

## *A Respectful Attitude*

He who believes knows where he is going when he goes to church; he is going to Our Lord Jesus Christ. On entering the church, he says to all his pursuits, like Saint Bernard: “Stay here at the door. I feel the need of seeking comfort and strength from God.”

Act in the same manner. You know how much time you are to spend in church; you do not come to transact business. And if you are pestered with distractions and worries, turn them all out of doors without getting troubled over them. Persevere in prayer and make acts of reparation and of respect. Take a better posture, and let Our Lord see that you detest your distractions. By your respectful attitude, if not by the attention of your mind, you are still proclaiming his divinity, his presence; were you to do only that, you would be doing a great deal.

Watch a saint enter a church. He goes in without concerning himself with those who are already there. He concentrates on Our Lord and forgets everything else. In the presence of the pope we hardly give a thought to cardinals or bishops. And in heaven the

saints do not idle away their time honoring one another; to God alone they give all honor and glory. Let's imitate them; Our Lord is the only one in church.

Remain quiet for a moment after you come into church; silence is the greatest mark of respect, and the first disposition for prayer is respect. Most of our dryness and lack of devotion in prayer is due to our lack of respect for Our Lord on entering the church and to our disrespectful posture.

Let us therefore make a firm resolution to foster in ourselves this instinctive respect; we do not have to appeal to reason for that. Must Our Lord prove his presence to us every time we enter the church? Must He send us an angel to tell us that He is there?

## ***Proof That I Believe***

This respect is the solemn profession of our faith and, at the same time, a grace of piety and fervor; for God punishes irreverences committed in his sanctuary with a weakening of faith and a withdrawal of graces of devotion.

Let us, therefore, be very serious on the matter of reverence in worship. Let our conduct be dignified,

our attitude religious; let us observe a strict silence, an absolute recollection of the senses. In church our attention must be for Jesus Christ only; friends must be as if they were not. Jesus is everything; the attention of the court centers on the King; He is the only one honored. At the sight of this profound and religious reverence, the worldly-minded will at least be forced to say: “There is something great here!” The weak, the lukewarm will be ashamed of their indifference and will pay due homage to Jesus Christ; good example is the royal lesson of wisdom and the most fruitful apostolate.

Before leaving the presence of the divine Master, thank Him for his reception of love. Beg forgiveness for your distractions and irreverences. Offer Him as a homage of allegiance a flower of virtue, a bouquet of little sacrifices. Then leave the church as if it were the upper room; leave Our Lord’s presence like the angel who takes his flight from the throne of God to carry out his divine commands.

## *Greatest Sins Against Faith*

St. Theresa used to say that she would willingly give her life for the smallest of the ceremonies of the Church; she understood how precious they were. Let adorers at least look upon them with respect, devotion, and love.

Why are we less sensitive when Our Lord's honor is at stake than when our own petty dignity is? Nothing could be more absurd. Our dignity, in fact, comes to us from no one but God. When, therefore, we allow respect for Our Lord to be lost, we destroy the respect due to our own selves.

Oh! If Our Lord were to punish us for our lack of respect as we deserve!

God had Heliodorus scourged for profaning his temple; but there is more than the temple here.

Let us, therefore, give Our Lord this first homage of a sentiment of respect as soon as we come into his presence. We are but wretches if we allow giddiness or carelessness to precede this homage.

Yes, our greatest sins against faith come from our lack of respect. Because of the careless way we pray, adore, and visit Him, no one would suspect the presence of Jesus Christ in our churches.