

# The Sacrament of the Eucharist



*Forming Christ-centred pilgrims of hope with kind hearts,  
questioning minds, a thirst for knowledge and a hunger for justice*

*A pastoral note*

Catechists should keep all discussion and reflection gentle and age appropriate.

# Jesus Feeds Us

## Session overview:

- Jesus gives Himself to us as spiritual food.
- The Eucharist helps us grow in love and stay close to Him.
- The Eucharist is a gift of Jesus' presence.

## Direct knowledge statement for pupils:

- **In the Sacrament of the Eucharist, we receive Jesus who helps us grow in love**

### Unlock the theme

Show a piece of bread.

Ask:

- Why do we need food every day?
- What happens if we don't eat?
- Can love and friendship need 'nourishment' too?
- Where in the Bible does Jesus share a meal with others?

### Proclaim scripture

**John 6:1-14 — Feeding of the Five Thousand**

Pause after reading.

Say:

'Jesus gives people what they need, not just food for their bodies, but food for their hearts.'

### Discussion prompts

Use some of these questions gently rather than as a rapid-fire quiz:

1. Why did Jesus feed the crowd?
2. What does this tell us about how Jesus cares for people?
3. What kind of 'hunger' do people have besides food?
4. How might Jesus help us grow stronger inside?
5. What do you think it means that Jesus gives Himself to us?

### Quick activity

Give each child a paper loaf or plate.

Invite them to write or draw: "What helps me grow in love?" Place them around a prayer focus.

Say quietly: 'In the Sacrament of the Eucharist, we receive Jesus who helps us grow in love'

### Prayer

Jesus, Bread of Life,  
thank you for loving me.  
Help me to grow closer to You.  
Feed my heart with Your love.  
Amen.

Repeat the direct knowledge statement together.

## Teacher Notes

This session introduces the Eucharist as gift and nourishment, not obligation. Children already understand physical hunger; this becomes a bridge to spiritual hunger.

Avoid overly abstract theology. Focus on:

- Jesus provides
- Jesus cares
- Jesus gives Himself

The key message: the Eucharist helps us grow in love.

### How this is seen in the Eucharist

- We come to Mass because we want to grow closer to Jesus
- The Eucharist feeds our hearts
- Receiving the Eucharist helps us grow in love
- Jesus stays close to us through this sacrament

# The Last Supper

## Session overview:

- Jesus gave us the Eucharist at the Last Supper and he fulfilled it on the cross.
- Bread and wine become His Body and Blood.
- The Mass continues what Jesus began.

## Direct knowledge statement for pupils:

- **At the Last Supper, Jesus gave us Himself in the Eucharist.**

### Unlock the theme

Show a table setting.

Ask:

- What makes a meal special?
- Why do people gather to eat together?

### Proclaim scripture

### Luke 22:14-20 The Last Supper

After proclaiming the passage, pause.

Say: 'Jesus wanted to stay with His friends, so He gave them a special way to remember Him.'

### Discussion prompts

Use some of these questions gently rather than as a rapid-fire quiz:

1. What did Jesus say about the bread?
2. What did He say about the chalice?
3. Why do you think this moment is important?
4. How is the Mass like the Last Supper?
5. What does this teach us about Jesus' love?
6. How do you think you might feel if you had been there at the Last Supper?

### Quick activity

Children draw a simple Last Supper scene or chalice and host.

Say quietly: 'At every Mass, we share in what Jesus did at the Last Supper.'

### Prayer

Jesus, Saviour of the World,  
Thank you for giving Yourself to us.  
Help me to remember Your love.  
Amen.

Repeat the direct knowledge statement together.

## Teacher Notes

This session is foundational. Keep language simple: avoid transubstantiation explanations

Emphasise:

- Jesus gives Himself
- This still happens at Mass

How this is seen in the Eucharist

- The priest repeats Jesus' words
- Bread and wine become Jesus
- The Mass makes the Last Supper present

# Jesus is truly present

## Session overview:

- Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist.
- We receive Him with reverence and love.

## Direct knowledge statement for pupils:

- **In the Eucharist, Jesus is truly present**

### Unlock the theme

Show a wrapped gift (with the name of Jesus or an image of Jesus inside)

Ask:

- What do you think is inside?
- Can something be real even if we cannot see it fully?

### Proclaim scripture

**Luke 24:13-35 Road to Emmaus**

After proclaiming the passage, pause.

Say: Jesus was truly present, even when they did not recognise Him at first.

### Discussion prompts

Use some of these questions gently rather than as a rapid-fire quiz:

- Why didn't the disciples recognise Jesus straight away?
- When did they finally recognise Him?
- How do you think they felt when they realised it was Jesus?
- Have you ever realised something important after not noticing it at first?
- How can we recognise Jesus today?

### Quick activity

Create a calm, prayerful space.

Invite children to sit quietly, close their eyes, and place their hands together.

Say slowly:

- *"Imagine Jesus is with you right now."*
- *"He is close to you. He knows you. He loves you."*

Then offer the reflection prayer: "Jesus, help me to recognise You."

Allow silence for a short time.

Encourage children to repeat the prayer quietly in their hearts.

### Prayer

Jesus, King of Eternal Glory,  
You are with me  
even when I cannot see You.  
Help me to recognise You  
and believe You are truly here.  
Come into my heart  
when I receive You.  
Stay with me, Jesus,  
and help me to love You.  
Amen.

Repeat the direct knowledge statement together.

## Teacher Notes

- Keep the focus on the presence of Jesus, not explanation. Avoid abstract theological language.
- Children understand mystery best through relationship, story, and experience, rather than technical definitions.
- The Emmaus story is key: it shows that recognition grows through encounter.
- Emphasise that Jesus being present is something we trust and respond to,
- Silence and stillness are important in this session, allow space for wonder.

### How This Is Seen (Lived Response)

Help children connect belief to action:

- We receive the Eucharist carefully and respectfully
- We approach quietly and thoughtfully
- We say “Amen” because we believe Jesus is truly present
- We treat this moment as special because we are receiving Jesus Himself

You might ask:

- *What does “Amen” mean?* (Answer: *I believe / Yes, it is true*)

Encourage them:

- Saying “Amen” is like saying, *“Yes, I believe this is really You, Jesus.”*

# Preparing our Hearts

## Session overview:

- We prepare to receive Jesus with love, reverence, and care.
- Preparing for the Sacrament of the Eucharist is not just about what we do outwardly, but how we are inwardly.
- We come to Jesus with hearts that are ready, open, and turned towards Him.
- This session helps children understand that preparation is about building relationships and getting ready to welcome someone they love.

## Direct knowledge statement for pupils:

- **We prepare our hearts to receive Jesus in the Eucharist.**

### Unlock the theme

Imagine a very special guest will be arriving at your home shortly:

Ask:

- *What would you do to get ready?*
- *Would you tidy up? Prepare something? Get yourself ready?*

### Proclaim scripture

### Matthew 6:7-15 The Our Father

After proclaiming the passage, pause.

Say: *"Jesus teaches us this prayer so we can know how to speak to God and prepare our hearts."*

### Discussion prompts

Use some of these questions gently rather than as a rapid-fire quiz:

- What do you think it means to have a "ready heart"?
- How can we show reverence when we are in church?
- Why is it important to prepare before receiving Jesus?
- What does Jesus teach us about forgiveness in the Our Father prayer?
- What helps you feel close to God?
- What helps you feel close to others?

### Quick activity

Invite children to reflect quietly.

You might say:

- *Think of one thing you can do to prepare your heart for Jesus.*

Then offer a short silent prayer:

- *"Jesus, make my heart ready for You."*

Children can repeat this quietly in their hearts.

### Prayer

Jesus, Son of God  
 help me to get ready for You  
 with a quiet and loving heart.  
 I am sorry for the times I have done wrong.  
 Please forgive me.  
 Help me to pray  
 and welcome You with love.  
 Jesus, make my heart ready for You.  
 Amen.

Repeat the direct knowledge statement together.

## Teacher Notes

- Strongly connect this session to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Emphasise that preparation is spiritual, not just practical.
- Children should understand that:
  - We prepare by praying
  - We prepare by being reverent
  - We prepare by being sorry when needed
- Focus on meaning and relationship.
- Help children see preparation as a loving response.

The suggested Act of Contrition could also be prayed to strengthen the connection to the Sacrament of Reconciliation:

O my God,  
because you are so good,  
I am very sorry that I have sinned against you,  
and with the help of your grace I will not sin again.

### How This Is Seen (Lived Response)

Help children connect belief to action:

- We are quiet and respectful in church
- We pray before receiving the Eucharist
- We follow fasting in a simple and understanding way (one hour before receiving the Eucharist)
- We say sorry to God and try to choose what is right
- We come forward with a calm and ready heart

You might ask:

- *How can your actions show that your heart is ready?*

Encourage responses that connect outward behaviour with inward readiness.

# Receiving the Eucharist

## Session overview:

- We learn how to receive the Eucharist with reverence and confidence.
- We understand what to do and what to say when we receive Jesus.
- We respond with “Amen”, showing that we believe Jesus is truly present.
- This session helps children feel calm, prepared, and ready for this special moment.

## Direct knowledge statement for pupils:

**When we receive the Eucharist, we say “Amen” because it truly is Jesus.**

### Unlock the theme

Show images, e.g. baking a cake, practising football skills

Ask:

- *Have you ever practised something before doing it for real?*
- Why is it helpful to practice?

### Proclaim scripture

**Matthew 8:5-8** The Centurion's Servant

After proclaiming the passage, pause.

Say:

- The centurion shows humility and trust.
- We use his words at Mass to help prepare our hearts before receiving Jesus.

### Discussion Prompts

- Why do you think the centurion felt unworthy?
- What does his trust in Jesus show us?
- How do we feel before receiving Jesus?
- What helps us feel calm and ready?

### Quick activity

- Walk forward calmly and quietly
- Bow your head as a sign of respect
- Hold out your hands or alternatively, the Eucharist may be received on the tongue
- Listen: *“The Body of Christ”*
- Respond clearly: “Amen”
- Receive carefully and return quietly

### Prayer

“Jesus, help me to come to You with trust and love.  
Amen.”

Repeat the direct knowledge statement together.

## Teacher Notes

- Reduce anxiety by showing physically what to do.
- Walk through the process step-by-step and allow repetition.
- Use calm reassurance:
  - There is no rush
  - It is okay to practise with unconsecrated hosts
  - Everyone is learning together
- Strongly connect to the words of the Centurion's prayer used at Mass.
- You may also introduce the prayer: *"O Sacrament Most Holy, O Sacrament Divine, all praise and all thanksgiving be every moment Thine."*
- Emphasise:
  - Jesus comes to us with love
  - We respond with trust, not fear

## How This Is Seen (Lived Response)

Help children connect belief to action:

- We walk calmly and respectfully
- We bow as a sign of reverence just before receiving the Eucharist
- We respond clearly: "Amen"
- We receive carefully and thoughtfully
- We return quietly to our place

You might ask:

- *How can your actions show that you believe Jesus is truly present?*

Encourage simple, thoughtful answers.

# Living as people of the Eucharist

## Session overview:

- *The Eucharist is not the end, and the Body of Christ which remains is placed in the tabernacle in church for private prayer or for taking the Eucharist to people who are sick at home or in hospital*
- *The Eucharist sends us out to share Jesus' Good News with others.*
- *Jesus gives Himself to us so that we can love like Him.*
- *We are called to live differently because we have received Jesus.*
- *This session helps children understand that the Eucharist is the beginning of how we live each day.*

## Direct knowledge statement for pupils:

- **Jesus helps us love others through the Eucharist.**

### Unlock the theme

Ask:

- *What happens after we receive a gift?*
- *Do we keep it to ourselves, or does it change how we act?*

### Proclaim scripture

**Matthew 25:35-40** The Judgment of the Nations

After proclaiming the passage, pause.

Say: "When we show love, kindness, and care to others, especially those in need, we are loving Jesus himself.

Through the Eucharist, we receive the grace and strength to love others in this way."

### Discussion prompts

Use some of these questions gently rather than as a rapid-fire quiz:

1. Who are the people Jesus is asking us to care for?
2. What are some ways we can show love to others?
3. How can receiving Jesus help us be kinder?
4. How do you feel when you help someone?

### Quick activity

Create a simple "pathway" on the floor or board.

Along the pathway, place actions such as:

- Helping someone
- Sharing
- Forgiving
- Being kind
- Including others
- Praying

Invite children to:

- Walk along the pathway
- Choose one action they will try this week

You may say:

- *"This is how we live as people of the Eucharist."*

### Prayer

Jesus, help me to love others as You love me. Amen.

Repeat the direct knowledge statement together.

## Teacher Notes

Emphasise that the Eucharist is not the end, it is the beginning.

Help children understand:

- We are sent out after Mass
- We carry Jesus into our daily lives

Keep the focus on:

- Action
- Relationship
- Living differently

Focus on small, real acts of love. (Saint Thérèse of Lisieux is known for her 'Little Way' of doing small everyday acts of love for God.

Reinforce that Jesus helps us; we are not doing this alone.

Help children connect belief to action:

- We go out to love others
- We make kind and caring choices
- We forgive and include others
- We live differently because we have received Jesus
- We stay close to Jesus through prayer

You might ask:

- *What is one way you can show Jesus' love this week?* Encourage simple, practical answers.