



Catholic Family Challenge

Start children off in the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it. Proverbs 22:6

When Does Mass End?

The Mass is made up of many different parts and prayers. The last part of the Mass is the Concluding Rites. The Mass does not end when the last person goes through the Communion line. After the altar is cleaned and reset, we hear a specific prayer - very simply called the "Prayer after Communion". Any announcements or special guest speakers usually come after that prayer. Even then, Mass is still continuing. The priest blesses everyone in attendance. On special feast days, we often hear a blessing that is longer at the end of the Mass. After that blessing, the priest or deacon says something that dismisses us to go spread God's word in the world. That typically sounds similar to "The Mass has ended, go in peace". This is not just the ending portion of the Mass, but it is also a command. We are sent out into the world to share our faith with everyone we encounter. This is actually where the name "Mass" for Catholic services comes from. The Latin phrase for ending the service is "*Ita missa est*", which means "*It is sent*". The word "*missa*" is what eventually translated into calling the service "Mass", because it requires being sent off to spread the Gospel at the end of the service. Since not every Mass has music, after this blessing is the "technical" end of Mass; however, everyone also has to physically exit the church in order to go out and spread the good news. That is why we end with a closing procession and hymn as the crucifix is open carried out for us to follow. Just like all parts of the Mass, the closing hymn is meant to be a part of our full participation in the Mass. Many people even stay after Mass to say a prayer of thanksgiving. We are the closest to Jesus right after we receive Him in the Eucharist at Mass, so staying to say thank you is not a bad idea! This Catholic Family Challenge is to stay after the closing hymn has ended to say thank you to God for all the blessings in your life. Thank him for your family and all those at Mass with you!



When Does Mass End?

Please read the above information together and complete the assigned activity with your family. Once you have done this, fill out and sign the bottom section of this page and return to the office. Only one page needs to be returned per family.

Student Name(s): _____

Family Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____