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The Eucharist and Holy Orders.

***Loci communes* and their theological-existential consequences**

according to J. Ratzinger / Benedict XVI

Summary

Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI is considered the most outstanding contemporary theologian. Apart from scientific work, his life is above all filled with the realisation of a priestly vocation. In the daily celebration of the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, he included and still includes the sacrifice of his life. Thus, it demonstrates a profound communion between the Eucharist and Holy Orders. In his works and teaching he often points to the unity and those sacraments. From this mystery of unity he draws conclusions which affect the lives of ordained ministers and the whole Church. A thorough analysis of the works of Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI in this dissertation shows the doctrinal beauty of the unity of the sacrament of Holy Orders and the Eucharist and the consequences which come out of it.

The fundamental question of the doctoral dissertation is the result of two ongoing interactions. The first one is the interdisciplinary plane of contact within sacramentology: a multithreaded and multifaceted encounter between the theology of the sacrament of Holy Orders and the theology of the Eucharist. The second interaction concerns an existential problem (it is therefore the life of the Church, the life of priests, and the life of lay faithful). It is an encounter between scientific *theoria* and true-to-life *praxis*. Thereby, the very question which sets the topic of the dissertation is: What is the result of the fact that the sacrament of the Eucharist and the sacrament of Holy Orders are so intertwined and interdependent that it is not meaningful to discuss them separately - if theological reflection on them is to be correct and fruitful? What does the great theological work of Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI have to tell us about this?

Holy Orders and the Eucharist have many things in common. The Church has been teaching this from apostolic times, through the Fathers of the Church, the Magisterium, saints, and popes. Even today, in a secularised world which in many places turns away from God and the sacraments, where the Eucharist seems unnecessary and the priesthood is seen as an unproductive, bizarre and ridiculed activity, in this work it is all the more important to pay

attention to the unity of the Eucharist and Holy Orders. up-to-date, and its deepening important for doctrinal, spiritual and pastoral reasons.

The present dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first is entitled *Doctrinal Consequences of "locorum communium"*. It shows the truth about the profound communion of the both sacraments and the consequences of this *communio* in the doctrine of faith. Specific common places of the Eucharist and Holy Orders have been indicated, such as the interdependence of existence, the unique mediation, and unity of the Church.

In the second chapter *Spiritual Consequences of "locorum communium"* the effects of these common places on spirituality have been discussed. Their interpretation leads to conclusions which could be adopted and introduced in the spiritual development of a person. They are especially important in terms of formation for ordained persons. They concern the Eucharistic life, the participation of ordained ministers in the life of God, and the *reasonable worship* of God (cf. Rom 12,1) which flows from it. Analysis of *logike latreia* occurs in connection with many aspects of life and is interpreted from various points of view. This work also shows what this "reasonable worship of God" should look like in the life of a deacon, priest, and bishop, and how it is present in the People of God, who also enjoys the universal priesthood and is united with God in communion. Every person in his/her own way ought to rationally serve God by giving himself/herself in love. This should lead to the daily, patient following of Christ in everyday life – a *passio* of life which is also ready to sacrifice itself.

Finally, in the third chapter, the *Pastoral Consequences of the "locorum communium"* have been shown and discussed. The central thought and question of this chapter is: How should pastors act?, what should they teach?, what should they pay attention to in leading others to ultimate fellowship with God in eternity? J. Ratzinger/Benedict XVI considers the primacy of God to be the most important matter in human life, and, therefore, setting the proper hierarchy of values. Either God is and He tells the truth, or He doesn't exist. Everything really depends on *who* God is for man and *where* He is in man's life. The pope believes that what is happening in today's world is so-called crisis of God, the problem of his presence. The main pastoral goal seems to be to restore this primacy of God in human life, society and the world.

The work is concluded with conclusions which elaborate life in love. Since God himself is love, the whole Church has to draw this love from the Eucharist. This love is ultimately transforming, and in it is the model of true life. Christ in love leads to the giving of himself – the cross which, despite failure, turns out to be a victory.

The dissertation has created a critical compendium of the most important findings concerning the discussed issue, i.e. the common places of Eucharist and Holy Orders; findings

which are the fruit of theological tradition, the achievements of contemporary theology, and the author's contribution of Ratzinger. All those three trends which have been extracted, analysed and shown in his doctoral dissertation meet in his *Opera omnia*.

In synthetic terms, it should be stated that J. Ratzinger/Benedict XVI believes that the *loci communes* of the sacrament of Holy Orders and the sacrament of the Eucharist:

1. Christ merges them and He is their cause and goal.
2. they show and demand the primacy of God in all areas of life.
3. by their profound communion, they imply the unity of the Church.
4. they significantly influence the life and spirituality of bishops, priests and deacons.
5. they call to the sacrifice of life those who celebrate it and participate in it - their body has to be "given up" and their blood has to be "poured out".