

What Your Child Needs to Know Before Receiving Eucharist

What does the Church require for your child to receive First Eucharist? The Church asks only what the child is able to give; that is, a child's faith and a child's desire to receive Jesus in the Eucharist.

- **The child should** know who Jesus is, some main events in his life, and the story of his death and Resurrection. Stress stories of his gentleness, concern for the sick and poor, love of children, and his love of his Father.
- **The child should** be taken regularly to Mass, and as the liturgy progresses, should be told what is going on and given the opportunity to ask questions. Point out that we give ourselves to God in Eucharist, and he shows his love by giving us his Son, Jesus. If we love Jesus, we also have to be kind to one another.
- **The child should** experience prayers as a regular part of family life. Prayer in the family lets a child see the faith of the adults and that Jesus, his Father, and the Holy Spirit are real.
- **The child should** be able to tell the difference between Eucharist and ordinary bread. Plain statements of belief are best, such as: The bread in the Eucharist really becomes the Body of Christ.
- **The child should** desire to receive Jesus in the Eucharist. Seeing parents receive the Eucharist in joy and respect helps a child to want to belong and to be part of this experience.