

Leader's Guide for
EUCHARIST: CELEBRATING CHRIST PRESENT
A Catholic Update Video

Please note: This leader's guide was originally written for those using this video program in its VHS format. Those now using this program on DVD may find some references that do not apply to their use (i.e., directions for locating segments, time notations, etc.). We trust that both VHS- and DVD-users will find this guide a valuable resource.

The Use of Video in Faith Formation

Jesus used the "media" of his day to teach. He was a master storyteller. His preaching is full of imagery. His parables are calculated to engage his audience. Through the ages, Christian teachers and preachers have followed Jesus in the creative proclamation of his message.

From the culture of Jesus' time, heavily dependent on *oral communication*—to the advent of *print communication*—to our own time and its dependence on *electronic media*—Christian teachers have adapted their proclamation to each new medium and its particular demands.

Media scholars like Marshall McLuhan remind us of the impact of the medium on the message it carries. *How* we communicate affects *what* we communicate. Electronic media offer us new ways to tell the story of our faith. Father Pierre Babin points out (see *The New Era in Religious Communications*, Pierre Babin with Mercedes Iannone, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 1991) that the message, as well as the sender and receiver, will be re-shaped in the telling.

Catechesis, as a part of the total evangelization process, must touch the learners' hearts and shine the light of faith on their lives. It must connect to the learners' experience or risk being discarded as irrelevant. To be effective, catechists must learn how to make the best use of the electronic media available in our culture, aware of the particular medium's strengths and weaknesses.

Video is a very popular, familiar and accessible part of our electronic culture. It draws us in, captures our imaginations and touches us on a deep, emotional level. As it speaks to our experience and utilizes several of our senses, its message is more likely to be heard and remembered. By integrating quality video programs into the catechetical process, catechists can share the message more effectively.

At the same time, as television becomes a more pervasive part of our lives, we can be lulled into thinking that it can do everything for us—inform, entertain, shop, even worship. The reality is that it can't and shouldn't do everything. As Pierre Babin emphasizes, electronic media function differently than print media. They appeal first to the *emotional* content of our faith rather than the *intellectual* content. Video cannot begin to convey the amount of information print can. It cannot replace the live presence and personal witness of the catechist. But in a catechetical setting, it can be a powerful part of the "mix of

media” used in proclaiming the message.

How effectively video—or any electronic media—is used in the catechetical setting depends primarily on how prepared the catechist is to use it:

- A preview of the video is essential to determine the best use of the program with a particular group.
- The catechist should select a video program (or section of a video) based on the audience, the purpose, and the availability of competent teachers and other resources and activities to support the theme.
- Sufficient time should be available to introduce the video and to process the viewing experience.

Catechists must realize that *they* control the use of video in their sessions. They might approach a video program in one of two ways: as a skeleton on which to build a presentation or as a way to “enflesh” an existing skeleton.

A video program well-tailored to the needs of a group might be used in its entirety. At other times, catechists may creatively manipulate the video to fit their needs:

- An excerpt may be taken from a longer piece to illustrate a point.
- A video may be shown with the *sound off* to highlight an aspect of the program.
- The “pause” button can be used freely to interject explanations and examples or to elicit reactions.
- The program or excerpt may be repeated to emphasize a point.

The producers of this video program have attempted to craft both medium and message with an awareness of the power of the medium as well as its limitations. They encourage those who use it to study this guide and become familiar with ways to allow this program to supplement their own sharing of the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.

Introduction to the Series

Catholic Update Videos are dynamic new media designed for use with today’s adult learners. Use them in RCIA, faith formation, liturgical and pastoral ministry, faith-sharing groups and sacramental preparation. *Catholic Update Video* offers catechists and pastoral ministers multimedia resources to enhance teaching, presentation and training efforts.

Catholic Update Video’s four segments—story, witness, teaching and musical reflection—are short and can stand alone or be used with others in the program. The format is flexible, making it useful in a variety of group settings as well as for individual viewing. The emphasis is on what video can do best, namely touch us through story (story segment), testimony (witness segment) and song (musical reflection segment) with images and the emotions they carry. But a more “didactic” approach (teaching segment) respects the need to convey a concise core of information.

The general model for catechetical process (life experience, message or doctrine, response) is respected by the order of the four segments, although at times a catechist may choose to use them alone or out of sequence:

- Each program begins with a **story segment** designed to draw viewers in and help them connect their life-experience to the faith-topic.
- The testimony of real-life Catholics in the **witness segment** helps viewers reflect on their own life experience and prepare for group sharing.
- Our teacher briefly highlights some aspects of the topic in the **teaching segment**. Relevant images help to illustrate the points being made. *(This segment is not intended to treat a topic exhaustively nor substitute for a more thorough presentation on the message or doctrine.)*
- Viewers are invited to respond in prayer using the *musical reflection segment*.

The program's host provides a context for each segment. This is designed to help viewers who will see the program from beginning to end. Catechists who use segments individually or out of sequence may wish to prepare their own lead-in. On-screen graphics provide viewers with a question for reflection or sharing between segments.

This leader's guide is an important tool for making the best use of this video program.

It includes the following features:

- **Summary and Suggestions for Use** for each segment.
- **Questions for Sharing** for the story, witness and teaching segments; facilitators can choose from them or use them as models for developing their own questions.
- **Suggestions for Use** for the musical reflection segment provide a model for using this segment in a prayer setting.
- **Resources for Further Study** are listed at the end of this guide.
- **Approximate times** are noted for where each segment begins. *(If the VCR is equipped with an "elapsed time" counter, reset the counter to 0:00:00 at the beginning of the tape and fast-forward to the time listed for the beginning of the desired segment. If the VCR does not have an "elapsed time" counter, the facilitator can fast-forward in the "review" mode [while the VCR is in "play"] to find the gray screen and Catholic Update Video logo that indicate the start of a segment.)*

EUCCHARIST: CELEBRATING CHRIST PRESENT

Overview of the program

To Catholics, the word *memory* recalls Jesus' command at the Last Supper: "Do this in memory of me." When it comes to Jesus, we are dealing with a *living* memory. Christ lives in the community of believers, the Church. His command to his disciples invites us, his contemporary followers, to be united with him in a very real way, to live out his sacrificial love for the world.

This *Catholic Update Video* emphasizes how the community at Eucharist actively carries out that command. Contemporary Catholics have received a variety of emphases in their understanding of the Eucharist. Those educated prior to Vatican II and the reform of the liturgy may look upon the Eucharist more in the light of Good Friday, as the unbloody sacrifice of Christ "re-presented" in the Mass.

More recently, the "meal" aspect of the Mass (recalling Holy Thursday and the Last Supper) has been stressed. The material in this program reflects an effort to integrate these two emphases as well as a third.

Using *Easter* as a key, we have another way to understand Eucharist: The risen Lord is so united with the Christian that what we do to one another, we do to Christ. St. Paul, whose conversion experience brought this truth home to him dramatically, was able to use it as a basis to reprimand the Corinthians, who were celebrating Eucharist without recognizing the Body of Christ, namely the poor who were going hungry in the midst of the community. Participating in the Eucharist, Paul reminds us all, makes us responsible for one another, treating each other as we would treat Christ himself.

As Father Tom Richstatter, O.F.M., teacher for this *Catholic Update Video*, notes, "The Eucharist is not merely a celebration of Real Presence, but a celebration of Real Presence which brings about unity and reconciliation in the whole Body."

A helpful synthesis might be found in the teaching on Eucharist given by the Second Vatican Council in its *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* and quoted in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1323):

"At the Last Supper, on the night he was betrayed, our Savior instituted the eucharistic sacrifice of his Body and Blood. This he did in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross throughout the ages until he should come again, and so to entrust to his beloved Spouse, the Church, a memorial of his death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a Paschal banquet in which Christ is consumed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us" (47).

Audience

This program is intended for an adult or teen-age audience, which may encompass several groups:

- adults preparing to be baptized or received into the Catholic Church, and to receive Eucharist for the first time as part of the rites of initiation;
- parents who wish to deepen their understanding of the Eucharist in order to help their children prepare for First Communion;
- high school students studying the Eucharist as part of a religious education curriculum.

While not intended for a young audience, this program does contain many key concepts which parents can integrate into the home preparation they give to their children for First Communion.

The values expressed by the parents and by the eucharistic community are values which must be passed on to those approaching the table for the first time. These values are stressed throughout this program, in the stories, testimonies, teaching and imagery. The questions explored here are crucial for parents to ask *of themselves*.

Teachers, group leaders and parish sacramental coordinators should explore how individual segments of this video program might be used fruitfully in First Communion programs for parents.

Another program in this *Catholic Update Video* series, *First Communion: Taking A Place at the Table* (V2050, D2050) deals more directly with First Communion.

STORY SEGMENT

“Do This in Memory”

(Begins approximately 2:37 into program.)

Summary

“Do This in Memory” takes place during the Easter Triduum, the “three days” of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil in which Christians remember and celebrate Christ’s “Passover” from death to life. The story centers on Assunta, the matriarch of an Italian-American family.

Assunta is the keeper of her family’s memories, and is beloved by all her children and grandchildren, especially her grandson Chris, who feels especially close to Assunta. She is also a prominent member of her parish, and serves as the sacristan at the church. She has a reputation for generosity and service in the community as well.

In the story, Assunta suffers a broken hip. Thus incapacitated, she cannot continue her work in the church, nor can she preside over the Easter dinner, as is her custom. Rita and Angela, Assunta’s daughters, propose canceling the Easter feast, concerned about their mother’s health, and feeling that the festivities will be incomplete without Assunta present.

Unspoken in the story, but underlying the daughters’ words, is the fear that Assunta’s memories,

significant for the family and the community she lives in, are at risk of being lost someday, after she is gone. She urges them to celebrate the Easter dinner, even though she cannot be there. She explains that they are to carry on the family traditions and stories in her place.

In doing so, the daughters realize their mother's presence is not something dependent on her physical presence—they, in effect, are her presence to the next generation. Even before the drama ends, we see them retelling stories of Assunta and putting into practice her love and service. As Assunta herself says in a key line in the story, "What we remember with love—that is what stays with us."

Suggestions for use

With some preparation and reflection, this story can help viewers reflect on the Catholic Eucharist. The story offers viewers a "jumping-off point" for discussing how Christ lives in the community that celebrates the Eucharist. Teachers, group leaders and parents can explore the following elements both before and after a viewing:

1) The characters. Assunta, her daughters and grandson illustrate a variety of concerns and qualities. Their fears, vulnerability, willingness to serve and care for others, religious values—all are points with which viewers might identify. For example, the story Angela and Rita recount which preparing Easter dinner—about Assunta's care and concern for a sick neighbor—relates to the responsibilities for love and service which flow from a truly eucharistic community.

2) Family and community. The family depicted in the story is intended to model what also should ideally happen in the Christian community, gathered around the eucharistic table: storytelling, shared memories, carrying on traditions, and—most importantly—forging bonds of love and unity. The Easter dinner shared by the family is intended to reinforce this idea.

3) Living memory and tradition. *Memories* are the way families and communities relate to those who have gone before us. *Tradition* is the handing on of beliefs, customs and memories. In both Judaism and Christianity, memory and tradition relate us to the saving deeds of God. In the Passover meal, or *Seder*, the living memory of what God did in the Exodus is shared by participants in that meal, a ritual handed on through the centuries.

In Eucharist, those who take part encounter the living Christ in word, sacrament and one another. In addition, they fulfill what was "handed on" to them: namely Jesus' command to "Do this in memory." The Church responds to this command by celebrating the Eucharist and attempting to live as Jesus did.

4) Stories. Assunta loves to tell stories to her grandchildren. When her daughters fear that her absence will mean the loss of those stories, Assunta urges them, "*You* can tell the stories...." The power of storytelling is evident in Christian ritual. In the Mass, as the Liturgy of the Word, the community tells the

scriptural stories of God's saving deeds. The Eucharistic Prayer itself recalls the story of the Last Supper.

In the homily, ideally the community should find a place for its own stories to link with those found in God's revealed word. Viewers of this story can be encouraged to relate their personal faith-stories as well.

5) Easter Triduum. Key to the story is its setting against the backdrop of the Easter Triduum. Father Tom's teaching explores how Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter offer a key to three understandings of Eucharist: fellowship meal, Christ's unbloody sacrifice, and the presence of the Church as the Body of Christ in service to the world. Teachers or group leaders should prepare viewers unfamiliar with the Triduum, by offering a brief explanation of the central nature of this feast in the Church year.

The questions below suggest how the above concepts can be developed in the context of a discussion following the viewing of the story segment.

Following the discussion of the story, invite them to make three columns on a sheet of paper. Ask them to list, side by side, elements which appear in the video story, in their own family stories and celebrations, and in the Mass. Use these common threads to develop a further consideration of the group's understanding of the Eucharist.

Questions for sharing

1. How does one of the characters in the story remind you of yourself? How does the family's situation remind you of your family history? Who embodies the memories of the Christian community? What has Assunta done for this family? Who in your family is like Assunta? How?
2. How do the concepts of *family* and *community* relate to each other? What elements in the video story reminded you of issues or concerns facing this community?
3. How will the grandmother in the story "live on" in the memories of her family? What traditions and customs do your own family preserve? What does ritual mean for you in a religious setting?
4. What stories does your family remember and share, especially with respect to ancestors? How do you understand the stories (readings and homilies) shared in the Liturgy of the Word at Eucharist performing a similar function for the Christian community?
5. Why do you think the story was set during the celebrations of Holy Week? Have you participated in the Easter Triduum? What elements from the liturgical celebrations of those three days particularly appeal to you? How do you suppose the Easter Triduum relates to Eucharist?

WITNESS SEGMENT

(Begins approximately 13:49 into program.)

Summary and Suggestions for use

The witness segment consists of a “collage” of interview excerpts done with ordinary Catholics. The individuals are real people, not actors. Some of them have participated in the Church’s rite of initiation for adults (RCIA).

This collage of interview excerpts can model what can emerge from a sharing of faith stories in a small group or classroom setting. The group leader should pick a time when group sharing seems appropriate.

It is important to present sharing in a non-threatening way, respecting the privacy of all concerned, and the possibility that not all participants may be comfortable talking in a group at this point—or at any time. Stress that there is no pressure to share at all, while offering the value of participation for both the individual and the group. An alternative for those who feel uncomfortable sharing would be to suggest writing a personal journal or record, for private use.

The witness segment should be introduced as the experience of *real-life* Catholics. These experiences were chosen precisely because they come from the lives of ordinary people. The participants shared their own experiences, not ones that were dictated by a teacher or group leader.

Questions for sharing

In inviting participants to share their faith stories, some general question areas can be developed, based on the comments of the witnesses on the program:

1. What is it like for you to participate in the Sunday Mass at your parish?
2. How would you describe your parish community in terms of its hospitality? The quality of its worship? Its service to the larger community?
3. What moment of Sunday Eucharist particularly holds the most meaning for you? Why?
4. How do you relate the Sunday Eucharist to the rest of your week?
5. *For parents preparing their children for First Communion:* How have you helped introduce your children to the meaning of Eucharist?
6. *For catechumens and candidates:* What aspects of the Mass would you like to know more about?

TEACHING SEGMENT

(Begins approximately 19:09 into program.)

Summary

Father Tom Richstatter, O.F.M., is the featured teacher for this segment. He offers viewers a key to a richer understanding of the Eucharist. The key is simply this: To understand the Eucharist well demands that we balance Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. His presentation follows this outline:

A. Good Friday: understanding the Mass as the unbloody sacrifice of Calvary.

B. Holy Thursday: focusing on the “meal” aspect of the Mass.

C. Easter Sunday: a third way to understand the Eucharist.

1. We, who are baptized into Christ, are the Body of Christ (St. Paul). Not only does the Body and Blood of Christ become present under the appearance of bread and wine, but the Body of Christ, the Church, also becomes visible for all to see.
2. St. Paul and the Corinthians: Those who worship the glorified Christ in heaven without similar reverence for the members of his Body here on earth “eat and drink judgment” (1 Corinthians 11:29) on themselves.
3. Paul’s conversion experience: “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?” (Act 9:4-5). Paul understood that the risen Lord is so united to the Christian that what we do to one another, we do to Christ.
4. St. Augustine: “If then you are the body of Christ and his members, it is your sacrament that reposes on the altar of the Lord....Be what you see and receive what you are” (Sermon 272). “There you are on the table, and there you are in the chalice” (Sermon 229).

By meditating on these three foundational events, keeping them in balance, and allowing them to inform each other, our understanding of the Eucharist continues to grow and be enriched.

Suggestions for use

As noted above, the teaching segment is not meant to be exhaustive. Preview the video before using it with a group, noting points in the outline that need fleshing out. Anticipate questions that may arise. For example, the aspect of Eucharist related to Easter may be new to many viewers. There also may be questions about the Catholic belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

The *Catholic Update* issue, “The Sacrament of the Eucharist: What Has Happened to My Devotion?” by our teacher for this segment, Father Tom Richstatter, may be especially helpful to supplement the video teaching offered here.

Teachers may want to review and refer to the life of St. Paul, his conversion as described in the Acts of the Apostles, Chapters 22 and 26, and Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians, Chapter 11. This material can supplement Father Tom’s remarks on the video program.

There are many excellent “overview” resources about the sacraments you many want to use to supplement the video teaching offered here. (See the “Resources” section of this guide, our print catalogs or our online catalog at www.AmericanCatholic.org.)

Questions for sharing

1. Which “dimension” of Eucharist is most familiar to you? Which was new to you?
2. In your own words, how would you express your understanding of Eucharist in relation to: Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter?
3. How would you describe the ideal eucharistic community?
4. What areas in this local Christian community could better reflect St. Paul’s wish that the Body of Christ be “discerned” as we celebrate Eucharist?

MUSICAL REFLECTION SEGMENT

“We Walk With Hunger”

(Begins approximately 26:39 into program.)

Summary

Bobby Fisher performs his song, “We Walk With Hunger”, for this musical reflection segment. The performance was recorded in a church setting, and the backgrounds carefully lighted to emphasize the altar table and the cross—reinforcing the “meal” and “sacrifice” aspects of Eucharist. In addition, the space where the assembly meets is lit as well, hinting at the “Easter” dimension stressed in the teaching segment—where we gather to become the Body of Christ, in order to go out in service to the world.

This dimension is further emphasized by the other visuals used in the video reflection. Scenes of people gathered for Eucharist intercut with scenes of people in need and in service. The words of the song emphasize this incarnational dimension as well.

Suggestions for use

To prepare viewers to appreciate the reflection, invite them to listen carefully to the lyrics and then link them with the images. You may wish to view this segment several times to let the richness of the words and music unfold.

This reflection segment may be used as part of a prayer experience with a group, especially with parents who are preparing their children for First Communion, or with adult catechumens or candidates anticipating their first reception of the Eucharist. The outline for such a service could be as follows:

1. The leader introduces the prayer experience in these or similar words:
St. Augustine's words about the Eucharist, to "be what you see and receive what you are," challenge us to discover ways to put into action what we experience within the Sunday assembly at Mass. The world around us offers endless opportunities for service. Our sensitivity to a world that is "starving for justice" begins with the fact that we ourselves "walk with hunger" to the Lord's table each Sunday. Let us reflect for a few moments on our own neediness...
2. A time of silence follows.
3. Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-29.
4. Show the musical reflection segment.
5. Ask the group to think of the needs of their community and the world, in these or similar words:
Our needs can only be filled by God, just as our own efforts to feed the world's many hungers can only succeed with God's help. Our efforts to "do in memory" what Jesus did begin around the table, when we experience so powerfully that he is alive and living in us. Let us reflect on ways our eucharistic community can open itself to the world's hungers...
6. Invite petitions from the group, beginning with one or two which model the prayer.
7. Conclude the petitions with the Lord's Prayer.
8. End the service with a eucharistic song or a second viewing of the music video.

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. **Scripture references:** As noted in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1338), the New Testament references to the Eucharist are found in the three synoptic Gospels and St. Paul, in the form of the "institution narratives" set during the Last Supper (Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20; 1 Corinthians 13:23-26). St. John recounts the discourse of Jesus in the synagogue at Capernaum in which he refers to himself as the "bread of life" (John 6).
2. ***Catechism of the Catholic Church* references:** In the *Catechism*, the Eucharist is covered in Part Two, Section Two: "The Sacraments of the Church", Chapter One, Article Three (1322-1419).
3. **Resources for further study from St. Anthony Messenger Press and Franciscan Communications:** For a complete and updated listing of our resources, visit <http://catalog.AmericanCatholic.org>.

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NOTE: This guide can be printed and cut down in size to be stored with the DVD version of this video program. Simply cut $\frac{3}{4}$ inch from each side of the page for a guide that, when folded, can be placed inside of the DVD case or attached to the DVD or VHS case.

For use with:

Eucharist: Celebrating Christ Present on VHS (V2030) and DVD (D2030)

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