

# Catechetics of Kneeling and Genuflections

THE NEW General *Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM, found in the new Latin *Missale Romanum* of 2002) preserves the earlier rubrics that the congregation kneel during the consecration of the Mass and again it makes provision for Conferences of Bishops to *extend* kneeling to other parts of the Mass.

With the first GIRM (1969/1970), the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference did extend kneeling from the end of the *Sanctus* ("Holy, Holy, Holy") to the great *Amen*, and from the end of the *Agnus Dei* ("Lamb of God") till the end of the Communion.

Over the years since then, trendy priests have discouraged kneeling. Churches have sometimes been built without kneelers, and with seats so close together that kneeling is impossible (for non-contortionists).

Thanks be to God, the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference has decided to continue their original rule on kneeling. Indeed, one bishop has said that this will necessitate providing kneelers in churches which do not have them. So far, so good.

**ANOTHER INNOVATION** has been standing up to receive Holy Communion. Rome required that Bishops' Conferences decide on some sign of reverence to replace kneeling. Ours chose a genuflection.

However, this was implemented in a half-hearted fashion. And in 1976 it was overtaken by a more radical change, 'Communion in the Hand'; (sec p. 4).

Reverence and faith have been weakened by SPEED: speed in 'handing over' the Sacred Host, contempt for crumbs, communicating oneself 'on the move' (and concealed from the priest. Why bother with genuflecting? So it was even more neglected.

Indeed, the practice of making any genuflection at all to the Blessed Sacrament was already 'on the way out' by 1980. Hence the reminder later that year that:

"The venerable practice of genuflecting before the Blessed Sacrament, whether enclosed in the tabernacle or publicly exposed [in the Monstrance], as a sign of adoration, is to be maintained. This act requires that it be performed in a recollected way. In order that the heart may bow before God in profound reverence, the genuflection must be neither hurried nor careless"

*Inaestimabile Donum* §26, in 1980.

Recently, however, our Bishops have decided to replace the genuflection with a bow, when standing to receive Holy Communion.

I predict: (1) some will rail against those who continue to genuflect; and (2) few people will bow.

**HOWEVER**, any communicant is entitled to receive kneeling, even in countries like ours when standing is authorized as normative:

Thus the Congregation for Divine Worship, Prot. n. 47/03/L of 26-2-03, commenting on its permission to the United States bishops, said:

"...while this Congregation gave the *recognitio* (authorization) to the norm desired by the Bishops'

Conference of your country that people stand for Holy Communion, this was done *on the condition that* communicants who choose to kneel are not to be denied Holy Communion on these grounds. Indeed, the faithful should not be imposed upon nor accused of disobedience and of acting illicitly when they kneel to receive Holy Communion."

There was an earlier reply in July 2002 from the former Cardinal Prefect himself. Cardinal Medina, to the effect that "The Congregation... considers any refusal of Holy Communion to a member of the faithful on the basis of his or her kneeling posture to be a grave violation of one of the most basic rights of the Christian faithful, namely that of being assisted by their Pastors by means of the Sacraments (canon 213)."

There was, and is, a similar problem with the refusal by some priests to give Holy Communion on the tongue. See the next page!

With such rulings about the right to kneel for Holy Communion, it must surely follow that a communicant will be entitled to go on genuflecting after the Australian Bishops implement bowing.

But the real solution is to re-instate kneeling for Holy Communion, and provide altar rails once more.

## Reform of the Reform

**W**E NEED a *Reform of the Reform* of the new Mass. Do you realize that the old Mass had more Scripture, specially Psalms, in the Ordinary of the Mass, than now? (i.e. in the fixed texts, into which the variable texts from the Proper of the Season or the saints are slotted.)

In the new Mass, the priest prays silently at the washing of his hands: *Lord, wash away my iniquity, cleanse me from my sin.* This is from Psalm 51 [50]:2.

He used pray silently in Latin, while the people read silently from their Missals, from Psalm 26[25]:6-12:

I will wash my hands among the innocent  
and will encompass Thy altar, O Lord.

That I may hear the voice of praise:  
and tell of Thy marvellous works.

O Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thy **house**,  
and the place where Thy glory dwelleth.

Take **not** away my soul, O God, with the wicked:  
nor my life with bloody men.

In whose hands are iniquities:  
their right hand is filled with gifts.

But as for me, I have **walked** in innocence:  
redeem me. and have mercy on me.

My foot hath stood in the direct way:  
in the churches I will bless Thee, O Lord.

Glory be to the- Father and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen

Note the mention of 'altar' Note also the "Glory be to the father": it was in the old Mass thrice, but never now. Similarly, in the name of liturgical purity, the beautiful Psalm 44[43], formerly alternated in Latin between priest & server, was dropped altogether; and likewise before drinking from the chalice. Psalm 116:12-13 [115:3-4] and Psalm 18[17]:4.

VCII allowed some of the Mass to be translated **into** the vernacular, and nominated other specific changes. That was the real **Reform** — the Reform that got swamped JT

# Holy Communion in the Hand

## Communion in the Hand

- was brought in by disobedience,
- then tolerated,
- authorized in Australia in 1976.
- sometimes even forced on the unwilling.

The truth is, no one is obliged to it.

**T**he PAPAL **DOCUMENT** authorizing "Holy Communion in the Hand" is found in Flannery's *Documents of Vatican Council II. Conciliar and post-Conciliar Documents*, Volume I, pp 148-153.

## Three points to note

1. Yes, this document confirms that there was an ancient practice of giving Holy Communion in the hand. But it does not give a detailed quote from St Cyril of Jerusalem. That is supplied here from a Redemptorist *Magellan* notice sheet for parish bulletins.

Actually, St Cyril's words *do not apply* to our modern practice. For him, the communicant did not pick up the Sacred Host "from his *right* palm enthroned in his left", but used his tongue to lick it up (the way Anglicans do, or used to do, in their Communion Service); whereas the modern Catholic permission has a communicant put his left hand on top and pick up the Sacred Host in the right and then place it on his tongue.

2. Pope Paul VI seemingly surrendered to secret pressures. Note how in granting this permission in principle, on 29th May, 1969, he gave the consultation figures from the world's bishops, two thirds of them were *against* Communion in the Hand, and yet the Pope gave in

Why did the bishops vote against change? Did they think it frivolous? or even a danger to reverence and faith, in view of the Dutch Catechism? and with the extensive liturgical anarchy so few years after VC'II? And why did the Pope publish the figures?

After all, Vatican II did not approve Communion in the Hand. Did the bishops there even discuss it? On the contrary, this change was slipped in during the Great Euphoria of "all change is **progress**".

3. Also note that early on in his pontificate. Pope John Paul II *never* gave Communion in the Hand: he was even known to pass the ciborium to his priest MC. take the spread-out hands of the communicant, fold them into the traditional flat-clasp for praying, take back the ciborium and give Holy Communion on the tongue. Further, it is said that the USA bishops were hood-winked by a photo from Ireland which purported to show the Pope giving Communion in the Hand, whereas he was actually handing back some Rosary Beads he had blessed in their round case...

## Other Things To Note

1. Communion in the Hand was supposed to be a concession or privilege, and not normative. But many priests have tried to make it "compulsory"! Shame!

2. It has not helped **belief** in, or reverence for, the Blessed Sacrament. See the surveys of 50% belief in transubstantiation by modern communicants

With Holy Communion received on the tongue, we did not have the problem with a communicant walking off with the Blessed Sacrament:

- to communicate himself on his way back to his place with a casualness claimed as a progressive piety;
- or to throw away in the case of non-Catholics who just drifted up with everyone else;
- to lick and stick on the underside of the pews
- to put in pocket or purse to *sell to the witches* for Black Masses;
- hence priests chasing communicants down the church to demand that they either communicate themselves at once or give the Sacred Host back! (I have had to do this in every parish I have been in!)
- hence the "guards" on duty at some big Masses

3. Do not be fooled by **artheolatry** — I can't remember its exact spelling, a word coined and condemned by Pope Pius XII in his encyclical letter *Mediator Dei* (on the Sacred Liturgy, 1947). Archcolatry meant the idol worship of things or ideas simply because they were ancient, and not for intrinsic merit

People who want to return to the disciplines of the ancient Church are choosy: they do not call for the return of public penance for adultery or abortion. Nor do they call for the exclusion from the "Mass of the Faithful" (i.e. from the Offertory onwards, like the archcolatry with which the trendies treat catechumens) of those invalidly married or contracepting.

4. I have heard it alleged, but I cannot prove it. that Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta said that the greatest evil in the world today was Communion in the Hand.

5. There are those who would rather have Communion in the Hand than receive Holy Communion under Both Kinds by the intinction of the Sacred Host in the Precious Blood. (Self-intinction, a common abuse, is forbidden.) Yet Communion under Both kinds has a theological meaning: a fuller sign of sharing in the Sacrifice being offered, and in the Final Banquet in Heaven, whereas Communion in the Hand has little theological benefit but lots of deficits.

6. Few now remember the prescribed "drill" on posters in church porches, showing how the communicant would hold his hands, how pick up the Sacred Host, how step sideways one pace so that the priest could see him put the Host in his mouth. On the basis of that drill some thought that faith and reverence would be preserved. Where is that drill now?

7. As a convert, I am more aware of the anomalies: *The Book of Common Prayer* of 1662 required Anglicans to kneel to receive their consecrated leavened baker's bread and sip port wine. But their 'Black Rubric' asserted that no adoration was thereby intended by kneeling.

Yet now we have Catholics standing to receive Holy Communion, and 'on the hand', with the soothing but unconvincing assertion that they still adore, and that there is no irreverence or weakening of faith.

Father James Tierney

# The Morality of Tattoos and Body-piercing

Father Peter Joseph

(Reprinted from AD2000 December 2003)

**MANY GOOD PEOPLE ARE** repelled by modern fads and fashions, such as tattooing, multiple ear-rings and other body-piercing, but feel unequipped to give a clear judgment on the morality of such practices, or to rebut the charge that they are elevating their personal preferences into a moral code. In this article, I will set out some criteria that are relevant to making a moral judgment on these things

In the Old Testament, the Chosen People were specifically commanded: "You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh... or tattoo any marks upon you: I am the Lord." (Leviticus 19:28). Inspired by God, St Paul admonishes us: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God?" (I Corinthians 6:19). Being a temple of the Holy Spirit, we owe our body due care and protection and decorum.

In some cultures, a special bodily mark or design — on the forehead, for example — signifies a certain attainment or marital status, or whatever, and is socially acceptable. Ethiopian Christians, to name one group, wear tattoo crosses on their foreheads. In Samoa, it was once a widespread custom to tattoo the eldest son or daughter of the local ruling family. In Western societies, ear-rings and make-up are acceptable as a part of feminine fashions and public presentability. But certain types of body-piercing and decorations in our society are extreme and unjustified, and some of them are motivated by anti-Christian sentiments.

It would be impossible to give black-and-white judgments on all bodily decorations. But we can point to a few negative aspects which should be of concern to a Christian. Unless otherwise stated, this article will refer to Western societies only.

## 1 Diabolical Images

Tattoos of demons are quite common, yet no Christian should ever sport an image of a devil or a Satanic symbol.

## 2 Exultation in the Ugly

This is a mark of the Satanic, which hates the beauty of God's creation and tries to destroy it and to ruin others' appreciation of the same. More than just being ugly, some body-piercing is the expression of delight in being ugly.

We recognise bad taste in tattoos, rings and studs, by looking at their nature, size, extent and place on the body. Ironically, even florid and colourful tattoos fade over time and end up looking dark and drear. When one considers how, in concentration camps, prisoners were treated like animals and branded on their arm with a number, it is amazing to think that people today adopt similar markings as if they were fashionable or smart. This is truly the sign of a return

to barbarity, the behaviour of people who do not have any sense of the dignity of the human person

## 3 Self-Mutilation and Self-Disfigurement

This is a sin against the body and against the Fifth Commandment. Some body-piercing verges on self-mutilation. At best, multiple body-piercing is self-inflicted abuse. A form of self-hatred or self-rejection motivates some to pierce themselves or decorate themselves in a hideous and harmful fashion. The human body was not made by God to be a pin cushion or a mural.

## 4 Harm to Health

Doctors have spoken publicly on this health issue. In 2001, researchers at both the University of Texas and the Australian National University reported on harm to health caused by tattoos and body-piercing. Some ear-rings (on the navel, tongue or upper ear) are unhealthy and cause infections or lasting harm such as deformities of the skin. They can also poison the blood for some time (septicaemia). Certain piercings (e.g. on the nose, eyebrows, lip, tongue) do not close over even when the object is removed. Such body-piercing, therefore, is immoral, since we should not endanger health without a reasonable motive. When done unhygienically, tattoos and piercing cause infection. A used instrument, if not properly sterilised, can transmit hepatitis or HIV.

Some have hoped to avoid health dangers by getting "henna" tattoos, which are painted on, rather than done with needles. Henna staining is an ancient Hindu wedding custom of painting floral designs on the feet and hands. A German Medical Association report in 2002 found that tourists returning home with hennas done in Bali and Bangkok, among other places, suffered severe skin infections and sometimes lifelong allergies. In some cases also, the colouring agent used meant that the tattoo faded away, but after several weeks of skin irritation, the design reappeared in the form of a reddish tattoo, often very painful for the patient. Allergies developed from 12 hours to a week after the application of the henna, causing intense itching, redness, blistering and scaling.

## 5 A Desire to Shock and Repel

It can be appropriate to shock people, as, for example, when one recounts the plight of poor and hungry people, or protests against crimes or terrible exploitation. This can be a healthy thing, when done properly and with due care, to arouse people out of complacency, so that they realise something must be done. But to shock people for the thrill of shocking people, with no intention to promote truth or goodness or aesthetic appreciation, is not a virtue, but a sign of a perverted sense of values.

In evaluating tattoos under this heading of repulsiveness, we look at the nature of the images, the size and number of the tattoos, and their place on the body. In evaluating piercings, we consider similarly their extent and location on the body.

## 6 Indecency and Irreverence

It is always immoral to get or exhibit tattoos of indecent images or phrases, or derisive figures of Our Lord or His Mother or holy things.

## 7 Signs of Disorientation

Pirates used to be the only males who wore ear-rings (for whatever reason) whilst sailors and side-show freaks were just about the only people with tattoos. What was once so restricted has now spread to wider sections of the community. In the 1970's, an ear-ring worn by a man in the left ear, or the right, or both, was a code-sign of his personal orientation and thus a form of picking up partners. As such, it was blatantly immoral, and generally an advertisement of one's immorality.

Ear-rings in boys and men are so common now that they have lost that significance, but they are never positively demanded by social requirements, as a suit and tie are socially required on certain formal occasions. Even admitting the lack of clear symbolism now, I would expect any seminary to tell any inquirer that he would have to remove any ear-ring or stud before entering, and question him as to when he started wearing it and why. A seminarian or priest sporting an ear-ring is not socially acceptable in the Catholic Church. A good number of parishioners would wonder about the deeper reasons or motivation.

No-one in such a public position starts to wear an ear-ring without taking a deliberate decision. As the late Father John Casey, a wise old Jesuit priest, said to me once, "No-one changes externals without having changed internals." It is regarded as what people call "making a statement". The same code of expected conduct applies to men in other professions such as policemen or teachers.

Employers and principals should make rules outlawing any such jewellery for male staff and students. Especially for the young, such rules protect them both from themselves and from peer pressure. The fact is that, still today, ear-rings are prevalent among females, and in minority use amongst males.

## 8 Unsuitability

Sometimes people tattoo themselves with a big image of a crucifix or other holy pictures. The human body is a most unsuitable place for such an image, even if it be a beautiful one. Whenever these people go swimming, for example, they are exhibiting this image in an inappropriate fashion. No priest would ever go down a shopping centre in Mass vestments, not because there is something wrong with vestments, but because there is a time and a place for donning special religious symbols.

## 9 Vanity

Some men tattoo their upper and lower arms in order to be ostentatious and impressive. It is a means of drawing attention to themselves. No one who meets them can fail to notice the tattoos — to the point where it is in fact a constant distraction. It detracts from the person, and focuses attention too much on the body's external appearance. The same can be said for a stud on the tongue, a ring in the nose, or ear-rings all over one's ears and eyebrows. These are not part of our culture; at most, they are part of a certain sub-culture, a minority affectation, devoid of religious or positive social significance. No-one is saying it is wrong to dress up, but here it is a question of moderation and discretion. Sacred Scripture implicitly recognises that it is good for a bride to be adorned for her husband when the heavenly Jerusalem is compared to such a woman (Apocalypse 21:2). It is good for a lady to be well-

dressed and to use make-up when the occasion calls for it, but everyone recognises when the embellishment has gone over the top and makes her look seductive or cheap.

## 10 Immaturity and Imprudence

An action acceptable or indifferent in itself can become wrong if the intention or motive is wrong. Some young people adopt outrageous fashions out of an immature desire to rebel against society or against their parents. Such disobedience against parents is sinful. Some do it out of an immature desire to conform to their friends, and others out of an equally immature desire to stick out from everyone around them. Some do it to overcome boredom, because it is something different, because it gives them a thrill, because it is something for their friends to admire and comment on.

Mindless following of fads is always the mark of immaturity. For young people who live at home under their parents' authority, it is enough if their parents express their disapproval of such fashions to know that they should not go ahead. Some young people go to further extremes and vie with each other as to who can pierce whatever part of the body the most. Parents must forbid such behaviour absolutely.

Young people can hardly justify the big expenditure (not to mention the pain) involved in getting a tattoo. It is also unjustified and just plain silly to mark your body for life with images of no great worth or the name of one's current lover. A recent example I heard of gives an idea of the time and expense: a teenage girl had one arm tattooed up and down. It required two four-hour sessions and cost \$2,000.

Tattoos are more serious than other adornments since they are more or less permanent marks on the body. There's many a man or woman who has been tattooed gladly in youth, but regretted it not so many years later when they came to regard it as an embarrassing disfigurement. Once they mature, they pay dearly for the luxury of getting rid of it.

The removal of tattoos is expensive and difficult — and can leave scars. The removal of big tattoos requires surgery under a general anaesthetic, with all the potential risks, plus the significant medical and hospital costs. The removal of large tattoos can leave big segments of the skin permanently disfigured or blotched, like skin that has been burnt.

Many adults find themselves ineligible for some jobs, because businesses will not employ them with their hands covered in tattoos, impossible to conceal years after their youthful folly.

## Universal Criteria

In any culture, things can arise, become acceptable, and become part of the culture — but this does not necessarily make them right. Here are some examples from foreign cultures which I equally regard as wrong. In one tribe of Africa, women wear gigantic and heavy ear-rings which change the shape of the ear-lobes. In another place, women put coils around their necks and elongate them unnaturally, or put plates in their mouths to make the lips protrude some inches. In China, there was once the practice of binding girls' feet tightly to stop them from growing, because small dainty feet were admired. These and other drastic alterations to

the natural growth of the human body must be judged immoral, as forms of abuse springing from vanity.

It is not always possible to draw an exact line and say where the bounds of moderation have been exceeded. But this does not mean that there is no line. No-one can define at what exact temperature a day **passes** from being cool to cold, but everyone knows that when the temperature is near zero, it is cold beyond dispute. Let us never fall for the ploy which tries to argue from borderline or difficult cases that there are no guidelines or principles, and that there is no such thing as a just mean or moderation, just because they are hard to define.

The human body is meant to be treated with care, not maltreated or disfigured. Its dignity and beauty must be respected and cultivated, in order that it be an expression of the deeper beauty of the soul.

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## Sacral Vernacular

We do not have to reinvent a sacred vernacular. Much of it exists in the old missals already provided for the active mental participation of the faithful in the silent Latin Mass prior to mid-1964.

Take for instance the Creed - then called the Nicene Creed but now, more accurately, the Nicene-Constantinople Creed: It was translated accurately, literally, and we understood it:

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of...  
[Rome is ordering the first person singular to be restored.]  
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God...  
Begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father..  
And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary...  
[Here we used genuflect, every time, not just twice a year. By the way, the USA has not got 'incarnate' in their version!]  
And in the Holy Ghost ['I believe' is not repeated!]  
And one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. [No 'in': We believe the Church but we believe in Divine Persons.]

Then everyone made the Sign of the Cross — but this will take the Reform of the Reform to restore. At least we are to get a better translation soon, if not a good one.

## Right-handed Man

MAN IS NATURALLY RIGHT-HANDED (with few exceptions) and that proves he should DRIVE ON THE LEFT OF THE ROAD.

It comes about like this. Right-handed man sheathed his sword in a scabbard on his left. A long sword would be impossible to get out if worn on the right. So swords were drawn out cross-body.

To mount a horse, a man needed to swing his leg across — his right leg, to avoid tangling with his scabbard. So he mounted on the horse's left, and horses now expect it.

It was quicker to ride off without a U-turn. Therefore he rode on the left of the road. Q.E.D.

**Men** who mounted across the road were going the other way. So everyone kept to his own left.

Moreover, this was better for sword-fighting an enemy coming the other way.

Horse-drawn vehicles kept to the left of the road, too. Their drivers had more room for their whip-hands, and for their whip-elbows. And it was better for using their whips on the oncoming traffic...

No wonder early motorcars drove on the left — except in countries where revolutions turned the established order upside down and they felt they had to do something different, to justify themselves and assert their new independent spirit. **Corollary:** Spiral staircases go up anti-clockwise, so a defender had his sword arm away from the wall; while attackers were disadvantaged fighting cross-body.

**S**HIPS AND AEROPLANES, however, keep to the right. But the basic reason is still the same, because man is right-handed. Why the difference?

The earliest boats were steered by a board over the side, with a tiller or lever attached. Which side? Right side, of course, because a man wanted to steer with his right hand on the tiller.

Thus the right side of a ship was called starboard, the side where the steering-board was.

For a while, the left side was called larboard: L for left, in place of ST, add "arboard". and you've got it

When ships came "into port" and moored alongside a wharf, they protected their steering-boards by having their larboard sides against the wharf. This was nearest 'the port', hence the left side got called port.

When two ships were meeting head-on, they both steered to starboard, to avoid their steering-boards getting scraped off if they should touch, and so the international rule became that you pass 'port-to-port'.

Also, they gave the right-of-way to the ship on their right (which used to be so on our roads, prior to give-way signs) to protect their steering-boards in a collision.

Finally, aircraft simply followed suit

Father James Tierney

P.S. A dictionary and Northcote Parkinson helped me put this little essay together!

P.P.S. Thanks for the response to Morse Code in 178/6. But I still need those 26 words whose accentuation matches the morse for their initial letter. Come on, you internet buffs.

# George Bush's Proclamation

## For National Sanctity of Human Life Day

OUR nation was built on a promise of life and liberty for all citizens. Guided by a deep respect for human dignity, our Founding Fathers worked to secure these rights for future generations, and today we continue to seek to fulfill their promise in our laws and our society. On National Sanctity of Human Life Day, we reaffirm the value of human life and renew our dedication to ensuring that every American has access to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

As we seek to improve quality of life, overcome illness, and promote vital medical research, my Administration will continue to honour our country's founding ideals of equal dignity and equal rights for every American. Every child is a priority and a blessing, and I believe that all should be welcomed in life and protected by law. My Administration has championed compassionate alternatives to abortion, such as helping women in crisis through maternity group homes, encouraging adoption, promoting abstinence education, and passing laws requiring parental notification and waiting periods for minors.

The Born-Alive Infants Protection Act, which I signed into law in August 2002, is an important contribution to our efforts to care for human life. This important legislation helps protect the most vulnerable members of our society by ensuring that every infant born alive, including one who survives abortion, is considered a person and receives protection under Federal law. It helps achieve the promises of the Declaration of Independence for all, including those without the voice and power to defend their own rights.

Through ethical policies and the compassion of Americans, we will continue to build a culture that respects life. Faith-based and community organizations and individual citizens play a critical role in strengthening our neighbourhoods and bringing care and comfort to those in need. By helping fellow citizens, these groups recognize the dignity of every human being and the possibilities of every life; and their important efforts are helping to build a more just and generous Nation. By working together to protect the weak, the imperfect, and the unwanted, we affirm a culture of hope and help ensure a brighter future for all.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Sunday, January 19, 2003, as National Sanctity of Human Life Day. As we reflect upon the sanctity of human life, I call upon all Americans to recognize this day with appropriate ceremonies in our homes and places of worship, to rededicate ourselves to compassionate service, and to reaffirm our commitment to respecting the life and dignity of every human being.

In witness WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 14th day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand and three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-seventh.

George W Bush

# Why New Translations

The Collect for the Fourth Sunday of Advent is actually the prayer from the end of the Angelus. Many would simply not recognize the present official ICEL English translation in the priest's altar missal and the people's missals as the same prayer:

**Lord**, fill our hearts with your love, and as you revealed to us by an angel the coming of your Son as man, so lead us through his suffering and death to the glory of his resurrection, for he lives and reigns...

The traditional translation of this prayer, used three times daily for those with such devotion, is:

**Pour Forth**, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts,

that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ Thy Son was made known by the message of an Angel, may, by His Passion and Cross, be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

## The Official Latin Text

Even a non-Latinist can pick out the words for grace and incarnation in Latin. They should not be rolled thin and flat into "love" and "the coming as man":

GRATIAM TUAM, quaesumus, Domine, mentibus nostris infunde, ut qui, Angclo nuntiant. Christi Filii tui incarnationem cognovimus. per passionem eius et crucem ad resurrectionis gloriam perducamur. Per Dominum.

But the plot thickens... The Collect for Our Lady of the Rosary on the 7th October has the same Latin text from the Angelus, with the addition of four words to make it appropriately Marian for that day: after *cognovimus* it has: *beatu Maria Virgine intercedente*.

So the translation should have another line: "with the Blessed Virgin Mary interceding".

But the official English ICEL translation for 7th October has the same desacralized text as for the 4th Sunday of Advent, and without the extra words at all.

Note the replacement of the special Catholic word, *grace*' by commonplace ambiguous "love". This happens over and over again in the ICEL texts.

The faithful need to hear the Catholic vocabulary with words like "grace" and "incarnation". "If you use our words you will think our thoughts; and if you do not use our words you will not think our thoughts." Sermons and instructions will explain our various Catholic technical words to all comers.

Please God that Cardinal Pell's worldwide Vox duru commission will really fix up the ICBL English and restore the Latinic structure of the Collects, and also the literal translation whose archaic tones of eternity constitute our traditional sacral vernacular. We have no trouble coping with such a prayer in the Angelus, so translate everything else on the same principles.

Father James Tierney