

## Narrated Mass

Entrance (explain after students are seated in pews, but before procession)

This is a special Mass. There will be no songs except for some of the responses and prayers, which are often sung. Instead, I will be narrating the Mass, explaining many of the parts of the Mass and how to do them properly.

Holy Water

We dip our hand into the holy water and make the sign of the cross as a remembrance of our baptism and a request that God clean us of our sin. We use our right hand to do this properly.

Genuflection

Genuflection is an ancient symbol of respect given to royalty. As Christ is our king, we should give him the most reverent genuflection of which we are capable instead of just dipping down briefly.

Prayer before Mass

As we prepare for Mass, we kneel quietly and pray to God, asking forgiveness for our sins, praising God, thanking him for his blessings, and asking him to continue giving us these blessings. There are four different reasons we pray, for repentance, worship, petition, and thanksgiving, and we should clear our minds of all distractions from the outside world and focus on any of these.

Why the Mass

The Mass is the same form of worship that Christians have used for 2,000 years, and we see the model of it in the New Testament, with its two main parts, the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. In addition, we can see in the book of *Revelation* that the Mass is modeled after the very same form of worship that the angels and saints are offering in Heaven. In fact, through the Mass, they join us now and surround us as we worship.

The Mass is not entertainment. The priest is not here to keep our interest. In fact, the Mass is a sacrifice, through which Christ offers himself to the Father. Because we are the body of Christ, we are not here to receive entertainment, but to offer ourselves. We can offer our joys and sufferings. If your knees hurt from kneeling, offer that to God and unite your suffering with Christ. Offer your work and play to God.

Lastly, the Mass is a wedding. Who knows whose wedding it is? That's right, Christ. And who is Christ marrying? The Church. We are the church. And because it is a wedding, it means that we give everything we have to Christ, as a husband or wife gives everything to a spouse. It means that we dress nicely, as we would on our wedding day. And it means that we respond and participate as enthusiastically as a wife says "I love you!" to her husband.

Entrance Chant

The Mass will often begin with an entrance chant (or hymn) to foster unity, introduce thoughts of those present, and accompany procession of the priest. Today we will not have an entrance chant, but rather, as the priest and the servers process, I will explain some of the parts of the Church. As we do when anyone important is entering a room, we stand as the priest enters in the place of Christ.

*Priest begins procession.*

Parts of a Church

The part of the church where we are gathered is called the "nave", which comes from an ancient word that means "ship". Just as Noah and his family were saved in a ship, you are saved from sin in this ship.

The priest and the servers are now entering the sanctuary, which is the holy place in the Church where the sacrifice of Christ will take place. This sacrifice will take place on an altar, as animal sacrifices once took place in Judaism, from which Christianity is born. We can see the great reverence one must have for the altar as the priest bends to kiss it upon entering the sanctuary. Altars typically contain a relic, such as a body part or article of clothing, of a saint.

We are surrounded by statues of Mary, Joseph and other great saints to remind us that they are with us right now.

Lastly, notice the red candle on the other side of the sanctuary. This light, which is always burning, marks the location of the tabernacle, where the consecrated host – the body of Christ – is contained. If you were to come here alone in the middle of the night to pray, this light would be burning to direct you to the place where Christ resides.

Remember the sanctuary. By the end of the Mass, it will have changed locations, and I will ask if any of you can locate it at that point.

#### Introductory Rites

##### Greeting

We will begin each Mass with the sign of the cross, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the three persons of the Holy Trinity. Father will then offer you a greeting, “The Lord be with you,” to which you should remember to respond, “and also with you,” with great enthusiasm.

*Pause for greeting from priest.*

##### Penitential Rite

Because we are all sinners, we will now ask for God to forgive us of these sins through what is called the “penitential rite”. Only by going to confession to a priest can we be forgiven of mortal sins, but now is the time to call to mind our general sinful acts and to ask God to clean us of them.

At the words, "through my own fault", we strike our breast (demonstrate) to symbolize that we are sorry for our sins and want to make up for them. Many do not realize that this action is called for in the guidelines for the Mass. Father will pause briefly at this point to remind us of this action.

*Pause for Penitential Rite.*

##### Kyrie

Because we are not capable of supernatural love without God’s grace, we now conclude our penitential rite by asking for God to have mercy. This prayer, one of the oldest in the Church, is called the "Kyrie eleison" in Greek, the language of Jesus and the apostles, and it has been prayed in this language through the Church’s history.

*Pause for Kyrie.*

##### Gloria

The Gloria is omitted on weekdays, but on Sundays it is offered as a hymn of praise based on song sung by the angels during the birth of Christ. Because it expresses our joy in Christ, it is also omitted during Advent because we are still anticipating his return at that point.

##### Opening Prayer

The opening prayer is called the “Collect”. At this point the priest will say “Let us pray” and offer all of our prayers as one. When he is finished, we must remember to say “Amen” with the same enthusiasm as we would tell a spouse “I love you!”

*Pause for Opening Prayer.*

#### Liturgy of the Word

Up to now we have had the Introductory Rite. Now we begin the first major section of our Mass, the Liturgy of the Word, where we will hear the inspired word of God. Just as we would not let a crumb of the Eucharist fall when we receive communion, we should not let a crumb of the Scriptures fall from our attention.

The readings very often tie together, and one of the ways that you can learn to pay better attention during Mass is to consider it a puzzle to figure out what links the readings, the responsorial psalm, and the Gospel.

##### First Reading

The First Reading is always from the Old Testament on Sundays except during Easter when it is from the New Testament. During the week, it is usually from the NT.

*Pause for first reading.*

#### Responsorial Psalm

God has spoken to us in the First Reading, and now it is our turn. We get to answer God through the words of the Psalm we respond using the words of a Psalm. Listen carefully to the refrain, which the cantor will sing, and be prepared to repeat it after each part of the psalm. Also remember to think about the story of ??? that we heard in the first reading and try to figure out how the psalm ties into this. You are speaking to God. Let him hear the love and enthusiasm in your voice.

*Pause for Psalm.*

#### Second Reading

Though omitted on weekdays, on Sundays you will hear an additional reading, which is taken from the New Testament, usually from one of the epistles.

*Pause for Second Reading.*

#### Alleluia

We are about to hear from the most important portion of Scripture, the Gospels, which tell the story of God becoming flesh and dying for our sins. To show our understanding of how important this is, we stand now. We also will sing the "Alleluia", which means "Praise God". The Alleluia will often have a line called the antiphon, which relates to the readings for that day and helps us to understand the message of the Gospel.

*Pause for Alleluia.*

#### Gospel

The Gospel is the highpoint of the Liturgy of the Word, the first part of the Mass. It is linked with the First Reading and Psalm so hopefully you can find a link each Sunday between the First Reading, Psalm and Gospel. The readings follow three-year cycle so it will be three years before you hear these readings proclaimed in Church again. Before proclaiming the Gospel the priest or deacon bows towards the Book of the Gospels and prays silently, 'Almighty God, cleanse my heart and my lips that I may worthily proclaim your holy Gospel'. The priest and people sign themselves on the forehead, lips and chest before the Gospel to signify that we will think about Jesus, speak about him, and carry him in our heart. Since the Book of the Gospels is a symbol of Jesus the priest or deacon concludes by kissing the book.

*Pause for Gospel and Homily.*

#### Homily

The priest now gives a homily that explains the purpose of the homily.

#### Creed

On Sundays, we would now stand and recite the creed, where we state that we believe in God the Father, Jesus, his Son, who came to earth and died for our sins, the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Catholic Church. This is where we state that we will believe and do all that God and his Church tell us. During the creed we should bow our heads to show reverence when professing how Jesus came to earth and was born of the Virgin Mary.

#### General Intercessions

In this last part of the Liturgy of the Word, members of the community will offer prayers for our religious leaders, world leaders, local petitions, and other needs. We will answer “Lord, hear our prayers” to signify that these are, indeed, our prayers.

*Pause for General Intercessions.*

#### Liturgy of the Eucharist

We begin the second main part of the Mass, the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Our attention will be focused on the altar. In ancient times, animals were sacrificed upon the altar to atone for sins. Christ offered himself for forgiveness for our sins, and we will witness him re-presenting that sacrifice for us through Father. As we witness this, we should offer ourselves to God.

#### Presentation of the gifts

Bread and wine are made by human hands. This is why you will now see, in the back of Church, members of the congregation carrying up these gifts to signify that we are offering ourselves and our works to God. Just as Jesus took a human body and glorified it, he will take this bread and wine and glorify it by turning it into his own body and blood.

#### Preparation of the Bread and Wine

You will notice through the Liturgy of the Eucharist that the priest is saying silent prayers.

Remember, the Mass is not a show for us; it is a prayer to the Father, and the priest is saying prayers on our behalf, often as we are joined in song.

He is now mingling the water and wine to symbolize the joining of Jesus and the Church, that Jesus and the Church are one.

The priest washes his hands as an expression of his desire for inward purification. When washing his hands the priest prays, ‘Lord wash away my iniquity and cleanse me from my sins’.

*Pause for Preparation of the Bread and Wine.*

#### Invitation to Prayer

The priest will now pray, asking that the sacrifice be acceptable to God.

#### Prayer over Gifts

The prayer over the gifts concludes the introduction the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

*Pause for Prayer over Gifts.*

#### Preface to Eucharistic prayer

After the priest says, “The Lord be with you,” and we respond enthusiastically, “And also with you,” we will sing the *Sanctus*, or “Holy, Holy”, which is another prayer we see the angels and saints singing in Heaven. Imagine them around us, singing, as you participate here.

*Pause for Sanctus.*

#### Eucharistic Prayer

We kneel because Christ is about to be before us, body, blood, humanity, and divinity.

Christ is offering the sacrifice through the priest.

The Eucharistic Prayer follows with its variable preface. The Preface begins with ‘The Lord be with you’ and concludes with the Holy, Holy.

The Eucharistic Prayer is a great prayer of thanksgiving. Each Eucharistic Prayer several important parts, specifically watch for these:

1. The priest will offer thanksgiving for what God has given us through the sacrifice of the Mass.
2. The priest raises the consecrated host and chalice of wine to the people so that they can adore Jesus truly present in the bread and wine.
3. The priest will ask the Holy Spirit to come down to help change the host and wine into the body and blood of Christ and to help us to receive him worthily.
8. The priest will repeat the words of the Last Supper, changing the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. While they will still appear to be bread and wine, the

substance has changed and Christ is present before us in a way that is different from earlier in the Mass. His body, blood, divinity and humanity are now upon the altar.

*Pause for Eucharistic prayer.*

At the conclusion of the Eucharistic prayer, we will now answer "Amen". However, this is called the "great Amen" because we are at the most exciting party of Mass. For that reason, we will all join together in singing the Amen.

*Pause for Great Amen.*

#### Communion Rite

##### Lord's Prayer

Please stand.

We will now pray as Jesus taught us, with the "Our Father". In this prayer we praise God, ask him to continue feeding us through the Eucharist, our daily bread, and ask him to forgive our sins.

Some of you have see others hold hands during the Our Father or raise their arms in what is called the Orans position. These are both fine, but it is also okay to simply put your hands together in prayer.

*Pause for Our Father.*

##### Sign of Peace

Father will now invite us to offer a sign of peace to signify that we have left all our differences outside the Church and are now prepared to become one to receive Christ. It isn't necessary to shake hands with everyone within reach. Rather, offer the sign of peace to those nearest to you and then return your attention to the altar.

*Pause for Sign of Peace.*

##### Breaking of the Bread (Fraction)

We are not worthy of receiving Christ, so we will once again ask for God's mercy through the Agnus Dei, or the "Lamb of God", which is often sung. While singing this, notice that the priest will break the host – this is called the Fraction – to signify that he is breaking it to offer to all of us. Then, while Jesus's blood separated from his body at the crucifixion, the priest will mix a piece of the host into the chalice to signify that Jesus's blood and body are now united.

*Pause for Agnus Dei.*

##### Prayers before Communion

The priest now says a private prayer to prepare himself for Holy Communion, holding up a host to the people and inviting them to humbly confess their unworthiness. Their response is 'Lord I am not worthy to receive you but only say the word and I shall be healed'. This is based on the reply of the centurion to Jesus in Matt 8:8.

##### Reception of Communion

We come in procession to the sanctuary to receive Holy Communion which reminds us that we are on a journey in life from baptism to glory in Heaven.

We must receive Christ in a worthy way. If we have committed a mortal sin and have not gone to confession, we are committing greater sin by receiving communion now. In that case you should approach with your arms crossed and receive a blessing. Also, if you have eaten in the last hour, you would be committing mortal sin to receive the Eucharist as we are asked to fast for an hour to prepare ourselves to receive Christ.

We should pause and offer a reverent bow – not just nodding our heads – before the host and answer with a heartfelt "Amen" when receiving.

The normal way to receive in the Church is on the tongue. In the United States, however, we have permission to receive in our hands and may use whichever method is most reverent to us, making sure not to take the host, but allowing it to be placed in our hands, understanding that it is the body of Christ.

*Pause for communion.*

#### Concluding Rite

The tabernacle has moved, by the way. Remember how I told you this would happen. Actually, the tabernacle is still in the same place, but it is also located elsewhere. If you know, show me where by pointing. That is right. You are all now tabernacles for Christ.

The final part of the Mass is the Concluding Rite. Sometimes people leave after communion and miss this part, which we should not do because this is one of the most important parts of the Mass. In fact, the word "Mass" comes from a Latin word, "Missio" in Latin, which means a "sending forth".

Because you are all tabernacles for Christ, the priest will now bless you and send you forth, with Christ present in a remarkable way inside you, to carry the message of Christianity into the world, being fishers of men and disciples of Christ to your friends, family, and even complete strangers.

#### Exit

The priest and the servers will now exit from the sanctuary. This is often accompanied by a closing song. Remember when you leave, to genuflect with true respect. Also, remember that after Mass is not a time for socialization. Many use this time as an opportunity for silent prayer and time with Christ, who now resides within them. We should respect this and keep our conversation until after we have left the nave.

Thank you for your participation and attention.