

# Ten Ways to: *Celebrate your Child's First Communion*

*Your child's sacramental experience begins at home. Here are some ideas for enveloping your child in an atmosphere of faith and love as First Communion day approaches. The suggestions are not just for parents. Aunts, uncles, grandparents, older siblings, godparents, neighbours and all who care for the children in their lives have an important role to play in passing on the great gift of faith.*



**Two key practices:  
Sunday Eucharist and  
family meals. Revitalize  
both as a gift to your  
child.**

## **1. Share memories**

What do you remember of your own First Communion day? Bring out the photos and momentos and share that part of your life with your child. It's all part of telling our story as a people of faith.

## **2. Mealtime magic**

Well-celebrated family meals lay the groundwork for imparting a eucharistic faith to your children. Add some special touches to your family meals in the weeks leading up to the big day. Invite family members to toast the First Communion candidate: "A toast to [name] because he/she brings [name the gift] to this family!" Pray for your child when you say grace before meals.

## **3. Gifts that go on**

Give First Communion gifts that will continue on into your child's faith journey: a child's missal, rosary beads, a statue of a special saint, a crucifix or holy picture for their bedroom wall. Don't let them gather dust on the shelf after the event; use these symbols as a talking point and focal point for prayer.

## **4. Read Scripture**

With your child, enjoy bible stories with a eucharistic theme—the Last Supper, the miracle of the loaves and fish. Find children's books or DVDs to assist—the local Catholic school may be a resource.

## **5. Get ready for Jesus**

Without getting too anxious about it, prepare your home for First Communion day by cleaning it and adding a few special touches: decorations, flowers, ice creams in the freezer... whatever will signal to your child that "It's your special day."

## **6. Enjoy one another**

Fill your home with the grace of the body of Christ. Invite some wonderful people of faith to your home—family or friends who will take an interest in your child and his/her First Communion. Perhaps team up with the family of another candidate.

## **7. Create a prayer corner**

Does your family's 'sacred site' need a bit of TLC? Revitalize it and adorn with symbols of wheat and grapes and other eucharistic images. Make it a pleasure to gather there by candlelight to pray each night.

## **8. Make it to Mass**

As obvious as it might sound, it's worth saying! The Sunday Eucharist is central to our faith as a Church—like family meals are to a family. The best way you can teach this to your child is to be committed to the Sunday Eucharist yourself

## **9. Build communion at home**

Like marriage, the Eucharist is a sacrament of unity. *Couples:* what a gift to your child's eucharistic preparation when you rekindle your romantic love. *Widowed parents:* envelop your child in memories of your love; share your faith in the resurrection. *Divorced parents:* a lasting gift to your child might be to forgive your ex-husband/wife.

## **10. Reach out**

Look for ways to support other families in their efforts to prepare their children for First Communion. It might be a phone call to a neighbour ("Can I offer you a lift to the parents' meeting?") or an invitation to share a celebratory cake.