

Background Notes for Parents/Carers

About the theme – Eucharist

In the Spring term the Sacrament of the Eucharist is explored. This is the Sacrament of communion with Christ and the Church.

There are several different names given to the Sacrament of the Eucharist. It is called:

- **Eucharist:** (Thanksgiving) because it is an action of thanksgiving to God. It reminds us of the thanks that Jesus made to his Father at the Last Supper.
- **The Lord's Supper:** because of its connection with the supper which the Lord took with his disciples on the eve of his Passion.
- **The Breaking of Bread:** because Jesus used this rite, part of a Jewish meal, when as master of the table he blessed and distributed the bread, above all at the Last Supper. It is by this action that his disciples will recognise him after his Resurrection.
- The **memorial** of the Lord's Passion and Resurrection.
- The **Holy Sacrifice:** because it makes present the one sacrifice of Christ the Saviour and includes the Church's offering.
- **Holy Communion:** because by this sacrament we unite ourselves to Christ who makes us sharers in his Body and Blood and to one another to form a single body.
- **Holy Mass**, (Missa) because the liturgy concludes with the sending forth (missio) of the faithful, so that they may fulfil God's will in their daily lives.

Children are introduced to a different aspect of the Eucharist, the Mass, in each year group.

Structure of the Mass

The Basic Structure of the Mass has four parts: two main parts (the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist) and two framing rites (Opening Rite and Concluding Rite):

Introductory or Opening Rites:	WE GATHER
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We lead those gathered into an awareness of God's presence who has assembled a community of faith.

Procession and song

Sign of the Cross

Greeting

Penitential Rite (when we say sorry to God)

(Gloria) – a song of praise used on Sundays and feast days

Opening Prayer or Collect

Liturgy of the Word:	WE LISTEN
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We listen and respond to the Readings and the Homily.

First Reading (from the Old or New Testament)

Responsorial Psalm (a Psalm from the Old Testament)

(Second Reading) (from the New Testament)

Gospel Acclamation (to prepare to greet the Gospel)

The Gospel (from Matthew, Mark, Luke or John)

Homily (a short address by the bishop, priest or deacon)

(Creed) – a profession of faith

Prayer of the Faithful (bringing our prayers for different needs before God)

Liturgy of the Eucharist:	WE GIVE THANKS
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We offer bread and wine and all that we have.

Preparation of the altar and the gifts (the bread and wine)

Eucharist Prayer (including the words of Jesus and prayer of consecration)

Communion Rite:

Lord's Prayer (the Our Father)

Sign of Peace (offering a gesture of peace to others)

Breaking of the Bread

Communion (distribution of the Body and Blood of Christ)

Concluding Rite:	WE GO OUT
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Blessing

Dismissal (sending out)

Overview

Key Vocabulary	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>EARLY YEARS</u> Gathering EUCCHARIST THEME</p>
<p>welcome</p> <p>blessing</p> <p>listen</p> <p>pray</p> <p>Mass</p> <p>sing</p> <p>gather</p> <p>together</p> <p>alone</p> <p>lectern</p> <p>“The Lord be with you.”</p> <p>“And with your spirit.”</p>	<p>The parish family finds strength in gathering for the celebration of the Eucharist, a sign of God’s love in our lives. We share memories, love and thanks as we celebrate the Life, Death and Resurrection of Jesus.</p> <p>Children will know and understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how and why people gather together • the joy of gathering together to celebrate at Mass <p>See Background Notes for Parents</p> <p>Week 1: Read the story ‘Happy Together’ and discuss some of the things that you do ‘together’. Play a game and discuss how it feels playing it ‘together’. Throughout the week notice the things you are doing together. Share photos of groups gathering together.</p> <p>Week 2: Talk about what is happening in the picture from <i>Church’s Story 2</i> (p6-7), how the parish family gather for Mass. Make ‘Welcome to Church’ poster. Look at <i>Church’s Story 1</i> (p12-13) and talk about how the people stand and sing at the beginning of Mass.</p> <p>Week 3: Show your child the picture from <i>God’s Story 1</i> pages 30-31. The picture shows the story from the Gospel ‘Jesus and the children’ (Mark 10: 13,14-16). Make some stick puppets and role play the story together. Look at the picture from <i>Church’s Story 2</i> (p12-13). At Mass we hear stories about Jesus. Ask your child to remember a story about Jesus and to draw it.</p> <p>Week 4: Look at the key vocabulary for this topic and use it to remember all that your child has learned about Gathering. Celebrate with a simple Act of Worship.</p>

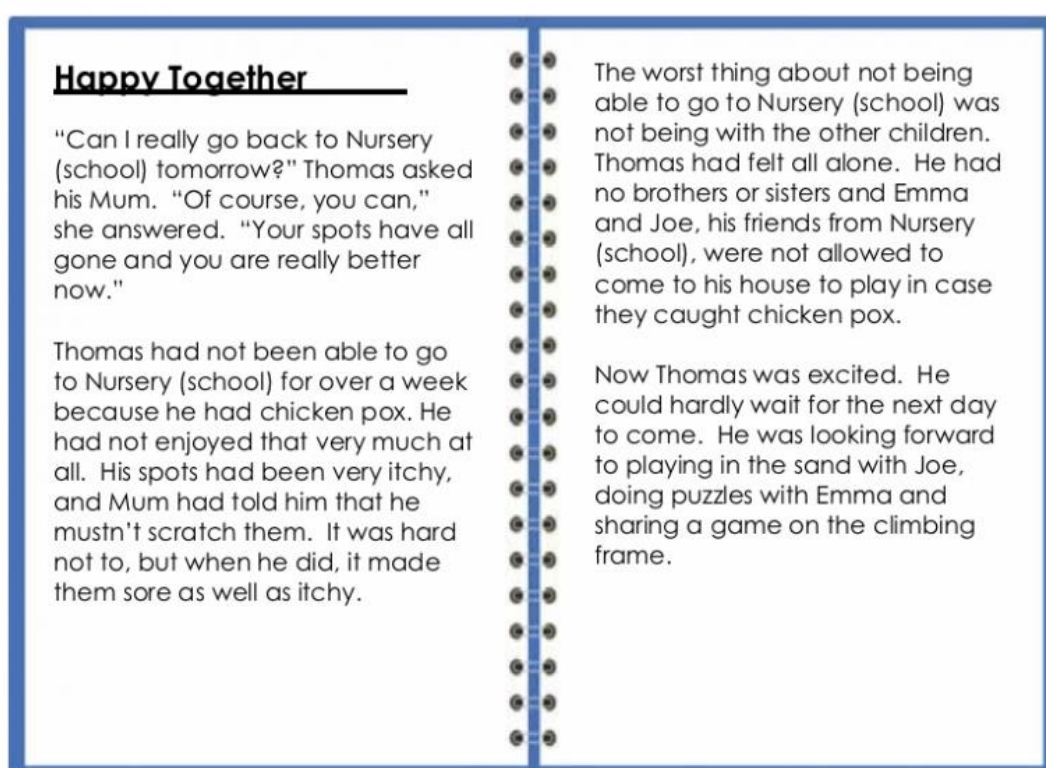
Early Years

In **EYFS** children will recognise the importance of gathering together. They will learn how the parish family gathers to celebrate Mass and that at Mass the parish family listens to God's Word.

As we are not able to gather together as freely as usual due to COVID restrictions this should be talked about with care to avoid upsetting children who may be missing gathering with friends and extended family.

Week 1: How and why people gather together

Read the story 'Happy Together'



Ask your child to suggest some other things Thomas and the other children in his class might do together. Talk about the activities that are better done together. What makes them better?

Task: Play a game together such as Snakes and Ladders or Hide and Seek. Discuss how children enjoyed it because they played it together with you. Talk about other things that you may do as a family 'together'.

Through the week look for opportunities to do things together as a family e.g. games, storytime, chores. Share photos of friends and family groups coming together.

Week 2: Lesson 1 The parish family gathering for Sunday Mass

Talk about what is happening in the picture from *Church's Story 2* (p6-7), how the parish family gather for Mass.



Some Key Questions to ask children

- Q What can you see in the picture?
- Q Where are the people going to?
- Q What are the people standing at the door doing?

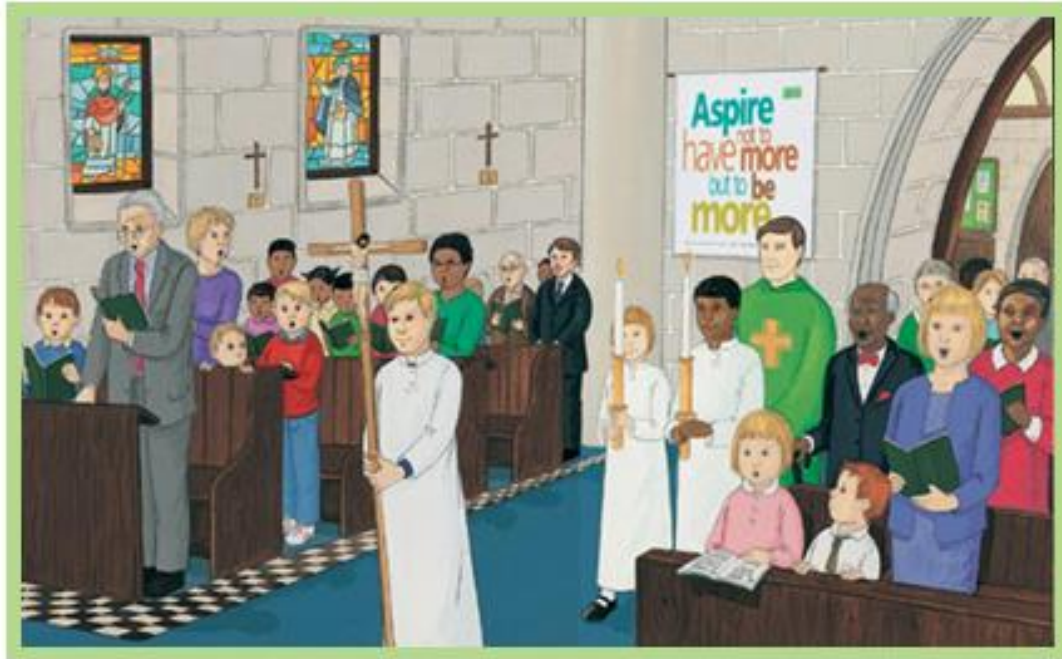
Task: Support your child to make a 'Welcome to Church' poster (template provided). Draw people you might see at Mass on a Sunday.



Welcome to Church

Week 2: Lesson 2 Talk about what is happening in the picture from *Church's Story 1* (p12-13)

When everyone is in their seats the priest enters. The people (or congregation) sing a gathering hymn. The priest says *The Lord be with you* and the people answer *And with your Spirit*. Can you learn that response?

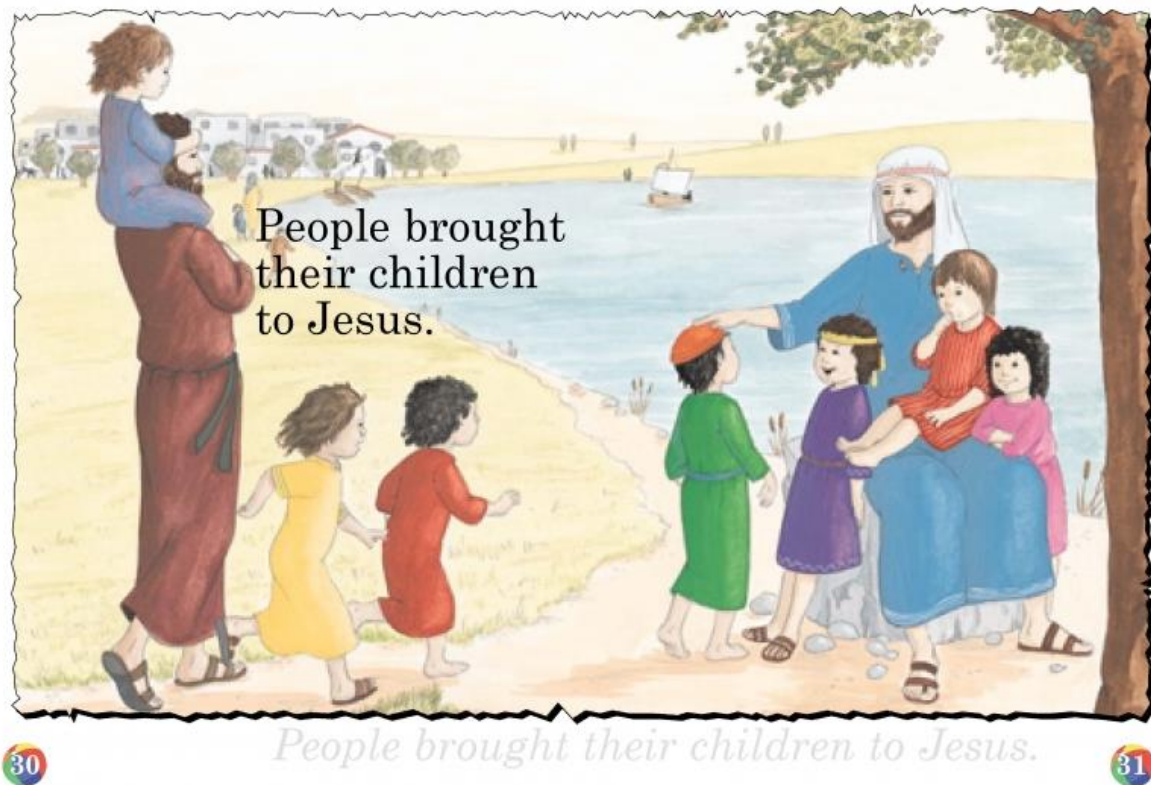


The Church family comes together to celebrate.

- Q** What do you see in the picture? (people, altar servers, priest, crucifix, hymn books, benches, stained glass windows, candles)
- Q** Who are the people in the picture? (the congregation)
- Q** What are the Church family doing together? (singing a gather song)
- Q** What is happening? (Priest and altar servers processing in)
- Q** Can you remember any hymns you have learnt in school?

Week 3: Lesson 1: The joy of gathering to listen to God's Word

Show your child the picture from *God's Story 1* pages 30-31 *People brought their children to Jesus*. The picture shows a story from the Gospel (Mark 10: 13,14-16). We listen to God's Word when we gather at Mass.



Share the following:

Jesus loved everyone, he was kind and gentle. Parents and carers brought their children to Jesus for him to bless. Some people thought the children should not be bothering Jesus. But Jesus loved all the children and said, "Let the children come to me." So, the children gathered round Jesus and loved being with Jesus. Jesus loved the children.

Tasks:

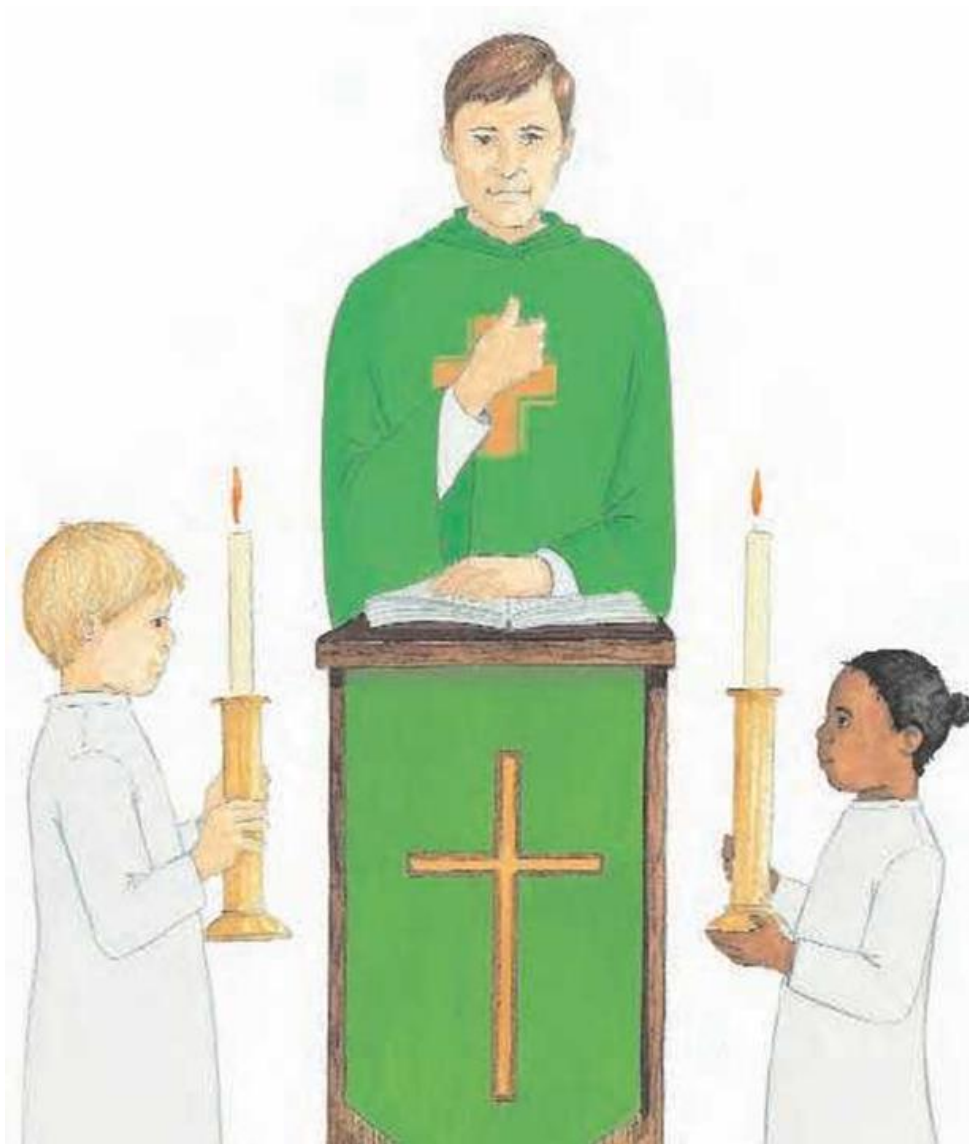
1. Re-enact the story of Jesus and the children using small figures/stick puppets. Talk about the story together.
2. Draw yourself and your friends around Jesus on the template (below). What would you say to Jesus?

Me

My Friend



Week 3: Lesson 2: Listening to God's Word at Mass



Look at this picture from *Church's Story 2* (p12-13)

When the parish family gathers together at Mass they hear stories about Jesus.

Which stories do you remember?

Task: Encourage your child to remember some of the Gospel stories (the Nativity story is the most obvious) Ask your child to draw a story about Jesus.

Week 4: Look at the key vocabulary and help your child to remember what they have learned about Gathering.

Celebrate with a simple Act of Worship (see below)

Week 4

Act of Worship 'GATHERING' EYFS 1 and 2

"The joy of gathering together to celebrate Mass"



Gathering together

You might like to set up a Focal table with some of the following:
Candle, Bible (if possible), some of your child's work on Gathering.

God is with us all the time and he promised to be with us especially when we gather together to pray. The sign of the cross reminds us that God is with us and loves us so let us begin our prayer together **In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

We have been thinking about all the things that we do together. *Ask your child to talk about some of the work covered in the topic.*

The Word of God

We have also learned about how the parish family gather together for Mass. When they gather together they listen to God's Word. Let's listen together to God's Word now. It's the story St Mark tells us about how Jesus welcomed the children who gathered around him.

A reading from the Holy Gospel According to Mark

Glory to You O Lord

People brought their little children to Jesus. They wanted Jesus to put his hand on the children and bless them.

Jesus' friends told the people off for annoying him, but when Jesus heard his friends, he was cross. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me. Don't stop them. Little people like these need God's blessing."

Then Jesus put his arms round the little children, put his hand on their heads, and blessed them.

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to You Lord, Jesus Christ

Use the picture in God's Story 1 p30-31

Look!

What do you see?

What are the children doing?

What are the people doing?

What is Jesus doing?

Would you like to be there too? Why?

What did the people want Jesus to do?

Why was Jesus cross?

What did Jesus say?

What did he do?

What does the story tell you about Jesus?

Response to the Word

Let us pray a 'thank you' litany together.

A 'thank you' litany is when someone thanks God for something and we all say **Thank you God:**

For the fun we have when we gather together to play

Thank you God.

For always welcoming us

Thank you God.

For the joy of gathering to listen to God's Word

Thank you God.

For the happiness we feel when we gather together to sing

Thank you God.

Think if there's anything else you want to thank God for and if there is then - say it silently inside your own head or share it aloud. (Pause)

Going forth

Something we did at the beginning of our prayer reminds us that God is with us - 'The Sign of the Cross'. Before we make the sign of the cross again let us try to remember that before we go to bed tonight we'll think again about the story of how Jesus welcomed the children.....Now let us end our prayer by saying: **In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit Amen.**