

Hand out for the video-presentation on the
Four Hymns for Eucharistic Procession
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1. Introduction to the whole presentation

Beauty is the splendor of truth. Music is a privileged way to express our faith and to teach it to others. This is the powerful double effect of liturgical music: first, it helps us in praising God with our whole being, body and soul, mind and heart; second, beautiful music allows the deeper truth and pure desires to make their way through our changing, distracted and sometimes misguided emotions. Beautiful music is the appropriate clothing of truth, clothing which renders the truth more appealing to the ear, clothing which invites the soul to open itself more deeply to listening. Beautiful music quiets and pacifies our emotions, aligning them, as it were, with the truth which is expressed.

The following four hymns constitute a passionate expression of faith in the Transubstantiation, at the same time as striving to convey this faith to the listeners. These hymns are our attempt, with Mother Church, to lead God’s children to a deeper appreciation of the wonderful mystery of the Transubstantiation.

The theme of these hymns is the Transubstantiation.

The first hymn refers to the term itself, “transubstantiation” and its importance.

The second hymn refers to some theological reasons we might sense, or intuit, for God’s wanting to perform such a miracle: that is, His desire to give Himself to human beings, to prepare them for union with Him, to perpetuate the cross for all generations...

The third hymn refers to the fact that, even though Christ is risen, the Holy Mass is a true sacrifice precisely because of the Transubstantiation.¹

¹ Cf. Carlos Miguel Buela, *Bread of Eternal Life and Chalice of Everlasting Salvation*, IVE Press, New York: 2013; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nn. 1365-1367.

The fourth hymn speaks more directly about the conversion itself, how it is understood, what it implies, etc.

Although any of these four hymns could be used for the Holy Mass, they seem to be better adapted to a Eucharistic procession with four “altars” or blessings, as songs for the moments of the four blessings, or songs during the procession itself.

In this presentation I will sing the hymns, adding some introductions and explanations. I will focus on the meaning, that is, on doctrine, but through the music. This is because I did not want to separate the music from the doctrine (or I could not do it properly) and because I would like to show precisely this: that music is a privileged way to convey the truth.

(At this point in the conference, first and second hymns are sung and explained)

2. Explanation of the Term “Concomitance” (*minute 26*).

Concomitance is being together, coming together, being with another. It is a theological term indicating that, when two things are together, if one of them is present, the other is necessarily there as well, precisely because those two things are together in reality.

Applied to the Eucharist, the term “concomitance” is important, because it expresses the reason for which we say that, under the appearance of bread (that is, in the host), there is contained not only the body, but also the blood, soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. But, we may ask, is not the host “the body of Christ” only? Why are all those other things also contained in the host? Because the body of Christ is in Heaven together with His blood, soul and divinity, and therefore, where the body is found, all those things which are together with the body must be found as well. Where the body is found, the blood is found as well, by reason of concomitance, that is to say, because they are actually together in Heaven.

3. Explanation of the Terms “Substance” and “Accidents” (*minute 37*).

The substance of something is the thing itself, that which it is, and the appearances or accidents of something, instead, are what it looks like, its size, etc. A human being can grow from childhood to adulthood, but no matter how much his or her appearance changes, he or she will still be a human being. When you put on some weight... you look different, but are still a human being as you were a human being before. Changes in appearance do not always mean a change of substance. Substance and appearances are therefore not the same thing, even if they belong to the same thing: the substance is the essential “aspect” of a thing, and the appearances are the

accidental aspect. Because substance and appearance are not the same thing, one of them can change while the other remains.

Applied to the Eucharist, these terms are very important, because they allow us to explain why we say that the host is the body of Christ even if it appears to be ordinary bread. The appearances of bread are not the same as the substance of the bread. Therefore, it appears to be bread because the appearances of bread remain. But it is the body of Christ because God, by his power, has converted the substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ.

4. Explanation of the Terms “Matter” and “Form” (for personal perusal)

Let us begin with an example. All dogs are dogs but each of them is a different dog. So, there must be in each dog something accounting for the fact that it is a dog, and a second thing accounting for the fact that it is a particular dog, different from other dogs. In Philosophy, we call those two things form and matter. Form is what gives the dog its specific “way of being”, its specific “perfection” as dog: form is what makes it a dog. Matter instead is what makes this dog different from other dogs. Matter is like a “recipient”, like a “container” of the form “dog”. It is similar to what happens with containers and their respective contents: you could have two different containers—a pitcher and a glass, let’s say—and yet each could contain the same content, water for example. All dogs have the form dog, but because the form dog is received in each of them into its own matter, each of them is a different dog.

What we have said about dogs applies to every material being, to every being we see in nature: every being has its own matter and its own form. Form and matter are different things, even if they belong to the same material being: the form is that which accounts for the fact that this is a dog (or a cat, or a cedar tree, etc.), and the matter is that which accounts for the fact that this dog is different from the other dog (or from another cat, or from another cedar tree, etc.). Also, because form and matter are different, sometimes the matter may remain, and the form change: this is called “transformation”.

In the Eucharist, we do not speak of transformation, because what changes is not only the form, but also the matter. The whole substance of the bread—that is, the matter and the form of the bread—is converted into the substance of the body of Christ, a body which has its own matter. This is why we say that this Holy Communion is, in reality, the body *of Christ*, the same body with which He died for us and the same risen body He now has in Heaven. There is nothing in creation, no change whatsoever, that can be compared with this wondrous change. And that is why Church Doctors had to “invent” the term “transubstantiation” to designate it.