



**WELCOMING
CHILDREN
in WORSHIP**

**THE CATHOLIC
UNIVERSITY
OF AMERICA**



Mass: Liturgy of the Word

October

Adaptive Activities for Children



**National Catholic
Partnership on Disability**

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Introduction

Welcome and thank you for your ministry that serves the liturgical formation of children for their participation in the Eucharist, the “source and summit of the Christian life.” This resource is provided by the Committee on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD). It aims to offer an adaptive catechetical opportunity for all who have a heart for disability ministry to reflect on the liturgical year. We welcome you to this virtual community and hope you find this resource beneficial.

Here you will find reflections to guide children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, or diverse learners, through the current liturgical season with adaptive catechesis to help them to participate fully. Each offering includes prayer, Scripture, activities and more that incorporate the senses and take into consideration the needs of all learners. We invite you to gather children around the table of the home or the table of the classroom as preparation for their participation at the sacred table of the Eucharist.

Each monthly edition incorporates the following:

- 1. Prayer**
- 2. Sacred Scripture**
- 3. Reflection**
- 4. Faith in Action**
- 5. Activities**
- 6. Saint**
- 7. Resources/Bibliography**

Prayer

Leader: Mass is a very important part of our Catholic faith. It gives us a way to celebrate what we believe and to encounter God with others. At Mass we hear God's Word and God comes to us in the form of the host at communion so we can be close to him! Mass includes many prayers, some that we pray at other times or might pray by ourselves, and many that we only pray at Mass: one of the prayers comes from the Book of Psalms. At Mass we pray a psalm, often by singing it, between hearing the first and second reading. Each chapter in the Book of Psalms was originally a poem, song, or prayer, and we can sing and pray any of them. We are going to pray a psalm together today!

Sing this psalm together or say it out loud. If you would like to sing it, this video provides a tune: <https://tinyurl.com/shepherd123>.

Leader: We are going to pray Psalm 23 together today. I will read part of the psalm then we are all going to say, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."

Begin with the Sign of the Cross.

Leader: The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.**

Leader: He makes me lie down in green pastures.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.**

Leader: He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.**

Leader: He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.**



Bernhard Plockhorst, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Leader: Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.**

Leader: Your rod and your staff— they comfort me.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.**

Leader: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.**

Leader: You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.**

Leader: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.**

Close with the Sign of the Cross.

Verses taken from the New Revised Standard Bible, Catholic Edition.



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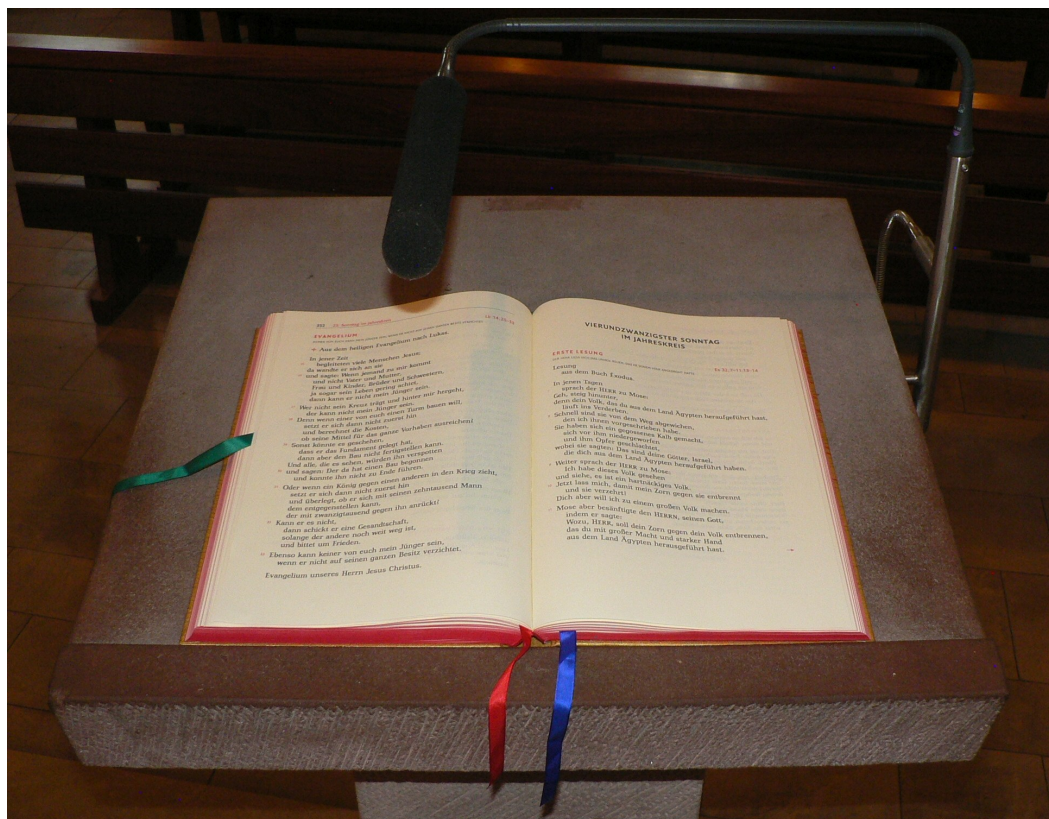
Reading of Sacred Scripture

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



User:MF-Warburg, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Gospel Reflection

In the first part of Mass, called Liturgy of the Word, the main focus is on the Word of God. The three readings that we hear all come from the Bible. We call everything in the Bible the Word of God because, while other people actually took pencil to paper, it was God's Words that they heard and wrote down. The Word of God is also called Scripture or Sacred Scripture. The Bible tells the history of our faith and includes a lot of advice to help us live the way God wants us to live.

Most of the year the first reading comes from the Old Testament, the part of the Bible that tells us about the world before Jesus was born. It relates to the other readings in some way, often telling a story like the one we hear in the second reading. Some weeks there are entire lines that are identical in the first reading and the second reading or the Gospel. The second reading comes from the New Testament, the part of the Bible that tells us about the world once Jesus was born. The person reading from the Bible at Mass is called a lector and when they do so, it's called proclaiming the Word of God.

The last reading is the Gospel that includes descriptions of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. The Gospel is always read by a priest or deacon, and we stand to hear it. Standing makes you more alert and helps you pay attention to the Word of God. It is also helpful to picture what you are hearing, or to listen for a repeated word or words that the lector or priest emphasizes with pauses or changes in their speech. Try to remember a word or phrase or to find the theme among the Scripture readings.

Have you ever tried reading the Bible by yourself? It can be very hard to understand and if you do not understand it how can you learn from it? Thankfully, after hearing the Gospel at Mass the priest or deacon explains what the Word of God means to help us understand the message. God gave us Sacred Scripture to teach us how to live the way he wants us to, and the part of Mass called the Liturgy of the Word helps us with this.



LMP 2001, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Faith in Action

Growing Faith Through the Liturgy of the Word: Jesus, the Word Made Flesh

In John 1:1–14, we hear this beautiful truth proclaimed at Mass:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

When we listen to the Scripture at Mass, we are not just hearing words — we are hearing Jesus, the living Word of God. Through the Liturgy of the Word, we:

- ⇒ Encounter Christ speaking to us today.
- ⇒ Learn how God's truth and love guide our lives.
- ⇒ Grow closer to Jesus, the Word made flesh, who dwells among us.

During Ordinary Time, we are invited to let God's Word take root in our hearts and grow in us, just like a seed planted in the earth. Let's explore ways to live out the gift of the Word!

Word Connection Activity: Hearing Jesus Speak

- ◇ During Mass, listen closely for a word or phrase from the readings or Gospel that stands out.
- ◇ After Mass, each family member can share their word or phrase and say why it touched them.
- ◇ Connect this back to how God speaks to us through Scripture and how Jesus, the Word, is alive in our hearts.

Adaptations: Children who cannot share verbally can point to a picture, gesture, or hold up a card with a symbol of the Word (like a cross or Bible).

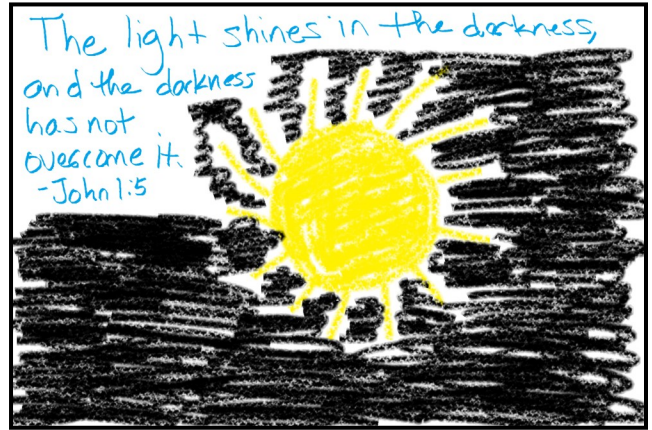


Photo by Anna Shvets at Pexels

Family “Word Became Flesh” Project: Bringing God’s Word to Life

- ◇ Choose a verse from John 1 (or another Sunday reading).
- ◇ Write or decorate the verse on paper, then display it in your home.
- ◇ As a family, talk about one way you can live out that verse this week (e.g., showing kindness, telling the truth, sharing).

Adaptations: Use large print or tactile letters for accessibility. Children can draw symbols (e.g., light, heart, cross) instead of writing.



Sacred Scripture Space: Making the Word Visible

- ◇ Create a small prayer space at home with a Bible, candle, and cross.
- ◇ Each family member can place a word or symbol (drawn, written, photo, etc.) in the space that reminds them of God’s love.
- ◇ Return to this space during the week to pray and remember how Jesus, the Word, is with you.

Adaptations: Use textured symbols or objects (wooden cross, smooth stone, soft fabric) for sensory engagement.

Family Scripture Prayer Card: Carrying the Word Home

- ◇ Make a prayer card with John 1:14 or a short phrase like “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.”
- ◇ Bring it to Mass and hold it during the Liturgy of the Word.
- ◇ At home, place it somewhere visible (e.g., kitchen table, child’s room, front door) as a reminder to let Jesus’ Word guide your daily life.

Adaptations: Use bold print, tactile decorations, or audio recordings of the verse for children with visual or reading challenges.

Activities with Children

Let's Read: Read the Scripture about why Jesus started the Mass and why we must attend.

Jesus offered the first Mass at the Last Supper, when he shared the sacrament of the Eucharist. Mass is more than a memorial of the Last Supper; it is a time that we are actually sitting in the presence of God. We attend Mass as an act of thanksgiving for all God has done for us and for inviting us to be in union with him.

◇ Matthew 26:26–28

◇ Luke 22:19–20

◇ 1Corinthians 11:23–26

◇ Exodus 20:8

◇ Acts 20:7

Let's Pray: Help your child get ready for Mass by praying a special prayer. Explain that this is to ask the Holy Spirit to help us see Jesus during the Mass and hear his Word spoken to us.



Photo by cottonbro studios on Pexel

Dear Jesus, thank you for this day and for the Mass. Help me to listen to your words, love you more, and be a holy person for you. Amen.

Let's Build It: Have your child display the order of the Mass at home by placing picture cards in order. At each step, have the children act out what they see the priest doing and what the people in the church do in response. Explain that at Mass, this is our time to be with Jesus, and everything we do has a meaning, as we are expressing our love for Jesus and God.

Let's Find It: Assist your child to find the different parts of the Liturgy of the Word. You can create a checklist with pictures from your parish (e.g., priest, deacon, lectors) or you can use this checklist:

◇ Parts of the Liturgy of the Word:

◇ First Reading

◇ Responsorial Psalm

◇ Second Reading

◇ Gospel Acclamation (Alleluia)

◇ Gospel Reading

◇ Homily

◇ Profession of Faith

◇ Prayers of the Faithful

You can extend this activity by finding all the parts of the Mass.



Photo by Tima Miroshnichenko at Pexels

◇ Parts of the Mass:

◇ <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/order-of-mass>

◇ Free Mass Checklist:

◇ <https://www.scribd.com/document/856684791/Catholic-Mass-Checklist-for-Kids>

Sensory Bin: Sensory bins can help children with hands-on learning. This month, read a recent or upcoming Scripture and find items that represent the readings.

Items to represent Scripture for October 12, 2025, include a small vial of water, a small wrapped gift, a bag of dirt, chains, a plastic figure that can be “dirty” and be “cleaned,” and key words written on notecards.

Saint for October

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux

Feast Day October 1

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, known as the "Little Flower," was a French nun who taught that holiness can be found by doing even small, everyday tasks with great love, a path she called the "little way."

Born as Thérèse Martin in 1873 and the youngest of nine children, Thérèse was a playful and fun child until her mother's death when she was four years old. She then became quite and sensitive. She was an excellent student in school but was very unhappy. She was bullied because of her small size, good grades, and that she liked quiet games, while other kids enjoyed noise and activity.

When Thérèse was 13 God worked a miracle in her, and she overcame her sensitivity and became calm. St. Thérèse was inspired to enter the Carmelite Monastery at the age of 15, with special permission needed because she was so young. She did all things with love and was determined to be charitable to everyone, even with little acts of charity that might seem unimportant to others. Despite struggling with sadness and illness, she stayed devoted to God and her spiritual mission, spreading love through her actions and prayer. She died at age 24 in 1887, and her life continues to inspire others to find God in small acts of love and kindness. Saint Thérèse was proclaimed a Doctor of the Church by St. Pope John Paul II in 1997.



Céline Martin, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons

Fun Facts:

- ◇ She was known for her “Little Way” which was based on Proverbs 9:4 - “Whosoever is a little one, let him come to me.”
- ◇ She invented sacrifice beads (see activity below).
- ◇ On her death bed, she said "After my death, I will let fall a shower of roses. I will spend my heaven doing good upon earth. I will raise up a mighty host of little saints. My mission is to make God loved."
- Miracles of St. Thérèse are often associate with the appearance of roses or the aroma of roses.
- ◇ Her parents, Zélie and Martin, are also recognized saints.

Activity: Making Sacrifice Beads from Little Ways

Materials:

- ◇ 25 inches of string or cord
- ◇ 11 beads
- ◇ 1 miraculous medal
- ◇ 1 crucifix/cross/saint medal

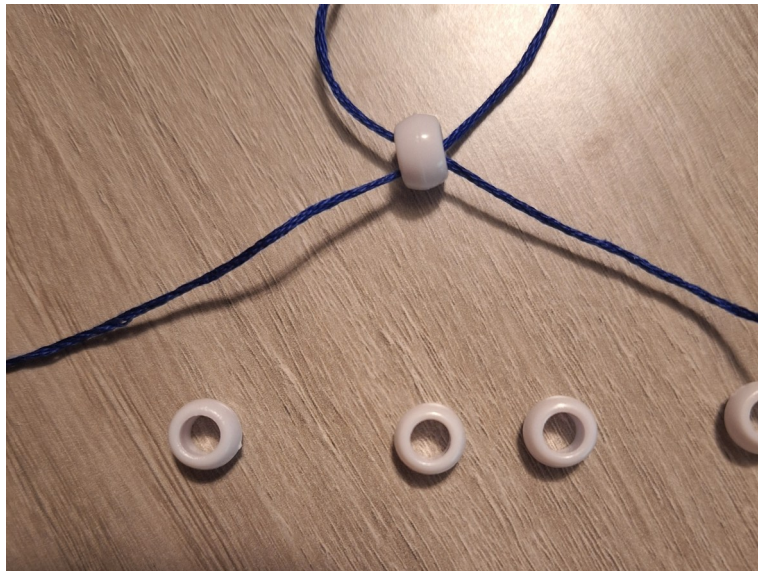
Steps:

1. Thread the miraculous medal onto the cord and pull it to the middle.
2. Take your first bead and insert one end of the cord through the bead from one side and the other end of the cord through the other side so that the cord makes an X inside the bead.
3. Pull both pieces of the cord until the bead is tight against the medal and the cords are the same length.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 until you have 10 beads total.
5. Leave about 3 bead lengths and tie a double knot.



Image by fbilhalv from Pixbay

6. Take the last bead, insert both ends of the cord through the same side of the bead and then tie a knot.
7. Take the cross, crucifix, or medal and insert both ends of the cord through the same side.
8. Tie a knot, ideally a double knot keeping the cross, crucifix, or medal as close to the last bead as possible.
9. With parental supervision burn or melt the extra cord off as cutting it will cause it to fray.
10. For visual directions see this website: <https://thelittleways.com/how-to-make-sacrifice-beads>



For more information:

My Catholic Kids. Saint Thérèse of Lisieux: God's little flower. <https://mycatholickids.com/saint-therese-lisieux-gods-little-flower/>

October Resources

October Resources

Archdiocesan Ministries. *Weekly Scripture Resources for Catholic Children's Ministry.* <https://archdiocesanministries.org.au/weekly-scripture-resources/>

Catholic Mom. *Catholic Gospel coloring pages and worksheets for Sunday Mass.* <https://www.catholicmom.com/sunday-mass-activities>

Cultivating Catholics. *Parts of the Catholic Mass for kids and printable activities!* <https://cultivatingcatholics.com/parts-of-the-catholic-mass-for-kids-and-printable-activities/>

The Religion Teacher. *The Liturgy of the Word Lesson Plan.* <https://www.thereligionteacher.com/liturgy-of-the-word-lesson-plan/>