

POSTURES & GESTURES

DURING HOLY MASS AT ST MICHAEL



“Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy.”

Sacrosanctum Concilium 14

Dear St Michael Parishioners,

The Holy Mass is the source and summit of our Christian life, and it is our responsibility to be faithful to it, doing our best to safeguard its beauty and divine purpose. The parts of Mass—the responses, hymns, postures and gestures — are all geared toward achieving an encounter with the Divine. The goal is to lead us to worship God as one unified community with full, con-

scious and active participation in our worship.

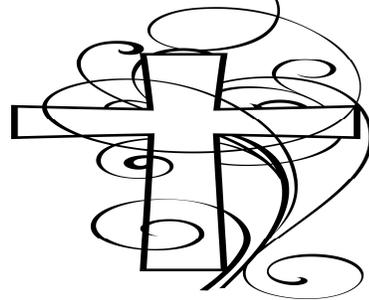
Guided by the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM)* and the instructions of the Bishop of Oakland, this booklet serves as a guide and catechesis on how we participate and celebrate Mass.

In Opus Ministerii,

Fr. Carl Arcosa
Pastor

Introductory Rites

The Introductory Rites help the faithful come together as one, establish communion and prepare themselves properly to listen to the Word of God and to celebrate the Eucharist worthily.



MAKE the Sign of the Cross with holy water (a sign of baptism and acknowledgement of the presence of the Divine Holy Trinity) upon entering the church.

GENUFLECT toward the tabernacle containing the Blessed Sacrament and the Altar of Sacrifice before entering the pew.

As a good habit, it is suggested that you ***KNEEL in the pew*** for private prayer before Mass begins.

STAND for the Introductory Rite: Entrance chant, Greeting, Penitential Rite, Gloria and Collect.

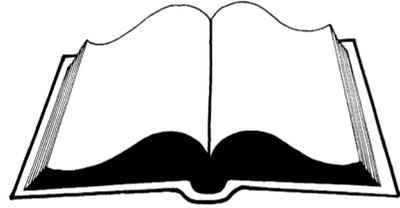
STRIKE your breast at the “mea culpa(s) through my fault” in the Confiteor.

It is suggested that you ***BOW your head when you say “Lord, have mercy”*** during the Kyrie.

If there is a Rite of Sprinkling, make the Sign of the Cross when the holy water is sprinkled in your direction.

Liturgy of the Word

By hearing the Word proclaimed in worship, the faithful again enter into the unending dialogue between God and the covenant people. The proclamation of the Word is thus integral to the Mass and at its very center.



SIT for the Sacred Scripture readings.

STAND for the Holy Gospel at the verse before the Holy Gospel.

TRACE a cross with the thumb on the forehead head, lips and heart when the priest or deacon announces the Holy Gospel as a form of asking for the presence of the Word of God in one's mind, upon one's lips, and in one's heart.

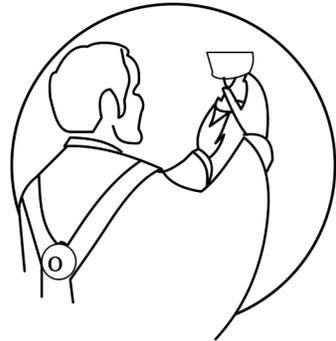
SIT for the homily.

Creed: STAND and BOW during the *Incarnatus* ("by the power of the Holy Spirit ... and was made man"); on the solemnities of Christmas and the Annunciation all genuflect at this moment.

STAND for Prayer of the Faithful and join in the response.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

For Catholics, the Eucharist is the source and summit of the whole Christian life. At its heart, it is the Real Presence of the crucified, risen and glorified Lord, continuing and making available his saving work among us.



SIT during the Offertory and Preparation of Gifts and join in singing the offertory hymn. As we offer the bread and wine, we also offer to God all our intentions and what we have in our hearts.

Here we also give our love offering to support the parish and our ministries. Please give generously. There are times when we pass the basket for the second collection.

STAND as the priest says

“Pray brethren that my sacrifice and yours...” and remain standing to respond, “May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands...”

If incense is used, the congregation bows toward the thurifer when the deacon bows to the congregation both before and after he has incensed them.

REMAIN STANDING until the end of the Sanctus (“Holy, ho-

ly”), then they **KNEEL** for the entire Eucharistic Prayer. Please lower kneelers gently.

As a good holy practice, **BEHOLD** reverently the Sacred Elements when the priest elevates each one of them. After the priest kneels, make a simple bow. These are the words of Saint Thomas when he realized that it was truly Christ who stood before him (John 20:28): Jesus responded, “Because you have seen me, you believed. Blessed are they that do not see and yet have believed.” (John 20:29)

STAND at the priest’s invitation to recite the Lord’s Prayer.

Reverently fold your hands together and bow your head as you pray the Lord’s Prayer.

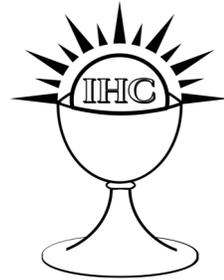
Remain STANDING to exchange the Sign of Peace, if the invitation is made. (The Sign of Peace may be either a handshake or a bow of the head towards those nearest you, accompanied by the words “Peace be with you”.)

Remain STANDING at the end of the Agnus Dei “Lamb of God...” (See GIRM #43.)



Communion Rite

The eating and drinking of the Lord's Body and Blood in a Paschal meal is the culmination of the Eucharist. The themes underlying these rites are the mutual love and reconciliation that are both the condition and the fruit of worthy communion and the unity of the many in the One.



Leave the pew (without genuflecting) and walk reverently in procession toward the altar, with hands folded in prayer.

To receive Holy Communion make a gesture of reverence (slight BOW) before the Blessed Sacrament as you approach the priest, deacon or extraordinary minister of holy communion. You may receive the Blessed Sacrament either on the tongue or in the hand.

When receiving on the tongue, open your mouth and extend your tongue, so the minister can place the Blessed Sacrament properly.

When receiving in the hand, place one hand over the other hand, palms open, to receive the Blessed Sacrament. With the lower hand, take the Blessed Sacrament and reverently place it in your mouth.

(See Holy See's 1985 directives on the back of this booklet.)

When receiving in the hand, please remove gloves and push long sleeves up.

If you are carrying a child, it is much less awkward to receive on the tongue.

When receiving the Precious Blood from the sacred chalice, make the same gesture of reverence when you approach the minister to receive. If you do not receive from the sacred chalice make

a sign of reverence (***slight BOW***) as you pass the sacred chalice in procession.

KNEEL in prayer or join in singing the hymn when you return to your pew after Holy Communion, until the priest sits down, or until he says “Let us pray”. Please raise the kneeler gently.

(GIRM 160 American adaptation says that people may “stand, sit or kneel”.)



Concluding Rite

The brief Concluding Rite sends the people forth to put into effect in their daily lives the Mystery of Christ's Death and Resurrection and the unity in Christ which they have celebrated. Their mission is to witness to Christ in the world and to bring the Gospel to the poor.

SIT for brief and important
parish announcements.

STAND for the concluding blessing, prayers and dismissal.

Make the Sigh of the Cross at the final blessing, as the priest invokes the Trinity.

Remain STANDING until all ministers have processed out.

If there is a hymn for the recessional, remain standing in your pew until it concludes. If there is no concluding hymn, remain in your pew until all the ministers have gone out of the main body of the church.

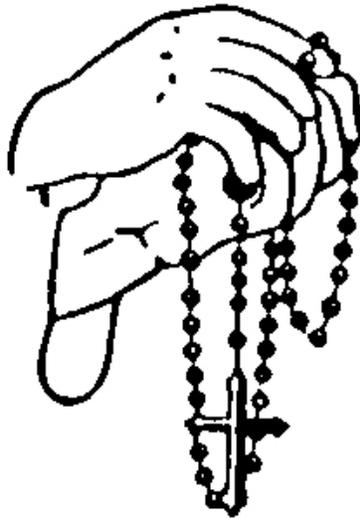
After the Mass is concluded, you may kneel for a private prayer of thanksgiving.

GENUFLECT reverently toward the Blessed Sacrament

and the Altar of Sacrifice as you leave the pew, and leave the nave (main body) of the church in silence.

the church, a reminder of our baptismal obligation to carry Christ's Gospel into the world.

Make the Sign of the Cross with holy water as you leave



References

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

General Instructions of the Roman Missal

bit.ly/TheGIRM

Holy See's 1985 Letter to American Bishops:

Communion in the Hand

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Smolarski, Dennis C. *The General Instructions for the Roman Missal 1969-2002: A Commentary*. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2003.

Turner, Paul. *A Guide to the General Instructions of the Roman Missal*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2013.



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