

Stand, Sit, Kneel - Prayer is a Great Workout!



Today let us wrap up the Liturgy of the Word. Our final two actions are the Creed and Prayers of the Faithful. We have two options for the Creed (either Nicene or Apostles'), though the Nicene is more frequently used. Since it is always the same, it is part of the Ordinary of the Mass, and yes, it can be sung. In fact,

the Creed belongs to the 2nd degree of progressive solemnity (See *Musicam Sacram* 30). This means that if the Kyrie, Gloria, and Lamb of God are to be sung, the Creed should as well. *Sing to The Lord*, (musical guidelines specific to the United States) reinforces this (75), and even says that it should be learned in Latin! All of this is to say that the Creed is very important. The entire first part of the Catechism of the Catholic Church is dedicated to it and every day Catholics are martyred for their profession of it. When we say the Creed we should not go on autopilot, but focus on these realities and really mean what we are saying.

Did you know that the Creed is one of the only parts of Mass that has a change of posture built into it? We change our posture (stand/sit/kneel) throughout the Mass to reflect in body what the present liturgical action is, but these changes of posture are mostly prior to/after something has happened. During the Creed, at the words "by the power of the Holy Spirit... became man" we are to make a profound bow (see General Instruction of the Roman Missal 137). On the Annunciation and at Christmas, we commemorate the special significance of that line by genuflecting. This change of posture mid-action is a powerful action for us and affirms the sacred nature of the Incarnation.

The final part of the Liturgy of the Word is the Prayers of the Faithful or General Intercessions. Here we pray as a community for our corporate/communal needs. Like the Creed, these occupy the 2nd degree of solemnity (they come right after the Creed), and thus can be sung. And just like that, we are halfway through the Mass! The Liturgy of the Word ends with a prayer by the priest and we begin the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

St. Cecilia, St. Elizabeth of the Trinity...Pray for us!

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