



# NewsLetter

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## **Fifth National *Encuentro* for Hispanic/Latino Ministry**

September 20-23, 2018 saw the gathering of over 3,000 people, including 130 bishops and over 300 priests, in Grapevine, Texas for the celebration of the Fifth National *Encuentro* for Hispanic/Latino Ministry, under the theme “Missionary Disciples: Witnesses of God’s Love.” This event represented the culmination of a process of reflection, consultation, and evangelization of more than two years that took place at the parish, diocesan, regional, and national levels. This series of *Encuentros* were not simply meetings or events, but rather involved processes which encouraged people to grow in the awareness of their religious identity, develop a sense of being living members of the Church, become more sensitive to pastoral needs, and make a firm commitment to ministry for service to the whole Church in the United States. Eighteen years have passed since the last National *Encuentro* took place, and so younger people and more recent immigrants to this country had never had the opportunity to participate in this process. This historical event for the Church in the United States will contribute to a strengthening of the contributions and role of Hispanic Catholics and to a new evangelizing impulse.



During the two years of preparation for the national event, a consultation at the local level considered 28 different areas of ministry, with a special goal of engaging young adults and non-practicing Catholics. One of the areas of discussion that received the most feedback was that of liturgy and spirituality. Addressing a noticeable decrease in Mass attendance, the consultation pointed out various contributing factors that deserve renewed efforts to remedy, such as Mass times that conflict with work schedules, irregular marriage situations that could be regularized, and difficulties with immigration status that could have legal solutions. The consultation also indicated factors that negatively affect liturgical participation, such as insufficient formation on the liturgy and a lack of understanding of the theology of rites and of traditional devotional practices. At times there is also a perceived lack of resources allocated for Hispanic/Latino ministry, though at times this appears to be the result of poor communication among those who work in ministry, rather than an actual scarcity. There were numerous recommendations to intensify the effort of formation in the liturgy, to foster the practice of the Liturgy of the Hours and *lectio divina*, and to strengthen the theological understanding of the popular religiosity and devotions practiced in the various cultural groups of the United States. Genuine intercultural and

intergenerational dialogue has the potential to contribute to a rich and varied expression of faith and spirituality in this country. The need for networks of information on liturgical issues was also indicated.

Both the *Instituto Nacional Hispano de Liturgia* and the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC) were present at a ministerial breakout session during the National *Encuentro*. The results of the liturgical aspects of the consultation were discussed, and presenters and attendees alike offered insights into what can be done to better serve the needs of the community. Both the *Instituto* and the FDLC have been working closely with the Subcommittee on Divine Worship in Spanish, particularly in the recent effort to provide formation on the new U.S. edition of the *Misal Romano*. The session also included a presentation of the many resources, publications and opportunities available through these organizations, other publishing houses, and the USCCB. (The Conference's liturgical resources in Spanish are found at [USCCB.org/cultodivino](http://USCCB.org/cultodivino).) All involved made a commitment to continue and expand their work to meet the needs of the Hispanic community in an effective and culturally sensitive way.

### **Archbishop Wenski Addresses the 2018 Annual Conference of the Society for Catholic Liturgy**

*The Society for Catholic Liturgy held its annual conference from September 27-29, 2018 in Miami, Florida, under the theme "Centenary of the Publication of The Spirit of the Liturgy by Romano Guardini." Keynote addresses were given by Gerhard Ludwig Cardinal Müller, Prefect Emeritus of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and by Miami Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski, whose address is reprinted for the benefit of our readers:*

The liturgy forms and transforms us, as the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy rightly reminds us:

The wonderful works of God among the people of the Old Testament were but a prelude to the work of Christ the Lord in redeeming mankind and giving perfect glory to God. He achieved his task principally by the Paschal Mystery of his blessed Passion, Resurrection from the dead, and the glorious Ascension, whereby "dying he has destroyed our death, and by rising, restored our life." For it was from the side of Christ as he slept the sleep of death upon the Cross that there came forth "the wondrous sacrament of the whole Church." (no. 5)

In *The Power and the Glory*, Graham Greene's novel of an imperfect priest caught in the violence of the anti-Catholic Mexican Revolution of the 1920s, the protagonist runs from village to village a wanted man: his parishioners want him for the sacraments; his persecutors want him for death in front of a firing squad. Such is the power and the glory of the Most Blessed Sacrament, evoking both love and contempt. And this is not only the stuff of novels; for real life is more dramatic than fiction. Since the time of Nero when Christians in Rome retreated to the catacombs to celebrate the Mass, enemies of the Church knew that to prevail in the fight against her they had to separate the people from the Mass.

Mass attendance is the primary indicator of "Catholic identity" – in other words, going to Mass is what makes us Catholic – or in the more erudite words of the Second Vatican Council, the Eucharist is "the source and summit of the whole Christian life" (*Lumen Gentium*, no. 11). For this reason, pastors of the Church continually insist on the obligation of the faithful to attend Mass on the Lord's Day. This is a grave obligation that binds all Catholics, and this obligation is easy to understand if we remember how vital Sunday is for the Christian life.

The Eucharist feeds and forms the Church. We receive the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion that we might more perfectly become what we receive, the Body of Christ. In this sense, the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist is at the same time an "epiphany of the Church."

Too often in the years following the Council, "full, active, conscious participation" became a mantra justifying superficial and trendy innovations that often resulted in a trivialized and too often vulgarized celebration of the Sacred Mystery. "Full, active, conscious participation" is not primarily about the vernacular, or about multiplying

new liturgical roles and ministries; it means allowing oneself to be penetrated by the life of the One who is Lord, the One who is my Creator and Redeemer. Liturgy is fundamentally about Christ! In other words, the Liturgy is not something “we do,” as if it were a purely human work; rather, liturgy is a gift we receive, for it is always first and foremost Christ’s work. Thus, the goal of every Holy Communion, which our participation in the liturgy normally culminates with, is to assimilate my life to his; it is to bring about my transformation and conformity to the One who is living Love.

*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, Vatican II’s Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, insisted that the full liturgical assembly includes not just the people gathered in a parish church at a particular time and in a particular place, but the full liturgical assembly includes angels, saints and indeed the entire cosmos. “You will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man,” Jesus told Nathaniel when calling him to be his disciple (John 1:51). These words are also addressed to us, as Pope St. John Paul II implied when he said, “The Eucharist is truly a glimpse of heaven appearing on earth. It is a glorious ray of the heavenly Jerusalem which pierces the clouds of our history and lights up our journey” (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, no. 19).

The Book of Revelation, the last book of the New Testament canon, is considered very difficult to understand. For this reason, it is often ignored by us Catholics and just as often misinterpreted by our separated brethren. But Scripture must be read from within the Church, the Church of the apostles. Thus, while the imaginative language of Revelation is hard for modern ears to grasp, the interpretative key to understanding John’s visions is the Eucharist itself. The Book of Revelation is essentially a description of the heavenly liturgy, of which our Mass is only the foretaste. In the heavenly liturgy, the saints contemplate the Lamb once slain face to face. In the Mass, we contemplate the same Lamb, our Lord Jesus Christ made present Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, in the sacred actions that make present to us the saving sacrifice of Calvary. But we contemplate him hidden under the appearances of bread and wine.

After these years marked by scandal within the Church as well as within the corporate and political arenas, in the face of an ongoing and increasingly frustrating war against terrorism, in the midst of a continuing cultural meltdown that has weakened families and made civil discourse ever more difficult among neighbors, who could argue that our post-modern world does not need a new evangelization? It needs to experience the Word of God as a word of grace and salvation. This new evangelization is not new in its message: Christ remains the same yesterday, today and forever; but as all the modern popes have argued, Catholics must with creativity and confidence discover new ways to present the Truth of Jesus Christ persuasively to our contemporaries in danger of yielding to a purely materialistic and soulless vision of the world.

How can we rise to the challenge? We need new ardor, new enthusiasm and perhaps new methods; but most importantly we need to get back to the basics. Since the Church’s practice must continually be placed alongside her perennial teachings, we must be careful to see that the law of prayer corresponds to the law of faith. The decline in Sunday Mass attendance, confusion among significant numbers of the faithful concerning the teaching on the Real Presence, the great disproportion between the many who receive Holy Communion and the few who go to Confession, as well the casual participation of those who dissent from Church teachings on faith and morals, are concerns that the pastors of the Church must address – and the way we address them is perhaps what could be called the reform of the reform.

Faithfulness to Sunday Mass and our worthy reception of Holy Communion is a basic first step towards a renewed fidelity among all the baptized. And just as the abuse of minors by ordained ministers of the Church has reminded us of the reality of evil, revival of Confession can reawaken in us a “sense of sin” while at the same time affording us its remedy in sacramental absolution. Prayer and contemplation serve as necessary antidotes to the secularism of our age. And charity, sacrificially given, is a cure for the hedonism of a consumerist culture.

*Ite, Missa est!* So concludes the Mass when celebrated in Latin. Usually translated, “Go, the Mass is ended,” the phrase could be better rendered as: “Go, it is the sending.” Eucharist and Mission: having encountered our Lord in the Sacred Liturgy, we should be motivated to bring him to others.

St. John Paul II reminds us that the Eucharist must lead us to solidarity with the world of pain and hurt. He said, “[W]e must recognize Christ in the poorest and the most marginalized, those whom the Eucharist – which is communion in the Body and Blood of Christ given up for us – commits us to serve. As the parable of the rich man, who will remain forever without a name, and the poor man called Lazarus clearly shows, ‘in the stark contrast between the insensitive rich man and the poor in need of everything, God is on the latter’s side.’ We too must be on this same side” (Message for the World Day of Peace 1999, no. 13). Solidarity, as John Paul once said, is another word for justice in our day. It is “a firm and preserving determination to commit oneself to the common good” (*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, no. 38).

As Catholics, we must be involved in the issues concerning the life and dignity of the human person. We work to end abortion, we oppose the death penalty, we promote human rights, racial justice, we are concerned for the poor, the immigrant, the abandoned elderly. These pursuits certainly are not contrary to the Spirit of the Liturgy, they are not opposed to the ultimate spiritual and transcendent destiny of the human person. Our involvement in these issues presupposes this destiny and is ultimately orientated to this end. If this earth is our only highway to heaven, then we must seek to maintain it, and to make sure to the best of our abilities that this highway is cleared of the obstacles which sin, both personal and structural, has placed in the path of those traveling on it. To go back to the parable of Lazarus the Pope referred to in the quote above: the rich man was condemned not for anything he did (though certainly one can go to hell for doing bad things) but for what he did not do. A faith without works – without concrete engagement with the least of our brethren – is dead.

The Eucharist reminds us that our commitment as Catholics to work for peace and justice in the world is not born of some ideology or political platform; rather, it is born of a person, Jesus Christ. And therefore, our “solidarity” with the world of pain is a call to a commitment expressed in allegiance not to lofty propositions but to concrete persons in whom we are to see the face of Christ. This solidarity is lived out through the practice of what the Catechism calls the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. God takes the side of the poor, the oppressed, the marginalized; through the works of mercy, we take their side too. Jesus’ words of the Great Commission are addressed to all of us: “Go to all nations and teach them the good news...”

## The Order of the Dedication of a Church and an Altar

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Ritual Book: 7-586 | Price: \$49.95

*The Order of the Dedication of a Church and an Altar* implores God’s blessing on the physical places to be dedicated to God for worship and celebration of the divine mysteries. Each chapter introduction gives valuable guidelines for bishops, priests, and deacons to celebrate the solemn liturgical rites. It will be useful for masters of ceremonies, offices of worship, and seminaries, as well as parishes that are building new churches or undergoing major renovations. Includes the order for laying a foundation stone, rites for dedicating and blessing a church or altar, as well as for blessing a chalice and paten.

Beginning on November 9, 2018, this text becomes the required English translation for use in the United States. This version includes psalm tones and music for antiphons for a joyful celebration of the rites!

