

SILENCE WITHIN MASS

During Mass, along with our active participation, our responses and singing, there are specific times when we are called to collect ourselves silently before God. These are precious moments when we can just be still in God's presence. Silence helps us discover the meaning and power of the liturgy.



RECOLLECTING:

At the beginning of the Penitential Act the Priest invites each of us to recall our sins and reflect on our need for repentance. Such recollection needs to be done individually, and we do so, briefly in silence.

During the Mass, each time we hear the words "Let us pray," there is a pause for a brief silence. In this time each of us individually and silently "collects" our whole self before God, recalling our own prayer and readying ourselves to bring this prayer to God. The priest then gathers or "collects" our prayers into one.



REFLECTING:

The Readings at Mass are a key part of God's on-going conversation with the People of God. God continues to speak to us today. We have only to listen and hear.

After each of the Readings and the Homily we are provided with some moments of quiet. This time of silence helps us to pause and receive the word of God. We give ourselves a moment to reflect on what we have just heard - words of love and hope, words that speak to our hearts. We take time in silence, then, to take these words to heart and make them our own.



PRAYING:

After receiving Communion we take a moment of silence to pray to God in our hearts. In our silent prayer we now give praise and thanks for the gift of Jesus Christ who comes to us in the Eucharist. We give thanks for our communion, our oneness with Christ who we have received. This is our nourishment for Christian living.

During this silent prayer we can prepare ourselves spiritually to go and live this Eucharist in our daily lives – expressing our communion with Christ and with one another by the actions and attitudes of our life.

“ *We are realising more and more clearly that silence is part of the liturgy. We respond, by singing and praying, to the God who addresses us. But the greater mystery, surpassing all words, summons us to silence. It must, of course, be a silence with content, not just the absence of speech and action. We should expect the liturgy to give us a positive stillness that will restore us.* **”**

(Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, The Spirit of the Liturgy, 2000)