

## HEART SPEAKS TO HEART: THE GIFT OF HOLY COMMUNION

### CATECHIST NOTES



## SESSION 6

### COURAGE: Food for the Journey (pp. 80-93)

#### Before the session begins:

- Prepare a focal point (which may this week include symbols associated with Holy Communion e.g. a plate or small paten with some hosts on it, a small chalice, a small jug of wine, etc.).
- Serve refreshments (when possible).
- Invite the children as they come in to place the object they have brought in their 'backpacks' near the focal point (and remind them to take their objects back at the end of the session)
- Have the *How to Receive Holy Communion* cards ready to be distributed towards the end of the session.
- If the **Help and Guidance** handouts are to be distributed during the session or in advance for Session 7, have the sheets ready for distribution at the appropriate point in the session.
- It may be a good idea to have one or two photocopies of the relevant pages of *Heart Speaks to Heart* (pages 80-93) in case some participants have forgotten their books!

This may be a longer session if catechists decide that the children should (or are able to) practise receiving Holy Communion during the session (hosts, chalices, wine and purificators will then be needed).

Catechists should be ready to help participants who may be struggling with the discussion. It may help to have pictures or images available or to point participants to this week's focal point.

Catechists should also be aware of families' stories, lives and struggles.

See suggested timings for each section of the session below: it is anticipated that pages 80-83 will take 10 minutes in total; pages 88-89 should take 10 minutes in total (but may take longer).

The Lead Catechist notes below are intended to be prompts for the sort of things Lead Catechists may say rather than scripts to be read out.

### **Welcome and Prayer**

**3-5 minutes**

Lead Catechist:

- Welcomes everyone
- Asks participants to turn to **page 80** in their books
- Reads out the title of the session and says:  
"In this sixth session we will be thinking about Jesus sharing Holy Communion with us, how we receive Holy Communion and how, through Holy Communion, Jesus remains with us."
- Asks everyone to join in the **prayer on page 81** ("Lord Jesus, You are the Bread of Life ..."), leads everyone in making the Sign of the Cross and then leads the prayer

### **Pages 82-83 ("Back together again")**

**5-7 minutes**

Lead Catechist:

- Asks participants to turn to **page 82**
- Says something like:  
"I hope you've had chance to read these pages and think about the questions which are on page 83:  
**1. What First Holy Communion preparation have you been doing at home since last time?**  
**2. In what ways can you make Sunday special?**  
**3. How are you feeling as the great day of your First Holy Communion approaches?**  
**4. Do you have other questions that you want to share?**  
Take time now to share your responses to these questions."
- May encourage participants to read pages 82-83 again before they talk about the questions

**Pages 84-85 ("Today's virtue is COURAGE")****5 minutes**

Lead Catechist:

- Asks participants to turn to **page 84**
- Says something like:  
"This week we will be thinking about the virtue of Courage. The virtues help us grow in friendship with Jesus and become the best person we can be. Let's read what it says about Courage on page 84."
- **EITHER** asks participants to read page 84 together **OR** reads the text aloud to the whole group **OR** invites two participants to read out a paragraph each to the whole group

**Pages 86-87 ("Bread from heaven")****10 minutes**

Lead Catechist:

- Asks participants to turn to **page 86**
- Says something like:  
"Let's listen now to a story from the Bible. As you listen, underline words which stand out for you on pages 86-87 and think about what they may mean. After you have listened to the story, share with each other the words and thoughts which meant something to you. Begin to write and draw your thoughts in the spaces beside the Bible passage. You can finish this off at home."
- **EITHER** reads the Bible passage about bread from heaven slowly and clearly **OR** invites participants to read the passage to one another **OR** plays the audio of the text (found under **Audios – Bible Passages > Session 6 Bread from Heaven**)
- Asks participants to share and write down or draw their thoughts

**Page 88 ("Jesus, the Bread of Life")****7-8 minutes**

Lead Catechist:

- Asks participants to turn to **page 88**
- Says something like:  
"Read the left-hand column on page 88 together, taking it in turns to read a paragraph each and then read the questions in the right-hand column and talk together, trying to answer one or two of these questions."

**Page 89****2-3 minutes**

Lead Catechist:

- Asks participants to look next at **page 89**
- Says something like:  
"Read the left-hand column. Try and think of one promise you would like to make as you leave Holy Mass and write it in the space provided (some ideas for your promise are suggested)."

**Pages 90-91 ("Holy Communion ...")****10 minutes**

Lead Catechist:

- Asks participants to turn to **page 90**
- Reads **OR** asks two participants to read the two paragraphs on the left-hand column out loud to the whole group.
- Says something like:  
"This week we will look closely at how we receive Holy Communion."
- Reads aloud the rest of pages 90-91, explaining the text while reading through it.
- Gives out the *How to Receive Holy Communion* cards and asks the children to learn the words and practise receiving Holy Communion at home (**OR** takes time now during or at the end of the session to practise with the children).
- Supplements what is said on the card (especially if the guidance for receiving Holy Communion needs to be adapted) and may add something like:  
"The children may well receive their first Holy Communion from a priest (as it says on the card) but often deacons and/or ministers of Holy Communion help priests to distribute Holy Communion (both the hosts and the Precious Blood)."

**Page 92 ("Things to do at home or in church")** **5 minutes**

Lead Catechist:

- Goes through the home/church activities on **page 92**
- Asks the children to read pages 96-97 and think about the questions there in preparation for the next session
- Informs participants of opportunities for Reconciliation and of any plans for a rehearsal before First Holy Communion
- Announces details of the First Holy Communion Mass and other celebrations

**Evaluation****5 minutes**

Lead Catechist:

- Asks participants to consider two questions, talk together about them and write down thoughts on post-its.
- The two questions are:
  - 1. What did you enjoy in the session? [2 minutes]**
  - 2. If we were to do the session again what could make it even better? [2 minutes]**

**Page 93 ("Let us pray together")****5 minutes**

Lead Catechist:

- Invites participants to sit quietly and close their eyes.
- Says something like:  
"I'm going to say a little phrase three or four times. Say these words silently to yourselves and continue to say them silently after I finish speaking. I will signal the end of this quiet prayer time" [perhaps by ringing a bell]
- Says aloud, "Lamb of God, have mercy on us" three or four times and then allows for 2-3 minutes silence
- Gives the pre-arranged signal after 2-3 minutes silence
- Asks participants to look at the right-hand column on **page 93**
- Reads the words at the top of the column and invites everyone to pray the Prayer of Thanksgiving ("My Jesus, I give You myself") together

**Thank everyone** for their participation in the session and let them know you are available after the session if anyone has any questions.

**Finish on time!**

Try and meet as a catechist & helpers team after the session to discuss how the session has gone and what could be done better in future sessions.

Please feel free to annotate these *Catechist Notes* and use them to help your reflection for future sessions.

**Below you will find some teaching on what we do during Holy Mass. You may like to share (or adapt and share) this teaching with parents and carers.**

## HELPING YOUR CHILD DURING HOLY MASS

### Part 4: The Liturgy of the Eucharist (from the 'Our Father') and The Concluding Rites

#### Holy Communion

- **Stand** after the 'Great Amen'.
- **Say or sing** with zeal the words the people say or sing (beginning with the 'Our Father').
- Exchange the Sign of Peace with your child and those around you.
- **Kneel** in reverence after the Sign of Peace and prepare for Holy Communion.
- Quietly and reverently join the Communion Procession with your child, your hands folded in prayer.
- Receive Holy Communion or a blessing.
- Return to your place in church, **kneel** and say quietly a Prayer of Thanksgiving. Encourage your child to do the same using one of the prayers of thanksgiving from the book – on page 79 or page 93.



#### The Concluding Rites

- **Stand** when the priest says, "Let us pray."
- Make the Sign of the Cross as the priest blesses the congregation.
- Once the priest has left the church it is good to give thanks to God, to **kneel** again and say a quiet prayer of thanksgiving before you leave. Encourage your child to do the same.
- On leaving your place, **genuflect** to Jesus present in the Tabernacle.
- As you leave the church bless yourself by making the Sign of the Cross with Holy Water from the Holy Water Stoup or Font as a reminder of your baptismal promise to bring Christ and His love to the world.