Zeno Carra, *Hoc facite. Studio teologico-fondamentale sulla presenza eucaristica di Cristo*, Cittadella Editrice, Assisi 2018, 290 p., ISBN: 978-8-8308-1624-4

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*Our culture has lost its sense of God's tangible presence and activity in our world.*¹ Beginning with the encyclical letter of Pope Francis, Zeno Carra's book tries to answer the following question: what does it mean that God is present in the historical reality of my day, how can I reach Him? We find the answer by reading this theoretical study, a thesis of fundamental theology, because it addresses a fundamental theological issue.

The overarching question of Gods' presence arose during Carra's service as priest in the diocese of Verona, which started in 2011. From 2016, he is licensed in Fundamental Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. Currently, he is a doctoral student in Theology and Patristic Sciences at the Augustinian Patristic Institute, also in Rome. He teaches Christian Antiquities at the San Zeno Theological Studio in Verona. This book is the thesis he defended at the end of his studies at the Pontifical University.

This presence of God in everyday life is equivalent to the Eucharist. Thereby, the purpose of the research is to investigate the dogma of the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. The author begins his study from the hypothesis that the classical structure, the Thomist system on which this truth of faith has been structured for over seven centuries, no longer applies to the modern man who is always in search of something current, tangible and existing.

The study written by Zeno Carra is based on qualitative research that uses primary sources and historiography from the field of fundamental theology. The following sources had a key role for this analysis: the work of Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), *Summa Theologiae*, III, questions 73–83, the canons on the Eucharist from the Council of Trent (1545–1563) and also the canons of the conciliar constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). Further on, the theories and works of the following theologians were also debated: Romano Guardini, Filippo Selvaggi, Carlo Colombo, Franz J. Leenhardt, Joseph Ratzinger, and Karl Rahner. An important element in the research was the concept of “the model”. It refers

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¹ https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20130629_enciclica-lumen-fidei.html Lumen Fidei, 17, accessed July 25, 2021.

to a way of accounting for theologically relevant items. The working method consisted in analyzing the two periods which most influenced the dogma of the Eucharist, as we shall see below.

The paper contains the following structure: firstly, the preface written by Stella Morra, theologian, and professor of Fundamental Theology at the Gregorian University in Rome. Morra was Carra's teacher and coordinator during his studies. The introduction highlights the motivation, the subject, the method, and the purpose of the research. The methodology behind the work is subsequently outlined. After these three introductory elements are the three chapters containing the research, as follows.

The first one deals with the dogmatic reflection regarding the apparition and crystallization of the Eucharistic practice starting from the early fathers of the Oriental and Occidental Church, up to the disputes from the Middle Ages. An important role in this regard is played by the analysis of the doctrine of Thomas Aquinas. Namely, how the work undertaken by *Doctor Angelicus* was received by the magisterium and introduced in the canons of the Tridentine Council. Then comes the examination of the Eucharistic practice from the Middle Ages to the Modern Era, with its liturgical and devotional practice. At the end of this chapter, there is a summary, useful as a basic model for the investigation that follows in the next chapter. Thus, there are positive data from the lexical level (Aquino's thinking), structural-practical (liturgical and devotional practice), and the articles from the Tridentine Council. This was the one that remained as such until the liturgical reform of the twentieth century.

The second chapter debates the events of the twentieth century. Carra does not want to delve into the theology of the century, but proposes three lines of research to understand how the pattern was inherited from the medieval period changed. Firstly, there is an analysis of the liturgical movement from the second half of the century with its theological, exegetical and pastoral rediscovery. Secondly, there are explicit operations on the concept of Jesus' substantial presence in the Eucharist. These are the epistemological debates that try to show the unsustainability of the reception of the old model of tradition and the positivist theological proposals for changing the truth of faith. Third, he examines the liturgical reform prepared by Popes Pius X and Pius XII and promulgated by Pope Paul VI in the constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* of the Second Vatican Council. The chapter ends with observations of the practice, namely the renovated liturgy of the last century, containing the core of the scholastic-tridentine system. The last chapter consists of a selection of directions outlined in the first two chapters, divided into two epistemological areas: fundamental theology and dogmatic-sacramentary. This action helps to sketch a new form of the model of access to the Eucharist.

The final part of the book includes the conclusions, the list of abbreviated works, the bibliography, and the table of content. The bibliography used is extensive, and we can see both primary sources and works belonging to important theologians. A division of the two types of sources would have been useful in this section.

With *Hoc Facite*, the author is aware of the complexity and controversy regarding the subject approached. However, it has served its purpose, to provoke, to offer ideas for dialogue and debate. Moreover, this can be a suitable introduction for one to familiarize with the dogma of the Eucharist, starting with the patriarchs to the present day. The paper can be read by believers or unbelievers, historians, theologians, or curious of any profession. This new study is welcomed due to the accentuated secularization of society that tends to lose sight of its identity, and Christian roots. After all, dogmas do not change. What changes is only our way of relating to them.