

CONGREGATIO DE CULTU DIVINO ET DISCIPLINA SACRAMENTORUM

Prot. 2520/03/L

From Vatican City, December 1, 2005

To the esteemed Mr Kiko Arguello, Ms. Carmen Hernandez, and Rev. Father Mario Pezzi,

Following the dialogue which has taken place with this Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments on the celebration of the Most Holy Eucharist in the communities of the Neocatechumenal Way, in keeping with the guidelines issued in the meeting with you on November 11 of this year, I am to inform you of the Holy Father's decisions.

In the celebration of the Holy Mass, the Neocatechumenal Way shall accept and follow the liturgical books approved by the Church, without omitting or adding anything.

Furthermore, with regard to some elements the following guidelines and clarifications are emphasized:

1. Sunday is the "*Dies Domini*", as the Servant of God, Pope John Paul II illustrated in the Apostolic Letter on the Lord's Day. Therefore the Neocatechumenal Way must enter into dialogue with the diocesan bishop so that, also in the context of the liturgical celebrations, a visible witness of the integration of the Neocatechumenal Way communities in the parish may be given. At least one Sunday per month, the communities of the Neocatechumenal Way must therefore participate in the Holy Mass of the parish community.

2. With regard to any admonitions given before the readings, these must be brief. The dispositions of the *Institutio Generalis Missalis Romani* (nn. 105 and 128) and the *Praenotanda* of the *Ordo Lectionum Missae* (nn. 15, 19, 38, 42) must also be followed.

3. The homily, because of its nature and importance, is reserved to the priest or deacon (cf. *Codex Juris Canonici*, can. 767 § 1). As for the occasional contribution of testimonies on the part of the lay faithful, the proper places and methods for these are indicated in the Interdicasterial Instruction *Ecclesiae de Mystero* which was approved "in specific form" by Pope John Paul II and published on August 15, 1997. In this document, sections 2 and 3 of article 3 read as follows:

§2 - "It is permitted to have a brief instruction designed to promote a better understanding of the liturgy that is being celebrated, and also, in exceptional circumstances, a few [personal] testimonies, as long as these conform to the liturgical norms and are offered on the occasion of Eucharistic liturgies celebrated on particular days (day of the Seminary, day of the sick, etc.), and are considered objectively opportune as a means of illustrating the regular homily delivered by the celebrating priest. These instructions and testimonies must not be such as to assume a character which could be confused with the homily.

§3 - "The possibility of a 'dialogue' during the homily (cf. *Directorium de Missis cum Pueris*, no. 48) can sometimes be prudently used by the celebrating minister as a means of exposition, which does not delegate to others the duty of preaching.

Careful attention must also be paid to the Instruction *Redemptionis Sacramentum* no. 74.

4. Regarding the exchange of peace, permission is granted to the Neocatechumenal Way to continue using the indult already granted, until further notice.

5. On the manner of receiving Holy Communion, a period of transition (not exceeding two years) is granted to the Neocatechumenal Way to pass from the widespread manner of receiving Holy Communion in its communities (seated, with a cloth-covered table placed at the centre of the church instead of the dedicated altar in the sanctuary) to the normal way for the whole Church of receiving Holy Communion. This means that the Neocatechumenal Way must journey towards the manner of distributing the Body and Blood of Christ that is indicated in the liturgical books.

6. The Neocatechumenal Way must also make use of the other Eucharistic Prayers contained in the missal, and not only Eucharistic Prayer II.

In short, the Neocatechumenal Way, in the celebration of the Holy Mass, should follow the approved liturgical books, keeping nevertheless in mind what is laid out above under numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

Grateful to the Lord for the good fruits granted to the Church through the manifold activities of the Neocatechumenal Way, I take this occasion to extend to you my best regards.

+ Francis Card. Arinze

Prefect

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