

# Eucharist Parent Orientation

## Goals

- To welcome parents and families in a hospitable environment
- To affirm the importance of parental and family participation in the process
- To introduce parents and families to the **Call to Celebrate: Eucharist** program
- To inform parents and families about the parish policies and procedures relating to the celebration of First Communion

## Environment

- Be sure to clearly identify the meeting place, posting clear directions if necessary.
- Tables and chairs arranged for small groups
- A prayer setting with large candle, Bible on a stand or table, clear bowl filled with water, and a branch or other instrument for sprinkling

## Materials

- Beverages and light refreshments
- Nametags
- Copies of **Call to Celebrate: Eucharist Family Guide** and *Child's Book*
- *Songs of Celebration* CD
- *Eucharist Stories of Celebration* video and guide
- Copies of the following from [www.osvcurriculum.com](http://www.osvcurriculum.com):
  - **Eucharist Parent Orientation Handouts 1 and 2**
  - "Celebrating Rituals at Home—Letter"
  - **At Home Ritual Preparation Handouts 1–8**

## Welcome and Opening Prayer

**Welcome** parents and other adults and distribute nametags.

**Introduce** yourself and briefly review the goals and agenda for the gathering.

**Gather** the group around the prayer setting or have them pause for a reflective moment.

**Begin** the prayer by singing or listening to "Yes Lord, I Believe!" from the *Songs of Celebration* CD, track 7.

**Light** the candle and lead parents in the following reflection. Pause after each question:

- *Recall your own First Communion day.*
- *Where was it? Who was there?*
- *Can you recall any significant things that happened that day?*
- *Do you remember any feelings you may have had during the ceremony?*
- *How were you prepared for the event?*
- *Was there any thing that stood out for you as memorable about your preparation or celebration?*

**Invite** parents and family members to share with one or two other persons any significant memories they may have of their own First Communion.

**Call** the group back together. Ask the parents and family members to stand. Lead the parents and family members in the Parent's Prayer (from **Eucharist Parent Orientation Handout 1**).

## View Video

**Show** Parts 1 and 2 of the *Eucharist Stories of Celebration* video.

**Use** the questions in the video guide for discussion.

**Break** for refreshments and conversation.

## The Call to Celebrate: Eucharist Program

**Distribute** the *Child's Book* and walk the parents through the Table of Contents.

**Point out** that the program:

- introduces the child to an understanding of the Eucharist (Mass).
- is a preparation for a lifetime of celebrating God's gifts, especially the gift of his Son, Jesus.
- introduces children to the Sacrament of Eucharist through its rituals and prayers.

**Use** one chapter of the *Child's Book* to show parents and family members the process of a session:

### Celebrate

- celebration and reflection

### Remember

- proclamation and breaking open the Scripture reading
- understanding the doctrine
- learning about the ritual action of the sacrament

## Live

- making connections to their lives and their families

**Highlight** the three Faith at Home features in the *Child's Book*.

**Emphasize** the importance of doing the activities on the Faith at Home page, especially the ritual action.

**Describe** the **Call to Celebrate: Eucharist Family Guide** using one of the two implementation models below.

### \* For programs where the catechesis is done in a group with a catechist and includes family support

**Distribute** the **Call to Celebrate: Eucharist Family Guide**. Point out the difference in the two parts of the guide:

- the first part is for parents and family members to use for their own reflections on community of faith, listening to the word, and the Bread of Life.
- the second part is for those who will be doing the child's preparation at home.

**Mention** the availability of the *Songs of Celebration* CD, which will enhance their time with the child and support the children's learning.

**Emphasize** that this time of assisting the child and using the *Family Guide* is an opportunity for parents and family members to grow in their own relationship with God and understanding the meaning of the Eucharist.

**Distribute** Eucharist Parent Orientation Handout 2 and go through the frequently asked questions with parents. Answer any other questions parents or family members may have.

**Go** to Parish Policies and Procedures.

### \* For programs where the catechesis is done in the home

**Distribute** the **Call to Celebrate: Eucharist Family Guide**. Point out the difference in the two parts of the guide:

- the first part is for parents and family members to use for their own reflections on community of faith, listening to the word, and the Bread of Life.

- the second part is to help these parents and family members to conduct the sessions at home.

**Go** through one session of the *Family Guide* and show parents and family members how to use the outline. Point out:

- the parent background essay, an important piece to understanding what the session is about.
- the easy to follow overview.
- the People of Faith story for each session and the significance of telling these stories to children so they can hear and visualize how others lived out their baptismal call.

**Emphasize** how essential the ritual prayer is to the session. Go through the prayer as it is written in the session, and talk about ways to prepare a prayer space and environment at home.

**Distribute** Eucharist Parent Orientation Handout 2, "Celebrating Rituals at Home—Letter," and At Home Ritual Preparation Handouts 1–8.

## Parish Policies and Procedures

**Explain** the commitment the parish expects of parents and family members for this preparation.

**Distribute** appropriate schedules or calendars.

## Closing Prayer

**Gather** the parents and family members in a circular grouping around the prayer space and pray together.

**Begin** with the Sign of the Cross.

*Let us call to mind the goodness of God who gives us all good things. I bless you with this water to remind you of your baptism and your call to hand on the faith. (Sprinkle the group with water.)*

**Sing** "Yes Lord, I Believe!" from the *Songs of Celebration* CD, track 7.

*Let us join in the prayer that Jesus has taught us.*

**Pray** the Lord's Prayer together.



**Encourage** parents and family members to go to [www.osvcurriculum.com](http://www.osvcurriculum.com) for more ideas and suggestions.