

St. Ignatius of Loyola Catholic Community

How We Worship Together

How to prepare for and act during a Catholic mass might seem obvious. However, we could all use a little refresher on the subject. Here is a guide from the Liturgy Committee.

Preparing for Mass

Take a little time to get ready for mass, both physically and mentally.

Here's How:

1. Fasting – Prior to the reception of the Eucharist one is to fast from food and drink, with the exception of water and medicine, for at least one hour. The elderly and sick are not required to maintain an hour's fast.
2. Dress – the church is a sacred space, what we wear speaks to how we respect the Lord's presence.
3. Feed children at home and remind them to use the bathroom before leaving the house.
4. Examine your Conscience – think back in the week about what you did, whom you met, and ways to more often incorporate Catholic and Christian values into your daily life.
5. Sacrament of Reconciliation – if you are not in the state of grace, go to

confession prior to receiving the Eucharist.

Arrival at Mass

As Catholics, we are privileged to spend quality time in the Lord's house.

Here's How:

1. Arrive and be seated before mass starts. It is a distraction when people arrive to mass late.
2. Turn off all electronic devices.
3. When entering church, bless yourself at the holy water font. Wet your fingers in the font and quietly make the sign of the Cross. Help young children do this too, to foster our Catholic identity.
4. Discreetly look for an available pew. Since the tabernacle with the blessed sacrament is in the sanctuary, it is appropriate to genuflect or bow before sitting down. To genuflect, while facing the tabernacle kneel down on the right knee; then stand up.
5. If you arrive late to Mass, while the scriptures are being read aloud, please be a good neighbor and wait until the reading is finished before being seated. Follow the directions of the ushers.
6. Take a moment to sit quietly in the pew before Mass begins. Collect your thoughts and put aside the distractions of the outside world. Since the Blessed Sacrament is

present, conversations and socializing with friends most correctly take place in the Narthex. Be mindful that others would like quiet prayer time in the pews before mass begins.

During Mass

We are all responsible to create an atmosphere conducive to worship for ourselves and others.

1. The liturgy is a time of prayer and celebration. While children are always welcome in church, when a child is not settling, consider taking him or her to the Growing Room, the Narthex, or even outside as needed. If a child must use the restroom during Mass, a parent is asked to accompany him or her. Unaccompanied children will be asked to return to their pew by the ushers.
2. Trips to the water fountain may take place before or after Mass, but not during. Multiple trips to the water fountain and/or rest rooms during mass are never appropriate.
3. If your child participates in the Children's Liturgy of the Word, please speak to him or her about staying with the group when they are dismissed to the social hall. For safety reasons, young children will not be allowed to return from the social hall to the church

unaccompanied. Also for safety reasons, do not allow your children to wander outside the buildings during Mass.

4. At the sign of peace, people usually shake hands. When you are sick, it is polite to not shake hands because of spreading germs. You can politely say “peace be with you.”
5. Parents are asked to bring appropriate “quiet” items to church to help young children develop church behavior. Please, do not allow anyone to write in the hymnals.

How to Receive the Eucharist

Receiving the Eucharist is a very important part of Mass. The way we receive the Eucharist reflects how we feel about Christ.

Here’s How:

1. Be respectful – approach the altar in a prayerful way, singing the communion hymn.
2. It is equally correct to receive the Eucharist by hand or by mouth. While in the Communion line, prior to receiving the host, the communicant bows his or her head

before the Sacrament as a gesture of reverence.

3. To receive the Eucharist by mouth, after responding “Amen”, open wide and slightly stick out your tongue.
4. To receive the Eucharist by hand, after responding “Amen”, form a “throne” by letting your dominant hand cradle your other hand.
5. Consume the host before leaving the altar area or receiving from the chalice. Do not walk off with the host. If you choose to receive from the chalice, take the chalice in both hands and take a small sip.
6. It is never appropriate to pluck the host from the hand of the Minister of Communion, nor is it appropriate to take the host and dip it into the chalice.

Dismissal

Here’s How:

1. The final part of Mass normally involves singing a last hymn and listening to the announcements. It is courteous to stay until the hymn is finished, and the priest processes out of the church. Habitually leaving beforehand, may distract other members of the congregation, and is considered rude behavior.
2. Gather your personal belongings before you go, and leave the worship space tidy for the next congregation.

Please put the hymnbooks back in the pew racks.

Some Final Tips

1. Arrive before Mass starts; leave after the final hymn ends.
2. Be courteous to others during Mass by maintaining a prayerful attitude.
3. Encourage your children to participate in the liturgy in appropriate ways.
4. Remember that in order to receive the Eucharist, one must be a practicing Catholic.

Note: The procedural guidelines in this pamphlet may be found in the Catechism of the Catholic Church or/and General Instruction of the Roman Missal.