

Statement of Principles: Language and the Liturgy

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, May 2001

I

- Australian English, when it is used well, is inclusive and non-discriminatory in its reference to human beings¹.
- Good Australian English must be used in liturgical celebrations in this country.
- Consequently all new and revised liturgical books need to use accurate and inclusive language, though the processes of approval of liturgical books must be respected absolutely.
- Inclusive language should be used in general intercessions, in preaching, in introductory remarks, and where possible in musical texts.

II

- God is beyond human comprehension and beyond human language.
- God's revelation to the human race in the Bible is normative for the Christian faith and biblical terms for God are integral to its expression.
- Because there is one personal God, the use of a singular personal pronoun for God is inescapable².
- Calling God Father and Lord must remain in Catholic liturgical prayer, but should be balanced with other non-gender-specific forms of address.

¹ See Style Manual for Authors, Editors and Printers, 5 th edition (Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1994) pp 121-144

² In liturgical texts, the most frequently used pronoun for God is you and yours .