



At-Home Experience – Eucharist Retreat

Our Lady of Light – First Communion

Note to Parents:

Welcome to the At-Home Experience for the First Communion Retreat! Thank you for taking the time as a family to complete this in preparation for your child's First Communion. This experience is filled with prayer, online videos, questions to answer, activities for your child, and optional resources.

Outline:

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Opening Prayer:

Lectio Divina means "divine reading," and it usually entails reading the scripture, meditating, contemplating, and prayer. Have a family member read the passages once. While you are listening to God speak to you through His Word, listen for a word or phrase that sticks out to you. Read it a second time while focusing on that word or phrase and let that passage move you—inspire you—to seek God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your understanding. Then talk as parent/child about what in the passage stood out to you or share what you think God is trying to tell you through it.

Sign of the Cross

Read [Mark 6:30–42](#) and [John 6:8–13](#).

Read aloud: Jesus makes A LOT of food! It shows us that God is generous – he wants to give us more than enough to eat. Jesus does this to show that he wants to provide all we need – in body and spirit. Jesus continues to feed us spiritually by providing the Eucharist to be our spiritual food. He is always ready to give us more of himself!

Answer the following reflection questions as a family:



1. What word or phrase did you focus on in the Bible passage?
2. What did you hear God saying to you through this scripture passage (through that word or phrase)?

Pray: Heavenly Father, thank you for waking us up today and allowing us to spend this time to better prepare our hearts for our First Communion. May we feel your presence here as we gather in your name to prepare to approach your table for the first time. May we be drawn together in communion and love as we share our faith and our joy with one another. We ask this through the intercession of Mary, our Mother as we pray... Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Our Lady of Light, pray for us. Live Jesus in our hearts, forever.


Amen

Sign of the Cross

Formed Video

Go to  [Formed](#) and click on "Find your parish subscription." Type in the zip code 45459 and select Our Lady of Light. Click NEXT and follow the instructions to create your account. Watch  [What is the Eucharist?](#) (4:22) to answer some of your preliminary questions before beginning this retreat.

Student True Presence Craft

Watch  [Michele's Introduction to the True Presence Craft](#) (7:10). Follow the instructions on the physical handout in your packet to complete the craft. Have a conversation with your student on the following questions:

1. Do you have a best friend? Who is it? What do you love about that friend? What makes them your best friend?
2. Do you see any of those same qualities in Jesus?
3. Have you ever craved a specific food? What was it like when you got that food?
4. How does being hungry affect you?
5. Have you ever been invited to a meal before? How did that invitation make you feel?
6. Just as we need physical food to survive, our souls need the Eucharist. Do you see Jesus in the Eucharist? (It's okay if the answer is no! Use that for further conversation on why that might be and how our faith isn't based on a feeling)
7. For the following prompts, use them as a guideline to share experiences and joy with your kids: If you (parent) are Catholic, share your experience with your First Communion with your child. If you (parent) are not Catholic, share why it is important to you and your family that your child receives their First Communion.

Parent Eucharist Presentation

Parents- watch  [Christen's Presentation on the Eucharist: The Family Meal part 1](#) (16:35). At the end of part 1, parents are prompted to watch a youtube video on  [What Happens During Mass](#) (5:31). Once you finish watching the video, please continue to  [Christen's Presentation on the Eucharist: The Family Meal part 2](#) (5:57).

Parent Questions to Ponder during the videos:

1. What is the most memorable dinner (or meal time experience) you've ever had?
2. What made it so memorable?
3. What is the best Mass you've ever been to? Why?
4. What was the worst Mass you've ever been to? Why?
5. Can the Mass change your life?
6. What does the Mass mean to you? Why?
7. What do you want the Mass to mean for your child(ren)? Why?
8. How can you make the most out of Mass as a family?

Breaking Bread Bible Study

Imagine that you're in the upper room with Jesus and his disciples on Holy Thursday - the day before Jesus was crucified.

Read [Luke 22:7-20](#). Answer the following questions together:

1. Jesus tells his friends to go and prepare everything to celebrate the Passover. What are some ways that you can get your heart ready to celebrate Mass? Why is this preparation important?
2. The Gospel tells us that Jesus "eagerly desired to eat this Passover" with his disciples. Why do you think Jesus was so excited about this meal with his friends? How does it make you feel to know that Jesus is just as excited to meet us in the Eucharist?
3. Jesus takes a loaf of bread and gives thanks, breaks it, and gives it to his disciples saying, "This is my body, which is given up for you." When do we hear these words at Mass?
4. Jesus said that we should "do this in remembrance" of him. What are we remembering every time we celebrate the Eucharist?

Read aloud:

Some ways we can prepare our hearts for Mass are by going to Reconciliation beforehand, fasting an hour before Mass, praying the Rosary, getting to Mass early to take a few extra minutes to pray, or looking at the readings ahead of time to better understand them.

Jesus loved his disciples and wanted to give them the Eucharist as the way that he would always remain close to his friends, even after his death and resurrection.


As Pope Francis tells us in his letter [Desiderio desideravi](#) ("I longed for the desire"):

"We may not even be aware of it, but every time we go to Mass, the first reason is that we are drawn there by his desire for us. For our part, the possible response. . . is, as always, that surrender to this love, that letting ourselves be drawn by him. Indeed, every reception of communion of the Body and Blood of Christ was already desired by him in the Last Supper" (6).

We hear these words, "This is my body, which is given up for you," in the Eucharistic Prayer at Mass. These are known as the words of consecration. They are also called the "words of institution," because with these words, Jesus instituted (or gave us for the first time) the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

When we do this in remembrance of Him, we remember and participate in Jesus' gift of himself on the cross (see [Catechism of the Catholic Church 1323](#) and [1366](#)), where he gave up his body and blood for us. The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross is made present to us in each celebration of the Eucharist.

Practice Receiving Communion

Watch  [Sacraments 101: Eucharist \(how we receive\)](#) to learn or get a refresher on how to receive Communion. Please feel free to practice these motions at home! Students should also be practicing in Awaken classes and in the 2nd grade classes at Incarnation. We will have rehearsal for First Communion on Saturday, April 5th, 2025 at 9am at St. Francis of Assisi and 11am at Incarnation.

Closing Prayer

Sign of the Cross


Lord God, we thank you for this intentional time together on retreat. We know you are present with us each day. As we prepare for our First Communion, help us desire to know you more through our prayer and understanding. Guide us on our journey so that we may be as close to You as possible. Amen.

Our Lady of Light, Pray for us.


Live Jesus in our Hearts, Forever.

Sign of the Cross

Next steps:

1. Complete this [survey](#) to give us feedback on this retreat experience.
2. Complete your First Reconciliation and email  [Jill Irlbeck](#) when you have this completed.
3. Attend Rehearsal on Sat, April 5th, 2025
 - 9am at St. Francis of Assisi
 - 11am at Incarnation
4. Create and bring your banner for your family's pew to your First Communion.
5. Celebrate your First Communion!

Optional Resources:

- [Divine Mercy Chaplet](#) - pray together as a family
- [The Rosary](#) - pray together as a family
- [My First Confession guide](#) - fill out this guide with the help of your examination of conscience and take it with you to your First Reconciliation to help you
- [Mass Reflection Page](#) - prepare for Mass by reflecting over the readings beforehand
- [Spiritual Communion Prayer](#) - pray when you're unable to receive Communion
- [Numbers 6 Blessing](#) - pray over your child daily
-  [Sophia's Introduction to Adoration](#) - watch this video before going to Adoration