

Understanding the Mass

Gift Bearers

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 **Gift bearers**.*

Last week, we learned about the offertory, the part of the Mass where we bring our offerings to God.

If they are serving at Mass, altar servers will leave the sanctuary (where the altar is) and go to the back of the church to lead the offertory procession.

In this procession, **Gift Bearers** will bring the gifts of bread and wine, and the collection, a role that dates back to early Christianity.

The bread (in the form of small hosts) is carried by the gift bearers in a special cup called the **ciborium**, which is made of precious metal like gold or silver.



The wine is carried in a special container called a **cruet**, which is made of glass or metal. Often water is also carried in a second cruet by the gift bearer.

As they carry the gifts of bread and wine, the gift bearers are representing all of us. They are bringing these gifts to the priest - and to God - on our behalf.

When they reach the front of the church, the gift bearers will give their gifts to the priest, who will receive them. The priest bows to the gift bearers to acknowledge their offerings on behalf of everyone at Mass. The gift bearers return this bow as a sign of respect for the priest.

Gift bearers are people just like us who are also participating in the Mass. They can be children, teenagers, or adults. They can be a whole family, couples or individuals. There is no special training or qualification - anyone can be a gift bearer! Being a gift bearer is a simple but beautiful way of serving God during Mass. If you are interested in being a gift bearer, do share your interest with one of our welcomers.

Who were the gift bearers at Mass today? _____