



Sharing in Christ's
priestly mission



There is only one **priest** in the Christian Religion: Christ. It is he who draws people into the sanctuary of God's presence. Now he, the vine, acts through us his branches.

In baptism we were anointed **priest**.

PRIEST

SANCTUARY

Presence to God

**Action
towards
US**

**Action
towards
GOD**

WORD

MEDIATION

**SACRI
FICE**

God's Way

US

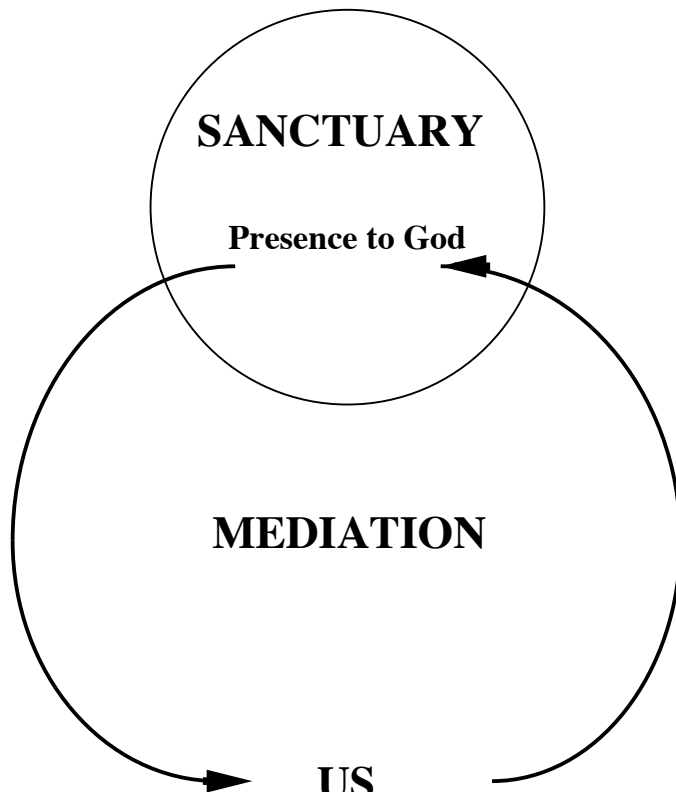
Self-offering

Will

Prayer

Blessing

forgiveness



Jesus, our One and Only Priest

In the Christian Church there is only one priest, Jesus,
'the one mediator between God and humankind'(1 Timothy 2:5).

The church is a priestly community.

We are 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,
God's own people'(1 Peter 2:9).

'Jesus made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God
and Father'(Revelation 1:6).



Tintoretto

‘An evangelizing community is filled with joy; it knows how to rejoice always. It celebrates every small victory, every step forward in the work of evangelization. Evangelization with joy becomes beauty in the liturgy, as part of our daily concern to spread goodness. The Church evangelizes and is herself evangelized through the beauty of the liturgy, which is both a celebration of the task of evangelization and the source of her renewed self-giving’(n. 24).

‘The Eucharist, although it is the fullness of sacramental life, is not a prize for the perfect but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak’(St Ambrose) (n.47).

In exile on the island of Patmos, on the Lord's day, John had a vision. The Christian communities of Ephesus and the other cities in the Roman province of Asia were gathered for the Eucharist. They were like golden lampstands and the risen Christ was present in them dressed as a priest:

'He was clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash across his chest. His head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, and from his mouth came a sharp, two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining with full force'(Revelation 1:13-16).

‘I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security. I do not want a Church concerned with being at the centre and which then ends by being caught up in a web of obsessions and procedures. If something should rightly disturb us and trouble our consciences, it is the fact that so many of our brothers and sisters are living without the strength, light and consolation born of friendship with Jesus Christ, without a community of faith to support them, without meaning and a goal in life. More than by fear of going astray, my hope is that we will be moved by the fear of remaining shut up within structures which give us a false sense of security, within rules which make us harsh judges, within habits which make us feel safe, while at our door people are starving and Jesus does not tire of saying to us: “Give them something to eat” (Mark 6:37).(n. 49).

Mark 6:35-38

When it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, “This is a deserted place, and the hour is now very late; send them away so that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy something for themselves to eat.”

But he answered them, “You give them something to eat.”

They say to him, “Are we to go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread, and give it to them to eat?”

And he says to them, “How many loaves have you? Go and see.”

When they had found out, they say, “Five, and two fish.”

Mark 6:39-44

Then he ordered them to get all the people to sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups of hundreds and of fifties (see Exodus 18:21).

Taking the five loaves and the two fish,
he looked up to heaven, and blessed
and broke the loaves,
and gave them to his disciples

Mark 14:22

Taking a loaf of bread,
and blessing,
he broke it,
gave it to them, and said,
“Take; this is my body.”

to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them all. And all ate and were filled; and they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. Those who had eaten the loaves numbered five thousand men.

I. THE LAST SUPPER

Luke 22:14-15

When the hour came Jesus took his place at table, and his apostles with him. He said to them: I have longed to eat this Passover with you before I suffer'

John 13:1

Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

Luke 22:19-20

Jesus took some bread, and when he had given thanks, broke it and gave to them saying: 'This is my body which will be given for you; do this as a memorial of me'. He did the same with the cup after supper, and said: 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood which will be poured out for you'



Tintoretto

John 13:5

Jesus washed the feet of his disciples and wiped them with the towel he had wrapped round his waste.



Sieger Köder

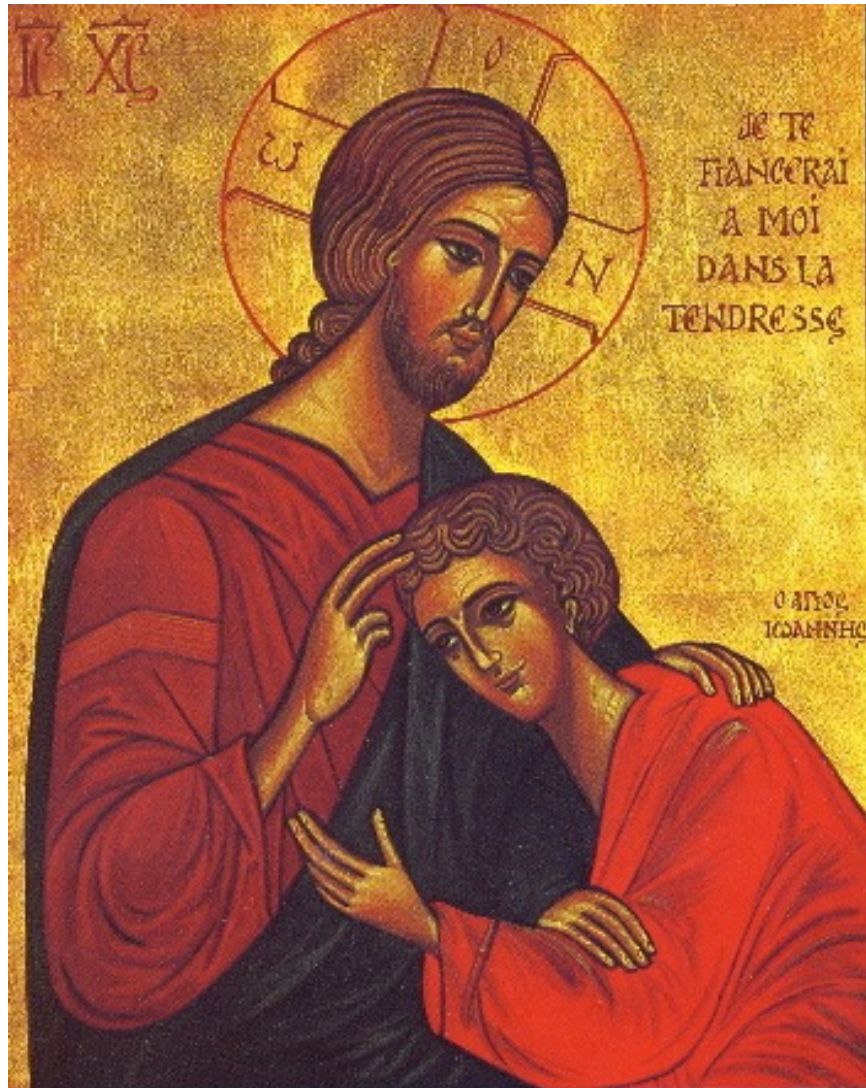
John 13:21-23

One of his
disciples –
the one whom
Jesus loved –
was reclining
next to him.

Exodus 3:14

ego eimi ho on
I am (will be)
who I am (will be)

YHWH



Jesus' Farewell Speech (John 13:33 - 14:31)

- Modelled on Moses' Testament in Deuteronomy

13:34-35

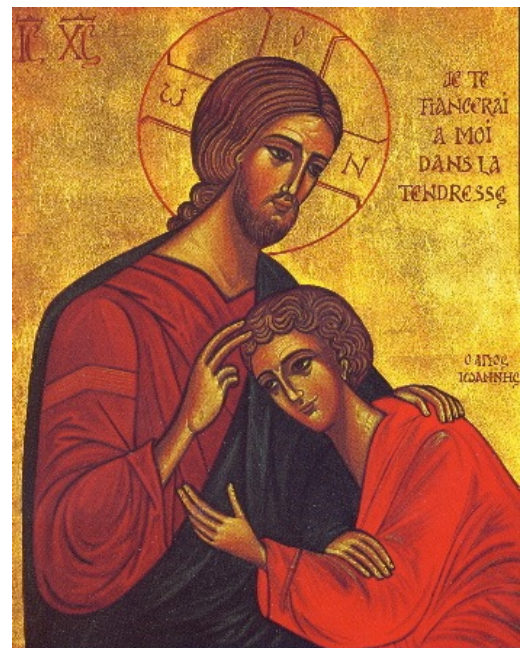
I give you a new commandment,
that you love one another.

Just as I have loved you, you also
should love one another.

By this everyone will know
that you are my disciples,
if you have love for one another.

John 14:1-3

Do not let your hearts be troubled.
Believe in God, believe also in me.
In my Father's house
there are many dwelling places.
If it were not so, would I have told you
that I go to prepare a place for you?
And if I go and prepare a place for you,
I will come again and will take you to myself,
so that where I am, there you may be also.



John 14:7-9

If you know me, you will know my Father also.

From now on you do know him and have seen him.'

Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father,
and we will be satisfied.'

Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time,
Philip, and you still do not know me?

Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.

'It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has
made him known'(John 1:18).

'It is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who
has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the
glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ' (2Corinthians 4:6).

14:15-18, 23

If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

And I will ask the Father,
and he will give you another Advocate,
to be with you forever.

This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world
cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him.

You know him, because he abides with you,
and he will be in you.

I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you ...

If you love me you will keep my word,
and my Father will love you, and we will come to you
and make our home in you.



ADDITIONS TO THE SUPPER DISCOURSE

1. The Vine and the Branches John 15:1-17

John 15:4-5

Abide in me as I abide in you.

Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it
abides in the vine,

neither can you unless you abide in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches.

If you abide in me and I in you,

you will bear much fruit,

because apart from me you can do nothing.

John 15:9

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love.

John 16:22

You have pain now; but I will see you again,
and your hearts will rejoice,
and no one will take your joy from you.

John 16:32-33

The hour is coming, indeed it has come,
when you will be scattered, each one to his home,
and you will leave me alone.

Yet I am not alone because the Father is with me.

³³I have said this to you,

so that in me you may have peace.

In the world you face persecution.

But take courage; I have conquered the world!

4. Jesus' Prayer John 17:1-26

John 17:11, 13, 17-19

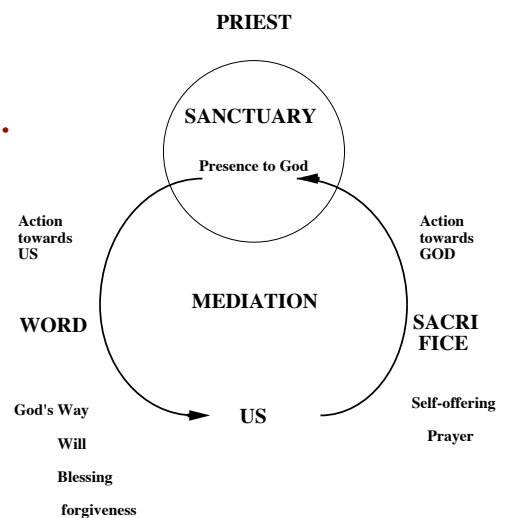
Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me,
so that they may be one, as we are one ...

I speak these things so that they may have my joy made complete in
themselves.

Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

As you have sent me into the world,
so I have sent them into the world.

And for their sakes I sanctify myself,
so that they also may be sanctified in truth.



- For future disciples

John 17:20-21

I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one.

As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

- For all disciples John 17:22-26

17:22-24

The glory that you have given me I have given them,
so that they may be one, as we are one,
I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that
the world may know that you have sent me
and have loved them even as you have loved me.
Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me,
may be with me where I am, to see my glory,
which you have given me because you loved me
before the foundation of the world.

John 17:25-26

Righteous Father, the world does not know you,
but I know you;
and these know that you have sent me.
I made your name known to them,
and I will make it known,
so that the love with which you have loved me
may be in them,
and I in them.

In this time apart we have an opportunity
to reflect on Paul's words:

1Timothy 4:14

‘Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you
by prophetic utterance when the council of the elders
laid their hands upon you.’

2Timothy 1:6

‘I remind you to rekindle the gift of God
that is within you
through the laying on of my hands;
for God did not give us a spirit of temerity,
but a spirit of power and love and self control.’

Ordained Priests

‘Through the sacrament presbyters, by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, are signed with a special **character** and so are **configured to Christ the priest** in such a way that they are able to act in the person of Christ the head’(PO, n.2).

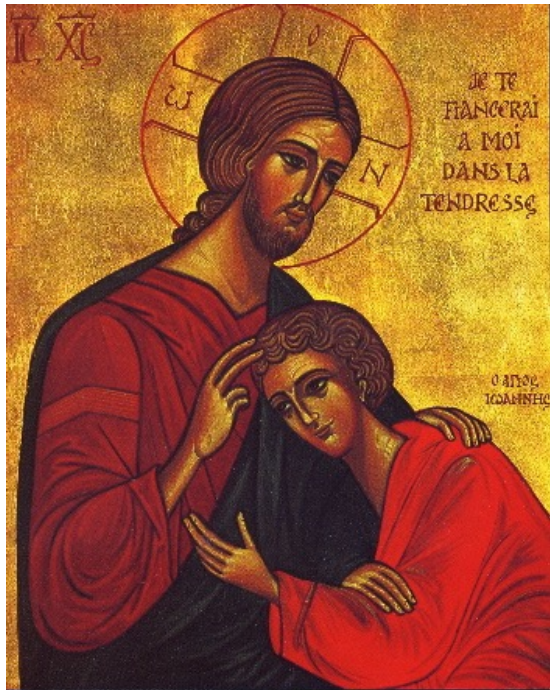
‘The priest, by virtue of the consecration which he receives in the sacrament of Orders, is sent forth by the Father in the mediatorship of Jesus Christ to whom he is configured in a special way as head and shepherd of his people, in order to live and work by the power of the Holy Spirit, in service of the Church and for the salvation of the world’(PDV, n.12).

All the elements of priestly mediation find special expression in the Eucharist in which the priest is a sacrament of Christ the bridegroom who speaks God's word of love to his bride, invites the assembled community to respond in love, and welcomes it into divine communion.

'The ministry of ordained priests is directed to the Eucharist and finds its consummation in it. For their ministration, which begins with the announcement of the Gospel, draws its force and power from the sacrifice of Christ and tends to this'(PO n. 2).

‘It is in the mystery of the Eucharistic sacrifice that priests fulfil their principal function’(PO n. 13).

‘Pastoral charity flows especially from the Eucharistic sacrifice. This sacrifice is therefore the centre and root of the whole life of the ordained priest, so that the priestly soul strives to make its own what is enacted on the altar of sacrifice’(PO n. 14).



Everything is holy now