

KINDERGARTEN

God Loves Us



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Meals Are Good

On the night before he died, Jesus ate a meal with the apostles. It was Jesus' last supper with them.



At this meal, Jesus gave thanks and praise to his Father. Jesus offered himself to his Father for us. Jesus gave himself to us as bread and wine.



As God's family, we come together at Mass.
We give God thanks and praise.

We hear God's Word
in the Bible.

We remember
Jesus' Last Supper.

We remember that
Jesus died for all of us.
Jesus gives himself to
us in the Eucharist.



At Mass the bread and wine become the Body
and Blood of Jesus. Jesus gives us the gift of
himself in Holy Communion.



Scripture

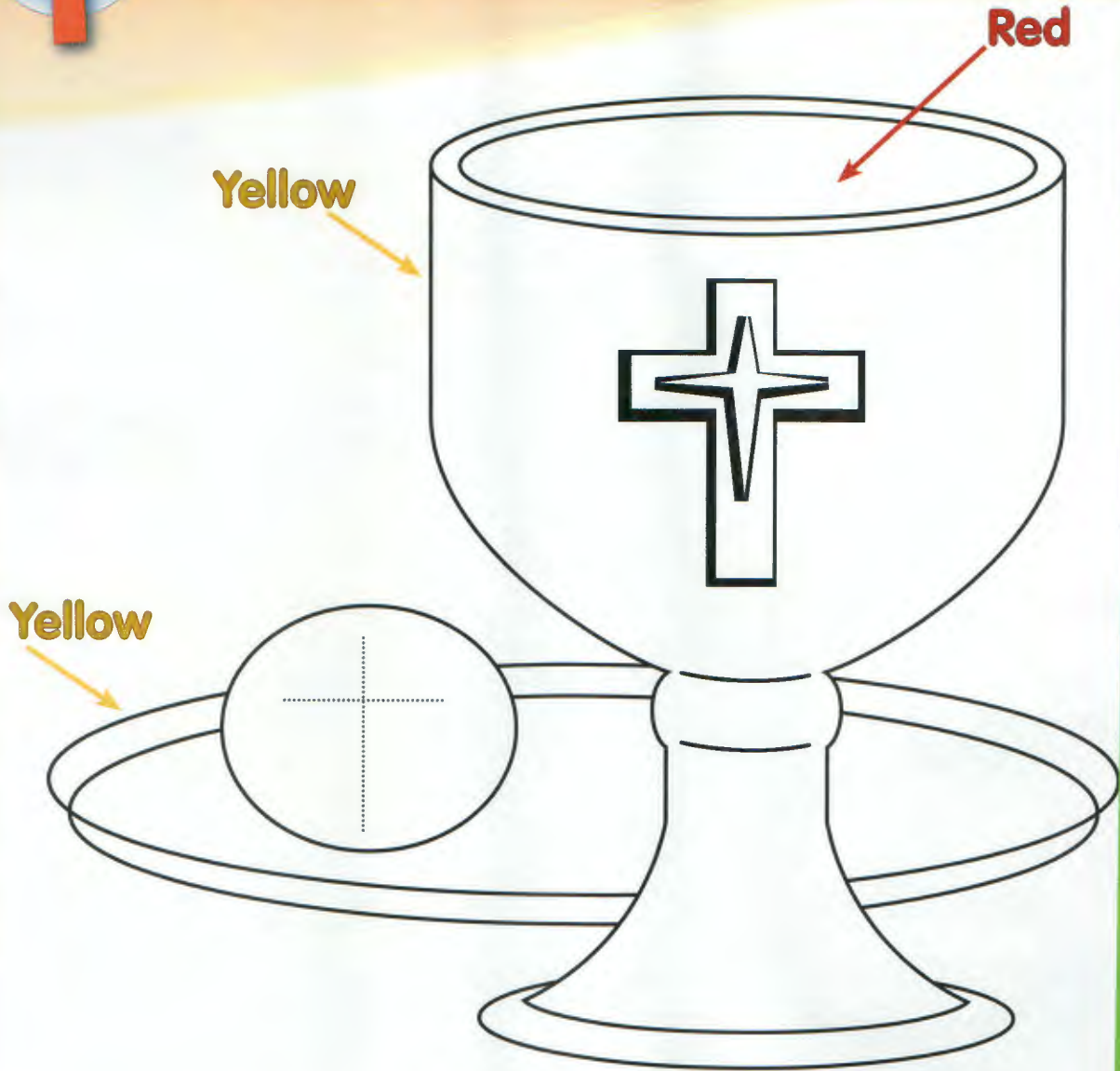
Jesus said, "Do this in memory of me."

Based on Luke 22:19





Try This



Color the wine in the cup red.

Color the cup and the plate yellow.

Trace over the cross on the bread.

LORD, you give us bread to make us strong.

Based on Psalm 104:14–15

Sharing Meals in Families

The Lesson Your Child Learned

At the Last Supper Jesus gave us the everlasting gift of himself. He offered his life as a sacrifice to his Father. He gave himself as food to strengthen us, to unite himself with us, and to unite us with one another. The Mass, then, is both a sacrifice and a meal. In this chapter, the children learned that meals are times for sharing love as well as for sharing food. They heard the story of Jesus' Last Supper and learned that at Mass Jesus offers himself up for us and feeds us with the bread and wine that are his Body and Blood. Through the love and friendship shared at family meals, children experience the human values found in the Eucharist.



Living the Lesson

Do you want to strengthen your family? Eat meals together regularly. Recent studies have shown that children whose families eat together regularly get better grades, enjoy better nutrition, and have a lower incidence of drug use and other problematic behavior. They're also more likely to practice their faith.

When we come together at the kitchen table, we bring not only our physical hunger, but also our social, emotional, and spiritual hungers. At the family meal, all these hungers are fed. In a time when children are being tossed about on the stormy seas of life, the family meal provides an anchor within a safe harbor—the family.

The biggest benefit of the family meal is that it prepares us all to come to the table of the Lord in the Eucharist. The more we can be present to one another at our own kitchen table, the more we will be able to experience the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

—Tom McGrath, author of *Raising Faith-Filled Kids* (Loyola Press)

Bringing the Lesson Home

- Read with your child the pages from this chapter that were sent home.
- Discuss the day's activities as a family at mealtime.
- Have a family baking project and enjoy the results at your family meal.
- Give your child the job of setting the table.
- Begin each family meal with a prayer. Let your child lead the prayer from time to time.



[A]s the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do.

Colossians 3:13

To forgive and to Serve

Forgiveness in the Family

The movie *Home Alone* may remain so popular because it shows what happens when a mom and her young son are not behaving at their best. This is not an unusual situation in families, so we can all relate to this family's dilemma. Tension in the household is running high, and Kevin McAllister and his mom say things they both end up regretting. The golden moment of the film is when mother and son are reunited by sharing the simple words, "I'm sorry." Some of the very best moments in a family come when forgiveness is freely offered and received all around.

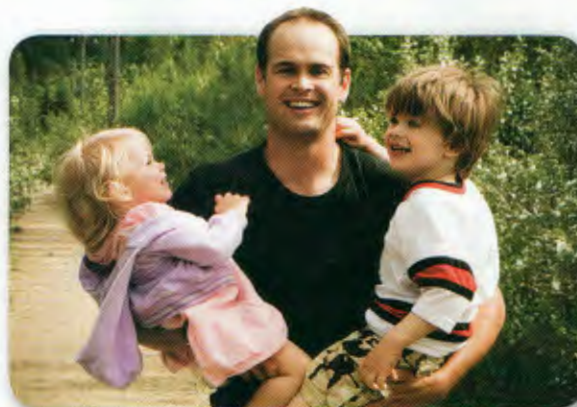
The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says, "[T]he home is the first school of Christian life..." It is the place where we "learn endurance and the joy of work, fraternal love, [and] generous—even repeated—forgiveness..." (CCC #1657) As fallible human beings, we need to learn to forgive as well as how to ask to be forgiven. What a blessing it is to live in a home where forgiveness is generously given and received. Forgiveness is a hallmark of Christian life.



When we recite the Our Father, the prayer Jesus taught us, we say, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." In that short passage, Jesus described forgiveness as an essential part of Christian life. Forgiveness is like a river; its nature is to flow and we know that it flows first and foremost from the heart of God. Because we are forgiven, we are able to forgive others.

One of the most important faith lessons you can teach your child is how to say, "I'm sorry" and "I forgive you." That's because God's love for us comes wrapped in forgiveness. The more we can accept forgiveness and pass it on to others, the more capacity we will have to receive and give God's love.

Children learn best from what's modeled to them. In homes where the words "I'm sorry" and "I forgive you" are heard frequently in the course of family life, children develop the confidence to expect forgiveness and the hope that reconciliation will be the result.



Getting Started

Some lessons are best learned by practice. Here are a few suggestions on how you can make your home a school of Christian life by modeling the virtue of forgiveness.

- When your child has done something you need to correct, ask in an unshaming way, “Do you understand what you did wrong?” or “Do you understand how your behavior hurt your sister?” The point is not punishment as much as it is helping your child grow in awareness.
- When correcting your child, be sure to make a distinction between the behavior and the person. For example, say, “Hitting other people is wrong because it will hurt them.” instead of “You’re a bad boy for hitting Jason.” This is not to let the child “off the hook” but will help him or her, over time, build empathy and understand the consequences of his or her actions.
- When you’ve acted in a way you regret, model for your child the way to ask forgiveness:
 1. Say you are sorry.
 2. Be specific as to what you are sorry for.
 3. Make an honest promise to do better in the future. This might sound something like this: “Jennifer, I’m sorry that I yelled at you in the car. I was worried I was going to be late, and I didn’t take time to listen to your questions. I hope you’ll forgive me. I will try to leave more time between errands next time so that I’ll have time to listen to your questions.”



- Let your child see you give and receive forgiveness with other family members. Apologizing is not a sign of weakness. It is an acknowledgement that we adults can fail, and that forgiveness is important to us too.
- The next time you pray the Our Father as a family, point out to your child the phrase, “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” Explain that Jesus wants us to forgive one another and to ask for forgiveness when we haven’t been loving to one another. Forgiveness is a sign that God is in our home.
- Tell your child the story of the Good Shepherd who seeks out the lost sheep. (Luke 15:3–7) This is a good opportunity to let your child know that Jesus is always ready to forgive us no matter what we do. We just need to tell him we’re sorry.