

How to Attend Mass

A guide on what to say, what
to do, and when to do it.



"Agnus Dei" by Jose Campeche

**For Parish of the Holy Eucharist
during Ordinary Time**

Table of Contents

What is the Mass? – pg. 4

How to use this guide – pg. 6

What to do before Mass – pg. 6

Introductory rites – pg. 7

Liturgy of the Word – pg. 9

Offertory – pg. 13

Eucharistic Prayer – pg. 15

Our Father – pg. 17

Whether, and how to receive Communion – pg. 20

Final Blessing – pg. 23

What is the Mass?

In the Old Covenant, God prescribed ritual sacrifices to be offered in the Temple for sins. But, as St. Paul points out in the Letter to the Hebrews, animal sacrifices could never fully atone for sin. Thus, God sent a perfect, spotless, unblemished victim, Jesus Christ, God become man, to die for our sins. Jesus Christ instituted this one sacrifice at the Last Supper and accomplished it on the cross. He gave His apostles the authority to offer this sacrifice in His name. Those apostles passed this authority on to their successors, leading to an unbroken chain. The Mass has been offered regularly now for 2000 years.

What is a sacrifice?

In a sacrifice, a precious gift is offered to a deity. In the sacrifice of the Mass, we offer Jesus Christ to the one true and infinitely good God. This sacrifice was completed when Jesus Christ died on the cross for us in 33 AD. That same sacrifice is presented on the altar in the Mass, but in an unbloody manner. What we see is bread and wine being offered to God like Jesus did at the Last Supper. Invisibly, His sacrifice on the cross is being made present on that altar.

Why do we offer the Mass?

You can think of the Mass as offering gifts to God. The gift we offer is the pearl of great price, the infinitely good God become man, Jesus Christ. We offer this great gift to God for the same reasons we offer them to other people.

- 1) To say thank you (thanksgiving). God has given us every good thing we have; in gratitude, we offer the greatest gift we have in return.
- 2) To say sorry (atonement). The Mass is the re-presentation of Christ's sacrifice on the cross by which our sins were forgiven. We can apply those merits in a specific way in atonement for our sins through the Mass.
- 3) To ask for what we need (petition). Just as you would bring gifts when seeking a favor from an earthly king, so too with the King of the Universe. The priest approaches God on our behalf and asks Him for what we need.
- 4) We offer gifts to God because He is infinitely worthy of it (adoration).

How to use this guide

The things you do are written in **red**.

The things you say are written in **bold**.

The things said by the priest, lector, or cantor are written in *italics*.

Before Mass

When you enter the church, dip your right hand in the holy water font at the entrance and make the sign of the cross. Before entering your pew, genuflect towards Jesus in the tabernacle and make the sign of the cross.

Kneel down and quietly speak to Him while you wait for Mass to begin.

Introductory Rites

Stand for the opening hymn or antiphon. The priest will ascend the steps and kiss the altar. When the priest arrives at his chair, he will begin Mass with the sign of the cross. Make the sign of the cross with the priest.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (Or a similar greeting)

And with your spirit.

Penitential Act

Brothers and sisters, let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

I confess, to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do, (strike your breast three times), through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

Amen.

Kyrie eleison

Kyrie Eleison

Christe eleison

Christe eleison

Kyrie eleison

Kyrie eleison

Gloria

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with

**the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

Collect

Let us pray.

The priest will now say the opening prayer specific to that particular day. The collect will end with the following phrase.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

Amen.

Sit for the readings.

First Reading

A reading from the book of _____.

The lector reads from the Old Testament.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm

The cantor sings the psalm or the lector reads it.
The congregation repeats the refrain.

Second Reading (Epistle)

A reading from the letter of _____ to _____.

The Lector reads one of the letters of the apostles.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel

Stand for the Gospel as the Alleluia is sung.

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

A reading from the holy gospel according to _____.

Glory to you, O Lord.

**Trace a cross with your thumb on your forehead,
your lips, and your heart.**

The priest or deacon reads the Gospel.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Sit for the homily.

The Creed

When the priest returns to his seat, stand for the creed.

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (here bow your head through the words, “became man”) and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the

Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the Faithful/Intercessions

The priest introduces the prayers of the faithful.

The Lector reads each of the intercessions, ending with the phrase:

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

The priest says some closing words after the prayers of the faithful.

Sit for the offertory.

Offertory

Ushers will take up the collection at this point in the Mass. The first collection is for the parish. Sometimes there is a second collection for a special cause. There is no price for attending Mass, but those attending are encouraged to contribute according to their means.

To contribute to the upkeep of the parish, you can either drop money in the basket or give online:
<https://www.wesharegiving.org/app/giving/WeShare-1269?tab=home>

The altar will be prepared. The hosts and wine that will be consecrated at Mass will be brought to the altar. The priest will offer these elements to God in anticipation of the moment of consecration in which we offer Jesus Christ as our supreme sacrifice to God.

The priest will conclude the offertory by washing his hands, symbolically purifying himself as he prepares to offer the holy sacrifice.

Stand after the priest washes his hands at the words, "Pray, brothers and sisters."

Pray, brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Amen.

The priest now says the Prayer over the Offerings.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right and just.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation...

The priest now says the preface and ends with the following or similar prayer:

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven, we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim:

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.

Kneel for the Eucharistic Prayer.

The Eucharistic Prayer

The priest first prays for the living. He then asks that God accept the sacrifice which he is about to offer.

You will hear one ring as the priest extends his hands over the gifts. In this prayer, He asks that God bless these gifts which he is about to offer to Him at the consecration.

The Consecration

The priest will take bread and say (in these or similar words): *TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT, FOR THIS IS MY BODY, WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.*

At the words, “This is my Body,” what was once bread is so no longer. It becomes Jesus Christ Himself, become flesh on our altars: body, blood, soul, and divinity. The priest will raise the host so that we can adore Jesus Christ. The bells are rung three times to announce that Our Lord has just become present.

The priest will then take the chalice and say (in these or similar words): *TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT, FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD, THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL COVENANT, WHICH WILL BE POURED OUT FOR YOU AND FOR MANY FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS. DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.*

At the words, “This is the chalice of My Blood,” what was once wine is so no longer. It becomes Jesus Christ Himself, body, blood, soul, and divinity. Only the appearance of wine remains. The priest will raise the chalice so that we can adore Our Lord.

The bells are rung three times to announce the miraculous change that has taken place.

The mystery of faith.

The faithful respond with these or similar words:

We proclaim your death, O Lord, and profess your resurrection until you come again.

The priest again asks that God receive the sacrifice which we have offered Him. He then prays for those who have died and are in purgatory. At the end of the Eucharistic Prayer, the priest will raise the host and chalice and say the following:

Through Him, and with Him, and in Him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Our Father

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on

earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever.

Sign of Peace

Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles: Peace I leave you, my peace I give you, look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will. Who live and reign for ever and ever.

Amen.

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And with your spirit.

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Here offer a quick wave or gesture to those nearest to you. When you hear the Lamb of God beginning or see the priest go to the tabernacle, be sure your attention is back on the altar.

Lamb of God

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.**

Kneel after the Lamb of God.

The priest holds up the host up for our veneration
and says:

*Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who takes
away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called
to the supper of the Lamb.*

**Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under
my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall
be healed.**

Communion

The priest now receives Our Lord in Holy Communion. Having done so, he will descend from the altar to administer Holy Communion to the faithful.

Many people will receive Communion at Mass, but not everyone. Some may stay back because they are not prepared or because they are not in a state to do so. To receive Holy Communion you should:

- 1) Be a member of the Catholic Church in good standing.
- 2) Have received your First Holy Communion and be at the age of reason (age 7 at least.)
- 3) Be in a state grace. If there are mortal sins on your conscience, you must go to confession first before receiving communion.
- 4) Have fasted an hour before receiving communion. The exceptions to this rule are for water and medicine.

If you are not receiving Communion

If you are not receiving communion, you can stay back in your pew and make an act of spiritual communion:

My Jesus, I believe that Thou art present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love Thee above all things, and I desire to receive Thee into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive Thee sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace Thee as if Thou were already there and unite myself wholly to Thee. Never permit me to be separated from Thee. Amen.

You can also receive a blessing from the priest. If you would like a blessing, go in the line in which the priest is giving communion rather than a lay minister. Cross your arms across your chest when you approach the priest to indicate that you would like a blessing.

If you are receiving Communion

If you are receiving Holy Communion, you may do so either standing or kneeling, in the hand or on the tongue. The priest will say, "The body of Christ," to which you respond, "**Amen.**"

If you are receiving on the tongue, open your mouth wide, stick out your tongue, and wait for the priest to place Our Lord on your tongue.

If you are receiving on the hand, place your left hand over your right hand. The priest will place Our

Lord in the palm of your left hand. Pick up Our Lord with your right hand and consume Him in front of the priest. Do not walk off with the host. On returning to your pew, kneel down and speak to Our Lord. Here is a suggested prayer:

My good Jesus, I thank Thee with all my heart for giving me Thyself, the Source of all graces, in holy communion. I thank Thee for all the blessings that I have received from Thee, especially through the Holy Eucharist, in which Thou art ever present to console us and to help us in our needs. In thanksgiving of all Thy favors, I offer Thee all that I am and have. Dispose of me according to Thy pleasure. May Thy will be done in me and through me now and forever. Amen.

Purification of the vessels

The priest will return to the altar and return all hosts which were not consumed to the tabernacle. He will then set to purifying the sacred vessels. Remember, every particle of a host and every drop of wine that was consecrated is now Jesus Christ Himself, so it is important that a particle not fall to the floor and be trampled on or a drop of the Precious Blood rinsed off and end up in a sewer. When the altar is cleared, the priest will usually sit down and say an act of thanksgiving himself.

Prayer after communion and final blessing

Stand when the priest stands.

Let us pray.

The priest then says the prayer after communion for that particular day.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The priest may have announcements. If so, he will say them now.

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

Bow your heads and pray for God's blessing:

The priest will now say the final blessing. Bow your head while he does so.

Amen.

And may almighty God bless you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. (or similar prayer.)

Make the sign of the cross with the priest.

Go in peace. (Or similar)

Thanks be to God.

The closing hymn or antiphon will begin. **Wait for the priest to process to the back of the church before leaving your pew. You are also free to stay and say additional prayers while Our Lord is still present in you from receiving Holy Communion. You may also spend time with Him present in the tabernacle.**