

The Eucharist

Set 12 of 12 slide sets

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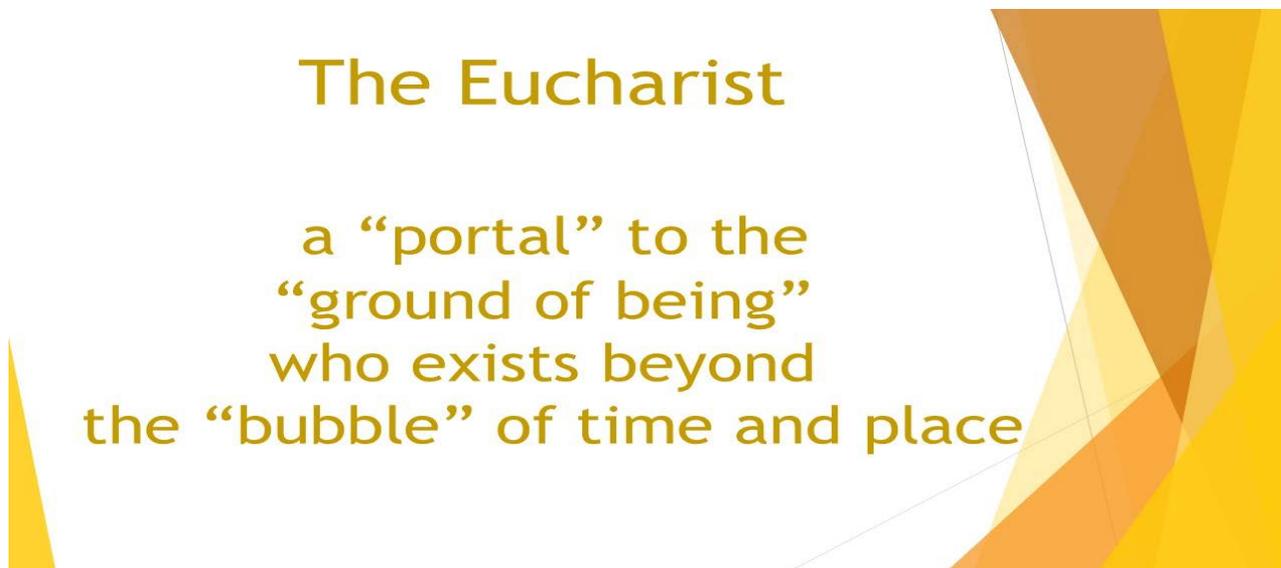
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The Eucharist

a “portal” to the
“ground of being”
who exists beyond
the “bubble” of time and place



To a standard "church goer" accustomed to the homilies given at a Eucharist, the above language may appear unfamiliar and even questionable.

However a quick exercise with one's mobile phone or laptop can provide a background to this.

For instance, Google's AI will readily give a full explanation of each phrase and show how this fits in with both the Bible and Church teaching.

You could try it!!

No. 265

The Eucharist
Does this 2,000 year old ritual provide a structure for an alignment between place and time?

No. 267

No. 266

To what extent does its present form show an attempt by the Vatican II Council of the 1960's to revive a sense of alignment between the

“Living Word” and the
“Living Authority” ?

No. 268

Consider changes of the 1960's to the celebration of the Eucharist,

The priest now faces the people.

He speaks in their local language.

Hymns are mainly based upon the Words of Scripture.

People are encouraged to join in responses and sing.

People are invited to do the readings.

The priest is asked to provide a homily at each Mass.

At the Offertory people bring up gifts from their daily work lives.

People receive communion in the hand.

The Eucharist includes the meaning of sacrifice of our own wills and a meal to strengthen us.

No. 269

Such changes require people to be **participants** in the Mass and not just observers.



No. 271

Scripture is interpreted here, in terms of the present time, in order to keep its message “alive”.

This section of the Eucharist is a reminder that the Word of God itself is “alive”

It is also linked in with the sense of place . How so?

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No. 270

The first major section of the Mass is about the Word of God

This entails a Proclamation of the Word by a member of the Congregation who reads a passage of Scripture.

Then a gospel passage is read and an explanation of the readings is given by the priest

No. 272

Recall that like music, speech is based on “the now” rather than on the passage of time.

Indeed it is very hard if not impossible to recapture the exact meaning of what was said in a past age.

At the same time, as pointed out by the philosopher Gadamer, all language is inter-connected.



No. 273

Arguably, even animals and birds share in a “universal language” of intonation.

One can tell if a chook is startled, afraid, angry, delighted or chatty etc.

This “language of intonation” extends “everywhere”.



No. 274

- ▶ As pointed out previously, the philosopher Gadamer argues that language acts as a “subject”, because of itself, it extends one’s understanding of reality.
- ▶ Logically, because language takes place in the “now” and is everywhere, it is heavily reliant on the location of **place**.

Endorse the existence of

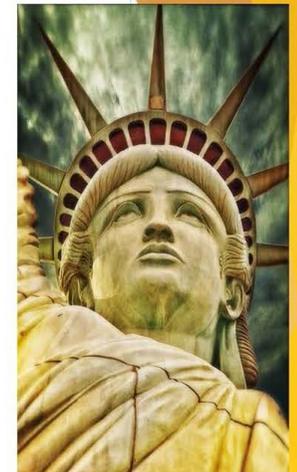
the Living Word

No. 275

- ▶ Recall that the gospel of John takes the meaning of the Greek Logos or ‘Word’ a step beyond that of recognising language as a subject (i.e. a doer of action).
- ▶ John says “And the Word was made flesh.”
- ▶ In making this claim, John (and Christianity) is not only endorsing a Hellenistic world view (cf. Greek philosophy, heavily based on rationalism and discourse).
- ▶ The claim is also being made, that the incarnation continues.
- ▶ The Word continues to live on as a “Living Word,” revealing the truths of existence.

No. 276

- ▶ Also recall that in the Acts of the Apostles, Luke distinguishes between the Word and the “loud voice”.
- ▶ “The Word” is not just any voice
- ▶ At the start of the Eucharist there is a Proclamation of the Word
- ▶ This endorses the existence of the Living Word and along with it the sense of **place**.



No. 277

What is the Second Major Section of the Eucharist?

The Second major section of the Eucharist is the
Offertory Procession followed by the Offertory



No. 278

This section of the
Eucharist ritual,
endorses
the sense of time and
an awareness of the
Living Authority.



How so?

Endorse the Existence of

Living Authority

No. 279

Again, consider the reflections of
the philosopher Gadamer referred to previously.

He says the significance of historical events
can only be understood after a passage of time.

He says the combined will of people form
an “anonymous will.” which acts as a subject.

This “anonymous will” has an impact on history.

No. 280

Within the Eucharistic prayers, people present
are united with those men and women
“doing the will of God throughout the ages.”

This prayer reminds the Congregation that
their daily efforts in carrying out the will of
God enables them to participate in
the Living Authority.

Living Authority and its impact exists over
time.

No. 281

What happens at the Offertory?



- ▶ In the offertory procession there is an offering of the fruits of people's daily work (usually in the form of the collection)
- ▶ Then there is the offering of bread and wine "the work of human hands," by the priest

No. 282



No. 283

▶ People share in the Living Authority when they carry out the duties of their daily lives.

▶ The Offertory exercises and endorses the "Living Authority"



No. 284

Thus, the first two parts of the ritual of the Mass form an endorsement of:

- the sense of the Living Word and the sense of place.
- and
- the sense of Living Authority and the sense of time.

The Ritual Provides a Structure for Commitment

No. 285

The ritual provides a structure in which place and time are aligned.



No. 287

- ▶ **One might say that for the ancient Egyptians, there wasn't really "a portal" opening between the pyramid and the stars, when these were aligned at a particular time and in a certain way.**

But there was an enormous effort made in setting up a "conduit" to the eternal through the pyramids.



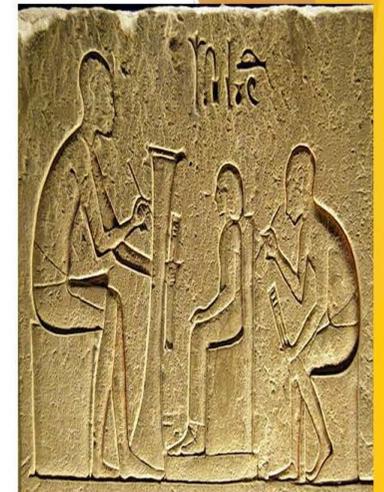
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No. 286

- ▶ **Is there a parallel here with what the ancients were trying to do?**
- ▶ **That is, does the structure of the Eucharist have parallels with ancient attempts to align time and place?**
- ▶ **It was believed such alignments would lead to a "portal" into the "ground of being", that exists beyond the "bubble" of time and place.**

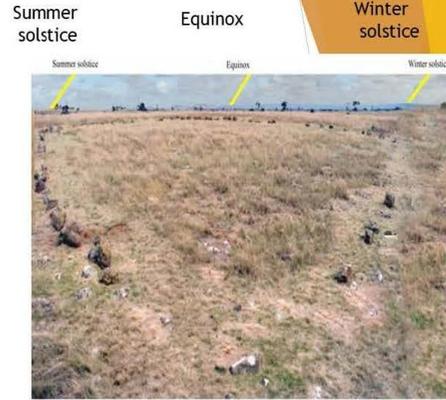
No. 288

- ▶ **The efforts made in doing this, would have been an on-going reminder to people that they themselves should try to pattern their lives on the laws of the universe and in harmony with the universe.**



No. 289

- ▶ The same would hold for other people who celebrated constructions in order to “capture” a particular time in a particular place e.g. in South America, in England and Australia.



11,000 year old alignment near Geelong Victoria

Fig. 4. The Wurdji Youang stone arrangement and the hypothesised solar alignments, from Norris et al. (2013). The point where the lines converge is the best vantage point for observing the solar markers.

- ▶ If something similar holds for Christians who celebrate the Eucharist, how are they supposed to know how to “align” their sense of place with their sense of time and in harmony with the cosmos?



No. 290

The Gospels provide a framework of "DO's" and "DONT'S" for alignment

No. 291

- ▶ Consider the structure of the gospels as described in a sociological analysis which has been set out in previous slides (cf. www.realitysearch.com.au)
- ▶ This analysis explores the planning and methods used by the gospel writers in order to help people take part in a process of alignment.



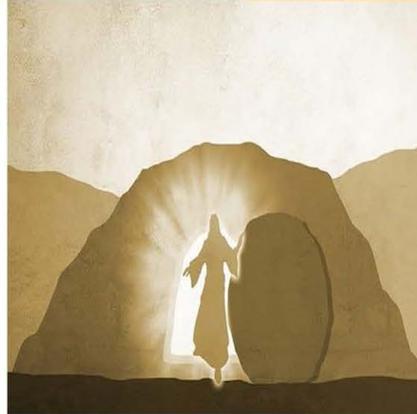
No. 292

- ▶ The gospel of Mark gives an outline of the basis of two differing societies types of society – that is, Judaism and Hellenism.
- ▶ Matthew describes the best aspects of Judaism along with its weaknesses in a time-based paragraph framework. Judaism is a society that relies heavily on the sense of time.
- ▶ Luke on the other hand describes the best aspects of Hellenism (cf. Greek philosophy) along with its weaknesses, in a framework of paragraphs based upon place and also those parties in the text that are being addressed.

People are Challenged to identify with

No. 293

- ▶ Participation in the Eucharist provides a ritual of commitment to strive for the best aspects of each society as set out in the gospels.
- ▶ People are challenged to endorse the “Living Word” and to endorse the “Living Authority” of the gospels
- ▶ Thus, there is an alignment of the sense of place and the sense of time.



No. 294

The ritual helps people to “align” their lives with the person of Jesus Christ who is the “Authorised, Living Word”.



Jesus Christ who is the “Living Word”

No. 295

What happens in the Third Major Section of the Eucharist?

Through their participation, in the Proclamation of the Word and the Offertory Procession and Offertory, the Congregation have already contributed to an alignment of the sense of place and the sense of time.

Jesus Christ who is the “Living Authority”

No. 296

The celebration of the Eucharist goes beyond what the ancients were trying to do.

This is because the priest exercises the “Living Authority” that has been given to him by Jesus Christ, through the church.



In the “Consecration” the priest re-enacts what happened at the last supper.

A “portal” is opened into the “ground of being” beyond time and space

The bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus Christ, who is the living word and the living authority.



Jesus Christ lives on in the "Body of Christ" which consists of the people who identify with him

The Fourth Major Section of the Eucharist is the Communion

We are reminded here of the claim made by John in his gospel “And the Word was made flesh”

This claim is physically continued on into the lives of the people who are there



No. 301



Thinking back over slides (or pages) in this collection are there any thoughts about the identity of Jesus Christ that had not occurred to you in the past?

Does the idea of "aligning" the sense of time and place within a society and one's personal life make that much sense to you? How?

In a traditional understanding of the Mass there has been an emphasis on the "sacrifice" of Jesus Christ.

At the same time if we are talking about efforts to "align" one's sense of time and place there would also be sacrifices to be made at a personal level. What do you think?

No. 302



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Some Questions

1. Re: Latin Mass

If you are familiar with a Latin Mass, do you think there is a over-emphasis on authority in the ritual and not enough emphasis on the participation of the congregation?

2. Re: Sacrifice

Do you think at times some apparently good things need to be sacrificed in order to carry through a balance in one's life?

5: Israel 2025

In the gospel analysis described above it is argued that Christian morality is based upon Judaism. But in 2025 the state of Israel is showing (many would say) anything but morality. Would the characteristics of their present behaviour fit in with the warnings in Matthew's gospel (cf. above) about. this type of society and its tendency to over-stress external law?

Are there lessons for Christians here?

6. Wokism

In Luke's gospel there are warnings (cf. above) about over-stress on idealism, living in the "now" and a lack of direction. Can you think of examples of this in our present society?

3. time/place alignment

In an explanation of the Eucharist ritual shown above, affirmation of the Living Word (cf. place) comes before affirmation of Living Authority (cf. time). Yet in ordinary language (and the analysis described above) the usual sequence is time (and law) then place (and order). Would the ritual switch these emphases in order to dramatically work up towards a climax (that is, "the consecration")?

4 Opening of a "portal"

What do you think of the idea of the Eucharistic ritual involving a "place then time" alignment in people's lives which leads into the opening of a "portal" at the consecration?

7 Living Word

Can you think of ways in which people try to carry through the "living word" e.g. efforts to support democracy, efforts to reveal the truth and even in scientific efforts to reveal realities about our universe?

8. Living Authority

Do you think there is a cumulative effect of people trying to express goodwill and do God's will "throughout the ages"? Does a "mandate" to do this reach beyond human beings into the natural world as well? In such case does this give the natural world its own rights? Would this require human beings to exercise a role of "stewardship" in the natural world?

Some Summary Points about Part 2 of *Is Christian Morality Unique?*

Gospel of Mark

Recognise Law and Order

- a. Law is Based on authority
- b. Order requires a sense of direction

- c. Jesus Christ --- the "adult child"
- d. The Challenge to respond

Gospel of Matthew

Internalise the law (cf. time)

- a. Jesus - a child of history
- b.c. Individual attributes needed,
- d. An environment of internalised law
- e. Avoid overstress on external law
- f. Forgive

Gospel of Luke

Give Direction to Order (cf. place)

- a. Jesus - a child of the world
- b. Individual attributes needed
- c. Improve on democracy
- d. Avoid overstress on idealism
- e. Act with Direction like a Kingdom Figure
- f. Forgiveness overcomes narrowness and the loud voice

Luke's Acts of the Apostles

Launch the Society

- a. Intro
- b. Recognise outside authority
- c. cope with opposition to outreach
- d. the "Word" acting as a subject
- e. "Anonymous goodwill" acting as a subject
- f. Challenge the social centre of the world

Gospel of John

Pass on the Power of One

- a. Intro. "and the word was made flesh"
- b. Heed characteristics of Living Authority
- c. Heed characteristics of the Living Word

- d. Identify with the Authorised, Living Word
- e. Allow the Authorised, Living Word to set Direction
- f. Epilogue

The Eucharist

Align Place and Time - A Portal Opens

- a. Proclaim the Living Word
(cf. Place)

- b. Offer authorised,
daily labour (cf. time)

- c. The Last Supper
is re-enacted

- d. Commune with
the Authorised Living Word

"and the Word was made flesh"