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Your First Communion



God, our loving Father,
thank you for all the ways you bless me.
Help me to be aware that every person,
place, and adventure I experience is an
opportunity to love you more.
Fill me with a desire to change and to grow,
and give me the grace to become
the-best-version-of-myself in
every moment of every day.

Amen.

This Is a Special Day

Have you ever been excited to give someone a gift? Maybe it was at Christmas or perhaps it was for someone's birthday. When you're really excited to give someone a gift, it's hard to keep that gift a secret. It's even harder to wait until the day of celebration to give the gift. It might feel like you're about to burst because you're so excited!

This is how God the Father feels when he thinks about giving you Jesus in the Eucharist. He knows how special this gift is, and he can hardly wait to share it with you.

Your First Communion is a very special day. You are blessed!



On the morning of your First Communion, before you get dressed, before you receive any gifts, before you even have breakfast, begin the day quietly with God in prayer. Let's practice together now:

**Loving Father, thank you for blessing me in so many ways.
Jesus, I am looking forward to receiving you in the Eucharist
for the very first time. Holy Spirit, help me to pay attention
and make the most of this fabulous day.**

Amen.

This is a very special day. You will remember your First Communion for the rest of your life. You are blessed!



You're Growing Up

When you think about all the things you can do today that you could not do one, two, or three years ago, you realize that you are growing up quickly.

One of the most significant signs that you are growing up is your ability to take responsibility for your own actions.

You are able to follow directions. For example, when parents or teachers ask you to do something, you are able to understand what they are asking and do it.

You are able to control your impulses. For example, when your brother or sister does something to upset you, you are able to control your anger. And you are able to listen to and follow your conscience. For instance, if a friend asks you to do something that

is wrong you will hear your conscience advising you not to do it—and you are able to say no to your friend.

The Church chooses this time in your life to share the Eucharist with you because you have reached the age of reason. When we reach the age of reason we are able to determine the difference between right and wrong and take responsibility for our actions.

You are ready to say yes to God. You are ready to say no to anything that does not help you become the-best-version-of-yourself. You are ready to walk with God, and you are ready to receive Jesus in the Eucharist.



Preparation Matters

When you were preparing for your First Reconciliation we talked about how important preparation is. We Catholics prepare for everything that is important.

Just as great athletes prepare every time they compete, Catholics prepare for the biggest moments in life. The great champions of our faith are the saints. They are all masters at preparation. The saints teach us how to prepare to receive Jesus in the Eucharist.

You are preparing for your First Communion, but it is important to prepare every time we receive Jesus in the Eucharist. We do this with prayer and fasting.

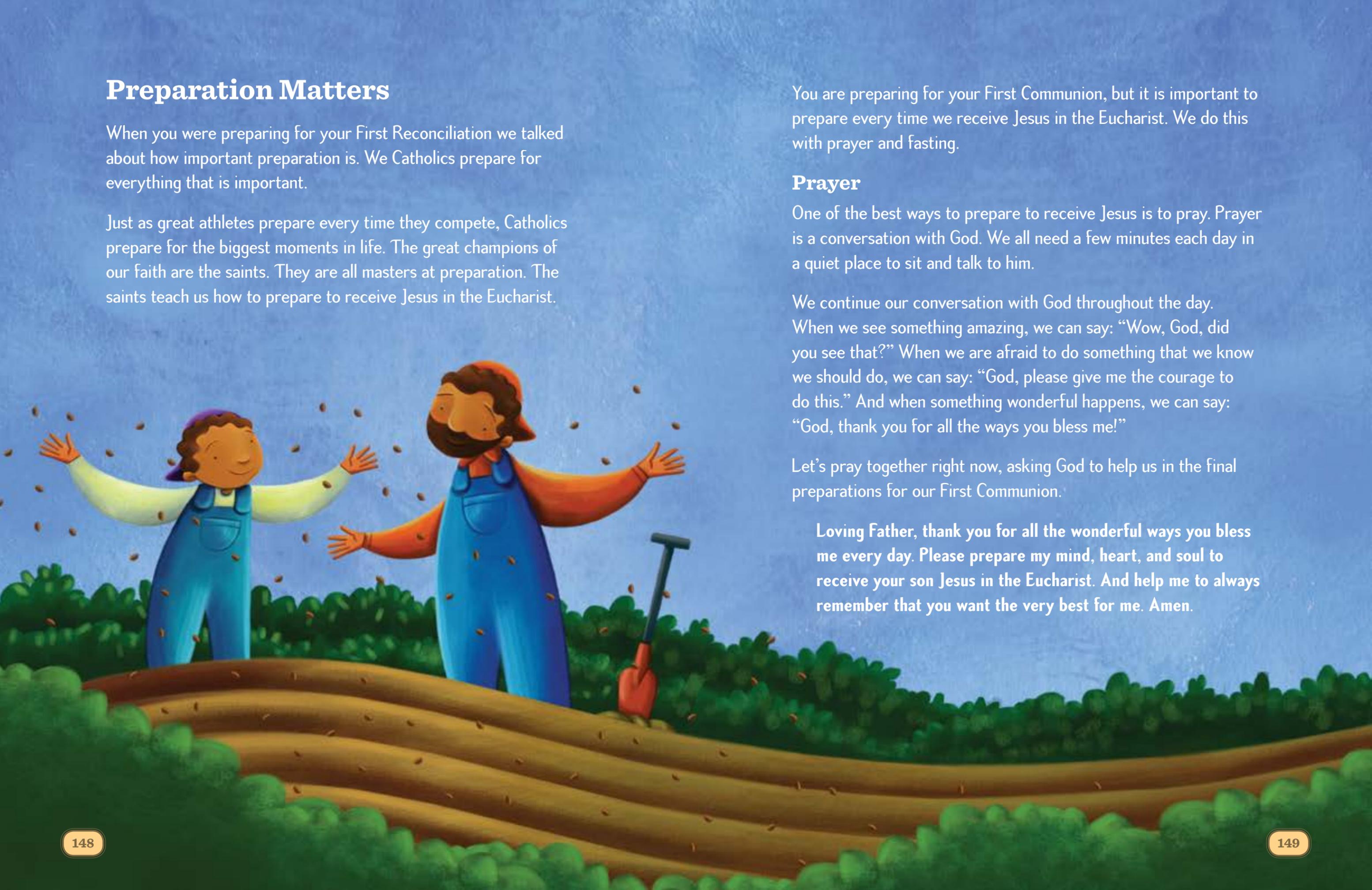
Prayer

One of the best ways to prepare to receive Jesus is to pray. Prayer is a conversation with God. We all need a few minutes each day in a quiet place to sit and talk to him.

We continue our conversation with God throughout the day. When we see something amazing, we can say: “Wow, God, did you see that?” When we are afraid to do something that we know we should do, we can say: “God, please give me the courage to do this.” And when something wonderful happens, we can say: “God, thank you for all the ways you bless me!”

Let’s pray together right now, asking God to help us in the final preparations for our First Communion.

Loving Father, thank you for all the wonderful ways you bless me every day. Please prepare my mind, heart, and soul to receive your son Jesus in the Eucharist. And help me to always remember that you want the very best for me. Amen.





Fasting

Another way we prepare to receive Jesus in the Eucharist is by abstaining from food for one hour before Mass. What does abstaining mean? It means going without. That's right, we don't eat or drink anything except water for one hour before Mass.

Fasting has played an important role in helping people grow spiritually for thousands of years. Our Jewish ancestors fasted to say sorry to God for their sins, to prepare for important events, and they fasted so they could see God's will more clearly. And Jesus went into the desert and fasted for forty days to prepare for his mission.

When you are an adult, the Church will invite you to fast on certain days, like Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Right now, the Church invites you to fast for one hour before Mass.

Fasting makes us more mindful of God's presence. It reminds us of how dependent we are on God and helps us to hear his voice more clearly. Fasting reminds us of our spiritual hunger. It helps us grow closer to God.

Receiving Jesus in the Eucharist is an awesome privilege. We prepare with prayer and fasting.

Prayer, fasting, and receiving Jesus in the Eucharist all help us to become more perfectly the person God created us to be, to grow in virtue, and to live holy lives.

The Eucharist Empowers Us to Do Great Things

The Eucharist empowers us to do great things for God. For two thousand years Christians have been doing wonderful things.

The first Christians changed the world by showing everyone how to live in loving community. By setting aside selfishness and loving each other they became great witnesses to God's love and fulfilled Jesus' vision: "Everyone will know you are my disciples if you love one another" (John 13:35).

The Eucharist empowered the saints to do great things for God too. It inspired and empowered St. Ignatius of Loyola to create schools and universities.

St. Teresa of Calcutta used to sit before the Eucharist for an hour each day just talking to Jesus. It gave her the strength and courage to care for the poorest of the poor.

Jesus in the Eucharist gave St. Francis of Assisi the strength to rebuild the Church and the wisdom to help men, women, and children grow spiritually.

St. Thérèse of Lisieux received power from the Eucharist to do little things every day with great love.

The Eucharist gave St. Thomas Aquinas the ability to write great books that helped people discover the genius of the Catholic faith.

God has been using the Eucharist to empower people to do great things for two thousand years. I am so excited to see what the Eucharist empowers you to do with your life.



From the Bible: The Visitation

When Mary was pregnant with Jesus, she went to visit her cousin Elizabeth, who was pregnant with John the Baptist. As soon as Mary arrived at Elizabeth's house, baby John heard the voice of Mary and leapt with joy.

Elizabeth felt John dancing in her womb and the Holy Spirit helped her to say these now famous words: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy" (Luke 1:42–44).

Mary then stayed with Elizabeth for three months before returning home.

Jesus was in Mary's womb. That's why the baby John danced for joy. He was so excited to be in Jesus' presence.

When you go to church there is usually a little red light on next to the tabernacle. This light means that Jesus is in the tabernacle. Mary was the first tabernacle; Jesus was inside her.

After you receive the Eucharist, Jesus will be in you. This should bring you great joy.

With Jesus alive within us, we are each called to go out into the world as his ambassadors and disciples. You can do this by being kind and generous. You can do it by living a holy life. You can do it by encouraging people.

God is sending you on a mission to bring his love to the world.



Your First but Not Your Last

This is your first but not your last Communion. Every Sunday when you go to Mass you can receive Jesus in the Eucharist. And if you are fortunate enough to go during the week for any reason, you can receive the Eucharist more than once a week. In fact, there are some people who go to Mass every day.

I want to encourage you to receive the Eucharist as often as you can, because the Eucharist fills us with the wisdom and courage to become the-best-version-of-ourselves, to grow in virtue, and to live the fabulous holy lives God wants us to live.

Just as we need to feed the body to give it the nourishment and energy it needs, we need to feed the soul too. We feed the soul with prayer, reading the Bible, and of course with the Eucharist, the ultimate food for the soul.

The Eucharist is a great blessing. You are blessed.

For the rest of your life you will have an open invitation to God's great banquet. God is the most generous host who has ever lived. He will never stop inviting you to share in this great celebration and he will never run out of food to nourish your soul.

There may be times when you wander away from God. But God will never stop calling you. He will never stop searching for you. God will never stop encouraging you to become the-best-version-of-yourself, grow in virtue, and live a holy life.

You are blessed.



Show What You Know

True or False

1. ____ Your First Communion is a very special day.
2. ____ You are not ready to walk with God, and you are not ready to receive Jesus in the Eucharist.
3. ____ Prayer doesn't help us prepare to receive Jesus in the Eucharist.
4. ____ Fasting makes us mindful of God's presence.
5. ____ For the rest of your life you will have an open invitation to God's great banquet.

Fill in the blank

1. God the Father is so _____ when he thinks about giving you Jesus in the Eucharist.
2. The Church chooses this time in your life to share the _____ with you because you have reached the age of reason.
3. We _____ for everything that is important.
4. The great champions of our faith are the _____.
5. Prayer is a _____ with God.



6. Fasting helps us to grow _____ to God.
7. The Eucharist fills us with the _____ and _____ to become the- best-version-of- ourselves, to grow in virtue, and to live a holy lives.
8. The Eucharist empowers us to do _____ things for God.
9. After you receive the Eucharist, _____ will be in you.
10. God is sending you on a _____ to bring his love to the world.

Word Bank

GREAT EUCARIST CONVERSATION WISDOM MISSION
JESUS EXCITED COURAGE CLOSER PREPARE SAINTS

Journal with Jesus

Dear Jesus,

I hope receiving you in the Eucharist inspires me to . . .



Closing Prayer

Throughout the Gospels we hear about Jesus performing incredible miracles. He made the lame walk and the blind see, fed the hungry, and even raised Lazarus from the dead.

Jesus has the power to transform everyone he comes into contact with. Sometimes that transformation comes in a single moment, but most of the time that transformation happens slowly over our lifetime.

If you stay close to Jesus in the Eucharist, the power of God will do incredible things in your life too. The Eucharist will open the eyes of your soul and cure it of selfishness and blindness, so you can love generously.

Let's pray together now:

**My Lord and my God,
I firmly believe that you are present in the Eucharist.
Take the blindness from my eyes,
So that I can see all people and things as you see them.
Take the deafness from my ears,
So that I can hear your truth and follow it.
Take the hardness from my heart,
So that I can live and love generously.
Give me the grace to receive
the Eucharist with humility,
So that you can transform me a little more each day
into the person you created me to be.**

Amen.

