

# Understanding the Mass

## The Collection

*Each week, we are explaining a different part of the Mass - the items that are used, the parts of the church, and the roles of the people who help us celebrate Mass. This week, our topic is the **Collection**.*

While the altar servers or the priest are preparing the altar (which we learned about last week), you may see people from the congregation stand up and walk along the aisles with a basket or a bag that is passed between everyone at Mass. This is the **Collection**, and it is called this because these people are collecting gifts from us.

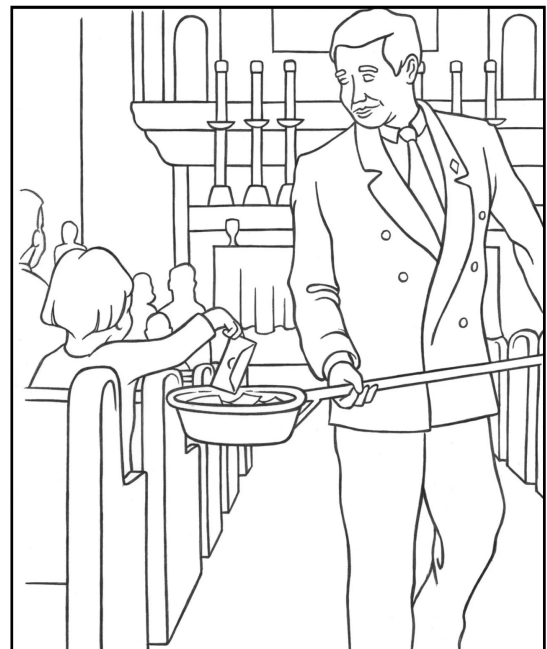
The tradition of giving offerings to God - and to His priests - comes from before Jesus. In ancient Israel, the Jewish people gave their animals, fruit, grain, dough, wine, and oil, for sacrifice and to support the priests. In the early days of the Church, while gifts were no longer shared for sacrifice (because Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice by dying for us on the Cross), they were still given by the faithful to support the work of the growing Christian community.

Farmers would give a share of their crops, or live animals - sheep, cows, goats and pigs. Millers would give flour they made. Tailors would help to make clothes. Blacksmiths would make items that could be used in the church, or by the priest. Everyone contributed their skills, and the fruits of their labour, to support the work of God.

Today, we support the church and our priests by giving money - either during the collection, by using the apps at the back of the church, or by bank transfer.

Our parishes need our financial support to keep the lights and heating on, to maintain the church buildings and the hall, to pay insurance and water bills, and to pay the salaries of those who work there - including our priests.

When we give to our parish, our priests, and the greater Church, in a very real way we are giving "to God the things that are God's".



While no one will ask us if we have made a contribution, or how much we have given, it is worth considering that we spend our money on what we think is important to us, and that includes what we give to God through the collection each week.