

# WHEN TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED

## Participating from home in the celebration of Mass



A resource for your family to express full, conscious, and active participation

“Jesus promised to be where two or three are gathered in his name (cf. Mt 18:20). We give the name *church* to the people whom the Lord gathers, who strive to follow his way of love, and through whose lives his saving presence is made known.

“A family is our first community and the most basic way in which the Lord gathers us, forms us, and acts in the world. The early Church expressed this truth by calling the Christian family a domestic church or church of the home.”

USCCB, [Follow the Way of Love](#)

The [Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy](#) reminds us that “all who are made children of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of his Church, to take part in the sacrifice, and to eat the Lord’s Supper” (SC, #10).

Yet being a part of the worshiping assembly is not always possible. For a variety of reasons, people do not have the opportunity to be physically present at Mass. For this reason, many dioceses telecast the Mass as a way of reaching out, to bring the Lord’s healing and comfort.

A televised Mass is not a substitute for participation in the actual celebration, but it does provide an opportunity 1) to identify with a worshiping community, 2) to hear the Word of God, 3) and to be moved to expressions of praise and thanksgiving.

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy emphasizes the importance of full, conscious, and active participation. Even when the Mass is televised or live streamed, our participation involves an inner attitude of prayer and external expressions including physical movement, sentiments of praise and adoration, and joining in the responses. Whether you are participating in a televised Mass at home alone or with others, we are still gathered together, lifting our hearts and minds, with others who are also participating at that time.

This resource provides you with ideas for how you can express your “full, conscious, and active participation” when participating in a televised or live streamed celebration of the Mass.

Adapted from the US Catholic Bishops “Guidelines for Televising the Liturgy” USCCB, 2014. <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/frequently-asked-questions/guidelines-for-televising-the-liturgy.cfm>). Last accessed March 19, 2020.

### 1. Be It Ever So Humble

Though God is present everywhere and always, creating a prayer corner helps to create the space where God meets us and we meet God. In a Christian family, this kind of ‘little oratory’ fosters prayer in common. (CCC, 2691)

- Find some of the same elements you find in Church that draw souls to God and incorporate them into your home - consider small statues or icons of saints, candles, your Bible, or a crucifix.
- Find a small table and drape it with some kind of cloth. If you can, find a cloth that matches the color of the liturgical season.
- Then, place the elements on top. Have children at home? Invite them to find items that remind them of God and have them help set up your “family altar.”
- Rearrange furniture in your house in order to participate fully when it is time for Mass.

### 2. Be intentional

- Arrive early. Light a candle. Sit or kneel as you are able. Enter into an attitude of prayer. Tune your television or device to the broadcast.
- Join in the responses out loud.
- Stand, sit and kneel as you are able.
- At the offertory, offer yourself in prayer as the bread and wine are offered, to be united in Christ’s sacrifice and transformed more completely into members of his body. Pray over your gift that you have prepared to send to your home parish.
- During reception of Holy Communion, make an act of spiritual communion.
- After Mass, extend the fellowship you’ve experienced in prayer through more shared activities with your family. Enjoy brunch or the at-home version of “coffee and donuts.”

### 3. Make an Act of Spiritual Communion

Below is a traditional prayer of spiritual communion. It can be prayed when you find yourself unable to receive the Eucharist, or even in the midst of your daily work, lifting up your thoughts to God.

**My Jesus,  
I believe that You are present  
in the Most Holy Sacrament.  
I love You above all things,  
and I desire to receive You into my soul.  
Since I cannot at this moment  
receive You sacramentally,  
come at least spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace You  
as if You were already there  
and unite myself wholly to You.  
Never permit me to be separated from You.  
Amen.**

### 4. Glorify the Lord by Your Life

Here are some helpful resources for you and your family to “Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.”

- [52 Sundays](#) - Archdiocese of Detroit
- [Celebrating Sunday for Catholic Families](#) - Liturgical Training Publications
- [Grand Rapids FAITH Magazine](#) - Diocese of Grand Rapids
- [Faith and Family](#) - Franciscan Media
- [Sunday Gospel Activities](#) - Catholic Mom

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