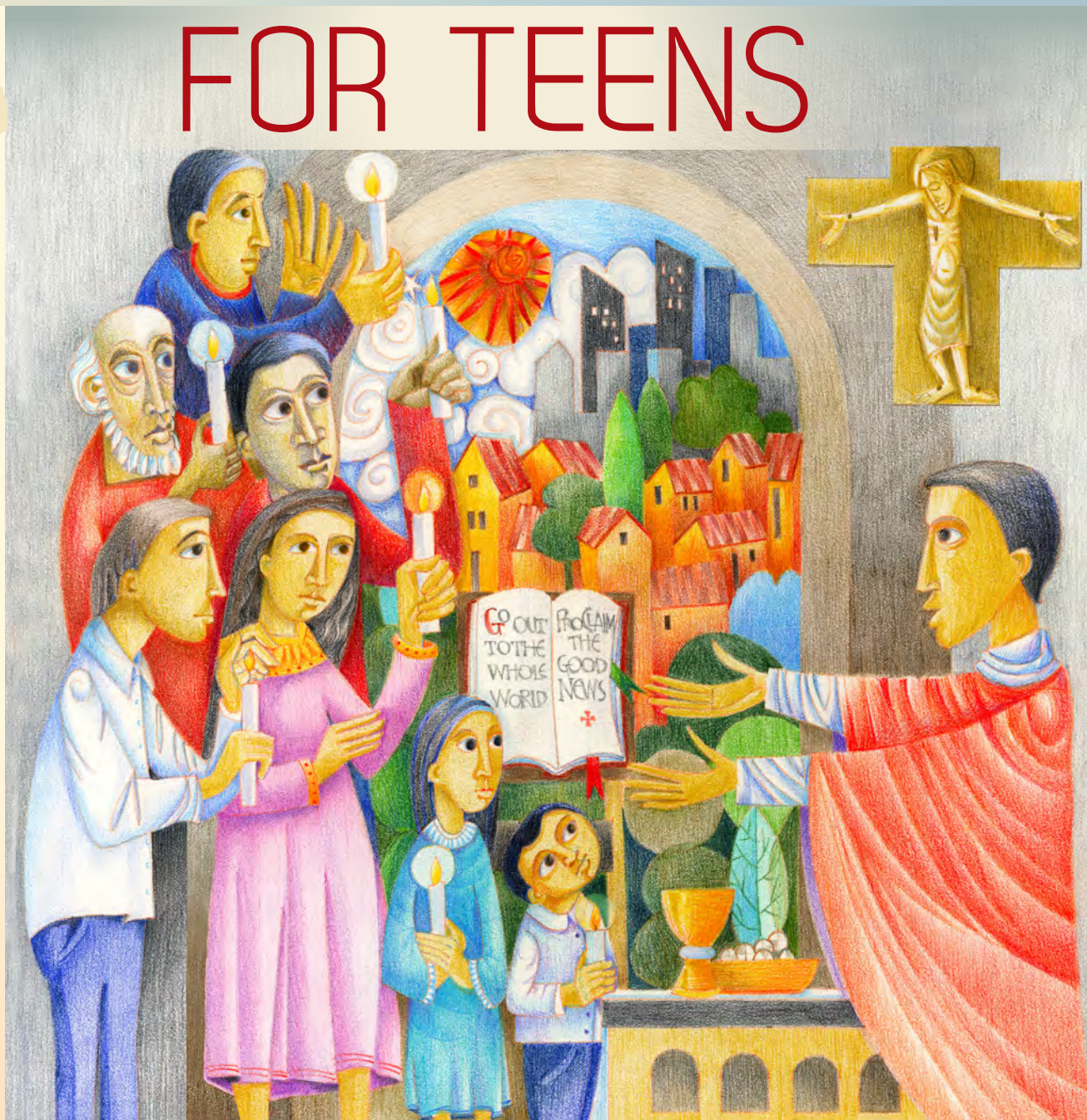


FROM MASS TO MISSION

Understanding the Mass and Its
Significance for Our Christian Life

FOR TEENS



LEADER'S GUIDE

TRISH SULLIVAN VANNI

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In fond memory of Rev. Kevin Seasoltz, OSB, who taught that our gracious God lives for giving, especially in the Eucharist. — PSV and DAN

Additional reflection questions, activities, and prayers provided by John Angotti, Michael Cymbala, Joyce Donahue, Maureen Kelly, and Stephen Wilbricht, CSC.

The title of this book was inspired by *Dies Domini*, 45. The cover of this book presents a metaphorical illustration of our charge to go forth from Mass as disciples called by Christ to be his light in the world (see Matthew 28:18–20).

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Welcome!

This *Leader's Guide* is a companion to the booklet *From Mass to Mission: Understanding the Mass and Its Significance for Our Christian Life for Teens*. This resource will empower you to create a wonderful experience for the youth with whom you are working. This resource can be used by Catholic high school religion teachers, parish catechists and youth ministers, Confirmation catechists and coordinators, and others who minister to teens.

The teen's booklet, *From Mass to Mission: Understanding the Mass and Its Significance for Our Christian Life for Teens*, provides valuable information that will engage teens more fully in each learning session. There are a number of ways that you can use the *From Mass to Mission* teen booklet. You can simply distribute it, encouraging teens and adults to read it and use it at home. This can be particularly valuable for those preparing for Confirmation, who may need a refresher on the Mass or who may benefit from a more mature encounter with this sacrament of initiation. Or you can use the booklet as supplemental material for a five-part learning session or daylong retreat about the Mass. Additional activities and reflection questions are found in the teen's booklet. You should feel free to incorporate these additional questions and activities as you find appropriate. They can be given for homework or used as small group discussions during your sessions.

In this *Leader's Guide*, you'll find five session outlines with many fun ice breakers, activities,

prayers, and discussion starters that are tied to a series of five videos found on the accompanying DVD. Additional resources are found on the enclosed DVD including opening and closing prayers, weekly letters for parents and guardians that will connect them with the experience you're providing for their teens, as well as ideas for home learning. There are even materials to help you advertise and promote the *From Mass to Mission: Understanding the Mass and its Significance for Our Christian Life for Teens* experience in your parish and school. These sessions may be adapted for a retreat.

Doctors in any number of disciplines — dermatology, cardiology, and more — are quick to tell us “you are what you eat.” St. Augustine, in one of his most famous sermons, suggested something similar — we become what we receive in the Eucharist: the Body of Christ. *From Mass to Mission* provides teenagers with the theology of the Eucharist, presented at an age-appropriate level, to inspire a deeper lived experience of the meaning and beauty of the Mass. This resource will deepen the understanding young people have of the Mass and its significance, and come to see its profound connection to the actions we make in the world as the disciples of Jesus Christ.

Thank you for being part of passing on the beauty and meaning of this powerful sacrament, a transformative gift of sacrifice and love from our Lord Jesus Christ. May your journey with

your participants not only deepen their faith, wonder, and action, but yours as well.

— Trish Sullivan Vanni



Using the *Leader's Guide*

This *Leader's Guide* provides five liturgically based sessions or learning experiences that tie the teen booklet to a larger group experience and deepen the connection for teens to the Mass. You might refer to these sessions as the “Mass to Mission Experience.” Each of the five sessions includes a video found on the accompanying DVD. You will be able to choose from the suggested activities to augment the learning of participants. These sessions may be adapted for a daylong or weekend retreat. Each session is designed to be no more than an hour and includes the following elements:

- list of preparation items
- opening prayer
- ice breaker
- discussion sparkers
- videos
- activities
- closing prayer
- social media suggestions
- directions for using the supplemental materials found on the DVD

You can follow each session closely or customize them to meet the particular needs or interests of your youth (for example, substituting hymns with which they are familiar through

the worship of your community for the contemporary hymns we suggest in this resource).

The sessions in this *Leader's Guide* may also be used to build a daylong or weekend retreat, pulling together a focus that best meets the needs of the teens with whom you are working. By selecting activities, prayers, and games, you can provide teens with a wonderful immersion into the meaning and beauty of the Mass.



Using the DVD

The DVD provided in this *Leader's Guide* includes supplemental materials for adult formation as well as PDF bulletin inserts, flyers, and letters for advertising formation opportunities for youth in the parish or school as well as connecting with parents and guardians. The PDF files are editable so that you may customize the text to your parish's needs. The files may be sent by e-mail, uploaded to your parish/school website, social media page, or blog, or printed and sent by mail. The opening and closing prayers for each session are provided as separate PDFs to print and place in ritual binders. Social media suggestions are also provided, including memes to post online.

You will need your computer with a DVD drive to open all data files (PDFs, JPGs, etc.). To access the files on the DVD select “Start_Here” and an interactive menu will open. The files are organized on the menu in this way:

- Bulletin Inserts
- Flyers
- Letters and E-mails

- Opening and Closing Prayer
- Social Media Resources
- Videos

Videos

The DVD includes a series of five short videos about the Mass as well as a promotional video for parishes to use to help advertise the *From Mass to Mission* experience. Each video corresponds to the material provided in the booklet, *From Mass to Mission: Understanding the Mass and Its Significance for Our Christian Life for Teens*. Included in the videos are interviews with noted theologians, liturgists, and Catholics, and additional information about the Mass. The videos are intended to be shown in your formation sessions. Suggestions for incorporating the videos are provided in each session outline in this *Leader's Guide*. You may upload the videos to your parish website, blog, or social media page. Directions for playing and uploading the videos to a website are found on the DVD (select "Videos" and then "How to Play or Upload the Videos"). You may play the videos by using a computer with a DVD drive.



Overview of Sessions

Using the Booklet in Sessions

Encourage teens to bring the booklet every time they gather. They will use the book for some of the activities. They should not shy away from writing in the book, highlighting paragraphs or single sentences that strike them, or taking

notes in the margins. By doing so, they will capture some of the group learning experience and can refresh their memories down the line when they come back to the book for any reason.

Setting the Stage for Respectful Conversation

Whenever a group gathers for learning and conversation, it is helpful to set ground rules to set expectations and shape behaviors. By making these rules explicit at the beginning, the group has a sense of how to behave and the leader has a place to point when participants stray from their agreements.

There are many ways to set norms. You can simply brainstorm a list. Or you can provide one. One effective approach has been developed by Peter Bierer, an experienced parish youth minister. At the beginning of a retreat or other learning experience, he writes the letters **R, I, B, P** on a white board, and asks the youth to guess what words describe the best way to relate to each other and our time together. The letters represent:

- Respect self and others.
- Invest (you can only get something out of the experience if you are willing to put something in; although when God's involved, the return on the investment will certainly be terrific).
- Be open to whatever happens (some things might seem odd to you or take you out of your comfort zone, but it's all done for a reason).
- Participate in everything (including prayers, games, singing, small group sharing).

Also encourage teens to “let go and let God.” Leave home at home and focus yourself on the present moment and God will take care of the rest in good counsel.

These norms should only be set once and should be left in a spot where they are visible at each session. This can be done by dedicating a corner of a white board or writing them on a flip chart sheet that can be posted each time you gather.

Act Like Jesus

Many of our youth were introduced to the saying, “What would Jesus do?” as children. Ask teens, what would Jesus do if he were part of a group? Here are some qualities group members could have that would be based on the actions of Jesus:

- be affirming
- share
- be open to people who are different than you
- gently challenge people
- forgive people
- defend the rejected
- teach, pray, listen¹

Cell Phones

At the start, ask the youth to grab their phones, hold them up, and then instruct them to turn them off. Most will comply. Tell them, “If I see you using your phone, I’ll take it and return it when our session is over.” This should not be much of a challenge for the youth, as almost all schools restrict the use of phones in classrooms.

¹ Joy Jones, “A Model Process for the Inclusion of Teens in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults” (DMIN diss., CUA, 2012), 32, <http://cuislandora.wrlc.org/islandora/object/etd%3A313/datastream/PDF/view>.

If you are hosting a retreat, consider the fine art of confiscation. Suggest that they leave phones at home, or set that as an expectation. Or, collect phones at breakfast and return them after night prayer. Some parents want their teens to have phones so that they can reach them. Be proactive in giving the cell phone numbers of the adults who are present to parents for use in emergencies. You can also consider repurposing a shoe storage hanger. Label each pocket with a different participant’s name. When teens come into class, ask them to deposit their phones. They can retrieve their device as they leave.

Small Groups

When we are asked to place ourselves in small groups, it’s completely understandable that we gravitate to friends. It’s a rare person, never mind a teen, who will turn to a group of people with whom they are not well acquainted to form a discussion group. However, when we are gathered as God’s people, the Church, there are no “insiders” and no “outsiders.” To help teens bridge their friend circles to new people, you may have to structure the discussion groups in advance. You can do this by placing numbers on their nametags. You can have fun with this by putting teens from different high schools (or for that matter the same high school) together and then mixing them up the following week. One week you can put people together by gender, with girls in groups and boys in groups. Another week you can cluster them by birthdays. All of this helps build community, but even more important, it underscores the importance of the fact that we are one body with many parts, as St. Paul reminds us (see 1 Corinthians 12).

Prayer

Good liturgical catechesis naturally flows from the liturgy. The liturgy should always be the starting point for teaching others about the Mass, the sacraments, and other Catholic rituals. This is why each session begins with an opening prayer ritual that closely follows the proclamation of the Gospel as experienced at Mass. This experience provides a way for teachers, catechists, and youth ministers to engage in a process of prayer that is rooted in the liturgy, the “source of summit of our Christian life” — the heartbeat of the Church (*Lumen gentium*, 11). With the Sign of the Cross, proclamation of the Gospel, and concluding prayer, the prayer incorporates elements that are familiar to teens and provides an opportunity to “unpack” what they have experienced.

Music suggestions are provided in each session outline for the opening and closing prayers. To catechize through experience (that is, modelling in the session what we do in liturgical prayer) live music is preferred. Since this resource is intended to provide a deeper understanding of the Mass for teens, you should feel free to substitute the suggested songs with something that is more familiar to the teens and that which is sung regularly at Sunday Mass. Encourage teens to sing along with live music rather than with a recording.

The opening prayer for each session outline includes the proclamation of the Gospel. Include a sung Gospel Acclamation and use the setting that is done at school Masses or in the parish for Sunday Mass. Be sure to use the appropriate acclamation if it is during Lent (we do not sing or say Alleluia during Lent). You do not need to include a verse for the acclamation. Intoning the

Alleluia and inviting the teens to respond is sufficient for the opening prayer.

The opening and closing prayers include parts for the youth minister/catechist/teacher, a reader, and a cantor. The youth minister, catechist, or teacher acts as prayer leader. If there are teens present who regularly serve as readers in your parish or school, invite them to read during prayer. This may also be an opportunity to discern a teen’s gifts and invite them to consider taking part in this ministry at their school or parish.

Live music can be a bit tricky to have at catechetical sessions (see above). However, if there are teens in your group who are involved with music ministry at church (either as an instrumentalist, choir member, or cantor) or are in choir or band in their school you might consider inviting them to lead the Gospel Acclamation and other songs during prayer, especially if you have access to a piano and/or guitar in your classroom or wherever you will hold the sessions or retreat. You will need to meet with the young musicians ahead of time to make sure that they are familiar with the music and are able to sing and play during prayer. Another option is to have a parish cantor and/or instrumentalist volunteer to help. Or, if you are comfortable, you can sing the Alleluia without accompaniment.

Environment

Among the many things that make Catholicism so rich is the beauty of our symbols and images. Consider setting up a prayer corner in the room in which you are meeting, with a small altar cloth in the color of the liturgical season and a table cross. Light a candle. These simple additions can convey to participants that while this

is a learning experience, it is also an experience of being a community of faith.

For the opening prayer experience involving the Word of God you will want to have a podium from which to proclaim the reading. If one is not available, you could use a music stand and drape a cloth in the liturgical color over the stand to create a more dignified place for the proclamation of the Word. Consider placing a lit candle near the stand to signify Christ's presence in the Word. If possible, you might want to move the desks aside and place chairs in a circle around the prayer space or antiphonally. Be sure to be respectful of the classroom or meeting space. Anything that is rearranged should be returned to its proper place at the end of the session.



Promoting the *From Mass to Mission* Experience in Your Parish or School

Planning and Logistics

Select a coordinator, youth minister, or a team of catechists and/or teachers to deliver *From Mass to Mission: Understanding the Mass and Its Significance for Our Christian Life for Teens*. This learning experience is appropriate to any season of the liturgical year, and can be used at any time during the year, especially in the following ways:

- a seasonal short series during Lent for youth
- an intergenerational event in which teens, children, and adults each have their own sessions (see other age-appropriate resources in LTP's *From Mass to Mission* series)

- Confirmation preparation
- a series or retreat following Confirmation to keep youth involved in the parish
- formational opportunity for teens who are already liturgical ministers or for those who are currently being trained or interested in serving as a liturgical minister
- a daylong retreat or parish lock-in

Start by deciding whether this experience will be a series of five sessions or the heart of a special teen retreat. Decide on dates, time, and locations, with sensitivity to other activities happening in the parish and the greater community. You don't want to calendar a retreat, for example, on the weekend of the parish festival or on Super Bowl Sunday. The enclosed DVD includes posters, bulletin inserts, and e-mail templates for you to use to promote the experience to those you are hoping to attract.

Purchase copies of *From Mass to Mission: Understanding the Mass and Its Significance for Our Christian Life for Teens* to distribute to the youth who will participate. You will want to have these in the hands of teens and parents at least two weeks before you plan on meeting.

Recruit a group of adults who will host and facilitate the experience. These can be parents, but they also can be community members who do not have a teen in their home, or young adults who are not so far away from the experience of being a teen. These people should be coached to be committed listeners, not participants. By this we mean that their job is to be enthusiastic "welcomers," great listeners in small groups (if you have enough adults to have one per group), and expert "corrallers" of those who are acting out, detracting, or distracting.

They should be encouraged to withhold sharing in the small groups, keeping the space open for teens — even if that means that there is occasional silence.

Consider offering a similar formation experience for the adults who will be leading the team with youth. An adult version of *From Mass to Mission* is available from LTP and was written by Trish Sullivan Vanni with Paul Turner. Its accompanying *Leader's Guide* provides numerous options for helping adults come to appreciate the Mass more deeply and, in turn, help teens and younger children grow in their own faith.

See if you can identify particular gifts or interests in your adult leaders. Some will be comfortable gathering the suggested music and helping teens lead music. Others will be great at working with teens to prepare them to lead prayer. Some will be super at hospitality logistics. Invite those who are sharing in this ministerial experience to contribute from their strengths as disciples. Consider putting together a list of possible ways people can contribute, like those just mentioned, to provide entry points for your adults.

Advertising

To distribute *From Mass to Mission: Understanding the Mass and Its Significance for Our Christian Life for Teens* you can do the following:

Mail these booklets with the provided cover letter to parents (see the letter for either the

“retreat” or “individual sessions” found on the DVD). This will ensure that they get to recipients and don't end up somewhere they can't be found, such as in an overfull backpack or under a bed.

Distribute the teen book to participants when they gather. If you do this, we suggest printing out two sets of label-style name tag sheets. Put one of the labels with the participants name on the back of the book. That way, the inevitably abandoned copies can find their way home.

At least six weeks in advance, begin using your bulletin, website, and pulpit announcements to make the community aware of this teen learning opportunity (see the bulletin inserts and flyers for the “Retreat” and “Initial Promotion” found on the DVD). Consider having the invitation come from one or more of the teens who has demonstrated a leadership role in your youth group. Teens tend to be very preoccupied with the question “Who will be there?” and hesitant to take a leap on something unknown. Also, they want to be assured that the experience will be both interesting and fun, and that there will be space for them to be themselves. Consider asking some of your teens to do a short promotional video for you that can be placed on your parish website or Facebook page. A promotional video has been prepared for you and is found on the DVD.

Chapter One: Why Is Going to Mass Important?

Session 1 Outline



Before the Session

You will need to advertise the *From Mass to Mission* experience. Consider whether you will be hosting this event as a retreat or as a series of individual sessions in your parish or school. Bulletin inserts, flyers, and letters and e-mails are provided on the DVD (click on “Bulletin Inserts,” “Flyers,” and “Letters and E-Mails”). The following bulletin inserts are provided for you (the titles below correspond to the titles on the DVD):

- Retreat
- Initial Promotion for Five Sessions (Longer Form)
- Initial Promotion for Five Sessions (Shorter Form)
- Session 1

The following flyers are provided for you (titles below correspond to the titles on the DVD):

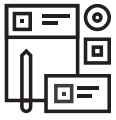
- Retreat
- Initial Promotion for Individual Sessions
- Session 1

The following letters and e-mails are provided for you (titles below correspond to the titles on the DVD):

- Retreat
- Individual Sessions

Objectives

- Begin developing a more mature understanding of what is accomplished for humanity in the Eucharist.
- Introduce core theological principles regarding the Eucharist.
- Emphasize the importance of going to Sunday Mass and encourage teen’s participation at Mass.
- Recognize the four-fold presence of Christ at Mass.
- Begin to make connections between participating at Mass and participating in the world as Christian disciples.
- Understand that the Mass has an ancient basic pattern.



Preparation Items

- DVD player/TV or computer with screen/projector
- Session 1 video
- prayer space has been prepared
- ritual binders for prayer
- Lectionary #168B
- music for prayer
- volunteers for leading music and proclaiming the Gospel
- multicolored plain M&M's
- bowl
- napkins
- flip chart, wipe off board, or white board
- closing prayer
- *From Mass to Mission: Understanding the Mass and Its Significance for Our Christian Life for Teens*, chapter one
- *Babette's Feast* (optional movie)



Opening Prayer

Begin the session with prayer. Be sure the prayer space is prepared ahead of time. You will want to arrange the space in a way that is conducive to prayer, learning, and activities. The opening prayer ritual is found on the DVD. Click on "Opening and Closing Prayer" and select the prayer for Session 1. Music suggestions are included. Print and place in a ritual binder. You may use the Lectionary for the proclamation of the Gospel or print the Gospel from the DVD and place it in a ritual binder. Invite teen volunteers to lead, read, and sing.



Icebreaker

M&M's (Mix and Meet)

Break your group into clusters of six to eight people. Each person grabs a handful of multicolored plain M&M's from a bowl you provide and places them on a napkin before them. Instruct everyone not to eat their candy just yet.

Put up a flip chart sheet (or write on a wipe off board or white board) that assigns a color to a topic. For example:

- blue = family
- green = school
- yellow = friends
- red = hobbies
- brown = music/movies

Participants are instructed to share as many facts as the number of M&M's they have. For example, if they have two yellow M&M's, they have to share two facts about their friends.



Lessons, Discussions, and Activities

Opening Discussion

- This first session establishes the principles for why it is important to go to Mass. Ask the teens to get in groups of five or six (no more). Ask them to share in a group about their experience attending Mass. How do they get ready to go? Do they go often? Why or why not? Why do they think Mass is important? Invite them to share in the larger group.
- Refer to page 2 in the booklet. Ask them to share with the larger group their responses to the questions.

Session 1 Video

Introduce the video for Session 1 by telling the youth that to understand the Mass more fully, we need to understand its importance and place in the life of the Church. Click on “Videos” to access the file on the DVD.

Note that the video outlined a number of reasons why it’s important to go to Mass. Ask the teens to share their own reasons why they think it’s important to go. Then choose two of the ideas provided below for group discussion.

Our Understanding of the Mass

The video you just watched offered insight into the ways Catholics understand the Mass. The list below summarizes what the Mass is (write these themes on a flip chart, wipe off board, or white board). The page number references refer to the teen booklet.

- Source and summit of the Christian life: The most important action we take as followers of Jesus (see p. 8).
- A mystery to be experienced: We bring ourselves and the deepest longings and needs of our hearts to God to directly experience God’s presence (see page 5).
- A sacrament of love: Jesus gave himself to free humanity from sin and, in his Death and Resurrection, accomplished our salvation (see page 5).
- A living thanksgiving: We express our gratitude for all God has done (see page 3).
- A sign of unity: We become the Church in the Mass, and we live out our faith in the company of others (see page 9).
- A bond of charity: We come to see how deeply loved we are, and in turn share that love with others (see pages 9–10).

- A Paschal banquet: Jesus is the Lamb of God who has achieved the perfect sacrifice.
- Ask teens: What is your reaction to these ideas? Which do you find compelling? Which does your parish live out well in their celebrations of the Mass? What areas could be improved?

An Encounter with Christ: His Real Presence

Refer to the box on page 5 of the teen’s booklet. Elaborate with the following: Christ is present in many ways when we come together at Mass. This is one of the great mysteries of our faith. This teaching is found in the document from the Second Vatican Council, the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (see article 7). The Risen Christ is present to us in the following ways:

- In the wine and the bread which have been transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ. Although other Christians consider the bread and wine to only represent Christ, we believe the consecrated bread and wine to actually be Christ, just as he promised in the Last Supper. Christ is most especially present to us in the liturgy in the Eucharist, because the Eucharist is Christ’s true Body, Blood, soul, and divinity (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1374).
- In the Word of God when the Sacred Scriptures are proclaimed by the reader(s) who read the readings, the cantor who leads the community in praying the psalm in song, and the priest or deacon’s proclamation of the Gospel. When the Scriptures are read, Christ himself is speaking to us.
- In the person of the priest, who offers the sacrifice of the Mass. The priest acts in the

person of Christ (*in persona Christi*) as he leads the community in prayer and consecrates the bread and wine (the elements of the Eucharist).

- In the faithful who are gathered as an assembly to pray and to sing, because Christ promised that “where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them” (Matthew 18:20).

Ask teens: Did you know there are so many ways Christ is present to us at Mass? Or did you think Christ was only present in the Eucharist? Which are new to you, if any? Which are the most meaningful to you?

The Mystery of Presence

Refer to page 33 in the booklet. Whether it’s trying to figure out who will end up on the Iron Throne (*Game of Thrones*) or how humanity will survive the apocalypse (*The Walking Dead*), most of us love a good mystery. How will it turn out, we wonder? What will be the ultimate solution?

Since it was instituted, Christians have marveled and wondered about the mystery of the gift of Christ’s presence that becomes available in the Eucharist. We know that the bread and wine become Christ’s Body and Blood, because he promised that to us. But, receiving his Body and Blood also changes us to do God’s work in the world. This is why Mass is so important for our life of faith.

Ask teens: What does it mean to say that Christ is present in the Eucharist? What questions do you have about it? What does it mean to you to receive Communion? Why is Christ’s presence important to you? Does it change you? How?

Eucharist as Meal

Have the teens discuss what family dinner is like in their household.

After the discussion, say: The family dinner is important. For some young people, the natural connection between our communal celebration of the Eucharist and the family meal has been eroded. The Eucharist is a sacrifice, and it is also a meal, and it is challenging to confer the importance of the latter in an age where there is a breakdown in the family meal. Many young people grab meals on the fly, or eat by themselves at a kitchen counter or in front of the television. The family meal has traditionally been a place to come together, share about the day, discuss news and generally reconnect. Ask them: Would you consider making dinner for their family one day this week, gathering people at a table with a nice setting, including a candle?

Participation in the Liturgy and in the World

Refer to pages 3 and 8. Emphasize that the liturgy is the most important action we do as Christians. The Eucharist reveals to us the complete love that God has for every human person, binding us in union with Jesus Christ and one another. As the Body of Christ, we are called not only to love one another but to serve one another with generosity and selflessness. When we do this, we live out our call to *caritas*, Christian love for all people. Understood this way, Christian charity is not merely benevolent giving, but a virtue that unites us to God. Being the recipients of the love that God has poured out so completely, we are able to imitate God’s generosity in our own lives.

Ask teens to share how they think the Mass sends them out into the world to serve. How does the Mass help them to be better Christians?

What Are You Getting out of Mass?

Refer to pages 5 and 9. The word “liturgy” is from the Greek word *leitourgia*, which means the work of the people. The Mass is not the work of one person — the priest — but the entire community that is gathered and celebrating. Sometimes, it seems like we aren’t getting much out of Mass. It’s easy to complain and point the finger. “The homily is boring.” “The music is for old people.” Or any number of other complaints.

When John F. Kennedy was president, he gave any number of speeches, but there is one that has stayed in the popular imagination of Americans for more than sixty years. In his inaugural address, he said to Americans, “Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.” He challenged citizens to shift their focus from getting to giving.

In some ways, that would be good counsel for how to have a better experience at Mass. It is easy to focus on whether or not our perceived needs are getting met. In fact, the Mass is not just about each of us as individuals. It is about the whole Body of Christ — the people gathered in our setting, the millions of other people around the world, and all the faithful people who have died but who are alive in Christ in heaven.

Ask teens to share their responses to the questions on page 9 in the booklet.

The Ancient Pattern of the Mass

Before proceeding with the remaining chapters, point out the ancient structure of the Mass. The word Mass comes from the Latin word *missa*, which means “dismissal.” While originally it was used to describe the closing prayer at any liturgical celebration, over time, this word was only used to reference the Eucharist. We know from the writing of St. Justin Martyr that the celebration of the Eucharist took place on Sunday, not

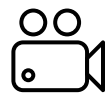
Saturday, which was the Jewish Sabbath. In the early Church, many people were both observant Jews and followers of Jesus.

As the Christian faith grew and spread, it became more diverse. The Mass was offered in more and more languages. Some of the practices of Greek and Roman culture began influencing how the community celebrated the Eucharist, such as including a full meal, called a love feast (*agape* feast), before the ritual meal of the Eucharist.

The *Didache*, a document dating to the first century of the Church, has provided contemporary scholars with a sense of what people did and said in the first Masses. Eventually, a variety of liturgical families, commonly called rites, emerged. In the United States, we pray in what is known as the Roman Rite, which is the most widespread rite of Catholicism. Note the four parts of the Mass:

- The Introductory Rites
- The Liturgy of the Word
- The Liturgy of the Eucharist
- The Concluding Rites

Ask teens: Did you know that the Mass has four parts? Are there parts of the Mass that grab and keep your attention? Parts that cause you to lose your focus? What are they? Why do some parts keep your focus?



Optional Movie

If your session is taking place within a longer retreat, you might consider showing the movie *Babette’s Feast* (G) followed by large group discussion. This is a 1997 Danish film that won the Academy Award for “Best Foreign Language Film.” *Babette’s Feast* is about austerity and celebration, solitude and community and so much

more. A film with strong Eucharistic themes, it could be shown as part of a movie night and discussed. You might consider scheduling a movie night with teens to watch this film since you probably cannot show it during a limited catechetical/youth ministry session.

Closing Prayer



Today's closing prayer suggestion is an ancient text from Ephrem of Syria, a deacon, writer of hymns, and theologian of the fourth century. His hymns were written to provide catechesis, and some even warn against heresies. It is found in the teen's booklet on page 8. It's also found on the DVD. Click on "Opening and Closing Prayer." If you print the prayer, be sure to place it in a ritual binder. Pray the text together.



Preparing for Next Week

For Teens to Do

Read chapter two in the booklet. Point the youth to the "How Can You Prepare for Mass" box on page 12 in the teen booklet. Encourage teens to go to Mass with their families this weekend. Ask teens to think about this question: This week when you go to Mass, look around as the assembly gathers. What do you notice? At your next session, invite teens to be ready to share their reflections about their experience. Everyone who brings a thought gets a piece of candy.

Letters to Send Home/Advertising

- E-mail, distribute, or mail the parent and guardian letter for Session 1.
- Publish the bulletin insert and post the flyer for Session 2.

Social Media Suggestions

Here are sample texts to post on Facebook or tweet after your session. They can be customized with youth group or parish hashtags.

- God loves us with an unlimited, infinite, perfect, almost humanly incomprehensible love. **#masstomission #ouryouthgroup #stmcgillicuddy**
- "This is my commandment: Love one another as I love you." — John 15:12 **#masstomission #ouryouthgroup #stmcgillicuddy**
- The Real Presence: Christ is truly and completely present in the Eucharist. **#masstomission #ouryouthgroup #stmcgillicuddy**
- "Our Christian identity is to belong! We are Christians because we belong to the Church." — Pope Francis **#masstomission #ouryouthgroup #stmcgillicuddy**
- Mass is not just about each of us as individuals. It is about the whole Body of Christ. **#masstomission #ouryouthgroup #stmcgillicuddy**
- Instagram, tweet, or Facebook a picture of the front door of your church. Caption: Waiting to be opened for you. **#masstomission #ouryouthgroup #stmcgillicuddy**
- Refer to the DVD for a meme to post on social media. Select the option for Session 1.