

Tridentine Community News

November 23, 2008

Reverences During the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

Now that the 2002 edition of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal has eliminated all genuflections during the Ordinary Form of the Mass except at the beginning and end of Mass, and for the priest at the consecration, the numerous genuflections made in the Tridentine Mass have become more conspicuous in comparison. When and why are these and other reverences made?

Bows & Genuflections

The priest, sacred ministers (Deacon, Subdeacon, and other clergy with defined roles in a Solemn Mass), and altar servers in the sanctuary genuflect whenever they cross the center. This is primarily meant as a reverence to the Blessed Sacrament that is usually present on the main altar of churches where the Tridentine Mass is celebrated. Genuflections are not made when servers follow the priest as he crosses the sanctuary, for decorum.



If the altar in question does not have a tabernacle, or does not have the Blessed Sacrament reserved in the tabernacle, the genuflections are still made. Not only does this allow for consistent habits to be formed, but it also respects the possibility that fragments of a Host may still be present upon the altar.

St. Albertus Church, no longer being a parish, is not permitted to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in its tabernacle. Thus, before and after Mass there, while setting up, the altar servers do not genuflect in front of the tabernacle. However, during a Tridentine Mass there, genuflections are still made.

Three Kinds of Bows

A simple bow (nod of the head) is made by all at the mention of our Lord's Name, Jesus; and by the celebrant at the name of our Blessed Mother, Mary. The priest bows to the altar crucifix for our Lord's Name, and to the missal for our Lady's.

A medium bow (45°) is made during certain prayers of the Mass, such as the *Glória Patri*, the *In spiritu humilitatis* at the Offertory, and the three pre-Communion prayers. These are significant moments of reverence to one or more members of the Trinity.

A profound bow (90°) is made during the *Confiteor*, reminiscent of the prostrations (laying flat on the floor) made by candidates for the priesthood during the Ordination Mass. These are points of beseeching God's Mercy.

When Sitting

The celebrant may choose to sit during any part of a sung Mass when the music is of long duration.

Everyone else in the sanctuary who has a chair available sits when the celebrant sits, with the exception of the Master of Ceremonies. He stands facing down the nave of the church so that he may signal the celebrant to remove his biretta and bow during those points in the singing which call for a bow. The MC makes this signal by bowing to the celebrant, then turning to face the altar and making the appropriate bow himself.

When the servers sit, they acknowledge the hierarchy of our Lord and the celebrant acting *in Persóna Christi* (in the person of Christ) by bowing first to the tabernacle, and then to the celebrant, before sitting.

At the Altar vs. In Choir

The servers and sacred ministers who are kneeling or standing at the altar, namely the Deacon and Subdeacon at a Solemn High Mass, the Acolytes, MC, and sometimes the Thurifer, genuflect and bow with the priest as he recites the *Glória* and *Credo*. Everyone else in the

sanctuary sitting "in choir" (to the sides) stands and sits with the congregation. This not only highlights the differentiation between what is going on at the altar – that is, its unique sacred character – but also allows those in choir to set an example for the congregation as to when to sit and stand. Holy Mother Church considers practical as well as theological matters as rules are set.

Christmas Eve Midnight Tridentine Mass

Fr. Borkowski has decided that the midnight Mass on Christmas Eve at St. Joseph Church will once again be a Tridentine Mass. On Christmas Day there will also be a 9:30 AM Tridentine Mass at St. Josaphat, and a 2:00 PM Tridentine Mass at Assumption-Windsor. Each of these Masses will be accompanied by a special music program. Fr. Peter Hrytsyk will be the celebrant of both the St. Joseph and Assumption Masses. Fr. Wolfgang Seitz will be the celebrant of the St. Josaphat Mass.

Thanks be to God that we in this region are so privileged as to have a choice of three such Masses in three historic churches.

Bishop Boyea Mass Postponed Again

Bishop Boyea has had to reschedule the Tridentine Mass he will be celebrating at Flint's All Saints Church yet again. The date of December 7 that we announced in our October 19 column became impossible, because His Excellency has to attend the installation of the new coadjutor Archbishop of Cincinnati that day. A new date has yet to be coordinated between His Excellency and the Flint Tridentine Community; we will announce it as soon as we are made aware. Bishop Boyea extends his apologies to everyone; now that he is a Diocesan Ordinary, his schedule is in many ways out of his control.