

10 Rules of Etiquette for a Non-Catholic Attending a Catholic Mass

As Catholics, we joyfully welcome people of all faiths and backgrounds to attend our liturgy and participate in our worship, but there are a few guidelines that might be helpful for a visitor to be conscious of. These guidelines are intended to help you understand how to best respect the sacredness of the Catholic Mass and respect the beliefs of others.

1. Save Conversations for After the Mass

During the liturgy, those around you are praying and listening intently to the voice of God. The Word of God is read, the priest offers his insight and prayers are said as a community during the Mass. These are all things that the faithful wish to hear. If you are talking, it will disrupt the ability of those around you to focus on God.

2. Put Your Cell Phone on Airplane Mode and Keep it Your Pocket

Obviously, you're not in an airplane, you're in a church. However, this is more than a building. **It is a sacred space set apart for the worship of God.** Putting your phone on silent will help to avoid embarrassing disruptions during the quieter parts of the Mass. In today's world, it is difficult to not look at our phones for an hour, but out of respect and reverence, please try to refrain from texting or using the internet while you are present in the house of God.

3. Please Come Forward for a Blessing, but Don't Receive Communion

The Church invites everyone present to come forward and receive a blessing during Holy Communion. To do this, cross your arms over your chest so that the extraordinary minister of Holy Communion will know not to give you Communion. There are many reasons why the Church asks those who have not yet received their First Holy Communion to not partake in this Holy Sacrament and you can find out more about them [here](#). **Catholics firmly believe that the Eucharist is the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ.** Please respect their beliefs by not receiving Communion at this time.

4. Spit out Your Gum and Leave Snacks and Drinks for Later.

In God's house, it is best that snacks be avoided until the liturgy is finished. Eating can be very disruptive when others are trying to maintain a prayerful mindset.

5. You don't have to guess what is going on.

You can follow along in the missal. Most of the time you will be able to find a book in your pew that will have the readings, prayers, and songs available for you to use in order to follow along with the Mass.

6. Sit. Stand. Kneel. Repeat.

Though the missal lists the prayers, not all have the physical actions of prayer listed. In this case, it is best to follow the lead of those around you. Find out more about the order of the Mass in this [post](#).

7. Children are welcome to the community, but be mindful of their behavior.

Most people love to see babies and children present in the Mass. Little noises, cries, and sounds are a part of the package when it comes to children, but if your child becomes too disruptive it is best to take them to the back of the Church. Remember, that although others think your child is adorable, this is a time set aside for prayer and focusing on God. Find some tips for taking children to Mass [here](#).

8. Dress appropriately.

In our comfortable and casual culture, we sometimes forget that we shouldn't wear yoga pants and flip flops everywhere. At many important events, there is somewhat of a dress code. A Catholic Mass is one of those events. Your clothes don't have to be fancy, but they should be modest and respectful of the atmosphere of prayer. Find more tips on dressing for Mass [here](#).

9. Wait until the priest exits before you leave the Mass, begin talking or take out your phone.

You will probably see people start to exit and get their things ready immediately following Communion, but that doesn't mean it is time to go. The correct protocol is to wait until the priest processes out of the Church and to follow after him.

10. Have Questions? We Want to Answer (of course, after Mass!)

We hope that you will enjoy your time spent with the Lord and will have many questions about the ways in which Catholics worship. **Find a Catholic to help you sort through your questions and get some of the answers you need to grow in your own faith.**