

Word on Worship

Newsletter of the Worship Office, Archdiocese of Newark, NJ

In This Issue:

During this Year of the Eucharist, *Word on Worship* is publishing articles which focus on the differing aspects of this special sacrament which is so central to the Catholic faith. Francis Cardinal Arinze of the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments was present at the Benedictine Abbey in Newark for Holy Week of 2005. While staying at the Abbey, he received an honorary degree from Seton Hall University and gave the following talk on the mission of the Eucharist on March 29, 2005. The talk is reprinted here with the author's permission.

I express my deep gratitude to Seton Hall University, and in a special way to you, Archbishop John J. Myers, for the honour done me in the conferral of this Doctorate Degree. The praise goes to God, since in honouring his work, we honour him, who is Creator and Providence.

The current Year of the Eucharist inaugurated by our Holy Father last October moves us, among other initiatives, to meditate more and more on the great mystery of the Holy Eucharist. I therefore request you to share with me the following reflections on the theme: "The Holy Eucharist sends us on Mission". This is one of the ways for us to spell out what the Eucharistic celebration is asking us to do.

After an introductory statement on the Holy Eucharist and on the mission of the Church, we shall ask ourselves how the Eucharist prepares us for

mission. Four areas of mission engagement will then be examined: proclamation, commitment to the earthly city, Christian solidarity with the poor and meeting people of other religions. We shall close with a consideration of how the Holy Eucharist nourishes all apostolates.

HOLY EUCHARIST: CHRIST'S INESTIMABLE GIFT

The night before he suffered, Jesus, at the Last Supper gave to his Church the wonderful gift of the sacrifice and sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. He thus wanted "to leave to his beloved spouse the Church a visible sacrifice (as the nature of man demands) by which the bloody sacrifice which he was to accomplish once for all on the cross would be re-presented, its memory perpetuated until the end of the world, and its salutary power be applied to the forgiveness of the sins we daily commit." (Council of Trent: DS 1740; cf also I Cor 11:23; Heb 7:24, 27; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1366; *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 11,12) Mass is offered to adore God, to thank him for his many gifts, to ask pardon for our sins and to request our needs both spiritual and temporal.

As sacrament, the Holy Eucharist is the Body and Blood, together with the soul and divinity of our

Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ who is truly, really and substantially present. (Council of Trent, DS 1651) We receive him in Holy Communion so that he promotes our union with him, increases grace in us, equips us the better to live the Christian life and gives us the pledge of eternal life.

MISSION OF THE CHURCH

By "mission" we mean everything that Christ sent the Church to do. Aware that he himself was sent by his eternal Father, Jesus sent his apostles, and through them the whole Church: "As the Father sent me, so am I sending you." (Jn 20:21) They are to be his witnesses" not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judaea and Samaria, and indeed to earth's remotest end. (Acts 1.8)

Mission is also called evangelization. It is not carried out in one act alone, but has many elements such as silent witness to Christ, proclamation and catechesis, conversion and Baptism, establishment of local churches, incarnation of the Gospel in cultures, meeting people of other religions, promotion of development in society, and solidarity with the needy. (*Redemptoris Missio*, 41-60; *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 17; *Dialogue and Mission*, 13)

THE HOLY EUCHARIST SENDS US ON MISSION

It would therefore be an unacceptable restriction of the concept of mission to understand it as referring only to catechesis and conversion. No. Mission covers the entire mandate given by Christ to his Church.

To carry out such a demanding assignment the Church has always understood the Holy Eucharist as playing a major and irreplaceable role in preparing Christians for mission and nourishing them in it. How does this happen?

EUCCHARISTIC SACRIFICE SUMMIT AND CENTER OF LITURGICAL LIFE

At the celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice we are fed at the two tables of the Word of God and of the Body and Blood of Christ.

In the first part of the Mass we receive the Word of God. The Sacred Scriptures are proclaimed. We sing psalms and canticles. Jesus speaks to us in the Gospel. In the homily, the biblical reading and other liturgical texts are explained to us and are related to the realities of our life in the world of today. If all this is well done, then we, much like the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, should find our hearts burning within us. (Lk 24:32) We should be better enlightened on the mysteries of Christ, on what God is saying to us, and on what he is sending us to do.

The second table is that of the Body and Blood of Christ. Jesus feeds us with himself. "If you do not eat the flesh of the Son of man

and drink his blood, you have no life in you... My flesh is real food and my blood is real drink... As the living Father sent me and I draw life from the Father, so whoever eats me will also draw life from me. (Jn 6:55, 57) The words of Jesus are clear, unambiguous, unmistakable. "Remain in me, as I in you." (Jn 15:4) This mutual abiding between Christ and the disciple is promoted in an exceptional way when we receive Jesus in Holy Communion. This sacrament promotes our union with Christ, increases

source and the summit of all evangelization, since its goal is the communion of mankind with Christ and in him with the Father and the Holy Spirit." (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 22) The Pope returns to the same theme in his Apostolic Letter to prepare the Church for the Year of the Eucharist: "The encounter with Christ, constantly intensified and deepened in the Eucharist, issues in the Church and in every Christian an urgent summons to testimony and evangelization.... Each member of the faithful must assimilate, through personal



the life of God, or grace, within us, and thus puts us in a good position to carry out our share in the mission of the Church.

Pope John Paul II underlines this great power of the Eucharist in preparing us for mission: "From the perpetuation of the sacrifice of the Cross and her communion with the Body and the Blood of Christ in the Eucharist, the Church draws the spiritual power needed to carry out her mission. The Eucharist thus appears as both the

and communal meditation, the values which the Eucharist expresses, the attitudes it inspires, the resolutions to which it gives rise." (*Mane Nobiscum Domine*, 24, 25)

The Holy Spirit, "the principal agent of evangelization" (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 75), also fills us with his graces when we receive the Eucharistic Christ. The Church prays to the Father in the Third Eucharistic Prayer: "Grant that we who are nourished by his Body and Blood may

be filled with his Holy Spirit, and become one body, one spirit in Christ." (*Roman Missal*) "By the gift of his Body and Blood", says Pope John Paul II, "Christ increases within us the gift of his Spirit, already poured out in Baptism and bestowed as a "seal" in the sacrament of Confirmation. (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 17)

It is therefore clear that the Holy Eucharist prepares us for mission. At the end of the Mass we are sent. The directive "*Ite Missa Est*" really means, not "Go the Mass is ended", but rather, "Go, you are sent now to live and share what we have received, what we have heard, and what we have sung, meditated and prayed".

Let us now take a look at four of the ways in which we can carry out this mission.

PROCLAMATION

Proclamation is one of the major ways in which the mission of the Church is carried out. Of course personal and group witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ is irreplaceable in its importance. Action speaks better than words. Nevertheless, there comes a time when, given the people and circumstances, it is possible or even obligatory to announce Jesus Christ in clear, articulated language. "There is no true evangelization," says Pope Paul VI, "if the name, the teaching, the life, the promises, the kingdom and the mystery of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God are not proclaimed. The history of the church, from

the discourse of Peter on the morning of Pentecost onwards, has been intermingled and identified with the history of this proclamation." (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 22)

The two disciples on the road to Emmaus, once they had listened to Jesus explaining to them the Scriptures with their hearts burning within them, and once they had recognized him in the breaking of bread, "set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem" (Lk 24:33) to share the good news of the resurrection. Saints Peter and John, in the midst of all the threats of the Sanhedrin against their preaching the same Gospel, declared courageously: "We cannot stop proclaiming what we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:20)

We have therefore to thank God that the Holy Eucharist fills us with love of Christ and faith in him and sends us to proclaim his good news, each of us according to our vocation and mission. Proclamation is thus carried out in various ways such as homily, catechesis, radio and television talks, books and other writings, religious plays, telling our colleagues about the Catholic faith and, in general, the use of the modern media to spread the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ for all humanity.

Let us focus on one vital area where proclamation can take flesh. It is in the promotion of the Catholic schools — elementary schools, vocational schools, grammar schools, high schools, and universities. We are talking of schools

which score high as education centers and at the same time offer the young people a dynamic and healthy unity between a Catholic family, the Catholic faith and a good Catholic educational institution. A Catholic school which is Catholic not just in name but in fact, is the best climate for young Catholics to develop a dynamic and healthy synthesis between religion and life, between Church and society, between being a Catholic and being a citizen. The Church especially through her religious orders, has traditionally sacrificed both personnel and finances for the education of the young, for their integral education that includes the intellectual, the religious, the moral and the physical dimensions. I commend Newark Abbey for what St. Benedict's Preparatory School means for so many young people, for their families and for the wider society. Every Catholic has to ask himself or herself how much he/she contributes in moral and financial support and in the offer of professional competence, for the proper running of sound Catholic educational institutions. Indeed every Catholic parish or diocese could ask itself the same questions. Furthermore, every parishioner can examine himself or herself: How much do I give every Sunday for the spread of God.

COMMITMENT TO THE EARTHLY CITY

The Holy Eucharist also sends us to be relevant citizens of the earthly city, to make our contribution so

What have you done to defend the innocent, the unborn children, the handicapped, the poor, the immigrant?

that this world will be a better place in which to live. The Christian has to learn to make a vital synthesis between religious duties on the one hand and civic duties on the other. Not only are two not opposed, but rather our religion manifests itself in our daily life as citizens. The Second Vatican Council warns: "The Christian who neglects his temporal duties neglects his duties towards his neighbor and even God, and jeopardizes his eternal salvation." (*Gaudium et Spes*, 43) These are rather strong words.

It is true that our faith, with the Eucharistic celebration as its central cultic expression, prepares us for "a new heaven and earth." (Rev 21:1) This increases rather than lessens our commitment to making a better world, our responsibility as citizens of the earthly city, build a more human world, a world more in harmony with God's plan. Therefore the promotion of justice, peace, development and harmony is very much a part of our religion. It is not something outside it. The Second Vatican Council puts it this way: "While we are warned that it profits a man nothing if he gains the whole world and lose himself, the exception of a new earth must not weaken but rather stimulate our concern for cultivating this one. For here grows the body of a new human family, a body which even now is able to give some kind of foreshadowing of the new age." (*Gaudium et Spes*, 39)

For these reasons, Pope John Paul II lists this attention to the good of society as one of the areas to be attended to in this Year of the Eucharist. Our troubled world which began the third millennium with the spectre of terrorism and the tragedy of war, he says: "demands that Christians learn to experience the Eucharist as a great school of peace, forming men and women who, at various levels of responsibility in social, cultural and political life, can become promoters of dialogue and communion." (*Mane Nobiscum Domine*, 29)

If one applies all this to the U.S. situation, the following questions could be asked: What is your attitude towards society? What has the county, state or nation benefited because of your contribution? What is your

dominant criterion in voting for your public officers or representatives?

What have you done to defend the innocent, the unborn children, the handicapped, the poor, the immigrant? What have you done to promote better understanding and cooperation between people in your own country and our states? Is world peace a concern to you? What of the development of the poorer nations? As a senator, a congressman or woman, a doctor, a lawyer, a teacher or other professional, how has your Catholic faith made you a better and more relevant citizen?

CHRISTIAN SOLIDARITY WITH THE POOR

Part of the mission which the Eucharistic celebration assigns to us is Christian





When Catholics show solidarity with the needy, they are not just social workers. They are witnesses of Christ. They are living out their Eucharistic celebration.

MEETING PEOPLE OF OTHER RELIGIONS

The Holy Eucharist sends us to be witnesses of Christ among all people, whether they believe in Christ or not. The Church sees herself as "a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind." (*Lumen Gentium*, 1)

Many levels of contact with people of other religions can be observed. There is first that of good will and mutual respect. Next comes mutual listening which can bring with it better understanding of the religious positions of one another. Where the partners persevere, collaboration in the promotion of social works can follow to the benefit of society. When mutual trust grows, and if the partners are theologically sufficiently prepared, they can get into an exchange at the theological level.

Contact with people of other religions cannot, for the Christian, avoid the fact that these people have the right to hear the good news of Jesus Christ and to be introduced into faith in him. A necessary condition is that they freely welcome such proclamation. The right to religious freedom of which the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights speaks in paragraph 18, includes the right to

solidarity with people who are in need. St. John the Evangelist gives us the beautiful and very dramatic account of Jesus washing the feet of his apostles. This event takes place at the critical time when the stay of our Saviour in this world was approaching its end. St. John gives the account just where the three Synoptic Gospels place their report on the institution of the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper. Jesus teaches the apostles to wash one another's feet. The Eucharistic overtones are unmistakable.

St. Paul teaches the Corinthians that their participation in the Holy Eucharist is defective if they have divisions among them, if they are selfish and if the rich are indifferent towards the poor. (1 Cor 11:17-22; 27-34)

The Holy Eucharist commits us to love the poor and to come to their help. (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1397) St. John Chrysostom is unambiguous: "You have

tasted the Blood of the Lord, yet you do not recognize your brother.... You dishonour this table when you do not judge worthy of sharing your food someone judged worthy to take part in this meal... God freed you from all your sins and invited you here, but you have not become more merciful." (Homily in 1 Cor 27,4:PCt 61,229-2330)

Jesus himself tells us that the last judgment will be based on how we have shown solidarity to the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, and the imprisoned. (Mt 25:31-46)

Pope John Paul II says that a good criterion to judge the authenticity of our Eucharistic celebrations is our solidarity with such people in need. Indeed he suggests that each diocesan or parish community undertake some such project as part of their initiative in this Year of the Eucharist. (*Mane Nobiscum Domine*, 28)

change one's religion. The Second Vatican Council notes that people are "bound by a moral obligation to seek the truth, especially religious truth. They are also bound to adhere to the truth, once it is known, and to order their whole lives in accord with the demands of truth." (*Dignitatis Humanae*, 2) Only thus can every individual be properly answerable to God for the use of freedom.

It follows, therefore, that no individual or government has the right to forbid conversion to Christianity or to Catholicism. It is also a necessary consequence that Christians have the obligation to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with people of other religions who freely want to hear it. Such a sharing is not proselytism. It is evangelization. Pope Paul VI insists in clear terms that interreligious dialogue or respect does not make proclamation unnecessary: "Neither respect and esteem for these religions nor the complexity of the questions raised is an invitation to the Church to withhold from these non-Christians the proclamation of Jesus Christ. On the contrary, the Church holds that these multitudes have the right to know the riches of the mystery of Christ." (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 53; also: *Dialogue and Proclamation*, 82)

When, therefore, we reflect that the Holy Eucharist sends us to meet our fellow human beings, we are to see ourselves as sent to share with them the best treasures that we have, according as respect for the human person and prudence may advise in each concrete

context.

HOLY EUCHARIST NOURISHES ALL APOSTOLATES

From the above reflections it follows that the Holy Eucharist is central to the life of the Church and to the living of that call by every Christian. It nourishes all apostolates in the Church.

Jesus has taught us that he is the vine and we are the branches. If we abide in him we can bear fruit. Cut off from him we can achieve nothing. (Jn 15:4-5) The more closely we are united with Christ, the more apostolic fruit we can bear. The Holy Eucharist is the source and apex of this enabling, this abiding in Christ

It is Jesus in the Holy Eucharist who gives strength to martyrs, virgins, confessors and all other Saints, so that they can bear witness to him, no matter at what cost.

The various states of life in the Church – the lay faithful whether married or single, the clerics and the men and women of consecrated life – all depend on the Holy Eucharist for their strengthening, enabling, nourishment, perseverance and authenticity. It is instructive that the other sacraments are celebrated within the Mass (like Baptism, Holy Orders and Matrimony), or are preparatory to it (like Penance and the Anointing of the Sick).

If Christians in these various states of life are to give credible witness to Christ in charity (mother of all the virtues), in self-

sacrifice for others, in asceticism, in chasity, in patience and in apostolic zeal, they absolutely need the nourishment given by the Holy Eucharist. If they are to live lives of sustained prayer and the seeking of the face of God, they have to rely to a great extent on their Eucharistic Lord. If parishes are to be authentic Christian communities of worship, service and witness, they have to be above all Eucharistic communities, with high premium set on the Sunday Parish Mass. (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 42; *Dies Domini*, 35-36; *Mane Nobiscum Domine*, 23; *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 162)

Indeed, the Holy Eucharist sends us on mission and also strengthens, nourishes and sustains us. Let us pray to the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, woman of the Eucharist (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 53) to obtain for us the grace to live this faith with firm engagement, with generosity, with perseverance and with apostolic dynamism.

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OFFICE OF DIVINE WORSHIP WELCOMES NEW DIRECTOR

Word on Worship newsletter is happy to welcome its editor, Rev. Thomas A. Dente, as the new Director of the Office of Divine Worship. His appointment, effective April 1, 2005, follows the resignation of Sr. Sandra DeMasi, SSJ, who previously served as Director for over nine years.

Father Tom is no stranger to the Worship Office. Ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Newark in 1993, he was soon recruited for the editorial board of *Word on Worship*. He authored several articles for the newsletter before becoming its editor in 2004. In addition to serving as a parish priest, he has been Associate Director of Liturgical Formation since 1999, offering presentations, workshops and classes throughout the Archdiocese.

"I am grateful to Archbishop Myers for appointing me to this position," Father Tom says. "I want to continue the work of the Worship Office in offering and promoting a high quality of liturgical formation and education." One of his primary goals will be to "aid and assist pastors, priests and liturgical ministers in leading the prayer life of the Archdiocese."

It is perhaps not surprising that Father Tom says that his vocation to the priesthood "found its source in the liturgical life of the Church." He has especially fond childhood

memories of being an altar server and of serving at the Triduum liturgies.

Fr. Tom brings a wealth of education and experience to his new position. He received a Masters of Divinity from Immaculate Conception Seminary, Seton Hall University in 1993 and earned a Master of Arts in theology (Liturgical Studies) from Notre Dame University in 2000.

Fr. Tom has served as an adjunct professor in liturgy at Felician College and Caldwell College. He also has extensive experience with liturgy in parish life as a presider and in guiding and training parish liturgy teams. He serves as a Master of Ceremonies at Archdiocesan Cathedral ceremonies and is a member of the Liturgical Commission for the Archdiocese.

Paying attention to quality and detail are hallmarks of his efforts to "form people more deeply into the Body of Christ." In his personal life and in his new role, Father Tom says he draws inspiration from the passage in the Gospel of John where Jesus encounters the woman at the well and tells her, "true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth." (John 4:23)

SOLEMN OBSERVANCE OF THE... •10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PASTORAL VISIT OF POPE JOHN PAUL II AND THE DESIGNATION OF THE METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL AS A MINOR BASILICA •CLOSING OF THE 'YEAR OF THE EUCHARIST' OCTOBER 9, 2005

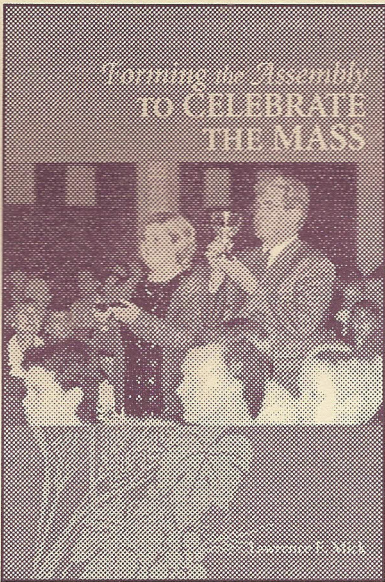
Everyone is invited to participate in all or in part of the liturgical commemoration of these historic events. Following the 'prayer after communion' at the 12 noon Mass, there will be a procession with the Blessed Sacrament to Saint Lucy Church. Eucharistic Benediction will take place on the plaza in front of the church at about 1:45 PM.

SCHEDULE

12:00 NOON	Mass and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the Cathedral Basilica
1:00 PM	Procession to Saint Lucy Church, Newark, immediately following the Mass
1:45 PM	Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament on the Plaza at Saint Lucy Church

In this year of the Eucharist... Our faith in the God who took flesh in order to become our companion along the way needs to be everywhere proclaimed, especially in our streets and homes, as an expression of our grateful love and as an inexhaustible source of blessings. —Pope John Paul II, *Mane Nobiscum Domine*

This is God's dwelling place and he has made it holy;
here we call on his name, for Scripture says: There you will find me.
— Evening Prayer II, Dedication of a Church



FORMING THE ASSEMBLY TO CELEBRATE THE MASS

The Second Vatican Council envisioned a worshipping community which could fully participate in the liturgy. Is that happening in your parish? This 80 page book by Lawrence Mick, experienced presider and liturgist, is a great resource for individuals and small groups looking to get more out of the Mass. Each chapter covers a different part of the Mass followed by questions for discussion. Cost: \$5.00

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