

9. Join the procession.

We do not join a queue to receive Holy Communion; we form a procession of reverence and awe as we approach the altar. Every step is a step of faith and even a simple bow of the head before receiving Holy Communion becomes an act of humble adoration.

As we receive Holy Communion, our "Amen" confirms our belief in the Real Presence of Christ who makes His home within us and heals our souls. This should bring us to quiet contemplation and gratitude.

10. Go, the Mass is ended.

The sacred action has ended but what we have celebrated and experienced lives on in us as we make our way out into the world, renewed in our discipleship and bearing Christ crucified and risen in our hearts.



For more information about Sunday Mass,
please go to the parish website for up to date information
or contact your parish priest.

Please visit the new Thresholds of Hope website at
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Vicariate for Adult Formation

Ten tips to help
participate more fully in
the celebration of Mass

Thresholds of Hope
Formation, Mission & Relationship

1. The Eucharistic Fast.

Refraining from food and drink (except water and medicines) one hour before Mass is a physical reminder that we are to hunger for Christ who will feed us with His own divine life in Holy Communion. The elderly and those who are suffering from some illness, as well as those who care for them, may receive Holy Communion even if they have consumed something during the preceding hour.

2. Aim to arrive in good time.

If you come to Mass harassed and “on the run” then there will be little opportunity to still your mind and recollect your heart. This may prove a challenge even at the best of times but it should remain a spiritual goal.

3. Help build the silence.

The Psalmist sings “Truly I have set my soul/In silence and peace” (Psalm 31) and adults should try to do so as well because silence makes us more sensitive to the presence of Christ. When we are silent we do not hear less, we hear more. We become attuned to the stirrings of the Holy Spirit within us.

But for this to happen we need to still our anxieties, to be more attentive and less distracted, to quiet all the white noise outside and within us in order to listen for God’s presence. We need to turn off our mobile phones, remove our wireless earpods, end our useless chatter, be less physically and mentally unsettled. When these things happen then we begin to develop the habits of a listening silence and a humble stillness. We become more present to God.

Silence does not happen automatically. It is created by the work of each member of the worshipping assembly. As we come to Mass, we need to commit ourselves to cultivating the reverent silences of the Mass.

4. Offer a contrite heart.

Coming into the presence of God, the All Holy One, should make us more sensitive to the barriers we have placed between ourselves and Him by our sinfulness and lack of faith. Bringing a contrite heart before God, we also recognise how rich He is in mercy and forgiveness, how slow to anger.

5. Practise attentive listening.

If the readings at Mass are to ignite our hearts and make them burn with love for God then they must not only be proclaimed with conviction but need to be listened to with an attentive ear and open heart.

Spending a little time with the readings each weekday before coming to Sunday Mass will allow God’s word to take seed in the soil of our lives.

6. Unite ourselves to the Eucharistic Prayer.

At the altar, the priest prays in the person of Christ, the High Priest, and on behalf of the whole Church. This prayer offers thanksgiving to God for bringing everything into being and sustaining it in being. It also recalls the Last Supper and by the power of the Holy Spirit, the salvation offered once and for all by Christ becomes real and truly present to us: bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ, our Holy Communion.

The Eucharistic Prayer concludes with the priest recognising that “all glory and honour is yours forever and ever” to which everyone responds with a great “Amen”. This is our deeply felt “yes” to the beauty, truth and goodness of the Blessed Trinity.

7. Recognise your adoption as sons and daughters of God.

The proof of this is that “God sent the spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying out, ‘Abba! Father!’” (Gal 4:6) The very words that Christ prayed in the Our Father are given to us so that we can reach out to our Heavenly Father and know His care and love for us.

8. Become the sign of peace.

The sign of peace might be mistaken for a convivial sign of affection. It’s not. The peace is a sacred action calling us to a profound peace and unity that we cannot manufacture but that is ultimately a gift from God. Through the Eucharist, we are grafted to Christ, the Prince of Peace, and it is as peacemakers that we come to be known as children of God.

