

HEAD BOW DURING HOLY COMMUNION

I noticed that some people make a movement of the head — sometimes a deep head bow, sometimes a simple nod — just before receiving holy communion. Is this another new rite to be observed by communicants?

The “head movement” in question is meant to be a sign of reverence to and adoration of the Holy Bread which the communicant in standing position is about to receive. Even after the Philippine bishops decided on kneeling as the uniformed posture of our faithful in receiving holy communion (*Vid. Decisions of the Philippine Hierarchy in Liturgical Matters*, July 4-5 1967, n. 4, in *BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO*, Oct. 1967, p. 726), some still bow or nod the head while already on their knees. And this, either inadvertently by force of habit perhaps, or consciously with the good intention of rendering reverence and homage to the Blessed Sacrament. Whatever the reason, the action is superfluous and must be corrected. You may inform the faithful in your church that “no other sign of reverence towards the Blessed Sacrament is asked from the faithful, whenever they receive holy communion kneeling down, because this very posture (of kneeling) expresses adoration” (*Instructio de Cultu Mysterii Eucharistici*, 25 May 1967, n. 34, b).

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ON PRIESTS GOING TO THE MOVIE THEATERS

“There is, I believe, a standing order of the Hierarchy of the Philippines prohibiting priests from going to the movie theatres. I understand, however, that the prohibition applies only in regard to indecent films and/or public theatres. Will you, please, enlighten me on the following:

1. What is the main reason for banning priests from going to the movies?
2. Are priests prohibited from seeing movies shown free in public squares for information or publicity purposes?