

Afternoon Session

Video – Earthy Eucharist



Reflection on Picture by Mary Southard CSJ

The community gathered around the table signifies our sharing of life, love and Earth's gifts with our brothers and sisters everywhere. This community is part of Earth's communion of Life. One can see brother Sun, sister Moon, the rocks, wind, fire and water and all that lives and grows in the seas and soil. The oak tree and acorns symbolize the unique gift of our Presentation charism to this sacred community. The fire rising

from the bottom centre, the burning bush, reminds us we are on Holy Ground wherever we are. A medieval symbol for God at the top centre reminds us that Divine energy permeates this intricately woven web of Life binding us all together into *One Sacred Community* .

When we gather round at tables, whether at home, or in places of worship, we share the fruits of this sacred Communion of Life, and we come with grateful hearts. All are welcome, all are interconnected. Every meal is sacred, Eucharistic, when we recognise that some creatures have given their lives that others may live.

We might say that the Universe is a banquet, and that every being in the Universe puts itself on the table; gives itself generously as nourishment for the good of the Whole.

"May they all be one." John 17:21

I also offer a reflection from the Jesuit Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, who was professor of geology at the Catholic Institute in Paris. On one of his geological expeditions to China in the middle of the desert where he was unable to celebrate Mass sacramentally as we know it, he offered us a reflection as the dawn was breaking.

Since 'I have neither bread, nor wine, nor altar, I will raise myself beyond these symbols, up to the pure majesty of the real itself; I, your priest, will make the whole earth my altar and on it will offer you all the labours and sufferings of the world.

Over there, on the horizon, the sun has just touched with light the outermost fringe of the eastern sky. Once again, beneath this moving sheet of fire, the living surface of the earth wakes and trembles, and once again begins its fearful travail.

I will place on my paten, O God, the harvest to be won by this renewal of labour. Into my chalice I shall pour all the sap which is to be pressed out this day from the earth's fruits.

My paten and my chalice are the depths of a soul laid widely open to all the forces which in a moment will rise up from every corner of the earth and converge upon the Spirit. Grant me the remembrance and the mystic presence of all those whom the light is now awakening to the new day.

.....Once upon a time men took into your temple the first fruits of their harvests, the flower of their flocks. But the offering you really want, the offering you mysteriously need every day to appease your hunger, to slake your thirst is nothing less than the growth of the world borne ever onwards in the stream of universal becoming.

Receive, O Lord, this all-embracing host which your whole creation, moved by your magnetism, offers you at this dawn of a new day.

Extract from *The Mass On the World*, that constitutes the first chapter of his book *-Hymn of the Universe*, (published in 1961).

Reflection Questions:

What does Eucharist mean to me?

Who do I share my table with?

Do I experience eucharist as communion?