

Reconciliation

Dr Peter Hocken, 2014

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In this document, page 2 and further, you find the text of four PowerPoint presentations, given by father Dr Peter Hocken, during the European conference for national representatives and leaders of Catholic charismatic renewal in central and eastern Europe, 11th till 14 September 2014 in Hungary, organised by the European subcommittee of ICCRS.

Further study:

Repenting for the sins of the past to heal the wounds of history - Mgr. dr. Peter Hocken

On The Purification of Memories, Solidarity and Identification, Unofficial and Official Initiatives, The need for research, confession, identification and lamentation. Asking Forgiveness.

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RECONCILIATION I

1st talk Peter Hocken

European ICCRS-conference in Hungary, 11-14 September 2014

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

BIBLICAL & THEOLOGICAL BASIS

- if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who **reconciled** us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of **reconciliation**: that God was **reconciling** the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of **reconciliation** (τόν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς)... We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be **reconciled** to God. (2 Cor. 5: 17 – 20).

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- “and in this one body to **reconcile** both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their **hostility**.” (Eph. 2: 16)
- “God was pleased to have all his fullness reside in him, and through him to **reconcile** to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.” (Col. 1: 19 – 20)

RECONCILIATION, UNITY & SALVATION

All three are closely linked. It is impossible to have one without the others.

Sin produces division: in the sinner, in personal relationships, in families, groups, and societies, between nations, and peoples, between humans and the surrounding creation.

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- Sin produces division, and leads to death.
- Salvation comes through faith in the saving, reconciling work of Jesus on the cross and in his victory over sin, Satan, and death.
- This faith includes confession of sin, and repentance (change of heart).
- God effects the reconciliation in Christ in the foundational act of baptism.

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In the celebration of **baptism** the newly-converted person

- renounces sin, Satan, and death
- professes the faith of the Church in the Triune God;
- is plunged sacramentally into the death of Jesus;
- is born into the life of Christ and marked with the sign of his victory

RECONCILIATION BETWEEN CHURCHES

- Reconciliation between Christians is the most important reconciliation, above all healing the division between separated churches.
- The Church is called to be the sign of restored and healed relationships through the cross.
- John 13: 35; John 17: 21 - 23
- “that the world may believe may know

-

Christian division contradicts the Gospel we are all called to preach. The Gospel is a message of reconciliation.

Taking our divisions for granted proclaims: we do not fully believe what we preach.

Our divisions undermine the **credibility** of the Gospel and of the Church.

Our divisions weaken evangelization.

THE JEWISH PEOPLE

Confessing the sins of the churches against the Jewish people belongs to this foundational reconciliation.

- Ephesians 2: 14 – 16

* “When she delves into her own mystery, the Church ... discovers her link with the Jewish people” (Catechism, para. 839)

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- Negativity to the Jews is opposition to God's chosen way to save the human race
- It refuses the true identity of Jesus
- It refuses the "two who become one" but who remain two
- First split among God's People is between Jesus-accepting Jews and Jesus-refusing Jews
- Next split between Jewish and Gentile disciples

Elements of Reconciliation

- 1. Proclamation of the Gospel of reconciliation**
- 2. Confession of sin (of persons, of groups, of nations, of churches)**
- 3. Sorrow proportionate to the sin, at same depth as the human engagement in the sin**
- 4. Firm renunciation of all involved in the sin**
- 5. Explicit forgiveness of the others**
- 6. Willingness to repair (make restitution)**

ESSENTIAL CONTRIBUTION OF CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

The experience of the Holy Spirit in the Renewal equips Christians to be agents of reconciliation.

1. Hearing the Lord: as to what to confess, as to how to lead reconciliation initiatives, where to begin, how to proceed.
2. Sensing the leading of the Holy Spirit: what to say, when and how to say it.
3. The use of the charisms.

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4. Spontaneity in articulation, in speaking, and in acting, especially spontaneous prayer and expressions of sorrow.
5. Use of everyone's gifts, the priesthood of all the baptized; makes possible new relationship between clergy & laity
6. Involvement of the whole person: mind, emotions, spirit; tears, groaning, the prayer of lament

THE SINS OF THE PAST

Are we responsible for what our ancestors did?
Not directly.

BUT

We are responsible for what we receive from our ancestors and from previous generations.

- Our **Memories**
- Our **Histories**
- The **Attitudes** and **Patterns of Behaviour** we learn and adopt

PURPOSE

The PURIFICATION OF MEMORIES (St John Paul II)

The Purification of Histories

Moving Towards A Shared History

IDENTITY & IDENTIFICATION

Identification is acceptance of your God-given identity.

Identity includes parents, tribe and people, their history, their dealings with God

We are saved by the total identification of Jesus with his own people Israel, and through that with all peoples on the earth

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Jesus is “the son of David, the son of Abraham”
Jesus who is sinless receives the baptism of John
which is a baptism of repentance.

“it is proper for us to do this to fulfil all
righteousness” (Matt. 3: 15)

His identification with his people is total: he
identifies with their calling, their glories, their
heroes, and with their sins, their disobedience,
their blindness.

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“But he was pierced for our transgressions,
He was crushed for our iniquities. ...
He was cut off from the land of the living,
for the transgression of my people he was
stricken.” (Isaiah 53: 5, 8).

Our identification as Catholics and as citizens of our nations

In following Jesus, we are called to identify ourselves totally with our church families, and with our peoples:

with the **glory**, and with the **shame**.

Only this is a true witness.

Identifying only with the glory = ideology

WE AND OUR FATHERS

“We have sinned against the LORD our God, both we and our fathers.” (Jer. 3: 25)

“O LORD, we acknowledge our wickedness and the guilt of our fathers.” (Jer. 14: 20)

See Nehemiah 9, esp. vv. 32 – 35

“O LORD, we and our kings, our princes and our fathers are covered with shame because we have sinned against you.” (Dan. 9: 8)

SOLIDARITY IN SIN

“Fill up, then, the measure of your ancestors.”
(Matt. 23: 32)

“Truly, I tell you, all this will come upon this generation.” (Matt. 23: 36). See Gen. 15: 16 and 1 Thess. 2: 16.

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it.”
(Matt. 23: 37).

RECONCILIATION II

2nd talk Peter Hocken

European ICCRS-conference in Hungary, 11-14 September 2014

EFFECTED IN THE BODY OF JESUS

JESUS & THE HOLY SPIRIT

- Special Moments of the Holy Spirit's Work in the Incarnation:
- 1. Jesus is conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of his mother
- Matt 1: 20
- Creed

- 2. Jesus is filled with the Holy Spirit at his baptism
- “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matt 3, Mark 1, Luke 3)
- Returns to Galilee in the power of the Spirit (Luke 4: 13)
- Begins his public ministry

- 3. Transfiguration of Jesus
- “As he prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening. ” (Luke 9: 29)
- A prefiguring of His resurrection
- A preparation for his death (“exodus” Luke 9. 31)

- 4. His Resurrection and Ascension
- “Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.” (Acts 2: 33)
- Totally filled with the Holy Spirit and totally penetrated with the glory of God as man.

JESUS REDEEMS US IN HIS BODY

- In his passion, Jesus allows the full weight of human sin to crush Him and to tear Him apart.
- This happens in and to His Body.
- In this, Jesus does not complain, He refuses to blame others, He absorbs everything.
- “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God.” (2 Cor. 5: 21)

- “For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:
- Who committed no sin
- Nor was deceit found in His mouth
- Who, when he was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously.” (1 Peter 2: 21 – 23)

WRONG MODEL

- Masses of human sin
- No possibility of a merely human punishment being enough
- Needs a sacrifice of infinite value
- Done by God-man
- With no connection, no identification, just a legal transaction

RIGHT MODEL

- Jesus becomes man in this place among this people at this time
- He identifies himself fully – through the Holy Spirit
- He takes upon himself the weight of sin
- The reconciliation with God is effected in his own body through the Holy Spirit
- Through sacrificial death & God raising him

RECONCILIATION III

3rd talk Peter Hocken

European ICCRS-conference in Hungary, 11-14 September 2014

PRACTICAL POINTS

“I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.” (Matt. 18: 19 – 20)

Significance of two or three from different Christian churches and denominations:

Reconciliation already expressed in the prayer

IN WHOSE NAME?

Important to distinguish

1. Governmental and Official Confessions

By people in authority with public responsibility

Nation/society: national, regional, city levels

Church: national, diocesan, parish

2. Personal Initiatives with others – not official, but can have representative character

- Importance of Identity and Identification
- When we fully identify with our church/nation, we can pray as representing our church/nation before the Lord
- Identification is permanent lifestyle, not an intercessory technique

- Do not claim to be more than you are, or less!
- Avoid all exaggerated language
- HUMILITY AND TRUTH
- Sins that caused division were arrogant and spread lies

- 3. My Personal Prayer and Intercession
- (or small group)
- Often 3 prepares the way for 2 and 2 prepares the way for 1

LOCAL RECONCILIATION

- As leaders be clear about
 1. what anyone can do
 - to confess wrong attitudes
 - to proclaim the victory of the Lord over sin
 2. what needs preparation
 - Research into local history

- Start Local (City, Region)
 - - learn out about local history
 - other Christians, Jews, minorities
 - - form relationships and listen
- BE LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT
- Do not recruit people for reconciliation initiatives. Teach the gospel of reconciliation, and see who the Holy Spirit touches.

Locating places of grave evil and injustice

- Massacre sites
- Concentration camps
- Places of Torture
- Forcibly evicted/transferred populations
- Places where much blood has been shed
- Desecrated synagogues

BIGGER INITIATIVES

- In general begin small – friend, come up higher!
- Going to the root of the history of sin, of conflicts
- Requires historical research
 - Requires a willingness to be radically challenged, to rewrite our histories
 - Only mature people ready to face the consequences should take part in such initiatives

NATIONAL TENSIONS IN EASTERN EUROPE

- Repentance for wrong attitudes can begin now
- But healing of the wounds of history requires knowledge, wisdom, sensitivity
- Need to go back behind 1920 and 1945
- These tensions and conflicts have roots that go back centuries
- Relatedness of national and religious

Enforced Suppression of Protestantism by the Habsburgs

- What are the effects still present today

Legacy of transplanted populations

Effects of the removal of the Jews

THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD

- Ephesians 6: 10 – 20
- “Put on the whole armour of God” (v. 11)
- “take up the whole armour of God” (v. 13)
- Against principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this age, spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (v. 12)

- Girded with truth
- Put on the breastplate of righteousness
- The gospel of peace (shalom)
- The shield of faith
- The helmet of salvation
- The sword of the Spirit, the Word of God
- praying always ... in the Spirit

PUBLICITY?

Governmental and official confessions of past sin should receive maximum publicity

Significant Group Visits to Atrocity Sites could be reported to make people aware

Do not make spiritual claims for what was achieved

Intercessory confession and repentance is a transaction between those engaged and the Lord. It is generally not appropriate to broadcast this to the world.

RECONCILIATION IV

4th talk Peter Hocken

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EFFECTS OF COMMUNISM

On Nations and on Churches

Effects on Nations/Peoples

Imposition of False Understanding of Man and of Society

Imposition of Ideology

Rewriting of national histories

Truth replaced by Propaganda/Lies (Pravda)

Coercion, Fear

Suspicion of Others

Drastic restriction of personal initiative

Effects on Churches

Defensive reactions

Suspicion

Constructive leadership difficult

Reception of Vatican Two more difficult

More difficult to confess sin and weaknesses in the Church

Effects on Priest – Laity Relations

Lack of Consultation

Lack of Open Discussion

Obstacles to Church Renewal

How Can CCR contribute?

Encourage Open Discussion of Real Pastoral and Spiritual Situation, Needs, Problems

Promoting teaching on Church as Communion, dignity and responsibilities of all the baptized

Intercessory Prayer addressing real issues in the power of the Holy Spirit

Confession of the sin, and resistance to renewal (but avoiding all accusation – direct or indirect)

Further study:

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