

Emmanuel



Eucharistic Spirituality

September/October 2021



Website and Digital Edition

Emmanuelpublishing.org now features easy on-site access to the digital edition of *Emmanuel* along with additional access to thought-provoking web-based theological, liturgical and ecumenical reflections.

All print subscribers can request free access to the digital edition by contacting us with your name and mailing address through our website: emmanuelpublishing.org - or - by email at: emmanuel@blessedsacrament.com.

EMMANUEL MAGAZINE (ISSN 0013-6719) is published bimonthly with 6 issues a year, by the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, 5384 Wilson Mills Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44143-3092. Phone (440) 449-2103. E-mail: emmanuel@blessedsacrament.com. Periodicals postage paid at Cleveland, Ohio and at additional mailing offices. SUBSCRIPTIONS (print subscription includes access to digital edition): individual (U.S.) \$35.00 one year/ \$65.00 two years; Canadian and foreign \$40.00 one year/ \$75.00 two years, U.S. currency; single issues \$8.00 plus postage. EDITOR: 5384 Wilson Mills Road, Cleveland OH 44143. POSTMASTER: send address change to Emmanuel Magazine, 5384 Wilson Mills Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44143-3092. ©2021

©2021 BY THE CONGREGATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

EMMANUEL MAGAZINE is a member of the Catholic Press Association. Indexed by The Catholic Periodical and Literature Index.



EDITOR/MANAGER
LAYOUT
CIRCULATION MANAGER
BOOK REVIEW EDITOR
PHOTOGRAPHY

John Christman, SSS
Kay Vincent
Elizabeth Zaller
Patrick Riley
John Christman, SSS;
Keith Chevalier

BOARD

Lisa Marie Belz, OSU
Paul Bernier, SSS
Thomas Dragga
James Menkaus
Gilbert Ostdiek, OFM

emmanuel@blessedsacrament.com

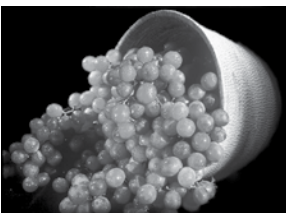
Emmanuel Magazine is published by the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament. The Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament is a Roman Catholic religious group of men whose mission is to assist the church in its efforts to form Christian communities whose center of life is the Eucharist. "Our ideal," as it is stated in our Rule of Life, "is to live the mystery of the Eucharist fully and to make known its meaning, so that Christ's reign may come and the glory of God be revealed to the world."



Emmanuel Magazine

Seeing all of reality in the light of the Eucharist

Volume 127 Number 5



EUCCHARIST: LIVING & EVANGELIZING

- A Spirituality of Cooking:
Preparing a Eucharistic Meal
by James Bartel and John Christman, SSS 284

EUCCHARISTIC TEACHINGS

- Rumer Godden on the Eucharist
by Dennis J. Billy, C.Ss.R. 291

EUCCHARISTIC LITURGY

- Concerning the Christian Altar
by Michael DeSanctis 301

EUCCHARISTIC SPIRITUALITY

- Why Bake Bread?
by Meghan Murphy-Gill 310
- A Mom Learns About Eucharistic Love
Through Breastfeeding
by Stephanie Clary 315
- Pondering the Parables
by Bernard Camiré, SSS 318

EUCCHARIST & CULTURE

- Art, Music, Film, Poetry, and Books 341

COLUMNS

- From the Editor 282
- Pastoral Liturgy 320
- Breaking the Word 326
- Eucharistic Witness 348



FROM THE EDITOR

One of my earlier books was denied an imprimatur (back in the days when that was deemed essential) because I had not said that the Mass was a sacrifice. Not that I denied it, mind you, only that I was focusing on the meal aspect of Eucharist. The emphasis on the Mass as a meal that followed Vatican II, though, was regarded with suspicion by some, as if doing so denigrated from the sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist.

What cannot be denied, however, is that the Eucharist was instituted at a meal. We do call it the Last Supper, after all. “While they were eating,” we are told by Mark and Matthew. “When the hour came, he took his place at the table,” we read from Luke. Saint Paul adds the injunction that shapes our Eucharists today: “For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes again” (1 Corinthians 11:26). These are meals that are being referred to.

Indeed, nothing seems more obvious than the reality of the meal dimension on the Mass. It is celebrated at a table lined with a tablecloth; there is a plate and a cup; there is bread and wine. The climax of the Mass is when the congregation comes forward to share that bread and wine in memory of Christ. Those are all elements of what we do at meals.

There are a number of consequences that follow on a deeper appreciation of the meal aspect of the Eucharist. One of the most important is that it puts a lot more emphasis on the fact that this is a family meal. We are not at Mass simply as individuals alone with Christ. We gather as members of his body. We are sisters and brothers of Christ. What makes it difficult to appreciate this today is that we live (at least here in America) in a fast-food society. In fast-food restaurants, the most important thing is not the people, it is the food — to be eaten as quickly as possible. They are not places of social encounter. A boy would not take his girlfriend there to propose to her.

When we think of meals in a eucharistic context, the best comparison would be with a festive meal, one celebrated at home for Thanksgiving or Christmas or some other important occasion. There, the most significant thing is the people gathered there. These meals last a long time. There is much conversation (very loud at times), people are not checking their cell phones, and the meal can last well past an hour. Reflecting on meals like this months, or even years, later, our memories tend to focus on the people who were there, the conversation, the friendship shared, etc. Exactly what we ate may even be forgotten. If there has been a falling out with someone, the mere fact of inviting that person to a meal is a sign of forgiveness and love. Meals are important for more than sustaining life.

I mention this because I am convinced that we cannot truly appreciate the Mass unless we appreciate meals. The central Catholic action has always been a sacramental meal. Indeed, in the earliest days of the church the Eucharist regularly took place as part of a full meal. It is obviously a sacrificial meal as well. But the emphasis I insist on here is that it is a meal. Catholic culture was formed at the family table as well as at the table of the altar. There is a reciprocal relationship here. This means that the focus is not only on eating and drinking, but on eating and drinking well. Hence the emphasis in this issue of Emmanuel on various aspects of meals. As I stated earlier, we cannot fully appreciate the Eucharist if we do not appreciate meals.



Paul Bernier, SSS
Emmanuel Editorial Board Member

In this issue

Food, meals, the people we share meals with and places we gather to share meals all shape our understanding of Eucharist. In this issue we explore these interrelated topics. Meghan Murphy-Gill offers a theological reflection on the meaning of making bread, especially during Covid-19. Chef James Bartel not only offers a recipe for a eucharist-inspired meal but shares his own spirituality of cooking. Meal sharing gathers us around a table. Michael DeSanctis explores the history of the Christian altar, which began as a table. Dennis Billy, C.Ss.R. delves into the rich literary offerings of Rumer Godden, especially her popular novel *In This House of Brede* whose central drama unfolds as a Benedictine community of Nuns considers renovating their chapel and altar during the time of the Second Vatican Council. Stephanie Clary brings together sacrifice, food, and Eucharist in a thoughtful reflection on motherhood and breastfeeding. To all of this we add a healthy serving of scripture reflections by Biblical scholar Lisa Marie Belz, OSU.



EUCHARIST: LIVING & EVANGELIZING

A Spirituality of Cooking: Preparing a Eucharistic Meal with Chef James Bartel

by John Christman, SSS and Chef James Bartel

How can your table become a place of eucharistic encounter?

James Bartel has been a professional chef for 45 years and graduated from the Culinary Institute of America in New York. John Christman, SSS is editor of Emmanuel.

EUCHARIST IS ABOUT SHARING FOOD, *GOOD FOOD!* IN SHARING FOOD, WE SHARE life. Jesus often “broke bread” with people. He ate at so many tables, and each meal became a life-giving encounter for both Jesus and those with whom he dined. Our tables have that same capability. How might we turn our meals into life-giving Eucharistic encounters? In this article I discuss with Chef James Bartel a spirituality of cooking and meal sharing. Here he offers not only his unique eucharistic experiences and insights but also a wonderful recipe for a joyful and delicious Eucharist-inspired meal.

JOHN CHRISTMAN, SSS: Recently I learned of a book series by Melanie Dunea built upon a fascinating idea. She wanted to ask chefs around the world, if they could choose, what would they have for their “last supper”? As you can imagine, the chefs’ responses are intriguing not only to other chefs, but to anyone who simply loves food. But it’s not so much unique food preferences that makes it interesting. That would be tantalizing, but perhaps somewhat superficial. Instead, it’s also about life experiences and what a “last supper” might mean to someone who’s life has been about preparing meals.

In her second book of these interviews entitled *My Last Supper: The Next Course* (Rodale Books, 2011), when asked what he would want for his last supper, Chef Joël Robuchun said, “A good bread. Bread is a symbol of birth, life and death.” And then he offered this lovely reflection. He said, “Bread is the most beautiful gesture of love. I remember from my childhood we would bake these very large loaves of bread. My mother would hold the bread against her chest and make the sign of the cross, because we were Catholic, and she’d cut the bread on her chest and give it to us, her children and to her husband. It was our daily bread. She gave us her love and emptied

herself giving us this bread.”

I think this is such a beautiful story and a profound insight into a eucharistic spirituality. Actually, it’s an insight into two different eucharistic spiritualities: Chef Robuchen and his mother. Early faith and food experiences can have lasting effects. What are your favorite memories of meals?

CHEF JAMES BARTEL: As a child, my favorite meal memories were our birthdays. We would request our favorite meal and my mom would prepare it for our birthday. When it was my birthday, I would present my mom with an entire menu, with multiple courses. I still remember it: Italian wedding soup to start, Ravioli Florentine, meatballs and sausage, greens and beans, all served with garlic bread. For dessert: chocolate brownies with mint ice cream.

CHRISTMAN: So then your mother must have known you would one day be a chef with a menu like that! It also sounds like meals were very important in your family. Not only were they significant moments of family life, but you ate well!

BARTEL: With nine children, we had a birthday meal almost monthly. Our birthday meal was truly special because it was centered around the person who was celebrating their birthday. While enjoying the meal, our focus would be on that special person. We would talk about the “guest of honor,” share stories about them, sing “happy birthday,” and open presents. I learned that it is important to give time and energy to building a relationship with the people you love. That is the key. Another unique treat was that we didn’t have to do chores on our birthday. Our chores would be done by others in the family.

CHRISTMAN: What were family meals like when you were young?

BARTEL: Our family meals were not just to nourish our bodies. They also nourished our minds and spirits. We started with grace, everyone saying the prayer together. We began the meal, and then the next five minutes were the quietest it ever was in our home! But then the conversations would start. A few of us would talk amongst ourselves, and as topics were brought up pretty soon the whole family was engaged in conversation. Food had a way of calming us down. It made us feel good, so we would open up and share. My parents would often say, “We may not have a lot of money, but we eat good!” Meals truly brought us together once a day, and never started until my dad got home from work. After the meal was over, we shared in the work of



cleaning up. We then made our lunches for school the next day. After that we would do our homework at the dinner table. My dad would help us with our homework, and we would also help each other. Many things happened around the dinner table.

CHRISTMAN: When I write or speak about Eucharist, especially when I'm making connections between Eucharist and scripture, I find that I often reference the occasions when Jesus ate with others. Scripture scholars frequently refer to this as Jesus' "meal ministry." I'm indebted to Eugene LaVerdiere, SSS whose writings really opened up this meal dimension of Eucharist for me. What are your favorite eucharistic stories in the Bible?

BARTEL: Two of my favorite eucharistic stories in the Bible are Jesus feeding the multitudes and Jesus going off by himself to pray to the Father early in the morning. In the story of Jesus feeding the multitudes in the gospel of Mark 6:34-44 the disciples were concerned about sending the people away so the people could buy themselves something to eat. But Jesus said to them, "You give them something to eat" (Mk 6:37). He then proceeded to feed the multitudes with two fish and five loaves of bread. I took Jesus' message to heart. For me the story isn't just about Jesus feeding everyone, it's about how he ministered to the people. They must have all been anxious and hungry, wondering where they would find food. Jesus acknowledged their fears. He then provided food for them which calmed them. A good eucharistic meal can do that. It can gather people together, and through the eating and sharing bring calm and comfort. That opens up the freedom to share and build deeper relationships. When my children were young, I could often sense when they were agitated or anxious, especially if that was mixed with hunger. I'd always sit them down, assure them, and start making something for them to eat. Once they started eating, the sharing of a meal would comfort them, and we could talk.

The other eucharistic stories from scripture that I find meaningful, are the times when we hear that Jesus went off by himself to pray (e.g., Mk 1:35, Lk 5:16). When Jesus went off early to pray to the Father that gave him spiritual nourishment. He communed with the Father. I spend time dwelling on the word of God each morning. As I do, I ask Jesus to guide my thoughts, words and deeds throughout the upcoming day.

CHRISTMAN: When I think of a "eucharistic spirituality" the word "nourishment" comes to mind. We are certainly "nourished" by the

Eucharist, in our mind, hearts, spirits, and, ideally our bodies as well. We are nourished in the depths of who we are and respond lovingly by nourishing others. For myself, as an artist, I know when I'm painting, I lose track of time and am completely absorbed in the moment. Hours could pass without notice. It is very life giving, and "nourishing." I normally start with a prayer and some quiet meditation before I begin painting, knowing God is present. I also often ask God to help me see the beauty in whatever might be the subject I'm painting that day. To see just a fraction of the beauty that God sees.

I know you have a deep faith and a rich eucharistic spirituality. What is your spirituality of cooking? Are there certain things you do to be aware of God's presence as you prepare a meal? What does it feel like when you are cooking?

BARTEL: Cooking occupies one third of my day. In order to nourish my spirit and get myself ready for the day, I begin with prayer. In my morning prayer I do a novena to the Holy Spirit. I pray for the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, and to understand when the Holy Spirit is speaking to me. I continue with prayer as I daily swim to strengthen my body. There's a natural connection between water and the Holy Spirit. I think of baptism and the peace that surrounds the Holy Spirit. When I'm swimming, I am in prayer in the water, and the peace of the Holy Spirit surrounds me. The Spirit's presence allows me to be open to God's will. During the time of prayer while I'm swimming, I mostly listen to God. It's about being present and open to God.

CHRISTMAN: That sounds like a beautiful routine and a very meaningful way to begin your day. How does that experience shape your cooking?

BARTEL: First, after swimming, I start with a good breakfast, to provide energy to start my day of cooking. I usually have steel cut oats and dried fruit. I sprinkle a little cinnamon or ginger on, depending on the type of fruit. Occasionally, if I have more time, I may make some type of frittata or omelet with cooked greens and fruit on the side.

Once I get to work, I turn on the radio and listen to the Christian music station. This keeps me prayerful throughout the day. Sometimes I sing along. It helps me feel God's presence in my work as I go about putting together menus, organizing ingredients and preparing meals.



This daily routine keeps me in a spiritual zone with our Lord and Savior.

As a French trained chef from the Culinary Institute of America, I was trained to use the methods and cookbooks of Auguste Escoffier. His method focuses on ingredients, rather than measurements. I think this method is important because it gives the chef more artistic freedom. It's also important because you can adapt the flavors to the taste of the people who will be eating. Chicken Marsala is an excellent example of this. It's served all over the world, but always has the same ingredients: chicken, mushrooms, green onions, marsala wine, and usually salt and pepper. But those ingredients are then put together in a way that adapts to local tastes. This allows for creativity but also requires wisdom gained through experience.

Though God has given me this special gift and talent of cooking, I know I must always have "an attitude of gratitude" to be my best self. I am nothing without God's gift of wisdom. I think a chef is wise when he or she doesn't use too much of any one ingredient in their dish. I have learned that it's important for me to stay "in the zone" to know the right measurements.

CHRISTMAN: In his introduction to this issue of *Emmanuel* Father Paul Bernier, SSS stresses the point that we must make the connection between what happens at the altar table and what happens at our family and community tables if we are to truly live eucharistic lives. That message has always made a strong impression on me. I feel like it's something I have to be ever attentive to. I've also seen how hospitality and meal sharing done in a eucharistic spirit can truly have a profoundly positive effect in people's lives. If you were to prepare a eucharist-inspired meal for family and friends, what would you make?

BARTEL: I'd make greens and beans, with baccala, served with fresh baked sourdough bread.

CHRISTMAN: That sounds delicious! How would you prepare it?

Recipe

Greens and Beans

Ingredients:

1 TBSP olive oil, 2 cups diced onions, 3 garlic cloves – minced, 2 cups cooked cannellini beans, ½ cup chicken stock, 8 cups escarole, ¼ tsp crushed red peppers. (Salt and pepper to taste.)

Directions:

Heat oil in a heavy large saucepan. Add diced onions and cook until caramelized. Add garlic and crushed red peppers and cook for 2 minutes. Then add beans, escarole, and chicken stock to saucepan and simmer for about 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve with parmesan cheese.

Baccala

Ingredients:

2 TBSP olive oil, 4 cups diced onion (medium diced), 2 stalks of celery (medium diced), 2 TBSP garlic (minced), 32 oz tomato sauce, 32 oz water, ¼ cup raisins, ½ cup capers, ½ lb. green olives, ½ lb. black olives, 2 cups potatoes (diced – 1 in. pieces), 4 lb. fresh cod cut into 1 ½ in. pieces (note: dried cod is optional), pastina or rice.

Directions:

Heat in a large heavy saucepan. Add diced onion and cook until caramelized. Add garlic and celery and cook for 3 minutes. Add the tomato sauce and ½ the water. Save 16 oz of the water until the end. Add the raisins, capers, and olives and simmer for 10 minutes. Add potatoes and simmer for 15 minutes. Then add the cod and simmer for 7 minutes (use the additional water if needed to cover all of the ingredients when you add the fish). Salt and pepper to taste. Serve with pastina or rice along with sour dough bread.

Sourdough Bread

Ingredients: ½ cup sourdough starter, 3 cups flour, ¾ cup warm water, 1 tsp. salt, 2 TBSP Corn oil, 1 tsp yeast.

Directions: Warm water to 105 degrees and let yeast dissolve in the water. Add oil and sourdough starter. Stir in flour until dough forms



and is not sticky (add more flour 1 TBSP at a time if dough seems sticky). Gather dough into a ball and place in a greased bowl, turn dough over, so greased side is up. Cover bowl with kitchen towel and place in a warm place until it doubles in size. Then punch dough down and knead lightly for one minute. Shape into an oval loaf and place in a lightly greased bread pan. Cover with a kitchen towel and let rise again until doubled in size. Bake at 350 degrees for one hour. Bake loaf until brown and has a hollow sound on the bottom. Transfer to a wire rack and let cool.

CHRISTMAN: This sounds like an amazing meal. Thank you for sharing it. Why would you choose this for a “eucharistic meal”?

BARTEL: I was raised in an Italian and German family. But I lean towards the Italian because my mother was Italian, and she did most of the cooking. This meal is a traditional Italian family meal. It’s a meal that centers upon bread and fish. These are eucharistic elements as we see in the Bible. I was thinking of Jesus’ meals, the early Christian communities and Mediterranean cuisine when I put this menu together. That being said, I’d probably pair this meal with a nice Chianti. So, there would be bread, fish, and wine.

CHRISTMAN: That’s perfect.

BARTEL: It’s not just the food, though, it’s how the food is shared that helps makes it eucharistic. A lot of Italian families place a variety of sauces/condiments in the center of the table. Around those you would find polenta, sausage and meatballs, and in this case fish. Everyone sitting around the table shares from the same bowls of sauce. That’s very eucharistic because it shows communion. Everyone is sharing. Then, bread cleans up all the sauce at the end. The plates are clean. There’s nothing left. To me that’s like the Eucharist, cleaning up all the messes in our lives.

CHRISTMAN: I think that’s a very beautiful and thought provoking image to end with.





EUCHARISTIC TEACHINGS

Rumer Godden on the Eucharist

by Dennis J. Billy, C.Ss.R.

Rumer Godden, one of the 20th century's great literary figures, converted to Catholicism while writing a novel about monastic life of a group of Benedictine Nuns living through the changes of the Second Vatican Council. What eucharistic insights can we gain from her extraordinary work?

RUMER GODDEN (1907-98) WAS BORN IN SUSSEX, ENGLAND BUT SPENT MOST OF her early life in colonial India in what is now Bangladesh. She and her sisters were sent back to England for their schooling but returned to India at the outbreak of the First World War. Trained as a dancer, she opened a school of dance in Calcutta in 1925 and ran the school for 20 years. She married in 1934, divorced in 1948, remarried in 1949, and had two daughters. She became interested in the Catholic Church in the early 1950s and converted to Catholicism in 1968. The author of some sixty novels, books of poetry, children's books, and non-fictional works, a number of her stories take place in India and many also focus on the lives of women religious. Her most notable works include: *Black Narcissus* (1939), *A Fugue in Time* (1945), *An Episode of Sparrows* (1956), *The Battle of Villa Fiorita* (1963), *In This House of Brede* (1969), and *Five for Sorrow, Ten for Joy* (1979). She was awarded the Whitbread prize for children's literature in 1972 and appointed to the Order of the British Empire in 1994. Her understanding of the Eucharist comes through most clearly in *In This House of Brede*, a novel about Benedictine nuns in England in the 1950s and 60s.¹

Redemptorist Father Dennis J. Billy is a regular contributor to Emmanuel. He has authored or edited more than 30 books and 300 articles in a number of scholarly and popular journals.

Godden's Spiritual Outlook

One of Godden's favorite sayings comes from an old Indian proverb, which she quotes in her autobiography, *A House with Four Rooms* (1989): "Everyone is a house with four rooms, a physical, a mental, an emotional, and a spiritual. Most of us tend to live in one room most of the time but unless we go into every room every day, even if only



to keep it aired, we are not a complete person.”² She led a disciplined life that was dedicated to her writing, working assiduously in both the morning and evening hours, yet also making time for other interests such as opera, dance, Pekinese dogs, and a good whisky. She sought the extraordinary in the midst of the ordinary; holiness, in the woof and warp of everyday life. Reared in the Anglican faith, she had a fascination with India, where she spent much of her childhood and early adult life, especially by the way in which the spiritual world imbued the material, and all of life was counted as sacred.³

A prolific author who wrote in a variety of literary genres, Godden was passionate about her writing and filled her tales with themes related to the search for meaning and the quest of holiness. She always wrote in longhand (and with a fountain pen), likening the author’s craft to that of an artist who must dip their brush into the paint to give time to ponder the next stroke.⁴ That nine of her novels were made into films reveals their broad appeal and her great success as a literary figure. The wide range of literary genres she employed in her writing manifests her talent as a writer and her willingness to employ various modes of expression in her search for meaning. Her lifelong love of dance represents one way in which she could integrate the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual in her life; her dedication to her writing, yet another.⁵

As Phyllis Tickle points out in her “Introduction” to the Loyola Classics edition of *In This House of Brede*, Godden studied the world religions and converted to Catholicism in 1968 at the age of sixty, while she was working on *Brede*.⁶ This Benedictine monastery of nuns, she points out, was based on Stanbrook Convent and St. Cecilia’s Abbey in Ryde, Isle of Wight. Philippa, the novel’s main character, in turn, represents all who search after Christian truth, while the monastery itself is a microcosm for the world we inhabit.⁷ It is a place where all four rooms of the human person are aired in varying degrees: the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual rooms of their lives. When you read the novel, one other integral dimension (or room) also comes to the fore: the communal. *Brede* is a religious family, a community of nuns dedicated to God and to one another. Existing as it does at the very heart of the Benedictine way of life, the Mass and the Blessed Sacrament spill over into the rest of the community’s life and the lives of its members. Seeing that Gooden converted to Catholicism while she was researching and writing the novel, it is likely that the Eucharist had a similar effect on her own search for holiness.

Godden on the Eucharist

In commenting on her conversion to Catholicism, Godden is known to have said, "I like the way everything is clear and concise. You'll always be forgiven, but you must know the rules."⁸ Her fascination with religious life (especially Benedictine monasticism) speaks to this love of clarity and precision. The Rule of St. Benedict cloisters its community members away from the world in order to provide them with a sense of peace, a peace that the world cannot give. That peace is rooted in a well-regulated order of the day organized around the concept of *laus perennis* (continual praise) as manifested in a life dedicated to prayer, spiritual reading, and manual labor. This peace, however, comes with a price: the cost of discipleship involved following in the footsteps of Jesus by denying oneself and taking up one's cross daily. The opening words of *In This House of Brede* set the tone for all that follows: "The motto was 'Pax,' but the word was set in a circle of thorns. Pax, peace, but what a strange peace, made of unremitting toil and effort, seldom with a seen result; subject to constant interruptions, unexpected demands, short sleep at nights, little comfort, sometimes scant food; beset with disappointment and usually misunderstood; yet peace all the same, undeviating, filled with joy and gratitude and love. 'It is my own peace I give unto you.' Not, notice, the world's peace."⁹ Philippa, the novel's main character, leaves the world behind in order to lose herself in the seclusion and anonymity of Benedictine life. The peace she finds there, however, comes about only by placing the will of God and the community before her own. As the novel unfolds, she finds herself only by losing herself in the service of others.

The Eucharist plays a central role within this intentionally organized form of religious life. Although Godden does not betray her craft as a novelist by focusing on the doctrinal dimensions of the faith and the way she presents the Eucharist in the novel does not necessarily represent her own views, she allows the Rule to speak for itself and does her best to depict what life in a Benedictine Abbey would be like in the decades immediately preceding and following the Second Vatican Council (1963-65). The novel is considered one of the best fictional depictions of Benedictine life before the Council and as it tried to adapt to the directives for renewal immediately afterward.

For the nuns of Brede, "the Conventual Mass was the most important act of the day."¹⁰ Although a low Mass was offered at the beginning of each day for those who could not attend because of sickness or



essential responsibilities, the Conventual Mass, which was intimately linked to the chanting of the Divine Office, represented the highpoint of their day: “The Office centered round the Mass, giving the day one theme, making of it one continuous prayer. ‘Everything we do, outside choir,’ said Dame Clare, ‘our work, our reading, our private prayer, even our meals in the refectory are simply pauses, meant to prepare ourselves for our real work, the Opus Dei—and that needs discipline.”¹¹

Godden also is very good at depicting the human element in the Benedictine way of life. Dame Clare, the assistant novice mistress, points out to her novices that the liturgical year is full of variety for that very reason: “Don’t you see, it’s like a pageant. Our cardinal has said the liturgy entertains as well as feeds us... Yes, we’re not angels but humans... and human nature is made so that it needs variety. The church is like a wise mother and has given us this great cycle of the liturgical year with its different words and colors. You’ll see how you will learn to welcome the feast days and the saints’ days as they come around, each with a different story and, as it were, a different aspect; they grow very dear, though still exacting.”¹²

Amidst the business of life at Brede, with all the activities and responsibilities delegated to the various members of the community, they all sensed “the great outlet of the Office and Mass running through the days to bind them to a whole.”¹³ Indeed, the Blessed Sacrament forms the backdrop against which the drama of Benedictine life unfolds. When Abbess Dame Hester dies soon after Philippa’s entrance, the abbey’s chaplain comes to administer the last rites: “The abbess had not been able to speak to make her last confession, but Dom Gervase, hastily summoned, had given her absolution; nor could she swallow the holy viaticum, food for the unfathomable journey she was to make, nor kiss the crucifix, but the prioress had held it to her lips.”¹⁴ When the abbess finally dies, the community mourns her passing for three days which culminate in the celebration of a Solemn Pontifical Requiem Mass.¹⁵ Toward the end of the novel, Dame Emily, who had been the prioress for many years and was now dying of cancer, tells Philippa of her conversion to Catholicism: “When I was eighteen, a high-headed proud young girl... we were on holiday in Folkestone, and on a rainy day when I was bored, having nothing particular to do, I wandered into a church to listen to the music. For me it might have been any church — but it was Catholic. The time was the octave of Corpus Christi, and I heard the priest preach on the Real

Presence — “This is my body” — and I thought, If this is true ... the rest followed.”¹⁶

The community celebrated *Quarant Ore*, forty hours of exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on the feast of Corpus Christi and had regular appointed times for solemn exposition.¹⁷ Near the end of the novel, Philippa kneels before the Blessed Sacrament and ponders its deep spiritual significance: “Bowls of flowers surrounded the high altar; the candles made points of flame above them, and, in the center, the disc of the white Host was enthroned in the glittering monstrance. Was it fancy because she was so tired, thought Philippa, a mere illusion, or was the Host penetrated by a light of its own? A kind of window through which, had she the eyes, she could have looked straight into heaven; but it’s only the dying, or the very holy, who have eyes like that, she thought.”¹⁸

One of Godden’s favorite sayings comes from an old Indian proverb, which she quotes in her autobiography, “Everyone is a house with four rooms, a physical, a mental, an emotional, and a spiritual. Most of us tend to live in one room most of the time but unless we go into every room every day, even if only to keep it aired, we are not a complete person.”

One of the central events in the novel concerns the design and installation of a new altar for the main chapel. Ordered by Abbess Hester before her death to be designed and installed by a renowned, internationally famous sculptor, questions arise concerning its exorbitant cost, its appropriateness for a religious community dedicated to poverty, and the way it will influence the celebration of Mass. As it is being constructed, the nuns ponder the possibility of the priest celebrating Mass facing the people, a controversial rubric at the time not permitted before the Second Vatican Council.¹⁹ The nuns’ interest in the proceedings of the Council reveals their interest in the world beyond the confines of the monastery walls yet brings to the surface a division within the community between the older sisters who are resistant to change and the younger ones who are looking for change simply for the sake of change. Abbess Catherine, who was elected to succeed Abbess Hester tries to steer a middle course between the old and the new.²⁰ The changing of the altar also reminds us that the



holy embraces not only people, but also the very dimensions of time and space. The altar, a place where God through human cooperation brings about an actualization of the holy, is both a banquet table and a place of sacrifice. The continuity and close connection between the one and the other remind the reader that the Church (and Brede itself) has always been in a process of continuity-in-change and change-in-continuity. At the end of the novel, Dame Philippa, the embodiment of the searching pilgrim, embodies this process as she lets go of her dream to live out the rest of her life at Brede and sets out for Japan to plant the seed of Benedictine monasticism on foreign shores.²¹

Some Further Insights

This brief summary of Godden's presentation of the Eucharist in *In This House of Brede* offers an opportunity to delve a bit further into the novel's underlying religious outlook and stance toward the sacrament. What follows are some observations aimed at probing this presentation of the Eucharist in a little more depth.

To begin with, Godden does a superb job in highlighting the main characteristics of Benedictine spirituality and the central role played by the Mass and the Opus Dei (the Divine Office). This spirituality sought to sanctify the day through a life of continual prayer dedicated to the chanting of the Divine Office, spiritual reading, and manual labor. All of these activities flowed from and returned to the daily celebration of the Eucharist, the central act of worship at Brede and of all Benedictine monasteries throughout the world. Although the nuns of Brede were divided into choir nuns (whose primary responsibility was the recitation of the hours) claustral nuns, (who focused on the manual labor and the physical upkeep of the monastery), and externs, (who engaged the community beyond the monastery walls), each sister balanced all three elements of daily Benedictine life: office, spiritual reading, and manual labor. In the wake of the Second Vatican Council, the distinctions among the sisters themselves would gradually disappear and a categorization that made all members of the community equal members under the abbess or prioress put in place.

Godden also does a very good job of depicting the spiritual battle that goes on within each individual, the battle between God's will and self-will, between humbly obeying the will of one's superiors and one's own individual freedom and autonomy. Dame Agnes describes this battle in her assessment of the novel's protagonist: "Dame Philippa won't

have won until she can do what she is asked, what is needed, without a battle."²² As a symbol of the religious seeker, Philippa engages in this battle and goes through a process whereby her will to decide her own destiny diminishes and is very gradually replaced by a willingness to serve the needs of the community. There is a clear movement in her life from self-will to conformity with God's will and, one would hope as her journey continues, to an actual uniformity with God's will. Central to this process of conversion is her participation in the life of the community, the most central feature of which is the celebration of Mass and the Divine Office. The Mass, especially, immerses those present in Jesus' selfless, sacrificial death on Calvary, the action par excellence that demonstrated his complete union with the will of his Father.

The Eucharist for each of them is Viaticum, food for the journey. For Abbess Hester, it will be the last bit of food to touch her lips during her earthly pilgrimage. For Dame Philippa, it will continue to be a source of her daily spiritual bread as she faces the challenges ahead.

Brede, we must remember, is a microcosm of the world. It represents the sanctity of time and space and the historical drama of human life that unfolds within their boundaries. The nuns of the monastery, although bound together by their common search for holiness within the Benedictine tradition, are in various places in their spiritual journey. They have entered the monastery for a number of reasons and have submitted themselves to its strict regimen of life there in order to purify themselves of themselves and allow God's will to reign in their lives. As the novel unfolds, it becomes clear that the nuns of Brede have deep spiritual aspirations yet are also very human. The same temptations and earthly attachments found in the world are also present within the monastery walls. While the Eucharist is celebrated on both sides of the monastery walls, it holds a conscious and highly focused place in the life of the community. This intentional eucharistic dimension sets Brede apart from the rest of the world and transforms it into a sign of God building God's kingdom in the midst of weak and vulnerable followers.

The peace experienced at Brede is not one free of struggle, pain, and suffering. On the contrary, it is one that comes from embracing the cross



of Christ in the particulars of one's life and persevering in following Christ day to day, month to month, and year to year, until one's earthly sojourn is complete. All of the nuns at Brede are on a journey. This is depicted most eloquently by Godden in the way she juxtaposes the death of Abbess Hester and her passing to new life near the beginning of the novel and Dame Philippa's journey to Japan at the end of the novel.²³ Each is at different stages of her journey. Abbess Hester's is complete, while Dame Philippa is still a wayfaring pilgrim. God has called each of them to leave Brede behind but to take what they have learned from their time there with them. The Eucharist for each of them is *Viaticum*, food for the journey. For Abbess Hester, it will be the last bit of food to touch her lips during her earthly pilgrimage. For Dame Philippa, it will continue to be a source of her daily spiritual bread as she faces the challenges ahead. Each has found peace in her earthly passage, a peace the world cannot give.

Finally, the novel takes place during the decades immediately before and after the Second Vatican Council, and many of the tensions experienced in the Church at large are also present within the walls of Brede. The replacing of the old altar with a new, modernized version, one that holds out the possibility of the priest celebrating Mass facing the people, raises questions not only regarding its cost but also the nature of the liturgy itself. Is the altar a table, and altar? Should the Mass be celebrated in the vernacular or not? If so, how is one to adapt the rhythm and sound of the English language to Latin chant? Should the distinctions between choir nuns and claustral nuns be done away with? To what extent should the Church be open to Christians of other denominations? These questions (and others like them) are of interest to the nuns of Brede, because the way they are answered will affect their lives directly. How the emphasis is laid will say much about how the Mass itself will be celebrated and how the nuns themselves will participate in it. The nuns' interest in the proceedings of the Council reflects their attitude toward change. Some wish to preserve the customs of Brede at all costs; others wish to change with the changing signs of the times. Abbess Catherine, a voice of mediation throughout the novel, seeks a middle ground. As the novel reaches its end, it becomes clear that Brede has always been in a state of flux (albeit in varying degrees). The Eucharist and the Divine Office themselves have also been subject to change, but their object, purpose, substance, and intent have always remained the same: to give glory and honor to God.

Conclusion

Rumer Godden was one of the most accomplished British authors of the twentieth century. Her sixty books, written in a variety of literary genres and brought into print by more than forty publishing houses, make her one of the most prolific and versatile authors of her day. Her search for meaning and holiness in everyday life, when combined with her fascination with women's religious life and her desire to get in touch with the minutest details of Benedictine monastic life, make her a valuable literary resource for those wishing to trace the religious and spiritual sensitivities of her day.

Although her influence on the Catholic imagination has waned in recent years, her works still maintain their power to immerse her readers in a world dedicated to God and the search for holiness. While researching Benedictine life for *In this House of Brede* (what many consider her masterpiece) she converted to Catholicism in 1968 in the immediate aftermath of the Second Vatican Council, a time when Catholicism itself was undergoing great changes in its own self-understanding and in the way it related to other Christians, non-Christians, and the outside world in general. Although the vicissitudes of time would impact life at monasteries such as Brede (for better and for worse) in the years to come, the underlying centuries-long tradition of Benedictine spirituality would remain vital as it adapted to the challenges of the day. The strength of a religious tradition consists in its ability to adapt to changing circumstances while at the same time maintaining its own identity.

Faced with the inevitability of change in the midst of life's challenges, one thing remains constant in the monastery of Brede and in the life of the Church at large: the worship rendered to God through the Divine Liturgy. Even if its ritual has changed from the Old Mass to the New, and even if Catholics today have the choice between the Extraordinary Form (what was practiced at Brede) and what is now called the Ordinary Form (the liturgy of the Second Vatican Council), the substance of Liturgy as an immersion into Christ's sacrificial death on Calvary, a foretaste of the heavenly banquet, and a celebration of Christ's presence among his people in the Blessed Sacrament remains constant. In the final analysis, Godden presents the life at Brede as a challenge to all Christians to allow the sacrificial death of Christ to take root in their lives so that they might put off the old self and put



on the new, so that Christ might live in them and the peace he offers by way of the cross might find a place in their hearts.



Notes

- 1 For more on Godden's life and writings, see "Rumer Godden: Literary Trust," <https://www.rumergodden.com/biography/>.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Phyllis Tickle, "Introduction" in *In this House of Brede* by Rumer Godden (Chicago: Loyola Classics, 2005), xi.
- 7 Ibid., ix.
- 8 Ibid., xi.
- 9 Rumer Godden, *In This House of Brede* (Chicago: Loyola Classics, 2005), 3.
- 10 Ibid., 105.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Ibid., 104-5.
- 13 Ibid., 493.
- 14 Ibid., 79.
- 15 Ibid., 89.
- 16 Ibid., 618.
- 17 Ibid., 618-19.
- 18 Ibid., 619.
- 19 Ibid., 243.
- 20 Ibid., 592-604.
- 21 Ibid., 635-38.
- 22 Ibid., 487.
- 23 Ibid., 79, 635-38.



EUCCHARISTIC LITURGY

Concerning the Christian Altar

by Michael DeSanctis

How did Jesus' table become an altar and how do we understand it today?

Introduction

I WASN'T ENTIRELY SURPRISED BY THE NATURE OF THE ENCOUNTER I ONCE HAD with an elderly laywoman in a Catholic parish that had sought my assistance with its church renovation project. Our exchange occurred one morning while I was collecting reference photographs of the parish's altar, a marble appointment installed soon after the Second Vatican Council whose exceedingly long and narrow table surface was balanced on a squarish base. One could liken the object to a petrified teeter-totter. The exaggerated dimensions of its cantilevered "arms" were presumably intended to accommodate concelebrations of the Eucharist by multiple members of the resident clergy — a more common occurrence in the mid-60s, when parish communities were flush with priests, than it is today.

"What are you up to?" the woman barked loudly enough to be heard throughout the echoey sanctuary where I stood. A space into which, I assumed, she seldom wandered but moved through effortlessly enough to confront me. "I hope you're not thinking of getting rid of our beautiful altar," she added, before pointing out for my benefit that it was "exactly like the one our Lord and his disciples used at the Last Supper."

I didn't have the heart, there and then, to challenge her familiarity with the details surrounding Jesus' institution of the Eucharist, situated, as it was in a domestic "upper room," arranged for dining in a style that required participants to "recline" at a common table (Luke 22:12-14). How many times in the course of her formation as a Catholic, I wondered, had she likely been exposed to a favored painting of the

Michael E. DeSanctis, Ph.D., is a retired professor of fine arts and theology at Gannon University, Erie, Pennsylvania. He writes widely on the subject of sacred architecture and is the author of *Building from Belief: Advance, Retreat and Compromise in the Remaking of Catholic Church Architecture* (The Liturgical Press, 2002) and *Renewing the City of God: The Reform of Catholic Church Architecture in the United States* (Liturgy Training Publications, 1993).



Last Supper by some master of the Italian Renaissance? Its sufficiently Italian-looking subjects seated at one side of an Italian-styled table of the period and frozen in anticipation of sharing in the yeasty morsels of *pane rustica* their divine — but outwardly Italianate — master raises heavenward? Indeed, how many altars themselves had she seen in the time since her youth that were adorned with a three-dimensional version of Leonardo da Vinci's famous interpretation of the subject (fig. 1), virtually all its details at odds with the historical circumstances surrounding Christ's Pasch? Instead, I assured her that no plans had yet been made for replacing any of the church's current furnishings. I likewise emphasized that my habit was to treat every liturgical object I came across in my line of work with the utmost reverence and regarded the altar at which a parish worships — and the body of parishioners regularly gathering before it — to be the essential components of a

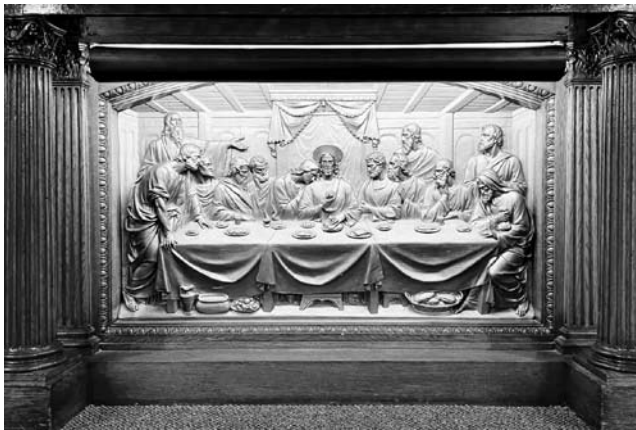


Fig. 1 Bas relief
Sculpture of Last
Supper on Altar Panel

Catholic place of worship. "The altar and its users are the real foundations of a church building," I explained, "the reason why it stands in the first place." "Isn't it amazing," I blurted out, attempting to encapsulate in a single phrase the reciprocity at work in each of the Church's sacramental actions: "We make our churches sacred by what we do within their walls, and they return the favor!"

A look of both confusion and irritation came over the poor woman's face, as if no one had previously spoken to her in such terms about the physical setting of the Church's rites. She offered no indication of ever having been invited from the pulpit in her own parish, for example, to consider whether the sanctified state that she and her fellow parishioners acquired in baptism might somehow "rub off" on the place they considered their spiritual home. Indeed, Catholics of her age and religious formation with whom I'd crossed paths in the course of my work promoting liturgical renewal in parishes tended to treat the sanctity of their churches as something that emanated solely from the tabernacles housed there, dwelling places of the eucharistic Christ. To hear them explain it, the miracle that occurred at the altar on Sundays or other times throughout the week when Mass was celebrated had importance inasmuch as it guaranteed that Jesus would be available to receive them for "visits" at times when their churches were otherwise empty. In their minds, the Catholic church

building was first and foremost a setting for prayer that was essentially devotional in nature, its purpose to contain, confine and preserve the Blessed Sacrament, tangible presence of Christ, as temples throughout the ancient world once housed all manner of divinities in the time of Jesus. This proved especially true among those whose religious formation occurred before Vatican II, when the eucharistic theology dispensed through catechetical materials did little to encourage the faithful to imagine *themselves* as God's dwelling places (1 Corinthians 6: 19-20) as much as any polished, ritual vessel worthy of reverence. The interior furnishings of Catholic churches and their arrangement prior to the council likewise did much to skew the relationship in the popular imagination between liturgical and devotional piety and subordinate the laity to a body worthy only of beholding the drama of the Mass from afar.

"Isn't it amazing," I blurted out, attempting to encapsulate in a single phrase the reciprocity at work in each of the Church's sacramental actions: "We make our churches sacred by what we do within their walls, and they return the favor!"

To be sure, the natural object of focus from that part of an empty church where lay worshipers would normally assemble was the so-called "high altar."¹ Under practical circumstances, however, fixed deep within an apsidal precinct of some kind and screened from the laity by the figures of the priest-celebrant, deacon, subdeacon and others stationed before it, the altar proper — especially its mensa — was not especially easy to view. Consequently, the object on which lay participants in the Mass more often fixed their attention was the retable, or "reredos," a tiered superstructure arrayed with candelabras, flowers and decorative sculpture that formed the backdrop of every altar, (fig. 2). Far from being intelligible as a free-standing object around which the faithful might gather in their solemn role as "*circumstantes*,"² the altar itself functioned as a kind of dado or visual foundation for its much taller retable. Of even greater attraction to the average layperson, however, was the tabernacle usually fixed on-axis to the mensa and thus visible from most corners of the place

Fig. 2 Neo-classical Retable Rising from Altar





of worship. If, in the popular imagination, liturgical and devotional treatment of the sacramental presence of Christ that came by way of the Eucharist were seen as *one*, it was partly because the altar and tabernacle were presented to them as one, the latter described in catechetical publications as the true “heart of the church.”³

The Christian Altar: A Complex History

The expectations Catholic laypeople bring to weekend Mass today are altogether different from those of their predecessors before the 1960s. One need only note the location of both altar and tabernacle in the modern parish setting to appreciate the degree to which a fundamental shift has occurred in the Church’s understanding of sacred worship. The altar, of course, has been liberated from its preconciliar place in the remotest part of any church building, brought forward, outward — indeed *peopleward* — to be virtually within reach of the majority of those drawn to its promise of nourishment (fig. 3). Likewise, this essential component of liturgical prayer has regained its historical identity as the communal table for a divine banquet set by Christ to be shared by all those being made into members of his own Mystical Body. To be “tabular” requires simply that it have a top carried on legs. It is essentially skeletal in conception and form, an open frame comprised of stone, metal or wood members — which is to say it needn’t rely on mass to accomplish its task. It can be relatively small and square in shape, a little larger but no taller than a modern butcher block and similarly approachable



Fig. 3 Freestanding Altar
– Mount Saint Benedict
Monastery, Erie, PA

from each of its sides. If it could speak as humans do, its words would be those of invitation. “Use me,” the modern altar might say, “ritual stand-in for Christ that I am, whose body you may anoint, dress, scent and festoon — even wound⁴ — as history has Christ’s own.”

The tabernacle today stands apart from the altar, either in a separate part of the sanctuary, clearly visible from the nave, or in a special chapel of reservation.⁵ Such spatial division of the two reflects the Church’s wish to better distinguish the practical difference between liturgical prayer, consisting of active and corporate participation in the sacrificial meal offered at the altar, and private worship directed toward the tabernacle, within which the sacrament-bound presence

of Christ resides for adoration by the faithful or distribution to those unable for any reason to be present for the liturgy of the Eucharist.⁶ Not until the 17th century, we should remember, did it become customary for tabernacles to be attached to altars for Catholic use and that both appointments have undergone numerous changes in appearance and placement over time, each reflecting some corresponding change in the Church's appreciation of its eucharistic inheritance. Even those priests and people today better informed on the circumstances surrounding Christian worship in an era immediately following the Emmaus event, however, have likely never pondered how it was that the table at the center of any "breaking of the bread" in the apostolic period evolved over time into an object resembling a sarcophagus. How, the question might be posed, did the wood or stone *tablet* that was the sacrificial surface for the earliest successors of Jesus become an object whose volume, dimensions and decorative treatment take on those of a tomb?

How, the question might be posed, did the wood or stone tablet that was the sacrificial surface for the earliest successors of Jesus become an object whose volume, dimensions and decorative treatment take on those of a tomb?

One key to answering this question can be found in the close connection between meal-related and funeral symbolism maintained by early Christian communities throughout the Mediterranean, a hold-over from the Greco-Roman culture from which the Church borrowed so liberally. In a real sense, from a time soon after the demise of the apostles until the 4th century, every altar *was* a tomb, the domestic tables at which Christians first celebrated their rites of praise and thanksgiving having given way to the gravesites of those whose martyrdom mirrored Christ's own sacrificial death. The tomb-type that citizens of the Roman world would recognize as an *heroum* — literally a site at which libations were shared and holocausts offered in memory of the hero buried within — were the inspiration for eucharistic altars shaped like sepulchers and placed beneath a gabled canopy (*canopeum*). There was power to be acquired from such burial places or "trophies" (*tropaia*), the most famous of which, even, perhaps unknowingly, among pilgrims to Rome today, that preserved deep within the foundations of St. Peter Basilica and said to bear the remains of its namesake.



Fig. 5a [above]
19th-century Altar
Fig. 5b [below]
10th-century
Tomb



Once admitted into the Christian imagination, the “sepulchral altar” exhibited tremendous longevity. A walk through any Christian cemetery of sufficient age, even in the United States, reveals the enduring hold of altars doubling as grave markers/memorials or conversely, burial vessels topped by mensas on which “sacrifices” might be laid as they would on an altar, even if they should be only flowers or bowls of incense (fig. 4a and 4b). The same holds true in liturgical settings too, of course, where altars with classic, tripartite elevations consisting of plinth, dado and top and subdivided into compartments horizontally by way of short pilasters assume a tomb-like appearance (fig. 5a and 5b). In some regional traditions throughout Europe and elsewhere, the fixed or portable altar incorporated into the drama of the Triduum is made to appear even more explicitly like a sepulcher when a sculpted figure of Christ is “entombed” for public veneration within an ordinarily concealed portion of its body. In this vein, a longstanding tradition in Poland still maintained by Polish Catholic immigrants and their successors in the United States requires parishes to devise some semblance of *Grób Pański* or “The Lord’s Grave,” close to which tokens of their Easter foods are arranged for blessing by a priest on Holy Saturday⁷ (fig. 6). For Catholics of Vietnamese descent, a Good Friday custom known as *Ngắm Mùà Chay* (Lenten lamentations) similarly involves processions around the interior of a church, in this case by parishioners bearing a representation of the crucified Christ within a translucent coffin, the latter of which is eventually placed on or near a minor altar for viewing by the faithful (fig. 7).



Fig. 4a [above] 19th-century Altar Tomb
Fig. 4b [below] 20th-century Altar Tomb



Fig. 6 Plaster Figure of Christ “Entombed” in Altar



Fig. 7 Vietnamese Ngắm Mùa Chay Ceremony

The Christian altar, whose life began as a table but which evolved into an object that could affirm at once “the sacrificial nature of the Mass, the ministerial priesthood, and the real and permanent presence of Christ under the Eucharistic species (Sacrosanctum Concilium, 7)” has reassumed its original shape in many new and reconfigured churches without forfeiting any of its layers of meaning.

More well-known to Catholics throughout the world, certainly, is the Church’s custom since earliest times of entombing the relics of saints and martyrs. For centuries prior to Vatican II, such bodily fragments of holy persons were preserved in the so-called “altar stones” inserted into the mensas of wood and stone altars alike. Carved into these, in turn, were shallow receptacles known as “sepulchers,” where the relics of one or more figures preserved in small reliquaries might be kept (fig. 8). The most recent edition of the *Rite of Dedication of a Church and an Altar*, however, stipulates that relics not be preserved in this manner but placed instead “beneath the table of the altar, as



Fig. 8 Rectangular Altar Sepulcher Containing Two Reliquaries



Fig. 9 Example of reliquary placed beneath altar mensa – St. Peter Cathedral, Erie, PA



the design of the altar permits” (Chapter IV, 11c). One finds in many new or renovated churches, then, that a reliquary large enough to be visible from the seats of the laity is situated between the plinth of an altar and its top and wrapped in decorative grillwork or an open colonnade (fig. 9).

Conclusions: From Tomb Back to Sacrificial Table

Even as cursory a treatment of the subject as the one I offer here reveals that the Christian altar has undergone significant changes in form and symbolic purpose over the centuries and that, even today, it may legitimately mean several different but related things to its users *simultaneously*. In this, it embodies a principle operative throughout sacred liturgy, namely, that one thing may indeed become another — as bread and wine are both transformed into something wholly other than themselves — or, at least at the level of symbol, that a single object or elements may assume multiple meanings at the same time. One instantly thinks in this realm, say, of water, which the Church employs to convey the ideas of cleansing, rebirth, refreshment, regeneration, and so forth. In the same way, the Christian altar, whose life began as a table but which evolved into an object that could affirm at once “the sacrificial nature of the Mass, the ministerial priesthood, and the real and permanent presence of Christ under the Eucharistic species”⁸ has reassumed its original shape in many new and reconfigured churches *without forfeiting any of its layers of meaning*. It is a table enriched by time and use like a family heirloom, imbued with the stories of others previously gathered around it. For the Church, the altar truly *is* that and more, a thing inseparable from the message and meal of salvation passed through generations, beginning with the apostles, laid before them by their Upper Room master as meal, memorial, and sacrifice.



Notes

¹ Multiple altars could be found in Catholic church buildings prior to Vatican II and could be used by priests presiding over so-called “private Masses” simultaneously in chapels throughout its interior. The altar located within the major apse and used for regular services was known as the “high altar.”

² This is one of the earliest descriptions of the liturgical assembly, suggesting that it literally surrounds or “rings” an altar in the way a group of bystanders naturally “gather around” an event of importance in its midst.

³ Ravoire, Morrow. *My Catholic Faith*. My Mission House, 1949, 293.

⁴ Traditionally, the mensa of an altar was inscribed or engraved with five crosses representing the five wounds Christ received at his crucifixion. These serve as wells for grains of incense burned upon the altar during its consecration.

⁵ *The General Instruction of the Roman Missal* prescribes that the tabernacle be placed “either in the sanctuary, apart from the altar of celebration, in a form and place more appropriate” or “in some chapel suitable for the faithful’s private adoration and prayer and organically connected to the church and readily visible to the Christian faithful” (315).

⁶ Over the centuries, the Church has proposed three reasons for reserving the sacrament : 1) so that it may be treated as an object of adoration; 2) so that it may be taken to those faithful too elderly, ill or infirm to participate in liturgical services; 3) so that it might be offered as *viaticum*—a supernatural gift literally to be “taken with you”—by believers preparing for death. Each of these is quite different from the full-blown experience of the Liturgy of the Eucharist that occurs at the sacrificial altar.

⁷ This popular ritual calls for families to carry portions of their Easter meals to churches, often in baskets. There, they are laid on a table at least symbolically, if not spatially, related to the main altar or shrine of entombment in a way that perpetuates the connection in the Catholic imagination between meal symbolism and funereal.

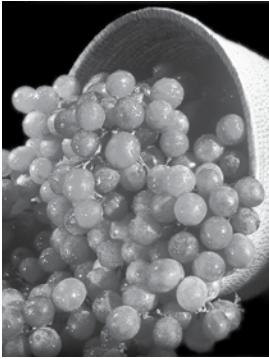
⁸ *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 7.

All photos: Michael E. DeSanctis

In Christ’s Peace Deceased Members

Very Reverend Anthony Schueller, SSS
Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament

Since its inception, *Emmanuel* has published a list of deceased members of the Priests’ Eucharistic League, remembering those who have served the church generously and faithfully and have passed into the promised eternal life. Priests in the Eucharistic League whose names begin with P, Q, R, S, T, and U are asked to celebrate Mass for deceased priests during September and October.



EUCCHARISTIC SPIRITUALITY

Why Bake Bread?

by Meghan Murphy-Gill

In the midst of the fear, anxiety and losses experienced during the isolation of the Covid-19 pandemic many people began baking bread. Why is baking bread so meaningful?

Meghan Murphy-Gill is writing a book on the spiritual lessons of bread, from seed to table, for Broadleaf Books. She currently serves as a transitional deacon at the Episcopal Church of the Ascension in Chicago.

LAST YEAR, WHEN THE REALITY OF QUARANTINE IN THE MIDST OF A GLOBAL health pandemic, a curious phenomenon occurred. Scroll through Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok, and scores of people were reaching into the recesses of their pantries for old yeast and flour to scrounge up whatever they had on hand that could be stirred and kneaded together into bread. Videos and photos of freshly baked loaves, from those with impressive decorative scoring in the crust to those equally impressive in their lack of rise, abounded. “Check out that crumb structure,” was practically a meme, accompanying photos of the inside of homemade bread.

Even if you weren’t on social media, the recipes and how-to articles soon began to proliferate in traditional media sources like the *New York Times* in response to novice bakers clamoring for more information on how to create and maintain a sourdough starter or get a bakery-like crust on the bread baked in their own ovens.

Flour and yeast were suddenly absent from grocery store shelves because of the demand. Stalwart bakers who’d been baking their own bread long before the pandemic were grumpy to find their trusted sources of supplies dried up. Within my own circle of friends, we’d frantically alert each other when one of a handful of online retailers of baking supplies had been restocked so we could buy what we needed before the flour was depleted again. I personally delivered glass mason jars of yeast (I’d accidentally purchased two pounds of it) to the doorsteps of friends in need. We’d wave hello through a screen door or six feet of distance and talk of being able to break bread again together.

My own bread making endeavors began a decade and a half ago before the pandemic, when I baked my first loaf of sourdough. It was a loaf unlike anything I'd ever eaten that hadn't been bought at a bakery, baked by professionals. My husband and I stood at the counter slathering slices in butter and eating quietly, stunned into awed silence by the magic that I'd conjured.

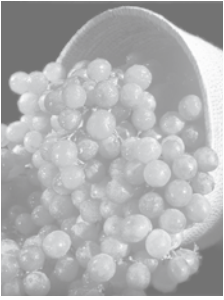
That magic, I suppose, is what we were all after last year, when the world felt dark, scary, and uncertain. I was completing a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago, where the most challenging Covid-19 cases in the region were sent, when the pandemic hit. I'd come home from a 12-hour shift craving three things: fresh air, sleep, *and bread*. I was evidently not alone. Throngs of new bakers too craved bread, and even if we couldn't do it together in person, those of us who coped with those unpredictable months by baking, did so with an awareness that we were part of something bigger.

It's hard not to see the eucharistic connections to this very visceral and concrete communal appetite for bread. There they are, exposed as wheat berries fresh from their chaff on the threshing floor. What we all needed in those early months of the Covid-19 crisis were signs of life. Should it have been any surprise then that bread, a cross-cultural symbol of life abundant, would be where throngs gravitated?

I have wondered if the symbol of bread is not merely an offering of hope. While some may say that it was just a nice way to pass the time when there was no place to go and the good shows on Netflix had run out, I believe that baking bread ignites deep, soul-level patterns.

I'm partial, however, to making connections to the "something more." I began to bake bread with some regularity the same year I entered a program for theological studies, 15 years ago. I'd read Edward Schillebeeckx and Elizabeth Johnson to the aroma of bread in the oven and typed my reflections on feminism and praxis in the reign of God to the sound of bread cooling and crackling — the sound of steam escaping tiny holes in the crust. Alone in the 500-square-foot 1-bedroom apartment, save for the tiny tuxedo cat my then-new husband and I had just adopted, I would attempt to resist breaking into the freshly baked bread until my husband arrived home from work. Lead me not into temptation, Lord, but deliver me from eating an entire loaf of bread by 4 pm.

I've heard others simply talk about what handling bread dough does



for them. It's therapeutic in a way they can't describe. Perhaps it's the visceral nature of kneading and shaping dough that ignites those deep, soul-level patterns, calling to mind and muscle a memory of a long tradition among humanity.

Consider this passage from Genesis:

“Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on — since you have come to your servant.” So they said, “Do as you have said.” And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, “Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes” (Gen 18:5-6).

I'm most familiar with this passage as a reflection on how Abraham shows us what it means to offer hospitality or what it means to invite God into your life — or to be open to the surprising ways God shows up. But I always think about Sarah in this story, tasked with baking for the guests — with the good flour — so they might be refreshed on their journey. I want to climb into the tent with her and help her dip cups into the flour. I imagine her as she kneads the dough with her strong hands and arms. I wonder what it might smell like as she puts the bread over the fire to bake. The aroma of yeast and smoke come to mind. Then the sound of crackling as the cakes cooled. Did Sarah make an extra cake for taste testing before offering the loaves to the guests? Or had she committed this recipe to muscle memory? Could she feel the rhythms of measuring, kneading, shaping in her bones as her mother and grandmothers before certainly had?

What we all needed in those early months of the Covid-19 crisis were signs of life. Should it have been any surprise then that bread, a cross-cultural symbol of life abundant, would be where throngs gravitated?

For many I've spoken with about baking bread, it's the physical labor of it that connects them to tradition, family stories of the past, and memories. For others, baking bread is an act of trust, a leap of faith. My friend Nurya, an Episcopal priest who runs Plainsong Farm in Western Michigan, wrote in a newsletter recently, that planting is an act of faith. “There is no way to guarantee they will survive,” she wrote, “but putting each into soil is an act of health for the present and hope for the future.”

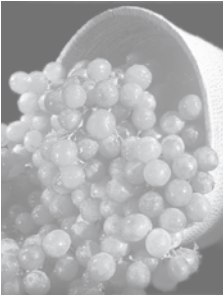
Living in a country as wealthy as the United States in the second millennium, we rarely confront the reality that there is no guarantee to our survival. The blessing of advances in medicine has veiled this truth from those of us who live with regular access to vaccines and antibiotics and antivirals. The global spread of Covid-19 ripped that veil apart, whether you witnessed the death of a loved one from outside their hospital room or feared a positive Covid test after getting groceries. Baking bread, whether new bakers recognized it or not, was a way to make a personal act of hope when all we knew about the world seemed to dissolve just outside of the homes where we were quarantined.

You don't need to ascribe to Christian symbols to see that transforming four simple ingredients, water, flour, yeast and salt, into a cross-cultural symbol of life is an act of faith. Despite the promises of too many cookbooks to teach readers to master bread, to make a good loaf of bread, a baker simply needs awareness and faith. A good baker knows that no recipe can account for all the variables involved in bread baking — room temperature, water temperature, vitality of the yeast, type of flour, availability of wild yeasts (or lack thereof). A good baker must put a little faith not only in the ingredients but in the baker's own abilities to notice and adapt to the needs of the dough. All things bread, from the seed in the soil to the loaf at the table, require a leap of faith. Just ask the farmer, the miller, the baker.

For me, I returned to my practice of bread baking in the pandemic for reasons I couldn't articulate initially. I wasn't bored and I certainly didn't need something to pass the time. (I have a young child who has still not returned to in-person school full-time, despite that both my husband and I work full-time.) Baking just felt like the right thing to do.

Because my informal culinary and formal theological education took place at the same time in my life, I've never been able to mix dough for baguettes nor boules without wondering what it all means, that four simple ingredients — water, yeast, flour, and salt — can transform into a symbol for life itself in my own humble kitchen, in my own humble hands. And when I gather with friends and family to tear into a loaf together, well I'm sent into a mystical experience. Warmth in my chest, buzzing in my ears, a swooning in my soul, all pronouncing, "God is here."

"God is here," is exactly what we Christians celebrate in the Eucharist. Bread proclaims the mysteries of life and death. "God is here," is what



I told my patients at Rush whose families couldn't visit because of hospital restrictions. "God is here," I said to the families who came to witness the deaths of their mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, grandparents to Covid-19. And then I carried their names and faces and stories home with me, and I baked bread.

The night before his death, Jesus' clear voice cut through the murmur and din of conversation swirling around the table and held up a piece of bread, saying "This is my body." He didn't point to himself, to his own body. He didn't gesture around the room and say, "This group here that is gathered to eat and drink and be with one another, this is my body." He held up a literal piece of bread and showed it to his disciples.

For many I've spoken with about baking bread, it's the physical labor of it that connects them to tradition, family stories of the past, and memories. For others, baking bread is an act of trust, a leap of faith.

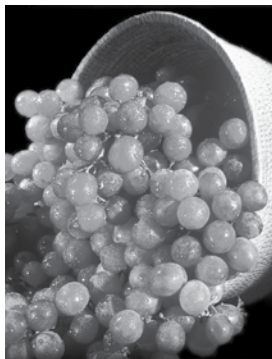
Was there a piece of fish before him that he touched before realizing it was the simple bread, the mixture of water, yeast, flour, and salt, that he needed to show his disciples? The wine would have been more obvious if it was the only thing to drink, but the bread may have taken at least a moment of discernment.

Of course, it had to be bread. Bread is synonymous with life, if even for the most practical reason: it is food, widely available, ubiquitous food. Food that makes life possible. "Take. Eat. Do this in memory of me," he said.

But in bread there is also death. To become flour, wheat is cut down and its berries are crushed in a mill into flour. Yeast, while activated and alive during the mixing, kneading, and proofing process, dies in high heat after releasing the last gasp of carbon dioxide that gives bread what's referred to as its "oven spring," when the bread swiftly swells for a final time in the oven.

Death is the context for the life in bread. But life is the context for death in bread. Something new is always offered. Life is always offered. Bread, from the seed planted in the soil to the hot loaves pulled from the oven and broken with friends and family, tells the story of God among us, over and over, again and again.





EUCCHARISTIC SPIRITUALITY

A Mom Learns About Eucharistic Love Through Breastfeeding

by Stephanie Clary

When we see the world through a sacramental lens meaning can be found everywhere. Here theologian Stephanie Clary shares how breastfeeding her child became a sacramental encounter.

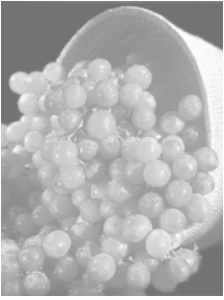
I HAVE SPENT THE MAJORITY OF THE PAST THREE YEARS OF MY LIFE EITHER PREGNANT or breastfeeding. While my collective 16 months of pregnancy with children born two years apart contain many moments of holy awe and wonder at the experience of begetting life, it is the cumulative 20 months (and counting) of breastfeeding that draw me deep into sacramental contemplation.

I remember once, a decade ago, asking a priest why there are sometimes images of pelicans carved into altars or depicted in church stained-glass windows. The answer is that if faced with a food shortage mother pelicans will feed their young with feathers and flesh plucked from their own breasts to the point of bleeding — they are a symbol of the Eucharist, the offering of oneself to save others.

To be honest, at the time that reason and reality seemed pretty gross. Pelicans aren't particularly majestic birds to begin with, and picturing one plucked and bloodied is anything but appetizing. Yet I have returned to this exact image over and over again — when I'm up in a rocking chair at 2 a.m., huddled on a park bench while others play, crammed in a public bathroom with a breast pump, or when crying in pain over a clogged duct or in frustration over a baby who won't latch.

Now that I have lived the experience of feeding another from my breasts, traditional depictions of Our Lady of La Leche — complete with flawless skin and many-layered robes — while beautiful, don't really resonate. It is the ruffled pelican mother that helps refine my understanding of the Eucharist.

Stephanie Clary is the digital editor at *U.S. Catholic*



What a unique experience it is to literally feed another with your body. It requires a level of sacrifice I've not known before, or at least in which I've never before been interested in participating (that being said, many parents' journey with breastfeeding is far more challenging than mine has been). Still, amid sacrificing certain foods, struggling to clock enough sleep each night, stressing about whether the baby is eating enough, and then panicking that he'll want more than I have to give, I reflect in renewed awe at the gift we've been given in the Eucharist.

This is my body, for you. A version of Jesus speaking these words is recorded in three gospels and in one of Paul's letters. In terms of historical accuracy, that means Jesus almost certainly actually said this. We remember it in a special way on Holy Thursday each year, but also in the sacrament every single Sunday and even during each daily Mass. It is quite possibly one of, if not the most often referenced line of scripture. It is that important.

Could this be what Jesus referenced when saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me"?

The pelican mother's act no longer strikes me as a distasteful and primal example of survival but rather a compelling model of how nourishment and connection reside at the core of our Catholic faith and help us thrive under any circumstances.

What a unique experience it is to literally feed another with your body. It requires a level of sacrifice I've not known before, or at least in which I've never before been interested in participating.

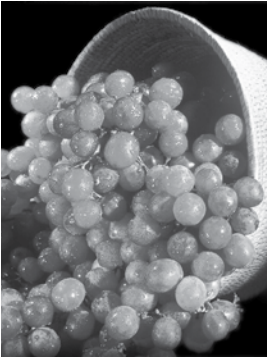
Breast milk, a substance of complete and perfect nourishment, is created by my body in response to the needs of my child at any given time as detected by changes in my baby's saliva. More fat, more hydration, certain immunities — they're all there in an instant without my ever having to think about it. Yet for being so specific my milk is still universal enough to share. As a preemie with dangerously low blood sugar, my oldest son required donor milk during his first hour of life. In turn, I donated more than 225 ounces of my breast milk to help a local mother and baby in need. Alone, we would have suffered. Together, we flourished.

Broken and shared. Is this the sort of connection Jesus sought to explain at the Last Supper — one of necessity, nourishment, dependence, and love (not just between a breastfeeding parent and baby but also with other parents and other babies and an entire support community)? Could this be what Jesus referenced when saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:19)? How maternal of the Christ to use this language in describing the depths of God’s love for us.



Reprinted with express permission from *U.S. Catholic*, 205 W. Monroe St., Chicago, IL 60606; uscatholic.org

Emmanuel Subscriber Service	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change your address • inquire about the status or payment of your subscription 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inquire about gift subscriptions • inquire about missing issues
NEW SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM	
U.S. Rates 2 yr. - \$65.00 1 yr. - \$35.00	
Canadian and Foreign Rates (U.S. currency) 2 yr. - \$75.00 1 yr. - \$40.00	
Name _____ Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____ - _____	
TO CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS	
Send us an address label from a recent issue together with your new address, or fill in the information below. Please give us 6 to 8 weeks advance notice.	
Old Address	New Address
Name _____	Name _____
Address _____	Address _____
City _____	City _____
State _____ Zip _____	State _____ Zip _____



EUCCHARISTIC SPIRITUALITY

The Parable of the Rich Fool (Lk 12:13-21)

by Bernard Camiré, SSS

Where did this "rich man" go so wrong that he is called a "fool" by God?

Blessed Sacrament Father Bernard Camiré is the parochial vicar of Saint Jean Baptiste Church in New York City. His most recent book is entitled, *Praise God in His Holy Place: Psalms and Canticles of Scripture for Eucharistic Adoration*. This reflection originally appeared in the Saint Jean Baptiste Church parish bulletin.

THE EVANGELIST LUKE INTRODUCES THIS PARABLE BY RECOUNTING A REQUEST MADE of Jesus to settle the matter of a disputed inheritance. In his somewhat harsh-sounding response to the one who made the request, Jesus does not directly address the matter in question. Rather, he speaks to the deeper issue involved, namely, the correct attitude toward material things; and he does this with a parable.


Significantly, the parable is introduced with a salient saying: "Take care to guard against all greed, for though one may be rich, one's life does not consist of possessions." With this statement, which is both a maxim and a warning, Jesus teaches that greed or avarice is a vice that turns its victim away from both God and neighbor. It is not the mere possession of material goods that is censured here, but the constant and all-obsessing need to accumulate surplus possessions. The parable of the rich fool illustrates Jesus' saying.

After we are told that the protagonist of the story was "a rich man," whose land brought forth a bountiful harvest, the narrative makes us privy to a soliloquy within the mind of the man. Rather than thank God for the great abundance with which he has been blessed and share it with the needy, his thought is only to build larger barns to store all his grain and other goods. We note how the man dialogues entirely within himself, in his soul. Thoroughly delighted with his success, he cannot bring himself even to share his joy with other people. His great wealth has had the effect of isolating him from human contact. His intention to rest, eat, drink and be merry parallels the behavior of the rich man in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk 16:19-31).

Suddenly, in the midst of his blithesome thoughts, a Faustian-like

moment of truth strikes. God announces: “You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?” In no other parable narrative does God enter so directly and startlingly. The name with which God addresses the man, “fool,” is a telling one. In Old Testament usage the fool is the individual who, in practice, denies God. He had not only forgotten that his life and the abundant fruits of his harvest were on a loan meant to be restored, but also forgotten God — so absorbed had he become in his possessions.

The concluding question that God addresses to the man, “The things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?” refers back to the dispute over inheritance, which occasioned the parable. The rich man’s avarice so isolated him that he had not even provided for his heirs. He dies completely alone in a situation that will generate acrimonious debate over inheritance. Jesus underscores the moral of the parable with his statement: “Thus will it be for the one who stores up treasure for himself but is not rich in what matters to God.” The statement emphasizes the foolishness of the rich man. He misplaced his security and failed to administer his God-given abundance with caution, responsibility, and charity.

This parable alerts us to the danger not only of making material possessions our only aim in life but also of relying exaggeratedly on possessions. It is of course lawful to want to own what we need for living, but the accumulating of material resources must never become an absolute. Such, necessarily, leads to spiritual ruin. Our pursuit in life must ever be God, our supreme good, and not possessions. The exclusive pursuit of possessions and material well-being becomes an obstacle to the realization of our true greatness and destiny, and prevents us from growing “rich in what matters to God.” 



PASTORAL LITURGY

What Have We Learned from the “COVID Mass?”

by John Thomas J. Lane, SSS

Blessed Sacrament Father John Thomas Lane, SSS holds degrees in music, education and liturgy. He currently serves as pastor of his home parish, Saint Paschal Baylon Roman Catholic Church, Highland Heights, Ohio. He has also been a pastor in Houston and Albuquerque, vocation minister, and a diocesan director of liturgy. His works have been in numerous publications, including LTP. For questions or workshops he could do for your parish, contact him at jtlanesss@gmail.com or (440) 442-3410.

A NEW MANTRA HAS DEVELOPED FOR ALL OF US: “WHAT A YEAR!” IT’S BEEN OVER a year since we returned to public worship in person after the initial closures. I write this column as Lent begins (February 2021) and am conscious that many of the current practices taken on to protect one another are perhaps permanent. I hope this will not be the case. Let’s review several practices that are new and would be good to keep in place, some transitional adjustments to be made, and other practices that have been put on hold but need to return to ensure “full, active and conscious participation (Sacrosanctum Concilium, 14)” in the Mass.

First, livestream or videotaping Masses brought us into the 21st century, using technology for outreach and evangelization. This has been a good thing. It allows people to participate in our celebrations that had been limited by the barrier of distance. This connection, made possible by the latest technological wonders, reminds us of a deeper communion that we share. Because of this many people did not feel completely separated from the Eucharist, even though they were not able to receive Holy Communion. A great grandmother explained to me why this process needs to continue: “I watched my great granddaughter’s wedding five times now! It was so beautiful!” Tellingly, she was actually physically present in church for the wedding but having YouTube Channels and archives allows us to savor the celebration. Another unexpected benefit in this process were additional volunteers who came forward to a new ministry: videographers.

Second, “Cleanliness is next to Godliness.” While that phrase is cliché, we created a new ministry or added to hospitality by passing out bulletins, sanitizing and assisting members in keeping one another safe. Sanitary stations and masks have assisted us in keeping the community healthier. These stations, along with extra cleaning, should continue.

Third, consultation and collaboration led to networking with a wider group of people than our regular “inner circle.” I enjoyed working with the health professionals in our parish. I am blessed to live near a “world class” health center. Our liturgy commission in particular expanded its role, developing protocols and procedures, and that led to other creative ideas to improve our worship.

These are all positive things that we can take away from this experience. They are things we have learned and gained and appreciate for. Yet, before we look to the things we need to return to, we must consider some important transitional steps:

First, it was well publicized that “we closed” as churches and worship centers. We need new banners and signs to remind people we are open, and that our churches are available for prayer again. With our regular cleaning throughout the week according to CDC guidelines, we can maintain a safe environment for people. There is a great value in hospitality and gathering together in person.

Secondly, we should rethink the location for exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. While acknowledging that most people feel more inclined to prayerful meditation in small chapels, today’s reality is that well-ventilated spaces take precedence over people’s preferences. Exposition in the main body of the church will allow for regular air flows. How many of our chapels were like closets and segregated with a special door code and area for those who prayed in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament? How often were these spaces not well ventilated? If safety is a concern, on various levels, rethink with your Community at Prayer Ministry (i.e. adoration bands) how these may return. “Cry Rooms” too should be reconsidered in light of safety and ventilation.

With those relevant considerations acknowledged, let’s turn our attention to the important aspects of our Eucharistic liturgies that should return.

First, special programs we had for children need to return and be revamped. Parishes should provide resources for families so that they are able to bring back their Children’s Liturgy of the Word. This is an important way to engage families and welcome them back to Mass. During the pandemic videos were made as resources for families for doing “at-home” worship. These can inspire and guide parishes to be just as creative, while also taking additional step to ensure each child will stay healthy.

Second, the procession with the gifts of bread and wine needs to return to make the connection between the gifts and the community. Much can be said about the importance of this aspect of the ritual. We should recall that the General Instruction of the Roman Missal states, "It is a praiseworthy practice for the bread and wine to be presented by the faithful. ... Even though the faithful no longer bring from their own possessions the bread and wine intended for the liturgy as was once the case, nevertheless the rite of carrying up the offerings still keeps its spiritual efficacy and significance" (GIRM 73)" Fellow priests have shared with me how they have brought this meaningful element of the Mass back by covering the hosts and using the vessels in a protected way.

Third, return the distribution of holy water with community members having access in one central spot, preferably the baptismal font. Additionally, allow for the sprinkling rite. Regularly renew the water in the baptismal font, ensure a filter system, and cease the use of holy water stoops, with sponges or other small pools, where water is not circulating or regularly sanitized.

Fourth, the Precious Blood must be offered to the faithful again. This may be the most difficult to reimage. Here's a creative suggestion for the return of this "command of Christ." Return to using a flagon, and at the Fraction Rite, pour the Precious Blood into individual chalices for those who wish to receive. We must continue to offer the Blood of Christ, not only for those with celiac, but to show forth the powerful theological reality that we share in the blood of the covenant, offered for our salvation. Too much blood has been shed for the faith, from Christ's to the martyrs, to not be regularly memorialized. I have heard too many people say, "Well, we didn't have the blood until recently, so what's the big deal?" Or, "It's not the right of the lay people, it was only meant for the priests." These are false interpretations of Christ's commandment at the Last Supper, our history, and the ways we share in the blood of Christ. Why not have ministers and members of the congregation sign up for chalices to be offered to them so that they will be able to participate in this aspect of the covenant? Having multiple chalices could facilitate a return to the reception of the Precious Blood. Many other Christian denominations have moved in the direction to encourage people to share in the Blood of Christ. We have had separate chalices for concelebrating priests, so is it time for us to have multiple chalices for the lay faithful?

Lastly, our processions and some safe form of physical contact need to return. We stopped a lot of physical contact, such as handshaking, and have provided for physical distancing in the entrance and exit rituals. Most folks are still not hugging and will hopefully return to this practice at some point. However, how many times was the pastoral touch of a hug necessary to support someone in their grief? It was so hard to reserve proper pastoral care. We need some physical contact with people in an appropriate way. Mask wearing will continue for the foreseeable future and many parishes have become creative with liturgical colors for masks. Some even provided special masks for First Communion and confirmation students.

These are but a few new realities and hopes to return to our former way of worshipping. The reality is that for the foreseeable future, this is the “new normal.” We will continue to have suggestions and updated procedures as events unfold. Let us evaluate and collaborate with health officials and with our diocesan and parish liturgy commissions, improving our worship and learning to safely guide one another to the table of the LORD.

Organizing for September/October 2021

Key: *Book of Blessings* (BB), *Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers* (CHBP), *Ceremonial of Bishops* (CB)

A few regular celebrations during these months:

- Beginning of the School Year (BB 522- 550)
- International Eucharistic Congress – to prepare for this in September 5 – 12 in Budapest, rescheduled due to COVID
- Labor Day Prayer, Monday, September 6 – See CHBP, page 176 and special lectionary readings for Mass
- Beginning Tuesday, September 7 – Jewish New Year (Rosh Hashanah)/Yom Kippur
- Second Sunday in September (September 12) is Grandparents Day in the civic calendar (Pope Francis added the Sunday nearest Saints Joachim and Ann as the Church’s annual blessing and celebration for grandparents)
- Third Sunday of September, September 19 is Catechetical Sunday Blessing of Catechists (BB 505-508)
- Ordained Priesthood Sunday – September 26
- Human Life Month/Sunday – First Sunday of October, October 3

- Blessing of Animals (BB 942-965; CHPB, page 154), for October 4, Saint Francis of Assisi
- Columbus Day (USA) – Second Monday, October 11
- National Boss Day – Saturday, October 16
- World Mission Sunday – Sunday, October 24
- United Nations Day – Sunday, October 24
- Reformation Day – Sunday, October 31

Lectionary supplement reminders:

- Thursday, September 8 – Peter Claver (USA Calendar Day)
- Thursday, September 23 – Padre Pio
- Tuesday, September 28 – Laurence Ruiz and Companions
- Tuesday, October 5 – Francis Xavier Seelos
- Monday, October 11 – John XXIII
- Friday, October 22 – John Paul II

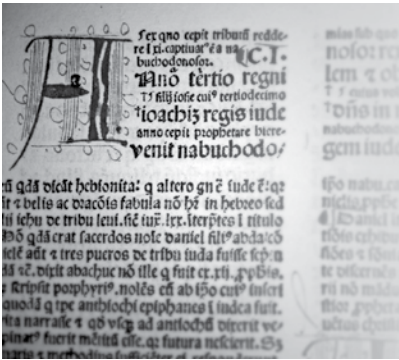
Other special days of note:

- Friday, September 3 – Memorial of Saint Gregory the Great, pope and doctor
- Wednesday, September 8 – Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Saturday, September 11 – Patriot Day (USA) – 20th Anniversary of September 11, 2001
- Monday, September 13 – Memorial of Saint John Chrysostom, bishop and doctor
- Tuesday, September 14 – Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross
- Wednesday, September 15 – Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows
- Tuesday, September 21 – Feast of Saint Matthew, apostle and evangelist
- Monday, September 27 – Memorial of Saint Vincent de Paul, presbyter. Also on this day (re)commission members of Gospel Justice Ministry (See BB)
- Wednesday, September 29 – Feast of the Archangels (Saints Michael, Gabriel and Raphael) and invite your first responders for a special blessing for their continued safety. This could also take place on Saturday, October 2, the Memorial of the Guardian Angels
- Thursday, September 30 – Memorial of Saint Jerome, presbyter and doctor
- Friday, October 1 – Memorial of Saint Thérèse of the Child

Jesus, virgin and doctor

- Monday, October 4 – Memorial of Saint Francis of Assisi, deacon and religious founder
- NEW: Tuesday, October 5 – Optional Memorial of Saint Faustina
- Thursday, October 7 – Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary and the Blessing of Rosaries (BB 1463 – 1487)
- Friday, October 15 – Memorial of Saint Teresa of Jesus, virgin and doctor
- Monday, October 18 – Feast of Saint Luke, evangelist. Consider including the anointing of the sick in honor of this patron saint
- Tuesday, October 19 – Memorial of the North American Martyrs (Saints Isaac Jogues, John de Brébeuf and companions)
- Thursday, October 28 – Feast of Saints Simon and Jude, apostles
- Sunday, October 31 – prepare for the Solemnity of All Saints (Monday, November 1)





BREAKING THE WORD

Scriptural Reflections – Homiletics

by Sister Lisa Marie Belz, OSU

An Ursuline
Sister of
Cleveland, Ohio,
Sister Lisa Marie
Belz is assistant
professor of
Biblical Studies
at St. Mary
Seminary and
Graduate School
of Theology in
Wickliffe, Ohio.

September 5, 2021 Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 35:4–7; Psalm 146:6–10; James 2:1–5; Mark 7:31–37

Are you asking God for enough? Today's readings urge us to think bigger, to ask for more, to see more intently, to listen more deeply, and, most especially, to open ourselves to the transformations that God desires to accomplish in us, for us, and through us.

In today's first reading, the prophet Isaiah urges his people to be on the lookout for positive changes to come. In the verses preceding today's passage (Isaiah 35:1-2), Isaiah speaks of unexpected transformations: the parched and lifeless desert, always encroaching upon Judah, will erupt with blossoms and lush vegetation. When does this happen? When the people can perceive "the glory of the Lord," and "God's splendor." The expression "the glory of the Lord" is found throughout Scripture and connotes God's presence, while the idea of "God's splendor" is Isaiah's way of speaking about God's profound goodness, even the utter beauty that is God, who makes all things beautiful. Those capable of perceiving the divine presence in all things can see God's beauty in everything. From there, grounded in a renewed awareness of God's presence, the prophet exhorts the people to speak words of encouragement to each other: "Say to the fearful of heart, 'Be strong! Do not be afraid!'"

The word translated here as "fearful" has the connotation in Hebrew of being "hurried" (from "mahar," "be in a hurry") — say to those who are "in a rush," or whose hearts are "anxious, running around doing many things": find your strength in slowing down, in stopping to take a breath. Slow down long enough to notice what is beautiful in your life. Slow

down long enough to become aware of God's loving presence in your life. God has your back! God desires your deepest well-being (Is 35:4). When you slow down enough, and regularly enough, to invite God's presence into your life, something deep inside of you changes and new possibilities for a flourishing life emerge from within you (Is 35:5-7a).

When we invite God's loving presence into our life, something happens inside us. We begin to see differently. We begin to see more as God sees. And then we see others differently. As our second reading reminds us, each human being, no matter how "shabby," has immense value. Each human being is precious. Those without power or money, those whom society discards, or judges as inferior, or laughs at, are nonetheless, human beings created in the divine image and likeness. For this alone, they are beautiful. Can we see others as God sees them? When we see with God's eyes, the world around us — and every human being, rich and poor alike — becomes for us more beautiful, more loveable, more honorable.

And so, do we ask God for enough? Do we ask God to give us a deeper sense of God's presence in our lives, a greater sense of God's loving care for us, the ability to see as God sees? Today's gospel tells a story about people who bring to Jesus a man who is deaf and mute. They only ask that Jesus "lay his hand on him." But Jesus is ready to do so much for the man. Jesus takes the man aside and spends extra time with him, gently touching the man where he is most broken. Significantly, the man allows Jesus to take his time with him, to touch him, to heal him. Then the man emerges transformed, and he can do something he couldn't do before. Now he can hear. Now he can speak. And he is changed.

Where are you blind, indifferent, deaf, or silent? Where are you broken and not able to function well? Where are there deserts in your life that need refreshment and revitalization? Where do you need change? Are you asking God for enough? Are you slowing down enough to allow Christ to accomplish in you the transformations that will empower you to thrive, grow and flourish?

September 12, 2021 Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 50:5–9; Psalm 116:1–6, 8–9; James 2:14–18; Mark 8:27–35

What makes for true, authentic faith? Often, when we think about what faith is, we focus on orthodox doctrine and dogma as markers of authentic faith. Of course, holding onto the truths of Christian faith with a profound respect for how the Church has diligently sought to understand and articulate those truths, in ways that are coherent and faithful, is undeniably important. We can call this “orthodoxy,” or “right belief.” But, as important as orthodoxy is, today’s readings challenge us not to limit our faith to merely a set of “right beliefs.” On the contrary, a faith that is true — and truly alive — requires still more.

For example, Peter, alone of all the disciples, offers the right answer to Jesus’ question, “Who do you say that I am?” He *knows* that Jesus is the “Christ,” that is, the “Messiah.” We could say his faith is “orthodox.” But, according to Jesus, Peter is missing something important. He’s thinking, not as God thinks, but as human beings think. Peter’s faith, even in its “orthodoxy,” in its correctness, is not yet going far enough. It hasn’t yet developed to the point where Peter can see as God sees.

More than being able to give the “right answers,” authentic faith should develop in us the capacity to see as God sees. Mark tells us that to begin to see as God sees will move us to follow after Jesus. Consider Bartimaeus who, after Jesus gives him sight, follows Jesus to Jerusalem, that is to say, he follows Jesus even to the cross (Mk 10:46–52), with all that this implies: putting Jesus’ Kingdom values ahead of our own ego and self-interests, spending ourselves, our very lives, for Christ’s sake and that of the Good News. Still more, for Mark, to begin to see as God sees means recognizing God’s son in the least likely people, like the centurion who perceived God’s son in the condemned man hanging before him on the cross (Mk 15:39).

But true faith should also develop in us the ability to hear as God hears. As we read in today’s psalm, “I love the Lord because he has *heard* my voice in supplication, because he has *inclined his ear* to me the day I called. . . The Lord keeps the little ones. I was brought low and he saved me.” Notice how to hear as God hears evokes an immediate

response: "He has inclined his ear to me *the day I called.*" Love doesn't hesitate. Love is not indifferent. God is not indifferent to what God sees and hears. Indeed, that God knows, sees, and hears the poor is central to God's self-revelation at Sinai (God "knows" their suffering: Ex 2:25; 3:7; God "sees" their affliction: Ex 3:7,9; 4:31; God "hears" their cry: Ex 2:24; 3:7,9; 4:31; 6:5). Therefore, genuine faith requires seeing as God sees, hearing as God hears, and *responding* without hesitation, without calculation.

This is why, for James, genuine faith goes beyond merely wishing our neighbor well. It requires that we notice our neighbor's needs, that we hear our neighbor's cry, and *that we respond*. Genuine faith requires an active love for our neighbor, particularly the neediest. It is not enough simply to have a doctrinally correct faith. We must see our neighbor, hear our neighbor, and love our neighbor by responding to our neighbor's genuine need. We can call this "orthopraxis," or right "practice." For James, faith without *orthopraxis* isn't faith at all. Even more than orthodoxy, more than getting all the answers right and nailing down the catechism, James insists that *orthopraxis* is equally a requirement for genuine faith.

While it is true that without orthodoxy our faith is distorted, today's readings warn us that without *orthopraxis*, our faith is *dead*.

September 19, 2021 Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Wisdom 2:12, 17-20; Psalm 54:3-6, 8; James 3:16-4:3;
Mark 9:30-37**

What does it mean to follow Jesus? To answer that question, we should look first to *the main focus* of Jesus' teaching and mission. Mark's gospel makes it clear that Jesus' entire mission, his entire focus, is the kingdom of God. While we often confuse the concept of the "kingdom of God" with "heaven," or a happy afterlife, the evangelists remind us that the kingdom of God has everything to do with the life we are called to live *now*. For Mark, Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom of God is about how we live *here*, on *earth*. Notice how this idea is preserved in the "Our Father": "Your kingdom come, your will be done *on earth* as it is in heaven" (Mt 6:10).

Central to Jesus' kingdom mission is "good news" for the poor (Mt 11:5; Lk 4:18;7:22). In today's gospel, we see Jesus insisting that in his kingdom, it is the little ones, those without rank or power, who count the most; any in his kingdom who aspire to greatness must become the servant of all — they must take the last place and assume the lowest status. To emphasize his point, Jesus takes and places a child among them, and then embraces the child. Matthew's version of this story offers more details, with Jesus warning his disciples that, unless they "change and become like children," they "will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 18:1-5). Why a child? In the world of Jesus, children had no rights, status or power. To become like a child is to become small, not to take oneself or one's importance so seriously. It means rejecting rank and prestige and the conflicts and toxic energy generated by self-inflated egos.

Of course, Jesus knows that his kingdom proclamation will meet with tremendous opposition by those who like their comfort, possessions, and status too much. Today's gospel takes us to the moment in which, for the second time, Jesus tries to prepare his disciples for the rejection ahead, for what will look and feel like catastrophic failure. Nonetheless, he also knows he must stay the course and be faithful to his work of promoting the kingdom of God, though it will cost him everything. Still, he is ready to face even the cross in his determination to be faithful to the mission his Father has entrusted to him.

Of course, this is all too much for his disciples to receive. They are only half listening. They're too focused on themselves and their petty rivalries, and so they completely miss what Jesus is preparing them for. The disciples' situation finds a parallel in today's second reading as James describes the rivalries and jealousies of Christians who have forgotten about what discipleship requires, Christians so focused on themselves and on acquiring possessions and status that they forget about Jesus and following him. They forget, too, to cultivate their relationship with Jesus, to listen carefully and intently to him. And notice where all that takes them: away from any sense of peace and well-being. When we put ourselves at our center and not Jesus and his kingdom values, notice the toxic energy we generate and live in. We create conflicts, in-fighting, even wars against each other, seeking to destroy or eliminate each other, if not physically then emotionally or psychologically by the way we destroy the reputations of those whom we envy or view as rivals or threats. Notice, there's no real happiness there, no genuine contentment or lasting peace.

But as Mark's gospel makes clear, to follow Jesus means being ready to face rejection and opposition, even the cross (8:34-37). It means faithfully living by the values of Jesus' kingdom heedless of the cost, and then accepting the consequences, confident that our lives are held in God's love, no matter what (Ps 54:4).

September 26, 2021
Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Numbers 11:25-29; Psalm 19:8, 10, 12-14; James 5:1-6;
Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48**

How do we value and use God's gifts, whether spiritual or material, whether given to others or to ourselves? In today's first reading, Joshua, Moses's young assistant, mistakenly thinks that there are limits to God's gifts. Joshua believes that the Spirit of God can only be given in a certain place, in a certain way, to certain people who fulfill Joshua's own limited understanding of "worthiness." When he learns that others are gifted with God's Spirit in ways that don't conform to his expectations, Joshua objects. While his intentions are good, he desires to uphold Moses's authority, his view of God is much too small. Fortunately, Moses helps him to value God's gifts in others, even in those whom Joshua thinks are undeserving. Similarly, today's gospel tells how the disciples try to prevent someone from "driving out demons" in Jesus's name because "he does not follow us." Again, like Joshua, the disciples have good intentions, wanting only to defend Jesus' authority. Nonetheless, Jesus encourages his disciples to think more broadly, more inclusively. Both readings invite our reflection: where are we like Joshua and Jesus's disciples, putting limits on God's gifts and grace? Where are we more like Moses and Jesus in their ability to recognize God's gifts at work in unlikely people and circumstances?

While today's first reading and gospel invite us to reflect on how we either encourage or oppose God's gifts, the second reading pricks our conscience as it asks us to consider how we come into possession of or use the material gifts we enjoy. The Epistle of James uses strong language against gaining wealth off the sweat of the poor, living a comfortable life yet refusing to pay a living wage to those whose labor benefits us. In fact, James equates the withholding of just wages

with murder as the underpaid struggle to survive. James' words echo Jesus' own strong language: "Woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation! Woe to you who are filled now, for you will be hungry!" (Lk 6:24-25). Jesus' parable of the rich man and Lazarus offers the same message (Lk 16:19-31). The rich man ignores the poor Lazarus at his door. Eventually Lazarus dies and goes to heaven, while the rich man, when he dies, goes to a place of torment, not for anything he did, but for the good he failed to do when he had the means and opportunity. Again, we are asked to consider, how do we enrich ourselves at the expense of others, or fail to share God's gifts in ways that improve the lives of others?

For those who think they don't have anything valuable to share, today's gospel reminds us that even the smallest thing we share has an impact. We don't have to look for big things to do to make a difference. Even being attentive to the small things, like giving someone a glass of water (what, in Jesus' world, would have been a sign of hospitality and acceptance), is of great value. At the same time, Jesus uses hyperbolic language to drive home the importance of using the gifts we have rightly. With our hands we bless others, we work, we serve, we touch in ways that are loving and kind. But those same hands can also be used for harm and hurt. Our feet can bring us to places where we can do good, but they also can bring us to places that are sinful. Jesus' point here is to entirely avoid those occasions and places where we are tempted to use the gifts God gives us in ways that are contrary to love and that oppose God's goodness.

God's gifts to each of us are abundant and diverse. God withholds good things from no one who asks. How do you recognize and encourage God's gifts in others? How do you use your own God-given gifts in ways that make the world around you better?

October 3, 2021
Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Genesis 2:18-24; Psalm 128:1-3, 4-6; Hebrews 2:9-11;
Mark 10:2-16 or 10:2-12**

What is love? Is love something that you "fall into"? Is it a passionate, romantic feeling, or an emotional attachment? Of course, if we can

“fall in” love, then we can also “fall out” of love. In fact, psychologists agree that intense emotions or romantic feelings are not sustainable in the long run; it is only natural for them to fade with time. Yet no one would dispute that we all need love to live happy, fulfilled lives. Certainly, to borrow a phrase from the 1976 hit song, love has to be “more than a feeling.” But what is love, exactly?

Today’s gospel offers insight into Jesus’ own views on love and the outspoken way Jesus challenges distortions about love that were popular in his time. For example, in Jesus’ world, a man could legally divorce his wife for any reason at all, no matter how flimsy: if he didn’t like how she cooked a meal; if she began to grow wrinkles or gray hair; if there was someone younger and prettier that he was interested in. All a man had to do was to send a servant to inform his wife to pack up her belongings and leave — immediately. He didn’t even have to talk to her directly. In fact, adultery at that time was legally defined by what a *wife* did with someone not her husband. For Mark’s Greco-Roman audience, a husband could have relations with anyone he wanted as long as his sexual partner(s) did not include a married woman. If culturally and legally we don’t define adultery in this way, and if divorce today is not as easy, we have Jesus to thank for it, and the profound influence that Christianity, informed by Jesus’ teachings on marriage and divorce, has had on Western civilization. Jesus was the first man to redefine adultery away from the double-standards of his time: for Jesus, just to look at a woman as a sex object, not as a human being, was to commit adultery with her in his heart (Mt 5:27-28).

Against a culture that treated women as discardable objects, Jesus upholds the scriptural teaching that both a man and a woman share the same dignity as creatures made in God’s image and likeness (Gen 1:26-27). When his questioners ask him about divorce, Jesus summarizes for them Gen 1:27 and Gen 2:24. Even Jesus’ disciples are perplexed by his adamant rejection of the cultural acceptability of divorce, asking him afterward for more explanation. Jesus responds by insisting on his own definition of adultery: for married partners, anything short of mutually exclusive sexual fidelity for life is adulterous.

What does this mean for us today? We might begin by looking at how we love, how we guard our heart for the one we love, the one to whom we have freely committed our life’s love. What are the popularly accepted distortions of love today that conflict with the love required

of us by the Gospel? What kind of loving environment do we create for our family? Do we regularly take time to let our spouse know how much she or he is cherished? Do our children know how dearly we love them? Do we create a home in which our spouse and children thrive (Ps 128:3)?

Created in the image and likeness of God, a God who is love (1 Jn 4:8,16), we are all created for love, to give love and to receive it. Thus, to lead genuinely happy and fulfilled lives would require that we make a *conscious choice* to put love at the center of our life. But God's love is not an easy love. It's not a love that discards others; it's not self-gratifying; it's not something that one who truly loves can "fall out" of. Love, then, is something we choose, something we cultivate, something we work at. It is what we build our lives on. And *how* we love, *whom* we love, and *what* we love shapes our heart.

October 10, 2021 Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Wisdom 7:7-11; Psalm 90:12-17; Hebrews 4:12-13;
Mark 10:17-30 or 10:17-27**

Have you found your greatest satisfaction yet? Have you discovered yet your heart's deepest joy? The rich young man in today's gospel approaches Jesus with a question and a heart yearning for something more. He has lived a virtuous life. He has observed all the commandments. He has everything he could possibly want. In fact, the Greek word translated here as possessions ("ktema") means "property" or "land" — he was a wealthy landowner, owning many pieces of land. But for all his affluence, he feels an emptiness inside, something pushing him to seek more. And so, he comes to Jesus, *running*: "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus' initial reply models that of a pious and devout Jew: "No one is good but God alone," a statement which reflects multiple summons in the Jewish Scriptures to acknowledge God's goodness. And then Jesus answers his question with a summary list of the commandments. When the man affirms that he has kept the commandments from his youth, Jesus' heart warms at his earnestness, and he perceives the man's sense of emptiness despite all his possessions. He then offers the young man an invitation: "You are lacking in one thing. Go,

sell what you have, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." The man's reaction is both *shock* ("stugnasis," from "stugnazo," meaning "be shocked") and *grief* ("lupoumenos," from "lupeo," "grieve"). Jesus' invitation has put him in a dilemma: does he follow his heart's deepest desire, or does he hold onto his many possessions and the comfortable world he knows? The young man feels the attraction of following Jesus. It tugs keenly on his heart strings. A part of him very much wants to accept Jesus' loving invitation. But he's not free enough to accept. He's held prisoner by his many possessions. And so, he chooses his possessions over freedom, spiritual emptiness over what would have been his greatest satisfaction, and grief over the deep joy of following Jesus. Somehow, he senses that he is rejecting the best invitation of his whole life. And he walks away sad.

For anyone of that time, Jesus' response would come as a surprise: "How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the Kingdom of God!" Wealth was considered a sign of God's favor, God's blessing. Jesus challenges the views of the time with his teaching that the poor are the ones who are blessed (Lk 6:20), while the rich are given "woe" (Lk 1:53; 6:24). Indeed, Jesus warns his disciples that, "though one may be rich, one's life does not consist of possessions" (Lk 12:15). Those who give up everything, whether family or possessions, for Jesus' sake and the sake of the gospel, will be given a hundred times more (and persecution besides!) —God is never outdone in generosity.

The Gospel is not easy in its demands, is it? As the Letter to the Hebrews warns, the word of God cuts us where it hurts! Still, there *is* hope. Jesus insists that what is impossible for human beings is possible for God (Mk 10:27). We open ourselves to new possibilities as we grow our prayer life: "I prayed, and prudence was given me; I pleaded, and the spirit of wisdom came to me" (Wis 7:7). In prayer we acknowledge our limits and dependence on grace, and then God accomplishes something in us beyond our power to do on our own: God gives us wisdom to see the hollowness in a life that accumulates possessions. As we grow in prayer, bit by bit we empty ourselves of what is less than God, and soon we discover how God fills our emptiness with something far better. Then with the psalmist we can "sing for joy" because we *know* what it is to be truly satisfied when we open ourselves up to be filled with God's love.

October 17, 2021
Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Isaiah 53:10-11; Psalm 33:4-5,18-20, 22; Hebrews 4:14-16;
Mark 10:35-45 or 10:42-45**

What does it mean to be truly great? Today's gospel tells us about two apostles with ambitions. They want the highest positions in Jesus' Kingdom. The problem is that Jesus just warned them, for the *third* time, what was ahead in Jerusalem, how his Kingdom proclamation and mission would be brutally rejected and opposed, and that he himself would face a violent end (Mk 10:32-34). But James and John didn't hear Jesus. Their response to him reveals how deaf they are to his teachings. Notice how the other apostles are equally as deaf as James and John. In fact, the dullness of Jesus' disciples is a major theme in Mark's gospel. Mark frequently portrays the disciples as a bit "thick-skulled," not quite grasping what Jesus is saying. In response to James' and John's request for special status, the others become upset. While we don't usually think of the apostles as rivals to each other, Mark's portrait of them is not a flattering one. They have their own pecking order and petty rivalries. So, Jesus has to take them aside for a lesson on true greatness.

Truth be told, we're not all that different from the disciples in Mark's gospel. We have our own petty conflicts, rivalries, envy, and pecking orders. Like James and John, some of us seek to position ourselves with people with power and authority. Others, like the remaining disciples, become peeved by those whom they perceive as trying to outrank them. Yet Jesus utterly rejects the vertical relationships where the goal is to be at the top of the heap, climbing over everybody else to get there: "You know that those who are recognized as rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones make their authority felt. But it *shall not be so among you*." Jesus demands that his disciples adopt an inverse vertical relationship. Instead of climbing over everyone else to get to the top, Jesus insists that the only real greatness is to be found at the bottom: "Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all."

Jesus himself leads the way to the bottom of the heap, to true greatness: “For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Christ takes the last place among us, both in his birth as a homeless child, with a manger for a cradle (Lk 2), and in his death, dying as a condemned man on the cross. The hymn in Phil 2:6-11, an early Christian reflection on Is 52:13-53:12 (a portion of which is found in today’s first reading), describes Christ’s death on the cross this way: “He emptied himself” (Phil 2:7). In Jesus’ world, there is no lower place to go than to die on a cross. In total solidarity with human brokenness, not sparing himself the horrors that we can know as human beings, Christ accepts being “crushed in infirmity” and dies rejected and abandoned, like so many others, then and now. And God tenderly and lovingly receives Jesus’ self-offering (Is 53:10), investing his blood with the power to forgive sin (Heb 9:12-14). And now we have a great high priest who has “passed through the heavens” (Heb 4:14), because in his kingdom, the only way up is to go down, and the lower one goes for the sake of love, the higher one is raised.

Christ takes the last place among us, totally divesting himself of rank and status, to teach us a new kind of vertical relationship. Rather than seeking to be lords over each other, backstabbing, biting, kicking and fighting each other on the way to the top, we all are to seek to meet each other at the bottom as servants to one another — with Christ, in Christ, like Christ, thereby becoming more and more Christ ourselves. Only in this way can we become truly great.

October 24, 2021
Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jeremiah 31:7-9; Psalm 126:1-6; Hebrews 5:1-6; Mark 10:46-52

What does it mean to see? To answer this question, it is worth noting that today’s gospel is the final segment of the central section of Mark’s gospel, a section which both begins and ends with the cure of a blind man (Mk 8:22-10:52). This central section, or core, of Mark is key to understanding the gospel as a whole and today’s gospel in particular. Within Mark’s central core, deeper glimpses into Jesus’s identity are offered: Jesus is transfigured (Mk 9:2-10), and Jesus gives the three predictions of his passion (Mk 8:31-33; 9:31; 10:32-34). What is more, it is in this central core, and linked with each prediction of the passion,

that Mark highlights the requirements and costs of discipleship (Mk 8:34-38; 9:33-37; 10:35-52). To put it another way, the entire central core of Mark's gospel offers a reflection on blindness and what it means to see clearly.

To penetrate Mark's deeper meaning, it's worth contrasting the first healing of a blind man (Mk 8:22-26) with the second healing of a blind man (as we read in today's gospel). In the first story, Jesus must keep working on the man before he can finally see. After Jesus' first attempt, the man can see, but people "look like trees." So, Jesus tries again, and with Jesus' extra effort the man is able to see clearly. For Mark, it is not that Jesus is unable to heal this man on the first try; rather, the man needs *extra work* — like the disciples who "see" but not clearly. For example, when Jesus asks his disciples, "who do they say that he is?" (8:29), Peter speaks up as someone who "sees" who Jesus is, "the Messiah." But Peter's sight is only partial. He doesn't have any idea what kind of messiah Jesus is. When Jesus explains that he is a messiah altogether different from popular expectation, that he will suffer and die, be rejected and killed, Peter rebuffs Jesus's understanding of his messianic mission. Peter is unable to see as God sees. Clearly, Peter needs more work. Jesus has to continue to work on Peter and the other disciples to help them see better and more clearly. It is at this point where Jesus gives his clearest and most difficult teaching on the costs of discipleship: "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the gospel will save it . . ." (8:35).

Throughout this central core of Mark's gospel, time and again Mark reveals the disciples' blindness, their inability to "see" who Jesus really is and to perceive what Jesus is really saying. Finally, however, with the story of the blind Bartimaeus, set just before Jesus enters Jerusalem, Mark shows us what clear-sighted and perceptive discipleship looks like. Like Peter, Bartimaeus knows that Jesus is the messiah. He loudly and unashamedly calls Jesus by a clearly messianic title, "Son of David," even when rebuked and silenced (contrast this with Mk 8:38). When Jesus calls him, he responds by throwing aside his cloak, giving up everything he owns in response to Jesus' call (compare with Mk 10:28-31). Jesus doesn't have to keep working on Bartimaeus, the way he had to with the first blind man. Instead, with just a word from Jesus, Bartimaeus can see. His faith has saved him. And because he sees by faith, he can see clearly to follow Jesus all the way to Jerusalem, all the

way to the cross.

For Mark, this is what it means to see clearly: to take up one's cross and follow Jesus, because those who lose their life for Jesus' sake and that of the Gospel will save it (Mk 8:34-35). Bartimaeus gives up all he owns in response to Jesus's call and follows Jesus to Jerusalem. Among those accompanying Jesus that day, Bartimaeus is the one who sees the most clearly of all.

October 31, 2021 Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Deuteronomy 6:2-6; Psalm 18:2-4, 47, 51; Hebrews 7:23-28;
Mark 12:28-34**

What does it take to flourish and thrive? Our initial clue to answer that question is found in today's first reading, the great "Shema" of Judaism. Notice how the *Shema* begins: "Hear, O Israel!" In fact, the Hebrew word "shema" means "Listen!," "Pay attention!" In Hebrew, however, the idea of "hearing" requires more than a passive reception of what is heard. It demands an engaged, active response.

So, what is Israel supposed to "hear" and actively respond to? To answer that requires examining the link between the *Shema* and the creation narrative in Genesis 1. In the Hebrew text of Genesis 1, God speaks ten times, and each time is a command. Rabbinic commentators point out the connection between the Ten Commandments and the ten commands that God speaks in Genesis 1: creation takes life, flourishes, multiplies and grows in response to God's ten commands. Consequently, because creation is founded upon God's ten commands, to live by the Ten Commandments is to live in harmony with creation as it was designed by the giver of life. Conversely, to live apart from the Ten Commandments is to dry up and wither, to be disconnected from the source of all life.

But more is going on here than merely a set of commands and obedience to them. For the biblical writer, creation comes forth from God's "chesed," God's "steadfast love" as we read in Psalm 135, which, line by line, reviews God's work of creation and then God's saving acts toward Israel. After each line, each work of creation and salvation,

the psalmist repeats, "For his steadfast love endures forever!" God's steadfast love generates life and all creation. What, then, is the only logical response to the giver of life from the creature made in the divine image and likeness? It can only be to "hear," to "listen" in an engaged and active way to the words of the creator whose every word brings forth only abundant life and whose every command is spoken only in "chesed," in steadfast love. Thus, Israel is given this command: "Hear, O Israel!" In "hearing" God's commands, given to Israel because God's "steadfast love endures forever," Israel responds with an active and engaged obedience, returning love for Love: "You will love the Lord your God with all your heart..." In fact, as today's psalm reminds us, only by cultivating that relationship of love with the God whose "steadfast love endures forever" can Israel find its strength (Ps 18:1).

However, the command to return love for Love is only the first part of the Sinai covenant. The second part, and what is given equal attention throughout Torah and the prophets, is love for the neighbor as oneself. Our neighbor, too, like ourselves, is made in the divine image and likeness; thus, love for God requires loving the image and likeness of God in others. Notice that the command to love our neighbor as oneself has no conditions. We don't love our neighbor only when our neighbor pleases us. The injunction in Leviticus 19:18 is clear: "Take no revenge and cherish no grudge. You will love your neighbor as yourself." Required here is an unconditional love for the neighbor. Leviticus 19:34 makes clear that the neighbor isn't limited to those like ourselves: "You shall treat the immigrant who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you; you shall love the immigrant as yourself; for you too were once immigrants." Thus, when Jesus repeats the command in the *Shema* to love God with all our heart, indeed, with all that we are, he links the *Shema* to the commands in Leviticus 19 requiring love of neighbor. We can't have one without the other.

This is what it takes, then, to flourish and thrive: to return love for Love by living by God's commands, given in love; to find our strength in loving God in an active and fully engaged way; and to love our neighbor as oneself, unconditionally.





EUCCHARIST & CULTURE

Art • Music • Film •
Poetry • Books

Poetry

Out of October's Shadows II

The pleasant sun shines one last glance of hope
As it retreats toward southern skies. Earth yields
Few reassuring signs to help us cope
With longer, colder nights and empty fields.

Yet Barren hills reveal the shape of earth
Where sacred fingerprints emerge to show
How dark and light were both part of the birth
God set in place to let creation grow.

Though days grow short as leaves begin to drop,
And cold winds mar the brilliant evening sky,
These cries of nature warn that we can't stop
The hands of time that claim we too will die.

When bones creak just from rocking on the porch,
And daily tasks include rest in the shade,
These tell us that it's time to pass the torch.
"For new to shine what's older needs to fade."

That chance to shine brings its attendant fear
Of what our lives have written on each page.
Both noble and more shadowed acts appear;
Yet shadows can be faced in every age.

For shadows come because there is a light
That shines for even just a little while,

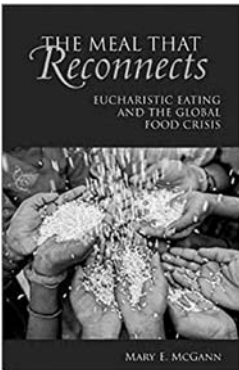
To help reveal the paths and choice that's right
For every generation's special style.

Though we prefer to keep life shining bright,
We never would see stars without the night.

Life grows—then fades—as part of God's design
To help us soar from "earthbound" to divine.

Patrick Dolan

Book Reviews



**THE MEAL THAT
RECONNECTS:
EUCHARISTIC
EATING AND
THE GLOBAL
FOOD CRISIS**
Mary E. McGann
Liturgical press
Academic
Collegeville, MN
2020
244pp.

In a "Zoom" lecture earlier this year organized by Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, the renowned theologian Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ presented, "Enfolding with Affection: Imagining 'Us' in Creation Theology." In the midst of this engaging lecture she made an intriguing aside. She expressed how she wished that she was just beginning her theological career, because with Pope Francis' impressive encyclical *Laudato Si'* there is so much important and exciting work to be done. With this in mind, Mary McGann, RSCJ's impressive *The Meal That Reconnects: Eucharistic Eating and the Global Food Crisis* is just such an example of how fruitful Pope Francis' watershed encyclical can be.

McGann's deep understanding of liturgy, culture, and ecology uniquely equip her to draw connections between the Eucharist, agriculture and justice. The interrelated qualities of these have been explored by other influential theologians, however, given our current ecological challenges and the spotlight Pope Francis has shined upon this reality for the whole Church, McGann's work is very timely and well-researched.

One key concept she uses to explore Eucharist, food, and justice is "relationship." We see this in the titles of the three parts of the book, "Part 1 - Eating as Relationship, Part 2 - Broken Relationships: Dining in the Industrial Food System, and Part 3 - Eucharist: the Meal that Reconnects." Pope Francis, likewise, utilizes this notion of relationship to weave together the many threads of *Laudato Si'*. "Relationship" is a very helpful lens through which to see a much larger context to our eucharistic gatherings. "With whom are we in relationship when we

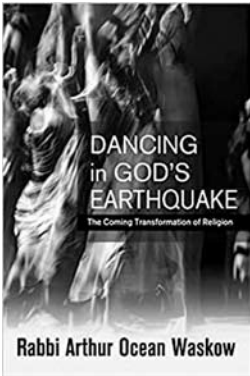
participate in Eucharist?" That is a very expansive question, but what if we try to literally explore the process that brings the actual bread used to make the host to our altars? In doing so we encounter that even this process has largely been subsumed into a vast high speed, mechanized industrial food system very far removed from "the work of human hands" envisioned in our Eucharistic prayers (195).

While part one of McGann's book deftly sets the stage by establishing a theological, scriptural, and liturgical basis for the sections to follow, it's likely not radically new information for those interested in eucharistic theology. What is most engaging are parts two and part three of the text. In part two McGann gives a compelling crash course in how the contemporary industrial food system developed and how it works. From the perspective of Catholic social teaching, reading this section is dispiriting to say the least. However, McGann ends each chapter in this section with an integrative reflection entitled "Making connections with Eucharist." Here she brilliantly opens up the implications of the agricultural crisis for a eucharistically minded people. Importantly, she does not stay on the level of diagnosis, but moves to positive suggestions for a healthy way forward in our food systems. From all of her research she offers five "foundational characteristics that mark an alternative food economy that can be sustainable into the future: (1) small in scale, (2) locally based, (3) organically sustained, (4) regenerative of Earth's resources, and (5) rooted in justice" (125). She then explains what each of these could look like in detail.

In part three of the book McGann then brings all of this into conversation with her primary area of expertise: liturgy. Here she offers creative and down to earth insights into how liturgical life and everyday parish life can be envisioned to integrate eucharistic values in harmony with Catholic social teaching (especially *Laudato Si'*), food systems, and proper care for the earth. Many of these suggestions are simple and attainable, creating community involvement without a big price tag. Whether starting a ministry to bake bread with local materials for hosts, or creating small gardens on parish property to help feed community members in need with food grown by the "Church," some of these things are already being done around the country. McGann provides clear and succinct theological explanations for these activities that would be easy to share with parishioners and parish pastoral leadership. As such *The Meal that Reconnects* is that rare book that blends theology, justice, and liturgy in a practical and readable manner. It's also hopeful while being honest and clear-

sighted. It could just be the leaven your parish needs to embrace it's eucharistic calling.

John Christman, SSS
Editor, *Emmanuel*
Cleveland, Ohio



**DANCING
IN GOD'S
EARTHQUAKE:
THE COMING
TRANSFORMATION
OF RELIGION**

Rabbi Arthur Ocean
Waskow
Orbis Books
Maryknoll, NY
2020

What is the best way to respond to an earthquake, an event that shakes the very foundations upon which we dwell and depend? That is the question that Rabbi Arthur Ocean Waskow seeks to answer in his book, *Dancing in God's Earthquake: The Coming Transformation of Religion*. The earthquake is metaphorical, of course, but that only increases the urgency of the question. It includes all at once the many ecological, social, cultural, and religious upheavals of the present and it is severe and disorienting.

Waskow suggests two alternative responses. One is to look for stability by returning to the tried and true certainties of the past. This he sees as ultimately unhelpful and not life-giving, especially when those in authority try to re-impose those certainties on others. The other is what he calls, "the dance," or as in the title of his work, "God's dance." The dance does not seek to return to the old certainties, but rather to engage the new that is emerging amidst the earthquake.

There appear to be two fundamental theological premises for his confidence that dancing in the earthquake is the proper response. One is that the earthquake has shown our conception of God as *Lord* to be a casualty of the quake. In its place Waskow chooses the name, YAHWEH, (which he notes was itself translated by many as *Adonai/Lord*). But he chooses YHWH, without the vowels, and notes that when we try to say this name aloud, we don't speak but we breathe. God then is the breath that pervades all existence. It breathes in us and through us. It is part of the very breath of nature as we breathe out CO2 into the atmosphere, and the trees breathe it in and then breathe out oxygen back to us. The breath that is God inseparably interconnects all that the Holy breathes into existence. The breath is not static. It is always moving. Indeed, it must if life is to survive and thrive.

The second theological premise has to do with midrashic interpretation. Waskow claims that midrash was never a once and for all interpretation

of a sacred text, but always a new and ever-changing interpretation as God's breath moved in varied times and places. As the text and its interpretation confront new and different times and places, it is invariably reinterpreted. The new interpretation then works to address and transform the situation in which it arose. This changed situation in turn provokes still other new interpretations, over and over again.

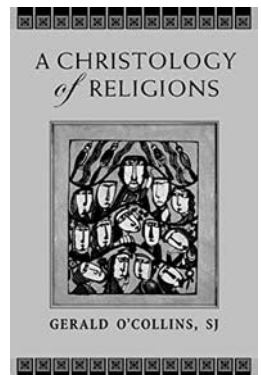
If God is YHWH, divine breathing, then dancing in the ever-changing movement – God's earthquake – is Waskow's response to the quake. In his own words: "...all sacred thought and action, like a spiral, is rooted in the past and spins through 'now' into the future. To reject reinterpretation of the wisdom we inherit is to lock God into the past. To lock God into only the present or the future is to erase the wisdom of the past. Midrashic reinterpretation of ancient sacred wisdom makes God Eternal by constantly outdating/updating the Divine" (p. 91).

This summary does not do justice to Waskow's text, but it may help to understand why the specific interpretations he offers in it are likely to be for his readers new instances of God's earthquake!

Joseph J. Fortuna, S.T.D.
Pastor, Our Lady of the Lake Parish
Cleveland, Ohio

Gerald O'Collins in his Introduction notes that Heinz Robert Schlette launched the term "theology of religions" (p. vii). He continues, "But so far as I know no one has proposed a "Christology of religions." This is his contribution to the theology of religions. He not only creates one, he uniquely develops his own Christology of religions by targeting the high priesthood of Jesus Christ as it is given in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Another strength of his book is his chapter on the special place of the dialogue after Vatican II with Jewish and Muslim theologies and the documents that emerged from that dialogue.

O'Collins taught for 33 years at the Pontifical Gregorian University of Rome. He has a doctorate from Oxford and in 2006 he was a Companion of the General Division of the Order of Australia (AC), the highest civil honor granted through the Australian government. He has written or co-authored 54 books. His specialty is Christology.



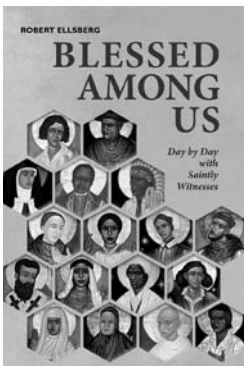
A
CHRISTOLOGY
OF RELIGIONS
Gerald
O'Collins, SJ.
Orbis Press
Maryknoll, NY
2018

His presentation covers the following issues: 1. Incarnation as caring for “the others” and sharing the sufferings of all, 2. Christ’s high priestly intercession for all, 3. Universal presence of Christ and the Holy Spirit, 4. The Church joins Christ in loving intercession for all people, 5. The faith of the suffering “others,” discerning the presence of Christ and the Spirit, 7. Dialogue and relations with Muslims and Jews.

Collins emphasizes that, though he is a Catholic theologian, he will focus on what is common to Christians rather than what is particular to Catholic Christology. He notes that he engages two theologians: Karl Rahner (1904-84) and Jacques Dupuis (1923-2004) both Catholics. His book “takes up the thought of Anglicans and Protestants such as Karl Barth, David Brown, and other scholars... It is as a Christian rather than specifically as a Catholic that I have continued to elaborate a Christology that is, or at least should be, shared by all Christians. It is in the same spirit that I now write *A Christology of Religions* (p. viii).”

His book will be inspiring to all readers and of special interest to theologians specializing in Christology. It will also be informative for ecumenists, Jewish and Muslim clergy, the laity and many others.

Ernest Falardeau, SSS, STD
Cleveland, Ohio



BLESSED AMONG US: DAY BY DAY WITH SAINTLY WITNESSES
Robert Ellsberg
Liturgical Press
Collegeville, MN
2016

I bought this book about two years ago and it got lost in my office for a couple of years. I re-discovered it during the Covid shutdown, and I began reading it every morning.

Ellsberg has done a great service in collecting this rather massive assortment of men and women he refers to as saintly witnesses. He offers two each day. Many of the persons described are canonized, venerables and “servants of God.” He draws from the Hebrew prophets, and Jewish leaders, the apostles, women of the New Testament, and martyrs of the early Church. Among the entries are popes, theologians, mystics, hermits, bishops, priests, women religious, and lay men and lay women who acted on the Gospel and made an impact. He also includes artists and poets. Not all of those included are Catholic, nor are all of them Christian. Each of the persons described in this book have made their own unique contribution to spirituality.

Many saints and blesseds appear in the book on what is their traditional feast day. Others are listed on the day of their death or birth. Each day as I open this book, I am introduced to two people, one on the left side and one on the right. Ellsberg gives a brief description of their life and contribution. At the end of each person's biography, Ellsberg offers a short quote either by that person or something written about him/her.

I, perhaps like many, am moved and motivated by people who had a particular vision and who directed their energy toward realizing that vision. Some call them heroes. Ellsberg calls them saintly witnesses. I just find it uplifting to read their stories the first thing in the morning, before I head off to Mass. I am so happy that Covid gave me an opportunity to discover it among the piles in my study and I highly recommend it.



Patrick J. Riley, D.Min
Book Review Editor, *Emmanuel*
Cleveland, Ohio



EUCHARISTIC WITNESS

Sister Noreen T. Thome, SSS
1934-2021

Waterville, Maine

Servant of the Blessed Sacrament Sister Noreen Thome passed away April 7, 2021. She lived her life in a cloistered community where she dedicated her life to prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. This Eucharistic Witness shared by her community member Sister Kay Kay, SSS tells of a time, when for the sake of justice, she left the enclosure of her monastery.

I do not remember what year it was. We heard that the State Legislature of Maine was questioning the need for home health care, even to the extent of reducing the hours of caregivers, perhaps even striking it out of the budget entirely. We thought the poor would suffer, for then only the rich could afford home health care.

This was clearly a social justice issue. It affected so many people: Sister Noreen, who was legally blind, the care givers who provided home health care within the state budget, and the many poor who were helped by it. It affected us all.

“We must be involved in this. Let us go to Augusta and join the protest,” I told Sister Noreen. I thought it was important that she go, as “Exhibit A” to help convince the legislature. She agreed, so we went.

There were leaflets about home health care set out by different agencies, set out for the legislators to take and read. But Sister Noreen was living proof of the need. Our religious habits displayed our poverty. We chatted with the legislators and others at the demonstration. We did not have to shout or do anything violent to gain attention for the cause.

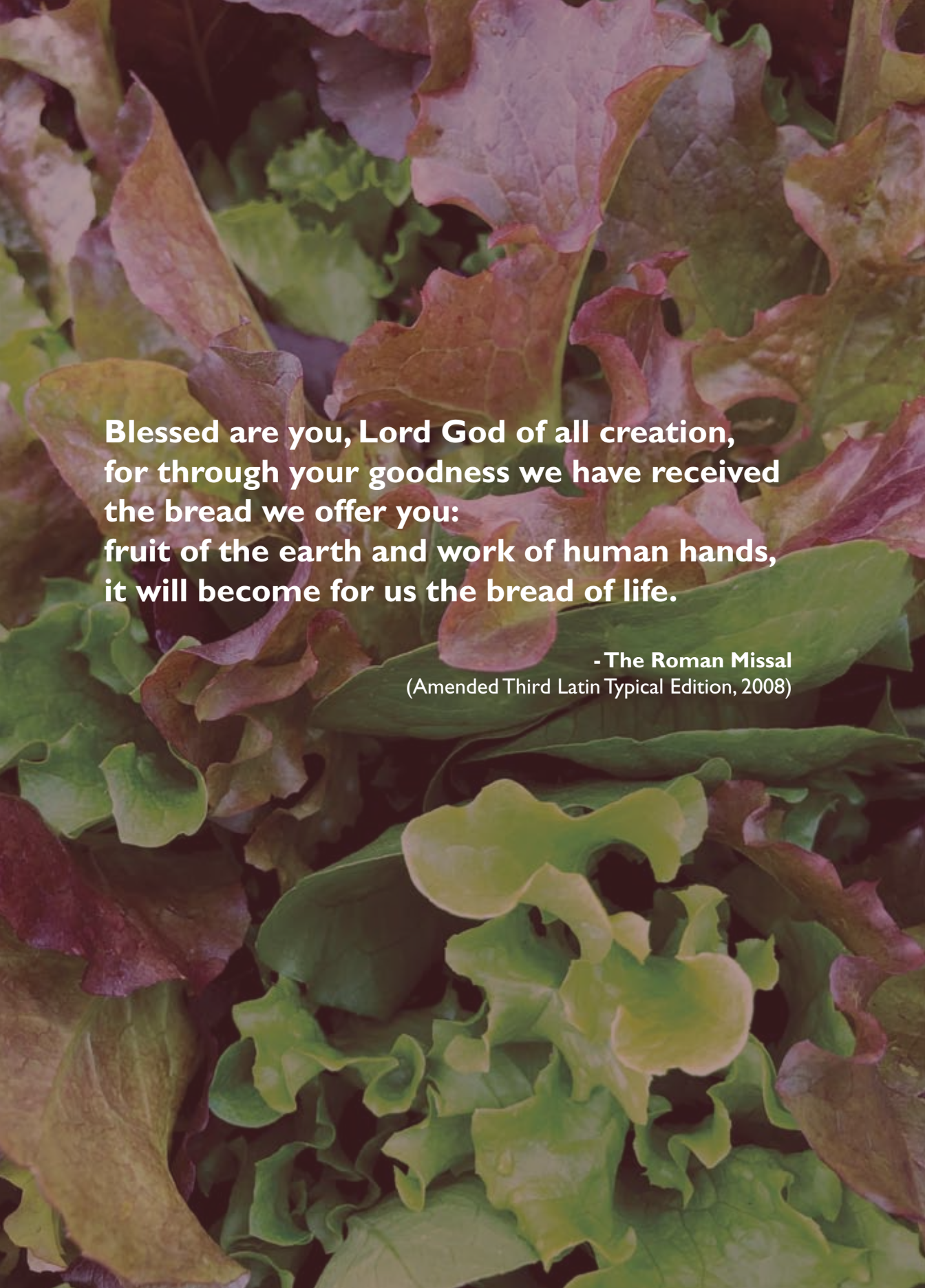
Home health care remains in the state budget, to the benefit of the “little ones” like Sister Noreen. If she had not attended the protest/rally, perhaps the state budget would be different today. This is how she helped the cause of social justice.





The Eucharist is the link between all Christians. Through it, we are related, we eat at the same table, and we have the same Father who is in heaven. As Saint Paul says, shouldn't we have the same spirit of charity, we who eat the same Eucharistic bread? Jesus Christ then is all in all.

Saint Peter Julian Eymard
(Prédication générale 244,3)



**Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,
for through your goodness we have received
the bread we offer you:
fruit of the earth and work of human hands,
it will become for us the bread of life.**

**- The Roman Missal
(Amended Third Latin Typical Edition, 2008)**