**First Eucharist Parent Child Meeting: Jesus is the Bread of Life**

**Part I: Introduction (10 minutes in full group)**

**Goals:**

1. Families will understand Jesus takes the gifts we give him and changes us so we become His hands and feet.
2. Families will gain a deeper understanding of what it means to say Jesus it the “Bread of Life.”
3. Families will have a share faith experience to encourage family prayer and relationship building.
4. Families will prepare for Bread partner weekend

Materials: unconsecrated host, chalice, ciborium, gift box full of objects that represent talents a child may have, frozen loafs of bread, paper, art supplies, bread partner cards, “Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes” from My Bible, the Story of God’s Love.

**Engage:**

1. Begin by gathering families in the Church.
2. On a table have the chalice and ciborium, and gift box full of things that represent a person’s gifts (football, art materials, pen, musical instrument)
3. Begin pulling things out of the gift box. Ask children what they think these two things may have in common.
4. Tell them that the bread and wine are gifts we present to God to change into His body and blood, just like we have gifts and talents. When we use those gifts and talents to serve God, he can use us to bring his love to others.

**Part II: Breakout Sessions (30 minutes)**

**Explore (30 minutes)**

1. Begin by welcoming families into the room. Invite children to sit near you on the floor.
2. Read aloud the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes out of the Children’s Bible.
3. Ask: “What happened in the story? How did Jesus feed all the people?”
4. Ask: Before Jesus could feed the people, what did the little boy have to do? (Give a gift of himself. Jesus took his gift and made the miracle.)
5. Ask: What would have happened if the little boy kept his gifts to himself and did not share them with Jesus. (Jesus could not have helped so many people. He took the gifts the boy offered and made them a miracle.)
6. Invite children to return to their parents. Give each family a gift large sheet of paper to divide into three columns and label them
   1. Name
   2. Gifts/Talents
   3. Ways to share my gift with Jesus to help others
7. Invite each member of the family to write their name, three gifts they have, and ways they can share those gifts with Jesus. On the board use yourself as an example for how to do this.
8. After five minutes ask families to share with another family at their table if the group is large, or with the whole group if the group is small.
9. Ask each child to circle the gift they would most like to share with Jesus
10. Hand out the bread partner cards.
11. Explain this weekend each child is invited to bring a loaf of bread to Church to be blessed and give to someone in the congregation they do not know to pray for them. The bread symbolizes the gifts they bring to Jesus as they prepare to receive the gift of Jesus in the Eucharist.
12. Hand out a bread partner card to each family. Explain they will attach this to their loaf of bread so that they will have someone special praying for them. Instruct them to fill out their name, gift they will share, date and time of First Eucharist.
13. Give families about 5 minutes to fill out the cards.

**Part III: Closing Ritual and Bread Partner Weekend (20 minutes in full group)**

**Reflect:**

1. Invite families back into the sanctuary. Tell them we will gather around the altar.
2. At the altar, light the candle. Have a plate with a cut up loaf of bread on it.
3. Say “Jesus told us he was the bread of life. We know bread fills our stomach, but only Jesus can fill our hearts with love forever. When we meet together for Mass, we are sharing in a meal, accepting Jesus’ gift of himself, and giving ourselves back to him.”
4. Pass the plate, and ask each person to take a piece to eat.
5. After everyone has eaten, say the Lord ’s Prayer together.

**Respond:**

1. Tell each family that this weekend is bread Sunday.
2. Each child is invited to bring a loaf of bread to be blessed. Just like the little boy in the story of the loaves and fishes, we bring our gift to Jesus, who in turn gives us the gift of himself.
3. Tell the families we have a gift for them to help them prepare for bread partner weekend at home.
4. Give each family a loaf of bread to bake and bread partner card. Encourage families to bake this loaf together.