

### **1. Fast Prior to Receiving Communion**

- Receive the Holy Eucharist with reverence, bow slightly and respond “Amen.” If receiving the host by hand, rather than kneeling at the Communion Rail, place the left hand over the right hand (or opposite if left-handed) and raise your arms slightly.

### **2. No Eating/Drinking in Church**

- The exceptions would be a drink for small children, water for the priest and water for those who are ill. Bringing a snack into church is not appropriate. Church is a place for prayer and reflection.

### **3. Remove Hats**

- It is impolite for a man to wear a hat into church. While this is a cultural norm, it is one that we should follow closely. Just as we take off hats for the Pledge of Allegiance, we do so in church; as a sign of respect.

### **4. No Chewing Gum**

- It breaks your fast, it’s distracting, is considered impolite in a formal setting, and it doesn’t help us pray better.

### **5. Sign of the Cross**

- Bless yourself with Holy Water when entering and leaving Church. As a sign of respect for the Blessed Sacrament, genuflect before taking your seat and leaving when Mass has ended.

### **6. Dress Modestly and Appropriately**

- The idea of “Sunday Best” should always be honored. Churchgoers of all ages should dress conservatively. As Catholics we believe God comes down to meet us at every Mass. So, why would we not dress appropriately for Him?

### **7. Arrive Early**

- Arrive at least 10-minutes prior to Mass. This helps reduce distractions and provides time to get settled. All entrance doors will be locked when Mass begins. Latecomers will be let in and seated by an Usher so you don’t disturb others. Getting to Mass early allows time to pray.

### **8. Cell Phone Should NEVER be Used**

- The one exception would be a serious emergency and if you do have an emergency, please contact an usher for assistance and walk out of church.

### **9. Seating at Mass**

- Move down the row to sit in the middle so others don’t have to climb over you to sit down.

## **10. Genuflect**

- Always genuflect toward the tabernacle when entering and leaving Church, by allowing our right knee to hit the floor. We acknowledge He is our Lord and God. If someone is physically unable to genuflect, then a bow is sufficient. During Mass, if you pass in front of the altar or tabernacle, bow reverently.

## **11. Talking in Church**

- Once you enter the sanctuary, it is not the time or place to visit with those around you. Remember that your conversation might be disturbing someone who is in prayer.

## **12. Moving Around During Mass**

- Please make sure you take care of your personal needs prior to Mass. Going in and out of Church is distracting and disturbing to others.

## **13. Loud Children**

- Every parent knows that sometimes the baby is going to have a bad day. Try to sit on the end of a pew so you can quickly take the child to the Cry Room in the back of the Church. Don't wait too long before you make a move. There is no reason to be embarrassed about having to quiet your child in the back of the church. It is worse to allow them to continually disturb others.

## **14. Offering Preparation**

- Christ tells us not to let your left hand know what your right hand is doing when you make your offering. Keeping the basket while you get your wallet out can sometimes become quite a scene, so have your cash or offering envelopes ready prior to Mass.

## **15. Reading the Bulletin During Mass**

- Imagine if you invited a guest to your home and before dinner (or during) they decided to read a magazine instead of talking to you. That is what is happening in God's house when you read the bulletin.

## **16. Respect Others Boundaries**

- You might want to hold hands to pray, they may not. They might be sick and not want to shake during the sign of peace. These are all okay.

## **17. Receiving Holy Communion**

- Receive the Holy Eucharist with reverence, bow slightly and respond "Amen." If receiving the host by hand, place the left hand over the right, or opposite if left-handed, and raise your arms slightly. You may also receive the Holy Eucharist kneeling.

### **18. Leaving Mass Early**

- We should stay to the end of the recession and the hymn that accompanies it, if there is one. While there are certainly exceptions to this guideline, most who leave early don't need to and should not.

### **19. Praying After Mass**

- It is a good custom, though not required, to offer a prayer of thanksgiving after Mass has ended.

### **20. Leave Quietly**

- Mass has ended when the priest has proceeded to the back of the Church. Genuflect toward the Altar before leaving the pew or at the end of the pew.

**Remember, you have entered into God's house for the purpose of prayer, adoration, reflection, or to celebrate a sacrament. Please respect Him!**