



Life & Liturgy: Introduction to a Liturgical Spirituality

Thursday 23 June 2020

Session II: Liturgy & the Life of the Church

I. The Church as the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ

- ☞ Scripture & Magisterium (Col. 1:18; Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12) →
- ☞ Organic, hierarchical, and charismatic.
- ☞ Joan of Arc: "About Jesus Christ and the Church, I simply know they're just one thing, and we shouldn't complicate the matter." (CCC 795)
- ☞ Liturgy is the work of Christ; work of the Church.
- ☞ The Church worships; the Church regulates worship (SC 22).
- ☞ Authentic liturgical worship is objective (vs. subjective idea).
- ☞ Who makes the Church? Christ and His People - living stones.

Pope Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*: "Again, as in nature a body is not formed by any haphazard grouping of members but must be constituted of organs, that is of members, that have not the same function and are arranged in due order; so for this reason above all the Church is called a body, that it is constituted by the coalescence of structurally united parts, and that it has a variety of members reciprocally dependent."

Benedict XVI: "The Church's existence lives from proper celebration of the liturgy and...the Church is in danger when the primacy of God no longer appears in the liturgy nor consequently in life."

SC9: "The sacred liturgy does not exhaust the entire activity of the Church." **SC10:** "Nevertheless the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows. For the aim and object of apostolic works is that all who are made sons of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of His Church, to take part in the sacrifice, and to eat the Lord's supper."

2. The Church Building as Icon of the Liturgical Life

- ☞ Two views: not contradictory, but complementary.
- ☞ What does heaven look like?
- ☞ — Rev. 4: open door - tear - mandorla (almond).
- ☞ — Rev. 21: living stones become heavenly gems.
- ☞ Churches are "heaven and earth in little space."
- ☞ Churches are cosmological: they prefigure Heaven.
- ☞ Churches are sacramental: they are more than buildings.
- ☞ Rites of initiation for a building
- ☞ Perfected creation — Eden undone; "Paradise regained."
- ☞ Justified relationship — proportion, shape, form
- ☞ Sanctified people — images and windows of the Saints
- ☞ Unity of divinity and humanity; uncreated and created order

Germanus of Constantinople: "The church is the temple of God, a holy place, a house of prayer, the assembly of the people, the body of Christ. It is called the bride of Christ. It is cleansed by the water of His baptism, sprinkled by His blood, clothed in bridal garments, and sealed with the ointment of the Holy Spirit."

Dietrich von Hildebrand: "Many buildings primarily serve a purely spiritual purpose. This is true above all of churches. It is indeed true that some technical requirements exist here too: lighting, a good acoustic, ensuring safety in emergencies, etc. But it is clear that these are completely subordinate considerations. The unequivocal purpose is the creation of a space for divine worship with a sacred atmosphere that helps us to recollect ourselves and fills us with reverence."

Benedict XVI: "I look at this beautiful cathedral — it is a living proclamation! It speaks to us itself, and on the basis of the cathedral's beauty, we succeed in visibly proclaiming God, Christ and all his mysteries: Here they have acquired a form and look at us. All the great works of art, cathedrals — the Gothic cathedrals and the splendid Baroque churches — they are all a luminous sign of God and therefore truly a manifestation, an epiphany of God. And in Christianity it is precisely a matter of this epiphany: that God became a veiled Epiphany — he appears and is resplendent."