



Queensland
Churches Together

CHRISTIANS IN DIALOGUE

Do this In Remembrance of Me An Ecumenical Discussion on the Eucharist - 1986

**Based on BEM, World Council of Churches
Faith and Order Commission 1982**

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Taken from Do This in Remembrance of Me – An Ecumenical Discussion on the Eucharist - 1986 (based on BEM, World Council of Churches Faith and Order Commission 1982).
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Do This in Remembrance of Me is the second part of a three-year program called *Christians in Dialogue* which was initiated by the Anglican and Roman Catholic Archbishops of Brisbane and the Moderator of the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod.

Parishes were invited by Heads of Churches to provide this Program during the four weeks following Pentecost Sunday in 1985, 1986 and 1987. The interchurch groups which participated in the Baptism part of the Program in May 1985 spoke highly of the experience. Whereas the Program was designed so that people from all churches would be involved in dialogue at the same time each year, there is no reason why the parts of the Program cannot be done at any time by a group.

Do This in Remembrance of Me is based on the *Lima Text* which is the result of fifty years of study by groups of theologians representative of most of the world's Christian churches: Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, Reformed, Methodist, Baptist and Pentecostal. It was finalised at a meeting of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches in Lima, Peru, in January 1982.

They agreed unanimously to present this statement to their churches, asking for a response to the following questions:

- Does your church recognise in this text the faith of the Church through the ages?
- Can your church use this text in dialogue with other churches which also accept it?
- How can this text help your church in its worship, its teaching and its witness?

It is hoped that, by coming together to share our faith, to listen to one another, and to join in common prayer, we may discover common answers to these questions.

Do This in Remembrance of Me aims are:

- To deepen our own personal awareness of the meaning of the Eucharist.
- To discover the richness of the various Christian traditions concerning the Eucharist.
- To come to appreciate the way in which different Christian communities celebrate the Lord's Supper.
- To pray together as members of the one Body of Christ.
- To discover ways in which we can express our unity in Christ and overcome our disunity.

The Themes:

Study 1: The Institution of the Eucharist
The Eucharist as Thanksgiving to the FATHER

Study 2: The Eucharist as Memorial of the SON
The Eucharist as Invocation of the SPIRIT

Study 3: The Eucharist as Communion of the Faithful
The Eucharist as Meal of the Kingdom

Study 4: The Celebration of the Eucharist

SUGGESTED TIME FRAME

A. Scripture Reading	20 Minutes
B. Lima Text	
C. Group Sharing	60 Minutes
D. Closing Prayer	10 Minutes

TOTAL 90 MINUTES

It is recommended that the sessions last for one and a half hours, and that the groups be kept small. It is important that each group has in it people from a number of denominations, all of whom are able to share equally in the discussion.

For the group to function successfully, leaders need to make themselves familiar with the material.

The team of Christians in Dialogue thank the Faith and Order Commission of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA for permission to quote from their “Confessing One Faith”.

The Christians in Dialogue task force which is organising the program on behalf of the Heads of Churches is indebted to an ecumenical group in Townsville for permission to use the material which they had designed around the ‘Lima Text’.

Members of the task force were:

Reverend Geraldine Wheeler (UCA)

The Late Canon James Warner (Anglican)

Brother Eric Blumenthal (Roman Catholic)



Do This in Remembrance of Me

EVALUATION FORM

The group leader invites the participants to complete the Evaluation Form at the end of the fourth study.

1. What did you appreciate about these studies?
2. What aspects of these studies did you find difficult?
3. What was the greatest challenge for you and your Church?
4. What topics would you like *Christians in Dialogue* to cover in future?

The Planning Committee invites the leader to respond to the two questions below.

1. Name of your group, each Church represented, and the number of people present from each denomination.
2. Generally speaking, how fully did participants enter into the discussion?

Thank you for your response.

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Leader's Guide

1. Gathering

People coming to a group for the first time will often have some anxiety –

- ◆ Will I know anyone?
- ◆ What will be expected of me?
- ◆ Did I switch off the oven?
- ◆ It is important to help them through this first awkward stage. Have all your preparations done well beforehand so that you are able to greet each person warmly on arrival, introducing them to one another, and perhaps having tea and coffee available.

2. Beginning

- A. When all have arrived get the session started by giving them a clear statement of what the group is about - Welcome the group
- ◆ who we are;
 - ◆ why we're here;
 - ◆ when we will finish.

It might go like this: "Welcome to my place, and I'm delighted that each of you has been able to make it. We are a group of people from Churches gathered together to reflect and share our ideas on ... (*name of study*). Tonight we will be looking at Study One

- B. Then invite the members to introduce themselves saying:
- ◆ who I am;
 - ◆ why I'm here;
 - ◆ what I hope to get out of the program.

Lead yourself by giving a short response to each of the three areas. Then invite each of the others to do likewise. Don't worry if some respond to only one or two of the areas.

- C. Then distribute copies of the program.

Encourage participants to listen to one another's ideas with respect.

3. Opening Devotion

- A. You may wish to play some music quietly in the background and give the group a few moments to reflect on the opening devotion. Then call for volunteers to lead it.
- B. You might like to choose an appropriate song for the group to share

4. Reflection on the Topic

Invite a couple of people to read the teaching. Encourage the readers to pause between each section.

5. Discussion

Allow a few minutes of quiet time to reflect on the questions. Encourage participants to share responses to each question but there is to be no pressure put on anyone to speak. Be sure to make some response to each speaker if only to say e.g. "Thank you John". This makes sure the participant feels that he / she has been heard.

6. Closure

Thank the participants for their participation. Check to ensure venue is right for next session.

Closing Devotion

Cuppa

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SESSION 1: The Institution of the Eucharist / The Eucharist as Thanksgiving to the Father

Do This in Remembrance of Me – An Ecumenical Discussion on the Eucharist - 1986

A. Scripture References

Allow a few moments to become still, and to recognise God's word; then ask someone to read the passages out.

1 Corinthians 11:23-25; Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20;
Exodus 24; Rev 19:9; John 13:1; Matthew 26:28; John 6:51-58

B. The Lima Text

The Institution of the Eucharist

1. The Church receives the eucharist as a gift from the Lord. St Paul wrote "I have received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said: 'This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance (anamnesis) of me.' In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying: 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'" (1 Cor 11:23-25; cf. Mat 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20).

The meals which Jesus is recorded as sharing during his earthly ministry proclaim and enact the nearness of the Kingdom, of which the feeding of the multitudes is a sign. In his last meal, the fellowship of the Kingdom was connected with the imminence of Jesus' suffering. After his resurrection, the Lord made his presence known to his disciples in the breaking of the bread. Thus the eucharist continues these meals of Jesus during his earthly life and after his resurrection, always as a sign of the Kingdom. Christians see the eucharist prefigured in the Passover memorial of Israel's deliverance from the land of bondage and in the meal of the Covenant on Mount Sinai (Ex 24). It is the new paschal meal of the Church, the meal of the New Covenant, which Christ gave to his disciples as the anamnesis of his death and resurrection, as the anticipation of the Supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:9). Christ commanded his disciples thus to remember and encounter him in this sacramental meal, as the continuing people of God, until his return. The last meal celebrated by Jesus was a liturgical meal employing symbolic words and actions. Consequently the eucharist is a sacramental meal which by visible signs communicates to us God's love in Jesus Christ, the love by which Jesus loved his own "to the end" (Jn 13:1). It has acquired many names: for example, the Lord's Supper, the breaking of bread, the holy communion, the divine liturgy, the mass. Its celebration continues as the central act of the Church's worship.

The Meaning of the Eucharist

2. The eucharist is essentially the sacrament of the gift which God makes to us in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Every Christian receives this gift of salvation through communion in the body and blood of Christ. In the eucharistic meal, in the eating and drinking of the bread and wine, Christ grants communion with himself. God himself acts, giving life to the body of Christ and renewing each member. In accordance with Christ's promise, each baptized member of the body of Christ receives in the eucharist the

assurance of the forgiveness of sins (Mt 26:28) and the pledge of eternal life (Jn 6:51-58). Although the eucharist is essentially one complete act, it will be considered here under the following aspects: thanksgiving to the Father, memorial of Christ, invocation of the Spirit, communion of the faithful, meal of the Kingdom.

The Eucharist as Thanksgiving to the Father

2. The eucharist, which always includes both word and sacrament, is a proclamation and a celebration of the work of God. It is the great thanksgiving to the Father for everything accomplished in creation, redemption and sanctification, for everything accomplished by God now in the Church and in the world in spite of the sins of human beings, for everything that God will accomplish in bringing the Kingdom to fulfilment. Thus the eucharist is the benediction (*berakah*) by which the Church expresses its thankfulness for all God's benefits.

4. The eucharist is the great sacrifice of praise by which the Church speaks on behalf of the whole creation. For the world which God has reconciled is present at every eucharist: in the bread and wine, in the persons of the faithful, and in the prayers they offer for themselves and for all people. Christ unites the faithful with himself and includes their prayers within his own intercession so that the faithful are transfigured and their prayers accepted. This sacrifice of praise is possible only through Christ, with him and in him. The bread and wine, fruits of the earth and of human labour, are presented to the Father in faith and thanksgiving. The eucharist thus signifies what the world is to become: an offering and hymn of praise to the Creator, a universal communion in the body of Christ, a kingdom of justice, love and peace in the Holy Spirit.

C. Group Discussion

1. The Church confesses that Jesus Christ reveals God's suffering and victorious love in his cross and resurrection. In what ways is the Church called to express its thankfulness for all God's blessings?

2. How does the eucharist convey God's personal assurance of the forgiveness of sin and the pledge of eternal life? Does frequent communion serve to strengthen your trust in God's unqualified love in Jesus Christ?

3. Our sacrifice of praise is at the heart of the eucharist. What is the role of the risen Christ in this celebration? How is this expressed during the worship service?

4. In the mystery of his person and work, Jesus Christ unites divinity and humanity, eternity and history. How can a "eucharistic lifestyle" of dying and rising with Christ help to integrate our Sunday worship and Monday work?

D. Closing Prayer

Symbol: A picture of the Last Supper is placed in the centre of the group.

The leader invites the group to gather for prayer.

Scripture Reading: 1 Corinthians 11: 23-27

For this is what I received from the Lord, and in turn passed on to you: that on the same night that he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread, and thanked God for it and broke it, and he said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this as a memorial of me". In the same way he took the cup after supper, and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this as a memorial of me." Until the Lord comes, therefore, every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are proclaiming his death, and so anyone who eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will be behaving unworthily towards the body and blood of the Lord.

Leader: Let us pray.

All: Blessed are you, Lord God,
you have given us life,
and each one of your unique creation.
We give you thanks and praise
for the gift of the Eucharist
because in and through it,
you have accomplished everything,
in bringing the Kingdom to fulfilment.

Through this gift, may we continue
to give thanks and praise,
striving for a kingdom of justice, love and peace,
through the power of your Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Leader: Let us offer each other the Sign of Peace.

SESSION 2: The Eucharist as Memorial of the Son /

The Eucharist as Invocation of the Spirit

Do This in Remembrance of Me – An Ecumenical Discussion on the Eucharist - 1986

A. Scripture References

Allow a few moments to become still, and to recognise God's word; then ask someone to read the passages out.

1 Corinthians 11:23-32; Romans 8:34, 12:1; Hebrews 7:25; 1 Peter 2:5.

B. THE LIMA TEXT

The Eucharist as Anamnesis or Memorial of Christ

5. The eucharist is the memorial of the crucified and risen Christ, i.e. the living and effective sign of his sacrifice, accomplished once and for all on the cross and still operative on behalf of all humankind. The biblical idea of memorial as applied to the eucharist refers to this present efficacy of God's work when it is celebrated by God's people in a liturgy.
6. Christ himself with all that he has accomplished for us and for all creation (in his incarnation, servanthood, ministry, teaching, suffering, sacrifice, resurrection, ascension and sending of the Spirit) is present in the anamnesis, granting us communion with himself. The eucharist is also the foretaste of his parousia and of the final kingdom.
7. The anamnesis in which Christ acts through the joyful celebration of his Church is thus both representation and anticipation. It is not only a calling to mind of what is past and of its significance. It is the Church's effective proclamation of God's mighty acts and promises.
8. Representation and anticipation are expressed in thanksgiving and intercession. The Church, gratefully recalling God's mighty acts of redemption, beseeches God to give the benefits of these acts to every human being. In thanksgiving and intercession, the Church is united with the Son, its great High Priest and Intercessor (Rom 8:31-4; Heb.7:25). The eucharist is the sacrament of the unique sacrifice of Christ, who ever lives to make intercession for us. It is the memorial of all that God has done for the salvation of the world. What it was God's will to accomplish in the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ, God does not repeat. These events are unique and can neither be repeated nor prolonged. In the memorial of the eucharist, however, the Church offers its intercession in communion with Christ, our great High Priest.
9. The anamnesis of Christ is the basis and source of all Christian prayer. So our prayer relies upon and is united with the continual intercession of the risen Lord. In the eucharist, Christ empowers us to live with him, to suffer with him and to pray through him as justified sinners, joyfully and freely fulfilling his will.

10. In Christ we offer ourselves as a living and holy sacrifice in our daily lives (Rom 12:1; 1 Peter 2:5); this spiritual worship, acceptable to God, is nourished in the eucharist, in which we are sanctified and reconciled in love, in order to be servants of reconciliation in the world.
11. United to our Lord and in communion with all the saints and martyrs, we are renewed in the covenant sealed by the blood of Christ.
12. Since the anamnesis of Christ is the very content of the preached Word as it is of the eucharistic meal, each reinforces the other. The celebration of the eucharist properly includes the proclamation of the Word.
13. The words and acts of Christ at the institution of the eucharist stand at the heart of the celebration; the eucharistic meal is the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, the sacrament of his real presence. Christ fulfills in a variety of ways his promise to be always with his own even to the end of the world. But Christ's mode of presence in the eucharist is unique. Jesus said over the bread and wine of the eucharist: "This is my body..., this is my blood...." "What Christ declared is true, and this truth is fulfilled every time the eucharist is celebrated. The Church confesses Christ's real, living and active presence in the eucharist. While Christ's real presence in the eucharist does not depend on the faith of the individual, all agree that to discern the body and blood of Christ, faith is required.

Commentary (8)

It is in the light of the significance of the eucharist as intercession that references to the eucharist in Catholic theology as "propitiatory sacrifice" may be understood. The understanding is that there is only one expiation, that of the unique sacrifice of the cross, made actual in the eucharist and presented before the Father in the intercession of Christ and of the Church for all humanity.

In the light of the biblical conception of memorial, all churches might want to review the old controversies about "sacrifice" and deepen their understanding of the reasons why other traditions than their own have either used or rejected this term.

Commentary (13)

Many churches believe that by the words of Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit, the bread and wine of the eucharist become, in a real though mysterious manner, the body and blood of the risen Christ, i.e., of the living Christ present in all his fullness. Under the signs of bread and wine, the deepest reality is the-total being of Christ who comes to us in order to feed us and transform our entire being. Some other churches, while affirming a real presence of Christ at the eucharist, do not link that presence so definitely with the signs of bread and wine. The decision remains for the churches whether this difference can be accommodated within the convergence formulated in the text itself.

The Eucharist as Invocation of the Spirit

14. The Spirit makes the crucified and risen Christ really present to us in the eucharistic meal, fulfilling the promise contained in the words of institution. The presence of Christ is clearly the centre of the eucharist, and the promise contained in the words of institution is therefore fundamental to the celebration. Yet it is the Father who is the primary origin and final fulfilment of the eucharistic event. The incarnate Son of God by and in whom it is accomplished is its living centre. The Holy Spirit is the

immeasurable strength of love which makes it possible and continues to make it effective. The bond between the eucharistic celebration and the mystery of the Triune God reveals the role of the Holy Spirit as that of the One who makes the historical words of Jesus present and alive. Being assured by Jesus' promise in the words of institution that it will be answered, the Church prays to the Father for the gift of the Holy Spirit in order that the eucharistic event may be a reality: the real presence of the crucified and risen Christ giving his life for all humanity.

15. It is in virtue of the living word of Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit that the bread and -wine become the sacramental signs of body and blood. They remain so for the purpose of communion.
16. The whole action of the eucharist has an "epikletic" character because it depends upon the work of the Holy Spirit. In the words of the liturgy, this aspect of the eucharist finds varied expression.
17. The Church, as the community of the new covenant, confidently invokes the Spirit, in order that it may be sanctified and renewed, led into all justice truth and unity, and empowered to fulfil its mission in the world.
18. The Holy Spirit through the eucharist gives a foretaste of the Kingdom of God: the Church receives the life of the new creation and the assurance of the return.

Commentary (14)

This is not to spiritualize the eucharistic presence of Christ but to affirm the indissoluble union between the Son and the Spirit. This union makes it clear that the eucharist is not a magical or mechanical action but a prayer addressed to the Father, one which emphasizes the Church's utter dependence. There is an intrinsic relationship between the words of institution, Christ's promise, and the invocation of the Spirit (*epiklesis*), in the liturgy. The *epiklesis* in relation to the words of institution is located differently in various liturgical traditions. In the early liturgies the whole "prayer action" was thought of as bringing about the reality promised by Christ. The invocation of the Spirit was made both on the community and on the elements of bread and wine. Recovery of such an understanding may help us overcome our difficulties concerning a special moment of consecration.

Commentary (15)

In the history of the Church there have been various attempts to understand the mystery of the real and unique presence of Christ in the eucharist. Some are content merely to affirm this presence without seeking to explain it. Others consider it necessary to assert a change wrought by the Holy Spirit and Christ's words, in consequence of which there is no longer just ordinary bread and wine but the body and blood of Christ. Others again have developed an explanation of the real presence which, though not claiming to exhaust the significance of the mystery, seeks to protect it from damaging interpretations.

C. Group Discussion

1. The opening story is especially relevant in regions where mixed marriages are becoming more and more common. Is this true of your community? How do the churches try to minister faithfully in meeting such difficult pastoral problems?
2. Why does the Lima text place so much emphasis on “the biblical conception of ‘memorial’”? Is the risen Lord bound by our human limits of time and space in the eucharist?
3. On the basis of the gospel, are we now able to affirm ecumenically both (a) “the unique sacrifice of Christ” that can “neither be repeated nor prolonged”, and (b) the eucharistic “intercession of Christ and the Church for all humanity”?
4. What is unique about Christ’s presence at the Eucharist? Why is faith necessary to discern that real presence?
5. How does the Lima understanding of Christ’s real presence in the sacrament affirm the indissoluble union between God the Son and God the Spirit? Is the invocation of the Holy Spirit an essential part of your Church’s liturgy?
6. Some churches have claimed that sharing in the eucharist is the “goal” of Christian unity in the apostolic faith. Others have held that this is a means of achieving it. How may the tension between the “already” and the “not yet” qualities of our life in Christ guide the communion practices of Churches embarked on the ecumenical pilgrimage?

D. Closing Prayer

Symbol: A loaf of bread and a cup of wine are placed at the centre of the group.

Scripture Reading: 1 Peter 2:4,5, 9-20

Come to him, to that living stone, rejected by men but in God’s sight chosen and precious; and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Once you were no people but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy.

Time is given for quiet reflection.

Leader: Let us pray

All: It is fitting, right and just,
here and everywhere
to give you thanks,
Lord, holy Father, eternal God.
Who is acceptable to tell your praises,
who can make a full declaration of your works?
Every tongue marvels at you,
all peoples extol your glory.

(cf. Gallican Liturgy)

Through the gift of Eucharist,
we offer ourselves as a living and holy sacrifice in all that we do each day, and
through this offering,
nourish our lives
so that we can be instruments of peace and reconciliation
in our communities.

(cf. Lima par.10)

May your Spirit strengthen us
to be servants of justice, truth and unity
in the coming of your Kingdom. Amen.

Leader: Let us offer one another a greeting of peace.

SESSION 3: The Eucharist as Communion of the Faithful /

The Eucharist as Meal of the Kingdom

Do This in Remembrance of Me – An Ecumenical Discussion on the Eucharist - 1986

A. Scripture references

Allow a few moments to become still, and to recognise God's word; then ask someone to read the passages out.

Matthew 5:23 f; 25:29; I Corinthians 10:16 f, 11:20-26; Galatians 3:28

B. The Lima Text

The Eucharist as Communion of the Faithful

19. The eucharistic communion with Christ who nourishes the life of the Church is at the same time communion within the body of Christ which is the Church. The sharing in one bread and the common cup in a given place demonstrates and effects the oneness of the sharers with Christ and with their fellow sharers in all times and places. It is in the eucharist that the community of God's people is fully manifested. Eucharistic celebrations always have to do with the whole Church, and the whole Church is involved in each local eucharistic celebration. In so far as a church claims to be a manifestation of the whole Church, it will take care to order its- own life in ways which take seriously the interests and concerns of other churches.
20. The eucharist embraces all aspects of life. It is a representative act of thanksgiving and offering on behalf of the whole world. The eucharistic celebration demands reconciliation and sharing among all those regarded as brothers and sisters in the one family of God and is a constant challenge in the search for appropriate relationships in social, economic and political life (Mt 5:23f; 1 Cor10:16f; I Cor 11:20-22; Gal 3:28) All kinds of injustice, racism, separation and lack of freedom are radically challenged when we share in the body and blood of Christ. Through the eucharist the all-renewing grace of God penetrates and restores human personality and dignity. The eucharist involves the believer in the central event of the world's history. As participants in the eucharist, therefore, we prove inconsistent if we are not actively participating in this ongoing restoration of the world's situation and the human condition. The eucharist shows us that our behaviour is inconsistent in the face of the reconciling presence of God in human history: we are placed under continual judgment by the persistence of unjust relationships of all kinds in our society, the manifold divisions on account of human pride, material interest and power politics and, above all, the obstinacy of unjustifiable confessional oppositions within the body of Christ.
21. Solidarity in the eucharistic communion of the body of Christ and responsible care of Christians for one another and the world find specific expression in the liturgies: in the mutual forgiveness of sins; the sign of peace; intercession for all; the eating and drinking together; the taking of the elements, to the sick and those in prison or the celebration of the eucharist with them.

All these manifestations of love in the eucharist are directly related to Christ's own testimony as a servant, in whose servanthood Christians themselves participate. As God in Christ has entered into the human situation, so eucharistic liturgy is near to the

concrete and particular situations of men and women. In the early Church the ministry of deacons and deaconesses gave expression in a special way to this aspect of the eucharist. The place of such ministry between the table and the needy properly testifies to the redeeming presence of Christ in the world.

The Eucharist as Meal of the Kingdom

22. The eucharist opens up the vision of the divine rule which has been promised as the final renewal of creation, and is a foretaste of it. Signs of this renewal are present in the world wherever the grace of God is manifest and human beings work for justice, love and peace. The eucharist is the feast at which the Church gives thanks to God for these signs and joyfully celebrates and anticipates the coming of the Kingdom in Christ (1 Cor 11:26; Mat 26:29).
23. The world, to which renewal is promised, is present in the whole eucharistic celebration. The world is present in the thanksgiving to the Father, where the Church speaks on behalf of the whole creation; in the memorial of Christ, where the Church, united with its great High Priest and Intercessor, prays for the world; in the prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit, where the Church asks for sanctification and new creation.
24. Reconciled in the eucharist, the members of the body of Christ are called to be servants of reconciliation among men and women and witnesses of the joy of resurrection. As Jesus went out to publicans and sinners and had table-fellowship with them during his earthly ministry, so Christians are called in the eucharist to be in solidarity with the outcast and to become signs of the love of Christ who lived and sacrificed himself for all and now gives himself in the eucharist.
25. The very celebration of the eucharist is an instance of the Church's participation in God's mission to the world. This participation takes everyday form in the proclamation of the Gospel, service of the neighbour, and faithful presence in the world.
26. As it is entirely the gift of God, the eucharist brings into the present age a new reality which transforms Christians into the image of Christ and therefore makes them his effective witnesses. The eucharist is precious food for missionaries, bread and wine for pilgrims on their apostolic journey. The eucharistic community is nourished and strengthened for confessing by word and action the Lord Jesus Christ who gave his life for the salvation of the world. As it becomes one people, sharing the meal of the one Lord, the eucharistic assembly must be concerned for gathering also those who are at present beyond its visible limits, because Christ invited to his feast all for whom he died. Insofar as Christians cannot unite in full fellowship around the same table to eat the same loaf and drink from the same cup, their missionary witness is weakened at both the individual and the corporate levels.

Commentary (19)

Since the earliest days, baptism has been understood as the sacrament by which believers are incorporated into the body of Christ and are endowed with the Holy Spirit. As long as the right of the baptized believers and their ministers to participate in and preside over eucharistic celebration in one church is called into question by those who preside over and are members of other eucharistic congregations, the catholicity of the eucharist is less manifest. There is discussion in many churches today about the inclusion of baptized children as communicants at the Lord's Supper.

C. Group Discussion

1. What is the moral dilemma posed in the opening story (see para.20 above)? Can you describe a similar situation that could arise in our own community?
2. Are you able to share the same cup with enemies as well as friends?
3. What does it mean that the Church uses the basic essentials of food and drink as its central act of worship?
4. Why is there a separation between the “spiritual” and the “material” dimensions of life? How does that confuse and weaken Christian responsibility in society?
5. Could it be that the energy crisis, endemic hunger, the arms race, along with persistent inflation and unemployment, are all part of an early warning system, telling the human race that its plundering of the earth’s resources cannot continue for ever? How faithfully have Christians interpreted - and obeyed - the biblical command: “...fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over every living thing” (Gen 1:28)?
6. What does it mean for you that as a group we cannot share the eucharist together? (para.26)
7. Do you agree that this does indeed weaken our missionary witness at both individual and corporate level?

D. Closing Prayer

Symbol: A loaf of bread and a cup of wine, or a picture of people gathered in worship placed in the centre of the group.

Scripture Reading: Matthew 5: 23,24

So if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

Quiet reflection....brief prayers from the heart.

Leader: Let us pray

Almighty, everlasting God,
we give thanks to thy exceeding goodness
because thou hast fed us
with the body of thy only-begotten Son, our Lord,
and given us his blood to drink.
We humbly beseech thee, work in us with thy Spirit,
that, as we have received this divine Sacrament,
so we may also receive and ever hold fast with true faith
thy grace, remission of sins, and communion with Christ thy Son.

May God have mercy upon us and bless us, lighten his countenance upon us, and give us his peace.

(cf. Hennann, 1545, Cologne)

All: Amen.

Leader: Let us offer one another a greeting of peace.

Session 4: The Celebration of the Eucharist

Do This in Remembrance of Me – An Ecumenical Discussion on the Eucharist - 1986

A. Scriptural References

1 Corinthians 11:17-34; Matthew 26:20-30; Mark 14:17-26; Luke 22:7-39

B. The Lima Text

The Celebration of the Eucharist

27. The eucharistic liturgy is essentially a single whole, consisting historically of the following elements in varying sequence and of diverse importance:
- hymns of praise;
 - act of repentance;
 - declaration of pardon;
 - proclamation of the Word of God, in various forms;
 - confession of faith (creed);
 - intercession for the whole Church and for the world;
 - preparation of the bread and wine;
 - thanksgiving to the Father for the marvels of creation, redemption and sanctification (deriving from the Jewish tradition of the *berakah*);
 - the words of Christ's institution of the sacrament according to the New Testament tradition;
 - the *anamnesis* or memorial of the great acts of redemption, passion, death, resurrection, ascension and Pentecost, which brought the Church into being;
 - the invocation of the Holy Spirit (*epiklesis*) on the community, and the elements of bread and wine (either before the words of institution or after the memorial, or both; or some other reference to the Holy Spirit which adequately expresses the "epikletic" character of the eucharist);
 - consecration of the faithful to God; -
 - reference to the communion of saints;
 - prayer for the return of the Lord and the definitive manifestation of his Kingdom;
 - the Amen of the whole community;
 - the Lord's prayer;
 - sign of reconciliation and peace;
 - the breaking of the bread;
 - eating and drinking in communion with Christ and with each member of the Church;
 - final act of praise;
 - blessing and sending.
26. The best way towards unity in eucharistic celebration and communion is the renewal of the eucharist itself in the different churches in regard to teaching and liturgy. The churches should test their liturgies in the light of the eucharistic agreement now in the process of attainment.
- The liturgical reform movement has brought the churches closer together in the manner of celebrating the Lord's Supper. However, a certain liturgical diversity compatible with our common eucharistic faith is recognized as a healthy and enriching fact. The affirmation of a common eucharistic faith does not imply uniformity in either liturgy or practice.

29. In the celebration of the eucharist, Christ gathers, teaches and nourishes the Church. It is Christ who invites to the meal and who presides at it. He is the shepherd who leads the people of God, the prophet who announces the Word of God, the priest who celebrates the mystery of God. In most churches, this presidency is signified by an ordained minister. The one who presides at the eucharistic celebration in the name of Christ makes clear that the rite is not the assembly's own creation or possession; the eucharist is received as a gift from Christ living in his Church. The minister of the eucharist is the ambassador who represents the divine initiative and expresses the connection of the local community with other local communities in the universal Church.
30. Christian faith is deepened by the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Hence the eucharist should be celebrated frequently. Many differences of theology, liturgy and practice are connected with the varying frequency with which the Holy Communion is celebrated.
31. As the eucharist celebrates the resurrection of Christ, it is appropriate that it should take place at least every Sunday. As it is the new sacramental meal of the people of God, every Christian should be encouraged to receive communion frequently.
32. Some churches stress that Christ's presence in the consecrated elements continues after the celebration. Other place the main emphasis on the act of celebration itself and on the consumption of the elements in the act of communion. The way in which the elements are treated requires special attention. Regarding the practice of reserving the elements, each church should respect the practices and piety of the others. Given the diversity in practice among the churches and at the same time taking note of the present situation in the convergence process, it is worthwhile to suggest:
 - that on the one hand, it be remembered, especially in sermons and instruction, that the primary intention of reserving the elements is their distribution among the sick and those who are absent, and
 - on the other hand, it be recognized that the best way of showing respect for the elements served in the eucharistic celebration is by their consumption, without excluding their use for communion of the sick.
33. The increased mutual understanding expressed in the present statement may allow some churches to attain a greater measure of eucharistic communion among themselves and so bring closer the day when Christ's divided people will be visibly reunited around the Lord's Table.

Commentary (28)

Since New Testament days, the Church has attached the greatest importance to the continued use of the elements of bread and wine which Jesus used at the Last Supper. In certain parts of the world, where bread and wine are not customary or obtainable, it is now sometimes held that local food and drink serve better to anchor the eucharist in everyday life. Further study is required concerning the question of which features of the Lord's Supper were unchangeably instituted by Jesus, and which features remain within the Church's competence to decide.

C. Group Discussion

1. If you have been able, in the last few weeks, (or at some other time) to attend a celebration of the Eucharist in a denomination other than your own -
 - what differences did you notice?
 - what similarities were evident?(ref. para.27 and any Orders of Service you may have available)

2. (a) The liturgical reform movement has brought the churches closer together in the manner of celebrating the Lord's Supper. Since a common eucharistic faith does not imply uniformity in either liturgy or practice, what forms of diversity do you find most helpful to your own spiritual nurture? (ref. para.28)

(b) Since New Testament days, the Church has attached the greatest importance to the continued use of the elements of bread and wine which Jesus used at the Last Supper. The Rev Dr Sione Havea of Tonga, former Principal of the Pacific Theological College, Suva, has stated in an article entitled "Moving Towards a Pacific Theology":

The coconut and the Eucharist. Grapes and wheat were common to the people where Jesus lived. They used bread and wine as elements of livelihood.

...when he instituted the Last Supper, he (Jesus) used the bread and wine as an act of remembrance of his body and blood. I am quite sure that if Jesus had been born to a coconut culture, he would have used the coconut instead of the bread and wine. From the same fruit, there is the flesh (kernel) and the juice, which is more significant than bread and wine. The body and blood come from one and the same fruit - but the bread and wine, they come from two different plants!

3. Which features of the Lord's Supper do you see were unchangeably instituted by Jesus, and which features remain within the Church's competence to decide?
4. A ship is wrecked. Fifty survivors - all the same denomination - reach a remote island. None is a priest/minister. Can the Eucharist be celebrated? (para.29)
5. How frequently is the Eucharist celebrated in your denomination? Do you consider it necessary for frequent, e.g. weekly, celebration of this Sacrament? Do you consider the celebration of the Eucharist as "the central act of the Church's worship"? (paras.30/31)
6. What do you think about paragraph 32? What is the understanding and practice in your tradition in this matter?

7. Some churches have claimed that sharing in the eucharist is the ‘goal’ of Christian unity in the apostolic faith. Others have held that this is a ‘means’ of achieving it. How may the tension between the ‘already’ and the ‘not yet’ qualities of our life in Christ guide the communion practices of churches embarked on the ecumenical pilgrimage. (para.33)

D. Closing Prayer

Symbol: A loaf of bread and a cup of wine placed in the centre of the group.

Scripture Reading: Luke 22: 2 4—20

And when the hour came, he sat at table, and the apostles with him. And he said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you I shall not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, “Take this, and divide it among yourselves for I tell you that from now on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them saying, “This is my body.”

Quiet reflection...brief prayers from the heart.

Leader: Let us pray.

Blessed are you, Lord God of the universe,
you are the giver of this bread, fruit of the earth and of human labour, let it become
the bread of life.

All: Blessed be God, now and for ever!

Leader Blessed are you, Lord God of the universe,
you are the giver of this wine,
fruit of the vine and of human labour,
let it become the wine of the eternal Kingdom.

All: Blessed be God, now and for ever!

Leader: As the grain once scattered in the fields and the grapes once dispersed on the
hillside are now reunited on this table in bread and wine, so, Lord, may your whole
Church soon be gathered together from the corners of the earth into your Kingdom.

All: Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus!

*(cf. W.C.C. Eucharistic Liturgy. cf. Jewish Prayer prayed by Jewish families
on each Friday evening as the Sabbath begins.)*