SESSION TWO: September 15, 2011

Introduction
• Ministry to the Actively Dying
• Sacrament of the Dying: Viaticum
• Celebration of Viaticum
• Ministry and Prayer in the Dying Hours
• Conclusion

Ministry to the Actively Dying
• Definition of “actively dying”
• Challenges in a death-denying of death-distancing society
  o Brief reflections on contemporary American culture
  o Comments on Christian/Catholic ambivalence toward death
• What “healing” means in this case, in contrast to serious or terminal illness

Sacrament of the Dying: Viaticum
• Theology in the Imagery of the Sacrament of Viaticum
  o Sacrament of the dying (PCS 161)
  o Food for the passage (PCS 175)
  o Crown of the Christian life (PCS 175)
  o Following the Lord into the banquet of God’s kingdom (PCS 175)
  o Strength, John 6:54 (PCS 26)
  o Pledge of the resurrection (PCS 26), Christ’s eucharistic body and the resurrected body of Jesus and believers (John 6; 1 Cor. 15)
• Pastoral Directives for this Sacrament
  o “Communion … under both kinds”: participation in the paschal mystery (26)
  o Duty of every Christian (PCS 27)
  o Pastoral responsibility: “while still in full possession of their faculties” (27)
• Rites for Exception Circumstances/Emergencies (PCS 232-296)
  o Contemporary cultural conditions: How exceptional, really, in practice?
  o Flexibility to pastoral needs (not least, of loved ones): Continuous rites

**Celebration of Viaticum**

• Mass is preferable form, with loved ones and care-givers: priest presiding
  o Baptismal profession of faith
  o Litany/petitions
  o Sign of peace: share genuine emotions (PCS 192)
  o Communion as Viaticum (PCS 193)
  o Apostolic pardon (PCS 195)

• Viaticum Outside Mass: deacon or lay minister
  o Sprinkling with holy water (PCS 198)
  o Viaticum: communion and prayer (PCS 207-209)
  o Blessing and sign of peace (PCS 210-211)

**Ministry and Prayer in the Dying Hours**

• Viaticum repeatable daily until death
  o Hence, need for lay ministry
  o Pastoral considerations

• Christian responsibility to the dying (PCS 213)
  o Types of prayer: short texts, readings, litanies, rosary, even simple chants
  o Good practices: quiet, slow, intermittent, varied to pastoral needs

• At the moment of death
  o Commendation of the Dying
  o Note options (PCS 220)

• After Death
  o “Saints of God …”: pointing to funeral rites: power in ritual repetition
  o Other options: psalms and prayers
  o Prayer for family & friends (PCS 222): shift in pastoral focus

• Prayers for the dead
  o Note separate chapter (7) in the PCS: distinct service v. sacraments for dying
  o Service to both the dead person and bereaved (PCS 224-225)
  o Acknowledgement of grief, litany (familiar), prayer of commendation (PCS 226-231)
Conclusion

- Questions and discussion
- Bibliography