



PROCESSING

LITURGY BYTES *by Michele Hall*



Before we look at processions, let us think about just plain old walking to begin. Have you ever noticed that some people walk gracefully with a certain rhythm, swinging their arms back and forth? Little children really do not walk as they prance about. Older young people often walk but have their eyes focused on their device. We notice when people are walking down our streets, glancing to and fro. We might think, could they be up to something? On the other hand, when a person holds their head up high, we see a certain eloquence when their head is held high and they have a very upright posture. Now, having mentioned a few qualities of walking, what does it mean that we begin Mass with a processional style of walking?

Walking in a procession is not hurried. Heads are held high. There is also a controlled quality to walking. Objects of importance are carried in the procession such as a book and a cross. Even the clothing is unusual, especially for the clergy and servers. Once inside the church for Mass, we sign ourselves with holy water, sit and then pray. The actual start of Mass is the entrance procession or Processional. This ritual walking functions as an invitation to deeper meditation on the meaning of Eucharistic worship. It is a serious time as witnessed by those in the procession. We are not just taking a walk, giving people extra time to get into their seats before Mass commences, rather, we are walking toward the altar of God. Every human life is a procession. Christian worship is serious. The serious quality of our worship is that we are moving toward the God who made the first move toward us and the One who is still moving toward us, meeting us along the way. So next time at Mass, as the procession begins, recognize the serious drama that is unfolding on the altar before us. Get up and greet God and rejoice in the gift of starting anew once again in His presence.

Have a blessed week and enjoy the procession!