Manna in the Wilderness: Bread from Heaven

God provides, one day at a time

Ages about 7-11 | Video 4:22 | Group lesson about 25-35 minutes

Central truth God fed Israel in the wilderness and taught His people to trust, share, and receive rest. Catholics recognize manna as preparing God's people for Jesus, the Bread of Life, and the gift of the Eucharist.

Learning goals Recall quail and manna; explain daily gathering and preparation for the Sabbath; connect Jesus the Bread of Life with Holy Communion.

Gather Video access, one handout per child, pencils or crayons, and a Bible.

Watch online Open this video on Servus Dei

Before watching | 2 minutes

Recall the crossing of the Red Sea. Ask: Who helps provide the food you eat? How can you show gratitude?

Watch and notice

Notice how God answers hunger, provides enough for each person, and teaches the people to prepare before resting.

Talk together | 6-8 minutes

1. What food did God provide?
Quail came in the evening, and manna appeared in the morning.

2. How much manna were the people to gather each day?
A portion for each person. There was enough for everyone in the household.

3. What happened before the Sabbath rest?
Moses gave the instruction, the people gathered a double portion, and the stored manna remained good the next morning. They rested on the seventh day.

4. Whom does the story call the Bread of Life?
Jesus. In the Eucharist He gives us His true Body and Blood; Holy Communion is receiving Jesus Himself.

Then respond and pray Allow 6-8 minutes for a handout or the activity on page 2; finish with the closing prayer.

Lead the response

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Short family lesson Watch the video, choose one recall question and one application question, then pray. About 12-18 minutes; the handout is optional.

Choose a handout

Draw & Tell Read prompts aloud. Accept drawing, pointing, dictated words, or spoken responses.

Read & Write Invite one remembered detail, one explanation, and one practical response of gratitude. Short or dictated answers are welcome.

Adapt by readiness

Younger children: focus on the manna, enough for everyone, and thanking God for food.

Older children: compare the daily gathering with Sabbath preparation in Exodus 16, then read John 6:48-51 with an adult.

Enough for everyone | Optional 4 minutes

Draw a household around a table and add a place for each person. Around the picture, write or draw people who help provide food. Choose one act of gratitude or practical care, such as thanking a caregiver or helping with a parish food collection alongside an adult.

Look for understanding The child names the foods, places the Sabbath preparation before rest, and identifies Jesus as the Bread of Life.

Closing prayer Loving God, thank you for our daily bread and for everyone who helps provide it. Help us share, trust your care, and receive rest with gratitude. Jesus, Bread of Life, draw us closer to you. Amen.

At home Say a prayer of thanks before a meal. Ask an adult how your family can help someone who needs food.

Handout answer notes Remember: quail and manna. Explain: daily portions, with a double portion prepared before the Sabbath. Connect: Jesus is the Bread of Life; in Holy Communion we receive Jesus Himself.

Teach with care

Have a Bible, paper, pencils, and crayons. Use the corrected Sabbath sequence: instruction, double gathering, good stored manna the next morning, then rest. Hunger is a real need. Do not blame people who lack food or suggest that prayer removes the need to seek practical help. Children can tell a trusted adult when they need food. Distinguish the manna from the Eucharist: the consecrated bread and wine are truly Jesus' Body and Blood, though their appearances remain. Do not stage a pretend consecration or Communion.

Words to explain Manna: the food God provided in the wilderness. Quail: small birds. Sabbath: the holy day of rest given to Israel. Eucharist: the sacrament in which Jesus gives us His Body and Blood.

Sources for the leader

Scripture: Manna, quail, and Sabbath rest - Exodus 16

Scripture: Jesus, the Bread of Life - John 6

Catholic teaching: Catechism: the Eucharistic celebration, 1345-1355