



LITURGY LESSON

Reverence - lesson 6

“Sunday Best” – we’ve all heard that term used before. The phrase describes our demeanor as well as the clothing we wear on special occasions such as seeing a play, attending a wedding - or going to a banquet.

When we receive that banquet invitation, we take the time to prepare for it with great attention to detail. We choose our clothing with care, making sure that we are properly dressed for the occasion. We arrive at the banquet hall in a timely fashion. We share a greeting with our fellow guests, and, whenever asked, we take an active part in the festivities. We listen to the speakers, dine in a dignified manner, and when the feast is over, we take the time to thank our host. As the celebration comes to a close, we head home for the evening, feeling nourished and fulfilled.



But evenings such as this pale in significance when we consider the most important occasion for putting on our “Sunday Best” – celebrating the Eucharist each weekend at Mass.

One of our popular Communion songs invites us to “...Come to the feast of heaven and earth! Come to the table of plenty...” This truly is a table rich in the blessings of Christ who is present with us through the Eucharist.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* tells us “...the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice is wholly directed toward the intimate union of the faithful with Christ...” (1382) Let us bring to that union the outward signs of our inward understanding of what is happening at Mass.

Outwardly, our bodily demeanor and our attention to dress need to convey the inward respect, love and joy that we feel in the presence of God. Arriving at church before Mass begins, we greet those with whom we will celebrate this Liturgy. We sign ourselves with the blessed water that recalls our priestly mission. We bow to the altar where our thanksgiving will be made. We genuflect in the presence of the tabernacle. We take a few moments of prayerful silence to prepare for the liturgy ahead. We sing the songs, make the responses, and listen to God’s word. We join together in all the prayers, even those spoken by the priest alone. We celebrate this time together respectful of the needs of those around us, not letting our actions or inattentiveness contradict the meaning of our gathering. We share the Eucharist in faith, giving thanks for the blessings we have received.

After the final blessing and as the sending song comes to a close, we leave the church with our hearts and souls refreshed and renewed through our encounter with the Lord.

