

Catholic Mass 101

Why is it essential to attend and participate in Mass?

- 1. The Eucharist.** The Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ is available to us! It is the pinnacle of our life as Christians. What better way to follow Jesus than to receive Him in the Eucharist! Sometimes the teaching on the Eucharist is hard for us to understand. It was hard for His followers too - read John 6. If you have trouble with your belief in the True Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist - PRAY! He will help you.
- 2. Grace.** Grace is like Gatorade for the soul. Grace is God's life and God's help given to us to live a better life in Him. We receive grace through the sacraments. Mass is loaded with grace - ready for us to receive. The more open we are to it - by actively participating, the better!
- 3. The Third Commandment.** Keep holy the Sabbath. Simple words, simple meaning. "So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it; because on it God rested from all his work." (Genesis 2:2) We, too, must keep it a special and holy day. The church teaches that Mass is the most important way to do just that. It is not just a good idea - it is our obligation as People of God. Remember the words of Jesus - **"If you love me, you will keep my commandments" John 15:15.** For Christians the Sabbath is now the first day of the week, Sunday, because it was on Sunday that our Lord rose. We start the week with a day totally devoted to our God.
- 4. Community.** We are the Church, the Family of God. God's people are not in this world to struggle along by themselves. We are all one in the Body of Christ. At Mass we join with Him in a special way. We join with those around us. It is a time to be with others for prayer and friendship. It is a mystical connecting with all our brothers and sisters around the world, in heaven and purgatory. Through Christ we become a community unlike any we know on earth. It is a glimpse of what heaven will be like

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3	Preparing for Mass
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7	The order of the Mass - Part 4 - Concluding Rites, Optional announcements, Greeting and Blessing, Dismissal
8	The order of the Mass - Part 5 - Prayer after Mass



Here
are
10
Good
Reasons

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- 5. Prayer.** The Mass is the ultimate prayer. There is singing, psalms, prayers of thanksgiving, prayers seeking forgiveness, prayers of worship and praise, the Lord's prayer and more. We pray as individuals and as a group. If you struggle with going to Mass - think of it from this perspective. The words we say are more than just a reply to the priest's words - they are prayer! Read them, say them, sing them, shout them, BELIEVE THEM!
- 6. The Bible.** Every time Mass is celebrated, we hear the Word of God. We hear from the Old Testament. It sets the stage for the Gospel reading. We hear from the New Testament - perhaps a letter from Paul or the Acts of the Apostles. In the Gospel we learn about Jesus from Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. Sometimes the readings are familiar, sometimes not. You hear more scripture at a Catholic Mass than at any other type of Sunday service! If you don't read the bible on your own - here is a chance to hear it proclaimed. If you do read the bible on your own, Mass is a time to get a better understanding of what you are reading. Jesus never said anything about go and write the Gospel for the world, he said go and PROCLAIM the Gospel. So we do.
- 7. The Our Father.** One of the highlights of Mass is The Lord's Prayer. We use the words Jesus gave us and pray together as a family. Remember - it is the "Our" Father, not the "My" Father. Jesus wants us to pray together! The Our Father is the perfect prayer - we give praise to God, we ask that our lives be lived His way instead of our way, we ask for His continued presence in our lives, we ask for His forgiveness, and we pray for His strength in the battle against evil. It's all there. Pray it! Mean it

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- 8. Making time with God.** If nothing else, ask yourself if you have at least one hour a week to set aside for God. Think of that. Imagine Jesus hanging on the cross, dying for YOU - and all He asks is that you join Him on Sunday for an hour or so, "**Do this in remembrance of Me**" (Luke 22:19) Can you do it? Yes. The question is - will you do it, for Him?
- 9. Suffering souls in purgatory.** The souls in purgatory need our prayers. Special intentions are offered at Mass for those who have died - both as a group and individually. It is important not to assume that anyone who died is automatically in heaven - we must pray for them! And the cool part is those who are in purgatory can't pray for themselves but can pray for us.
- 10. It's what Jesus wants us to do.** Once you figure out what Sunday Mass is all about then ask yourself this question. Self, am I the type of person to always do the bare minimum? Do I only show up for the game, or do I spend time practicing? Do I only practice the piano when I have to? If you want to really be good at anything, the bare minimum is never enough. Being a Christian is no different. Try going beyond the minimum with Mass. Find a weekday Mass you can attend even one day a week. What an awesome way to say to God, I am not just trying to squeak into heaven. I want to get as much of You as I can as often as I can.

Catholic Mass 101

Materials, objects, vestments and liturgical colors in the Mass?

Alter – Table upon which the sacrifice of Christ and paschal banquet are enacted



Tabernacle – The container with doors that can be locked. This is where the reserved consecrated hosts are kept for communion, for the sick and for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Festively decorated, it is made visible to all worshippers.



Chalice – The cup which contains the wine consecrated at Eucharist.



Ciborium – Vessel which holds the consecrated hosts given at communion. Remaining consecrated hosts are reserved after communion



Paten – The plate which holds the host(s) to be consecrated



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Corporal – White cloth on which the chalice and paten are laid on the altar to collect any fragments from the Eucharistic body of Christ during the Mass.



Purificator - The purificator (purificatorium or more anciently emunctorium) is a white linen cloth which is used to wipe the chalice and paten after the ablutions which follow Communion.



Cruets – Little pitchers containing the water and wine used in Mass



Incense – A material that produces a sweet fragrance when burnt on charcoal. The rising smoke symbolizes our prayers going up to God.



Catholic Mass 101

Materials, objects, vestments and liturgical colors in the Mass?

Presiders (priest or bishop) Chair – The place from which the priest begins and ends Mass



Ambo (Pulpit or Lectern) – Stand at which scriptures are proclaimed and the homily given

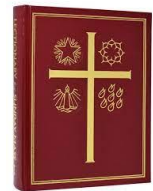


Sacristy – Room where materials and vestments for Mass are stored



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Lectionary – The book that contains the scriptural readings for the Liturgical year.



Sacramentary – The book of prayers used by the celebrant at Mass



Pall – Seen at funerals, the cloth that covers the coffin symbolizes our baptismal robe, and it is also the square of linen stiffened with starch, cardboard, or plastic set upon the chalice during the celebration to prevent external elements from contaminating the Blood of Christ after the consecration.



Catholic Mass 101

Materials, objects, vestments and liturgical colors in the Mass?

The liturgical vestments worn at Mass have evolved over time. Nevertheless, since the earliest days of the Church, liturgical vestments have been worn by priests for the celebration of the Mass. Even though priests of the Old Testament wore vestments in their liturgical rites, the “Christian” vestments are not really adaptations of them; rather, the vestments of the Christians developed from the dress of the Graeco-Roman world, including the religious culture. Nevertheless, the Old Testament idea of wearing a special kind of clothing in the performance of liturgical rites did influence the Church. St. Jerome asserted, “The Divine religion has one dress in the service of sacred things, another in ordinary intercourse and life.” After the legalization of Christianity in A.D. 313, the Church continued to refine “who wore what when and how” until about the year 800 when liturgical norms for vesting were basically standardized and would remain so until the renewal following the Second Vatican Council.

To date, for the celebration of Mass, a priest wears the amice, alb, cincture, stole, and chasuble.

Amice – a white linen cloth worn on the neck and shoulders, under the alb, by a priest celebrating the Eucharist.



Alb – Long white robe worn by priests, deacons, and servers at liturgy.



Cassock– A full-length form fitted robe often worn during liturgy by priests and sometimes by servers



Chasuble – The colored outer garment worn by the priest



Dalmatic – Loose fitting robe with open sides and wide sleeves worn by the deacon



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Stole – A long, narrow strip of cloth matching the chasuble worn by celebrants and deacons



Surplice – A mid-length white garment worn over the cassock by servers and other assistants



Cincture – a cord about the waist, to signify Chastity.

The symbolism of the cincture:
(a) The cincture symbolizes the cord that bound Our Lord to the pillar when He was being scourged. (b) Symbolizes modesty and readiness for hard work in God's service.



Catholic Mass 101

Materials, objects, vestments and liturgical colors in the Mass?

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LITURGICAL COLORS
CatholicLink

GREEN	RED	GOLD OR WHITE	ROSE	PURPLE
<p>Green: signifies hope. This is the most frequent color of vestment worn by priests for most of the Church year, known as Ordinary Time. It represents nature, vitality, and progress.</p>	<p>Red: symbolizes the fire of charity and blood shed for Christ. Worn on Palm Sunday, Pentecost Sunday, Good Friday to commemorate the Sacrament of Confirmation, and is also the garment worn by priests on martyr feast days owing to its link with martyrs.</p>	<p>Gold or White: Symbolizes glory, joy, innocence, and purity of soul. Worn on important feast days, Christmas, Easter, and funeral Mass of the Resurrection.</p>	<p>Rose pink: Symbolizing joy and love. Pink is an optional color that can be worn on two Sundays a year, the Third Sunday of Advent, and the Fourth Sunday of Lent; it reflects a softer tone during these two seasons.</p>	<p>Purple: Signifies humility and penitence. Purple is a color that is worn during Lent and Advent to represent penance and repentance.</p>

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2023 Catholic Liturgical Calendar



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Holy Days of Obligation

01/01/23	Sunday	Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
05/18/23	Thursday	Ascension of Jesus
08/15/23	Tuesday	Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
11/01/23	Wednesday	All Saints' Day
12/08/23	Friday	The Immaculate Conception of The Blessed Virgin Mary
01/01/24	Monday**	Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
05/09/24	Thursday	Ascension of Jesus
08/15/24	Thursday	Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
11/01/24	Friday	All Saints' Day
12/09/24	Monday**	The Immaculate Conception of The Blessed Virgin Mary

**When a feast falls on either a Monday or a Saturday the obligation is removed.

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Preparing for Mass

It is important for us to prepare for mass, as this is our opportunity to have a very special encounter with Christ. The Wedding Feast of the Lamb

Before going to mass

1. Start by reflecting on your week and the week ahead. What things are you thankful for, and who or what would you like to pray for during the mass this week?
2. Read the Sunday readings ahead of time. Reflect on them. What are the readings saying to you? You can easily find them at <https://www.usccb.org/>

Arriving at mass

3. Holy Water Font - The first symbol that greets us at the door is water which has been blessed. When we dip our finger in the water and sign ourselves with it, we can experience a sense that we are entering this church, re-connecting with our identity as Baptized into Jesus' death and resurrection. If we do this intentionally, it adds meaning to our journey into the celebration.
4. Genuflect - When we approach our pew or seats, we look up at the place where the Eucharist is reserved - usually signified by a red vigil lamp - and we genuflect (get down on our right knee) or make a reverent bow recognizing that we are before our God and Savior.

5. Arrive 15-20 minutes before Mass begins (yes, early) Sit in silence, calm your mind, and talk to God about the things you are thankful for and the special intentions you may have for God's help. God hears our prayers and requests.
6. Work on paying attention during Mass. Ask your Guardian angel to help you stay attentive.
7. Be free from sin when you come to Mass. If you have mortal sin on your soul, go to confession before receiving Christ in the Eucharist. If you are unable to go to confession before mass, while communion is being distributed, place your arms across your chest, go up for a blessing, and then go to confession on your next opportunity. (See flip side regarding mortal vs. venial sin)

The Second Vatican Council's *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* tells us that the Eucharist (which means "Thanksgiving") is the "source and the summit" of our faith life. Our faith life comes from the liturgy and when we celebrate the liturgy well, that celebration is the best expression of our faith life. The *Constitution* sought to renew the liturgy so that we might all have "fully conscious and active participation" in it.

Catholic Mass 101

Preparing for Mass

What is Mortal and Venial Sin?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church provides:

[1855] Mortal Sin destroys charity in the heart of man by a grave violation of God's law; it turns man away from God... by preferring an inferior good to him. Venial sin allows charity to subsist, though it offends and wounds it.

[1861] Mortal sin... results in... the privation of sanctifying grace, that is, of the state of grace. If it is not redeemed by repentance and God's forgiveness, it causes exclusion from Christ's kingdom and the eternal death of hell...

[1862] One commits venial sin when, in a less serious matter, he does not observe the standard prescribed by the moral law, or when he disobeys the moral law in a grave matter, but without full knowledge or complete consent.

[1863] Venial sin weakens charity... and... merits temporal punishment. Deliberate and unrepented venial sin disposes us little by little to commit mortal sin. However, venial sin does not break the covenant with God. With God's grace, it is humanly reparable. "Venial sin does not deprive the sinner of sanctifying grace, friendship with God, charity, and consequently, eternal happiness."

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What are the 3 conditions for mortal sin?

For a sin to be mortal, three conditions must exist at the same time.

- It must be of a grave matter;
- It must be committed with full knowledge that it is a mortal sin;
- It must be committed with full consent.
[Full consent means to do it "voluntarily."
(C.C.C. # 1857)

Examples of mortal sin include blaspheming, worshipping false gods, taking of life, infidelity, stealing, taking advantage of the poor, etc.

Examples of venial sin include gossiping, lying, and neglecting to pray or read scripture regularly to name a few.

What removes venial sin?

Venial sins can be forgiven in several ways: The sacrament of Reconciliation. Worthy reception of Communion. Sincere act of contrition.

What part of the Mass absolves us of our venial sins?

Although the Penitential rite has the power to forgive our lesser faults and dispose us to participate more wholeheartedly in worship and praise, **it is not** a replacement for the sacrament of Reconciliation.

Catholic Mass 101

The order of the Mass - Part 1 Introductory Rites

Entrance, Greeting and Penitential Rite, Gloria and Opening Prayer

The Mass begins with the entrance song. The celebrant and other ministers enter in procession and reverence the altar with a bow and/or a kiss. The altar is a symbol of Christ at the heart of the assembly and so deserves this special reverence.

All make the Sign of the Cross, and the celebrant (priest or bishop) extends a greeting to the gathered people in words taken from Scripture.

The Penitential Act follows the greeting. At the very beginning of the Mass, the faithful recall their sins and place their trust in God's abiding mercy. The Penitential Act includes the *Kyrie Eleison*, a Greek phrase meaning, "Lord, have mercy." This litany recalls God's merciful actions throughout history. On Sundays, especially in Easter Time, in place of the customary Penitential Act, from time to time the blessing and sprinkling of water to recall Baptism may take place.

On Sundays, solemnities, and feasts, the *Gloria* follows the Penitential Act. The *Gloria* begins by echoing the proclamation of the angels at the birth of Christ: "Glory to God in the highest!" In this ancient hymn, the gathered assembly joins the heavenly choirs in offering praise and adoration to the Father and Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

The Introductory Rites conclude with an opening prayer, called the Collect. The celebrant invites the gathered assembly to pray and, after a brief silence, proclaims the prayer of the day. The Collect gathers the prayers of all into one and disposes all to hear the Word of God in the context of the celebration.

Source: <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/order-of-mass/introductory-rites>

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Good to Know

The first form of the penitential rite is the "Confiteor." The word "Confiteor" comes from the first words of the prayer, "I confess." The prayer used to be a private prayer of preparation said in the sacristy by the priest and the servers. It appeared at the beginning of Mass around the 10th century – but was still done quietly as a preparation rite for the priest and ministers. This prayer best expresses the communal nature of the Church: "I confess to Almighty God, and to you, my brothers and sisters...therefore I ask the Blessed Mary, ever virgin, all the angels and saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God."

The other form we often hear is the Greek "Kyrie." This is a short litany, "Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy." Each response may include a short invocation. This simple litany may follow the Confiteor or may stand alone with its invocations.

The Gloria

The Gloria is omitted during the season of Advent so that we may sing the song of the angels with renewed joy at Christmas. It is also omitted during the season of Lent because there is no room for such exuberant joy when we are reckoning with our sins.

Catholic Mass 101

The order of the Mass - Part 1 Introductory Rites

Entrance, Greeting and Penitential Rite, Gloria and Opening Prayer

Liturgical Music of the Mass

Why do we have music and sing as part of the Catholic Mass?

God has bestowed upon His people the gift of song. God dwells within each human person, in the place where music takes its source. Indeed, God, the giver of song, is present whenever His people sing His praises.

A cry from deep within our being, music is a way for God to lead us to the realm of higher things.

Holy Mother Church clearly affirms the role within worship of the entire liturgical assembly. The Church urges all members of the liturgical assembly to receive this divine gift and to participate fully depending on their orders and their role in the liturgical services. **“The full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else, for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian Spirit.” (Sacrosanctum Concilium, no 14)**

Songs of the Mass

- **Entrance Chant** – is intended to unify us into a sense of community with one another. We do not worship alone. Father, Son, and Spirit call us to communion with them and each other.

- **Gloria** – This song of praise gives Glory to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The theme of glory appears first in the Old Testament. It referred to the shining presence of God as he manifested himself in the pillar of fire by night and pillar of cloud by day to the Israelites. Today, giving glory to God is synonymous with praising Him. Think of the many gifts you have received from God and give Him glory.

- **Responsorial Psalm** - The Responsorial Psalm is sung between the readings. The psalm helps us to meditate on the word of God.

Sources:

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The Liturgy Documents Volume One

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- **Gospel Acclamation** - The acclamations of the Eucharistic Liturgy and other rites arise from the whole gathered assembly as assents to God's Word and action. The Eucharistic acclamations include the Gospel Acclamation, the *Sanctus*, the Memorial Acclamation, and the Great Amen.

- **Holy, Holy, Holy** – adapted from the song of the angels in the vision of Isaiah, chapter six, and the cheers for Jesus in His Palm Sunday procession (d. Matthew 21:9)

- **The Mystery of Faith** – The Church calls us to respond with faith to this gracious mystery of faith, given to us because God loved us so much.

- **Amen** - The word has a number of different meanings. Jesus often said, “Amen, amen, I say to you...” In this case, it means “truly.” When we receive the Body of Christ, we say “Amen” to mean “I believe.” And in the Great Amen, it takes on the added meaning of “Yes!”

- **Lamb of God (Agnus Dei)** – In scripture the lamb was the principal animal for sacrifice. When Jesus came, He became the real lamb, whose sacrifice really achieved the world's salvation. John the Baptist first spoke the words that we use in our prayer (John 1:29)

- **Communion Chant** – Expresses the unity of those processing and receiving the holy sacrament.

- **Sending Forth (Closing)** – To go forth as a unified church and live out the word of God. When a closing song is used, the procession of ministers should be arranged in such a way that it finishes with the final stanza.

Good to know

Musical settings of the Order of Mass must conform to the official text of the Roman Missal and may contain any or all the parts previously listed. (Any musicians wishing to set other texts from the Order of Mass should contact the Secretariat of the USCCB to obtain the official text)

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The order of the Mass - Part 2 - Liturgy of the Word, First Reading, Psalm, Second Reading, Gospel Acclamation, Gospel, Homily, Profession of Faith, and Universal Prayer

Most of the Liturgy of the Word is made up of readings from Scripture. On Sundays and solemnities, there are three Scripture readings. During most of the year, the first reading is from the Old Testament and the second reading is from one of the New Testament letters. During Easter Time, the first reading is taken from the Acts of the Apostles which tells the story of the Church in its earliest days. The last reading is always taken from one of the four Gospels.

In the Liturgy of the Word, the Church feeds the people of God from the table of his Word (cf. Sacrosanctum Concilium, no. 51). The Scriptures are the word of God, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. In the Scriptures, God speaks to us, leading us along the path to salvation.

The Responsorial Psalm is sung between the readings. The psalm helps us to meditate on the word of God.

The high point of the Liturgy of the Word is the reading of the Gospel. Because the Gospels tell of the life, ministry, and preaching of Christ, it receives several special signs of honor and reverence. The gathered assembly stands to hear the Gospel and it is introduced by an acclamation of praise. Apart from Lent, that acclamation is "Alleluia," derived from a Hebrew phrase meaning "Praise the Lord!" A deacon (or, if no deacon is present, a priest) reads the Gospel.

After the Scripture readings, the celebrant preaches the homily. In the homily, the preacher focuses on the Scripture texts or some other texts from the liturgy, drawing from them lessons that may help us to live better lives, more faithful to Christ's call to grow in holiness.

In many Masses, the Profession of Faith then follows the homily, either the Nicene or Apostles' Creed. The Nicene Creed is a statement of faith dating from the fourth century, while the Apostles' Creed is the ancient baptismal creed of the Church in Rome. If baptismal promises are renewed, from a formula based on the Apostles' Creed, this takes the place of the Creed.

The Liturgy of the Word concludes with the Universal Prayer, also called the Prayer of the Faithful. The gathered assembly intercedes with God on behalf of the Church, the world, and themselves, entrusting their needs to the faithful and loving God.

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Good to Know

"When the Sacred Scriptures are read in the Church, God himself speaks to his people, and Christ, present in his word, proclaims the Gospel" (GIRM, no. 29).

These words from the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM) set before us a profound truth that we need to ponder and make our own. The words of Sacred Scripture are unlike any other texts we will ever hear, for they not only give us information, but they are also the vehicle God uses to reveal himself to us, the means by which we come to know the depth of God's love for us, and the responsibilities entailed by being Christ's followers, members of his Body. What is more, this Word of God proclaimed in the liturgy possesses a special sacramental power to bring about in us what it proclaims.

The Word of God proclaimed at Mass is 'efficacious' that is, it not only tells us of God and God's will for us, it also helps us to put that will of God into practice in our own lives. How, then, do we respond to this wonderful gift of God's Word? We respond in word and song, in posture and gesture, in silent meditation and, most important of all, by listening attentively to that Word as it is proclaimed. Following each reading we express our gratitude for this gift with the words "Thanks be to God" or, in the case of the Gospel, "Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ," and it is appropriate that a brief period of silence be observed to allow for personal reflection.

Following the first reading we sing the Responsorial Psalm, a meditation on God's word through the inspired words of one of the psalms from the Psalter, the Bible's prayer book

Sources:

USCCB.org

The Liturgy Documents Volume One

Catholic Mass 101

The order of the Mass - Part 3 - Liturgy of the Eucharist, Presentation of the Gifts and Preparation of the Altar, Prayer over the Offerings, Eucharistic Prayer, Preface, Holy Holy, Holy, First half of prayer, including Consecration, Mystery of Faith. Second half of prayer ending with Doxology. The Lord's Prayer, Sign of Peace, Lamb of God, Communion, Prayer after Communion

The Liturgy of the Eucharist begins with the preparation of the gifts and the altar. As the ministers prepare the altar, representatives of the people bring forward the bread and wine that will become the Body and Blood of Christ. The celebrant blesses and praises God for these gifts and places them on the altar, the place of the Eucharistic sacrifice. In addition to the bread and wine, monetary gifts for the support of the Church and the care of the poor may be brought forward. The Prayer over the Offerings concludes this preparation and disposes all for the Eucharistic Prayer.

Eucharistic Prayer

The Eucharistic Prayer is the heart of the Liturgy of the Eucharist. In this prayer, the celebrant (priest or bishop) acts in the person of Christ as head of his body, the Church. He gathers not only the bread and the wine, but the substance of our lives and joins them to Christ's perfect sacrifice, offering them to the Father.

The introductory dialogue, establishes that this prayer is the prayer of the baptized and ordained, is offered in the presence of God, and has thanksgiving as its central focus. Following this dialogue, the celebrant begins the Preface.

The Eucharistic Prayers make clear that these prayers are offered, not to Christ, but to the Father. It is worship offered to the Father by Christ as it was at the moment of his passion, death and resurrection, but now it is offered through the priest acting in the person of Christ, and it is offered as well by all of the baptized, who are part of Christ's Body, the Church. This is the action of Christ's Body, the Church at Mass.

The priest offers the Eucharistic Prayer in the first-person plural, for example, "Therefore, O Lord, we humbly implore you..." This "we" signifies that all the baptized present at the Eucharistic celebration make the sacrificial offering in union with Christ and pray the Eucharistic Prayer in union with him. And what is most important, we do not offer Christ alone; we are called to offer ourselves, our lives, our individual efforts to grow more like Christ and our efforts as a community of believers to spread God's Word and to serve God's people, to the Father in union with Christ through the hands of the priest. Most wonderful of all, although our offering is in itself imperfect, joined with the offering of Christ it becomes perfect praise and thanksgiving to the Father.

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The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (no. 79) provides the following summary of the Eucharistic Prayer:

The main elements of which the Eucharistic Prayer consists may be distinguished from one another in this way:

- a) **The thanksgiving** (expressed especially in the Preface), in which the Priest, in the name of the whole of the holy people, glorifies God the Father and gives thanks to him for the whole work of salvation or for some particular aspect of it, according to the varying day, festivity, or time of year.
- b) **The acclamation**, by which the whole congregation, joining with the heavenly powers, sings the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy). This acclamation, which constitutes part of the Eucharistic Prayer itself, is pronounced by all the people with the Priest.
- c) **The epiclesis**, in which, by means of particular invocations, the Church implores the power of the Holy Spirit that the gifts offered by human hands be consecrated, that is, become Christ's Body and Blood, and that the unblemished sacrificial Victim to be consumed in Communion may be for the salvation of those who will partake of it.
- d) **The Institution narrative and Consecration**, by which, by means of the words and actions of Christ, that Sacrifice is affected which Christ himself instituted during the Last Supper, when he offered his Body and Blood under the species of bread and wine, gave them to the Apostles to eat and drink, and leaving with the latter the command to perpetuate this same mystery.

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- e) **The anamnesis**, by which the Church, fulfilling the command that she received from Christ the Lord through the Apostles, celebrates the memorial of Christ, recalling especially his blessed Passion, glorious Resurrection, and Ascension into heaven.
- f) **The oblation**, by which, in this very memorial, the Church, in particular that gathered here and now, offers the unblemished sacrificial Victim in the Holy Spirit to the Father. The Church's intention, indeed, is that the faithful not only offer this unblemished sacrificial Victim but also learn to offer their very selves, and so day by day to be brought, through the mediation of Christ, into unity with God and with each other, so that God may at last be all in all.
- g) **The intercessions**, by which expression is given to the fact that the Eucharist is celebrated in communion with the whole Church, of both heaven and of earth, and that the oblation is made for her and for all her members, living and dead, who are called to participate in the redemption and salvation purchased by the Body and Blood of Christ.
- h) **The concluding doxology**, by which the glorification of God is expressed, and which is affirmed and concluded by the people's acclamation "Amen."

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Communion Rite

The Communion Rite follows the Eucharistic Prayer, leading the faithful to the Eucharistic table.

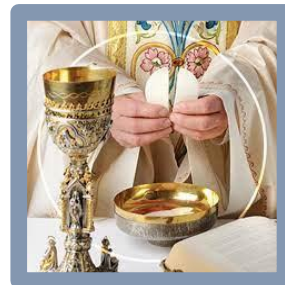
The rite begins with the Lord's Prayer. Jesus taught this prayer to his disciples when they asked how to pray (cf. Mt 6:9-13, Lk 11:2-4). In this prayer, the people join their voices to pray for the coming of God's kingdom and to ask God to provide for our needs, forgive our sins, and bring us to the joy of heaven.

The Rite of Peace follows. The celebrant prays that the peace of Christ will fill our hearts, our families, our Church, our communities, and our world. As a sign of hope, the people extend to those around them a sign of peace.

In the Fraction Rite, the celebrant breaks the consecrated bread as the people sing the Agnus Dei or "Lamb of God." John the Baptist proclaimed Jesus as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29). The action of breaking the bread recalls the actions of Jesus at the Last Supper, when he broke the bread before giving it to his disciples. One of the earliest names for the Eucharistic celebration is the breaking of the bread (Lk 24:35; Acts 2:42, 46).

Before receiving Holy Communion, the celebrant and assembly acknowledge their unworthiness to receive so great a gift. The celebrant receives Holy Communion first and then the people come forward. Those who receive Holy Communion should be prepared to receive so great a gift. They should fast (except for medicines) for at least one hour before receiving the Eucharist and should not be conscious of having committed serious sin.

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Because sharing at the Eucharistic Table is a sign of unity in the Body of Christ, only those in communion with the Catholic Church may receive Holy Communion. To invite others present to receive Holy Communion implies a unity which does not exist. Those who do not receive Holy Communion still participate in this rite by praying for unity with Christ and with each other.

The people approach the altar and, bowing with reverence, receive Holy Communion. People may receive the Body of Christ either on the tongue or in the hand. The priest or other minister offers the Eucharist to each person saying, "The Body of Christ." The person receiving responds by saying, "Amen," a Hebrew word meaning, "So be it" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2856).

As the people receive Holy Communion, the communion chant/song is sung. The unity of voices echoes the unity the Eucharist brings. All may spend some time in silent prayer of thanksgiving as well.

The Communion Rite ends with the Prayer after Communion which asks that the benefits of the Eucharist will remain active in our daily lives.

Catholic Mass 101

The order of the Mass - Part 4 - Concluding Rites, Optional announcements, Greeting and Blessing, Dismissal

During the Concluding Rites, announcements may be made (if necessary) after the Prayer following Communion. The celebrant then blesses the people assembled. Sometimes, the blessing is very simple. On special days, the blessing may be more extensive. In every case, the blessing is always trinitarian: "May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit." It is in the triune God and in the sign of the cross that we find our blessing.

After the blessing, the deacon dismisses the people. In fact, the dismissal gives the liturgy its name. The word "Mass" comes from the Latin word, "Missa." At one time, the people were dismissed with the words "Ite, missa est" (literally meaning "Go, she—meaning you, the Church—has been sent"). The word "Missa" is related to the word "missio," the root of the English word "mission." The liturgy does not simply come to an end. Those assembled are sent forth to bring the fruits of the Eucharist to the world.

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Why we should never leave mass without receiving the final blessing!

In Scripture, a blessing always meant a communication of divine breath and life to the one blessed. It was meant to give spiritual strength and transformation to the one or the element blessed. In many ways, we have been so blessed throughout the Mass. The priest now gathers up all the ways that God has shown his love for us by sharing his life and articulates it in the final blessing.

Sources: USCCB.org
Celebrating the Mass by
Alfred McBride, O.Praem.

Catholic Mass 101

The order of the Mass - Part 5 - Prayer after Mass

Generally, after Mass there is a surge towards the doors, meeting the priest, deacon and the hospitality volunteers. But many stay for a while after Mass to pray. Below are some suggested prayers. If you cannot say them right after Mass, think of doing so later in the day when you have some quiet time.

For identity With Jesus

Bread of Life, Wine of Salvation, Jesus, I adore you, love you, and surrender myself to you. I believe. Help my unbelief. Stretch my inner spirit to receive an even greater fullness of your mystery and love. Fill me with the kind of love that opens me to appreciate the mystery that makes it possible for me to know you and benefit from your care for me. Put power in my faith so I will not be afraid to give myself to you. Teach me to see that being “taken, blessed, broken, and given” actually heals me and those for whom I care.

For Companionship With Jesus

Jesus, host of many meals in the Gospel stories, especially the Last Supper, you teach me that at these dining experiences, you helped the participants to learn many of the Gospel messages you wanted them to know. Today at the table of the Eucharist I experienced your sacrificial presence and the community of other believers. May my beliefs, attitudes, and practices reflect my communion with you, both in the sacrament and in my daily behavior. Take my hand and walk with me. Thank you, my Lord and my God.

Source: Celebrating the Mass
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For the Grace to Witness the Mass

Jesus, the priest has sent me forth with the words to serve you and others. Help me to be your missionary in my family, neighborhood, and local community. Relieve me from the fear of sharing my faith with others. Show me how to have a social conscience, which both heals the symptoms and the causes of injustice. Remind me that I should always see a connection between my worship here and my behavior out there. Make me a cheerful giver of the graces you have imparted on me. Let me be a witness of the Mass in action. I love you.

Final Thoughts

The slip of a vine planted in the ground bears fruit at the proper time. The grain of wheat falls into the ground and decays, only to be raised up again and multiplied by the Spirit of God, who sustains all things. The Wisdom of God places all these things at the service of man and when they receive God's word they become the Eucharist, which is the body and blood of Christ. In the same way our bodies, which have been nourished by the Eucharist, will be buried in the earth and decay, but will rise again at the appointed time, for the Word of God will raise them up to the Glory of God the Father. St Irenaeus of Lyons (130-200)