

EUCCHARIST, FAITH, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

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Church of St. Francis Xavier, New York City

Second Sunday of Easter, April 7, 2004

- I. Christian faith is a praxis (not an idea, concept, argument).
 - A. From the side of liberation/political theologies: mysticism/liturgy and politics/ethics
 - B. From the side of sacramental-liturgical theologies: drawing on ancient tradition.

- II. Putting Liturgy/Eucharist in Biblical-Traditional-Ethical Perspective
 - A. The entire Christian life is the worship of God. The *ritual* worship of the church is for the purpose of revealing and empowering such life.
 1. Primordial (biblical, early-church) tradition (*Sacrosanctum concilium*, 1–4)
 2. The sacraments' purpose is to "teach [the faithful] all that Christ has commanded, and to invite them to all the works of charity, piety, and the apostolate. For all these works make clear that Christ's faithful, though not of this world, are to be the light of the world and to glorify the Father before [people]. Nevertheless, the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time, it is the font from which all her power flows" (*SC*, 9b-10a).
 3. "In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy the full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else, for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit" (*SC*, 14). What are the biblical-revelatory roots of all this?
 - B. Romans 12:1: "I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship."
 - C. 1 Peter 2:1-5: "Rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, insincerity, envy, and all slander; like newborn infants, long for pure spiritual milk so that through it you may grow into salvation, for you have taste that the Lord is good. Come to him, a living stone, rejected by human beings but chosen and precious in the sight of God, and, like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."
 - D. Ancient Christian terms for worship
 1. Sacrifice
 2. Holiness
 3. Priestly people (1 Pet 2:9)
 4. Day of the Lord (2 Pet 3:10)
 5. New heaven and a new earth (2 Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1)

- III. The ongoing reform/restoration and renewal of the liturgy and, thus, the church
 - A. The Assembly
 - B. The Liturgy of the Word: What God? *This* God.
 - C. The Liturgy of the Eucharist
 1. Augustine: Receive who you are, the body of Christ.
 2. Communion sacrifice (Rev 19:9) verified by ethical living (solidarity)

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