Raising children to draw life from the Mass

In her formal teaching about children and Mass the Church has stated that bringing children to Mass without their being helped to inner active participation in what we do can be pointless and even harmful to the children. A statement from Holy Mother Church such as that may well come as a surprise, and should certainly make us think – especially children's parents!

How children participate in the Mass – indeed how any of us participate – will depend on our various capacities. It will vary according to our understanding of why Church is. And what we do at Mass. To whom we offer praise and thanksgiving and all during the Mass – indeed why we offer praise and thanksgiving and all. How we show reverence and again why, and to whom.

A sense for the holy and special – a bedrock for any understanding of Mass - can be communicated even to the very young. From a very early age they can pick up their parent's expression of reverence and prayerfulness - even if their attention span may well be very short, and their capacity much more limited than an adult's to sustain a mood, a response and so on, let alone give it expression by joining in the prayers and songs themselves.

But if at key moments - for example when we stand to acclaim the Gospel, or during the words of institution/consecration – parents draw even 2 or 3 year-olds close and invite them to share the moment, reminding of its' importance, then something of faith, something essential about what we are here at Mass for is communicated to the children, and over time learnt by them.

Families who take care of these things and who are regular at Mass will find that from an early age their children will join in the actions of the Mass, and sing and say regular parts of the Mass – like the dialogues, for example 'The Lord be with you/And with your Spirit'; - and acclamations – like the Gospel Acclamation and the Eucharistic Acclamations (the 'Holy', the Memorial Acclamation and the Great Amen) – even before they start attending school. And maybe sometimes they will say and sing them with an enthusiasm and at a volume that can put the rest of us to shame, and bring a gentle smile to our lips.

By the time children are becoming comfortable at reading then parents can help them follow and join in further parts of the mass too – longer regular texts like the Creed and the Gloria, and occasional songs, like our various hymns and songs.

As adults we are likely to have particular reasons for our being Catholic and being at Mass. Children are only Catholic because of their parents choice, and only at Mass because adults have brought them. Parents can serve their children well by helping them to understand why they chose to take on the responsibility to bring them up as Catholics, loving God and loving their neighbour, and why it is they bring them to Mass. And then help the children find their own reasons for their own prayer at Mass – the things they want to give thanks for, say sorry for, ask for help with. Parents can help them identify those things before coming to mass, and encourage them in prayer too before Mass begins – perhaps going to the Sacred Heart or Lady chapels to light a candle and pray for their family and friends. All this helps the children enter into what it is we are all called to do – and have a responsibility to do - when we are at Mass

Sometimes we adults ourselves need a bit of a refresher with regard to the Mass and how to pray it – in order for us to continue to draw from its spiritual treasury the nourishment, refreshment and encouragement it offers for our life in faith. There are a number of resources that can help. One of the most basic is that prepared for children (but prepared mindful that it should be of help to parents too) is the *Beginners Guide to Praying the Mass* written by a local author, and available in the parish shop. *Scripture and the Mystery of the Mass,* edited by Scott Hahn among others is a very readable and informative text. *The Banquet's Wisdom* by Dr. Gary Macy will be especially appreciated by those interested in the history of the Mass in the Church and the churches. A much more general text that parents might find it helpful to familiarise themselves with is *YouCat, the Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church* – and its companion volume, *DoCat, the social teaching of the Catholic Church.*

The latter reminds – and it is always a helpful reminder – that the more clearly any of us are able to make connections between what and how we pray and how we live our daily lives, then — whatever our age and level of understanding —, the more we will find enrichment in the Mass, and learn the value of owning the petition in the Lord's Prayer. 'Give us this day our daily bread'! Fr. Allen

Parish Pilgrimage The pilgrimage is arranged to take place during the Autumn half term to make it possible for families with children to take part in any parts that appeal. Details are on the noticeboard in the porch.
All elements of the pilgrimage are optional. Come along for what you want and stay away from what does not appeal. And arrange your accommodation and transport accordingly.

St Nicholas Catholic Church, Boldmere

Address: 243 Jockey Rd., Boldmere, Sutton Coldfield, B73 5US
Website: www.stnicholasboldmere.co.uk
E-mail: stnicholas.boldmere@rcaob.org.uk **Telephone:** 0121 354 1763
Parish Blog: www.stnicholasboldmere.wordpress.com
Cluster blog: www.catholicsuttoncoldfield.wordpress.com
Parish Priest: Fr Allen Morris **Deacon:** Rev John Garvey
Our Parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham: Registered Charity No. 234216

July 2026: Parish Masses This week

Sa	**11**	6pm	**15TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**	Bridget Quinlisk RIP (Gill)
Su	**12**	9am		Laurence Paul Hodgson
		11am		For the parish
M	**13**	10am		Betty Perks (Makepeace)
T	**14**	10am		Teresa Scott
W	**15**	10am	St Bonaventure	***Anointing of the Sick*** *(int Sr Mary Grogan)*
Th	**16**			
F	**17**	7pm		Mr M E Connelly
S	**18**	6pm	**16TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**	Benefactors of Johnson Clergy Association
Su	**19**	9am		For the parish (JCA)
		11am		For the parish

Anointing of the Sick: Next parish celebration is at 10am on 15th July

Sacrament of Confession: Friday 19.30 (after Mass) until 20.00; Saturday 5.30-5.45 — and by appointment

Please pray for those who are sick: Stephen Gateley, Rita Rhodes, Mary Daniels, Brenda Davies, Lesley Devlin, Margaret Reeves. **Please pray** for Elsie Wilkinson who died recently and whose funeral is at 11am on Thursday 30 July, and for Laurence Breen, Josie Garvey, Margaret Stroud, Ron WIlkinson, Fred Rhodes and all whose anniversary occurs at this time. ***Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may they rest in peace.***

RESOURCES FOR PRAYER.

1. ***Parish Morning Prayer***: Mon-Sat, at 8.30am (Zoom link on website)
2. ***Readings of the day*** and much more at Universalis.com
3. ***The Sunday Scriptures*** are a richer resource for spiritual growth when we read and pray with them before the Sunday (and again after the Sunday). Next Sunday's readings are Wisdom 12:13, 16–19 / Psalm 86:5–6, 9–10, 15–16 / Romans 8:26–27 / Matthew 13:24–43

WEEKDAY SOCIAL. Tuesdays after 10am Mass.

PARISH CAR PARK 1 hour's free parking is available for anyone at anytime in our carpark. Automatic free parking is available too on **Sat** 5.30pm to 7.30pm; **Sunday** 8am to 2pm; **Mon, Tues, Weds** 9.30am to 11.30am; and **Fri** 6.30pm to 8.30pm. *At other times, please - if in church or here for meetings - please use the QR code to extend your 'free' parking time.*

The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and the National and Archdiocesan policies & procedures at all times. Our Parish Safeguarding Representative is Mary Rose. She can be contacted at: sg.stnicholas.boldmere@rcaob.org.uk Alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding team can be contacted on 0121 230 6240 or safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk

**Our parish is part of Catholic Sutton Coldfield.
This cluster of Parishes is made up of the parishes of
Holy Cross & St Francis, Walmley; Sacred Heart, Four Oaks; Holy Trinity, Sutton Coldfield; and St Nicholas , Boldmere.**

We Believe Festival brings thousands together to encounter Jesus Christ in His Church. It's an unmissable opportunity to discover the traditions and charisms that flow through the Church, to grow in authentic community, and to encounter the transforming love of God. Join us from 24th-27th July, 2026 at the historic and beautiful setting of St Mary's College, Oscott for a feast of the True, the Good and the Beautiful. **www.webelievefestival.com**

There's now a 33% discount on day-tickets using the code 'BIRMINGHAM-DISCOUNT' at checkout.

The Saint Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) Summer Raffle
Tickets cost £1 and will be on sale after each mass on 18/19 July. First prize £5K! Please support the work of our parish conference. Thieir aim is simple: to love our neighbours and seek to alleviate poverty in all forms. With your help they visit and befriend people who may be isolated in their home, in hospital or in care. They accompany beneficiaries to appointments, to church, to go shopping, on walks, or out for coffee to meet up with others. They provide material support to help those who may be struggling to buy food, clothing or pay energy costs.

Today there is a retiring collection for the Apostleshp of the Sea.
The Church's charity supports those who work at sea - people whose working conditions are especially demanding, and often leave them open to exploitation.

The Introductory Rites

Opening Song

Gloria

We praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.

Glory to God...

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;
You are seated at the right hand,
of the Father, have mercy on us.

Glory to God...

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.
Glory to God... Amen. Amen. Amen.

The Collect

The Liturgy of the Word

Isaiah 55:10-11

Thus says the Lord:
'For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven
and do not return there but water the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.'

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ***Scripture readings:*** *The English Standard Version of the Bible, Catholic Edition, copyright 2017 by Crossway.* **The Psalms:** *Abbey Psalms and Canticles © 2018 USCCB.* **Excerpts from the English translation of** *The Roman Missal © 2010, ICEL.* ***Songs:*** Gloria, (Storrington Mass) *Marty Haugen, Tune: © 2010, GIA Publications, Inc.* Sanctus and Memorial Acclamation. *(Mass of Christ the Savior) Dan Schutte, Music - ©2007,2009, 2010 OCP;* Bread for the world: *© 1990, Bernadette Farrell.* Ubi caritas *© 1978 Ateliers et Presses de Taizé;* Christ be beside me *© 1969, James Quinn, SJ. Texts of copyrighted songs are reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-A-742254. All rights reserved.*

Ps 65(64):10a-d. 10e-11. 12-13. 14.

You visit the earth, give it water;
you fill it with riches.
God's ever-flowing river brims over
to prepare the grain.

And thus you prepare it:
you drench its furrows;
you level it, soften it with showers;
you bless its growth.

You crown the year with your bounty.
Abundance flows in your pathways;
in pastures of the desert it flows.
The hills are girded with joy.

The meadows clothed with flocks.
The valleys are decked with wheat.
They shout for joy; yes, they sing!
They shout for joy; yes, they sing!

Romans 8:18-23

Brothers and Sisters: I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption, and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia. **The seed is the word of God, Christ the sower; all who find him will live for ever.** ***Alleluia.***

Matthew 13:1-23

At that time: Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: 'A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He who has ears, let him hear.'

Then the disciples came and said to him, 'Why do you speak to them in parables?' And he answered them, 'To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: "You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive." For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

'Hear then the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.'

Homily

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right
hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come
to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Prayer of the Faithful

All: Through our lives and by our prayers,
your kingdom come.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Offertory

Ubi caritas et amor, ubi caritas, Deus ibi est

(Where there is charity and love, there is God.)

The Eucharistic Prayer

Sanctus

The mystery of faith

The Communion Rite

Communion thanksgiving

Christ be beside me, Christ be before me,
Christ be behind me, King of my heart.
Christ be within me, Christ be below me,
Christ be above me, never to part.

Christ on my right hand, Christ on my left hand,
Christ all around me, shield in the strife.
Christ in my sleeping, Christ in my sitting,
Christ in my rising, light of my life.

Christ be in all hearts thinking about me,
Christ be in all tongues telling of me.
Christ be the vision in eyes that see me,
in ears that hear me, Christ ever be.

Prayer after Communion

Concluding Rites

Blessing and Dismissal

Sunday Friends

The next gathering is today at 1:30 pm in The Newman Centre in Boldmere. The theme is Saints Peter and Paul. Autistic people and people with learning disabilities are at the heart of the group, along with their friends and families; all ages, faiths or none, are very welcome. Anyone is very welcome to join us!