"If angels could be jealous of men, they would be so for one reason: Holy Communion."

--St. Maximilian Kolbe

Dear Parents,

Thank you for your kind attention and participation in last night’s Parent Meeting for First Holy Communion.  I hope l answered all of your questions completely.  If l didn’t, or you have others, please email me.  We can all work together to make this day beautiful and very meaningful for our children and their families!

This weekend, as mentioned at the meeting, are the **Enrollment Masses** on Saturday at 4:00 or Sunday at 9:30.  Please choose one and attend, sitting near the aisle for easy access to come out when asked to after the homily.  After Mass, remember to escort your child to the west wing of the school to sign the Enrollment Book.

The next thing after that is that Jesus Books are to be turned in on or before April 11th to your child’s teacher.  They will be returned on Jesus Day.

Meanwhile, thank you for the responses to the **Jesus Day Volunteer** opportunities.  Some one has volunteered to head up arranging the lunch so no need for anyone else to consider that.  I will be emailing information individually to you about all of this later in March.

What you can be doing from now until First Communion Day is work on the Jesus Book with him/her, and:

Four Ways to Help Prepare Your Child for First Communion

**Talk to them about the Eucharist in ways that relate to their own lives.**

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You can help your children understand and appreciate the Eucharist--and thus prepare for First Communion--if you relate it to their lives. Familiar, ordinary realities that kids already value can be conversation-starters for exploring the meaning of the Eucharist with them. Here are four ways to use those everyday realities to talk about the meaning of the Eucharist with your children so they will understand the sacrament they will be receiving for the first time.

**1. Spiritual Food.** If your kids are like mine, one of their main interests in life is food. How many times a day have I heard, "What's for dinner?" or "Isn't there anything good to eat (read: junk food) around here?" So, food is a natural starter for conversations about the Eucharist, since it is a ritual meal. Here are some ways food can help you talk to your children:

* "The Eucharist is a meal. On the table of the altar, Jesus feeds us with his Body and Blood, under the appearances of bread and wine."

"Just as food nourishes our bodies, the Eucharist is spiritual food that nourishes our soul."

"The bread and wine are signs that tell us the Lord is nourishing us spiritually."

"Unlike other signs--stop signs, for example--that can't cause us to do anything, the bread and wine of the Eucharist cause what they signify. They nourish us in our spirit; they cause us to grow in Christ."

**2. Real Presence.** Friends are a high priority for your kids. Your children's experience of friendship can be a launching pad for talking about the Eucharist, the sacrament in which Christ is present to us and shares his life with us. Some possible lines for conversation are:

* "We like to be around friends, and our love for them grows when we're with them."

"Jesus called us friends, and in the Eucharist he made it possible for us to be with him (see John 15:15)."

"Jesus is really present in the Eucharist under the forms of bread and wine."

"When we celebrate the Eucharist and spend time in Jesus' presence, our love for him grows."

**3. Sacrifice.** Christ's sacrifice on the cross was the offering of his Body and Blood to the Father as gifts for the salvation of the world. In the Eucharist, we offer the Father this gift of Jesus. It is the greatest gift we can give the Father, and we receive abundant blessings because of this. You can use the concept of gift giving to help your children understand the sacrificial element of the Eucharist. Here are some points to make:

* "We give gifts as a sign of our giving ourselves to people we love."

"Friends like to share with us our gifts to them --like candy or toys--as a way of uniting themselves to us in love."

"In the Mass, we give bread and wine to God as signs of our giving ourselves to him. God unites our self?giving with the bread and wine. Through the action of the priest, the Holy Spirit transforms the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. This act makes present the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and its divine power of salvation for us. When we receive Communion, we are united with Jesus and transformed by his saving power into him. When we eat ordinary bread, we change the bread into ourselves. When we eat Christ's eucharistic Bread, he changes us into himself by giving us a deeper share in his divine life and love. God accepts our gifts (bread, wine, ourselves) and changes them by uniting them with himself. Then he gives them to us to share in Holy Communion."

**4. Celebration.** We have parties to celebrate events and anniversaries, and the Eucharist is a celebration of the most important event ever. You may find the following themes helpful:

* "At parties, we celebrate with special foods and drinks, and we do things like sing and dance to express how we feel."

"The Eucharist is a celebration. We gather with friends to remember the death and resurrection of Jesus."

"The Eucharist is a thanksgiving celebration of what God has done for us in Christ.

God bless,

Mrs. Gulden