

## First Eucharist

### Ideas to Nurture a Lifetime of Faith

by Joellyn Cicciarelli

I have been thinking about my son's big day, his First Eucharist. I've been asking myself: How can I make the day of his First Communion special? How can I extend his sense of sacramental awe and wonder beyond that first special moment, his First Holy Communion?

The pressure to make this day "perfect" can be enormous, especially as parents begin to compare stories and plans. I decided to concentrate less on the clothes, photos, party, gifts, guest list, etc., and more on helping my child "meet" Jesus, so that he would better understand the gift and grace he was about to receive.

Here are three ideas I tried.

- My son and I whipped up several batches of pizzelles, Italian wafer cookies. As we cooked, we talked about the love that we put into making meals with our family. I then explained that at Mass, we bring to the table of the Lord all the love and joy that we have experienced in sharing meals with our family at home. In return, we receive the Body and Blood of Christ as food for our journey through life.
- I cleared a space in our dining room hutch to gather symbols of our Catholic faith. My son and I "stole" items from every room and had fun creating a display. Baptismal candles, a nativity scene, and crosses were given a collective place of honor. As we arranged, we talked about each item and why it is important to our family and faith.
- I talked with my son about being open to discovering, learning, and growing in life and in our faith. To illustrate this idea, we chose one new recreational activity to learn to do together (edit movies on our home computer) and one new faith activity to experience together (attending a Taizé prayer service).

I now feel less pressure to make this day "perfect". I am confident it will be because of our time spent together meeting Jesus along the way.



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