

Chapter 12: We Worship in the Liturgy and the Sacraments

Worship at Mass draws us into communion with God.

Chapter Summary

God began His work of salvation to free us from sin and death in the Old Testament. His plan of salvation was fulfilled in Christ. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, God continues His work in the Mass. A liturgy is an act of public worship. There are two main parts of the Mass—the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Jesus is present in several ways in the Mass. Not only is He present most especially in the Eucharist, but He is also present in the priest, in the Scriptures, and in us. At Mass throughout the liturgical year, we celebrate the life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus. God continues His work of salvation by giving us the sacraments in the Church. The whole life of the Church is centered around the sacraments, which are instituted by Christ and offered by the Church.

More for Parents

With all the weekly obligations that we have, Mass can sometimes seem like just another one we have to do. However, when we grow in our understanding of what is made present at Mass, our desire for the Mass will grow. We will begin to see Mass as the time when we truly encounter Jesus, who died and rose again out of love for us. We go because we want to be with Jesus, who loves us. We go because we want to love Him in return, give Him thanks, and adore Him for all He has done. When the Mass is reframed in this way for us and for our children, it becomes not only desirable but also more efficacious. We open our hearts up more to the graces Jesus offers us, graces that make us holy and capable of fulfilling our daily duties with love.

Virtue in the Family

God works to make us holy through the graces in the liturgy. We need to open ourselves to those graces by preparing adequately outside Mass. Only then can we grow in holiness and virtue as His children.

Open to the Mass

- Family prayer activity
 - Arrive early to Mass. In the presence of Jesus, reflect on the following:
 - Imagine sitting across from Jesus at the Last Supper as He holds up the Eucharist and says, “This is My Body given up for you, [say the name of your children].”
 - Reflect on how Jesus gives His Body directly to *you* at Mass. He offers *you* all the graces you need to be holy.
 - Pray for the Holy Spirit to open your heart to receive the graces Jesus offers.
 - Conclude by praying, “Dear Jesus, thank You for offering me Yourself in the Eucharist. Move me to give You myself in the Mass in return. Amen.”
- Prior to Mass, have all members of the family share what they are grateful to God for that week. Encourage and remind them to offer their thanks to God as gifts when the bread and wine are brought forward to the altar.
- Set aside a month to read through one of the four Gospels together as a family. Read a chapter aloud each morning and/or evening. It’s important to know the account of the Paschal Mystery to understand Christ’s great love for us. Then we can enter more deeply into the liturgy.

Vocabulary Words for Your Children to Review

- **liturgical year**
- **liturgy**
- **Ordinary Time**
- **sacraments**

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