

Attending Mass as a Family

***"What really matters in life is that we are loved by Christ
and that we love Him in return..."***

Saint John Paul II

The church is a special place where we come together as a community of believers who praise and thank God. Attending Mass as a family may mean sacrifices, but it is essential for the life of our souls. Our faithful Mass attendance sets a good example of what we, parents and their extended family, value: celebrating the great things that God has done for us through Jesus and the Saints at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.

Try some of these helpful tips to make the most of your time at Mass:

- The ["Sunday Connection"](#) will help you to better understand the upcoming Sunday's Scripture readings by helping you to connect Scripture to daily life.
- Watch the two minute, weekly [Holy Hero's Sunday Mass Prep Video](#) with links to a coloring page and questions for discussion.
- Remember you are on holy ground and meeting the King of Kings. Dress for Mass. Make it a special day.
- When entering the church, make the Sign of the Cross and bless yourselves with holy water. Explain to your children that we, Catholics, do this as a reminder of our Baptism. It also provides a cleansing of venial sin, as well as protection against evil. We are receiving grace for both our body and soul.
- Before entering the pew, genuflect towards the tabernacle out of love and reverence for Jesus, who is present in the tabernacle.
- Sit before the Blessed Sacrament or relatively close to the sanctuary where your child can see what is going on.
- Teach your child to be observant and aware of the meaning of the symbols, which make a Catholic church special– holy water, pictures and statues of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, images on stained glass, crucifix, Stations of the Cross, banners, candles, choir, altar, tabernacle. Someday, when your child

visits a church of another faith, he may ask why you do not go there. You can refer to these special items to help you answer his or her questions

- Participate in the Mass with your children. Sing, respond to the readings, kneel and stand appropriately, and pray. Quietly point out key moments... "Now, listen carefully, we are going to hear Jesus speak to us," "Watch and listen, the priest will repeat the actions of Jesus at the Last Supper. Tell Jesus you love Him very much and want to receive Him in your heart." Let your children hear Mass through you.
- Use the "My Picture Missal" and "MagnifiKid" to help your child follow along and participate during the Mass (available in the vestibule of the church.)
- Set aside a portion of his or her allowance for the church collection. Teach him or her that God always keeps His promises, and that He has told us that our blessing for being generous will be returned to us tenfold.
- Bring "My First Prayer" book to help them focus on praying after communion.
- Introduce your children to the priest, deacon, lectors, musicians, altar servers, and other liturgical ministers after the procession exits or during a social hour after Mass. Encourage your child to serve as an altar server or children's choir member when they are old enough.
- After Mass, talk with your family about their experience. Use your "MagnifiKid" for discussion if you didn't discuss the Scripture readings before Mass- "What was interesting?" ... "Any surprises?" ... "Any questions?" ... Play Mass at home. Have your child act out a different part of the Mass, then explain the meaning to help your child understand and appreciate this treasured gift from God.