

Calvin Symposium January 2009: A17 Baptism & Eucharist: Early Celebration and Practice

PowerPoint Outline

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Introduction

§ Sacraments of initiation: form a whole complex of conversion, surrender, new life

§ Sacraments of initiation = Baptism-confirmation, Eucharist

§ Development shows increased understanding, theological reflection

Baptism

§ Baptism comes from the Greek *baptizein* which means to plunge (see Rom 6:3-4)

§ Baptism also is called the sacrament of regeneration or being born again (John 3:1-8).

§ Earliest strata: first to third centuries (The Great Command: Matt 28:19)

- ≡ Water bath (Acts 8:35-38; 10:47-48)
- ≡ Receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5; 8:16-17; 11:16; 19:2-6)
- ≡ Preceded by hearing the word of Good News preached (Acts 16:14-15; 16:32-33; 18:8-11; 22:14-16)

§ Beginning c. late third century: catechumenate and celebration of the sacraments of initiation

- ≡ Precatechumenate and then acceptance into the Order of Catechumens
 - ÷ Sign of the Cross
 - ÷ Salt
 - ÷ Laying on of hands (cf. Heb 6:2)
 - ÷ Exorcism
- ≡ Catechumenate, election, celebration of baptism/confirmation
 - ÷ Renunciation of sin and profession of faith
 - ÷ Stripping and pre-baptismal anointing
 - ÷ Prayer over the water
 - ÷ Water bath
 - ÷ Clothing in white garment
 - ÷ Lighted candle
 - ÷ Sealing (*sphragis*); confirmation: laying on of hands, anointing with chrism
- ≡ Completion of baptism/confirmation in celebration of Eucharist
- ≡ Mystagogical catechesis

§ The fruits (grace) of baptism/confirmation

- ≡ New identity in Christ: old self dies, sins are forgiven, life of the Spirit given
- ≡ Plunged into Christ = s dying and rising mystery (the paschal mystery) (Rom 6:3-4)

- ≡ Receive the life of the Holy Spirit and a *unique gift* for building up the Body of Christ (Eph 4:11-13); seal = *sphragis*
- ≡ Made members of the Body of Christ (Eph 4:1-6) and children of God (Heb 2:13b-15)
- ≡ Become heirs of eternal life (Gal 4:7)
- ≡ Given a share in Christ = s high priesthood (Heb 4:14-16; 5:1-10; 13:16; Rev 5:10)

Eucharist (from *Eucharistia* = thanksgiving)

§ Earliest practice: shared meal (1 Cor 11:20-22)

- ≡ Simple, family gatherings of thirty to fifty people in larger homes
- ≡ Breaking of bread and passing of thanksgiving cup at end of meal
- ≡ All are equal
- ≡ The poor have their fill from God = s table
- ≡ The Lord = s Day is gathering time (*Didache* 14)
 - ÷ Included confession of sins, reconciliation with neighbors
 - ÷ Memorial of resurrection

§ Mid second to fourth centuries

- ≡ Meeting place: house churches (especially toward fourth century)
- ≡ Meeting time: sunrise
- ≡ Structural shape begins to emerge (Justin = s *First Apology*)
 - ÷ Assembly happens on Sunday in one place
 - ≡ First day of creation: sun created, darkness and chaos dispelled
 - ≡ Jesus = resurrection day
 - ≡ risen Jesus appeared to disciples on Sunday, taught them, sent Spirit
 - ÷ Scripture readings as long as time allows @
 - ÷ Homily (president in a discourse admonishes and exhorts [us] to imitate these good things) @
 - ÷ Offer prayers
 - ÷ Presentation of gifts
 - ÷ President offers prayers and thanksgiving
 - ÷ Distribution of Elements
 - ÷ Sent by deacons to those who are absent
 - ÷ Collection from wealthy and given to president who helps those in need

§ Fourth century

- ≡ Building of churches
- ≡ Fourfold shape in place: introduction, Word, Sacrament, dismissal
- ≡ Key elements

- ÷ [Introductory rites]
- ÷ [Proclamation of the Word]
- ÷ [Prayer of the Faithful]
- ÷ Presentation and preparation of gifts (done in silence)
- ÷ Prayer over the offerings
- ÷ Lavabo
- ÷ Kiss of peace
- ÷ Reading of names of living and dead (diptychs)

÷ Eucharistic Prayer

#Dialogue & preface

#Epiclesis (double)

#Institution narrative

#Anamnesis

#Offering

#Intercessions

#Doxology

- ÷ Lord = s Prayer
- ÷ Breaking of Bread and mingling
- ÷ Preparation for and invitation to Communion
- ÷ Communion
- ÷ [Concluding blessing & dismissal]

\$The fruits (grace) of Eucharist

≡ The bread and wine are truly changed

—
÷ Transubstantiation@

≡ We are truly changed; St. Augustine (Sermon 272):

If you are to understand what it means to be the Body of Christ, hear what Paul
—
has to say: No you are the body of Christ and individually members of it@ Cor
12:27). If you are the Body of Christ and members of it, then it is that mystery

which is placed on the Lord = s table: you receive the mystery, which is to say the
Body of Christ, your very self. You answer Amen to who you are and in the
answer you embrace yourself. You hear Body of Christ and answer Amen. Be a

member of Christ = s body, that your Amen will be true.

≡ Nourished for life = s journey (living the paschal mystery)

≡ Food given so no one is in need

≡ Memorial of Jesus = gift of self