

KNIGHTS OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS - AUSTRALIA

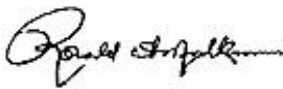
FORMATION PROGRAMME 2008

FOREWORD

In view of the publication in 2007 of the post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, “Sacramentum Caritatis”, on the Eucharist as the source and summit of the Church’s life and mission, it is appropriate that we consider the Eucharist in our Formation Programme in 2008. Incidentally, we ought to be conscious of the campaign of prayer for vocations launched by the Knights of the Southern Cross. Without priests we cannot have the Eucharist.

At the same time, we must be conscious of the importance and significance of the celebration of the World Youth Day in Sydney in July 2008. There has already been much preparation for this event in various regions of Australia. It is important that World Youth Day will have a lasting effect in giving new enthusiasm and confidence to young people, and indeed to people of all ages, so that they will face the future with faith and hope and love. The highlight of the celebration will be the Mass, scheduled to be offered by Pope Benedict XVI, at Randwick. Hence the decision to begin our Programme with consideration of the World Youth Day programme and its 2008 theme that is the “call to witness” and then to continue the year’s formation by reflecting on the Pope’s Exhortation on the Eucharist.

Once more, I am deeply indebted to Sr. Anne McMillan RSM, Director of the Pastoral Ministry Office of the Ballarat Diocese, for her generosity and expertise in putting this Programme together. May it help bring us all closer together and closer to God.

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+ Ronald A Mulkeams
National Chaplain.

Knights of the Southern Cross - Australia

“IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH” **Formation Program for 2008**

Reflections on ***World Youth Day 2008*** ***“Sacramentum Caritatis” – Benedict XVI***

World Youth Day

The first World Youth Day was held in Rome in 1986 on Palm Sunday, and each year World Youth Day is celebrated at a Diocesan level on Palm Sunday. World Youth Day was one of the great legacies of Pope John Paul II. The Pope wanted to bring together young Catholics from around the globe to celebrate and learn about their faith on a more regular basis. Every 2-3 years a massive international gathering celebrates in a different 'host city' Buenos Aires (Argentina), Santiago de Compostela (Spain), Czestochowa (Poland), Denver (USA), Manila (The Philippines), Paris (France), Rome (Italy), Toronto (Canada), Cologne (Germany) have all been hosts. The international World Youth Days are marked by a week long series of events for evangelisation, attended by the Pope and hundreds of thousands of youth from all over the world. In 2008, the international World Youth Day will be held in Sydney. This constitutes a call to all Australian Catholics to reflect on this event and how we can respond.

“Sacramentum Caritatis”

The eleventh General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops was held in Rome in October, 2005. The theme of the 2005 Synod was set by Pope John Paul II and confirmed by his successor, Pope Benedict XVI: “The Eucharist: Source and Summit of the Life and Mission of the Church.” In 2007, Pope Benedict published his post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation “Sacramentum Caritatis” addressed to the Bishops, Clergy, Consecrated Persons and the Lay Faithful on the Eucharist as the Source and Summit of the Church’s Life and Mission.

FORMAT OF PRAYER SEGMENTS

(20 MINS)

1. OPENING PRAYERS

- ❖ Opening Prayers from the Order Prayers for Meetings of the Order.

2. PRAYER FOCUS

- ❖ Each segment will address a theme taken from the Order Prayers and the Objects of the Order.

3. THE WORD

- ❖ The Word of God and related reading from Church documentation is proclaimed. This is read by the discussion leader or member/s nominated by him.

4. REFLECTION

- ❖ Silent reflection on the Word of God and other readings. (5 mins.)

5. THE SHARING

- ❖ Members share their reflection on the Word and responses to discussion points. (10 mins.)

6. CLOSING PRAYERS

- ❖ Closing Prayer as in the Order Prayers for Meetings of the Order.

POINTS FOR SUCCESSFUL FORMATION PROGRAMMES

1. Choose a formation leader for the year so that someone is responsible for the facilitation of the segment.
2. These formation segments require each participant to ideally have his own copy of the Readings, therefore a copy of the Session should be provided for each member at the each meeting.
3. Abide strictly to the allotted time; not less than twenty nor more than thirty minutes.

SESSION NO 1

THEME: *“WORLD YOUTH DAY” – an introduction*

CALL TO PRAYER & OPENING PRAYER: As for the Order Prayers

FOCUS: *“World Youth Day is much more than an event. It is a time of deep spiritual renewal, the fruits of which benefit the whole of society.”* (Benedict XVI – Appeal for 23rd World Youth Day)

WORD OF REFLECTION

From Pope Benedict XVI to the Youth of the World

I always remember with great joy the various occasions we spent together in Cologne in August 2005. At the end of that unforgettable manifestation of faith and enthusiasm that remains engraved on my spirit and on my heart, I made an appointment with you for the next gathering that will be held in Sydney in 2008. This will be the XXIII World Youth Day and the theme will be: *“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses”* (Acts 1:8)

The celebration of World Youth Day

World Youth Day (WYD) was an initiative of Pope John Paul II, who was inspired by massive gatherings of young people in Rome celebrating the Youth Jubilee in 1984 and the United Nations International Year of Youth in 1985. He wanted to bring together young Catholics from around the globe to celebrate and learn about their faith on a more regular basis. Pope John Paul II saw WYD as a way to reach out to the next generation of Catholics, to demonstrate confidence in them, to rejuvenate the Church and ensure that the core teachings of Christ are transmitted and lived.

The first World Youth Day was held in Rome in 1986 on Palm Sunday. Each year since, World Youth Day has been celebrated at a Diocesan level on Palm Sunday. Every two to three years, a massive international gathering celebrates WYD in a different 'host city' - Cologne, Buenos Aires, Czestochowa, Paris, Toronto, Manila and Denver have all been hosts. The international World Youth Days are marked by a week-long series of events, attended by the Pope and hundreds of thousands of young people from all over the world.

There are four main goals for the host nation in staging the largest event for the Catholic Church in Australia:

- To provide a moving and sanctifying pilgrimage in faith;
- To provide the forum for youth to experience the power of the Holy Spirit;
- To assist the rediscovery of the centrality of the Word and Sacraments in the lives of the young people;
- To enable youth to be witnesses to Christ.

At the most recent World Youth Day in 2005 in Cologne, the German people saw a witness of faith, hope and love on an unbelievable scale when it welcomed:

- 435,000 registered pilgrims from 197 countries;
- 800 Bishops and Cardinals;
- 7000 international journalists;
- an incredible 1.2 million people who attended the Final Mass.

Allow a few moments reflective silence, then proclaim the Word of God

WORD OF GOD



The Gospel according to John 20: 19-22, 24-29

The Word of God is now read aloud slowly and prayerfully

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."

When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."



For the next five minutes silently read and reflect on the readings.

Underline what you consider to be key words and/or phrases for you.

THE SHARING



Now bring your insights and reflection around the theme into discussion of the following:

(10 mins)

- ❖ What do you see as the most important issue facing the Church today in regard to its young people?
- ❖ In what way can World Youth Day contribute to the life of the Church?
- ❖ How can you as Knights of the Southern Cross participate in this great event?

CONCLUSION

Leader: As we conclude this time of reflection, let us give praise to God as we say:

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

The meeting proceeds

CLOSING PRAYERS: As for the Order Prayers at the Closing of the Meeting.

SEGMENT NO 2

THEME: *“THE MESSAGE OF THE WYD CROSS”*

CALL TO PRAYER & OPENING PRAYER: As for the Order Prayers

FOCUS: *The Cross of Christ! Carry it throughout the world as a symbol of Christ's love for humanity...* (Pope John Paul II)

WORDS FOR REFLECTION

The World Youth Day Cross is the most significant tangible symbol of World Youth Day. Originally the idea of Pope John Paul II, the 3.8 metre high wooden Cross was built and placed as a symbol of the Catholic faith, near the main altar in St Peter's Basilica during the Holy Year of 1983. At the end of that year, Pope John Paul gave this cross as a gift to the youth of the world, to be carried through the world as a symbol of Christ's love for humanity.

“My dear young people, at the conclusion of the Holy Year, I entrust to you the sign of this Jubilee Year - the Cross of Christ! Carry it throughout the world as a symbol of Christ's love for humanity and announce to everyone that only in the death and resurrection of Christ can we find salvation and redemption.”

Pope John Paul II, Rome,

22 April 1984

The World Youth Day cross has travelled far and wide - it has been throughout Europe, the United States, Canada, South America and The Philippines, to Poland and Prague, to the German Parliament and even to Ground Zero in New York. It has been carried by commercial airline, light aircraft, dog sled, pick-up truck, tractor, sail boat, fishing boat and on shoulders. From parish churches to youth detention centres, prisons, schools, universities, national historic sites, shopping centres, nightclub districts and parks. It is truly an international symbol for Catholic youth.

Following the handover of the WYD Cross and Icon from Germany to Australia in Rome, on Palm Sunday 2006, the Cross and Icon were commissioned to make their way to Africa *“to manifest the closeness of Christ and of his Mother to the peoples of that continent affected by so many sufferings”* (Pope Benedict XVI), before beginning in earnest their pilgrimage of preparation in Oceania for World Youth Day 2008, Sydney.

Allow a brief time for quiet reflection on the above words.

WORD OF GOD *The Word of God is now read aloud slowly and prayerfully*



The Gospel according to Luke 9: 23-26, 14: 27.

Then he said to them all, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it. What does it profit them if they gain the whole world, but lose or forfeit themselves?

Those who are ashamed of me and of my words, of them the Son of Man will be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple”.



The first Letter of Peter 2: 21-24

For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps. "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly.

He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.



For the next five minutes silently read and reflect on the readings. Underline what you consider to be 2 or 3 significant words and/or phrases.

THE SHARING



*Now bring your insights and reflection around the theme and the Readings into discussion of the following:
(10 ins)*

- ❖ What impact does the message of the Cross make in your daily life?
- ❖ The Journey of the Cross calls for a public statement of each person's commitment to their faith. In what ways can or do the Knights of the Southern Cross make a public faith statement in local communities?

CONCLUSION

Leader: *As we conclude this time of reflection, let us give praise to God as we say:*

All: *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*

The meeting proceeds

CLOSING PRAYERS: As for the Order Prayers at the Closing of the Meeting.

SEGMENT NO 3

THEME: *“THE MESSAGE OF THE WYD ICON”*

CALL TO PRAYER & OPENING PRAYER: As for the Order Prayers

FOCUS: “Today I also entrust to you.....the Icon of Mary.”

(John Paul II)

WORD OF REFLECTION

Presentation of the Icon

On Palm Sunday in 2003, Pope John Paul II gave young people a second symbol of faith to be carried in the world, accompanying the WYD Cross - the Icon of Our Lady, '*Salus Populi Romani*', a contemporary copy of a sacred and ancient icon housed in the first and greatest basilica to Mary the Mother of God in the West, St Mary Major.

Today I also entrust to you... the Icon of Mary. From now on it will accompany the World Youth Days, together with the Cross. Behold, your Mother! It will be a sign of Mary's motherly presence close to young people who are called, like the Apostle John, to welcome her into their lives. John Paul II, Rome, 2003.

Like the Olympic Torch and the Commonwealth Baton Relay, the Cross and Icon travel the world between World Youth Days to deliver a message of hope, peace and unity.

Allow a few moments reflective silence and then proclaim the Word of God

WORD OF GOD



The Gospel according to John 19: 23-26

The Word of God is now read aloud slowly and prayerfully

When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the scripture says, "They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots." And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son."



For the next five minutes silently read and reflect on the readings.

Underline what you consider to be key words and/or phrases for you.

THE SHARING



Now bring your insights and reflection around the theme and the Readings into discussion of the following:

(10 mins)

- ❖ What do you consider is the message of the Gospel in regard to Mary?
- ❖ What role does Mary, Mother of God, have in the lives of each of you?
- ❖ Is there some way the Knights of the Southern Cross can contribute to and support prayer and devotion to Our Lady?

CONCLUSION

Leader: As we conclude this time of reflection, let us give praise to God as we say:

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

The meeting proceeds

CLOSING PRAYERS: As for the Order Prayers at the Closing of the Meeting.

SEGMENT NO 4

THEME: *“CALL TO WITNESS – WYD Theme”*

CALL TO PRAYER & OPENING PRAYER: As for the Order Prayers

FOCUS: “... to give witness *to Christ*. “You will be *my* witnesses,” he says.”
(*Bishop Anthony Fisher*)

WORDS OF REFLECTION - *Reflect on the reading of the following:*

From a Reflection on the WYD Song:

The theme of WYD08 is taken from the last words Christ spoke to his disciples before he ascended to the Father. The promise of the Holy Spirit is specifically linked by Christ to the call to the disciple to witness, testimony, even martyrdom. But to whom? The Holy Spirit empowers the young people not to give witness to themselves, not even to give witness to the Spirit, but to give witness *to Christ*. “You will be *my* witnesses,” he says. The song articulates the response of the faithful disciple to that call and empowerment.
(*Bishop Anthony Fisher*)

Papal Message to the Youth of the World:

I always remember with great joy the various occasions we spent together in Cologne in August 2005. At the end of that unforgettable manifestation of faith and enthusiasm that remains engraved on my spirit and on my heart, I made an appointment with you for the next gathering that will be held in Sydney in 2008. This will be the XXIII World Youth Day and the theme will be: “*You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses*” (*Acts 1:8*). The underlying theme of the spiritual preparation for our meeting in Sydney is the Holy Spirit and mission. In 2006 we focussed our attention on the Holy Spirit as the *Spirit of Truth*. Now in 2007 we are seeking a deeper understanding of the *Spirit of Love*. We will continue our journey towards World Youth Day 2008 by reflecting on the *Spirit of Fortitude and Witness* that gives us the courage to live according to the Gospel and to proclaim it boldly. (*Benedict XVI*).

Allow a few moments reflective silence, then proclaim the Word of God

WORD OF GOD



From the Acts of the Apostles 1: 4-9

While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. “This,” he said, “is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority.

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.

Allow a moment of reflection then proclaim the gospel reading



The Gospel according to Luke 24: 45-53

The Word of God is now read aloud slowly and prayerfully

Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them.

While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven.

And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.



***For the next five minutes silently read and reflect on the readings.
Underline what you consider to be key words and/or phrases for you.***

THE SHARING



*Now bring your insights and reflection around the theme and the Readings into discussion of the following:
(10 mins)*

- ❖ What is the 'witness' that Jesus speaks of?
- ❖ What makes witnessing to Christ difficult in today's world?
- ❖ What particular form of witness do the knights of the Southern Cross give in today's world?

CONCLUSION

Leader: *As we conclude this time of reflection, let us give praise to God as we say:*

All: *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*

The meeting proceeds

CLOSING PRAYERS: As for the Order Prayers at the Closing of the Meeting.

SEGMENT NO 5

THEME: “SACRAMENTUM CARITATIS – an introduction”

CALL TO PRAYER & OPENING PRAYER: As for the Order Prayers

FOCUS: “...a renewed commitment to the Eucharistic enthusiasm and fervour in the Church”

(Sacramentum Caritatis #5)

WORDS OF INTRODUCTION - *Reflect on the following:*

Sacramentum Caritatis

Sacramentum Caritatis is a document written by Pope Benedict XVI addressed to the whole Church. It is the final part of the Synod on the Eucharist where the Holy Father takes the reflections and propositions from the Synod Fathers, the bishops present at the Synod, and draws them together ‘to offer some basic direction aimed at a renewed commitment to the Eucharistic enthusiasm and fervour in the Church’.

(Sacramentum Caritatis # 5)

What is a Synod?

The General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops was a process and a gathering instituted by Paul VI following the Second Vatican Council. Each Synod focuses on a particular aspect of the life of the Church. Pope John Paul II called for the 11th Synod to focus on the Eucharist as the source and summit of the Church’s life and mission. It was held in October 2005 and was preceded by the Year of Eucharist.

Introducing Sacramentum Caritatis

The Sacrament of Charity explores the place of the Eucharist in the life of the Church as both the centre and summit of her life but also as way of shedding light on the whole of Church’s activity. The document draws on the propositions from the Synod and places them in the context of the teaching of the Church. With what seems particular pleasure, Pope Benedict often refers to the writings of his ‘beloved Predecessor, the Servant of God John Paul II’. (#4)

The document is structured in three sections: the Eucharist, a mystery to be believed, celebrated and lived. This reflects the structure of the Catechism. The Holy Father also makes a connection with his first Encyclical Letter, *Deus Caritas Est* in which he ‘frequently mentioned the sacrament of the Eucharist and stressed its relationship to Christian love, both of God and of neighbour’. (#5)

Read aloud the following extracts:



FROM THE DOCUMENT

“The sacrament of charity, the Holy Eucharist is the gift that Jesus Christ makes of himself, thus revealing to us God’s infinite love for every man and woman.”

(Sacramentum Caritatis #1)

“True joy is found in recognizing that the Lord is still with us, our faithful companion along the way. The Eucharist makes us discover that Christ, risen from the dead, is our contemporary in the mystery of the Church, his body. Of this

mystery of love we have become witnesses. Let us encourage one another to walk joyfully, our hearts filled with wonder, towards our encounter with the Holy Eucharist, so that we may experience and proclaim to others the truth of the words with which Jesus took leave of his disciples: “Lo, I am with you always, until the end of the world” (Mt 28:20).”

(Sacramentum Caritatis #97)

Allow a few moments reflective silence.

WORD OF GOD



The Gospel according to Matthew 28: 5-10, 16-20

The Word of God is now read aloud slowly and prayerfully

But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."



For the next five minutes silently read and reflect on the readings. Underline what you consider to be key words and/or phrases for you.

THE SHARING



*Now bring your insights and reflection around the theme and the Readings into discussion of the following:
(10 mins)*

- ❖ What do you see as important in regard to the Eucharist?
- ❖ What are some of the difficulties for the practice of Eucharistic devotion in the modern world?

CONCLUSION

Leader: As we conclude this time of reflection, let us give praise to God as we say:

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

The meeting proceeds

CLOSING PRAYERS: As for the Order Prayers at the Closing of the Meeting.

SEGMENT NO 6

THEME: *“THE EUCHARIST – A Mystery to be Believed”*

CALL TO PRAYER & OPENING PRAYER: As for the Order Prayers

FOCUS: “*What wonder must the Eucharistic mystery awaken in our own hearts*”
(Sacramentum Caritatis #1)

WORD OF INTRODUCTION

Part One: The Eucharist, a mystery to be believed.

The first part speaks about the **Church’s eucharistic faith** in particular the relationship between the **Blessed Trinity and the Eucharist**. Christ in the scriptures reveals himself to be the gift of the Father; by giving the totality of his life he reveals the ultimate origin of this love. This leads to a reflection on the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper which ‘demonstrates how Jesus’ death, for all its violence and absurdity, became in him a supreme act of love and mankind’s definitive deliverance from evil’. The presence of the Holy Spirit is traced through the New Testament noting that ‘it is through the working of the Spirit that Christ himself continues to be present and active in his Church, starting with her vital centre which is the Eucharist’.

The latter half of Part One looks at the relationship between the **Eucharist and the Sacraments**. Each Sacrament is considered alongside the Eucharist in turn both to show how they mutually illuminate the other and to raise some of the concerns raised at the Synod. Within this section the Holy Father expresses the ‘gratitude of the whole Church for all those Bishops and priests who carry out their respective missions with fidelity, devotion and zeal’.

The last two sections of the first part are the **Eucharist and Eschatology**, the liturgy of the Eucharist is a foretaste of the fulfilment for which every human being and all creation are destined, and the **Eucharist and the Virgin Mary**, Mary, who inaugurates the Church’s participation in the sacrifice of the Redeemer’.

WORD OF REFLECTION

Reflect on the reading of the following words taken from Sacramentum Caritatis:

The food of truth - in the sacrament of the altar, the Lord meets us, men and women created in God's image and likeness (cf. Gen 1:27), and becomes our companion along the way. In this sacrament, the Lord truly becomes food for us, to satisfy our hunger for truth and freedom. (#2)

"The mystery of faith!" With these words, spoken immediately after the words of consecration, the priest proclaims the mystery being celebrated and expresses his wonder before the substantial change of bread and wine into the body and blood of the Lord Jesus, a reality which surpasses all human understanding. The Eucharist is a "mystery of faith" par excellence: "the sum and summary of our faith." The Church's faith is essentially a eucharistic faith, and it is especially nourished at the table of the Eucharist. Faith and the sacraments are two complementary aspects of ecclesial life. Awakened by the preaching of God's word, faith is nourished and grows in the grace-filled encounter with the Risen Lord which takes place in the sacraments: "faith is expressed in the rite, while the rite reinforces and strengthens faith." (#6)

Allow a few moments reflective silence, then proclaim the Word of God

WORD OF GOD



The Gospel according to John 6: 25-35

The Word of God is now read aloud slowly and prayerfully

When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal."

Then they said to him, "What must we do to perform the works of God?" Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent."

So they said to him, "What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"

Then Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."



For the next five minutes silently read and reflect on the readings.

Underline what you consider to be key words and/or phrases for you.

THE SHARING



*Now bring your insights and reflection around the theme and the Readings into discussion of the following:
(10 mins)*

- ❖ What is the most important belief you hold in regard to the Sacrament of the Eucharist?
- ❖ What is the most difficult thing to believe in regard to the Eucharist?

CONCLUSION

Leader: *As we conclude this time of reflection, let us give praise to God as we say:*

All: *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*

The meeting proceeds

CLOSING PRAYERS: As for the Order Prayers at the Closing of the Meeting.

SEGMENT NO 7

THEME: *“THE EUCHARIST – A Mystery to be Celebrated”*

CALL TO PRAYER & OPENING PRAYER: As for the Order Prayers

FOCUS: “.....you yourselves are what you have received.”

(St. Augustine of Hippo)

WORD OF INTRODUCTION

Part Two: The Eucharist, a mystery to be celebrated

At the centre of the document is the section on the liturgy of the Church. It begins by making the connection between faith and celebration which is a theme of the whole document how the liturgy, the Eucharist, is both a source and an expression of faith. **Beauty and the liturgy** speaks of Christ, the Father’s glory, the fairest of the sons of men and therefore an essential element of the liturgical action because Christ is the ‘subject’ of the liturgy. **Good celebration** is encouraged as the best way of fostering the active participation of the People of God. Good celebration means a knowledge and appreciation of the liturgical books and norms together with attentiveness to the various kinds of language used in the liturgy: word and music, gestures and silence, movement and colour.

The document goes on to detail some specific parts of the Mass which require special attention. These include: the importance of well-prepared readers, the quality of homilies, the appreciation of the richness of the Eucharistic Prayers, the need for sobriety at the Sign of Peace, the distribution and reception of Holy Communion. There follows an exploration of the different aspects of **Active Participation**. Active participation is linked to **Interior participation in the celebration** in particular, and through mystagogical catechesis, the faithful can both deepen their faith in the Eucharist and transform their lives so that they can witness to Christ. The final section of this part stresses the importance of **Adoration and Eucharistic devotion**

WORD OF REFLECTION

*Reflect on the reading of the following words taken from *Sacramentum Caritatis**

The "subject" of the liturgy's intrinsic beauty is Christ himself, risen and glorified in the Holy Spirit, who includes the Church in his work. Here we can recall an evocative phrase of Saint Augustine which strikingly describes this dynamic of faith proper to the Eucharist. The great Bishop of Hippo, speaking specifically of the Eucharistic mystery, stresses the fact that Christ assimilates us to himself: "The bread you see on the altar, sanctified by the word of God, is the body of Christ. The chalice, or rather, what the chalice contains, sanctified by the word of God, is the blood of Christ. In these signs, Christ the Lord willed to entrust to us his body and the blood which he shed for the forgiveness of our sins. If you have received them properly, you yourselves are what you have received." Consequently, "not only have we become Christians, we have become Christ himself." We can thus contemplate God's mysterious work, which brings about a profound unity between ourselves and the Lord Jesus: "one should not believe that Christ is in the head but not in the body; rather he is complete in the head and in the body." (#36)

The Second Vatican Council rightly emphasized the active, full and fruitful participation of the entire People of God in the Eucharistic celebration.

Certainly, the renewal carried out in these past decades has made considerable progress towards fulfilling the wishes of the Council Fathers. Yet we must not overlook the fact that some misunderstanding has occasionally arisen concerning the precise meaning of this participation.

It should be made clear that the word "participation" does not refer to mere external activity during the celebration. In fact, the active participation called for by the Council must be understood in more substantial terms, on the basis of a greater awareness of the mystery being celebrated and its relationship to daily life. The conciliar Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* encouraged the faithful to take part in the Eucharistic liturgy not "as strangers or silent spectators," but as participants "in the sacred action, conscious of what they are doing, actively and devoutly". (#52)

Allow a few moments reflective silence, then proclaim the Word of God

WORD OF GOD



The Gospel according to Luke 22: 19-20

The Word of God is now read aloud slowly and prayerfully

Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."



For the next five minutes silently read and reflect on the readings. Underline what you consider to be key words and/or phrases for you.

THE SHARING



*Now bring your insights and reflection around the theme and the Readings into discussion of the following:
(10 mins)*

- ❖ How do you understand "active, full and fruitful participation"?
- ❖ What impedes us from the fullest participation in Eucharistic practice and devotions?
- ❖ How can we further develop devotion to the Eucharist in our families and as a KSC group?

CONCLUSION

Leader: As we conclude this time of reflection, let us give praise to God as we say:

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

The meeting proceeds

CLOSING PRAYERS: As for the Order Prayers at the Closing of the Meeting.

SEGMENT NO 8

THEME: *“THE EUCHARIST – A Mystery to be Lived”*

CALL TO PRAYER & OPENING PRAYER: As for the Order Prayers

FOCUS: "...there is nothing more beautiful than to be surprised by the Gospel, by the encounter with Christ. There is nothing more beautiful than to know him and to speak to others of our friendship with him." *(Benedict XVI – Homily at Installation as Pope)*

WORD OF INTRODUCTION

Part Three: The Eucharist, a mystery to be lived

In the last part of the document Pope Benedict draws together the mystery that is 'believed' and 'celebrated' and shows how every aspect of life is included and transfigured by the Eucharist. He quotes St Ignatius of Antioch who called Christians 'those living in accordance with the Lord's Day'. Sunday provides a model for Christian living as it a day when the community gathers and is day of joy, rest and charity.

The Synod Fathers stated that 'the Christian faithful need a fuller understanding of the relationship between the Eucharist and their daily lives. Eucharistic spirituality... embraces the whole of life'. The document goes on to speak of the Eucharist and moral transformation: 'the joy-filled discovery of love at work in the hearts of those who accept the Lord's gift'.

The part is brought to conclusion by the looking outwards. First making the connection between the **Eucharist and mission** and then as a **mystery to be offered to the world** - 'Each of us is truly called, together with Jesus, to be bread broken for the life of the world'. So the final paragraphs speak about the Church's social teaching and the sanctification of the world and protection of creation.

WORD OF REFLECTION

Reflect on the reading of the following words from Sacramentum Caritatis:

"There is nothing more beautiful than to know him and to speak to others of our friendship with him." These words are all the more significant if we think of the mystery of the Eucharist. The love that we celebrate in the sacrament is not something we can keep to ourselves. By its very nature it demands to be shared with all. What the world needs is God's love; it needs to encounter Christ and to believe in him. The Eucharist is thus the source and summit not only of the Church's life, but also of her mission: "an authentically eucharistic Church is a missionary Church." We too must be able to tell our brothers and sisters with conviction: "That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us" (1 Jn 1:3). Truly, nothing is more beautiful than to know Christ and to make him known to others. The institution of the Eucharist, for that matter, anticipates the very heart of Jesus' mission: he is the one sent by the Father for the redemption of the world (cf. Jn 3:16-17; Rom 8:32). At the Last Supper, Jesus entrusts to his disciples the sacrament which makes present his self-sacrifice for the salvation of us all, in obedience to the Father's will. We cannot approach the eucharistic table without being drawn into the mission which, beginning in the very heart of God, is meant to reach all people. Missionary outreach is thus an essential part of the eucharistic form of the Christian life. (#84)

The Eucharist and witness

The first and fundamental mission that we receive from the sacred mysteries we celebrate is that of bearing witness by our lives. The wonder we experience at the gift God has made to us in Christ gives new impulse to our lives and commits us to becoming witnesses of his love. We become witnesses when, through our actions, words and way of being, another makes himself present. Witness could be described as the means by which the truth of God's love comes to men and women in history, inviting them to accept freely this radical newness. (#85)

Allow a few moments reflective silence, then proclaim the Word of God

WORD OF GOD



The Gospel according to John 6: 53-57

The Word of God is now read aloud slowly and prayerfully

So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them.

Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me.



*For the next five minutes silently read and reflect on the readings.
Underline what you consider to be key words and/or phrases for you.*

THE SHARING



*Now bring your insights and reflection around the theme and the Readings into discussion of the following:
(10 mins)*

- ❖ How is your active participation in the Eucharistic mystery expressed in your life in your family and community?
- ❖ How can/does/should the KSC movement bring Christ's love, experienced in the sacred mysteries, into the life of society today?

CONCLUSION

Leader: As we conclude this time of reflection, let us give praise to God as we say:

*All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.*

The meeting proceeds

CLOSING PRAYERS: As for the Order Prayers at the Closing of the Meeting.