PICKING ONE THING

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My boys don't sit still in the liturgy. I don't think they are poorly behaved, I think they are just being kids. We cannot expect our kids to pay attention to the WHOLE liturgy. They are kids. They need to move, they need to chat, they need to play.

What I try to do is focus on one thing during the liturgy that I ensure they pay attention to. Right now, for my boys, that's the Great Entrance. Right before it happens, I give them a warning in an excited whisper ("The altar servers are coming!"). I encourage them to crowd the end of the pew and get a front line view. I point out and whisper things that the altar servers do that makes the Great Entrance interesting:

- How many altar servers are walking around the church today?
- Do you notice how they walk in pairs? Do you notice how they bow in front of the altar?
- What color vestments are the priests wearing today?
- What are the priests carrying in their hands?

These small questions that I whisper during/after the Entrance and talk with them about after the service at home or in the car help engage them in the service ("Did you notice the priests were wearing blue today?"). They get excited to watch the great entrance now and they tell me what they noticed. Creating curiosity around one part of the liturgy can help create some anticipation and excitement while also breaking up the service.

- Other parts of the liturgy to encourage your kids to pay attention to:
- The epistle and gospel readings (if you arrive early enough)
- The children's sermon
- The Lord's prayer
- The consecration and kneeling
- Holy communion

Choose one thing to focus on in the liturgy that you want to prioritize for your kids and make it exciting, interesting, and fun!