

As Church, We Serve

Objective: Students will be able to state that we receive the Body and Blood of Jesus every time we receive Holy Communion. When we receive the Eucharist, we become one with Jesus Christ and with each other

For the Catechist

In this lesson the children are told the story of the Passover. They will learn that Jesus transformed the ancient Passover feast of deliverance from slavery in Egypt into a new deliverance. Jesus delivers us from eternal death through the giving of His life. In this series the story of Moses is in the Grade 1 book, but this lesson includes the first reference to the Passover meal.

There is more involved in Jesus' last Passover meal than we can realize at one time: the memory of Jesus' farewell, Jesus' sacrificial act, the New Covenant between God and man, the forgiveness of sins, thanksgiving to God, and the expectation of the Kingdom. The Passover meal recalls what God has done and points to His Kingdom. This lesson connects the Passover meal to the Eucharist in the Divine Liturgy.

During the Passover meal, Jesus told His disciples to listen and to act:

"While they were eating, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take it; this is my body."

Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it. He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed for many."

(Mark 14:22-24)

By receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus, we make Jesus a part of our lives. We join with all the other people who have received Jesus. Together we make up the Body of Christ, the Church.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: The Creed

Introduction: Discussion of Passover
Need: Matzoh or crackers

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:

Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic:* We Are One
- *Group:* "Holy Communion" Filmstrip
- *Craft:* The Prospora

Closing: The Creed

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord: The Mystical Supper

Teaching Pics:

Divine Liturgy: DL1, DL2, DL3, DL4, DL19, DL20, DL22

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

Passover

"These events in Christ's life took place during Passover, the most holy feast of the Jewish religious year. The Passover celebrated the Israelites' release from bondage in Egypt and their exodus to the promised land. The miracles God performed on their behalf to free them were remembered by means of various rituals. Most important of these was the sacrificing of the passover or paschal lamb. According to the Book of Exodus, a lamb was slaughtered by each Hebrew family and its blood smeared on the doorway. When the plague came killing the first-born son of each household, it spared those homes marked by the blood of the lamb. Death 'passed over' God's chosen people" (LLII 56).

Christ our Passover

"Christ fulfilled this mystery when He Himself took the place of the paschal lamb and shed His blood on the doorpost of the Cross. He is God's first-born and only Son, whose blood saved the whole world from sin and led us all from death to life. St. Paul exclaims in joy, 'Christ our Passover has been sacrificed' (I Cor 5:7). The Gospel of St. John places our Lord's death on the Day of Preparation, when the passover lambs were being slaughtered in the Jerusalem temple, to show that Jesus fulfilled all the sacrifices of the Old Testament. This mystery expressed, 'Christ entered [the sanctuary], not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood and achieved eternal redemption' (Heb 9:12). Here was fulfilled St. John the Baptist's prophetic identification of Jesus at the beginning of His ministry, 'There is the Lamb of God' (Jn 1:36)" (LLII 57).

The Last Supper

"All four gospels as well as St. Paul tell us how, just before His death, Christ celebrated a 'last supper' with His apostles: a meal the evangelists are careful to present in the context of the Jewish Passover. Jesus took bread and wine and identified them as His body and blood. He gave us a new ritual to celebrate: one that is not merely symbolic but real, freeing us from the death of sin whenever we participate in it with faith. Henceforth whenever we would receive Communion, we would be truly united with Christ both in our body and our spirit. We therefore call the bread of the Divine Liturgy the 'Lamb.' The Eucharist is truly our Lord, the Lamb of God, the One who suffered, died and is risen, the perfect fulfillment of all sacrifices" (LLII 57).

The Divine Liturgy

"When we present these rites and words, when the bread and wine are placed on the holy table and consecrated, we experience this amplified reality as 'Christ is among us.' We are forged together as Church in a sanctifying action which frees us from sin and fills us with the Spirit in the fullness of the future kingdom experienced in the present. When we eat and drink the Body and Blood of Christ, we unite with God in the Holy Trinity through the Word who became flesh for our sake. St. John Chrysostom declared this mystery, 'For it was not enough for [Christ] to be made man, and to be struck and slaughtered, but He also comingles Himself with us, and not by faith only but in very deed, He makes us His body ... and we are made one body and one flesh with Christ' (*Homily on the Gospel of St. Matthew 82.5*)" (LLII 61).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Today we are going to continue saying the Creed. Did you say the Creed during the Divine Liturgy this week? Let's begin with the sign of the cross. [Use the prayer worksheet according to your jurisdiction.]

Introduction

Today I have a Bible story to tell you. It is the story about Moses. Do any of you remember learning about Moses? [Let the children share what they know]

In the Bible is a story about Moses and the Jewish people living in Egypt. These people were slaves. They wanted to be free. The ruler of Egypt would not allow them to be free to leave. God gave Moses special instructions for the Jewish people to follow. Finally, they were set free, and they left Egypt quickly. The ruler of Egypt changed his mind and tried to stop them, but the people were gone.

Each year the Jewish people tell this story at their Passover meal called a seder. They remember all that God had done and how He had freed the Jews. Because this meal is so different and special, a set of rules tells what is to be eaten, when it is to be eaten and what is to be said. On what holiday do they have this meal? (Passover) In eating this meal the Jewish people praise and thank God for saving them. God saved them by giving special instructions to Moses. The people had to kill a lamb, put blood on doorways, and mix dough without yeast. Why did the people follow God's instructions? (They loved Him and believed Him.) If all this was done, they would not be killed.

Because the people left Egypt in a hurry, they did not have time to put yeast into their dough to let it rise. When it was baked, the bread was flat like this matzoh we are eating. Today people eat this matzoh at their Passover meals to remember how quickly the Jewish people had to leave to be saved from the Pharaoh. [Hold up a matzoh cracker.] This is a matzoh cracker. This is a special part of the meal.

Since Jesus followed the Jewish traditions, His family celebrated Passover. Let's read about something very special that Jesus did at His last Passover.

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As Church, We Receive

Jesus followed the Jewish traditions of His family. Every year the Jewish people gather to praise and thank God for leading the Israelites out of Egypt.

The Israelites were the chosen people of God. God promised to save them. They believed and trusted God who helped them many times.

God helped the Israelites when they were slaves in Egypt. They prayed to God to save them, and He did. The Jewish people have a special religious observance that praises and thanks God for saving their ancestors from slavery in Egypt. This observance called Passover is celebrated every year.

Jesus and the twelve disciples were together for Passover.



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Unit 3: As Church, We Act

Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

As Church, We Receive

[Have the students turn to the first page of their lesson.]

Does anyone know what this is? (The icon of the Last Supper) Who are these people? (Jesus and His twelve disciples.) This is a picture of Jesus and disciples at His last Passover meal.

Jesus and the twelve disciples were together for Passover.

What is Passover? (A special religious observance of the Jewish people) Why do they celebrate it? (To thank God for saving their ancestors, the Israelites)



While they were eating, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take it; this is my body." Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it. He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed for many."

(Mark 14:22-24)



The Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Jesus. He is with our Church always. He gives us this Holy Mystery. We receive the Eucharist with faith and love. Each year our Church remembers the first time Jesus gave the Eucharist. On Holy Thursday, our Church remembers the Lord's Supper when Jesus first gave us the Eucharist.

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... our Church remembers the Lord's Supper when Jesus first gave us the Eucharist.

At His last Passover meal, Jesus took bread and wine and blessed them. What did He say they would become? (The Body and Blood of Jesus) What day of our Church year do we observe the first Lord's Supper? (Holy Thursday)

The Holy Eucharist is the Mystery that makes us one.

In church we come together as one to receive Communion. What is the name of the special bread? (Prospora) What is the name of the cup for Communion? (Chalice) What is the name of the dish? (Diskos) The Eucharist is a special meal prepared at the Lord's table. The bread is cut and placed on the diskos. The largest piece of bread placed in the center of the diskos is called the Lamb. What do the bread and wine become? (The Body and Blood of Jesus) With whom do we unite when we receive the Eucharist? (Jesus and each other) We join together as one.

Let's review: *What is the name given to all of us joined together as the Body of Christ on earth? (The Church) As one Church, we receive the Lord Jesus in the Eucharist.*

We receive the Eucharist during the Divine Liturgy. The priest uses a special cup called a chalice. With the chalice is the diskos or dish. The diskos holds the specially prepared bread called the prospora.



Through the Mystery of the Eucharist, the Church remembers all that Jesus has done for us. In the Eucharist we give thanks to God for all that He has given us. The Holy Eucharist is the Mystery that makes us one.

In Holy Communion we are one with Jesus Christ
We also become one with each other.

Words to Remember:
Eucharist: The Body and Blood of Jesus
Chalice: A special cup containing wine which will be the consecrated Holy Blood.
Diskos: A dish on which the Lamb—which will be the consecrated Holy Bread—is placed
Prospora: A specially prepared bread that is used during the Divine Liturgy

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Activity Tracks

Basic: We Are One

[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Today we are going to review the words that are important when we talk about the Eucharist. Let's do the worksheet.

We Are One
Place the words in the boxes that complete the sentences.

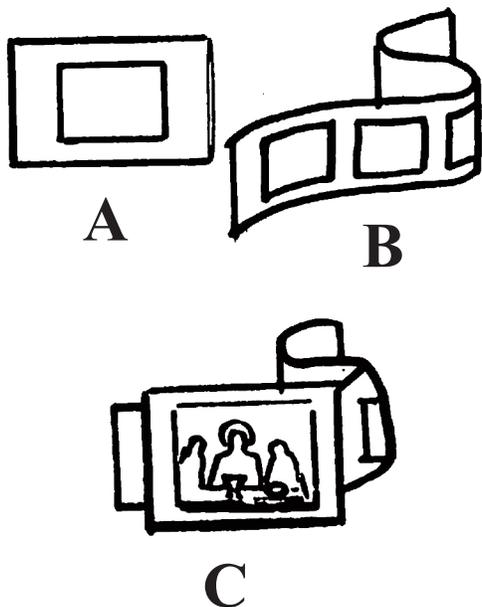
church	Holy Thursday
Eucharist	Me Jesus

- On Holy Thursday at the Lord's Supper, _____ gave us His Body and Blood.
- Jesus told His disciples: "Do this is remembrance of ____."
- Today the _____ celebrates this Mystery in the Divine Liturgy.
- The _____ is the Body and Blood of Jesus.
- Each year the Church remembers this event on the day called _____.



- JESUS
- ME
- CHURCH
- EUCCHARIST
- HOLY THURSDAY

Group: "Holy Communion" Filmstrip



Materials: One 3 5/8" by 6 1/2" envelope for each group of 3 children, 3 1/4" by 12" strip of white paper, markers, scissors

Today we read about everything that happened on Holy Thursday. Now we are going to make a filmstrip that shows what took place that day. We are going to cut a 4" by 3 1/4" window on the front side of this envelope. [You could have this cut in advance.] Now we will seal the envelope and cut the ends open. On this strip of paper that will slide through the envelope [show students] we need to draw pictures to tell the story of the Lord's Supper and the Eucharist. [Some suggestions: Jesus and the disciples around the table; diskos and Communion bread; chalice and wine; priest and people worshipping in church.]

Now let's thread the picture strip into the television envelope. Roll up the paper and hold it in one hand. As we unroll and pull through, picture by picture, we can share the story with each other.

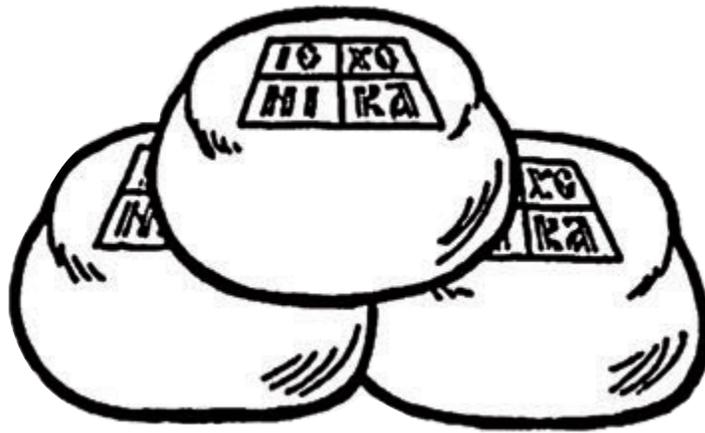
Craft: The Prospora

Materials: Follow the recipe on the worksheet.

Closing

We are going to say the Creed for our closing prayer. Let's begin with the sign of the cross.

Preparing the Holy Bread



There are many variations to the recipe for prosphora and these are often found in ethnic cookbooks. The following, adapted from *A Guide for the Domestic Church*, is typical of the bread of Greek or Southern churches. For a Ukrainian recipe, see *We Are Children of Light*, available from the Sister Servants of Mary Immaculate, 5 Austin Terrace, Toronto, ON M5K 1Y1.

A basic bread dough recipe is used in preparing the holy bread. The most distinctive sign that this bread is meant for the Eucharist is that, before baking, it is marked with the seal or stamp on which the divine name is inscribed. This seal consists of a cross, around which is written the Greek inscription IC XC NIKA (Jesus Christ is victorious), some loaves contain only one such inscription; others contain several (meant to be used in larger celebrations) as well as indications for the other particles cut during the prothesis or preparation rite. Usually made of wood (but increasingly of plastic or ceramic as well), these seals are available from Eastern Church suppliers and often from ethnic grocers as well.

One popular recipe is on the following page.

Holy Bread

1 pkg. compressed dry yeast
2 1/2 cups water
2 tsp. salt
6 3/4 to 7 cups unbleached flour (Crutchfield is a good brand)

Dilute yeast in warm water.

Add salt, half of the flour and stir.

Mix the remainder of the flour by hand until the dough is firm.

Knead until dough is smooth.

Divide the dough and place in 8", 9" or 10" cake pans that have been floured only; do not grease pan. Keep in mind that the dough should be smoothed out to cover the bottom half of the depth of the pan.

Take the eucharist seal and dip it into flour. Shake off the excess flour, then press firmly and evenly in the center of the dough.

Remove the seal and let the dough rise, covered, until almost doubled in bulk. As the dough will also rise in the oven, take care that it does not rise so much that the seal will be erased.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Before baking, take kitchen scissors and cut the dough at an angle around the perimeter of the bread midway between the edge of the pan and the seal, taking care not to cut through to the bottom. Then take a toothpick and prick the outer edge of the seal. Do not pierce the center section of the seal.

Bake in a 400 degree oven for 30 minutes or until done. Bread should be golden in color. Immediately after taking the bread from the oven, wipe the face of the bread with a clean, damp cloth which has been soaked in cold water.

Cover the bread with a dry cloth and allow to cool. Put bread in a plastic bag when cool.

While mixing, kneading and waiting for the bread to rise or bake, you can pray for the intentions you wish to commemorate during the Liturgy. When you bring the bread to church, include a list of the intentions you wish to commemorate.

Unit 3

As Church We Act

Review

1. How do we imitate Jesus?
(Lesson 14: We imitate Jesus by serving one another.)
2. What is the name of the preparation for the Nativity?
(Lesson 10: The name is the Nativity Fast.)
3. What is the Creed?
(Lesson 11: The Creed is a statement of what the Church believes.)
4. What is the Greatest Commandment?
(Lesson 1: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.)
5. What is a Savior? Why is Jesus called our Savior?
(Lesson 2: A Savior is a special leader who brings people to eternal life. Jesus is our Savior because He gave us eternal life.)