

### **Catholic Crossfit: Stand, Sit, and Kneel**

Have you ever been driving or riding in a car and accidentally cut someone off? Perhaps you didn't check the mirror or were talking on the phone or texting (that's dangerous, by the way). Usually the person that you cut off is less than enthused. They might hit the horn, speed up and stare or, worse yet, practice some "sign language."

If you've ever been on the receiving end of the middle finger, you know how it makes you feel. It's so random isn't it? A person takes one of the fingers on their hand and simply raises it and your peace is shattered. That gesture makes a huge statement. Little issues become big issues all from the extension of one pudgy, little digit. We communicate with our bodies. Exterior expressions and gestures say a lot about our interior thoughts and feelings. In a similar but obviously less offensive way, we can use our hands and bodies to communicate in prayer and in worship as well.

Kneeling, for instance, is a common sign of humility and respect but is far more than an action. Often at Mass we might just kneel because everyone else is kneeling and we want to be consistent. The reality is that our kneeling should be an external expression of the posture of our heart. When we fall on our knees it is a silent, but visible statement about what is transpiring and about whom we are worshipping.

You'll find at other times during the Mass we sit or stand. Standing is seen in a light of urgency and preparedness. At the time for the Gospel acclamation we stand, ready and willing to receive Christ's words. We're not saying that the other readings that preceded the Gospel aren't important, only that the Gospel holds an even greater importance.

Our posture changes depending upon what we are doing during specific parts of the Mass. It should not be seen in comparison, like "this part is more important than that part" since the entire liturgy is important. Rather it should signal to us to focus and help us stay attentive to what is happening at all times.

Always consider what you are saying intentionally, unintentionally, verbally, or nonverbally by your body language. If you are sitting in the pew with your arms crossed and a nasty look on your face, it communi-

cates something doesn't it? Even if you don't mean to look angry or bored, your body language says something different. You don't have to be in traffic to hinder someone else's faith walk. Be conscious of what your body is saying in action (and in dress). Self-awareness is the foundation of true holiness.

**Scripture:** Psalm 95:6, Philippians 2:10-11, Matthew 9:18, Luke 22:41, Malachi 3:2, Acts 10:26, Ephesians 6:14

**GIRM:** 42-44