

- Come forward, reverently, bowing before receiving each element, and let your “Amen” be firm and heartfelt. You are saying “yes” to Jesus.
- Go back to your seat, kneel and join the song. This is not time for “Me and Jesus” but for the praise of the whole community.
- After the song, while the Eucharist and vessels are being purified and put away, is the time to let Jesus know the full extent of your gratitude. Thank him.
- Pray that what you have received will change and strengthen you to carry out the part of the Mission of the Church that God has entrusted to you in your family, your workplace and community.

Blessing and Dismissal

- When you stand and the priest says “Let us pray,” again collect yourself – and listen. These texts often provide guidance for how the Eucharist should affect us and our actions in daily life.
- Receive the blessing knowing that you are sent into the world to help bring about the Reign of God through your daily actions – a mission given to you at baptism and renewed each week as you are sent forth.
- Go forth singing with joy, feeling ready to face your week until you return to Mass to renew your covenant to be an important part of God’s mission.

For more information, see

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal.

For resources to learn more about the Mass and Liturgical Year, visit theliturgicalcatechist.weebly.com or “like” The Liturgical Catechist” on Facebook.

Joyce S. Donahue is Catechetical Associate for the Diocese of Joliet Religious Education Office. jdohue@dioceseofjoliet.org

How to Get More Out of the Mass



By Putting More of Yourself In

When you are at Mass, do you sit, stand, kneel, speak the responses and sing? That’s only the beginning of how you can be fully involved.

How do you engage your mind, heart and soul? By learning how to be an active participant. You are not part of a passive audience, but present to pray the Mass through and with Jesus, with your body, heart and mind, as an important part of the community of all God’s priestly people.

Before Mass

- Prepare during the week by studying and praying the Mass readings. You can find them in most parish bulletins and a Bible, a phone app (*iMissal*, for example) or at USCCB.org (Click on the calendar.)
- Think about what you are grateful for, or who or what needs prayer this week. Bring this with you to Mass.
- Enter the church, greet other members of the community with sincerity and affection, then collect your thoughts and prayers in the silence before Mass.
- Notice what liturgical season the Church is celebrating by observing the seasonal colors on the altar, priest's vestments and symbols around the church.
- Above all, be mindful and intentional; not passive or purely sociable in this time before the Mass.

Entrance & Introductory Rite

- Join in the song as the ministers process to the sanctuary. Join in the Penitential Rite, admitting your own sinfulness and sing the Gloria with joy. You are here to praise and worship the Father through Jesus Christ– the community needs your voice.
- As the priest says "Let us Pray," add those intentions you reflected on earlier - your thanks or your needed prayers. This is your Mass as well as the community's.

Liturgy of the Word

- Give the readings and homily your full attention. God's word is alive and active – something that you hear today is meant for YOU. If you have looked at them ahead of Mass, this will be even easier. Listen actively; reflect during the silences; try to ignore distractions. The Holy Spirit is waiting to do the rest.
- Sing the Responsorial Psalm and Gospel Acclamation with joy and conviction. This is Good News!

Preparation of the Altar and Gifts (Offertory)

- Place your monetary gift in the collection, join in the song, and as the bread and wine come forward "send" yourself in mind and spirit to the altar along with them.
- As the priest offers the bread and wine to the Father, offer yourself – your whole life –with all its joys, sorrows and challenges. Your offering will become part of the Eucharistic "power that transforms the world" (***Catechism of the Catholic Church #901***)

Eucharistic Prayer

- When the priest says "Lift up your hearts," imagine you are holding up your heart and offering it to God with joy. Continue to offer yourself to God during the prayer and join fully in the sung or spoken responses.
- As the priest holds his hands horizontally over the bread and wine, calling down the Holy Spirit to change them, feel yourself being drawn spiritually into the Transubstantiation.
- Remember and visualize – Jesus and the Last Supper during the Words of Institution, the Church around the world in all times and places, the saints and angels – and know they are all present, right now, at this Mass.
- When the priest holds up the Body and Blood, be mindful that Jesus said "This IS my Body" and "This IS my Blood" – and know his presence is truly in them.
- Pray the "Our Father" fully mindful of each phrase and how it affects your daily life. Be grateful for the Bread of Life you are about to receive.

Communion

- As the ministers prepare, open your heart to what you are about to receive. Join in the song before and as you come forward; if you know it well, sing in line.