



An Introduction to the Roman Catholic Mass

For Masses and Services at Richard Challoner School we will either display the words to hymns, responses and prayers for the Mass through a projector at the front, or we will give out small booklets with the responses and prayers in.

This booklet is designed to help people who may be unfamiliar with the Roman Catholic Mass by explaining some of its parts for you.

INTRODUCTORY RITE - *Hello!*

When we go out and meet our friends, the first thing we say is Hello! It is the same when we are in the Church. The people gather together while the priest and the altar servers go to the altar. Everyone makes the sign of the cross which is saying in whose name we gather. This is a sign that we belong to God- we are God's people. We say Hello to everyone and to God! Saying Hello is important because it shows our willingness to be there in the Church to be with our community and with God.

PENITENTIAL RITE - *Sorry*

When we hurt someone, like our brother, sister, mom, dad or any of our friends, we say Sorry! When we hurt someone or ourselves, it can damage our relationship with God and each other. It is important that we ask God's forgiveness and mercy at the start of the Mass to help be ready to fully participate in what will follow.

The Penitential Rite includes a short time for self-reflection, it will sometimes include a prayer called "I Confess", and the "Lord Have Mercy" prayers. It ends with the Priest asking God to forgive us for our sins.

GLORIA - *Praise*

On special occasions and feasts a prayer called the "Gloria" is said. It is a prayer of praise and thanksgiving for all that he has given to us.

This part of the Mass ends with the Priest saying a “collect” or prayer, where he invites us and guides us to pray in relation to the theme of the day.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

- *Listen*

Everyone sits

This part of the Mass is when we listen to the readings taken from the Bible. This part is important because the Bible is God speaking to us. This is the Word of God which helps us understand how to live our lives the way he wants us to.

First Reading: This is usually taken from the Old Testament, or one of the Letters in the New Testament.

The Responsorial Psalm: Taken from the book of Psalms in the Old Testament this is when the congregation joins with the reader in a song/chant of praise.

On Sundays & Feast Days a Second Reading is included and is usually taken from the New Testament.

Everyone stands for The Gospel Acclamation: This is an acclamation for the congregation to say that they are ready to listen to Jesus’ words in the Gospel.

The Gospel: This is when the Priest reads a passage from one of the Gospels which contains a story from Jesus’ life or some of his teachings.

Everyone sits for The Homily: This is when the Priests explains the readings to us and gives us a better understanding of them in connection to our daily lives.

Everyone stands.

THE CREED

- *Believe*

On Sundays & Solemnities the Creed will be said. This is a proclamation by the congregation of all that Catholic’s believe in.

THE BIDDING PRAYERS - *Asking*

The Bidding Prayers are prayers where we asked to pray for people and things that are important to the local community and the world. We ask God's help with those things.

The Bidding Prayers usually end with saying the "Hail Mary", where we ask Mary, the Mother of Jesus, to join our prayers, to pray with us and for us.

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST *Remembrance, Offering, & Blessing*

The next part of the Mass is the most special and holy for Catholics, it includes the Offertory, the Preparation of the Gifts, the Eucharistic Prayer and Consecration. In the Liturgy of the Eucharist the Priest repeats the words Jesus said at the Last Supper, and the Bread and Wine are blessed and Catholics believe that they become the Body and Blood of Jesus.

The Preparation of the Gifts: The Bread and Wine are brought to the altar, either in an Offertory Procession, or by the Priest from a side table. The bread and wine are the gifts of the people through which we offer thanks to God for all his blessings in our lives and later they enable us to participate in the Eucharist. Once the bread and wine are on the altar the Priest blesses the gifts.

Eucharistic Prayer:

After a prayer called the Holy Holy, or Sanctus, everybody kneels.

The Priest then says the Eucharistic Prayer, in this prayer he recites the words that were said by Jesus at the Last Supper and asks God to consecrate (bless) the gifts so that they become the Body and Blood of Jesus.

The Eucharistic Prayer then includes prayers, for the Pope, Bishops and Clergy, all who have died, and the whole Church.

THE COMMUNION RITE - *Receive*

The Lord's Prayer:

The Communion Rite is the part of the Mass where we prepare to receive the Body of Jesus at Holy Communion. It begins with everyone standing and saying the "Lord's Prayer" – this is the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples.

Sign of Peace:

The Sign of Peace is where the Priest wishes everyone the peace of Christ. We then offer this in turn to each other, usually with a shake of a hand.

Lamb of God:

Everyone then says a prayer called the Lamb of God or Agnus Dei. This prayer asks for God's mercy on his people.

Holy Communion:

At Holy Communion Catholics come forward to receive the blessed bread which Catholics believe to be the Body of Jesus. In some Masses the wine may be made available as well.

Due to the holy and sacred nature of the bread and wine to Catholics, we ask that **ONLY CATHOLICS** who have made their Holy Communion receive the bread or wine, if you not receiving Communion you are still welcome to come to the front in the procession and receive a blessing from the Priest or Eucharistic Minister. You can show that you require a blessing when you get to the front by crossing both arms across your chest.

After everyone has finished receiving Holy Communion or Blessings, everyone stands and the Priest says a prayer to help reflect on what we have participated in.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

- <i>Go!</i>

This marks the end of the Mass. The Priest blesses us and we are now sent to spread the Good News and live like Christ.

If you have any questions or concerns about the Mass or the Chaplaincy please do see Mr N D'Aguiar today, or feel free to email him on mrdaguiar@challoner.kingston.sch.uk.

More details about the Chaplaincy at the school can be found at www.richardchalloner.com/spirituality