucharist has many different names, all of which help us to understand something about its richness. Many of these are used throughout the Eucharist activity book, in this and other topics, so it's helpful to be aware of them. Here are some, as outlined in the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

- **Eucharist** comes from the Greek words 'eucharistein' (to 'give thanks') and 'eulogein' ('blessing'), so it is an 'action of thanksgiving to God' for all that God has done (CCC, 1993, para. 1328).
- The **Lord's Supper** because of its deep connection with Jesus' Last Supper and because it looks forward to the great feast to come in heaven (CCC, 1993, para. 1329).
- The Breaking of the Bread because that was the solemn act that Jesus used at the Last Supper and the rite that Christians, from the earliest times, would use in their Eucharistic assemblies (CCC, 1993, para. 1329).
- The **Eucharistic Assembly** because it is celebrated when all the faithful are gathered. Together we are a visible sign of the Church (CCC, 1993, para. 1329).
- **The Holy Sacrifice** because it makes the sacrifice of Jesus present and we respond with our 'sacrifice of praise' to God (CCC, 1993, para. 1330).
- **Holy Communion** because through this sacrament we become united with Christ, we become 'one body' with him (CCC, 1993, para. 1331).
- **Holy Mass** because the liturgy we participate in concludes with the 'sending forth' of the faithful gathered so that they can do God's will and work in their everyday life (CCC, 1993, para. 1332).

For Catholics, the Eucharist is the most powerful way to encounter the real presence of Jesus Christ.

## Family Fun

Invite families to make some damper together. Food is so much more special when it is shared so encourage them to enjoy it with others.

## Family Prayer Idea

Encourage families to try saying grace before meals. They could use the one in the Eucharist activity book or make up their own.

## Activity

Encourage the children to complete the activity on page 5 and draw the items they see on the altar when they go to Mass.



# TOPIC 3

## Feeding of the 5000 & The Last Supper

Page 6-7 of the Eucharist activity book

### Aim

The aim of this topic is to explore the scripture stories of the 'Feeding of the 5000' and 'The Last Supper' so that the children and their parents can make connections between the two texts and what they teach us about the Eucharist.



### Notes

### Sacramental team background information

The sixth chapter in the Gospel of John is all about the Eucharist! It begins with the miracle of the 'Feeding of the 5000', which creates a catalyst for Jesus to teach the truth of who he is. Jesus says, 'I am the bread of life'. 'Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.' He even goes on to tell them:

'Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.' John 6:53-58 (NRSVCE)

So, in the miracle of the 'Feeding of the 5000', Jesus is offering a foretaste of what is to come. There are a couple of scripture clues that stand out in particular. Firstly, Jesus goes 'up the mountain' (John 6:3), a sign that something amazing is about to happen! Secondly, John 6:4 tells us that 'the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near'. This reminds us of the Jews great exodus from Egypt and connects the words and actions of Jesus to their experience of being saved. These clues tell us that this miracle is about more than feeding the people with ordinary bread, it prefigures Jesus' sacrifice when he gives himself as the living bread.

This leads us to the story of the Last Supper (Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25 and Luke 22:14-23) in which Jesus institutes the Eucharist.



While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Matthew 26:26-29 (NRSVCE)

Then, in the first letter to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 11:23-26), St Paul writes about the Eucharist, as something he received from the Lord to be passed on to others.

Jesus said, 'Do this in remembrance of me' and that's exactly what the early church did. In the book of Acts we read: 'They spent their time learning from the apostles, and they were like family to each other. They also broke bread [the Lord's Supper] and prayed together.' (Act 2:42).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us: 'From that time on down to our own day the celebration of the Eucharist has been continued so that today we encounter it everywhere in the Church with the same fundamental structure. It remains the centre of the Church's life' (CCC, 1343).

## Scripture

Encourage families to look up the scriptures about the Last Supper in the bible or read those printed in the Eucharist activity book.



## Family Fun

Encourage families to share a picnic or get some fish and chips to eat at the beach and imagine what it must have been like to be there on the day Jesus fed all those 5000 people!

Jesus said 'do this is remembrance of me'. There are many ways to remember people we love. The activity on page 7 of the Eucharist activity book gives the families an opportunity to talk about this and have the children reflect on how they do this in their family.

## Family Prayer Idea

Encourage families to try saying grace before meals. They could use the one in the Eucharist activity book or make up their own.

## Activity

Have the children imagine that they are the child in the story of the 'Feeding of the 5000'. The activity on page 6 of the Eucharist activity book gives the children an opportunity to write about what they imagine it would be like.



# TOPIC 4

## When I go to Mass: Page 8-13 of the Eucharist activity book

### Aim

In topic four there are two sections, through which children learn about the two main parts of Mass: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

### Sacramental Team Background Information

All that Jesus accomplished through his death and resurrection is being celebrated right now in eternity - in God's time. Drawing on scripture, the Catechism tells us that all the angels, Mary the Mother of God, all of creation, all the people of God who have gone before us, all the martyrs, the Church as well as 'a great multitude which no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes, and peoples and tongues' (Revelation 7:9) are all celebrating this 'eternal liturgy' (CCC, 1138). And, by the power of the Holy Spirit, every time we go to mass we join in this celebration too!

The [Mass] unfolds according to a fundamental structure which has been preserved throughout the centuries down to our own day. It displays two great parts that form a fundamental unity: the gathering, the liturgy of the Word, with readings, homily and general intercessions; the liturgy of the Eucharist, with the presentation of the bread and wine, the consecratory thanksgiving, and communion.

Together they form 'one single act of worship'; The Eucharistic table set for us is the table both of the Word of God and of the Body of the Lord (CCC, 1346).

All of us have a role to play in the celebration! The priest, who has received the sacrament of Holy Orders, stands in the 'person of Christ', he says the words and does the actions of Jesus in the liturgy.



And all of us, who have received the sacrament of Baptism, are servers, readers, singers, responders and so forth, who actively participate so that we are all united together with Christ in the eternal liturgy (see CCC, 1348)!

### Notes

"Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy, and to which the Christian people, "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people," have a right and an obligation by reason of their Baptism" (CCC, 1141).

Isn't that amazing? We get a taste of heaven each time we participate in the mass. That's why it's so good to know more about the mass, so that we can recognise Jesus' presence and join in with all that we are.



At mass, Jesus is present in four special ways: in the priest, the people gathered, the Word (sacred scripture) that is read and in the Eucharist (the bread and wine that is changed into his Body and Blood). In the previous paragraphs we've talked about the priest and the people so let's now have a look at the two, equally important, parts of the mass that relate to the Word and the Eucharist.

# Liturgy of the Word

(pages 8 and 9)

## Liturgy of the Word

Sacred scripture is called the 'Word of God' because those who wrote the texts did so under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. So, through the Liturgy of the Word:



- we listen to the scriptures being proclaimed (including the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Gospels)
- we deepen our understanding of what God is saying in the scripture through the homily
- we respond to God's message by singing the Psalm and praying the General Intercessions (Prayer of the Faithful).

It is the Holy Spirit who helps us to take God's Word to heart and put it into practice.

## Family Fun

Encourage the families to chat with their children about the readings they will hear at Mass that day prior to attending. This helps to know what to listen for in the celebration. Encourage them to then follow up the conversation after Mass and invite the children to write or draw what they heard on page 9 of their Eucharist activity book.

## Activity

Invite the children to complete the crossword on page 8 of their Eucharist activity book which covers the elements in the Liturgy of the Word. All the answers can be found by reading the text on pages 8 and 9.

Crossword answers: 1 - public, 2 - faith, 3 - creed, 4 - church, 5 - world, 6 - psalm, 7 - homily, 8 - acclamation, 9 - Jesus



# Liturgy of the Eucharist

(pages 10 and 13)

## Liturgy of the Eucharist

In the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the bread and wine are changed, by the power of the Holy Spirit, into the Body and Blood of Christ.

Through the Liturgy of the Eucharist:

- we give praise to God for all God has done.
- the Church asks God the Father to send the Holy Spirit so that the bread and wine may become the Body and Blood of Christ.
- we receive the Body and Blood of Christ Jesus who loves us and has given himself to us.
- we consume the Body and Blood of Christ Jesus and become one with him and with the whole Church.



## Activity

Invite the children to draw what the priest is doing during particular parts of the Eucharistic prayer (pages 10 to 12), there are prompts in their Eucharist activity book but these images are here to help also:

## Page 10



"Father,  
we ask you to bless these gifts of bread  
and wine  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and make them holy.  
Change them for us into the Body and  
Blood  
of Jesus Christ, your Son."

## Page 11



"He took bread  
and gave you thanks.  
He broke the bread  
and gave it to his friends, saying:  
TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF  
IT;  
FOR THIS IS MY BODY  
WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU."



"In the same way,  
he took a cup of wine.  
He gave you thanks  
and handed the cup to his disciples,  
saying:  
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.

## Page 12



"Through him, and with him, and in him,  
O God, almighty Father,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all glory and honour is yours,  
for ever and ever. Amen."

# TOPIC 5 Receiving the Eucharist

Page 14 of the Eucharist activity book

## Aim

In this topic, children learn how to receive the Body and Blood of Christ.

## Sacramental Team Background Information

Catholics believe that Jesus is wholly and truly present in the Eucharist. The bread and the wine are not just a representation of Christ. "In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist 'the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained'" (CCC, 1374). That's why, we approach the Eucharist with such great reverence - because it IS Jesus.

So, when we are invited to process together to receive the Body and Blood of Christ in communion:

- we process forward, mindful of the amazing gift we are about to receive - Jesus.
- as we approach the priest or communion minister, we make a simple bow of the head to express our reverence for Christ Jesus.
- we create a 'throne' by placing one hand under the other.
- the priest or communion minister holds the host up and says 'The Body of Christ'. We respond with 'Amen'. The word 'Amen' comes from the Hebrew *āmēn*, meaning 'certainty', 'truly', or 'so be it'. When we say 'amen' we are saying 'yes' in faith to what the priest or communion minister has declared when they held the host before us - the is the Body of Christ.
- the priest or communion minister then places the host in the 'throne' we've created and we consume it straight away.
- we then move to the priest or communion minister who is holding the chalice.
- as we approach, the priest or communion minister holds the chalice up and says 'The Blood of Christ'. We respond with 'Amen'.
- we reverently take the chalice into our hands and take a small sip of the Blood of Christ.
- we return to our seat and take some time to pray and thank Jesus for loving us and giving himself to us (there's an example on page 14 of the Eucharist activity book).

## Notes

## Family Fun

Watch the Flame of Faith Eucharist video  
<https://flameoffaith.org.au/>

## Activity

Encourage the parents and children to practise the words and actions used when receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus.



# TOPIC 6

## Living the Eucharist

Page 15 of the Eucharist activity book

### Aim

In this topic, the children explore what it means to 'live' the Eucharist by following Jesus' example.

### Sacramental Team Background Information

When we receive the Eucharist, we become one with Christ Jesus and with the whole Body of Christ - the Church. Jesus is 'in' us and we are 'in' Jesus. At the end of Mass we are dismissed and sent forth with a blessing, so that just as Jesus has shared himself with us in the Eucharist, we are sent live the Eucharist and share Jesus' love with others.

Jesus gave us many examples of how to do this but one in particular happened during the Last Supper:

So during the meal Jesus got up, removed his outer garment, and wrapped a towel around his waist. He put some water into a large bowl. Then he began washing his disciples' feet and drying them with the towel he was wearing.

But when he came to Simon Peter, this disciple asked, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

Jesus answered, "You don't really know what I am doing, but later you will understand."

"You will never wash my feet!" Peter replied.

"If I don't wash you," Jesus told him, "you don't really belong to me."

Peter said, "Lord, don't wash just my feet. Wash my hands and my head."

Jesus answered, "People who have bathed and are clean all over need to wash just their feet. And you, my disciples, are clean, except for one of you." Jesus knew who would betray him. That is why he said, "except for one of you."

After Jesus had washed his disciples' feet and had put his outer garment back on, he sat down again. Then he said:

"Do you understand what I have done? You call me your teacher and Lord, and you should, because that is who I am. And if your Lord and teacher has washed your feet, you should do the same for each other. I have set the example, and you should do for each other exactly what I have done for you."

John 13:4-15

### Notes

## Scripture

Encourage families to look up the story of Jesus' washing his disciples' feet in the bible.

## Family Fun

Encourage families to talk about how they can follow Jesus' example and share his love with others through service. Perhaps they could make a meal together and give it to someone who is sick or visit someone who lives alone. There are so many options!



## Activity

Invite the children to write or draw about what they did with their family to serve others in the space provided on page 15.

## Family Prayer

Encourage the families to pray the prayer on page 15 of the Eucharist activity book together.

# TOPIC 7

## Church search

Page 16-17 of the Eucharist activity book

### Aim

In this topic, the children become more familiar with the items found in their parish church.

### Sacramental Team Background Information

While it is not necessary to know all the names of the items found in the church, this opportunity to explore them outside of the liturgical context, provides a great chance to talk about them and become even more familiar with the things Catholics believe and how we worship.

### Activity

Either on their own or as part of a sacramental preparation session, provide families with an opportunity to explore the items listed on page 17 of the Eucharist activity book. Discuss what they are and what they are used for.

The Church Search could be part of the session when children practise receiving communion.

### Notes



# PARISH REFLECTION

What worked well?

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What would you change or adjust for your parish ?

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Tips for your Sacramental team in preparing for next year?

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