

# POSTURES FOR THE MASS

**Thank you for your presence and participation in the Liturgy at Saint Vincent de Paul Church!  
In order to bring a proper sense of reverence, respect, order, and devotion to our liturgies  
please be mindful of proper postures and church etiquette during the Mass.**

**Entering the Church: Bow** Please arrive on time for the Mass! It is a sign of mutual respect! Upon entering or leaving the pew, the proper posture is a bow toward the Altar. The Altar represents Christ. Since our Tabernacle is located in the Blessed Sacrament Tower Chapel, only a bow is needed when entering the pew or crossing in front of the Altar. The genuflection is reserved as a sign of reverence for the Eucharist which is why the priest genuflects at the Altar during Mass after the Consecration. After the Consecration, a genuflection would be appropriate when entering or leaving the pew.

**Profession of Faith: Bow** A bow is called for during the Profession of Faith (Nicene Creed) while saying the words *“and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.”*

## **The Our Father**

Many people have become accustomed to joining hands during the Our Father as a sign of unity. But the real sign of unity at Mass is being united together in Jesus in receiving Holy Communion. So, in our parish, for the Lord's Prayer, people are encouraged to either fold their hands or raise them in what is known as the “prayer posture” – hands opened and turned to God. After the Lord's Prayer, the hands are lowered and not kept raised during the continuing prayers (*Deliver us, Lord, from every evil...For the kingdom and the power...*).

## **Sign Of Peace**

For the sign of peace to be given....it is appropriate that each person offer the sign of peace **only to those who are nearest** and in a sober manner. This is not a greeting but rather a *sign* of our desire for Christ's peace in our lives.

## **Fasting Before Communion**

Abstain from any food or drink, except water and medicine, for at least one hour before Holy Communion. The elderly, infirm and those who assist them are exempted. (Canon Law #919)

## **Who Joins the Communion Procession**

Only those receiving Holy Communion should join the Communion Procession. If young children accompany an adult who will receive Holy Communion, the child should stand at the adult's side and **bow** in adoration with the adult. The Communion Procession is not the appropriate time to request a blessing since all receive a blessing at the end of Mass. The priest will also gladly provide a blessing outside after Mass upon request for any person.

## **Receiving Communion: Bow**

While in the Communion Procession, with one person in front of you, just prior to receiving Holy Communion, the communicant **bows** before the Sacrament as a gesture of reverence and then receives the Body of the Lord from the Priest or Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. The consecrated host may be received either on the tongue or in the hand at the discretion of each communicant. If in the hand, place one hand on top of the other – palms up. Hands are held like a throne for the Lord. After receiving Holy Communion, take a short step to the side and place the Eucharist in your mouth in the presence of the Minister. The Sacred Host should be consumed before turning to go back to the pew. When Holy Communion is received under both kinds, the bow is also made before receiving the Precious Blood from the Cup.

## **After Communion**

After you have received Holy Communion and returned to your place in the pew, you may kneel or sit for moments of adoration and meditation. Close your eyes. Spend time in silence with Jesus or join in the Communion Hymn. While the Priest is purifying the Sacred Vessels on the Altar, do not be distracted, but use this time for quiet prayer.

## **Remain in the Church until the Mass has ended**

Our Liturgy has a beginning (“In the name of the Father ...”) and an end (“Go in peace...”). The Mass is not over until we have been blessed and “sent” forth as disciples for the world. Please always try to arrive on time and to not leave the church before the end of Mass. This is common courtesy and a sign of common love for the community of believers gathered in worship.

# CHURCH MANNERS AND ETIQUETTE

## Proper Attire

Dress should always be modest and appropriate. Please be mindful of the length of the dress and a modest style of blouses and shirts.

## Silence

"Sacred silence, as part of the celebration, is to be observed. Even before the celebration itself, it is commendable that **silence** be observed in the church, in the sacristy, in the vesting room etc. . . so that all may dispose themselves to carry out the sacred action in a devout and fitting manner." (GIRM #45)

## When to Enter

Enter the Church through the main front doors. The doors are a symbol of Jesus Christ, who is the Door, the Gateway to Heaven (John 10:7). Once you enter the Church, please follow the directions of the Ministers of Hospitality. **During the Scripture Readings and the Homily please wait at the entrance.** You may be seated during the sung Responsorial Psalm and Gospel Acclamation. The side aisles are used at this time for less distraction. Children are seated in the pew next to a parent or adult in order to learn how to follow the Mass appropriately. Baby strollers should be left outside so that aisles are not blocked.

## Do not Chew Gum

Many people chew gum. Often people arrive at church not even realizing that they are still chewing gum. Unfortunately, this often gets tossed on the ground or stuck under a pew. **PLEASE do not chew gum on our parish property.** Throw it into one of the many trashcans.

## Cell Phones / Texting / Cameras

Please allow yourself and others the grace of undisturbed quiet during our times of prayer by leaving your cell phones and pagers in your car or turned off. Text messaging during Mass is never permitted. Cameras (and cameras on cell phones) should only be used with explicit permission from the Pastor.

## Food, Drinks and Water Bottles

**No food or drinks or water bottles** should be brought into the church building (except for baby bottles or due to illness). There is a drinking fountain near the restrooms.

## Kneelers

Please keep the kneelers in the up position, unless you are kneeling. This will prevent children from standing on them. Shoes can damage the kneelers as well as the finish on the pews. For maintenance and safety reasons please do not stand on kneelers or pews. **Please lift and lower the kneelers carefully and quietly!**

## Bathrooms: Children must be with an Adult

If needed, it is best to stop by the restroom before Mass. But if your child needs to use the restroom during Mass, he/she **MUST be accompanied by a parent.** No one else can be responsible for your child's safety – especially in the unsupervised restrooms. Children must also be supervised in the Courtyard. Do not allow your child to leave the church building alone. Even a drink of water can usually wait until after Mass.

## Our Children: Time Out

When a child needs special attention, please accompany him/her outside for a "time out." Please do not give children keys or toys to pacify them, as their shaking and falling and playing can be a distraction.

## Applause

Although the musicians appreciate your expression of gratitude, they would prefer that there be **no applause** at the end of Mass. Express your appreciation by greeting the Music Ministers after Mass.

## Coffee and Donuts in the Hall AFTER Mass

Coffee and Donuts are provided after Sunday morning Masses in order for parishioners to share time *together* in the Parish Hall and to build up community. There is no charge for the donuts. But the donuts are **NOT provided to bring home** or to the car. Please do not take donuts or coffee outside of the Parish Hall.