

FIRST COMMUNION CELEBRATION

PARENT'S BLESSING: Blessed are you, Lord, our God, ruler of the universe. You have given us holidays and seasons for rejoicing. We thank you for the gift of this springtime season of renewed life, and this Easter season of Resurrected Life. But most especially, we thank you for the gift of reborn life, which we remember now as we light this candle and recall the day when you welcomed us into your family through the waters of Baptism and gave us the gift of your son, Jesus Christ, the Light of the World.

(Light candle at table)

We pray that our (son/daughter), soon to be strengthened through communion, will keep Jesus' light burning within (him/Him) and share that light with others.

WASHING OF HANDS *The First Communicants are now asked to wash the hands of the members of their family who are present as a reminder that at the Last Supper Jesus in washing the feet of the apostles called us all to serve one another.*

PARENT'S BLESSING: Blessed are you, Lord, our God, ruler of the universe, creator of the fruits of the earth! All who are hungry, let them come and eat. All who are in need, let them come and find rest.

RESPONSE (ALL): Blessed are you, Lord, our God, ruler of the universe, you give us our lives overflowing with your gifts, and you bring us to the Banquet Table and offer us your own son, Jesus.

FIRST COMMUNICANT: Why is tonight different from other nights?

PARENT: Tonight we are celebrating your next step in your journey with Jesus. Listen as we hear the story of that first Eucharist once again.

(Reading for the Gospel of Matthew 26:26-30)

Yet this is not the only time when God has shown himself to be with us. Today we remember the long history of God being with us in the big and little events. Let us remember them together.

After each ALL RESPOND: JUST THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN ENOUGH FOR US

- He led us out of Egypt and gave us the Commandments
- He led us into the Promised Land and made us a people dear to himself.
- He remains faithful to us and forgives our sins.
- He gave us our lives.
- He gave us our families.
- He gave us our friends.

- He gave us his only Son.
- His Son gave up his life for us.
- He gave us the Sacraments and Church so we would never be without him.

FIRST COMMUNICANT: Why do we gather around the table with flowers and tablecloth?

PARENT: These remind us that it was God who commanded us to rest on Sundays and worship Him. The tablecloth reminds us that this is a day to celebrate your coming Communion while the flowers and greenery remind us of the gifts of life and of nature which God has given us.

FIRST COMMUNICANT: Why do we eat a sour pickle during this celebration?

PARENT: The pickle taste reminds us that there will be bitter times and suffering during our life. Just as Jesus had to suffer on the cross there will be times when we must suffer for our faith. It is right to remember these times today because it will be through the graces we receive in Communion that God will lead us through those hard times.

FIRST COMMUNICANT: Why do we drink from the fruit of a vine?

PARENT: Jesus told us “I am the vine and you are the branches.” The juice reminds us that just as the individual grapes had to give of themselves to make the one juice, we as a Church must also give of ourselves for the one Body of Christ. It also reminds us of the wine which is offered at Mass that becomes Jesus present for us.

FIRST COMMUNICANT: Why do we eat this unleavened bread?

PARENT: At the Last supper, Jesus celebrated a Passover meal with his apostles and said “Take and eat, this is my Body.” He used unleavened bread at the first Communion and we continue to use this same type of Bread today to help us remember how special it is to receive Him in Communion.

SHARING OF THE FOOD: *The pickle, juice, and bread are now shared by all members of the family.*

BLESSING OF THE PEOPLE

CLOSING PRAYER: (All) Lord, our God, ruler of the universe, remember us, your people. Deliver us from all evil, and make us perfect in your love. Gather us together from the four winds into your kingdom which you have prepared for us. For yours is the power and the glory for ever. Let love come! And may this world of evil pass away! Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus!