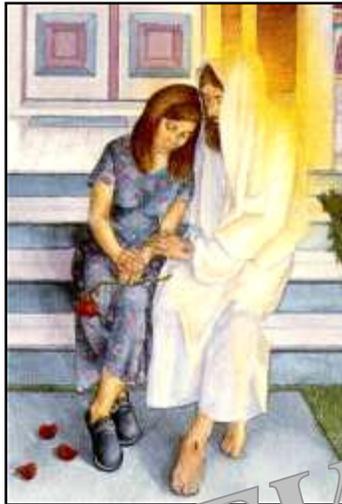




## What's the Big Deal About Going to Mass?

Do you feel lonely? Like no one truly understands you? Does it seem that while you're trying hard to do your best (as a parent, a spouse, an employee, etc.), other forces are working against you? Is something missing from your life? The full amount of joy, perhaps? The full amount of love you need?



The way God designed things, you can never be completely satisfied alone. You can never resolve these feelings alone.

“Remember that man is social by nature and that it has been God’s pleasure to assemble those who believe in Christ and make of them the People of God.” (From Vatican Council II’s *Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People*, 1965.)

In other words, God designed us to need each other. He wants us to be joined as a Church that depends on togetherness. Only this way can we find support in the midst of our problems. Only this way can we remain standing strong against the onslaught of the world’s evil.

### A Different Perspective

What excuses have you heard for not going to church? If people used the same excuses at home, here’s what it would sound like:

- “I won’t be part of my family because they argue.”

- “I work hard and need time by myself. I don’t want my spare time to be taken up with family interests.”
- “My family is always asking for money.”
- “With all the scandals you read about in families, I think it’s safer to live by myself.”
- “My wife (or husband) wants to meet with me too much.”

### Do You Remember Falling in Love?

Remember the gushy feeling in your stomach when that special someone called or accompanied you on a date? You probably did a few crazy things just to be near him or her, like driving for hours to spend a few minutes together, or giving up your favorite activity to be available. Church is a love relationship between us and God. He loves us more than any other ever could. His love is most powerfully available to us when we gather with other believers to share the Eucharistic meal. It is in this Communion that Jesus becomes tangibly present and reconciles us to the Father and to each other.

### The Church Helps Us to Understand God

The wonders of God, from His infinite, unconditional love to His plan of salvation for you, are “a mysterious storehouse, or, in other words, a treasury... which are to be revealed through the Church,” says Pope Paul VI in his encyclical letter entitled, *Paths of the Church*.

He adds that the Church helps us understand God better, leading us to a deeper faith, which in turn leads us to a greater love for the Church: “Indeed, awareness of the mystery of the Church is a result of

a mature and living faith. From such a faith comes that 'feeling for the Church,' which fills the Christian who has been raised in the school of the Divine Word."

### Is Something Missing from Your Life?

We are incomplete if we read the Word of God without becoming an active part of the Body of Christ, or if we try to understand God without the benefit of both Scripture and Church.

### Why Isn't Worshipping God at Home Enough?

Certainly, prayers at home are pleasing to God, but celebrating Mass with the local community of believers is too valuable to miss. Why would we want to stay away from Jesus when He manifests His presence physically in the Eucharist?



Also, we can be strengthened by making contact with, worshipping with and praying with the rest of the community. We can also strengthen them in like manner. Attending Mass is a visible witness of our fidelity to Christ and His Church. It is a joining of our prayers with others.

St. John Chrysostom said:

"You cannot pray in your home as in the Church, where many are gathered, (and) where the cry of all rises to God as from one heart. There is in her (the Church) something more: the union of spirits, the harmony of souls, the bond of charity, the prayers of the priests."

Whenever we place anything above God, we are sinning. When we choose to sleep late or entertain ourselves on Sunday mornings, for example, instead of meeting Jesus in the Mass, we are turning our backs on the One who suffered greatly and died for us.

### Is Missing Mass Really a Sin?

The Revised Code of Canon Law states: "On Sundays and other holy days of obligation the faithful are bound to participate in the Mass; they are also to abstain from those labors and business concerns which impede the worship to be rendered to God, the joy which is proper to the Lord's Day, or the proper relaxation of mind and body."

The Church needs you! The Church loves you. What has kept you away? If the Church has sinned against you, she needs your forgiveness.

Come inside and make a difference. Make the Church a better place with the unique talents and experiences only you can offer!

We warmly invite you to make  
**Name of your church here**  
 your place of worship  
 and friendships  
 in Christ.

**333 Holiness Lane**  
**Your Town, State**  
**555-777-1234**  
**Email address**

Add other info, such as  
 the Mass schedule or the dates  
 of Welcome Home or RCIA  
 classes. You can change the font  
 color and size and style.