FIRST COMMUNION RETREAT

9:00 am-12:00 pm

9:00 am—(A parent or adult must accompany all students). Welcome (Have nametags available); Opening Prayer; Overview of the day; washing of hands.

9:15 am—Bread making: Unleavened Bread Recipe: 4 cups whole wheat flour; 1 cup white flour; 2 cups water; ¼ cup honey; 1 ½ teaspoon salt; ¼ cup oil. Have the students measure out ingredients and stir until blended. Let each student have some dough to pat flat onto aluminum foil. Each student makes 2 unleavened breads—one to eat at the retreat and one to give away. Place breads and foil on cookie sheets and bake at 400 degrees for about 15 minutes. (Have someone assigned to watch these, because they could get overdone). This recipe makes enough for about 6-8 unleavened breads.

9:45 am—Decorating pew banners: (We use small pew banners to identify where students are to sit at the First Communion Masses and it helps Fr. To be able to easily remember students’ names.) I supply white background felt, approximately 9 inches wide and 15 inches long, (please adjust to fit your pew space), with an inch hem sewn at the top to insert a dowel for hanging. (A ribbon or gold metallic cord will be tied to each end of the inserted dowel to hang from the end of the pew). I supply various glitter glue, felt pieces, scissors, glue, and some templates of symbols they may want on their banner. I ask that they include the student’s name at the top, and a host above a chalice be on all banners.

At this time, students write their name on tags to be attached to the unleavened bread they will give away to someone they don’t know at the weekend Masses. The tags say, “Hi! My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I am making my First Communion on April 22nd. Will you please pray for me? Thanks!”

10:25 am—DVD—We watch the DVD, “A Child’s First Communion,” with Fr. Joe Kempf. It lasts about 20 minutes. After this we go into church and Fr. talks to the students about Holy Communion and its importance in their lives. We then practice receiving Communion, what to do and what not to do. (This can be very funny). After that Fr. blesses our First Communion pins and gives them out to the students.

11:25 am—Parents and students write a prayer of thanksgiving to be used at the First Communion Mass. This is explained by Fr. or me and then the parents/students work as a family on their prayer to thank Jesus for coming to them in this special way.

11:30 am—Bathroom and washing of hands

11:35 am—Students dress as in Jesus’ time, Fr. is “Jesus.” ( I have supplied material pieces that seem to have come from Jesus’ time—striped or plain, , many with holes cut in the middle for their head to go through and twine ropes for belts. Parents help their students get dressed as disciples for the “Last Supper.”( I decorate the table before the retreat starts with cloths, and any items that may look like they come from that time). The helpers at the retreat set a simple table of small plates for the unleavened bread and plastic wine glasses filled with either grape juice or a mix of grape juice and 7-Up. Grapes are also on the table and honey to dip the bread. The students sit on one side of the table, (the table is really three tables in a row) and “Jesus” sits about in the middle of them. Fr. says a prayer and does a teaching on the Last Supper and Holy Communion connection. Parents have unleavened bread, “wine” etc. on tables separate from the students.

The giveaway unleavened breads are wrapped in plastic wrap by the retreat helpers and tied with a ribbon while the retreat has been going on. The tags have been added, so the students can take them with them when they leave.

12:00 am—End of retreat.

The booklet that I have students and parents work on during Sacramental year is : My Booklet about the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist from the Leaflet Missal Company. This booklet is to be turned in completed at this retreat.