

One thing that I find fascinating about life as a priest is the assumptions different people make about my thoughts on many aspects of Church life. And while sometimes, they are right, many times, they are pretty far off! And while acknowledging that each priest is unique, I want to address something that I know Fr. Chris and I are in total agreement about: noisy kids at Mass.

The assumption that many people make is that any noise or disruption during Mass is something distracting, and therefore, should be eliminated. But when it comes to babies or young kids who are making noise in Church, there is nothing further from the truth!

When I am up in the sanctuary and I see families with young children at Mass, I am most definitely not annoyed or distracted. I am excited. I am grateful. I am relieved that I am not the youngest person in the Church! The sound of babies and young kids in Church is not a distraction, but a sign of life that our Church is alive and growing. So first and foremost, I want to thank the parents of these young ones for choosing to come to Mass with your families!

It is so important to pray together as a family, and the dedication you show to doing that inspires me. I know that it isn't easy to wrangle young ones, so I want to encourage you to keep at it! If you know people who see their little ones as obstacles to coming to Church, encourage them to give it a shot! No matter how old or young we are, everyone needs the Lord. And for the rest of us, who don't have young ones, I encourage you to be patient and understanding when kids don't behave perfectly. If you are parents but your children have grown, I am sure you can recall what those days are like.

We should remember that Jesus never said "Let the well-behaved adults come unto me," but "Let the children come unto me." Let's work together to make St. John the Baptist a real spiritual home for people of all ages!

In Christ,

Fr Jim