OBJECTIVE: Learn how to live the virtue of solidarity, which Christ models through the gift of the Eucharist.

SESSION SNAPSHOT
Review the entire lesson plan in advance so you are prepared to lead and discuss comfortably. Adjust the suggested time allotments as necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>SECTION</th>
<th>SESSION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>CONNECT</td>
<td>Do an activity to illustrate the concept of true presence; then open with Scripture and prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 minutes</td>
<td>DISCUSS</td>
<td>Work together to prepare bread and discuss solidarity as the bread bakes. Prayer together and practice solidarity while enjoying the fresh bread!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>COMMIT</td>
<td>Close in prayer, encourage everyone to make time this week to practice solidarity at home or school.</td>
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SUPPLIES NEEDED:
- A Bible
- *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (optional)
- Ingredients and baking supplies for bread recipe
- Instructions for bread recipe
- Place to cook bread
- Participant Sheets
- Pens or pencils
- Snacks and drinks (optional)
- Participants’ cell phones
LEADER TIPS

- Secure access to a kitchen. Have supplies/ingredients laid out in advance. Leave the mixing of dough and the baking of bread to the group as a whole. This will both unite your team and give them an opportunity to practice being truly present to one another.

- Check for any food allergies in advance. It is important that everyone can participate in making and eating the bread. If you have some who requires gluten-free food, for example, have a set of alternative ingredients and kitchen tools available.

- Find a simple quick-bread recipe. (We searched “honey wheat quick bread” online and found a delicious-looking option that has a 45-minute bake time.) Two or three days before the session, give your bread recipe a test drive.

CONNECT

Discipleship is about more than discussing the faith and participating in a small group. Discipleship requires learning from the example of a rabbi—in this case, participants learn from your daily example. It is healthy for your group members to do regular, everyday activities together because they will learn from your example and the example of their peers. As they grow in fellowship and deeper friendship through these activities, they will grow as disciples.

INTRODUCTION

SAY: I’d like to open by inviting all of you to turn to a partner and for each of you to take out your cell phones. If you don’t have one, just sit alongside someone who does for this quick activity. Now, sit back-to-back—I want you to be facing away from each other—and using only text messages, text the following question to each other: What does it mean to be really and truly present for someone?

Allow 1 or 2 minutes for the texting conversation.

Now, put your phones down, turn to your partner, and answer the same question face-to-face.
Allow 1 minute for the partners to converse, and then ask the whole group the following question.

**ASK:** What was the difference between answering the question through text versus answering it face-to-face?

There is a substantial difference between true, personal, face-to-face presence as opposed to the distance of texting or other forms of social networking. During this session, we’re going to talk about what it means when we say that Christ is truly present in the Eucharist, and how His true Presence shapes our understanding of what human solidarity is. But first, let’s simplify so that we can enter into this session without distractions.

*Have participants silence cell phones before you collect them (and other electronic devices) and set them out of sight.*

**OPENING PRAYER**

**SAY:** Let’s begin in prayer.

**PRAY:** Our Father…

**OR**

Ask for a volunteer to open the meeting with a prayer.

**ACTIVITY**

*Distribute Participant Sheets and ask someone to read the Scripture passage found there (Acts 2:44-47).*

**SAY:** We experienced the difference true presence makes, and read about the early Church gathering together in homes to break bread and praise God in their community. Now let’s experience a bit of what those involved in the early Church did when they gathered in homes—it’s time to bake some bread as a group!

*Have the instructions for making the bread sitting out with the ingredients. Preheat your oven, and then step back and simply allow participants to enjoy each other’s company as they work together to make the bread. Encourage them to work together through the process without your help (unless necessary).*
“Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace; above all taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication.”

—Ephesians 6:11-18

Once the bread is in the oven, gather for discussion.

**Ask:** When you hear the word solidarity, what do you think of? What does that word mean?

**Leader’s Tip**

This is your opportunity to summarize the teaching of the Catechism on Solidarity. Here are a few highlights that you can bring up if nobody else does:

- **Solidarity is a Christian virtue** (meaning that it is a good habit/disposition) that practices the sharing of spiritual goods even more than material ones. —CCC 1948
- **Solidarity can also be called “friendship” or “social charity.”** —CCC 1939
- **Solidarity is “a direct demand of human and Christian brotherhood.”** —CCC 1939
- **Solidarity is made known through a just distribution of goods** (i.e. giving human persons their due in all circumstances), and is the only real resolution for socio-economic problems. —CCC 1940-1941
SAY: During this session, we are going talk about solidarity within the context of a meal. In fact, during every Mass we participate in the most extreme form of solidarity humanity has ever known.

Based upon our discussion of what solidarity is, spend a few minutes writing down your thoughts on how the Eucharist is a sign or sacrament of God's solidarity with men and women.

Direct the group members to their Participant Sheets. After a few minutes, ask them to share their answers with the group. Answers may include: Provision of spiritual nourishment, a sign of Christ’s charity through re-presentation of the sacrifice on Calvary, a sign of generosity, a sign of friendship with us, a bond of unity with Him and with one another, etc. Depending upon answers you receive, you may be able to briefly summarize these next few points.

God’s gift to us in the Eucharist provides a model for solidarity. So, as we wrap our minds around solidarity tonight, we’ll actually turn to the Eucharist to inform us.

- In the Eucharist, Jesus is really and truly present—Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity—for us. Solidarity demands being truly present to someone.

- The Eucharist is a true sign of Christ’s love for His friends. We remember His self-giving sacrifice, which, through the Church, is made present each time we celebrate the Eucharist (CCC 1363-1364). In similar fashion, solidarity is rooted in authentic, self-giving love for the good of others.

- Jesus, in the Eucharist, fills each of us in our poverty and our need for His life and His love. In solidarity, we see the poverty or need in the other and attend to it, whatever that poverty might be (loneliness, material poverty, etc.).

- The Eucharist is the “sign of unity” and “bond of charity.” The Eucharist is unifying as Christ unites Himself with us, and compels us to reach out in charity to one another.

Let’s summarize: How does the Eucharist teach us about solidarity?

Invite your group members to take turns reading these bullet points (also located on their Participant Sheets).
• We need to be truly present to each other.
• We need to reach out to each other in self-giving love.
• We need to be concerned about each other’s needs, and attend to those needs.
• We need to grow in unity with each other.

SAY: Notice how I stressed the words each other? Often we may think of solidarity with the poor, both in our country and across the globe. This is certainly necessary, but solidarity is also more abstract and difficult to grasp. During this session we want to practice solidarity together—especially as solidarity has been informed by the Eucharist. In order to build virtue, we have to train or practice virtue in the circumstances that we have been given...at home, at school, and even in this group.

Turn to your Participant Sheets and answer the following questions. Then get with a partner to discuss your answers:

• How can you be more present with people in your life?
• Can you share an example of a time you experienced disunity (maybe on a sports team or during a group project, for example)? What about a time of unity? What difference does unity make?
• How can you take what you’ve learned about solidarity and the Eucharist in this session with you to school? How does this teaching change the ways you interact with your peers and teachers?

Next invite someone to read CCC 1397 from the Participant Sheet.

ASK: In the Eucharist, Jesus Christ, who took on human flesh, encounters each of us in our humanity, even with all of our faults and wounds. How does God’s merciful action in the Eucharist call you to conversion in how you see other people?
SAY: This week, let’s remember that the virtue of solidarity teaches us to be grateful for others in our lives and to petition on their behalf. Before meals, consider these simple questions as you pray:

- Who or what would you like to thank God for today?
- What petitions would you like to offer God? Think of someone in your life who needs your prayers.

Once the bread has finished baking, take the loaf out and set it in the middle of the table. Enjoy the aroma as it cools! While sitting around the bread that your group made together, take a few minutes to pray.

SAY: Bread is the most widely consumed food in the world. It has been a staple in the human diet for thousands of years. When the Israelites were delivered out of Egypt and were hungry in the desert, God sustained them with manna—bread from heaven. When the crowds surrounding Jesus were hungry, He multiplied loaves and fish.

God takes care of our physical and spiritual needs. It is no accident that Jesus chose something as significant as bread to be transformed into the Eucharist. While the bread that we’ve made together is not the Eucharist, it does serve as a symbol of the unity God has bestowed upon us, His people. Even in the early Church, right after Pentecost, the first Christians broke bread together in their homes and praised God. So let us now pray and eat together.

Begin with the Sign of the Cross. Have someone read the Scripture passage for the session (Acts 2:44-47), found on the Participant Sheet.

As we near the end of our time together in this session, let us, as a sign of unity, offer our prayers of praise and thanksgiving to God. We’ll go around the circle and, one by one, offer to the Lord one or two things—or people—we are most thankful for today.

It may be best if you begin the prayers of thanksgiving yourself to provide a model for everyone. After you give thanks, say “Amen” to signal the next person to begin.
Now let us bring our needs before the Lord. We will again go around and offer one or two petitions. If you have something or someone to pray for that you wish to keep between you and the Lord, you can just offer up a special intention.

*Again, it may be best if you begin the prayers of petition in order to provide a model for everyone. After you offer your petition, say “Amen” to signal the next person to begin.*

Gathering our prayer and praises into one, let us offer the prayer Christ Himself taught us. Our Father…

*Lead the group in praying the Our Father together. Enjoy the bread as a group as you take a look at the Tips for the Week on the Participant Sheets. Encourage your group members to try the tips to help them live out what they have learned this week.*
“And all who believed were together and had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people.”

—Acts 2:44-47

How is the Eucharist a sign or sacrament of God’s solidarity with men and women?

The Eucharist Teaches Solidarity

• We need to be truly present to each other.
• We need to reach out to each other in self-giving love.
• We need to be concerned about each other’s needs, and attend to those needs.
• We need to grow in unity with each other.

Respond to these questions, and discuss with a partner:

• How can you be more present with people in your life?
• Can you share an example of a time when you experienced disunity (maybe on a sports team or during a group project, for example)? What about a time of unity? What difference does unity make?

• How can you take what you’ve learned about solidarity and the Eucharist in this session with you to school? How does this teaching change the ways you interact with your peers and teachers?

“The Eucharist commits us to the poor. To receive in truth the Body and Blood of Christ given up for us, we must recognize Christ in the poorest, his brethren: You have tasted the Blood of the Lord, yet you do not recognize your brother,....You dishonor this table when you do not judge worthy of sharing your food someone judged worthy to take part in this meal....God freed you from all your sins and invited you here, but you have not become more merciful.”

—CCC 1397

COMMIT

Before meals, consider these simple questions as you pray:

• Who or what would you like to thank God for today?

• What petitions would you like to offer God? Think of someone in your life who needs your prayers.

“I do not pray for these only, but also for those who believe in me through their word, that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”

—John 17:20-21
You can incorporate these Eucharistic reflections/prayers into your daily prayer time this week, especially before the Blessed Sacrament in adoration or right before or after Mass. Use the space provided to journal any reflections you have.

“In each of our lives Jesus comes as the Bread of Life—to be eaten, to be consumed by us. This is how He loves us. Then Jesus comes in our human life as the hungry one, the other, hoping to be fed with the Bread of our life, our hearts by loving, and our hands by serving. In loving and serving, we prove that we have been created in the likeness of God, for God is Love and when we love we are like God. This is what Jesus meant when He said, ‘Be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect.’”

—Blessed Teresa of Calcutta

“Lord Jesus, Who in the Eucharist make your dwelling among us and become our traveling companion, sustain our Christian communities so that they may be ever more open to listening and accepting your Word. May they draw from the Eucharist a renewed commitment to spreading in society, by the proclamation of your Gospel, the signs and deeds of an attentive and active charity.”

—Pope St. John Paul II
“Come, and your every sacrifice will be repaid in heaven, because Jesus Christ promises that everything we do for the poor in His name, we do for Him. You do not want to deny Christ this love, He whose infinite love for humanity gave Himself to us in the sacrament of the Eucharist, as our Comforter and the Bread of Life.”

—Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati

**TIPS FOR THE WEEK**

*Now that you’ve gained insight into the Eucharist and its relation to solidarity, try these ideas to continue on your faith journey:*

- **Pray for Unity**: Take 10 minutes in prayer with Acts 2:42-47. Open with a prayer to the Holy Spirit, asking for guidance. Read through the passage (slowly!) twice. Then write down ways you can meet with other believers to pray, grow, and worship together. Make a plan to act on your ideas in the upcoming month.

- **It Starts at Home**: Make time this week to practice solidarity at home (reach out to a sibling who is struggling with homework, have a cup of coffee with mom or dad, make dinner together, etc.). Journal about how your efforts at home are helping you grow in your faith each week.

- **Be a Light at School**: Make an effort this week to practice solidarity in a tangible way at school (for example, invite a classmate who typically eats alone to eat with you). Write in your journal about how practicing solidarity at school is making a difference in your life and in the life of your peers.
Every YDisciple session has three parts: CONNECT, DISCUSS, and COMMIT. The CONNECT section is designed to build trust, transparency, and community in the group. The DISCUSS section introduces topics of the faith, engages critical thinking, and facilitates valuable conversation. And the COMMIT section helps students take ownership of their faith and put it into practice. Use this Parent Sheet to take a glimpse at our most recent session so you can have a follow-up conversation with your teenager about his/her experience in the small group and encourage spiritual growth.

SESSION OVERVIEW

In this session, we focused on building solidarity in our group and on ways the teens could practice solidarity at home, at school, and with their peers.

CONNECT

God’s gift to us in the Eucharist, our participation in the heavenly banquet, is in many ways a sacrament of solidarity—drawing Christians into deeper relationship with God and into union with one another, and increasing concern for the poor. Solidarity can also be called friendship or social charity. Teens discovered during our session that solidarity is a Christian virtue that places the sharing of spiritual goods above material ones.

The starting point for Christian solidarity is life in Christ Himself, and this union with Christ is the principal fruit of receiving the Eucharist in Holy Communion (CCC 1391). Thus, the Eucharist teaches us about solidarity in at least four ways (there are certainly more, but these are the ones we covered):

- Jesus is substantially present (really and truly) in the Eucharist. In solidarity, we are called to be truly present to one another.

- The Eucharist is a re-presentation of the sacrifice of the Cross—the ultimate sign of Christ’s self-giving love. In solidarity, we are moved by authentic charity and compassion for the other.

- In the Eucharist, Christ satisfies our deepest spiritual poverty by satisfying us with Himself. In solidarity, we express concern for the spiritual and material needs of others and attend to those needs.
The Eucharist draws the person into intimate communion with Christ, in unity with the whole body of believers. In solidarity, we grow in unity through the bond of friendship.

In order to help grasp these concepts, we focused on building solidarity in our group and talked about other ways we can form solidarity with those we encounter. As this virtue of solidarity increases, it is only natural that teens will want to reach out even further to the wider community, yet they should always return to the source of this bond of unity and charity—Christ Himself.

**DISCUSS**

Here are some conversation starters for this week. Remember to share your perspectives as well.

- How can our family do a better job of being truly present to one another?
- What are some ways our family, as a unit, can provide friendship or social charity to others?

**COMMIT**

This week, teens are encouraged to remember that the virtue of solidarity teaches us to be grateful for others in our lives and to petition on their behalf. Before meals, remember to consider what you’re grateful for, and offer prayers for those in need.

“And all who believed were together and had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people.”

—Acts 2:44-47

**PARENT TIPS**

Establish an evening this week where the whole family can gather to prepare a meal together. Turn off all electronic devices, put the cell phones away, and practice being present to one another as you work together to prepare the meal. Then enjoy time together without distractions. Talk about how each person in the family can be more present for each other in the upcoming week.