

20 Tips for Proper Etiquette In Mass



Mass Etiquette: 20 Things To Do And Not Do In Mass

1. **Fast before Mass.** It is Church law that one fasts for at least 1 hour before receiving Holy Communion. The only exceptions are medicine, water or unless someone is ill and needs to eat sooner.
2. **No Food and Drink in Church.** The only exceptions would be milk for infants, water for the priest or choir (if discreet) and water for those who are ill.
3. **Men take your hats off.** It is impolite to wear a hat into any church for a man.
4. **Don't chew gum in church.** It breaks your fast and it's distracting.
5. **Make the sign of the Cross with Holy Water on entering and leaving the church.** This is a reminder of our Baptism, which made us members of Christ's Church.
6. **Dress modestly and appropriately.** Wear your Sunday Best. As Catholics we believe that God comes down to meet us at every Mass. Why would we not dress up?
7. **Show up at least a few minutes early.** If you can't be on time, then sit in the back so you don't disturb others.
8. **Cell phones should never be used** in Mass for calls or texting. The ONLY exceptions are emergencies (big ones, not everyday ones) and if you are using the phone for readings or prayers.
9. **Don't sit on the edge of the pew** if you sit down before others. Rather, sit in the middle so others don't have to climb over you. Furthermore - Gentlemen offer their seats

to a any lady (elderly, disabled, etc) who must stand. Some churches, like ours, get packed. We live in Texas. In Texas men don't sit when a woman is standing.

10. **When we enter and leave Church, genuflect** toward the Tabernacle. Christ is present for our sake. By allowing our right knee to hit the floor, we acknowledge He is our Lord and God. If someone is physically unable to genuflect, then a bow is sufficient. During Mass, if you pass in front of the altar or tabernacle, bow reverently.
11. **Sit quietly while in church.** Once you enter the sanctuary - it is not the time or place to visit with those around you. If you must talk do so as quietly and briefly as possible. Remember that your conversation might be disturbing someone who is in prayer, which is much more important. Sssshhhhhhh.
12. **Take loud children to the back.** Every parent knows that sometimes the baby is going to have a bad day. Don't make everyone else's day bad as well. Sit on the end of a pew, if you can, and take the kid to the back quickly. Don't wait more than 10 seconds or so before you make a move. There is no reason to be embarrassed about having to quiet your child in the back of the church. It is worse to allow them to disturb Mass continually.
13. **Prepare your offering before Mass.** Christ tells us not to let your left hand know what your right hand is doing when you make your offering. Keeping the basket while you get your wallet out can be quite a scene. For tips on tithing, check this out.
14. **No bulletin reading during Mass.** Imagine if you invited a guest to your house and before dinner (or during) they decided to read a magazine instead of talking to you.
15. **Respect Boundaries others may have.** You might want to hold hands to pray, they may not. They might be sick and not want to shake during the sign of peace. These are all OK. Do not make any unnecessary judgment because they worship differently.
16. **Bow before receiving Holy Communion.** If it is God, then show your respect with a bow of the head.
17. **Do not receive Holy Communion by tongue if you are sick.** This is an act of charity.
18. **Do not leave early.** We should stay to the end of the recession and the hymn that accompanies it, if there is one.
19. **Pray after Mass,** if you can. It is a good custom, though not required, to offer a prayer of thanksgiving after Mass is over. What could be more important?
20. **Leave quietly.** We encourage you to fellowship with others, but only when you are outside of the main sanctuary of the church so you won't disturb others who want to stay and pray.