

Lesson 28 – Holy Communion

Grades 6-8

Lesson Preparation:

Read Lesson 28 in the Baltimore Catechism.

Opening Prayer:

Scripture: “For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes. Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord.” 1Corinthians 11:26-27

Leader: Lord Jesus, You not only gave your Body up on the cross for us, You have given your Body to us in Holy Communion. May we receive this sacrament with love so it can always draw us closer to you. Amen.

Together: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created, and You shall renew the face of the earth. O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit, we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolations, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Opening:

This lesson is about the proper reception of Holy Communion. Ask students to consider what they would do if they wanted a closer relationship with someone, a friend or family member, for example. If they were going to spend special time with that person, how would they prepare? Allow them to discuss a little.

Holy Communion has the power to bring us closer to God than anything else. So how should we prepare to receive Him in this special way? Let them discuss ideas.

Watch the Lesson 28 Video on Catholic Brain

Comprehension Questions: *Note: These questions are asked after the video, just to check student comprehension. They are not discussion questions, but be sure students understand the answers to these questions before moving on*

1) What is Holy Communion?

It is our receiving of the Eucharist

2) If someone is in a state of mortal sin, what must he do before receiving Communion?

Go to Confession

3) What do we have to do for one hour before receiving Holy Communion?

Fast for one hour, with the exception of water and medicine

4) What is Eucharistic Adoration?

Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, exposed in a monstrance. It is also good to make a visit to the church and pray before the tabernacle.

Discussion Questions: *Note: These questions are for student discussion. The students should consider these questions and comment on them. There are some key points included in this lesson, after each question, that you can use to help guide their discussion toward truth. It's important that the students think about and discuss these things, but that they don't leave the discussion with false impressions about what is true.*

1) One hour is not a very long fast. Why do we do it before Holy Communion?

It is a small way to acknowledge that what we are about to receive is holy.

2) Why is frequent Communion important?

We receive grace every time we receive the sacrament. Also, it is our most intimate union with Jesus.

3) Let the students share memories of their First Holy Communion.

Go Deeper:

In a previous lesson, you met some of the Fathers of the Church. Read together a few of the things they said about the Eucharist, and discuss:

St. Ambrose – Commentaries on Twelve Psalms of David – A.D. 389

We saw the prince of priests coming to us, we saw and heard him offering his blood for us. We follow, inasmuch as we are able, being priests, and we offer the sacrifice on behalf of the people. Even if we are of but little merit, still, in the sacrifice, we are honorable. Even if Christ is not now seen as the one who offers the sacrifice, nevertheless it is he himself that is offered in sacrifice here on Earth when the body of Christ is offered. Indeed, to offer himself he is made visible in us, he whose word makes holy the sacrifice that is offered

St. John Chrysostom – Homilies on Hebrews – A.D. 403

We offer always the same, not one sheep now and another tomorrow, but the same thing always. Thus there is one sacrifice. By this reasoning, since the sacrifice is offered everywhere, are there, then, a multiplicity of Christs? By no means! Christ is one everywhere. He is complete here, complete there, one body. And just as he is one body and not many though offered everywhere, so too is there one sacrifice

St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lecture 23, circa A.D. 350

Then, having sanctified ourselves by these spiritual hymns, we beseech the merciful God to send forth his Holy Spirit upon the gifts lying before him, that he may make the bread the Body of Christ and the wine the Blood of Christ, for whatsoever the Holy Spirit has touched is surely sanctified and changed.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem – Catechetical Lecture 19 – A.D. 350

The bread and the wine of the Eucharist before the holy invocation of the adorable Trinity were simple bread and wine, but the invocation having been made, the bread becomes the body of Christ and the wine the blood of Christ

Activity:

Although we are only obligated to go to Mass on Sundays and holy days, we are invited to go anytime. On days we can not go, we can make a spiritual communion. This is a prayer in which we tell God of our desire to receive Him and ask Him to come into our hearts.

Write your own prayer of spiritual communion. Then go before Jesus in the tabernacle or Eucharistic Adoration and pray the prayer you have written.

Closing Prayer:

Leader: Thank You, God, for calling us to be so close to You that we become one flesh, in Holy Communion. You have given yourself totally to us; may we give ourselves totally to You. Amen.

Together: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.