

Chapter 6 Eucharist

Background Focus for Parents

It can become easy for prayers that we regularly recite by heart to become words that we repeat almost as if on auto-play. We pray them correctly and with good intention, but we can lose touch with the deeper meaning of the words or the significance of praying them with others.

The Profession of Faith at Mass is one of those instances. Our statement of faith represents such a beautiful and significant moment in the Mass, but perhaps it can benefit from renewed attention. If we look around the Church as we focus on the meaning of the words we are saying, we will surely be awed by the significance of the unity of faith we are proclaiming.

This chapter teaches the importance of Christian unity and how the Profession of Faith helps us declare and celebrate that unity. As the children continue to learn this proclamation of faith, make sure to celebrate it as a time when they now proclaim for themselves a faith that was proclaimed for them at Baptism.

Opening Prayer

- Invite your child to begin in prayer by leading in the Sign of the Cross, then saying, “Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.” Allow about 10 seconds of silence. Pray: Jesus, you prayed to God that your followers may be one. Help us be patient and kind with one another and celebrate the faith we share. Amen. Close with another Sign of the Cross.

Activity

- Invite your child to share what the word unity means. (Accept all reasonable responses.)
- Ask them to think of a group of people—such as a sports team, a club, the Church, or a group of friends—and to share some of the signs that a group has unity. (Accept all reasonable responses, such as they work together, they share the same goal, they believe the same things, they respect one another, etc.)
- Tell your child that in today’s lesson they will learn about the importance of unity in the Church and some of the ways we show our unity in faith.

Featured Story

- Invite your child to find John 17:20–23 in the Bible.
- Read the story and ask your child to share what they think it means when Jesus prays that all of his followers will be one. (It means that he wants all Christians to be unified / have unity.)

- Remind your child of the different characteristics of unity that they mentioned earlier. Show them how these characteristics apply to Christians as well.
- Read to them: This Bible passage is part of a prayer Jesus said at the Last Supper. He prayed that his followers would be one with God and with one another. This means that Jesus doesn't want anything to keep us from loving one another - not different ideas, not different backgrounds, not jealousy, not pride. When we are one, we will not hurt one another with words or actions. We will be patient and kind to one another. Other people will notice our love for one another. Seeing our joy, they will want to be part of us too. They will come to believe in Jesus. Then the Church will grow. We need to pray with Jesus, "that we may all be one, Father." Explain that we are all different, but we are united because we share the same faith—we all follow Jesus and share in his mission of love.

Activity

- Family unity does not come about by working to make sure everyone in the family is a copy of everyone else. Unity comes from shared beliefs, shared goals, and shared history.
- Invite your child to help you create a list of things your family believes, such as "All people deserve respect," "Everyone is special," or "Always be kind." Talk about how this could be seen as your family creed, and celebrate the uniqueness of your family.

God's Treasure of the Eucharist

- Tell your child that going to Mass is a sign of unity, and knowing that Catholics in our local community and around the world are going to Mass on Sunday helps us remember how we are all connected in faith.
- Explain that another sign of unity in the Mass is the Profession of Faith that happens in the Liturgy of the Word after the homily. During the Profession of Faith, we proclaim a creed, which is a statement of our shared beliefs. Help your child understand that there are two creeds that can be used in Mass, the Nicene Creed and the Apostles' Creed. Explain that in each creed, we proclaim our belief in God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), God the Holy Spirit, the Church, and life in Heaven.
- Read the Nicene Creed to your child, stopping to explain certain vocabulary and meanings. Assure your child that they will continue to grow to understand the full meaning of this creed, but that it states our common beliefs as Catholics and shows our unity.
 - Nicene Creed
I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

- Invite your child to think back over all of the different things they did in this lesson, and ask them to share some of the key things they learned. Ensure that the following points are made:
 - Jesus wants his followers to be united in faith.
 - Proclaiming the Nicene Creed together is a sign of our unity.
 - The Nicene Creed expresses our belief in God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), God the Holy Spirit, the Church, and life in Heaven.