

THEOLOGY OF THE LAITY

DISCIPLES IN THE WORLD

Session II – Identity: Priest

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A. BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST'S THREEFOLD IDENTITY

- **PRIEST**
- **PROPHET**
- **KING**

As sharers in the role of Christ as priest, prophet, and king, the laity have their work cut out for them in the life and activity of the Church. Their activity is so necessary within the Church communities that without it the apostolate of the pastors is often unable to achieve its full effectiveness.

- Apostolicam Actuositatem 10

B. LAITY AS PRIESTS

- **WHAT IS A PRIEST?**

- **SCOTT HAHN**

A priest is an authorized mediator who offers sacrifice to God on behalf of others. Christ is the perfect priest, for he is perfectly united to God in his divinity and fully united to us in his humanity.

- **LUMEN GENTIUM 34**

The supreme and eternal Priest, Christ Jesus, since he wills to continue his witness and service also through the laity, vivifies them in this Spirit and increasingly urges them on to every good and perfect work. For besides intimately linking them to His life and His mission, He also gives them a sharing in His priestly function of offering spiritual worship for the glory of God and the salvation of men.

C. OLD TESTAMENT BACKGROUND

- **ABEL**

- **GENESIS 4:4**

“while Abel, for his part, brought the fatty portion of the firstlings of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering”

- **MELCHIZADEK**

- **GENESIS 14:18-20**

“Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought out bread and wine. He was a priest of God Most High. He blessed Abram with these words: “Blessed be Abram by God Most High, the creator of heaven and earth; And blessed be God Most High, who delivered your foes into your hand.” Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.”

NOTES

FOR PRAYER

- **ABRAHAM & ISSAC**

- **GENESIS 22:1-19**

“Then God said: Take your son Isaac, your only one, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. There offer him up as a burnt offering on one of the heights that I will point out to you... So Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac, while he himself carried the fire and the knife... Isaac continued, “Here are the fire and the wood, but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?” “My son,” Abraham answered, “God will provide the sheep for the burnt offering.” Then the two walked on together... When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. Next he bound* his son Isaac, and put him on top of the wood on the altar. Then Abraham reached out and took the knife to slaughter his son. But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, “Abraham, Abraham!” “Here I am,” he answered. “Do not lay your hand on the boy,” said the angel. “Do not do the least thing to him. For now I know that you fear God, since you did not withhold from me your son, your only one.”

- **LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD**

- **DAY OF ATONEMENT**

Hb. “*Yom Kippur*”

Priest serves as minister of YHWH’s mercy

D. JESUS CHRIST FULFILLS THE OLD TESTAMENT PRIESTHOOD

- **HEBREWS 8:1-6**

“The main point of what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister of the sanctuary* and of the true tabernacle that the Lord, not man, set up. Now every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; thus the necessity for this one also to have something to offer. If then he were on earth, he would not be a priest, since there are those who offer gifts according to the law. They worship in a copy and shadow of the heavenly sanctuary, as Moses was warned when he was about to erect the tabernacle. For he says, “See that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.” Now he has obtained so much more excellent a ministry as he is mediator of a better covenant, enacted on better promises.”

- **CHRISTIFIDELIS LAICII 14:** The lay faithful are sharers in the priestly mission, for which Jesus offered himself on the cross and continues to be offered in the celebration of the Eucharist for the glory of God and the salvation of humanity. Incorporated in Jesus Christ, the baptized are united to him and to his sacrifice in the offering they make of themselves and their daily activities.

FOR PRAYER

E. HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO A PRIEST IN MY DAILY ACTIVITY?

LUMEN GENTIUM 34:

For all their works, prayers and apostolic endeavors, their ordinary married and family life, their daily occupations, their physical and mental relaxation, if carried out in the Spirit, and even the hardships of life, if patiently borne—all these become "spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ".

1 PETER 2:4-5

Come to him, a living stone, rejected by human beings but chosen and precious in the sight of God, and, like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES

LUMEN GENTIUM 34: Together with the offering of the Lord's body, they are most fittingly offered in the celebration of the Eucharist. Thus, as those everywhere who adore in holy activity, the laity consecrate the world itself to God.

F. PRIESTLY IDENTITY POINTS BACK TO RELATIONSHIP

- **BISHOP ROBERT BARRON:** "Power for us is not primarily an institutional manner... In the Church power comes from being a SAINT..."
- **END GOAL OF THE CHURCH'S ACTIVITY:**
 - **MAKE SAINTS!**

HOMEWORK

- Keep praying for 15 minutes a day
 - Remember:** Relationships require commitment
- Spend 5 minutes at the end of each day reflecting on these questions:
 - What was my biggest positive grace today?
 - What was my biggest struggle today?
 - Close with the following prayer:

I adore You, my God,
and I love You with all my heart.
I give You thanks for having created me,
for having made me a Christian,
and for having preserved me this day.
Pardon me for the evil I have done today;
if I have done anything good, please accept it.
Keep me while I take my rest
and deliver me from all dangers.
May Your grace be always with me.

Amen.

FOR PRAYER