

Newman Center Catholic Community at UC San Diego

Offers families with children an opportunity to pray and worship at an age appropriate level for 3-6 year olds. Parents are expected to rotate in as adult monitors to assist the trained catechists in caring for the children.

We celebrate a children's Liturgy of the Word (CLW) at the 12:30 pm Mass with our younger children, ages 3-6. Children's Liturgy of the Word essentially is worship, not catechesis. We take part in CLW simply because it is liturgy—a time in which the living God communicates life to God's holy people and in which we, the people, respond with adoration, praise, thanksgiving and petition.

Sunday is the day of the assembly of the local church. This is why our children do not totally celebrate a "children's mass" apart from adults. CLW is a liturgical experience of God's presence in the ritual proclamation of the Word. During mass, after the opening prayer, the children are called forth by the Presider and then are sent forth with a trained minister for their own Liturgy of the Word in the chapel. The children return during the preparation of the gifts.

Emphasis during the children's liturgical experience is on ritual not learning. The minister uses a three step process that includes:

- **Step 1:** We listen to God speak. The readings are adapted to the language of the child while still maintaining the integrity of the Word.
- **Step 2:** We reflect on the Reign of God. After drawing from the children what they heard God say to them, we share questions that invite the children to reflect on what difference God's Word makes in their life.
- **Step 3:** We respond to God's Word. Finally we explore with the children what they are going to do now that they have heard God's Word.

What happens at a Children's Liturgy of the Word

1. All gather in the main church for the gathering rite with their families.
2. After the opening prayer, the Presider calls the children forward and presents the book of God's Word to the children's minister of the Word
3. The children follow their leaders to the assigned room for their celebration of the Word at their own level
4. The children's Liturgy of the Word follows the structure of the celebration by the adults: Gospel Acclamation, Gospel Proclamation, reflection by the children's minister of the Word, (adapted, age appropriate Creed) and Prayer of the Faithful
5. The children return to the assembly main church during the preparation of the gifts as together, we celebrate Eucharist around the table as one family of faith.

SIGN UP AT THE MINISTRY FAIR or Contact Patty Stewart at cathcom@ucsd.edu
Please indicate CLW in the Subject line.

