

Joyful Catholic Families

# Lesson #1 – Beginning to Learn about the Mass

## Items used at Mass:

(Look at the bottom of [this post](#) for the pdf of the large pictures used in this lesson.)

The children sit on the floor with the teacher.

Have the following items in a gift bag so the children cannot see them. Take one item out at a time and talk about its name, what it is used for. Let the children touch and hold them.

- **Chalice:**
  - holds the wine which becomes Jesus' Blood during Mass
- **Purificator:**
  - like a cloth napkin
  - used to wipe the chalice after people drink from it
- **Paten:**
  - holds small round pieces of bread that become Jesus' Body during Mass.

To parents: The chalice and paten are to be made from precious metals. Most parishes cannot afford ones made from 14kt Gold so they have the outside plated in gold or silver. The inside (the part that has contact with the precious Body and Blood of Christ) is to be plated with gold. There are some exceptions but this is what you will usually see. ([click here for more information](#))

- **Priest:** (show picture)
  - He celebrates the Mass for us.

When you walk into a Catholic Church at night, what is the first thing you will see? (the sanctuary lamp)

- **Sanctuary lamp:** (show picture)
  - The Sanctuary lamp is actually a candle.
    - We try to never let the candle go out.
  - Why do we have a Sanctuary lamp?
    - To show us where the tabernacle is (show picture of a tabernacle)
- **Tabernacle:**
  - What is a tabernacle for? to keep the consecrated Body of Christ in
  - Why do we keep extra consecrated hosts?
    - for the sick and dying
    - for adoration – so we can spend time in God's presence
  - Because Jesus is in the tabernacle, we treat it with great care. What should we do when we see a tabernacle? (genuflect)

## **Practice Genuflecting:**

When you go into a Catholic church, how can you easily find the tabernacle?

- Look for the sanctuary lamp.
- The sanctuary lamp is always near the tabernacle, letting us know that Jesus is in the tabernacle.

Who knows how to genuflect? (show the children what a genuflection is)

Why do we genuflect?

- To show honor and respect to Jesus who is in the tabernacle in the form of consecrated bread

We are going to practice genuflecting.

- Put a small sticker on each child's right hand and top of right knee (so the child can see it when genuflecting).
- Right knee to the ground (the knee with the sticker on it)  
(To parents: we genuflect on the left knee when genuflecting before the Pope, a king, or a queen)
- Make the Sign of the Cross with your right hand (the one with the sticker on it)
- Don't rush – this is a prayer

When you genuflect, you need to first face the tabernacle. Then genuflect.

When do we genuflect?

- when entering and leaving the pew at Mass
- whenever you pass in front of the tabernacle  
(To parents: we bow to the altar and genuflect towards the tabernacle so if there is no tabernacle, then just bow.)

Go to the church. When you enter the church, show the children the baptismal font or the holy water fonts.

- If you have holy water fonts, explain that the fonts contain holy water (water blessed by a priest). When you enter or leave the church, you dip your fingers into the holy water and make the Sign of the Cross. This reminds us of our baptisms – when we were baptized with the priest pouring holy water on our heads.
- If you have a baptismal font in the entrance of your church:
  - Explain that the baptismal font contains holy water (water blessed by a priest).
  - The baptismal font is where people are baptized. I bet some of you were baptized in this font.
  - Baptism is when Father pours water on your head and says, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit."
    - You become a member of God's family, children of God
    - You also became a member of the Catholic church.
    - When your parents brought you to the Church to be baptized, your parents were saying that they wanted you to be a part of God's family
  - When you enter or leave the church, you dip your fingers into the holy water and make the Sign of the Cross. This reminds us of our baptisms.

Practice genuflecting in different places in the church.

## Pictures of Priest with his eyes shut

The children sit on the floor in a circle.

Show the 2 pictures of the priest with his eyes shut during Mass.

- What do you think the priest is doing? Do you think he is sleeping?
- When you go to church next week, watch and see what our priest does when he sits in his chair.
- If you sit in a place that you can't see our priest's face, ask your parents if you can sit in a different place so you watch our priest.

## Make Booklets of Mass items and Prayers:

[\(click here for a post with more information\)](#)

Today we are going to start making a book about the Mass.

(Show the pages of the book that have the items talked about in class today.)

We will also be putting prayers in these books.

(Show some prayers in the book.)

Ask your parents if you can take this book to Mass.

- While at Mass, look around and see if you can find the things that you have in your book.
- This month especially look for what our priest does when he sits in his chair.

Each time you come to Little Lambs this year, you will get new pages to put in your book.

(Children return to parents at tables.)

Hand out covers for the books and crayons. The children color the covers for their books.

While the children are coloring, explain to the parents:

[\(click here for a post with more information\)](#)

- **Prayers:**
  - Part of learning our Catholic faith is learning the prayers of our faith.
  - On the table are cards with prayers that your child can learn.
  - Pick out the prayers your child already knows
  - Pick out **one** prayer for your child to learn
  - When your child learns that prayer, he/she can pick a new prayer to learn
- **Home lessons:** Handout and explain them to parents.
  - Don't need to do everything
  - Read through the lesson before doing it with your child.
  - Pick out the activities that will work best for your family and gather up supplies you will need.
- **Magnets:** Hand out magnets with schedule on them.
- Most importantly, HAVE FUN! Sharing our faith with our children can be the most rewarding thing we do. **It is the most important thing we do.**

Parents picks out prayers the child knows plus one prayer to learn.

Hand out Mass pages for the book and 1" binder rings. When the covers are colored, parents help their children put together the book.

## Life-size game board:

[\(click here for a post with more information\)](#)

- Before class, copy onto colored cardstock pictures of chalice, purificator, paten, priest, sanctuary lamp, tabernacle, happy face, and sad face. You need one set per child.
- Use the colored cardstock with pictures on it to make a life-size game board – a path for the children to follow around the room. Some options for the life-size game board are:
  - If you don't have a large space, tape the cardstock on the walls of the room with painter's tape. The children can walk around the room and stand in front of the squares when playing the game.
  - If you have a large space, tape the sheets of colored cardstock to the floor so it looks like a path on a game board. The children can stand on the cardstock while playing the game.
  - If you have a large space and don't want to tape down each individual piece of cardstock, tape two pieces of cardstock together and put over a small cone. I use these [cones](#). The children stand by the cone when playing the game.

The children start throughout the game board with all the children standing on different squares that are the same color (for example, all the children are on a red square.)

You say a Mass item and they go to that item OR you ask a Mass behavior question and the children go to a happy face if it is something you do in Mass or to a sad face if it is not what you do during Mass.

You can also tell the children to move to a color (i.e., red) or to move a number of spaces (i.e., 3). The children then say the name of the item on the cardstock.

Some possible Mass behavior questions:

- Do we talk to our friends and family during Mass? (sad face)
- Should we sit still in Mass? (happy face)
- Should you kick the pew in front of you during Mass? (sad face)
- Should you listen to the readings at Mass? (happy face)
- Should we run up and down the pews? (sad face)
- Should you make the Sign of the Cross after dipping your fingers in holy water? (happy face)
- Should we play in the holy water? (sad face)
- Should we go to the bathroom before Mass begins? (happy face – then you won't have to leave during Mass)
- Is it okay to run in church? (sad face)
- Should we be quiet in church so people can pray? (happy face)
- Should we pray in church? (happy face)
- Should we kneel when everyone else kneels? (happy face)
- Should we sit when everyone else is standing? (sad face)
- Should we talk while others are singing in church? (sad face)

## Stickers:

- Give each child a sticker after the game.

## **Supplies:**

Nametags

Permanent markers

Home lessons

Snack

Plates/napkins

Water

Glasses

Stickers (for each child at the end of class)

Gift bags

- Chalice
- Purificator
- Paten
- Tabernacle – large picture
- Sanctuary lamp – large picture
- Priest picture – large picture
- 2 pictures of Fr. Wesley with his eyes shut during Mass

Small stickers to practice genuflecting

Pictures of mass items for books – cut apart with holes punched

- Chalice
- Purificator
- Paten
- Tabernacle picture
- Sanctuary lamp picture
- Priest picture
- Baptismal font
- 2 pictures of priest with his eyes shut during mass

Prayers for prayer rings – cut apart with holes punched -- spread out on a table

Sample book of Mass items and prayers

Rings for mass/prayers books

Covers for mass/prayers books

Markers/crayons

Magnets with class dates on them

Life-size game board:

- Blue tape or cones
- Large pictures of mass items (chalice, purificator, paten, tabernacle, sanctuary lamp, priest) and happy and sad faces printed on colored cardstock. Each picture is on a different color of cardstock (for example, the chalice is on yellow cardstock, the tabernacle on blue,...)