

Call to Celebrate Eucharist

Chapter 5-We Prepare

Theme: As we move from the Liturgy of the Word, where we focus on Scripture, we move toward the preparation to receive the Eucharist. We reflect on the meaning of sacrifice, in the context of the sacrifice that our Savior, Jesus Christ, made for us and our offering of the Sacrifice of the Mass through our gifts and being. We begin this movement with the Preparation of the Gifts.

Doctrinal Content

One of the earliest traditions of the Mass is that of Christians providing the bread and wine for the Eucharist. This comes in a rite called the presentation of the gifts. In the Bible, bread was seen as a support for human life. It was absolutely essential. Offering the bread and wine symbolizes the offering of one's self. In the bread and wine, we offer back to God the gifts of creation and the result of our labors. In the early celebrations of the Mass, the "first fruits" were brought to the altar during this rite. Items such as honey, flowers, grains, flax seed, and wine were offered. They were the "fruits of the earth and the work of human hands" as we hear at Mass. The bread and wine at the offertory symbolize our lives as a gift to God. While we now offer a financial contribution as a personal sacrifice along with the bread and wine, the idea is the same; we offer the fruits of our labor as a gift of ourselves to God. God does not need these gifts. We need to grow in self-giving love, and this is one way we can unite our lives to him. These small offerings help us to grow in sacrificial love. What gives these gifts value is that we unite them with Christ's perfect sacrifice.



Parent/Child Activity

1. Start with a prayer of thanksgiving:
Jesus, thank you for the gift of each other and the time we have together. Help us to grow in your love, so that we can serve you and others with a big heart. Help us not to worry about what has to be done or finished before tomorrow. Let us rest in you. Amen.
2. Read the Mass for Children booklet pages 15-17.
3. Read the pamphlet called *The Story of Bread* that was sent home with your child, together, and then do the survey sheet.