



Children's Liturgy of the Word

Join Your Fellow Parishioners At 9 a.m. Mass with the Children's Liturgy of The Word ...

Every Sunday during the school year at the 9 a.m. Mass, children from 5 years up to 12 are invited to gather after the opening prayer and go next door to the Parish Center to openly participate in the Children's Liturgy of the Word. Your Children hear the same readings and Gospel that we are hearing in the church followed by an open discussion of how the reading relate to their everyday life, then the children return to the Church at the offertory. You may be surprised by how much they listen to and express themselves in the group, and you will feel tremendous joy knowing that the children will carry the seed of the gospels in their heart from because of your involvement.

We have a dedicated group of volunteers who prepare every week for the Children's Liturgy of the Word, and on special occasions such as Palm Sunday they hand make a special Palm Cross for every child at the Mass. The entire group and especially the children would be honored to have any fellow parishioners join the Children's Liturgy to help continue this important ministry.

The group has enjoyed having many volunteers over the past 20 years, and continues today with **Mark DeBiase, Esther Sloan, Mike Pierret, Liz Parrot and Wendy Hambleton.**

In the future, we hope to expand the Liturgy of the Word for Children to a number of Saturday/Sunday Masses. We need a number of helpers to accompany the children, to set up or to assist. We also need people who want to learn how to preside. We have only four adults who lead the children right now, and we want to have perhaps 12 or more so that we can offer the word at more Masses and with fewer demands on the presiders. Ideally it would be great if each presider could lead one or two liturgies a month.

Please feel free to follow the children and see what is involved. The Children's Liturgy of the Word has become so important to the children, and if you would like to share your faith with the children talk with Mark DeBiase our lead presider and coordinator of this program 847-404-1000.

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These are some FAQ for your information.

WHAT IS LITURGY OF THE WORD FOR CHILDREN?

It is the First part of Mass and it invites the participation of children.

WHEN AND WHERE DOES IT TAKE PLACE?

On Sunday mornings during the first part of the 9:00 AM Mass. Children attend church and sit with parents until they are invited to follow the presider of the Children's Liturgy of the Word.

They children proceed with supervision over to the Parish Center-- the children in 2nd grade or younger, going to the Conference Room and the children who have already made their First Communion go to the meeting room down the stairs. At the preparation of the gifts, right after the collection, they return to sit with their families.

DOES IT MEAN SIGNING UP FOR IT OR IS THERE ANY COST INVOLVED?

No sign up and no cost. A child may come regularly or when they please.

WHO PARTICIPATES NOW?

On any given Sunday, there may be from 60 to 120 children participating. The children come from both St. Mary's School and St. Mary's Religious Education Program, and a few are not in either program. All children from Kindergarten through Sixth Grade are welcome.

WHO PRESIDES? WHAT KIND OF TRAINING IS INVOLVED?

The presiders have been teachers in the religious education program, or are simply parents of children in our parish. Most presiders have attended our ministry formation program and have participated in our own workshops.

This is not a class or instructional time, but a time for liturgy, the official public worship of our church. It is a time to give God thanks and to pray together about the things that are important in our lives.

If your children attend the Liturgy of the Word for Children, they will be hearing the same gospel that is proclaimed in church. One other reading comes from scripture that is usually used that Sunday. We use the readings from the Lectionary for Children that have been approved by our Catholic bishops. The topics and questions we use to address the children are found in wonderful resources specifically designed for liturgy of the word for children. During the twenty minutes that the children participate, they hear readings, listen to a homily and interact with the presider, offer prayers of the faithful, and sing religious songs. In a word they are attending the Mass of the day, but in a way that invites their participation.

WHY TAKE MY CHILDREN TO LITURGY OF THE WORD FOR CHILDREN?

Children are different from adults in a number of ways. First of all, even visually, children have a difficult time seeing the altar and what is happening there. What appeals to them is usually very sensory and very interactive.

Secondly, children have experiences and relationships and understandings that are very different from adults'. Their concerns, fears, hopes, and faith can be very immediate and direct. They need very concrete and specific examples.

Third, their spirituality can be very different from that of adults. Their image of God and the holy and heaven, their prayers and their practices may be quite unique.

Fourth, although their community life principally involves the immediate family, it also includes other children. Hopefully we can direct and enhance their prayer life and help them develop a sense of community with the other children participating.