

# Networking Cedara

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**Tuesday, 9 May:** Institute Liturgy (5 pm, Johannes Welhem SAC presiding, Sue Rakoczy IHM preaching)

**Tuesday, 16 May:** Cluster Publications Book Sale (10 am, the Hall)  
Institute Liturgy (5 pm, Frank McGreal OMI presiding)

**Friday, 19 May:** Academic Assembly (10:30 classroom 2-3)

**CLUSTER PUBLICATIONS BOOK SALE**

On Tuesday, 16 May during tea in the Hall Cluster Publications will have a book sale.  
Prices will be very affordable!!  
Browse and buy!!

**STAFF MEANDERING**

Paul Decock will be away in Stellenbosch from Monday 8th to Monday 15th. He will be back for the lecture on Job on the 15th, but the lecture will begin only at 3pm, as he has a medical appointment in Durban at 11am.

**SOLIDARITY AND ITS CHALLENGES**  
(OCTAVIO FRANCISCO SCJ)

Solidarity is not just a mere *flactus vocis* (a mere mane, word or sound without a corresponding objective reality) as a nominalist would have it. The word 'solidarity' is not only a rhetorical expression. It is much more than that. Its aim is not to show something superfluous and mediocre reserved for the weak or a restricted group. It is not a distorted feeling towards the poor or the needy. Solidarity expresses a human dimension which one might call 'existential communion'. Something effective and affective that springs from our humanity thereby falls within the ontological status of being a creature. It is a proclamation of a brotherly/sisterly world and therefore of a more human face. Where the suffering of others is not just their thing. As Levinas points out 'we are all responsible for each other and especially I for others'.

In an era in which the world seems to have become a small place through advancements in travel and communication, people remain very distant from each other. The internet joined dreams and human fantasies but it has brought about 'superficial

relationships'. With this regards, Henrique Rojas denounces materialism. The man of today thinks that everything is matter and therefore the best we can do is to live a hedonistic kind of life characterized by the pursuit of personal pleasure. It is a sort of recyclable society, disposable where what has been used is thrown away. As a result, we throw away many things, even persons. We live in a society where everything seems possible. A sort of a fairy tale where everyone triumphs. Relativism has not only been advocated but also installed. We are being tossed about by every wind of doctrine and worst of all, is that those 'who live according to a clear faith based on what the Church believes and teaches are viewed as extremists' says, Ratzinger.

This leads to disastrous and nefarious consequences. How to speak of the absolute and of the dignity of the other man or woman in a society where everything is relative? Asks John Paul II. This materialism creates a kind of troubled and perplexed man and women. As Rojas spells out, 'a man/woman orphan of humanity'. Materialism does not want to know of a reality that is beyond matter or ultra-material realities because it has placed pleasure as the maximum value. The current materialism has closed the eyes of many to the realities that by being fully human realities project man and woman to a horizon where matter is no longer everything.

The man of today, insofar as he adheres to matter, feels the emptiness of all this, for everything that is material is too little for man and woman, as Benedict XVI says. Everything that is material and finite is insufficient for man/woman. Because they were created by the Infinite and to infinity, matter remains always insufficient and at the bottom of materialism, there is an existential void that causes the suicide of many.

Moreover, solidarity appears here as a typically human expression. It rescues man and woman from distorted forms of humanism because no one was born by or only for himself. Solidarity is a permanent complaint of the presence of the other, of inter-creaturely respect, and of the co-existence between the members of the great human family. With solidarity, no one is proposed as a human material or a kind of 'by-product'. It draws men and women to a profound and meaningful realization that the other is a person and not just a number; that we are all humans and other people's faces challenge me as Levinas says. Material goods are to be taken as means or realities that aim to facilitate coexistence and not realities that are to be worshiped or venerated.

With solidarity, we realize that between the material goods and the dignity of all man and women, there is an abysmal distance. Because within this framework men and woman perceive themselves as beings who are permanently thirsting for others and they can never be complete unless they engage in a proper existential communion with others. Men and women were made and created for communion and interpersonal conviviality. As Boff puts forth, we were not only born to live but also to 'convive'. Thus one can assume that every human project that places property or matter above men and women is a distorted form of humanism.

## PERFECTION AND HOLINESS: ARE THESE TERMS SEPARATED?

(FELISBERTO DUMBO)

When these terms are separated from its semantic point of view they become a complex dualism. In this world where the tendency of dichotomy is so patent and latent the meaning of these two words have been understood as separated from each other. Perfection is much attached to human effort whereas holiness is left to the metaphysical world. Perfection has got an ideological understanding which its meaning seems to be foreigner to holiness. Perfection is, therefore, seen as the new proposal to human beings in this world where technology pushes us to the ideal of being perfect for the fact that the evolutionary science draws things in such a way that the appearances of things have to be perfect.

Yet, such perfect idea of things has influenced human beings to become aware that we are also called to be perfect through our personal efforts. This revolutionary change from perfect things to human beings has gone further, which is good. However, human beings have collapsed in the way of seeking for perfection because perfection has replaced holiness not only by idealistic meaning but by action too, that is people confuse perfection and holiness. Consequently, the new generation confuse perfection being greater than holiness and perfection becomes an entrapment non conformation to holiness. Without going into deeper theological understanding, perfection is related to human effort, it is proper to us to try to be perfect, that is, being perfect is an inner desire in us.

Therefore we see that the tendency of making things perfect are desirable and somehow present in our midst. Being drawn from our personal efforts, perfection is achieved when things are well done and beyond other people capability. The result of this human perfection are seen in the world of technology such as in medicine, engineering, so to speak. However, replacing holiness is contradiction to one seeking God through Holiness because God is replaced too and put into human categories. Human beings become the model of themselves. If man/woman is capable of doing things in perfect manners, it may mean also that he/she is the own and author of his/her holiness, which is wrong. Here we find the danger of dualism.

Holiness is on the other hand divine because it has God as its author, as the theologian Karl V. Truhlar (1982:638) spells out: 'the ultimate source of all holiness is the holiness of God. It is proper to God to be holy. As human beings are image and likeness of God, this aspect is also attached to us, man is unable to accept this self-communication of God and to respond to it through the supernatural virtues. We receive holiness from God as free gift and not from our human effort. Therefore we affirm metaphysically that seeking for truth is proper to human beings because God is Truth himself. Human beings are therefore encouraged to find God within themselves since it is where God abides. God is the one who enlightens human beings to be holy. Human beings cannot become holy without God's grace.

Unfortunately, because of the appearances, often human beings get stocked on the step of perfection for thinking that it is enough. Human beings need to go beyond

Perfection does not stand by itself in human beings if God does not empower his love on us. Therefore, human beings are called either to be perfect by doing things skillfully as gift from God or holiness by allowing God to mold our hearts in order to deepen our image and likeness with God. Holiness does not mean perfectness because in the world of perfectness any mistake is seen as failure and fatal and can lead one to suicide.

Holiness is open to failures (mistakes) because it is God the one who protects and helps human beings to journey, unfortunately we are born in sin and it is this sin that triggers imperfection and contradictions of becoming holy, which is in the likeness of God. Unfortunately this misunderstandings are seen in the life of many communities where people are obliged to do things perfectly as means of holiness, which is wrong. Such wrong mentality of perfectness in religious life is spoiling this new generation for the fact that the appearance of being a good law follower ends when the one who promotes that spirit is not around. Let us overcome this plague of dichotomy and dualism of separating “holy things for holy people”.

## The Liturgy Corner

### PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

I like to point out first that the preparations of the gifts is not the preparation of the altar. The former includes the latter but should not be reduced to it. Yet in my observation in many places including at our Institute liturgy, the preparation of the gifts is being reduced to the preparation of the altar. The problem is when should the bread and the wine (the ‘gifts’) be put on the altar? They are put down *by the presider* as he says certain prayers (‘Blessed are you Lord, God of all creation ...’). In other words, the preparation of the gifts is not the picking up of the gifts off the altar to say the prayers (of placing) and putting them down again. We need to go deeper into the point.

The *-General Instructions of the Roman Missal* says,

The bread and wine are placed on the altar by the priest to the accompaniment of the prescribed formulas. (GIRM 75).

The rubrics in the Roman Missal (p. 529, third edition) gives more details; and it gives the ‘prescribed formulas’ which I called the ‘prayers of placing’ above. Before the placing of the gifts, the instruction is the following,

First, the altar, the Lord’s table, which is the center of the whole Liturgy of the Eucharist, is prepared by placing on it the corporal, purificator, Missal, and chalice (unless the chalice is prepared at the credence table). (GIRM 73).

This is specifically what I have called the preparation of the altar. Notice the chalice is placed on the altar – it is an empty chalice; that is the ‘gift’ of wine is not already in it.

The point I make is that the presider should not be called to the altar on which the bread and wine has already been placed; it is the presider who places them while saying the prescribed prayers. I have been in many celebrations where the presider (sometimes a bishop) is called to the altar on which the bread and wine had been placed by the deacon; then the presider proceeds to lift the plate with the bread (and then the chalice) high up as if it is now an offering. The significance of the preparation of the gifts has shifted!

The problem arises when there are several ciboria (with bread) and chalices (with wine) already prepared before the Mass begins. When should they be brought to the altar? The current practice is to place all of these on the altar during the ‘preparation of the altar’ phase of the preparation of the gifts. This is done out of convenience; but the practice does not adhere to the meaning of the action of the preparation of the gifts. My solution, as a presider, to this problem is the following which I had successfully implemented in the parishes I had served. I would first place the (principal) ciborium on the altar saying the prescribed formula, then the deacon (and altar servers) would place the other ciboria. They already have it in their hands standing near the altar. Then I would do the same with the (principal) chalice with the wine. In this way I was able to retain the significance of the preparation of the gifts. Altar servers, acolytes and deacons need the appropriate training.

As an academic Institute where we teach the liturgy and train future presiders I believe we should do it correctly. (MOTI)

### **POPE FRANCIS: MANY YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH HAVE FALLEN INTO THE ‘TEMPTATION OF RIGIDITY’**

*By Catholic News Service (Friday, 5 May 2017)*

Pray that those who are too rigid learn to follow the way of Christ and his meekness, Pope Francis said on May 5 during his early morning Mass in the chapel of his residence, the Domus Sanctae Marthae. With the day’s first reading dedicated to the conversion of Saul — who went from fiercely persecuting Christians to patiently evangelising all peoples — the Pope used St Paul’s life story as an example of an honest, idealistic person of faith, who had been “convinced” of the rigidity of the law.

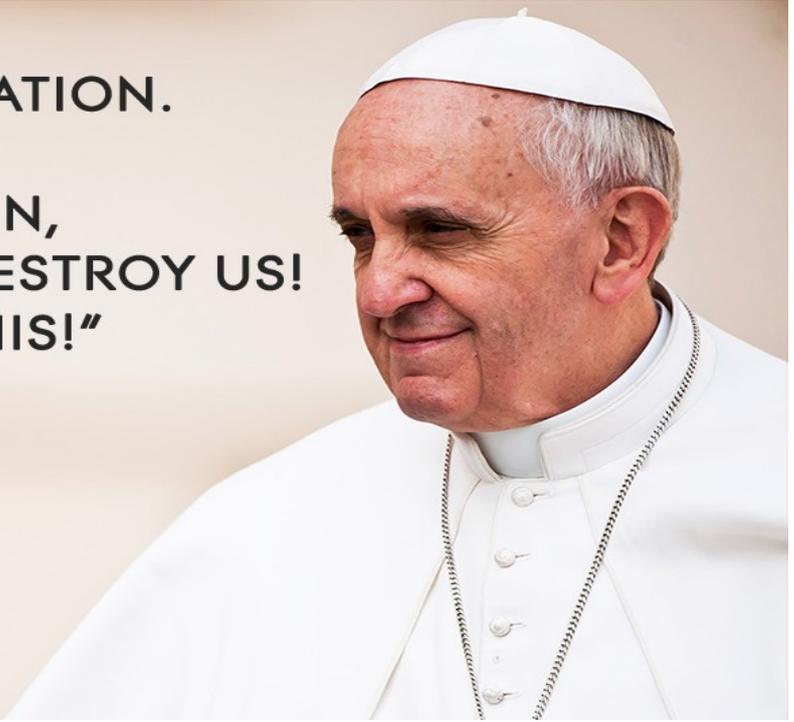
Pope Francis said Saul’s early life reminds him of “many young people in the church today who have fallen into the temptation of rigidity. Some are honest, they are good and we must pray that the Lord help them grow along the path of meekness.” Others, the Pope said, use rigidity to cover up their weaknesses, sins and personality disorders and to assert themselves over others. “They are the rigid with the double life. They show themselves as beautiful, honest, but when no one is looking, they do bad things,” he said. Saul, on the other hand, was rigid, but honest, the Pope said, and he let himself be led by the Lord, who spoke to him on the road to Damascus with “a language of meekness: ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’”

Saul was called with “the force of the meekness of the Lord” to become Paul, preach the Gospel and suffer and die for the Lord, the Pope said. Saul’s conversion shows dialogue between condescending rigidity and meekness, a dialogue between “an honest man and Jesus who speaks with kindness.” “This is the path of a Christian: going forward following Jesus’ footsteps,” which is “a trail of preaching, a trail of suffering, the trail of the cross” and resurrection, the Pope said. The Pope asked people to pray to Saul for those Christians who are rigid — “for the honest-rigid like him, who have zeal, but get it wrong, and for the hypocrite-rigid, those with a double life.”

**“SAFEGUARD CREATION.  
BECAUSE IF WE  
DESTROY CREATION,  
CREATION WILL DESTROY US!  
NEVER FORGET THIS!”**

**- POPE FRANCIS**

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