



FIRST COMMUNION FAMILY GUIDE

Growing Closer to Jesus, as a Family

I always look fondly on the memories I have of my First Communion. I remember trying on my First Communion dress, writing out the invitations, and the excitement everytime I went to Mass, knowing I would get to participate in the sacrament soon!

Preparing for a sacrament is serious and is a huge responsibility. Each parent chooses the sacramental life for their child through Baptism and takes on the responsibility of teaching the faith. Along with the seriousness, we should not forget the joy a life with Jesus brings! Having joy does not mean lack of hardship or sacrifices, but the peace that comes with our trust in God.

This guide provides suggestions of how to love Jesus while preparing for First Reconciliation and First Communion. The home is known as the domestic church and creates a pattern of holy living for children as they grow. Included is a bucket list to check off different ways to prepare for the sacraments as a second grader. Each bucket list item can be completed as a family or between the grader and parents.

May we always love Jesus in the Eucharist as we ought. Jesus, have mercy on us!

Sincerely,
Sarah Niekamp

Questions or comments? Email Sarah Niekamp at:
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My First Communion **Bucket List**

*My Name:*_____

*My First Communion Date:*_____

How many bucket list items can you and your family check off before your First Communion?

Celebrating as a Family

- ☐ Pray before meals
- ☐ Have a family game night
- ☐ Bake bread
- ☐ "Phone-free" dinner
- ☐ Take a walk in God's creation
- ☐ My Choice_____

Prepare for my First Communion

- ☐ Send out invitaitons to your family
- ☐ Plan your outfit
- ☐ Go to Confession
- ☐ Practice receving the Eucharist
- ☐ Plan the meal and dessert!
- ☐ Pray for God's graces before Mass
- ☐ My Choice_____

Learn about the Eucharist

- ☐ Read The Last Supper story Mt. 26:26-30
- ☐ Know what makes the Eucharist special
- ☐ Learn about the concecration at Mass
- ☐ My Choice_____

Serve Like Jesus

- ☐ Do a secret act of kindness
- ☐ Make a meal for someone in need
- ☐ Pray for someone who is struggling
- ☐ My Choice_____

Live the Catholic Faith

- ☐ Arrive 10 minutes early to Mass to pray
- ☐ Visit Jesus in Adoration
- ☐ Discuss the Sunday Readings
- ☐ Celebrate the Church's Feast Days
- ☐ Pray a weekly Rosary
- ☐ Learn about a new Saint
- ☐ My Choice_____



November 1
All Saints' Day



December 25
Nativity of Jesus



January 1
Solemnity of Mary



March 28
Easter Sunday



April 4
Divine Mercy Sunday



May 27
Corpus Christi

Celebrate **JESUS IN THE EUCHARIST**

The Eucharist is the most precious thing in the entire world- Jesus Himself. God's desire to be close to us is so great He comes to us in the Eucharist, where we get to receive Him at Mass or just sit and be with Him in Adoration. Take the time to recognize Jesus present at every Catholic Church even when you are not at Mass.

ACTS:

Adoration

Recognize God's goodness.

Contrition

Recognize your shortcomings.

Thanksgiving

Recognize what God has given you.

Supplication

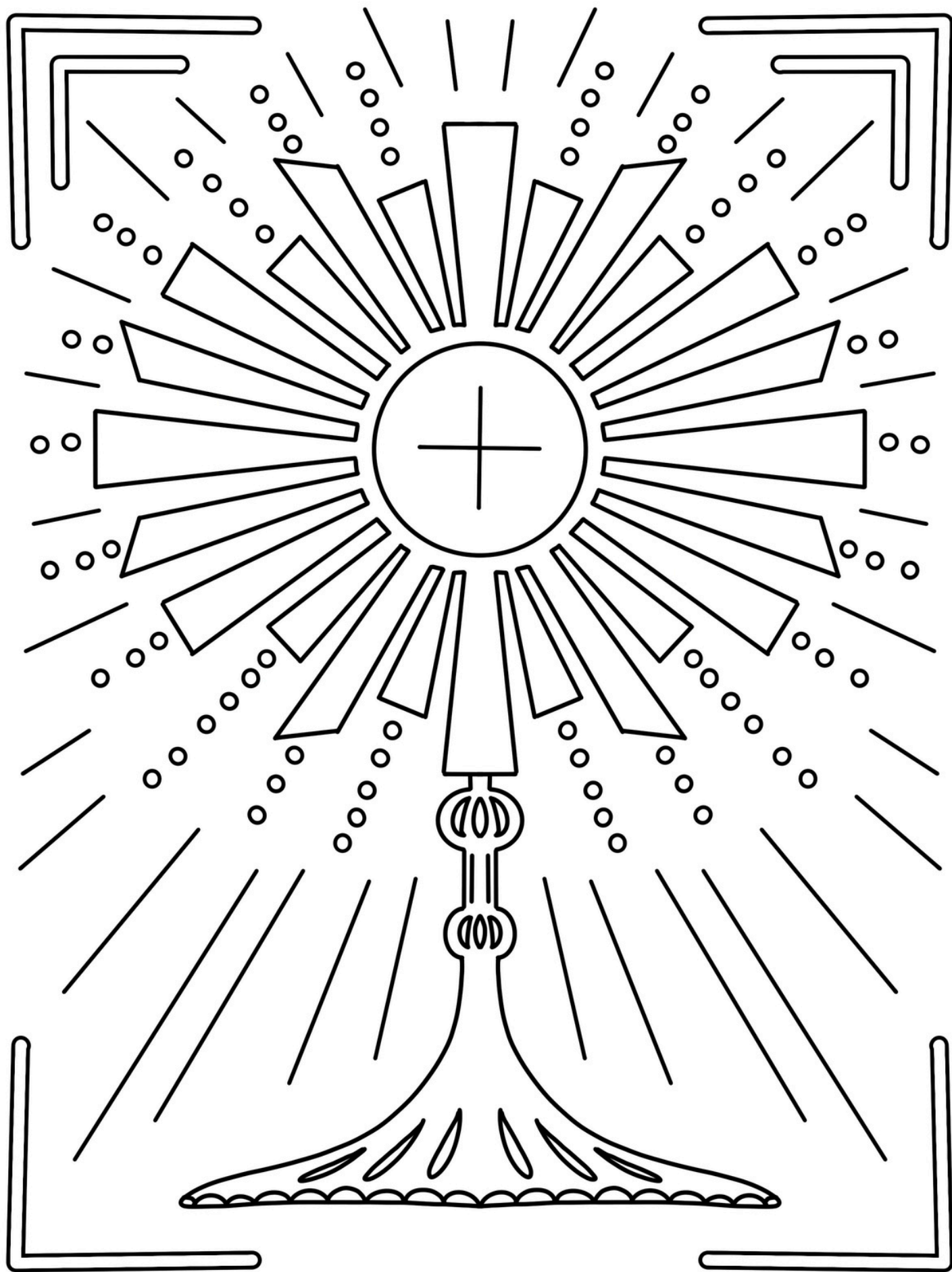
Recognize how you need God's help.

HOW TO LIVE IT:

- Spend an hour in Adoration at St. Wendelin
- Make the Sign of the Cross every time you pass a Catholic Church
- Learn about the consecration at Mass

RESOURCE DEEP DIVE FOR THE PARENTS:

The **Blessed is She** shop has a prayer journal for both men and women. These are a great beginning steps to start building your prayer life and learning to use the most of your time in Adoration.



Celebrate **RECONCILIATION**

Going to Confession can be a scary, especially if this is the very first time or the first time in years. But Be Not Afraid! God's goodness and mercy are so great and are never used to shame His children. Help your child to "Be Not Afraid" by showing them what it will look like to go to Confession or allowing them the opportunity to watch you go into the Confessional and come back out.

Make it special:

Celebrate it! Your child just received God's mercy. Have ice cream or cupcakes to eat as a celebration after confession celebration or give a small gift like a Saint medal or Holy card.

Parent Recommendation:

[Holy Heroes Confession Pack for Kids.](#)

HOW TO LIVE IT:

- Find a time that works in your schedule **every** month
- Incorporate the daily Examen before bed
- Go to Confession as a family

RESOURCE DEEP DIVE FOR THE FAMILY:

Hallow has a [Confession Prep](#) series to help guide young members through the steps of Confession. Take the time to make sure your child is comfortable with Confession before you go!

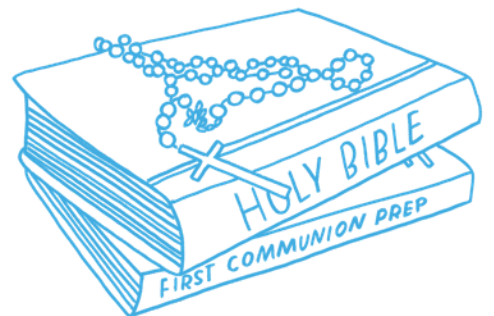
WORD SEARCH

Reconciliation

R	S	Q	K	A	B	S	O	L	U	T	I	O	N	Q	F	M	S
E	T	E	N	C	O	M	M	A	N	D	M	E	N	T	S	G	E
P	R	E	P	A	R	E	J	W	C	J	Q	Y	U	W	A	T	U
E	S	O	U	L	O	F	F	E	N	D	S	E	V	V	C	K	H
N	T	W	I	Q	A	P	E	N	A	N	C	E	X	E	R	P	E
T	C	O	N	F	E	S	S	I	O	N	Y	J	A	S	A	R	A
A	R	E	C	O	N	C	I	L	I	A	T	I	O	N	M	I	L
N	C	O	N	F	E	S	S	I	O	N	A	L	T	H	E	E	I
C	M	C	C	T	P	H	B	J	E	S	U	S	I	T	N	S	N
E	G	Z	G	O	D	H	O	L	Y	S	P	I	R	I	T	T	G
H	C	G	R	A	C	E	T	Q	C	H	U	R	C	H	K	C	B
F	S	F	O	R	G	I	V	E	N	E	S	S	I	N	S	A	U

Find the following words in the puzzle.

- | | | |
|----------------|---------------|--------------------|
| + ABSOLUTION | + HEALING | + RECONCILIATION |
| + CHURCH | + HOLY SPIRIT | + REPENTANCE |
| + CONFESSION | + JESUS | + SACRAMENT |
| + CONFESSIONAL | + OFFENDS | + SINS |
| + FORGIVENESS | + PENANCE | + SOUL |
| + GOD | + PREPARE | + TEN COMMANDMENTS |
| + GRACE | + PRIEST | |



The Steps of Reconciliation

1. Say hello to Father.
2. Make the Sign of the Cross with Father.
3. Say to Father: "Forgive me, Father,
for I have sinned. It has been (say how long)
since my last confession".
4. Tell your sins to Father, ending with "For these,
and all my sins, I am truly sorry."
5. Listen to the priest carefully and listen for your
penance.
6. The priest will ask you to say the Act of Contrition:



O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee,
and I detest all my sins because of thy just punishments,
but most of all, because they offend, Thee, my God,
Who art all good and deserving of all my love.
I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to sin no more
and to avoid the near occasions of sin. Amen.

7. Listen to the words of forgiveness and receive absolution.
8. Thank Father and leave the confessional.
9. Go back to your seat in the pew and say your penance.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

(Based on the Ten Commandments)

1. I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.
 - a. Have I wanted more, making things or money more important than God?
 - b. Do I like sports or entertainment figures better than God?
 - c. Do I ask God for help and rely on His help in all that I do?
 - d. Do I want to please God in everything I do?
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
 1. Do I use God's name carelessly or when I am angry?
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.
 1. Did I attend Mass on Sunday and Holy Days?
 2. Have I remembered to pray daily?
 3. Have I worked on homework on Sunday when I could have done it Friday or Saturday?
4. Honor your father and your mother.
 1. Do I obey my parents and do my chores without complaining?
 2. Was I disrespectful to teachers, coaches, bus drivers, the Church or others in authority?
5. You shall not kill.
 1. Do I keep my patience, or do I lose my temper?
 2. Have I said mean things about another person?
 3. Have I treated others kindly, even those who are different than I am?
6. You shall not commit adultery.
 1. Do I show respect for my body and the bodies of others?
 2. Do I avoid harmful things like eating too much candy, or things I shouldn't eat/drink?
7. You shall not steal.
 1. Have I taken something that belongs to someone else?
 2. Have I used money responsibly and given to the poor?
 3. Have I polluted or not recycled things that I could have recycled?
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
 1. Do I play fairly, or do I cheat at school or in games?
 2. Have I been honest, or have I lied?
 3. Have I gotten in fights or hurt someone by what I have said or done?
 4. Have I teased others or called someone names?
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
 1. Have I been jealous of the friends that someone else has?
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.
 1. Have I been jealous of the things that others have?
 2. Have I shared my things when others needed them?

Adapted from Seven Frequently Asked Questions About Children and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, written for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee by Kathleen D. Beuscher, 2010

Prepare for your **FIRST COMMUNION**

The excitement of receiving a sacrament is for the joy of deepening our relationship with God. The Eucharist is the closest we are able to get to Jesus here on Earth. This is something to celebrate, along with all the other receptions of Communion. The preparation and excitement that we have for our First Communion should be carried to every time we receive the Eucharist, the attentiveness to our outfit, how we make Sunday special, and how we bring Jesus into all parts of our life.

REMOTE PREPARATION

- Practice how to receive the Eucharist reverently
- Dress up for Mass
- Arrive early to Mass to prepare your hearts to listen to Jesus

PROXIMATE PREPARATION

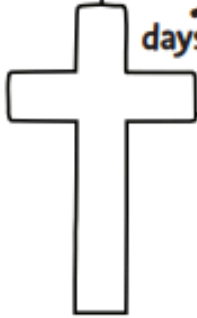
- Approach the Eucharist with humility
- Find a First Communion outfit

BEFORE MY FIRST COMMUNION, I WANT TO...

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Be kinder to others | ☐ Know Jesus better |
| ☐ Help my family | ☐ Pray more |
| ☐ Spend more time with Jesus | ☐ Got to Mass with a joyful heart |
| ☐ _____ | |

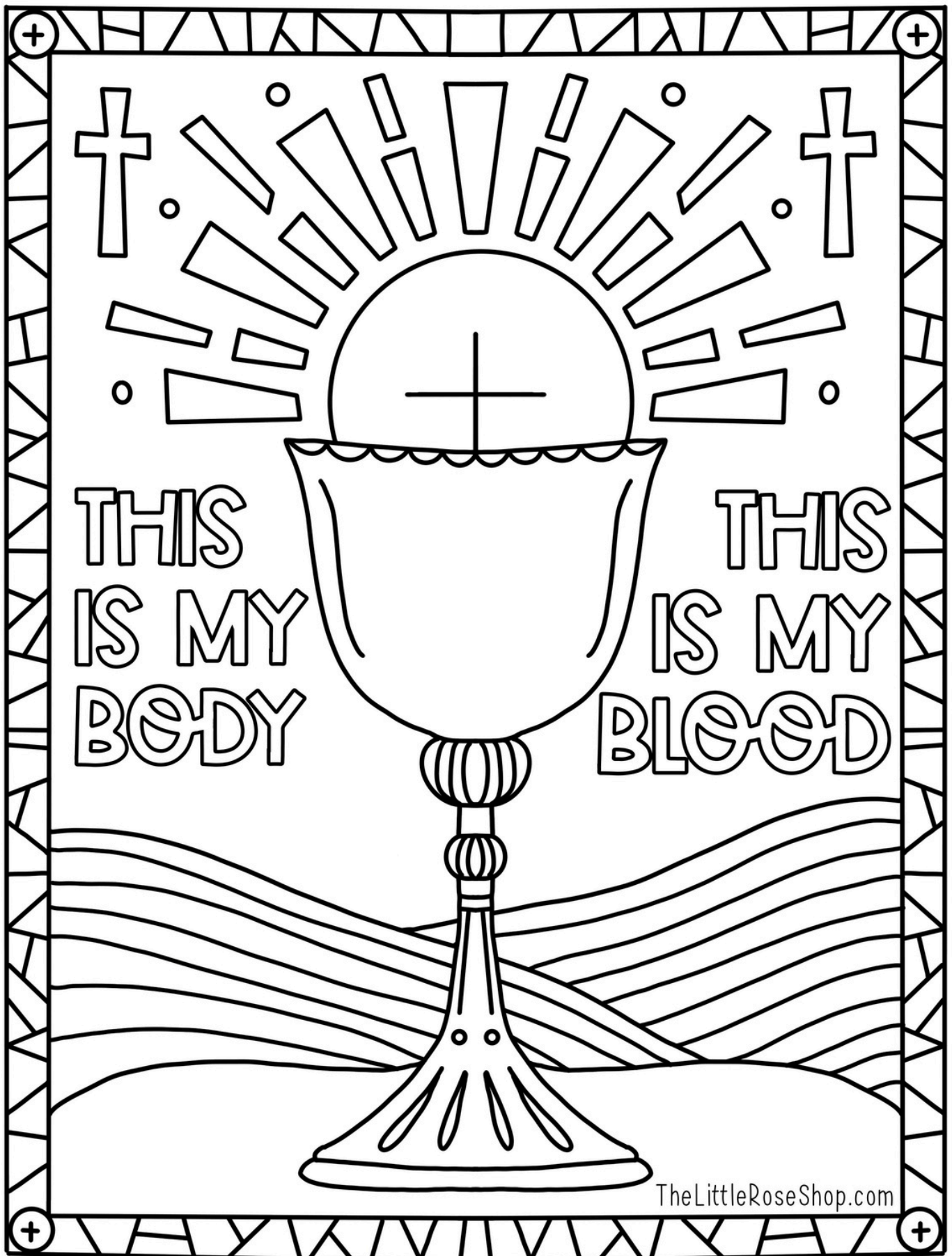
Countdown to my FIRST COMMUNION

Subtract 25 days from the scheduled date
of your First Communion, and begin this countdown on that day.
Each day, color in a square as you anticipate receiving Jesus in the Eucharist for the first time!

 25 days left	24 days left	23 days left	22 days left	21 days left
20 days left	19 days left	18 days left	17 days left	16 days left 
15 days left	14 days left	13 days left	12 days left	11 days left
 10 days left	9 days left	8 days left	7 days left	6 days left 
 5 days left	4 days left	3 days left	2 days left	1 day left 

My First Communion Day: _____

thelittleroseshop.com



Celebrate **AS A FAMILY**

Our homes are the first place that we learn to love and serve God. The love we receive in our family reflects the love God has for us. Build the domestic church and fill your family and home with prayer. Complete joy-filled activities and live the joy of God.

HOW TO LIVE IT:

- Take a family walk outside in God's creation
- Have a phone-free dinner
- Family Game night
- Family Prayer Nook
- Pray a weekly Rosary.

Bake a Loaf of Bread:

Draw the connection between earthly bread that feeds our body and Divine Bread that feeds our soul. Bake a loaf of quick bread that takes less than an hour. Read and discuss John 6:35-58 as the bread bakes. Enjoy the Word of God and the bread you made!

Parent Recommendation:

[Celebrating Sunday for Catholic Families](#)

RESOURCE DEEP DIVE FOR THE FAMILY:

"Catholic Mom" offers some simple ideas to start incorporating Liturgical living into your family life. The Church offers so many different Feast Days to celebrate and traditions to adapt to the family life. The most impactful thing on your child's faith is seeing how it matters to you.



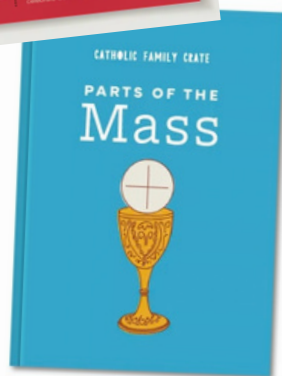
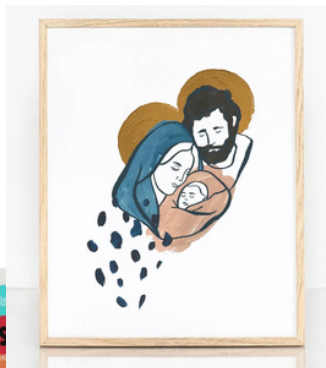
*I'm
praying
for you!*

Say to the Lord, "My refuge and fortress, my
God in whom I trust." Psalms 91:2





First Communion GIFT GUIDE



Holy Water Font
Devotional Book
Necklace
Saint Wall Art
Reflection Journal
Rosary and Pouch
Wall Crucifix
Catholic Bible
Mass Play Set



Some Catholic Shops to check out!
Shop by occasion for more ideas.

The Little Rose Shop has some great shirts and books.

Be A Heart Design has some fun Catholic water bottles and DIY Rosary kits.

Blessed is She has some great devotional books for all seasons.

Shining Light Dolls has some fun Catholic toys and a subscription to the Catholic Kids' magazine.

Catholic Family Crate has fun Catholic games, books, and daily prayer life resources.