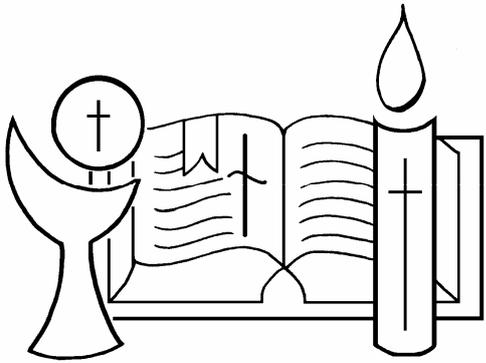


Some Changes in the Celebration of Mass



On Sunday May 11, this year, Catholics in Australia will be asked to make two changes in the way we celebrate Mass. The Holy See has approved an English translation of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM)* which guides the way we celebrate the Eucharist and accompanies the third Latin edition of the *Missale Romanum*.

† The First Change relates to a Posture.

At present when the priest invites the people to pray at the Preparation of the Gifts we remain seated until we have responded *'May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands to the praise and glory of His name, for our good, and the good of all His Church.'* And then we stand for the Prayer over the Gifts.

From Sunday May 11, 2008 you will be asked to STAND when the priest invites you to pray.

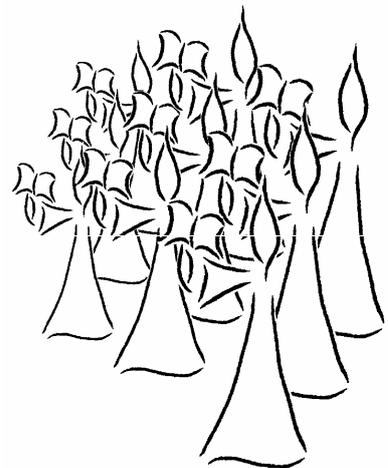
'Pray brethren that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God the Almighty Father.'

(We STAND and respond) *'May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands to the praise and glory of His name, for our good, and the good of all His Church.'*
(GIRM 46)

Why stand? The posture for prayer whether it be standing or kneeling reflects something of our relationship with God and helps define that relationship.

To stand in response to the priest's invitation is a sign of our readiness to enter into the great prayer which will follow ie: the Eucharistic Prayer which the priest prays on behalf of the gathered assembly.

To stand is to make a formal recognition of the importance of that invitation.



† The Second Change relates to a Gesture.

The Communion Procession is a most important ritual act in the celebration of Mass. It is the time when those disposed to receiving Holy Communion come as the Body of Christ to receive the Body of Christ.

We are individuals, yet we constitute something more in this procession.

The Australian edition of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal says: **“When approaching to receive Holy Communion, the faithful bow in reverence of the Mystery that they are to receive.”** (*GIRM 160*)

The Communicant might bow just before receiving Holy Communion or perhaps while the person in front of them is receiving Holy Communion.

Such a bow can be done simply, without disrupting the flow of the Communion Procession.



Above all the Communion Procession should be reverent, ordered and never rushed.

The General Instruction also provides for a Communion hymn or song to be sung during the procession. Its purpose is to unify the assembly as it receives Holy Communion and to assist worshippers as they prepare to receive the Body and Blood of Christ.

As with any change it will take some time to become accustomed to the change in posture and the new gesture. Some will be quicker than others in making the change, but with a little patience and quiet concentration there should be no confusion or disruption to the flow of the Mass.

Be ready now for these changes at Mass from Sunday May 11, 2008

Bishops Commission for the Liturgy 2008

