



# Raising saints: 3 simple steps for Mass with kids

---

*Say "Yes!" to God,  
one Sunday at a time*



# Welcome!

*we're so glad you're here*

One of the greatest joys and tasks God gives us as parents is the opportunity to share the love of Christ with our kids. We are their parents, and they trust us above all other people. Who else in our lives will absorb our words and actions like they will?

Each week, the Mass is a wonderful opportunity to bring our children to Jesus. And although many of us struggle with bringing our kids to Mass, it is always a place for you to belong, and it is always a place where your kids belong.

The goal of this guide is to provide a simple framework centered around the Mass that will help you lead your family by example and catechize through conversation.

This PDF is a free preview of *Every Sacred Family: A 52 Week Mass Discussion Guide*. We're praying for y'all and hope that these tips help your family grow closer to Christ - one Sunday at a time!

*Learn more*

# 3 SIMPLE STEPS

## FOR MASS-CENTERED FAMILY CATECHESIS



### *Before Mass: Prepare*

Preparing for Mass as a family is the first step! In this guide, we'll show you how to integrate Mass preparation with activities you already do with your family. You can start small, even just in the car on the way to Mass, trusting God can multiply any effort for His glory! Read more on pages 4-5 for details on preparing for Mass as a family, logistical tips to set you up for success, and a prayer for parents before Mass.



### *During Mass: Engage*

The most important hour of the week is Mass! Your Mass experience won't look the same with kids as it was without - and that's okay! Our kids learn what is important by watching what is important to us. Model engagement during Mass by singing, following along with the readings (a *Mass journal* can be a useful resource for notes), and participating fully. Your child might need help engaging, and we've provided age-appropriate ideas on pages 6-7.



### *After Mass: Continue*

Immediately after Mass is a wonderful opportunity to continue the conversation with your family! The car ride home can be a great time to discuss the Gospel reading. If one question leads to another fruitful topic, go where the Holy Spirit leads you! If you're not sure what questions to ask, *Every Sacred Family* is a 52 week discussion guide that follows the Gospel readings, and you can find our favorite topics for conversation on page 8.



For example you can tape a verse from the upcoming Gospel (or the weekly verse from *Every Sacred Family*) on the mirror to read while brushing teeth, or keep your Bible on the kitchen table to read aloud and ask one discussion question before starting homework. By connecting the new habit of preparing for Mass with an already established routine, you'll have a much better likelihood of keeping up with it!

Separately from discussing readings as a family before Mass, it's important to prioritize personal prayer time for each parent. When can you dedicate time during the week to read the Mass readings? If you are struggling in your current season to prioritize prayer, we recommend the books *A Mother's Rule of Life*, by Holly Pierlot, and *Searching for and Maintaining Peace* by Fr. Jacques Philippe. If you're not sure how to pray, *Conversation with Christ*, by Peter Rohrbach, details St. Teresa of Avila's excellent step-by-step method of prayer. Also, a personal *Mass journal* with the full readings, such as the one from Every Sacred Sunday, can be a wonderful resource to help you spend time in scripture.

Finally, here are a few of our favorite logistical tips for the "day of":

- Try to choose outfits the night before for a morning Mass.
- Make sure everyone has eaten well. Bring a snack in the car to prevent "hangry" kids.
- Have everyone go to the bathroom before Mass starts.
- Say a prayer as you walk into Mass, or use the prayer below!
- Keep your "tools" in a handy place - for example a faith-based book for littles or a Mass journal and pen for homily notes.

And please remember - you and your kids are wanted at Mass. Always. The Church needs your family and thank you for joining in worship!

### *A Parent's Prayer Before Mass*

Lord, prepare my heart to receive you today. Open my heart and ears to hear your word. Send your Holy Spirit to give me patience with my family, and show me how to lead my kids closer to you through the Mass. Amen.

## STEP 2: ENGAGE

### *Our top tips to help engage kids of any age at Mass!*

One of the best opportunities we have for bringing our children to Jesus is through the Mass. How ironic that the very thing many Catholic parents struggle with the most is one of the most effective avenues for grace in the family! Many people have asked us "How can I get my kids to behave at Mass?", and there is no magic answer. What we do know is that the Mass is still a place for you to belong, and it is still a place where your kids belong! Rather than behavior modification ("sit still and be quiet") instead seek to engage your kids in what is going on. It might mean accepting that your own experience at Mass will look different, but the reward in the long run is worth it!



#### *Babies - <18 months old*

Congrats on your new arrival! If your baby is young enough, you can time your Mass attendance with your baby's nap time. As your little one starts getting mobile and talkative, remember that your baby sounds much louder to you than anyone else around you. You belong in Mass, and so does your little one. Engage your baby by pointing out the stained glass, candles, and Jesus on the cross.



#### *Littles - 18 months to 5 years*

Having a toddler at Mass can be one of the most drastic changes in terms of our Mass experience. Rather than behavior modification - "sit still and be quiet" - seek to engage them in what is going on. This means accepting that your own experience at Mass will look different. To engage littles, have them count the candles, or find Mary. Make a big deal during the transubstantiation, and point out the bread becoming Jesus' body. Remember that Mass is for them too, and they just need a little help. And most of all, give yourself a lot of grace!



### *Elementary - 6 to 11 years*

At this age, your child has either received their first Holy Communion, or soon will. This is a great age for your child to start learning the Bible, imagining what life would be like in Jesus' time, and practice memorizing a verse for the week. Help them read along with the readings, follow the music notes in the missal with their finger, or draw a picture of something that stood out to them about the Gospel. This can be a time to get them involved, such as with altar serving or singing in the children's choir.



### *Middle School - 12 to 14 years*

This is a great age to encourage your kids to take ownership in their prayer life! Ask your middle schoolers to lead your family discussion, and give them the responsibility of quizzing the younger kids on the verse to memorize that week. Encourage them to invite friends to Mass, and get them involved with a middle school youth group. At this age they could also start using a Mass journal!



### *High School - 15 to 18 years*

At this age, your kids will have received their Confirmation, or soon will. Encourage them to take their initiation into the Church seriously by serving in some way, whether by becoming a reader, an usher or greeter, someone that takes communion to the elderly and homebound, or some other way. Encourage them to join youth group, or serve on mission. Invite your high schooler to take a regular Holy Hour to encourage personal prayer and love of the Eucharist.

## STEP 3: CONTINUE

*After Mass, it's time to continue the conversation!*

At the end of Mass, we "Go Forth" into the world - raising Catholic kids is an action we carry forth into the entire week! If you didn't have a chance to discuss the readings before Mass, you can start on the car ride home or at your next meal time. You can also naturally continue the conversation by referencing these three categories of conversation starters: Truth, Beauty, and Goodness.

### TRUTH

*What is true and builds our knowledge?*

Part of being a disciple is building up our minds with knowledge as we journey towards Truth. No matter how much we study and pray, there will always be something new to learn about God! What did you learn about God at Mass? What did you learn about how God has interacted with His people throughout salvation history in the Scriptures? Share this insight with your family.

### BEAUTY

*What is beautiful and points to Christ?*

Cultivating our awareness of beauty can direct us to Christ. Take note of your senses. What beauty do I notice at Mass? This could be something like a candle, the music, or the way the person in front of you was praying. Maybe it was a certain word in the readings, or worship that caught your attention. How did beauty elevate you to experience God?

### GOODNESS

*What is good and how can we share it?*

God is always present in our lives, even when we don't notice it! How have you seen God's goodness moving in your life? Take time in thanksgiving! The next step is to share God's goodness with others. God speaks to us through the Scriptures, even though they were written long ago. How is God asking you to love those around you better, and how is He calling you to serve Him?



# MEET THE TEAM

*We're so glad you're here!*

## ABLAZE FAMILIES

*Dedicated to raising saints*

We are a nonprofit on a mission to equip and empower parents to lead their kids to Heaven! Our resources include online courses, e-books, and intentional Catholic communities. Come say hi and get connected!



*[ablaze.us/ablaze-families](https://ablaze.us/ablaze-families)*



*[everysacredsunday.com](https://everysacredsunday.com)*

## EVERY SACRED SUNDAY

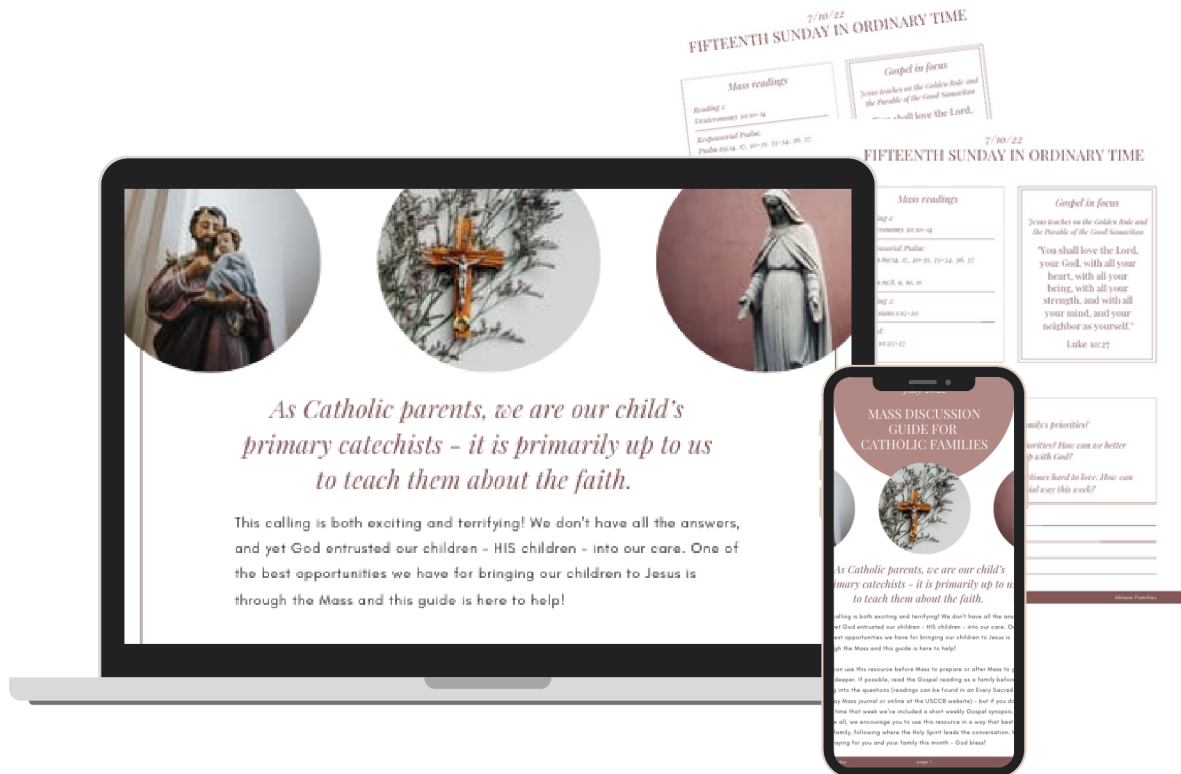
*Creator of the ESS Mass Journal*

Hello from Kassie & Christie, co-founders of Every Sacred Sunday! We were in a Bible study together in 2017 when the Holy Spirit placed the idea on our hearts to publish Mass journals that were beautiful, functional, and 100% Catholic. Thanks for joining us!

Thank you for joining us in saying "Yes!" to God, one Sunday at a time!

*Enjoyed this PDF? Get the expanded version!*

# EVERY SACRED FAMILY



## WHAT'S INCLUDED:

- 52 weeks of curated discussion questions centered around the Gospel readings
- Designed to spark conversation with kids of all ages
- Gospel synopsis and verse of the week make it easy to prepare for Mass
- Written and reviewed by a Catholic mom and theologian

LEARN MORE