

## The Mass

Mrs. Evans led Lisa, Terrence, Tanya, and Tomás into the front pew of the church. Today they were attending their first Mass together.

Tanya looked around nervously. "I've never been to Mass before," she whispered to Lisa. "What if I do something wrong? How do I know what to do when?"





Are you ever nervous at Mass?

What would you tell Tanya to make her less afraid?

## Gather Together

We come together in church for Mass to remember Jesus, "Do this in memory of me" (Luke 22:19) and because Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20).

Mass begins with a gathering song. We sing together as the priest and ministers enter in a **procession**. The priest begins the celebration of the Mass by making the Sign of the Cross. This shows we all belong to God's family. He asks us to remember our sins. We ask God to forgive us.

Next, we sing or say the **Gloria**, an ancient Christian song of praise. We say, "Glory to God in the highest," just like the angels sang at Christmas. Then the priest says another short prayer.

## Listen to God's Word

Now we sit and listen to a reading from the Bible, God's word. This part of the Mass is called the **Liturgy of the Word**. The book of Mass readings is called a **Lectionary**. We hear three readings during Sunday Mass and two during weekday Mass.



In the first reading, we hear stories of God's love and mercy from the Old Testament. Then we sing the **Responsorial Psalm**. The psalms are prayer-poems that the Jewish people sing to God.

The second reading tells us how the early Church lived and prayed. After that reading, we stand and sing "Alleluia" before the final reading, the Gospel. **Alleluia** means "praise God" and **gospel** means "good news." So we praise God for his good news during this reading.

After the Gospel, the priest explains the readings in his homily. The **homily** teaches us what God's word means and how it applies to our lives today.



What do you want to praise God for?





**How do you use words to praise God?**

**How can you praise God by listening?**

## Share and Pray

We share things about our lives with our families. We also ask our families for help when we're stuck or feeling bad. Our Church community is like a really big extended family. So during the **Universal Prayer** our Church family shares its concerns and problems, too. We pray together for our needs and the needs of others. We ask God to help and heal us. We hear requests, called **petitions**, and hold these prayers in our hearts.



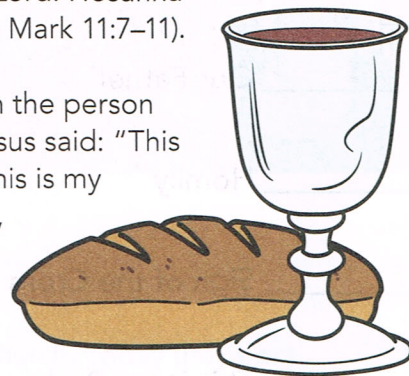
**What do you want to pray for today?**

Next, we get ready for the **Liturgy of the Eucharist**. *Eucharist* means "thanksgiving" and is another name for holy Communion. Just like your family gets together to share a meal, we share a meal at Mass with our Church family!

Before our meal, we bring gifts to God. This part of the Mass is called the **offertory** because we're offering things to God. The money placed into the basket helps the Church and the needy. The bread and wine that are carried to the altar become the Body and Blood of Jesus.

After receiving the bread and wine, the priest asks God to accept and bless these gifts in the **eucharistic prayer**. We praise God again with the **Holy, Holy, Holy**: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory! Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest" (see Mark 11:7–11).

The priest, acting in the person of Jesus, says as Jesus said: "This is my body" and "this is my blood" (Mark 14:22, 24). We believe this is really Jesus in the bread and wine.



## Join Together

We stand and pray the Our Father as one community in the Lord. As a tangible sign of the unity initiated by Christ, we say to those around us, "Peace be with you." We may also shake hands or hug each other.

## Eat and Drink Together

We line up to receive the Eucharist, the true Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. When we eat this bread and drink this wine, Jesus' presence makes us more like him. After Communion, we silently thank God for coming to us.

After everyone has gone to Communion and after a final blessing, the Mass has ended. The priest says, "Go in peace." We reply, "Thanks be to God." We are proud to go out and share God with the world.



**How do you share God with others?**



# ORDER OF THE MASS

Put these parts of the Mass in order. Write the numbers in the blanks.

\_\_\_\_\_ Gloria

\_\_\_\_\_ Our Father

\_\_\_\_\_ Homily

\_\_\_\_\_ Sign of the Cross

\_\_\_\_\_ This is my Body

\_\_\_\_\_ Sign of Peace

\_\_\_\_\_ Gathering song

## In Short



- The Mass has two main parts.
- Everything we do at Mass has a specific function.
- Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist.

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