FINDING JESUS IN THIS LESSON

WORD OF GOD: “In John’s Gospel, God’s ‘Word’ means his only-begotten Son, who is the fullness of God’s revelation and who took flesh (the Word incarnate) and became man for the sake of our salvation.”

CCC Glossary
“For ‘the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father ... And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace.’” CCC 423

BEGIN WITH SCRIPTURE

In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
He was in the beginning with God.
All things came to be through him,
and without him nothing came to be. John 1: 1-3

Dear Lord Jesus, Word of God, thank You for shining Your light of love and truth onto our family! Thank You for the grace of knowing You and for this opportunity to know You better. We invite You to be with us now as we do this lesson and ask that through it we would grow to be reflections of Your light to everyone we meet. Amen.

PREPARATION

Read the Parent Pages Q & A, Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About the Mass, and look ahead at the lesson. Over the next two weeks we will be looking at the Mass. This week, we are focusing on the first part - the Liturgy of the Word. There are two main parts to this lesson and they could easily be separated into two shorter lessons, if that works better for your family. “The Paulines Go To Holy Mass” starts on Page 5, and you may find this short piece is better to do on its own before you go to Mass next Sunday.

Lesson

When we are learning about the Mass it is good to think about the Holy Trinity. We can start with the Holy Spirit who is, even now, preparing us to meet Jesus there and is working to make our time in Mass bear fruit in the world.

The Holy Mass was instituted by Jesus Christ at the Last Supper. Every Mass we attend recalls the words of Jesus, “Do this in memory of me.” Luke 22:19
At each Mass we adore God the Father who gives us all the blessings of creation and salvation. The Mass is the perfect prayer of Jesus to God the Father. It makes present the sacrifice Jesus offered on the cross as a true expression of His love for each of us. As members of the Body of Christ, we are able to take part in this prayer.

The Mass is one prayer, with two main parts:

**THE LITURGY OF THE WORD**

and

**THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**

*“The Mass is the most perfect form of prayer.” Pope Paul VI*

Some may ask, “Why should I attend Mass? I can pray anywhere.” Yes, we can pray anywhere. But, through our Baptism, we became members of the Body of Christ. Because we are members of His Body, we are able to participate in Christ’s sacrifice in the Mass. We are also able to receive the Holy Eucharist which is the true life-saving food for our souls. What an awesome privilege it is to be part of the Church’s perfect worship, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass!

**My Holy Mass Book**

**ACTIVITY:** Give each of your children their own *My Holy Mass Book*. This will be used as a teaching tool during your Home Lessons this week and next as you learn more about the Mass. This week, focus on the Liturgy of the Word section of the booklet (Pages 1-10). The Liturgy of the Eucharist will be covered next week.

Throughout the booklet, there are spaces for your children to add their own personal prayers and petitions. On Page 25, you will find a list of ideas for working through it in a more interactive way. Have your children bring their booklets to Mass, so they may follow along and come to understand the various parts of the liturgy.

**PARENTS:**

- Take time to review the *Parents’ Pages* provided. You will find the answers to many common questions regarding the Mass. Sharing some of the information with your children (appropriate to their level of understanding) will also give them a better grasp of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.
• Work through the booklet as a family, and talk about the Mass and the special meanings of each part. Start by reviewing the behavior guidelines on the inside front cover. You may want to use these guidelines as a pre-Mass checklist each Sunday.

ENTRANCE RITE
We begin Mass in the Name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Whenever we make the Sign of the Cross, we remind ourselves of our life in the Trinity. We pray the entire Mass to the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit. Do these words sound familiar to you: “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all”? This, and other prayers that talk about the Holy Trinity, can be found in many different parts of the Mass. Listen carefully next time you are there to see where you can hear them.

PENITENTIAL RITE
Before we can enter fully into the Mass, we need to be sorry for our sins. At the Penitential Rite, we take some quiet time to examine our conscience, and then we pray together asking for God’s mercy. This prepares us to hear God’s Word and to receive the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist.

THE GLORIA
After we have asked for forgiveness of our sins, we praise God for His great mercy. Since the Gloria is a prayer of celebration, we only sing it on Sundays and feast days, and we do not sing it during Advent and Lent, which are times of preparation and penance.

THE OPENING PRAYER
This prayer is also called the “collect” (KAH-lehkt). In this prayer, the priest collects all the prayers of the people together and presents them to God the Father.

THE FIRST READING
This is the beginning of the Liturgy of the Word. The first reading is usually from the Old Testament, and it connects in some way to the second reading and the Gospel.
THE RESPONSORIAL PSALM
At every Mass, we hear one of the Psalms. Usually, we repeat an antiphon after each verse, which is read or sung.

THE SECOND READING
This reading comes from the New Testament, usually one of the Epistles. We listen to hear God’s message for each of us.

THE GOSPEL
This reading is taken from one of the four Gospels. Do you remember which books those are? (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) These books tell us about the life of Jesus, so this is the most important of the readings. We greet it by singing “Alleluia!” and we stand in respect for this important reading. After the priest or deacon announces the Gospel, we reply, “Glory to You, O Lord,” while tracing a small cross with our thumbs on our forehead, our mouth, and our heart. While we do this, we pray silently something like “Your Word, O Lord, be on my mind, on my lips, and in my heart.” But before it can be any of those places, it has to be in our ears, so we must listen carefully to the Gospel reading!

The Sunday Gospel readings rotate on a three-year cycle. Each year focuses on one of the three Gospels in particular. Right now, we are in Cycle A, which focuses especially on Matthew; but in a few weeks, starting with the First Sunday of Advent, we will be in Cycle B, which focuses on Mark. The year after that is Cycle C, which focuses on Luke. We hear Saint John’s Gospel at different points throughout all three years, especially during Easter and Christmas.

THE HOMILY
At this part of the Mass, we sit and listen carefully as the priest or deacon explains some part of the readings.

THE NICENE CREED
In the Creed, we state the major beliefs of the Catholic Faith. The Nicene Creed has four main sections, where we talk about the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and the Church. We bow in reverence during the words, “and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the
Virgin Mary, and became man,” as we remember that Christ left the glories of heaven and humbled Himself to become one of us.

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS
During these prayers, also called “The Prayer of the Faithful,” we pray together for our Church, our world, our country, and many other needs. We can silently add our own petitions to those who we are praying for aloud.

Stay tuned for the exciting conclusion, next week, as we learn about:

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST!

PARENTS: Read The Paulines Go To Holy Mass: A Journey of Faith. As you read the following scenarios, discuss with your family what the proper behavior of the Paulines should be. Take time to discuss the proper behavior at Mass with your family.

The Paulines Go To Holy Mass
A JOURNEY OF FAITH
Based on 1 Timothy 3:15b: “… You should know how to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of truth.”

The Paulines are getting ready to attend Sunday Mass together as a family. Sunday worship is the high point of the Paulines’ week. As parents of six growing boys and girls, they also take seriously their responsibility to raise their children in the proper practices of the Faith.

Martin Pauline gets up early on Sunday morning. He wants to make sure things run smoothly so there is no hectic, last-minute rush out the door for Mass. He is very devout when it comes to his faith.

What would Martin do?

A. He reads through the Sunday Scripture readings with the family to prepare for Sunday worship.
B. He reads the Sunday morning paper until 10:28 a.m. and tells everyone to load up in the van so they can be there for 10:30 a.m. Mass
Therese is the mother of the Pauline children. She feels that it is important for the family to look their best when they go to Mass each Sunday. She believes her children should act and dress responsibly when at church.

What would Therese do?

A. She stays up late on Saturday night finding pairs of shoes for the younger children to wear and making sure that all the clothes are laid out so they won’t be late looking for last-minute items.
B. She presumes everyone knows exactly where they last left their shoes and will find them immediately before heading out the door.

Peter is home from college this weekend. He has been raised with strong values and has a charitable heart. Every one of the younger Paulines looks up to Peter.

What would Peter do?

A. He tells his parents that he stayed up late last night and wants to sleep in this morning.
B. He helps rally the younger children and works to get everyone out the door in a timely manner, helping out wherever he can.

Mary Clare is 16 and wants to be accepted by the crowd at school but also knows that she has a higher calling of being a Catholic Christian.

She is like a “second mother” to the others and is always watching over them to make sure they show proper respect at church.

What would Mary Clare do?

A. She races to her seat at church with all her friends sometime during the opening song.
B. She helps her family enter properly into church by making the Sign of the Cross, genuflecting before they enter their pew, and praying quietly before Mass.
Vincent is 12 and just at the age when he likes to have lots of fun in his free time. He loves certain sports teams and has a tremendous memory for statistics, sports quotes, and plays. He is also very reverent.

What would Vincent do?

A. He shows respect in church by taking off his baseball cap whenever he is in the sanctuary, and uses his remarkable memory skills for memorizing the prayers of the Church.
B. He thinks Sundays are just for watching football.

Lucy is studying hard for her First Communion day. She is the one who listens the most intently when Dad goes through the Sunday Scriptures before Mass. She imagines glorious pictures of Jesus from the words of the Bible.

What would Lucy do?

A. She looks around during Mass, gets up several times to go to the bathroom or get some water, and bangs the kneelers.
B. She soaks in the words of all the prayers, and quietly listens to the wisdom from the homily.

Hillary is 4 and loves to participate in all the motions of the Mass. Her mom and dad say she’s the “best little kneeler” in the whole family.

What would Hillary do?

A. She entertains herself by playing with the song book.
B. She makes the Sign of the Cross with the rest of the people, kneels and folds her hands properly during Mass, and loves to give her family the sign of peace handshake.
Ben is the baby of the family, but even at such a young age, he seems to know that Mass is a special time, and the church is a special place. Ben thinks that the music is great!

What would Ben do?

A. He rolls his noisy toy truck back and forth over the pew.
B. He sings “la-la-la” with all the songs and enjoys entering into the celebration of the Holy Mass.

What are some things that you learned from the Pauline family about going to Mass?