

Top 10 Reasons to Go to Mass

Talking to your kids about the importance of attending Mass

“WHY DO WE HAVE TO GO TO MASS???” For many parents, this question will be asked by their children more times than they can count. For a time, parents may answer, “Because I said so” but eventually children will need better reasons. When the time comes, the following article written to teenagers, may be helpful in answering the question: why do we have to go to Mass?

For many kids the reason for going to Mass is simple - because parents make us go! (That's OK, they make us do lots of things that we may not want to do - but that are good for us!) But why SHOULD we go to Mass? It's important to remember that we are NOT going there to be entertained! Mass is something WE PARTICIPATE in. Most of our complaints about Mass come from the fact that we don't UNDERSTAND why we are there or what's going on during the mass. So why should we go?

TOP 10 reasons to go to Mass:

- 1. The Eucharist.** The Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ is available to us! It is the pinnacle of our life as Christians. What better way to follow Jesus than to receive Him in the Eucharist! Sometimes the teaching on the Eucharist is hard for us to understand. It was hard for His followers too - read John 6. If you have trouble with your belief in the True Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist - PRAY! He will help you.
- 2. Grace.** Grace is like Gatorade for the soul. Grace is God's life and God's help given to us to live a better life in Him. We receive grace through the sacraments. Mass is loaded with grace - ready for us to receive. The more open we are to it - by actively participating, the better!
- 3. The Third Commandment. Keep holy the Sabbath.** Simple words, simple meaning. "So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it; because on it God rested from all his work." (Genesis 2:2) We, too, must keep it a special and holy day. The church teaches that Mass is the most important way to do just that. It is not just a good idea - it is our obligation as People of God. Remember the words of Jesus - "If you love me you will keep my commandments" John 15:15. For Christians the Sabbath is now the first day of the week, Sunday, because it was on Sunday that our Lord rose. We start the week with a day totally devoted to our God. Liturgy Rocks.
- 4. Community.** We are the Church, the Family of God. God's people are not in this world to struggle along by themselves. We are all one in the Body of Christ. At Mass we join with Him in a special way. We join with those around us. It is a time to be with others for prayer and friendship. It is a mystical connecting with all our brothers and sisters around the world, in heaven and purgatory. Through Christ we become a community unlike any we know on earth. It is a glimmer of what heaven will be like.
- 5. Prayer.** The Mass is the ultimate prayer. There is singing, psalms, prayers of thanksgiving, prayers seeking forgiveness, prayers of worship and praise, the Lord's prayer and more. We pray as individuals and as a group. If you struggle with going to Mass - think of it from this perspective. The words we say are more than just a reply to the priest's words - they are prayer! Read them, say them, sing them, shout them, BELIEVE THEM!

6. The Bible. Every time Mass is celebrated we hear the Word of God. We hear from the Old Testament. It sets the stage for the Gospel reading. We hear from the New Testament - perhaps a letter from Paul or the Acts of the Apostles. In the Gospel we learn about Jesus from Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. Sometimes the readings are familiar, sometimes not. You hear more scripture at a Catholic Mass than at any other type of Sunday service! If you don't read the bible on your own - here is a chance to hear it proclaimed. If you do read the bible on your own, Mass is a time to get a better understanding of what you are reading. Jesus never said anything about go and write the Gospel for the world, he said go and PROCLAIM the Gospel. So we do.

7. The Our Father. One of the highlights of Mass is The Lord's Prayer. We use the words Jesus gave us and pray together as a family. Remember - it is the "Our" Father, not the "My" Father. Jesus wants us to pray together! The Our Father is the perfect prayer - we give praise to God, we ask that our lives be lived His way instead of our way, we ask for His continued presence in our lives, we ask for His forgiveness, and we pray for His strength in the battle against evil. It's all there. Pray it! Mean it!

8. Making time with God. If nothing else, ask yourself if you have at least one hour a week to set aside for God. Think of that. Imagine Jesus hanging on the cross, dying for YOU - and all He asks is that you join Him on Sunday for an hour or so, "Do this in remembrance of Me" (Luke 22:19) Can you do it? Yes. The question is - will you do it, for Him?

9. Suffering souls in purgatory. The souls in purgatory need our prayers. Special intentions are offered at Mass for those who have died - both as a group and individually. It is important not to assume that anyone who died is automatically in heaven - we must pray for them! And the cool part is those who are in purgatory can't pray for themselves but can pray for us.

AND 10... DRUM ROLL PLEASE

10. It's what Jesus wants us to do. Period.

Once you figure out what Sunday Mass is all about then ask yourself this question. Self, am I the type of person to always do the bare minimum? Do I only show up for the game, or do I spend time practicing? Do I only practice the piano when I have to? If you want to really be good at anything, the bare minimum is never enough. Being a Christian is no different. Try going beyond the minimum with Mass. Find a weekday Mass you can attend even one day a week. What an awesome way to say to God, I am not just trying to squeak into heaven. I want to get as much of You as I can as often as I can.

SOURCE: <http://www.catholicyouth.org/index.html>