

Understanding the Mass

The Kyrie

Each week, we are explaining the different parts of the Mass - what is in the church, what we use in the Mass, and why (and how) we celebrate Mass the way we do.

*Today our topic is the **Kyrie**.*

The **Kyrie** - from the Greek *Κύριε*, meaning “Lord”, is an ancient chant in which we praise God and ask for His mercy. Also known as the **Kyrie eleison**, this is the part of the Mass where we pray:

Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Kyrie elesion.
Christe elesion.
Kyrie elesion.



The Kyrie is often sung, with the choir or cantor leading and the congregation responding.

The use of the Kyrie in the Mass originally came from the Eastern liturgies, where it is used multiple times as a response throughout the Mass. In the Roman Catholic rite, the Kyrie may be used in English or in the original Greek.



The words of the Kyrie are biblical. Many people, like the blind beggar Bartimaeus, approached Jesus, calling Him “Lord” and asking for His mercy - specifically asking Jesus to help and to heal them.

Mercy is compassion, a kind of love, which we give to others even if they don't deserve it. The forgiving father was merciful to the prodigal son when he returned to him - and God is always merciful to us, always ready to love and forgive us.

Like Bartimaeus, the ten lepers, and the father of the epileptic son, we ask Jesus in this part of the Mass to have mercy on us, and those we love.

Who can you pray for the mercy of Jesus at Mass today? _____