

Receive the Lord

Teaching Plan

Teaching Tips

Ahead of introducing *Receive the Lord* to the children, take time to familiarize yourself with the contents. Review this handout and how it correlates to the children's resource.

The resource is designed for children to interact with. Have the children follow along as you read aloud, and engage them in hands-on interaction with the resource, as suggested in the teaching steps below.

Background

Since we receive Jesus sacramentally in the celebration of the Eucharist, learning about the Mass is foundational to First Communion preparation. In many Catholic parishes, it's traditional for children preparing for the sacrament to make banners as keepsakes of this important day. But First Communion signs and banners can also serve as tactile learning tools, as children work with images of bread, wheat, grapes, and other elements of the Eucharistic feast.

While this booklet explains the images used in typical First Communion banners, you do not necessarily have to make one to get use out of it. Using the Mass as a framework, it explains in concrete terms the objects, symbols, signs, gestures, readings, and prayers that form our celebration of the Eucharist. Encourage children to look for these each time they go to Mass.

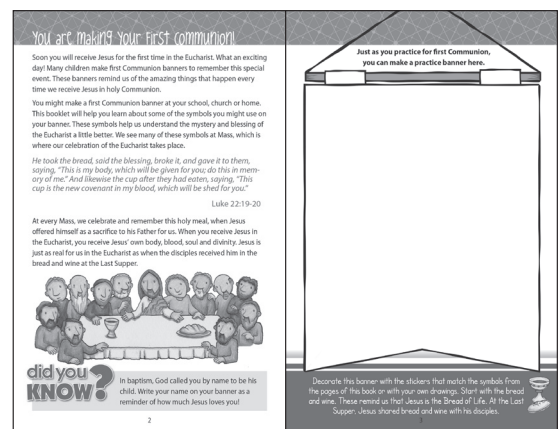
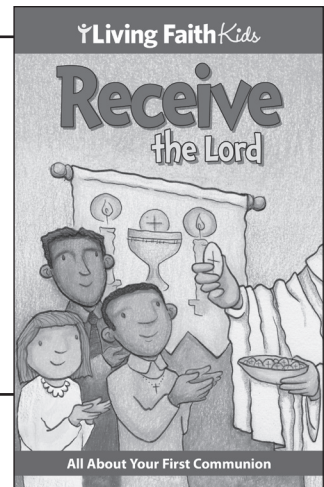
Opening Prayer

Begin your lessons with prayer. Use the following or modify it each time you pray it with the group.

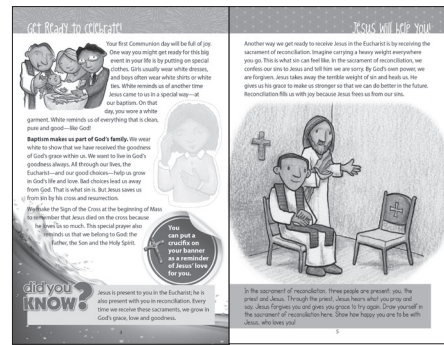
Loving God, because you love us so much, you gave us the gift of your Son, Jesus. As we prepare to receive him in Holy Communion, help us to love and serve each other as Jesus does. Amen.

Teaching Steps

Page(s)	
COVER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct the children to look at the cover of their booklets. Read the title aloud: <i>Receive the Lord</i>. Ask, <i>How are these children receiving the Lord?</i> (In the Eucharist, which is truly the Body of Christ.) • Discuss the art. Say, <i>What can you see in this picture? What can you not see?</i> (Jesus' Real Presence in the Eucharist). Explain that we will learn more about what we can see, touch, taste, smell, and hear at Mass. But we will also learn about all that we cannot see as we receive the Lord.
2-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read aloud the header on page 2. Announce the date, if you know it, for the children's First Communion, and discuss what an exciting day that will be. • Read each paragraph on page 2. Whether or not you are making an actual banner, focus on the "amazing things" children will learn about in this booklet. • Note the circular red sticker icon with the crucifix. These sticker icons appear throughout the booklet as cues to place a sticker on the banner on page 3. • Read the "Did you know?" text. Before the children write their names on the banner, explain that they will be adding many stickers to it, so they should try and leave room for those. • Read the text on the top of page 3 and the directions on the bottom of the banner activity. Remind the children that they will be placing more stickers on this banner as they learn about each item.



- **Read aloud the header on page 4.** Explain that when something special happens in our lives, we want to be ready so that we can get the most out of it. Ask about the ways children prepare for their First Communion.
- **Read the paragraphs as the children follow along,** emphasizing words such as "joy," "family," and "goodness." If necessary, review how to make the Sign of the Cross.
- **Read the paragraph at the top of page 5 together.** Ask, *Can you imagine carrying a heavy weight around with you all the time? How does Jesus take away the weight of sin from us? How does Reconciliation make us feel?*
- **Read the text in the blue box.** Ask, *How many people are there when we receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation? Who are they?* Have the children draw themselves in the picture.



The following pages describe the parts of the Mass. For each page pair (6-7, 8-9), follow the steps below.

- **Introduce pages by reading the header** and stating in your own words what you will be learning about. For example, on page 6 you might say, *Now we will learn about what happens at the beginning of Mass.*
- **Read each of the paragraphs and when finished,** refer back to your introductory statement. For example, on page 6 you might say, *So what have we learned happens at the beginning of Mass?*
- **Pause occasionally** to ask review and clarifying questions such as:

Page 6: *Why do we call the Gospel "Good News"?*

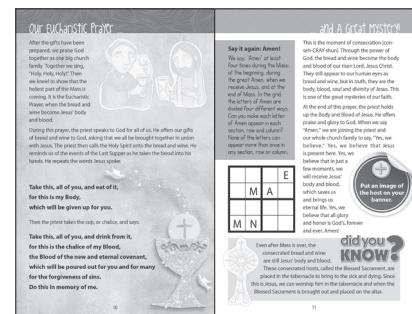
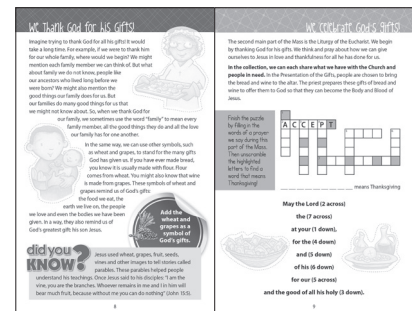
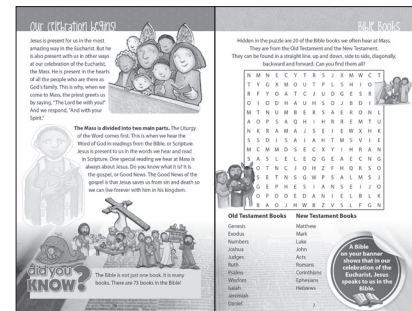
Page 8: *What are the symbols we use to remind us of God's gifts?*

Page 10: *What is the holiest part of the Mass? Why? How can you show God how much you love him during this part of Mass?*

Page 12: *What are some ways we prepare our hearts at this time of the Mass? Who said, "Behold the Lamb of God..."?*

Page 13: *What do we bring to Jesus when we receive him in Holy Communion?*

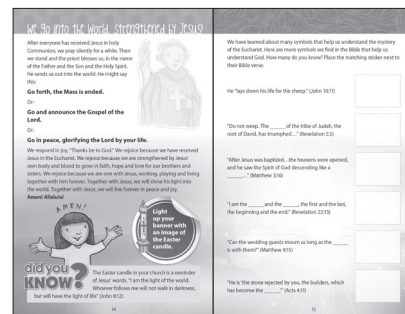
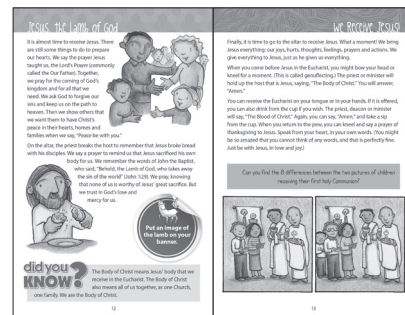
Page 14: *What do you think it means when the priest tells us to "glorify the Lord by your life"? God gives all of us gifts he wants us to share. What special gifts has he given you that he wants you to share?*



- **Offer guidance.** If needed, help the children complete the activities on pages 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15.
- **Pay attention to the red sticker icons** when they appear and have the children place the appropriate sticker on page 3. Help with other sticker placement if needed.
- **Use the “Did you know?” text to extend the lesson** whenever you are able. For example, you might read another of Jesus’ parables, such as the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1–9; 18–23) to show other ways Jesus used familiar things to tell stories (page 8); or if you are able, bring the children to church for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament (page 11).
- **Other Extension ideas:**

Take note of discussions that particularly engage the children, or use the review and clarifying questions to inspire them to draw their impressions. For example, after discussing what we bring to Jesus in Communion, you might have the children draw themselves walking forward to receive the Eucharist at Mass. They might surround their drawings with smaller pictures of all they bring: times they experienced joy or sadness, etc.

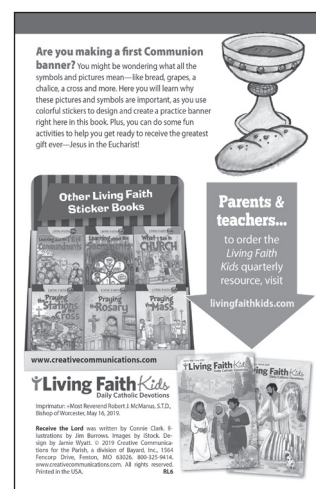
Help the children practice receiving Communion frequently so they can become comfortable with the steps involved.



Closing Prayer

Lead the children in prayer.

Jesus, you are really and truly present in the Eucharist we receive! We love you, we thank you, and we can't wait to receive you. Help us prepare our minds and hearts for this for this great day! Amen.



Living Faith Kids