

Our Bodies Profess Our Belief

During the Mass, we make many different gestures with our bodies: we sit, stand, kneel, bow, or genuflect. Each of these gestures has a meaning. We communicate what is in our minds and hearts with our bodies. If we turn our back on someone, we communicate we are unhappy with him. If we stand and move toward someone who has entered the room, we show this person that we are excited to see her.

Our gestures during Mass communicate what is in our minds and hearts as well.

When we profess the truths of the Creed, for example, we stand. Standing is a sign of paying attention and being ready to act. Standing to profess the Creed communicates that we are attentive to what is being said and that we accept it. Also, by standing, we show that we are ready to receive the faith we profess and to live by that faith in our daily lives.

There is one place in the Creed where we make another gesture with our bodies. In the Nicene Creed, at the words “and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man,” we bow. Bowing is a sign of reverence and respect. ***Why do you think we bow at this part of the Creed?*** We bow because it tells of one of the great mysteries of our faith: the Incarnation, when God became man. We bow in reverence to this holy moment.

On the two feast days most closely associated with the Incarnation—the Annunciation (March 25) and Christmas—we do not just bow; we genuflect during this line in the Creed. *Why would we genuflect during the Creed on these specific days instead of simply bowing?*

Genuflecting shows the greatest reverence to God. We genuflect to the Lord and Creator of the universe. Genuflecting reminds us that on those days we are celebrating God, the Lord and Creator of the universe, becoming one of us to save us from sin.

Journal Reflection

Write a prayer of thanksgiving for God becoming man. Write your prayer on the journal page. [Journal pages are available on the parent and student portals.](#)

