

## PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR FIRST EUCHARIST

- **REAL PRESENCE OF JESUS IN THE EUCHARIST**
  - Read together the story of the Last Supper in Matthew 27:17-30.
  - Remind your child that the bread and wine are not just symbols. While they still look like bread and wine, they become the Real Presence of Jesus. We don't exactly know how the bread and wine become the Real Presence; it is a mystery that we think about. We believe it happens, though, because Jesus said, "Take my body...Take my blood..."
- **EUCHARIST FAST**
  - To prepare our bodies, minds, and hearts to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, we fast from food and liquids (except water) for at least one hour before receiving Eucharist.
- **CHURCH MANNERS** – *Just as we behave in certain ways at school, we behave in a certain way at church.*
  - Entering church...
    - Go to the baptismal font, dip your fingertips in the holy water, and make the Sign of the Cross. We do this to remind ourselves of our Baptism, that we are children of God and members of the Body of Christ.
    - Genuflect to the Blessed Sacrament as you enter the pew.
  - During the Mass...
    - It is important for us to participate in the entire Mass, from the opening procession to the closing song.
    - We need to be present for all of the parts of the Mass, especially the readings and the entire Eucharistic Prayer (after the Presentation of the Gifts/the collection to Eucharist). [*Have your child use the restroom before Mass begins so that s/he can be present through the entire Mass.*]
    - We participate in all of the parts of the Mass joyfully and reverently.
      - Our joy comes from the gift of Jesus we receive in the Word and Eucharist.
      - We show reverence by acting thoughtfully, not talking through the Mass, walking slowly, participating in the prayers and responses of the Mass, and being respectful of the people around us.
- **RECEIVING HOLY EUCHARIST**
  - Use a small cracker or piece of bread and a cup of juice or water.
  - Prepare your hands – Make a throne for Jesus.
    - Hold out your eating hand (the one with which you hold a fork), palm up.
    - Place your other hand, palm up, on your eating hand.
    - Cup your hands slightly to receive the Body of Christ.
  - Receiving the Body of Christ.
    - When the Extraordinary Minister of Eucharist (EMC) says, "The Body of Christ," you respond, "Amen."
    - The EMC will place the Body of Christ on your top palm.
    - Using your eating hand, pick up the Body of Christ with your fingertips, and place it in your mouth.
  - Receiving the Blood of Christ.
    - The EMC says, "The Blood of Christ," and you respond, "Amen."
    - The EMC will hand you the cup.
    - Hold the cup firmly with both hands and tip it to your lips to take a small sip.
    - Hand the cup back to the EMC and return to your seat to kneel and join in singing the Communion Song.