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The Role of Scripture and Liturgy in Catholic Faith Formation  
Week 1: September 4, 2008

Key Terms: Sacred Scripture, Sacred tradition, Liturgy, Church, History, Economy, Typology, and Mystagogy.

1-Sacred Scripture: Speech of God written down under the breath of the Holy Spirit. The dictation of the Holy Spirit. Divine authorship is credited to Scripture itself cf. 1 Tim.3.16; 2 Ptr. 3.19; 3.16 (consider the analogy of the same musical note played by a different instrument). God's word is objective truth, for it created the world and its hosts and breathed inspiration into Scripture (cf. Ps.33.6). Therefore, Scripture's authority is an extension of Christ's own authority. *"Just as Christ is fully human and divine so Scripture is fully human and divine."*

--Hahn

2-Sacred Tradition: Divine truths orally transmitted to the apostolic successors under the guidance of the spirit...note the conclusion of the Gospel of John. Congar said this of tradition, *"Tradition is the principle that links one generation with another; It enables them to remain with their parents...Tradition is memory, and memory enriches experience..."* Tradition lives in conversation with the past making it visible to the present; the continuation through time of the mission of Christ which shares his passionate love for all cultures.

3-Liturgy: In its original meaning, "a public work", or service done on behalf of the people. Through the liturgy, Christ our high priest continues the work of redemption through the Church's celebration of the Paschal mystery by which he accomplished our salvation.

4.Church: *Consult Word of the Week on Church*

5-History: In its original meaning, "to weave a pattern", God in the Old Testament, over a period of time, uses images throughout Old Testament history to reveal to us what we have to day. As history does not spring forth from non-events, God uses it pedagogically, as a great Teacher revealing his eternal wisdom to his eternal plan. It will be ancient history that will unite man--not unproved modern notions.

6-Economy: --History reveals the *economy* of God, considering its original meaning "the law of the household." As Benin states: *"God teaches through the events of history that correspond to his eternal plan"*. That ultimately, in Christ, the embodiment of law, we may find that the heart of the law of the household is to live in the law. The "*oikonomia*" is the wise arrangement by stages whereby the mystery that is Christ is brought to fulfillment (CCC 236).

7-Typology: *Consult Word of the Week on Typology*...salvation history's plot is revealed through a careful study of typology. This interacts with the Liturgy so that we are placed in salvation history in the Eucharist. We see this in Scriptures and

Tradition.

Typology is the Literal Sense in which the New Testament reads the Old. For Daniellou, “it gives intelligible coordination to Gods work in salvation history.”

8-Mystagogy: typology applied to the sacraments. For Danielou, “*The sacraments carry out the great works of God in the OT and NT*”. In addition, Mazza states, “*the oral or written explanation of the mystery hidden in the scriptures and the celebration of the liturgy*”. Having been instructed in the pattern of the divine economy, the disciples could see the age of the Church lived in the sacramental life. Mystagogy is seeing Christ revealed in the breaking of the bread (Lk.24;13-25). The process of covenant fulfillment in Christ is not concluded but continued in the sacramental life.

- I. The Unity of Sacred Scripture and Liturgy: The road to Emmaeus reveals an ancient truth concerning the unveiling of truth, that Scripture is about and for Liturgy as Liturgy is about and for Scripture. Liturgy and scripture possess an intrinsic unity bound by the Spirit.
  - A. Scripture is concerned about conveying the stuff of Liturgy. Stages of salvation history that are caught up in the liturgical current. One OT scholar noted the OT is simply about Israel, God’s liturgical people (not just kid stories)
    1. Adam...Creation establishes the sabbatical pattern (Gen.2:3).  
\*\*\*consult *Word of the Week* on **Covenant** for significance of the number 7
    2. Cain and Abel...ritual offering of the first fruits of their labor (Gen.4:3-5).
    3. Noah...Flood...seven pair of clean animals for holocaust (Gen.8:20)
    4. Abraham...ritual precision of sacrifice (Gen.22)
    5. Jacob...Altar for anointing (Gen.28:18)
    6. Moses...Exodus and the “liturgical procession” into worship.
    7. Joshua...Promised Land and the conquering of Jericho follows suit to the sabbatical pattern of worship (Jos.6)
    8. David...Kingdom of David...establishment of the Passover liturgy (1 Chr.23-25; 28; 2 Chr. 30, 35). Recount his psalms that in their primacy our liturgical hymns sung to the Lord according to the Liturgical celebration.
    9. NT is saturated with the Israelite heritage...among the many rich fulfillments of Christ himself as the “new liturgy”, he was obedient to the ritual laws as a faithful Jew...consider his trips to Jerusalem and the synagogues (explicating Scriptures), praying ancient prayers and even going under ritual bathing in the Jordan.
  - B. Liturgy brings form to Sacred Scripture. The canon of Sacred Scripture itself was derived out of the earliest liturgical tradition. Simply, the Bible was made for liturgical use. “*Scripture are liturgical documents of the OT and NT*”—Caroll Stuhlmueller

1. The scriptural canon was enacted as a “rule for liturgy”. Consider that the very word canon, derived from the Greek *kanon*, means “measuring stick”. The earliest Christian use of this word described the official lists that determined a documents worth for public worship.
  - a. It was not the Church councils that were the final determining factor of the canon as much as it was the council’s obedience to the living and breathing spirit of truth that was being actualized on the altar since the earliest Christian communities. Scripture canonizes liturgy as liturgy canonizes Scripture
  - b. This is an example of how liturgy is the core breath of the living Sacred Tradition.
2. The Spirit of Sacred Scripture is intended to carry us into the liturgical spirit that quintessentially is defined by the worship of the Jewish and Christian communities.
  - a. Consider the giving of the Law at Sinai, the foundation of the Temple by Solomon, and even the religious reform under Josiah. All of these take shape and form in the proclamation of the Word accompanied by sacrifice.

II. Liturgy as Catechism: What the CCC is for Catholics the ancient Liturgy was for ancient Judaism. All the inherent truth of Judaism was contained within their celebration of feast days. In fact, Judaism is one of the few faiths period that is without a catechism.

A. The great Rabbi Hirsch (1800’s) was once asked: “Why don’t you have a CCC?” his response was “our calendar is our Catechism”. The catechism of the Jew consists in his calendar where God inscribes timeless truths in days/weeks/months/years...they become heralds of covenant truth.

1. In a more than similar way, our own Catholic liturgical calendar is a catechism not written on pages but written in days/weeks/months/years...timeless truths carved in the time signature of our calendar.