

...And they prepared the Passover...

For what were they preparing? The disciples had no glimmer that something NEW was about to happen. And ever since something new happens at every Eucharist.

Ever since various rites and rituals surround the essential elements of Eucharist.

Vatican II restored the liturgy to the people's language, but also put a new burden on the celebrant. He no longer stood with his back to the people uttering secret words!

Doing liturgy is now much more of a challenge.

What of the future?

Perhaps this might be a model of liturgy for the future:

Several years ago a group of Hispanics approached me desperate for a celebrant for their Neo Catechumenate community. Although I do not speak Spanish, it is close enough to Latin that I understand the mass text. So I agreed.

This group has a community meeting each Wednesday night and then gathers for mass each Saturday night.

They always come well dressed, well prepared and start right on time. They fully participate, singing and clapping and loudly making the responses.

Their children are well behaved and also fully participate.

□ Their liturgy is unique in several ways: flowers always ON the altar.

□ Sign of peace at offertory, always Communion under both species, and most important comments from the community following the Scripture readings.

This includes reflections by *WOMEN* on the Scriptures.

There is no other liturgy celebrated in the Diocese of Phoenix where this takes place.

It happens because this group and others like it has an indult from Rome allowing it to happen.

It happens also because the group: 40-50 people is small enough to allow it to happen.

IF we would have a married clergy, and thus obtain Hispanic male priests---we don't now because of the high value placed on *familia*---it could happen in many other places.

But for now, this group of fervent Catholics must rely on a soon to be 83 year old Irish American to preside.

Is there a future for LARGE church gatherings where the celebrant too often speaks

broken English, which for many is as less understood as Latin? It seems people are abandoning these in droves.

The Spirit moves where it will. We know that the Mass over centuries has undergone many changes and evolutions with its core identity remaining

When I observe these Hispanic people, I feel they *know who they are!*

Centuries ago, Saint Augustine when addressing newly baptized Catholics at the Easter Vigil proclaimed: "When the consecrated bread is placed in your hand, and the bishop proclaims: "Corpus Christi!"

You can respond: 'YES WE ARE!'

And so we pray:

Here below these signs are hidden

Priceless things to sense forbidden,

Signs not things are all we see.

Blood is poured and flesh is broken,

Yet in either wondrous token,

Christ entire we know to be...

St Thomas Aquinas

