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## What is the Church?

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### ***Parent Leader's Guide: Unit 7***

## **We are People who Live our Faith**



### **Main themes**

- ◆ Renewed through the celebration of the Eucharist, the Church community is sent out.
- ◆ As full members of the Body of Christ we continue to grow and develop using our gifts and talents in service of our world.
- ◆ We reflect on the part we can play in the life of the Church.

### **Link to the Mass - Concluding Rites**

***"The dismissal of the assembly is like the breaking of the bread. We have become 'the bread of life' and 'the cup of blessing' for the world. Now we are scattered, broken, poured out to be life for the world.***

***What happens at home, at work, at meals? What do we make of our time, our words, our deeds, our resources of all kinds? This is what matters."***

*(Cardinal Bernardin, Guide to the Assembly, page 23)*

### **During the meeting, parents will:**

- ◆ appreciate that the concluding rites send us out in service of the world
- ◆ reflect on the journey of initiation which their children have made, looking to ways of encouraging future growth and development
- ◆ discover what the parish catechists or faith friends will do with the children
- ◆ be given details of the arrangements for any celebration that is to take place
- ◆ consider suggestions for supporting their child at home



The suggested material for this meeting is offered in three sections.

Parent leaders may wish to use something from each section.

*Section A offers main points and a suggestion for prayer.*

*Section B provides a workshop reflection looking back over all the units.*

*Section C suggests ways of evaluating the process.*



## **Unit 7 – Section A**

### **Main points for this meeting**

Almost twelve months ago we came together to consider ways to help and support our children as they prepared to complete the journey to full membership of the Church. This journey of initiation began when they were baptised and was completed with the celebration of Confirmation and First Holy Communion.

At the very first meeting we asked the question “What is the Church?” Throughout our meetings from then on, we have been concerned with some ways in which we can answer this question.

We come now to a further answer: “We are people who live our faith”. We all need to recognise the direct relationship between our Sunday celebration of the Eucharist and our everyday lives. Through the concluding rites of the Mass we are sent out into the world to use our individual gifts and talents in service of the world. The ways in which we do this will vary according to the circumstances of our lives, but we are all called to be ‘people who live our faith’.

The quotation from Cardinal Bernardin for this unit speaks directly of this relationship and challenges us to reflect on our calling as members of the Body of Christ.

The further growth and development of our children as full members of the Church will be gradual, much like our own. Regular participation in the Sunday Eucharist and in the life of the parish community will nurture and nourish this development. Encouragement at home will also be an important factor in the faith development of our children. Our catholic schools will play their part too.

Use the suggested prayer focus (overleaf).



### ***Suggested prayer focus:***

Have displayed the titles of the different units from this process: either in large letters displayed on the wall, or perhaps using workbooks from each of the units.

Invite everyone to a period of silence, giving thanks to God for bringing us together once more.

Have someone read slowly, with pauses between each sentence, the question and answers which have been our focus:

"What is the Church?"

We are the people of God

We are people who pray

We are people who celebrate forgiveness

We are people who celebrate God's Word

We are people who follow Jesus

We are the Body of Christ

We are people who live our faith

Then introduce the closing words from Cardinal Bernardin's reflection on the Sunday Eucharist which has guided our journey together:

*"...we will gradually become active members of a Sunday assembly of the baptized who know how to gather, how to listen to the word, how to give thanks and praise, how to share in holy communion, how to take leave of one another for the week-long and life-long work of building the kingdom of kindness, justice and peace."*

(Cardinal Bernardin, *Guide to the Assembly*, page 28)

After a moment of silence, all pray the Our Father together.



## **Unit 7 – Section B**

### **A Workshop Reflection**

*Before the meeting begins:* have the following clearly displayed -  
A copy of the children's workbook for each unit, **or** a copy of the parent leaflet, **or** the back cover of the children's folder

*You will also need:* the room arranged for group work: 5/6 chairs round a table  
copies of the worksheet 'We are People who Live our Faith' for each parent  
pens/pencils  
copies of the parent leaflet

1. As parents arrive, warmly welcome them and invite them to sit grouped according to the room arrangement. Introduce yourself and any other team members. Comment, and invite comments, on the two celebrations which have recently taken place. Introduce the title for this final meeting and explain how this unit is directly related to who we are and the way in which we live our faith during the week.
2. Hand out copies of the sheet 'We are People who Live our Faith' and, depending on your situation, either:
  - a) Invite parents to reflect alone for five minutes, jotting down what they remember from each of the units - perhaps something from the celebration or something their child said or did at home, or perhaps a thought or activity from the parents' meeting.
  - or
  - b) read through the sheet with parents, offering some memories of your own from the different stages of the journey before inviting them to reflect in silence for a few moments and perhaps jot down some of their memories.
3. After allowing time for this personal reflection, invite them to share some of their memories with the other parents at the table.
4. Invite some sharing with the large group.
5. Give out copies of the parent leaflet and cover one or two of the main points that the catechists will focus on with the children. Comment on one or two of the suggestions for helping and encouraging their children at home.
6. Details of the celebration should now be given and some time allowed for evaluation (see Section C).



**Gathering  
Together**

**Praying  
Together**

**Celebrating  
God's Word**

**We are People who Live our Faith**

**Celebrating  
Forgiveness**

**Following  
Jesus**

**We are the  
Body of Christ**



## Unit 7 – Section C

### Evaluation

Evaluation is an important and useful process. This final parent meeting is an appropriate time for formally inviting the parents to reflect on how they have felt about the process for sacramental initiation for the children in the parish. Three possible approaches are:

1. Either in small groups of 4/5, or if preferred in 2's, invite parents to talk about and then feedback on some or all of the following points;
  - ◆ has the sacramental process met their expectations?
  - ◆ how do they feel about the level of involvement they have had as parents?
  - ◆ has the parish team worked together successfully, in their experience?
  - ◆ have the school and parish links been successful?
  - ◆ are there any organisational issues they would like to comment on e.g. the timing of parent meetings, catechist sessions, timing of information?
  - ◆ do they have any specific suggestions for change?

Reassure the parents that their thoughts and comments will be reflected on by members of the parish team and used in future planning.

2. Invite the parents to reflect on:

"What words of encouragement would you give to the next group of parents about to begin the sacramental journey with their children?"

Write the comments on a flipchart or on large display paper, so that they can be used at the introductory meeting for the new group of parents.

3. This celebration encourages the children to take their place as full members of the Christian community, journeying in faith. Involvement in the sacramental process can often give people the opportunity to become involved in a parish in new ways.

Encourage parents to think about the things they have done, such as reading at celebrations, making refreshments, taking part in processions, sharing their ideas and their faith with new people, praying together. How would they like to continue their involvement with the parish family?

- ◆ as a welcomer?
- ◆ as a reader?
- ◆ parish catechist?
- ◆ parent leader?
- ◆ helping with the celebration of the Liturgy of the Word with children?

Consider producing a sheet of suggestions for parents to take away. Ensure that there is a way to follow through any offers or requests made.



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## **What is the Church?**

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*Parent Leaflet: Unit 7*

### **We are People who Live our Faith**



## **Main Themes**

The children, with their catechists, are looking at how we are called to live out our faith.

They are being asked to think about the following things:

- ♦ That they have now grown as members of the Church
- ♦ That they have completed a journey of preparation but continue a life-long journey of following Jesus
- ♦ At Mass we are reminded of the different ways in which we have answered the question 'What is the Church?'
- ♦ We need to find ways of living our faith in our everyday lives
- ♦ We remember other people who have been (or will be) involved in our life of faith



## From Your Child's Worksheet

### At Home...

Make sure you have completed all your worksheets and then keep them together in your special folder.

You can look through the worksheets every now and then to help you remember some of the things you have done and learned during this time of preparation for First Holy Communion.

Use this list to remind you of ways in which you can live your faith:

- ♦ Trying to spend some time in prayer every day
- ♦ Finding ways of helping your family and friends
- ♦ Working hard at school
- ♦ Going to Mass on Sundays

Don't forget to pray for those who have helped you during this time of preparation:

- ♦ Your parents
- ♦ Your catechist or faith friend
- ♦ Your teacher
- ♦ Your parish priest

When you are at Church:

- ♦ Say hello to some of the people who have helped you
- ♦ Pray for the next group of children who are preparing for these sacraments

This worksheet belongs to: \_\_\_\_\_



## **What You Can Do To Help Your Child**

Discuss with your child how he/she can now take a full part in the Mass and receive Holy Communion.

Revisit with them the journey of initiation they have just completed:

- ♦ get out their baptismal candle, used during the Presentation celebration
- ♦ say the 'Our father' together regularly, using the prayer card presented during the second celebration
- ♦ remember the celebration of reconciliation and find time to celebrate with the parish especially during Lent and Advent
- ♦ share memories of First Holy Communion - who was there? what cards and gifts were given? were photographs taken?
- ♦ remember with your child, any special contributions made during the celebrations - readings, processions, drama, music.

Make a scrapbook with mementoes, photographs from the journey to full membership of the Church.

Come regularly to Sunday Mass as a family to celebrate the precious gift of the Eucharist.

Discuss your child's special gifts and talents, giving thanks for them to God. Encourage them to think of ways they can use these gifts in the parish and in the local community.

Consider offering your own time, gifts and talents in some way in the parish, perhaps by helping with next year's process of preparation for these sacraments. Parents are excellent role models.

Please gather all your child's worksheets together and keep them in the special folder. Look over them with your child from time to time to remind yourselves of this process of preparation and what the different parts of the Mass are about.



## **Concluding Rites**

***"The dismissal of the assembly is like the breaking of the bread. We have become 'the bread of life' and 'the cup of blessing' for the world. Now we are scattered, broken, poured out to be life for the world.***

***What happens at home, at work, at meals? What do we make of our time, our words, our deeds, our resources of all kinds? This is what matters."***

***(Cardinal Bernardin, Guide to the Assembly, page 23)***



## What is the Church?

### Children's Worksheet: Unit 7

## We are People who Live our Faith



Many people will be happy that you have now celebrated your First Holy Communion - even some people that you don't know. Can you think of some of the people who will be happy?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

These people are happy because they know that you have taken a very important step in

- ◆ Believing in Jesus
- ◆ Growing as a member of the Catholic Church

First Communion marks the end of a special journey that you have been on over the past few months - a journey of preparation.



But there is another journey that you are on - being a follower of Christ - that lasts for the whole of your life.

So First Holy Communion is only the beginning. Now you will be able to receive Communion each time you come to Mass and be reminded about how much Jesus loves you and how he will help you throughout your life.



## Looking Back...

Over the past few months we have been thinking about different answers to the question 'What is the Church?' During Mass we remind ourselves of these answers:



We are People who

P \_ \_ y

We are People who celebrate

F \_ r \_ i \_ e \_ e \_ s

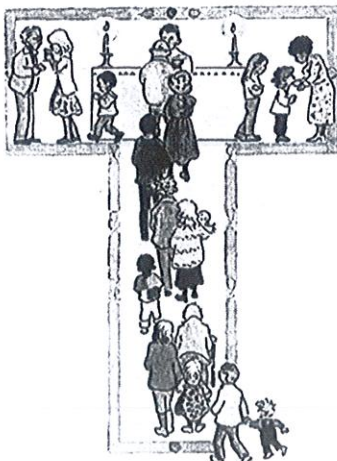


We are People who celebrate

G \_ d ' \_ W \_ \_ d

We are People who

F \_ l l \_ w J \_ s \_ s



We are the

B \_ \_ y of C h \_ \_ \_ t



## Looking Forward...

At the end of Mass we are told to 'Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.'

This is an invitation for us to go out into the world and make it a better place by living our faith.



We are followers of Jesus, strengthened with the gift of Jesus in Holy Communion.

Draw some pictures showing how you can live your faith

**At Home**

**At School**

**At Church**

**Near to where you live**

***Jesus wants his followers to be happy  
and to share that happiness with other people***



## At Home...

Make sure you have completed all your worksheets and then keep them together in your special folder.

You can look through the worksheets every now and then to help you remember some of the things you have done and learned during this time of preparation for First Holy Communion.

Use this list to remind you of ways in which you can live your faith:

- ♦ Trying to spend some time in prayer every day
- ♦ Finding ways of helping your family and friends
- ♦ Working hard at school
- ♦ Going to Mass on Sundays

Don't forget to pray for those who have helped you during this time of preparation:

- ♦ Your parents
- ♦ Your catechist or faith friend
- ♦ Your teacher
- ♦ Your parish priest

When you are at Church:

- ♦ Say hello to some of the people who have helped you
- ♦ Pray for the next group of children who are preparing for these sacraments

This worksheet belongs to: _____
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## **What is the Church?**

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### ***Catechist's Guide: Unit 7***

## **We are People who Live our Faith**



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).

Spend a few moments seeing what the children remember from their celebration of Confirmation and Holy Communion.

The aim of this unit is to think about how we are called to live out our faith. This will be done by reflecting with the children on a number of themes:

- ♦ They are now full members of the Church
- ♦ They have completed one journey but also started another
- ♦ At Mass we are reminded of the different ways in which we have answered the question 'What is the Church?'
- ♦ We need to find ways of living our faith in our everyday lives
- ♦ We remember other people who have been (or will be) involved in our life of faith.

In preparation for this session, you will need to be clear about the arrangements for any celebration that is to take place and what is happening about the presentation of certificates (if this has not already taken place).



# INITIATION

## What is the Church?

### Children's Worksheet: Unit 7

#### We are People who Live our Faith

Many people will be happy that you have now been confirmed and celebrated your First Holy Communion - even some people that you don't know. Can you think of some of the people who will be happy?


These people are happy because they know that you have taken a very important step in

- ♦ Believing in Jesus
- ♦ Becoming a full member of the Catholic Church

Confirmation and First Communion mark the end of a special journey that you have been on over the past few months - a journey of preparation.



But there is another journey that you are on - being a follower of Christ - that lasts for the whole of your life.

So First Holy Communion is only the beginning. Now you will be able to receive Communion each time you come to Mass and be reminded about how much Jesus loves you and how he will help you throughout your life.



## Looking Back...

Over the past few months we have been thinking about different answers to the question 'What is the Church?' During Mass we remind ourselves of these answers:



We are People who

P \_ \_ y

We are People who celebrate

F \_ r \_ i \_ e \_ e \_ s



We are People who celebrate

G \_ d ' \_ W \_ \_ d

We are People who

F \_ l \_ l \_ w \_ J \_ s \_ s



We are the

B \_ \_ y of C h \_ \_ \_ t



## Page 1

Help the children to think about some of the people who will be happy now that they have celebrated Confirmation and Communion, [e.g. their parents, teachers, grandparents, brothers and sisters, parishioners, the parish priest, yourself!]

Remind the children that these two sacraments complete their initiation into the Church. They are now full members. Their journey of preparation is over. However, they are on a bigger journey - one that lasts a lifetime - being a follower of Jesus.

They need to grow as followers of Jesus (as we all do) by coming along to Mass each week and receiving Jesus in Holy Communion. This will strengthen them to live a life of faith.

## Page 2

Help the children to complete the words which will give them the titles of a number of the units that have been part of their preparation.

Remind them that these titles help us to think of parts of the Mass. Each time we celebrate the Mass we are able to reflect a little bit more on prayer, forgiveness, hearing God's Word, following Jesus, or receiving and being the Body of Christ.

So the preparation over the past few months has not just been for the two special celebrations (Confirmation and First Holy Communion) but to help them to take part in the Mass for the rest of their lives.

Encourage them always to think about the different parts of the Mass when they come to Church.



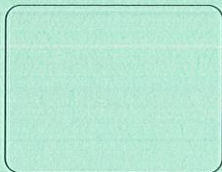
### Looking Forward...

At the end of Mass we are told to 'Go in peace to love and serve the Lord'.

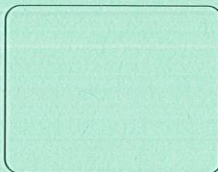
This is an invitation for us to go out into the world and make it a better place by living our faith.

We are followers of Jesus, strengthened with the gifts of the Holy Spirit and with the gift of Jesus in Holy Communion.

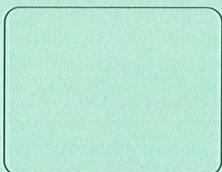
Draw some pictures showing how you can live your faith



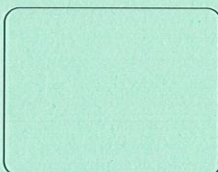
At Home



At School



At Church



Near to where you live

**Jesus wants his followers to be happy  
and to share that happiness with other people**



### At Home...

Make sure you have completed all your worksheets and then keep them together in your special folder.

You can look through the worksheets every now and then to help you remember some of the things you have done and learned during this time of preparation for Confirmation and First Holy Communion.

Use this list to remind you of ways in which you can live your faith:

- ♦ Trying to spend some time in prayer every day
- ♦ Finding ways of helping your family and friends
- ♦ Working hard at school
- ♦ Going to Mass on Sundays

Don't forget to pray for those who have helped you during this time of preparation:

- ♦ Your parents
- ♦ Your catechist or faith friend
- ♦ Your teacher
- ♦ Your parish priest

When you are at Church:

- ♦ Say hello to some of the people who have helped you
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This worksheet belongs to: \_\_\_\_\_

## Page 3

Ask the children about what happens at the end of Mass, after Communion. [Prayer, Notices, Blessing, Dismissal, Hymn]. These concluding rites are meant to help the community to go out from its celebration and live its faith in the week ahead.

Draw particular attention to the form of dismissal printed on their worksheet: 'Go in peace to love and serve the Lord'. That is what living our faith means - finding ways to love and serve the Lord in our everyday lives.

Spend some time helping the children to think about what they might draw in the boxes to show how they love and serve the Lord in the different aspects of their lives. [Home, School, Church, Neighbourhood]

Emphasise the fact that Jesus wants them to be happy in loving and serving him. You might want to share with the children the gospel story about the beatitudes [cf. *Additional Suggestions and Resources No. 1*]

## Page 4

*There is nothing for the children to complete at home on this page. Instead it offers them a reminder of four things which you might like to go through with them now (if time permits). Encourage them:*

to treasure the worksheets they have completed over the past few months and to look over them from time to time.

to think of further ways of living their faith, other than the suggestions given.

to pray often for those who have helped them (and will continue to help them) on their journey.

to keep in touch with you at Church and listen out for news about other children preparing for the sacraments.

*Get the children to write their name on the worksheet. Thank them for taking part, or tell them how much you have enjoyed working with them.*



## **Additional Suggestions and Resources**

### **1. The Story of the Beatitudes**

*Jesus told his followers that they would be happy if they lived in certain ways and this teaching applies to us today:*

Crowds of people were following Jesus, trying to see him and hear him speak.

When Jesus saw the crowds, he climbed a little hill and sat down.

His friends joined him and he began to tell the people how to be happy:

"Happiness is being gentle.

Happiness is wanting God in your life.

Happiness is longing for what is right.

Happiness is being generous always.

Happiness is putting God first.

Happiness is being a peace-maker.

Happiness is standing up for God.

Happiness is suffering for God.

Rejoice and be glad, your reward will be very great in heaven."



## What is the Church?

### ***Celebration Guide: Unit 7***

## **We are People who Live our Faith**

**The journey of Initiation into the Church was completed by the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist.**

**As one journey ends, however, another begins: the journey of life as a full member of the Church. The only real celebration of *this* journey is to join the weekly gathering of the Church to celebrate the Eucharist on the Lord's Day.**

**This unit is offered as a way of celebrating the journey that has been completed, and inviting the children and their families to explore the full meaning of what they have done.**

1. The celebration has three focal points: the Litany of Thanksgiving, the celebration of the Eucharist and the Dismissal at the end. For this reason it is best suited for celebration during a Parish Sunday Mass. An alternative celebration is given for use outside Mass, but this is less suitable, since it does not emphasise that the children now take their own place in our community's worship.

2. All the indications given in previous celebration notes for celebrating Mass in a way which helps the children and their families also apply here.

3. The timing of this celebration will depend on when a Parish is celebrating Confirmation and First Communion. It will probably occur towards the end of term, in late June or early July.



4. The Scripture Readings and Presidential prayers should be taken from the occurring Sunday. Parishes may wish to look at the appointed readings before deciding which Sunday to choose for this celebration.

5. Readers and commentators, whether children or adults, should be chosen for the ability to proclaim clearly, with an awareness that God is speaking to his people in their proclamation.

6. In Mass, the musical priorities are the Gospel acclamation, and the Eucharistic acclamations (Holy, holy, Mystery of Faith, Great Amen.). The Responsorial Psalm should be sung, as should the "Gloria". Other music should be chosen to celebrate the themes of the Scripture Readings and the Celebration.

#### 7. Checklist:

- ◆ Commentator
- ◆ Readers
- ◆ Processional Cross
- ◆ A purple stole
- ◆ A Children's Prayer Card
- ◆ Wheat and Grapes
- ◆ The Sacred Chrism
- ◆ The Book of the Gospels
- ◆ The Paschal Candle
- ◆ A table placed on the Sanctuary



# CELEBRATING "JOURNEYING ON" DURING MASS

## INTRODUCTION

*Before the Celebration begins, a commentator may say:*

**My dear friends; we are the Church, the holy people of God, and we gather here this evening/morning to thank God for his many gifts. We especially welcome the children who have completed their journey of initiation. By receiving the sacrament of Confirmation and sharing in Holy Communion they have become full members of God's family.**

**The Mass is all about giving thanks—we give thanks for all God has done, especially for the gift of Jesus. Today our children stand with us in thanking God, and asking for his blessing on the journey of faith which will last the rest of their lives.**

**So, as one body in Jesus Christ, let us all now stand for our opening hymn:**

## ENTRANCE PROCESSION

*The procession is led by servers with lighted candles, and should include people carrying the following:*

- The Paschal Candle
- A prayer card/prayer books
- A purple stole
- The Gospel Book
- The Processional Cross
- The Sacred Chrism
- Wheat and Grapes

*These may be carried by representatives of the following groups: children, families, catechists and parishioners, to express the whole worshipping community. When the procession arrives at the sanctuary, those carrying the symbols stand to one side and wait.*

## GREETING

**Priest: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.**

**All: Amen.**

**Priest: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.**

**All: And also with you.**

**Priest: My dear friends, we rejoice in the love of God, who calls us together as one holy people. As we gather today we give thanks for our children who have become full members of God's family. We proclaim God's goodness now, by saying together: "We are your people, and you are our God."**

**All: We are your people and you are our God.**

## LITANY OF THANKSGIVING

**Reader: (As the reader speaks, the Paschal Candle is brought forward and placed in its holder.)**

**Our journey began in Baptism, where we were given the light of Christ. Lord God, you have called us out of darkness, into your own wonderful light. We thank you and say:**

**All: We are your people and you are our God!**

**Reader: (The Prayer Card/Prayer Book is brought forward and placed on the table) We have learned to pray with each other in the family of the Church. Lord God, when we call, you answer us. We thank you and say:**

**All: We are your people and you are our God!**

**Reader: (The Purple Stole is placed on the table) We celebrated God's forgiveness and learned to forgive each other. Lord God, you forgive us our sins: we thank you and say:**

**All: We are your people and you are our God!**

**Reader: (The Book of the Gospels is placed on the altar) We have learned to hear God's voice in the words of the Bible. Lord God, you speak to us in words of love; we thank you, and say:**

**All: We are your people and you are our God!**

**Reader: (The Cross is placed in its holder on the sanctuary) We have learned how Jesus gave himself for us, so that we could follow his way. Lord God, you loved us so much you gave us your only Son; we thank you and say:**

**All: We are your people and you are our God!**

**Reader: (The Sacred Chrism is brought forward and placed on the table) Our journey was sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit; Lord God, you send your Spirit to renew the face of the earth. We thank you and say:**

**All: We are your people and you are our God!**

**Reader: (The wheat and grapes are placed on the table) And finally, we shared in Holy Communion, the gift of Jesus' own Body and Blood. Lord God, we receive what we are: the Body of Christ! We thank you and say:**

**All: We are your people and you are our God!**

**Priest: (Those who were carrying the items can now stand in a circle in the sanctuary, holding hands) Lord God and Father, through the sacraments of your Church you make us one Body in Jesus your Son. And so we gather here as your family, and say:**

**All: We are your people and you are our God!**

**Priest: Gathered as God's people, we praise him now in our song of glory:**

**All: Glory to God in the highest...**

## OPENING PRAYER

*(of the occurring Sunday)*

*Mass continues as normal with the LITURGY OF THE WORD of the occurring Sunday.*



## CONCLUDING RITE

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

(of the occurring Sunday)

### BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

**Priest:** We have celebrated this great gift of God together; as we come to the end of this Mass, we think of taking God's gifts out into the world until we meet here again next week. I invite the children who have recently completed their journey of Initiation to come forward.

*The children come forward and stand facing the priest. One or more of the children could be invited to say a few words, thanking the parish for their prayer and support during the journey, and promising to take full part in the life of the Parish in the future. Then the priest says:*

**Priest:** People in the Parish are very happy for you. They will be glad to see you joining in all the things we do together—especially our Mass every Sunday. We want you to be happy as you grow and try to live in Jesus' way.

*(Addressing the whole congregation)*

**Priest:** The Lord be with you.

**All:** And also with you.

**Priest:** May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**All:** Amen.

**Priest:** My dear children, you have finished one journey, but another is beginning. I now invite you to lead us out of the Church, as a sign that you are carrying the riches of your journey into the future. Let us all go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.

**All:** Thanks be to God.

*The final hymn begins. The symbols brought in at the beginning may be collected again: the children, symbol-bearers, servers and priest follow the processional cross out of the Church.*

## CELEBRATING "JOURNEYING ON" OUTSIDE MASS

### INTRODUCTORY RITES

*The entrance procession will only consist of Cross, candles and Gospel Book. After a Hymn, Greeting and Gloria, the Opening Prayer is said:*

**Priest:** Lord God, our loving Father, by the waters of Baptism and the gift of the Holy Spirit, we have celebrated the mysteries of your Son, and so become your holy people. Grant to us now and always the grace to be faithful to what we have received, so that we may praise you in all times and places. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

**All:** Amen.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

*Use the Sunday Readings or those suggested on the back of this guide. The homily and General Intercessions follow as usual.*

### LITANY OF THANKSGIVING

*After the General Intercessions, a procession brings the items from a place at the back of Church. Instead of the processional cross, another cross should be used, and instead of the Gospel book, another large Bible or Book of the Scriptures. During the procession a hymn is sung. On arriving at the altar, the Litany is as on page 2, but ends as follows:*

**Priest:** (Those who were carrying the items can now stand in a circle in the sanctuary, holding hands) Lord God and Father, through the sacraments of your Church you make us one Body in Jesus your Son. And so we gather here as your family, and say:

**All:** We are your people and you are our God!

**Priest:** Gathered as God's people, join together in the prayer Jesus gave us:

**All:** Our Father...

### CONCLUDING PRAYER

**Priest:** Lord God, we rejoice in the gifts of your love. Strengthen all your children, to live every day in the way of truth and love shown us by Jesus, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

**All:** Amen.

### BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

*the same as the celebration during Mass.*



# IDEAS FOR THE CELEBRATION

## PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

*During Sunday Mass, the prayers of the faithful should be specially written to harmonise with the Scripture Readings. They should include prayers for local intentions, as well as the Church and the World.*

*Outside Mass, the following may be useful:*

**Priest: My dear friends, having listened to the Word of God, we know that God will listen to our prayers. Let us offer them now.**

*Reader:*

1. Let us pray for our children, who have completed their journey into full membership of the Church, (pause for silent prayer). May they grow each day in faith, hope and love. Lord, in your mercy...
2. Let us pray for the Church throughout the world, especially for our Holy Father, Pope John Paul, and for our Bishop Terence. (pause for silent prayer) May God strengthen and bless all the members of his family. Lord, in your mercy...
3. Let us pray for all who have helped our children on their journey; for our priest(s), our catechists, the children's prayer partners, their parents and families, and all parishioners, (pause for silent prayer). May God help us to grow closer to each other as we grow closer to him. Lord, in your mercy...
4. A prayer for local needs should be added.

**Priest: Lord God, because we are your people, we trust that you will listen to our prayers. Pour out your grace upon us who are your children, and grant to us, and those dear to us, all we need. We ask this through Christ our Lord.**

## SUGGESTIONS FOR READINGS (OUTSIDE MASS)

### First Readings:

**Isaiah 60: 1-4**

**Acts 13:46-49**

### Psalms:

**Psalms 95**

**Psalms 97**

### Gospels:

**Matthew 28:16-20**

**John 17:11, 17-23**

## LOCAL ADAPTATIONS

*A Parish may wish to adapt this celebration by choosing other symbols which have more meaning to the children or the parishioners. So, for instance, a better symbol than a purple stole might be used for reconciliation.*

*Other elements could be added. The children could either bring up their completed worksheets from the children's sessions in the procession - or alternatively the completed sheets could be collected beforehand and presented to the children. Similarly, certificates of Confirmation and First Communion could be distributed.*

*The best place for presenting items to the children would be just before the dismissal, when the children are called forward by the priest.*