

# Ordinary Time: Thursdays

Early Church history and tradition teaches that each day of the week has a theme which can help us to celebrate ordinary time. We focus on the Holy Eucharist on Thursdays. The Eucharist is at the center of our faith and should be the center of our lives. God allows His people to meet Him face-to-face in this sacrament. It is said that if one understands the Eucharist, all other truths will fall in line. Activities might include:

## Food for Our Bodies – Food for Our Souls

You'll need: a healthy dinner; poster-board; and markers and/or crayons.

Cook an especially healthy dinner. Explain to the children that these foods help our bodies to grow and to be healthy. After dinner make a chart on the poster board, with "Food for the Body" listed on one side and "Food for the Soul" listed on the other. Under the "Body" side write the things discussed at dinner, such as:

- food makes us strong
- helps us grow
- can keep us healthy
- keeps us alive.

On the other side list the ways in which the Holy Eucharist is nourishment for the soul. For example:

- must have it to live God's life
- makes us strong to resist temptation
- helps us become saints
- helps us to do what is right. (Adapted from Faith and Life Series, Grade 2.)

## **Learn the Act of Love**

Charity (love) is the virtue by which we love God above all things and our neighbor as ourselves. Through this virtue we do this for the love of God not our own gain. Today remember this virtue by treating all people with charity for the love of God. Learn the prayer and add it to your evening prayer time for this week.

O my God, I love you above all things, with my whole heart and soul, because you are all-good and worthy of all love. I love my neighbor as myself for the love of you. I forgive all who have injured me and ask pardon of all whom I have injured.

## **Attend Mass**

If you can, attend Mass this day; if it is not possible, make an act of spiritual communion, such as this one attributed to St. Francis of Assisi:

“I believe that you, O Jesus, are in the most holy sacrament. I love you and desire you. Come into my heart. I embrace you. Oh, never leave me. May the burning and most sweet power of your love, O Lord Jesus Christ, I beseech you, absorb my mind that I may die through love of your love, who were graciously pleased to die through love of my love.”

## **Spiritual Reading**

Paul's epistles (letters) to the Thessalonians were written to the new Christians in Thessalonica to answer questions that they had regarding Christ's second coming and stressing the need to be spiritually vigilant.

## **Write an Epistle**

Moms and dads can write epistles to the children stressing their need to be spiritually vigilant. Personalize the letters so that specific household issues can be addressed, such as getting ready for bed on time so that prayer-time is not

rushed.

## **Spend Time with the Blessed Sacrament**

Many saints drew their strength and endurance from hours of adoration in front of the Blessed Sacrament. Spend some time in front of the Tabernacle or find a local church with Perpetual Adoration (the Blessed Sacrament exposed on the altar twenty-four hours a day for adoration). If a trip to church is not possible, set up a prayer corner for members of the family to spend quiet time in front of a picture or statue of our Lord.

This time should be spent telling Him you love Him and asking help to love Him better, but most importantly, it should be spent listening. Rules should be set to minimize distractions, such as no TV or stereo on in the room and only interruptions that are absolutely necessary. Don't even answer the phone!

## **Read the Acts**

Read about the philosophers of Athens in Acts 17:16-34. Paul tells the philosophers that there is one God that created us and He does not inhabit any image of gold or silver or stone made by human hands. This might be a good time to check the children's understanding of the various representations of Christ and the saints that they are familiar with. Make sure they understand that they are reminders of the figures they symbolize (see CCC 2110-2117). Make the distinction concerning the Eucharist. In this case, God Himself replaces the bread and wine, keeping only the appearance of these elements (see CCC 1373-1381).

## **Make a Spiritual Communion**

"Our Lord does not come from Heaven every day to stay in a golden ciborium. He comes to find another Heaven, the Heaven of our soul in which He loves to dwell" – St. Thérèse of Lisieux.

**Today, ask Jesus to dwell in the heaven of your soul.**

Spiritual Communion: Say an Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be three times each. Then say, "I wish, Lord , to receive you with the purity, humility, and devotion with which your most holy Mother received you, with the spirit and fervor of the saints."

## **God's Temple**

Jesus, present in the Eucharist, is kept in a tabernacle. When we receive the Eucharist, our bodies become His tabernacle in a very real way. St. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 that we are to always see ourselves as God's holy temple. Discuss the obligation to God to keep His temple clean and healthy. Evaluate family hygiene, eating, and sleeping habits. Determine where can you improve. Set one family goal and make a chart to measure when and how it is reached.