

REVERENCE IN CHURCH - WHY?

The Gospels of Saints Matthew, Mark, and Luke all speak of our Lord's Holy Anger. It is known as the "Cleansing of the Temple." Why did Jesus get so angry? Why did He cast out certain people? "He overturned the tables and seats... Moreover, He would not permit anyone to carry things through the temple area." (Mt.21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:45). Jesus left no doubt why He was angry. It was the House of God. It was the Temple of His heavenly Father. He quoted scripture to justify His holy anger. **"My house shall be called a house of prayer."** And He added: **"You have made it a den of thieves."**

The Church building is a sacred structure devoted to divine worship of God. It is not a social hall. It is not a place of entertainment. The Catholic Church, especially when the Most Blessed Sacrament is reserved in the tabernacle, is **the HOUSE OF GOD. We go there to worship, to participate in the greatest act of worship possible**, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, which perpetuates Jesus' Sacrifice on the Cross. This is infinite worship. This infinite act of reparation in God's House demands reverence on the part of all who enter. It is Jesus Christ, God become man, who is present in the Holy Eucharist. Jesus offers at Holy Mass the self same Sacrifice He offered on the Cross of Calvary. The ordained priest acts in the Person of Christ. Jesus is both Priest and Victim in every Sacrifice of the Mass. The House of God is therefore a sacred place for adoration and worship of infinite value.

What is reverence?

It is a virtue. In general, there are four forms of reverence, corresponding to four forms of dignity of persons. 1. There is familial reverence toward one's parents. 2. There is civil reverence toward persons holding civil authority and responsibility. 3. There is ecclesiastical reverence concerning persons of special authority in our holy Catholic Church; this is reverence due first to the Pope, then bishops and priests, and other consecrated persons in special service of the Church. 4. There is religious reverence toward any person, place, or object related to God.

The highest and greatest reverence is due the Holy Eucharist.

*Since the degree of reverence we owe corresponds to the dignity of the person, when it comes to the **House of God**, and the **Holy Eucharist** in the tabernacle, the dignity of the Person we speak of is One who is **INFINITE**, God Himself. Therefore, the greatest reverence we can give is reserved for **JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF** in the Holy Eucharist.*

Baptism received before Eucharist

None of the seven Sacraments which Jesus Christ gave His Church may be received validly and with the faith and the reverence we owe them unless we are first baptized. By Baptism, we are made a member of the Church. We enter the Church through Baptism. We are to recall our own dignity as a son or daughter of God through Baptism each and every time we enter God's House.

The church building or House of God where we worship is an image of our heavenly home and the Kingdom of God. Since Baptism admits us to the Church and new life in Christ, each time we enter the church building, this sacred place, we are to bless ourselves with Holy Water, the sacramental symbol of our Baptism into the Church.

The use of the sacramental of Holy Water is a reminder of Baptism and a means of sanctification. We need Baptism for entrance into the Church, Christ's Mystical Body, and for entrance into heaven. We dip our fingers into the blessed water of the Holy Water font and we sign ourselves in the form of the Cross— In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

