



Saint Clare of Assisi

CATHOLIC CHURCH

THE SHAPE OF OUR LITURGY WEEK FOUR: THE CONCLUDING RITES

Concluding rites 54:31-57:40 (3 min)

Address from Bishop Barron to the Adoremus Eucharistic Congress and Pilgrimage in Liverpool. Saturday morning, 8 September 2018

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DPR2u6NkZeU>

Optional announcements

Greeting and blessing

Dismissal

Having received the body and blood of the Lord (gathered and fed), we are now sent out. Nobody in the Bible is ever given an experience of God without being sent, no mystical experiences as ends in themselves: the invitation is always to “come” and “go.”

We are sent to “Christify” the world: *lumen gentium* (light of the nations).

Go and bring the light that you have seen, the Christ that you have become, to the world.

What we are sent out to be and do: A sacramental/liturgical spirituality

Kevin Irwin, Models of the Eucharist

“...liturgy derives from the context of human life and daily living. It also returns participants back to daily living with their vision of the Christian life sharpened and their understanding of the challenge of living that vision enhanced. It relies on, and at times will articulate, aspects of what can be termed a “catholic,” liturgical, and sacramental vision of life (understanding, of course, that this vision is not particular to Roman Catholicism)” (297).

Mark McIntosh, Mysteries of Faith

“We have three kinds of evidence that tell us this is what happened: the witness of the scriptures, the earliest patterns of eucharistic worship, and the common life of the church. Each testifies to the divine momentum that was shaping the early community into the Body of Christ. What these

early followers discovered was a new way of encountering God through the mystery of God's own life on earth. That is, they understood with increasing clarity that Jesus' own life was simply and purely a relationship with the One he called Father and whom they knew as the God of Israel. And it was into this relationship between Jesus and the Father that the early Christians were brought.

"The shape of the new community, furthermore, was based on this new encounter. In baptism, the power of the Spirit brought creation out of chaos and led the community into the death and resurrection of Jesus. In the eucharist, it was the same Spirit who drew Mary's faithfulness into the purposes of God that now received them and their offerings as the living presence of God's Word. Thus Jesus' early followers began to grow into a new identity, one shaped less by their families and backgrounds and more by the relationships they developed with each other through a common fidelity to Christ. That is why St. Paul could write: "As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:27-28). In all this they learned to live into what made Jesus who he was: his relationship to the Father in the Spirit. In this sense, every follower acquired a new identity, one achieved through communion and expressed and lived out in baptism and eucharist.

Two points are crucial here. First, the early community provided new ways for its followers to relate to each other and to God; and second, what gave life and shape to that new way of relationship was none other than God's own self-giving way of life. Jesus' followers, in other words, were invited into the mystery of God's own way of being God. They were invited to risk living into that pattern of death and resurrection that marks the earthly form of God's life.

...The patterns and movement of our common life are sacraments of something greater and deeper: that pattern of eternal loving, giving, and receiving that is the only fruitful ground of all our relationships. Our yearning for communion with beauty in all its many forms whispers to us of the Holy Spirit, who would draw us into Communion itself: the communion of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit that is God's own life" (28-29).

John Koenig, The Feast of the World's Redemption

...the last supper commemorations of the earliest believers served to channel the promise and power of God's imminent kingdom into daily life, ...worship becomes the normal way to mission, especially worship at table, where the crucified and risen Messiah invites his followers most physically to join his self-offering for the life of the world" (214).

Alexander Schmemmann, The Journals of Father Alexander Schmemmann 1973-1983

To understand St. Paul when he says, "The image of this world is passing away," to make it real, we need in *this* world the experience of the *other* world, its beauty, depth, treasure, the experience of the Kingdom of God and its Sacrament– the Eucharist. The Church has been established in this world to celebrate the Eucharist, to save man by restoring his Eucharistic being. The Eucharist is impossible without the Church, that is, without a community that knows its unique character and vocation—to be love, truth, faith and mission—all of these fulfilled in the Eucharist; even simpler, *to be* the Body of Christ. The Eucharist reveals the Church as a community—love for Christ, love in Christ—as a mission to turn each and all to Christ. The Church has no other purpose, no 'religious life' separate from the world. Otherwise the Church would become an idol. The Church is the home each of us leaves to go to work and to which one returns with joy in order to find life, happiness and joy, to which everyone brings back the fruits of his labor and where everything is transformed into a feast, into freedom and fulfillment, the presence, the experience of this 'home'—already out of time, unchanging, filled with eternity. Only this presence can give meaning and value to everything in life, can refer everything to that experience and make it full. "The image of this world is passing away." But only by passing away does the world finally become the 'World': a gift of God, a happiness that comes from being in communion with the content, the form, the image of that 'World'" (25).

Pulling it all together

What should we expect Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, to do to us in the mass individually? Corporately, as the community of God?

What role does each part of the mass play in shaping us into what Christ desires?

Introductory rites (gathering)

Liturgy of the word

Liturgy of the table (eucharist)

Concluding rites (sending)

What is it we are sent to be and to do as we leave the mass?
