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IL ROSARIO
«COMPENDIO DI TUTTO IL VANGELO»
(Pio XII)

La memoria della beata Vergine Maria del Rosario, celebrata in tutta la Chiesa da più di quattro secoli nel mese di ottobre, è un eloquente esempio del rapporto che corre tra la celebrazione liturgica e la pietà popolare. Si tratta di complementarietà tra azioni differenti tra loro eppure in sintonia, come sapientemente rilevava il Papa Paolo VI nell'Esortazione apostolica Marialis cultus: «Etsi utrumque precandi genus ad rerum ordines pertinet, qui suapte natura inter se differunt, nihilominus sive anamnesis in sacra Liturgia sive recordatio contemplativa in mariali Rosario in iisdem versantur salvificis eventibus, quorum auctor est Christus» (n. 48).

Non è difficile sentirsi chiedere se il Rosario sia preghiera mariana oppure cristologica. L'interrogativo ha motivo di essere posto, giacché se tutti i misteri del Rosario fanno riferimento a Cristo (la Sua gloria illumina l'Assunzione e l'Incoronazione di Maria in cielo), non tutti i misteri proposti alla meditazione fanno menzione della Madre del Signore (nei misteri dolorosi non si nomina Maria).

Inoltre, con la ripetizione delle Ave, Maria si trova anche quella del Pater noster e del Gloria Patri. Se la prima parte dell'Ave è composta dal saluto dell'Angelo (cf. Lc 1, 28) e dalla benedizione di Elisabetta (cf. Lc 1, 42), il contenuto di tale rivolgersi a Maria è direttamente motivato da Gesù Cristo: la Vergine è salutata dall'Angelo e benedetta dalla cugina in ragione del suo Figlio Gesù. La seconda parte dell'Ave si presenta come una supplica alla Madre di Dio.

Non v'è dubbio che nella tradizione ecclesiale e nel sentire comune dei fedeli il Rosario sia una preghiera mariana, denominata anche « Salterio della Vergine ». Occorre tuttavia riconoscere con Paolo VI che « Rosarium... cum Evangelio innitatur et ad mysterium Incarnationis hominumque redemptionem tamquam ad centrum pertineat, oratio est putanda, quae ad rem christologiam prorsus convertitur » (Marialis cultus, n. 46). In questo senso, la preghiera mariana del Rosario è in linea col sentire liturgico della Chiesa, che celebra Maria intimamente congiunta con i misteri di Cristo (cf. SC, n. 103).

Il successo plurisecolare e popolare incontrato dal Rosario dev'essere attribuito, innanzitutto, alla sua semplicità e facilità: può essere pregato anche dagli illetterati, recitato in un letto d'ospedale, proposto anche ai bambini...

In secondo luogo, molto han contribuito alla recezione della pratica occidentale del Rosario numerosi santi e sante che, con l'esempio e la parola, ne hanno sottolineato i salutarî frutti per la vita spirituale. La corona del Rosario ha trovato posto anche nell'affresco michelangiolesco del « Giudizio universale » nella Cappella Sistina: aggrappati alla corona del Rosario è più facile ascendere verso il Signore glorioso nell'alto dei cieli.

Si può pensare che proprio a motivo della mirabile armonia cristologico-mariana che contraddistingue la pia preghiera del Rosario, i Sommi Pontefici abbiano ripetutamente esortato i fedeli alla sua recita frequente.

La stima riservata dalla Chiesa al Rosario ha trovato espressione nel disporre un Ordo benedictionis coronarum Rosarii (De benedictionibus, nn. 1183-1207). Le formule di benedizione indicate nel rito, opportunamente consigliato nelle feste mariane o in occasione di pellegrinaggi a santuari

(ib., n. 1184), mettono in luce la nota cristologico-mariana del Rosario, evidenziando l'innesto della figura di Maria nei misteri della Redenzione operata da Cristo: «*Praestet nobis fidelibus suis, pia Rosarii precatione suffultis, ut, Iesu gaudia, passionem et gloriam cum Maria, eius Matre...*» (ib., n. 1197); «*... fideles tui beatam Mariam Virginem fidenter implorent et Christi Iesu mysteria assidue revolventes...*» (ib., n. 1198).

Il Rosario recitato nelle parrocchie, sovente prima o dopo la Messa, o pregato da migliaia di fedeli nei grandi santuari mariani, accompagnato da canti e processioni con le candele accese, è una testimonianza ed una proposta di preghiera «per tutti». Lo ha ricordato Giovanni Paolo II la sera del 5 ottobre: «Il mio pensiero si estende a quanti si sono uniti a noi nella preghiera, mediante la radio e la televisione: penso alle famiglie, agli anziani, che hanno tanto caro il Rosario, ma anche ai giovani che pare lo vadano riscoprendo» (L'Osservatore Romano, 7-8 ottobre 1996).

SOMMAIRE - SUMARIO - SUMMARY - ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Ioannes Paulus PP. II (pp. 706-721)

On rapporte quelques extraits d'appels et de discours, qui contiennent des évocations de la vie liturgique: en particulier les passages relatifs au Baptême dans les homélies et discours prononcés à l'occasion de la visite pastorale en France pour célébrer le quinzième centenaire du baptême de Clovis. C'est encore sur le thème du Baptême qu'est centrée la lettre adressée à l'Eglise de Saint-Domingue pour rappeler les premiers baptêmes dans le nouveau monde.

* * *

Se reproducen algunos párrafos de discursos cuyos contenidos hacen referencia a la vida litúrgica: de modo particular aquellos relativos al bautismo, entresacados de los pronunciados durante la visita pastoral a Francia para celebrar el decimoquinto centenario del Bautismo de Clodoveo. Sobre el mismo tema del Bautismo se centra la carta dirigida a la Iglesia de Santo Domingo con ocasión de recordar los primeros bautismos en el nuevo mundo.

* * *

We publish some extracts from discourses and appeals referring to liturgical life, in particular, those concerning Baptism, pronounced during the Holy Father's pastoral visit to France on the occasion of the fifteenth centenary of the Baptism of Clovis. We also publish the text of the letter addressed by the Holy Father to the Church in the Dominican Republic recalling the first Baptisms in the New World.

* * *

Es werden einige Auszüge aus Aufrufen und Ansprachen wiedergegeben, die sich auf das liturgische Leben beziehen: insbesondere jene, welche die Taufe zum Inhalt haben, und während des Pastoralbesuches in Frankreich, aus

Anlaß der 1500 Jahrfeier der Taufe Chlodwigs, gehalten wurden. Um das Thema Taufe kreist auch der an die Kirche in Santo Domingo, zur Erinnerung an die ersten in der Neuen Welt gespendeten Taufen, gerichtete Brief.

Alia Dicasteria (pp. 722-755)

Le texte d'étude et de travail, préparé par le Comité pontifical pour les Congrès eucharistiques internationaux en vue de préparer le 46e Congrès eucharistique international, qui se tiendra en 1997 à Wrocław, Pologne, a pour thème le rapport entre Eucharistie et liberté. Il a semblé utile de rapporter ce texte dans sa version anglaise et en entier, de manière à diffuser par ce moyen une action pastorale féconde dans toutes les Eglises.

* * *

El texto de estudio y trabajo, preparado por el Pontificio Comité para los Congresos Eucarísticos Internacionales para la preparación al 46° Congreso Eucarístico Internacional, que se celebrará en 1997 en Wrocław, Polonia, relaciona entre sí Eucaristía y libertad. Ha parecido útil transcribir el texto íntegro en su versión inglesa, de modo que su difusión promueva una fructífera acción pastoral en todas las Iglesias.

* * *

The text of the study document prepared by the Pontifical Committee for International Eucharist Congresses in preparation for the 46th. International Eucharist Congress, to be held in Wrocław, Poland, concentrates on the theme of the relationship between the Eucharist and liberty. This document is reproduced in its English version in the hope that it will contribute to proficuous pastoral action in all of the dioceses.

* * *

Der vom Päpstlichen Komitee für die Internationalen Eucharistischen Kongresse zur Vorbereitung auf den 46. Internationalen Euchari-

stischen Kongress, der 1997 in Wrocław (Polen) stattfinden wird, herausgegebene Studien- und Arbeitstext behandelt das Thema der Beziehung zwischen Eucharistie und Freiheit. Es erschien von Nutzen den kompletten Text in seiner englischen Version wiederzugeben, um auf diese Weise in allen Kirchen gewinnbringende pastorale Initiativen anzuregen.

Studia (pp. 756-763)

Son Excellence Mgr Medina Estévez avait déjà publié en Chili, le 20 juillet 1996, quelques pages sur la célébration liturgique: on en trouvera ici le texte de nouveau, car ces pages constituent un rappel pastoral efficace au sens de la célébration selon l'esprit du renouveau liturgique.

* * *

Su Excelencia Mons. Jorge Medina Estévez publicó en Chile, el 20 de julio de 1996, unas páginas sobre la celebración litúrgica. Se reproduce aquí el texto, dado que constituye una eficaz llamada pastoral al sentido de la celebración según el espíritu de la renovación litúrgica.

* * *

On 20 July 1996 His Excellency Mons. Medina Estevez published some pages in Chile concerning liturgical celebration. We again reproduce the text of those pages given the pastoral importance of celebrating according to the spirit of the liturgical renewal.

* * *

S. Exz. Msgr. Medina Estévez hatte bereits am 20. Juli 1996 in Chile, einige Seiten über die liturgische Zelebration veröffentlicht. Der Text, der einen eindrucksvollen pastoralen Hinweis auf den Sinn der Zelebration im Geist der liturgischen Erneuerung darstellt, soll hier erneut wiedergegeben werden.

Actuositas liturgica (pp. 764-775)

Nous publions la première partie de la liste des éditions officielles des textes liturgiques, ainsi que le plan d'action pastorale établi par la Commission épiscopale de liturgie de la Conférence épiscopale espagnole, comme un exemple de ce qu'a de souhaitable une coordination efficace entre la préparation au Grand Jubilé et un renouveau liturgique bien orienté.

* * *

Se publica la primera parte del Elenco de las ediciones oficiales de los textos litúrgicos, y el Plan de acción pastoral de la Comisión episcopal de liturgia de la Conferencia Episcopal Española, porque constituye un ejemplo de cómo es posible una efectiva coordinación entre la preparación al Gran Jubileo y una renovación litúrgica terminada y orientada.

* * *

We publish the first part of the list of official liturgical texts and the plan of pastoral action prepared by the Episcopal Commission for Liturgy of the Spanish Episcopal Conference which demonstrates an effective coordination between preparations for the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 and a planned liturgical renewal.

* * *

Wir veröffentlichen den ersten Teil der Liste der offiziellen Ausgaben liturgischer Texte und den Pastoralen Aktionsplan der Bischöflichen Liturgiekommission der spanischen Bischofskonferenz, welcher in beispielhafter Weise aufzeigt, wie wünschenswert eine wirksame Koordination zwischen der Vorbereitung auf das » Große Jubiläum « und einer zielgerechten und gut ausgerichteten liturgischen Erneuerung ist.

Acta

BEATIFICATIONES

Die 23 Iunii 1996, Berolini (Germania):

Beatus Bernardus Lichtemberg, presbyter et martyr;

Beatus Carolus Leisner, presbyter et martyr.

Die 6 Octobris 1996, in area quae respicit Basilicam Vaticanam:

Beati Vincentius Lewoniuk et duodecim socii, martyres:

Daniel Karmasz,

Lucas Bojko,

Constantinus Bojko,

Bartholomaeus Osypiuk,

Anicetus Hryciuk,

Philippus Geryluk,

Ignatius Franczuk,

Ioannes Andrzejuk,

Maximus Hawryluk,

Onuphrius Wasyluk,

Michael Wawryszuk;

Beatus Edmundus Ignatius Rice, religiosus;

Beata Maria Anna Mogas i Fontcuberta, virgo;

Beata Marcellina Darowska, religiosa.

LETTERA PER IL V CENTENARIO DEI PRIMI BATTESIMI AMMINISTRATI IN SANTO DOMINGO*

Queridos Hermanos en el Episcopado,
amados sacerdotes, religiosos, religiosas y fieles laicos:

1. El próximo día 21 de septiembre se cumple el V Centenario de los primeros bautismos conferidos en el Nuevo Mundo. Tuvieron lugar en el territorio de la actual diócesis de La Vega, en la isla conocida entonces como La Española. Ya con anterioridad algunos hijos de esas tierras habían recibido las aguas bautismales en Barcelona en el año 1493 y después otros en el Monasterio de Guadalupe (Extremadura) el 29 de julio de 1496, pero fue en la fiesta del apóstol San Mateo cuando se pronunciaron por vez primera en suelo americano las palabras de la fórmula sacramental: «Yo te bautizo en el nombre del Padre, y del Hijo y del Espíritu Santo», otorgando así la filiación divina al indio Guaticaba, a quien se puso por nombre Juan Mateo, y a la gente de su casa y familia.

Es justo que este importante acontecimiento sea recordado y por eso me uno a todos vosotros para dar gracias al Señor por los abundantes dones recibidos en estos cinco siglos de presencia eclesial en América, así como por los copiosos frutos de vida cristiana que el Señor ha ido suscitando en las diversas comunidades de la República Dominicana y de toda América, con ellas entono la alabanza a Dios, que nos llama a la vida nueva y nos introduce en ella por medio del sacramento del Bautismo.

2. «Los trabajos apostólicos se ordenan a que, una vez hechos hijos de Dios por la fe y el bautismo todos (...) participen en el sacrificio y coman la Cena del Señor» (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 10). Cuando en el segundo viaje de Colón doce misioneros acompañaban a

* *L'Osservatore Romano*, 22 settembre 1996.

Fray Bernardo Boyl, la *Instrucción Real* ordenaba al Almirante que «trabajase por atraer a los moradores de aquellas islas a la fe católica». Así, la labor de aquellos primeros evangelizadores se dirigía a que, mediante la predicación y la catequesis, los habitantes de la Isla abrazasen la fe y recibieran el bautismo, siendo éste el primer fruto de aquella ingente obra misionera, iniciada por España.

La gracia divina, que precede y acompaña las obras de los hombres, por la predicación de los misioneros, llamó a la fe al cacique del Guarionex, quien después de un catecumenado de dos años, recibió el sacramento bautismal junto con algunos familiares, dando origen así a la primera comunidad cristiana del Nuevo Mundo. Se cumplía de ese modo el mandato que los Apóstoles y sus sucesores recibieron de Cristo en el monte de Galilea: «Id, pues, y haced discípulos a todas las gentes, bautizándolas en el nombre del Padre, del Hijo y del Espíritu Santo» (*Mt* 28, 19), mandato que conserva su carácter de perentorio hasta el final de los tiempos.

El cacique Guaticaba, incluso antes de recibir el bautismo, acompañaba a los misioneros en sus visitas al interior de la Isla haciendo de traductor e intérprete, y al poco tiempo de bautizado recibió la palma del martirio por la fe católica, diciendo mientras le mataban: «Dios naboria daca, Dios naboria daca», que en su lengua significaba «Yo soy siervo de Dios» (cf. HERNANDO COLON, *Historia del Almirante*, cap. XXV).

3. Hace unos años celebramos el V Centenario del aquel memorable 12 de octubre de 1492 en el que se encontraron los dos mundos y que señala el inicio de la evangelización de América. Después, el 6 de enero de 1494 tuvo lugar la primera Misa en La Isabela. La efemérides que ahora recordamos, junto con la del 8 de agosto de 1511, cuando el Papa Julio II erigió las primeras diócesis del Nuevo Mundo, permiten afirmar que la Iglesia quedó verdaderamente plantada en América, con lo cual «se ensancha la historia de la salvación, crece la familia de Dios, se multiplica «para gloria de Dios el número de los que dan gracias» (2 *Cor* 4, 15)» (*Discurso en Santo Domingo*, 12.X.1992, 3).

Los cristianos atribuimos siempre un carácter religioso a los aniversarios, que se celebran como un particular momento de gracia para los individuos y las comunidades, lo cual les atribuye un papel importante y significativo (cf. *Tertio millenio adveniente*, 15). En el caso presente nos encontramos con un aniversario que se refiere al bautismo de los habitantes del continente americano y ello nos invita a redescubrir las riquezas insondables de este sacramento y a asumir, con renovado fervor, los compromisos que se derivan del mismo. Esta invitación aparece además reforzada por el programa de preparación al Gran Jubileo del Año 2000, en el cual, dentro de un plan orgánico de renovación eclesial, he propuesto que el año 1997 reflexionando sobre « *Cristo Salvador y Evangelizador* » (*ibíd.*, 40) se considere « el descubrimiento del Bautismo como fundamento de la existencia cristiana » (*ibíd.*, 41).

4. « Todos los bautizados en Cristo os habéis revestido de Cristo » (*Gal* 3, 27). Al recibir el sacramento del Bautismo los cristianos son consagrados por el nuevo nacimiento del agua y la unción del Espíritu Santo y, entrando a formar parte de la Iglesia, constituyen « un linaje elegido, un sacerdocio real, una nación santa, un pueblo adquirido por Dios » (*1 Pe* 2, 9). Siendo verdaderos hijos de Dios « participan de la naturaleza divina y son, por tanto, realmente santos. Por eso deben, con la gracia de Dios, conservar y llevar a plenitud en su vida la santidad que recibieron » (*Lumen gentium*, 40).

Formando parte del pueblo de Dios, los cristianos, incorporados a Cristo por el Bautismo, participan también de las funciones de Cristo: sacerdote, profeta y rey, realizando cada cual según su condición la misión de todo el pueblo cristiano en la Iglesia y en el mundo. Por ello « están obligados a confesar delante de los hombres la fe que recibieron de Dios por medio de la Iglesia » (*ibíd.*, 11), siendo así sal de la tierra y luz del mundo. Además, en virtud del nuevo nacimiento en Cristo, todos tienen la misma dignidad, la misma gracia de hijos y la misma vocación a la perfección según los diferentes estados (cf. *ibíd.*, 31).

5. Con ocasión de este V Centenario que nos disponemos a celebrar, los Obispos de la República Dominicana han publicado la *Carta Pastoral* «*El Bautismo Don y Compromiso*», convocando a los fieles a que la gozosa celebración ayude a estimar aún más el propio bautismo y desde él se impulse «una nueva evangelización que involucre y llegue a todos, que integre la promoción humana y que se encarne en nuestra cultura, para que Cristo, presente en el corazón y en la acción de los dominicanos, realice su Reino entre nosotros» (n. 3). En efecto, esta celebración ha de ser para los fieles dominicanos y para todos los demás católicos de América un motivo para profundizar en la fe recibida, en la oración constante, en la renovación espiritual y en la vida de caridad y solidaridad.

Por todo ello, la Iglesia universal eleva su canto de agradecimiento al Señor de la historia por el inestimable don del Bautismo, por la acogida que éste ha encontrado en vuestras tierras a lo largo de estos cinco siglos, por el fervor con el que ha sido conservada la fe y sus variadas manifestaciones, por la riqueza espiritual que las comunidades católicas de América han representado y representan en la comunión eclesial, siendo prueba de ello «los tres grandes amores que han caracterizado la fe católica de vuestros pueblos: amor a la Eucaristía, amor a la Madre del Salvador y amor a la Iglesia en la persona del sucesor de Pedro» (*Carta*, 12.XII.1993, 3).

A la Virgen Santísima, Estrella de la primera y de la nueva evangelización, Madre de Dios y Madre nuestra, que en su advocación de Altagracia, tan venerada por los dominicanos, se nos presenta recogida en oración ante el misterio del Verbo hecho carne, confío los buenos propósitos de los Pastores y fieles para acoger en toda su profundidad el bautismo recibido y vivir con generosidad y audacia sus riquezas y exigencias. Para ello, que sea también de ayuda la Bendición Apostólica, que con afecto os imparto.

Vaticano, 4 de septiembre de 1996

Allocutiones

NUTRIRSI DELLA PAROLA DI DIO E DELL'EUCARISTIA*

Nei vostri gruppi, carissimi giovani, moltiplicate le occasioni di ascolto e di studio della parola del Signore, soprattutto mediante la *lectio divina*: vi scoprirete i segreti del Cuore di Dio e ne trarrete frutto per il discernimento delle situazioni e la trasformazione della realtà. Guidati dalla Sacra Scrittura, potrete riconoscere nelle vostre giornate la presenza del Signore, e allora anche il «deserto» potrà diventare un «giardino», nel quale è possibile alla creatura parlare familiarmente con il suo Creatore: «Quando leggo la divina Scrittura, Dio torna a passeggiare nel Paradiso terrestre» (S. AMBROGIO, *Epistola* 49, 3).

Gesù vive in mezzo a noi nell'Eucaristia, nella quale si realizza in maniera somma la sua presenza reale e la sua contemporaneità con la storia dell'umanità. Fra le incertezze e distrazioni della vita quotidiana imitate i discepoli in cammino verso Emmaus e, come loro, dite al Risorto che si rivela nell'atto di spezzare il pane: «Resta con noi perché si fa sera e il giorno già volge al declino» (*Lc* 24, 29). Invocate Gesù, perché lungo le strade delle tante Emmaus dei nostri tempi rimanga sempre con voi. Sia Lui la vostra forza, Lui il vostro punto di riferimento, Lui la vostra perenne speranza. Non manchi mai, cari giovani, il Pane eucaristico sulle mense della vostra esistenza. È da questo Pane che potrete trarre la forza per testimoniare la fede!

Attorno alla mensa eucaristica si realizza e si manifesta l'armoniosa unità della Chiesa, mistero di comunione missionaria, nella quale *tutti si sentono figli e fratelli*, senza preclusioni o differenze di razza, lingua, età, ceto sociale o cultura. Cari giovani, date il vostro contri-

* Ex nuntio dato occasione diei mundialis invenum (cf. *L'Osservatore Romano*, 17-18 agosto 1996).

buto generoso e responsabile per edificare continuamente la Chiesa come famiglia, luogo di dialogo e di reciproca accoglienza, spazio di pace, di misericordia e di perdono.

VENERARE I PROPRI SANTI*

È tenendo ben saldi questi principi dottrinali e morali che voi potrete contribuire a conservare e sviluppare il patrimonio cristiano della Nazione ungherese. I valori accumulati in oltre mille anni di storia costituiscono un patrimonio che gli ungheresi per primi devono amministrare. Se essi non vi si impegneranno, chi lo farà per loro? Altri non lo faranno per loro. Voi, che come cittadini siete parte della Nazione e come successori degli Apostoli siete capi del popolo di Dio, avete al riguardo una speciale responsabilità.

Promuovete in modo particolare *la venerazione dei vostri Santi*. In essi si riassume il meglio della vostra storia millenaria. Il loro esempio deve essere riproposto alle nuove generazioni. La santità autentica non passa mai di moda. Nella vita dei Santi ungheresi è possibile ammirare la fede intrepida e l'audacia apostolica, la nobiltà dell'animo e l'umiltà del cuore, lo spirito di penitenza e il servizio ai poveri, agli ammalati, agli ultimi. Non mancano tra loro rappresentanti di ogni ceto sociale, che hanno saputo essere testimoni di Cristo in ogni situazione, compresa anche quella del sacrificio supremo.

Sforzatevi, a vostra volta, di confortare il vostro insegnamento con la *coerenza della vita*. Ricorderete in tal modo ad ogni battezzato che universale è la chiamata alla santità. «Siate santi perché io, il Signore, Dio vostro, sono santo» (Lv 19, 2). Sono note le parole del Signore: «Siate dunque perfetti come è perfetto il Padre vostro celeste» (Mt 5, 48).

* Ex allocutione die 7 septembris habita Episcopis Hungariae, (cf. *L'Osservatore Romano*, 8 settembre 1996).

SIGNIFICATO ESSENZIALE DEL BATTESIMO ALLA LUCE DI MARIA*

3. De siècle en siècle, les successeurs des apôtres et de nombreux disciples ont travaillé à remplir cette mission confiée par le Seigneur. Dans votre région, saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort en fut l'un des plus remarquables. Je suis heureux de commencer mon pèlerinage en terre de France sous le signe de cette haute figure. Vous savez que je dois beaucoup à ce saint et à son « *Traité de la vraie dévotion à la Sainte Vierge* ». Aujourd'hui, puisque ma visite pastorale est placée, pour une bonne part, sous le signe du baptême, je voudrais avant tout mettre en relief le fait que, dans l'esprit de saint Louis-Marie, toute la vie spirituelle découle *directement du sacrement du saint baptême*, ainsi que le montre un passage significatif de l'Acte de consécration à Jésus Christ par les mains de Marie, précisément rédigé par Montfort. Au centre de cet acte, il y a ces paroles: « Moi – ici on prononce le nom, par exemple Louis-Marie, ou Jean-Paul, ou Charles – pécheur infidèle, je renouvelle et ratifie aujourd'hui entre vos mains (entre les mains de Marie), *les vœux de mon baptême*: je renonce pour toujours à Satan, à ses pompes et à ses œuvres, et je me donne tout entier à Jésus Christ, la Sagesse incarnée, pour porter ma croix à sa suite tous les jours de ma vie... » (*L'Amour de la Sagesse éternelle*, n. 225).

Le rappel des promesses du saint baptême est clair. Au cours de la liturgie baptismale, il a été demandé à chacun de nous: « Renoncez-vous à Satan, à toutes ses œuvres et à toutes ses séductions? » puis: « Croyez-vous? ». *L'acte du baptême va de pair avec le choix de Dieu, le choix du Christ, le choix de vivre dans la grâce de l'Esprit Saint*. Ce choix est, en un sens, la victoire sur le péché originel. La grâce sacra-

* Ex allocutione die 19 septembris 1996 habita apud Saint-Laurent-sur-Sèvre (Gallia), durante celebratione Vesperarum cum religiosis (*L'Osservatore Romano*, 25 settembre 1996).

mentelle du baptême efface le péché originel. Mais l'homme qui le reçoit doit donc lui-même renoncer au péché, pour correspondre ainsi à la grâce de la justification qui lui est offerte dans la foi au Christ. Dans le sacrement du baptême, il y a un certain retour au commencement, aux origines, quand il fallait choisir le bien et non le mal, le salut et non le refus. Si Grignon de Montfort fait entrer cela dans le contenu de sa vraie dévotion à la Mère de Dieu, il le fait parce que *Marie, par la volonté divine, dès son Immaculée Conception, a été inscrite dans le plan de Dieu pour surmonter le péché* par la justification reçue de la grâce qui vient du Christ. Il est bon qu'au commencement de ce pèlerinage qui me conduira également à Reims pour le mille cinq centième anniversaire du baptême de Clovis, nous puissions considérer ici d'un point de vue marial la signification essentielle du sacrement du baptême.

4. En m'adressant à vous, hommes et femmes engagés dans la vie consacrée, je voudrais redire que, « dans la tradition de l'Eglise, *la profession religieuse* est considérée comme *un approfondissement unique et fécond de la consécration baptismale* en ce que, par elle, l'union intime avec le Christ [...] se développe » (*Vita consecrata*, n. 30). Vous êtes appelés à aller plus loin encore, grâce à « *un don spécifique de l'Esprit Saint* » (*ibid.*), car vous choisissez de pratiquer radicalement les conseils évangéliques pour suivre le Christ, et vous prenez pour modèle la Vierge Marie, « exemple sublime de consécration parfaite, par sa pleine appartenance à Dieu et par le don total d'elle-même » (*ibid.* n. 28).

L'exigence de votre engagement peut paraître à vos contemporains difficile à comprendre et presque impossible à vivre. Que cela ne vous trouble pas! En vérité, fidèles et humbles, vous donnez *un témoignage dont le monde a besoin*. Votre libre choix du célibat, du renoncement aux biens et de l'obéissance constitue une réponse aux questions que beaucoup se posent sur les valeurs authentiques de leur vie. En somme, votre pratique des conseils évangéliques n'a d'autre sens que de confesser, dans un cœur sans partage, l'amour infini de Dieu, suprême richesse de l'homme, et la beauté libérante d'une dé-

pendance filiale et non servile (cf. *Vita consecrata*, n. 21). Vous avez vocation d'être de vivants signes de Dieu pour le monde en « reproduisant l'image de son Fils » (*Rm* 8, 29).

FAMIGLIA E VITA SACRAMENTALE*

Vous êtes « le sel de la terre » et « la lumière du monde ». Par ces paroles, le Seigneur vous invite à être *des témoins et des missionnaires auprès de vos frères*. Que votre vie, qui tient son sens du Christ, ait de la saveur pour ceux qui vous entourent! Que votre vie rayonne, car au fond de votre cœur le Seigneur est présent; il vous aime et il vous appelle à sa joie! C'est bien le fait de se savoir aimé qui permet d'avancer sur la route avec confiance. La vie des baptisés consiste tout d'abord à être relié au Christ, source de la vie, à recevoir de Lui la vie en abondance et à en devenir les témoins. « Le sacerdoce baptismal des fidèles, vécu dans le mariage-sacrement, constitue pour les époux et pour la famille le fondement d'une vocation et d'une mission sacerdotales » (*Familiaris consortio*, n. 59).

Plusieurs des témoignages que nous avons entendus soulignent *la place essentielle de l'Eucharistie*. Vous avez raison, car elle est une source à laquelle puisent les époux chrétiens. Dans le sacrifice de la nouvelle Alliance que le Christ scelle avec l'humanité, ils découvrent un modèle pour leur amour, qui est un don gratuit et une action de grâce. La relation conjugale ne peut pas reposer sur les seuls sentiments amoureux; elle se fonde *avant tout sur l'engagement définitif clairement voulu, sur l'alliance et sur le don, qui passent par la fidélité*. Par leur vie conjugale, les époux témoignent de l'amour vrai, qui intègre toutes les dimensions de la personne, spirituelle, intellectuelle, volontaire, affective et corporelle.

* Ex allocutione die 20 septembris 1996 habita in Sainte-Anne-d'Auray (Gallia) familiis coram admissis (*L'Osservatore Romano*, Supplemento, 25 settembre 1996).

RICERCARE LE SORGENTI DEL PROPRIO BATTESIMO*

2. «Un seul Seigneur, une seule foi, un seul baptême» (*Ep* 4, 5).

La liturgie de cette Messe nous invite à retrouver les sources de *notre baptême*. Voici quinze siècles, le roi des Francs, Clovis, reçut ce sacrement. Son baptême eut le même sens que tout autre baptême. Rappelons-nous les paroles du Christ: «Personne, à moins de naître de l'eau et de l'Esprit, ne peut entrer dans le Royaume de Dieu» (*Jn* 3 5). Il fut ainsi donné au souverain des Francs d'être appelé à la vie du Royaume de Dieu. Il avait longtemps médité le message chrétien dont témoignaient auprès de lui Clotilde, Remi, Vaast, Geneviève. Il fit le choix de renoncer à l'esprit du mal, à tout ce qui conduit au mal et à tout orgueil; en même temps, il professait la foi de l'Eglise et il adhérait au Christ, le Fils de Dieu fait homme, mort et ressuscité pour la rédemption du monde. Le baptême l'a libéré du péché originel et de tout péché commis antérieurement et, par la grâce sanctifiante, l'a fait participer à la vie de Dieu. Ses compatriotes baptisés avec lui reçurent les mêmes dons. Ils devinrent chrétiens, fils adoptifs de Dieu. Ils devinrent aussi membres du Peuple de Dieu, l'Eglise.

3. Nous avons écouté le prophète Ezéchiel. Ses paroles soulignent particulièrement ce second aspect du baptême. Il s'adresse aux fils et aux filles du Peuple de Dieu, au pluriel et non au singulier, et cela a une signification. Il dit: «J'irai vous prendre dans toutes les nations [...] Je verserai sur vous une eau pure, et vous serez purifiés. De toutes vos souillures, [...] je vous purifierai. Je vous donnerai un cœur nouveau, je mettrai en vous un esprit nouveau [...]. Alors vous suivrez mes lois, et vous observerez mes commandements et vous y serez fidèles» (*Ez* 36, 24-27). Quand le nouveau baptisé reçoit l'Es-

* Ex homilia habita die 22 septembris 1996, apud Reims (Gallia) occasione celebrationis XV centenarii Baptismi Clodovaei regis (*L'Osservatore Romano*, 25 settembre 1996).

prit, il entre dans *la communauté des baptisés*, enrichie par ce don, la communauté que Dieu rassemble et purifie pour lui donner un Esprit nouveau. Le prophète Ezéchiel s'adresse au Peuple de Dieu de la Première Alliance à Israël. Le Peuple de la Nouvelle Alliance, ce sont tous les baptisés, *provenant de tous les peuples et de toutes les nations*, et chacune de ces nations a *sa propre histoire*: une histoire marquée par l'adhésion au Christ d'hommes et de femmes des générations successives.

4. L'Evangile de cette Messe, à son tour, montre que le baptême concerne aussi la communauté tout entière. Le Christ dit aux disciples: « Vous êtes le sel de la terre [...]. Vous êtes la lumière du monde » (*Mt 5, 13.14*). Parlant ainsi, il pense à chaque personne: tout chrétien est le sel de la terre et chacun doit s'employer à ne pas laisser ce sel perdre sa saveur; s'il le laisse s'affadir il n'est plus bon à rien. Mais, en même temps, le Christ s'adresse à toute la communauté: vous, chrétiens baptisés, *vous*, catholiques de France, comme communauté, vous pouvez conserver la saveur du message évangélique, ou alors vous pouvez le perdre. *En tant que communauté*, portant dans votre cœur la lumière qui vient de Dieu, *vous pouvez* être la lumière qui illumine les autres, comme une ville située sur une montagne, ou bien vous pouvez devenir le contraire de cette lumière qui illumine les autres. Les hommes peuvent voir ce que vous faites de bien et en rendre gloire au Père qui est aux cieux (cf. *Mt 5, 16*), ou bien ils peuvent ne pas le voir, peut-être simplement parce que la lumière reste cachée sous le boisseau, ou encore parce qu'elle s'affaiblit!

Cette grande célébration jubilaire du baptême vous donne l'occasion de réfléchir sur *les dons que vous avez reçus* et sur *les responsabilités qui en découlent*. Au cours des siècles, ces dons ont été, assurément, multipliés de nombreuses fois en tous ceux qui sont devenus dans votre pays le sel de la terre, en ceux qui ont fait resplendir et qui continuent à faire resplendir la grande lumière du témoignage chrétien, de l'apostolat, de l'esprit missionnaire, du martyr, de toutes les formes de la sainteté. Que l'on pense aux martyrs depuis Pothin et Blandine de Lyon, aux pasteurs comme Martin ou Remi, François de

Sales ou Eugène de Mazenod, aux saintes femmes comme Jeanne d'Arc, Marguerite-Marie ou Thérèse de Lisieux, aux apôtres de la charité comme Vincent de Paul, aux saints éducateurs comme Nicolas Roland ou Jean-Baptiste de La Salle en cette ville même, aux fondatrices missionnaires comme Anne-Marie Javouhey ou Claudine Thévenet. Ce grand jubilé du baptême doit vous amener à dresser un vaste bilan de l'histoire spirituelle de « l'âme française ». Vous vous souviendrez certes de temps obscurs, de bien des infidélités et des affrontements, conséquences du péché. Mais vous vous souviendrez que toute traversée de l'épreuve est un appel pressant à la conversion et la sainteté, afin de suivre jusqu'au bout le Christ qui a livré sa vie pour le salut du monde. C'est quand la nuit nous enveloppe que nous devons penser à l'aube qui poindra, que nous devons croire que l'Eglise chaque matin renaît par ses saints. « Qui l'a une fois compris, disait Bernanos, est entré au cœur de la foi catholique, a senti tressaillir dans sa chair mortelle [...] une espérance surhumaine » (*Jeanne, relapse et sainte*).

5. Saint Paul écrivait aux Ephésiens: « Je vous encourage à suivre fidèlement l'appel que vous avez reçu de Dieu » (4, 1). Paul pense évidemment à la vocation personnelle de chacun des destinataires de cette lettre, mais, là encore, il s'adresse à toute la communauté de l'Eglise qui est à Ephèse. En tant qu'Eglise, les Ephésiens doivent *se comporter de manière digne de leur vocation*, avec humilité et avec douceur, avec patience et avec charité (cf. *Ep* 4, 2). Tous devraient avoir à cœur « de garder l'unité dans l'Esprit, par le lien de la paix » (*Ep* 4, 3). Pour que le Corps du Christ soit uni, il faut que tous soient animés par le même Esprit. Paul écrit: « Un seul Seigneur, une seule foi, un seul baptême, un seul Dieu et Père de tous, qui règne audessus de tous, par tous, et en tous » (*Ep* 4, 5-6). Tous les baptisés sont appelés à l'unité: l'unité de la foi, de la charité et de la vie chrétienne, l'unité sacramentelle de l'Eglise. Cette unité est l'œuvre de Dieu, de l'Esprit Saint et, en même temps, elle est confiée à chacun pour qu'il y contribue selon ses propres dons.

Dans le contexte du jubilé célébré aujourd'hui, les paroles de saint Paul présentent une profonde signification. C'est justement parce que vous avez derrière vous tant de siècles de christianisme que vous êtes appelés à agir de manière digne de la vocation chrétienne. La vocation des baptisés a une dimension constante, éternelle, et elle a une dimension particulière, temporelle. En un sens, les chrétiens de notre temps ont la même vocation que les premières générations de chrétiens de votre terre, et, en même temps, leur vocation est déterminée par l'étape présente de l'histoire. L'Eglise est toujours *une Eglise du temps présent*. Elle ne regarde pas son héritage comme le trésor d'un passé révolu, mais comme une puissante inspiration pour avancer dans le pèlerinage de la foi sur des chemins toujours nouveaux. L'Eglise va entrer dans son troisième millénaire. Il faut déchiffrer notre vocation chrétienne en fonction de notre temps, à la lumière des enseignements du Concile Vatican II sur l'Eglise, *Lumière des nations*, et sur l'Eglise *dans le monde de ce temps*: dans une attitude fraternelle, avec amour pour tous les hommes, l'Eglise n'a d'autre but que de « continuer, sous la conduite de l'Esprit consolateur, l'œuvre du Christ lui-même, venu dans le monde pour rendre témoignage à la vérité, pour sauver, non pour condamner, pour servir, non pour être servi » (*Gaudium et spes*, n. 3). Catholiques de France, en communion dans la foi, l'espérance et l'amour avec vos frères de toutes les régions du monde, soyez aujourd'hui le vivant reflet du visage du Christ, présent en son Corps qui est l'Eglise!

6. Frères et Sœurs, nous avons chanté comme refrain du psautre: « J'ai choisi d'habiter la maison de Dieu, j'ai choisi le bonheur et la vie! » *Que cette célébration jubilaire du baptême de Clovis vous remplisse de joie*, car elle rappelle le choix accompli il y a quinze siècles. Il faut se réjouir pour le choix renouvelé au cours des siècles par tant et tant de fils et de filles de votre terre; il faut se rejouir maintenant pour le choix fait par notre génération, au terme du deuxième millénaire. « J'ai choisi d'habiter la maison de Dieu »: ces paroles nous placent aussi dans la perspective eschatologique de la

vocation chrétienne, dans la perspective de la fin des temps, quand le Christ rassemblera tous les membres de son Corps dans le Royaume du Père. Par don de la grâce, nous pouvons aussi chanter: «J'ai choisi le bonheur et la vie». Oui, habiter dans la maison de Dieu est source de vie et de bonheur. Nous rappelons ceux qui nous ont précédés et qui sont accueillis désormais dans la maison de Dieu; nous prions en même temps pour ceux qui sont sur le chemin et pour que beaucoup d'autres s'y engagent. Que ne cesse de briller la lumière de la foi! Soyez dans la joie d'avoir choisi librement d'être unis au Christ par le baptême afin de marcher avec vos frères sur les chemins de vie!

PARTECIPARE ALLA VITA SACRAMENTALE DELLA CHIESA*

Le Concile Vatican II a renouvelé l'enseignement sur *le sacerdoce universel* de tous les croyants et sur *le sacerdoce ministériel*. Vos travaux, j'en suis sûr, se sont inspirés de ce magistère conciliaire, exprimé surtout dans la Constitution *Lumen gentium* sur l'Eglise. Cet enseignement est admirable, il libère notre manière de penser et notre expérience chrétienne de tout ritualisme étroit. Il nous apprend à faire de nos vies une offrande spirituelle (cf. *Rm* 12, 1).

La démarche conciliaire nous invite aussi à participer de la manière la plus profonde possible à la vie sacramentelle de l'Eglise, spécialement à l'Eucharistie. Pour prolonger votre démarche synodale, reprenez la lecture des documents conciliaires essentiels qui traitent du sacerdoce. Il faut sans cesse approfondir le sens du sacerdoce, aussi bien du sacerdoce universel des fidèles, lié au baptême, que du sacerdoce

* Ex allocutione die 22 septembris Reims (Gallia) habita (*L'Osservatore Romano*, 25 settembre 1996).

ministériel. Fidèles laïcs, vous serez plus assurés dans votre consécration baptismale et votre mission dans la communauté ecclésiale. Réfléchissez aussi au rôle irremplaçable de l'évêque et des prêtres: ils sont ordonnés pour célébrer l'Eucharistie du Seigneur et transmettre les dons de la grâce dans les autres sacrements, pour rassembler les fidèles au nom du Christ et pour être les premiers porteurs de la Parole de Dieu.

PONTIFICIO COMITATO PER I CONGRESSI EUCARISTICI INTERNAZIONALI

THE EUCHARIST AND FREEDOM
46th INTERNATIONAL EUCARISTIC CONGRESS
WROCLAW, POLAND 1997

"For freedom Christ has set us free" (Gal 5:1)

INTRODUCTION

AN EVENT OF GRACE IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

A "Statio Orbis" in Eastern Europe

1. The 46th International Eucharistic Congress will be celebrated in Wrocław, Poland, in 1997. For the first time in the history of the International Eucharistic Congresses, this will be a very timely occasion to reflect on the rich and stimulating theme of the Eucharist in relation to freedom. With the whole Church we are indeed moving towards the celebration of the Third Millennium of the Christian era at the close of a century which has witnessed the drama of entire nations being subjugated to totalitarian regimes. This painful experience has involved in a special way the nations of Eastern Europe. Only a few years ago, divine Providence allowed us to behold the signs of this oppression collapsing almost suddenly before our eyes. The celebration of the Congress will take place in the very heart of Eastern Europe, in Poland, in order to shed its light on all the nations which during the last decades have experienced the tragic negation of personal and social freedom. Thus, the Eucharistic mystery will highlight not only the positive experience of both the historical and social

aspects of freedom but also the supernatural quality of the freedom with which Christ has set us free.

The Eucharist – about which the whole Church will pause in adoration, as at a “*Statio Orbis*” – must, however, shed its light with the splendour of truth on all the nations of the world, not only on those which are still deprived of freedom or undergoing the trials of war; nor only on those people who are oppressed by new forms of poverty, underdevelopment, racial hatred, bad government, or the abuse of the mass media... For all people of the world the message of Christ’s true freedom must ring out as an urgent summons to proclaim truth, to respect the rights of God as guaranteeing the right of humanity, to seek concord and work towards true peace in justice.

The Eucharist, mystery of faith and life, gift of freedom

2. The Eucharist is at the centre of the Church’s faith and life. In Christ Jesus, the Incarnate Word, who died and is glorified, the living Bread and our Passover, we have the essence of all aspects of our redemption.

The 46th International Eucharistic Congress is focused on presenting and celebrating the mystery of the Eucharist in the light of a concept of far-reaching anthropological, social and salvific significance: freedom. This word “freedom” expresses the great quest of humanity, the desire of all people. Freedom is an expression of that spark of truth and life with which humanity was created in the image and likeness of God. Freedom both signifies humanity’s noblest expression and is also fraught with its greatest risk: “God willed that man should be ‘left in the hand of his own counsel’, so that he might of his own accord seek his Creator and freely attain his full and blessed perfection by cleaving to him”.¹

¹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, ET Geoffrey Chapman, 1994 [= CCC], n. 1730, p. 388; cf. GS 17; Sir 15:14.

Freedom is God's gift made to humanity in creation, and even more in redemption. It is, indeed, to the mystery of redemption that Paul is referring when he says: "For freedom Christ has set us free" (*Gal* 5:1 = RSV). Precisely because freedom is a fragile and endangered gift, it has been "redeemed" from sin and is "saved" by the gift of the Holy Spirit, in whom we have become children of God, freed from the slavery of sin so as to cry out together "Abba! Father!" (cf. *Gal* 4:4-6). The same Spirit enables us to turn to others as our brothers and sisters in the freedom and evangelical fraternity of the children of the one Father.

For this reason, so that we may remain free, Christ himself willed that the mystery of redemption and our liberation – his and our Passover – should be sacramentally presented to us in the Eucharist at all times and in all places until his glorious and definitive return, when: "freed from the corruption of sin and death, we shall sing the glory of the Father with every creature".²

On the threshold of the Great Jubilee of the year 2000

3. A strong summons to Christian freedom springs from its happy coincidence with the immediate preparation for the Great Jubilee of the year 2000. In the tradition of the people of Israel, a Jubilee year was indeed a joyful and community celebration of the freedom and liberation offered to all by God. Christ himself, consecrated by the Spirit and sent by the Father, came to put into effect the great Jubilee of redemption.

"It is he who brings liberty to those deprived of it, who frees the oppressed and gives back sight to the blind (cf. *Mt* 11:4-5; *Lk* 7:22). In this way he ushers in 'a year of the Lord's favour', which he proclaims not only with his words but above all by his actions".³

² Cf. *Eucharistic Prayer* IV.

³ POPE JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, n. 11; (ET) Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994.

The Great Jubilee of salvation was accomplished in the Paschal mystery of the death and resurrection of Christ, of which the Eucharist is the perpetual memorial.

In the perspective of preparation for the Great Jubilee of 2000, the year 1997, that of the International Eucharistic Congress in Wrocław, will be dedicated especially to celebrating the one Saviour of the world, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and today and for ever" (*Heb* 13:8); for "a renewed appreciation of Christ, Saviour and Proclaimer of the Gospel, with special reference to the fourth chapter of the Gospel of Luke, where the theme of Christ's mission of preaching the Good News and the theme of the Jubilee are interwoven..."⁴

The providential choice of the theme *Eucharist and Freedom* is meant to place at the centre of the celebration of the Eucharistic Congress Christ the Lord, source of freedom and true liberation.

The reflections suggested by the theme and proposed in this text are intended as an aid for the Church's preparation in the different nations. All alike, both the faithful and pastors, focusing on the Eucharist, should prepare for the Congress by following together a path which leads from listening to the Word, meditation, celebration and commitment, towards joyfully experiencing that freedom by which Christ has set us free and continues to set us free in the mystery of redemption.

I. THE GIFT OF FREEDOM IN A TIME OF CRISIS

1. THE PAINFUL EXPERIENCE OF A DIFFICULT TIME

A witness to true freedom

4. The proclamation of the Eucharist as the source of freedom is very relevant today. Never perhaps as in our century has the longing

⁴ *Ibid.*, n. 40.

for freedom coexisted with the trampling underfoot of the most elementary rights of individuals and nations. The conscience of humanity has wonderfully matured in this century as regards the dignity of the human person; and yet, never before perhaps have there been such terrible crimes committed against freedom and human rights.

Only recently, after many years of totalitarian rule, has the social and political freedom of humanity been restored to the nations of Eastern Europe, while at the same time, a crisis of true freedom is being experienced in the developed nations which have a long tradition of democracy. These facts present a powerful challenge for the Church.

What action must be taken to enable the Church, meditating on the Eucharist, to restore a true sense of freedom? How can the innate human sense of freedom become the foundation of a worthy response to the Creator? How can it be the basis of a society whose citizens and Christians, as well as the nations and peoples of the world, who are called to be one single family, may live together in fraternal solidarity?

The Church seeks in the light of Christ's Word and strengthened by the Bread of Life to be above all in this world "a living witness to truth and freedom, to justice and peace, that all humanity may be lifted up by the hope of a world made new".⁵

Trials and victories of Christian freedom

5. The Eucharistic Congress will take place at the end of a century which should have been a wonderful era of freedom. But freedom has been trampled down by totalitarian systems in the countries of the East: both by the brutality of Stalinist oppression; and by the tyranny of Nazism. The power of a spirit of independence has, nonetheless, become apparent even when in public life freedom has been

⁵ Cf. *Eucharistic Prayer: "pro diversis necessitatibus"* (for Various Needs and Occasions).

severely restricted or completely eliminated. The totalitarian systems did not endeavour to form human persons from within; they imposed external pressure. According to the ideology they proclaimed, industrialized society, which came about as a result of scientific and technological achievements, could not become the fruit of free decisions involving the participation of all free people. Freedom became untrustworthy.

At the same time, these systems showed themselves to be powerless when confronted with the inner freedom of human persons. Concentration camps, gulags, prisons and political trials brought about the inhuman destruction of millions of human beings. But they also occasioned untold triumphs of the human spirit. Human life took on a deeper significance in pardon, in effective love for one's neighbour, to the point of offering one's own life for the good of the enemy and for a better world. These were the triumphs of men and women whose lives were never disfigured by betrayal, collaboration with the forces of evil or compromise with the powerful.

A high price was paid in human terms. But this was offset by the wonderful witness of inner freedom. One might ask what was the source of this strength of character. What enabled human beings to sacrifice their lives in defending truth, justice or the lives of others? How can we explain the fact that in the very act of losing one's life from a human point of view one discovers the fullness of one's destiny, one's own "salvation"? Such questions cannot be satisfactorily answered without referring to human conscience, in whose core the divine law is etched and which is formed through experiencing universal and transcendent values.

The experience of genocide and the triumph of the human spirit reveal both the tragic and inspiring aspects of the reality of our time, aspects which cannot be regarded as something banal. In a poignant way these aspects signify the mystery of human beings' encounter with God; or rather, with the One who is the revelation of God, Christ Jesus. Experience has shown that the human spirit has ultimately proved stronger than the power of totalitarian regimes. These

latter suddenly collapsed either because of their intrinsic weakness or because of the yearning for freedom, which for decades filled the hearts of men and women, or, moreover, because of the special grace of God's providence and mercy.

2. TRUTH AND FREEDOM: THE AMBIGUITY OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE

The risk of freedom in contemporary culture

6. While a new situation of freedom has been created in many nations – often resulting from a reaction to a culture of dependence – we are, at the same time, experiencing today a sense of unbridled liberalism. The life-style created today is based on a notion of freedom that is almost absolute, lacking the moderation which the dignity of redeemed humanity demands for true freedom. The outcome of the loss of personal relationships is loneliness, the syndrome of the lonely crowd, a sense of the absurd, selfishness and emptiness regarding the meaning of existence which drives people more and more towards aggressive and brutal behaviour. This emptiness regarding the purpose of existence increasingly results in seeking substitutes for true freedom: for example, consumerism and hedonism, while on the other hand a great variety of alternative religious movements and the phenomenon of the rise of sects attempt to provide a delusive and alienating response for those seeking the true meaning of life.

While it is true that the humanistic currents of the Enlightenment shaped the notion of human rights, the interpretation of these rights without reference to the perspective of the natural law failed to recognise the dignity of the human person as person. This resulted in liberal and subjective trends which are based on certain individualistic claims regarding how to define and decide the nature of truth, justice and morality.

God did not bestow his own likeness, and hence, the possibility of true freedom, on an ideologically privileged race. He did not hand

over humanity to a revolutionary class struggling for the government of souls; nor did he entrust to a liberal State the task of reflecting the divine. Human beings, in fact, as persons, bears within themselves the image of the personal God, an image reinstated by the Redeemer's grace. They are, however, born not already free – as liberal thought affirms –, but with the capacity of becoming free and assured by the promise of liberating salvation. Human nature is weakened by the heritage of sin. For the development of personal freedom, capability and formation, human persons require, above all, to be redeemed, that is, ransomed by God himself. The mystery of evil is overcome by the mystery of salvation.

The gift of true freedom

7. The problem of freedom in the world today concerns the relationship between freedom and truth – that relationship perceived by conscience formed according to the revelation of the Gospel and the Church's teaching. John Paul II states: "only the freedom which submits to the Truth leads the human person to his true good. The good of the person is to be in the Truth and to *do* the Truth".⁶

The rupture of the link between truth and freedom has produced in our day a general collapse of values and, at times, a real catastrophe regarding the meaning of humanity. John Paul II denounces some of the symptoms of this situation: "All around us we encounter contempt for human life after conception and before birth; the ongoing violation of basic rights of the person; the unjust destruction of goods minimally necessary for a human life".⁷ All false interpretations of freedom, so often denounced by the Church's Magisterium in our time, find expression in a crisis of true freedom in the life of individuals, families, and society.

⁶ Enciclical Letter *Veritatis Splendor*, n. 84; ET Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993 – citing the Address to those taking part in the International Congress of Moral Theology (10 April 1986), 1: *Insegnamenti* IX, 1 (1986), 970.

⁷ *Ibid.*

In the face of this situation the message of Paul is still relevant regarding the need for human freedom to be freed from sin, redeemed by grace. "For freedom Christ has set us free" (*Gal 5:1*). Freedom itself needs to be set free. It is Christ who sets it free.⁸ "By his glorious Cross Christ has won salvation for all men. [...] The grace of Christ is not in the slightest way a rival of our freedom when this freedom accords with the sense of the true and the good that God has put in the human heart. On the contrary, as Christian experience attests especially in prayer, the more docile we are to the promptings of grace, the more we grow in inner freedom and confidence during trials, such as those we face in the pressures and constraints of the outer world. By the working of grace the Holy Spirit educates us in spiritual freedom in order to make us free collaborators in his work in the Church and in the world".⁹

3. THE CHRISTIAN'S RESPONSE TO FREEDOM

Contemplating the Crucified and Risen Christ

8. Faced with the difficulty of understanding in depth the true meaning of freedom, we behold shining before our eyes the splendour of the truth of Christ, the Crucified and Risen Lord, in his free sacrificial offering of himself to the Father for his brothers and sisters. "The Crucified Christ reveals the authentic meaning of freedom; he lives it fully in the total gift of himself and calls his disciples to share in his freedom".¹⁰ "Contemplation of Jesus Crucified is thus the highroad which the Church must tread every day if she wishes to understand the full meaning of freedom: the gift of self in *service to God and one's brethren*. Communion with the Crucified and Risen Lord is the neverending source from which the

⁸ Cf. *Ibid.*

⁹ CCC nn. 1741-1742; ET loc. cit., p. 390.

¹⁰ *Veritatis Splendor*, n. 85; ET loc. cit., p. 105.

Church draws unceasingly in order to live in freedom, to give of herself and to serve. [...] Jesus, then, is the living, personal summation of perfect freedom in total obedience to the will of God. His crucified flesh fully reveals the unbreakable bond between freedom and truth, just as his Resurrection from the dead is the supreme exaltation of the fruitfulness and saving power of a freedom lived out in truth".¹¹

In the Crucified and Risen Christ shines forth the truth of the free gift with which Jesus, "having loved his own who were in the world, loved them to the end" (*Jn* 13:1 RSV). The Eucharist is the sacrament of this love. This truth also corresponds in a special way to the truth about humanity and to the understanding of freedom. No one can live without being welcomed and accepted by another person, without experiencing love and giving love. "Man cannot live without love. He remains a being that is incomprehensible for himself, his life is senseless, if love is not revealed to him, if he does not encounter love, if he does not experience it and make it his own, if he does not participate intimately in it".¹²

On the one hand, a person finds fulfilment by being consumed in love, and in this way realizes his or her own infinite potential. On the other hand, love is also a particular kind of freedom, because one who loves moves constantly towards freedom – towards the freedom that sets one free from one's own limitations, from one's selfishness.

The Bread of freedom and life

9. Contemplation of the Crucified One and the gift of love have been the key to understand so many heroic lives of those who by listening to the words of the Master and being nourished by the Eucharistic Bread have remained faithful and borne witness to the

¹¹ *Ibid.*, n. 87; ET loc. cit., p. 107f.

¹² JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Redemptor Hominis*, n.10; ET CTS Do 506, p. 27.

truth of God. These examples from the past remain as an urgent reminder that, living in our society, we need to experience the indissoluble relationship between sharing in the Eucharistic Liturgy and the authentic freedom of God's children. We celebrate and bear witness to the freedom with which Christ has set us free by being nourished by the Word of the Gospel and the Eucharistic Bread, by entering into communion with Christ, by adoring the Father in spirit and truth, and by showing love for our brothers and sisters even to the point of giving up our lives for them.

We should also remember that in this century, as during the first ages of the Church, the Eucharist has been the Bread of Freedom, the viaticum for courage and martyrdom. In the catacombs of the twentieth century, its celebration has aroused faith and hope and strengthened the new martyrs who, by the witness of their lives and often at the price of death, have upheld the dignity of conscience and the value of obedience to God's law.

The International Eucharistic Congress can be an appropriate occasion for commemorating the martyrs of Christian freedom, for strengthening the bonds of communion, and for building a new society – a society which will stand firm against any regression to the moral poverty experienced during this century. Fixing our eyes on Christ, who is our Passover and liberation, this Congress offers an opportunity to hand on an education in the true sense of the freedom of God's children.

II. THE EUCHARIST, PROCLAMATION AND GIFT OF FREEDOM

1. CHRIST'S FREE OFFERING

The life of Christ, a mystery of freedom

10. The celebration of the Eucharist highlights the filial obedience with which Christ surrendered himself into the hands of those

who crucified him and into the hands of his Father. Christ's whole work of salvation is founded on the mystery of his limitless obedience to the Father. The Letter to the Hebrews tells us how Christ entered upon his saving works; as he came into the world, he said: "Sacrifices and offerings thou hast not desired [...] in burnt offerings and sin offerings thou has taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'Lo, I have come to do thy will, O God'" (*Heb* 10:5-7 RSV). During his public activity, Christ himself illustrated his life's programme with these words: "My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work" (*Jn* 4:34 RSV). Fidelity to this programme, which he often reiterated, reaches its dramatic climax in the mystery of the agony in Gethsemane and the death on the cross. In the Garden of Olives Christ concludes the torture of his mysterious hesitation by expressing his heroic readiness: "My Father [...] thy will be done" (*Mt* 26:42). On the cross, where he finally accomplished his work in accepting death, he seals his life's programme with the terse exclamation: "It is finished" (*Jn* 19:30). These words sum up his submission to the Father throughout his life; they are also the last act of the work accomplished by Christ: the work of salvation and rehabilitation of humanity in which human freedom is reborn.

"A death he freely accepted"

11. Christian tradition has applied to Christ's voluntary offering the words of the prophet Isaiah: "He was offered because he so willed" (*Oblatus est quia ipse voluit* – cf. *Is* 53:7 according to the Vulgate). His supreme freedom in accomplishing the work entrusted to him by the Father is clearly evident at the beginning of the "book of glory", that is, the chapters in which John narrates the glorious passion of the Lord. "Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end" (*Jn* 13:1 RSV). These words show that on Holy Thursday Christ was clearly conscious of the fact that the historic moment

of the accomplishment of his mission had arrived – a moment, that is, at the same time an historic one for all humanity. This moment was reached also because of what had taken place in the early hours of that day; it had its climax in his death: “obedient unto death, even death on a cross” (*Phil 2:8*). “Jesus’ hour” is thus wholly immersed in obedience and love. One of the principal moments of this hour is the mystery of the Eucharist.

By instituting the memorial of his sacrifice at the Last Supper, Jesus expressed in the most transparent manner the freedom with which he offers in immense love to his disciples his body and blood, which he poured out as a sign of his free and voluntary gift. The liturgy of the Church reminds us of Jesus’ gesture of freedom in certain Eucharistic Prayers from both the Western and Oriental traditions: “Before he was given up to death, a death he freely accepted, he took bread...”;¹³ “Father... in fulfilment of your will he gave himself up to death”.¹⁴ An Oriental anaphora expresses this clearly: “Accepting to suffer voluntarily for us sinners, he who committed no sin in the night when he was betrayed, or rather, when he gave himself up for the life and salvation of the world...”.¹⁵

This liturgical proclamation reminds us daily of the free act of love by which Christ offered himself to the Father for us, and, day after day, surrenders himself to the Church, so that in turn she may be for the faithful a source of true freedom in self-giving.

2. THE MYSTERY OF THE EUCHARIST

The Eucharist, gift of liberation

12. The Church’s Eucharistic liturgy recalls the gift of the freedom with which Christ has set us free at the heart of the celebration

¹³ *Eucharistic Prayer II.*

¹⁴ *Eucharistic Prayer IV.*

¹⁵ *Anaphora of St James.*

while introducing the words of Institution: "When the time had come to give his life for our liberation, he took bread...";¹⁶ "He always loved those who were his own in the world. When the time came for him to be glorified by you, his heavenly Father, he showed the depth of his love".¹⁷ The Eucharist expresses the mystery of Christ's freedom, the gift of liberation; it means love to the end, for only love can liberate.

The Holy Father Pope John Paul II put this eloquently in one of his first homilies during his third "Eucharistic pilgrimage" to Poland in 1987: "The Eucharist belongs to that Hour, to Christ's hour of redemption, to the hour of redemption in the history of humanity and of the world. This is the hour in which the Son of Man 'loved unto the end'. To the end he affirmed the saving power of love. He revealed that God himself is love. There has never been, and there will never be a greater revelation, a more radical confirmation of this truth: 'Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life' (Jn 15:13) for all, that they may 'have life and have it to the full' (Jn 10:10)".¹⁸

In this mystery of love, so powerfully expressed, which is at the heart of this 'hour of history', the mystery of Jesus' obedience to the Father is inseparable from his human freedom. In instituting the Eucharist, Christ indeed underlines the fact that it is intimately related to the New Covenant through the 'outpouring of blood' in his death, the climax of his submission to the Father in limitless filial obedience.

From the old to the new Passover

13. "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer" (Lk 22:14). The institution of the Eucharist is associated in

¹⁶ *Eucharistic Prayer of Reconciliation II.*

¹⁷ *Eucharistic Prayer IV.*

¹⁸ Homily during the Opening Mass of the National Eucharistic Congress, Warsaw, 8 June 1987.

this way with the great tradition of the Jewish Passover, the annual memorial of the liberation from Egypt, which it gives a new direction in pointing it towards the memorial of the New Covenant.

The memorial of Israel's liberation was at the heart of the celebration of its Passover. In the prayers of the Hebrew tradition we read these eloquent words that accompanied the Paschal banquet: "In every generation each individual is bound to regard himself as if he personally had gone forth from Egypt... Therefore we are bound to thank, praise, laud, glorify, extol, honour, bless, exalt and reverence him who did all these miracles for our ancestors and for us: he brought us forth from bondage to freedom, from sorrow to joy, from mourning to holydays, from darkness to great light".¹⁹

Jesus brings the Passover to fulfilment with his redeeming death and his resurrection, according to the words of Paul: "Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed" (*1 Cor 5:7 RSV*). At the Last Supper he institutes the memorial of his Passover and invites his disciples to carry out until his return in glory this memorial of his body which is given and of his blood which is poured out.

In the gift of his body and the outpouring of his blood Christ affirms our liberation and redemption from sin; in the sacrifice of the New Covenant he expresses the fullness of our liberation and our salvation with the inner gift of the Spirit, and he summons us to the eternal Passover in his Kingdom.

The Eucharist, the bread come down from heaven, the flesh offered for the life of the world, the gift of resurrection and life, is indeed Christ, the Incarnate Word, who died and is glorified; he leads us with him from this world to the Father and promises our final liberation, when he will raise us up on the last day (cf. *Jn 6:51-54*).

In the Eucharist we behold as in a mirror what we shall be enabled to contemplate face to face in eternity. We thus can face up

¹⁹ *The Pessach Haggada*, ET by Joseph Loewy and Joseph Guens, "Sinai" Publishing, Tel Aviv, Israel, 1965.

to the burden of living filled with the strength of the Eucharist and the hope of "rising again". This hope also confers special characteristics on human freedom. It teaches patience, perseverance, self-giving and sacrifice. And it shows us that the Risen Christ is the source and measure of the fullness of freedom.

3. CELEBRATION OF CHRISTIAN FREEDOM

The gift of the Spirit

14. The ineffable riches of the Cenacle, together with the gift of the priesthood, complete the command of the Apostles: "Do this in memory of me" (*1 Cor* 11:24; *Lk* 22:19). How profound and full of meaning is this command! What was instituted at the precise moment of that hour in the Cenacle, closely linked with what would happen in another moment of time on the same historic day, surpasses the limits of history as an event that would accompany the new People of God on their journey until the end of time. For Christians the Passover is, indeed, a person, Christ himself, and not merely an event of the past. Through the resurrection of Christ, it remains in the "today" of eternity.

"As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (*1 Cor* 11:26). We are called to participate in the gifts of redemption and salvation: the remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit. The experience of liberation is renewed for us especially through the outpouring of the Spirit of the Risen One, as in a renewed Pentecost, so that we may respond to Christ's gift with the same attitude of love freely given: "That we might live no longer for ourselves but for him, he sent the Holy Spirit..."²⁰

The Eucharist, instituted by the words "do this in memory of me", becomes, then, the redemptive encounter through which the infinite riches of salvation – including the possibility of rehabilitation of human

²⁰ *Eucharistic Prayer IV.*

freedom destroyed by sin – are, as it were, made available to humanity for all time. Through the Eucharist humanity is offered the possibility of emerging from slavery with all its consequences that today are bringing it to the edge of the precipice of total destruction. All three aspects of the Eucharist: sacrifice, communion, presence, share in the work of growing into that freedom for which “Christ has set us free”.

The liberating power of charity

15. The celebration of the breaking of the bread, which is also called “the Lord’s Supper” (*1 Cor 11:20*), constitutes the people of the New Covenant; it makes present the Risen Lord and unites all who share in the one bread and the one chalice into one single body in Christ in the Holy Spirit (cf. *1 Cor 10:16-17*). The divisions that remain within the community reflect, however, as Paul explains, an incomplete understanding of the original meaning of the Eucharist as communion with Christ and with one’s brothers and sisters (cf. *1 Cor 11:17-22*).

The communion of charity, on the contrary, and the sharing of goods are the condition and effect of communion with Christ in the Church. They eloquently express the fact that all barriers of selfishness have been broken down by the freedom with which Christ has set us free – that freedom granted to all believers who make up the new people (cf. *Acts 2:42-45*).

Irenaeus of Lyons was so fascinated by the freedom brought by Christ that he called the first disciples “preachers of truth and apostles of freedom”.²¹ He presents the Christian Eucharist from the standpoint of freedom. As a gift from the Lord, the Eucharist is an offering of people who are free.²² Even in the midst of persecutions, the first Christian communities understood and bore witness to the fact that the Eucharistic celebration was the source of a great impetus

²¹ *Adversus Haereses*, III.15,3; *PG* 7, 919.

²² *Ibid.*, IV, 18, 1-2; *PG* 7, 1025.

to mutual charity. This charity was able to make brothers and sisters of them all, forming them into a new people who were educated to bear witness courageously even to the point of martyrdom. They became capable of bringing about the renewal of society through their charity and a fresh social sense of solidarity that sprang from the Eucharistic celebration and became expressed in the sharing of their goods and contribution towards those in need.

III. TOWARDS EDUCATION IN FREEDOM IN THE LIGHT OF THE EUCHARIST

1. THE PRIMACY OF THE WORD IN EVANGELIZATION

Evangelization and catechesis

16. The preparation of the 46th International Eucharistic Congress on the eve of the Church's celebration of the Great Jubilee year 2000 offers a great opportunity for constantly "proclaiming" the true meaning of the Eucharist. It also expresses the task of ongoing re-evangelization of the Christian community on the basis of the Eucharist, which is the synthesis of word and sacrament. Christ's teaching turns us towards communion with him. What is proclaimed becomes a reality. There is a change in the form of proclamation. Evangelization becomes the proclamation of God's present action, creating through the Eucharist the greatest event of the ecclesial community. This community is called together and fashioned by the word as it relates to the sacrament and especially to the Word made flesh in the Eucharist.

The homily should meet the needs for evangelization and catechesis as they are experienced in our communities. The Lectionaries offer great riches for this purpose. We have to be sensitive also to the varying conditions of the baptized, both adults and young peo-

ple, not neglecting to recognise that ours is a society critical of Christianity. Our task is to strengthen the faithful in their need for deepened faith and hope regarding their own lives in the midst of the world.

A thorough reading of God's word (the "*lectio divina*"), both personally and communally, complements the homilies. Reflecting on the needs of humanity today and as a perennial response to Revelation, this can prove very fruitful during the preparation of the Eucharistic Congress.

Proclaiming the Eucharist to evangelise freedom

17. In his message to the Corinthians Paul reacted to possible distortions of the Eucharistic mystery and to a way of limited interpretation of it that failed to grasp its salvific realism and implications regarding commitment to faith and life. We must also, in the light of the Church's Magisterium, tirelessly bring out the authentic meaning of the Eucharistic revelation.

We should listen with love to the deep truth of the words with which Christ the Lord and the apostolic community expressed the full meaning of the Eucharist within the history of salvation, whose centre is the Paschal mystery. Only in this way can we let the inexhaustible light of this mystery spring forth from the centre of the faith, worship and life of God's people.

Moreover, the Eucharist, which is indissolubly linked with the proclamation of the Word, makes it possible constantly to re-evangelise the Christian community so that Christ's teaching may resound in the minds of the people and take root in their hearts, while it offers them the gift of the true freedom he grants to his disciples. This will come about in accord with the same logic with which Jesus himself pointed to the path that leads from listening, to experiencing freedom: "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free". (*Jn* 8:31-32).

We must above all remain faithful to the Word. This implies

becoming closely related to the Master, as followers of his teaching and imitators of his life. Remaining faithful to the Word is the essential condition for being disciples. This communion brings a gift which perhaps only those who are disciples can appreciate, although all seek it: namely, to know the truth. The truth of the Gospel frees; it also gives that great good desired by all: God's gift of freedom, which is a capacity for love and the gift of self that does not enslave nor know any bounds. Only truth – Christ who is the Truth – makes us free. This means being free from the becoming conditioned by error through sin, free from selfishness; free in the positive sense to give of oneself even to the point of offering one's life itself in the service of God and our neighbour. At a time when the problem of freedom is so acute it remains essential to encounter Christ's word of truth and his power of liberation.

2. THE GIFT OF CONVERSION AND THE PATH TO HOLINESS

Conversion and the Eucharist

18. The first fruit of the truth that makes us free is the full knowledge of ourselves that leads to conversion. Without conversion there is no possibility of experiencing true Christian freedom.

Christian freedom begins by acknowledging our need of forgiveness. This is the only way to come to authentic Christian transformation. What does this spiritual transformation mean? Negatively, it means liberation from whatever threatens the interior integration of a person. Therefore, it means liberation from the alienating influence of sin, that is, being saved from whatever is negative and evil, namely sin. Positively, conversion is the gift of that freedom which makes it possible to develop the qualities inherent in one's own character; it brings human persons to the fulfilment of the potential which they have received from the Creator.

When we think of the ideal of a liberated human being, an ideal that the Church should promote and realise, we think of what has already matured in human persons, namely, gifts which have been received from divine grace and which, because of this, ought to be fully realised. We think of the development and maturing of freedom. Pastoral care and education fosters the formation of this freedom in various ways: through the help given for human and social development, through the cultivation of a sense of discerning the experience of grace, through counselling, through promoting theological wisdom and prayer.

But everything begins and is celebrated in the mystery and ministry of reconciliation, that is, in the sacrament of Penance. Without this there is no true conversion sealed by the mediation of the Church, which in Christ's name pronounces the word of reconciliation, calls for reconciliation with God, bestows his grace, remits sins and frees from guilt.

The preparation for the Eucharistic Congress should heighten an awareness of true freedom through this sacrament of Penance with the joyful experience of knowing that we have been forgiven so that we may also become a leaven of reconciliation, forgiveness and peace in the Church and in society.

Path to holiness, way of freedom

19. Integral to a programme of evangelization and conversion, a pastorally centred approach to the relationship between the Eucharist and freedom should work out a concrete pedagogy which shows the way to live the word of God. This way will trace the meaning of "believing the Gospel" and the following of Christ, for herein lies the basis of every conversion, that is, wholehearted adherence to the Master and his cause.

The convincing power of Christian truth is experienced concretely in the freedom of God's children, in the obedience of faith

and holiness, which opens the way to evangelical freedom. Pope John Paul II states: "In particular, *the life of holiness* which is resplendent in so many members of the People of God, humble and often unseen, constitutes the simplest and most attractive way to perceive at once the beauty of truth, the liberating force of God's love, and the value of unconditional fidelity to all the demands of the Lord's law, even in the most difficult situations".²³ For a knowledge of the truth that brings inner conviction, Christian holiness reveals the beauty of the divine plan, the liberating power of love and the value of faithfulness.

In this context, the Eucharist holds an essential place as the Pope himself underlines: "by sharing in the sacrifice of the Cross, the Christian partakes of Christ's self-giving love and is equipped and committed to live this same charity in all his thoughts and deeds. In the moral life the Christian's royal service is also made evident and effective: with the help of grace, the more one obeys the new law of the Holy Spirit, the more one grows in the freedom to which he or she is called by the service of truth, charity and justice".²⁴

3. FROM EUCHARISTIC PRAYER TO PRAYER FOR FREEDOM

Eucharistic Prayer

20. Since the true freedom of God's children is a gift from above that shares in the nature of God, it calls for humble and intense prayer on the part of the Church and of every member of the faithful. The Church celebrates the Eucharist with a rich variety of *anaphoras* or Eucharistic Prayers from East and West. These prayers express in a wonderful manner the full meaning of the Paschal mystery that is celebrated.

²³ *Veritatis Splendor*, n. 107; ET loc. cit., p. 127.

²⁴ *Ibid.*; ET loc. cit., p. 128.

A sound preparation for and a mature fruit of the International Eucharistic Congress could be the rediscovery of the theology and spirituality of the Eucharistic Prayers as well as their relationship to the gift of freedom with which Christ has set us free.

It would be useful to outline certain points which will pedagogically foster a rediscovery of the prayer dimension of the Eucharist and which will teach us how to model our personal and communal prayer on the attitudes of Christ and the Church.

Thanksgiving for the gift

21. We must above all call to mind the saving deeds by which the Lord has done great things for our liberation throughout the history of salvation from creation to redemption, while we await for the fullness of the complete freedom of God's children to be realised in glory. Memory calls forth blessing, praise, thanksgiving, Eucharist.

In her *Magnificat*, that canticle of praise from which the Church draws its inspiration, the Virgin Mary invites us to magnify the Lord for the great things God has done for his people and continues to do for us in the salvation history of the Church and of all people.

The International Eucharistic Congress should be a great act of thanksgiving for the restored freedom that makes it possible for Christ in the Eucharist to radiate from the "*Statio Orbis*" of Eastern Europe to the ends of the earth.

Invoking the Spirit

22. Freedom is the gift of the Holy Spirit. In the Eucharist we call upon the Holy Spirit to sanctify the gifts and transform them into the body and blood of Christ, and to make of the liturgical assembly one body and one spirit. In the same way, fervent prayer must constantly rise up to the Father, asking that, through the gift of

the Spirit, true freedom in love, the liberating power of charity, may take firm root in the hearts of the faithful, in communities, in families, in society, for the building of a new world.

The Blessed Virgin, who in her prayer invoked and awaited the Spirit of Pentecost, is the model of prayer and of persevering and confident invocation.

The Eucharistic Congress should be an intense and choral epiclesis of the whole Church, which unites in praying that true freedom may take root in consciences, be strengthened in peoples and extended to those nations that do not yet fully enjoy civil and religious freedom so that, free from every hinderance and restrictive influence, they may freely worship the true God.

Offering a free heart

23. The source of true freedom for all humanity is the free offering to the Father by which Christ has redeemed and sanctified us. The essential condition for being free and for promoting freedom will therefore be our humble and convinced offering of ourselves with the freedom that ennobles human persons in their relationship to God. This is the worthiest gift that can be made to God. In communion with Christ, Eucharistic Prayer teaches us to make of our entire lives a perennial sacrifice, an offering acceptable to God in spiritual worship (cf. *Rom.* 12:1-2). In our "yes" we give back to God what is God's, so that the saving and sanctifying divine will may be accomplished in us.

In offering herself to God at the Annunciation and again freely when offering Christ in the temple and at Calvary, the Virgin Mother of the Lord is the incomparable model for the Church in the restitution made to God of our freedom and in our commitment of collaboration in God's saving design.

The Eucharistic Congress, by acknowledging the gift of personal and social freedom, should facilitate our response of faith and love, that response which we make in offering ourselves together with

Christ. The whole Church, awakening to the gift received, can thus work together with God in enabling true freedom to take root in hearts, in society, in the family, in all nations.

Universal intercession

24. In the Eucharistic Prayer, while entrusting itself to the communion of Saints and to the mediation of Christ, the Church presents to the Father in the Holy Spirit its universal intercession for the needs of humanity. In face of the panorama of our society with its false concepts and attitudes regarding freedom, which is not liberated and unredeemed; in confronting the bitter fruits of selfishness enslaving and contradicting the dignity of human persons, a powerful prayer of intercession should rise from the heart of every believer for the victims of hatred, violence, exploitation. Such intercessory prayer expresses the charity of Christ.

Mary, Mother of the Church, in her evangelical intercession at Cana and in her maternal mediation on behalf of all in heaven, is the model of that confident and universal prayer expressing the charity with which we should be sensitive to our brothers and sisters in need.

This occasion of the Congress, while we look towards Christ, "the awaited of the nations and their Liberator", who is the Eucharistic Sun of truth and grace and whose rays light up the geography and history of humanity, this Eucharistic Congress should inspire a great prayer of intercession so that the freedom, attained at so high a price, may be enduring and become deeply rooted in all nations.

4. PRESENCE ADORATION, FREEDOM

In face of the mystery

25. The ultimate dimension of the truth about the Eucharist is its mystery: the saving presence of Christ under the appearances of

bread and wine. For the Lord willed to be permanently present in his Church as Emmanuel, God with us.

Although in all its manifestations the Eucharist is a mystery of presence, this reality is particularly evident in silent prayer before the tabernacle and in the various traditional forms of Eucharistic adoration. This reality enables us to remain before God, recognizing the mystery and gift of God's presence. The greatness of God and human finiteness seem to meet in contemplation of the Eucharistic mystery.

In modern times, the dimension of mystery has been lost to a great extent. The truth of the spiritual dimension of human beings seems to be stifled by the model of activism, which the accelerated pace of living in the world stresses as the only form of life worthy of humanity. But human persons will always experience their limitation as finite beings, at least in the sense that they are not omnipotent, nor have the fullness of being, but are immersed in inscrutable mystery. The truth about the Eucharist, as a mystery, enables human beings to understand themselves as regards their deepest dimension which is open to unchanging mystery through the transcendence of the spirit. It is only in this context of the mystery of God that the mystery of human beings becomes clear. The mystery of the human person, of the world and of human history always points beyond humanity towards God.

Adoration and prayer: encounter of two freedoms

26. Christ's presence in the Sacrament calls every believer to an act of faith and adoration in openness to the transcendent to which the encounter of silent adoration leads. The divine "Thou" addresses, reveals and fulfils the human "thou".

For prayer to be authentically Christian it is essential that there be "the meeting of two freedoms, the infinite freedom of God with the finite freedom of man".²⁵ In the climate of today's civilization, the

²⁵ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Letter *Orationis formas* (15.10.1989), on Some Aspects of Christian Meditation, n. 3; ET Vatican City, p. 5.

attitude of meditation, reflection, recollection and wonder is lost. This has its effect on the life of faith. It is difficult for people today, even for believers, to remain in God's presence, in the spirit of adoration and awe, thanksgiving, reparation and dedication, prayer and intercession, all of which spring from a heart that is free because it is capable of recognising God.

Before the Blessed Sacrament contemplation of the mystery makes possible this essential encounter with Christ away from the bustle and superficiality in which at times we are immersed. Only in the sanctuary of conscience, enlightened by a faith-awareness of being in the presence of God, does one experience true freedom, which responds freely to God's love. This experience reveals the truth that is God's and ours.

The Eucharist as the mystery of presence invites us to adoration. Pope John Paul II has written about the intrinsic relationship between freedom and adoration: "True worshippers of God must thus worship him 'in spirit and truth' (*Jn 4:23*): *in this worship they become free*. Worship of God and a relationship with truth are revealed in Jesus Christ as the deepest foundation of freedom".²⁶

5. CELEBRATION AND LIVING TRUE CHRISTIAN FREEDOM

Attention to Eucharistic celebrations

27. How is the link between the Eucharist and freedom to be expressed in practice? How are we to bring out their relationship more clearly and effectively in today's world?

To achieve this a renewed pastoral approach needs to be taken. The following are some suggestions:

a) In the first place special attention should be given to the quality of the Eucharistic celebrations. These celebrations must be per-

²⁶ *Veritatis Splendor*, n. 37; ET loc. cit., p. 106.

vaded by an atmosphere of faith, hope and charity so that they will be a festive expression of the faith of God's people, a joyful expression of encountering the Lord. In such an atmosphere we can experience the grace of being called by Christ, formed by him for discipleship, united with him in the Eucharist in order to witness joyfully to our faith in the midst of the world without fear or embarrassment.

b) There is still need for all the suggestions from the post-Conciliar liturgical renewal to be implemented in parishes, local communities and groups so that the Eucharistic celebration may be restored to its true significance as a Paschal banquet which celebrates the freedom with which the Lord has set us free. The quality of celebrations can be enhanced by an appropriate choice of texts and hymns, fostering greater participation of the assembly, catechesis promoting understanding the rites and appropriate use of liturgical symbols. Everything should contribute towards a fitting expression of the Paschal significance of the Eucharist. Likewise encouragement to participate in the Mass daily will enable Christians to encounter the Lord and, thus, bear lively witness to him in their families, the place of their work and at school.

The centrality of Sunday

28. One characteristic sign of the Christian life is under strong attack today from contemporary culture. We are referring to Sunday, the Lord's day and the day of the Church. This holiday is coming to be seen more and more as something secular and recreational, while the Christian meaning of Sunday is becoming excluded from the public sphere. In face of the alternative of a weekend dedicated solely to relaxation and amusement, the Christian community should reaffirm the sacred significance of Sunday as an occasion for freedom to adore God and to make his presence manifest in the midst of our society.

The day of the Lord's Resurrection or the weekly Passover should

be fittingly celebrated by taking the necessary time to worship God especially through the Eucharist and other liturgical and devotional exercises. It should also leave room for rest, for family life, meeting friends and works of charity. In the Jewish tradition observance of the Sabbath was, and still is, an eloquent sign of the Lord's resting after his works and a perennial memorial of the freeing of God's people from the slavery of Egypt (cf. *Deut* 5:13-15). Sunday, as the memorial of the Lord's Resurrection, should also be a joyful expression of the Paschal freedom of the people of God.

All through the week we should learn to prepare for Sunday – in the “*scholae cantorum*”, in choirs, schools, catechetical and other groups of Christian formation, as well as in the family. In this way the Eucharist will be experienced as a living memorial of Christ's Resurrection, the source and summit of our spiritual and cultural life. In short, it will be experienced as the most intense moment of our ecclesial, parochial, family and social reality.

6. FROM EUCHARIST TO LIFE

Eucharist and charity

29. We thoroughly prepare ourselves to celebrate the Eucharist, the source and summit of the Church's life, through reading and meditating the Word so that we may live its implications in social life through love and charity. “People today put more trust in witnesses than in teachers, in experience than in teaching, and in life and action than in theories... The evangelical witness which the world finds most appealing is that of concern for people, and of charity towards the poor, the weak and those who suffer”.²⁷

The Eucharistic liturgy should create the foundation and motivation for charity. If it does not lead to serving humanity, to helping the

²⁷ POPE JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Redemptoris Missio*, n. 42; ET CTS Do601, p. 31 – cf. POPE PAUL VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, n. 41.

poor and those who suffer, it does not achieve its purpose. If the Eucharistic celebration does not lead to the expression of mutual help among those who take part in it, an essential element is missing in the Eucharistic community. On the other hand, the more the liturgy fosters the inner need to offer service and love, the more often charity becomes proclaimed and witnessed, while, at the same time, it effectively promotes greater liturgical participation. In the midst of a situation of selfishness and the moral slavery of contemporary society, the Eucharist becomes an especially credible sign for those in doubt and unbelievers. Christ is present in the Eucharist and in the sacraments, as well as in his word; he is present also in those who are in need. The great patristic tradition, which is represented for instance by St John Chrysostom, emphasises the relationship between the sacrament of the Eucharist and the sacrament of the brother or sister who is poor and needy. This tradition recalls Christ's words: "I was hungry and you gave me food... As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" (Mt 25:35-40).²⁸

"So that earth may become heaven"

30. In the first centuries of the Church the tradition of charity and social life underlined the duty of uniting the Eucharistic celebration and social charity. This tradition can be summed up in a phrase from St John Chrysostom – a phrase which could still become a programme of Eucharistic life today: through works of mercy, live the charity born of the Eucharist, "so that earth may become heaven".²⁹ The Eucharistic celebration is an urgent call to bring from the altar of the Eucharist into the world the liberating power of charity that renews all.

Today, because of a distorted sense of freedom or the persistence of forms of oppression, many of our brothers and sisters need

²⁸ Cf. St JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *In Math. Hom.*, 50, 3-4; PG 58, 508-509.

²⁹ *In Act. Apost. Homil.*, 11, 3; PG 60, 97-98.

to be brought back to an authentic experience of their dignity as God's children. After their joyful celebration of the Passover when gathered in the Eucharistic assembly, Christians set out along the roads of the world to proclaim, like the disciples of Emmaus, that they have listened to the voice of the Lord and have recognised him in the breaking of bread. Showing the joy and active love of the works of mercy towards the least of their brothers and sisters, with whom the Lord identified himself, they bring the experience of "heaven on earth" in the Eucharistic celebration to a world that for many is anything but heaven – rather, a place of suffering and slavery.

The community should be moved by the needs of the poor, the sick, the weak, the suffering, prisoners and the oppressed, as these needs are revealed, raised up and seen in a supernatural light. All these needs should inspire both the "collect", the prayer recited in the liturgy, and also the "collection" of offerings to be creatively employed in charity. The offerings should be carefully gathered and with equal care distributed by responsible representatives of the community. Thus, the special concentration of love in the Eucharist as divine service will be translated into practical human service for the promotion of life worthy of human beings.

Christians, enlightened by the Eucharist, should be the promoters of true reconciliation between persons, families and nations. They should play a positive part in fostering liberation and in bringing into our world the power of truth, goodness, beauty and justice.

CONCLUSION

Setting free the power of the good

31. For the first time an International Eucharistic Congress – the 46th – will be celebrated in Poland. It will significantly link the mystery of the Eucharist and Christ's gift of freedom. It should serve as a

fine opportunity for a new evangelization and stimulate fresh enthusiasm that will foster zeal among priests, institutes of consecrated life, ecclesial movements, the laity and youth. All should play their part in deepening the Church's liturgical life as well as its charitable, cultural and social activities. The meeting-place for all these expressions of the Church's life should be the parish, which is in a special way the Eucharistic community.³⁰

The Church is preparing to celebrate the Great Jubilee of the year 2000, which is so closely related to the experience of true freedom and authentic liberation also in the social sphere. In this context the Eucharistic celebration should contribute towards understanding the significance of giving freedom to prisoners, joy to the afflicted, health and hope to the sick and those who are beset by doubt, companionship for the lonely, assistance to the poor.

May the grace of the Eucharist, which is proclaimed, celebrated, communicated and adored, contribute towards breaking the circle of oppression, hatred and selfishness. May it promote a great movement of charity also in the social sphere through sincere commitment even to the point of giving up one's life for others. Through the culture of communion and unity, may it open up a new and wholly different horizon for the countries of the East that have only just emerged from a long period of oppression, and for all nations throughout the world. The disciples of Jesus will become in this way the seed of a new society where, in mutual solidarity, each one will gladly bear another's burdens and those who are interiorly free and reconciled will experience happiness and social peace.

On the way towards ultimate freedom

32. We can look forward to these things because the Eucharist interprets Christian hope in its own way. It shows that merely human activity and aspirations and human freedom with regard to every

³⁰ Cf. POPE JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici*, n. 26.

good cannot by themselves reach fulfilment in this world. In transcendent hope human beings possess aspirations, dreams and desires that can never be satisfied by human effort alone. The path to their fulfilment does not lead only to death. Their end, indeed, is not in the historical future, but in the transcendent future. Human history will not reach fulfilment, except in glory.

In considering the value of human activity in the light of the Paschal mystery, the Second Vatican Council emphasised the meaning of that freedom which will only be complete when all humanity will be presented to the Father as an acceptable offering (cf. *Rom* 15:16). While we are on our way towards the future, the Church gives us this assurance: "A pledge of this hope, sustenance for this journey, our Lord left us in that sacrament of faith in which natural elements cultivated by men are turned into his glorious Body and Blood, the supper of fraternal communion, the foretaste of the heavenly banquet".³¹

With Mary, the Mother of Jesus

33. In the programme of the Eucharistic Congress, although not explicit, there is the implicit conviction that our incorporation in Christ becomes possible through the maternal mediation of Mary, the Mother of the Son of God. This is not merely a pious reference to devotion to the Mother of God that is traditional for the Church and, in a particular way, for Poland and the countries of the East.

The Church sees in Mary a model of liberation. Freedom is given to human beings not only for the self-affirmation, but also for self-giving in love. This means recognising the fact that human beings grow and develop by freely choosing to belong to the communities of which the family is the first cell, after which come the local and professional communities, the nation, the international community. An attitude of fidelity in self-giving is the vital energy which Mary, the

³¹ *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 38.

Mother of God, exemplifies in an outstanding way. For she is clearly at all times in communion with God and in solidarity with the People of God.

In the Virgin of the Annunciation, who freely gives herself up to cooperate with the Father for the salvation of humanity, in the Virgin of the Magnificat, whose song is of God's saving work in the past, present and future of history, John Paul II invites us to contemplate the one who is "totally dependent on God and completely directed towards him, and, at the side of her Son, she is *the most perfect image of freedom and of the liberation* of humanity and of the universe".³²

Already now we entrust to her maternal intercession the celebration of the 46th International Eucharistic Congress in Wrocław. May there be abundant fruit springing from the Eucharist so that humanity and all nations, enlightened and nourished by Christ, the Light of the world and the Bread come down from heaven, may enjoy the true freedom for which he, the Redeemer of humanity, has set us free (cf. *Gal* 5:1).

(Original: italian)

³² Encyclical Letter *Redemptoris Mater*, n. 37; ET Briefing 87, Vol. 17 n. 8, p. 140 – citing Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation* (22 March 1986), 97.

SOBRE LA CELEBRACIÓN LITÚRGICA

1. INTRODUCCIÓN

Cuando el Concilio Vaticano II declaró que la Liturgia es la cumbre de la vida de la Iglesia, expresó en una frase quizás novedosa, una convicción muy profunda y tradicional de la Iglesia católica. Recuerdo como si fuera hoy una conversación que sostuve en Zagorsk, cerca de Moscú, en 1973, con un sacerdote ortodoxo. El tema de la conversación era la persecución directa o solapada que el gobierno de la Unión Soviética mantenía contra la Iglesia ortodoxa. El sacerdote me explicó que no podían imprimir libros, ni recibir libremente seminaristas, ni abrir otros monasterios fuera de los cinco autorizados («reservas monásticas»), ni recibir más monjes o monjas que el número fijado para cada monasterio, ni mantener escuelas, ni imprimir la Sagrada Escritura. Me explicó que los fieles podían bautizar a sus hijos, aunque eso no era bien visto por las autoridades, pero que contraer matrimonio ante la Iglesia era algo muy riesgoso, pues podía acarrear cesantía. Le pregunté entonces cómo podía subsistir la Iglesia, y me dijo que mediante la celebración de la Sagrada Liturgia. Es lo único que nos permiten, me dijo, y lo hacen así porque no tienen fe y no comprenden que la Liturgia es lo más importante y vital de la Iglesia. Así es que nos han dejado lo más importante y de eso vivimos. Pude comprobar la verdad de las palabras del sacerdote ortodoxo con sólo ver la gente que acudía a los templos, los pocos que quedaban abiertos. En esos días estaba también en Zagorsk el gran teólogo ortodoxo John Meyendorff y, hablando de la Liturgia, me dijo que «cuando se celebra la Santa Liturgia, el cielo baja a la tierra y por eso no hay que preocuparse por la hora». Tuve oportunidad durante ese viaje, de palpar el clima de odiosidad hacia la Iglesia y los controles de toda suerte sobre ella, con el ánimo evidente de ahogar su vida, pero vi también la persistencia de la fe y de la vida cristiana, alimentadas por la Sagra-

da Liturgia. Supe de comunidades que no tenían sacerdote y que, no pudiendo celebrar la Liturgia, se congregaban en el templo y sacaban en procesión los ornamentos sacerdotales, como una muda nostalgia de la celebración eucarística.

Entre nosotros también se puede percibir cómo el pueblo cristiano tiene un gran aprecio por la celebración de la Santa Misa, aunque no siempre posea una formación doctrinal que le permita tener un conocimiento más reflexivo del sentido y naturaleza de la celebración del culto de la Iglesia.

El culto de Dios es, como corresponde a la naturaleza humana, interior y exterior. El hombre comprende que debe reconocer humildemente que sólo Dios es Dios, que sólo Él merece adoración, que hay que derribar los ídolos que los hombres construyen y que se atreven a requerir para sí el lugar que sólo le corresponde a Dios. Adorar interiormente a Dios es reconocer no sólo de palabra sino de obra que únicamente Él puede y debe ser el punto de referencia de toda la vida, sin excluir ninguna «zona» del ser ni de la acción. Esa actitud es la que expresaba San Francisco de Asís con su breve oración, que repitió durante toda una noche de oración en el bosque: «Deus meus et omnia», la que podría traducirse diciendo «Dios mío, Tú eres todo para mí». Es evidente que el culto interior, llamado también «devoción» (en el mejor y más puro sentido de la palabra) es el alma del culto exterior. Sin la actitud interior, lo exterior se convierte en pura «exterioridad», el rito sagrado en «ritualismo» y el sacerdocio común o ministerial en actividad mercenaria.

El culto exterior es la expresión humana del culto interior. Se expresa en signos de adoración, de ofrenda de la vida, de reverencia ante la inmensa majestad de Dios, de respeto ante lo sagrado. El culto exterior descende hasta los detalles, precisamente en la forma como los que se aman cuidan de los más pequeños indicios en sus actitudes, de modo de poder agradar, y no desagradar a la persona amada. El silencio durante la celebración, la atención que evita toda distracción, la observancia de las normas litúrgicas que enmarcan cada celebración, la limpieza de los vasos sagrados, de los lienzo, de los utensilios del

culto, el adorno sobrio y de buen gusto del templo, del altar y de las imágenes, la dignidad en los movimientos, el evitar la prisa, todo ello pertenece al culto exterior que es noble expresión de un espíritu religioso y reverente. ¡Cómo impresiona ver al Santo Padre cuando vuelve de distribuir la Sagrada Comunión, y, al entregar el copón a un sacerdote o diácono, dobla su rodilla e inclina profundamente su cabeza para adorar al Hijo de Dios presente en la Eucaristía! ¡Y cómo impresiona ver al Papa arrodillado y sumido en oración, largamente, antes y después de la celebración de la Santa Misa!.

A un sacerdote que celebraba rápida y descuidadamente la Santa Misa, San Juan de Avila le dijo, señalándole la santa hostia: «cuídemolo, mire que es el Hijo de Dios!».

Celebrar «digne, attente ac devote»: digna, atenta y devotamente.

2. LA LITURGIA, ACCIÓN DE IGLESIA

En la Liturgia es la comunidad eclesial quien celebra el culto de Dios. La comunidad eclesial es toda la Iglesia: su Cabeza, que es Cristo glorioso, el Pontífice de la Nueva Alianza; los ministros ordenados que son los instrumentos visibles de Cristo, y todo el pueblo fiel, dotado del sacerdocio común que es la vocación a vivir una vida de ofrenda a la gloria de Dios Uno y Trino. La comunidad concreta en la que se realiza la celebración puede tener muy diferentes magnitudes, pero en ella está presente toda la Iglesia. Una celebración litúrgica es legítima solamente cuando se realiza en la comunión de la Iglesia: comunión de fe, comunión en los sacramentos y comunión bajo la conducción pastoral de los legítimos sucesores de los Apóstoles. El Concilio Vaticano II dice que «las acciones litúrgicas no son acciones privadas, sino celebraciones de la Iglesia, que es “sacramento de unidad”, esto es del pueblo santo, congregado y ordenado bajo la dirección de los Obispos. Por tanto (las acciones litúrgicas) pertenecen a todo el Cuerpo de la Iglesia, influyen en él y lo manifiestan, pero afectan a cada miembro de este Cuerpo de manera diferente, según la diversidad de órdenes, funciones y participación actual» (SC n. 26).

La Liturgia es, pues, expresión y vigorización de la eclesialidad, es decir de la naturaleza comunitaria del misterio de la salvación, de la humanidad «congregada» por la Palabra de Dios que convoca. Sin que desaparezca el «yo» del que participa en la Liturgia, porque en definitiva es cada persona en su identidad irrepetible la que es objeto de la acción salvadora de Dios, ese «yo» se encuentra situado en el «nosotros» del Cuerpo de Cristo precisamente porque nuestro «yo» personal está incorporado como un sarmiento en la vid vivificante que es Cristo (*Jn* 15, 4 ss.):

La naturaleza eclesial de la celebración litúrgica postula que, en la medida de lo posible, la acción tenga las características de una realidad en que se perciba en alguna forma la comunidad que no sólo asiste pasivamente, sin que participa activamente, no como quien es espectador de lo que otros hacen, sino como quien toma parte en algo propio. Esa participación es ante todo interior y espiritual: es tomar parte con el «corazón» puesto en Dios y unido a los hermanos. Pero es también externa, como corresponde a la naturaleza humana, a la vez espiritual y corporal.

Puesto que la Liturgia es acción de la Iglesia y no un asunto «privado», debe realizarse en conformidad a las normas de la Iglesia: «la reglamentación de la sagrada Liturgia compete únicamente a la autoridad de la Iglesia... por tanto, nadie, aunque sea sacerdote, debe añadir, quitar o cambiar nada en la Liturgia por iniciativa propia». Los mismos libros litúrgicos señalan, con amplitud variable, las posibles adaptaciones de los ritos en función de las diversas circunstancias en las que se celebran. Si una celebración fuera arbitraria, ajena a las normas de la Iglesia, marcada por el personalismo y la «creatividad» de las personas, en tal caso es claro que se pierde el carácter de «celebración de la Iglesia» y quien la preside aparece como olvidando su calidad de «ministro» o «servidor» de Cristo y de la Iglesia, para asumir la de «director» o «animador» de un acto que le es propio.

El canto común – ojalá común en una vasta región –, la posición corporal que expresa la coherencia con el momento y significado de un preciso momento de la celebración, las respuestas a los diálogos de

la Liturgia, las aclamaciones y los gestos, son otros tantos elementos externos que expresan la unidad de la comunidad que participa en la acción litúrgica. No son imposiciones arbitrarias, ni «gimnasia litúrgica», sino formas que contribuyen a subrayar que los creyentes somos «uno» en Cristo.

3. LOS SIGNOS, PARTE ESENCIAL DE LA LITURGIA

La celebración litúrgica comporta signos y palabras. Los signos, frecuentemente acompañados por palabras, evocan las maravillas que Dios ha realizado por nuestra salvación, y calan hondo en los sentidos de los participantes, siendo a la vez expresiones del misterio de la salvación y pedagogía de la Iglesia. En el caso de los sacramentos, los signos propiamente sacramentales son instrumentos de la gracia salvadora y santificadora.

Una antigua tradición catequística de la Iglesia subraya la importancia de la explicación de los signos litúrgicos como un modo muy válido para introducir a los catecúmenos y a los fieles en el conocimiento del designio salvador de Dios. En la explicación de los signos de la Liturgia es importante señalar su relación con los hechos realizados en la Antigua Alianza – que eran prefiguración de la Nueva – su contenido cósmico y natural y, sobre todo, su íntima dependencia de Cristo, la perfecta Imagen del Padre.

La lista de los signos litúrgicos no es breve, ni es la misma en todos los ritos o familias litúrgicas (al menos en aspectos secundarios), ni todos los signos tienen la misma importancia. Tengamos presente que los signos que constituyen la parte esencial de los sacramentos tienen una particularísima dignidad, puesto que están constituídos en instrumentos de la gracia que salva y santifica.

Un primer grupo de signos litúrgicos está constituido por el templo cristiano. El templo es signo de la Iglesia. En el templo destaca como signo el altar, lugar del sacrificio eucarístico. Cerca del altar está el ambón, relacionado con el leccionario en el que se lee la palabra de Dios. También cerca del altar se encuentra la Cruz, signo de la victo-

ria de Cristo sobre la muerte. En la proximidad del altar se sitúa la sede o asiento del que preside la asamblea litúrgica, presidencia que representa la de Cristo, Cabeza de la Iglesia. El tabernáculo, digno y hermoso, constituye también un signo y lo es de la presencia sacramental de Cristo en la Eucaristía. Dentro del templo o contiguo a él está el bautisterio, el lugar para la celebración del bautismo en el que muere el hombre viejo y resucita la nueva creatura, revestida de Cristo. Al ornato del templo y del altar pertenecen las luces, y especialmente los cirios, que representan a Cristo, única y verdadera luz del mundo.

Un segundo grupo de signos está compuesto por diversos elementos materiales que se emplean en la Liturgia. Ante todo el pan y el vino que se emplean en la celebración eucarística, signos de unidad, de alimento y bebida, de gozo espiritual y bajo las sagradas especies. Luego el agua, empleada en el bautismo y para las aspersiones que se relacionan con la gracia bautismal. Los santos óleos, empleados en algunos sacramentos y en algunos ritos particularmente solemnes, como en la dedicación de iglesias y altares son signos de vigor, de belleza, del buen olor de Cristo (el Santo Crisma), de curación, de consagración. El incienso es signo de honor, de oración, de respeto y del perfume de Cristo, que son las buenas obras de sus discípulos.

Un tercer grupo de signos son las vestiduras litúrgicas, algunas de las cuales llevan también el nombre de ornamentos. La vestidura es signo de una función, tarea, autoridad. Desde hace muchos siglos, quizás desde el siglo IV, la Iglesia ha querido que sus ministros realicen su servicio litúrgico «revestidos» con ornamentos que son signos de que están actuando no por autoridad propia, sino, por decirlo de algún modo, «revestidos de Cristo», en su nombre, a su servicio, como instrumentos de su soberano poder salvador. Los ornamentos de los ministros son algunos comunes y otros propios de cada uno de los grados del sacramento del Orden: Obispos, presbíteros y diáconos. Tuvieron origen, a veces, en usanzas profanas, pero desde hace ya muchos siglos sólo tienen una significación en el culto cristiano principalmente católico u ortodoxo. Las comunidades nacidas de la reforma

protestante son, en general (con algunas excepciones), menos sensibles al empleo de vestiduras litúrgicas.

Una categoría muy especial de signos está constituida por las sagradas imágenes. No es este el lugar para recordar las controversias, a veces violentas, a que dió lugar, sobre todo en Oriente, la promoción o el rechazo del culto a las imágenes. Baste decir que un Concilio ecuménico, el II de Nicea reivindicó su legitimidad en el año 787 y que otro Concilio ecuménico, el de Trento, en 1583 precisó el sentido y el modo correcto de venerar (no «adorar») las sagradas imágenes. El Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica contiene una clara enseñanza sobre este punto (ver nn. 1159 a 1162).

En el fondo todos los signos litúrgicos son realidades materiales que sugieren una realidad espiritual que está «contenida» o «detrás» de ellos. A través de ellos Dios y la Iglesia nos invitan a penetrar en el mundo de las cosas que no se ven con los ojos de la carne, mundo que, paradójicamente, es el origen y la razón de ser de las cosas que se ven (ver *Hebr* 11, 3). Despreciar los signos puede ser señal de orgullo, pero mucho más frecuentemente es indicio de que ha faltado una apropiada formación y catequesis «mistagógica» según la terminología de los especialistas.

¿Habrá necesidad de decir que para que los signos «hablen», es preciso que sean sobrios, nítidos, de buen gusto, empleados con delicadeza y respeto y realizados con dignidad y espíritu religioso?

4. PARA LA SANTIDAD

La Liturgia es honor de Dios y nada lo honra como el hecho de que el hombre viva como hijo del Padre, como miembro y discípulo de Cristo y como templo del Espíritu Santo. La sagrada Liturgia apunta a la santificación del hombre y eso lo expresa San Pablo así: «les pido, pues, hermanos, por la misericordia de Dios, que se ofrezcan como sacrificio vivo, santo y agradable a Dios. Este debe ser su auténtico culto. No se adapten a los criterios de este mundo; al contrario, transfórmense, renueven su interior, para que puedan descu-

brir cuál es la voluntad de Dios, qué es lo bueno, lo que le agrada, lo perfecto» (*Rom* 12, 1 s.). Se trata, pues, de «vivir para Dios» (*Rom* 14, 8), de «tener los mismos sentimientos de Cristo» (*Flp* 2, 5), de que no seamos ya nosotros mismos lo que vivamos, sino que sea Cristo quien viva en nosotros (*Gal* 2, 20) para alabanza de la gloria de su gracia (*Ef* 1, 6. 12. 14). Ese es el programa de la vida cristiana y ese programa se va realizando en los diversos actos de nuestra existencia y señaladamente en la sagrada Liturgia: «sed perfectos, como vuestro Padre de los cielos es perfecto» (*Mt* 5, 48). Todo esto parece una meta muy alta, pero con la gracia de Dios es posible – «todo lo puedo en aquel que me conforta», decía San Pablo (*Flp* 4, 13) – y constituye, además, la única alegría verdadera.

Valparaíso, 20 de julio de 1996

✠ JORGE MEDINA ESTÉVEZ
Obispo de Valparaíso

Editiones textuum liturgicorum

Hac rubrica praebeamus elenchum librorum liturgicorum officialium, qui ad Congregationem de Cultu Divino et Disciplina Sacramentorum a die 1 ianuarii 1996 ad diem 30 iunii 1996 pervenerunt secundum normam quae datur in Decreto approbationis (vel confirmationis), scilicet: «In textu imprimendo inseratur ex integro hoc decretum, quo ab Apostolica Sede petita approbatio vel confirmatio conceditur. Eiusdem insuper textus impressi duo exemplaria ad hanc Congregationem transmittantur».

Elenchus complectitur libros liturgicos editos sive cura Coetuum Episcoporum, sive cura Dioecesium, sive cura Familiarum Religiosarum.

Sigla quibus tituli librorum compendiantur:

MR	Missale Romanum
OBP	Ordo Baptismi Parvulorum
OCM	Ordo celebrandi Matrimonium
OICA	Ordo Initiationis Christianae Adultorum
OLM	Ordo Lectionum Missae
OLMP	Ordo Lectionum Missae Proprius
OPR	Ordo Professionis Religiosae
PLH	Proprium Liturgiae Horarum
PM	Proprium Missarum
RM	Rituale Monasticum

I. NATIONES

ASIA

Iaponia

Rito del Matrimonio (OCM).

Lingua: *iaponensis*.

Editor: Conferenza Episcopale del Giappone, Tokio, 1995.

Confirmatum: die 24 martii 1995 (Prot. 1505/94/L).

EUROPA

Hispania

Liber Commicus (Missale Hispano-Mozarabicum): Proprium de Sanctis (OLM).

Lingua: *latina*.

Editor: Conferencia Episcopal Española, Arzobispado de Toledo, Toledo, 1995.

Confirmatum: die 23 ianuarii 1994 (Prot. 203/86 et CD 763/92).

Ritual del Matrimonio (OCM).

Lingua: *hispanica*.

Editor: Comisión Episcopal Española de Liturgia, Barcelona, 1996

Confirmatum: die 31 ianuarii 1995 (Prot. 2462/94/L).

Lituania

Romos Misiolas – VI: Skaitiniai Eiliniu Siokiadieniu Misoms, Poriniai Metai, E2 (OLM).

Lingua: *lituana*.

Editor: Lietuvos Vyskupu Konferencija – Kataliku pasaulis, Vilnius, 1994.

Confirmatum: die 30 ianuarii 1987 (Prot. 292/87/L).

Kudikiu Krikstas (OBP).

Lingua: *lituana*.

Editor: Lietuvos Vyskupu Konferencija – Kataliku pasaulis, Vilnius, 1995.

Confirmatum: die 15 ianuarii 1994 (Prot. 1826/93/L).

Lusitania

Iniciação Cristã dos Adultos (OICA).

Lingua: *lusitana*.

Editor: Conferência Episcopal Portuguesa, Gráfica de Coimbra, Coimbra, 1996.

Confirmatum: die 20 ianuarii 1995 (Prot. 2411/94/L).

Regiones linguae germanicae

Messbuch – Die Feier der Heiligen Messe – Karwoche und Osteroktav – Ergänzt um die Feier der Taufe und der Firmung sowie die Weihe der Öle (MR).

Lingua: *germanica*.

Editor: Benziger, Solothurn und Düsseldorf – Herder, Freiburg und Basel – Friedrich Pustet, Regensburg – Herder, Wien – St. Peter, Salzburg – Veritas, Linz, 1996.

Confirmatum: die 13 iulii 1987 (Prot. CD 924/87).

III. INSTITUTA

Congregatio Sororum ab Immaculata Conceptione B.M.V.

Obrzędy Ślubów Zakonnych (OPR).

Lingua: *polona*.

Editor: Zgromadzenie sióstr Niepokalanego Poczęcia Najświętszej Maryi Panny, Szymanów, 1996.

Confirmatum: die 8 februarii 1996 (Prot. CD 1815/92).

Congregatio Sororum a Sacra Familia de Savigliano

Calendario e Proprio (PM/PLH).

Lingua: *italica*.

Editor: Alzani, Pinerolo (Torino), 1995.

Confirmatum: die 3 augusti 1995, (Prot. 1122/95/L).

Institutum Filiarum Mariae Auxiliatricis

Liturgia de las Horas, Oficios salesianos (PLH).

Lingua: *hispanica*.

Editor: Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco, Roma, 1995.

Confirmatum: die 25 iulii 1995 (Prot. 582/95/L).

Institutum Fratrum Scholarum Christianarum

Celebrazioni Liturgiche e Preghiere (PM/PLH).

Lingua: *italica*.

Editor: Regione Italia – Province di Roma e di Torino, Roma, 1996.

Confirmatum: diebus 29 februarii et 4 octobris 1995 (Prot. CD 61/92 et 1947/95/L).

Institutum v.d. « Volontari Don Bosco »

Liturgia de las Horas, Oficios salesianos (PLH).

Lingua: *hispanica*.

Editor: Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco, Roma, 1995.

Confirmatum: die 25 iulii 1995 (Prot. 582/95/L).

**Moniales Ordinis Sancti Benedicti
Confederatio « Castellana » in Hispania**

Ritual Monástico para los Monasteros de Monjas de la Orden de San Benito (RM).

Lingua: *hispanica*.

Editor: Federación Castellana de Monjas Benedictinas, Cuenca, 1995.

Confirmatum: die 21 decembris 1994 (Prot. 1911/94/L).

**Ordo Fratrum Discalceatorum
Beatae Mariae Virginis de Monte Carmelo**

Swiecki zakon Karmelitów Bosych – Regula Zycia, Statuty, Rytual (RM).

Lingua: *polona*.

Editor: DRUK – Instytut Teologiczny Ksiezy Misjonarzy, Kraków, 1996.

Confirmatum: die 18 decembris 1995 (Prot. 1868/94/L).

Ordo Sancti Ieronimi (Barcelona)

Litúrgia de les Hores i Litúrgia de la Misa (PM-OLMP-PLH).

Lingua: *catalaunica*.

Editor: Orde de Sant Jeroni, Barcelona, 1995.

Confirmatum: die 9 septembris 1985 (Prot. 1240/85).

Societas Sancti Francisci Salesii

Liturgia de las Horas, Oficios salesianos (PLH).

Lingua: *hispanica*.

Editor: Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco, Roma, 1995.

Confirmatum: die 25 iulii 1995 (Prot. 582/95/L).

Conferencia Episcopal Española

PLAN DE ACCIÓN PASTORAL DE LA COMISIÓN EPISCOPAL DE LITURGIA (1996-2000)

La Comisión Episcopal de Liturgia presenta su Plan de trabajo para el cuatrienio 1996-2000, en explícita continuidad con los Planes precedentes, pero tomando como propio el ritmo de preparación al Tercer Milenio, según las directrices del Papa Juan Pablo II, y en el marco del Plan Pastoral diseñado por la Conferencia Episcopal Española para el mismo período.

OBJETIVOS Y ACCIONES

Objetivo 1º: Continuar la tarea de promover y acompañar la renovación litúrgica

En la Carta Apostólica «Tertio Millennio Adveniente» (= TMA), el Santo Padre propone como punto importante del examen de conciencia al que llama a la Iglesia la forma como se ha recibido el Concilio Vaticano II. Refiriéndose a la liturgia, pregunta: «¿Se vive la liturgia como 'fuente y culmen' de la vida eclesial, según las enseñanzas de 'Sacrosanctum Concilium'?» (= SC).

Con ocasión del 25º aniversario de la citada Constitución conciliar, había advertido: «La liturgia de la Iglesia va más allá de la reforma litúrgica... (Se trata) de una profundización cada vez más intensa de la liturgia de la Iglesia, celebrada según los libros vigentes y vivida, ante todo, como un hecho de orden espiritual» (Vicesimus Quintus annus, n. 14).

La insistencia y perseverancia en este punto nunca se logrará si los pastores de la comunidad no están personalmente imbuidos del genuino sentido de la liturgia (cf. SC n. 14). Para ello, es necesario que la liturgia ocupe el lugar que le corresponde en el nivel académico, en las Facultades teológicas, Seminarios y Casas de formación de los religiosos (cf. SC n. 16), y sobre todo que sea celebrada y vivida en el tiempo de formación, sin descuidar la iniciación teórica y práctica al arte de celebrar (cf. SC n. 17; Instr. «*In ecclesiasticam futurorum*», 3 de junio de 1979, Not. 15, 1979, 526-565). Del mismo modo, en la formación permanente del Clero no se puede descuidar esta materia, en sus aspectos teológicos, pastorales y espirituales (cf. SC n. 18).

Las celebraciones litúrgicas presididas por el Obispo, como gran sacerdote de su Iglesia, tienen una incidencia particular en este tema, especialmente las que hace en la Catedral, y en las ocasiones más significativas de su ministerio: la Misa Estacional, las Ordenaciones, la celebración de la Semana Santa y el Triduo pascual, las Confirmaciones, la dedicación de las iglesias y la visita pastoral.

Acciones

1ª Mantener contactos con las Comisiones Episcopales del Clero, de Seminarios, y de Relaciones Obispos-Superiores Mayores, en orden a colaborar en la formación litúrgica integral en los Seminarios y Casas de formación, así como en los programas de formación permanente.

2ª Interesar a los directores de tandas de Ejercicios para sacerdotes en la relación entre la Liturgia y la espiritualidad, y promover jornadas y convivencias que fomenten la experiencia espiritual de la celebración litúrgica.

3ª Difundir la doctrina del Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica sobre la celebración del Misterio cristiano. Dar a conocer el Magisterio de la Iglesia sobre la liturgia, sobre todo a partir de la encí-

clica *Mediator Dei* (1947, 50º aniversario en 1997), del Concilio Vaticano II, y de los grandes autores cristianos. Difundir las iniciativas – publicaciones, cursos – que en este sentido tome el Secretariado de la Comisión, y ayudar a las que se tomen en las Iglesias particulares.

Objetivo 2º: Destacar la importancia del Año litúrgico como «santificación del tiempo»

El contexto de preparación del Jubileo ofrece una particular oportunidad para la catequesis y para una mejor práctica de la santificación del tiempo. Por la Encarnación del Hijo de Dios, «la eternidad ha entrado en el tiempo... Cristo es el Señor del tiempo, su principio y cumplimiento... Por ello, también la Iglesia vive y celebra la Liturgia a lo largo del año. El año solar está así traspasado por el año litúrgico, que en cierto sentido, reproduce todo el misterio de la Encarnación y de la Redención... Cada Domingo, recuerda el día de la resurrección del Señor» (TMA nn. 9, 10).

El valor teológico y pastoral del Año litúrgico y del Domingo ha de darse a conocer cada vez más a los fieles, pues es el modo como la Iglesia entra en contacto con el misterio salvífico a lo largo de la propia vida.

Acciones

1ª Proponer a la Conferencia Episcopal, y a cada Obispo en su diócesis, una forma de responder a las necesidades eclesiales, que actualmente tienen sus propias «Jornadas», para que no interfieran en el desarrollo del Año litúrgico, especialmente en los tiempos más fuertes. Dar unas normas precisas para los organizadores de las Jornadas.

2ª Proseguir en la difusión y explicación de la doctrina sobre el Domingo, y dar a conocer los documentos publicados por la Conferencia Episcopal y por la Comisión de Liturgia.

3ª Proponer a la Conferencia Episcopal el texto de los cantos para la misa de los domingos y fiestas del Año litúrgico, difundirlos y promover su utilización, según lo establecido en la Ordenación General del Misal Romano.

Objetivo 3º: Impulsar la pastoral sacramental

La preparación del Jubileo del año 2000 es una oportunidad para impulsar la pastoral sacramental, y de un modo especial la pastoral de los sacramentos de la Iniciación Cristiana. En efecto: «Conforme a la articulación de la fe cristiana en palabra y sacramento, parece importante juntar, también en esta particular ocasión, la estructura de la 'memoria' con la de la 'celebración', no limitándose a recordar el acontecimiento sólo conceptualmente, sino haciendo presente el valor salvífico mediante la actualización sacramental» (TMA 31).

El Santo Padre ha indicado un itinerario sacramental íntimamente vinculado con la estructura ideal del trienio de preparación, que debe ser 'trinitaria', centrada en Cristo, Hijo de Dios hecho hombre (cf. TMA 39). Este itinerario comprende básicamente el recorrido de los sacramentos de la Iniciación Cristiana, a los que se añade el sacramento de la Penitencia, como sacramento de reconciliación y segundo bautismo.

Acciones

1ª Programar las Jornadas Nacionales de Liturgia del trienio 1996-1999 en función de las indicaciones de la TMA para cada uno de los años siguientes, de manera que puedan servir de ayuda e intercambio de experiencias para la pastoral sacramental y litúrgica en las diócesis.

2ª. Preparar juntamente con la Subcomisión Episcopal de Catequesis las «Orientaciones sobre la Iniciación Cristiana en España», para ser presentadas a la Conferencia Episcopal Española y colaborar en su difusión.

3ª Preparar una nueva edición típica para las diócesis de España del Ritual de la Iniciación Cristiana de Adultos, con las adaptaciones que requieran nuestras Iglesias. Revisar igualmente el Ritual del Bautismo de los párvulos y el de la Confirmación, en orden a sus segundas ediciones típicas particulares. Crear las comisiones de trabajo al respecto.

4ª Colaborar con la Comisión para la Doctrina de la fe, en la preparación de la Biblia de la Conferencia Episcopal, para el año 2001.

5ª Continuar y completar la revisión de las versiones castellanas de los textos eucológicos del Misal Romano, en orden a la preparación de una nueva edición.

6ª En colaboración con los Delegados diocesanos de liturgia y los responsables de asociaciones eucarísticas, analizar los aspectos de la celebración de la Eucaristía, y del culto eucarístico fuera de la Misa, que necesitan una atención y un impulso renovados. Programar y realizar acciones en este sentido.

7ª En relación especial con el último año del trienio preparatorio, acentuar la pastoral del sacramento de la Penitencia, con la conveniente propuesta de reflexiones, ayudas y reedición de los materiales catequético-litúrgicos del Secretariado.

Objetivo 4º: Promover el culto de los Santos en las Iglesias particulares

Dentro del programa trazado por el Papa Juan Pablo II para preparar el tercer milenio cristiano, tiene un lugar destacado la actualización de los martirologios locales, y en general la atención al «patrimonio de santidad» de las Iglesias (cf. TMA 37). Los frutos que se esperan de esta iniciativa son un despertar más intenso del deseo de santidad en los cristianos, y un sentido de acción de gracias y alabanza a Dios, que es glorificado en sus Santos.

Acciones

1ª Suscitar en todas las diócesis que todavía no lo han hecho después del Concilio Vaticano II un trabajo de preparación de sus Calendarios particulares y sus Propios. Eventualmente, propiciar una revisión de los mismos en las Iglesias que ya hicieron este trabajo.

Objetivo 5º: Impulsar la pastoral del canto en la liturgia y dar solución a los problemas existentes

La función ministerial del canto en la liturgia (cf. SC 121) necesita ser puesta de relieve de una manera más clara, después de unos años de experiencia de canto en lengua vernácula en la liturgia. Hay un acuerdo generalizado en que estamos ahora en situación de proponer y lograr una mayor calidad en los textos y una mayor sintonía con cada uno de los momentos de la celebración. Para ello es necesario un esfuerzo pastoral que implique la autoridad jerárquica.

Acciones

1ª Remodelación del Departamento de Música de la Comisión Episcopal de Liturgia, y promoción de responsables de la pastoral del canto en las diócesis. Trabajo coordinado, e intercambio de experiencias.

2ª Impulsar la constitución de una Escuela Superior de Música litúrgica, para preparar personas que puedan trabajar en este campo con la debida competencia.

3ª Programar una acción de largo alcance que permita una renovación del canto litúrgico según las indicaciones de la SC y de los documentos posteriores, especialmente en la selección de textos.

Objetivo 6º: Fomentar la influencia en la piedad popular

La incidencia de la liturgia en los ejercicios de piedad es uno de los aspectos no menores de la pastoral litúrgica, indicado en SC

n. 13. Esta piedad popular se presenta en nuestras Iglesias en formas muy variadas, algunas de ellas de gran arraigo e importancia para la vida cristiana de las comunidades.

El Secretariado de la Comisión Episcopal de Liturgia publicó el Directorio sobre «Liturgia y piedad popular» en 1989. La Comisión publicó el documento: «Evangelización y renovación de la piedad popular» y desea que las orientaciones que en éstos se encuentran puedan ser tenidas en cuenta para un buen desarrollo de este tema.

Acciones

1ª Fomentar la formación litúrgica de los miembros de cofradías, en contacto con los Delegados de liturgia de las diócesis.

2ª Preparar subsidios para los ejercicios de piedad y difundir los preparados en las diversas Iglesias.

3ª Proponer el tema de la relación entre liturgia y piedad popular para estudio de los sacerdotes en la formación permanente, sobre todo con la explicación del Directorio publicado por la Comisión.

INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION
OF LITURGICAL FURNISHINGS AND OBJECTS

Rome 8-11 June 1996

The Seventh Koinè exhibition of liturgical furnishings and objects used in divine worship was held in Rome, 8th-11th of June 1996. This exhibition which has been promoted for almost a decade by the Italian Federation of Wood, Cork and Furniture is designed to foster cooperation between artists, architects and liturgists and indeed, all those who have a particular responsibility for the construction, furnishing and decoration of the house of God.

In the past exhibitions have had a particular theme or subject, for example in 1990 among the themes have been vestments "The Chasuble". The presbyterium and nave furnishings "The Seat and Seating" in 1993. The place for the Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament "The Tabernacle" in 1995.

The exhibition fell into three main sectors. The first was obviously the display of products. This sector ranged from liturgical furniture and the various elements needed within the worship space – for example lighting – to sacred vessels, vestments, sacred images and religious and pious objects.

The second sector was concerned with the service that can be offered to the local Church. In this sector information was available concerning the restoration of artwork, stained glass windows, liturgical furnishings and similar items. A section was given to religious publishing, computer services, and advice on the installation of sound amplification, bells, heating, security and fire prevention. Information was also available concerning liturgical norms and technical matters, including finance.

The third sector was of an academic nature, and entitled "Koinè Research". Meetings and seminars were organized in order to promote information and research regarding all that comes under the heading of the setting for worship.

Such exhibitions are of positive value and can provide the much needed assistance at both diocesan and parish level. The opportunity to see and evaluate the work that is being done is not without importance. Certain sectors showed a very highly developed standard both of workmanship and design. Other areas, especially those of mass production, are still open to improvement. It is absolutely necessary that the distinction between sacred art for the liturgy and what in general is called religious art should be understood. The role of symbolism and especially biblical imagery is still an area which has to be examined adequately.

The Seventh Koinè exhibition was inaugurated by the Secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, His Excellency Mons. Geraldo M. Agnelo.

The original text of the short discourse of His Excellency Mons. Geraldo M. Agnelo is given below.

CUTHBERT JOHNSON osb

INTERVENTO DI S.E.R. MONS. GERALDO M. AGNELO KOINÈ 1996

Momento importante per la manifestazione della vita della comunità crisitana è la celebrazione della Liturgia. Parte integrale della vocazione della comunità è il suo dovere di lodare, adorare e professare il nome di Dio davanti a tutta l'umanità. Uno dei luoghi principali dove avviene questa testimonianza è la chiesa-edificio.

La teologia della Chiesa contenuta nei grandi documenti conciliari, quali la *Lumen Gentium* e la *Gaudium et spes*, deve trovare espressione

anche nella progettazione delle chiese e nel loro arredamento. Le nostre chiese devono essere strumenti visibili per l'opera di evangelizzazione.

Il *Rito della Dedicazione della chiesa e dell'altare* dice esplicitamente che: «In quanto costruzione visibile, la chiesa-edificio è segno della Chiesa pellegrina sulla terra e immagine della Chiesa già beata nel cielo».¹

Così non soltanto lo stile e la decorazione della chiesa ma anche l'arredamento e gli oggetti liturgici e paramenti sacri devono proclamare e fa capire a chi entra che si trova in un luogo dove Dio incontra il suo popolo.

Lo stesso *Rito* esplicita ancora il ruolo della chiesa-edificio in modo pratico: «La chiesa ... dev'essere un edificio dignitoso, che si distingua non tanto per sontuosità di costruzione quanto per nobiltà di linee e si presenti davvero come simbolo e segno delle realtà ultraterrene».²

Da questa citazione si può concludere che esiste un rapporto spirituale tra la nobile semplicità e la santa povertà e che ci deve essere una fondamentale dignità tanto nella struttura quanto nella decorazione e arredamento delle chiese.

Se crediamo che Dio è presente ovunque, dobbiamo mostrare rispetto per la materia di costruzione. Tutto ciò che Dio ha creato è buono e noi dimostriamo di credere a questa verità se restiamo fedeli alla natura dei materiali che usiamo nella progettazione e nella costruzione delle nostre chiese.

D'altra parte la semplicità non dovrebbe mai essere identificata con l'eliminazione irragionevole di qualsiasi oggetto artistico. La vera semplicità è bellezza, riflette la qualità della sincerità e dà la priorità al culto di Dio.

Auguro ogni bene per questa VII^a edizione di KOINÈ, la rassegna di arredi, oggetti liturgici e componenti per l'edilizia di culto, organizzata da Federlegno-Areddo con la collaborazione dell'Ente Fiera di Roma e di Vicenza.

¹ *Rito della Dedicazione della chiesa e dell'altare*, n. 2.

² *Rito della Dedicazione della chiesa e dell'altare*, n. 3.



CD-ROM: IUS CANONICUM ET IURISPRUDENTIA ROTALIS

☐ **In hoc CD-ROM adsunt reproducta:**

- Codex iuris canonici anni 1917.
- Codex iuris canonici anni 1983.
- Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium anni 1991.
- Decreta interpretativa canonum Codicis Iuris Canonici anni 1917 et Codicis Iuris Canonici anni 1983 data a Pontificio Consilio de legum textibus interpretandis.
- Constitutio Apostolica « Provida Mater Ecclesia » anni 1936.
- Motu Proprio « Causas matrimoniales » anni 1971.
- « Normae Rotae Romanae Tribunalis » annorum 1934 et 1994.
- Iurisprudentia Rotalis de merito scilicet « Decisiones seu sententiae selectae Rotae Romanae Tribunalis » quae prodierunt ab anno 1966 ad annum 1990.
- Iurisprudentia Rotalis de ritu seu Decreta Rotalia antea numquam publicata annorum 1966-1990.
- Doctrina citata a iurisprudentia Rotali de merito in tribus archivis: magisterium ecclesiale, magisterium pontificium, auctores varii. Index analyticus textuum supra citatorum idiomate latino, italico, gallico, anglico, hispanico.

☐ **CD-ROM consuli potest uti sequitur:**

per indicem argumentorum iuxta capita nullitatis; per indicem analyticum argumentorum; per indicationem sententiae vel decreti rotalis; per nomen iudicis; per nomen Curiae; per indicationem canonis Codicum iuris canonici; per indicationem articuli textus Provida Mater, M.P. Causas matrimoniales, Normarum Rotalium; per indicationem doctrinae magisterii sive ecclesialis sive pontificii et auctorum; per concordantiam Codicis anni 1917 cum Codice anni 1983 et versa vice; per navigationem ipertextualem inter documenta cohaerentia.

☐ **Ex parte utentis requiruntur:**

Personal computer; Lector CD-ROM; Media operationis MS-DOS.

☐ **Pretium operis \$ USA 700.**

CONGREGATIO DE CULTU DIVINO ET DISCIPLINA SACRAMENTORUM

RITUALE ROMANUM

EX DECRETO SACROSANCTI OECUMENICI CONCILII VATICANI II RENOVATUM
AUCTORITATE PAULI PP. VI EDITUM IOANNIS PAULI PP. II CURA RECOGNITUM

ORDO CELEBRANDI MATRIMONIUM

EDITIO TYPICA ALTERA

Ordo celebrandi Matrimonium, ad normam decretorum Constitutionis de sacra Liturgia recognitus, quo ditior fieret et clarius gratiam sacramenti significaret, a Consilio ad exsequendam instaurationem liturgicam apparatus, anno 1969 publici iuris factus est a Sacra Rituum Congregatione in prima editione typica. Nunc vero, post experientiam pastoraalem plus quam vicennalem factam, opportunum visum est alteram parare editionem, attentis animadversionibus et suggestionibus, quae ad Ordinem meliorem reddendum hucusque ac undique pervenerunt.

Editio typica altera apparata est ad normam recentiorum documentorum, quae ab Apostolica Sede de re matrimoniali sunt promulgata, videlicet Adhortationis Apostolicae *Familiaris consortio* (diei 22 novembris 1981) et novi *Codici Iuris Canonici*.

Relatione habita ad priorem, haec editio altera sequentia praebet elementa peculiariora:

— editio ditata est amplioribus *Praenotandis*, sicut ceteri libri liturgici instaurati, ut aptius exponatur doctrina de sacramento, structura celebrationis immediate eluceat et opportuna suppeditentur pastoralia media ad sacramenti celebrationem digne praeparandam;

— modo clariore indicatae sunt aptationes Conferentiarum Episcoporum cura parandae;

— nonnullae inductae sunt variationes in textus, etiam ad eorum significationem profundius comprehendendam;

— adiunctum est novum caput (Caput III: Ordo celebrandi Matrimonium coram assistente laico) ad normam can. 1112 C.I.C.;

— ad modum *Appendicis* inserta sunt specimina Orationis universalis, seu fidelium necnon Ordo benedictionis desponsatorum et Ordo benedictionis coniugum intra Missam, occasione data anniversarii Matrimonii adhibendus.

Venditio operis fit cura Librariae Editricis Vaticanae