

Saint Therese Church Parish Etiquette

General

Please maintain a reverent, prayerful atmosphere in the Sanctuary by the following:

- Kindly turning off the sound on your cell phone.
- Avoid bringing any food, drinks, or chewing gum in church.
- Speaking softly, if necessary so no distraction is caused.
- Supervising your young children at all times.
- Genuflecting or bowing to the tabernacle when you enter a pew or cross in front of it. Remember, our Lord is present in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

The Mass (Sunday Liturgy)

Attire: Appropriate attire for Mass should be modest and respectful. A rule of thumb: If you can't wear it to the office for "Casual Friday," probably it isn't appropriate for Mass.

Before Mass (Mass begins when the Opening Hymn has begun).

- Enter the church, and be seated before Mass is scheduled to begin.
- Greet friends in the Atrium. However, once in the Sanctuary please kindly try your best to maintain a reverent silence.
- Remember to make the sign of the Cross with Holy Water upon entering (and leaving) the church.
- Genuflect or bow to the tabernacle as you enter the pew for the first time. But, you do not need to genuflect or bow every time you leave or enter the pew.
- If you arrive after Mass has started, find a seat quietly so as not to distract others from worship.
- If you arrive during the readings or while a priest or deacon is at the Ambo, please remain standing until they are done speaking, and then seek a seat.

During Mass

- Please participate fully in the liturgy by joining in the prayers and singing.
- Unfortunately, if a child cannot sit quietly for a long period of time, escort the child into the Children's Prayer Room. Or, if it is full, the atrium of the Church.
- **The Lord's Prayer:** Some hold hands when we pray the "Our Father", but be respectful of anyone who does not wish to hold hands.
- **Sign of Peace:** During the sign of peace, we greet one another with a handshake. Be respectful of anyone who does not wish to shake hands, but simply give the verbal greeting, "Peace be with you."

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The Eucharist

Catholics fast one hour before receiving Holy Communion. This means no food or drink other than water. If you have health issues, you do not need to observe this fast. And, obviously, chewing gum should be avoided while in God's House during Holy Mass.

Receiving Communion

- Follow the direction of the ushers and walk reverently to the minister distributing Holy Communion. This is not the time to be conversing or greeting each other.
- You may receive Holy Communion on your tongue or in your hands. If you receive in your hands, hold your open hands one under the other at heart level.
- When the minister says "Body of Christ", respond "Amen."
- Consume the Body of Christ **immediately** or step to one side and put it into your mouth. You do not have to make the sign of the cross after you put the consecrated host into your mouth.
- Never take the consecrated host back to your seat or give it to anyone else.
- If you wish to receive the Precious Blood, sip from the cup held by the minister, and respond "Amen." If you do not wish to receive the Precious Blood, acknowledge the cup with a nod as you pass by.
- Return to your pew with reverence.
- Remain kneeling until the tabernacle is closed.
- A friendly reminder: We all should be in the state of grace to receive Holy Communion. Therefore, if a confession is needed, please do so.

If health issues prevent you from walking to the minister to receive communion, notify the usher and Holy Communion will be brought to you.

The end of Mass

Mass has not ended until the priest, deacon and altar servers have walked to the back of the church.

- If there is singing during the "sending forth", you may leave once the priest has reached the back of the church, or you may remain until the end of the singing.
- Maintain reverence in the Sanctuary. Visit with friends in the Atrium or in the parking lot.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, MAY GOD BLESS YOU FOR COMING TO

SUNDAY MASS EACH WEEKEND!