

# Liturgy Resources For First Communion 2004

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## Rituals

The following are suggestions of how to highlight various rituals in the Mass for the celebration of First Communion. It is not intended that all of these suggestions be used in one liturgy. They are listed here merely as options, and will require adaptation and editing according to the readiness and needs of your children and community, as well as the actual structure of your worship space.



Artwork by Dorothy Woodward rsj

## Entrance Procession

### Highlighting the Eucharistic Symbols

This procession will focus on the four elements in which Christ is present in the liturgy – The Community itself, the Word, The Bread & Wine and The Ministers. For the purpose of highlighting this focus for this specific celebration, the First Communion children will bow to each other. Following this, the Word, which is usually carried in procession just before the Presider, will follow immediately behind the First Communion Children and before the symbols of bread and wine. *It is important to advise the community before Mass to remain seated for this procession so that the symbols can be seen. When the Procession has ended, all will be invited to stand and sing together a suitable entrance hymn.*

### Order of the Procession:

- Processional Cross
- Candles
- The First Communion Children
- Lectionary
- Large round loaf of bread
- Glass decanter of red wine
- Servers & Ministers
- Presider

The Procession proceeds to the sanctuary as an appropriate Processional Hymn or mantra is sung (see music section below). When the procession arrives at the sanctuary, the cross and candle bearers stand together to one side of the sanctuary. The First Communion children come in pairs *to the first row of seats before the foot of the sanctuary*. The first pair of children moves up to *the foot of the sanctuary and* bows to the altar. They then turn to face each other and bow to one another. (See below for details). They then go and *sit* in their designated seats. The next pair comes forward and does the same. This is repeated until all the children have entered and taken their seats.

At this point, the singing stops and the Lectionary, Bread and Wine are brought to the sanctuary in *total silence*. (The servers, ministers and Presider wait in the centre aisle before the sanctuary.) The three symbol bearers stand in the centre of the sanctuary, and one by one, beginning with the lectionary, display their symbol to the community, simply by stepping forward, lifting the symbol high before the community.

(Ensure that the actual bread can be seen and not just its container, and that the wine can be seen rather than hands that hold it).

They then walk to the sacred space and place the symbol in its allocated position. When each of these symbols has been enthroned in the sacred space, the symbol bearers bow to them and go to their places.

At this point, the community is invited to stand and sing together the Entrance Hymn as the servers, ministers and Presider proceed to the sanctuary. The Mass continues as usual with the Welcome and Introductory Rite.

### **Specific Notes:**

- **Processional Bow**

Bowing is not part of our culture and the children will need to have this explained to them in order to be more comfortable with it. Explain to them that in bowing to one another, we acknowledge the presence of Jesus in each other – that we are the living body of Christ. It is important to practice the bow so that their embarrassment is eased. The more familiar they are with it the more reverent and sincere it will be.

(Ensure that the first pair leading the procession is comfortable and confident with what they each have to do. In this way, the others will follow correctly. It is important to stop the procession at the first row of seats, and that only one pair at a time moves forward to the foot of the sanctuary (clearly mark this spot) for the bowing ritual. Allowing this space will enable the ritual to be seen by all, which in itself will be sacramental for the whole community.

### **Offertory**

Have two children carry up in procession white fabric that is folded in such a way that it can be unfurled by them and placed on the altar as the altar cloth. Following this, another child comes with a rich gold/deep yellow cloth draped over her/his arms. This is placed across one side of the altar in such a way that it hangs over a section of the front of the altar. Three children come in procession, one with a lit candle that is placed on the yellow cloth and the other two with the gifts of bread and wine. Following them are all the First Communion children who come and stand

around the altar for the Prayers of Offering and the Eucharistic Prayer. Throughout this ritual of dressing the altar and the procession of gifts, play appropriate instrumental music or have the choir sing a special hymn or mantra that reflects the spirit and meaning of this ritual.

(See the list below). *For this ritual to be focused and really effective, avoid having collections until it is completed.*

### **Eucharistic Prayer**

The Eucharistic Prayer is intended to be the highpoint of the Mass, and yet quiet often, especially for children; it is hard to keep focused. Having the children stand around the altar for this will help them to focus. However, the Prayer itself is designed for community participation, and First Communion is an appropriate time to ensure that the community participates by singing or reciting the given responses. (Refer to the document, *Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children*, e.g. Eucharistic Prayer 2, where the responses are included.)

Alternatively, an appropriate short refrain of praise can be sung for each response. (See music section below).

### **Fraction Rite- The Breaking Of The Bread**

Following the sign of peace, as the Lamb of God is sung, the Presider breaks the bread. Unfortunately, this powerful symbolic ritual goes unnoticed by most. Given the focus of this celebration, it would be good to highlight the breaking of the bread in simple ways:

- \* Have the Presider wait until people have settled after the sign of peace, before beginning this ritual.
- \* Engage them with eye contact, especially the First Communion Children.
- \* Hold the host out to them and slowly and deliberately break the bread.
- \* Alternatively, hold the bread close to the altar microphone and allowing the sound of its breaking to be heard.

### **Post-Communion Reflection**

#### **Option 1: Reflective Hymn:**

After Communion, settle the whole community, inviting them to listen to the reflective hymn, ***Hello My God*** (Praise & Blessings – see below). Where possible, have a little child do the child's solo part, with the other First Communion children singing the chorus parts and an adult singing the part of God's response.

#### **Option 2: Dance**

Have some children sing and dance one of the following hymns, ***That's Just How It's Supposed To Be*** (Praise & Blessings – see below) or I ***Have A Song*** (Praise & Blessings – see below).

#### **Option 3: First Communion Prayer & Certificates**

The First Communion children come forward to the sanctuary, with unlit candles, and go in procession to the appointed minister, who lights their candles from the Paschal Candle. When all their candles are lit, the children hold them high and pray together their First Communion Prayer. Following this, they are given their certificates.

## **Recessional Procession**

### **Candle Procession**

If candles have been used (see above- Post Communion Reflection – Option 3), then have the children process out of the Church holding their candles high during the singing of the Recessional Hymn.

## **Readings**

Proclaiming the Word of God is not the same as reading a book in a classroom or in a presentation.

It is important that the children who are reading the scriptures are comfortable, confident and familiar with the text they are reading. It is not just a matter of being good readers- it is the presence of the children, their ability to articulate and produce their voices and generally be comfortable in what they are doing.

This is best achieved when each child actually understands and has a feel for the meaning of what is being read. This will require some one-on-one work with the readers, as well as some technical work in using microphones etc.

The pace at which they read is very important. It may be that the text needs to be typed for them, with pauses allocated in it and important words emphasised, keeping in mind that when children are nervous, they tend to race through their readings and forget their instructions.

### **Suggestions for the First Reading:**

Genesis 14: 18 -20

*Melchizedek brought bread and wine...he pronounced this blessing...*

Exodus 16: 4 – 8a

*Now I will rain down bread for you from the heavens...Yahweh will give you bread until your heart's content.*

Deuteronomy 8: 2-3

*God gave you food... he fed you with manna*

### **Sung Responsorial Psalms:**

(See below in the music section)

### **Suggestions for the Second Reading:**

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

*This is what I received from the Lord...This is my body given for you...*

1 Corinthians 10:16-17

*Though we are many, we form a single body ... because we share this one loaf*

Hebrews 9: 11; 15

*Christ has come as the high priest of all the blessings...*

Acts 2: 42- 47

*They remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles and the breaking of the bread...*

Ephesians 1: 3- 5a; 8- 12a

*Before the world was made God chose us, chose us in Christ...*

1 Thessalonians 3: 12-13

*May the Lord be generous in increasing your love, and make you love one another...*

### **Gospel Acclamations & Processions:**

Choose an appropriate Gospel Acclamation from the list below, and let it accompany one of the following Gospel Processions:

#### **Option 1: Procession with Paschal Candle**

Have two Candidates come forward to assist with this procession.

One takes up the Paschal candle (or, if this is too heavy, lights another processional candle from it). She/he then goes to the place where the Lectionary is enthroned.

The second candidate takes up the Lectionary and displays it to the community.

The candle bearer leads the Lectionary bearer in procession to the place where the Gospel will be proclaimed.

The Lectionary bearer hands the Lectionary to the Presider who in turn, holds it high until the acclamation has ended.

The Candle bearer stands beside the Presider as he proclaims the Gospel. When the Gospel has ended the candle bearer returns the candle to its place and goes back to her/his seat. (This will need to be timed to the sung acclamation).

#### **Option 2: Procession with Candle and White Fabric**

A child or young adult processes with a lit candle from the back of the centre aisle of the Church to the lectern on the sanctuary, where the Presider is ready to receive the Word.

Following close behind, another child or young adult walks with a long flowing piece of white fabric (*soft chiffon-type material*), trailing behind her/him. She/he approaches the sanctuary and drapes the white fabric over the lectern, letting it flow down the front of the lectern.

A third child or young adult follows, carrying the Lectionary. She/he steps up to the centre of the sanctuary, displays the Word and then carries it to the Presider who places it on the enthroned lectern, ready to proclaim the Word.

The candle bearer remains beside the Presider throughout the proclamation, while the two other children return to their places. (This will need to be timed to the length of the gospel acclamation.)

#### **Option 3: Procession with Dancers**

Have some children usher the Word of God to the Presider, in a dance like movement, using white and gold fabric (*soft, flowing chiffon-type material*). This will need to be well rehearsed with the specific acclamation that is chosen.

The place where the procession begins may be determined by the length of the acclamation - that is, whether it begins from the very back, or centre back of the church, or across the front of the sanctuary.

### **Suggestions for the Gospel:**

Luke 9: 11- 17

*He took the five loaves and two fishes... and said the blessing over them*

John 6: 35- 40

*I am the bread of Life...whoever sees the Son and believes in him will have eternal life*

John 6: 51-58

*My flesh is real food and my blood is real drink...*

Mark 14: 12 –16; 22-26

*This is my body, this is my blood*

Luke 24: 28 –31

*Now while he was with them, he took the bread and broke it...and they recognized him*

Matthew 26: 26 –29

*As they were eating, Jesus took the bread...he broke it and gave it to his disciples...*

John 15: 9-15

*This is my commandment, love one another as I have loved you...*

### **Hymns and Music:**

- A Child's Prayer** (D. Halloran & M. Millward – As One Voice For Kids)
- Alle, Allelu** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)
- All Praise, Glory & Honour(2<sup>nd</sup> half only)** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)
- Blessing Song** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)
- Celebrate & Dance With Joy** (Monica Brown – One Moment)
- Come Gather and Praise (Mantra)** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)
- Come Together** (Michael Mangan – Sing Your Joy)
- Eat This Bread** (J.Berthier – As One Voice/Vol1 & Gather Australia)
- Emmaus Song** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)
- Eucharistic Acclamation** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)
- Given For You** (Michael Mangan – Setting Hearts On Fire)
- God Is** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)
- God Is Good** (Kathie Chan – As One Voice For Kids)
- Go Now In Peace** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)
- Hearts of Joy (Mantra)** (Monica Brown – Holy Ground)
- Hello My God** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)
- Hosanna** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)
- I Have A Song** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)
- In Memory of You** (Monica Brown – Special Collection)

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**Instrumental Music** (Monica Brown- Quiet My Soul Instrumental)  
**I Will Bless You Lord** (D. Halloran & M. Millward – As One Voice For Kids)  
**Jesus You Live In Our Hearts** (D. Halloran & M. Millward – As One Voice For Kids)  
**Lamb of God** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)  
**Oh How It's Good** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)  
**One Body, One People** (Michael Mangan – Setting Hearts On Fire)  
**One Bread, One Body** (J. Foley – As One Voice/Vol 1 & Gather Australia)  
**One In Love** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)  
**Psalm 100- Make A Joyful Noise** (Linnea Good – As One Voice For Kids)  
**Sing Alleluia** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)  
**Share This Meal With Me** (John Burland – As One Voice For Kids)  
**Shout For Joy** (N. Ford – As One Voice For Kids)  
**Sing and Dance** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)  
**Sing New Songs Of Joy** (Michael Mangan – As One Voice For Kids)  
**Song Of The Body Of Christ** (David Haas – As One Voice For Kids)  
**Speak From Your Heart** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)  
**Table of Plenty** (Dan Schutte – As One Voice/Vol2)  
**Take & Eat** (Maggie Russell – As One Voice For Kids)  
**Take & Eat** (Michael Mangan – Sing Your Joy)  
**The Blessing of Jesus** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)  
**The Bread of Life** (Michael Mangan – Setting Hearts On Fire)  
**The Gift of Love** (John Burland – Celebrating The Sacraments)  
**The Table Of The Lord** (Michael Mangan – Sing Your Joy)  
**That's Just How It's Supposed To Be** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)  
**We Give Thanks** (Trisha Watts & Monica O'Brien – As One Voice For Kids)  
**We Live & Love Your Word** (Kevin Bates – As One Voice For Kids)  
**We Remember** (Marty Haugen – As One Voice/Vol 1 & Gather Australia)

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