

Tonight at 6:45 -- the  
Sorrowful Mother Novena  
in Sacred Heart Church.

University of Notre Dame  
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Tomorrow afternoon - Confes-  
sions in Sacred Heart Church  
from 4:30 until 5:30.

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A Form Of Politeness

There are certain rubrics for the faithful at Mass that stem from not only the li-  
turgy, but also from politeness and good order. As a Catholic gentleman of university  
stature, much will be expected of you. Back home, the parish stalwarts will take it  
for granted that your every movement is the result of enlightened training, and will  
imitate you. They presume that you know when to stand, or kneel, or sit down during  
Divine Services. Do you?

The Low Mass offers no problem. You stand for the Gospels, sit down during the  
Offertory, and kneel during the remainder of the Mass.

The Missa Cantata (High Mass) requires that you stand whenever the priest chants a  
part of the Mass; that you sit down during the Offertory, and kneel during the rest  
of the Mass, except for the Last Gospel.

At the Domine non sum dignus, the server rings the bell. In large churches, where  
the voice of the priest is not heard distinctly, there is need for calling the at-  
tention of the congregation to the essential parts of the Mass. This bell is also  
the signal for you to approach the Communion rail. Those in the front pews should  
come up immediately and kneel down. All others should remain in their places.

The point to remember is this: everyone should be kneeling when the priest turns,  
faces the congregation, and recites the Misereatur, and the Indulgentiam prayers --  
the second of which has the efficacy of remitting venial sin.

The warning bell is rung just before the Consecration. From this point on, no one  
should move about the church, go to confession, or do anything other than kneel, --  
wherever he happens to be.

During the elevation everyone should look up at the Host and at the Chalice, and  
make an Act of Faith in the Real Presence. That's the very purpose of the rubric --  
to show God to the faithful. To bow your head low, without first observing God is  
pious, but not proper, and hardly meaningful. In the Ages of Faith, people used to  
greet one another, not with the inquiry: "Have you been to Mass this morning?" but  
with the meaningful phrase: "Have you seen God today?"

To be late - for an appointment is regarded in the social world as a mark of extreme  
impoliteness. On Sunday morning, every Catholic has an appointment with God. By  
coming late for Mass, a Catholic shows himself extremely impolite by reason of the  
gravity of the appointment, and the dignity of the One offended.

Late-comers are also a source of distraction to others already intent upon worship-  
ping God. Hence, ushers have been instructed to request all stragglers to take places  
quietly in the rear. Once Mass has started, we want no one parading through the  
church, or wandering about like Lady Macbeth, looking for a vacant spot in a pew. If  
you are in line near a confessional, remain in that vicinity throughout the Mass.

For Communion outside of Mass -- the rubrics dictate that you kneel during the brief  
prayers of the priest before he distributes Communion; and that the last rail of  
recipients remain kneeling until after the Blessing which terminates the ceremony.  
All communicants should approach the rail, and depart, with hands folded reverently.

When the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, or the tabernacle door is open -- the genu-  
flection is always made on both knees.