



# Bringing Children to Mass



Our Lady of  
Mount Carmel  
Wentworthville

*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

We love all our parishioners. And the youngest ones are no exception.

Coming to Mass with children can be a very rewarding experience for everyone; children, parents and fellow parishioners. Here are some tips and services that will make the experience enjoyable.

## Before Mass

- Mass begins from the moment you decide to go to Mass. Incorporate Mass into your family's weekend plans. Instead of saying, 'Who wants to go to Mass?', ask everyone, 'Which Mass are we going to?'
- Prepare a small Mass Bag for your child. This could include a book about a saint, a children's missal, and a little money for the collection
- Download the next week's readings and prepare a colouring or activity sheet based on the readings. Include this with a few colouring pencils in the Mass Bag. Resources could be found at:
  - <https://www.catholicmom.com/sunday-mass-activities>
  - <https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Children-s-liturgy>
- Encourage children to take part in the more active parts of the Mass – the introduction, Gloria, Responsorial Psalm, Creed, Sign of Peace, the singing, the Collections, the Offering, Communion, etc
- Go to the bathroom before Mass – that way, there's less chance of being interrupted
- Sit as close to the front as possible. Kids are far more engaged if they can see the action. It's boring looking at the back of people's heads
- Consider coming to a Mass that has the Children's Liturgy of the Word.  
This is where we invite the children into a neighbouring room to participate in the Sunday's liturgy. We pray together, we read the gospel, and we talk about it.





The children share their thoughts and experiences about the gospel, and sometimes we may even have some time for a quick song or puzzle. It doesn't go for very long, and the children take part in the Offertory before joining their parents for Communion. Parents are always welcome to join.

The Children's Liturgy of the Word takes place at the 10am Mass

- Say hello to someone you know. Fist-bumps and high-fives are welcome
- Grab a newsletter and read through it with your child. Talk about all the events that are going on around your community.

## During Mass

- Relax! Honestly, nobody is as worried about bringing your kids to Mass as you are. We LOVE seeing you with your kids. We love that they're here, and we think you're just marvellous to bring them
- If you need to take your child to the narthex during Mass, it's OK. But come back! We really do want you and your children to be part of the celebration
- SING IT LOUD! All kids are wonderful, talented singers. We haven't met a single child that sings badly. We have a core parish repertoire that is familiar to most parishioners and visitors, and all songs are displayed on the screen. So, sing it loud and proud!
- Try and answer their questions. If they ask, quietly explain what is happening at Mass. If it's a trickier question, ask them to write it down and keep it for after Mass. If you're not sure of the answer, look it up together
- Give your child a little money to contribute to the collection
- *Peace be with you.* As a kid, it can be a little daunting shaking a stranger's hand. So, after you've offered your family the Sign of Peace, just let your child observe you at this ritual. Until they become a little more comfortable, they can offer it to someone by smiling and nodding, or maybe a little wave. Later on, when they're a little more confident, they may like to shake someone's hand.
- Come to Communion. Help your child line up, bow before the Body of Christ, and cross their arms in anticipation of a blessing. The minister will hold the paten over their head as a symbol that recognises their baptism, and of their eventual sharing at the altar



- Stay for a cuppa. Say hi to the priest or a friend. Primary school-aged children will probably find someone they know, so this is also a great time to catch-up with someone *you* know.


## After Mass

- Let them know how well they did at Mass, that they were very good listeners, and thank them for helping you to enjoy Mass
- Talk to your child about what they saw or heard at Mass
  - What colour was the priest wearing?
  - What was the gospel reading about?
  - What did you do at the Children's Liturgy of the Word?
  - What was the most interesting part of the Mass?
  - Can you draw something you saw or heard at Mass?
  - What will you pay more attention to next week?
  - What are you looking forward to next Sunday?
  - How should we prepare for next Sunday?
- Ask your child what they would like included in their Mass Bag for next week.



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