

Details make a difference...

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"To have a right to do a thing is not at all the same as to be right in doing it." - GK Chesterton



Things you should not do at Mass (but you might be doing anyhow)

Small details that make a difference and unite the Church

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- Do not be late. Remember God is waiting for you to fill you with love, to speak to your ear, to tell you what you need to hear, to forgive you. He gave you a special place at his table. Do not keep him waiting.
- Do not wear inappropriate clothing. Do it for you, and for others.
- Do not enter the church without greeting the Lord. When you arrive, make the Sign of the Cross. God is there, happy to see you. Thank him for the invitation.
- Do not be lazy when it comes to bowing or genuflecting. If you walk in front of the altar, which represents Christ, bow. If you pass before the Tabernacle, where Christ is, genuflect.
- Do not chew gum, eat, or drink during Mass. Only water is allowed if necessary for health reasons.
- Do not sprawl or slump in the pew. Your body should express your devotion.
There is no need to add “extra sentences” to the Readings and the Psalm. That is, do not read the red letters or say “First Reading” or “Responsorial Psalm.”
- Never recite the Alleluia in advance. Wait a few seconds. Surely someone will sing it. If neither the priest nor anybody sings, omit it, but never recite it.

- Do not make the Sign of the Cross before the proclamation of the Gospel. Make three small crosses: one on your forehead, one on your lips and the last over your heart, asking the Word of God to be in your mind, on your lips and in your heart.
- Do not respond in the plural when the Creed is prayed in the form of questions. The presider at Mass may ask: “Do you Believe in God the Father Almighty?” In this case, do not answer “yes, we do,” because faith, although collective, is also personal: you cannot believe “for” someone else. You should simply reply “Yes, I do.”
- Do not collect the offering during the Universal Prayer. The offering should be collected during the presentation of the gifts, when all are seated and the priest thanks God for the bread and the wine and purifies the hands.
- Do not sit during the Consecration. If you cannot kneel, consider standing up, but try to leave sitting for times of illness or caring for a child. Your posture during the consecration should reflect your great respect and reverence for the Real Presence of Christ on the altar.
- There is no need to pray out loud during the Consecration. There are people who, during the Consecration, say the Apostle Thomas’ prayer out loud: “My Lord, My God.” But this can distract those who are making a personal prayer in silence.
- Do not repeat “Through him, and with him, and in him ...” (that is, the Doxology that concludes the Eucharistic Prayer). The only person who should say this is the priest who presides over the Mass.
- Do not leave your place to go and give peace. You should only greet those who are close to you in the pew. Neither should you use this moment to go congratulate someone or give condolences.
- If your soul is not prepared with the one hour fast and in the state of grace, do not take Communion.
- Do not insist on taking Communion from the priest. Jesus is present in the Consecrated Host, regardless whether you receive it from the priest or from an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, who is a person prepared and authorized by the Church to distribute Communion at Mass and to take it to the elderly and sick.
- After receiving Communion, do not talk to others. Go back to your place and talk to the Lord. If you have not received the Eucharist, make a spiritual communion and talk to Him.
- Once Communion has been distributed take a moment of sacred silence, in which each person simply dialogues with God.
- Turn off the phone. Do not message or talk on the cell phone during Mass, as it distracts you and others. Turn your attention to the Lord, who is dedicating His attention to you.
- Keep your kids in sight, next to you. Teach them to enjoy their time at the Father’s house.
- Do not leave until the Mass is over. You don’t want to miss the final blessing, through which the priest sends you into the world to bear witness in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Come out of the church with a new purpose, inspired by the Lord, to build his Kingdom of love

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