

Message from Archbishop Rowan Williams

VIII International Liturgical Conference

LITURGY AND ART

The challenge of today's world

Bose, 3-5 June 2010

Monastery of Bose

National Office for the Cultural Heritage of the Church – CEI

MESSAGE FROM ROWAN WILLIAMS, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

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To the Community at Bose
and the Eighth International Liturgical Conference, 'Liturgy and Art',
meeting at Bose, 3-5 June 2010

My dear Brother Enzo,
brothers and sisters of the Monastero di Bose,
participants in the Conference:

The life of Christian prayer has itself been described as 'the art of arts', and it is deeply appropriate to be thinking about liturgy in the context of the various challenges of the contemporary imagination. When we encounter God, whether in personal prayer or in the corporate work of liturgy - both equally, of course, the action of the Body of Christ our minds and hearts are changed; we enter a larger and more mysterious world, a world where more is possible than we could have hoped, and where we are also tested and judged as part of the process of transformation. The human response to art echoes this in different ways, so that we can say that exposure to the life of the imagination in its fullness is always a step towards exposure to the maker of all things.

St Bonaventure famously called Christ 'Ars Patris', the skilful work of the Father. To meet Christ and to participate in the act of Christ through the liturgy of the Church, above all the eucharistic celebration, is to be taken into the divine 'imagination', the eternal purpose of God in creating and redeeming the world. I hope that this consultation will offer new depths of understanding of what it means to be incorporated in this way into God's work and of the riches of human capacity that can be released in such an incorporation.

I am very happy to send - through my dear friend and colleague, Bishop David Stancliffe - my blessings and warmest wishes to all who gather at Bose for this event. May we all be helped to new vision and commitment through your deliberations.

With my love in Jesus Christ, as always, Your brother

Rowan Williams

Lambeth Palace, London SE1 7JU