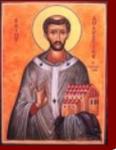


REPORTS FROM ADOREMUS EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS and NEWSLETTER 2nd December 2018



The second group of reports in the newsletter based on Congress talks, compiled by parishioners attending the Congress.

PREPARING CHILDREN FOR THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION - Presentation, 7th September 2018

Presenter: Dora Nash - Reflections and Excerpts

In the afternoon of the first day of attendance of the Eucharistic Congress in Liverpool, I joined hundreds of people to listen to this very interesting presentation. The author, Mrs Dora Nash was sharing her personal view, born of many years of teaching classroom RE, being a Parish catechist, a mother and grandmother. Her knowledge and experience are derived from a good pedagogical practice and teaching of the Church.

Preparation for First Holy Communion needs to be Christocentric, so Eucharistic Adoration should play a prominent role in the child's spiritual formation. Getting to know Jesus has two key aspects at this stage as at every stage of catechesis; knowing and loving. Benedict XVI in *Sacramentum Caritatis* taught:...'I recommend that, in their catechetical training, and especially in their preparation for First Holy Communion, children be taught the meaning and the beauty of spending time with Jesus and helped to cultivate a sense of awe before his presence in the Eucharist.'

There are a number of aspects of Eucharistic Adoration, which give the practice great power, significance and help children in their Eucharistic formation. Children are told, 'Jesus is our friend. Let's go to Church to visit him. We will pray in silence, with our eyes closed and hands held in prayer, as we kneel in front of the Eucharist. We can thank Him for everything He has done for us. Tell Him all our secrets and ask Him to be with, always.' These can be one of the first steps in building the child's personal relationship with Jesus. Adoration speaks to simple hearts. "Let the little children come to me."

The preparation for First Holy Communion should place the life and teachings of Christ at its centre, with His Passion, Death and Resurrection in particular, explored and explained in depth. Firstly, we need to place Jesus in the context of Salvation History.

Children love a story and Salvation History is the great story of how God made us and revealed Himself to us. We can do it through simple 'landmarks' - the Creation by the One God, who made human beings out of love, the Fall, when human beings rejected God. Then, the great beginning of God coming among us as Man. Our salvation story climaxes in the Incarnation - the heart of our Faith. This must be at the heart of First Holy Communion preparation.

The context of Salvation History was the basis of catechesis in the Early Church and it should be the same for our children today. It allows the catechist firstly to help the children to reflect on the beauty of the created universe and also, what is special about human beings. We are made in God's image and our souls need Him. The story of Revelation starts here and teaches us the broader meaning of creation by God out of nothing with humankind as God's special creation, capable of knowing and loving Him.

The story of the Fall and Original Sin is an essential part of our faith, because it is part of human experience. Children of this age are perfectly aware that all is not right with the world, cheating, failing out, being unkind, bullying, things being "Not fair!". Children have a strong sense of right and wrong. At this age a child has already learnt how to say 'sorry' to be forgiven and even how to forgive others - 'making up' with a friend after an argument. So it is not difficult to explain the Ten Commandments for child's level of experience. Children understand about rules. Games don't work, unless there are rules, and when God gave the Commandments, it was a great privilege for the Jewish people not a burden.

But our teaching of Salvation History is leading to Jesus. We should dwell on the Annunciation - the moment of the incarnation. The unique place and role of Mary, Jesus as God and Man, and Jesus' Baptism in the river Jordan can be a very visual way of presenting the Trinity - we can hear God the Father, we can see God the Son and we are given an image of God the Holy Spirit. We shouldn't shy away teaching the Trinity, it's how God shows us himself and how he draws us into himself. We are planting the seeds for later thinking and understanding.

The story of Jesus continues through the call of the disciples and through the spreading of the Good News, the importance of listening to Jesus' words and acting on them. Show the children, that they are part of something big and something with a direct descent from those fishermen in the boat.

To help put across Jesus' teaching in a concrete way and to show how Jesus relates to individuals in love and compassion, we should look at some miracle accounts from the Gospel. Perhaps the ones including children, like Jairus' daughter, we see Jesus coming to the child's home to heal and save her, bringing happiness and peace and conquering sin and death. This is a good preparation for the sacrament of Penance as well as that of the Eucharist, sin being the kind of death, which Jesus can release us from.

The Paschal Mystery is at the heart of our Catholic faith and so the Death and Resurrection of Our Lord must be at heart of Eucharistic preparation. The Last Supper was a last Passover meal, which in Jesus' hands becomes the first Mass. The words of consecration are central. When we receive his Body and Blood under the appearances of bread and wine, his saving death is made real here and now again for us. We share in His victory over sin achieved on Calvary, when He allowed Himself to be 'taken as a criminal' and put to death to make up for all our sins and so to Easter.

The Resurrection is, with the Incarnation, one of the key doctrines which sets Christianity apart from all other faiths; even the

monotheistic ones. Children should be aware of the uniquely Christian importance of Easter, like the risen Christ's encounter with Mary Magdalene in the garden where we see the devastation wrought on his followers by his death. Then a dawning realisation of the truth, the difference between the Risen Lord and what he was before.

Preparation for First Confession and Communion is a kind of mini-Catechumenate for our children. They take that first step towards Jesus Christ by coming for catechesis and with a good practice and planning they can be ready for the great day of having Our Blessed Lord 'under my roof' for the first time. We mustn't let the opportunity for formation pass by. The first Holy Communion Mass is an affirmation that we belong, not a performance.

LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN COME TO HIM.

Compiled by Luba Korda

Scriptural context to Adoration and understanding the Holy Eucharist

Keynote 1. Speaker CANON MERVYN TOWER, 7th September 2018

Canon Mervyn Tower is Parish Priest of Corpus Christi Church, Oxford. He was the first speaker of the conference and presented an overview of how we come to an understanding of the Blessed Sacrament through the whole of the Scriptures.

For most of us present, this was an extremely in depth account of how we come to venerate the Body of Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist. His talk and all the others are available on line, either through the Adoremus or Diocesan websites, so I will summarise what came across to me as the most important points.

For the Catholic Church the Eucharist is the source and summit of the theology and liturgical life of the Church. As such, it is all embracing and includes all biblical/theological themes. With this in mind, Canon Mervyn drew on The Old and New Testament, Jewish Scriptures, the study of Ontology (or being) and a sociological theory, to demonstrate how the Holy Eucharist therefore Our Lord Jesus Christ, is the reason we believe in faith. That we are present here and now, and through Scriptures we have an idea of where we are going or at least, where we want to go.

He stressed that the following three points are very important for our growth in veneration of the Holy Eucharist:

1) The link between the Scriptures and the Holy Eucharist. They cannot be separated one from another.

We cannot grow in veneration of the Body of our Lord unless we grow in veneration, respect and appreciation of the Old and the New Testaments. The Old Testament gives us a pattern of what both holiness and veneration are. This link between the two was the reason St Jerome chose to live in a cave as near as possible to the place that Jesus was born. He realised that there is an interface between the Incarnation and birth of Our Lord and the way God speaks through the Holy Scriptures, both are the incarnate word of God.

St Jerome was anxious to show this tangibly by his way of life and stated that "... ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ", therefore ignorance of the Holy Eucharist. St Jerome translated the Scriptures from Hebrew into Latin, which then became the common language of the Church. He also used existing translations from the Greek part of the Old and New Testaments.

2) We need to follow the hermeneutic principles of the Catholic Church in order to understand Scripture properly.

Hermeneutics comes from the Greek verb *hermeneuein* which means to "interpret". When Jesus was on the road to Emmaus with those two disciples who did not recognise him (Luke ch 24), he explained all the passages of the Scriptures to them that were about himself, beginning with Moses and all the prophets. In the passage, the Greek verb that is used for explain is "*hermeneuein*".

Any group following any religion has its own rules of interpretation. Within Catholic hermeneutics there are rules that stop us becoming fundamentalists and open us up to the mystery of what the Church and the Sacraments are about. The principles that are there for the Interpretation of the Scriptures are also there for the interpretation of the Eucharist. Canon Mervyn refers to this again later.

3) There is a need to recognise the deep philosophical questions of our existence - Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I/where are we going?.

This is relevant for us in the here and now and for society in 2018. These are the questions that individuals and societies have always asked. The Scriptures reflect this and reveal the nature of human beings and the nature of God.

The questions also relate to our needs as human beings. Canon Mervyn illustrated that all individuals, and communities have a desire for their deepest needs to be met. I.e. what is ultimate existence about and what is the meaning of life? These issues arise in the pastoral care of people and parishes, which is relevant for the Church in that it exists for the salvation of the world, through Our Lord Jesus Christ.

There are answers to these questions in the Scriptures, but they don't always start from the nature of God. They sometimes start from where we think we ought to be. This is especially true in the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament, but also in the Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Songs, etc. The ancient love poetry of the Song of Songs is interpreted as the Bridegroom being God, and the human person/community, the Bride. It talks about Love as the deepest needs of us human beings. Job asks the questions of suffering and goes through immense pain through circumstances beyond his control. How can God be a just God? All the big questions are there in the Scriptures and they are given some answers. This is also true of the Holy Eucharist, if we meditate on, focus on and revere Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, we have the answer for our lives.

To arrive at this point, to Love as God loves us, we need to grow as human beings. Canon Mervyn argues that there are three aspects that are needed for this, (but there may be others too).

a) *There is a need for Adoration and worship that is structured and follows a particular pattern.*

Sacrifice is linked to this and is essential to our human nature. (As a background to our understanding of the Sacrifice of the Mass, (my parenthesis)). In Jerusalem sacrifice took place in the temple and was the core of what went on. There is a basic human need to worship and adore something outside of ourselves, this is necessary for our growth. For this, the human matrix is crucial. For those of us in the church, the Parish is crucial.

b) *We need to belong to a community that is tangibly one of life.*

To understand our human need for the Holy Eucharist and the Scriptures, we need to know our human need to Adore God.

c) *We need to be altruistic and open to others and not closed in on our selves.*

Canon Mervyn went on to looking at the Historical approaches to the scriptural context of the Eucharist.

Three major Catholic hermeneutical principles help us understand the Scriptures, these are:

- 1) The Holy Scriptures are written under the influence of the Holy Spirit and teach us the truth for our salvation.
- 2) The Holy Scriptures were written by real human beings who were culturally conditioned by their back grounds and ideas.
We need to discern what these are by principles of Biblical criticism.
- 3) Scripture needs to be taken as a whole along with the tradition of the church.

These principles are equally valid for the understanding of the Eucharist. We have to study the truths that are being taught for our salvation.

He talked about the different approaches to the Old Testament concerning the origins of the Holy Eucharist:

- The Old Testament has little or nothing to offer and is approached but only as a source for comparative religion,
- Jewish texts are just parallels and not resources, the origins of Christian worship are found in pagan rites.

The Church's view that:

- The Old Testament i.e. the 46 books of the Catholic Canon gives us a direct background to the origins of the Eucharist.
- The Fathers of the church saw the Old Testament as prefiguring the New Testament and claimed the Old Testament as Christian and as such superseded Judaism.

Examples of how the Church links the Old Testament to the Eucharistic narratives in the New Testament were found during the Sunday readings in August when John 6 was read at Mass.

1st Sunday Exodus 16. The Lord sends Manna from Heaven, John 6. I am the Bread of Life

2nd Sunday 1 Kings. The angel gives Elijah food to reach the mountain of God, John 6. Anyone who eats this Bread will live forever

3rd Sunday Proverbs 9. Wisdom builds her house and invites all to eat her bread there, John 6. My flesh is real food and my blood is real drink

4th Sunday Joshua 24. We will serve the Lord for he is our God, John 6. Who shall we go to ? You are the Holy one of God.

Canon Mervyn gave many examples from the Old Testament of Worship and Adoration in general, guidance and feeding narratives, sacrifice, the Messianic Banquet and the Passover. The Passover is celebrated as a "Memorial". This is not a simple mental image of the past, but is interconnected with the general Hebrew view of time, linking past, present and future and emphasising transcendence. Jesus' words at the last supper, 'Do this in Memory of Me' in this Biblical sense means not just in the past but in the here and now. Bringing to life what is already there, transcending time and living in the present. That we are involved with this sacrifice now is so important for our understanding of the Holy Eucharist i.e. the mystery of Calvary and the Garden of the Resurrection which are all together in the biblical notion of time.

Although the OT and the NT are linked with a language of promise and fulfilment, Canon Mervyn cautions against using the OT as only a preparation for the Gospels. This could imply that Christianity fulfills and succeeds Judaism which would therefore be considered defunct. He says it is better to use the language of parallels and avoid the language of fulfillment.

The New Testament narratives were then looked at of which there are several. The Institution narratives are crucial, the oldest of which is thought to be 1 Corinthians 11 23-27, 'That on the night he was betrayed the Lord Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my Body which is for you. Do this in Remembrance of me"'. The Road to Emmaus, (Luke 24) gives insight to the early structure of the Eucharist with Scripture readings and homily.

Canon Mervyn examined the context of Jewish Liturgy for the celebration of the Eucharist. There are several Jewish prayers of thanksgiving, blessing and sacrifice which scholars consider important for the background for the structure of the Christian Eucharist. One of these is the prayer of presentation of the gifts at Mass which is, "Blessed are you Lord God of all Creation." This comes from the beginning of most Jewish prayers, "Blessed are you Lord Our God, King of the Universe". The other important one is the Shema Yisrael, Deuteronomy 6 4-6, "Hear O Israel! The Lord your God is one God, and you must love the Lord your God with all your Heart and all your Soul and all your Might." This is the centrality of Monotheism. Catholics and Jews are united in a deep veneration of the presence of God in our midst, for the Jews especially in the Torah and for Catholics in the Eucharist.

Canon Mervyn concluded by recounting a story told to him by the mother of one of his Priest friends who lived in Brooklyn New York. When she first moved to the street everyone was Catholic and they used to have Blessed Sacrament processions, then the Catholics moved out, and her neighbours were all Jewish. They had a feast in honour of the Torah where they brought out the scrolls of the Law, from the Synagogue, covered by a canopy and paraded through the streets with singing and dancing. The Torah was given great honour. This reminded her of the Blessed Sacrament processions.



Shema Yisrael

Canon Mervyn's one plea was that when we have Blessed Sacrament processions we bring out the Holy Scriptures to show that we honour them and that what we learn from the Scriptures we give to the Blessed Sacrament and what we learn from the Blessed Sacrament we give to the Scriptures to show the equivalence between them. He hoped his talk would be an encouragement for us to study the Scriptures more especially in order to further our understanding of the Blessed Sacrament.

THIS WEEK

SUNDAY 2nd First Sunday of Advent
Yr C Ps Wk 1

9.30 am Mass - Offertory procession
includes toys for Mayor's Toy Appeal

4.00 pm Advent Service - Come and
join us in the church and in the hall
afterwards for refreshments.

Outreach: Crisis is the national charity for single homeless people. At Christmas, Crisis takes special steps to provide company and support to tackle loneliness and isolation and to help people take their first steps out of homelessness. See www.crisis.org.uk

MONDAY 3rd St Francis Xavier
Day of Prayer for Migrants

TUESDAY 4th

Noon – Tuesday Lunch Club – Hall

THURSDAY 6th

10.00 am Funeral - Katie Quinnell

FRIDAY 7th St Ambrose

SATURDAY 8th The Immaculate
Conception of the Blessed Virgin
Mary

2.30 pm Polish Catechism - Hall

SUNDAY 9th Second Sunday of Advent
Yr C Ps Wk 2 Bible Sunday

4.00 pm Advent Service - Cloth for
the Cradle

Outreach: Street Pastors are trained Volunteers from 25 local churches who care for those in their community. They have been operating in the town for nearly 9 years, helping to bring a calming peaceful presence to people who are out on the streets.

DATES for YOUR DIARY

1- Filipino Sta Nino Thanksgiving Mass & Fatima Service Jan. 1st 2019 at 2pm and afterwards in the hall. Further details from Lollett & Jaime Vidamo.

2] St Augustine's Nursery Christmas fair
Sat 8th Dec from 10am – 12 pm

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Dinner for the Homeless, Needy or Lonely. Drivers are needed to pick-up guests at about noon to transport to the Age UK Hall off Camden Road and to take them home at about 2pm. Please give your name and telephone number to the Office.

NEED FOR MORE CHURCH CLEANERS

We are still in need one or two more church cleaners to spread the load. Each group only cleans once every 4 weeks for 1.50 hrs. Please consider if you could help. If you are able to, pop in the office and give your name or ring 01892 522 525 or email: office@st-augustine.co.uk



REFUGEE AID

This Christmas we have found a way to make your Christmas shopping easy and give refugees in Northern France what they need most. By buying vouchers you are helping to make their winter a little more bearable. You're also showing the generosity and kindness that all refugees need. Details are on website - care4calais.org/christmasgiftvouchers.

The Passage is a Christian Charity working with homeless people in Central London. **For every £1** given through the Big Give website after 12.00 noon on Tuesday 27 November and before 12.00 noon on Tuesday 4 December, can result in the charity receiving **£2**.

<https://secure.thebiggive.org.uk/project/30366>

ADVENT III service

We would welcome any children who would like to be involved. As in previous years they would lead the procession into the church and assist in carrying candles during the service. If your child would like to take part either leave your name in the office or contact Paul Lambert 01892 531093



OFFERTORY

Offertory: £2009.77
Catholic Youth Services £634.08
CAFOD £10
Mitapeeap £46.25

Thank you for your generosity.

Confirmation 2019

Young people who are in Year 10 or above of secondary school may now enrol for the Confirmation programme.

Confirmation will be celebrated on
30th June 2019.

Please take an enrolment form from the narthex and complete and return it as soon as possible. The first meeting for parents and confirmation candidates will be Sunday 27th January 2019 after the 5.45pm Mass and the sessions will be after the Sunday evening Mass

First Holy Communion 2019

Final call for children in year 3 and above who wish to join our First Holy Communion programme. Completed Application packs need to be handed in NOW - the first Parents meeting is

Tuesday 11th December
in the Hall at 8pm

Christmas Day Dinner

Anyone who would like to join us for dinner on Christmas Day at the Age UK Hall, Wood Street (off Camden Road), and has not received an invitation, please collect one from the Parish Office. Also, could anyone help us catch the turkey?



Christmas Cards for Cambodia



Around this time of year we also remember our twin parish and send them religious Christmas cards which are always received with pleasure.

The address is: **Fr Mark Lopez**
Catholic Church, PO Box 601
Kompong Thom, Cambodia

Madonnas

A social group for young women/mums At our first meeting last week, about 20 of us chatted over a glass of wine, a plate of cheese and some delicious chocolate brownies/cookies. It was great to see old friends and meet women new to the group.

Please put the following dates in your diary:

***** Wednesday 19th December
8pm - A Christmas Soiree *****
and Monday 21st January 8pm
(details to follow)

Hope to see lots of new faces at our next get together on Dec 19th at 8pm.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
Year C Psalter Week 1
PARISH MASS BOOK
Readings: page 82
Preface: page 65