

HOW DO YOU GET YOUR KIDS TO MASS?

Ideas from St. Joseph Religious Education parents.

- 1) My children don't mind going to mass and they get up and get moving in the morning if they know they get to go to Children's Church.
- 2) There is really never any questioning or argument about it because they know that Mass is not optional. This is because we set the example. We never miss Mass except for illness. If we are out of town, we go to Mass where we are staying. If we don't know where a church is or the Mass times, we look online at masstimes.org. If we can't get to church in Harvard because of some scheduling issue, we go to another town that has Mass at later times in the day. It takes some planning and effort and it is not always convenient, but it is a priority for our family to attend Mass every week.
- 3) Get them involved! (Altar serving, greeting or singing) If they know they have an assignment or commitment, they are more likely to attend (they feel part of the parish and they feel needed).
- 4) Parents can tell their kids that after mass they are going to go somewhere the kids like to go.
- 5) Help them to understand why mass is so important and how they can receive extra graces from attending and participating.
- 6) I bring a "busy bag" to church for my young children. The bag is packed with books and quiet toys that the children can occupy themselves with. This helps mom and dad to be able to participate in mass while keeping our children from getting restless. It's amazing how much the children see and hear with a toy in their hands.
- 7) Laying out the kids clothes the night before helps make the transition to church easier. This will end the struggles with such things as arguments about articles of clothing that no longer fit.
- 8) We find that by choosing to go to the 8:00 AM mass, we have less struggles. The kids don't seem awake enough to argue beforehand and less likely to elbow their sibling during the mass.
- 9) Giving kids a choice of which mass they would like to go to helps. Giving them a choice of time helps them feel a part of getting to mass. It is a choice of time and not whether we go or not.
- 10) Just like children must go to school, so the same is with mass. My children are exposed to reading and writing and math in school. How else will they learn about their faith if they are not exposed to mass?