Mind Your Manners at Mass!

When we come into the church building we are entering a holy place. The walls have

been anointed by the bishop, the statues, pictures and windows remind us of God’s love

for us. People come here to pray and spend quiet time with God. Certainly we can pray

anywhere at any time, but prayer in church is always very special.

We begin by blessing ourselves with Holy Water when we enter. This reminds us of our baptism and that we are children of God, members of the Church, the Body of Christ.

We take off our hats, we lower our voices and we use our best manners.

We go into the church in a solemn way, to respect people who are praying. Before we go into the pew we genuflect to show our reverence for the **altar** and the **tabernacle**.

We spend a moment in prayer before Mass begins. It’s our chance to talk to God about

important things, to thank God or to remember in prayer the people who need God’s

help. We remain calm and quiet during the whole Mass because we are cooperating

with everyone in worshiping and praising God.

Every time you go to Mass, also called EUCHARIST, there are chances for you to join

in. Pay close attention during Mass and you will notice that you make the **Sign of the**

**Cross** many times. Name some of these times.

Another way of participating in the Mass is by adding your voice to the prayers we say

aloud. Do you know these prayers by heart so you can say them with the rest of the

People of God? **Nicene Creed, Gloria, Our Father, Lamb of God, Holy, Holy, Holy**

**and Prayer Before Communion.**

Another special way to be part of the Mass is by saying AMEN at the end of certain

Mass prayers. Did you know Amen means I BELIEVE? Next Sunday when the priest

says the various prayers, see how many Amens you can count. Hint: We say it after

the SIGN OF THE CROSS, the GLORIA, the CREED, and when we receive

COMMUNION. But there’s more Amens. One is called the GREAT AMEN. Which one

is this?

Don’t forget to listen QUIETLY at Mass. Use your loud clear voice for joining the

prayers, singing the hymns and saying every single AMEN.

At the **Sign of Peace** some people shake hands, some hug one another. What do you do

and say?

When you attend Mass watch for the four PROCESSIONS:

The priest comes down the center aisle of the church and goes to the altar at the

**Entrance Procession**. Who else is with him? What are they doing? The priest kisses

the altar when he first reaches it. Why do you think he does this?

In the **Offertory Procession** people carry wine, bread and collections to the priest who

waits in front of the altar. What are the people in the pews doing?

During the **Communion Procession** people at Mass move forward to receive the Body

and Blood of Christ. What should we be thinking about at that time?

The final procession is called the **Recessional**. The priest blesses us, then what

command does he give us? He walks down the aisle and goes out the main door of the

church to greet people as they leave. Do you ever say hello to the priest as you leave?

Even if you are not interested in the Mass every single minute, you should still sit

quietly so that you do not disturb or distract other people around you. God is certainly

watching you, but so are the other people around you. Your behavior at Mass can give

them a good or bad opinion of you and your family. Your excellent behavior and

participation may even get compliments from total strangers. Your poor behavior will

give people the impression that you don’t have much love or respect for God and

others.

God has given us everything we have. The very least we can do to thank God for all we

have is by giving ONE HOUR a week of our attention, participation and best behavior

at Mass.