

SOCIETY OF HELPERS

VOICES of Hope



Prophets of Hope in our Midst

BRINGING HOPE TO THE HUMAN JOURNEY

Vol XII Issue I

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January 2022



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For many of us, the word “Prophet” evokes prophets of the Old Testament like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, and Jonah. They received a direct call from God to deliver a specific message to a specific people. They were God’s spokespersons. Some of them were ordinary people who resisted being called out of their everyday occupation to become bearers of a message that they themselves did not fully understand. It was a struggle, but they submitted and became extraordinary prophets.

We continue to hear God speaking to us through other people. He invites ordinary people to be extraordinary messengers of forgiveness, repentance, direction, hope, and encouragement. Prophets are in our midst and for this issue of *Voices*, we invited contributors to share their experience of prophets in their lives.

Sheila Pyatt describes how a Lakota Elder and Holy Man Chief Wallace Black Elk, whom she met at a New Age event in San Francisco, influenced the rest of her life. Clement Martin introduces us to a prophet of hope in a high school on Chicago’s West side. Cheryl Cattledge is helped in making an important decision when she hears two different people quoting the same passage from Isaiah. Ellen Stelling recalls the ordinary people in her life who helped her through challenging times.

Laetitia Bordes reminds us of the young prophets like Amanda Gorman and Greta Thurnberg who are rising up today with the urgent message of collaborating to build a better world. Fr. Frank Fried shares how we might all become better prophets, and Christiane Hourticq gives us a glimpse into the future when there will be fewer priests and women will assume prophetic roles in the Liturgy.

Our writers remind us of the importance of having a deep relationship with our Creator so we can be open to listening to the wisdom and guidance that comes to us through the prophets of old and those in our midst. In this new year, may we take time to listen to the prophets in scripture, the people in our lives, and the whispers of the Spirit in nature and the world. Listen!

Sr. Jean Kielty, SH



Prophets cause me a great deal of discomfort. They don’t leave me alone. They always seem to come around when I am wallowing in my misery, descending deeper into the funnel of despair over the actors on the world stage, ready to give up the hope of ever being the Joan of Arc of the 21st century. It’s just too much. I’m tired; I’ve had it. Things are only getting worse.

These were some of my ruminations on January 6, 2021, the day on which we celebrate the Epiphany, God Incarnate’s manifestation to the universe, a feast I love. The day turned into one of upheaval and of death when Trump supporters stormed the Capitol Building in an attempt to destroy our democracy. Had it come to this? Like many Americans, I went about frightened and depressed the following days thinking about the future.

Then came Inauguration Day and God roused me from my despair as I listened to a young 22-year-old woman, Amanda Gorman, read her Inaugural poem, “The Hill We Climb.” Tears of sorrow over my despair mingled with tears of joy for the newfound hope I uncovered as the last lines of the poem resonated in my heart: “*For there is always light, if only we’re brave enough to see it. If only we’re brave enough to be it.*” How often have I meditated on this text that we read at Christmas from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah: “*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone.*” (Is. 9:2) At a time when I was sorely in need, God sent me a prophet: Amanda Gorman.

Prophets are all around us. We tend to ignore them because they disturb us or always seem to be asking for more. I have come to realize that they are not asking for more, but rather inviting me to live in a radical way what I profess to believe in. I will give just two examples of modern day prophets who invite me to reexamine my lifestyle.

Dorothy Day was a radical in the true sense of the word.





She dug deeply into the very roots of injustice. A pacifist, she did not believe in war and became an anarchist in opposition to a system that carried out wars. I do not imitate her, but she invites me to continue to seek out and examine the root causes of injustice in our society.

Greta Thunberg, a young Swedish environmental activist, challenges me to become more involved in preserving the gift of the planet. At the age of 14, Greta mobilized students to engage in a school strike on Fridays to prevent climate change and to demand that fossil energy transition to renewable energy. Four years later,

she continues to mobilize people all over the world. She pricks my conscience, reminding me of how often I wound Mother Earth by the choices I make or don't make.

Both the prophets of the Old Testament who constantly call me to repent and assure me of God's everlasting love, and the modern day prophets who urge me out of my comfort zone into the fray, are companions on my journey. What would I do without them?

Laetitia lives in San Bruno, California. She is the Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation Coordinator for her Province. She loves sharing stories about prophets she has met on life's journey.



I would recognize a *prophet* as a person whose deep connection with Great Spirit has provided him/her with the ability to *predict* future events that *can or will occur*. This ability to *explain and clarify the meaning* of multi-faceted issues relating to aspects of our current human existence constitutes an essential aspect of prophecy. The journey of modern-day prophets along this seldom trod lifepath requires commitment of one's entire being to an arduous life.

I am grateful for today's prophets, especially those who face misunderstanding and danger in their daily lives. Some prophets may be scientists whose discoveries have evoked disparagement, rejection, or even threats. Other prophets have missions that may be known only to a few. I may not recognize them as they ride on crowded subways to and from their everyday jobs. Prophets, both young and old, come from all walks of life, from all races, tribes, and tongues.

Chief Wallace Black Elk was the embodiment of such a prophet. I first met this Lakota¹ Holy Man in 2002 at a New Age event in San Francisco. He was surrounded by people interested in indigenous life and traditions. He radiated a genuine interest in all who approached him with their questions and concerns. At that moment, I had no idea of how profoundly he would influence my life.

As a traditional Lakota Elder and Holy Man, Chief Wallace Black Elk has influenced the lives of people throughout the world. He advocated for the rights of indigenous people his entire life. Respectfully referred to as "Grandfather," I was always inspired by his deep connection with and love for *Tunkashila* (Great Spirit). His approach to life's challenges was courageous, straightforward, and unequivocal. He told me, "In my mind, there is no room for doubt." Those words have stayed with me to this day. Grandfather knew self-doubt and self-deprecation are harmful and hinder one's spiritual growth. He instilled in me a deeper confidence in myself. When I pray to *Tunkashila*, there is "no room for doubt."

Grandfather Black Elk taught the ways of the Lakota people to those who were interested, providing his students (both indigenous and non-indigenous) with a deeper understanding of indigenous-based knowledge, especially as this related to the sanctity of Mother Earth and all her inhabitants².

1 - The word "Lakota" as defined by Chief Wallace Black Elk, means, "People of peace."

2 - Black Elk, WH, and Lyon, W.S., Ph.D., (1990). *Black Elk, The Sacred Ways of the Lakota*, (W.S. Lyon, Editor). Harper & Row Publishing.



I believe Grandfather Black Elk's ability to *clarify the meaning* of today's complex issues constitutes another aspect of prophecy. His teachings relating to the *spiritual essence* of our existence were both profound and reassuring. Grandfather possessed a kindness and a wonderful sense of humor that dissolved barriers to understanding and communication.

Grandfather's relationship with and connection to *Tunkashila* was the source of his prophetic ability. I never doubted his veracity and accuracy in describing future challenges and events. His ability to share his knowledge and wisdom in such a caring and compassionate manner helped us to better understand some of the serious and disconcerting realities he knew would challenge us. He spoke with a knowledge and clarity that came directly from Great Spirit. I experienced how his indomitable love of Great Spirit supported him during those final hours of his life as we gathered in the *inipi*³ for his final ceremony. I later learned some of his relations saw his spirit leave his body. The wisdom and teachings of Grandfather Wallace Black Elk provide us with guideposts and trails through the challenges we address today, as citizens and as spiritual people. ***Ho, mitakuye oyasin. (We are all related.)***"

Originally from Massachusetts, Sheila travelled westward to San Francisco where she would meet her husband, Charlie Pyatt. They live in Oakland and have four children and one lively grandson, all of whom keep them busy and engaged as they enter their eighth decade.

3 - "Inipi" is the Lakota term for "sweat lodge."

"Be with us Tunkashila.

You promised you'd be hovering over us.

You'd be in front all the time

you'd be on both sides of us;

you'd be underneath us.

Tunkashila, you promised that way,

so whenever they need your help.

Tunkashila, they'll look up to you.

They'll ask for your help.

Tunkashila, keep them well that way."

Chief Wallace Black Elk



Often times, I struggle to view the people that grace my life every day as prophets. When thinking about prophets, my mind is reflexively drawn to scripture, to

Catholic grade school assignments about Elijah, Malachi, or John the Baptist. We are, however, surrounded by prophets of hope – people who bring God's message of love to us in the world.



It is extremely important to take time to acknowledge and offer our gratitude for these prophets. In my role as President of Christ the King Jesuit College Prep, it is easy to become mired in the work, worrying about the many tasks that need to be completed each day. Bearing witness to the challenges facing our young men and women growing up on Chicago's West Side can also leave me with feelings of desolation. Fortunately, I am surrounded by many people that help to remind me that God is present and working in our world – they are my prophets of hope.



He can be intimidating. Standing at well over six feet tall with a goatee, bald head, and booming voice. Prophet would not be the first descriptor that I, or anyone, would use to define him. He was definitely not someone whom I expected to tear up while watching a video at one of our galas that showed the lives of Makhi and Josh, two brothers who are students at Christ the King Jesuit College Prep. They were tears of joy. He was proud of them. After all, they were "his kids."

It has been several years since Tim Caldwell, or TC as he is affectionately called, has had any of his own

children enrolled in our school, but all the young men and women at CTK are "his kids."

His love for our students resounds in his powerful voice that can be heard echoing down the hallway outside the gym, reminding students to get to class, get into dress code, and hand in assignments. Much like a parent, these gentle reminders coupled with his infectious smile and sense of humor endear him to the students and help each one of them to know and understand that they are loved by him and, by extension, God.

As an apostolic work of the Society of Jesus, we are called to accompany the young in the creation of a hope filled future. This work cannot be done unless we have people, like TC, that are willing to be prophets of hope and remind us of God's loving presence in our world.

Clem Martin is an experienced Catholic school leader committed to making quality educational opportunities accessible to all students. He is currently serving as the President of Christ the King Jesuit College Prep, a Cristo Rey model school in the Austin community on Chicago's West Side.





"A prophet is one who acts fearlessly and persistently for the sake of the world, the future, and the Gospel."

*- Sister Joan Chittister
O.S.B.*



"There is always light, if only we are brave enough to see it, if only we are brave enough to be it."

- Amanda Gorman



What is a Prophet? Prophets might be described as those who tell us what is to come, what has been revealed to them, or what we are called to. I see a prophet as someone who has learned by observation or experience and has been encouraged from within, or maybe by the Holy Spirit to teach and reveal their knowledge to others for the betterment of their lives.

In the course of my lifetime many prophets have revealed their wisdom and love to me. First were my parents. My dad taught me his love of nature, especially through his care of the land and his love of flowers. My mother always cared for others with her cooking and baking and took good care of my sister and me.

When I was sick with a lung illness at 3-months-old, another prophet entered my life—Dr. DuShane. My parents and I benefitted from his wisdom throughout my childhood as I had pneumonia five times before I was 11 years old.

Other prophets were the following women in my life: Margie R., Idy W., Ruth W., Margaret A., Grace B, and Sister Mary Jude Jun, OSU. They were gentle teachers and prophets to me. These women are now all deceased but continue to be very close to my heart.

One priest has been a prophet to me since 1984. He listened to me when I was struggling with the alcoholism in my family. He taught me gently about being an adult child of alcoholic parents and I learned why I was feeling so angry and stuck after I married into the same disease. Learning about all of this caused great division in my family because they thought that I was being brainwashed. It was a sad time for me because I was at last feeling peace amid the storm in my life. As I met more “prophets” in Alanon, I began to see how this disease



was not peaceful for my family either. When my son, Rick, age 22, died by suicide in 1993, I then found more “prophets” in NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) who helped me cope.

The Holy Spirit has guided me over the years and although I don’t always feel happy, I always have inner joy. I am now a cojourner with the Rochester Franciscans and the “prophets”

there are many. I am now able to be prophetic to others who live without a loved one because of suicide, and to those who live with alcoholism in their lives. Although this is not the path I would have chosen, it is what I have said yes to because of my learning and experience.

My life would be very different without all of these prophets. I have just celebrated my 75th birthday and I believe that when I was in my late 40’s I could have died. I was not well physically, mentally, or emotionally, but the gift of spirituality helped me. I listened to the “prophets” around me who showed me unconditional love and inspired me gently yet firmly to change my life and my actions. As I listened and learned from them, my resilience, a gift that I had, came to light and I could make it in life.

I think some prophets today are the scientists who are doing their best to keep us healthy from COVID and the variants. But as with all prophets, not all are able to hear what they have to say.

My favorite biblical prophets are Isaiah and Jeremiah. From Jeremiah 29:11, I hear, “*For I know the plans I have for you, declares God, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a future full of hope*”. I truly believe this.

A native of Millville, MN, Ellen worked as an LPN in post-surgical cardiac ICU. She married, lived on a farm, raised three children, and has since worked in a variety of care-giving positions including hospice care, massage therapist, and nanny. She is a cojourner with the Rochester Franciscans in her retirement, continuing to love life and people.





The word “prophet” usually wasn’t a hot-topic in everyday conversation in the past. However, this term seems to be making a comeback in this generation. I find it interesting that I was just asked by one of my senior students last week if I believe in prophets.

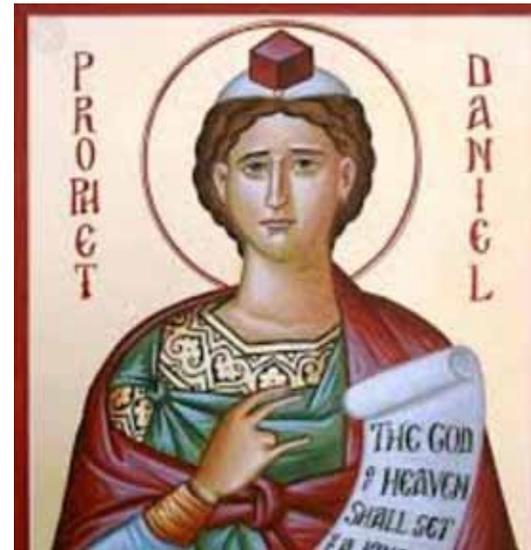
According to Merriam-Webster: “One who utters divinely inspired revelations.” According to Oxford Learner’s Dictionaries: “A person sent by God to teach the people and give them messages from God.” Personally, I don’t think there is a one-size-fits-all definition of what a prophet is and what their role should be. I believe God chooses ordinary people with unique gifts to be His messengers and continue His mission on earth.

Although I do believe that there are modern day prophets, I think if you come to someone and say, “Hi, I’m John Doe and I’m a prophet,” you may get a response like “Yeah, right.” They may even try to one-up you and add, “... and Jesus and I are cousins.”



The qualification requirements to be a prophet can vary. I think many prophets that we read about in scripture have unique job descriptions which were specific for their particular assignment. For example, the court Prophet Nathan was honest and direct in reprimanding King David for committing adultery with Bathsheba while she was the wife of Uriah (2 Samuel 12:7–14). In addition, Queen Esther, a competent and brave prophetess, defended and supported her people during a critical moment from 483 BC to 473 BC.

There also have been very unique ways that people through the ages revealed messages to others for their own good and survival. For instance, during the slavery era in the south, there were many slaves who told folktales to the other slaves for the purpose of giving messages on how to trick their slave owners (i.e. Brer Rabbit). Brer Rabbit represents the enslaved



African American’s alter ego and trickster-hero, and the so-called stronger animals represent the white enslavers¹.

If I have to name my favorite biblical prophet, it would have to be the Prophet Daniel. I am inspired by his loyalty to God through fasting, maintaining hope and being a great example of faithfulness to God. As a result of reading about him, I led a communal Fast for my family, friends and colleagues every January for the last 9 years.

Although, I do not consider myself a prophet, this devotional activity was inspired by the prophet Daniel.

Two modern day prophets that have inspired me are my former student Daryah Ireland and my pastor Fr. Michael Pflieger.

This past August I was in discernment about accepting the invitation from the Chairperson of an international organization in which I am a member of to uphold an officer’s position. I was very reluctant to accept this position because it would mean that my schedule and free time were going to be impacted much more than they already were. To me, this did not make sense to pile on more responsibilities to an already very busy schedule. After much thought and prayer, I made the decision not to accept the position. I planned to let the Chairperson know this the following Monday morning. I did not let anyone know about this offer nor my decision. At a student retreat that I was facilitating on a Friday, I asked Daryah to come and say a few encouraging words to my retreatants. Within her brief talk to the students, Daryah quoted these words from the Prophet Isaiah: “God does not always make sense, ‘his ways are not our ways’; we have to trust Him.” Instantly a chill came over me as we continued to listen to her.

Two days later while in church, I listened to my pastor preach his homily. In the middle of his message, Fr. Pflieger stated the words, “God does not always make sense, like the Prophet Isaiah said, ‘his ways are not our

1 - Bickley, R. Bruce, Uncle Remus Tales (2002) Florida State University, Tallahassee, <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/arts-culture/uncle-remus-tales>.

ways.’” I got that chill again and immediately teared up. Just 48 hours prior I heard these same words spoken. I believe God used these two individuals to deliver a message to me. I heard the message and I called the Chairperson and told him I accepted the position.

So therefore, prophets don't appear to us as they did in the Bible, however they are still alive and active in our daily lives and churches.



Cheryl Cattledge is a spiritual woman of God who possesses a life-long devotion to invite and encourage others to participate in opportunities of prayer and worship experiences to enhance their relationship with God. Cheryl is currently the Director of Campus Ministry and Religious Studies Teacher at Christ the King Jesuit College Prep High School on Chicago's west side. Cheryl is also an Augustus Tolton Scholar Alum with a Masters of Divinity Degree from Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

On Becoming Prophets | By Rev. Frank Fried



A young man entered the sacristy, distressed, just before Mass, to ask me, “Father, is the world really getting better, or is it getting worse and worse?” I was vested, ready to celebrate—ready to preach the Gospel. With no time to engage in any discussion, I answered with a firm “Yes, it is getting better, by God.” He left, satisfied.

But later I began to ask myself, where did this confident response come from? I am living in the same human world as everyone else—a world that seems to be getting more secularized by the minute. It can be very distressing. After some contemplation, I realized that my conviction came because I had just completed my preparation for the pulpit. I had prayed, listened, and was ready to preach the Gospel. How could my heart not have been filled with confidence and hope in God's plan?

Does this make me a prophet? I'd like to think so, and I believe we can all be prophets. Prophets have an experience of God. Think of Moses. He came upon a burning bush that was not extinguished (Exodus 3). The Lord spoke face-to-face to Moses—spoke “as one person speaks with another” (Ex 33:11). That description of Moses communicating with the Lord reminds us of Jesus, who often paused in his preaching to talk with his Father. From that intimate prayer he received power to carry out his prophetic mission: to preach, to heal, to empower his disciples, to himself suffer and die, and to rise from the tomb. Jesus rose as the ultimate prophet. His message is a promise of life to come, even when things are difficult.

Being baptized means I share Christ's mission—I have a share in his prophetic role in the world! But I encounter obstacles in so many of my “good” projects and plans. I meet difficulties in every endeavor, it seems. Why? Why can't I be about my life with smooth results—successes in my fostering goodness in the world—every time?

Well, I guess it is necessary, in order to live a prophetic life, to be in touch with the Creator of chaos, remembering what is becoming of original chaos in the universe. God is certainly bringing good out of painful growth experiences. Jesus, and truly all the prophets before him, gave us an example of how to be closer to the Creator: Prayer! If we prayed more and trusted that we have a role in God's divine plan for the world, we could all become more prophetic! We could be empowered, like Jesus, to “rise from the tomb” so to speak, to rise above what may seem like insurmountable obstacles. What if we truly “prayed



more, worried less” and expected good to mysteriously come out of every blip and every bump we encounter?

This conviction—that positive comes from negative—is the basis of Christian hope and it is greatly needed by each one of us today. Convinced this way, we are more prepared to assert that God’s great plan for good is being realized in our lives and in the world around us. What if we each engage more firmly in prayer so that we can take up our role in fostering God’s divine plan? Then, we can answer with confidence—Yes, the world is getting better, by God.

Rev. Frank Fried is a retired pastor in Saint Paul, MN. He continues to minister, leaving time for family, friends and biking/skiing.

Prophetic Insights Into Liturgical Life

Excerpts from an Interview with Sr. Christiane Hourticq, SH

Introduction

Difficult times can be occasions that arouse prophetic insights into ways of addressing the challenges before us. Certainly the shutdowns imposed by the COVID-19 called for creativity in the Church to address the liturgical life and needs of the faithful. Many religious communities of women and men explored ways of continuing to be nourished when a Eucharistic celebration had become impossible. One such community was the Society of Helpers at their Paris Mother House. Following are extracts of an interview by Elisabeth Auvillain with Sister Christiane Hourticq that was published in *Global Sisters Report*, a Project of *The National Catholic Reporter*, in the March 23, 2021 issue. (Reprinted with permission)



Interview

Like many women’s religious communities, the *Soeurs Auxiliatrices des Âmes du Purgatoire* (Society of Helpers), a congregation of Ignatian spirituality present in 22 countries, could not attend Mass on Sundays. They decided to be creative and organize their own celebrations of the Word.

Sr. Christiane Hourticq taught theological anthropology at the Institut Catholique de Paris. She had responsibilities in her congregation as superior of the Province of France and as general councilor at the international level. She told *Global Sisters Report* how the pandemic gives the Catholic Church an opportunity to adapt to today’s world.

GSR: How has the pandemic changed the life of the communities of women religious?

Hourticq: The liturgical life of religious women’s communities has profoundly changed. Taking part in a Eucharistic celebration had become impossible. Even in some places where it could have been possible, some sisters decided not to attend the celebration of Mass as a sign of solidarity with laypeople. For our community, our liturgical life had to take another form. We chose to be creative and have a celebration of the Word every Sunday. This was a favorable time. Usually, we do not have Sunday Mass together. Since all 25 of us sisters living in the motherhouse of our congregation were confined, we could pray together. Our chapel is large enough to allow us to be together while maintaining social distancing. Each celebration was prepared by a group of about five people. The whole assembly took part in it: Readings, homily and prayers of intercessions were said by several different people.

What was this celebration like?

I can tell you, as an example, how we celebrated the third Sunday of Easter during the first period of confinement. The superior general and her four councilors prepared the celebration of that Sunday, when the Gospel is the episode of the pilgrims to Emmaus ([Luke 24:13-35](#)). The superior general opened the celebration by welcoming the participants to the word of God. After invoking God’s mercy and singing the Kyrie, we followed the liturgical indications given by the church for the first part of the Mass. The reading of the Gospel was particularly emphasized.

The reader took several breaks. After every paragraph, a sister brought a basket and put it in front of the altar. The first contained our prayer intentions; the second evoked our broken hopes, echoing the despair expressed by the disciples on the way. The third contained the book of the word of



God. In the fourth were five loaves of bread made by one of our sisters. After the reading of the Gospel was completed, a sister played a piece of music. We are lucky to have gifted musicians in our community. Then we recited the creed.

What innovations did you bring to the celebration?

In the Gospel of the disciples of Emmaus, Jesus disappears in the eyes of the disciples. But he leaves them his gesture of breaking bread. We reproduced this gesture. The superior general broke the loaves of bread and placed the pieces in baskets while our assembly took the time for a universal prayer, punctuated by the refrain: "Stay with us, Lord Jesus." We asked for the grace to become broken bread and spoke about the needs of those to whom we are sent. Our assembly ended with the recitation of the Lord's Prayer and a final prayer. Before leaving, we asked for God's blessing, and then the superior general and her councilors distributed the broken bread.

Didn't you follow the usual liturgy of the Mass?

Such a celebration is not a Mass, but in this case, it unfolded like one, with stress put on the first part of Mass, the readings especially. But we carefully avoided mimicking the second part of the Mass with the consecration. There was no one at the altar, but someone was presiding over the celebration; in the example I gave, it was the superior general. Our service lasted for an hour, like any Mass.

This sounds like a Protestant service!

In a sense, yes, it is like a Protestant service! There are a number of points that Luther was right about, especially about the importance of having a living relationship to God's word. As far as the Bible is concerned, I am heavily indebted to Protestant scholars and theologians.

Could this kind of celebration become a new way of praying on Sunday, since there are fewer and fewer priests?

Clearly, the eucharistic celebration of Sunday the way it has been since the Middle Ages is no longer adjusted to today's situation. Christians do not gather together according to their territorial proximity anymore, and priests wear themselves out driving miles to celebrate Masses in scattered churches where there are fewer and fewer faithful. People communicate in a different way today, and we have to take this into account.

What does it mean today to preside over a eucharistic celebration?

Let's look at the tradition: We see that during his missionary journeys, St. Paul founded a great number of communities. After announcing to them the good news of the Gospel, he entrusted an elder with the task of watching over the community. It was only in the second and third centuries that the distinction between clerics and laypeople became clearer and then stricter.

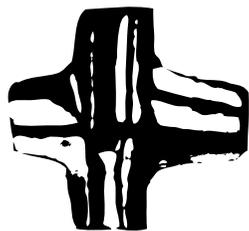
When did this change?

In order to counter the Reformation, the Council of Trent (1545-63) developed a theology of the priesthood that, by insisting on the sacredness of the person of the priest, encouraged clericalism. It reinforced the divide between clerics and laypeople, giving the priest the lead of the community. The relationship between the community and the priest was reversed. The community should come first. The priest is sent to maintain its unity and ensure communion with the other communities. It is in this capacity that he presides at the Eucharist. Today, Mass is organized according to the priest, and the community is a gathering of people who only have in common to come to that Mass at that time.

How do you see new kinds of celebrations?

We have to consider first the reality in France today: The vitality of Christian communities is very real. They are very diversified and more and more numerous.

From this point of view, the two lockdowns had a positive effect. Older people have learned to communicate through the internet and can now exchange views on themes they are interested in. Bible study groups, retreats, spiritual itineraries organized by parishes or religious institutes are multiplying. They meet with real success, favored by a healthy context that calls for reflection and obliges us to live at a different pace. The experience of these communities will shed light on the question of presiding at the Eucharist. The synod on the Amazon opened that way.



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