

Eucharist Without Walls

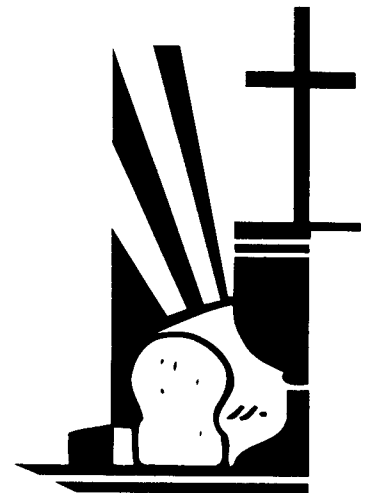
Pastoral Letter for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee

Study Guide for High School Teens

Session Two: Eucharist

Notes to Session Leaders:

1. This session is based on pages 6-8, 9-12, and 16 of *Eucharist Without Walls*. It is meant to be an experience that brings together the ideas of bread, Holy Communion, the Real Presence in the Eucharist, and following Jesus (“being Eucharist”).
2. Remember that this session is written for use with young people of different ages (from grades nine through twelve), so you must adapt it to the age and characteristics of the specific group you are working with. This is especially true of part C, which is the reflection questions. Some groups will need more follow-up questions to get the conversation going; some might just start talking and need less input. The key to being successful with this session is to know your group and be flexible, so your use of the material can best fit their level and abilities.
3. Materials needed for this session are:
 - Ingredients for bread, as listed in part A
 - Bowl for mixing
 - Greased cookie sheet
 - Optional: rolling pin and pizza/pastry cutter
 - Toaster oven, Pizza oven, or access to a kitchen oven
 - Bible
 - Candle
 - Cloth (to create prayer space, with Bible and candle)
 - Wheat and grapes (or flour and grapes)
 - Grape juice, cups and napkins
 - Basket or dish for the bread



4. Have your prayer space set up before the session begins:

Have a Bible and Candle placed on a cloth in a special area – on a small table or as part of a large table. On the cloth, also have the wheat and grapes (or flour and grapes).

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Part A) Opening Orientation

1. Welcome the group.

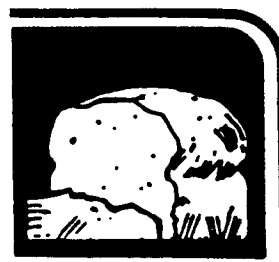
Explain that this session will focus on the Eucharist,
and that it will begin with the making of bread.

Ask if anyone has ever made bread before.

Explain that this recipe is a very simple one, often used for Eucharistic bread. It bakes into a very flat, plain tasting loaf, which is probably similar to the kinds of breads made by our ancestors in Biblical times.

2. Gather the ingredients together and have the young people identify each one as they pour them into the bowl.

- White and/or Whole wheat flour – 1 ½ cups
- Baking powder – 1 ½ teaspoons
- Salt – dash
- Oil – 3 tablespoons
- Honey – 2 tablespoons
- Water or Milk – ¾ cup



3. Have one or two young people from the group mix all of these ingredients and shape into a loaf.

As your group mixes these ingredients, remind them that bread is one loaf, made from many different ingredients, just like we as church are made from many different people. So Church is like Bread. In fact, the words, “Body of Christ” refer both to the bread we eat at Communion, as well as ourselves, the People of God.

4. Put the loaf on a greased cookie sheet.

5. Using your hands or a rolling pin, flatten out the loaf until it is only as thick as a thick pancake.
Optional: Use a pizza cutter or pastry cutter to score lines down and across (to make it easier to break apart and distribute)

6. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes.

7. Continue the session while the bread bakes.

Part B) Prayer

1. Light the candle.

2. Have a young person who is excellent reader, trained and prepared, proclaim:

A Reading from the Gospel of John (Jn 6: 51-58)

Jesus said to the People, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; those who eat of this bread will live forever. The bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh."

Some people began to dispute among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" So Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood, you have no life in you; those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me and I in them. As the living God sent me, and I live because of God, so those who eat me will live because of me. This is the bread which came down from heaven, not such as our ancestors ate and died; those who eat this bread will live forever.

3. Say something like this:

A very significant belief in our Catholic faith is the belief in the real presence of Christ in our Eucharistic meal. In other words, we truly believe exactly what Jesus said in this reading – that we are to eat his flesh and drink his blood, and that we will have eternal life. When we go to Mass and receive communion, we are not eating bread and drinking wine that has been just blessed or just put in special holy containers. We believe we are actually receiving the body and blood of Christ. It's a mystery which we cannot explain, but we believe it because Jesus so clearly taught it to us.

But there is even more to it than this. When we say "Amen" to the Eucharist, we not only say yes, we believe the bread and wine is Christ. We also say yes, we are part of the body of Christ, and yes, we promise to live our lives by "putting on Christ" and by following his example. We actually say "yes" to being Eucharist ourselves, and to bringing the message of Jesus into our every day lives.

4. Blessing:

Have the group stand in a circle facing inward, with their hands up in a blessing gesture toward each other. Ask them to repeat these words as you say them:

Jesus, who walked this earth as a human being like us...
Christ, who rose from the dead and brought us new life...
Bless our efforts as we try to become Eucharist for each other...
May your body and blood make us stronger...
And more sure of our faith ...
May the bread and wine of our Communion meal...
Help us become nourishment and celebration...
For your church, the People of God...
And for the world. Amen.





Part C) Reflection Questions

Present this part of the session as a conversation. You say a little, then you ask the young people to say a little. It isn't necessary to read the comments and ask the questions exactly in the way they are written. The comfort and flow of the group is more important. It's important that the content is touched upon, and that the young people have a chance to answer some questions and join the conversation so that the content is digested and understood.

1. "Being Eucharist" means following the way of Jesus the Christ in a confident manner. It means not being afraid to stand up to sin when we see it, and not being afraid to do the right thing, even at times when doing the wrong thing might be easier, simpler, and more convenient. It means loving all of our neighbors and creating relationships of support and trust. It means becoming people of healing and people of service as second nature, as an automatic response.

Who are people you already know who try to live their life in this way?

When have you made a conscious decision to respond in this way to a difficult situation?

How do you bring the way of Jesus the Christ into your everyday life? What will it take for all Catholic teenagers to begin to see themselves as Eucharist? How will that happen?

2. "Eucharist without walls" is a concept brought to life by Archbishop Rembert Weakland and Bishop Richard Sklba. It means "being Eucharist" every day, every place we go; not just when we are in a church building. It means complete sharing of our resources, complete openness to the movement of the Holy Spirit. It means not letting parish boundaries or population changes get in the way. It means embracing our calling to be Church, to be the People of God in a way that brings new life and new energy to our faith. This is a difficult and frightening thing for us to do as we watch the growing shortage of priests affect our archdiocese.

There has been a lot of pain as parishes go through the process of planning for the future. There has also been a lot of hope. What have you heard about this process? How has your parish been involved?

Where is your pain and your hope as you look toward the future?

Where do you see opportunities to be a person of healing and a person of service to the poor and underprivileged?

3. It is especially challenging to respond to the changing situation of our church, because we must accept the pope's decision not to ordain women and married men, and we must accept the reality of declining numbers of priests. We must also demand high quality and high standards for ministry – with both priests and lay ministers.

Archbishop Weakland and Bishop Sklba offer us three responses to answer these challenges: First, to increase our participation at Mass; Secondly, to truly create Eucharist without walls; and Thirdly, to plan important ways to celebrate the millennium as Eucharistic People.

Would you describe your participation at Liturgy as complete or full? Why or why not? How could your participation be increased?

How do you imagine "Eucharist without walls"? How might that look like or feel like?

How do you feel about the coming millennium? Do you see this as a time for despair or a time of hope? How so?

Part D) Activity

1. Bring out the bread, freshly baked and still warm.

Serve it with grape juice.

2. As you eat the bread and drink the grape juice together, encourage the group to name the people who have nourished them and have helped them grow, people who have celebrated life with them.

3. Tell everyone that "Eucharist" means thanksgiving.
Ask everyone to be quiet for a moment,
and to think of these special people and to thank God in a special prayer.

4. End the session with a sharing of the sign of peace.

