

“Downtimes During Communion”

Dear Antwort Mann,

There are times during Communion when nothing is going on. Either we're in between hymns, or the hymns are done but people are still going to the communion rail. It's pretty boring just sitting there. What should I do?

**Signed,
“Restless,”**

Dear “Restless,

Well, you could play games on your smart phone or talk to your neighbor, but then you'll go to hell. *Just kidding!!* Rather than seeing those downtimes during Communion as a waste, there are a lot of spiritually beneficial things you can do.

First of all, you can pray, either “from the heart,” or using the prayers in the hymnal. There are loads of prayers in the hymnal for all kinds of people and situations. Those prayers begin on page 305 in the hymnal.

Second, you can review the Catechism and refresh your understanding and knowledge of those things we believe, teach and confess as true from Holy Scripture. You can find the catechism beginning on page 321 in the hymnal.

Third, you can read again the texts you sang during Communion and meditate on what those hymns are saying/teaching. Or you can look at other hymns in the hymnal for particular circumstances you are experiencing in life right now. There are hymns of prayer, of comfort, of praise, of instruction. The hymnal is a wealth of resources for your spiritual growth, and to keep you grounded in Christ.

Fourth, you can open your Bible and read from it, or reread the texts of the appointed Readings for the Day that are printed in your bulletin and look for connections between them, and reflect on the texts, sermon and hymns to see what the overall theme of the day is.

You could even (“*Say it ain't so!*”) reflect on the sermon you just heard. What was the sermon's point? What did you learn? How did the Law strike you? How was the Gospel proclaimed and applied to you? Did the sermon even have anything to do with the text on which it was supposedly based?

I can guarantee that if you do one or two of these things each week during those “downtimes” in Communion, you will not be bored; the time will go by much more quickly; you won't find yourself tempted to play with your smart devices, and you will find that you have gotten way more out of the Service than you expected. But that shouldn't be surprising, because you will have been focused on Christ and His Word, and not on yourself.

***“Make me understand the way of Your precepts, and I will meditate on Your wondrous works.”
Psalm 119:27***

Best regards,

Der Antwort Mann