

Eucharist as Food for the Journey

To go out to be like Jesus in the world



TARGET AUDIENCE

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Overview

This Object highlights the significance of the new forms of dismissal; they bring to the fore our mission to live as Jesus taught us.

The multimedia element of this Object displays two case studies. The case studies exhibit the contribution of two primary schools in an international context: St Christopher's, Airport West, in Peru; and St Joseph's, Malvern, in Tanzania. They provide students with examples of how their school community could be like Jesus in the world.

Teacher Background

Teachers are encouraged to review the 'Living a Eucharistic Life' section of the DVD Rom *Become One Body One Spirit in Christ* to deepen their understanding of: the call to 'go forth' and live the mission of the Gospel in our daily lives; how we are called to live our Catholic and Christian faith; and the meaning of the Eucharist in our lives.

In particular, the following aspects of *Become One Body One Spirit in Christ* provide entry points and context for this Learning Object:

- Within the pathway 'Dismissal for Mission', watch the video 'The Dismissal'.

Where appropriate, use this material with the students.

Supporting Content

This text supports the focus of the multimedia element.

Go forth, the Mass is ended. The word 'Mass' comes from a Latin word *missa* which means 'dismissal'. We gather for Mass, celebrate Mass and are then dismissed with a mission: to go out and be like Jesus in the world; living life with, and for, each other so that we become one community *one body, one spirit in Christ*. When we go out from Mass, Jesus is with us. '... I am with you always, to the end of the age.' (Mt 28:20) We are nourished and strengthened by sharing the Eucharistic meal with those gathered.

Jesus' real presence during the Eucharist helps us to go and be like Jesus in

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Supporting Content

the world. This can be difficult particularly if others at work and play do not think or act the same way. Every day we are called to be people of faith, hope and love. This means to be strong in what you believe is right and to serve those in need especially the disadvantaged. It also means to show love, even to your enemies.

To be hopeful is a way to live a Eucharistic life. To bring hope to people who are suffering and in need is a special gift that Jesus calls us to give. We are called to develop different ways of being hopeful for ourselves and for others. In doing this, we are sharing the real presence of Jesus with those we meet and help.

CASE STUDIES: BRINGING HOPE TO OTHERS

St Christopher's Primary School, Airport West, Melbourne

Anna Tonini and I are teachers at St Christopher's primary school in Airport West, Melbourne. The school is committed to educating the students in social justice and Anna and I wanted to 'walk the talk'. We were looking for a project in some part of the world – I thought of Vietnam, Anna of the Philippines. When we approached the principal Gary Trainor with the idea, he told us that the school was connected with Peru through Columban Fr Bernard (Bernie) Lane, originally from Essendon, Melbourne.

Fr Bernie had been to our school in 2006 and spoke to the students. He made a strong impression on the teachers and children and this had turned into support for his mission in Lima, specifically the Manuel Duato School for children with various kinds of special needs. The whole school, principal, board and parents had got behind a project to buy a bus to transport the children to school. The school is an initiative of the Columban Fathers who have worked in the area for 60 years.

The fundraising in the school was concentrated on this project and when Anna and I went to visit Manuel Duato, our primary school and friends had raised \$28,000. We cannot underestimate the generosity of the children, parents and those associated with the project. Part of the project is to blend our work in the classroom with the words of Jesus and in 2012 hopefully, send two more teachers to Lima with a similar amount of money.

I remember my first reaction to Lima after leaving the international airport was fear. I didn't expect the darkness, the glumness and barrenness; everything was unkempt and run down. This was offset by the warm

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Supporting Content

welcome from the Columban priests who work in Lima and who gathered in the centre house to welcome us. It was an unexpected highlight of the trip.

On leaving Lima after two weeks, I felt that I had a life-changing experience in the sense of 'don't sweat the small stuff.' What is important is worth dealing with, forget the rest.

Going to Mass with Fr Bernie was like going to a shack on a tip. Mass started when the people had gathered. The stipulated time for starting Mass might have been 10:00am but hardly anyone was there; by 10:45 we were ready to start. Mass was different from at home, people came and went, it was kind of informal but everyone was an active participant – the young, the youth right through to the elderly, were passionate about their faith.

The people were warm and welcoming. We visited family homes where the house was no bigger than one average room of an Australian house. We visited a home of four where there were only three chairs. I found it hard to accept their hospitality because I had so much more and they were offering food and drink that they could ill afford but their hospitality demanded to be recognised. They wanted to give from their small provisions because they were our hosts for our visit to their home.

With senses alive to all these new experiences, sometimes I wanted to close down the overload of misery. On reflection, I don't think the people I met were people I felt sorry for. They will be all right with or without help from Australia.

The Manuel Duato School was better set up than we thought. The teachers and principal loved their jobs. Anna and myself found that the children were more disabled than we expected and the variety of disability had a wider scope also – not just hearing difficulties and Down syndrome children. It was an emotional experience being a teacher and a mother of two boys both at home in Australia and missing them. It was wonderful to see that the children at the school were happy, well-adjusted and loved.

The school was well resourced and researched, time and effort had gone into what the children needed. A speech therapist, a physical therapist and an occupational therapist were part of the staff. The children's parents are very supportive of the program. We skyped the children at St Christopher's from Lima, making the whole experience more immediate for everybody.

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Some days it was hard being there, we just wanted to go home. We admired the Columbans who like Fr John O'Connell has spent nearly 60 years there; he has been in for the long haul. Visiting, seeing and experiencing, is the only way to understand in some small way what the people of Peru live through.

St Joseph's Catholic Primary, Malvern, Melbourne

When it comes to social justice and helping people in need, students at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in Malvern are happy to answer the call.

Supporting Content

During Lent, each class chose a charity or cause they wanted to help. They had guest speakers, raised money with cake stalls, fresh produce stalls and Easter raffles, and collected goods for the less fortunate.

Even the youngest in the school had an opportunity to make a difference. The two Prep classes collected clothes for Prep students attending the School of St Jude, which is in a small village just outside Arusha City, in Northern Tanzania. It was set up by Australian Gemma Sisia to educate the poorest children in the region.

Prep teacher Marta Lukaitis said: 'There are so many people in this world that need the help of fortunate people like us. It's important for children to learn at a young age the importance of caring for others, no matter where they are.' Last year Marta introduced the importance of social justice and the plight of those less fortunate to her Year 1 class. Together they sponsored young Elifuraha so that she could attend the school of St Jude.

'The Year 1s raised enough money to cover Elifuraha's school fees for 2010 and for this year too,' said Marta. 'Each class also had a list of things needed by St Jude's in their classroom and between us we gathered enough things to fill a 10 kilogram box. I took all the extra donations to St Jude's along with a number of beautiful gifts and letters from my students for Elifuraha when I visited in January.'

Wanting to continue the good work with her 2011 Prep class, Marta said: 'My preppies are very new to it all so we thought it would be a lot more meaningful for them to give something that belongs to them and that will keep another preppie in another country warm. They are very excited to see photos of the children with their clothes and to receive letters back from St Jude's.'

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Supporting Content

'There are many ways young children can make a real difference in the real world and they can do this in such a way that they understand who they are helping and why. We all want children to grow up feeling they can make a difference.'

For Reflection and Discussion: Ideas for Use

Select one or more of the following activities for students to complete.

1 **Initiate a class discussion with students on the following:**

What are some stories of Jesus where Jesus cared for other people, especially those who needed help?

Invite each member of the class to contribute one active statement.

Create your own active Mission Statement that shows your understanding of being the face of Jesus to those around them e.g. my mission is to be a friend to others, I will therefore try to include other people when I play; or my mission is to help other people, I will therefore try to follow the school rules.

Brainstorm ways that as a class or year level they can live out the mission in their school or local community.

Decide on one idea to work towards for the term and present the idea to the whole school at assembly. Design posters and power points to promote your project in the school.

Initiate a class discussion with students.

Explore the different responses classes and students in your school make to social justice issues e.g. Project Compassion, fundraising for Catholic Mission or Bandana Day.

Teacher Professional Development Resources

[Synod of Bishops\(XI Ordinary General Assembly\) Instrumentum Laboris Eucharistia: fons et culmen vitae missionis Ecclesiae, The Eucharist: Source and Summit of the Life and Mission of the Church, 7 July 2005](#) – Chapter VII, The Eucharist: A Gift for Mission