



School and Religious Education Program Invitation

Lesson Plan

Grade 6

Preparation

Personal Reflection: So that you have a better understanding of the need for and purpose of this lesson, read Archbishop Perez's pastoral letter regarding the *Nothing Compares to Being There Initiative*. It can be found at <https://archphila.org/nothingcompares/>. Explore the additional information and links found on the web site. At this level, students are a bit more independent and able to understand the importance of the *Nothing Compares to Being There Initiative*.

Catechesis at this level has a focus on Scripture, Sacramental celebrations, Liturgy of the Hours and Worship of the Eucharist Outside of Mass. Please review the guidelines for the sixth grade found on the web site for the Office of Catechetical Formation: <https://phillyocf.org/elementary-religious-education/>

Learning Objectives/Goals

- The students will realize that the season of Advent is a good time for them to focus on Jesus coming to them in the Eucharist.
- The students will learn that Liturgical prayer is the official public worship of the Church. It includes the Mass, the sacraments, and the Liturgy of the Hours.
- The students will gain a deeper understanding of Eucharistic references in scripture.
- Students will understand the importance of the Liturgy of the Word in Mass as a preparation for the Liturgy of the Eucharist
- Students will experience the praying of the Psalms and canticles in the Liturgy of the Hours.

Activities

Note: Begin each activity with a prayer to the Blessed Sacrament: *O Sacrament most Holy, O Sacrament Divine, all praise and all thanksgiving be every moment thine.*

1. Explain to the students that we are now in the season of Advent, and the Church is inviting us to return to active participation in the Mass and the liturgical life of the Church. Read to them Archbishop Perez's letter calling all to come back to a fuller participation in the Eucharist and the Sacraments. Play for them the Advent hymn, "Maranatha" found at <https://youtu.be/BhrsSTXXNFq> Explain that the word, "Maranatha" has a scriptural reference (1 Corinthians 16:22) and comes from two Aramaic words meaning, "The Lord is coming." As Catholics we look to the coming of the Lord –not just at Christmas, but also every time we receive Communion. Just as so many in the Old Testament spent time preparing for the Coming of the Lord as Savior, we need to prepare to receive Him in Communion.
2. Read with the students the scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday's Mass. Establish quiet time for approximately two or three minutes before the reading of the passages. Explain the structure of the Liturgy of the Word, referencing Old Testament, Psalms, and New Testament, especially the Gospels. Read the passage slowly, aloud or softly. Allow about three or four minutes of quiet time to allow them to reflect on the readings. Spend some time discussing with them how the messages of the different readings are connected. Ask: How can the messages help you to be better prepared to receive Jesus in Communion? Allow them the time to write a reflection in their prayer journals. Repeat this activity each week during Advent.
3. Use a video of the celebration of a daily Mass as a teaching tool to give the students the experience of focusing on the scriptures as a way of preparing for the reception of Communion. One that could be used can be found at <https://youtu.be/yYm5i7iG9b8?t=14> Pause the video where appropriate. When it is time for Communion, explain to the students, that since they cannot receive Communion at this time, they can make a Spiritual Communion such as the one found on this video.

4. Explain to the students that the Liturgy of the Hours also makes use of Scripture as a form of prayer. Over the centuries, the Church developed a way to help people, especially clerics and religious, to pray at regular intervals throughout the day. This traditional practice is known as the Liturgy of the Hours, or Divine Office. The prayers associated with the Liturgy of the Hours center around psalms and canticles from the Scriptures, and are devised so that "the whole course of the day and night is made holy by the praise of God" (Catechism 1174); they are like an extension of the celebration of Mass into everyday life.

- Invite your pastor deacon, or a religious to explain to the children how he or she prays morning or evening prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours and to show them the book(s) used for this prayer.
- With his or her help, create your own morning or evening prayer (depending on the time of day when your group meets)
 - *The basic format is as follows:*

Opening song

One to three psalms (usually prayed by alternating sides of a group or in responsorial style)

Short Scripture reading

The Canticle of Zechariah ([Luke 1:68-79](#)) for morning prayer or The Canticle of Mary ([Luke 1:46-55](#)) for evening prayer

Four to five Prayers of Petition

The Lord's Prayer

Closing prayer or blessing

The group can then use their prayer service as a special prayer before closing for the holidays (or plan a special time to invite their parents or other classes to join them.)

Encourage student to pray often with their families.

