

Eucharistic Prayer: “In the dioceses of the United States of America, they should kneel beginning after the singing or recitation of the *Sanctus* until after the *Amen* of the Eucharistic Prayer, except when prevented on occasion by reasons of health, lack of space, the large number of people present, or some other good reason. Those who do not kneel ought to make a profound bow when the priest genuflects after the consecration. The faithful kneel after the *Agnus Dei* unless the diocesan Bishop determines otherwise.” (#43 *GIRM*)

Communion:

- “When receiving Holy Communion, the communicant bows his or her head before the Sacrament as a gesture of reverence and receives the Body of the Lord from the minister . . . When Holy Communion is received under both kinds, the sign of reverence is also made before receiving the Precious Blood.” (#160 *GIRM*)
- “The norm for reception of Holy Communion in the dioceses of the United States is standing.” (#160 *GIRM*)

Our Bishops Conference asked Rome to clarify the posture of communicants after they have received Communion and returned to their pew. The determination was made that the communicant should be free to stand, kneel, or sit after they have received communion according to their custom.

Posture during the Celebration of Mass

from the new
General Instruction of
the Roman Missal
(G.I.R.M.)

POSTURE

Diocese
of
Fort Wayne-South Bend

Office of Worship
2003

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“The **gestures and posture** of the priest, the deacon, and the ministers, as well as those of the people, ought to contribute to making the entire celebration **resplendent with beauty and noble simplicity**, so that the **true and full meaning** of the different parts of the celebration is evident and that the **participation of all** is fostered.

Therefore, attention should be paid to what is determined by this General Instruction and the traditional practice of the Roman Rite and to what serves the common spiritual good of the People of God, rather than private inclination or arbitrary choice.

A common posture, to be observed by all participants, is a **sign of the unity** of the members of the Christian community gathered for the sacred liturgy: it both **expresses and fosters the intention and spiritual attitude** of the participants.” (#42 GIRM)

“Among gestures included are also actions and processions: **of the priest** going with the deacon and ministers to the altar; **of the deacon** carrying the Evangeliary or Book of the Gospels to the ambo before the proclamation of the Gospel; **of the faithful** presenting the gifts and coming forward to receive Communion.” (#44 GIRM)

Genuflection:

A genuflection, made by bending the right knee to the ground, signifies adoration, and therefore it is reserved for the Most Blessed Sacrament, as well as for the Holy Cross from the solemn adoration during the liturgical celebration on Good Friday until the beginning of the Easter Vigil.

Bowing:

A bow signifies reverence and honor shown to the persons themselves or to the signs that represent them. There are two kinds of bows: a bow of the head and a bow of the body.

- A **bow of the head** is made when the three Divine persons are named together and at the names of Jesus, of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of the Saint in whose honor Mass is being celebrated.
- A **bow of the head** is made as a Sign of Reverence when receiving the Body and the Blood of Christ.
- A **bow of the body**, that is to say a profound bow is made during the creed at the words “*Et incarnatus est.*”
- A **profound bow** is made during the Eucharistic Prayer, if one is not kneeling, when the priest genuflects after the consecration.
- A **profound bow** is made when crossing in front of the altar if the Blessed Sacrament is not in the sanctuary.

Postures During Mass:

- **Entrance/Closing Procession:** “On reaching the altar, the priest and ministers make a profound bow.” (#122 GIRM) “If, however, the tabernacle with the Most Blessed Sacrament is present in the sanctuary, the priest, the deacon, and other ministers genuflect when they approach the altar and when they depart from it, but not during the celebration of Mass itself. . . Ministers carrying the processional cross or candles bow their heads instead of genuflecting.” (#274 GIRM)
- **Creed:** “The Creed is sung or recited by the priest together with the people with everyone standing. At the words . . . *by the power of the Holy Spirit . . . and became man* all make a profound bow; but on the solemnities of the Annunciation and of the Nativity of the Lord, all genuflect.” (#137 GIRM)
- **Orate Fratres Pray My Brothers and Sisters:** “Upon returning to the middle of the altar, the priest, facing the people and extending and then joining his hands, invites the people to pray, saying, . . . Pray my brothers and sisters. The people rise and make their response: . . . May the Lord accept .” (#146 GIRM)

Outside of Mass

“Otherwise all who pass before the Most Blessed Sacrament genuflect, unless they are moving in procession.” (#274 GIRM)