



October 5, 2022 – Gateway: Why do I need to go to Mass?

Today’s Goal: For the middle schoolers to experience the Mass as God’s gift to us and see it as a place where God most fully pours out His grace on us.

Main Ideas in This Week’s Talk:

- The Mass is God’s gift to us and where He pours out grace upon us to help us grow in our relationship with Him.
- The grace Jesus won for us through His Passion, death, and Resurrection is made available to us through the Mass.
- The Mass allows us to intentionally set apart time for God and to make Sunday a holy day and a day of rest.

CCC References: 1082-1085, 1382-1372, 1391-1405, 2174-2195

Scripture for this Week: *“Then he said to them “The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath; so the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath.” Mark 2: 27-28*

Activity for this Week: Church Tour & Meditation – take a tour of the church, explaining the purpose of each item on our list. Challenge the kids to think about how the items are used to see God and interact with him during Mass. After the tour, have the youth sit in the pews and pray for a few minutes, asking for God to show Himself next time they are at Mass. You can give them the Visual Church Meditation sheet to help them pray. The sheets will be in your mailbox/cubby.

MS Crew Rotations	6 th Boys & Girls	7 th & 8 th Girls	7 th & 8 th Boys
6:15pm-6:30pm	Announcements in Church	Announcements in Church	Announcements in Church
6:32pm-6:50pm	Small Group	Talk In Emmaus ABCD	Activity
6:52pm – 7:10pm	Activity	Small Group	Talk In Emmaus ABCD
7:12pm – 7:30pm	Talk In Emmaus ABCD	Activity	Small Group

Announcements on next page

Announcements:

Friday Night Alive (FNA) – our first Friday Night Alive is October 14th from 5:30pm – 8:30pm! FNA is free for all participants and is a youth group opportunity to play games, learn about your faith, and get to know other kids from church. We provide dinner for the night, you just need let Elliut know you're coming!

Psalm 78 Retreat – the first middle retreat of the year is October 28 & 29! This year's retreat theme is "Mixtape" and will focus on encountering God through scripture. God's word is good, true, and beautiful. Reading the Bible is one of the best ways to know God! Psalm 78 is open to all middle schoolers and friends of HNOJ. Cost is \$55 until October 14. Registration will open this Friday, September 30th. This weekend is going to be filled with encounters of God and fun experiences with friends!

Extreme Faith Camp 2023 – Registration for next year's summer camp will open this Friday, September 30th! Extreme Faith Camp is a week-long camp/retreat for middle schoolers, where we do high adventure activities while deepening our relationship with Jesus in real, practical ways. This life changing camp is a highlight for many HNOJ teens! This year, EFC will be Monday, June 26 to Friday, June 30, 2023 at Camp Victory in Zumbro Falls. Spots are very limited so you'll want to act fast for registering!

For any questions on youth ministry announcements, please contact Elliut Fonseca.

Small Group Guide & Questions

1. Open with prayer
2. Weekly check-in. Highs and lows. How did the challenge go over the weekend?
 - a. Last week's challenge : go to Mass and leave with a question on what happened at Mass or have an inspiring thought.
3. Cover some of the following questions.
 - a. What is a big event that you make sure to never miss out on? Something that your family holds as a tradition (Watching the Super Bowl, having dinner with family on birthdays, going to a special location when on vacation).
 - b. Do you have a core memory associated with Mass? It can be something a priest said, a song that was sung, or something unrelated that you saw happen during Mass.
 - c. When you think of the word "worship" what comes to mind? *Worship is the act of acknowledging of another's worth, dignity, or superior position compared to us.. When we assign worth to something, we can worship it if we deem it more important than us.*
 - d. Why is a Sabbath day important? How can respecting a Sabbath day impact your happiness, stress level, and relationship with God?
 - e. Why is Mass important to our worship of God? How can we make Mass the center of our week?
 - f. What can you do to engage more actively in worship at Mass? Name a few practical things you can do next Sunday.
4. Weekly Challenge: Before or after the next Mass you attend, stop at one of the places we visited during the church tour and say a prayer.
5. Go over the youth ministry announcements above.
6. Close in prayer with a Hail Mary– ask one of the kids to lead!

Church Tour & Visual Church Meditation – Please be respectful during the tour!

Sacristy (located in the hallway outside the church, across from the bathrooms): The sacristy is the room where the priest prepares for Mass. The priest obviously prepares in practical ways like putting vestments, but he also spiritually prepares to lead all of us into the mystery of Christ's life, death, and Resurrection.

Altar: In religions throughout history, the altar has been a place where people offer sacrifices to God. At Mass, the altar is where the priest consecrates the Eucharist. In a mystical way, Christ's sacrifice on the cross is made present again in the Eucharist.

Tabernacle (in the Adoration Chapel): The tabernacle is where the Eucharist is kept after it has been consecrated. Jesus is fully present to us in the Eucharist in the tabernacle.

Intercessory candles (Adoration Chapel, behind the big doors): In religions throughout history, flames and candles have symbolized prayers rising up to God. Our churches sometimes have candles in front of particular images or statues as a physical reminder of our prayer intentions.

Sanctuary lamp (in the church, just outside the Adoration Chapel): The sanctuary lamp is a special light that continuously glows to remind us that Christ is present in the Eucharist in the tabernacle. The sanctuary lamp is only extinguished on Good Friday when we move the Eucharist out of the church as a reminder of Christ's death.

Ambo: The ambo is the podium where the Word of God is proclaimed. Whenever anyone is speaking from the ambo, it is an opportunity for us to hear about the work of God through all of salvation history.

Statue of Mary: When we see people reverencing or kneeling before the statue of Mary, they are not worshipping the statue. The statue of Mary is simply a reminder to reach out to Mary in prayer. When we ask for Mary to pray for us, we express our love to her as Jesus' mother and she returns our love, helps us know the love of Christ, and brings our prayers to Him.

Statues, stained glass windows, and other images of saints and quotes: Our churches have images of saints because the saints are people who can inspire us and who can help us know and love God as they did. Churches are often decorated with the images of the saint the parish is named after or saints from a religious order the parish is connected to.

Area for musicians and/or choir: In most religious practices, music is an important part of worship. Catholic worship can include many different styles of music. It is important to remember not to just sing along but really pray the words in the songs.

Baptismal font: The baptismal font is used for baptizing people when they come into the Church. The Catholic Church typically baptizes people when they are babies, but adults are sometimes baptized during the Easter Vigil. The baptismal font reminds us that we are God's sons and daughters, baptized into Christ's life, death, and Resurrection.

Visual Church Meditation

Invite the youth to sit in the pews, in a spot where they can see the crucifix and quiet themselves. Encourage them to recall the things they saw on the tour. Remind them that the church is not full of decorations but reminders of important truths about the faith — everything points to Christ in some way.

Invite the youth to join you in a prayer to reflect on different things they can see in the church. Allow them to readjust themselves if needed, and then slowly lead them through the following prayer:

Focus your eyes on something that draws you to the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus, offered for us and to us at every Mass. It is a supernatural way for us to experience Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

Focus your eyes on an image of a saint. The saints all led very different lives, but they all shared a great love for Christ. Take a moment to ask this saint to show you how you can love Christ like they did.

Focus your eyes on a place in the church where the Word of God is proclaimed, spoken or in song. Every time we come to Mass, we have the opportunity to learn more about Christ and His love for us. Do you take that opportunity, or do you let it pass you by?

Focus your eyes on a source of light. Christ is our light, who offered Himself for us so that we would not have to live in darkness. In your heart, speak to Christ about one area of darkness in your life, and ask Him to shine His light into that area of darkness.

Focus your eyes on whatever part of the church tour struck you the most. What might Christ be saying to you? Is He asking you to pay more attention during a particular part of the Mass? Is He inviting you to join a liturgical ministry or to play a bigger role in the Mass? Take a few minutes to sit in silence and listen to Him now.

Finally, focus your eyes on the cross. Have you ever wondered what you would do if you were at the crucifixion? The answer to that question lies in what you do at Mass. The Mass is our opportunity to be present to Christ's sacrifice each Sunday. The Eucharist is our opportunity to receive Jesus' Body and Blood. We all occasionally fail to give the Mass our full attention, but let's resolve now to realize the beauty of what Christ has given to us in the Mass and try to be more present and aware of what is happening at each Mass.

Close the reflection time by saying a Hail Mary.