

# Liturgical Worship

Why do we do that?

The liturgy begins as a  
real separation from the  
world

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It is precisely the point of the liturgy to take people out of their worlds and usher them into a different one. The liturgy reveals a greater world. It does not seem relevant at first but strange. It shows us that, despite appearances, the last thing in the world we need is more of the world out of which we've come from. It turns out that the world the liturgy reveals is more real than the one we inhabit day by day.



Liturgical churches know that as profound a reality as is the surrounding culture, there is an even more profound reality waiting to be discovered.



- **Celebrant:** Blessed be God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.  
**People:** And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever.
- **Deacon:** Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**People:** Thanks be to God.
- The liturgy, from beginning to end, is not about meeting our needs. The liturgy is about God.

It's not even about God-as-the-fulfiller-of-our-need-for-spiritual-meaning. It's about God as he is himself: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is not about our blessedness but his. The liturgy immediately signals that our needs are not nearly as relevant as we imagine. There is something infinitely more worthy of our attention—something, someone, who lies outside the self.



Sacraments, like the Incarnation itself, constitute physical points at which the eternal touches time, or the unseen touches the seen, or grace touches nature. It is the Gnostics and Manicheans who want a purely disembodied religion.

We see the unseen in  
the seen



# The Word Became Flesh

The Spiritual Became Physical

Ceremony does what words can never do

“Donde huelgan las palabras, comienza la danza”

Where words come to an end, the dance begins

# manual acts of devotion

The guiding principle behind all ritual gestures and movements is the idea of the incarnation. The incarnation is about God having taken a human body in Jesus of Nazareth and lived a human life among us in that body. This tells us that what we do with our bodies is important.

Further, we Episcopalians believe that worship should involve the whole human person, not just the mind.

# The Sign of the Cross

- 2nd Century
- Sanctifying every action in daily life
- Baptism/Confirmation - signation
- Blessing

# Sign Of The Cross

- Early Christians made use of the sign of the cross as a means of blessing oneself, beginning and ending a prayer, and in devotions associated with the Holy Trinity. One practice for the faithful was, upon rising in the morning, to begin their daily prayers in the name of the Trinity and sign themselves with the cross at the same time. This still a good devotional practice that many Christians put to good use.

# The Sign of the Cross

Holding the thumb and first two fingers together (three fingers for the Holy Trinity, two fingers for the two natures of Christ) and touching the forehead, the breastbone, the left and then the right shoulders makes the sign of the cross. Some Anglicans complete making the sign of the cross by bringing their hand to rest over their heart, as a sign of how Christ is at the heart of their being.

## There are many times during the Eucharist when it is appropriate to cross oneself:

- At the beginning of the liturgy when the priest makes the opening acclamation, this demonstrates that we have assembled in the name of the Triune God;
- At the end of the Gloria because we are involving the name of the Trinity;
- At the beginning of the Gospel as the priest or deacon announces the reading. This particular signation is done one of two ways. In some places the people make the traditional sign of the cross, but the more common form is to use the right thumb to make a small cross on the forehead, the lips and the heart, with the silent prayer intention being "God be in my thoughts, my words and my heart to believe your Holy Gospel";
- At the end of the Nicene Creed at the words "and we look for the resurrection of the dead" because it is through the cross of Christ that the resurrection has become a reality for us;
- In the Prayers of the People at the petition for the dead, to remember the departed before God and remind ourselves that we too will die and pray for a holy death in Christ;.

- At the point in the Great Thanksgiving in which we ask God to send His Holy Spirit upon His people;
- At the absolution, as the priest makes the sign of the cross over us, in acknowledgement of God's forgiveness;
- At the Benedictus Qui Venit ("Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord ") because we give thanks for Jesus coming to us as our Lord and Savior;
- During the Eucharistic Prayer many people cross themselves at the elevation of the Eucharistic elements. This is in thanksgiving for the sacred presence of our Lord Jesus Christ in the sacrament of the altar;

- At the presentation of the Blessed Sacrament, when the priest says "The gifts of God, for the people of God" we acknowledge God's gifts and pray to be worthy to receive them;
- When receiving communion, making the sign of the cross just before we consume each species of the Blessed Sacrament and again before we leave the altar rail;
- At the final blessing, in thanksgiving for what God has done for us in the Mass as we prepare ourselves to go into the world, declaring His truth.

# Bowing

- Many Episcopalians bow at the name of Jesus wherever it appears in the liturgy or in hymnody. This is a little tribute to that line written by St. Paul in the letter to the Philippians in which he says that “at the name of Jesus every knee should bow (2:10). While actually bending the knee at these points would be awkward (to say nothing of strenuous), a bow of the head gives passing acknowledgment to Paul’s exhortation about the sacred name of Jesus.

# Bowing

- Bowing is described in the Scripture as a posture of worship as well. Psalm 95:6 says, “O come, let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.” (See also, Isaiah 45:23, Micah 6:6, Romans 14:11, Ephesians 3:14)

- Many Episcopalians bow when the procession cross passes them. This bow is, again, a recognition of the centrality of the cross in our theology and a way of honoring and raising God for the mystery of our redemption achieved upon the cross.
- In the midst of the Creed, we bow at what is called the incarnatus, that line in the Creed which speaks of Jesus who “for us and for our salvation ... came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.” This bow is a gesture of reverence for the sacred mystery of the incarnation.
- Some also bow near the end when the Creed proclaims the Spirit as “worshiped and glorified.” Bowing is a gesture of worship and adoration. Most of us bow at the beginning of the Sanctus. This bow is made as a recognition of the divine name, “Lord, God of power and might,” and we bow here for the same reason that we bow at the name of Jesus.

# Genuflections

- A genuflection is a momentary dropping to the right knee. It is a sign of adoration or respect. Some people genuflect whenever they pass the reserved sacrament which is kept in the Church for communion of the sick and as a sign of God's presence with his people. You can tell when the reserved sacrament is present; there is always a white candle burning on or near the altar or other place where the sacrament is kept. At All Saints Church, the sacrament is kept in what is called a "hanging pyx" over the altar.
- Genuflections before entering or leaving a pew are made for this reason.

# Kneeling

- It is clear from Scripture that kneeling is to be a part of our worship of God. Kneeling is: a basic posture of worship (1Kings 19:18, Psalm 95:6, Ephesians 3:14-16) the posture of humble submission and thankful reception of God's provision (1Kings 8:54, Daniel 6:10, Matthew 17:14-15); a sign of humility and repentance (Ezra 9:5); a sign of utter submission to God our King (Isaiah 45:23, Philippians 2:9-10, Romans 14:11)

# Standing

- To Praise, to Sing and To Honor
- Gospel Procession
- The Peace
- Easter and the Great 50 days

# Sitting

- To hear and listen
- Mary “sat at the Lord’s feet.”