



Holy Rosary Parish,  
Milton, ON



## *Bringing Your Child to Mass*

*"Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them;  
For it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs."*

*Matthew 19:14*





### ***Engaging your Children in the Mass***

**We are grateful to parents who continue to bring their children to Mass. We understand that the Eucharist is the “source and summit of Christian life” and, as such, our faith community of Holy Rosary Parish supports you in bringing your child to Mass. In this Year of Faith, we are reminded that the primary means for transmitting the faith rests with Family. Here are a few helpful hints to make the Mass a positive experience for all.**

#### ***Laying the Groundwork***

**You are the first and most important faith educators of your children. You already know that your child loves to pretend to be mom or dad cooking, vacuuming, and repairing. Use that rapt attention to model faith-filled behaviour, including:**

- ◇ **prayer before meals and bedtime**
- ◇ **making daily connections to the Creator’s role in the world around us**
- ◇ **active participation at home in the rich traditions of our faith: praying the rosary; gathering around an Advent wreath; Lenten promises of prayer, fasting and repentance**
- ◇ **regular attendance at celebrations of the Mass – your child should not be a stranger to the faith community between Baptism and First Reconciliation**

### ***Before Mass***

- ◇ **When introducing your children to the world of books, take time to explore a Children’s Bible, one with captivating pictures to encourage curiosity**
- ◇ **Create a special bag that is brought out ONLY when it’s time for Mass – this bag might include pencils, pencil crayons, paper, sacramental books, coloring books, and wallets**
- ◇ **Please avoid bringing food if you are able. We have just renovated and we’d like to keep our church looking good. Young children do not need to fast—ensure our little ones have eaten well before coming. We understand that infants may need bottles—perhaps sealed “sippy” cups can be used for toddlers. As well, if you do bring crackers or small snacks please be courteous to others’ attending future Masses and clean up any mess**
- ◇ **Make a game out of teaching the difference between indoor/outdoor/whispering (or church) voices**
- ◇ **Set the context for your children: Mass is a gathering of church family; liken it to special family dinners at home: we arrive on time, give our full attention to the guest of honour, participate fully, and we don’t leave early**
- ◇ **Consider attending a Mass that has Children’s Liturgy (Sunday at 10:00 am and 11:30am) where children from JK to grade 2 can participate**

### ***During Mass***

**Here's where your preparatory work will bear fruit, but your role-modeling is still crucial in engaging your children in the celebration of Mass.**

- ◇ **Include your school-aged children in following the order of Mass**
- ◇ **Encourage joining in song (to sing is to pray twice!)**
- ◇ **For active children, phase in length of time the child is required to sit in the pew; time-outs, if needed in the foyer or outside; tune out some behaviours, but keep in mind the celebrant's and other parishioners' ability to focus**
- ◇ **Talk to children gently and calmly to reduce anxiety all round – praise is powerful**
- ◇ **Use the special bag that has been prepared with special books for Mass (colouring materials etc.)**
- ◇ **Please leave electronic games and devices at home**
- ◇ **Cue children for specific parts of the celebration (time for peace, time to go for a blessing; here's your favourite song; time for collection; time to stand/kneel/sit**

### ***After Mass***

- ◇ **Praise your child for a job well-done**
- ◇ **Introduce yourself and your family to our priests—they love to see young families at Mass**

***See you next Sunday!***

***Contributions by  
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