

The Litany of Welcome

Who are you? Are you divorced? Are you married with kids, worrying for them and committed to their welfare? Are you married for the second, or even the third time? Are you a single parent struggling to make ends meet? Are you gay or lesbian?

Well, whoever you are, you belong to us because you belong to Christ. Christ is the host here today and he welcomes you as part of his body. The words of the Gospel are addressed to you: Peace be with you.

Are you lonely? Are you a widow? Are you a single man or woman who would prefer to have a spouse? Are you disabled or disfigured? Have you run out of luck? Are you living with shame? Have you been a prisoner?

Well, whoever you are, you belong to us because you belong to Christ. Christ is the host here today. Christ sets this table of Word and Bread. And Christ welcomes all. Peace be with you.

Are you new here? An immigrant, maybe? Are you from another Christian tradition? Are you full of doubt today, like Thomas? Are you fearful like the disciples were? Has it been a while since you darkened the doorway of this church? Or are you a regular here, full of faith and enthusiasm for the community?

None of that matters. You belong to us because you belong to Christ. Christ is the host here today and he welcomes you as part of his body. The words of the Gospel are addressed to you: Peace be with you.

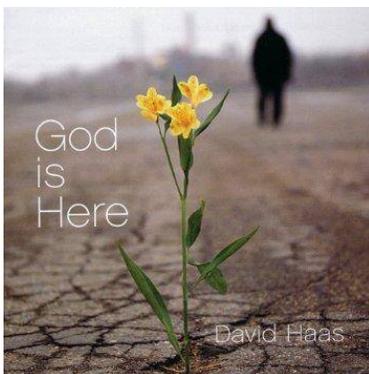
All people of good will are welcome here: that's the *really* good news!

If you've been away, you can come back; if you've been living in darkness, you can come to the light; if you haven't been able to believe without seeing God, look around you: the Body of Christ has come to Mass today. Sinners are welcome. Saints, too. Everyone is welcome to come to Christ: our God, indeed!

The message of welcome!

Use this explicit message in whatever form you are comfortable, to let folks know that you do indeed welcome them! For many people they never ever hear their "name" mentioned at Mass because they're on the list of "outsiders." You can change that by offering an explicit welcome. Ask a parish leader to read this following "Litany of Welcome," or a variation of it, before Mass once a month or so. Or find a way to get the word out: *Whoever you are and whatever you've done, you belong to us because you belong to Christ!*

This litany is also available in song form, composed by David Haas and published by GIA found on the Album "God is Here". A sample is available on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=muTX4joyTeQ>



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