

(2) In the petition by the Philippine Hierarchy of March 1, 1967, we read: "It was almost the unanimous opinion of the Ordinaries that owing to the lack of priests, who could celebrate Mass according to the convenience of the faithful, one of the remedies found for the said difficulties, was in the possibility of satisfying this grave precept of hearing Mass on the afternoon or evening of Saturday and Vigils preceding these Days of Precept."

Accordingly, the main purpose is "to enable Christians today to celebrate MORE EASILY the day of the Resurrection," (n. 28 of the Instruction), which is more explicitly expressed by the petition of the Philippine Hierarchy: ...for the *convenience* of the faithful.

The limiting clause "for those who cannot attend Sunday Masses", is not expressed in either documents. The Instruction enjoins the *pastors* to make the faithful understand that, as much as possible, the Mass be heard on Sundays and Holy Days. But it is not a condition imposed on the faithful in order to validly comply with the precept of hearing Mass.

Consequently, no special reason is asked of the faithful in order to be able to take advantage or make use of this privilege, where such privilege is enjoyed. Whoever hears Mass on Saturday afternoon or in the vigil of a Holy Day of obligation with the intention of complying with the precept of hearing Mass on Sunday or Holy Day, complies with the said precept and is not bound to hear another Mass the next day.

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POSTURE WHEN COMMUNICATING

Is there no order of the Hierarchy of the Philippines that standing while receiving Holy Communion is not allowed? Certain Fathers told me there is. Yet I noticed in some churches where the Priest command the faithful to approach the Communion rail standing by twos.

The history of this liturgical gesture is very interesting and offers a good example of liturgical development. The custom of kneeling

between the eleventh and the sixteenth centuries. Previous to this period the custom was standing. However, Pius XI approved the Roman Ritual on June 10, 1925, which specifies the position: kneeling.

Recent liturgical developments and experimentations found out that, in most cases, especially when there is a large crowd communicating, the standing position proved to be more practical. When the May 4, 1967 Instruction came out it gave the impression of leaving the question open by saying: "ac statim Communionem de more distribuit fidelibus." (n. 13).

The Philippine Hierarchy during their second meeting for 1967, decided the question as far as we are concerned. Its decision on this point is as follows: " (4) *Posture in receiving Holy Communion*. The bishops upheld a decision made during their meeting in January 1967 which had not been published, namely, that for the sake of uniformity, the faithful should receive communion *kneeling*. They also agreed that the body of delegates to the Roman Synod (Sept. 1967) should examine more fully some of the reasons stated in a "Memorandum on the manner of distributing Communion" presented to the Hierarchy by the expert-priests of the National Liturgical Commission. The above mentioned decision does not apply to communion given under both species, in which the rubric prescribing the standing posture is binding." (*Bol. Ecl.*, October 1967, p. 726).

Consequently, the officially approved posture for receiving Communion under one species in the Philippines is *kneeling*.

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