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The Greatest Event on Earth

God, our loving Father,
thank you for all the ways you bless me.
Help me to be aware that every person,
place, and adventure I experience is an
opportunity to love you more.
Fill me with a desire to change and to grow,
and give me the grace to become
the-best-version-of-myself in
every moment of every day.

Amen.

The Ultimate Prayer

You are blessed. One of the greatest blessings God gives us as Catholics is the Mass.

There are many different types of prayer. There are prayers of thanksgiving, in which we thank God for all the ways he blesses us. There are prayers of petition or intercession, in which we ask God for some favor. There are prayers of praise, in which we praise God for being God. And there are prayers of adoration, in which we adore God.

One of the incredible things about the Mass is that it combines all these forms of prayer. This is just one of the many reasons why the Mass is the ultimate prayer. Another reason is because in it we present a perfect offering to God. Jesus, who died for us on the cross, is that perfect offering.

Each time you receive Jesus in Holy Communion, God will fill you up in a special way with his grace so that you can become the-best-version-of-yourself!

It is a great privilege to go to Mass each Sunday. The Mass is the ultimate prayer. It is the perfect way for us to gather together as a community of believers and praise God.

At Mass we remember Jesus' last meal, his death on the cross, and his Resurrection. We also get to receive him in the Eucharist. The Eucharist is a celebration of God's love for us and a reminder that God is always with us.

Your First Communion is going to be a very special day in your life.

God's House

Where do we celebrate Mass? At God's house! That's right. The church is God's house. God is so brilliant that he knew in his almighty wisdom that it would be important for us to spend time with him at his house.

Why? Well, have you ever noticed that when you are around people who are good, kind, generous, and thoughtful, you get inspired to be good, kind, generous, and thoughtful too?

When we spend time with God he inspires us to be good—and not just good, but our best. God wants you to live the best life imaginable and he wants you to become the-best-version-of-yourself, grow in virtue, and live a holy life.

When we spend time with God, he fills us with his grace so that we can live holy lives. So each Sunday he invites us over to his house for a great celebration. We call that celebration the Mass. But God is always happy to see us. Sometimes it is nice just to stop by church in the middle of the week and sit in the pews and talk to God about whatever is happening in your life. He loves it when we talk to him about what is happening in our lives.





The Third Commandment

When Moses went to the top of Mount Sinai to speak with God, God didn't give him one hundred commandments or a thousand commandments. How many commandments did God give Moses to share with the people?

That's right. Just ten.

Do you remember what we said about the Ten Commandments when we were preparing for your First Reconciliation? Let's take another look.

The Ten Commandments are a blessing from God given to his people. They help us become the-best-version-of-ourselves, grow in virtue, and live holy lives. They show us the best way to live.

And because there are so few, every single one is very important.

Do you remember what the third commandment is? That's right. "Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day."

Sunday is the Lord's Day. It is the Sabbath. It is God's day. And this is really important to remember. How do we keep the Sabbath holy? By going to Mass.

Going to Mass is the most important thing on Sunday. God wants to see us and spend time with us. Even if we have a soccer game or a camping trip, God still expects us to plan a time to go to Mass.

He gives you life every moment of every day. He fills your life with fabulous opportunities. He blesses you in so many ways. And he asks that you visit him for one hour each week.

How many hours are there in a week? There are seven days in a week, and twenty-four hours in a day: $7 \times 24 = 168$. Out of 168 hours each week, God asks that you come to his house for one hour. Is that too much to ask?

We should be excited to get there each Sunday to thank God for all the ways he has blessed us, to thank him for life, and just to spend time with him.

Listening to God

When you get to church each Sunday it is good to take a few minutes to get quiet before Mass begins. This helps us to hear what God wants to say to us.

God speaks to us in so many ways.

God speaks to us through the Bible. He speaks to us through the Church. He speaks to us in our hearts. He speaks to us through other people and through situations. And he speaks to our hearts in a special way at Mass.

Learning to listen to God's voice is one of the most important lessons we can learn in life. But learning to hear his voice clearly takes a lot of practice. One great way to practice is at Mass on Sunday. In some ways, we come to Mass on Sunday to get our instructions for the week from God.

You probably won't hear an actual voice when God speaks to you. He might speak to you through one of the readings, or through the music or homily, or he may just speak to you in the quiet of your heart.

God might say, "I want you to practice being more patient with your little brother this week." He might say, "I want you to listen to your parents and do what they ask you to do without hesitation." Or he might say, "I want you to enjoy nature while you are on your vacation this week."

God has a special message for us every week. That's why it's important to go to Mass every Sunday. Without God's instructions and directions, we get lost.

Every Sunday at church God has something he wants to tell you. It's unique every week. That's why he invites you to come to Mass every Sunday, so you can hear the special thing he wants to say to you.

Last time you were at church, what did God say to you? Do you remember? Were you listening?



Your Mass Journal

Do you ever feel like God is trying to tell you something? God is always trying to speak to us, but learning to listen to God in the many ways he speaks to us takes time and practice.

When God spoke to Jonah, he told Jonah about a very special mission he had planned for him. Well, Jonah didn't like what God was asking him to do, so instead of listening to God, Jonah tried to run away.

But God didn't give up on Jonah. Instead, God sent a giant whale to swallow Jonah whole! For three days and three nights Jonah lived in the belly of the whale. Once Jonah finally started listening to God, God rescued Jonah from the whale and sent him off to fulfill his mission.



God has always spoken to his people. And he wants to speak to you too.

Next Sunday, take a little notebook to Mass with you. This will be your Mass Journal. Listen to the music, listen to the readings, listen to the prayers, listen to the homily, and listen to your heart. Before Mass begins, pray, “Dear God, please show me one way in this Mass that I can become a-better-version-of-myself this week.”

Then listen, wait patiently, and when you sense the one thing that God is saying to you, write it down. Pray for the rest of the Mass about how you can live that one thing this week, and ask God to help you.

There are many wonderful reasons why we go to Mass on Sunday, and one of them is to listen to God’s voice.



From the Bible: The Road to Emmaus

A few days after Jesus rose from the dead, two of his disciples were walking from Jerusalem to a village called Emmaus. They were talking about Jesus and all the incredible things that had happened. While they were talking Jesus came up beside them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. He said to them, “What are you talking about?”

They stopped and looked at him. Then one of them said, “Are you the only person in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there the past few days?”

“What things?” he asked them.

“The things about Jesus of Nazareth, a great and wise teacher, who died and has now risen from the dead.”

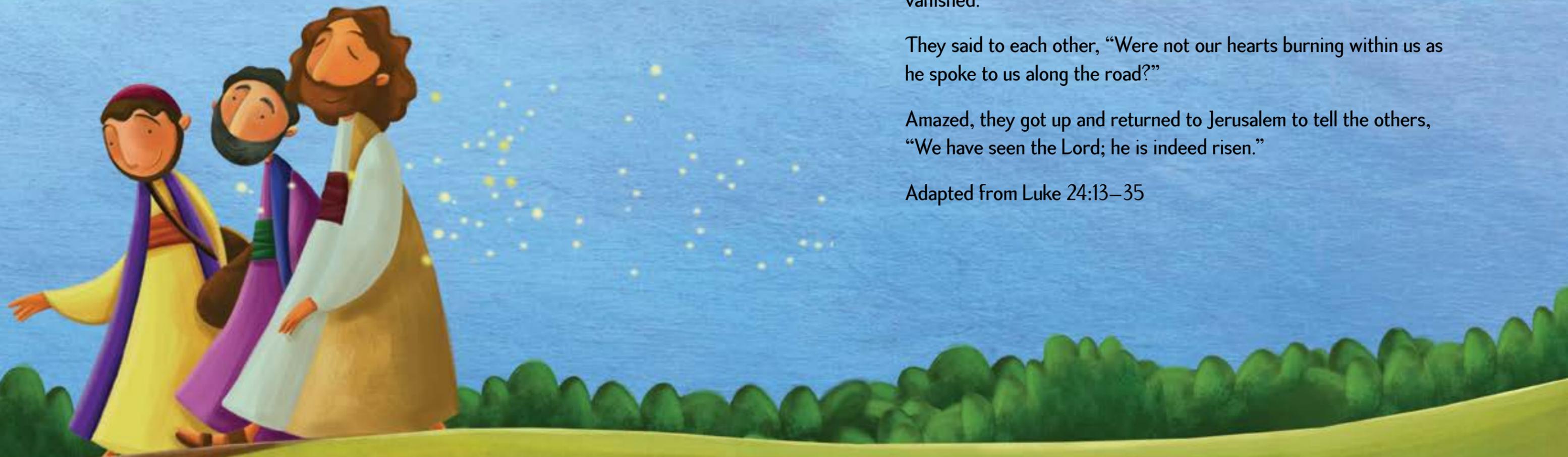
Then Jesus spoke to them about how it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer before entering into his glory, and he explained all the places in the Scriptures that referred to him.

As they approached Emmaus they invited him to join them for a meal. So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he vanished.

They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us as he spoke to us along the road?”

Amazed, they got up and returned to Jerusalem to tell the others, “We have seen the Lord; he is indeed risen.”

Adapted from Luke 24:13–35





The risen Jesus is always at our side, but often we don't recognize him. Jesus is by our side when we wake up each morning, he is by our side when we are playing with friends, he is by our side when we are at baseball and ballet, he is by our side when we are doing our homework, he is by our side when we go shopping, and he is by our side when we go to bed at night.

In the morning, he is so excited for you to wake up and start a new day. At soccer he is cheering for you to do your best. And when you go shopping, he is whispering in your ear, "Is what you are about to buy going to help you become the-best-version-of-yourself?"

Jesus is present in a special way at Mass. The disciples had a powerful encounter with Jesus on the road to Emmaus, but you get to have an even more powerful encounter with him each Sunday at Mass. And very soon you are going to be able to receive Jesus in the Eucharist.

So Many Wonders

There are so many wonderful things that happen during the Mass. If you went to Mass every day of your life, you would still be discovering its wonders at the end of your life. There is nothing like the Mass.

We have already talked about how God speaks to us at Mass. That is amazing. The Eucharist is another wonder we experience at Mass. We believe that during the Mass, a simple piece of bread and a cup of wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Jesus. That is amazing!

It is amazing that God gives himself to us in this way. At Mass God gives himself to us completely in the Eucharist, and at Mass we give ourselves completely to him in prayer. We are going to talk a lot more about this in the coming pages.

Sometimes people say they are bored at Mass. Usually this is because they don't know what is going on or because they are not listening to what God is saying to them. It is impossible to be bored at Mass if we are trying to listen to God's voice. If we ever find Mass boring, it's time for us to put more energy into our conversation with God.

If we find Mass uninteresting, perhaps we need to learn more about what is actually happening. Everything that happens at Mass happens for a reason, and when we really know what is going on, it is fascinating.

Sometimes it helps to have a missal, a small book that explains everything that is happening in the Mass. It can be very helpful to follow along.

Another way to make sure we don't get bored at Mass is to sing all the songs and respond to all the prayers. When you participate in Mass you are in a conversation with God. It is only when we stop participating that we get bored. Plus, when we talk with God, he tells us amazing things!

As we grow in wisdom we discover that the Mass is the most amazing event on earth!



Show What You Know

True or False

1. _____ Your First Communion is going to be a very special day in your life.
2. _____ God wants you to live the worst life imaginable.
3. _____ The Ten Commandments show us the best way to live.
4. _____ God never speaks to us.
5. _____ Every Sunday at church God has something he wants to tell you.

Fill in the blank

1. Each Sunday God invites us over to his _____ for a great celebration.
2. The _____ is one of the greatest blessings God gives us as Catholics.
3. The Eucharist is a _____ of God's love for us.
4. When we spend time with God he fills us with _____ so that we can live holy lives.
5. The Ten Commandments are a _____ God gives us to help us become the-best-version-of-ourselves.

6. It is _____ to be bored at Mass if we are trying to listen to God's voice.
7. The Mass is the _____ prayer.
8. Learning to _____ to God's voice is one of the most important lessons we can learn in life.
9. If you went to Mass every day of your life, you would still be discovering its _____ at the end of your life.
10. As you grow in wisdom you discover that the Mass is the most _____ event on earth.

Word Bank

HOUSE AMAZING CELEBRATION IMPOSSIBLE GRACE
MASS ULTIMATE LISTEN WONDERS BLESSING



Journal with Jesus

Dear Jesus,

I am excited to receive you in the Eucharist for the first time because . . .



Closing Prayer

Tragically, there are many people who spend their whole lives not knowing Jesus and how much he loves them. This is very sad.

The reason they never meet Jesus is because they never go looking for him. God speaks to us in many ways. He speaks to us through the Church, the Bible, the Mass, nature, great art and literature, and one another. But to hear God, to meet him, to discover his amazing plan for your life, you need to seek him!

Let's pray together now and ask God to give us the courage and the desire to always seek him, no matter what:

**Be, Lord Jesus,
a bright flame before me,
a guiding star above me,
a smooth path below me,
a kindly shepherd behind me:
today, tonight, and forever.**

Amen.

Prayer of St. Columba

