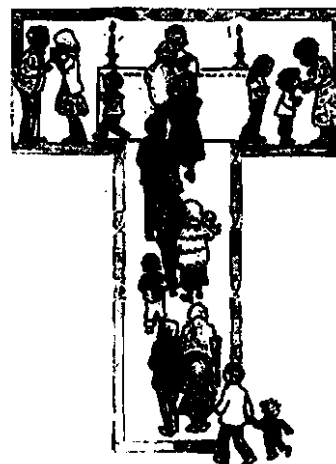




What is the Church?

Catechist's Guide: Unit 6

We are the Body of Christ



You will need to gather in the children's worksheets from the previous unit (unless this has already been done or unless they are keeping them at home). Even if they normally hand in their worksheets, they might want to keep hold of their last one if this unit is taking place during Lent so that they can complete the chart on the final page.

Spend a few moments seeing what the children remember from their last session with you - or from any celebration that took place.

Remind them that they are preparing to become full members of the Church family through Confirmation and Holy Communion and that this is going to happen soon.

The aim of this unit is to think about ourselves as the Body of Christ. This will be done by reflecting with the children on a number of themes:

- ♦ We will very shortly be celebrating Confirmation and Communion
- ♦ In Confirmation we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit
- ♦ At Mass we do what Jesus did at the last Supper
- ♦ In Communion we receive the Body and Blood of Jesus

In preparation for this session, you will need to be clear about the arrangements for celebrating these sacraments in your parish (unless the children are to be told about those arrangements at some other time).

You might also like to look back over the previous sessions because there are a number of connections that can be drawn here.

INITIATION

What is the Church?

Children's Worksheet Unit 6

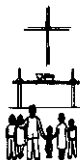
We are the
Body of Christ



C _ n f _ _ m _ t _ _ n

and

C _ m m _ n _ _ n



These two important sacraments complete our initiation into the Church which began with our Baptism.

We celebrate them close together and in a very short time we will become Full Members of the Church.

Confirmation is a sacrament that we only celebrate once.

Communion - the Eucharist - is a sacrament we can celebrate many times but our First Holy Communion is a special occasion.

In Holy Communion we receive 'The Body of Christ'.



Confirmation - The Gift of the Holy Spirit

Before Jesus returned to his Father in heaven, He promised his friends that He would send the Holy Spirit to help them to carry on his work.

Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to his friends at

P _ _ t e _ _ s t

Jesus promises to send us the Holy Spirit so that we can carry on his work.

He comes to us first at our Baptism and we are renewed and strengthened in the Spirit at our Confirmation.



Just before we are confirmed, we renew our baptismal promises.



The bishop or priest who confirms us stretches his hand out over us and prays that the gift of the Holy Spirit will be given to us.

He then marks a sign of the cross on our foreheads using a special oil called Chrism and says:

_____ be sealed with the
gift of the Holy Spirit'



As this anointing is taking place, our sponsor stands with us and puts his/her hand on our shoulder. Our sponsor is someone from the Church family who will help us to live in God's ways.

We might choose a particular saint to copy in our lives and take that saint's name for our Confirmation name.

Page 1

Help the children to complete the names of the two sacraments - Confirmation and Communion.

Talk to the children about the fact that these two sacraments complete the initiation that started with their Baptism. They are about to become full members of the Church.

Draw out the distinction between Confirmation as a sacrament that we only celebrate once in our lives and Communion which we can celebrate often. Urge them to come frequently to take part in the Mass and to receive Communion.

Ask them if they recognise the picture of the body containing all the other bodies. It was the picture used for the first unit of their preparation (*We are the People of God*) and it shows how each one of us is part of the Body of Christ.

Talk about how Jesus needs us to be part of his body to continue his work in the world. That is why they are preparing to be full members of the Church - his body - his presence on earth.

Page 2

Ask the children to complete the word Pentecost and tell them the story of Pentecost Sunday [cf. *Additional Suggestions and Resources No. 1*].

Talk about Confirmation as the renewal or strengthening of the gift of the Spirit already given to us in Baptism.

Explain that the baptismal promises are a way of expressing our faith (in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit) and saying that we want to live in God's ways. [cf. *Additional Suggestions and Resources No. 2*].

Take them through the elements of the Confirmation ceremony as indicated on their worksheet, including, if appropriate, practical details relating to the parish celebration of the sacrament. [cf. *Additional Suggestions and Resources No. 3 on Chrism*].

Speak to them about sponsors and about Confirmation names and get them to write their name (or Confirmation name) on the line '_____ be sealed...' [They should leave it blank if they have not yet decided what name to use].

Communion - The Gift of Jesus

Fit these words into the gaps to complete the story

eat
drink
body
blood
bread
wine

The evening before Jesus died on the cross he celebrated a special meal with his friends. This meal is known as The Last Supper.

During the meal, Jesus took b ____ blessed it and broke it and said, "This is my b ____ which will be given up for you. Take it and e ____." He took the cup of w ____ blessed it and said,

"This is the cup of my b ____ which will be shed for you and for all.

Take it and d ____."

He told his friends, "Do this in memory of me."

We obey this command when we come together at Mass and do what Jesus did at the Last Supper.

The Mass is also called 'The Eucharist' which comes from a Greek word meaning 'Thank you'.



The priest says the Eucharistic Prayer - a prayer of thanksgiving.

During that prayer, he takes the bread and the wine and says the same words that Jesus said at the Last Supper.

The bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus and we receive Him in Holy Communion.

At Home...

Colour in this picture of Jesus sharing the Last Supper with his disciples



and think about the words he spoke to them.

Write down some of the things that we can thank God for when we come to Mass - the Eucharist:

Say this prayer to the Holy Spirit as you prepare for Confirmation:

**Come Holy Spirit, fill me with your gifts.
Help me to live as Jesus wants me to live,
loving God and other people.
Amen.**

This worksheet belongs to: _____

Page 3

Help the children to complete the story of Jesus at the Last Supper by filling in the missing words: bread - body - eat - wine - blood - drink.

Spend a few moments thinking about the word Eucharist meaning 'Thank you' and ask the children to think of some things that we should thank God for. Help them to see that one of the main things we thank God for is the gift of Jesus.

Remind them of some of the words they will hear at Mass when the priest is asking God to send the Holy Spirit to change the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus [cf. *Additional Suggestions and Resources* No. 4].

If appropriate, give practical details relating to First Communion in your parish.

Page 4

Ask the children to complete this page of the worksheet at home but, if time allows, take them through the ideas that it contains:

The picture is another reminder of the Last Supper. Can they spot the bread and wine and see Jesus blessing them?

There are lots of things to thank God for when we come to Mass. [They should just have mentioned some (cf. notes on Page 3) but this is not the time to fill in these lines].

The prayer reminds us to keep asking God for the gift of the Spirit and why we are asking - so that we can do His will.

Get the children to write their name on the worksheet and remind them to bring their worksheet back to the next session. Thank them for taking part, or tell them how much you have enjoyed working with them. Encourage them to prepare well for the celebration of these sacraments and say how much you are looking forward to sharing those celebrations with them.

Additional Suggestions and Resources

1. The Story of Pentecost Sunday

It was Pentecost day and all Jesus' friends were gathered in the room where they had met for the Last Supper. Suddenly they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven, and it seemed the whole house was full of noise. Something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire. These separated and came to rest on the heads of each one of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit. They began to preach the Good News.

2. Baptismal Promises

- ◆ These promises express the faith of the Church - the Body of Christ.
- ◆ When children are baptised, it is the parents and godparents who express their faith.
- ◆ As the children grow older, they can express this faith for themselves.
- ◆ We have opportunity each Easter to renew our baptismal promises (at the Easter Vigil).
- ◆ Although the children will renew these promises during the Confirmation ceremony, Confirmation is not to be seen as 'a sign of maturity'. It is a free gift from God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, which *confirms* the gift of the Spirit already given in Baptism.

3. Anointing with Chrism

- ◆ Chrism is a special oil consecrated by the bishop on Maundy Thursday. It is used in Baptism and Confirmation (as well as Holy Orders).
- ◆ Anointing with oil is often a sign of strengthening a person for a particular task.
- ◆ The Chrism is used to 'seal' the gift of the Holy Spirit. Sealing something (in former times) was a mark of authenticity - to prove to the recipient that it was genuine. We are sealed with the Spirit as authentic followers of Christ.

4. Invocation of the Holy Spirit

- ◆ *Eucharistic Prayer I:* 'Bless and approve our offering; make it acceptable to you, an offering in spirit and in truth. Let it become for us the body and blood of Jesus Christ, your only Son, our Lord.'
- ◆ *Eucharistic Prayer II:* 'Let your Spirit come upon these gifts to make them holy, so that they may become for us the body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ.'
- ◆ *Eucharistic Prayer III:* 'And so, Father, we bring you these gifts. We ask you to make them holy by the power of your Spirit, that they may become the body and blood of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at whose command we celebrate this eucharist.'
- ◆ *Eucharistic Prayer IV:* 'Father, may this Holy Spirit sanctify these offerings. Let them become the body and blood of Jesus Christ our Lord as we celebrate the great mystery which he left us as an everlasting covenant.'