

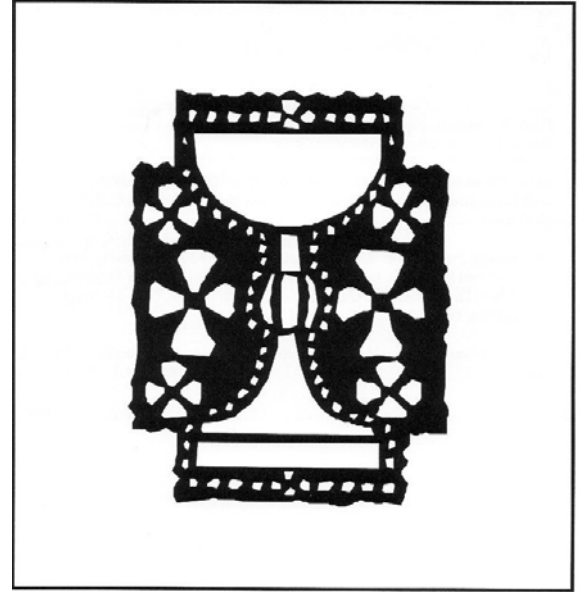


National Apostolate for  
Inclusion Ministry

*Promoting the Full Inclusion of People with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities in the  
Life of the Catholic Church*

## Eucharist Themes and Learning Styles

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Chapter 6, **Sacramental  
Preparation Baptism:  
Individualizing Lesson  
Plans**

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Below are ten key ideas about Eucharist that are included in most student religious education books. Each theme that is listed has a number of suggestions about how to teach the theme in a visual, auditory or kinesthetic manner. Read your text to determine themes. Use these suggestions by matching them to the themes in your student text. Then, use those suggestions that will help your student with intellectual challenges.

Plan to team the students into pairs or small groups when the activity requires tasks too difficult for the person with intellectual limitations. For instance, with a group art activity, allow the students to assist with pasting rather than writing words on the project. Or, team people so that one can dictate a message for the other to write down. You may want to create a system for forming different combinations of people such as by birth month, by first letter of last name, or by preferred color.

These suggestions may spur your own creativity. Your creative energies will be needed to find a multitude of multi-sensory ways of giving input to the students. Also, be flexible in terms of what form their response takes.

### **THEME 1: BELONGING/WELCOME**

#### *Visual*

Have students bring in pictures of family events and celebrations. In addition to what they supply, provide photographs of people who are obviously comfortable and happy to be with each other. Using the picture book from the library entitled *Little Yellow and Little Blue* by Leo Leoni, discuss what it means to belong and feel welcome.

#### *Auditory*

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Teach the song “Oh, How I Love Jesus” from *Hi God!* cassette or CD (try Autom). Relate it to the themes of welcome and belonging.

***Kinesthetic***

Take the students to the church. Have them sit by themselves separated from one another. Perhaps at different ends of the pews. Say a brief prayer. Then have the students sit together in one group close to each other in the front of the church. Again say a short prayer or sing a song. Encourage discussion about their feelings when they were sitting alone and when they sat together in a large group.

**THEME 2: LISTENING – GOD’S WORD**

***Visual***

Have students look at images of the Last Supper. Ask them to identify the people who were paying attention to Jesus and those who were not. Ask them to show you what it looks like to pay attention and what it looks like to ignore another person or ignore God.

***Auditory***

Teach songs such as “Speak Lord I’m Listening” or “Here I am Lord.” Play the chorus several times. Ask students to identify key words. (Glory and Praise and Gather)

Have students tape record the scripture passage where Jesus says, “I Am the Bread of life, he who comes to me shall not die, he shall live forever.” Give each student the chance to read this phrase into the tape recorder. Play it for the whole class.

Discuss the art of truly listening. Active listening is not easy to do. Have the students create a list of things good listeners do and what is different about listening to God’s Word compared to listening in on a conversation with a friend.

***Kinesthetic***

Have students use stories from the text to create scenarios where people did and didn’t listen to one another. Ask the visual students to read the story. Have the kinesthetic students act it out. Relate these skits to the list of good things listeners do and sometimes frightening consequences of not listening. Skits allow participation of both the verbal and non-verbal student.

**THEME 3: GIFTS – BREAD, WINE, OURSELVES**

***Visual***

Have students bring shoe boxes and decorate them with the words I AM GIFT. The students then use magazines to find words and pictures about themselves that they can cut or tear out and put in the “gift boxes.” This project may require a buddy to assist the student with intellectual limitations.

***Auditory***

Teach songs: “Seed Scattered and Sown” or “One Bread, One Body.” (Gather)

Read a story to the students about making bread and one about the making of wine.

***Kinesthetic***

Allow students to actually make bread, and use grape juice as a substitute for wine. Practice carrying gifts to the “altar” during a classroom prayer service. Part of the gifts can be the boxes that the students made and decorated to symbolize themselves as gifts to God. Explain that this is different but similar to the offertory procession at Mass.

If possible, have the students carry the gifts at the Mass that they attend when studying this theme.

#### **THEME 4: REMEMBERING**

##### ***Visual***

Have students view a video on First Eucharist preparation. Stress the concept that at Mass we remember the Last Supper and sacrifice that Jesus made for us.

Ask students to list things they remember about Jesus. Ask a student who can write to write these statements on slips of paper. Put them in a basket. Use these during the closing prayer service for the class. Example of statements might be: Jesus loves us. Jesus gives us Himself in the Eucharist. At Mass we remember the Last Supper.

##### ***Auditory***

Teach the hymn “We Remember How You Loved Us.” (Gather)

Play audio tapes of several church hymns with different kinds of themes. Ask students to identify the one that is about remembering. Suggestions: “Canticle of the Sun” or the chorus from “Blest Be the Lord.”

##### ***Kinesthetic***

Make a memory matching game with pictures of items related to First Eucharist. Suggestions included: chalice, Host, wheat, candles, grapes, cross, altar.

#### **THEME 5: THANKS AND PRAISE**

##### ***Visual***

Have the students create a class “quilt” of things they are thankful for by using large blocks of construction paper and allow students to draw or cut and paste something they are especially thankful for. Laminate or tape the quilt. Place it in the prayer corner of the classroom.

##### ***Auditory***

Teach songs such as “Glory and Praise to Our God” or “Sing to the Mountains.”

Have students learn the song “There Are Many things I Am Thankful For.” (Taken from Hap Palmer Record: “Ideas, Thoughts and Feelings” – try Amazon)

Create and record a thanksgiving prayer to use at future class prayer services.

##### ***Kinesthetic***

Have students create thanks and praise windsocks using off-white heavy cardboard and crepe paper streamers. Students first decorate the cardboard and then staple it into a circle. Then, they staple streamers to the bottom of the tube and staple a yarn “handle” to the top so that the windsock can be hung at school or home.

Give the students instruments, i.e., tambourine, triangle, bells, etc. to use with a recording of a song of praise and have them do a praise dance.

#### **THEME 6: SHARING CHRIST’S BODY AND BLOOD**

##### ***Visual***

Show a video of a farmer growing corn or wheat. Show a picture of people going to Holy Communion. Ask students to name the ways that Jesus helps us to grow spiritually.

##### ***Auditory***

Teach a song such as “One Bread, One Body.” (Gather)

Adapt the story of the Last Supper into a brief choral reading. Give some students individual parts and have the class respond as a unit with a specific phrase. Examples of possible choral responses are:

-- Jesus helps us to love.

- This is My Body. This is My Blood.
- Do this in memory of Me.

***Kinesthetic***

Have students work in pairs and lie down on butcher paper and trace the outlines of their bodies. Have them put their names in the head of the body. Next have them draw or find pictures of wheat, grapes, chalice, hosts, etc. and draw them inside the outline of their bodies. Talk about how Jesus is alive in them.

**THEME 7: UNITY**

***Visual***

Give each student several construction paper strips. Have them draw or write an adjective that describe Christ-like behavior on each strip. Have the class use these strips to create a class chain in the shape of a circle to represent unity. Students who cannot write can contribute words if the task is phrased simply, i.e.: Does Jesus want you to love or hate? Does Jesus want you to be good or bad? The student can then pick the right answer to be added to the chain.

***Auditory***

Use the song “We Are Many Parts.” (Gather) Discuss the difference between aloneness and togetherness and working together vs. working against each other. Introduce the concept of a harmonious group: people who share and think alike in terms of values.

***Kinesthetic***

For a fun activity for this theme, have two students each join their right hand to another student’s left hand. Then ask them to unravel themselves. They should end up in a circle.

For success, have everyone join hands while they sing about unity.

**THEME 8: SERVING ONE ANOTHER**

***Visual***

Have students create a large poster of pictures showing people serving one another.

***Auditory***

Play the songs “Love One Another” (Gather) or “Whatever You Do.” (Glory and Praise) The auditory learners can break into small discussion groups and generate a list of concrete ways they can serve their families or neighbors.

***Kinesthetic***

Ask the pastor or a pastoral minister if anyone in the parish is ill or confined at home. If so, have the students draw or make get-well or hello cards for them. Emphasize that following Jesus means that we help one another.

**THEME 9: PEACEMAKERS**

***Visual***

Allow the students to use colored cellophane paper to create stained glass windows with symbols of peace on them. Use magic markers to draw the symbols.

Use clip-art images of religious symbols to make transparencies. Students can create colorful transparencies by coloring the clear spaces with magic markers. Use the transparencies during a prayer service to close the lesson on peacemaking.

***Auditory***

Sing the song together “Let There Be Peace on Earth.” (Young People’s Glory and Praise)

Read the students a series of poems with a theme of peace. Create a class poem



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Students with intellectual challenges could suggest words for the poem.

***Kinesthetic***

Have the students work in cooperative teams to create skits about being peacemakers. Allow each group to perform for the rest of the class. Suggested skits:

- 1) Two young children arguing over a toy; an older sibling helps them to resolve the problem without getting physical.
- 2) A playground fight and a teacher who helps students resolve the conflict with words, not fists.
- 3) A student is being teased; two students confront the people doing the teasing.

**THEME 10: TRANSFORMING THE WORLD WITH GOD'S LOVE**

***Visual***

Have the class make signs that say: GOD LOVES YOU. Have them make enough to put up in their classroom and some to take and display in their homes.

***Auditory***

Have the students create a radio commercial about changing the world by loving one another. Record the "commercial" on a cassette tape and use it as part of a class prayer service. Give several students the opportunity to record the "commercial" and use all during the class prayer.

***Kinesthetic***

Use finger painting as a medium for creating a large mural of an imaginary world that has been transformed by God's love.

With permission, have students use colored chalk to draw a mural on the sidewalk that shows a world transformed by God's love.

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