

Brief Outline of the Roman Catholic Mass

INTRODUCTORY RITES

A Catholic Mass starts with the entrance procession of the priest and other ministers toward the sanctuary of the church. During the entrance procession, there is usually a gathering song followed by a Greeting to the assembly, the Penitential Rite (a time of reflection on one's sins and a prayer for God's mercy), concluded with the Opening Prayer.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

This part of the Mass will offer Scripture readings from the following areas:

First Reading

A scripture reading from the Old Testament

Responsorial Psalm

A Psalm selected from the Book of Psalms. The congregation interacts by offering a response (usually sung).

Second Reading

A scripture reading from the New Testament, usually the epistles

Gospel Acclamation

The people praise Christ's presence in the sacred Word of God.

Gospel Proclamation

Taken from one of the four Gospels of Mathew, Mark, Luke or John.

Homily

The priest or deacon will address the congregation on the scripture proclaimed.

Universal Prayer of The Prayer of the Faithful or The General Intercessions

A collection of short prayers of petition normally led by the deacon is one is present. After each petition is said the congregation will respond by saying, "Lord, hear our prayer" or something similar.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Offertory or Presentation of the Gifts and Preparation of the Gifts

The bread and wine are brought to the altar along with any monetary offerings for the poor that may have been collected from the congregation. The Offertory hymn may be sung at this time.

Prayer Over the Gifts

The priest may say or sing this prayer.

Eucharistic Prayer

At this time the congregation will kneel as Calvary becomes present on the altar in an unbloody manner.

Begins with the Preface, the Sanctus, - Memorial Acclamation and Great Amen.

COMMUNION RITE

Lord's Prayer

The reciting of the Our Father. No handholding!

The Sign of Peace

The deacon will prompt the congregation to offer each other a sign of peace. You will shake the hand of people around you, perhaps saying, "Peace be with you."

Breaking of the Bread / Lamb of God

Distribution of Communion

People process in lines to the front of the Cathedral, receive communion standing and then return to their seats. After returning to their places, people are encouraged to immediately sit down or kneel in silent prayer.

If you are not Catholic, you may process to the front and cross your hands across your chest to receive a blessing or you may remain seated or kneel in prayer while communion is being distributed.

Only Catholics in a state of grace, i.e., not conscious of serious sin, may receive communion.

This is a sacred time for Catholics. Do not engage in unnecessary conversation during this period of the Mass. There should be no unnecessary trips to the bathroom or other diversions. Please do not let children run in the aisles. Instead, take them to the back of the church until their needs are met.

Prayer After Communion

CONCLUDING RITE

This segment is the conclusion of the Mass and includes a second collection, announcements, and the final blessing.

Solemn / Final Blessing

Given to the entire congregation.

Dismissal

Given by the deacon.

Recessional

The priest and deacon process out of the church during a final hymn.

THE MASS IS NOT OVER UNTIL THE CONCLUSION OF THE CLOSING HYMN.

Please – always maintain a reverent silence **before and after mass** as there are many people who wish to have private prayers during these times.