

Year of the Eucharist

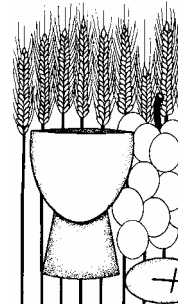
October 2004 to October 2005

Part 4 in a series on
The Year of the Eucharist
from
The Office of Rites and Sacraments
Catholic Diocese of Memphis
in Tennessee

The Structure of the Mass *continued*

QUESTION: When I come into my church, should I genuflect or kneel? I see people doing both!

ANSWER: It depends on how your church is arranged. If the Blessed Sacrament is in the tabernacle behind the altar or near it, as in many older churches, then you genuflect toward the Blessed Sacrament. The reason for this is that genuflecting is the posture for adoration. If in your church, the Blessed Sacrament is in a separate chapel of repose, as at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in our diocese, then you do not genuflect when you come into the church or enter your pew. Instead, you bow to the altar. Bowing is a sign of reverence, and we reverence, rather than adore, the altar. You genuflect only when you actually go into the separate Blessed Sacrament chapel.



QUESTION: Our parish just purchased a new Book of the Gospels. Should it be carried in the Entrance Procession? If so, who should carry it?

ANSWER: The Book of the Gospels may be carried in the Entrance Procession or placed on the altar before Mass begins. It is carried, slightly elevated, by a deacon. If a deacon is not present, or for some reason is not physically able, a lector may carry the Book of the Gospels. The Lectionary, however, is NOT carried in the Entrance Procession. (See G.I.R.M. #120)

QUESTION: When carrying the Book of the Gospels, should the deacon or lector bow when he/she reaches the altar?

ANSWER: When carrying a sacred item, e.g., processional cross, candles, Book of the Gospels, the sign of reverence, in this case bowing, is omitted altogether.

QUESTION: Why do we use incense at some liturgies and not at others?

ANSWER: The option to use incense is normally exercised on Sundays and festive days.

QUESTION: Why do some ministers of music continue the Gathering Song after the priest has arrived at the presider's chair?

ANSWER: According to the *General Instruction on the Roman Missal*, "The purpose of the Gathering Song is to open the celebration, foster the unity of those who have been gathered, introduce their thoughts to the mystery of the liturgical season or festivity, and accompany the procession of the priest and ministers." (#47) This interior disposition of the people is rarely accomplished in only one or two verses of a hymn. In addition, the integrity of the composer's intent must be honored. Often, when a hymn is brought to an abrupt ending, the theology of the text is lost. A good example would be a Trinitarian hymn. If three verses are required to offer praise to Father, Son and Spirit, and only two are sung, the message is not communicated.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES OF THE MASS

The Introductory Rites are the rites preceding the Liturgy of the Word. Their purpose is to ensure that the faithful who come together as one establish communion and dispose themselves to listen properly to God's word and to celebrate the Eucharist worthily. (G.I.R.M. #46)

ENTRANCE

VENERATION OF THE ALTAR

SIGN OF THE CROSS

GREETING

ACT OF PENITENCE*

KYRIE

GLORIA [except during Advent & Lent]

OPENING PRAYER [or Collect]

* On Sundays, especially during the Easter season, the blessing and sprinkling of water to recall Baptism may replace the Act of Penitence.