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#### **4. Letters of St. Ignatius of Antioch (c. 110 AD):**

St. Ignatius, in his letters, emphasizes the importance of the Eucharist and the role of the bishop in presiding over the liturgy. His writings reflect early Christian beliefs and practices regarding the Mass.

#### **5. Justin Martyr's First Apology (c. 155 AD):**

In his First Apology, Justin Martyr describes the Christian liturgical celebration, including readings, prayers, the Eucharistic prayer, and Communion. His account closely resembles the structure of the modern Mass.

#### **6. Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus (c. 215 AD):**

This early liturgical text outlines the Eucharistic celebration, including the prayers and the order of the service. It provides detailed evidence of the form and content of early Christian worship.

#### **7. Council of Nicaea (325 AD):**

The Council of Nicaea's canons reflect the established liturgical practices and the importance of the Eucharist in Christian worship, showing the continuity of the Mass tradition.

#### **8. Writings of St. Cyril of Jerusalem (c. 350 AD):**

In his "Mystagogical Catecheses," St. Cyril provides detailed instructions and explanations of the liturgical rites and the Eucharist, evidencing the developed form of the Mass in the 4th century.

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#### **9. St. Augustine's Sermons and Writings (4th-5th Century):**

St. Augustine's extensive writings include numerous references to the Eucharist and the liturgy, indicating the central role of the Mass in early Christian life and its established form by his time.

#### **10. Gregorian Sacramentary (6th-7th Century):**

This early liturgical book compiled under Pope Gregory the Great provides texts and prayers for the Mass, showing a standardized form of the liturgy that would influence the development of the Roman Rite.

*These pieces of evidence demonstrate that the Holy Mass, as a form of Christian worship centered on the Eucharist, has ancient roots dating back to the time of Christ and has undergone development and formalization over the centuries.*

***"It would be easier  
for the world to  
survive without  
the sun than to do  
so without the  
Holy Mass."  
- Saint Padre Pio***



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#### **WHAT IS HOLY MASS?**

The Holy Mass in the Catholic Church is the central act of worship, re-presenting the Last Supper and commemorating Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the Cross. It consists of the Liturgy of the Word, with Bible readings and a homily, and the Liturgy of the Eucharist, where bread and wine are consecrated and distributed as the Body and Blood of Christ. Celebrated by a priest, the Mass involves active participation from the congregation and is obligatory on Sundays and holy days, reflecting its central role in Catholic spiritual life.

#### **Ten important things every Catholic should know about the Holy Mass**

##### **1. Real Presence:**

Catholics believe that during the Mass, the bread and wine become the actual Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. This doctrine is known as the Real Presence and is central to Catholic faith and worship.

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## 2. Structure of the Mass:

The Mass is divided into two main parts: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The Liturgy of the Word includes readings from Scripture, a homily, and prayers. The Liturgy of the Eucharist includes the consecration and Communion.

## 3. Sunday Obligation:

Catholics are required to attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation. This is based on the Third Commandment, to keep holy the Sabbath day, and is a key part of Catholic practice.

## 4. Sacrifice of the Mass:

The Mass is viewed as a re-presentation of the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross. Catholics believe that the sacrifice of Jesus is made present in an unbloody manner during the Eucharistic celebration.

## 5. Transubstantiation:

This is the term used to describe the change of the substance of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, while the appearances (or "accidents") of bread and wine remain. This change occurs during the consecration in the Eucharistic Prayer.

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## 8. Participation of the Faithful:

Active participation by the congregation is encouraged, which includes responding to prayers, singing hymns, and attentively listening to the readings and homily. This participation fosters a deeper engagement with the liturgy.

## 9. Eucharistic Fast:

Catholics are required to fast from food and drink (except water and medicine) for at least one hour before receiving Communion. This fast is a sign of reverence and preparation for receiving the Eucharist.

## 10. Receiving Communion:

Catholics must be in a state of grace (free from mortal sin) to receive Communion. If they are conscious of having committed a mortal sin, they should go to Confession before receiving the Eucharist. Additionally, reverence is shown when receiving Communion, either on the tongue or in the hand, according to local customs.

*Understanding these elements helps Catholics to participate more fully and meaningfully in the celebration of the Mass, deepening their faith and connection to the Church's liturgical life.*

# 10 details about the historical development of the Holy Mass, along with evidence for each

## 1. Origins in the Last Supper:

The Holy Mass traces its origins to the Last Supper, which Jesus shared with His disciples on the night before His crucifixion. This event is recorded in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:14-20) and in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, where Jesus instituted the Eucharist.

## 2. Early Christian Celebrations (1st Century):

Early Christians gathered for the "breaking of bread" as described in Acts 2:42 and Acts 20:7. These gatherings included readings from Scripture, prayers, and the Eucharist, forming the basic structure of the Mass.

## 3. Didache (1st Century):

The Didache, a Christian text from the late 1st or early 2nd century, provides instructions on Eucharistic celebrations, including prayers of thanksgiving, indicating an established liturgical practice.