

LITURGY BYTES

Jesus Present in the Assembly

First of all, those gathered together for Mass are known as the **assembly**, the Church family that shows us the face of Jesus Christ. Our Church family, with all of its diversity, shows us the face of Christ.



The baby crying during the homily, the elderly man moving slowly with his walker in procession to receive Communion, the teenager slumped over in the rear pew, the mother with three young children moving constantly, and the father rocking a sleeping infant are all part of the Body of Christ as Jesus is present within all.

When we are joined at Mass to pray and sing, as per the gift of our Baptisms, it is something greater than just ourselves alone. We collectively make up the Body of Christ, resurrected, seated at God's right hand, and constantly present whenever we gather in Church to give God praise. This is the beauty of the Sacraments — that we can see and hear and touch God in Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit and the ministry of the Church.

One of the expectations of the Church is that we show reverence to Christ at all times. During Mass, the Church gives reverence to Christ through the use of incense and gestures and bodily postures. We bow to the altar or genuflect to the tabernacle, the dwelling place for the consecrated Body of Christ. We even extend our hand as a gesture of Christ's peace before receiving Holy Communion as another opportunity to show reverence for our Lord present in our brothers and sisters in the assembly and to love one another as ourselves.

This week let us ask God for the grace to see Jesus in one another and to show each other true reverence — something really good to do for Lent!

Have a prayerful, peaceful, and blessed week ahead! ~~ *Michele Hall*