

PART ONE: THE EUCHARIST, A MYSTERY TO BE BELIEVED

1.-33. [Omitted]

PART TWO: THE EUCHARIST, A MYSTERY TO BE CELEBRATED

"Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven;
my Father gives you the true bread from heaven" (*Jn* 6:32)

Lex orandi and lex credenda

34. The Synod of Bishops reflected at length on the intrinsic relationship between eucharistic faith and eucharistic celebration, pointing out the connection between the *lex orandi* and the *lex credendi*, and stressing the primacy of the *liturgical action*. The Eucharist should be experienced as a mystery of faith, celebrated authentically and with a clear awareness that "the *intellectus fidei* has a primordial relationship to the Church's liturgical action." (105) Theological reflection in this area can never prescind from the sacramental order instituted by Christ himself. On the other hand, the liturgical action can never be considered generically, prescinding from the mystery of faith. Our faith and the eucharistic liturgy both have their source in the same event: Christ's gift of himself in the Paschal Mystery.

Beauty and the liturgy

35. This relationship between creed and worship is evidenced in a particular way by the rich theological and liturgical category of beauty. Like the rest of Christian Revelation, the liturgy is inherently linked to beauty: it is *veritatis splendor*. The liturgy is a radiant expression of the paschal mystery, in which Christ draws us to himself and calls us to communion. As Saint Bonaventure would say, in Jesus we contemplate beauty and splendour at their source. (106) This is no mere aestheticism, but the concrete way in which the truth of God's love in Christ encounters us, attracts us and delights us, enabling us to emerge from ourselves and drawing us towards our true vocation, which is love. (107) God allows himself to be glimpsed first in creation, in the beauty and harmony of the cosmos (cf. *Wis* 13:5; *Rom* 1:19- 20). In the Old Testament we see many signs of the grandeur of God's power as he manifests his glory in his wondrous deeds among the Chosen People (cf. *Ex* 14; 16:10; 24:12-18; *Num* 14:20- 23). In the New Testament this epiphany of beauty reaches definitive fulfilment in God's revelation in Jesus Christ: (108) Christ is the full manifestation of the glory of God. In the glorification of the Son, the Father's glory shines forth and is communicated (cf. *Jn* 1:14; 8:54; 12:28; 17:1). Yet this beauty is not simply a harmony of proportion and form; "the fairest of the sons of men" (*Pss* 45[44]:3) is also, mysteriously, the one "who had no form or comeliness that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him" (*Is* 53:2). Jesus Christ shows us how the truth of love can transform even the dark mystery of death into the radiant light of the resurrection. Here the splendour of God's glory surpasses all worldly beauty. The truest beauty is the love of God, who definitively revealed himself to us in the paschal mystery.

The beauty of the liturgy is part of this mystery; it is a sublime expression of God's glory and, in a certain sense, a glimpse of heaven on earth. The memorial of Jesus' redemptive sacrifice contains something of that beauty which Peter, James and John beheld when the Master, making his way to Jerusalem, was transfigured before their eyes (cf. *Mk* 9:2). Beauty, then, is not mere decoration, but rather an essential element of the liturgical action, since it is an attribute of God himself and his revelation. These considerations should make us realize the care which is needed, if the liturgical action is to reflect its innate splendour.

The eucharistic celebration, the work of "Christus Totus"

Christus totus in capite et in corpore

36. The "subject" of the liturgy's intrinsic beauty is Christ himself, risen and glorified in the Holy Spirit, who includes the Church in his work. (109) Here we can recall an evocative phrase of Saint Augustine which strikingly describes this dynamic of faith proper to the Eucharist. The great Bishop of Hippo, speaking specifically of the eucharistic mystery, stresses the fact that Christ assimilates us to himself: "The bread you see on the altar, sanctified by the word of God, is the body of Christ. The chalice, or rather, what the chalice contains, sanctified by the word of God, is the blood of Christ. In these signs, Christ the Lord willed to entrust to us his body and the blood which he shed for the forgiveness of our sins. **If you have received them properly, you yourselves are what you have received.**" (110) **Consequently, "not only have we become Christians, we have become Christ himself."** (111) We can thus contemplate God's mysterious work, which brings about a profound unity between ourselves and the Lord Jesus: "one should not believe that Christ is in the head but not in the body; rather he is complete in the head and in the body." (112)

The Eucharist and the risen Christ

37. Since the eucharistic liturgy is essentially an *actio Dei* which draws us into Christ through the Holy Spirit, its basic structure is not something within our power to change, nor can it be held hostage by the latest trends. Here too Saint Paul's irrefutable statement applies: "no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid, which is Jesus Christ" (*1 Cor* 3:11). Again it is the Apostle of the Gentiles who assures us that, with regard to the Eucharist, he is presenting not his own teaching but what he himself has received (cf. *1 Cor* 11:23). The celebration of the Eucharist implies and involves the living Tradition. **The Church celebrates the eucharistic sacrifice in obedience to Christ's command, based on her experience of the Risen Lord and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. For this reason, from the beginning, the Christian community has gathered for the *fractio panis* on the Lord's Day.** Sunday, the day Christ rose from the dead, is also the first day of the week, the day which the Old Testament tradition saw as the beginning of God's work of creation. The day of creation has now become the day of the "new creation," the day of our liberation, when we commemorate Christ who died and rose again (113).

Ars celebrandi [The Art of Celebrating the Mass]

38. In the course of the Synod, there was frequent insistence on the need to avoid any antithesis between the *ars celebrandi*, the art of proper celebration, and the full, active and fruitful participation of all the faithful. The primary way to foster the participation of the People of God in the sacred rite is the proper celebration of the rite itself. **The *ars celebrandi* is the best way to ensure their *actuosa participatio*.** (114) The *ars celebrandi* is the fruit of faithful adherence to the liturgical norms in all their richness; indeed, for two thousand years this way of celebrating has sustained the faith life of all believers, called to take part in the celebration as the People of God, a royal priesthood, a holy nation (cf. *1 Pet* 2:4-5, 9) (115).

The Bishop, celebrant par excellence

39. While it is true that the whole People of God participates in the eucharistic liturgy, a correct *ars celebrandi* necessarily entails a specific responsibility on the part of those who have received the sacrament of Holy Orders. Bishops, priests, and deacons, each according to his proper rank, must consider the celebration of the liturgy as their principal duty (116). Above all, this is true of the Diocesan Bishop: as "the chief steward of the mysteries of God in the particular Church entrusted to his care, he is the moderator, promoter, and guardian of the whole of its liturgical life" (117). [Omitted]

Respect for the liturgical books and the richness of signs

40. Emphasizing the importance of the *ars celebrandi* also leads to an appreciation of the value of the liturgical norms. (121) The *ars celebrandi* should foster a sense of the sacred and the use of outward signs which help to cultivate this sense, such as, for example, the harmony of the rite, the liturgical vestments, the furnishings and the sacred space. The eucharistic celebration is enhanced when priests and liturgical leaders are committed to making known the current liturgical texts and norms, making available the great riches found in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* and the *Order of Readings for Mass*. Perhaps we take it for granted that our ecclesial communities already know and appreciate these resources, but this is not always the case. These texts contain riches which have preserved and expressed the faith and experience of the People of God over its two-thousand-year history. Equally important for a correct *ars celebrandi* is an attentiveness to the various kinds of language that the liturgy employs: words and music, gestures and silence, movement, the liturgical colours of the vestments. By its very nature the liturgy operates on different levels of communication which enable it to engage the whole human person. The simplicity of its gestures and the sobriety of its orderly sequence of signs communicate and inspire more than any contrived and inappropriate additions. Attentiveness and fidelity to the specific structure of the rite express both a recognition of the nature of Eucharist as a gift and, on the part of the minister, a docile openness to receiving this ineffable gift.

Art at the service of the liturgy

41. The profound connection between beauty and the liturgy should make us attentive to every work of art placed at the service of the celebration. (122) Certainly an important element of sacred art is church architecture, (123) which should highlight the unity of the furnishings of the sanctuary, such as the altar, the crucifix, the tabernacle, the ambo and the celebrant's chair. Here it is important to remember that the purpose of sacred architecture is to offer the Church a fitting space for the celebration of the mysteries of faith, especially the Eucharist. (124) The very nature of a Christian church is defined by the liturgy, which is an assembly of the faithful (*ecclesia*) who are the living stones of the Church (cf. *1 Pet 2:5*).

This same principle holds true for sacred art in general, especially painting and sculpture, where religious iconography should be directed to sacramental mystagogy. A solid knowledge of the history of sacred art can be advantageous for those responsible for commissioning artists and architects to create works of art for the liturgy. Consequently it is essential that the education of seminarians and priests include the study of art history, with special reference to sacred buildings and the corresponding liturgical norms. Everything related to the Eucharist should be marked by beauty. Special respect and care must also be given to the vestments, the furnishings and the sacred vessels, so that by their harmonious and orderly arrangement they will foster awe for the mystery of God, manifest the unity of the faith and strengthen devotion (125).

Liturgical song

42. In the *ars celebrandi*, liturgical song has a pre-eminent place. (126) Saint Augustine rightly says in a famous sermon that "the new man sings a new song. Singing is an expression of joy and, if we consider the matter, an expression of love" (127). The People of God assembled for the liturgy sings the praises of God. In the course of her two-thousand-year history, the Church has created, and still creates, music and songs which represent a rich patrimony of faith and love. This heritage must not be lost. Certainly as far as the liturgy is concerned, we cannot say that one song is as good as another. Generic improvisation or the introduction of musical genres which fail to respect the meaning of the liturgy should be avoided. As an element of the liturgy, song

should be well integrated into the overall celebration (128). Consequently everything – texts, music, execution – ought to correspond to the meaning of the mystery being celebrated, the structure of the rite and the liturgical seasons (129). Finally, while respecting various styles and different and highly praiseworthy traditions, I desire, in accordance with the request advanced by the Synod Fathers, that Gregorian chant be suitably esteemed and employed (130) as the chant proper to the Roman liturgy (131).

43.-51. [Omitted] The structure of the eucharistic Celebration; *The intrinsic unity of the liturgical action; The liturgy of the word; The homily; The presentation of the gifts; The Eucharistic Prayer; The sign of peace; The distribution and reception of the Eucharist; The dismissal: "Ite, missa est"*

Actuosa participatio

Authentic participation

52. The Second Vatican Council rightly emphasized the active, full and fruitful participation of the entire People of God in the eucharistic celebration (155). Certainly, the renewal carried out in these past decades has made considerable progress towards fulfilling the wishes of the Council Fathers. Yet we must not overlook the fact that some misunderstanding has occasionally arisen concerning the precise meaning of this participation. It should be made clear that the word "participation" does not refer to mere external activity during the celebration. In fact, the active participation called for by the Council must be understood in more substantial terms, on the basis of a greater awareness of the mystery being celebrated and its relationship to daily life. The conciliar Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* encouraged the faithful to take part in the eucharistic liturgy not "as strangers or silent spectators," but as participants "in the sacred action, conscious of what they are doing, actively and devoutly" (156). This exhortation has lost none of its force. The Council went on to say that the faithful "should be instructed by God's word, and nourished at the table of the Lord's Body. They should give thanks to God. Offering the immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest but also together with him, they should learn to make an offering of themselves. Through Christ, the Mediator, they should be drawn day by day into ever more perfect union with God and each other" (157).

Participation and the priestly ministry

53. The beauty and the harmony of the liturgy find eloquent expression in the order by which everyone is called to participate actively. This entails an acknowledgment of the distinct hierarchical roles involved in the celebration. It is helpful to recall that active participation is not per se equivalent to the exercise of a specific ministry. The active participation of the laity does not benefit from the confusion arising from an inability to distinguish, within the Church's communion, the different functions proper to each one. (158) There is a particular need for clarity with regard to the specific functions of the priest. He alone, and no other, as the tradition of the Church attests, presides over the entire eucharistic celebration, from the initial greeting to the final blessing. In virtue of his reception of Holy Orders, he represents Jesus Christ, the head of the Church, and, in a specific way, also the Church herself. (159) Every celebration of the Eucharist, in fact, is led by the Bishop, "either in person or through priests who are his helpers." (160) He is helped by a deacon, who has specific duties during the celebration: he prepares the altar, assists the priest, proclaims the Gospel, preaches the homily from time to time, reads the intentions of the Prayer of the Faithful, and distributes the Eucharist to the faithful. (161) Associated with these ministries linked to the sacrament of Holy Orders, there are also other ministries of liturgical service which can be carried out in a praiseworthy manner by religious and properly trained laity. (162)

The eucharistic celebration and inculturation

54. On the basis of these fundamental statements of the Second Vatican Council, the Synod Fathers frequently stressed the importance of the active participation of the faithful in the eucharistic sacrifice. In order to foster this participation, provision may be made for a number of adaptations appropriate to different contexts and cultures. (163) The fact that certain abuses have occurred does not detract from this clear principle, which must be upheld in accordance with the real needs of the Church as she lives and celebrates the one mystery of Christ in a variety of cultural situations. In the mystery of the Incarnation, the Lord Jesus, born of woman and fully human (cf. *Gal* 4:4), entered directly into a relationship not only with the expectations present within the Old Testament, but also with those of all peoples. He thus showed that God wishes to encounter us in our own concrete situation.

[Omitted]

Personal conditions for an "active participation"

55. In their consideration of the *actuosa participatio* of the faithful in the liturgy, the Synod Fathers also discussed the personal conditions required for fruitful participation on the part of individuals. (168) One of these is certainly the spirit of constant conversion which must mark the lives of all the faithful. Active participation in the eucharistic liturgy can hardly be expected if one approaches it superficially, without an examination of his or her life. This inner disposition can be fostered, for example, by recollection and silence for at least a few moments before the beginning of the liturgy, by fasting and, when necessary, by sacramental confession. A heart reconciled to God makes genuine participation possible. The faithful need to be reminded that there can be no *actuosa participatio* in the sacred mysteries without an accompanying effort to participate actively in the life of the Church as a whole, including a missionary commitment to bring Christ's love into the life of society.

Clearly, full participation in the Eucharist takes place when the faithful approach the altar in person to receive communion (169). Yet true as this is, care must be taken lest they conclude that the mere fact of their being present in church during the liturgy gives them a right or even an obligation to approach the table of the Eucharist. Even in cases where it is not possible to receive sacramental communion, participation at Mass remains necessary, important, meaningful and fruitful. In such circumstances it is beneficial to cultivate a desire for full union with Christ through the practice of spiritual communion, praised by Pope John Paul II (170) and recommended by saints who were masters of the spiritual life (171).

56.-63. [Omitted] Participation by Christians who are not Catholic; Participation through the communications media; Active participation by the sick; Care for prisoners; Migrants and participation in the Eucharist; Large-scale concelebrations; The Latin language; Eucharistic celebrations in small groups

Interior participation in the celebration

Mystagogical catechesis

64. The Church's great liturgical tradition teaches us that fruitful participation in the liturgy requires that one be personally conformed to the mystery being celebrated, offering one's life to God in unity with the sacrifice of Christ for the salvation of the whole world. For this reason, the Synod of Bishops asked that the faithful be helped to make their interior dispositions correspond to their gestures and words. Otherwise, however carefully planned and executed our liturgies may be, they would risk falling into a certain ritualism. Hence the need to provide an education

in eucharistic faith capable of enabling the faithful to live personally what they celebrate. Given the vital importance of this personal and conscious *participatio*, what methods of formation are needed? The Synod Fathers unanimously indicated, in this regard, a mystagogical approach to catechesis, which would lead the faithful to understand more deeply the mysteries being celebrated. (186) In particular, given the close relationship between the *ars celebrandi* and an *actuosa participatio*, it must first be said that "the best catechesis on the Eucharist is the Eucharist itself, celebrated well." (187) By its nature, the liturgy can be pedagogically effective in helping the faithful to enter more deeply into the mystery being celebrated. That is why, in the Church's most ancient tradition, the process of Christian formation always had an experiential character. While not neglecting a systematic understanding of the content of the faith, it centred on a vital and convincing encounter with Christ, as proclaimed by authentic witnesses. It is first and foremost the witness who introduces others to the mysteries. Naturally, this initial encounter gains depth through catechesis and finds its source and summit in the celebration of the Eucharist. This basic structure of the Christian experience calls for a process of mystagogy which should always respect three elements:

a) *It interprets the rites in the light of the events of our salvation*, in accordance with the Church's living tradition. The celebration of the Eucharist, in its infinite richness, makes constant reference to salvation history. In Christ crucified and risen, we truly celebrate the one who has united all things in himself (cf. *Eph* 1:10). From the beginning, the Christian community has interpreted the events of Jesus' life, and the Paschal Mystery in particular, **in relation to the entire history of the Old Testament.**

b) A mystagogical catechesis must also be concerned with *presenting the meaning of the signs contained in the rites*. This is particularly important in a highly technological age like our own, which risks losing the ability to appreciate signs and symbols. More than simply conveying information, a mystagogical catechesis should be capable of making the faithful more sensitive to the language of signs and gestures which, together with the word, make up the rite.

c) **Finally, a mystagogical catechesis must be concerned with bringing out the significance of the rites for the Christian life in all its dimensions – work and responsibility, thoughts and emotions, activity and repose.** Part of the mystagogical process is to demonstrate how the mysteries celebrated in the rite are linked to the missionary responsibility of the faithful. The mature fruit of mystagogy is an **awareness that one's life is being progressively transformed by the holy mysteries being celebrated. The aim of all Christian education, moreover, is to train the believer in an adult faith that can make him a "new creation", capable of bearing witness in his surroundings to the Christian hope that inspires him.** [Omitted]

65.-69. [Omitted]

Reverence for the Eucharist; Adoration and eucharistic devotion; The practice of eucharistic adoration; Forms of eucharistic devotion; The location of the tabernacle

PART THREE: THE EUCHARIST, A MYSTERY TO BE LIVED

"As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me" (*Jn* 6:57)

The Eucharistic form of the Christian life

Spiritual worship – logiké latreía (Rom 12:1)

70. The Lord Jesus, who became for us the food of truth and love, speaks of the gift of his life and assures us that "if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever" (*Jn* 6:51). This "eternal life" begins in us even now, thanks to the transformation effected in us by the gift of the Eucharist: "He who eats me will live because of me" (*Jn* 6:57). These words of Jesus make us realize how the mystery "believed" and "celebrated" contains an innate power making it the principle of new life within us and the form of our Christian existence. By receiving the body and blood of Jesus Christ we become sharers in the divine life in an ever more adult and conscious way. Here too, we can apply Saint Augustine's words, in his *Confessions*, about the eternal *Logos* as the food of our souls. Stressing the mysterious nature of this food, Augustine imagines the Lord saying to him: "I am the food of grown men; grow, and you shall feed upon me; nor shall you change me, like the food of your flesh, into yourself, but you shall be changed into me." (198) It is not the eucharistic food that is changed into us, but rather we who are mysteriously transformed by it. Christ nourishes us by uniting us to himself; "he draws us into himself." (199)

Here the eucharistic celebration appears in all its power as the source and summit of the Church's life, since it expresses at once both the origin and the fulfilment of **the new and definitive worship of God, the *logiké latreía***. (200) Saint Paul's exhortation to the Romans in this regard is a concise description of how the Eucharist makes our whole life a spiritual worship pleasing to God: "I appeal to you therefore, my brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship" (*Rom* 12:1). In these words the new worship appears as a total self-offering made in communion with the whole Church. The Apostle's insistence on the offering of our bodies emphasizes the concrete human reality of a worship which is anything but disincarnate. The Bishop of Hippo goes on to say that "this is the sacrifice of Christians: that we, though many, are one body in Christ. The Church celebrates this mystery in the sacrament of the altar, as the faithful know, and there she shows them clearly that in what is offered, she herself is offered." (201) Catholic doctrine, in fact, affirms that the Eucharist, as the sacrifice of Christ, is also the sacrifice of the Church, and thus of all the faithful. (202) This insistence on sacrifice – a "making sacred" – expresses all the existential depth implied in the transformation of our human reality as taken up by Christ (cf. *Phil* 3:12).

The all-encompassing effect of Eucharistic worship

71. Christianity's new worship includes and transfigures every aspect of life: "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (*1 Cor* 10:31). Christians, in all their actions, are called to offer true worship to God. Here the intrinsically eucharistic nature of Christian life begins to take shape. The Eucharist, since it embraces the concrete, everyday existence of the believer, makes possible, day by day, the progressive transfiguration of all those called by grace to reflect the image of the Son of God (cf. *Rom* 8:29ff.). There is nothing authentically human – our thoughts and affections, our words and deeds – that does not find in the sacrament of the Eucharist the form it needs to be lived to the full. **Here we can see the full human import of the radical newness brought by Christ in the Eucharist: the worship of God in our lives cannot be relegated to something private and individual, but tends by its nature to permeate every aspect of our existence.** Worship pleasing to God thus becomes a new way of living our whole life, each particular moment of which is lifted up, since it is lived as part of a relationship with Christ and as an offering to God. The glory of God is the living man (cf. *1 Cor* 10:31). And the life of man is the vision of God. (203)

72.-76 [Omitted] *Iuxta dominicam viventes – living in accord with the Lord's Day; Living the Sunday obligation; Meaning of rest and of work; Sunday assemblies in the absence of a priest; A eucharistic form of Christian life, membership in the Church; Spirituality and eucharistic culture*

77. Significantly, the Synod Fathers stated that **"the Christian faithful need a fuller understanding of the relationship between the Eucharist and their daily lives. Eucharistic spirituality is not just participation in Mass and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. It embraces the whole of life."** (216) This observation is particularly insightful, given our situation today. It must be acknowledged that **one of the most serious effects of the secularization just mentioned is that it has relegated the Christian faith to the margins of life** as if it were irrelevant to everyday affairs. The futility of this way of living – "as if God did not exist" – is now evident to everyone. Today there is a need to **rediscover that Jesus Christ is not just a private conviction or an abstract idea, but a real person**, whose becoming part of human history is capable of renewing the life of every man and woman. Hence the Eucharist, **as the source and summit of the Church's life and mission, must be translated into spirituality, into a life lived "according to the Spirit"** (*Rom* 8:4ff.; cf. *Gal* 5:16, 25). It is significant that Saint Paul, in the passage of the *Letter to the Romans* where he invites his hearers to offer the new spiritual worship, also speaks of **the need for a change in their way of living and thinking: "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect"** (12:2). In this way the Apostle of the Gentiles emphasizes **the link between true spiritual worship and the need for a new way of understanding and living one's life**. An integral part of the eucharistic form of the Christian life is a new way of thinking, **"so that we may no longer be children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine"** (*Eph* 4:14).

78. The Eucharist and the evangelization of cultures

From what has been said thus far, it is clear that the eucharistic mystery puts us *in dialogue* with various cultures, but also in some way *challenges* them. (217) The intercultural character of this new worship, this *logiké latreía*, needs to be recognized. [Omitted]

79. The Eucharist and the lay faithful

[Omitted] And because the world is "the field" (*Mt* 13:38) in which God plants his children as good seed, the Christian laity, by virtue of their Baptism and Confirmation, and strengthened by the Eucharist, are called to live out the radical newness brought by Christ wherever they find themselves. (219) They should cultivate a desire that the Eucharist have an ever deeper effect on their daily lives, making them convincing witnesses in the workplace and in society at large. (220) I encourage families in particular to draw inspiration and strength from this sacrament. The love between man and woman, openness to life, and the raising of children are privileged spheres in which the Eucharist can reveal its power to transform life and give it its full meaning. (221) The Church's pastors should unfailingly support, guide and encourage the lay faithful to live fully their vocation to holiness within this world which God so loved that he gave his Son to become its salvation (cf. *Jn* 3:16).

80.-83. [Omitted] *The Eucharist and priestly spirituality; The Eucharist and the consecrated life; The Eucharist and moral transformation; The Eucharist, a mystery to be proclaimed*

The Eucharist and mission

84. In my homily at the eucharistic celebration solemnly inaugurating my Petrine ministry, I said that **"there is nothing more beautiful than to be surprised by the Gospel, by the encounter with Christ. There is nothing more beautiful than to know him and to speak to others of our friendship with him."** (233) These words are all the more significant if we think of the mystery of the Eucharist. The love that we celebrate in the

sacrament is not something we can keep to ourselves. By its very nature it demands to be shared with all. What the world needs is God's love; it needs to encounter Christ and to believe in him. The Eucharist is thus the source and summit not only of the Church's life, but also of her mission: "an authentically eucharistic Church is a missionary Church." (234) We too must be able to tell our brothers and sisters with conviction: "That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us" (1 Jn 1:3). **Truly, nothing is more beautiful than to know Christ and to make him known to others.** The institution of the Eucharist, for that matter, anticipates the very heart of Jesus' mission: he is the one sent by the Father for the redemption of the world (cf. Jn 3:16-17; Rom 8:32). At the Last Supper, Jesus entrusts to his disciples the sacrament which makes present his self-sacrifice for the salvation of us all, in obedience to the Father's will. We cannot approach the eucharistic table without being drawn into the mission which, beginning in the very heart of God, is meant to reach all people. Missionary outreach is thus an essential part of the eucharistic form of the Christian life.

85-87 [Omitted] The Eucharist and witness; Christ Jesus, the one Saviour; Freedom of worship

The Eucharist, a mystery to be offered to the world

88. [Omitted].

In the Eucharist Jesus also makes us witnesses of God's compassion towards all our brothers and sisters. The eucharistic mystery thus gives rise to a service of charity towards neighbour, which "consists in the very fact that, **in God and with God, I love even the person whom I do not like or even know.** This can only take place on the basis of an intimate encounter with God, an encounter which has become a communion of will, affecting even my feelings. Then I learn to look on this other person not simply with my eyes and my feelings, but from the perspective of **Jesus Christ.**" (240) In all those I meet, I recognize brothers or sisters for whom the Lord gave his life, loving them "to the end" (Jn 13:1). **Our communities, when they celebrate the Eucharist, must become ever more conscious that the sacrifice of Christ is for all, and that the Eucharist thus compels all who believe in him to become "bread that is broken" for others, and to work for the building of a more just and fraternal world.** Keeping in mind the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, we need to realize that Christ continues today to exhort his disciples to become personally engaged: "You yourselves, give them something to eat" (Mt 14:16). Each of us is truly called, together with Jesus, to be bread broken for the life of the world.

89. The social implications of the eucharistic mystery [Omitted]

90. The food of truth and human need [Omitted]

91. The Church's social teaching [Omitted]

92. The sanctification of the world and the protection of creation [Omitted]

93. The usefulness of a Eucharistic Compendium [Omitted]

CONCLUSION

94. [Omitted]

95-96. The **martyrs of Abitinae**; Mary Most Holy...**tota pulchra, the all-beautiful** [Omitted]

97. [Omitted]

Notes (1) – (256): see http://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_ben-xvi_exh_20070222_sacramentum-caritatis.html#CONCLUSION