

# Welcome! Bienvenidos!

## SWLC

Beaumont , Texas  
January 2014



## *Living the Eucharist: A Sacramental Encounter With Christ*

*Daniel Girardot ~ January 24, 2014*

*~ 2014 SWLC Study Week ~ Beaumont, Texas ~*

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*The Spiritual Practice of Eucharist as  
Daily Bread for your spiritual journey*

*The Sacramental Encounter:*

*The mystery of God seen through struggle, pain  
and joys in life*

Who are we?  
What are our hopes?  
What are our questions?

Let us Pray....



We begin with.....  
The Spiritual Practice of  
Attention.....

*Stop...Look...Listen.....*

*Practice of Attention.....*

*What do you “see” in front of  
you...AND what might you see  
BEHIND it?*

Spiritual Literacy Project -  
*Vision: Making the World Whole Again*

<http://youtu.be/u8fURcEQ4W8>

What is the story behind an image, an  
experience or a human person?

Let's ask Mr  
Rogers!



WHO is your neighbor?

**“Who we are in the present  
includes who we were in the past.”**

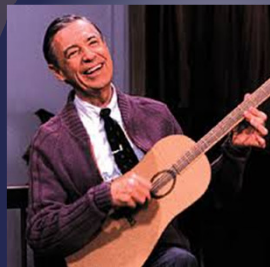
*Fred Rogers*



We never know another person's story...so treat everyone with care love and respect. As a child he decided he would never demean another person.

**“Deep and simple is far more  
essential than shallow and complex.”**

*Fred Rogers*



In the end, life isn't about material things. It's about the relationships you have with one another and yourself.

**“There’s something of yourself  
that you leave at every meeting  
with another person.”**

*Fred Rogers*



**Be focused and  
present to others.**

**“Human life is very deep and our  
modern lifestyle is not.”**

At the end of the day, life is about  
the deep connections you make.





More Wisdom:

- “The best thing you can offer someone is your honest self.”
- “That which is most essential is invisible to the eye.”
- “Simple is not the same as easy. Simple is often very difficult. Simple is right.”
- “Often when you think you’re at the end of something you’re at the beginning of something else.” HMMM.....

***Living the Eucharist:***

***A Sacramental Encounter With Christ***

*Eucharist as daily bread for your spiritual journey  
Practice of Attention to God’s Action in My Life*

***Sacramental Encounter:***

*The mystery of God seen through  
struggle, pain and joys in life with  
Reflection and Response  
leading to Transformation*



Pastoral  
{ Ministers,  
and Seekers  
of God.

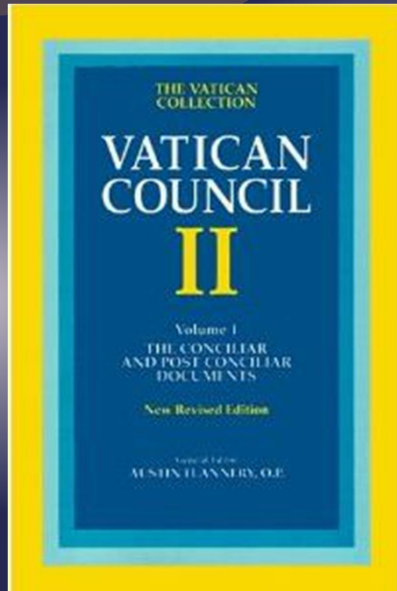
We Gather...ministers living the Mystery of Faith, exploring the Spiritual Practice of Attention to God's Action in ministry and in life.



To my words be  
attentive to my  
sayings incline  
your ear...  
(Proverbs 4:20-22)

*But how,  
Lord...  
How?*

*Sacrosanctum  
Concilium,  
No. 14,  
emphasized  
the practice of  
attentiveness  
in the central  
act of our faith.*



*“Fully  
conscious and  
active  
participation  
in liturgical  
celebrations ...  
is demanded  
by the very  
nature of the  
liturgy.”*

## Spiritual Practice of Attention

- ⌘ benefits of this practice
- ⌘ Greater focus on God's presence
- ⌘ Experience more fully the grace of God
- ⌘ self-knowledge, self-acceptance, spiritual maturity, and holiness
- ⌘ WHAT is the source of this?

### ~ The Eucharist ~

**It is the Source and Summit of our  
Christian Faith.**



# *The Sacramental Encounter in the Eucharist*

## **The Eucharistic Prayer: Symbolic Exchange Between Humanity and God**

### **The Eucharistic Prayer: Symbolic Exchange Between Humanity and God**

- Sacraments are THE WAY and channel of the relationship exchange between humanity and God.
  - God's grace is completely *free* – not earned in any way; completely initiated by God.
  - In sacraments, grace is completely *gracious* – given without any calculation or regard for value...it occupies the position of the gift given by God AND the return gift of the believing subject.

## Symbolic Exchange Between Humanity and God

- The believer responds to love by love!
- In the order of symbolic relationship of love and grace, the more one gives, the more one receives.

## Symbolic Exchange Between Humanity and God

- Classical Western culture tells us that *words* were believed to disclose a meaning beyond the limits of human speech.  
(Aquinas, *Summa*, IIIa.60.2)
- Every symbol launches a search... a process through which we connect with something absent, something transcendent  
(Mitchell, p. 89)
- Every symbol is a many faceted, interactive, invitation to have a broader vision and deeper understanding of reality
- This is the great paradox of symbols...while they *make present* what they symbolize, we must agree that there is *something absent* that needs to be made present.

## Symbolic Exchange Between Humanity and God

- Symbols are transactions that disclose and embody relationships
- Catholic tradition maintains that the *sacrament* (symbol) both comforts us with presence *and* confronts us with absence, an otherness.....a mystery
- **The paradox is... the experience of sacred absence is the path we must take that leads us to sacramental presence**

## Symbolic Exchange Between Humanity and God

- Human meaning is mediated by the language of symbol
- **We can only encounter God fully by encountering the HUMAN fully** (NB: Fred Rogers)
- The sacramental presence is always an incarnate, embodied presence

## Symbolic Exchange Between Humanity and God

- The Eucharist launches a symbolic process in which appearances become sacramental signs...**real symbols that embody and effect what they signify** (Mitchell, p. 105)
- The symbolic process points to **something absent from this world that only God can create and only faith can perceive**
- The symbolic exchange between humanity and God is especially visible in the Eucharistic Prayer

## Symbolic Exchange Between Humanity and God

- **The notion of absence, or a lack to be filled, is the foundation of the Eucharistic Prayer text**
- This is in contrast with traditional sacramental theology's focus on **presence** (Kubicki, p. 28)
- Christ's physical presence is absent (memorial), but it is anticipated, which also indicates absence
- When we imagine Christ's presence, we can live in the future – eschatological celebration (our heavenly home).
- This is an **experience of the “already/not yet” of Christ**



## Symbolic Exchange Between Humanity and God: The Eucharistic Prayer - A Narrative Analysis

- There are “gear wheels” by which the parts of the Eucharistic Prayer “mesh” and cause them to *function* eucharistically. This *mechanism* constitutes the eucharistic process. (Chauvet, p. 129)
- The Eucharistic Prayers are a written text that **starts from a negative situation of a “lack” and stops when the lack is filled.**

## Symbolic Exchange Between Humanity and God: The Eucharistic Prayer- A Narrative Analysis

- The “lack to be filled” which underlies the whole text of the Eucharistic Prayer is indicated in the invocation of the Preface Dialogue, **“Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.” (there is no “thanks” until we give thanks).**
- This is the principle which is the foundation of the whole prayer:
  - **WE the church (the community who acts)**
  - **must attribute to GOD (the One who receives)**
  - **GRACE or GLORY.**



## The Eucharistic Prayer: A Narrative Analysis

- Our text stops when “the work” is finished by the final doxology of praise.
- The fulfillment of this *program* by the church assembly is a *performance* which requires *competence* for it to be realized. (*diagram*)
- **We → give → Grace/Glory → to → God**

## The Eucharistic Prayer: A Narrative Analysis

- This fulfillment is done in three steps.
  - 1) In the initial thanksgiving (*Preface*) and the *Sanctus*, **the Church gives thanks to God for the gift of God's beloved Son sent to redeem us.**
  - 2) In the next three parts (*Epiclesis*, *Institution Narrative*, and *Anamnesis*) **we thank God for the gift of the Holy Spirit and the Body of Christ made present to us in food, drink and assembly.**
  - 3) In the final two parts (*Intercessions* and *Final Eschatological Prayer*) **we give thanks to God for the Body of Christ already present AND that which is not yet come.**

## The Eucharistic Prayer

- Preface Dialogue
  - What is the “lack?”...
- 

Priest: The Lord be with you.  
People: And with your spirit.  
Priest: Lift up your hearts.  
People: We lift them up to the Lord.  
Priest: Let us give thanks  
to the Lord our God.  
People: It is right and just.

## The Eucharistic Prayer II

- Preface - *The Church gives thanks to God for...*

**It is truly right and just**, our duty and salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, **Father most holy**, through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, **your Word** through whom you made **all things**, **whom you sent as our Savior and Redeemer**, **incarnate** by the Holy Spirit **and** born of the Virgin. **Fulfilling your will and gaining for you a holy people**, **he stretched out his hands as he endured his Passion**, **so as to break the bonds of death and manifest the resurrection**. And so, **with the Angels and all the Saints we declare your glory**, **as with one voice we acclaim**:

## The Eucharistic Prayer

- In the preface thanksgiving, the Church gives thanks for a twofold theme:
  - 1) All of God's Creation and 2) The Salvific mission of Jesus Christ throughout all of salvation history.
- The two theological principles always found in the preface:
  - 1) **What God has done for humanity according to the Scriptures & Salvation History**
  - 2) **Preface thanksgiving always culminates in the paschal mystery of Christ or one of the facets of that mystery.**

## The Eucharistic Prayer

- Sanctus :
- Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of **hosts**. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.
- The praise of the Sanctus punctuates the preface prayer of thanksgiving and calls forth a full, conscious active response of joy from the assembly gathered at the table.
- This is **thanksgiving and praise for the action of God culminating in the gift of the Son Jesus**, his historical body; and of his risen, glorious body.

## The Eucharistic Prayer

- the theologian Louise Marie Chauvet synthesizes the activity of **the first step** of the sacramental encounter with God like this: (Chauvet, p. 131)

God → Historical & Glorious → Us  
F. & H.S. body of Christ

(p. 131)

- The **first step** includes the epiclesis over the gifts following the Sanctus, narrative of institution, and the Anamnesis which is its development. (p. 131)

## The Eucharistic Prayer

- The Epiclesis:
  - You are **indeed Holy, O Lord**, the **fount** of all holiness.
  - Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray, by sending down your Spirit upon them like the dewfall**, so that they may become for us the Body and Blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ.



## The Eucharistic Prayer

- The epiclesis:
  - You are.....the font of all holiness
  - Sending down your Spirit upon these gifts like the dewfall.
  - So that they may become for us the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ
- Here is a two fold difference: **Jesus Christ is given as a “gift” as food and drink (no longer historical) and IN the present (no longer in the past).**
  - God, Father → Communal → We (Us)
  - Holy Spirit      Body of Christ

## The Eucharistic Prayer

- **Summary: To give thanks to God in an Christian manner demands a complete itinerary of conversion in the strongest sense of the word**
  - ...since human beings need the action of God giving the Son to humanity under all three modes (historical, Eucharistic and ecclesial)
  - ...this responds to the triple dimension of time, past, present and future.
  - ...God must give humans the ability to perform these actions.
- **Thus, the Eucharistic Prayer causes us to travel the way of conversion which Christians are called to walk throughout their lives.**



## The Eucharistic Prayer

- *The Status of the Narrative of Institution, the Anamnesis and the Epiclesis – the 3 central parts of the Eucharistic Prayer*
  - The Narrative of Institution:
    - **At the time he was betrayed and entered willingly into his Passion, he took bread and, giving thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:**
    - **Take this, all of you, and eat of it: for this is my Body which will be given up for you.**

## The Eucharistic Prayer

- **In a similar way, when supper was ended, he took the chalice and, once more giving thanks, he gave it to his disciples, saying:**
- **Take this, all of you, and drink from it: for this is the chalice of my Blood, the Blood of the new and eternal covenant, which will be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in memory of me.**

## The Eucharistic Prayer

- The institution narrative is heavy with theological significance since the story the church tells about Jesus functions at the core of the liturgical action as the Lord speaking directly to the church.
- **In telling the story of Jesus at the Last Supper, the church sees itself called by its Lord to act.**
- Here we find the *Fourfold Action of the Eucharist*:  
**Take** (the gifts), **Bless** (Eucharistic Prayer), **Break** (breaking of the bread), **Give** (communion)
- **This is the central action of the Church!**

## The Eucharistic Prayer

- The Confession of Faith: the action of the church...  
The church is *The Church* only as much as it sees itself as dependent on Jesus.
- This is recognized and expressed to the highest degree when it says and does what Jesus himself said and did two millennia ago.
- **The Church holds its identity by constantly receiving itself from him.**

## The Eucharistic Prayer

### Mystery of Faith

Priest: **The mystery of faith.**

People: A – **We proclaim your death, O Lord,  
and profess your Resurrection  
until you come again.**

B – When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,  
we proclaim your death, **O Lord,**  
until you come **again.**

C – **Save us, Savior of the world,**  
**for** by your Cross and Resurrection,  
you have set us free.

## The Eucharistic Prayer

### Anamnesis

- **Therefore, as we celebrate the memorial** of his Death and Resurrection, we offer you, **Lord,** the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation, **giving thanks that you have held us worthy to be** in your presence and **minister to you.**

### Epiclesis

- **Humbly we pray that, partaking of** the Body and Blood of Christ, **we may be gathered into one** by the Holy Spirit.

## The Eucharistic Prayer

- Intercessions

- **Remember, Lord, your Church, spread** throughout the world, and **bring her to the fullness of charity**, together with N. our Pope **and** N. our Bishop and all the clergy.
- *In Masses for the dead:*  
Remember **your servant** N., whom you have called **(today)** from this **world to yourself**. **Grant that he (she) who was united with your Son in a death like his, may also be one with him in his Resurrection.**
- Remember also our brothers and sisters who **have fallen asleep** in the hope of **the resurrection** and all **who have died in your mercy: welcome them** into the light of your **face**. Have mercy on us all, **we pray, that with the blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, with the blessed Apostles, and all the Saints who have pleased you throughout the ages, we may merit to be co-heirs to eternal life, and may praise and glorify you through your Son, Jesus Christ.**

## The Eucharistic Prayer

- Concluding Doxology and Great Amen

- Priest prays
  - Through him, and with him, and in him,  
O God, almighty Father,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all glory and honor is yours,  
for ever and ever.
- The people acclaim:
  - Amen.



## The Eucharistic Prayer

### The Discourse of Anamnesis

- What appears as the dependence of the church on its Lord in the institution narrative, is expressed as a positive **in the anamnesis prayer. Here the church opens its hands and offers it back to God.**
- **The amazing, free and gracious gift of God can only be experience by the church letting go of it and giving back to God with thanksgiving. This is the gift of Christ Jesus who continues to give up himself in the sacrament.**

## The Eucharistic Prayer

- This offering is a symbolic act.
- **The Sacramental offering of the Body and Blood of Christ is the ritual channel which symbolically shows what the return gift is: the real and symbolic offering of one's own life.** (p.135)



## The Eucharistic Prayer ~ Epiclesis Prayer

- To offer a present is to let go of something; and to let go is to place oneself in a state of offering. It is impossible to offer a free gift without offering oneself.
- The Church cannot offer Christ in the sacrament without being itself offered through and in him.
- By offering the Eucharistic Body of Christ, the church symbolizes what it must become, the ecclesial body.
- **Epiclesis expresses...that the Holy Spirit may come over the assembly so that through participation in the Eucharistic body, it may become the ecclesial body of Christ.**

## The Eucharistic Prayer

- **The SUPREME GOAL OF THE EUCHARIST is the GIFT OF CHARITY between sisters and brothers and unity.**
- Charity and unity within today's church, but also with the whole of humanity which is in the process of becoming the body of Christ.
- **What is at stake? ...everything that pertains to justice, sharing, reconciliation, forgiveness... all at the collective level of economic, political and cultural relations between nations and races as well as at the level of interpersonal relationships.**

## The Eucharistic Prayer

- Mass would be barren if it did not enjoin on Christians the obligation to “become what we receive,”...the sacramental body of Christ.
- What are we to become? Christ's ecclesial body, in and of the world!
- Such is the *final return-gift* which is implied in the reception of the gift of God
- The reception of grace as *grace* never goes without a task; it implies our necessary return-gift .... justice and mercy!

**The Sacramental Encounter in the Eucharist is the encounter with Christ's**

## **Paschal Mystery:**

**The passion/suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ**

⌘ Through the spiritual practice of Attention, in light of our Eucharistic life in Christ, we call called to look deeper, listen and BE PRESENT in charity to the world.



## The Paschal Mystery ~ Encountering Christ in your Life and Ministry.

*Consider and reflect.....*

- 1) How do you experience the **passion/suffering** of Christ in your ministry and daily life?
- 2) ) How do you experience the **death** of Christ in your ministry and daily life?
- 3) How do you experience the **resurrection/joy** of Christ in your ministry and daily life?

## Engage your senses

↳ Notice the Sacramental Encounter with the Paschal Mystery IN:

⌘ Active Listening

⌘ Exercising servant and spiritual leadership

⌘ Liturgy: Focus & attention on God's action and presence

LOOK to the Eucharist  
and the  
Sacramental Encounter with Christ  
as the model for your life!



**See God's eucharistic action & presence  
in our worship and every day living**

**Fourfold action in the Eucharistic Liturgy**

- 1) Take**
- 2) Bless**
- 3) Break**
- 4) Give.**

Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*

**Consider the Fourfold action using the practice  
of mystagogical reflection on your  
liturgical experience – Hughes**

- 1) Awareness**
- 2) Reflection**
- 3) Reception**
- 4) Transformation**

Kathleen Hughes, *Saying Amen: A Mystagogy of Sacrament*



**The Eucharistic Liturgy gives us  
the grace to practice this Pattern of  
Attention to the Experience, with  
Contemplation and Action!**

**Reflect on the wonder, meaning and  
vision of God's presence!**

## **The Main Idea:**

- & Open yourself to reflect on the wonder,  
meaning and vision of God's presence**
- & The experience itself does most of the  
teaching!**

## Living the Eucharist – Embrace the Paschal Mystery in the Sacramental Encounter with Christ that brings Conversion

- ✧ A lifelong, daily process
- ✧ Enter more deeply into the suffering, death of the Lord...and experience Resurrection!
- ✧ In our daily ministry and life:
  - ✧ Develop a deeper relationship with Christ
  - ✧ Embrace deeply the action of God
  - ✧ Engage the body, mind, heart, & spirit in reflecting on God's presence
  - ✧ Open yourself to the wisdom of God by listening with the "ear of the heart."

**Create Spiritual Goal or a  
Spiritual Plan of Action**

Remember the wisdom of Mr. Rogers....

- “That which is most essential is invisible to the eye.”
- “Often when you think you’re at the end of something you’re at the beginning of something else.”

So....**WHAT** will YOU DO?!?......

Now for a sacramental question.....  
(seen at a bus stop in Washington D.C.)



Called to DO.....*Take, Bless, Break, Give*...for the life of the world.

# *Symbol of the Paschal Mystery.....the Sign of the Cross*



*Almighty God,  
by the cross and resurrection of your  
Son, you have given life to your people.  
Your servants have received the sign of  
the cross.  
Make them living proof of its saving  
power and help them to persevere in the  
footsteps of Christ.*



The Rite of Acceptance from the RCIA, reminds us of the people we are called to be and of the response we are called to make. Please turn again to your partner and participate with me in a special blessing for one another.

**In the name of the Father....+**

*As you repeat each phrase, perform the action implied:*

- ❖ Receive the sign of the cross on your ears, that you may hear the voice of the Lord.
- ❖ Receive the sign of the cross on your eyes, that you may see the glory of God.

- ❖ Receive the sign of the cross over your heart, that Christ may dwell there by faith.
- ❖ Receive the sign of the cross on your shoulders, that you may bear the gentle yoke of Christ.
- ❖ Receive the sign of the cross on your hands, that Christ may be known in the work which you do.
- ❖ Receive the sign of the cross on your feet, that you may walk in the way of Christ.

Go In Peace!  
Proclaiming  
the Gospel  
by your life!

