

HELPFUL DO'S & DON'T'S

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

- When you genuflect at Mass to the Tabernacle also recognise the Altar. The Altar is the focus of our prayer during Mass.
- Wouldn't Mass be completely different if the majority of the congregation joined in the singing? What is stopping us?
- '*Good mornings*' are said before entering the Church or in the sacristy not at the beginning of Mass. As Mass begins, we greet each other with liturgical language – *the Lord be with you*.
- The priest enunciates the sign of the cross; the people say *Amen*. The priest should not say *Amen*; the people should not enunciate the sign of the cross. These are dialogue prayers and they create a rhythm between priest and people.
- When the priest says '*let us pray*', there should be quiet time to pray - a silent pause for a few moments before the opening prayer.
- If able, the congregation should stand from the Introductory Rites until after the Opening Prayer.



1. BEING PRESENT

22nd May

Welcoming the 3rd Edition of the Roman Missal

BEING PRESENT AT MASS

Our preparation for Mass begins long before Mass begins. Preparation begins at home. As well as getting ourselves ready it may involve getting children ready. Sometimes this can be a challenge, especially in the teenage years. Do it firmly but gently. Remind them that this is the Lord's Day. It is the day we give to God, not just narrowly the time spent going to Mass. Purposefully begin the day with the right spirit.

Is there an elderly neighbour to whom you could give a lift to Church?

Arrive for mass in good time.

When we get to church we prepare ritually as we enter the church. We need to pay attention to these rituals and their meaning or they can become just habits. Give the children time to perform these rituals themselves and explain the meaning to them.

1. We dip our hands into holy water as we enter the church to remind ourselves of our Baptism; the day when we became part of the People of God. Our baptism calls us to gather with God's people to worship on this day.
2. We make the sign of the cross over our bodies. Do it deliberately and prayerfully; mark and touch your body with the Life-Giving Cross of Christ. This marks you as a Christian. It is the mark of Christ's love for you - *his body given for you, his blood poured out for you.*

3. We genuflect before entering the pew in reverence to the Tabernacle and also respecting the Altar. Be conscious of the Altar. On this Altar the bread and wine will be transformed. We receive the 'Bread of Life' so that we too might be transformed into Christ's Body.
4. We take our place. Sometimes we might acknowledge fellow parishioners but the time before Mass is a time to talk to God. We are in the church physically but we need to place ourselves in church spiritually - being present. The presence of our neighbours should not distract us from the Real Presence.

Being present spiritually at Mass is a challenge to give attention to our inner lives. We need to develop an inner silence. This silence is not just an absence of speech and action, but the recognition of the Real Presence of Him who is within - within the church and within us.

