

31 Days of the Little Way: Celebrating “Mass” in the Living Room

Our younger son has a bad cold, so we decided to keep him home and go to separate Masses.

Not long after I told our boys the plan, they started setting up “Mass” for their stuffed animals in the living room.

I can’t remember the first time we held a pretend Mass, but it was another sick day from church, and our children were much younger. Since then they’ve become a treat—mostly because the Masses aren’t Mama’s idea and the children get to drag many stuffed animals into the living room. And there’s food.

I love that even though our children are almost 7 and 9, they still enjoy creating a church setting at home. They know it’s not the same as going to church, but they enjoy acting their parts in these simulated Masses. These days Daniel plays songs on the piano, and Leo’s stuffed animals deliver brief, pointed homilies.

My duties are always the same. I go find our two green plastic chalices and pour water into them. I fill a plate with crackers or something else that will work as hosts—this time we used Nilla Wafers. Then I read the readings to keep things moving for the congregation of stuffed animals. The animals sit nicely enough through Mass, but it’s clear from the start that they are most excited to receive “Communion.”



This time our living room “Mass” was fairly reverent. Sometimes something funny happens, and we have a little trouble staying on track. But I enjoyed the homily, which focused on the importance of faith in God, and I enjoyed seeing which parts of the Mass this congregation seemed happy to fast forward through and which they wanted to focus on. Seeing Mass through our children’s eyes always gives me a glimpse into how they experience our Catholic faith.

I wasn’t surprised that when the priest said he had a few announcements after Communion, he told us that after Mass we were all invited to spend an hour hunting for Pokemon together outside the church.

After he gave the final blessing and Daniel played a closing song, I left the room for a few minutes to take care of something else.

When I came back, I realized I needed to put away the leftover food, but I couldn’t

find the plate of Nilla wafers.

I called the boys.

“Did you eat them all?” I asked.

No, they told me. There were lots left over. So they put them away in the tabernacle.

The...tabernacle?

Turns out that’s the dry sink that stands beneath our TV.

Whew. I’m more than a little relieved I found those before some little critter discovered them—and brought all his relatives to join him there.

