

AUGUST SALAD N STUDY 2013
OUR EIGHTH SUMMER SCHOOL
ANIMATOR, CANON JIM IRVINE

OUR ONE GREAT ACT *of* FIDELITY

WAITING FOR CHRIST
IN THE EUCHARIST

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Session 1 – August 1, 2013	1
1 THE CENTRALITY OF THE EUCHARIST	
2 THE RADICAL, SHOCKING, RAW, PHYSICAL CHARACTER OF THE EUCHARIST	
3 THE MANY DIMENSIONS OF THE EUCHARIST	
4 THE EUCHARIST AS GOD’S PHYSICAL EMBRACE	
Session 2 – August 8, 2013	3
5 THE EUCHARIST AS AN INTENSIFICATION OF OUR UNITY WITHIN THE BODY OF CHRIST	
6 THE EUCHARIST AS THE NEW MANNA GOD’S DAILY BREAD FOR US	
7 THE EUCHARIST AS A MEAL, AS A CELEBRATION OF OUR HEALTH AND JOY, AND AS A CELEBRATION OF OUR PAIN AND SORROW	
8 THE EUCHARIST AS SACRIFICE	
Session 3 – August 15, 2013	7
9 THE EUCHARIST AS A MEMORIAL OF THE PASCHAL MYSTERY	
10 THE EUCHARIST AS THE ULTIMATE INVITATION TO MATURE DISCIPLESHIP – TO WASH EACH OTHER’S FEET	
11 THE EUCHARIST AS AN INVITATION TO JUSTICE	
Session 4 – August 22, 2013	10
12 THE EUCHARIST AS A RITUAL TO SUSTAIN OUR HEALTH	
13 THE EUCHARIST AS VIGIL, AS A COMMUNAL RITE OF WAITING	
14 THE EUCHARIST AS THE PRIESTLY PRAYER OF CHRIST	
Session 5 – August 29, 2013	13
15 THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE EUCHARIST: RECEIVE, GIVE THANKS, BREAK, SHARE	
16 OUR ONE GREAT FIDELITY	
Communion	18

1 – THE CENTRALITY OF THE EUCHARIST

Already then there were major variations among the different communities as to how often the Eucharist was celebrated and what its exact role was in bringing the community together. In either case, however, it was still deemed to be central, the summit to which we are called. Augustine, perhaps the most influential Christian theologian of all time, puts it this way: Jesus didn't leave us the church and from the church we derive the Eucharist; rather, for him, *Jesus left us the Eucharist and from the Eucharist we derive the church*. The church is in service of the Eucharist, not vice versa. Heaven will be a banquet table. The Eucharist already is that table.

2 – THE RADICAL, SHOCKING, RAW, PHYSICAL CHARACTER OF THE EUCHARIST

Skin needs to be touched!

God knows that better than anyone. It's why Jesus gave us the Eucharist. In the Eucharist skin gets touched. The Eucharist isn't abstract, a theological instruction, a creed, a moral precept, a philosophy, or even just an intimate word. It's bodily, an embrace, a kiss, something shockingly physical, the real presence in a deeper way than even the old metaphysics imagined.

Christianity is without doubt the earthiest of all religions. Unlike most other religions, it doesn't call you out of the physical, out of the body, or out of the world. Rather it tells you that *God enters the physical, becomes one with it, blesses it, redeems it, and that there is no reason to escape from it*.

Something in that goes against the grain. Christ's relationship to the physical scandalized his contemporaries. "This is intolerable language!" is what the crowds said when Jesus spoke of the physical character of the Eucharist in John's Gospel, and the raw physical character of the Eucharist is still hard for us to accept today. But it's also a wonderful part of Christianity. In the Eucharist, our skin gets touched.

And, given our tensions and loneliness, we need that touch frequently, daily even.

3 – THE MANY DIMENSIONS OF THE EUCHARIST

There is no adequate explanation of the Eucharist for the same reason that, in the end, there is no adequate explanation for love, for embrace, and for the reception of life and spirit through touch. Certain realities take us beyond language because that is their very purpose. They do what words cannot do. They also are beyond what we can neatly nail down in our understanding.

4 – THE EUCHARIST AS GOD’S PHYSICAL EMBRACE

Among other things, what this parable expresses wonderfully is how the Eucharist works. In it, God physically embraces us. Indeed that is what all sacraments are, *God’s physical embrace*. Words, as we know, have a relative power. In critical situations they often fail us. When this happens, we have still another language, the language of ritual. The most ancient and primal ritual of all is the ritual of physical embrace. It can say and do what words cannot.

Jesus acted on this. For most of his ministry, he used words. Through words, he tried to bring us God’s consolation, challenge, and strength. His words, like all words, had a certain power. Indeed, his words stirred hearts, healed people, and affected conversions. But, powerful though they were, in time they too became inadequate. Something more was needed. So on the night before his death, having exhausted what he could do with words, Jesus went beyond them. He gave us the Eucharist, his physical embrace, his kiss, a ritual within which he holds us to his heart.

5 – THE EUCHARIST AS AN INTENSIFICATION OF OUR UNITY WITHIN THE BODY OF CHRIST

The Eucharist ... is meant to be an intensification of our unity within the Body of Christ. It is not just the bread and wine that is meant to change and become the body and blood of Christ. There is a famous saying in the writing of the great church Father, Saint Augustine. Whenever he would give communion to someone for the first time, instead of holding up the host and saying, “The Body of Christ,” he would hold it up and say, “Receive what you are.” The Eucharist tries, first of all, to change us so that we become what we receive, one body, one community, one heart, and one spirit.

Our differences eventually have their say, both in our personal relationships and in the relationships between countries, cultures, ethnic groups, and religions. At a certain point our differences, like a cancer that cannot be stopped, begin to make themselves felt, and we feel helpless to overcome that.

But realizing this isn't despair. It's the beginning of health. As anyone who has ever fought an addiction knows, the beginning of a return to health lies in the admission of helplessness. It's only when we admit that we can't help ourselves that we can be helped. We see in the Gospels where so many times, immediately after finally grasping a teaching of Jesus, the Apostles react with the words, “If that's true, then it's impossible for us, then there's nothing we can do!” Jesus welcomes that response because in that admission we open ourselves to help, and replies, “It is impossible for you, but nothing is impossible for God!”

The Eucharist is such a prayer of helplessness, a prayer for God to give us a unity we cannot give to ourselves. It is not incidental that Jesus instituted it in the hour of his most intense loneliness, when he realized that all the words he had spoken hadn't been enough and that he had no more

words to give. When he felt most helpless, he gave us the prayer of helplessness, the Eucharist. Our generation, like every generation before it, senses its helplessness and intuits its need for a messiah from beyond. We cannot heal ourselves and we cannot find the key to overcome our wounds and divisions all on our own. So we must turn our helplessness into a Quaker silence, a Eucharistic prayer that asks God to come and do for us what we cannot do for ourselves: create community. We go to Eucharist for this reason.

6 – THE EUCHARIST AS THE NEW MANNA GOD’S DAILY BREAD FOR US

John, in placing the washing of the feet where the other Evangelists put the words of institution, as we shall see later, is reminding us that washing each other's feet, service to each other and humility before each other, is what the Eucharist is ultimately about. But John also emphasizes another aspect of Eucharist.

While linking the Eucharist to the Last Supper and highlighting that it means service and humility, John also places it into Jesus' discourse on the bread of life. In chapter 6 of his gospel, Jesus says: "Unless you eat the bread of life, you will not have life within you." In speaking of the bread of life, he links it to the manna, the daily feeding that Israel received from God during her years in the desert. During all those years in the desert, manna was Israel's daily food, and often her only food. It had, too, a curious quality. When the Israelites ate it alongside other foods they had procured or brought out of Egypt, it tasted bitter, but if they took manna as their sole food, it tasted sweet. In either case, it was their daily sustenance.

In John's Gospel, Jesus tells us that the Eucharist is the new manna, the new bread from heaven, the new way that God gives us daily sustenance.

7 – THE EUCHARIST AS A MEAL, AS A CELEBRATION OF OUR HEALTH AND JOY, AND AS A CELEBRATION OF OUR PAIN AND SORROW

Everything is meant to be in relationship. The Eucharist honors that. When Jesus gave us the Eucharist, he intended it to be a ritual that

invites us to come together as a family in every circumstance of our lives. In faith, just as in nature, we are meant to come together with others when we are happy and when we are sad; when the occasion is festive and when it is mundane; when we celebrate new life and when we bury loved ones; when we give ourselves to each other in marriage and when we need reconciliation; when our energy is high and when it is low; when we feel the need for each other and when we want distance from others; and when we have no other reason to be together other than the fact that our nature invites us there. ...

But families that sustain community also gather regularly, ideally daily, irrespective of whether there is a special occasion or not. They don't just gather when the energy is good, when everyone is at his or her best, when nobody is bored or angry, and when some occasion merits the effort. They come together regularly, despite tedium, boredom, low energy, busyness, distractions, and interpersonal tensions, because they recognize, however inchoately, that family life is as much about sharing the mundane, the distracted, the sports scores, and the tensions of life as it is about sharing special and joyous moments. The weekday supper of hot dogs and beans, wolfed down in twenty minutes with the conversation going no deeper than the sports scores, is not exactly the same stuff as the fare of the Christmas dinner or the conversation that takes place at a wedding or a funeral, but it is equally as important in creating family and keeping a family together. Families are for every day, just as they are for special occasions. So too is the Eucharist.

...

One of the reasons we go to church is to pray, but we go there, too, for the same reason we go to the family table every evening. It's good to be there, no matter what!

8 – THE EUCHARIST AS SACRIFICE

Simply put, the lesson is this: *In order for something to be received as a gift, it must be received twice.* What is implied here?

A gift, by definition, is something that is not deserved but given freely. What is our first impulse when we are given a gift? Our instinctual response is, “I can't take this! I don't deserve this!” In essence, that gesture, that healthy instinctual response, is an attempt to give the gift back to its giver. But, of course, the giver refuses to take the gift back and re-gives it to us with the assurance, “But I want you to have this!” When we receive it the second time, it is now more properly ours because, by trying to give it back, we healthily *recognized* that it was a gift, unmerited, undeserved.

9 – THE EUCHARIST AS A MEMORIAL OF THE PASCHAL MYSTERY

Once upon a time there was a rabbi who, whenever he wanted God’s presence, went to a special place in the woods, lit a fire, said some prayers, and did a dance. Then God would appear to him. When he died, his disciple did the same. If he wanted God’s presence, he went to the same spot in the woods, lit the fire, and said the same prayers, but nobody had taught him the dance. It still worked. God appeared. When the disciple died, his own disciple carried on the tradition. If he wanted God’s presence, he went to the same spot in the woods and lit the fire. He didn’t know the prayers or the dance, but it still worked. God came. Then that disciple died. He also had a disciple. Whenever he wanted God’s presence, he, too, went to the same place in the woods, but nobody had taught him how to light the fire or say the prayers or do the dance, but it still worked, God appeared. That disciple, too, eventually died, but he also had a pupil. One day this pupil wanted God’s presence. So he searched for the place in the woods, but couldn’t find it. And he didn’t know how to light the fire or say the prayers or do the dance. All he knew was how to tell the story. But it worked. He discovered that whenever he told the story of how the others had found God, God would appear.

In essence, this story explains how sacred ritual liturgy—works. Judaism calls this “making zikkaron.” Christians call it “making memorial.” The idea is that a past event can be remembered, ritually recalled, in such a way that it becomes present again and can be participated in. How is this possible?

...

Properly understood, the Eucharist, as a ritual, gives us another kind of “real presence.” It makes present for us the reality of Christ’s dying as well as God’s response to that, the Resurrection, and invites us to participate in that event. *What the Eucharist makes present is not an iconic Christ to be adored or even consumed, but the reality of Christ’s dying and rising as an event within which we are invited to participate.* Too often this

understanding of the Eucharist has been lost, and, as a consequence, we go to Eucharist to receive the person of Christ and to intensify our communion in the body of Christ; both of these reasons are wonderful, valid, and important, but we miss the sense that we are there to participate in the saving event of Christ's death and resurrection, not just to adore or admire it.

10 – THE EUCHARIST AS THE ULTIMATE INVITATION TO MATURE DISCIPLESHIP – TO WASH EACH OTHER'S FEET

These words wonderfully describe one of the central meanings of the Eucharist. We should be on our knees washing each other's feet because that is precisely what Jesus did at the first Eucharist, and he did it to teach us that the Eucharist is not a private act of devotion, meant to square our debts with God, but a call to, and a grace for, service. *The Eucharist is meant to send us out into the world ready to give expression to Christ's hospitality, humility, and self-effacement.*

Where do we get such a notion?

This is everywhere evident in the Gospels, though John's Gospel puts it the most clearly. Where the other Gospels have Jesus speaking the words of institution at the Last Supper ("This is my body. This is my blood. Do this in memory of me."), John has Jesus washing the disciples' feet. But, *for John, this gesture replaces the words of institution.* It specifies what the Eucharist is in fact meant to do—namely, to lead us out of church and into the humble service of others.

...

The Eucharist is both an invitation that invites us and a grace that empowers us to service. And what it invites us to do is to replace distrust with hospitality, pride with humility, and self-interest with self-effacement so as to reverse the world's order of things—wherein the rich get served by the poor and where the first priority is always to keep one's pride intact and one's self-interest protected. The Eucharist invites us to step down from pride, away from self-interest, to turn the mantle of privilege into the apron of service, so as to help reverse the world's order of things wherein pride,

status, and self-interest are forever the straws that stir the drink.

11 – THE EUCHARIST AS AN INVITATION TO JUSTICE

The Eucharist, among other things, calls us to justice, to dissolve the distinction between rich and poor, noble and peasant, aristocrat and servant, both around the Eucharist table itself and afterwards, outside of the church. The Eucharist fulfills what Mary prophesied when she was pregnant with Jesus—namely that, in Jesus, the mighty would be brought down and the lowly would be raised up. ...

Sadly, we often don't take this dimension of the Eucharist seriously. There is a common tendency to think that the practice of justice, especially social justice, is an optional part of being a Christian, something mandated by political correctness rather than by the Gospels. Generally we don't see the call to reach out actively to the poor as something from which we cannot exempt ourselves.

In the New Testament, one line out of ten is a direct challenge to reach out to the poor. In Luke's Gospel, we find this in every sixth line. In the Epistle of James, this occurs in every fifth line. The challenge to reach out to the poor and to level the distinction between rich and poor is an integral and nonnegotiable part of being a Christian, commanded as strongly as any of the Commandments.

12 – THE EUCHARIST AS A RITUAL TO SUSTAIN OUR HEALTH

A friend of mine, an alcoholic in recovery, likes to explain the dynamics of an Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting this way: “It’s funny, the meetings are always the same, the exact same things get said over and over again. Everything is totally predictable; everyone, except those who are there for the first time, knows already what will be said. And we’re not there to show our best sides to each other. I don’t go to an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting to share my talents or to be a nice guy. No, I go because if I don’t, I know, and know for sure, that I will start drinking again and eventually destroy myself. It’s that simple. I go there to stay alive!”

In a curious, but accurate way, that can also be a description of the Eucharist, at least of one important aspect of it. Among other reasons, we go to the Eucharist to stay alive. The Eucharist is meant to be God’s regular nourishment for us, daily manna to keep us alive within the desert of our lives.

13 – THE EUCHARIST AS VIGIL, AS A COMMUNAL RITE OF WAITING

So, too, within each of our lives. *We are always waiting.* The Eucharist is meant to help us with that. Among other things, it is meant to be a vigil, a coming together to wait for someone or something new to happen to us. We meet in Eucharist to wait with each other. The Eucharist is meant to be a vigil. As Gerhard Lohfink puts it:

The early apostolic communities cannot be understood outside of the matrix of intense expectation. They were communities awaiting Christ’s return. They gathered in Eucharist for, among other reasons, to foster and sustain this awareness, namely, that they were living in wait, waiting for Christ’s return.

14 – THE EUCHARIST AS THE PRIESTLY PRAYER OF CHRIST

There are two essential kinds of prayer: Something we call liturgical prayer, the public prayer of the church, and something we call private or *devotional* prayer. Unfortunately we often confuse the two.

For example, although five hundred people might be sitting in meditation together in a church or praying the rosary together at a shrine, this is still private or devotional prayer. Conversely, someone might be praying the Office of the Church alone at home in an armchair, or a priest might be celebrating the Eucharist alone at a kitchen table, and this is public, liturgical prayer. The distinction, as we see from these examples, is not dependent upon the number of people participating, or whether the prayer is taking place in a church, or even whether the prayer is being prayed in a group or privately. The distinction is based upon something else. What?

Perhaps a change of names might help us understand the distinction: liturgical, public prayer might more aptly be called priestly prayer, while private and devotional prayer might better be termed affective prayer.

What is priestly prayer? It is the prayer *of* Christ through the church for the world. Our Christian belief is that Christ is still gathering us together around his word and is still offering an eternal act of love for the world. As an extension of that, we believe that whenever we meet together, in a church or elsewhere, to gather around the scriptures or to celebrate the Eucharist, we are entering into that prayer and sacrifice of Christ. This is *liturgical prayer*; it's Christ's prayer, not ours. We pray liturgically whenever we gather to celebrate the scriptures or the sacraments, or when we pray, in community or privately, something that is called the Prayer of the Church or the Office of the Church (Lauds – Morning Prayer and Vespers – Evening Prayer).

And this kind of prayer is not restricted to the ordained clergy. We are all priests by virtue of our baptism, and part of the implicit covenant we make with the community at our baptism is the commitment, when we reach adulthood, to pray habitually for the world through the liturgical Prayer of the Church.

What needs also to be highlighted here, since we easily miss this aspect, is that the church's *liturgical prayer* is for the world, not for itself.

Affective prayer has a different intent. Though it has many forms—meditation, centering prayer, praying the rosary, devotional prayers of all kinds—it has a single aim, to draw us and our loved ones into deeper intimacy with Christ. In the end, no matter its particular form, all nonliturgical prayer ultimately aims at personal intimacy with God and is, ultimately too, private, even when it is done publicly or in a large group. All private and devotional prayer can be defined in this way: it is prayer that tries, in myriad ways, to open us or our loved ones up in such a way that we can hear God say to us, “I love you!”

Churches themselves struggle with this. Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Episcopalians, and mainline Protestant churches have a strong liturgical tradition, sometimes to the detriment of affective prayer. Evangelical and Pentecostal churches, on the other hand, have a strong focus on affective prayer, sometimes to the point of neglecting liturgical prayer almost entirely.

15 – THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE EUCHARIST: RECEIVE, GIVE THANKS, BREAK, SHARE

The Eucharist is not intended to be simply a ritual prayer within which we participate regularly, but is also meant to be something that touches and colors every area of our lives. Scripture exhorts us to “pray always.”

Obviously this does not mean that we should always be saying prayers. We would have to stop living normal lives. It refers to something deeper. *The challenge is to try to live our lives in such a way that our whole life, in a manner of speaking, becomes a prayer.*

It is the same with the Eucharist. We need to be living and breathing Eucharist all the time, not just at those times when we are in church. The Eucharist needs to be a defining attitude, a way we meet life, receive it, and share it with others. It needs to be a spirituality, namely, a way we undergo the presence of God and others in this world.

Receive

A man ... was once a member of a hunting expedition in Africa. One morning this man left the camp early, by himself, and hiked several miles into the jungle, where he surprised and eventually bagged two wild turkeys. Buckling his catch to his belt, he headed back toward camp. At some point, however, he sensed that he was being followed. With his senses heightened by fear, he stopped, hands on his rifle, and looked around. His fears were dispelled when he saw what was happening. Following him at a distance was a naked and obviously starved adolescent boy. The boy's objective was food, not threat. Seeing this, the man stopped, unbuckled his belt, and, letting the turkeys fall to the ground, backed off and gestured to the boy that he could come and take the birds. The boy ran up to the two birds, but, inexplicably, refused to pick them up. He was, seemingly, still asking for something else. Perplexed, the man tried both by words and by gestures to indicate to the boy that he could have the birds. Still the boy refused to pick them up.

Finally, in desperation, unable to explain what he still wanted, the boy backed off several meters from the dead birds and stood with outstretched and open hands ... waiting, *waiting until the man came and placed the birds in his hands*. He had, despite hunger, fear, and intense fused to *take* the birds. He waited until they were *given* to him; he received them.

That simple story is a mini-course in moral theology. It summarizes all of Christ's moral teachings and the entire Ten Commandments. If we, like this boy, would always wait until life was given to us as gift, as opposed to taking it as if by right, seizing it, or raping it, we would never break a single Commandment. Moreover, we would have in our lives the first and most important virtue of all, the sense that all is gift, that nothing is owed us by right.

Give Thanks

A Jewish folk tale tells of a young man who aspired to great holiness. After some time at working to achieve it, he went to see his rabbi. "Rabbi," he announced, "I think I have achieved sanctity." "Why do you think that?" asked the rabbi. "Well," responded the young man, "I've been practicing virtue and discipline for some time now, and I have grown quite proficient at them. From the time the sun rises until it sets, I practice a rigorous asceticism: I take no food or water. All day long, I *do* all kinds of hard work for others and I never expect to be thanked. If I have temptations of the flesh, I roll in the snow or in thorn bushes until they go away, and then at night, before bed, I practice the ancient monastic discipline and administer lashes to my bare back. I have strongly disciplined myself so as to become holy."

The rabbi was silent for a time. Then he took the young man by the arm and led him to a window and pointed to an old horse that was just being led away by its master. "I have been observing that horse for some time," the rabbi said, "and I've noticed that it doesn't get fed or watered from morning to night. All day long it has to do work for people, and it never gets thanked. I often see it rolling around in snow or in bushes, as horses are prone to do,

and frequently I see it get whipped, but that, young man, is a horse, not a saint!”

This is an insightful parable because it shows how simplistic it is to identify sanctity and virtue with self-renunciation and the capacity to do what is difficult.

...

Mostly what has been presented as mature, as the ideal to be imitated, is the ideal of the stoic, the Hamlet figure, the person who is somehow above and detached from the enjoyments, pleasures, and delights of the ordinary person. A saint who craves chocolate? There aren't many icons, outside of Buddhism, that depict saintly figures with a double chin. We are the poorer for that. We have mistaken Hamlet for Jesus, stoicism for Christianity, depression for detachment.

A spirituality of the Eucharist, as inviting us to gratitude, can serve a corrective here. The Eucharistic person is not the noble antihero who luxuriates in despair, but the child of the kingdom, the grace-merry person who, while sharing fully in the tears of this world, is ultimately distinguished through his or her laughter. To consider life as tragic is to not live out the Eucharist. It is also to not imitate Christ, who shocked as many people with his capacity to enjoy this Earth as he did with his challenge to live in the face of the fact that this Earth is not our true home.

...

Give thanks! These words are not just a mandate for the moral posture we should have when receiving the Eucharist. They also invite us to stand before all of life in a certain posture of gratefulness, realizing always that *it is nobody's job to love and take care of us*, and that *love and care come to us as gifts* that need to be acknowledged. Indeed the very word Eucharist means gratitude.

Break

Break! How do we break so as to live the Eucharist within our daily lives? When Jesus links the idea of breaking to the Eucharist, the rending

and breaking down that he is talking about have to do with narcissism, individualism, pride, self-serving ambition, and all the other things that prevent us from letting go of those things inside of us that prevent us from giving ourselves to others. Buddhist spirituality suggests that most everything that is wrong in the world can be explained in one image, that of the group photo. Whenever anyone looks at a group photo, the person invariably looks first at how he or she turned out and only afterwards considers whether or not it is a good picture of the group. *Breaking the Eucharistic bread invites us to look first at how the group turned out.*

It invites us, too, into a deeper understanding of what it means to be together at a Eucharist: *our* Eucharists, like *our* homes and places of work, bring us together even as we are still filled with distrust, jealousy, paranoia, and misunderstandings. We stand around the Eucharistic table with the same wounds we bring to our other tables.

Eucharist, then, is meant not just to celebrate our joys and gratitude, but also to break us open, to make us groan in anguish, to lay bare our mistrust, to lessen our jealousies and break down the distances that separate us. *What the Eucharist asks of us is vulnerability, humility, contrition, and forgiveness. Bitterness, hatred, and suspicion are meant to disappear at a Eucharist.*

Share

There used to be an expression in popular spiritual literature: *Families and communities are schools of charity.* I remember reading it as a novice many years ago, and very naively and very badly misunderstanding it. My simple thought then was, *Yes, that makes sense! When you live within a family or some other community, it gives you a lot of chances to practice patience, forgiveness, and understanding—as you deal with other people's faults!* How wrong I was! What that expression suggests is not, first of all, that we grow in charity and maturity by putting up patiently with other people's faults, but that real relationship, actual interaction within family and community, deflates our fantasies, makes us see reality, punctures our self-

centeredness, and against every protest, denial, and rationalization we can muster, shows us how selfish and immature we often are.

16 – OUR ONE GREAT FIDELITY

Throughout two thousand years of history, Christians, both whole churches and individual believers, have consistently been able to ignore many of Jesus' key commandments and invitations. We have either been too weak to follow his counsels or we have rationalized them away in some way.

And so, to a large extent, we have exempted ourselves from the demands to love our enemies; to turn the other cheek when attacked; to forgive seventy times seven; to leave our gift at the altar and first go and seek reconciliation with our brother before we worship; to place justice on the same level as worship; to see mercy as more important than dogma; to not commit adultery, not steal, not call someone a fool, not tell lies, not give in to jealousy. *We have, in virtually every one of these areas, individually and collectively, a history of infidelity and rationalization.*

COMMUNION

OUR ONE
GREAT ACT *of*
FIDELITY

WAITING FOR CHRIST
IN THE EUCHARIST

Brothers and sisters in Christ,
God calls us to faithful service
by the proclamation of the word, and sustains us with the sacrament of the body and
blood of Christ.

[*Hear now God's word, and*] receive this holy food from the Lord's table.

Most merciful God,
**we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us,
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

The priest shall say...

Almighty God have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,

confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in eternal life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Before Communion...

As our Saviour taught us, let us pray,

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,**

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial,

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,

and the glory are yours,

now and for ever. Amen.

The gifts of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

After Communion...

Glory to God,

whose power, working in us,

can do infinitely more

than we can ask or imagine.

Glory to God from generation to generation,

in the Church and in Christ Jesus,

for ever and ever. Amen.

Dismissal...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.