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Intrinsic Bond Between the Word of God and the Eucharist



Propositions of Synod on the Eucharist, Nos. 16-20

VATICAN CITY, OCT. 28, 2005 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Here is a translation of propositions, Nos. 16-20, given to Benedict XVI by the Synod of Bishops on the Eucharist.

The Pope has allowed the publication of a non-official provisional translation in Italian, on which this text is based. ZENIT is in the process of publishing translations of all 50 propositions.

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Proposition 16

Mystagogic Catechesis

Not neglecting the systematic understanding of the contents of the faith, the ancient tradition of the Church reminds that the Christian journey is experience born from the proclamation and deepened in catechesis, which finds its source and summit in the liturgical celebration.

Faith and sacraments are two complementary aspects of the Church's sanctifying activity. Awakened by the proclamation of the Word of God, faith is nourished and grows in the encounter of grace with the risen Lord in the sacraments. Faith is expressed in the rite, and the rite reinforces and strengthens faith.

Hence the exigency of a mystagogic endeavor lived in the community and with its help, which is based on three essential elements:

-- Interpretation of the rites in the light of biblical events, in conformity with the tradition of the Church;

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-- Appreciation of the sacramental signs;

-- Meaning of the rites in respect of the Christian commitment in life.

It would be desirable to develop the mystagogic method above all with children receiving first communion and confirmation.

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Proposition 17

Compendium on the Eucharist

The competent departments of the Holy See and/or of the episcopal conferences should consider a Eucharistic Compendium project, or an instrument of pastoral aid that brings together, at the same time, liturgical, doctrinal, catechetical and devotional elements on the Eucharist, to help develop faith and Eucharistic piety.

This compendium could propose the best of patristic teaching, the experience of the Latin Church and of the Eastern Churches, and devotional prayers. It should include an appropriate catechesis on the nature and structure of Eucharistic prayers.

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Part II

Participation of the People of God in the Eucharistic Celebration

Structure of the Eucharistic Celebration

Proposition 18

Of the two banquets, that of the Word of God and that of the Body of Christ, the Church receives and offers to the faithful the Bread of Life, especially in the sacred liturgy. The Word of God, as the whole Eucharistic mystery, is only accessible in faith. It is appropriate therefore that the readings be proclaimed with care, if possible by instituted readers.

The correct weight must be given to the Liturgy of the Word in the Eucharistic celebration. There is an intrinsic bond between the Word of God and the Eucharist. In the Eucharist, the Word made flesh gives himself to us as spiritual food. Faith is born from hearing the Word of God (cf. Romans 10:17).

To appreciate, celebrate and live the Eucharist better, a profound knowledge of

the proclaimed Sacred Scriptures is necessary. "Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ" (cf. "Dei Verbum," 25). The faithful must be helped to appreciate the treasures of the Scripture in the Lectionary, through the development of the biblical apostolate, the impulse of parish groups that prepare the Sunday Mass with a prayerful study of the Readings themselves, and liturgical practices such as silence or a few introductory words that help for greater understanding.

Moreover, the People of God must be educated through a catechesis based on the Word of God. To love, read, study, meditate and pray the Word of God is a precious fruit of the practice of "lectio divina," of groups of biblical study and prayer in the family and in small ecclesial communities.

Because of the intrinsic relationship between the liturgy of the Word and the Eucharistic liturgy, the Word of God must be venerated and honored (cf. "Dei Verbum," 21), especially the Gospels, as sign of the presence of the Word incarnate in the assembly of the faithful (cf. "Instrumentum Laboris," 46).

An expression must be found for the prayer of the faithful that is related better with the Word of God, with the needs of the assembly and more broadly with those of the whole of humanity.

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Proposition 19

The Homily

The best catechesis on the Eucharist is the Eucharist itself well celebrated. Because of this ordained ministers are asked to consider the celebration as their main duty. In particular, they must prepare the homily with care, basing themselves on an appropriate knowledge of Sacred Scripture.

The homily should put the Word of God, proclaimed in the celebration, in profound relationship with the sacramental celebration (cf. "Sacrosanctum Concilium," 52) and with the life of the community, so that the Word of God is the foundation and life of the Church ("Dei Verbum," 21) and is transformed in food by prayer and daily life.

The homily molded by the teachings of the Fathers of the Church is a true mystagogy, that is, a true initiation to the mysteries celebrated and lived.

In addition, the possibility was suggested of taking recourse -- stemming from the triennial lectionary -- to "thematic" homilies that, in the course of the liturgical year, could address the great topics of the Christian faith: the Creed, the Our Father, the parts of the Mass, the Ten Commandments and other arguments.

These thematic homilies should correspond to what has again been authoritatively proposed by the Magisterium of the Church in the four "pillars" of the Catechism of the Catholic Church and in the recent Compendium. With this objective, the elaboration of pastoral material was proposed, based on the triennial lectionary, which puts the proclamation of the Scriptures in relationship with the doctrines of the faith that spring from the same.

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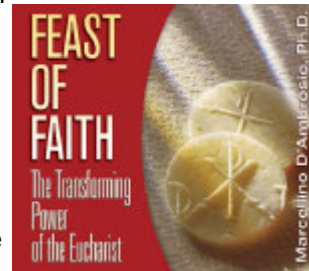
Proposition 20

Offering of Human Work

The bread and wine, fruits of the earth and of the work of man, which we place on the altar as expression of the offering of the life of the human family, imply that the whole of creation is assumed by Christ the Redeemer to be transformed in his recapitulating love, and to be presented to the Father. It should be ever more underlined that the dignity of the work of the men and women of the whole world, through the Eucharistic celebration, is profoundly united to the redeeming sacrifice of Christ the Lord.

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