



Close Encounters with the Mass

Study Guide

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1. Mr. Ferndock seems very confused about the Mass. He gives the children some incorrect answers to their questions. However, the questions the children asked are often the same questions you might have about the Eucharist. Before you begin studying about the Mass, write down one or two questions you have about the Eucharist.
2. The Mass is a meal. What do you need to have a family meal? How is the Eucharist like your own family meal?
3. The Mass is a ritual – a ceremony, special custom or procedure. We have daily rituals like the way we get ready for school in the morning or how we all go to lunch each day. We also have special rituals like the way we celebrate major holidays like Thanksgiving or Christmas. What are some of your daily rituals and some of your special rituals? How is the Mass a ritual every time we celebrate it?
4. We prepare for the Mass. Some people take home a Missalette and read the Scripture readings before they come to Mass. They say it helps to prepare them for Mass. Perhaps your class has had the opportunity to prepare for one of your Eucharistic celebrations. You may have written out the General Intercessions for the Mass or planned the music. Think of one way that you could prepare yourself better for going to Mass.
5. The Mass celebrates the value of sacrifice. At Mass we remember that Jesus chose to die on the cross for our sins. That was the biggest sacrifice of all. However, we also make love offerings to people. We do this when we give up something we want to do, in order to do something else we know is right. At the Eucharist we have the opportunity to connect our sacrifices with Jesus. What are several sacrifices you have made recently?
6. The Mass begins with the Gathering Rite. Who gathers together at the Eucharists you celebrate? What do they have in common? Do you have any special ways to make new people feel welcome?
7. The next part of Mass is the Liturgy of the Word. At this time we recall how God has worked in the lives of His people, especially the Church. Share with your class several of your favorite Old Testament or Gospel stories. Why do you like these or remember them so well?
8. The Preparation of the Gifts is the next part of Mass. On Sundays it is a time to give money to help support our faith community. However, there are many other ways to give to our Church. We share our time and our talent, too. Just being present at Mass is a gift of your time. What are some other gifts that you could bring to the Eucharist? Remember, we are not talking about material things, but rather talents we share.
9. The Liturgy of the Eucharist follows next. This is a very special part of the Mass. It is the time when the priest recalls the Last Supper, the death and resurrection of Jesus. It is a time when we talk directly to God the Father. We thank and praise God. We ask Him to send the Holy Spirit to us in a very special way. We ask that our bread and wine be made into the Body and Blood of Christ. How well do you listen to this part of Mass? Do you give your thanks for the great gift of Jesus in the Eucharist?
10. Mr. Ferndock talks about the Eucharistic fast. We do not eat or drink anything except water for one hour before we go to Mass. He says that this is so we can come to the table of the Lord hungry to receive Jesus into our lives. An hour doesn't seem like a long time not to eat anything, but many people ignore the fast completely, especially by chewing gum. What might be a good way for you to remember to that this fast is important to our spiritual lives?
11. After the Eucharistic prayer we are called to the altar to receive Jesus into our hearts. Just as we would feel upset if there were no bread or food in our houses, we should want very much to receive Jesus

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as spiritual food for our souls. What can you do to make sure that you are really paying attention to what you are doing during the Communion Rite?

12. The Closing Rite is the last part of Mass. It is a time for us to realize that we are part of this larger community called the Church. We accept the responsibility to help build God's Kingdom each day in our lives. What are some ways that you can show you are a Christian to others in your daily life?

13. After seeing this video, how has your understanding of the Eucharist changed? Are any of your questions answered? Does it make more sense as part of your life?

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