



1. Pray. Daily prayer is a conversation with God and crucial if we want to have a moving experience in Mass. In the morning, we praise God for a new day and the opportunity to serve him. At the end of the day, we examine our conscience, and think

about what we've done and what we failed to do. Ask yourself, "How well did I follow Christ's teachings today?" Having Jesus present in our minds and heart helps you make better decisions to be more faithful, loving, grateful and strong.

2. Go to Confession. The more we go to Confession, the more we will be transformed. We live in a culture that dismisses the seriousness of sin. The loss of an awareness of sin results in an artificial spirituality ignoring the importance of taking the Eucharist unworthily, especially if we have committed Mortal Sin. Confession deepens and enriches our prayer life. Frequent confession (once or twice a month), will elevate our spiritual growth and strengthen our relationship with Jesus in the Mass.

3. Fast. Fasting *intensifies* our hunger for God. The Church says that we should abstain from food for at least one hour before Mass. There are other types of fasting we can do daily to stay focused on Jesus. Try fasting from noise as you wake up Sunday morning and prepare for Mass. Find peace in silence and seek the Holy Spirit to calm your restless heart. Meditate on this verse: "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalms 46:10) Let the worries of the week disappear in silence and let His voice guide you as you seek peace.

4. Dress nicely for Mass. How you dress expresses the importance of the occasion. If you're going to McDonald's, it doesn't matter what you wear. But if you're going to a really nice restaurant with your spouse or a special person, how you dress matters. How should you dress for Mass? Dress like you are going to a wedding because you *are*! It is the "Marriage Supper of the Lamb". (Rev. 19:9) Dressing appropriately for Mass shows reverence, awe, piety and respect.

5. Arrive early. Arriving 10-15 minutes before Mass for prayer and contemplation mentally, emotionally and spiritually. At a wedding banquet, you make the effort to show up early to find a table because the food will be served without you. Why would you be late to the Lord's house for *His* wedding banquet that you have been personally invited to? *Also, It is not appropriate to arrive once the readings have begun, especially the Gospel.*

6. Recognize and honor our Blessed Mother Mary. She always points to Christ. Ask her to open your heart to the Lord as he speaks to you in His Word. Ask her to help you listen prayerfully and attentively. The Lord has something he wants to say to you "Fiat", let it be done unto me." She said to the Angel Gabriel. Let us ask Jesus, to let His will be done unto us.



7. Pray for those at Mass around you. Even if you don't know their names, pray for your brothers and sisters in Christ. A spiritual bond develops with those you are praying with and for. We need each other because we are the Body of Christ in communion with them, the Saints and Jesus.

8. Daily Mass. Daily Morning, mid-day or evening Mass will keep us centered on Christ and in His Sanctifying grace even more intimately. "Give us this Day our Daily Bread". Commit to attend Mass daily during Advent or Lent as a personal sacrifice to the Lord.

9. Eucharistic Adoration. If you spend just 20 or 30 minutes in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, you will be transformed. Adoration will help you grow spiritually, in your relationship with Christ. Some parishes have perpetual adoration 24/7, weekly or monthly.



10. Use Catholic Calendars or publications. The "Magnificat" highlights Feast days, Holy Days of Obligation and Saint's days and can help you enter more fully into the liturgical rhythms of the year in understanding Ordinary Time, Triduum, Advent and Lent for example. Many parishes distribute Catholic calendars during the Christmas season.

11. Pay attention. One of the most common problems people have at Mass is letting their minds wander. Distractions are inevitable. Babies crying, the thoughts that stir up in the minds of parishioners about other parishioners. All distractions are caused by our fallen natures. Our sinful thoughts, boredom, sleepiness, lack of preparation and worry are caused by satan entering into our minds, even *in* the Church. When you find yourself distracted, look to the Cross and focus on Christ clearing your mind with only Him present.



12. Offer it up. Offer your Communion for a friend or family member who is sick or in need. Offer it up for your children, your spouse or your relatives and family. Offer it up for an increase in vocations or for a particular priest or seminarian. Offer it up for an end to abortion, war and violence. Offer it up for the country, our soldiers overseas, and those who risk their lives to protect us daily. The more specific you are about your intention, the more it will impact you during Mass.



13. Tithe. Remember the words of our Lord Jesus, how he said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35) Our offering is a symbol of our life and an expression of our commitment to the Lord and His Church. But more importantly, it is an integral part of worship. The offering we make at Mass should be a "sacrifice of Thanksgiving" (Psalm 116:17) The more generous you are of your time, talent and treasure, the more you'll get out of Mass.

14. Pray for your priest. A good Homily, inspiring music and beautiful worship are, of course, the goal of every Mass. But it doesn't always happen. We expect the best from our priest, but we too must give our best in prayers and intentions for our parish "shepherd" in order for him to preach well and get the most out of Mass.

15. Use the Missalette. The Missalette is the Booklet in the pew that contains the parts of the Mass. It includes Scripture readings, hymns and the Creed. Some Missalettes also include prayers we can use before and after Communion. Reading and meditating on a hymn or one of the prayers is a good way to prepare for Mass.

16. Pray after The Eucharist. We are never closer to Jesus than right after receiving Him in the Eucharist. We meditate silently on the mystery of our salvation. Listen to the meditative choir music and spend those few minutes with Jesus in you and reflect on what His Sacrifice means to you. It is a time of profound spiritual intimacy. Cherish it. And please, do not leave before the Mass has ended!



17. **Learn more about your faith.** The more you know, the more you'll get out of Mass. There are many classes, books and other resources offered at your parish, online and locally to help you grow in your faith. The internet is an excellent resource for Catholic news and purchase of books. Talk to your pastor, or the director of religious education to find out what's happening in your parish. Most dioceses offer classes, lectures and conferences to enrich your faith. Call the office of Faith formation in the diocese for more information.

18. **"The Mass is ended. Go in peace, To love and serve the Lord!"** The celebration of the Eucharist is not complete until we put into practice that which we have received.

"The love of God has been poured into our hearts". (Rom 5:5) and so we are sent out to make that love known to the world.

"The love that we celebrate in the sacrament." Pope Benedict XVI said, is not something we can keep to ourselves. By its very nature it demands to be shared with all.

"Go in peace, glorifying God by your life!"



And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer;"

Luke 22:15



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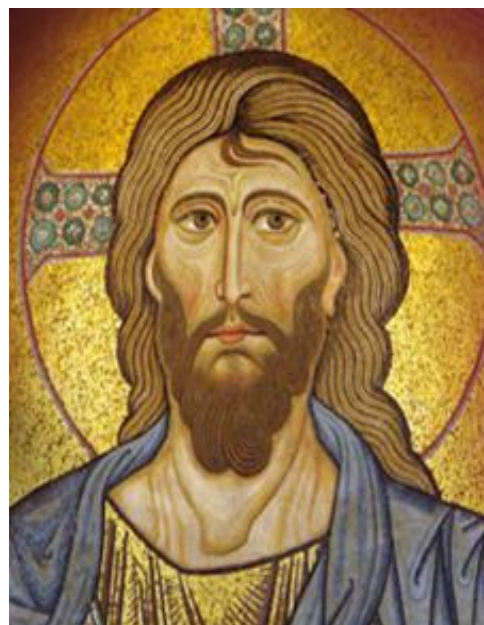
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Catholic Diocese of Laredo

MASS APPEAL

How To Get The Most Out Of Mass



"And when He had taken *some* bread *and* given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

(Luke 22:19)



"Celebrate this Mass as if it was your first Mass;"
"Celebrate this Mass as if it was your only Mass;"
"Celebrate this Mass as if it was your last Mass."

The quote above was taken from a wall at a chapel of the Sister of Charity in Rome.

The Mass is the "source and summit of the Christian life." Everything flows from it and leads to it because in it "is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ Himself" (Catechism 1324)

The ideas in this pamphlet are meant to help you get more out of Mass. As with any worthwhile activity, the more you put into it the more you will get out of it.

St. Francis said, "It is in giving that we receive."

This Year of Faith is a calling for all of us to be active Catholics in our Church and in our Faith. This brochure does not list anything new you do not already know. The key is to make a strong effort to strengthen your relationship with Christ or begin a new relationship with Him and allow it to grow.

Most importantly, it is the intimate relationship that He seeks with us and the best place to visit Him is in His home, the Church. Read the Bible, worship, confess, adore, pray and talk to others about Him.

Submit to His Will and you will be transformed by His love. God bless you.