

BLESSED First Communion

Lesson 1 (PART 1, to be taught at home prior to the February 11/12 class)

VIDEO LINK: <https://dynamiccatholic.com/blessed/program-view>

(NOTE: This is one of the longer lessons in the book. It should be covered in two sessions.)

1. **Open to the cover page** in the book and write their name and Communion date on the lines. Then read the page out loud together. Find the date on a family calendar and circle it. Talk about what a happy day this will be for your family.
2. **Turn to page 1.** Before beginning the prayer, tell your child that you are going to be silent together for a few moments. Then sit quietly for 20-30 seconds before slowly making the Sign of the Cross and praying the opening prayer on page 1 together. Let your child know that when they pray, they are listening and talking to God.
3. **WATCH AND DISCUSS**—read pages 2 and 3 together and then tell your child that the first episode you will be watching is about a celebration that Ben, Sarah, and Hemingway (the gerbil) are going to share with their friends. At the end of episode 1, re-enforce that we should thank God our Father each day for the gifts in our lives.
4. **WATCH AND DISCUSS**—ask the children if they can think of why God gave us gifts like Communion and Reconciliation. Explain that Sarah has the same question and we're going to watch Sarah finding the answer to this question. Watch Episode 2. (Note this episode is a bit longer than most.) Remind the children that these great moments are called SACRAMENTS. We are given these 7 gifts to help us lead the best and most holy life we can in this world and live with Him in happiness in heaven forever.
5. **READ AND EXPLORE**—the section in the book review each of the seven sacraments. Before starting, remind your child that each sacrament is special moment where we can receive God's grace and special help to become more holy.
 - a. **BAPTISM**—read pp 5-6 and then share pictures of your child's baptism with him/her. Find the date of the baptism and mark it on a calendar as you would a birthday or special event. Try to make a plan to celebrate or mark the anniversary of the baptismal date.
 - b. **RECONCILIATION**—read pp 8-9 and explain that Joseph chose to forgive the terrible wrong that his brothers had done to him. Explain that this forgiveness allowed the family to become one again and changed the course of history in Israel. Then read pp 10-11. Talk about how they received this sacrament for the first time in December and they can now go whenever they need to repair their relationship with Jesus and need the grace to change.
 - c. **COMMUNION**—read page 12 and tell your child that when they receive First Communion in May, it is not a 'one-time' sacrament like Baptism. They can receive the Eucharist each Sunday when they attend Mass. Receiving the Eucharist brings Christ closer to us—we are called to become what we receive and receiving Jesus in the Eucharist brings us the grace we need to become more like Christ, if we choose to be closer. Continue reading pp 14-15.
 - d. **CONFIRMATION**—Explain that God wants us to know Him. He has a special mission (job) for each of us and when we have a close relationship with Him, we will be able to discover what that mission is. Then read pp 16-18. Explain that when they are older they will be confirmed and this sacrament is a special gift to help them get ready to spread God's word and fulfill His mission for us.

- e. **MARRIAGE**—read the pages on marriage, 20-21. Tell your child that when a man and a woman receive the Sacrament of Marriage, they receive the grace to make each other better people. In a marriage, the couple is called to serve each other and to help their partner become more holy.
 - f. **HOLY ORDERS**—Look at the pictures on pp 22-23 and tell your child how at the Last Supper Jesus took on the job of the lowliest servant and washed the apostles' feet. From this, we know that all people are called to serve one another. Men who receive Holy Orders are called to serve the Church in a special way—by leading us in prayer, celebrating the Sacraments with us, and acting as spiritual fathers to everyone in their parish.
 - g. **ANOINTING OF THE SICK**—In your own words, tell your child the scripture story of Jesus healing the paralyzed man who was carried by his friends. Explain that in this sacrament, we ask the Holy Spirit to heal an ill person spiritually and sometimes physically. This sacrament, like all sacraments, is a gift of grace to bring us closer to God. Then read pp 24-25.
6. Read page 26 aloud to your child. Ask them if they are looking forward to First Communion, Confirmation, possibly marriage or Holy Orders. Ask them if they think some people look forward to the Anointing of the Sick. (Yes—especially those who are scared or worried about their illness). Remind them that these 'Catholic Moments' are special gifts from Jesus and from the Church.

At this point you should probably take a break or end this part of the lesson for the day. If you choose to end the lesson for the day, don't forget to end with a closing prayer—the Our Father, Hail Mary, or Glory Be. As always, start and end the prayer with a reverent Sign of the Cross.

LESSON 1 (PART 2—to be completed prior to the February 11/12 First Eucharist Class)

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7. **OPENING PRAYER**—let your child choose the opening prayer (Our Father, Hail Mary, or Glory Be) for the second part of the lesson. As always, start and end the prayer with a reverent Sign of the Cross.
8. **WATCH AND DISCUSS**—in episode 3, Sarah plays with Hemingway and she and Ben talk about celebrations.
9. **READ AND EXPLORE**—before reading about Zacchaeus, tell your child to listen for what happens to Zacchaeus after the first time he meets Jesus. Read the story on pp 30-31.
10. **READ AND EXPLORE**—before reading page 32, explain to your child that a saint is a person who lived a good life and has gone to live in heaven with Jesus. They are a part of our Catholic community and it is good to learn about them and use their lives to inspire us. Then read page 32 together. If your child has a saint’s name or a derivative of a saint’s name as a first or middle name, find out a few facts about the saint and share them with your child. If you’d rather share some thoughts about another saint that would also be fine. (You can find short descriptions of saints lives at catholicsaints.org.)
(The saints pictured on page 32 are: St. Patrick, St. Therese, St. Teresa of Calcutta (Mother Teresa), St. Peter, Mary, St. George, St. Michael the Archangel, St. Francis, St. John Chrysostom, St. Dominic, St. John Paul, and St. Thomas More.)
11. **READ AND EXPLORE**—read page 34. Point to the picture of the dove near the church door. Tell them that the dove is used as a sign of the Holy Spirit. The dove in the picture, with the light rays, is a way of showing God’s love in a picture.
12. **WATCH AND DISCUSS**—introduce episode 4 by explaining that the boys have a special surprise for Tiny. Everyone can see the surprise but Tiny and we will talk about it after we watch the episode. When Sarah arrives, have your child open to page 38 and read along with video.
13. **WATCH AND DISCUSS**—in Episode 5, Ben and Sarah talk about creation. Ask your child if they have heard or can recall the bible story of creation. Tell him/her that Ben is going to share the story with us in this episode. After watching the video, read pp 42-43 together as a reminder that Sunday Mass is a great way to say ‘Thank you’ to God.
14. **WATCH AND DISCUSS**—before watching episode 6, read pp 44-45 together with your child. Then watch Episode 6. Did you know that you can review each Sunday’s readings before you go to Mass? If your child hears the readings before Mass, it will make it easier to pay attention during the readings. They are posted to www.usccb.org. Just click on the calendar on the right side of the page.
15. **SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW**—together with your child, complete pages 46-47. It doesn’t matter who writes the answers as long you parent and child work and discuss the answers together.
16. **JOURNAL WITH JESUS**—help your child write a sentence or two on page 49.
17. **CLOSING PRAYER**—read page 50 together before beginning Episode 7.