

100 YEARS
THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY
Worldwide Festival in Dortmund
Oct 7 – 11, 2022

CG
2022

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The sacraments, including the Communion sacrament, have been the subject of our work on several occasions. Volker Harlan and Martin Bruhn wrote about this in previous newsletters. Today you can read contributions by Anastasiia Mazur and Tom Ravetz and in future by Michael Debus and Ulrich Meyer.

The current to-do list on page 4 includes the title, the motto, the call for our festivities.

Sacramentum

Dates for 2020/21

Large planning team **Saturdays 11 am - 6 pm**

Register: info@cg-2022.org
Oct 3, Herdecke Christian Community
Nov 21, Steiner-School Dortmund
Feb 6, Location to be decided
March 20, Location to be decided
June 12, Location to be decided

Young people's planning team

Applications: youth@cg-2022.org
Dec 27 – Jan 1, New Year's Meeting,
Maison Oberlin, Vosges, France
Feb 1–2, Cologne Christian Community

Württemberg meeting **Saturdays 9 am – 4 pm**

Register: m.gerhardts@posteo.de
Dec 12, Location to be decided
March 6, Location to be decided

The horizon between spirit and matter

Leonardo da Vinci's well-known *Last Supper*, shows Christ sitting in a room in front of a window. We see the face of Christ against the background of a landscape, and in the distance heaven and earth meet in the horizon. Exactly on this border between heaven and earth in the centre of the picture are the eyes of the Christ. I would like to take a closer look at this seemingly insignificant fact.

A few decades before Leonardo, paintings of the great masters were quite different. They were almost childish. Children see and paint the world differently than adults: their paintings are two-dimensional and without any perspective – just like the painters up to the fifteenth century. Before that, the surrounding world, the heavens and the earth, were like a backdrop for the depicted people who had a religious character. Whether saints or noblemen, their religious and spiritual significance was directly expressed in their height. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, humanity's view of the world changed. Within a short period of time different painters discovered the outer world in different places. They suddenly saw the things in the world not as a background for the spiritual and religious, but as autonomous objects in a certain relationship to each other and to the viewer. They began to paint nature, architecture, flowers and houses. People became spectators and began to explore and recognize the world. The line of the horizon gained in importance. The border between heaven and earth became the most distant thing the human eye can see and at the same time the thing everyone relates to when orientating themselves in space.

At this significant moment in history Leonardo painted his *Last Supper*. It was as if he could see where this discovery of the world would lead humanity. In that time (from 1413) not only art made a turn, but science too. Astronomers thought about the place of the earth in the cosmos, physicists discovered the laws of nature, the human body was subjected to anatomical study. People wanted to see and know exactly how everything works. In the past, people looked with childlike eyes and saw those things that were important to them bigger, brighter and more beautiful. Today, scientists in the laboratory should not think too much, because they might influence the experiment and add something subjective to the objective truth they are looking for. Do we humans only have these two possibilities? Either to walk dreamily through the world, seeing the important spiritual but stumbling over the earthly; or to observe the outer world very precisely, without allowing a spiritual element in the earthly?

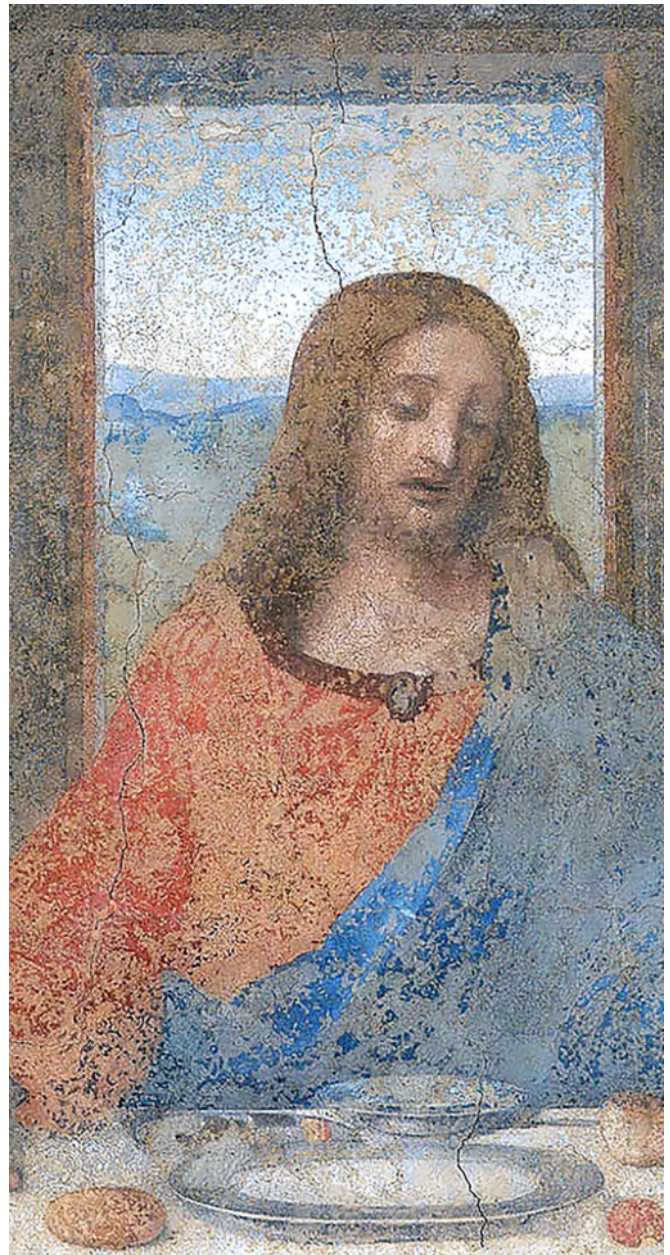
The Christ connects heaven and earth. He came from the highest spiritual realms and brought them into the human Jesus. Through death and resurrection he raised the earthly into the spiritual. He carried the transformed earth into heaven.

In every moment of (re)cognition we connect spirit (the idea) and matter (the object). We see this world with our

eyes, we perceive it in its outer reality and from within, from the spirit, we grasp the concept, the idea of what we perceived. The horizon between spirit and matter is within ourselves.

It is not insignificant that Leonardo places the eyes of Christ on the line between heaven and earth. At the beginning of the path that led into materialism, he showed that human perception, human vision need not exclude the religious dimension. The human gaze has enormous significance for the world. The world no longer wants to be a backdrop. It wants to be recognised in its entirety. For this it needs the human being who can heal this separation, this wound, by uniting spirit and matter in his consciousness.

REV. ANASTASIIA MAZUR, Bremen, Germany



Healing

The healing of the sickness of sin did not happen once and for all: it was inaugurated as a possibility through the death and resurrection of Christ. Since then, it seeks to permeate the whole of reality. In the Last Supper, Christ establishes a new relationship between human beings and the divine world. The apostles are given the task of continuing this relationship by celebrating the Eucharist, the encounter with Christ through bread and wine. For the earliest theologians, there was no great difference between their encounter with Christ at the Lord's Supper and the kind of encounter that the disciples had with Jesus after the Resurrection.

The Gospels show the many facets of Christ's healing power.

– He gives us a new orientation by showing new possibilities of being human. The power of this example can be seen in the stories of the martyrs, beginning with Stephen (Ac 7:54–60).

– He strengthens our middle, allowing us to develop freedom between the extremes that embody the adversary powers. We can see this in the story of the man possessed by demons (Mk 5:1–20). The two moments of transformation in the story of the woman caught committing adultery (Jn 8) demonstrate this too: those who are possessed with a stony spirit of justice and vengeance find the mirror of their conscience, whilst the woman who has lost herself in passion is empowered to continue on her path in life with a new attention to her responsibility for her actions.

– He heals physical diseases by strengthening the innermost self of the other in such a way that the whole person can be permeated by his power.

Each of these aspects can be found in the Act of Consecration of Man.

– The stories of the life of Christ in the Gospel Reading place archetypes of the new humanity in our soul. This experience is intensified in the Transubstantiation, when the gospel of the Lord's Supper is enacted before our eyes.

– In the Offering we start on a journey towards the healing of our middle, when we recognise the consequences of the sickness of sin in our strayings, denials and weaknesses and then offer up the forces of our soul to the higher world.

– In the Communion, we receive Christ's body and blood as the medicine that makes whole. The intimate process of receiving communion heals an aspect of our isolation. We stand with our mouths open, completely receptive for the gift of the spiritual world. The priest comes far closer than we would normally allow someone to approach us; their fingers touch us.

A member once described an experience that she had after the Act of Consecration of Man had finished. She had been waiting in the foyer to attend to something else, so she saw the congregation emerging from the chapel. People's faces were illumined. For a few moments, they seemed to be freed from their everyday concerns. They were surrounded by a gentle glow. Without putting ourselves under pressure to have deep experiences (which usually chases such experi-

ences away!), it can be valuable if in the evening we create a quiet listening space to allow any subtle experiences to resound on in us, for example by looking back on what we experienced at the altar that morning.

... that the sickness of sin be healed.

We all have many experiences on which we can draw if we want to contemplate the experience of healing. Here are a few examples that might inspire personal reflection:

– After a long illness, we feel the gradual return of our energy and vitality.

– We have been alienated from someone whom we loved for years. All attempts at reconciliation changed nothing: we seemed doomed to remain in conflict. One day, a message comes – perhaps something as brief as a text message – and we know: Life is flowing between us again!

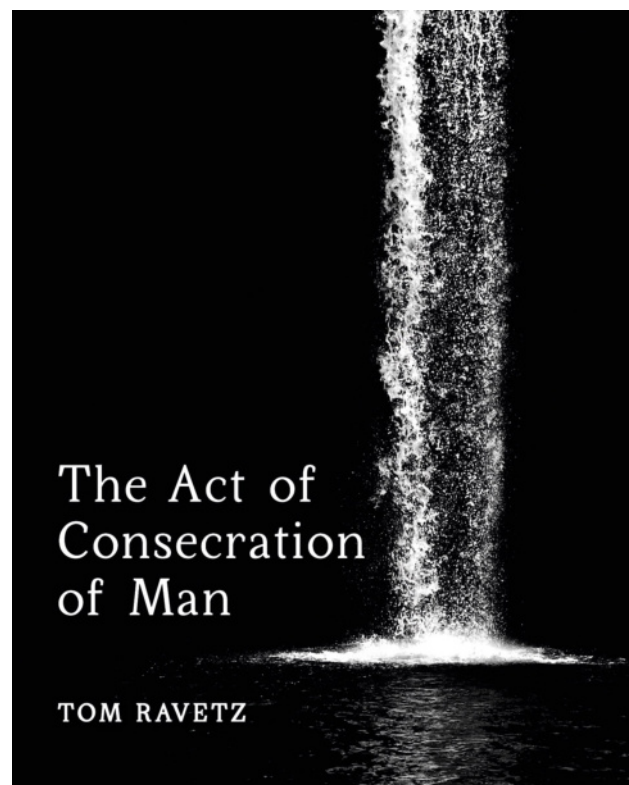
– We were in a conflict and had reached the point of giving up. The mood of despair suddenly changed when someone found the courage to break through the seemingly hopeless situation with a new word that embodied a new insight.

– In an abandoned factory or industrialised area, we see the power of nature to regenerate. The stones are lifted by saplings sprouting up; ivy pulls down the old walls. Even pools of waste have been taken over by particularly vivid vegetation.

In addition to personal memories, there are other sources ... [like the Bible or reports of so-called near-death experiences]. In this mood, we might recall the last time we took communion and prepare ourselves for the next time we will receive it.

REV. TOM RAVETZ (Forest Row, England)

This text is from pp. 114–120 of Tom Ravetz, *The Act of Consecration of Man* (Floris Books 2020)



To-do list for 2022

So far we have called our anniversary “Festival 100 Years The Christian Community,” but this is not yet a title, motto or appeal. In our search for this it is worth looking back to earlier major conferences. In 1997 in Hamburg it was called *Inicio* (beginning/start), *Breakthrough and Departure*. In Dortmund in 2010 it was called *Future Now*. We are now following up this sequence with our festive days in 2022.

You will find suggestions for a title from previous discussions in the CG-2022 Easter and St John newsletters, in the blackboard illustrations. In the large planning team on October 3, 2020 we want to fix the title of the congress and on November 21, 2020 we want to continue working on the contents. Details of these two dates are on page 1.

A concise title alone is not everything – the meeting of people, the exchange of ideas is what should characterise these festive days. In order to be able to draw on these things afterwards, careful preparation is essential. This requires the cooperation of all! There are still two years left until the conference to make connections and contacts. We can find like-minded people, form community partnerships, even across national borders. We can participate in preparatory meetings for the festivities, visit the many conferences of the Christian Community. We can continue such a world-wide process after the festival like a constant renewal.

We know all those substantive issues that are important to us, that we have always wanted to talk about, that we wanted to achieve together. Many themes are already presented in our documents on www.cg-2022.org. Other topics and discussions are very welcome, especially in our two interactive media:

On the internet forum you can exchange ideas, thoughts, wishes, concerns and much more in connection with 100 Years Christian Community with us and many others.

The bilingual CG-2022 journal *Dies bewegt uns. This moves us* is a pdf document which can be requested from newsletter@cg-2022.org. So far 38 members have written what they think is important for the future of The Christian Community. Further contributions are always welcome and will be included in the spring 2021 issue. What is special about this journal is that every reader can add their own comments to this pdf. In this way a documented discussion process can develop.

If you are not familiar with such interactive computer use, please feel free to send us an e-mail to newsletter@cg-2022.org or post a letter to our conference office: Mergelweg 31, 42781 Haan, Germany. Your contribution is very welcome in any form.

WOLFGANG JASCHINSKI, Public relations for CG 2022

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Page 3: We are grateful to Floris Books.

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Please send your comments and short contributions to newsletter@cg-2022.org
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