



# Guide to the Traditional Latin Mass

Holy Family Parish

4851 Beatrice Street

Vancouver, British Columbia

<http://holyfamilyvancouver.ca>

*Served by the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter (FSSP)*



Welcome! If you are new to the Latin Mass, you may notice the following:

## Language

While the priest prays most of the Mass in Latin, the official language of the Roman Catholic Church, he preaches his sermon in English.

A red booklet missal (Latin-English) is provided that contains the prayers of the Mass in both Latin (on the left page) and English (on the right page) to assist you as you pray the Mass. We also have booklets in Latin-Chinese, Latin-Spanish, and Latin-German. The red booklet will be sufficient for you for the time being, as your “training

manual.” Most people eventually purchase a Daily Missal, which contains all the readings and prayers of the year in one book. The parish office can provide more information on how to get a full Daily Missal. Stick with the red booklet for the time being.

## **Silence**

People are very quiet as they come into the church before Mass, to show reverence for the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle and to prepare themselves for the Mass. There are also periods of silence during the Canon of the Mass (the Eucharistic Prayer) while the priest is praying very quietly at the altar.

## **Posture**

When entering the church, bless yourself with the holy water, go up to your pew, then genuflect in the aisle on your right knee, towards the main altar, where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in the tabernacle. If there is Exposition (the Blessed Sacrament is exposed for adoration in a monstrance above the tabernacle), kneel on both knees in the aisle and bow your head before entering the pew.

When leaving your pew, genuflect towards the altar (or kneel again on both knees if the Blessed Sacrament is exposed). Please do not genuflect again as you exit the doors; you have already done so as you left your pew.

## **Priest faces the altar**

The priest faces the tabernacle and the altar as he offers the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Some may mistakenly think that the priest is turning his back on the people. Quite the contrary: the priest and congregation are deliberately facing the altar together, uniting their prayers during Mass. The priest faces the same direction as the people as he shepherds and leads them on their pilgrim journey to God. This unity in posture is traditional to the Roman Rite and is rooted in the practice of the Jewish synagogue. This posture is also traditional to the Eastern Rite Catholics, such as the Ukrainian Catholics.

## **Crucifix**

The crucifix in the sanctuary and on the altar remind us that the sacrifice of the Cross and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass are one and the same sacrifice.

## **Following along with the Mass**

As mentioned above, there are red booklet missals for those who wish to follow along with the text of most of the Mass. The changeable parts of the Mass, including the Scripture readings (Epistle and Gospel) of the day as well as the Proper prayers of the Mass, are available in the Daily Missal, which is available for purchase through the parish office.

## **What am I supposed to do?**

*Pray!* But here is some practical advice –

### **Standing, sitting, kneeling**

If you are unsure when to stand, sit, or kneel, follow the instructions in the red booklet missal. Follow the instructions for the High Mass when the Mass is chanted (sung) at 10:30 a.m. on Sundays and at 7:30 p.m. on special feast days. Follow the instructions for Low Mass when the Mass is spoken (recited) at 8:00 a.m. on Sundays and at other times during the week. If you wish, simply follow those around you!

### **Responses**

In the Traditional Latin Mass, the altar servers say the responses to the priest. The most important form of participation for the congregation is interior participation, in which we pay close attention to the Mass and lift up our hearts and minds in silent prayer. If you wish to join in the singing of certain responses at the High Mass, you may do so at the appropriate times, imitating what the other people are doing.

(Note: Singing of the Gloria and Credo is done antiphonally, responding to the choir. The choir takes the lead, with the people responding at the second, fourth, sixth, etc. verses.)

## **Holy Communion**

At the Traditional Latin Mass, you receive Holy Communion while kneeling (if you are able to do so) at an altar rail, placing your hands under the white communion cloth. You receive the host on the tongue, not in the hands. In addition, you do not respond “Amen” to the priest; the act of kneeling is in itself a kind of “Amen.”

The Roman Catholic Church permits baptized Catholics who are in a state of grace (that is, those who have confessed all mortal sins to a priest) to receive Communion. Fasting before receiving Communion is an act of penance and causes us to hunger for the Lord. The 1983 Code of Canon Law calls for a Eucharistic fast of at least one hour. The longer devotional fast of three hours is optional, at the discretion of each individual, but it is not strictly required by the Church’s current disciplinary law.

## **Dress**

We ask everyone – men and women – to please dress modestly for Mass, because:

- We are in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.
- Our attire should not be distracting to those around us.

Traditionally, ladies often wear a head covering, or mantilla, during Mass. Doing so is a sign of humility and purity before God and is encouraged.

## **After Mass**

You are encouraged to stay behind and make your thanksgiving in the quiet of the church after Mass. Those who wish to converse are encouraged to join the community for coffee and conversation in the hall following the 10:30 a.m. Sunday High Mass. The hall can be accessed from the parking lot, or via the stairwell next to the lobby.