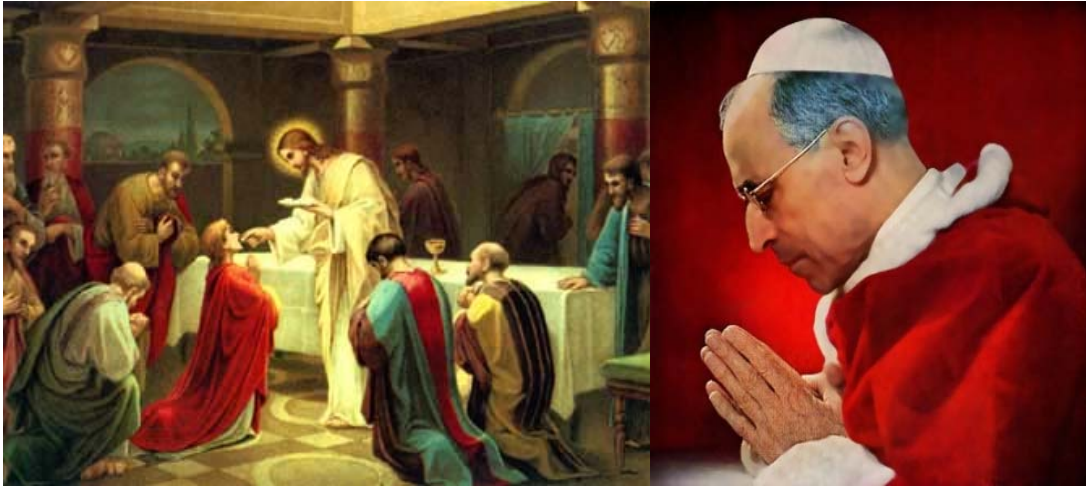


Theology of Kneeling-Cardinal Ratzinger

From Cardinal Josef Ratzinger's book The Spirit of the Liturgy



Pius XII after Communion

There are groups, of no small influence, who are trying to talk us out of kneeling. "It doesn't suit our culture", they say (which culture?) "It's not right for a grown man to do this — he should face God on his feet". Or again: "It's not appropriate for redeemed man — he has been set free by Christ and doesn't need to kneel any more".

If we look at history, we can see that the Greeks and Romans rejected kneeling. In view of the squabbling, partisan deities described in mythology, this attitude was thoroughly justified. It was only too obvious that these gods were not God, even if you were dependent on their capricious power and had to make sure that, whenever possible, you enjoyed their favor. And so they said that kneeling was unworthy of a free man, unsuitable for the culture of Greece, something the barbarians went in for. Plutarch and Theophrastus regarded kneeling as an expression of superstition.

Aristotle called it a barbaric form of behavior (cf. Rhetoric 1361 a36). Saint Augustine agreed with him in a certain respect: the false gods were only the masks of demons, who subjected men to the worship of money and to self-seeking, thus making them "servile" and superstitious. He said that the humility of Christ and His love, which went as far as the Cross, have freed us from these powers. We now kneel before that humility. The kneeling of Christians is not a form of inculturation into existing customs. It is quite the opposite, an expression of Christian culture, which transforms the existing culture through a new and deeper knowledge and experience of God.

Kneeling does not come from any culture — it comes from the Bible and its knowledge of God. The central importance of kneeling in the Bible can be seen in a very concrete way. The word *proskynein* alone occurs fifty-nine times in the New Testament, twenty-four of which are in the Apocalypse, the book of the heavenly Liturgy, which is presented to the Church as the standard for her own Liturgy.

On closer inspection, we can discern three closely related forms of posture. First there is prostration — lying with one's face to the ground before the overwhelming power of God;

secondly, especially in the New Testament, there is falling to one's knees before another; and thirdly, there is kneeling. Linguistically, the three forms of posture are not always clearly distinguished. They can be combined or merged with one another.

Prostration: For the sake of brevity, I should like to mention, in the case of prostration: just one text from the Old Testament and another from the New.

In the Old Testament, there is an appearance of God to Joshua before the taking of Jericho, an appearance that the sacred author quite deliberately presents as a parallel to God's revelation of Himself to Moses in the burning bush. Joshua sees "the commander of the army of the Lord" and, having recognized who He is, throws himself to the ground. At that moment he hears the words once spoken to Moses: "Put off your shoes from your feet; for the place where you stand is holy" (Josh 5:15). In the mysterious form of the "commander of the army of the Lord", the hidden God Himself speaks to Joshua, and Joshua throws himself down before Him.

Origen gives a beautiful interpretation of this text: "Is there any other commander of the powers of the Lord than our Lord Jesus Christ?" According to this view, Joshua is worshipping the One who is to come — the coming of Christ.

In the case of the New Testament, from the Fathers onward, Jesus' prayer on the Mount of Olives was especially important. According to Saint Matthew (22:39) and Saint Mark (14:35), Jesus throws Himself to the ground; indeed, He falls to the earth (according to Matthew). However, Saint Luke, who in his whole work (both the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles) is in a special way the theologian of kneeling prayer, tells us that Jesus prayed on His knees. This prayer, the prayer by which Jesus enters into His Passion, is an example for us, both as a gesture and in its context. The gesture: Jesus assumes, as it were, the fall of man, lets himself fall into man's fallenness, prays to the Father out of the lowest depths of human dereliction and anguish. He lays His will in the will of the Father's: "Not my will but yours be done". He lays the human will in the divine. He takes up all the hesitation of the human will and endures it. It is this very conforming of the human will to the divine that is the heart of redemption. For the fall of man depends on the contradiction of wills, on the opposition of the human will to the divine, which the tempter leads man to think is the condition of his freedom. Only one's own autonomous will, subject to no other will, is freedom. "Not my will, but yours . . ." — those are the words of truth, for God's will is not in opposition to our own, but the ground and condition of its possibility. Only when our will rests in the will of God does it become truly will and truly free.

The suffering and struggle of Gethsemane is the struggle for this redemptive truth, for this uniting of what is divided, for the uniting that is communion with God. Now we understand why the Son's loving way of addressing the Father, "Abba", is found in this place (cf. Mk 14:36). Saint Paul sees in this cry the prayer that the Holy Spirit places on our lips (cf. Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6) and thus anchors our Spirit-filled prayer in the Lord's prayer in Gethsemane.

In the Church's Liturgy today, prostration appears on two occasions: on Good Friday and at ordinations. On Good Friday, the day of the Lord's crucifixion, it is the fitting expression of our sense of shock at the fact that we by our sins share in the responsibility for the death of Christ. We throw ourselves down and participate in His shock, in His descent into the depths of anguish. We throw ourselves down and so acknowledge where we are and who we are: fallen creatures whom only He can set on their feet. We throw ourselves down, as Jesus did, before the mystery of God's power present to us, knowing that the Cross is the true burning bush, the place

of the flame of God's love, which burns but does not destroy.

At ordinations prostration comes from the awareness of our absolute incapacity, by our own powers, to take on the priestly mission of Jesus Christ, to speak with His "I". While the ordinands are lying on the ground, the whole congregation sings the Litany of the Saints. I shall never forget lying on the ground at the time of my own priestly and episcopal ordination. When I was ordained bishop, my intense feeling of inadequacy, incapacity, in the face of the greatness of the task was even stronger than at my priestly ordination. The fact that the praying Church was calling upon all the saints, that the prayer of the Church really was enveloping and embracing me, was a wonderful consolation. In my incapacity, which had to be expressed in the bodily posture of prostration, this prayer, this presence of all the saints, of the living and the dead, was a wonderful strength — it was the only thing that could, as it were, lift me up. Only the presence of the saints with me made possible the path that lay before me.

Kneeling Before Another: Secondly, we must mention the gesture of falling to one's knees before another, which is described four times in the Gospels (cf. Mk 1:40; 10:17; Mt 17:14; 27:29) by means of the word *gonypetein*. Let us single out Mark 1:40. A leper comes to Jesus and begs Him for help. He falls to his knees before Him and says: "If you will, you can make me clean". It is hard to assess the significance of the gesture. What we have here is surely not a proper act of adoration, but rather a supplication expressed fervently in bodily form, while showing a trust in a power beyond the merely human.

The situation is different, though, with the classical word for adoration on one's knees — *proskynein*. I shall give two examples in order to clarify the question that faces the translator.

First there is the account of how, after the multiplication of the loaves, Jesus stays with the Father on the mountain, while the disciples struggle in vain on the lake with the wind and the waves. Jesus comes to them across the water. Peter hurries toward Him and is saved from sinking by the Lord. Then Jesus climbs into the boat, and the wind lets up. The text continues: "And the ship's crew came and said, falling at His feet, 'Thou art indeed the Son of God'" (Mt 14:33, Knox version). Other translations say: "[The disciples] in the boat worshiped [Jesus], saying . . ." (RSV). Both translations are correct. Each emphasizes one aspect of what is going on. The Knox version brings out the bodily expression, while the RSV shows what is happening interiorly. It is perfectly clear from the structure of the narrative that the gesture of acknowledging Jesus as the Son of God is an act of worship.

We encounter a similar set of problems in Saint John's Gospel when we read the account of the healing of the man born blind. This narrative, which is structured in a truly "theo-dramatic" way, ends with a dialogue between Jesus and the man He has healed. It serves as a model for the dialogue of conversion, for the whole narrative must also be seen as a profound exposition of the existential and theological significance of Baptism.

In the dialogue, Jesus asks the man whether he believes in the Son of Man. The man born blind replies: "Tell me who He is, Lord". When Jesus says, "It is He who is speaking to you", the man makes a confession of faith: "I do believe, Lord", and then he "[falls] down to worship Him" (Jn 9:35-38, Knox version, adapted). Earlier translations said: "He worshiped Him". In fact, the whole scene is directed toward the act of faith and the worship of Jesus, which follows from it. Now the eyes of the heart, as well as of the body, are opened. The man has in truth begun to see.

For the exegesis of the text it is important to note that the word *proskynein* occurs eleven times

in Saint John's Gospel, of which nine occurrences are found in Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman by Jacob's well (Jn 4:19-24). This conversation is entirely devoted to the theme of worship, and it is indisputable that here, as elsewhere in Saint John's Gospel, the word always has the meaning of "worship". Incidentally, this conversation, too, ends — like that of the healing of the man born blind — with Jesus' revealing Himself: "I who speak to you am He" (Jn 4:26).

I have lingered over these texts, because they bring to light something important. In the two passages that we looked at most closely, the spiritual and bodily meanings of proskynein are really inseparable. The bodily gesture itself is the bearer of the spiritual meaning, which is precisely that of worship. Without the worship, the bodily gesture would be meaningless, which the spiritual act must of its very nature, because of the psychosomatic unity of man, express itself in the bodily gesture.

The two aspects are united in the one word, because in a very profound way they belong together. When kneeling becomes merely external, a merely physical act, it becomes meaningless. On the other hand, when someone tries to take worship back into the purely spiritual realm and refuses to give it embodied form, the act of worship evaporates, for what is purely spiritual is inappropriate to the nature of man. Worship is one of those fundamental acts that affect the whole man. That is why bending the knee before the presence of the living God is something we cannot abandon.

In saying this, we come to the typical gesture of kneeling on one or both knees. In the Hebrew of the Old Testament, the verb barak, "to kneel", is cognate with the word berek, "knee". The Hebrews regarded the knees as a symbol of strength, to bend the knee is, therefore, to bend our strength before the living God, an acknowledgment of the fact that all that we are we receive from Him. In important passages of the Old Testament, this gesture appears as an expression of worship.

At the dedication of the Temple, Solomon kneels "in the presence of all the assembly of Israel" (II Chron 6:13). After the Exile, in the afflictions of the returned Israel, which is still without a Temple, Ezra repeats this gesture at the time of the evening sacrifice: "I . . . fell upon my knees and spread out my hands to the Lord my God" (Ezra 9:5). The great psalm of the Passion, Psalm 22 ("My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"), ends with the promise: "Yes, to Him shall all the proud of the earth fall down; before Him all who go down to the dust shall throw themselves down" (v. 29, RSV adapted). The related passage Isaiah 45:23 we shall have to consider in the context of the New Testament. The Acts of the Apostles tells us how Saint Peter (9:40), Saint Paul (20:36), and the whole Christian community (21:5) pray on their knees.

Particularly important for our question is the account of the martyrdom of Saint Stephen. The first man to witness to Christ with his blood is described in his suffering as a perfect image of Christ, whose Passion is repeated in the martyrdom of the witness, even in small details. One of these is that Stephen, on his knees, takes up the petition of the crucified Christ: "Lord, do not hold this sin against them" (7:60). We should remember that Luke, unlike Matthew and Mark, speaks of the Lord kneeling in Gethsemane, which shows that Luke wants the kneeling of the first martyr to be seen as his entry into the prayer of Jesus. Kneeling is not only a Christian gesture, but a christological one.

The Name Above All Names For me, the most important passages for the theology of kneeling

will always be the great hymn of Christ in Philippians 2:6-11. In this pre-Pauline hymn, we hear and see the prayer of the apostolic Church and can discern within it her confession of faith in Christ. However, we also hear the voice of the Apostle, who enters into this prayer and hands it on to us, and, ultimately, we perceive here both the profound inner unity of the Old and New Testaments and the cosmic breadth of Christian faith.

The hymn presents Christ as the antitype of the First Adam. While the latter high-handedly grasped at likeness to God, Christ does not count equality with God, which is His by nature, "a thing to be grasped", but humbles Himself unto death, even death on the Cross. It is precisely this humility, which comes from love, that is the truly divine reality and procures for Him the "name which is above every other name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth" (Phil 2:5-10).

Here the hymn of the apostolic Church takes up the words of promise in Isaiah 45:23: "By myself I have sworn, from my mouth has gone forth in righteousness a word that shall not return: 'To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear'". In the interweaving of Old and New Testaments, it becomes clear that, even as crucified, Jesus bears that "name above every name" — the name of the Most High — and is Himself God by nature. Through Him, through the Crucified, the bold promise of the Old Testament is now fulfilled: all bend the knee before Jesus, the One who descended, and bow to Him precisely as the one true God above all gods. The Cross has become the world-embracing sign of God's presence, and all that we have previously heard about the historic and cosmic Christ should now, in this passage, come back into our minds.

The Christian Liturgy is a cosmic Liturgy precisely because it bends the knee before the crucified and exalted Lord. Here is the center of authentic culture — the culture of truth. The humble gesture by which we fall at the feet of the Lord inserts us into the true path of life of the cosmos.

There is much more that we might add. For example, there is the touching story told by Eusebius in his history of the Church as a tradition going back to Hegesippus in the second century. Apparently, Saint James, the "brother of the Lord", the first bishop of Jerusalem and "head" of the Jewish Christian Church, had a kind of callous on his knees, because he was always on his knees worshipping God and begging forgiveness for his people (2, 23, 6). Again, there is a story that comes from the sayings of the Desert Fathers, according to which the devil was compelled by God to show himself to a certain Abba Apollo. He looked black and ugly, with frighteningly thin limbs, but most strikingly, he had no knees. The inability to kneel is seen as the very essence of the diabolical.

But I do not want to go into more detail. I should like to make just one more remark. The expression used by Saint Luke to describe the kneeling of Christians (*theis ta gonata*) is unknown in classical Greek. We are dealing here with a specifically Christian word. With that remark, our reflections turn full circle to where they began. It may well be that kneeling is alien to modern culture — insofar as it is a culture, for this culture has turned away from the faith and no longer knows the one before whom kneeling is the right, indeed the intrinsically necessary gesture. The man who learns to believe learns also to kneel, and a faith or a liturgy no longer familiar with kneeling would be sick at the core. Where it has been lost, kneeling must be rediscovered, so that, in our prayer, we remain in fellowship with the apostles and martyrs, in fellowship with the whole cosmos, indeed in union with Jesus Christ Himself.

The Word of God

And he went a little farther, **and fell on his face**, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. (**Matt 26-39**)

35 And he went forward a little, **and fell on the ground**, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. 36 And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt. (**Mark 14**)

41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, **and kneeled down, and prayed**, 42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. (**Luke 22**)

10 that at the **name of Jesus every knee should bow**, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, (**Philippians 2-10**)

40 But Peter put them all forth, **and kneeled down**, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. (**Acts 9-40**)

36 And when he had thus spoken, **he kneeled down**, and prayed with them all. (**Acts 20**)

5 And when we had accomplished those days, we departed and went our way; and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city: **and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed**. (**Acts 21**)

20 Job stood up and tore his robe in grief. Then he shaved his head and **fell to the ground before God**. (**Job 1-20**)

6 Come, let us worship **and bow down**. **Let us kneel before the LORD** our maker,⁷ for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the sheep under his care. (**Psalms 95**)

As I live, says The Lord, **to Me every knee shall bend** and every tongue shall give praise to God." (Rom.14:11)

"And entering the house, they found The Child with Mary, His Mother, and **falling down they worshipped Him...**" (Matt.2:11)

"For this reason **I bend my knees to The Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ**." (Eph.3:14)

"Having said this, **he knelt down and prayed with them all**." (**Acts 20:36**)

"**...and we knelt down on the shore and prayed**." (**Acts 21:5**)

"**...and bending the knee before Him they mocked Him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews.'**" (**Matt.27:29**)

36 And when he had said these things, **he knelt down and prayed with them all**. 37 Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him... (**Acts 20**)

And we knelt down on the shore and prayed. 6 (**Acts 21**)

St. Augustine said: 'It was in the flesh that Christ walked among us and it is His flesh that He has given us to eat for our salvation. But,' he added: '**no one eats of this flesh without having first adored it . . . and not only do we not sin in thus adoring it, but we would be sinning if we did not do so!**'" (St. Augustine, *On the Psalms*, 98:9, in Paul VI, *Mysterium Fidei*, No. 55, p. 323)

Pope Pius XII's encyclical on the Sacred Liturgy, *Mediator Dei*, tells us that "Outward acts of religion... serve to foster piety, to kindle the flame of charity, to increase our faith and deepen our devotion." "They make it possible to tell genuine Christians from their false or heretical counterparts." Furthermore, the holy Pope Pius XII states, "**It is therefore the keen desire of the Church that all of the faithful kneel at the feet of the Redeemer to tell Him how much they venerate and love Him.**"

Dietrich von Hildebrand, whom Pope Pius XII called a 20th Century Doctor of the Church, asks, "Whence comes the disparagement of kneeling? Why should the Eucharist be received standing? Is not kneeling, in our culture, the classic expression of adoring reverence?" (*The Charitable Anathema*, p. 42)

Cardinal Ratzinger writes these words on the importance of kneeling during the liturgy: "Here the bodily gesture attains the status of a confession of faith in Christ: words could not replace such a confession." (Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *The Feast of Faith*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986, pp. 74-75).

At the U.S. bishops' meeting in 1991, "Bernard Cardinal Law ... remarked that when the bishops ... established the practice of standing for Communion, they did not realize how Catholic identity and piety would suffer." (*The Wanderer*, November 28, 1991, p. 4)

17And when he was gone forth into the way, **there came one running, and kneeled to him**, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? (**Mk 10**)

14And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, **kneeling down to him**, and saying (**Matt 17**)

Bishop John Keating of Arlington, Virginia, states in his pastoral letter on Eucharistic reverence:

"No bodily posture so clearly expresses the soul's interior reverence before God as the act of kneeling. Reciprocally, the posture of kneeling reinforces and deepens the soul's attitude of reverence." (*A Pastoral*

I bow my knees before the Father. ." (**Eph 3: 14**)

Lex orandi, lex credendi

By Anthony J. Manuppella

In the year 422 A.D. Pope St. Celestine enunciated an axiom in sacred theology. “Legem credendi statuit lex orandi.” From the Latin, translated literally it means “the rule of prayer determines the rule of faith.” In other words, “the way we pray, shows what we believe.”

It is because this axiom is so true that Holy Mother the Church takes great care in making sure the liturgy, especially the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, is carried out with the greatest care. Consequently, the priest is supposed to follow certain rubrics during the Mass, such as genuflecting at certain times, folding his hands, or hands outstretched, enunciating clearly the words of the Mass, especially the Holy Words of the consecration, etc. Why? The reason is to show that the Mass is not like going to McDonalds for a Big Mac, to show, to point out that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is something very special. The Mass transcends time and space because we are being made present to the Redeeming and Salvific act of Christ’s Redemption—the Sacrifice of Calvary. The Mass is the sacred Eucharistic Sacrifice. The Mass is the Sacrificial Banquet!

Unfortunately, over the past 30 years we have seen an excessive emphasis on the meal or banquet aspect of the Mass to the detriment of the sacrificial aspect. And so how many of us have witnessed liturgical aberrations in Masses we’ve attended where the priest might dress up as a clown so “the children can better relate to him and the Holy Meal” or the Halloween Masses where the priest is dressed up in a Halloween costume, or the Masses where Father is acting more like Jay Leno on the Tonight Show rather than acting in “persona Christi” at the altar? I could go on and on.

If people come to Mass and see their priest dressed as a clown, in a Halloween costume or telling constant jokes during the Mass, what are they to think about the Mass? There is consequently a lessening of the understanding of what the Mass is and so the faith of the people is weakened. Remember the axiom—lex orandi, lex credendi—how we pray, shows what we believe?

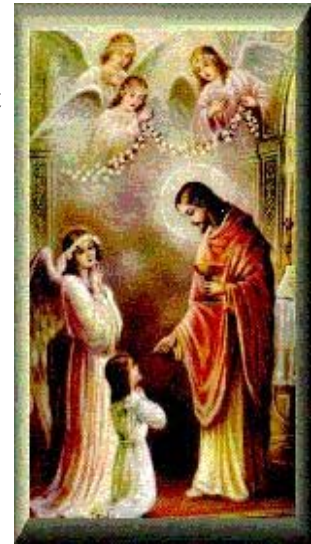
But there is an even more insidious effect on the faith of the people in the Eucharist stemming from the changes enacted by the American Bishops’ conference which tolerated illicit liturgical abuses such as communion-in-the-hand, female altar servers, and then proceeded to legislate them into law!

Recently the American Bishops issued a pastoral letter defining Catholic teaching concerning the Real and True Presence of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament, responding to ignorance and or unbelief in the Real Presence.

Over the past thirty years or so we have witnessed going from gold chalices to hold the Precious Blood of Christ to glasses and pottery

cups; from the gold ciborium that holds the consecrated Hosts to bread baskets and dishes; from kneeling to receive Our Lord in Holy Communion—a gesture no one could mistake for anything but an act of faith in the Real Presence of Christ in

the Eucharist, to standing to receive Holy Communion; from being fed the Holy Eucharist on one's tongue—a definite and definitive action showing plainly that this is no ordinary food but the Bread of Angels, to receiving Holy Communion in one's hands you would take food off a table or a snack of potato chips; from receiving Holy Communion from the hands of the priest ordained to feed and nourish his family, to being handed the Eucharist from “Joe the butcher” from down the street and from Sue my neighbor with whom I was just gossiping over the telephone yesterday; from the Blessed Sacrament being reserved on the altar in the center of our churches to the tabernacle being placed on a pedestal as if it were just another religious statue.



Why are the bishops surprised and shocked that so many American Catholics do not know and believe the teaching of Christ regarding the Most Blessed Sacrament? Why do the American bishops act so puzzled and alarmed that recent polls show over 50% of American Catholics are ignorant of or do not believe the Church's teaching that the Eucharist is the very Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ and not just a symbol of Jesus? When it is they who have presided over, authorized and promoted so many of these changes pertaining to the manner of reception of Holy Communion and the reservation of the Eucharist in our Catholic Churches.

What is so desperately needed today is not a pastoral letter, not a “verba” but “facta.” The old Latin axiom rings so true—“facta non verba.” “Deeds not words.”

Our people in the pews need to see the immediate restoration of all those sacred gestures and actions which say, “Yes, we believe the Holy Eucharist we receive is the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ.” What we need today is to make the **ORANDI** correspond with the **CREDENDI!** We need to make what and how we pray around the Holy Eucharist correspond to what we believe about the Eucharist.

The American bishops need to reassemble the apparatus that for years has safeguarded the mysterious and clear truth of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. The American bishops don't need so much to publish a pastoral letter but they need to reaffirm by DEEDS the doctrine of the Real Presence, by reinstating all the gestures and actions which say by deeds, ***This is the Real and True Body and Blood of Christ I am receiving in Holy Communion.***

“See, I kneel to receive my God!” “See, I receive my Lord ON MY TONGUE for he is no ordinary food but God himself.” “See, I look as I enter my parish church and I can find my Lord on the altar in the center in the tabernacle—he is the focus of my life. He is really Christ my Savior and Lord in the tabernacle.”

We've all heard the old expression, “A picture is worth a thousand words.” There is really no substitute for the Eucharistic piety expressed by our bodies, infused into our

souls, known with the power of our minds, when one's whole being bows in adoration to the Most Blessed Sacrament.

So, we ask the question—what can be done to repair so much damage caused by the dismantling of traditional Eucharistic piety? The American bishops need to reevaluate all that they have legislated in the past 30 years.

1. Instead of proposing that standing should be the recognized posture for receiving Holy Communion in the United States, the American bishops should be saying we need to reaffirm the Catholic teaching of the Real Presence —FACTA—Kneeling for Holy Communion will now be the norm.

2. FACTA—abolishing the option of receiving Communion in the hand which has become in practicality the only option since we have a generation or two of children who were never even told there was any other option of receiving Holy Communion but in the hand.

3. FACTA—The ordained Priest or deacons are the only ministers of Holy Communion unless in case of emergency. All of the changes can be accomplished smoothly by a year long catechesis from the pulpit, Catholic newspapers and publications on the reasons necessitating these changes coupled with preaching from the pulpit what the true doctrine of the Church regarding the Eucharist is, thereby combining the *FACTA* with the *Verba*.

You see the Pastoral Letter of the American bishops is the *Verba*, we eagerly await the *FACTA*.

You see, the Pastoral Letter of the American bishops is the *Credendi*, we eagerly await the *ORANDI*.

Bottom Line: We probably wouldn't need a Pastoral Letter restating Catholic doctrine on the Real Presence if we were still kneeling for Holy Communion, receiving the Eucharist humbly on our tongues from the hands of the priest!

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