

THE EUCHARIST AND THE NEW MAN

Effects of the Holy Eucharist in transforming the lives of workers!

1. We have the providential privilege of participating in this International Eucharistic Congress,

- not just by our prayers, hymns, assistance at the Eucharistic ceremonies, for a few hours and a few days,
- but we have come here from all countries of the world to engage ourselves,
- to transform our lives in the living Christ in us,
- to continue through the Eucharist living Christ in us,
- to the salvation and the redemption of all human beings on earth and in eternity.

The Eucharistic Congress must be the greatest grace for all of Asia, for all its peoples, especially for the multitudes of the poorest and the humblest workers – youth and adult – for all workers. God, speaking through his prophets, said: “the poor will eat, will satisfy their hunger and will glorify the Lord.” And the Church in hymns to the Blessed Eucharist sings: “the poor, the workers, those most humble, partake of the Lord.”

The Eucharist shows, in the most touching manner, God's love for each human being and the divine dignity of each human being; the will of God and His sacrifice to render this divine dignity on earth as in eternity.

God created man in His own image – a human being – with his own special mission and destiny, not only as his new collaborator in transforming all creation and all His creatures in the service of all humanity; but when man did not accept this divine mission of God and fell into sin and degradation, God the Father sent His Divine Son on earth as man – as one of the poorest and humblest of workers – to help and save the poorest and the humblest of people, to preach the dignity of the poorest and bushiest and to suffer and to die on the cross and to rise from the grave for the salvation of all human beings.

And Christ remained on earth – not just for 30 years... He founded His Church to form a new humanity. He chose twelve humble men to be His apostles and gave them the power to transform bread and wine into His own body and blood, into His own glorious and eternal person, to give Him to each person who believes in His divine presence, so that they may live till the end of time, transforming men, helping them to make of all their lives – personal, family, professional and social – the continuation and realisation of the plan of God and of Christ... to save the whole of humanity.

3. If we are to understand the deep significance and total purpose of the Eucharist, we can make no distinction between the Eucharistic life and temporal life.

Without work there is no Eucharist. We have **seen** the workers building the altars; bringing what is needed to celebrate Mass, to consecrate bread and wine, and to give Christ to all people in Holy Communion. The Eucharist lives on... when Mass is over... It begins with Holy Communion – not to be kept for the communicant himself but to be shared with all, even with those who do not know Him. Receivers of Christ have to be transformed in Him. Christ will work in them, speak in them, love in them. He will help all people in their temporal and spiritual needs – socially as well as personally – to transform our world into a Eucharistic world, our society into a Eucharistic society. Christ is offered to His Father on the altar not only in the Church, but in all factories, all work places, all homes. All human institutions and environments become more and more influenced and transformed by the Eucharistic spirit, the Eucharistic doctrine and the Eucharistic life.

4. The Eucharistic doctrine may not be separated from the Church's social doctrine. Nor can "Mater et Magistra" be separated from the Encyclical on the Incarnation and Redemption. Communicants must

become apostles – spiritual apostles – the Communion table must lead to the family table and the community table. Communion must become a community matter – not for only the communicants, but for all peoples. The communicants must spread the message of human fraternity, human solidarity, human justice and human peace.

The Eucharist is not for a minority – a privileged few – for the richest.

No, the Eucharist is for all – particularly for the poorest, just as Christ is for all and in a special way for the most impoverished: “My Father sent Me to announce the Good News to the poorest.”

6. And the Eucharist gives us not only a doctrine, but the faith – the power, the courage, the spirit of sacrifice of Christ! “He who eats of my flesh,” says Christ, “abides in Me and I in him, he who eats this Bread shall live forever.”

7. The Eucharistic doctrine and life is a spring of divine renovation, the unique divine revolution, which brings about unity, love and friendship between persons, families and peoples. It must inspire all social progress – nationally and internationally. It must bring the peoples together, inviting them to unite their personal and collective efforts for the relief and the happiness of all humanity.

Let us all take a big resolution during this Mass: to reflect on the total aim of the Eucharist, to pray and ask for the faith and the courage to cooperate with the Eucharist, transforming ourselves and all others, so that we all become new men... new men who must build the new world where all peoples will be respected and helped to respect one another – not for their own benefit, but for the happiness and the salvation of all.

We will not transform the world by hatred, war, killing, and destruction, but by love and fraternity. Thus will all these men, and all peoples glorify God on earth and in eternity. Amen.

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Discours Mgr Cardijn, Congrès Eucharistique, Bombay 1964

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