

## **BODIES**

We sometimes say it so quickly that there is hardly time to think: "I believe in... the resurrection of the body." What a remarkable statement that is! What a confession to make! Unlike some religions, even unlike some Christian interpretations, we think that bodies are important enough to be raised from the dead.

I think this is also seen in our worship. It is more than words. Our bodies are involved. We stand, we sit, we bow, we kneel, we raise our hands, we process, to receive a morsel of bread in our hand, we take hold of a cup to drink. These postures are second nature to most of us; we're hardly aware of how we are involved in our worship. But, the question "Why?" is a good one.

We stand to begin; to welcome the Gospel and to listen to it carefully; to make intercession before God; to pray the great prayer of thanksgiving, the eucharistic prayer; in many places, to eat our Lord's body and drink his blood; to take leave of the assembly. Why? If for no other reason that standing shows respect for the assembly, for the Gospel, for God.

And what about sitting? We sit for the readings and the sermon; as the gifts of bread and wine are prepared; when keeping silence is all we can or should do. Why? We sit so we can be attentive, so we can ponder (not so we can be entertained or relax; that's not the kind of sitting our worship needs).

And why do we kneel? Sometimes to beg for mercy or to plead for the Holy Spirit to come upon us or to show how truly sorry we are. Why? Because kneeling is the posture of a servant, of someone in need - and we are both before God.

And here's an idea, an Easter idea about posture. The Council of Nicaea banned kneeling during the Easter Season. The reasoning was

that, as Jesus was raised from the dead, so also Christ's body now can be up-standing. It's an interesting thought. Maybe during this joyful Eastertide we can think more about our bodies and give thanks that Jesus has saved all of us!

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This is the tenth in a series of articles on worship and the church's mission. Please feel free to copy and share it!