

## Week 1: Gather

Week	Week's Theme	Part of the mass
28 Oct – 3 Nov	<b>Gather</b>	Gathering & Introductory Rites
4 – 10 Nov	<b>Listen &amp; Respond</b>	Liturgy of the Word
11 – 17 Nov	<b>Give Thanks &amp; Praise</b>	Preparation of Gifts, Eucharistic Prayer
18 – 24 Nov	<b>Receive</b>	Communion
25 Nov – 1 Dec	<b>Go!</b>	Concluding Rites

### Looking at the Mass

#### Introductory Rites

- Entrance Procession
- Greeting
- [Sending forth the children]
- Penitential Act  
[or Blessing and Sprinkling of Water]
- Gloria
- Collect (Opening Prayer)

#### Liturgy of the Word

#### Liturgy of the Eucharist

#### Concluding Rites



We come together to listen to God's word and to be nourished by Christ's body and blood, so that we can be his body in the world. The **Introductory Rites** help to bring us together, once more, as the Body of Christ.

The assembly's worship begins with the opening song and **procession**, which help to create a sense of identity, a willingness to celebrate, and an awareness of the mystery being unfolded. After making the **Sign of the Cross** together, the priest and people exchange formal **greetings** as a mutual acknowledgement and calling forth of the presence of Christ in their midst and as a prayer for his sustaining power.

In the **Penitential Act** the assembly, gathered in God's presence, recognises its sinfulness and confesses the mystery of Christ's love.

The blessing and sprinkling of **water** serves as a memorial of Easter and Baptism. When it is used, it replaces the Penitential Act. God is thanked for intervening to save us through the medium of water and is asked to continue to give forgiveness and life.

The **Gloria** is one of the Church's most ancient hymns. In the West its use was originally restricted to the opening of only the most solemn eucharistic celebrations. The Gloria is by nature a festive hymn (which is why it is not sung during Advent and Lent).

The **collect** (or Opening Prayer) completes the introductory rites. Through petition to God, it expresses the character of the celebration and prepares the assembly to hear the word of God.

### Why do we do that...?

Mass begins with the Entrance Procession of the priest and other ministers. We all stand and sing the opening song (or recite the Entrance Antiphon).

One of the key purposes of standing and singing together is to express our unity and identity as the Body of Christ in this place and at this time.

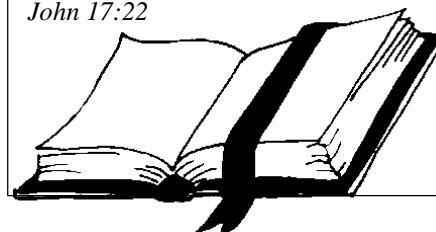
"We rise to greet people, to honour someone important, to express readiness for action, or when seized with excitement. In Christian liturgical tradition, standing is the basic posture of an Easter people lifted up to greet its risen Lord" (Celebrating the Mass 58)

**Let's stand in unity, ready for action, and sing heartily together - we are the Body of Christ!**

### SCRIPTURE CORNER

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it  
*1 Corinthians 12:27*

The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one  
*John 17:22*



# *In Communion With Christ*

It is baptism that makes us one with Christ, members of his Body, the Church. This unity is constantly renewed and sustained by our sharing in the Eucharist – not as individuals but as members of the Body. The Mass can never be celebrated alone – always we celebrate together, not only with those visibly present in a particular place, but together with the whole Church, on earth and in heaven. This spiritual union is something more than eyes can see.

*We celebrate together  
with the whole Church,  
on earth and in heaven.*

And yet how we are when we are physically together in the Church matters a great deal. The way we gather and greet

each other, the way we listen and pray together, conscious of being an assembly at prayer, is not something independent of the Mass – these things are a full and integral part of the Mass itself. Our human togetherness is part of our common prayer.

Already we are one in Christ, but at Mass, together, we seek to grow into deeper union with him.

Our society is sometimes so fragmented – broken along racial, cultural, religious divides. In the gospel of John we read how Christ prayed that all might be one. At Mass we are invited to pray as one – and despite all our diversity, by and large we manage to do this.

*At Mass, we seek to  
grow into deeper  
union with Christ*

Can we bring this experience of unity to bear on the lives we live outside Mass? Can we work for unity there too, serving our society by being a people who dedicate themselves to healing hurts, overcoming fear of difference, and who build up community?



## **A PRAYER FOR OUR PARISH**

Father, pour out your Spirit on our parish  
and grant us a new vision of your glory,  
a new experience of your power,  
a new faithfulness to your word  
and a new consecration to your service,  
that your love may grow among us  
and your kingdom come,  
through Christ, our Lord.

AMEN



## ***DURING MASS TODAY...***

- ✚ Make a special effort to sing heartily and join in the responses and actions to express your unity with everyone else at Mass - we are one body in Christ!
- ✚ Be aware of Christ's presence in the people gathered together at Mass

### ***With your child:***

- ☺ Encourage them to join in with the prayers, singing and actions
- ☺ Notice how different people participate

## ***This week's suggestions:***

- Choose a text from the Introductory Rites (e.g. the Gloria or Greeting) and pray it slowly over and over, allowing silence for reflection afterwards.
- Read through this leaflet again and reflect on what it is saying.
- Say the Prayer for our Parish every day.

### ***With your child, why not try...?***

- drawing a picture of the entrance procession
- chatting about what they've noticed happening at Mass and which part they like best (apart from going home at the end!)
- saying some prayers together as a family - you are the Body of Christ!