

In the Jewish battle against Amalek, the army under the leadership of Joshua had the upper hand when Moses was praying for them with his hands raised in prayer. Holding your hands raised for a long while is tedious. It is all the more tiresome for an old man like Moses. But when he let his hands rest while continuing to pray, the Jews started going down in the battle. What is the scripture trying to tell us?

A lot! One of them is that your body is part of your prayer.

Raising your hands, kneeling, bowing your head, genuflecting, making the sign of the cross with holy water, and fasting are some forms of including the body in prayer. They have significant roles in our prayer life. On this Sunday, as we are gathered together to celebrate the Holy Mass together, we do a lot of them by habit. They deserve our attention.

Our Sunday celebration begins with our planning. Let me appreciate you for making plans and arranging your routines to attend the holy Mass today. You know you are here to thank God for all that you have received in your life. We are here to praise, worship, and present your needs before Him. We are here to receive His Body and Blood sacramentally and to express our gratitude for nourishing you.

Getting children ready for the holy Mass, taking care of the sick and elderly who cannot attend the Mass, and taking care of all other domestic details are part of involving your mind and body in Sunday Mass.

Presenting yourself in decent attire is an expression of prayer. If we are here to impress somebody, it is to impress God. It is pleasing to see that almost everyone here is in good dress. When you adorn yourself with a moderate dress for the church, you are elevating your body in prayer.

Responding to the prayers along with the community, singing with the choir, and assuming the prescribed postures like standing, kneeling, bowing your head, and receiving the blessing with a sign of the cross are also part of worshipping God.

Receiving the holy communion is integral to the Sunday Mass. There are two approved ways to receive the holy communion. One may receive it either on one's tongue or in the open palms. If you are receiving it in your palms, remember that you are receiving it and not that you are taking it away from the priest. Do not take it from the priest with your fingers, but receive the holy communion in your open palm, one placed beneath the other like this. Once you receive it, consume it then and there. You don't have to step aside to consume the Body of Christ. And never walk away with the communion in your hands.

Involve your body gracefully in your worship.

The battle against Amalek reminds us that we are never too old or too tired to pray. Your prayers, those prayers that hurt you, keep your beloved ones who are battling in the world.

Of course, Jesus underlined it when he asked us never to give up praying through the story of the widow and the dishonest judge.

Amen.