



**WELCOMING  
CHILDREN  
in WORSHIP**

**THE CATHOLIC  
UNIVERSITY  
OF AMERICA**



**Eucharist**

**May**

# **Adaptive Activities for Children**



**National Catholic  
Partnership on Disability**

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# Introduction

Welcome and thank you for your ministry that serves the liturgical formation of children for their participation in the Eucharist, the “source and summit of the Christian life.” This resource is provided by the Committee on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD). It aims to offer an adaptive catechetical opportunity for all who have a heart for disability ministry to reflect on the liturgical year. We welcome you to this virtual community and hope you find this resource beneficial.

Here you will find reflections to guide children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, or diverse learners, through the current liturgical season with adaptive catechesis to help them to participate fully. Each offering includes prayer, Scripture, activities and more that incorporate the senses and take into consideration the needs of all learners. We invite you to gather children around the table of the home or the table of the classroom as preparation for their participation at the sacred table of the Eucharist.

**Each monthly edition incorporates the following:**

- 1. Prayer**
- 2. Sacred Scripture**
- 3. Reflection**
- 4. Faith in Action**
- 5. Activities**
- 6. Saint**
- 7. Resources/Bibliography**

# Prayer

*Begin with the Sign of the Cross.*

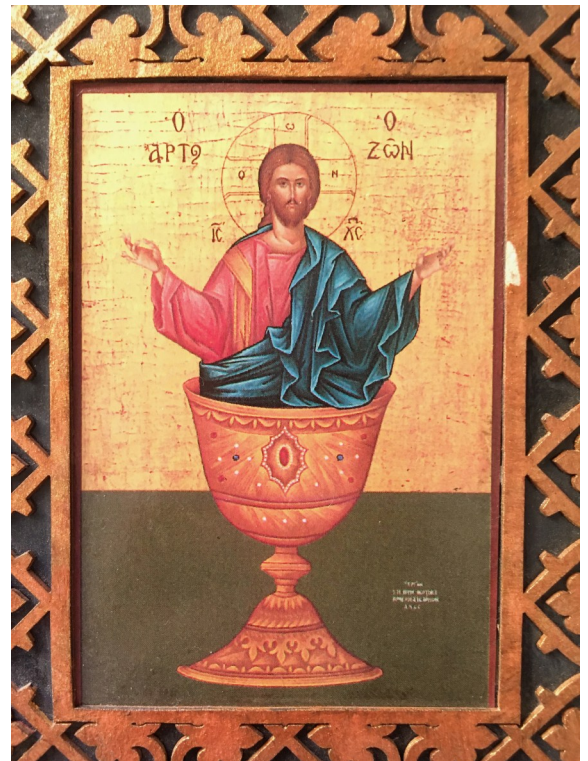
**Leader:**

Jesus, as we learn more about you, about your life, and about your love for us, help us to enter more fully into the mystery of your life, your love. We are so grateful for the gift of your love, and for the ways in which you continuously come to us.

Let us reflect on words from Scripture (John 6:35-40). In this Scripture, Jesus tells his followers that he is the Bread of Life. He is necessary for our survival.

Then Jesus declared,

“I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.”



Uriel1022, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

**Leader:**

Lord Jesus, we thank you for the gift of the Eucharist. We thank you for coming to us so simply in the form of bread. Thank you for becoming food so we can be nourished by you. We praise you, and we thank you for the great gifts you share!

**All:** Amen.

*Close with the Sign of the Cross.*

## Reading of Sacred Scripture

Mark 14:22-26

While they were eating, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, and said, "Take it; this is my body." Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it. He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed for many.

Amen, I say to you, I shall not drink again the fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." Then, after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**



Juan de Juanes, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



## Gospel Reflection

In this reading Mark talks about the Last Supper and the moment Jesus gives us his body and tells us to eat it. We go to Mass each week to receive Jesus' body in the Eucharist and be closer to Christ. The priest prays over bread and wine, asking the Father for the power of the Holy Spirit to turn the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. Jesus is the Eucharist and gives us spiritual nourishment.

Out of the seven sacraments, the Holy Eucharist is the most important because it is Jesus himself. The bread becomes his body, the wine becomes his blood. Jesus was thoughtful in the fact that

he left us his body which we can find in every tabernacle and in every Catholic Church in the



British Museum, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

world. All over the world we can find a Catholic Church that celebrates the Liturgy and offers the Eucharist.

When we attend Mass at any parish, we are responding to Jesus's call and visiting him in the Eucharist. Although Jesus is everywhere, receiving the Eucharist makes us close to Jesus in a special way. He nourishes us the same way that eating vegetables nourishes our physical body. Eucharist protects us from sins like how drinking milk protects our bones, working on the inside of us. Receiving the Eucharist is important, but we can also sit with Jesus. He is in every tabernacle in the world and sometimes parishes provide



Joe Mabel, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

opportunities to sit with and pray in the presence of Jesus during Eucharistic adoration. A consecrated host, one that has through divine intervention has become Jesus' body, is placed into a monstrance. A monstrance is a religious item that protects Jesus' body and has a window so that the Mystical Body of Christ can be seen. Find adoration times near you and go as a family. Spend time talking about what to do during this time.



PerfectUnityOrg, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

# Faith in Action

*Jesus is with Us Always—In the Eucharist and in Heaven!*

Do you know what staying close to someone you love means—even when you can't see them? That's what Jesus teaches us through the Eucharist!

At the Last Supper, Jesus gave us the gift of the Eucharist—his Body and Blood—so we could always be close to him. Every time we go to Mass and receive the Eucharist, Jesus is really, truly present with us. He comes to be with us in a very special way, giving us strength, peace, and love.

After rising from the dead, Jesus spent time with his friends. Then he returned to heaven to be with God the Father. But Jesus didn't leave us alone! He promised to send the Holy Spirit and always be with us—in our hearts, our prayers, and especially in the Eucharist.

That means:

- ◇ Jesus is in heaven, praying for us.
- ◇ Jesus is with us in the Eucharist.
- ◇ We are never alone—Jesus is with us always!

Even if we sometimes feel left out, confused, or different, Jesus is always nearby. He understands us. He feeds us with his love. And he invites all of us—every single one of us—to be part of his Church and his mission.



Benvenuto Tisi, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



Here are some ways to celebrate the Eucharist:

**“Jesus is with Us” Eucharist Banner:** Create a family banner to remember that Jesus is always present with us in the Eucharist.

- ◇ Design a family banner to hang up to celebrate the Ascension, the day that Jesus joined our Father in heaven.
- ◇ Decorate it with images of a host and chalice, hearts, and rays of light.
- ◇ Use fabric, felt, or textured paper for sensory elements.
- ◇ Hang it near the dinner table or somewhere in your home where you pray.

**Adaptations:** Pre-cut some of the materials or use fabric stickers to simplify the process for family members who may have difficulty with fine motor skills.

**Holy Meal Family Picnic:** Celebrate the gift of the Eucharist by having a special “holy meal” together outside or in your home.

- ◇ Begin with a prayer of thanksgiving, remembering the Last Supper.
- ◇ Share regular bread and juice to remember Jesus’ love.
- ◇ Talk about how Mass brings us close to Jesus and one another.
- ◇ Read a story with photos of the Last Supper.

**Adaptations:** Prepare familiar and comforting foods for your family’s dietary or sensory needs.



Image from Vecteezy



**Eucharistic Gratitude Bags for Community Helpers:** Make thank-you bags for persons who serve your community, such as firefighters, teachers, delivery drivers, or parish staff.

- ◇ Include snacks, handmade cards, and a note that says, “We thank God for you!”
- ◇ As a family, pray for each person who receives a bag.
- ◇ Have one family member decorate the bag, another write the note, and another help deliver.

**Adaptations:** Choose what to include using picture cards or communication boards. If needed, add sensory-friendly or dietary-specific items.

**You Are Fed, Now Feed Others:** After receiving Jesus in the Eucharist, we are filled with his love. Share that love by collecting food for persons in need.

- ◇ As a family, organize a mini food drive at your school, parish, or neighborhood.
- ◇ Go shopping as a family to collect materials and supplies. Use pictures or checklists to ensure that everyone can participate.
- ◇ Decorate the boxes or bins with messages and joyful images/colors.
- ◇ Include cards with messages like “Jesus loves you” or “You are never alone.”
- ◇ Help deliver the food as a family and say a prayer for persons receiving it.



Image from Vecteezy

## Activities with Children

**Let's Read:** Read Scripture that tells of Jesus and the Eucharist then talk about what it means for your family.

- ◇ Matthew 26:26-30 (The Lord's Supper)
- ◇ Mark 14:22-26 (The Lord's Supper)
- ◇ Luke 22:14-20 (The Last Supper)
- ◇ John 6:22-59 (The Bread of Life Discourse)

**Let's Go to Mass:** Help your child notice the times during Mass when the priest is talking about or holding the Eucharist. Later, invite them to draw their favorite scene with the Eucharist from Mass.

Questions you can use:

- ◇ Can you see the Eucharist?
- ◇ Is it regular food or Jesus?
- ◇ Where is it now?
- ◇ What is the Priest doing with the Eucharist?
- ◇ What are the people doing with the Eucharist?



Image from Vecteezy

**Let's Sort Jesus from Food:** Explain that when the priest consecrates the host during Mass, the Eucharist is no longer food but Jesus. You can go around the house and gather items that represent our faith (i.e., rosary, crucifix, picture of consecration) and pieces (or pictures) of food. Sort into food, non-food, and Jesus. Talk about how both food and Jesus nourish our body but only Jesus is able to nourish our souls.

**Let's Build It:** Using air drying modeling clay, have your child build a chalice and host that can be used during play time or to assist with teaching about Mass.

**Let's Bake it:** After reading the Scripture about the Last Supper you can bake unleavened bread, a symbol of the Eucharist. Interact with the Scripture by holding your bread up and saying, "this is my body given up for you!" This is great way to start talking about what these phrases mean for Catholics and provides a tactile-kinesthetic experience.

#### Ingredients

- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups flour, plus 2 Tablespoons
- 1 cup water, cold

#### Instructions

1. Combine salt and flour together in a bowl. Stir in the water until the dough comes together in a ball. Knead for 5 minutes.
2. Pre-heat skillet over medium-low heat.
3. Pinch off 5-7 pieces of dough and form into small balls. Roll out each piece on a lightly floured surface about 6" each
4. Cook on a hot skillet for 2 minutes on each side. Serve or store covered.



Image from Vecteezy

Recipe from Oh Sweet Basil: <https://ohsweetbasil.com/unleavened-bread/>

**Sensory Bin:** Sensory bins can help children with hands on learning. This month create a sensory bin focused on the Eucharist. Items can include: rice, unconcreted eucharists, crosses, play food, Easter eggs with Holy Week items in them, eggs without anything in them to represent the empty tomb.

# Saint for May

## Saint Angela Merici

Feast Day January 27

Saint Angela Merici was born on March 21, 1474, died on January 27, 1540, and was canonized on May 24, 1807. She had a great love of other people and always wanted to help people.

When Angela was young her parents and one sister passed away. So, she and her remaining sibling went to live with their uncle. She was raised in the Catholic faith and always had a great love for Jesus and wanted to help others grow closer to the Lord.

When Angela Merici was 20 years old her uncle died, so she moved back to her hometown. When she was there, she saw that many of the young girls there did not get a good education. This made her feel sad, and she wanted to help them. She started to teach them when she could and taught many young girls about Jesus.



Pietro Calzavacca (1855-1890), Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

A couple years after she began teaching girls Angela went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. On the way there, she lost her sight. She continued her trip to the Holy Land and visited the sacred shrines, though she could not see them with her eyes. On her return trip, Angela stopped in the place where she lost her sight and prayed before a crucifix where her vision returned.

After her pilgrimage, Angela Merici moved back home and continued to teach. She went on to start what would become the Order of the Ursulines where young women could go, learn about Jesus, serve others, and pray together. She always wanted to bring people together and help them fall in love with Jesus.



Saint Angela Merici faced many challenges in her life, but she trusted in God, found reasons to be joyful, and brought many people closer to Jesus. Who is someone in your life that you can share your favorite story about Jesus with?

### Activities

- ◇ Saint Angela Merici loved Jesus. Draw a picture of Jesus and put it on your refrigerator or in your room. Then tell someone about the picture, what details did you include, why did you include them?
- ◇ When Saint Angela Merici taught girls about Jesus, she told them about his life. Listen to a story about Jesus' life from the Bible. What things did you hear? What stood out? Share the story with someone else.
- ◇ Talk to several of the catechists at your parish. Some questions you may ask include:
  - \* Why do you teach others about Catholic teachings and traditions?
  - \* What is your favorite part of teaching kids about their faith?

Information from CatholicOnline



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## May Resources

Catechist.com. "Living the Liturgical Year – The Ascension (Free Downloadable Activity)." <https://www.catechist.com/living-liturgical-year-ascension-free-downloadable-activity/>

Catholic Icing. "Celebrating the Solemnity of the Ascension with Kids." <https://www.catholicicing.com/celebrating-solemnity-of-ascension/>

Catholic Kids Media. "Ascension Cycle C." YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VGDWsV3CUfY>

Catholic Kids Media. "What is the Eucharist? Corpus Christi." YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hpII4IG01kk>

Catholic Online. "St. Angela Merici." [https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint\\_id=21](https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=21)

Catholic Teacher Resources. "Arts and Crafts: The Ascension of Jesus." <https://www.catholicteacherresources.com/arts-and-crafts-the-ascension-of-jesus/>

Guided Children's Adoration. "USCCB Eucharistic Revival Resources." <https://www.guidedchildrensadoration.com/usccb-eucharistic-revival-resources.html>

Intentional Catholic Parenting. "Feast of the Ascension for Families." <https://intentionalcatholicparenting.com/feast-of-the-ascension-for-families/>

Oh Sweet Basil. Unleavened bread recipe. <https://ohsweetbasil.com/unleavened-bread/>

Sadlier Religion. "Eucharist Resources." <https://www.sadlier.com/religion/eucharist-resources>