

Pastor's note  
16th week of Ordinary Time

It seems that last week's note may have left a little confusion out there as to what we are reverencing and when, hopefully I will be able to clear that up some.

As we have been talking about, there is a lot going on whenever we enter the church, which makes sense if everything we do is supposed to be wrapped up in the mystery of the mass. This makes the answer a little difficult to answer fully. But in short, when we go into the church for our own personal prayers of whatever sort they may be, we are directly acknowledging the tabernacle and our Lord's presence there. When we are in the midst of the mass, our focus is on the sanctuary as a whole and specifically centered around the altar.

Jesus' presence in the Eucharist and our ability to worship our Lord through this is an extension of the mass. So when we enter the mass, we shift our central focus from the tabernacle to the altar. The fact that we still genuflect upon entering the church at the beginning and the end of mass shows an acknowledgement of this reality, if the tabernacle were empty we would just bow towards the sanctuary. So while we hold that reality in one hand, in the other we shift to the actual participation in the sacrifice of Christ.

To see this in practice, when I am the one setting up for mass, when I move about the sanctuary I try to keep my focus around the tabernacle. When mass has begun everything is centered on the altar. As awesome as it is to sit with Jesus, it is even more awesome to participate in His act of love. If there is a choice to spend an hour with our Lord in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament or to attend mass, there is no question, the mass trumps all.

If this all seems confusing still, just know we are there to love Jesus and we show respect through what we do in our postures and gestures. These expressions of love are what is most important, the who/what/when/why/where of everything can just take us a little deeper. I hope this helps.

God bless,  
Fr. Adam