



# Catechesis For the Masses

Basic Teachings on Liturgy and Participation in the Mass in Both Forms.

## Part 16: Go Forth: Try it Four Times

**A**s a right conclusion to this series of articles, it is fitting to encourage all to continue to the pilgrim journey of faith with openness to the possibilities that the Lord Jesus offers to each and to all for more perfect communion with Him in the Holy Mass. Acknowledging that this series has sought to look at both the “Ordinary Form of the Roman Rite” for Mass (the Mass celebrated in most parishes since the reforms of liturgy after Vatican II) and the “Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite” for Mass (the Mass celebrated from the *Roman Missal* from 1962 or the Mass as universally offered until 1965), it is my hope and prayer that all who have taken time to read and prayerfully reflect upon the teachings given here have grown in their understanding and desire for a fully and more proper participation in the Holy Mass, no matter which form is preferred.

Since, however, it is the establishment of the regular offering of the Extraordinary Form Mass that served as the primary reason for this series of bulletin inserts, it is fitting to close by encouraging all Catholics in openness to both forms. In particular, I believe it is important to invite those who have not participated in the Extraordinary Form Mass ever or for a very long time to consider attending it - and to do so at least four times. To that end, I want to offer the following points of encouragement (which are available at the entrances of the Church each time that the Extraordinary Form Mass is offered):

If your next time of attending the Extraordinary Form Mass will be your first time ever (or the first time since before 1965) or if you are not regularly accustomed to participating in the Extraordinary Form

Mass, we want to encourage you to enter into Mass in the following ways:

1. Before Mass in your private prayer, **ask the Lord to help you to open your mind and heart to His gifts of grace** that will become present through this Mass.
2. In the “Low Mass,” which is the Mass without any singing, most of the prayers are prayed by the priest in an inaudible voice, while others that are prayed audibly are typically responded to by the altar servers alone. In the “Missa Cantata” (that is, the “Sung Mass”), some prayers are sung by the priest alone, while many others are spoken by the priest in a low or inaudible voice while the choir sings various prayers and acclamations. In your first experiences of either of these expressions of the Mass, **we recommend NOT TRYING TO FOLLOW ALONG IN A BOOK**; but to simply observe and to continue in prayer to receive God’s grace through what is made present in your midst.
3. The Extraordinary Form of the Mass contains a great depth of symbolism. Rather than focusing upon your own effort to follow or understand, we encourage that in your first experiences of this offering of Mass to come and to “be present,” similarly as being present to such a moment as a beautiful sunset or another marvel of God’s creation. **Do not be afraid to use your imagination** - aware that the Mass is an offering to God the Father and an encountering of Jesus Christ. Simply seeking to “take it in” as it appears, rather than trying to understand or analyze each moment can make this both a **prayerful experience of God’s transcendent**

ent love and a way to be drawn beyond what is perceptible to that which is meant as a glimpse of heaven.

4. For gestures of kneeling, standing, or sitting, simply do your best to follow what others are doing...seeking once more to first observe, taking in what is happening without getting discouraged over what is unfamiliar. At the Missa Cantata, where an MC sometimes assists the priest at the altar, this MC also can assist the people in knowing at which points they are to stand, sit, kneel, etc., by giving directives at the proper time. Simply follow his lead in his directing of such gestures.
5. If you will seek to receive Holy Communion, simply come forward at the proper time (it will be easily recognized) and kneel on one of the kneelers. When the priest comes to you to offer Holy Communion, **all you need to do is open your mouth and the present your tongue such that the priest can place the host upon it.** The priest says all the words that are part of the offering of Holy Communion, including the “Amen.” (If you are unable to kneel, please stand directly in front of the kneeler, as the priest will still be behind the kneeler to offer Communion.)

6. Finally, if this Mass leaves you with more questions or confusions than with a sense of prayerfulness, please do not give up after only one Mass. In fact, we encourage you to come to the Extraordinary Form Mass at least four times - following the tips given on this page before making any judgment.

Please know too that all of the bulletin inserts of this series will remain available on the website [www.stbensduluth.org](http://www.stbensduluth.org). Likewise, the table within this insert offers website addresses for several more sets of resources that are easily accessible to learn more about liturgy in general, especially the Holy Mass.

Finally, might we always remember that the meaning of worship has always been consistent in the history of the Church. May we all continue to grow in our “fully, conscious, and active participation” in the saving works of Jesus Christ made present to us in the liturgy by Christ for our sake.

May God bless you with the gift of His divine life offered through the Most Holy Eucharist.

*Want to know more about Mass?*

*Check out these websites:*

#### **Resources for Liturgy:**

[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/ccdds/index.htm](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/index.htm) - Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship - English documents on liturgy.

#### **Resources for the Extraordinary Form Mass:**

[www.sanctamissa.org](http://www.sanctamissa.org) - Helps for learning to offer and serve at the Extraordinary Form Mass.

[www.ecclesiadei.org](http://www.ecclesiadei.org) - Directory of Latin Masses

[www.latinliturgy.com](http://www.latinliturgy.com) - Latin Liturgy Association (resources, catechetical materials, etc.)

[www.gettlim.org](http://www.gettlim.org) - other additional resources.

#### **Articles and General Topics on Liturgy:**

[www.newliturgicalmovement.org](http://www.newliturgicalmovement.org) - Scholarly articles on topics of liturgy.

[www.liturgicalinstitute.org/media](http://www.liturgicalinstitute.org/media) The Liturgical Institute - University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, IL - VIDEOS, PODCASTS, etc.