

Young Apprentices

A RESOURCE FOR THE OCIA

INQUIRY SESSION: MASS

Inquiry Session (Approximately 60 minutes)

Prepare

For this session you will need a video of the Mass as it is celebrated at your parish, or a handout for each child with the outline of the Mass and the assembly's responses, or a hymnal or resource used at your parish for each child that contains an outline of the Mass and the assembly's responses.

Set the space with chairs in a circle and in the center place a candle and a Bible. (Mark the Scripture citations noted in participant materials.) If possible have available a Book of Gospels, a Lectionary, a Roman Missal, a chalice, a paten, a purificator, and a corporal.

If needed, have name tags. Make refreshments available, too.

Gather (10–15 minutes)

1. Greet the children as they arrive. Invite each child to share his or her name and something good that happened since the last time the group gathered.

Take time to find out how the children are doing.

Ask whether they had an experience of prayer or church since the last session.

2. Read together the **My Story** section of the participant page and discuss the questions found there.

3. Ask whether anyone in the group has ever been to Mass. Encourage those who have been to Mass to share what that experience was like. Ask questions such as the following:

What did you see?

What did you hear?

What surprised you?

What seemed strange to you?

What questions do you have about what you saw or experienced?

4. If possible, respond to any questions the children have raised about their experience of Mass.

Expand (15–20 minutes)

1. Read and discuss the **God's Story** section of the participant handout.
2. Highlight the following discussion points:
 - In Baptism we become part of the family of God.
 - At Mass the family of God gathers at Church to share stories of Jesus and to share Communion, the very special meal of the family of God.
 - The time we spend at Mass helps us grow closer to Jesus and to his family, the Church. It makes us strong in faith.
 - The parts of the Mass are the same throughout the world. The language of the Mass is different but the readings and the prayers said are the same.
3. Read aloud each Scripture passage. After reading each, pause and invite volunteers to share what the passage tells us about the Mass and about the role of the priest.

Genesis 14:18 (The Four Kings)

Luke 24:13-32

(The Appearance on the Road to Emmaus)

Acts 2:42, 46 (Communal Life)

Our Response (15–20 minutes)

1. Show the children the Lectionary and the Book of the Gospels. Explain that these two books contain the readings proclaimed at Mass. The Lectionary contains the First Reading, Second Reading, and Responsorial Psalm, and the Book of the Gospels contains the Gospel reading. Point out to the children the readings for the upcoming Sunday.
2. Show the children the Roman Missal. Explain that the prayers the priest says are in the Roman Missal, and so are the prayers and words that the assembly says. Especially point out the section of the Roman Missal that contains the text of the Mass.
3. Show the children select parts of the video of the Mass as it is celebrated at your parish, or distribute the handout or Mass text resource you have available for today's session. Review with the children the flow of the Mass, pointing out some of the assembly's responses (*such as, "And with your spirit"*) and some of the gestures and postures (*such as signing the forehead, lips, and heart at the proclamation of the Gospel, or how to exchange the Sign of Peace*).
4. Use the corporal, chalice, paten, purificator, and Roman Missal to show the children how the altar is set for the Eucharistic Prayer.
5. Encourage the children to come regularly to Sunday Mass, and to pay attention to the books, sacred vessels, and sacred objects used during the celebration of the Mass. If possible, have parishioners assigned to both greet and sit with the children and their families at Mass.
6. Use the participant page, or in your own words, share the story of Saint Justin Martyr, who wrote a detailed account of how the Mass was

celebrated in the Roman Church around the year AD 150.

7. Point out the ***Faith Words*** section of the participant page. Review the faith words with the children.

Pray (2–3 minutes)

Read aloud to the children the words of consecration from the Eucharistic Prayer.

At the conclusion, invite all to respond by saying with you, "Amen!"