

# Basics

A 4 week series of homilies delivered during Advent to help you focus, reclaim or discover the little ways that will enhance and deepen your Catholic Christian Life through the Mass.

Part 1 Before Mass

Part 2 Liturgy of the Word

Part 3 Liturgy of the Eucharist

Part 4 After Mass

“Worship” itself, Eucharistic communion, includes the reality both of being loved and of loving others in turn.

A Eucharist which does not pass over into the concrete practice of love is intrinsically fragmented.... the “commandment” of love is only possible because it is more than a requirement. Love can be “commanded” because it has first been given.”- Pope Benedict XVI *Deus Caritas Est*

## 1. Be joyful

*“Joy is prayer; joy is strength; joy is love; joy is a net of love by which you can catch souls.”- St Theresa of Calcutta*

We can't be happy all the time, but joy transcends emotion; it's rooted in the hope we have in Christ and the knowledge that his faithfulness is constant and enduring. Within this context, we are able to better live in the present moment and dispense with the anxieties that come from focusing too much on either the past or the future.

## 2. Whatever you do, give it your best

*“Do not be afraid. Do not be satisfied with mediocrity. Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.”- St John Paul II*

We all work for the Lord. So that carries with it a responsibility we should always do our best in human terms.

## 3. Notice others

*“Charity is certainly greater than any rule. Moreover, all rules must lead to charity.” -St. Vincent de Paul*

There are people around you experiencing difficulties. Although we can't fix everything, we can provide resources, support and encouragement. This can be as simple as an understanding smile, willingness to listen patiently, or an encouraging word.

#### **4. Be an ally/supporter**

*“Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up, as indeed you do”- St Paul to the Thessalonians 1:5:11*

In thinking about it, don't we all need allies, don't we want people, family or friends to support us? This helps us to remember that it's not all about us. We need to be allies for mutual support and encouragement.

#### **5. Forgive**

*“May we never risk the life of our souls by being resentful or by bearing grudges.”  
- St Gregory of Nyssa*

Forgiveness is necessary and as Catholics we need to ask for it and receive it. The words “I'm sorry” are among the most powerful we can use, and when it's our turn to forgive, we're called to do it from the heart. When others offend us and genuinely seek forgiveness we should be quick to accept it.

#### **6. Accept weakness**

*“Therefore, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and constraints, for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong.” -St Paul 2 Corinthians 12:10*

We are all weak in one way or another. Honestly acknowledging our weaknesses and failures is a sure way to grow in virtue and holiness. Turn to Christ, turn others to Christ, the source of true and eternal strength.

#### **7. Be grateful**

*“The secret of happiness is to live moment by moment and to thank God for what He is sending us every day in His goodness.” -St. Gianna Beretta Molla*

Gratitude is a powerful aspect of our faith. The Eucharistic is the primordial prayer of Thanksgiving. Let gratitude be a part of your daily interactions with others.

#### **8. Be humble & authentic**

*“Humility is truth and pride is lying.” - St. Vincent de Paul*

There are no limits to the benefits of humility. Part of humility is also to be vulnerable. Doing so will foster growth in love of God and neighbor.

#### **9. Pray**

*“Prayer is the inner bath of love into which the soul plunges itself.”*

*-St. Jean Marie Baptiste Vianney*

The first thing we can do to Announce the Gospel is to pray. Intercessory prayer is powerful prayer! Our hope springs from the Lord, whose mercy is likened to the ocean. With our Catholic toolbox bulging with tools (the sacraments, prayers, devotions, the Rosary, Mass, etc.), we can always pray for others and know the Lord hears us.