

Press release

VI International Liturgical Conference

HOLY ASSEMBLY

Form, Presences, Presidency

Bose, 5-7 June 2008

Monastery of Bose

National Office for the Church's Cultural Heritage of the Italian Bishops' Conference

PRESS RELEASE

Bose, Tuesday 3 June 2008

The VIth International Liturgical Conference will be held at the Monastery of Bose (Magnano, Province of Biella) from Thursday 5 to Saturday 7 June 2008. The Conference is organized by the Monastery of Bose in collaboration with the National Office for the Cultural Heritage of the Church of the Italian Episcopal Assembly (CEI). This year, the topic of the Conference is the **Holy Assembly: Forms, Presences, Presidency**.

The opening session will be co-chaired by Enzo BIANCHI, Prior of Bose and Mgr Stefano RUSSO, Director of the National Office for the Cultural Heritage of the Church (CEI).

Among the participants are Archbishop Piero MARINI, President of the Pontifical Committee on International Eucharistic Conferences, entrusted with the official message of His Eminence Cardinal Tarcisio BERTONE, Secretary of State; Mgr Felice DI MOLFETTA, Bishop of Cerignola-Ascoli Satriano, Chairman of the Episcopal Committee on Liturgy of the CEI; Mgr Sebastiano DHO, Bishop of Alba and Chairman of the Episcopal Committee on Liturgy of the Episcopal Assembly of Piedmont; Mgr Gabriele MANA, Bishop of Biella; Mgr Arrigo MIGLIO, Bishop of Ivrea, Secretary of the Episcopal Assembly of Piedmont; Abbot Michael ZIELINSKI, Vice-president of the Pontificia Commissione per i Beni Culturali della Chiesa and of the Pontificia Commissione di Archeologia Sacra.

The presence of the official delegate of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, Prof. Job GETCHA (Paris) and of the official delegate of the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece, Prof. Evangelos THEODOROU (Athens), gives fullness to the ecumenical dimension of the Conference, in which scholars from the Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran, Anglican and Reformed Churches. Among the participants are don Giuseppe RUSSO, Head of the Servizio Nazionale per l'edilizia di culto of the CEI, entrusted with the official message of Mgr Giuseppe BETTORI, Secretary General of the CEI.

Conference participants come from Italy, Belgium, Brasil, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Malta, Poland and the United States. The presence of monks from Italy and abroad testifies the vital attention which the monastic world devotes to liturgical themes.

Already in its sixth year, the International Liturgical Conference at Bose provides for an annual encounter of scholars and scientists of world renown, belonging to different Christian churches, who confront topics related to the relationship between liturgy and architecture, and offer a vast public composed of theologians, liturgical experts, architects, artists, stakeholders in church architecture and interested laymen, an opportunity for joint reflection inspired by a desire to know the value, semantics and symbolic implications of Christian liturgical spaces.

The **Conference Scientific Committee** – composed of Enzo Bianchi (Bose), Stefano Russo (Rome), Goffredo Boselli (Bose), Frédéric Debuyst (Louvain-la-Neuve), Paul De Clerck (Paris-Brussels), Albert Gerhards (Bonn), Angelo Lameri (Rome) Keith Pecklers (Rome-New York), Giancarlo Santi (Milan).

The selection of this year's topic, the **Holy Assembly**, follows in the wake of reflections carried out during these years. The introductory reflections of Frédéric DEBUYST, foremost expert in Europe on the relationship between liturgy and architecture, will outline the framework of the Conference; his intervention is entitled «Living Assembly: A Fulness Ever Incomplete». It will be followed by an examination of the **forms of assembly**: Giuseppe BUSANI, liturgist and President of the Associazione Professori di Liturgia dell'Italia, will show how from an anthropological point of view, the assembly is

made up of bodies called to form one sole body. The historical approach of Giuliano ZANCHI, director of the Diocesan Museum of Bergamo, will demonstrate the different typologies of assembly arising from different topographies of the liturgical space in the course of centuries. The intervention of Gordon LATHROP, ecclesiologist from the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, will in its turn demonstrate how different models of assembly correspond to precise church models. Particular attention will be given to the singular configuration of liturgical space in ancient Syriac churches, through the intervention of Sebastià JANERAS, of the Facultat de Teologia de Catalunya (Barcelona), one of the greatest experts on liturgy and architecture in the ancient Syriac church.

The holy assembly is also an epiphany of **presence**. The intervention of Jean-Yves LACOSTE (College of Blandings) examines the philosophical and theological concept of 'presence' in ancient and contemporary thinking. André WENIN (Belgium), Biblical scholar from the Catholic University of Louvain-la-Neuve, will present Biblical data on the evolution of the presence of God in history. Within the theme of the presence, ample reflection will be devoted to the **eucharistic reservation**. Nathan MITCHELL (USA), from the University of Notre Dame, will examine the history of the **tabernacle**, as a particular form in which the Catholic tradition venerates the eucharistic gifts, while the renowned liturgist Robert TAFT will present the forms of veneration of the eucharist in the Orthodox traditions.

Within the plurality of presence, the liturgical **presidency** is a constitutive and essential element of the Christian eucharist. Louis-Marie CHAUVET (France), renowned theologian and liturgist from the Institut Catholique de Paris, will analyse the meaning of liturgical presidency, while Albert GERHARDS, liturgist at the University of Bonn will demonstrate the theological implications of the bishopric throne and presbyter seat. At the end of the conference, Paul DE CLERCK (Institut Catholique de Paris) will proceed with a synthesis of the conclusions of the conference.

In the course of the conference there will be a presentation of the most important historical and contemporary thrones and seats, and also of eucharistic reservations present in principal European geographical areas. At the end of the inaugural session the official presentation will take place of the Proceedings of last year's Vth Conference: **G. Boselli (ed.), Il Battistero**, Edizioni Qiqajon, Magnano 2008.