

The Liturgy – Where is Jesus?

- Most Catholics recognize the presence of Christ in the bread and wine that we believe becomes the very body and blood of Christ in the celebration of the Eucharist. We have long called this the *Real Presence*.
- Second Vatican Council – *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* §7 reminded us that there are also other ways that Christ can be found during the Liturgy.
 - ~ In the assembly that gathers in Christ's name
 - ~ In the priest, insofar as it is he who celebrates the Eucharist
 - ~ In the Word proclaimed in our assembly
 - ~ Especially in consecrated elements of the bread and wine
- Given that these are all ways in which Christ can be found in the liturgy – how are we to show reverence to each of the four differing ways in which Christ is present in the liturgy?
- Jesus' Presence in the Assembly. Wherever two or three are gathered.....
When we gather in Church to worship God in Christ and through the Holy Spirit, then we become the Body of Christ – gathered in this particular place and time – alongside all the other instances everywhere in the world.
 - ~ Christ reveals his presence to us in one another
 - ~ Reverence requires that we acknowledge his presence and respond to it
 - ~ Hospitality, connecting with each other in a way that expresses the love of Christ
 - ~ For example, if I know my friend has had a disappointment, has been sick or is celebrating something – we can reverence Christ by acknowledging the events in other people's life
- Jesus' presence in the Presider. The priest serves the assembly through his liturgical leadership. Since the true leader of our worship is Christ, how do we show reverence to this presence of Christ?
 - ~ The Presider invites us to worship (*Let us pray...*)
 - ~ Reverence requires that we respond both internally and externally
 - ~ Sing the songs, say the prayers, engage in the actions of worship
- Jesus' presence in the Word Proclaimed. Christ speaks to us through the Scriptures.
 - ~ When you hear the voice of the lector, you are hearing the voice of Christ.
 - ~ Reverence requires that listen with open ears and an open heart
 - ~ Look at the reader, give then your full attention
 - ~ Listen to the homily so that the Word takes root in your heart – makes a difference in your life.
- Jesus' Presence in the Eucharistic Meal. Communion is not a private moment between God and you, but is most fully Communion when you also recognize the link between Christ and his mystical body the Church
 - ~ Reverence requires that we respond both to Christ and to the people gathered
 - ~ Augustine: "it is your own mystery that is placed on the altar.... Be what you see and receive what you are"
 - ~ This mode of presence brings us back to the first
- The various modes are not in competition. Each is real, each is unique. All support each other. Together they offer us a richer way to experience Christ's continuing presence and to fill ourselves with his love.
- This should be your goal in the experience of Liturgy