

cially the Profession of Faith and the Lord's Prayer, according to the simpler settings.⁵¹

Gestures and Bodily Posture

42. The gestures and bodily posture of both the Priest, the Deacon, and the ministers, and also of the people, must be conducive to making the entire celebration resplendent with beauty and noble simplicity, to making clear the true and full meaning of its different parts, and to fostering the participation of all.⁵² Attention must therefore be paid to what is determined by this *General Instruction* and by 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 bodily posture, to be observed by all those taking part, is a sign of the unity of the members of the Christian community gathered together for the Sacred Liturgy, for it expresses the intentions and spiritual attitude of the participants and also fosters them.

43. The faithful should stand from the beginning of the Entrance Chant, or while the Priest approaches the altar, until the end of the Collect; for the *Alleluia* Chant before the Gospel; while the Gospel itself is proclaimed; during the Profession of Faith and the Universal Prayer; and from the invitation, *Orate, fratres* (Pray, brethren), before the Prayer over the Offerings until the end of Mass, except at the places indicated here below.

The faithful should sit, on the other hand, during the readings before the Gospel and the Responsorial Psalm and for the Homily and during the Preparation of the Gifts at the Offertory; and, if appropriate, they may sit or kneel during the period of sacred silence after Communion.

In the dioceses of the United States of America, they should kneel beginning after the singing or recitation of the *Sanctus* (Holy, Holy, Holy) until after the *Amen* of the Eucharistic Prayer, except when prevented on occasion by ill health, or for reasons of lack of space, of the large number of people present, or for another reasonable cause. However, 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*

(*Lamb of God*) unless the Diocesan Bishop determines otherwise.⁵³

For the sake of uniformity in gestures and bodily postures during one and the same celebration, the faithful should follow the instructions which the Deacon, a lay minister, or the Priest gives, according to what is laid down in the Missal.

44. Among gestures are included also actions and processions, by which the Priest, with the Deacon and ministers, goes to the altar; the Deacon carries the Evangeliary or Book of the Gospels to the ambo before the proclamation of the Gospel; the faithful bring up the gifts and come forward to receive Communion. It is appropriate that actions and processions of this sort be carried out with decorum while the chants proper to them are sung, in accordance with the norms laid down for each.

Silence

45. Sacred silence also, as part of the celebration, is to be observed at the designated times.⁵⁴ Its nature, however, depends on the moment when it occurs in the different parts of the celebration. For in the Penitential Act and again after the invitation to pray, individuals recollect themselves; whereas after a reading or after the Homily, all meditate briefly on what they have heard; then after Communion, they praise God in their hearts and pray to him.

Even before the celebration itself, it is a praiseworthy practice for silence to be observed in the church, in the sacristy, in the vesting room, and in adjacent areas, so that all may dispose themselves to carry out the sacred celebration in a devout and fitting manner.

III. THE INDIVIDUAL PARTS OF THE MASS

A) THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

46. The rites that precede the Liturgy of the Word, namely, the Entrance, the Greeting, the Penitential Act, the *Kyrie*, the *Gloria in excelsis* (*Glory to God in the highest*) and Collect, have the character of a beginning, an introduction, and a preparation.

Their purpose is to ensure that the faithful, who come together as one, establish communion and

⁵¹ Cf. Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 54; Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction, *Inter Oecumenici*, September 26, 1964, no. 59; *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 56 (1964), p. 891; Instruction, *Musica sacra*, March 5, 1967, no. 47; *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 59 (1967), p. 314.

⁵² Cf. Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, nos. 30, 34; cf. also no. 21.

⁵³ Cf. *ibidem*, no. 40; Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Instruction, *Varietates legitima*e, January 25, 1994, no. 41; *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 87 (1995), p. 304.

⁵⁴ Cf. Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 30; Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction, *Musica sacra*, March 5, 1967, no. 17; *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 59 (1967), p. 305.