

“Food for Thought” from Deacon Steve Roscher for the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

Dear Parishioners,

“Getting More Out of Sunday Mass” (part 2 of 2)

- 6) Pay careful attention during Mass.** All of us have a tendency to let our minds wander during Mass since it follows the same format each week. However, with a conscious effort we can focus on what is taking place at Mass. There is a simple prayer that we might want to employ before (and during Mass, if necessary) to keep our minds and hearts on what is taking place. “Lord, let this Mass be like my first Mass, my last Mass, my only Mass.”
- 7) Take advantage of the Sacrament of Reconciliation (go to Confession.)** Do you want that feeling that the anvil on your back has been lifted? **Go to Confession.** We have gotten away from a sense of sin. When we present ourselves for Communion at Mass, it should never be where we are burdened with mortal sin. Even if we are not under the pain of mortal sin, we still receive great spiritual benefits from frequent use of this wonderful sacrament that is seldom used by most Catholics today. If you haven’t been to confession in a long time (or perhaps never), let the priest know and he will help you along.
- 8) Pray an Act of Faith** before you get in the procession to receive our Lord Jesus, the Real Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. Even as our minds may not grasp this truth to our satisfaction, let the faith of our hearts and souls accept it as Jesus wants us to believe in his Real Presence in the consecrated wine and bread. “Jesus, I believe you are present in the Eucharist; help me to believe in you even more.”
- 9) Bring your requests to God at Mass.** What special intention do you bring in your heart to Holy Mass? Pray for that intention at the Offertory as communally we offer God the bread, wine, and our treasure. St. John Bosco is credited with saying, “The best time to ask and obtain favors from God is the time of the elevation.” See Matthew 7: 7-11.
- 10) Have a heart filled with gratitude.** Don’t rush out immediately after Mass (or after receiving Holy Communion. Remember, Judas left early!). Take 60 seconds to savor what you have just experienced and thank God for the many gifts he has entrusted to you — and for becoming one of us to show us the way to eternal life with him in heaven. “Thank you, dear Lord, for sharing in our humanity so that we can now share in your divinity.”

(A special thanks to Maria Cintorino. Her article, “10 Ways to Actively Participate at Mass”, in the February issue of Our Sunday Visitor was the inspiration of the message these past two weeks.)

~ Deacon Steve