

# FROM MASS TO MISSION

Understanding the Mass and Its  
Significance for Our Christian Life

for Children



LEADER'S GUIDE

JOYCE DONAHUE

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*Nihil Obstat*

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The title of this book was inspired by *Dies Domini*, 45. The cover of this book presents a metaphorical illustration depicting that we are sent from Mass as disciples called by Christ to be his light in the world (see Matthew 28:16–20).

This book was edited by Danielle A. Noe, MDiv. Christian Rocha was the production editor, Anna Manhart was the designer, and Kari Nicholls was the production artist. Juan Alberto Castillo was the designer and production artist for the materials on the DVD.

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# Welcome!

Full, conscious, and active participation in the Mass is the most important thing that Catholics do (see the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 14). Everything we are and everything we can become in Jesus Christ flows from the liturgy. In all our activities during the week, we should reflect what we celebrated the previous Sunday and look ahead to the next celebration. Our anchor is the liturgical year, which spirals us through sacred time even as we navigate our days from birth to death.

As a teacher and catechist, yours is an important role. You are partnering with parents to pass along to children a love and appreciation of the Mass that can become a lifelong basis for the practice of the faith and nourishment for their journey to discipleship. This *Leader's Guide* accompanies *From Mass to Mission: Understanding the Mass and Its Significance for Our Christian Life for Children*, a short booklet for children in grades 3–6. It is designed as a supplemental resource for diocesan-approved curricula and is designed to help you use the children's booklet in a parish religious education session, at Catholic school religion classes, and with parents to learn with their children.

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## Structure of Lessons

The children's booklet, *From Mass to Mission: Understanding the Mass and Its Significance for Our Christian Life for Children*, includes five chapters. The first chapter provides context for liturgical prayer and for why it is important to attend Mass, especially as a family. The remaining four chapters are on each part of the Mass: the Introductory Rites (chapter 2), the Liturgy

of the Word (chapter 3), the Liturgy of the Eucharist (chapter 4), and the Concluding Rites (chapter 5). The lesson outlines in this *Leader's Guide* correspond to each of these five chapters, and are easily adaptable to fit many classroom models and parish needs. The number and type of interactive activities included in these lessons allow you to help students go beyond a superficial level of understanding. You might even consider using the activities throughout the liturgical year as a refresher on the Mass. Each lesson includes the following elements:

- reflection for teachers and catechists
- full lesson with preparation materials and teaching points
- incorporation of videos for each lesson
- suggestions for utilizing supplemental material on the DVD
- fostering the prayer life of children
- homework
- family activities and reflections (“Family Connection”)
- chapter quiz and answer key

In situations where a number of full-length lessons can be presented, such as school religion class, *From Mass to Mission* is best taught in six sessions, with the chapter on the Liturgy of the Eucharist divided into two parts, due to its length. You will find an optional chapter break in this guide, with a learning activity to assist you in ending the session.

For situations where less time can be devoted, such as in a weekly religious education class, plan to teach chapter 1, “Why Is Mass Important?” as one

lesson, but divide up subsequent chapters according to the segments of the Mass and use the activities as supplemental pieces throughout the year.

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## **Connecting with Parents and Guardians**

Parents and guardians are crucial to children’s Mass attendance — reaching out to them and finding strategies to encourage them to discover the rich spiritual potential of the Mass is one of the best things you can do. At the end of each chapter in the children’s booklet, you will find a family reflection and activity called the “Family Connection.” Children should be encouraged to take their booklets home and to work on these parts with their parents. The *Leader’s Guide* you now hold in your hands includes letters to send home to parents encouraging them to work on these parts together with their children. The letters are found on the accompanying DVD. They may be printed and sent home with the children or e-mailed to parents.

To encourage family reflection on the Mass, this resource also includes instructions for how to host intergenerational sessions — two formats are provided (see page 29). This will be especially helpful if your parish program typically has gatherings in a whole parish faith formation format with families learning together. This session would be a great way to launch the study of this book. Schedule the intergenerational session before beginning to use the booklet in classes. Letters of invitation and bulletin inserts promoting the intergenerational session are found on the DVD.

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## **Using the DVD**

Supplemental PDFs, PowerPoint game, and videos for use in the classroom or by families at home are found on the accompanying DVD. The PDFs include editable fields so that you can adapt the text to fit the needs of your parish or school. You may print as many copies as you need for your catechetical purposes. Suggestions for using these materials are noted where appropriate in each lesson outline in this *Leader’s Guide*. To access the files on the DVD select “Start Here” and an interactive menu will open. The menu includes the following options:

- Activities and Handouts
- Quizzes
- Parish Bulletin Inserts
- Letters and E-mails
- Videos

The videos may be used in classroom sessions or by families at home. In an age-appropriate way, the videos present live Mass footage, further explanations of the Mass, and interviews with liturgical experts, parents, and children. Furthermore, the videos may be uploaded to the parish or school website. Directions for playing and uploading the videos are found on the DVD (select “Videos” and “How to Play or Upload the Videos”). Directions for using the videos in each lesson are found in the lesson outlines provided in this *Leader’s Guide*. You must use a computer with a DVD drive to play the videos and access the files.

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## **A Your Spiritual Enrichment**

One last thing. You will be more effective in encouraging children to love the Mass if you personally love the Mass and participate in it regularly. In your preparation materials for each session, you will find reflection questions designed to put you personally in touch with the beauty of the Mass and its connection to your spiritual life. We hope that using this resource will help you continue to grow in your personal understanding and appreciation for the Mass, not just so you can teach that to others, but so you can personally experience spiritual growth in the Eucharist.

There is ample advice throughout this guide to help you deepen your understanding and appreciation of the Mass. You may wish to start with the brochure provided on the DVD for parents and older students, “How to Get More out of the Mass.” For additional enrichment for yourself, or as an adult resource for use with parents, see *From Mass to Mission: Understanding the Mass and Its Significance for Our Christian Life* by Trish Sullivan Vanni with Paul Turner, also available from Liturgy Training Publications.

—Joyce Donahue



## CHAPTER 1 LESSON

# Why Is Mass Important?

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### Before Session

- Decide if you will be offering an intergenerational session (see page 29) or will be reviewing this lesson in class.
- Depending upon if you will be offering an intergenerational session or using this resource in a classroom setting, publish the appropriate bulletin inserts. See the DVD for these materials. Click on “Bulletin Inserts.”
- Mail or e-mail the appropriate letter to parents and guardians found on the DVD. Letters regarding *From Mass to Mission* are available for hosting an intergenerational session, or for sending to parents and guardians of children in Catholic schools or parish religious education programs. You might include a copy of the children’s booklet with the letter. Click on “Letters and E-mails” and select “From the School” or “From the Parish.”



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### Reflection for Teachers and Catechists

“The Church earnestly desires that all the faithful be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations called for by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as ‘a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people’ (1 Peter 2:9; see 2:4–5), is their right and duty by reason of their baptism.”

—*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 14

- ❖ What does “full, conscious, and active participation” mean to you?

- ❖ Do you participate actively in the Mass? Why or why not?
- ❖ What do you need, or need to let go of, in order to do better?



### Lesson 1

#### Preparation for Lesson 1

This session is about the importance of liturgical participation — being an active part of the Mass. Young people sometimes say Mass is “boring” because to them it may seem repetitive and rote, and they are conditioned to be passive watchers. Your task is to help them understand that they, as members of the assembly, have an active role at Mass. They are not an audience.

Watch the video for chapter 1 ahead of time. The video is found on the accompanying DVD. Note some places where you may want to pause the video or any moments in the video that you may want to refer to during teaching.

**Before beginning your lesson, do the following:**

- Make sure each child in the class has a copy of *From Mass to Mission: Understanding the Mass and Its Significance for Our Christian Life for Children*. You might want to have extra copies on hand in case children forget to bring their copy to class (children are encouraged to read the booklet and do its suggested activities at home with their family).
- Have the video for chapter 1 ready to play for the students.
- Prepare a prayer space in your classroom. See page 28 in this *Leader’s Guide* for ideas on creating the space. Colors and symbols of the liturgical season, a Bible, candle, cross or crucifix, and other appropriate seasonal items should be part



of your instructional space for every religious education or religion class lesson, to help participants see this is not a school subject, but a place for sacred sharing of Catholic faith.

- Print a copy of the quiz for chapter 1 found on the DVD (click on “Quizzes”). The answer key is found in this *Leader’s Guide* on page 9.
- Print copies of the letter that is to be sent home with the children. It is available on the DVD (click on “Letters and E-mails” and select the letter for lesson 1). You may also e-mail the letter to parents.
- The children should be encouraged to work on the “Family Connection” section together.

## Teaching Points for Lesson One

The following provides helpful tips and instructions for supplementing your lesson with the booklet *From Mass to Mission: Understanding the Mass and Its Significance for Our Christian Life for Children*. Point out to the children that words in bold are defined in the Vocabulary section on page 37 in their booklet. The headings below correspond to those found in the children’s booklet.

### Mass Is Special!

Turn to page 1 in the booklet. Have the children read the first paragraph. Ask students where they get to be an audience, just sitting and watching. Possible answers may be: at home watching TV, movie theaters, sports events, formal concerts, dance recitals, and so on.

Explain that when we are in church we are *not* the audience. We are part of the action. Mass is actually interactive, just like their favorite video games! There are important things they can do all through the Mass that will make the experience more fruitful for them.

### Mass Is Where We Meet Christ

Emphasize the four ways Christ is present at Mass — list these on your board:

- in the Eucharist
- in the priest
- in the Word of God
- in the people at Mass

Ask students to look at the “Reflect and Share” question in the box on page 2 in the booklet. Discuss their answers.

Talk about how they normally participate in an activity, using the examples from the student book (see page 2).

### Bonus Concept: Ritual Is Repeated Action

Ask students why they think we do some of the same things at Mass every time we gather. Explain that there are other times we expect to repeat actions. Ask what they expect to see and hear at a birthday party. For example, children might respond: birthday cake, singing “Happy Birthday,” blowing out candles, opening presents, and so on. Explain that just like at a birthday party, when we are at Mass we expect to do the same things together every time we gather. When we have a job to do, it helps if everyone knows their part!

### Video

Show the video for chapter 1 found on the DVD (click on “Videos”). You can play the entire segment at once, or choose stopping points for discussion. When finished, have students continue where you left off in chapter 1.

### Pray with Your Whole Body

Read the paragraph on page 3. Have the children make the Sign of the Cross, stand, sit, and kneel.

### We Listen, Speak, Believe, and Live as God’s People

Emphasize paying attention to God and being part of his people. Ask: “Why this is important?”

### Prayer Activity

Quiet the students and have them close their eyes. Urge them to use their imagination to remember something that feels holy or special about the Mass. Instruct them to write that in the space on the their page, then to sit quietly and say a silent prayer as others in the class finish.

Lead the “Pray with Your Family” prayer found on page 4 in the children’s booklet. Let the children read it aloud with you.

## Homework/ Materials to Send Home

Point to the “To Do this week” section on page 5 and the “Family Connection” on page 5 in their booklet. Children should bring their booklets home to complete the “To Do This Week” task and work on the activities with their family.

In addition to bringing home their booklets to explore with their families, distribute or e-mail the letter to parents and guardians. This letter explains *From Mass to Mission: Understanding the Mass and Its Significance for Our Christian Life for Children*, stresses the importance of attending Mass as a family, and explains the “Family Connection” and expectations

for parents. A letter is provided on the DVD for whether you are a parish or school. Select the letter for “After Lesson 1.”

Upload the video for chapter 1 to your school or parish website. Directions for uploading are found on the DVD. E-mail parents or guardians a link to the video and encourage them to discuss together as a family.

### Quiz

If you wish, distribute the quiz for chapter 1 in class today, assign it for homework as a way to bridge chapter 1 with the beginning of your lesson on chapter 2, or give it to the students at the beginning of your next lesson. The quiz is found on the DVD (click on “Quizzes”). The answer key is found below.



### CHAPTER 1 QUIZ

## Why Is Mass Important? Answer Key

- Going to Mass is important for Catholics because
  - It helps us learn more about God and how he wants us to live.**
  - The parish needs the money we put in the collection.
  - We are afraid God will be angry if we don't go.
- Christ is really present at the Mass
  - In the readings from the Word of God
  - In the Eucharist
  - Both A and B**
- The word *liturgy* means
  - Slow prayer
  - Work of the people**
  - The music we sing at Mass
- When you stand, sit, kneel, or walk during Mass, you are praying with your body.
  - True**
  - False
- Nothing we pray at Mass is what we believe.
  - True
  - False**
- Name one thing you learned about the Mass that you did not know before.  
**Answers will vary.**



## Chapter 2 Lesson

# We Get Ready for Mass



### Reflection for Teachers and Catechists

“The assembly should *prepare* itself to encounter its Lord and to become ‘a people well disposed.’ The preparation of hearts is the joint work of the Holy Spirit and the assembly, especially of its ministers. The grace of the Holy Spirit seeks to awaken faith, conversion of heart, and adherence to the Father’s will. These dispositions are the precondition both for the reception of other graces conferred in the celebration itself and the fruits of new life which the celebration is intended to produce afterward.”

—*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1098

- ❖ **How well do you prepare yourself to celebrate Mass?**
- ❖ **What could you do, or what do you need to make it easier to prepare both externally and internally?**



## Lesson 2

### Preparation for Lesson 2

This session is about how we prepare ourselves for the Mass, both externally and internally. It is so important that we not arrive at Mass on “autopilot” and simply allow it to happen to us. To get the most benefit from the Mass — and to provide our best for our parish community — we need to be prepared to participate fully and to be open spiritually to what we will receive from the Word and Sacrament. The headings below correspond to those in the children’s booklet. The handout on the DVD, “How to Get More out of the Mass” will help you to learn more about how to do this

yourself — and prepare you to explain this to students. Click on “Activities and Handouts.”

Watch the video for chapter 2 ahead of time. It is found on the DVD (click on “Videos”). Note any places where you might want to pause or refer to during the lesson.

#### Before beginning your lesson, do the following:

- Make sure the children have copies of *From Mass to Mission: Understanding the Mass and Its Significance for Our Christian Life for Children*. They will need to open to chapter 2 which begins on page 6.
- Have the video for chapter 2 ready to play for students.
- Prepare the prayer space in your classroom or meeting room (see page 28).
- If you have a large liturgical year calendar available, post it where it can be seen. Consider hanging LTP’s *Year of Grace* calendar (available here: [www.LTP.org](http://www.LTP.org)). It is published annually and includes a beautiful illustration of an aspect of our Catholic faith.
- If you plan on using the optional “Name That Season” game, use the PowerPoint found on the DVD (click on “Activities and Handouts”) or use the physical objects needed for the game (see the instructions on page 12). (This game works well with this lesson but it can also be used periodically throughout the year, especially in Advent when the new liturgical year begins.)
- Print the quiz for chapter 2 found on the DVD (click on “Quizzes”). The answer key is found in this *Leader’s Guide* on page 13.
- Students in grades 5 and 6 may receive their own copy of “How to Get More out of the Mass.” This handout is found on the DVD (click on

“Activities and Handouts”). Be sure to make enough copies to send home to parents.

- Be ready to point out to the children the “Family Connection” section that is found at the end of the chapter. The children should be encouraged to work on this with their family.

## Teaching Points for Lesson 2

### Preparing Yourself

Have students read the question about preparing for special events and write their answer in the blank (see page 7 in the booklet). When they are ready, have them share their answers. Then, go over the bullet points on preparing “on the outside” (see page 6 in the booklet). Make sure they understand about the Eucharistic fast — not eating for an hour before Mass. You can have them stand next to their desk or chair and demonstrate how to genuflect.

Then, go over the bullet points on how to get ready “on the inside” (see page 7 in the booklet). When you get to the liturgical year, if this has not already been explained at another time during your class, take time to point out the seasons of the year and their corresponding colors on the calendar “wheel,” either using the one in the book or, if you have one, a large poster of the liturgical year (available annually from Liturgy Training Publications, [www.LTP.org](http://www.LTP.org)). The optional game activity for the end of this session is a Power-Point found on the DVD (click on “Activities and Handouts.”)

### Video

Show the video for chapter 2 found on the DVD (click on “Videos”). You can play the entire segment at once, or choose stopping points for discussion. When finished, have students continue where you left off in chapter 2.

### The People Get Ready

Go over the section on preparations for Mass and ask what students have observed before Mass. If there are any altar servers in the class, they should be responsive and helpful.

This would be a great time to ask a liturgical minister to visit class, especially a sacristan. Ask your parish liturgy or music director or coordinator for a recommendation for someone to ask, if you do not know. That person can explain or demonstrate how to set up for Mass.

### Introductory Rites/Opening Procession

Describe the opening procession and song, using the text (or have students read that section on page 8). Be sure to point out and define the vocabulary words that are in bold. Ask if or when students have seen incense used at Mass.

### Saying Hello in a Special Way

Have students practice the Sign of the Cross, then go over the three options for the greeting. No matter what the priest says, their answer is always the same. Explain that we say “And with your spirit” to remind ourselves that we are talking with Christ, through the person of the priest.

### Asking Forgiveness

Go over the three options for the Penitential Act, and again, ask which they hear most often. Then point out the Kyrie and mention that these are the only Greek words we say at Mass.

### Sprinkling Rite

Talk about how water used during Easter Time reminds us of our Baptism — and the relationship between the names of the *aspersorium* and *aspergillum* and the Latin word *asperges* which means “to wash.”

### Reflect and Share

Have students guess why we strike our chests during the Confiteor . . . the reason is that this shows we are sorry from the heart for our sins.

### Praising God: The Gloria

Discuss the Gloria and its connection to the angels singing to the shepherds at the Lord’s birth. Perhaps sing together the refrain or part of it from a setting your parish or school uses frequently.

## The Collect

Remind students that part of their preparation for Mass is to think of a personal intention for the Mass. In the silence before the Collect they can offer that prayer to God.

### Activity: Name That Season!

This activity can be used at the end of this session or at another time. Use the PowerPoint, “Name That Season!” found on the DVD (click on “Activities and Handouts”). The answers to the game are found in the notes field in the PowerPoint game.

As an alternative, you can use actual objects to represent the seasons and have the students guess the correct answer. For this “live version” you will need the following:

- fabric swatches in the colors of the liturgical year: bluish violet, white, green, reddish violet, red
- a small Advent wreath (or a picture of one)
- a picture of the night sky with stars (Advent)
- a picture of sunrise (late Advent)
- a miniature nativity scene, or a picture of one (Christmas Time)
- a living green plant, or a picture of one (Ordinary Time)
- stones, cacti, or pictures of the desert (Lent)
- a cross (Holy Week / Palm Sunday / Good Friday / Triduum)
- a basin, towel, and pitcher (Holy Thursday / Triduum)
- a white candle (Easter Vigil / Triduum)
- a picture of an empty tomb (Easter Time)

- a bowl or bucket of water with a branch or a picture of a baptismal font (Easter Time)
- red or orange paper flames or pictures of fire (Pentecost)

### Directions for the Game

Divide students into two teams. Using the PowerPoint or physical objects, alternate teams by showing each team a color or an object associated with a season of the liturgical year. The team that guesses the most correct answers on the first guess wins! The answer key is below.

### Prayer

Lead the “Pray with Your Family” prayer found on page 13 in the children’s booklet. Let the children read it aloud with you.

### Homework/Materials to Send Home

Point to the “To Do This Week” and the “Family Connection” sections on page 14 in their booklet. Children should bring the booklets home to complete the “To Do This Week” task and work on the activities with their family. Upload the video for chapter 2 to your school or parish website. Directions for uploading are found on the DVD. E-mail parents or guardians a link to the video and encourage them to discuss together as a family.

### Quiz

If you wish, distribute the quiz for chapter 2 in class today, assign it for homework as a way to bridge chapter 2 with the beginning of your lesson on chapter 3, or give to students at the beginning of your next lesson. The quiz is found on the DVD (click on “Quizzes”). The answer key is found in this *Leader’s Guide* on page 13.



## CHAPTER 2:

# We Get Ready for Mass

## Quiz Answer Key

1. Mass is special because
  - A. We get to go to church.
  - B. Christ is really there.**
  - C. We get to dress up.
2. I can get ready for Mass on the outside by
  - A. Dressing in clean clothes
  - B. Washing my hands
  - C. Not eating anything for one hour before Mass
  - D. All of the above**
3. I can get ready for Mass on the inside by
  - A. Thinking about what I have to do the rest of the day
  - B. Hoping Mass is interesting that day
  - C. Looking at the readings I will hear at Mass ahead of time**
4. Who is in the entrance procession?
  - A. The crossbearer, reader(s), priest, deacon (if there is one), and altar servers**
  - B. The priest, the sacristans, and the candle-bearers
  - C. The priest, the cantor, the extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, and the altar servers
5. The Collect is
  - A. When the ushers pass the basket to collect money
  - B. When the ministers of the Mass gather in the back of church before the entrance procession.
  - C. A prayer as we start Mass in which the priest gathers up all the people's intentions and offers them to God**



## CHAPTER 3 LESSON

# We Listen to God's Word



### Reflection for Teachers and Catechists

“In the liturgy of the word, the congregation of Christ’s faithful even today receives from God the word of his covenant through the faith that comes by hearing, and must respond to that word in faith, so that they may become more and more truly the people of the New Covenant.

The people of God have a spiritual right to receive abundantly from the treasury of God’s word. Its riches are presented to them through use of the Order of Readings, the homily, and pastoral efforts.

For their part, the faithful at the celebration of Mass are to listen to the word of God with an inward and outward reverence that will bring them continuous growth in the spiritual life and draw them more deeply into the mystery which is celebrated.”

—“Introduction” to the *Lectionary for Mass*, 45

- ❖ **When have you heard the Word of God at Mass and had it “speak” to you directly?**
- ❖ **What do you need to be more open to the Word of God?**



### Lesson 3

#### Preparation for Lesson 3

This session is about learning to listen and respond to God’s Word, as well as understanding the ritual actions and dialogues accompanying the sharing of the words from Sacred Scripture. Understanding that the homily is a teaching about the Word of God and a part of this sacred sharing is also important. The

headings below correspond to those in the children’s booklet.

Watch the video for chapter 3 ahead of time. It is found on the DVD (click on “Videos”). Note any places where you might want to pause or refer to during the lesson.

#### Before beginning your lesson, do the following:

- A simple media connection for fun: grab your cell phone and take a photo of the ambo (pulpit) in your parish church or school chapel so you can have that ready to show your students.
- Make sure the children have copies of *From Mass to Mission: Understanding the Mass and Its Significance for Our Christian Life for Children*. They will need to open to chapter 3 which begins on page 15.
- Have the video for chapter 3 ready to play for students.
- Prepare the prayer space in your classroom or meeting space (see page 28).
- Make sure you have access to a Bible.
- Borrow a Lectionary from the church, parish office, or school library to show your students. (Be sure to return it to its proper place.)
- Point out to the children the “Family Connection” section that is found at the end of the chapter.
- Print the quiz for chapter 3 found on the DVD (click on “Quizzes”). The answer key is found in this *Leader’s Guide* on page 17.

#### Teaching Points for Lesson 3

##### The Liturgy of the Word and the Importance of Listening to God

Go over the brief explanation of the importance of the Word of God and the section called “Time to Listen!” (see page 15). Hold up a Bible. Emphasize that the readings we hear at Mass are all taken from the Bible.