Memorandum

To: **The priests, Lay Pastoral Co-ordinators, Parish Liturgy Committees & Diocesan Liturgy Commission; Diocese of Palmerston North**

From: **Bishop Peter Cullinane**

Date: **May 2008**

Re: **Preparing for the new translation of the revised Roman Missal**

Foreword

How we participate in the liturgy is governed by how we understand the liturgy. That is why our diocese has not neglected liturgy education. In 1992 we published *Sacraments, Policies and Guidelines*, which gave a catechesis for each of the sacraments. *Seasons of Grace* (1999) provided a careful selection of liturgical music for all occasions. And, my pastoral letter *What is Liturgy? What is Good Liturgy?* (Pentecost 1999) described liturgy from the perspective of our participation in the great events of salvation history. All these resources are still relevant.

This present Memorandum has a different focus. It addresses the request of the Diocesan Liturgy Commission for clarity and consensus on how liturgical norms are to be interpreted. To know this, we need to know something about the Church's liturgical tradition, its moral tradition, and its canonical tradition. Drawing on these is only a matter of sharing more widely the scholarship that has always been available in text books and learned commentaries.

Introduction

We appreciate liturgical norms best when we appreciate what they are intended to protect and facilitate namely, our participation in something truly wonderful: a plan God had in mind from the beginning…. to draw all things together in Christ, all things in heaven and on earth (cf Eph. 1:9, 10). Jesus' resurrection is the first fruits of what God is doing *for the whole of creation*. It is all God's doing, but through union with Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit, God makes us *active participants* in the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit.

It is above all in the sacraments of the liturgy that we are being drawn into God's life (communion) and sent out to transform the world (mission). In this way, our whole life becomes "an acceptable sacrifice" and "true worship".

The dispositions of mind and heart that we need for liturgical renewal to unfold according to *the mind of the Church* are a genuine love for the Church and its liturgy, thinking and feeling with the Church – sentire cum ecclesia – and the deepening of our personal prayer life. With these dispositions we more easily recognise the meaning of liturgical norms.

Liturgical law is given in the General Instruction for the Roman Missal, not in the Code of Canon Law. However, precisely *because* the GIRM is normative, it should be interpreted with that "new way of thinking - novus habitus mentis – proper to the Second Vatican Council" that Pope Paul VI called for when commissioning the new Code of Canon Law (1965). This is primarily a reference to the Council's ecclesiology and pastoral orientation. But it also means something different from the legalistic mentality that had plagued the Church before the Council.

Interpreting Church laws and norms the way the Church interprets them

When we look to the Catholic tradition – to see how the Church interprets its own laws – we find that the most literal interpretation of law is *not always* the right or best thing to do. This can be hard for us in the English-speaking world to understand. It is often said that Italians have a more relaxed and benign way of interpreting Church laws. So, how do *they* see us? At an international meeting of bishops in Rome, (attended by one of the NZ bishops) a top official of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), after listening to the English-speaking bishops, said: "You anglophiles love to make yourselves feel guilty, don't you"! i.e. we sometimes interpret law too literally, and are known for doing so.

Again, in 1998 the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued, over Cardinal Ratzinger's name, a warning about reading the books of Fr Anthony de Mello SJ, saying that "in order to protect the good of the Christian faithful, this Congregation declares (his) positions are incompatible with the Catholic faith and can cause grave harm." The NZ bishops (anglophiles!) naturally assumed they were supposed to discourage people from reading them, perhaps even discourage Catholic booksellers from selling them. Then, on their Ad Limina visit to the CDF shortly afterwards, they expressed their surprise that de Mello's books were on sale at the Vatican Book shop! It was gently pointed out to us (by the now Secretary of State) that we were over-interpreting the intentions of those who had issued the instruction.

So what does all this mean? Surely the law is meant to be taken literally? How can "the right thing to do" sometimes be different from what the law says we should do?

It is because those responsible for the governance of the Church presume that the laws and rulings they make will be interpreted in the light of the Catholic moral tradition. That tradition takes seriously three factors: what the law prescribes (according to the letter), the person's intentions, and the circumstances or context. All three factors matter.

So it is not the law alone that determines the moral obligation; that is "legal positivism". Nor does our tradition base the moral obligation solely on the decision of the legislator; that is "voluntarism". St Thomas taught that the legislator's decision is not sufficient to create a valid law if the proposed law itself does not positively contribute to the common good (Summa Theologiae, I - II, Q. 90, art. 2, ff).

What is true of Church laws is even more true of "Instructions" issued by agencies of the law-maker, because according to canon 34 an Instruction does not legislate; it only interprets legislation. It cannot add an obligation that is not already contained in law. And when it conflicts with Church law it lacks binding force (canon 34/2).

There are other factors relevant to the proper interpretation of Church law. All Church laws, including liturgical norms, are subject at all times to "higher" laws. The highest law is to do what is best for people's salvation – lex suprema salus animarum – and that is

supposed to guide our interpretation of all Church-made laws. In the context of liturgy, this can involve making small accommodations according to the different needs of different congregations. In this way, liturgical norms are more flexible than canon law:

> The sharp distinction between canon law and liturgical norms follows from the natural difference between the external structures of the Church and its intimate life of worship. Each needs to be ordered and regulated but in different ways. The main purpose of the canons is to build, to support, and to safeguard the necessary societal structures. The aim of liturgical norms is to help the community to recall God's mighty deeds and to experience his presence through the celebration of the mysteries. In this difference of intent there is an important clue regarding the interpretation of each set of norms.
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> There should be stability in the external order; hence, exceptions from structural and disciplinary laws should not be easily granted. There should be flexibility in worship according to the spiritual needs of the people; hence, adaptations should be more easily forthcoming (The Code of Canon Law, A Text and Commentary, Ed. James Coriden, 1985, p.26).

Civil law is even less able than canon law to allow this kind of flexibility. Consequently:

> A proper attitude towards Canon Law is not an easy task for those who find themselves with one foot in the world of civil law and the other in the world of Canon Law… (ibid. p. 14).

There is yet a further reason why it is not enough to look only at the letter of the law – not even on the web. It has to do with the nature of the Church and the role of bishops in it. The teaching role and pastoral ministry of bishops requires that they "mediate" Instructions that have been issued for the universal Church, precisely because these do not necessarily apply the same way in all countries. This term "mediate" was used by Cardinal Sanchez when issuing the Catechism of the Catholic Church itself. He was saying that the way the Catechism is written for the universal Church is not necessarily the best way of expressing it in the local Churches. It needed to be properly understood, internalised and then re-expressed in ways more appropriate for local use. There is a lesson here for those Catholics who tend towards literalism, or tend to by-pass the role of the bishops.

Reporting on Cardinal Arinze's visit to Austria in June 2004, *The Tablet* commented as follows:

> As far as putting the Vatican's directives on the liturgy into practice was concerned, he said he was in favour of giving local bishops as much leeway as possible… 'the world is big and the situation is not the same everywhere. The diocesan bishops are the ones who are best acquainted with the local situation, so they should decide', Cardinal Arinze said.

For all these reasons it is a mistake to try to identify "abuse" and "disobedience" by reference to the letter of the law only. The *right* thing to do depends on the circumstances and intentions as well. And so the *wrong* thing to do is not determined by the letter of the law on its own.

It may rightly be asked whether this way of interpreting Church law involves a subjective judgement. The answer is: Yes, of course it does, just as every moral decision has to be the decision of the person who makes it. That is why the best insurance against wrong

interpretations derives from the subjective dispositions mentioned above: love for the Church and its liturgy, thinking and feeling with the Church, and a deeper prayer life.

This also involves taking responsibility. Faithfulness and obedience do not excuse us from the need to think. The issuance of an Instruction does not mean the thinking has all been done for us – by someone else. In order to comply with a liturgical Instruction faithfully, we need to ask ourselves: what are the values which this instruction intends to safeguard. When we know that, we more easily discern how, and how far, the Instruction applies in given situations.

Making such judgements is not purely subjective. There are very real *objective* teachings and principles that must *inform* our moral judgements and that point us in the right direction. Everything we do in the liturgy should be guided by these teachings and principles.

General principles and specific issues

1. **What the Council actually said**
   The revision of the Roman Missal, its translation into the vernacular languages, and the re-ordering and refurbishing of churches, were three aspects of the same liturgical renewal – all intended to lead to that "full, conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy" (Constitution on Liturgy, n. 14).

   Having distinguished between "unchangeable elements divinely instituted" and "elements subject to change", the Council said that

   > These latter not only may be changed but ought to be changed with the passage of time, if they have suffered from the intrusion of anything out of harmony with the inner nature of the liturgy or have become less suitable. In this restoration both texts and rites should be drawn up so as to express more clearly the holy things which they signify. The Christian people, as far as is possible, should be able to understand them with ease and take part in them fully, actively, and as a community (para. 21).

   The most fundamental of the above-mentioned three aspects of the renewal was the revision of the Missal itself, concerning which the Council said:

   > The rite of Mass is to be revised in such a way that the intrinsic nature and purpose of its several parts, as well as the connection between them, may be more clearly manifested, and that devout and active participation by the faithful may be more easily achieved.
   >
   > For this purpose the rites are to be simplified, due care being taken to preserve their substance. Parts which with the passage of time came to be duplicated, or were added with little advantage, are to be omitted. Other parts which suffered loss through accidents of history are to be restored to the vigour they had in the days of the Holy Fathers, as may seem useful or necessary (n. 15).
   >
   > Provided the substantial unity of the Roman Rite is maintained, the revision of liturgical books should allow for legitimate variations and adaptations to different groups, regions, and peoples, especially in mission lands. Where opportune, the same applies to the structuring of rites and the devising of rubrics (n.38).

Failure to accept these teachings involves unfaithfulness to the Council, no less than do distortions of the Council's intentions.

2. **Liberties v. Accommodations**
What the Catholic people have an inviolable right to is *the Church's liturgy*. It is necessary to distinguish between the kind of "creativity" and liberties that result in something other than the Church's own liturgy, and those accommodations that are sensibly made to help make *the Church's liturgy* properly accessible to people, so that the Church's prayer can be truly *their prayer*. This is not a difference of degree only. It is a difference in kind.

Liberties which obscure the *givens* of the Church's liturgy or which make it harder for people to recognise those givens are indeed aberrations. On the other hand accomodations which enhance people's ability to *enter into these givens* help us to fulfil the spirit and purpose of the law and the liturgy. The liberty allowed by the liturgical books themselves is

> so that the celebration may be adapted in an intelligent manner to the Church building, or to the group of faithful who are present, or to particular pastoral circumstances in such a way that the universal sacred rite is truly accommodated to human understanding (*Consilium for Implementing the Constitution on the Liturgy*, 1965, Notitiae, p.254).

A good sense of what accommodation means can be got from the Directory on Children's Masses, 1973, even allowing for what has been superseded by the GIRM.

Precisely because the Mass is the re-enactment of Calvary, it is inevitably always "the same". However, this does not mean merely routine or mechanical:

> The liturgical renewal that has taken place in recent decades has shown that it is possible to combine a body of norms that assure the identity and decorum of the liturgy and leave room for the creativity and adaptation that enable it to correspond closely with the need to give expression to their respective situation and culture of the various regions (Pope John Paul II, *The Spirit and the Bride*, para. 16).

There is a process governing the introduction of changes or adaptations that are intended to be ongoing, and this process involves the jurisdiction of the Bishops' Conference and the Holy See. There are other small accommodations that are made simply to help the congregation become engaged in the liturgy.

3. **Respecting the Meaning**
All adaptations, and all expressions of inculturation, must respect the meaning of the rite and each of its parts (cf SC n.50). Similarly, postures and gestures are also intended to make visible the inner meaning of the liturgy.

4. **Fruitful participation**
The *fruitfulness* of liturgical prayer (as distinct from validity and liceity) depends on each one's *personal* prayer life.

5. **To God and from God**
Eucharistic liturgy is directed first and foremost to God; (to the Father through union with Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit). It is also directed towards community,

but specifically *the kind of community* that derives from these relationships with the Persons of the Trinity. Those relationships are the foundation of Christian community, Christian living and Christian mission.

6. **Mystery/Reverence/Silence**
We should be aiming to make the liturgy a profound experience of the mystery of "Christ among us" (cf Col. 1:20). Silence is an important way of *participating* – of being drawn into the mystery. But it is not the kind of silence needed for private time with God. The liturgy is not private time: we come to God *with one another*. Our relationship with God is *embodied* in our relationship with each other. Being w*ith* one another means more than being *alongside* one another.

The Council taught that the real presence of Our Lord in the liturgy is focused in **four** different ways: in the congregation, (which is why we make ourselves *present to one another* as we gather); in the ministry of the priest who will act in the person of Christ; in the word ("when the scriptures are proclaimed in the assembly Christ is speaking to his people", *Constitution on the Liturgy*, n.7); and above all in the Sacrament.

7. **Sacrifice and Meal**
Sacrifice and meal are not competing concepts. The Mass is the *sacrifice* of Jesus ("my body broken… my blood poured out") sacramentally made present. The *outward sign* of this sacramental making-present is the Eucharistic meal in which we "take and eat/drink…" (Hence the two names, altar and table, for the same thing.)

8. **Ordained Priesthood**
The ministry of the ordained priest is different in kind from all other ministries. The priest gives voice and visibility to what Christ is doing in the midst of the whole priestly people. Ordained ministers do not act "on Christ's behalf"; it is still he – Jesus of Nazareth – who is acting, on his own behalf. Our ministry is only the outward sign of what *he* is doing, and of him who is doing it.

> There is only one Pastor of the Church and he is Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd. All that priests do as pastors is serve Christ's own pastoring of the Church. There is only one priest in the Church, Jesus Christ, and all that Christian priests do is to be the sacramental presence of Christ's own priesthood. There is only one Teacher of the Church, Jesus Christ, and all that priests do is give voice to Jesus who speaks through them as the Word of life for their hearers.
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> As priests preside over the Church's liturgy and over the Christian community, they do so only as servants of Christ who alone is Head of the Church. (Foreword in *The Prayer of the Priest*, Bishop Michael Putney, 2005).

9. **Recent Instructions**
Norms and modifications more recently put in place by the Holy See can be seen as having two main *purposes*: they are intended

(i) To enhance our sense of the sacred. When that is their purpose, the norms themselves are *relative* to that purpose; therefore each is more important or less important depending on how important it is for safeguarding our sense of the sacred. (The various rubrics

regarding the distribution of Holy Communion come under this description.)

(ii) To emphasise the difference between the *priesthood* of the priest and the *priestliness* of all the baptised. Again, the importance of each norm depends on how necessary it is for obviating any confusion regarding this difference.

10. The Sign of Peace

Where the Sign of Peace is placed is what determines its meaning. If it were just a greeting it would be located at the beginning of Mass. "But it isn't, so it's not" (Sir Humphrey Appleby). If it were an act of reconciliation it would be before we "bring our gifts to the altar," but it isn't. Instead, it comes right at the time when we are preparing to receive Christ in the sacrament – as a reminder that there is no point receiving Christ in the sacrament if we do not recognise him in our neighbour. *How* we do it should be consistent with *what* it means.

11. Church Architecture & Furnishings

How our worshipping space is shaped, and how it is furnished, also affect the way we worship. Architecture and furnishing, too, must respect the meaning of the rites and their individual parts.

> The reorganisation of existing churches and the planning of new churches must be seen as part of the liturgical renewal which is not limited merely to the changing of rites and texts. Similarly, the renewal of church architecture should not be limited to changes in design and construction but should be *part of a larger programme whose aim is to foster the formation of the faithful* (*Building and Reorganisation*..., n. 1.3)
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> Liturgy flourishes in a climate of **hospitality**: a situation in which people are comfortable with one another, either knowing or being introduced to one another; a space in which people are seated together, with mobility, in view of one another as well as in view of the focal points of the rite, involved as participants and not as spectators." (*Environment and Art in Catholic Worship*, US Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, 1978, n.11).
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> The **main altar** should be free-standing to allow the ministers to walk around it easily and Mass to be celebrated facing the people, which is desirable wherever possible. Moreover, the latter should occupy a place that it truly is the centre on which the attention of the whole congregation of the faithful *naturally focuses*.... (*General Instruction on the Roman Missal*, n. 299).
>
> The dignity of the Word of God requires the church to have a place that is suitable for the proclamation of the Word and is *a natural focus* for the people during the Liturgy of the Word (ibid, n. 309).
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> The priest-celebrant's **chair** ought to stand as a symbol of his office of presiding over the assembly and of directing prayer.... (ibid, n. 310)
>
> The place in a church or oratory where the Eucharist is reserved in a **tabernacle** should be truly a place of honour. It should also be suited to private prayer so that the faithful may readily and to their advantage continue to honour the Lord in this sacrament by private worship. Therefore, it is recommended that as far as possible the tabernacle be placed in a chapel set apart from the main body of the church, especially in churches where frequently there are marriages and funerals and in

> places that, because of their artistic or historical treasures, are visited by many people (*Instruction on Worship of the Eucharist,* n.53).
>
> It is preferable that the tabernacle be located, according to the judgement of the diocesan bishop, either in the sanctuary..... or in some chapel suitable for the faithful's private adoration and prayer and which is organically connected to the church and readily visible to the Christian faithful (GIRM, n. 315).
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> In relation to the design of each church, the **music group** should be so placed that its character as truly a part of the gathered community of the faithful with a special function to carry out stands out clearly. The location should also assist the choir to exercise it's function...(ibid, n. 312)
>
> The architectural character of existing churches and of any existing works of **art** of genuine merit should be retained, but only insofar as may be consistent with the spirit of the liturgy. (*Building and Reorganisation*...., n. 1.14).

In building or refurbishing churches we should think especially of the young. There is clear evidence that they are attracted to environments of intimacy, reverence and vitality – not to an environment that looks tired and worn.

Refurbishing should also make it easy for people to **kneel**; (comfortable ways of doing this do not depend on whether or not there are kneelers).

12. Posture & Gesture

> In the celebration of the Mass the faithful form..... one body, whether by hearing the word of God, or by joining in the prayers and the singing, or above all by the common offering of Sacrifice and by a common partaking at the Lord's table. This unity is beautifully apparent from the gestures and postures observed in common by the faithful (GIRM., 95-96).

Of course, this symbolic way of acting as one body must always respect the needs of individuals who might need, for example, to sit more often; and those whose signs of reverence are deeply rooted in their culture.

Despite the practice of kneeling that many of us grew up with, the 1975 edition of the Roman Missal specified that

> *...unless other provision is made, at every Mass the people should stand...from the Prayer of the Gifts to the end of the Mass, except....*
>
> *...they should kneel at the consecration unless prevented by lack of space, the number of people present, or some other good reason*
>
> *... but it is up to the Conference of Bishops to adapt the actions and postures described in the Order of the Roman Mass to the customs of the people. But the Conference must make sure that such adaptations correspond to the meaning and character of each part of the celebration* (art. 21).

The 2000 revision of the GIRM

- *reiterates* what the 1975 GIRM said about standing; (above)
- *extends* slightly the actual standing time;

- *adds* that when not kneeling at the consecration, the congregation should make a *profound bow* (similar to concelebrating priests): NB This bow should not be neglected;
- *adds* "reasons of health" to the reasons for standing and bowing at the consecration instead of genuflecting (cf art. 43).

The 2000 GIRM then adds a sentence that was not in the 1975 GIRM. It says that it is "laudable" to retain the practice of kneeling throughout the Eucharistic Prayer (cf art. 43). It does not *require* kneeling, having just reiterated, in the previous sentence, the provisions regarding standing. The posture of kneeling draws our whole self into our prayer of adoration, and is appropriate in moments of Eucharistic devotion. Its obvious place is in Eucharistic services like Benediction.

In the Eucharistic Prayer of the Mass the focus does not stop at Christ present in the Sacrament. Rather, the focus is on our worship *of the Father*, for which we have been raised up with Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit. The posture of standing illustrates our status as a redeemed people. We have been "made worthy to stand in Your presence and serve you". Of course, if people do not know that this is *the reason for standing* then their standing risks becoming only a posture of convenience.

So we do adore Christ in the Sacrament which is why at the consecration the Host is lifted just enough to be "shown" to the congregation. But at the end of the Eucharistic Prayer it is "elevated" and the priest proclaims that "through Him, with Him and in Him" our prayer of adoration goes *to the Father*.

13. Language & Translations

Just as inculturation, church architecture and furnishings, and decisions of Bishops' Conferences, must all respect the *meaning of the rites and their individual parts*, so too must the language of worship. This means among other things:

(i) It should be language that evokes a sense of it being God we are addressing, without, however, using the kind of language that further widens the gap between faith and the rest of life. Whereas the current translation is often flat and prosaic, the new English translation is more dignified and reverent. It also better reflects the biblical allusions in the Latin texts. For these reasons the new translation is welcome.

(ii) A translation must always respect the *meaning of the original*. Sometimes this is best done by a literal translation. At other times it can be better done by translating into the "dynamic equivalent". This is because *how it is heard* is also relevant to how it should be translated. It is essentially an act of *communication*.

(iii) There are two distinct roles that should not be blurred. The duty of the translators was to produce a faithful translation for promulgation in the Missal. This they have done. The duty of the presiding celebrant is to ensure that the *prayers of the Missal* can become *the prayers of the people* present. Normally, the translation allows him to do this. If, however, the official translation is going to be "heard" differently by a given congregation, he should do what is necessary to communicate the *original meaning*. For example, a phrase in the new translation (draft) would have us "run forth with righteous deeds". Our people are not expected to suppress their

imaginations when they are at worship, and so if he doesn't want them to think of an egg and spoon race he could simply change this to "hasten in the way of good works". In making this small change, the priest has not *changed* the text; he has *used that text* to help him know the meaning that needs to be expressed for living prayer. Likewise, pastorally minded priests are not going to have children who have learned one version of the Lord's Prayer in their classroom then be faced by another version (with "funny" words) at Mass.

Note again: what is involved here is bringing out the meaning that is *already there*; what we may not do is *alter* the meaning or *add* further meanings.

Sometimes there will be a theological reason for using an unusual phrase, and then, of course, that text should be unchanged. For example, the response "and also with your spirit".

(iv) Hopefully, one day a leader with the vision and courage of the apostle to the gentiles will allow a rite, based on the Roman Rite, to be *written in English*. The Anglican Prayer Book is testimony to how the beauty, power and poetry of the English language can express in a simple, direct and dignified way what no mere translation from Latin can do.

(v) The Missal is in a sense a symbol of our identity as the Catholic people of this country in union with Catholics all around the world. To be authentic, therefore, it should include the Maori translation as well as the English translation. (To publish the Maori translation only in Missalettes is also symbolic – but in the wrong way.)

> Adequate translations of liturgical texts and appropriate use of symbols drawn from local cultures can avert the cultural alienation of indigenous people when they approach the Church's worship. The words and signs of the liturgy will be the words and signs their soul (Pope John Paul II to the Church in Oceania, n.39).

14. Paraphrasing

The official prayers of the liturgy should not normally be paraphrased, but sometimes it is right to make the kind of *simplifications* required for some of our congregations, e.g. at children's Masses. It is not desirable, however, even for children to not learn – at their pace – the official texts of prayers such as the Lord's Prayer, the Gloria and the Creed.

15. Lay Preaching

The Church allows for lay preaching in a church (c.766). But there is a form of preaching for which priests are ordained. This is "homily".

Before the Second Vatican Council, we used to say that we had "been to Mass" provided we arrived "before the Offertory". The Liturgy of the Word was not considered an *essential* part of the Mass. We also used to say that what made priesthood distinctive were certain sacramental powers. We would not have said, as

the Council has said, it is primarily a ministry of proclaiming the Word (cf *On Ministry & Life of Priests*, n.4 and footnote, Abbott, p. 539.)

So we had a diminished understanding of the Mass and a diminished understanding of priesthood. To correct this, the Council emphasised the intrinsic connection between *word and sacrament*: the celebration of Eucharist is *essentially both word and sacrament*; and priesthood is of its nature a *ministry of word and sacrament*.

There is a specific form of preaching that is *part of the Mass*, and part of what a priest is ordained for (cf Constitution *on the Liturgy*, para. 52). Other forms of preaching which are not part of the Mass as such (e.g. evangelisation, exegesis, instruction, exhortation, etc) should not normally take place at the time of, or replace the homily.

Because the homily is part of the Mass, it should not be omitted on Sundays or other holy days unless there is a good reason (*Constitution on the Liturgy*, para. 52). At other times, and especially on weekdays, there can be a good reason for dispensing with it. For example, at a children's Mass the immediate need might be for a mini-catechesis. This is not a homily, and it can be entrusted to someone with teaching skills.

Sometimes Religious will want to speak during a funeral Mass on the basis that they knew their Sister best. Their ability to do this well is not in question, and considerations of charity can sometimes justify dispensing with the homily. (Sometimes it might be claimed that "as a Religious she was one of us and so it is for us to speak for her". No, she was first and foremost "one of us the Church", and so should be entrusted to the rites of the Church as would be any other baptised person. However, the higher law of charity might still justify dispensing with the homily.)

Lay preaching will become more familiar as funeral services without a Mass and weddings without a Mass become more frequent. We will need to ensure that the funeral leader's part does not come across as just one more eulogy among others, but rather as a prayerful reflection on the scriptures.

16. Catechesis

Every aspect of liturgical renewal requires a gentle and respectful catechesis, rather than clerical dictate. The main resources for this catechesis are the General Instruction of the Roman Missal, and the Rites of each sacrament.

A linchpin for liturgical catechesis is the Rite for the Christian Initiation of Adults. It is integrated with the liturgical seasons, especially Lent and Easter, which links it with the very soul of Catholic experience – the journey through death and resurrection. Because it engages the whole parish, it underlines the fact that the life of the Church, and entry into it, are of their nature *community* experiences. They are not private, and not individualistic.

The NZCBC has therefore stipulated that the catechumenate is the *normal* way of entry into the Church.

This also implies that there is room for exceptions. Coping with the catechumenate is easy enough for some people. We must respect the fact that for others it is not.

17. 1962 Missal

When Pope Paul VI promulgated the new Order of the Mass in 1975, he intended it to include and supersede the 1962 Missal. At the same time, however, he did not, in the canonical sense, "abrogate" or repeal the 1962 Missal. And so it remained legitimate to use it.

When Pope Benedict XVI gave general permission for its use, at the same time he endorsed the revised Missal issued by Paul VI by confirming that it is the juridically "ordinary" way of celebrating Mass. The continued use of the 1962 Missal was to be regarded as "extraordinary", and for the purpose of meeting a particular need.

It is, therefore, not compatible with the intentions of either Pope to recruit Catholics to the use of the 1962 Missal as if it were simply an alternative ordinary way of celebrating Mass. Based on what both Popes have said, and John Paul II as well, it is the revised Missal that is to be promoted; the 1962 Missal is to be "permitted".

18. The development of custom and the correction of abuses

As already explained, the norm governing posture during the Eucharistic Prayer, as in the 1975 edition of the Missal and the 2000 edition, is standing, save for kneeling at the consecration. When efforts were made (in the USA) to enforce the norm, (i.e. standing) objectors were supported by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments, who pointed out that the "norm" in the GIRM was only "descriptive", not "prescriptive". And so Bishops' Conferences were able to sanction the custom of kneeling which had developed contrary to the norm.

This may come as a surprise to anyone who thought that *everything* in the GIRM was prescriptive and not just descriptive. It serves as a reminder, however, that in Church usage an obligation is to be proven, not presumed. However, we should regard all rubrics as descriptive of best practice, and in that sense the "norm" to be followed.

By definition, a contrary custom develops *before* it is sanctioned. Up until the 16th century liturgical changes developed mainly in this way. Papal Indults and more recently the *Motu Proprio* regarding the 1962 Missal seem to be another example of sanctioning a custom that had developed contrary to the norm, i.e. contrary to the clear intentions of Pope Paul VI (Apostolic Constitution, 1969). Sometimes the Church sanctions customs that grow up contrary to the existing law; e.g. allowing altar girls, allowing women to read from within the sanctuary, and allowing women to have their feet washed on Holy Thursday.... Contrary custom is not necessarily an "abuse".

Considerations such as these can make a bishop wary of "correcting" what might be eventually turn out not to be abuses. Slowness to implement some of the changes may also be motivated by the need for more time, lest premature changes have to be changed back. Nor should a bishop allow his pastoral role to be cast in a policing role. Safeguarding his role as a pastor would be of a higher order than correcting every little aberration that crops up.

It would be a different matter if *real* abuses were to occur. Examples of real abuse would be: substituting non-scriptural readings for the Word of God (because

nothing can); holding the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist at different locations or at different times (because that obscures the unity of Word and Sacrament in the Mass); composing one's own Eucharist Prayers (because that is not the *Church's* liturgy); "celebrating" in the ordinary social sense (because *commemorating* the death and resurrection of Jesus is not entertainment); ill-prepared, waffling and insensitive preaching (because that was not the manner of the Good Shepherd); the wordiness that smothers and kills (because the key symbols of the liturgy speak to us through all our senses, our imagination, and quiet reflection, and these can be stifled by too many words); anything that seriously compromises Catholic doctrine pertaining to the Sacrament of Holy Orders, or the validity of the sacraments (e.g. pertaining to the bread and wine required for Eucharist); and anything that seriously compromises reverence.

Abuse of the liturgy can take various forms. Straight-jacketing the liturgy, failure to inculturate, and giving more attention to lesser rubrics than to the Church's social teachings, are among them. Attempts to thwart the Council's reforms have also been made in various ways. Examples of how the Congregation for Rites tried to do this following the Council have been well documented by Archbishop P Marini, Pontifical Master of Ceremonies, 1987-2007; e.g. "the tenacious return to pre-conciliar positions, (the) uninterrupted tendency to mistrust the episcopate and its genuine loyalty to the Holy See, and (the) obsessive concern to return to the previous centralisation of all liturgical authority". What Pope Paul VI had to deal with in 1964 has continued right into our own times.

Diocesan Policy

The official policy of the Diocese of Palmerston North will be whatever is decided by the NZ Catholic Bishops' Conference in those matters which belong to the jurisdiction of the NZCBC.

Conclusion

When we look at our Catholic moral and legal tradition, we find that literalism and legalism on the one hand, and unregulated adaptation and creativity on the other, are both unfaithful to the Catholic tradition. Neither arbitrariness nor rigidity belong.

I hope this paper will provide clear guidance to the priests of the diocese, lay pastoral co-ordinators and parish liturgy committees, and help the Diocesan Liturgy Commission to respond to any further enquiries it receives.

I want the liturgy in our diocese to be a profound experience of God "drawing close to us" in the person of Jesus Christ, and of the difference this makes to everything.

The Orthodox churches of the East have a strong sense of the liturgy being the worship of God taking place simultaneously on earth and in heaven. That is what we participate in.