

***Developed habits or traditions (that are not universally held Church Traditions):
Things We Might Be Doing During the Liturgy of the Mass that We Need to Give Up!***

Arriving late

Perhaps our “habit” is something that we developed after somebody told us that if you arrived before X and left after Y part of the Mass, then you have “officially” fulfilled your “obligation” to attend the weekly Sabbath Mass. This is sadly a minimalistic approach to our Catholic faith (i.e., what is the minimum I need to do). Plain and simple: Our New Covenant obligation is to attend the Mass, from beginning to end. If one happens to arrive late (because of circumstances beyond our control; if we made an honest effort to be there on time, but we walked in at the Psalm); you’re fine. But if for example, we just had to catch the last 7 minutes of a newscast or a sports game, and that’s why we’re late, that’s a different story – then it’s time for us to re-access and re-prioritize what’s **really** important in our daily lives. Confession may be a good idea also.

Genuflecting toward the Tabernacle, not the Altar

Genuflecting is a profound gesture of reverence and humility we utilize during Mass, so it is reserved for the highest good — the God/Eucharist Himself. Where’s the Eucharist? In the Tabernacle. Before getting in your pew, if and only IF the Tabernacle is visible, genuflect toward it. If it’s not in view, bow toward the altar. This applies in and outside of the Mass.

Speaking of bowing ... Nodding our head instead of a proper bow

Wherever bowing is called for by the faithful in the liturgy of the Mass (for example: when the congregation is incensed or in the middle of the Creed (at the recitation of “... and by the Holy Spirit, was born of the Virgin Mary and became man” (the Incarnation), etc.) it is always a “profound bow”; which just means that we bow from the waist. We are asked to reverently bow our head on occasions: “when the three Divine Persons are named together, and at the names of Jesus, of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of the saint in whose honor Mass is being celebrated”, before entering the sanctuary (if there is something in our hands), and before receiving Holy Communion.

Standing in the *Orans* position during the communal recitation of the Our Father prayer

We often see priests assume the *Orans* position (hands extended out from their side, oriented slightly upward toward heaven) in the Mass. It is a posture that indicates that he is praying on our behalf of the assembled faithful before Almighty God. In other words, he’s praying on our behalf *in persona Christi capitis* [in the Person of Christ, the Head]. This is why the Mass universal (i.e., worldwide) instructions and norms do not permit deacons, acolytes or other members of the laity to simply adopt the *Orans* posture (i.e., it is reserved to the priest by virtue of his ordained office). For that reason, members of the laity need not raise their hands/arms to the *Orans* position—in imitation of the priest—because in reality, there is but one ordained celebrant of the Mass (the priest).

Walking around during the exchange of the Sign of Peace

Over the years, this portion has unfortunately become akin to a social hour or reunion. The Church's instructions and norms for the Liturgy of the Mass, tell us that it is "appropriate that each person offer the sign of peace only to those who are nearest and in a sober manner". Therefore, the developed habit within the U.S. of walking across the aisle or going to greet people a few rows forward or behind us, has been discontinued.

Not saying "Amen" before receiving Communion (of both/either the Sacred Body and Precious Blood)

When the priest, deacon, or EMHC elevates the host or chalice and says, "The Body/Blood of Christ", our reply BEFORE receiving the Communion specie is "Amen.". By doing so, we personally affirm before God our belief in the Real Presence of Jesus, the Christ in the Sacred Body and Precious Blood we are about to receive. As we move forward in the Communion procession, let us be focused and mindful of God's freely given gift of the Eucharist, which we earnestly yearn to receive. Let our minds not be distracted by things around us or what awaits us at home or work—instead, be focused on the divine gift of grace awaiting us the Holy Eucharist.

Not singing

"He who sings," said St. Augustine, "prays twice." Singing adds to our praise and worship of God and helps to ensure our "*full, conscious, and active*" participation in the Mass called for by the Second Vatican Council. Sung prayer reminds us of the choirs of heaven, with whom we are called to praise God eternally in heaven.

Skill, expertise or perfection is not a prerequisite. We sing and make joyful noise to the Lord.

Not saying the responses

Active participation in the liturgy is not achieved or accomplished through mere passive presence; in other words, without our active participation in the liturgy. While, before Mass we are encouraged to prepare our interior disposition, habitually refraining from the Mass responses is a pretty clear sign of poor disposition. Again, liturgy is when and where we worship together.

Leaving before the Mass is over

Also known as the "*Judas Shuffle*". A parish church once had a large sign over the rear exit doors, that read: "***Remember: Judas left the supper and celebration early too!***"

Sadly, some poorly catechized Catholic faithful believe that Mass is over as soon as *we* receive Holy Communion. It's not! We are all called to observe long-standing Catholic custom and tradition for the Mass: a proper interior disposition; appropriate exterior dress; and full active, participation within the liturgy (from beginning to end).

(SR: <https://epicpew.com/10-things-you-might-be-doing-wrong-at-mass/>)