

Why Do Catholics Go to Mass?

EPISODE 1 • TEACHER GUIDE

God speaks to us.

Jesus feeds us.

Lesson snapshot

Ages 8–12 • 30–40 minutes • Family, parish, classroom, or homeschool use

Children discover that Mass is more than a gathering or performance. On Sunday, the Church celebrates the Resurrection together; God speaks through Scripture, Jesus gives himself in the Eucharist, and the people are sent to live his love.

Learning goals

- Name Sunday as the Lord's Day—a weekly celebration of Jesus' Resurrection.
- Identify the two main parts of Mass: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.
- Explain in child-friendly words that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist.
- Describe ways every child can participate reverently, including before First Communion.
- Choose one concrete way to carry the love of Mass into the coming week.

Prepare

Materials: Episode 1 video when available, Bibles, pencils or crayons, and one student activity sheet per child. Preview the episode and use the final, approved video link from kids.oracatholic.org/catechism.

Opening question

“If God is everywhere and we can pray at home, why do Catholics go to Mass?”

Welcome answers without grading them immediately. Affirm that praying at home is good. Then explain that Jesus gives the Church something at Mass that an individual cannot create alone: we gather as his people, hear his Word, and receive him in the Eucharist.

Teach the lesson

1. Sunday is a little Easter	Every Sunday celebrates the Resurrection. Catholics gather because Jesus rose and called a people to himself.
2. God speaks	In the Liturgy of the Word we hear Scripture, pray a psalm, listen closely to the Gospel, and receive help understanding it in the homily.
3. Jesus feeds us	In the Liturgy of the Eucharist, bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. Catholics believe Jesus is truly present—Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity.
4. We belong	We worship as one Church family. Children who have not yet received First Communion still pray, listen, sing, kneel or stand as able, and draw close to Jesus.
5. We are sent	Mass ends with a mission: forgive, serve, tell the truth, help people in need, and love as Jesus loves.

Conversation and activities

WATCH • WONDER • PRACTICE • PRAY

After watching

- What part of Mass helps you listen to God?
- What makes the Eucharist different from ordinary food?
- How can someone participate before First Communion?
- Why might the Sunday obligation protect a gift rather than feel like a punishment?
- Whom might Jesus be asking you to love this week?

Activity 1 — Put the Mass in order

Write these four phrases on cards and invite children to arrange them: Gather • Listen to God's Word • Give thanks and receive Jesus • Go forth to love and serve. Ask them to name something they see, hear, or do at each stop.

Activity 2 — God speaks / Jesus feeds

Read each item aloud. Children point left for the Liturgy of the Word and right for the Liturgy of the Eucharist: Gospel, homily, bread and wine, Eucharistic Prayer, psalm, Holy Communion. Remind them that together these form one act of worship.

Activity 3 — A Mass mission card

Each child completes: "This week Jesus is sending me to _____. " Encourage a specific, safe action: forgive a sibling, welcome someone lonely, help at home, pray for a person, or tell the truth when it is difficult.

Key vocabulary

Liturgy	The public worship of Christ and his Church.
Liturgy of the Word	The part of Mass in which God speaks to his people through Scripture.
Liturgy of the Eucharist	The part of Mass centered on thanksgiving, Christ's sacrifice made present, and Holy Communion.
Eucharist	Jesus Christ truly present under the appearances of bread and wine; the word also means thanksgiving.
Homily	The priest or deacon helps the Church understand and live the readings.

Pastoral notes

Present the Eucharist clearly and reverently without pressuring children to receive before they are prepared. A serious reason—such as illness or caring for someone who is ill—can excuse attendance; families should seek parish guidance for personal situations. This lesson uses the Roman Rite as its visual and teaching frame while respecting the legitimate liturgical traditions of the Catholic Church.

Closing prayer

Jesus, thank you for meeting us at Mass. Open our ears to your Word, prepare our hearts for the Eucharist, and send us to love the people you place in our lives. Amen.

Faithfulness check

Primary review sources: Catechism of the Catholic Church 1324, 1345–1355, 1366–1377, 1385–1390, and 2174–2183; USCCB Order and Parts of the Mass. Human catechetical review is required before public classroom adoption.