

Chapter 16

Gathered for Mass



Let Us Pray

Leader: Loving God, bring us together as a community.

“When I went in procession with the crowd,
I went with them to the house of God.”

Psalm 42:5

All: Loving God, bring us together as a community. Amen.

Activity

Let's Begin

● **Do Your Part** An elephant met a hummingbird lying on its back with its feet straight up in the air. “What are you doing?” the elephant asked. The hummingbird replied, “I have heard that the sky is going to fall and I am trying to hold it up.” The amazed elephant said, “How can one hummingbird keep the sky from falling?” The hummingbird answered, “We all must do our part.”

Think about what part you play in your family, in your group of friends, and in the Church.

Why is it important for everyone to do his or her part?

What tasks can best be accomplished by people working together as a group?

● **Describe Your Role** Tell a partner about a time when you did your part to make something great happen.



United in Christ's Body



Focus What is the liturgical assembly?

At Sunday Mass, Sally sees Billy Yuan with his grandfather, Mr. Jones, who is in his wheelchair. There's Father Burke, talking with Deacon Tom; and Sister Teresita is with the Dixon family. Sally says hello to DJ and waves to Zoe, who always comes early to pray the Rosary. Happy or sad, people come. All are welcome.

The Assembly of Believers

The worshipers at Sally's church have come from different places to assemble as one community of faith. When the opening hymn begins and all raise their voices in song and prayer, they become something more than just a group of assorted individuals. They become a **liturgical assembly**, doing the most important thing that Catholics can do—celebrating the Eucharist.

When a parish community comes together to celebrate the Eucharist, you can see that all kinds of people make up the Body of Christ. Rich and poor, old and young, hearty and frail, people come together from all nations and cultures to share in the Mass, the celebration of their salvation through Christ. Together they become an assembly of the People of God. Christ is truly present in the people assembled.

? Who are the people you see at Mass on Sunday?

? What sights and sounds make you feel welcome?

The Real Presence

The Eucharist is central to Catholic life because it unites Christ's followers more closely to him and to one another. In the liturgy, Catholics celebrate the special presence of Christ. During the Eucharist, Christ is present in the assembly, in the priest, in the word of God, and in the Eucharist. Most important, Christ is present in the sacred Bread and Wine, which truly become his Body and Blood. This unique, true presence of Christ in the Eucharist under the appearance of bread and wine is called the **Real Presence**.

In the liturgy the people remember with thanksgiving the Paschal mystery of the Lord through prayer, song, sacrament, listening, active participation, and reception of Holy Communion. All gathered are united to the sacrifice of Christ through which new life comes.

Words of Faith

The **liturgical assembly** is the community of believers who come together for public worship, especially in the Eucharist.

The **Real Presence** is the true presence of Christ in the Eucharist under the appearance of bread and wine.

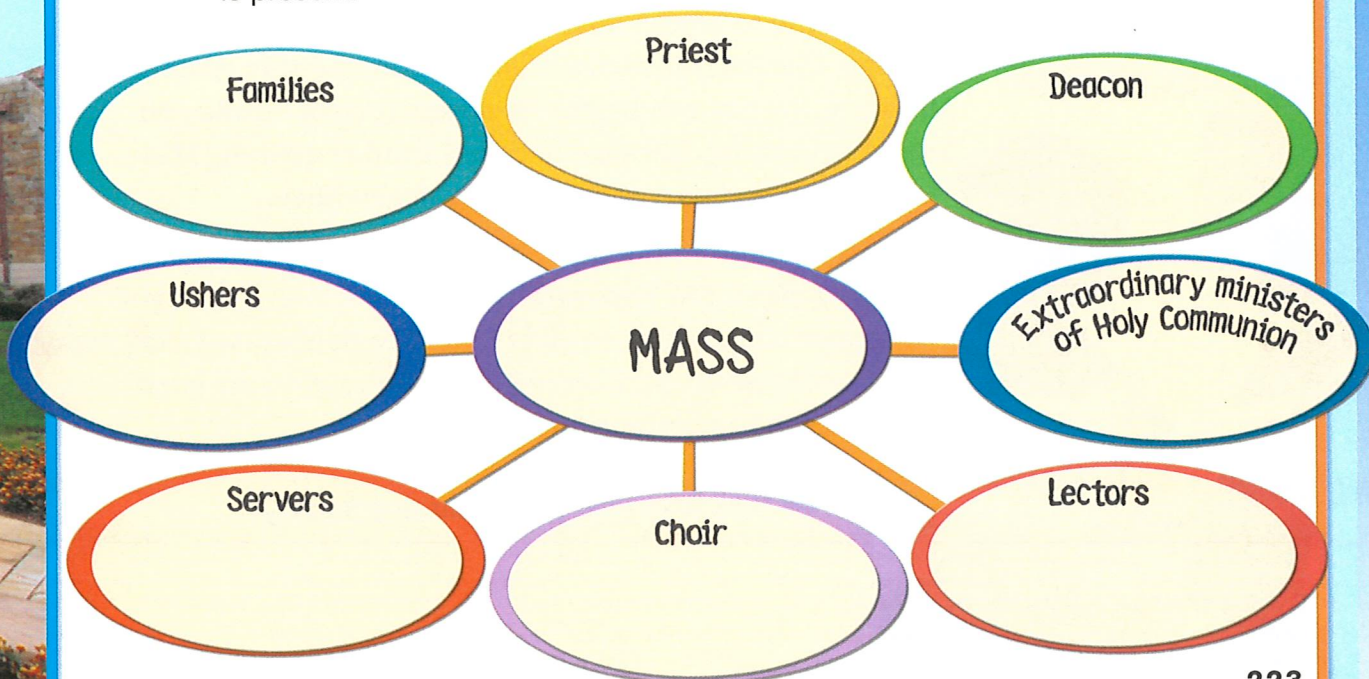
Activity

Share Your Faith

Reflect: Think about all of the people who are included in the Sunday assembly.

Share: With a partner, discuss each person or group mentioned in the web below.

Act: Beneath the reference to each group or person, write a sentence stating how each one shows the belief that Jesus is present.



Participation in the Community



Focus

Why do Christians celebrate the Lord's day?

When Sally joins the parish community for Mass on Sunday, she may not be aware that she is stepping into a living tradition many centuries old. In the time of the early Christians, Sunday was the Lord's day, the day on which the community celebrated the Resurrection of Jesus. The Church continues this practice today.

The Eucharist is the high point of a life of faith shared by a community. The Christian community must be built day by day, as Saint Paul advised an early Church community.



SCRIPTURE

"We urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, cheer the fainthearted, support the weak, be patient with all. See that no one returns evil for evil; rather, always seek what is good [both] for each other and for all. Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus."

1 Thessalonians 5:14-18

Sunday Observance

According to Jewish custom, the Sabbath began on Friday evening. The early Jewish Christians adopted this custom. Similarly, the Church begins its observance of Sunday on Saturday evening. Because of this, Saturday evening Mass is considered part of the Sunday observance.

Participation in the Sunday Eucharist is a privilege and a duty. It offers the opportunity to meet God in a dialogue through Christ and the Holy Spirit. To deliberately stay away from Mass on Sunday regularly without a very good reason is a serious matter.



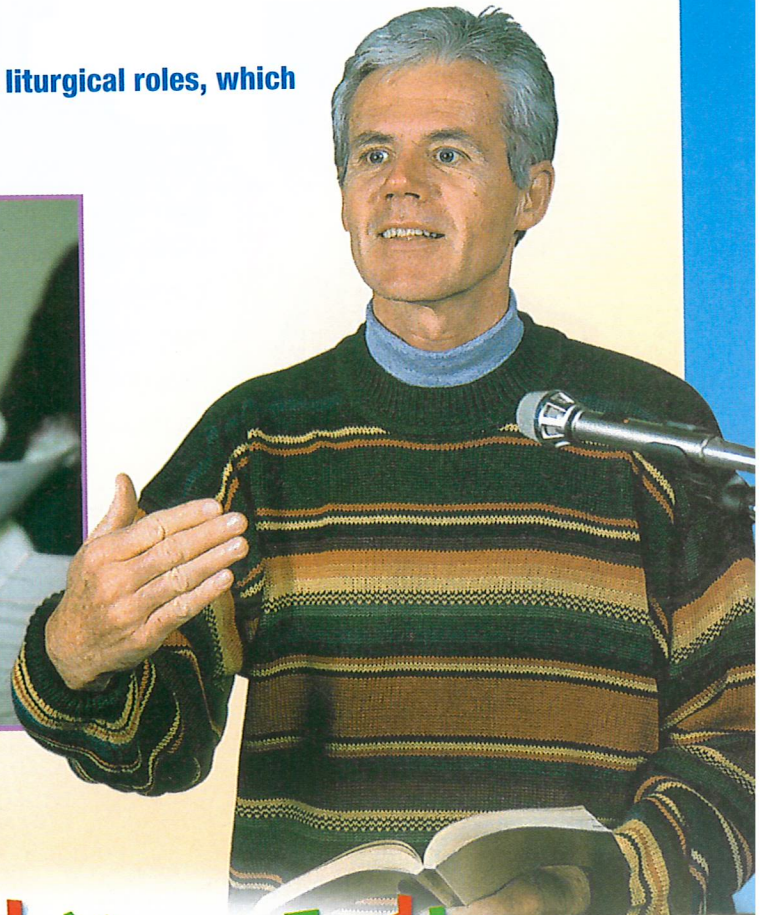
How does your parish observe Sunday?

Liturgical Ministries

Within the community, certain members of the Church are called to special service as ordained ministers—bishops, priests, and deacons. By the power of the Holy Spirit, bishops and priests *preside*, or act as leaders of the Eucharistic assembly. Deacons assist them.

Other members called by the community also have distinct roles in the liturgy. They are greeters, choir members, cantors, musicians, readers, altar servers, and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion. All of these people help the assembly worship as one community.

? If you could choose to serve in any of these liturgical roles, which would you choose? Explain your choice.

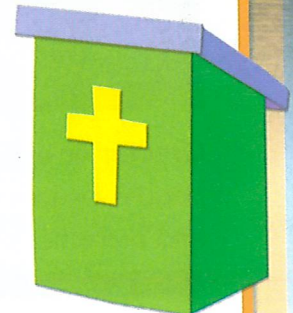


Activity

Connect Your Faith

Share an Invitation Imagine that you have been asked to give a talk at the end of Sunday Mass, inviting others to serve in any of these liturgical roles. What three reasons would you give for joining a particular ministry?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Forms of Service



Focus

What are the specific responsibilities of liturgical ministers?

All members of the parish are invited to participate in the Eucharist. Some members are called to serve the assembly in special ways. Think about the skills and qualities required for each one.

Choir member

Enhances worship by singing in a group and supporting the singing of the assembly.



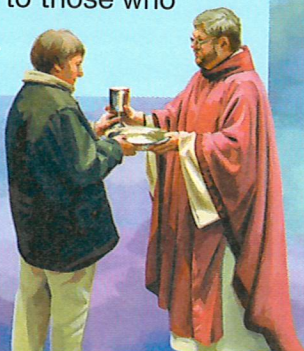
Reader Proclaims the word of God in the readings of the Mass. A reader may also read the Prayer of the Faithful.



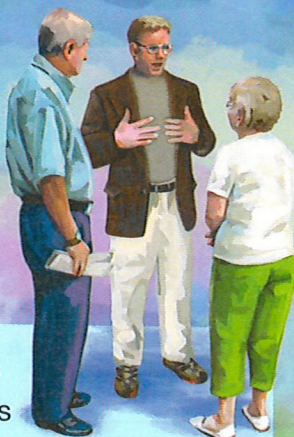
Altar server Assists the priest by holding the book of Mass prayers and bringing items to the altar as needed. A server also carries the cross, candles, and incense in processions.



Extraordinary minister of Holy Communion Helps distribute Communion at Mass or to those who are sick.



Greeter or usher Greets and seats people, passes out worship programs and bulletins, and takes up the collection.



Cantor Leads the people in song and sings the verses of the psalm and other sacred texts in the liturgy.



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What skills or abilities do you have that would make you good at one of these ministries?

Live Your Faith

Greeters/Ushers

SERVERS

Choir Members

READERS

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

Celebration of the Word



Let Us Pray

Gather and begin with the Sign of the Cross.

Leader: God has gathered us as a community of faith. We bring our joys and sorrows, our faith, and our love for one another.

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Read Matthew 5:23–24.

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflect quietly on the reading.

Leader: Taught by our Savior's command, and formed by the word of God, we dare to say:

All pray the Lord's Prayer.

Leader: Let us pray.

Bow your heads as the leader prays.

All: Amen.

Leader: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All: And with your spirit.

Leader: Let us share with one another a sign of Christ's peace.

Share a sign of peace.



Sing together.

Gather us in—the lost and forsaken,
Gather us in—the blind and the lame;
Call to us now, and we shall awaken,
We shall arise at the sound of our name.

"Gather Us In", Marty Haugen,
© 1982, GIA Publications, Inc.



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A Work with Words Match each description in Column 1 with the correct term in Column 2.**Column 1**

- _____ 1. ordained ministers who assist bishops and priests
- _____ 2. called together by God to celebrate the liturgy
- _____ 3. presides at the Eucharist
- _____ 4. community built up by daily faithful living
- _____ 5. has a role in the Eucharistic celebration

Column 2

- a. bishop or priest
- b. liturgical assembly
- c. Body of Christ
- d. each individual
- e. deacons

B Check Understanding Fill in the circle next to the correct response.

6. The true presence of Christ in the Eucharist under the appearance of bread and wine is called the _____.
☐ Paschal mystery ☐ Eucharistic miracle ☐ Real Presence
☐ Holy Communion ☐ Incarnation
7. The Body of Christ is made up of _____.
☐ spirit and flesh ☐ humanity and divinity ☐ Father and Holy Spirit
☐ all kinds of people ☐ saints
8. During Mass, Christ is present in all of these except _____.
☐ the assembly ☐ the bells and incense ☐ the priest
☐ the word of God ☐ the Eucharist
9. Participation in the Sunday Eucharist is _____.
☐ a privilege and an option ☐ merely a duty ☐ a privilege and a duty
☐ merely an option ☐ the same as praying at home
10. All these are particular roles in the liturgy except _____.
☐ cantor ☐ reader ☐ server
☐ greeter ☐ catechumen



Family Faith

Catholics Believe

- The wheat bread and grape wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus in the Sacrament of the Eucharist.
- In the liturgical assembly, the Holy Spirit's grace of faith strengthens the community.



SCRIPTURE

Read 1 Peter 3:8–12 to learn more about how members of a faith community are to behave toward one another.



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For weekly scripture readings and seasonal resources

Activity

Live Your Faith

Introduce Yourself Part of belonging to the liturgical assembly is getting to know others. This week:

- plan to attend Mass as a family.
- arrive early for Mass or stay after Mass.
- introduce yourself to several parishioners and liturgical ministers.
- write down names so that you will remember them.
- reflect on the experience. What did you learn by doing this?



People of Faith

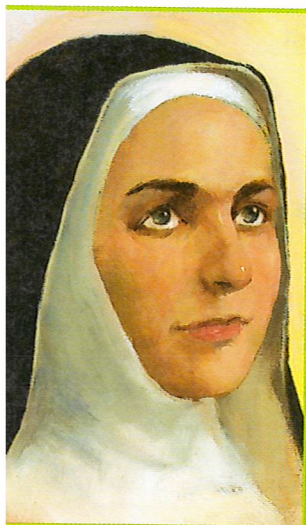
Catherine's father owned a small cloth-dyeing business in the Italian republic of Siena, but her family was not influential. From her earliest years, Catherine was drawn to a life of prayer and self-denial. Through her relationship with God, she acquired such force of personality that she became an important spiritual counselor to many people. Before reaching the age of thirty, she was a valued adviser to two popes. Saint Catherine's feast day is April 29. She was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1977.



Family Prayer

Saint Catherine, pray for us that we may share your learning and your great love for God. May we strive to be a force for healing and wisdom in the world, as you were. Amen.

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▲ Saint Catherine of Siena
1347–1380

In Unit 6 your child is learning about SACRAMENTS.

230 CCC See *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1141, 1373–1381 for further reading on chapter content.