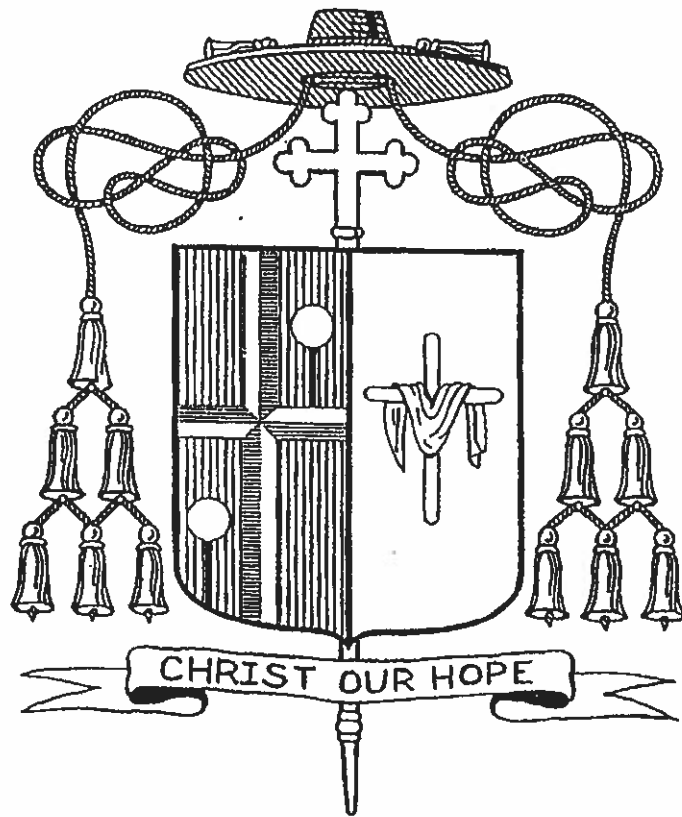


SACRED GESTURE IN THE LITURGY
Norms for the Diocese of Honolulu

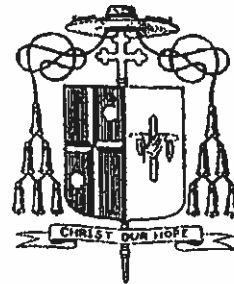


Most Reverend Francis X. DiLorenzo, S.T.D.
To the Catholic People of Hawai'i

January 3, 1999.

Diocese of Honolulu

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Office of the Bishop

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:

- 1 The Diocese of Honolulu encompasses the entire state of Hawai'i, located about 2,500 miles from the coast of mainland United States. Hawai'i is home to approximately 1.2 million, out of which 61% are Pacific Islanders and/or Asian. The term *Pacific Islander* refers to Melanesian, Micronesian and Polynesian which includes the indigenous people of Hawai'i. The balance of the population is composed of Caucasian and other ethnic groups in smaller numbers. Inculturation in a multicultural environment is the venue in which we find ourselves today.
- 2 Both Christian life and worship presuppose community - a willingness to learn from others and to be open to others in generosity and love. Only on such a base can liturgy really be said to affect and deepen the sense of community. In its language, symbol, style and spirit today's liturgy is a growing sign and instrument of community, people at one with each other and with God.¹
- 3 As moderator of the liturgical life of the diocese I am promulgating norms for sacred gesture within the liturgy for the Diocese of Honolulu. I do this for two important reasons:
- 4 Sacred gesture is a way for Pacific Islanders, Asians and those who embrace the culture to worship as baptized Catholics. For many, their cultural and religious experience are interwoven. These sacred gestures were and are part of the repertoire of prayer forms of the people indigenous to the islands and many of those who have recently arrived in Hawai'i.²
- 5 Sacred gesture is also an important prayer form for the children. In view of the nature of the liturgy as an activity of the entire person and in view of the psychology of children, participation by means of gestures and posture should be strongly encouraged in Masses with children, with due regard for age and local customs. Much depends not only on the actions of the priest, but also on the manner in which the children conduct themselves as a community.³
- 6 Sacred gesture is hereby defined as movement in ways that express praise, thanksgiving, adoration, petition and penitence. This form of gesture is considered as a form of praying with one's whole being.⁴
- 7 Proper catechesis is to take place prior to use of sacred gesture within the liturgy. This catechesis will be coordinated through the Office of Worship.
- 8 The directive received from Rome in May 1998 banning dance within the liturgy in churches within the Diocese of Honolulu remains in effect as entertainment has no place within the sacred liturgy.
- 9 As we move closer to the Diocesan Synod in the Year 2000 and the New Millennium, I pray that we may appreciate the rich multicultural presence within the diocese and value the sacred gesture in prayer that comes out of this multicultural context.

With every best wish, I remain,

Sincerely yours in our Lord,

Most Rev. Francis X. Di Lorenzo, S.T.D.
Bishop of Honolulu

Norms

Sacred gesture is a natural expression of prayer among the indigenous people of these Islands and of many recent immigrants. It is a prayer expression that enhances and draws in the full, conscious and active participation of the assembly.

The following are to be followed within the Diocese of Honolulu:

DESIGNATION

Determine at which of the regularly scheduled celebrations of the Sacred Liturgy sacred gesture might take place. This will afford those who are uncomfortable with sacred gesture an opportunity to attend another regularly scheduled mass.

Sacred gesture can be appropriate during special celebrations, such as but not limited to: First Communion, Confirmation, Weddings, Parish Patronal Feast Day.

ATTIRE

Culturally appropriate dress respecting the sensitivity of the assembly and the sacredness of the liturgical Celebration

PLACES WITHIN THE LITURGY

Attention must be paid to the liturgical season, as well as, to the particular celebration.

The entrance procession, responsorial psalm, gospel procession, presentation of gifts, communion meditation and recessional are appropriate times for sacred gesture.

SONGS

They are to be seasonal or scriptural.

INSTRUMENTS

Cultural instruments, such as but not limited to: ipu, pahu, sticks, nose flute, etc. are to be considered.

Notes

¹ The Church at Prayer A Holy Temple of the Lord, 52.

² cf. Inculturation and the Roman Liturgy, 41.

³ Directory for Masses with Children, 33.

⁴ cf. Inculturation and the Roman Liturgy, 42.