



## From the Pastor's Desk:

I found the following in the 2008 "American Decency Association Update" and thought it appropriate to share with you since I would like us to continue to take a closer look at how people coming to Church choose to dress. Read this first and then I'll continue....

"As we progress into the summer months, immodest dress - even in the church becomes increasingly evident and concerning. Why? Here are a couple of reasons.

(1) Because men are particularly visual, immodesty, even inadvertent immodesty, in church can trigger lustful thoughts. We are at church to worship a holy, loving God who came to set us free from the bondages of sin. To come to church and have women dressed immodestly is an insult to a holy God and thwarts the feeding of His people.

(2) Immodesty establishes an ungodly example. "If Christians dress that way, it must be okay. I'm going to dress that way too."

(3) For godly mothers, the task of parenting is made that much harder because their daughters may want to wear "what everyone else is wearing." Parents are cognizant that immodest dress is not pleasing to God, yet when this issue is not addressed, it creates discouragement, heartache and confusion."

... Do you know what bothers me about what is written here? It's true... and... it indicates how our Catholic Christian Family has deteriorated in its effort to be more "in touch" with "the world"! Now I know that God accepts us all in our humanity, with our faults and weaknesses. I know that He loves us even in our nakedness! But we're not in the original Garden of Eden. We are living "after the fall of Adam and Eve"... if you will, we are living in "the time beyond the fig leaf." The heightened awareness of our minds triggers not only good, but also bad thoughts, ideas, decisions and actions. How we dress becomes a reflection of who we are. Clothing also reflects our respect for ourselves.

Dressing down is not an excuse for exposing ourselves to create or add to the already lustful nature of a person's mind. The bikini and the thong were not designed to create better tan lines, but to draw attention to the sexual, erotic nature of men and women. Here's another quote from the above "Update".

"And yet another powerful and sad statement, *"Thanks so much for your teaching about modesty! My men's Bible study group talks frequently about controlling our lust, thoughts, and eyes. Yes, the problem and responsibility are ours, but is it really reasonable for the women of the church to make it THIS difficult for us? The only place that I go on a regular basis where I am so overwhelmed by half-clothed women is CHURCH! How backward is that???* I want to run up to the microphone and yell *"Yes, you're beautiful, now go home and put on some clothes!"* And lastly another wrote, *"... We all know men are visual and we all know how the Lord made men. .... The Bible says we are not to be stumbling blocks to another person's spiritual walk. Wearing a clingy [or downright tight] blouse or a short skirt [or short shorts] might be contemporary to the styles of the times, but it is not appropriate to wear to church!"*

Here at OLPH, I ask that everyone, women and men, think about how you dress when you come to Church for worship, and in general. In general, I believe it is fair to ask everyone, "How do you dress when you go to visit someone very special, or when you are attending a special and significant event?" Every Mass may not be a wedding or a funeral, but it is "The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass", at which our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ comes to us and is present to us in His Most Sacred Body and Blood. It is not just a visit to an old friend, but an encounter with Jesus, the Son of God. And while He does not want you to dress as though you were going to a wedding, He does want you to dress so that you reflect the dignity of the experience. Dressing down just may be too casual, dressing up and not "over" just makes you feel that going to Church is something important and special. DRESS WITH RESPECT. That's all I ask you. That's all God wants from you.

**If Jesus found you naked in the street, He would pick you up, embrace you and care for you. He would dress you not because He is offended by your nakedness, but because your nakedness offends you in your humanity through your embracement in relationship to other human beings.**

**Our Church is the House of God. You come here to encounter and worship Him. Whether you are a man or a women, when you get dressed for Church, look in the mirror before you leave just as you would before leaving for that special event and ask yourself, "How do I look, Am I dressed appropriately and respectfully?" In short, no matter who you are, where you are or where you are going, "DRESS WITH RESPECT."**

May God +bless you and yours now and forever.

*Father Anthony*