

# Reflections

Father Nicolas Schwizer

# 61 – June 15, 2009

## The Mass Is A Banquet

“I am the bread of life,” says the Lord. The symbol for essential food is bread. Christ in the Eucharist offers Himself to us as spiritual food for eternal life, therefore, the Mass is considered a banquet. We know that Our Lord said His first Mass at the Last Supper.

The altar, in spite of its ornaments, is fundamentally a table. As at a banquet, tablecloths, bread, water, wine, a cup, a golden plate, candles and flowers are placed on it. The priest and the faithful know and feel that they are invited to eat flesh which is true food and they are invited to drink blood which is an authentic drink.

At a banquet, logically, you eat, participate and have communion. The table is the place par excellence where family or friends gather. When we want to establish a relationship with someone... when we want to be more closely united to our friends..... when we want to celebrate a wedding... when we want to demonstrate agreement... we eat together.

Also at Mass, the Father of the family, our Heavenly Father, gathers all of his children. He reminds them that they have a common Father who loves them, and that in spite of their weaknesses and sinfulness, they continue being His children and will forever be His children. He tells them that they can spend the entire week working... exhausting themselves... spending themselves... but He waits for them everyday to comfort them and to make them new men and women... He wants to place in their hearts all the love they need to love others.

Because we are so poor, we have so little love. To love our spouse properly... to love our children... to love our relatives... to love our friends.....to love them as they expect us to, we need nothing other than God Himself... we need His love in our hearts so that we can fulfill all the love which is asked of us.

For that, the Father invites us to sit at His table. He makes Himself visible to us in the bread. He gives us His bread – which is His own Son. He does this in that gesture in which a father or a mother make themselves known and beloved by their children thanks to those delicious family meals.

Now, what will we think of the one who refuses to come, the one who is bored at the home of his/her Father and looks for excuses for not sharing with Him? What do we think of the one who accepts His invitation but refuses to eat at the table? Unfortunately, there are many who agree to come, but refuse to eat. Perhaps they do not feel like it; this bread says nothing to them; they do not trust this food; throughout the meal, they will remain seated before their empty plate.

How a good housewife trembles with such guests! It is enough to make the other guests also lose their appetite. What a sad and lamentable meal would that be where many of the guests would refuse to associate with the others.....would refuse to communicate in the joy and the friendship of the rest! Who of us would tolerate such poorly educated persons? Who would dare to celebrate a feast in such circumstances?

In the beginning, the Mass was an authentic banquet, fraternal and loving, where Christ spoke at length with His disciples. There, Christ offered them the best He had: His own flesh which would nourish us, His own blood so we could obtain the transfusion of His life.

The apostles all communicated together. What joy, what fervor they all felt after their first communion! Upon leaving Mass, when will we feel so happy.....so renewed.....so fraternal.....so generous.....that we may be aware that only God has been able to change us to this extreme.....that God Himself has been present among us and has manifested Himself to us.....that we have seen the Father and have participated at His own table?

### Questions for reflection

1. Do I participate joyfully at the banquet?
2. Do I consider going to Mass on a weekday?
3. Do I go to communion at Mass?

If you wish to subscribe, comment on the text or give a testimony, write to: [pn.reflexiones@gmail.com](mailto:pn.reflexiones@gmail.com)

Translation: Carlos Cantú Family Federation La Feria, Texas USA 042209