A Peek Into The Atrium

Gestures of the Mass

During the atrium year, we reflect with the children on some of the elements of the mass. As children spend time in the atrium they become receptive to gathering and discussing these somewhat abstract moments, and can handle the glass materials with grace.

Year One: Epiclesis

This is the priest's gesture of the imposition of the hands over the bread and wine during the Eucharistic prayer. We present it to the children and reflect on:

What is coming from those hands? As the priest makes this gesture, he is asking the Holy Spirit to be present. What will change?

Preparation of the Cruets

This material connects the work of pouring (BIG first year work!) with the wine and water that is prepared before mass and is used by the priest prior to the Eucharistic prayer. It prepares the child for later works that highlight the use of the water and wine during mass.

Year Two: Offering

This lesson highlights another moment in the Eucharistic Prayer. The priest lifts the gifts of the consecrated bread and wine high and offers them back to the Father. What is on that plate and in that cup? Jesus is present in the gifts, but what else might be offered to the Father?

Preparation of the Chalice

This is another very small gesture and quick moment to observe during the mass, just before the Eucharistic Prayer. The priest pours the wine into the chalice and adds just a small drop of water. The water and the wine are now mixed so closely together. We cannot take out the water now. We can no longer even see the water in the wine. We can say the wine is Jesus, but who might the water be?

Year Three: Sign of Peace

We are familiar with the gesture of peace. We take time to talk about the gesture as we see it at mass and think about whose peace we are sharing. Up to this point we have seen gestures that have a vertical element to them (up/down). This gesture goes side-to-side or horizontally. What might that mean at this moment in the mass, just before we share the bread and the wine?