



Cavanis Lay Fraternity
Sacred Heart House, CAVANIS INSTITUTE
Via Col Draga - Possagno (TV)

INVISIBLE MONASTERY 02nd July 2021

A few weeks ago, in the occasion of *the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ*, I reflected on the extraordinary power with which the Word of the Scripture illuminates the great mystery of the Eucharist imperiously deducting ourselves from any temptation to think that is as something intimate and restoring us to a choral, or rather, ecclesial, dimension of the mystery of the body and blood of the Lord.

The two scenarios drawn by the Word (the Covenant on Sinai, narrated in Ex. 24 and the new covenant, stipulated on Christ's Passover in Mk 14) evoke a community dimension and give the Eucharist (rite of the new Easter) a broad, plural, ecclesial character, in fact. St. Augustine, speaking to neophytes of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, told them: *"You are the body of Christ and his members"*.

So if you are the body of Christ and his members, your own mystery is placed on the Lord's table: receive your mystery. To what you are you answer: *Amen* and by answering you sign it. In fact, it is said to you: *The Body of Christ*, and you answer: *Amen*.

Be a member of the body of Christ, for your *Amen* would be true" (Ser. 272). It is therefore true that the Church makes the Eucharist by celebrating it, but it is true, even before, that the Eucharist makes the Church, summoning it and rooting it in Christ. On the altar, then, our mystery is also celebrated; the Church is present; the Amen that we pronounce at the moment of communion is a "yes" said to Christ, but it is also a "yes" said to the Church and to the brothers. On the altar Christ is made present, in a real way (by transubstantiation, according to the technical but inadequate language of theology), but the Church is also made present, by virtue of her intimate connection with his head.

On the altar it is therefore present both the real body of Christ, in the species of bread and wine, and his mystical body which is the Church. Prophetically, Pope Francis reminds us that "Participating in the Eucharist engages towards others, especially towards the poor, educating us to pass from the flesh of Christ to the flesh of our brothers and sisters, in which he expects to be recognized, served, honored, loved by us" (Audience 4 April 2018). When it is said of the first Christians that *"they were united in the breaking of bread"*, that is, united in dividing, indeed in

sharing, it refers precisely to this particular aspect of the Eucharist which also reveals its deepest meaning: in Christ we can achieve that unity that, separated from him, we could not even conceive. For this reason, only a profoundly "Eucharistic" community can truly be called a Christian community. Finally, I thought of how true all this is in Cavanis pedagogy and spirituality: the table to be set is also that of the education of young people which can properly be experienced as a Eucharistic action; as bread to be broken and shared and as thanksgiving to God.

From the Holy Gospel according to Saint Mark (Mk 14, 12-16. 22-26)

On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"

So he sent two of his disciples, telling them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. Say to the owner of the house he enters, 'The Teacher asks: Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there".

The disciples left, went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover. While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body".

Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it. "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them. "Truly I tell you, I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God". When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

From "Unpublished writings of Fr. Anthony Cavanis for the Spiritual Exercises", in AICV, b. 14, GO, p. 320

The priest alone can offer the supreme sacrifice of the body and blood of the Son of God himself. The Eucharist is a perfect and supreme sacrifice, of which the ancient sacrifices were only a shadow and figure. Those had no power of themselves, but ours has the strength to obtain the remission of the temporal punishments of sins and, at least mediately, the increase of grace and more abundant help to those for whom it is offered.

The Eucharist is the holiest and dearest action to God that can be done: because of the victim is Christ himself, and the first offerer that is also the same Jesus Christ who offers himself by the hand of the priests (...)

All the honors that the angels have never given to God with their obeisances and men with their virtues, penances and martyrs and other holy works, have not been able to be of as much glory of

God as a single mass, since all the honors of creatures are finite, but the honor that is given to God in the sacrifice of the altar, because it is given by a divine person, is infinite honor (...)

The Eucharist brings to men the same good that the sacrifice of the Cross brought, says St. Thomas: In qualibet missa invenitur omnis fructus quem Christus operatus est in Cruce. (...)

In short the Eucharist is the best, the most beautiful in the Church. St. Bonaventure calls it the compendium of all divine love. With reason, therefore, the Council of Trent requires in the celebration of this divine sacrifice the greatest possible devotion and purity of conscience.

From the Statute of the Lay Cavanis Fraternity:

Art. 3. PERSONAL SANCTIFICATION

1. The members of the Cavanis Lay Fraternity, called to new life in Christ through Baptism, commit themselves to "nourish the hidden life with Christ in God" (Col. 3, 3) in order to grow, through the exercise of discipleship, to "the state of perfect man, to the extent that befits the full maturity of Christ" (Eph. 4, 13). In particular:

- a. dedicating certain and daily times to prayer, especially ensuring the recitation of Morning Lauds and Vespers;*
- b. reading with faith the sacred texts and above all the Holy Gospel according to the practice of "lectio divina";*
- c. fervently looking after sacramental practice and reserving a special space for the Eucharist - the heart and center of Christian life;*
- d. practicing, at least weekly, the so-called "revision of life" to read any shortcomings in the light of the Spirit and intervene to correct them;*
- e. striving to respect the laws of God, the precepts of the Church and her Magisterium.*

