

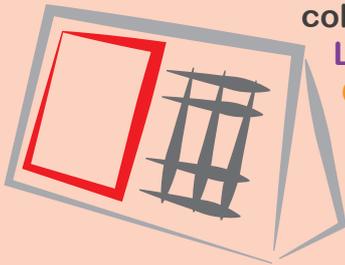
# What happens during Children's Mass?

**A** bell rings to tell everybody that the Mass is starting. It's a sign that we should be quiet and pay attention. When the service begins you may wonder who the people at the front are, and what they do.



One of them wears special clothes called **VESTMENTS**. This person is called the **PRESIDENT**. The President is usually Father John the Rector, or Father Dave the Curate. The special clothes are different colours according to the time of year. The church has special seasons and each has its own

colour: **Purple** in Lent and Advent, **Gold** at Easter, **Green** at Trinity, **Red** at Whitsun.



**What colour is the President wearing today, and what is the season of the year?**

There are two other people there to help the President at the front, saying prayers and holding things. They are called the **DEACON** and **SUBDEACON**. 'Deacon' is an old word for a helper.

The President leads us as we say a prayer and reminds us that God is with us in the Mass. And because God is perfect and we aren't, before we do anything else we admit to God that we need his help. The President then prays that God will help us all.

Then we sing a song and while we are singing the President sprinkles water.

He sprinkles the Altar first, then the Deacon and Subdeacon, and then everybody else. The water reminds us how God helps us.



As well as special seasons, the church has a special prayer for each Sunday. The President sings that prayer now. This way of singing prayers has been a tradition in the church for hundreds of years. He raises his hands as he sings, to show that he is singing it for all of us and we are all included in the prayer.

The **TALK** follows next. **Who will give the talk today? The Rector, or someone else?** The Talk helps us to understand the **BIBLE**. The Rector or Curate do



their best to make this fun and to make us think about what happened during **JESUS'** time and how he helped and healed people. You can join in, when they ask you questions.

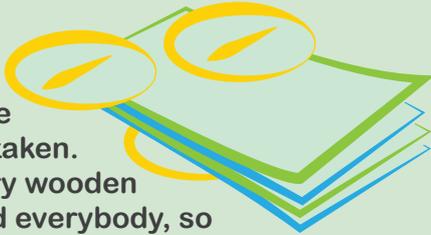
Then someone comes from the congregation to read from the Bible. They stand at the lectern to read. The lectern is shiny and shaped like an **EAGLE**. **Can you see it?** The Bible says what Jesus did and said, and how people down the ages have tried to do what God wants. We read the Bible because we can learn from it how to get God's help.



Children from the congregation are chosen to read the prayers. After each prayer we can join in by saying, “**LORD GRACIOUSLY HEAR US**”. The prayers are for the Church, all the people of God, for the people who are ill, for the children who are to be baptised and some of them thank God for the good things he does for us. We would be rude if we didn't say thank you.

After the Prayers, we all stand to say that we believe in God. We all say that we believe in **GOD THE FATHER**, in **JESUS GOD'S SON**, and in **GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT**.

While we sing the next song, the collection is taken. Children carry wooden plates around everybody, so that they can put money in them. It's important to put money in the collection, to pay our share for the things the church has to buy from week to week.



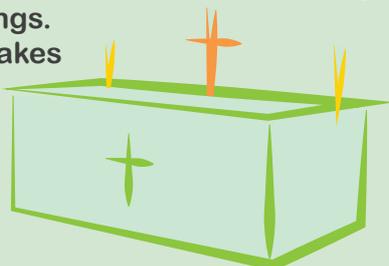
While the children are taking the collection, and everybody else is singing the song, the President uses a strange thing called a

**THURIBLE**. The Thurible is like a metal ball on a chain. It contains sweet smelling incense, and burning charcoal that makes the sweet smelling smoke come out through holes in the Thurible. The President waves the Thurible around the Altar, to make a nice smell around it.



The incense is kept in a brass container shaped like a little boat with a lid. Incense comes from countries in the Middle East, near where Jesus lived, and has been used for thousands of years as a sign of our prayers going up to heaven. The President, the Deacons and the Subdeacon then turn to the **ALTAR**. An Altar is a table that is only used for holy things.

The President makes sure that the bread and wine for the communion are on the Altar,



and begins to say the communion prayers. After the first part of the communion prayers, the bell rings to show that we can sit down if we want. Not many people sit down, perhaps they do not know what it means!

At the most important part of the communion prayers, when the bread and wine are blessed for communion as Jesus commanded us to do at his Last Supper, the bell rings several times. It rings several times for the bread and several more for the wine. **Can you count how many times it rings?**



When the communion prayers are finished, the President invites us to go up to the Altar. A bell rings to remind us to go up. People who have been taught about the bread and wine eat and drink a little of it. The rest of us go up too, to receive a blessing. **Who is giving the blessings today? Who is giving out the bread and the wine?**

After the communion the President says a final prayer. Then we say the Gloria together which is a way of saying thank you to God.



Then the President makes announcements, asks if anyone has had a birthday, and gives out Children's Bibles to any children who have recently been baptised. These are special bibles that are arranged as a series of interesting stories.

The President gives us a blessing before we all sing a final hymn.

After the Mass we have drinks and biscuits, or sometimes cake.

