

Whispers in the PEW

Helpful ways to understand, connect and celebrate Mass with your children





One of the intriguing things about this series on the Mass is the title. “Whispers in the Pew” reminds me of the very best way children learn about liturgy: directly from their parents, grandparents or caregivers during Mass. When children return to church every week, questions naturally arise: “What’s that for?” “Why does the priest do that?” “Why are we standing up again?” Sitting close enough in the pews to whisper responses, adults lovingly pass on the faith to the children Jesus treasures.

I pass this booklet on to you as a source of learning and encouragement. In its pages you’ll discover stories that apply various parts of the Mass to daily family life. Whether it’s you or your children who have questions about what we do when we come together at Mass, “Whispers in the Pew” will provide some answers and inspire good conversations on the way to or from church. The Action Steps on each page will also bring you confidence and joy as you pick up some practical tips from a veteran mom who knows what it’s like to bring little ones to Jesus.

The seven articles in the booklet follow the order of the liturgy:

Part 1: Introductory Rites

Part 2: Liturgy of the Word (Scripture Readings)

Part 3: Liturgy of the Word (Homily, Profession of Faith, Universal Prayer)

Part 4: Liturgy of the Eucharist (Presentation of Gifts, Preparation of Altar, Prayer over Offerings)

Part 5: Liturgy of the Eucharist (Eucharistic Prayer, Communion)

Part 6: Concluding Rites

Part 7: Return to Daily Life in the Domestic Church

There’s even activity pages at the end to help your child learn more about the Mass. Each article takes only a few minutes to read. Try reading one each week to help prepare for Mass.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Jerome E. Listecki". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Jerome E. Listecki
Archbishop of Milwaukee

Take a fresh look at your family's role in Sunday Mass

Imagine it's Sunday. As Mass begins, all sorts of people pour into the church. From the beginning of time, God knew this particular group of people would gather to worship: restless toddlers, sweet ladies with rosary beads, well-dressed grandpas, poorly dressed loners, families, doubters, maybe some saints and lots of sinners. People who are friendly, rude, self-righteous, mentally ill, grieving, grateful or lost are gathering under one roof. God created each with love, in his own image.

Where are you on Sundays? If you have young children, maybe you sit in the back for quick exits and potty breaks. Maybe you favor the cry room, because your parish has one of the "good" ones that doesn't make you feel like the whole family is in "timeout."

When all five of our children were at their peak noise level, we usually tried to hide near the back. One Sunday, when we were later to Mass than usual, we discovered— to our horror — that the only pews left were in front. We had three options: leave, stand in the back for an hour and chase the children, or make the long, terrifying journey to the front pew.

Opting bravely for the front pew, we were astonished at how attentive our children became. Sitting so close to the altar helped them connect with and respond to the priest. Of course, if a spectacularly inattentive child needed to go out, the "walk of shame" took a lot longer from the front.

Maybe it's rough to get to Mass every weekend. Many families have only one parent, or only one Catholic parent, which makes a weekly trek to church nerve-racking.



Maybe the church experience seems important only at Christmas and Easter. Or perhaps your children attend Catholic school, and their weekday school Mass seems like it ought to "count" for Sunday.

But what is the Sunday Mass experience all about? Why does the Church expect weekly attendance from all able-bodied Catholics when they surely know how hard it is to haul the whole family to church? And what if the liturgy feels boring, or the preaching seems irrelevant, or the music is painful?

This series on the family and Sunday Mass will take a fresh look at the liturgy and our families' role in it.

For starters, liturgy means "the work of the people." Even though the Mass is celebrated everywhere in the world on Sunday, we can't think of it as some giant machine that priests just set in motion. The Sunday Mass is our work. Each of God's children belongs at the Mass. Not a single soul is disposable.

Our work begins as we try our very best simply show up and take our place. Our work continues as we accept everyone

we see, acknowledging that God calls each of us here.

But what if I've been away for years? Or I don't look like everyone else? Or my kids are hyper? Or I have problems with a priest or the church?

"Come and see," Jesus says. He makes all things new. The experience of Mass comes first, then the learning. Come and see.

My favorite part of the beginning of Mass is the "Collect" – the opening prayer. After the notes of the Gloria fade, the priest says, "Let us pray." Then he pauses. In silence, we consider our worries, cares, questions and concerns. We recall people

who need our prayers.

In this hushed "collection" of our hearts and minds, we can offer this Mass for the good of others. The liturgy may be the work of the people, but God's busy too: in the next hour or so, God will transform our prayers and concerns into amazing, effective grace for the world.

He will transform bread and wine, too, but that miracle comes later in our series.

Originally published in Catholic Herald, September 25, 2015

ACTION STEPS

- **Connect!** Join a parish and commit to every Sunday Mass.
- **Love!** Be kind to everyone at church – even those who are irritating or distracting.
- **Celebrate!** Have clear expectations for children during Mass, and be consistent with consequences and rewards.

Mass is a time to share our story

When my son Paul was a toddler, his favorite book was “The Pig in the Pond.” It’s one of those books where each page complicates the plot by adding a farm animal and, of course, the sound it makes. The first time I read the book aloud, I mimicked the animal sounds with gusto and enhanced the experience by shouting and jumping at the appropriate times.

Paul was hooked, and I was doomed: from then on – no matter how exhausted I was or how many times I had read the book that evening – that story required hugely energetic noises and movements. The way we share stories matters.

At every Mass, we share our story. The Liturgy of the Word invites us into Jewish Scripture, the Psalms, the letters of the apostles, and the Gospel.

Every Sunday reminds us of our universal human story: we are created tenderly by God, but we are not God.

Because we tend to sin, God lovingly sent his Son into the world to accompany us, teach us, suffer for us and save us.

This is our story. And the way we share it matters.

Like an organization with a powerful mission statement, our families thrive when we remember who we are and why we’re here. We need to hear our story again and again, infants, toddlers, children, adolescents, teens and all adults, from young to old. We need to share our story at home, at work, at play, and, in a special way, at Mass.

The Mass follows ancient traditions for sharing the Word of God. Recall, for example, the moment Jesus himself reads in the synagogue:

[Jesus] went according to his custom into the synagogue on the Sabbath day.



When we join our voices in singing the Responsorial Psalm, we imitate Jesus again. The Gospel tells us Jesus sang Psalms with his disciples (Mk 14:26, Mt 26:30). Jesus sang! Can you imagine what his singing voice sounded like? Especially if you’re shy or not fond of singing, take a few

moments to imagine Jesus singing with his disciples. Pay attention to how it feels when Jesus includes you in the ancient Hebrew song he sings with his friends.

Even though our families differ greatly, we share a common story. We are treasured, nourished, and saved by God.

Thanks be to God, we are free to read about our story in Scripture anywhere. But when we share our sacred story together at Mass, we imitate Jesus. We also encourage one another to keep living the story!

Just as “the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently” at Jesus, we become stronger as the family of God when we direct our gaze together at Jesus. We know he is always looking at us, with a heart full of love.

Originally published in Catholic Herald, October 29, 2015

He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor...”

Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him (Lk 4:16-18, 20).

Jesus reads from the Book of Isaiah. Right this minute, we can turn to Isaiah 61 in our modern Bibles and follow along with Jesus. When we bring our families to Mass each Sunday, we imitate Jesus, who practiced the regular habit of sharing our very same scriptures with his faith community.

ACTION STEPS

- **Prepare!** Read some or all of the Sunday readings together as a family before Mass. Consider choosing favorite words or phrases to listen for during the Liturgy of the Word. Maybe even offer a fun prize to family members who choose a word the preacher highlights in the homily.
- **Practice!** Take a weekday field trip to church with your young children. In the empty pews, practice how to whisper and be still. Even a few minutes of practice will help Sundays feel calmer.
- **Reflect!** Set aside time to recall the readings later and to discuss the homily. You might be surprised at how many details family members can remember when they know a discussion will follow Mass.

Homily inspires, Creed tells our story

“Keep your fork!” That was the theme of a homily I heard when I was 11 years old. Fr. Mark, the homilist, explained those words came from a young woman who was dying. As the story goes, the woman asked to be buried with a fork in her hand. Why? Because she always looked forward to dinners when her mom would tell her to keep her fork as the dishes were being cleared. “Keep your fork” meant the family could expect a tasty dessert.

The young woman wanted to be buried with a fork so that, at her funeral, mourners could ask about the strange object in her casket. She wanted the priest to tell everyone, “Keep your fork! The best is yet to come.” Heaven awaits us. As good as life on earth can be, the best is yet to come.

When consulting with my family to get the details of this 30-year-old homily straight, Google helped us discover that the “keep your fork” story was probably not original to Fr. Mark. It seems to be a well-worn tale of hope used by Christian preachers everywhere.

I don’t mind. I love the fact that my family has been discussing forks – and the promise of paradise – for 30 years.

Can you recall great homilies that stick with you even today? (We might also recall some bad preaching, I suppose.) But which homilies inspire you, challenge you, console you?

I have to admit, going to Mass with young children can distract me from the preaching. But on days when I’ve done more refereeing than listening, I look for gratitude in my heart.

God has given us a great gift: the freedom to sit together with family, in a safe building, surrounded by our community and the Word of God. The German word *Gemütlichkeit* describes this feeling of warmth and coziness, this gratitude for being side by side.

The homily helps us reflect on the readings and brings us together as children of God; our response to

the preaching is a bold declaration of faith. With the Creed, we suddenly rise to our feet and recite, in unison, the story of our salvation. We invoke the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and recall the marvels and mysteries of Christianity.

The Creed is our story. Sunday Mass lets us gather as God’s family and pass it on.

I love to imagine the Communion of Saints professing the faith with us. Everyone saved by Jesus’ death and resurrection joins in the Creed. And Jesus listens to each one of us with delight, as if we were the only person ever created.

The Profession of Faith is a lovely time to remind our children of people they love, living or dead, and invite them to recite the very same Creed that was on the lips of our ancestors.

The Universal Prayer (or “petitions”) similarly draws us into the fullness of the church. Whether we’re praying



for the health of a parishioner, the intentions of the pope, or private intentions deep in our hearts, we intercede for the Church and the world. Our prayers matter.

And our prayers at Sunday Mass are particularly powerful. Thanks be to God, Mass is the best prayer we have.

Originally published in Catholic Herald, November 30, 2015

ACTION STEPS

- **Reflect!** If attending Mass with your children feels stressful, spend quiet time on a Sunday evening to identify specific causes of stress. Maybe the entire liturgy feels like a hot mess, but a careful look might suggest strategic improvements: trying a different Mass time or seat in church; rotating children’s Mass books to stay fresh; asking a friend or grandparent to join you in the pew; etc.
- **Share!** Let your parish pastor or liturgist know how you’re doing. Maybe your parish wants to help young families, but doesn’t really know where to start. Does the “cry room” need updating or remodeling to be more inviting? Can the first two pews be reserved for families with small children? Could a parish library provide religious books for children?
- **Absorb!** Our children may not know the entire Creed by heart right now, but they will. Repetition, every Sunday, allows them to soak in the words. To guard against mindless reciting, however, we parents can start a discussion once in a while to see how they are growing in understanding.

Share in 'big event' with Jesus every Sunday

I'm about to tell you something personal. It involves something my husband is still sensitive about, so if you see him, don't let on that you know, OK?

On May 21, 1995, a gloriously sunny day, I graduated with my bachelor's degree. The commencement ceremony was a big deal to me; in addition to receiving my diploma, I also got to take the stage to sing the National Anthem and Alma Mater. My family travelled over 400 miles to attend.

What's more, the ceremony happened to be six days before my wedding. My soon-to-be-husband was graduating the same day, with his master's degree. So much to celebrate! Neither my fiancé nor I owned a cell phone, so we simply agreed on a place to meet outside the arena.

At the appointed time, my family and I waited for David. And waited. The glaring sunshine became uncomfortably warm. At last, David appeared, but with no cap and gown. He looked terrible.

He was suffering from a debilitating migraine, managing to haul himself over to the arena only after he felt sure he was done vomiting. He had missed the entire ceremony.

To be perfectly honest, I was angry with him for missing my big day. Eventually, though, my selfishness subsided; I felt terrible about his illness and understood why he had missed graduation. Nonetheless, my heart felt sad that I never shared the big event with him personally.

Jesus must feel something like this when we miss Sunday Mass. Jesus skips over the selfishness that I initially felt, of course. In his tremendous mercy, Jesus immediately understands our weakness and complicated lives. I imagine how he looks at us with love



Jesus himself asks us to remember his sacrifice, but not as spectators. No, the Church invites us to imitate Jesus, to come to Mass and offer ourselves as well.

In the liturgy, the Preparation of the Gifts dramatically reminds us why each one of us – even our children – is important. Where do the gifts of bread and wine come from? From God, originally yes, but from where in the Church?

They come from the congregation. And regular folks from the pews bring the gifts up to the altar.

A friend who spent time in Togo, Africa last winter was

deeply moved by the Preparation of the Gifts in that community's liturgies. Every member of the church brings up a personal gift, usually food from their land, as part of the procession. As they bring their gifts to the altar, they dance. Each person's dance is unique, too, highlighting how unrepeatable we are.

Our neighborhood church cultures might not include dancing in the offertory, but if we pay attention, we'll recognize our very bodies are gifts we can offer to God. As we watch the bread, wine, and donations of food and money make their way to the altar, we can imagine ourselves making the journey up the aisle.

Originally published in Catholic Herald, January 28, 2016

– and also sadness – as he sees us somewhere other than his church each weekend.

The analogy of my commencement to the Lord's Supper doesn't come close to what Jesus does for us and how much he longs for us to be at Sunday Mass. In every celebration of the Mass, we recall the way Jesus offered himself to us. He didn't protect his body from harm, but spilled his blood for us, even giving these physical gifts to us as actual food and drink.

The Bible puts it simply: "And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me" (Lk 22:19).

ACTION STEPS

- **Whisper!** Help your children pay attention to the Presentation of the Gifts, Preparation of the Altar, and Prayer over the Offerings. Quietly invite them to take in what the priest and congregation are doing.
- **Imagine!** Imagine yourself sitting or lying on the altar, being offered as a gift to God. Jesus, the priest, stands at the altar, looking at you with love. Have a conversation with Jesus about what you want to give him.
- **Offer!** Realize how precious you are to the Lord. God has given you gifts like no other person in the world. Bring these gifts to him each Sunday at Mass, and share them all week long with others.

'The Chart' May Help Children Focus During Mass

How long is your child's attention span?

Most research suggests that children's attention spans relate to their age: how many years old are they? That's the same number of minutes they can sustain interest in an activity.

Four-year-old children, for example, can pay attention for four minutes. Some studies claim attention spans extend up to two times the child's age. In that case, under the right circumstances, our 4-year-old children can accomplish eight minutes of acceptable church behavior.

Depending on your parish, the Eucharistic prayer occurs about 40 minutes into the celebration of Mass. Forty minutes of liturgy is FIVE TIMES those eight minutes we can expect from our little ones. And some of our children struggle with medical or behavioral challenges that make the eight-minute mark a miracle.

Even so, the Eucharistic prayer and Communion are essential to every liturgy, capturing the highest drama of human existence. Jesus literally commands us to participate: "Do this in memory of me" (Lk 22:19). Let's fill those pews. Let's fill them together, short attention spans and wiggly children included.

Our own high-energy family struggled to be still throughout Mass, especially during the text-rich Eucharistic prayer. To encourage our children to focus between the Holy, Holy, Holy and Great Amen, we devised The Chart.

The Chart listed each child's name followed by three Velcro, detachable Xs. We had a family meeting to unveil the Velcro wonder. We all agreed that because Mass was really important for our family and our friends at God's house, we needed to try our best to be respectful.

At Mass, then, when a child's noise or behavior made it difficult for others to pray, we would make eye contact,



silently and deliberately pull out the chart, and slowly peel off one of the Xs. Losing all three Xs meant losing the treasured post-Mass doughnut. We were surprised that only twice in The Chart's long career did we have to remove a child's third X.

Every family's strengths and challenges are unique, so you might discover a different strategy to encourage your young family members. We loved tying Mass to doughnuts because eating is central to the liturgy. Even before children can receive the Eucharist, they can make the connection between Mass and

food. In the Eucharist, Jesus gives us his flesh as real food and his blood as real drink (Jn 6:55).

Mass is all about what Jesus does for us, and the Eucharist strengthens us to imitate Jesus in daily life. The entire ancient liturgy we celebrate represents our intimate relationship with God. Every Mass draws us closer to Christ – sometimes closer to his sorrows than his joys, perhaps. For a few moments toward the end of Communion, we can ask the Lord to show us what we have learned about him that day.

Originally published in Catholic Herald, February 26, 2016

ACTION STEPS

- **Have mercy!** Every time a child at Mass distracts you by moving around or making noise, consider this: *How many times have I ignored the Lord? How have I distracted others with behavior or conversation that offends or discourages them? Jesus, my words and deeds should always lead people closer to you. Forgive my weakness.* In this way, restless children can trigger prayer and humility. On the other hand...
- **Be Consistent!** If it happens to be your child who distracts others at some point in the liturgy, take heart! Learning to love the subtleties of Mass is a lifelong process. We help our children grow in love, obedience and patience when we share our expectations with them and encourage them with confidence.
- **Pray!** God loves to draw close to your family in a special way at Mass. God will always help you. Ask for strength, patience, wisdom, and joy. If faith the size of a mustard seed can accomplish something as random as uprooting a tree and planting it in the sea (see Luke 17:6), just think what a tiny bit of faith could mean for your family, which is so much more important to God than a traveling tree. Ask the Lord to bless your family at Mass, and expect great things.

Mass prepares you to be sent into the world

My washing machine broke. A tiny plastic piece in the detergent compartment disappeared. Don't ask me how – it's one of life's mysteries related to the Final Resting Place of socks that vanish from the dryer.

Whatever. I ordered the part, tracked the package's progress online, and ripping open the envelope, discovered my simple piece of plastic. Predictable enough, I suppose. Even so, I still felt a little thrill when I saw a package waiting for me in the mailbox.

I can't be the only one who hasn't quite outgrown the charm of receiving a special delivery.

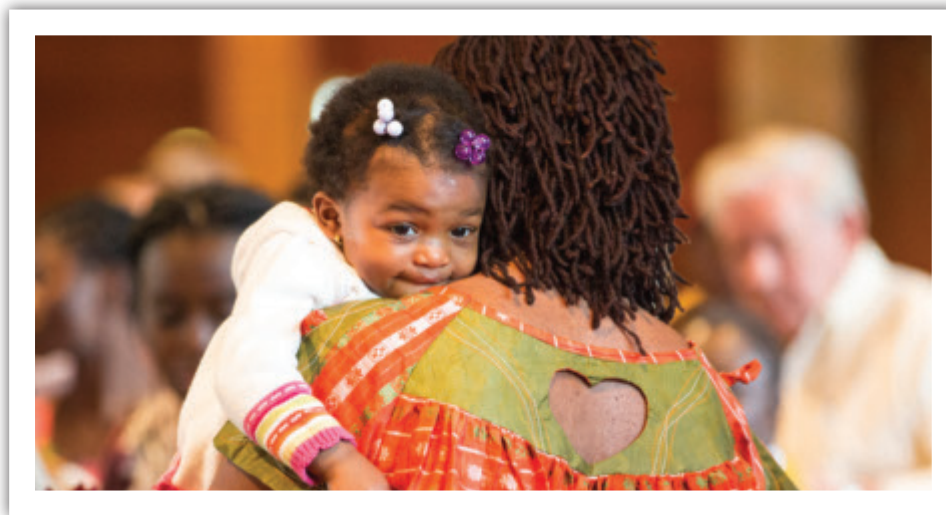
Sending and receiving packages connects us to one another. And knowing a package is meant just for me – regardless of its contents – lifts my spirits.

As our "Whispers in the Pew" series draws to a close, we consider the very end of Mass. For centuries, the Latin words used to dismiss the people have been "Ite, missa est" – literally meaning "Go, she (you, the Church) has been sent."

The liturgical prayer and the people who offered it are now "sent." The whole Mass takes its name from this dramatic moment. Another English word comes from this same Latin root: missionary. Just as missionaries are sent to care for the physical and spiritual needs of others, every person at Mass is dismissed from church with a purpose: to love others in the name of Jesus.

We are God's packages. Big and small, confident and awkward, questioning and imperfect, we are each marked "Special Delivery." Jesus says it best: "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (Jn 20:21).

Where is God sending us? Into the world, into our daily lives. We are modern-day apostles, and our mission territory is right in front of us. Strengthened by the very flesh and blood of Jesus, we return to our weekday routine as Jesus' disciples.



In these final minutes of Mass, our children might not grasp the great dignity and joy of being sent as missionaries; they may simply be glad to be released. (Maybe you can sympathize!)

My son Jack used to get hopelessly squirmy toward the end of the liturgy. Sometimes I really did just need to take him out, but often I could interest him in the tabernacle.

Whispering in the pew together, we would keep our eyes on the open tabernacle. I'd ask Jack to imagine what it must feel like for Jesus to live in that special place all week long. I'd remind him that although Jesus lives everywhere, the tabernacle is built to keep his Body safe. Moments before the end of Mass, just before the priest would close and lock the tabernacle, Jack would whisper a prayer into his hand, then wind up like a pitcher and throw the prayer into the tabernacle.

"Throwing" our prayers into the tabernacle helps us remember where all our concerns should rest: in the Heart of Jesus. No one has ever cared for us like Jesus does. He receives our prayers and offerings, transforming them into the grace we need to bring his love to the world.

Go. You are sent.

Originally published in Catholic Herald, April 28, 2016

ACTION STEPS

- **Watch!** As the Communion line tapers off, children can become restless. Help them watch each person receive a blessing or the Body of Christ. Whisper about how great Jesus is to want to be with us like this.
- **Imagine!** Think of three places you go on any given weekday, or three tasks you must do. Jesus is interested in everything, be it brushing teeth or performing surgery. These specific places are your mission territory, where Jesus accompanies you. As each day begins, imagine what you and Jesus can do together for the salvation of souls.
- **Offer!** Learn the words to a Daily Offering prayer. This one for children from the Apostleship of Prayer is sung to the tune of "Amazing Grace":

*For love of me you came to earth;
You gave your life for me.
So every day you give me now
I give back happily.
Take all my laughter, all my tears,
Each thought, each word, each
deed, And let them be my all-day
prayer To help all those in need.*

Daily Life in the Domestic Church

I spent most of high school and college assuming I would never marry or have children. God had set me on fire with faith, and I wanted to give him my absolute best. In Catholic terms, as far as I knew, that meant entering religious life.

And then I met a guy. . . .

This guy, David, was different from others I had dated. He loved life, he loved God, and he knew God wanted him to be a father. Not a priest-father, but a father-father. At church one day, before we met, David had a prayerful encounter with Jesus: he felt a very clear and joyful calling to serve God by getting married and raising a family.

Honest to God, I never knew that was a thing. I never heard anyone describe marriage as a holy vocation.

I heard David testify to his calling to married life, and my world view expanded. Could God possibly be excited about calling hearts to marriage just as much as to religious life and priesthood? I definitely felt called to spread the faith, but my search for a religious community kept coming up dry. Was that because God had a different path for me to evangelize?

I went on retreat to mull this all over, and encountered John 14:23: “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.”

All at once I realized God wanted to make a home in me. My own path for discipleship, then, would be to imitate God by making a home for a family. According to the Second Vatican Council, the family is “the domestic church” (*Lumen Gentium*, 11).

What is the domestic church? It is love. It is hospitality. It is the first place children learn that, for a disciple of Christ, forgiveness is more powerful than our worst mistakes. Home is where we fight, cry, eat, laugh, sin, pray, and reconcile.



When God became human, he made his first earthly home in Mary’s womb. Though he created the universe, God chose to grow slowly in a woman’s belly, fragile as any baby. His next home, in Bethlehem, was a rough shelter filled with livestock. As we can see, God is so eager to be with us, he’s not picky about the circumstances. All of us can welcome God into our homes without shame. No matter what, God longs to be with our families.

We nourish the lively connection between church and family in two ways: bringing our families to church regularly—every weekend and on holy days; and bringing church back into our homes—finding ways to honor the Lord and to remember our story,

our work as God’s beloved children.

When each of our children got to be about two years old, we would make a special trip to church together. We would ask the toddler to sit comfortably for a bit, looking around. After a few moments, we would ask, “What is your favorite thing to look at here?” The answer became that child’s unique symbol. Our five children chose five interesting symbols: the vigil lights, the crucifix, the sanctuary lamp, the tabernacle, and the body of Jesus on the cross. If the children became restless at Mass, we could always calm them down for a

few minutes by asking them to find the family’s symbols.

When I pray for our children or visit parishes around the country, I often look for our symbols to offer particular prayers each child needs. Even as we drop them off at college, we visit a university chapel and make sure to find their symbols.

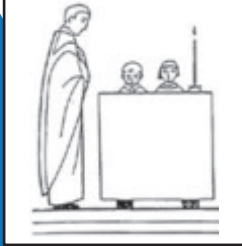
As our children grow and spend more and more time in the world on their own, parents can find peace in prayer. We commend our children to the God who first entrusted them to our care. We trust that our homes—our domestic churches—have formed them as children of God, sent into the world to share the love of Jesus.

ACTION STEPS

- **Decorate!** Breathe the life of the Church into your home by incorporating simple decorations, such as a tablecloth, placemats, or candles, to coordinate with the current Church season: purple for Advent and Lent, white for Christmas and Easter, red for Pentecost, and green for Ordinary Time.
- **Gather!** Remember that God brought your family together. Make a special effort to spend device-free time together often, especially on Sundays.
- **Read!** Read from the Bible every day as a family. Make it a routine as part of mealtime or bedtime.

Where are we in the Mass?

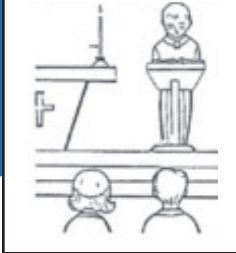
ENTRANCE RITE



The priest comes in and greets the people in the name of Jesus.

We listen to stories from the Bible.

SCRIPTURE READINGS



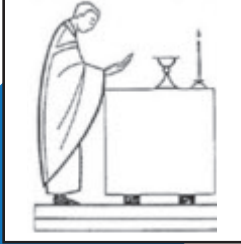
God speaks to us through the Priest.

HOMILY



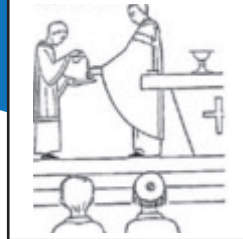
The priest prepares the bread and wine to present it to the Lord.

CONSECRATION OF THE BREAD AND WINE



The priest does as Jesus did at the Last Supper, saying do this in remembrance of Him.

WASHING OF THE HANDS



The priest washes his hands in preparation for the consecration.

PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS



We say "yes" to all that has taken place in the Eucharistic prayer.

THE GREAT AMEN



THE LORD'S PRAYER



SIGN OF PEACE LAMB OF GOD

We speak to God our Father in the words Jesus taught us and then we share a sign of peace.

People receive Jesus in Communion.

HOLY COMMUNION



CONCLUDING RITE

We receive God's blessing from the priest: May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit. We answer. Amen

Can you find?



CHOIR



EUCHARIST



STAINED GLASS



BOOK OF BIBLE STORIES



CHALICE



PEW



KNEELER



BAPTISMAL FONT



PIANO OR ORGAN



CANDLE



TABERNACLE



BELL



WORSHIP AID OR HYMNAL



AMBO



CRUCIFIX



SAINT STATUE



PRIEST



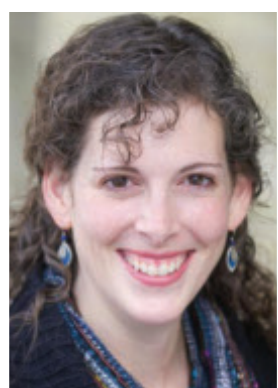
ALTAR SERVER



ALTAR



DEACON



About the Author

Grace Urbanski identifies seven practical ways to help parents teach their children about the Mass. Originally featured as a series in the *Catholic Herald Family*, in collaboration with the Synod Implementation Evangelization and Sunday Mass team, easy to follow action steps are designed to encourage parents to help children have a positive Mass experience and deepen their relationship with God.

Grace's mission is to make sure children know how precious they are to God, and how powerful their prayer can be for the good of others, as well as themselves. Grace and her husband David have learned a lot about the power of childhood from their own five children. Since the oldest Urbanski child was only seven years old when the fifth was born, Grace spent many years surrounded by the little ones Jesus embraced. While Grace spent her young adulthood convinced she would enter religious life, God had other plans!

Grace has degrees in English and Theology. She is a writer, teacher, musician, and an energetic speaker in demand throughout the country. Her recent book, *Pray with Me: Seven Simple Ways to Pray with Your Children* (Ave Maria Press), is available from the publisher and everywhere books are sold. She and her family live in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin.

She can be contacted at gracemazzaurbanski@gmail.com.



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