## 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*

| **August/September 2026: Parish Masses** This week | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sa** | **29** | 6pm | **22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time** | Elsie Wilkinson RIP (Foster) |
| **Su** | **30** | 9am | | For the parish |
| | | 11am | | Elsie Wilkinson RIP (Green) |
| **M** | **31** | 10am | | Andy Hazel RIP (Gill) |
| **T** | **1** | 10am | | Stuart Baird RIP (Wilkinson) |
| **W** | **2** | 10am | | Bishop David Oakley (Cotton) |
| **Th** | **3** | | **St Gregory** | |
| **F** | **4** | 7pm | | Josephine and Henrick Ints. Drozd |
| **S** | **5** | 6pm | **23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time** | Lucy, Jay and Maria Szambir RIP |
| **Su** | **6** | 9am | | For the parish |
| | | 11am | | Elsie Wilkinson and Fred Rhodes RIP |

***Anointing of the Sick***: Next parish celebration is at 10am on 16th Sept

***Sacrament of Confession:*** Fri 19.30-20.00; Sat 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 Janet Wakeham who died recently and Mary McGill, Freda Gately, Frances Raczka 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.**

**The Saint Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) Summer Raffle** Tickets cost £1 and are on sale next weekend. First prize £5K ! Please support the work of our parish conference. Their 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.

### Bringing very young — *and very lively* — children to Mass?

First of all thank you. As the children are part of your family so they are part of ours, - and we're glad to see them.

Most of us know it sometimes can't be easy for parents with very young children at Mass. And you probably know that is not easy for the rest of us sometimes! But the children are welcome - and we know you probably can't work miracles!

There are though some things people can do to help the children grow into Mass - even the youngest. For example:

- At the beginning of the Mass and at the final blessing, make the sign of the Cross with them or over them.
- When we stand for the Gospel get them to join in singing the Alleluia.
- Have them stand with you, or hold them close to you and again trace the Cross on their forehead and lips and heart.
- At the showing of the consecrated elements - again keep them close to you and encourage them to look with you 'Behold the Lamb of God…', Again make the sign of the Cross with them.
- If it is difficult to keep them in your bench with you, please try and make sure they play in a side aisle so they are distracting as few people as possible.
- Do sit near the front so the children can see better what is happening on the Sanctuary and start to get some sense of what it is they - and we all -are here for and part of.

## The Introductory Rites

### Opening Song

O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder
consider all the works Thy hand hath made,
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,
thy power throughout the universe displayed:
*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,*
*how great thou art! how great thou art!*
*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,*
*how great thou art! how great thou art!*

And when I think that God His Son not sparing,
sent Him to die - I scarce can take it in.
That on the cross my burden gladly bearing,
he bled and died to take away my sin:

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
and take me home - what joy shall fill my heart!
Then shall I bow in humble adoration
and there proclaim, my God, how great Thou art!

### 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

### Jeremiah 20:7-9

O LORD, you have deceived me, and I was deceived; you are stronger than I, and you have prevailed. I have become a laughing-stock all the day; everyone mocks me. For whenever I speak, I cry out, I shout, 'Violence and destruction!' For the word of the LORD has become for me a reproach and derision all day long.

If I say, 'I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name', there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot.

### Ps 63(62):2. 3-4. 5-6. 8-9.

O God, you are my God; at dawn I seek you;
for you my soul is thirsting.
For you my flesh is pining,
like a dry, weary land without water.

I have come before you in the sanctuary,
to behold your strength and your glory.
Your loving mercy is better than life;
my lips will speak your praise.

I will bless you all my life;
in your name I will lift up my hands.
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet;
with joyful lips, my mouth shall praise you.

For you have been my strength;
in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.
My soul clings fast to you;
your right hand upholds me.

### Romans 12:1-2

I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

### Gospel Acclamation

*Alleluia, alleluia.* May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, enlighten the eyes of our hearts, so that we may know the hope to which he has called us. *Alleluia.*

### Matthew 16:21-27

At that time: Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, 'Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.' But he turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.'

Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.'

### 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

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful, in the Lord I will rejoice! Look to him, do not be afraid, in him rejoicing: the Lord is near; in him rejoicing: the Lord is near.

### The Eucharistic Prayer

### Sanctus

### The mystery of faith

## The Communion Rite

### Communion thanksgiving

### Prayer after Communion

## Concluding Rites

### Blessing and Dismissal

**Sutton Town Hall, 30 Sept-3 Oct. A** parish outing to a show about how, following 9/11, the people of Gander, Newfoundland, opened their homes and public buildings to stranded airline passengers. The population went from 9,000 to over 15,000 overnight. When the world felt it was falling apart, Gander became a bubble of safety and community. Details of other nights the show is on and also how to book are on the porch noticeboard.

### The Catholic Culture Club

An opportunity to enjoy local cultural events (with other parishioners when convenient, and by yourself when it is not) and also to meet afterwards to chat over things.

**AUTUMN PROGRAMME**

- Walsall New Art Gallery: Sun 20 Sept at 3pm. **Face Value: Contemporary Portraits from the Collections**. *What is in an image?*
  - Group meeting to chat: Friday 25 Sept
- Sutton Coldfield Town Hall. ***Come From Away*** - details above for opportunity for group visit on Thursday 1 October .
  - Group meeting to chat: Friday 25 Sept
- The November meeting will probably be a visit to a local cinema. More details SOON!

***Follow-up group meetings are all in the Benedict Room on Fridays at 8pm***

### Help needed to offer support to sick and housebound members of the parish.

As you leave church today please do take a copy of the handout on how our parish responds to the needs of parishioners who are sick and housebound.

To support the work done by our present team of people, we need two or three more people to assist regularly with taking Holy Communion to the sick.

The minimum commitment is to visit one person once or twice a month, for about 15-20 minutes on a day and at a time convenient to you and them. If you ***are*** available to do more, that would be excellent!

To learn more, please speak with Fr Allen.

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;* **In the Lord** *Text: Public Domain; 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.*