

# First Communion Connection #6

Soon we will be celebrating First Communion Together!

Until then... Keep connected, Keep preparing, Keep faith!

## Start with Prayer



**A note to Parents, before getting started:** This prayer experience invites your family to gather around a cross. If you do not have a cross in your home, invite your child to get creative and lead your family in making one, using stuff around your house or backyard.

**Here are two options for starting your prayer time:**

**Option One:** With a leader holding a cross, invite your family to process through the inside or the outside of your home to the place where you will gather for prayer. Invite everybody to settle themselves and to become aware of God's presence. After a moment of quiet, begin...

**Option Two:** Place a cross on table (or at the center of the place) where you will gather for prayer. Invite your family to come forward silently and gather around the cross. Invite them to settle themselves and become aware of God's presence. After a moment of silence, begin...

**Leader:** Let us begin by praying the Sign of the Cross, which reminds us of our Baptism. This special prayer reminds us that God loves us very much, that we are part of God's family, that we are followers of Jesus Christ, and that the Holy Spirit is always with us to help us live as friends of God and followers of Jesus.

**All:** *Making the Sign of the Cross, pray,* In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

**Leader:** Our response is: Come Holy Spirit. God, our loving Father, we gather around the cross of your Son, Jesus. Send the Holy Spirit to open our hearts to your Word.

**All:** Come Holy Spirit.

**Leader:** Send us the Holy Spirit to help us remember to follow Jesus every day.

**All:** Come Holy Spirit.

**Leader:** Send us the Holy Spirit to help us live as your children.

**All:** Come Holy Spirit.

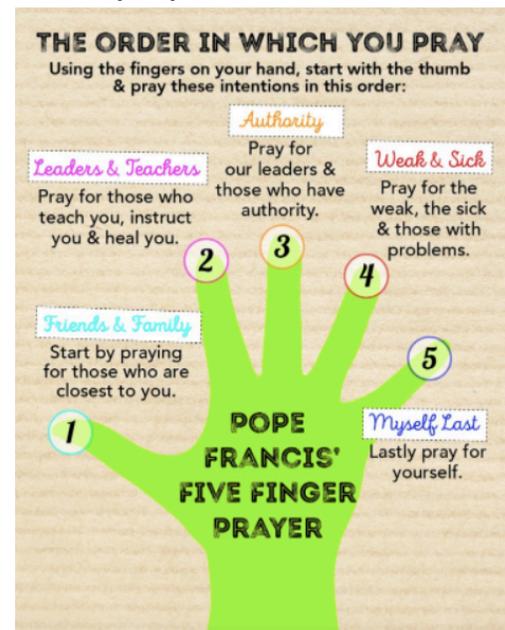
**Leader:** We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son.

**All:** Amen.

**Leader:** Invite family members to pray for those in need. If you choose, use Pope Francis' five-finger prayer that was taught in First Communion Connection #1 to help focus your prayer.

**Leader:** Let us conclude by praying the prayer Jesus taught us.

**All:** Our Father...



## Warm up for today's Scripture story with this activity:



Look carefully at the picture below. What do you see happening in the illustration? Describe what you see. Talk about your observations with your family.



### Read the Scripture Story “The First Christians” (based on Acts of the Apostles 2:41-47)

Many people were baptized and became followers of Jesus. They shared their food and everything they had. They helped one another live as Jesus taught them.

They spent time learning about Jesus and praying together. They broke and shared bread with one another as the disciples did with Jesus.

#### **Talk about it:**

- ✚ How did the first Christians help each other live as Jesus taught them?
- ✚ Why did the first Christians gather in their homes? What did they do there?

#### **Did you know?**

Christians are followers of Jesus. The first Christians often gathered in one another's homes.

They had no churches to go to.

During the Easter season, the first reading we hear on Sunday usually comes from a book in the New Testament part of the Bible called the Acts of the Apostles. It is filled with stories about the first Christians.

## Make the Connection

Our church family is the community of people who belong to Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The Church is the Body of Christ and the People of God. It is made up of people all over the world. Our church family also includes all the faithful members who have died.

When it is possible to do so, our church family comes together each Saturday evening or Sunday morning for Mass. At Mass we do what the first Christians did. We gather together. We pray. We thank God. We listen to God's word. We break bread. We receive the gift of Jesus in Holy Communion. At the end of Mass we are sent out to live as followers of Jesus.

### **Talk about it:**

- ✚ Why do we gather for Mass?

## What difference does this make in my life?

This is a hard time for our church family. We cannot gather together at Mass. We must stay home to stay safe and healthy. During this time our Bishop has special words for your family:

**“Make your home a little Church.”** –Bishop Scharfenberger

Remember: this is what the first Christians did!

### **Talk about it:**

- ✚ How can you make your home a little Church?
- ✚ How can your family stay connected to our church family while we are socially distancing?
- ✚ Here is one idea: Make “family hands garland.” Trace your family members hands on paper. Cut them out. String them together. On the hands, write the names of members of our parish – people you usually see at Mass or Generations of Faith. It's ok if you don't know their names – “the nice lady who sits behind us at church, or the little girl who sings in the choir, or the usher, or the family with the cute little baby...” all work too! Include them in your family prayers.



Families are the domestic Church, where Jesus grows. –Pope Francis

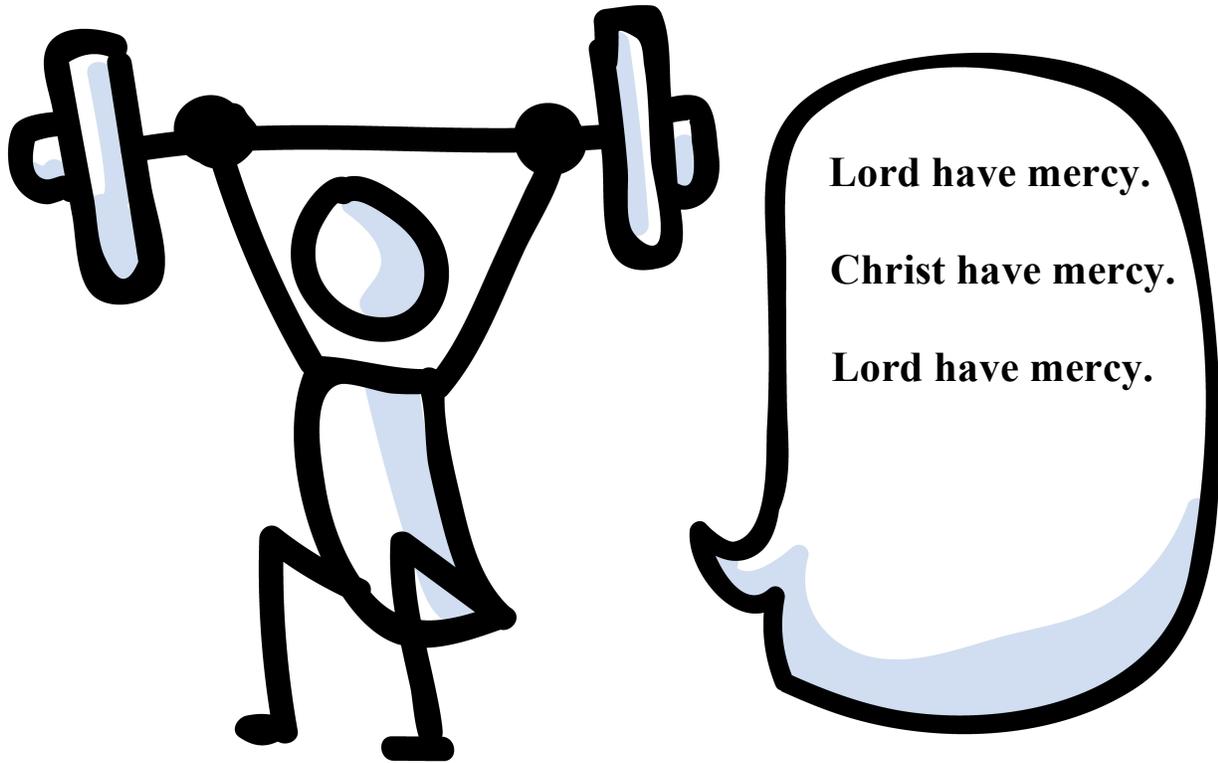
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## Keep your “Mass” muscles strong!

**Review the Introductory Rites in “Celebrating the Mass: The Order of the Mass Explained for Kids.”** (You will find a PDF of this on the First Communion Connection website.)

### **Mass Memory Verse of the Week:**

The PENITENTIAL ACT happens during the INTRODUCTORY RITES (at the start of Mass.) We say that we are sorry for the times when we have not acted like friends of Jesus. We also bless God for showing us mercy. We repeat after the priest:



### **Prayers to Know by Heart:**

The Lord’s Prayer & The Sign of the Cross: *Keep practicing! You can do it!*



Don’t forget about your “**Eucharist is About...**” family activity pack. If you can’t find it, no worries! Joy uploaded another copy to the First Communion Connection webpage, under First Communion Connection #4. Try choosing one activity a week.

\*\*\* This week’s “**First Communion Connection**” was adapted from ***Eucharist: Do This in Memory of Me***, from RCL Benziger