

MASS FOR PREGNANT MOTHERS/FAMILIES

PURPOSE OF PROGRAM

To promote a positive parish celebration of unborn babies and their families.

INSTRUCTIONS

One Month Before Event

- ✓ Contact your pastor one month before the scheduled Mass for Pregnant Mothers/Families to secure his permission to hold this event.
- ✓ (Optional) Reserve the parish hall for the reception that will follow the mass. You might consider contacting a CCD or Catholic school class to help with decorating the parish hall if you need help. [This may be eliminated to simplify the program].

Three Weeks Before Event

- Place announcement in parish bulletin announcing Mass for Pregnant Mothers/Families. Instruct the couples to call the rectory or contact the parish Pro-Life Coordinator to sign up to take part in the liturgy. (The parish coordinator should list his/her name and telephone number in the announcement.)
- Display the poster at all the Church entrances. (See sample)
- Decide what you will give the pregnant mother at the Mass for Pregnant Mothers/Families. You might want to give her:
 - ⇒ a rose or some other flower
 - ⇒ a medal of St. Gerard, the patron Saint of pregnant mothers
 - ⇒ a copy of "Prayers for the Beginning of Life", U.S. Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy (call 1-800-235-8722) \$1.95 apiece.
 - ⇒ a copy of the Mothers' Manual, a small book of prayers for mothers and mothers-to-be (by A. Francis A. Coomes, S.J., William J. Hirten, Co., Inc., 6100 17th Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11204 or check with your local religious book store)
- Send a written invitation to any families who sign up. Remind them of the time of the Mass for Pregnant Mothers/Families, the reception (if applicable), to sit in front in the designated pews, and that they are welcome to bring their families with them.

Two Weeks Before Event

- ✓ Put together a booklet for the liturgy. Use special prayers and Blessing 1 for the Mass for Pregnant Mothers/Families. (See sample prayers and blessing.) Your Liturgy Committee or parish secretary can help you. Don't forget to thank everyone who helped. (back page)
- ✓ Type (double space) Blessing 2 on a separate piece of paper and give to the celebrant.

Day Before Event

- (Optional) Set up the hall for the reception. Tape posters to walls. Set up tables.
- Put together the gifts you are giving the pregnant mothers. Make sure they're ready to go with you to Church tomorrow.

Day of the Event

- ✓ (Optional) You and your volunteers should arrive about one hour before the Mass. Make coffee and tea; have juice or punch ready; put out cups, napkins, plates, sugar and cream; put out light refreshments.
- ✓ Put bows on pews for the pregnant mothers/couples and their families.
- ✓ Designate someone to give the booklets to the expectant families.
- ✓ Give the celebrant the separately typed sheet with Blessing 2.
- ✓ Place the gifts in a basket near the altar before Mass.
- ✓ Ask one of the expectant couples to bring up the Offertory Gifts.
- ✓ (Optional) Have the celebrant or lector remind the couples and parishioners about the reception following the Mass.

Sample Letter Requesting Help with Reception (Optional)

Dear Teachers and Students,

On Sunday, (*put date here*), our parish will be celebrating the miracle of life with a Mass for Pregnant Mothers & Families.

Following the (*put time of Mass here*) Mass there will be a reception for the families expecting the birth of a baby.

Our parish Pro-Life Committee needs your help with this special occasion. We would like to decorate the church hall with congratulatory posters made by the students. We need students to help us set up and decorate the church hall the day before. We will meet at 1:00 p.m. to set up. And we need students who can help us serve the refreshments and clean up after the reception.

If any of your students would like to volunteer, please call me at (*put your telephone number here*). Thank you for your willingness to share in this celebration of new life.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Pro-Life Coordinator