

# CELEBRATE

## Objective

To explore the meaning of the ritual action of Honoring the Cross

To teach the meaning of sacrifice

## Liturgical Catechesis

The purpose of this section is to help children reflect on their experiences of the signs, rituals, prayers, and gestures of the celebration and to lead them to express their own meaning of the experiences. Allow children to share their experiences without commenting on them.

## The Cross

- On the board or on chart paper, write the following questions: What did you see? What did you hear? What did you do?
- Guide children to review the celebration by reviewing what happened in the prayer.
- Invite children to share their responses to the questions.

## Reflect

- Ask children to write their responses in the book. Tell children they do not have to complete all three choices.
- Have volunteers share their responses.

## The Cross

- Invite children to look at and touch the cross or crucifix used in the celebration.
- Read the text aloud.

## The Cross



### The Cross

The cross reminds us that Jesus gave his life for us. We see the cross in the church near the altar. Some Sundays the cross is carried in the Entrance Procession. On Good Friday we honor the cross in a special service. When a cross has a figure of Jesus on it, it is called a crucifix.



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## Reflect

**Honoring the Cross** Think and write about the celebration.

*When I think about all of God's gifts*

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*When I put my hand on the cross*

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*When I think about Jesus*

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## Additional Activity

**Make crosses** Have each child make a cross to take home and hang in a place where it can be seen every day.

- Have available paper, markers, scissors, yarn, glue, and any other safe and tactile supplies that children might use to make their crosses. Be sure the paper is sturdy enough to survive the trip home.
- Distribute the basic art supplies of paper and markers.
- Show children where they can get more decorations for their crosses. Have a table set apart with the additional tactile supplies.

- Tell children to make a special cross that will remind them each time they look at it how much Jesus loves them.
- As children finish, display the completed crosses.
- At the end of the session, invite children to take their crosses home.





## Sacrifice

The cross reminds us that Jesus died for us. He died for our sins. He gave up his life as a sacrifice for all people. To *sacrifice* means to “give up something out of love for someone else.” What a wonderful gift Jesus gave us—his life.

We sacrifice when we share with others. When we give up something to help someone, we sacrifice. We sacrifice out of love.

When the Church gathers for Mass, we remember the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. The Mass is our sacrifice, too. At Mass we remember what we have done for God and others. We give God the gift of our lives.



### The Altar

The **altar** is the central table in the front of the church. It is a sign of Jesus' presence with us. It is also a sign that the Mass is a sacrifice and a meal. Another name for the altar is “the Table of the Lord.”



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## Sacrifice

- Read aloud the first two paragraphs.
- Ask children to think about a time when they made a sacrifice for someone else.
- Invite children to share their stories with a partner.
- When they have finished sharing, ask them why they made the sacrifice and how it felt to sacrifice.
- Summarize the last paragraph.



### The Altar

- Invite children to read the text silently and find one thing the altar is a sign of. **Jesus' presence; Mass is a sacrifice and a meal.**
- Have children look at the picture of the altar on page 82 of the Words of Faith glossary.



## Teaching Tip

**Altar** One of the meanings of the word *altar* is “place of sacrifice.” In Hebrew the root of that word means, “to slaughter and cut up for the purpose of sacrifice.”

Altars actually go back to pre-biblical times, when people slaughtered animals as a sacrifice to the gods and then placed the animals on the altar, either to be left there or to be burned.

Sacrifice has always been part of human worship.

- The Eucharist is the memorial of Christ's Passover, the making present and the sacramental offering of his unique sacrifice. (CCC, 1362)
- We participate in that sacrifice as we bring the gift of our lives to the altar.

