

## Family Prayer

*This pattern of prayer will help the whole family grow in familiarity with the Gospels and prepare well for taking part in the Liturgy of the Word at Sunday Mass.*

*Before hand find the Sunday Gospel reading in a children's bible - the Good News translation is the best one to use with children. You will find the reference for the Gospel in a Sunday Missal or, perhaps in your parish newsletter.*

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

*All make the sign of the Cross and say: **Amen.***

Leader: Before we listen to our reading from the Gospel of N.,  
let us spend a moment in quiet prayer,  
asking the Holy Spirit to hear Jesus speaking to us  
in the words we hear.

*After a short silence, the Leader announces the Gospel: **A reading from the Holy Gospel according to N.** and all trace the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips and heart. The Gospel reading is then read. If children are able to read confidently and well, they might read the passage. Otherwise it will be more helpful for them if an adult reads it.*

*At the end of the Gospel the reader says: **This is the Gospel of the Lord.**  
All respond: **Praise be to you, Lord Jesus Christ.***

*Following the reading be ready to say a word about something you find attractive about the passage, perhaps about how Jesus relates to people, perhaps about the faith people show. Invite others also to say what words or events in the passage have struck them.*

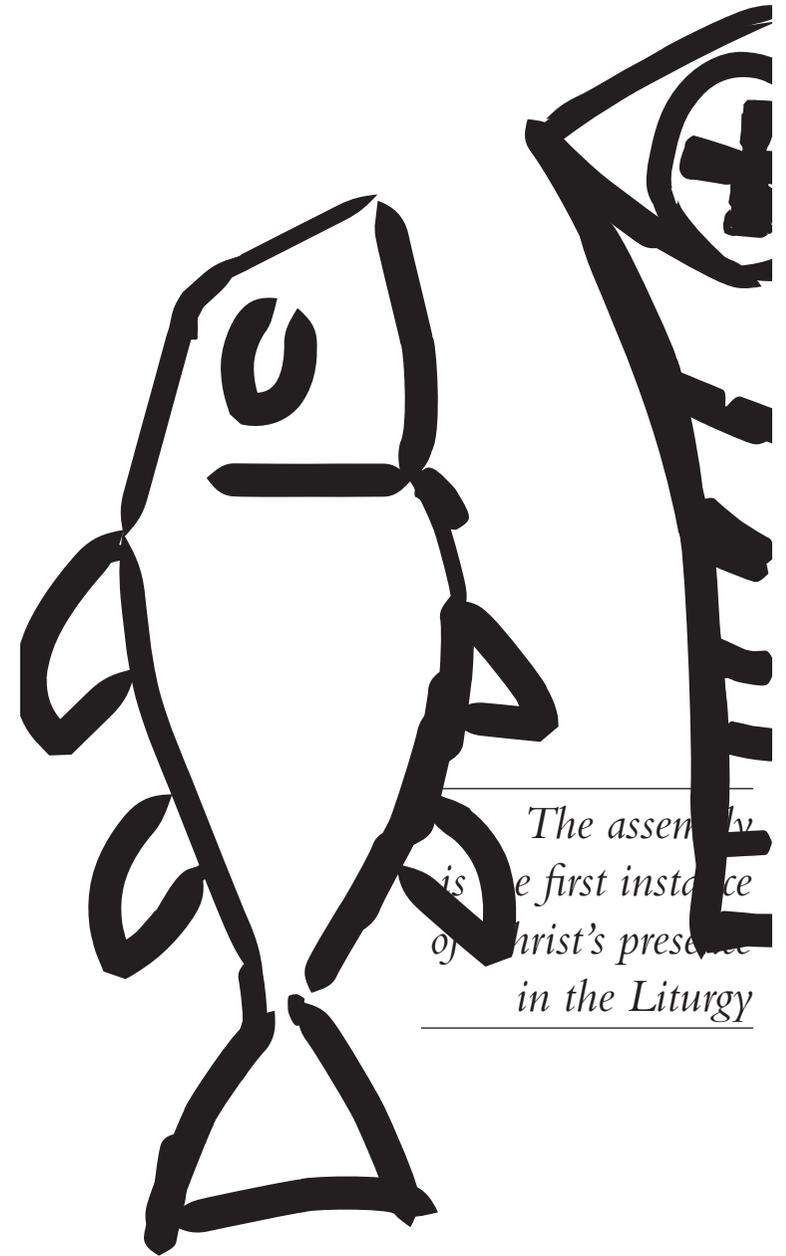
*Don't force the sharing. It is enough if you have the opportunity to share with the family something of your response in faith with the family.*

*When ready invite everyone to join together in praying the Lord's Prayer.*

Leader: May almighty God bless us all,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

# In Communion with Christ

## 3. Word



*The assembly  
is the first instance  
of Christ's presence  
in the Liturgy*

## Looking at the Mass

### Introductory Rites

#### Liturgy of the Word

Reading

Responsorial Psalm

Reading

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel

Homily

Profession of Faith

Prayer of the Faithful

#### Liturgy of the Eucharist

#### Concluding Rite

When we hear the scriptures proclaimed in the liturgy Christ speaks to us. If we are ready to listen Christ meets us in his word.

The readings from Sacred Scripture and the chants between the readings form the main part of the Liturgy of the Word. The Homily, Profession of Faith, and Prayer of the Faithful expand and complete this part of the Mass.

In the Scriptures the community of faith even now hears God speaking to it. For this reason the biblical readings and their accompanying Scripture chants may not be omitted, shortened, or replaced by non-biblical texts.

The high point of the Liturgy of the Word is the proclamation of the Gospel reading. The other readings in their established sequence from the Old and New Testaments prepare the assembly for this proclamation.

# In Communion with Christ

## The Bible — Word of God

At Mass, every Sunday, we listen to readings from the Bible in the Liturgy of the Word. Just as the Gospel reading is the high point of the Liturgy of the Word so the Gospels are at the heart of the Bible.

We have four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Each one tells of the life and teachings of Jesus in their own style. Some stories are shared by each writer; others are unique to a particular gospel. Over a 3 year cycle we listen to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. The Gospel of John is read at different times over the three years.

At the heart of each Gospel is the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus — the Paschal Mystery—God’s saving act of love for us that redeemed us. The rest of Gospels, and even the Old Testament, can be seen as leading up to this. The remainder of the New Testament the response of the early Church to living out the meaning that this has for their lives and for the world.

To every piece of scripture we hear in church we can ask: *What does it tell me of God’s saving love?*

This leaflet for parents of young families is one a series of resources produced by the Liturgy Office of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales to assist parishes reflect on their celebration of the Eucharist in the light of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*. Celebrating the Mass and Leaflet © 2005 Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales. Other resources are available from [www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources](http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources)

## Listening and Reflecting

*If we are ready to listen Christ meets us in his word.*

In the Mass we meet Christ in a number of ways. Christ is present in those who come together to celebrate; he is present in the person of priest; when the scriptures are proclaimed it is Christ who speaks to us and in Holy Communion we it is Christ we receive, the bread and wine having become his body and blood.

It is not enough for Christ to be present in these ways. We need to be present to him too. We must be ready to meet him. For example with his presence in the word. We need to listen to ‘hear’ his presence; to hear what he is saying to us.

Good ministry of the liturgy can help us by providing us with good proclamation of the readings and space for silent reflection. And we ourselves have our part to play, whether that is through preparation, in the way suggested overleaf, or by catching a phrase or image in the reading that speaks to us and giving ourselves the chance to listen to it again in the coming week.

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The psalms have been used to give prayerful expression to the faith and feelings of God’s people over the centuries. They were used by Christ himself in prayer. In these words of wonder and praise, repentance and sorrow, hope and trust, or joy and exultation the Church now responds to God’s word. The psalms in the Lectionary have been selected to help the assembly to meditate on and respond to the word that has just been proclaimed.

The Alleluia or Gospel Acclamation is an acclamation by which the assembly of the faithful welcomes and greets in song the Lord who is about to speak to them in the Gospel, and by which they express their faith.

Enlightened and moved by God’s word, the assembly exercises its priestly function by interceding for all humanity. Because “the joy and hope, the struggle and anguish of the people of this age and especially of the poor and those suffering in any way are the joy and hope, the struggle and anguish of Christ’s disciples,” the Church prays not just for its own needs but for the salvation of the world, for civil authorities, for those oppressed by any burden, and for the local community, particularly those who are sick or who have died.

*Celebrating the Mass* 153–171