

Emmanuel



Eucharistic Spirituality

January/February 2014



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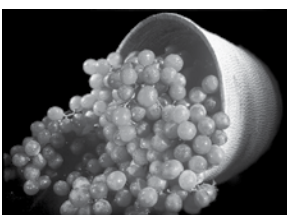
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Emmanuel Magazine

Seeing all of reality in the light of the Eucharist

Volume 120 Number 1



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FROM THE EDITOR

Six years ago, optimism was in the air as Barack Obama, the junior Senator from Illinois, launched an improbable bid for the Presidency, proclaiming “Yes, We Can.” With just a couple years’ experience in the upper chamber of Congress, he came from out of nowhere to defeat the highly-favored Hillary Rodham Clinton for the Democratic nomination to face Arizona Senator John McCain, ex-POW and a pragmatic conservative, in the general election.

As the election drew near, public figures and celebrities lined up to declare their support for one or other of the candidates. I remember watching an interview with Colin Powell, the hero of the Gulf War and the 65th U.S. Secretary of State under President George W. Bush, who broke ranks with the Republican Party to throw his support behind Senator Obama. Why? Powell spoke of Barack Obama as potentially a “transformational” leader, and cast the 2008 election as a pivotal moment in American history.

I remember thinking to myself how remarkable it was that just four decades after the civil rights struggle and the divisiveness of the Vietnam War era, the United States stood on the threshold of electing an African American President. I felt a sense of pride in the resilience of our American democracy.

It is debatable whether history will ultimately judge President Obama to be the transformational leader Colin Powell envisioned. His presidency has been beset by problems and limits, some of his own creation, some the result of differing views of public policy and national priorities, and still others the consequence of the political dysfunction that seems to characterize Washington these days.

On the horizon, however, stands another man who is being hailed as a transformational leader: Pope Francis. The former Jesuit priest and Argentine archbishop has surprised everyone with his candor, his unpretentious style, and his impassioned articulation of a “church of the poor.”

In striving for the transformation of the church, a pope has distinct advantages over a President. He doesn’t have to deal with the checks and

balances found in a representative democracy or contend with independent branches of government. Additionally, his words carry the weight of office as universal pastor and teacher.

This issue of *Emmanuel* devotes several articles and reflections to the Holy Father and his vision of the church. As a magazine of eucharistic spirituality, our purpose in presenting these is to explore the ecclesial and eucharistic dimensions of his words and actions, and especially the spirituality underlining them.

Emmanuel has a new editor (my second go-round at it) and a new art director, Father John Christman, SSS, who has studied in the area of theology and film (writing his thesis on the topic of "The Eucharist and Film") and who has contributed to *Emmanuel*, *U.S. Catholic*, and *New Theology Review* on the topics of art, film, and music.

As we begin our 120th year of publication, we are introducing a new format. We are also adding a new section entitled "The Eucharist & Culture," which provides us with the opportunity to explore the many and varied ways that our world can be seen "in the light of the Eucharist."

In it, you will continue to find pertinent and thoughtful book reviews as well as poetry inspired by a Catholic sacramental perspective. This sacramental perspective will also inform our music reviews and art reviews. Beginning with this issue, we are offering film reviews which center on contemporary and classic films from around the world that have a strong eucharistic dimension. As such, these films might be excellent sources for community reflection in parish and pastoral settings. Father John will edit this section.

The other sections remain unchanged: "Eucharist: Living & Evangelizing," "Eucharistic Teachings," and "Eucharistic Spirituality."

Emmanuel now has a digital edition. Print subscribers will be able to sign up for a digital subscription free of charge. Or you can subscribe to the digital edition alone for just \$20.00.

I take this opportunity to thank Brother Gary LaVerdiere, SSS, for his 30-plus years as art director. Gary is a brilliant artist with an eye for the beauty that touches, uplifts, and inspires. His gifts and talents, both aesthetic and practical, have contributed so very much to *Emmanuel*.

Anthony Schueller, SSS
Editor



EUCCHARIST: LIVING & EVANGELIZING

Five Responses to Pope Francis' Interview in *La Civiltà Cattolica*

In the months since his election to the See of Peter, Pope Francis has shown himself to be someone who is comfortable speaking openly and honestly about himself, his role as the bishop of Rome and the shepherd of the universal church, his Jesuit spirituality, and his hopes for the church, including that it be genuinely devoted to serving the poor.

Following his much-publicized interview with *La Civiltà Cattolica* in September 2013, which was subsequently reprinted in a number of Jesuit publications worldwide, we asked five Catholic leaders to write short “responses” to what most inspired them or challenged them in his remarks. These are offered below in their purest form, in alphabetical order and without substantive revision or editorial comment.

Jesuit Practice of Discernment

The recent interview of Pope Francis by the editor of *La Civiltà Cattolica* has provided us with another glimpse into the thinking of the newly elected pope. There was much in that interview that caught my eye and warmed my heart. However, I was particularly struck by his insistence on the importance of the practice of discernment, that element of Ignatian spirituality that he sees as fundamental to his engagement in ministry. The implications of this practice are both far-reaching and profound.

Discernment, as understood by the pope, “is always done in the presence of the Lord, looking at the signs, listening to the things that happen, the feeling of the people, especially the poor.” In other words, the pope believes that leadership is rooted in listening—listening first to God, then to the reality of a situation and to the people involved in that situation, particularly those people who are in any way disadvantaged. He admits that, in his early years as a religious leader within the Society of Jesus,

he did not always listen or engage in necessary consultation. His “style of government as a Jesuit at the beginning had many faults,” and this authoritarian way of leadership created problems. He now maintains that “the mystical dimension of discernment never defines its edges and does not complete the thought. The Jesuit must be a person whose thought is incomplete, in the sense of open-ended thinking.” This explains the pope’s insistence on the importance of consultation, not “token consultations, but real consultations.”

This conviction about the importance of discernment and the resulting need for consultation leads to the pope’s resolve to think with the church. However, the image of the church that he advances is “the holy, faithful people of God” as described in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (12). He argues that “we should not even think, therefore, that ‘thinking with the church’ means only thinking with the hierarchy.” While he is well aware of the hierarchal face of the church, the ecclesiology of which he speaks here is communitarian: “This church with which we should be thinking is the home of all, not a small chapel that can hold only a small group of selected people.”

It is clear from this interview that the Jesuit practice of discernment has shaped Pope Francis’ understanding of the church and directed his style of leadership. I am eager to see how this will play out in the future.

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Reappropriating the Vision of Vatican II

There are many inspiring passages in the pope’s interview. The one that struck me as of key importance was his comment on Vatican II. The passage reads:

Vatican II was a re-reading of the Gospel in light of contemporary culture. It produced a renewal movement that simply comes from the same Gospel. Its fruits are enormous. Just recall the liturgy. The work of liturgical reform has been a service to the people as a re-reading of the Gospel from a concrete historical situation. Yes, there are hermeneutics of continuity and discontinuity, but one thing is clear: the dynamic of reading the Gospel, actualizing its message for today—which was typical of Vatican II—is absolutely irreversible.



This stress on being able to read the Gospel according to the signs of the times seems especially significant to those of us who see the past 25 years as an effort to roll back the intent and meaning of that council. We hear of the need to “reform the reform.” We are told that we need a new liturgical movement, one which will call to life the “real heritage” of the Second Vatican Council. The 17-year effort of ICEL to improve the translation of the Sacramentary was simply thrown out by Rome. Instead, we were given a hastily designed literal translation disliked by most priests—one cobbled together by a small group in four years with no ecumenical consideration whatsoever.

The Bologna school, with its acclaimed five-volume history of the council, was singled out as the propagators of a distorted history, one that must be opposed. That was the opinion voiced in semi-official channels by Cardinal Ruini, head of the Italian Bishops’ Conference. We are told that the only proper hermeneutics for interpreting the council is one of continuity with the past.

Pope Francis’ vision seems to believe that calling 2,000 bishops together simply to repeat the past is a waste of time and money. Thus he calls for the reform of consultative and collegial structures in order to achieve a humble, discerning church. Vatican II offered a new way of thinking about doctrine as always needing to be interpreted and appropriated in a pastoral key. This is why he can insist, “The dogmatic and moral teachings of the church are not all equivalent.”

Francis, it seems, wishes to prevent the council’s bold vision of a collegial church living out basic gospel values from shriveling on the vine. I was afraid I would not live to see this happen.

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A Solidly Grounded Spirituality

When Father Schueller asked me to write a short piece on Pope Francis' now famous interview with the editor of the Italian Jesuit magazine *La Civiltà Cattolica*, I hesitated knowing that so many articles were being written about it already. I had read a few, and some were quite good. I was wondering what I could possibly contribute to the discussion.

After re-reading the interview in *America* magazine (9/30/13) and the accompanying editorial, my interest was awakened by the editors' comment: "It is clear from his interview . . . that Pope Francis has developed a deep spirituality over many years in ministry, learning from his mistakes and seeking counsel from his brothers and sisters in Christ."

I set about looking for signs of this "deep spirituality" in the pope's interview. A magazine like *Emmanuel*, dedicated to exploring the inner depths and the outer boundaries of spirituality, is a perfect place to reflect, if only briefly, on the new pope's spirituality.

His spirituality is solidly grounded in a personal self-awareness as one fallen but loved by God, independent of his priestly/episcopal vocational calling.

I suppose the first thing one notices, and ought to expect, is the distinctively Jesuit aspects of this pope's spirituality as expressed in his opening reply to the very first question put to him, "Who is Jorge Mario Bergoglio?": "I am a sinner whom the Lord has looked upon."

It is interesting that he does not formulate his answer in the context of his new apostolic/papal ministry. His spirituality is solidly grounded in a personal self-awareness as one fallen but loved by God, independent of his priestly/episcopal vocational calling. And he illustrates his meaning with the scripture passage of Jesus' invitation to Matthew, the publican. Only once he has acknowledged this reality does he then proceed to express how he was then able to accept what his Lord was asking of him in the Petrine ministry.

Another interesting dimension of his spirituality is the value he places on community. "I was always looking for a community. I did not see myself as a priest on my own. I need a community. . . . I need to live my life with others." The pope then explains that this is why he has chosen to live outside the



papal apartments. What he holds of value translates into action.

Then, of course, one major aspect of this pope's spirituality is the notion of discernment. What particularly struck me was the way he put it: "Only in narrative form do you discern, not in a philosophical or theological explanation, which allows you rather to discuss. The style of the Society [of Jesus] is not shaped by discussion, but by discernment, which of course presupposes discussion as part of the process. . . . The Jesuit must be a person whose thought is incomplete, in the sense of open-ended thinking." A peek into the window of his soul!

Finally, although so much more can be said but not in this limited space, this Jesuit pope centers his life, his spirituality, on Christ and in prayer. What he believes, as a Jesuit, is to live life as a "contemplative in action." This is who he is, what he believes, and what the church hopes to garner from this Jesuit pope whose spirituality will be in greater evidence as he translates it into action. Let us pray for him.

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An Idea and an Image

As I read the interview with Pope Francis, *one idea* and *one image* were particularly striking to me. The *idea* is in reference to the pope's reflections on how he prefers to come to a consensus or a conclusion through consultation. He stated: "The consistories [of cardinals], the synods [of bishops] are, for example, important places to make real and active this consultation. We must, however, give them a less rigid form. I do not want token consultations, but real consultations."

This gives great hope that the world synods of bishops under Pope Francis will have an atmosphere of honesty and forthrightness and be venues in which the gathered bishops can truly share their beliefs, their experiences, and their hopes.

Created by Pope Paul VI during the Second Vatican Council, but not by the council, the world synods of bishops were designed to continue the collegiality of the council. These synods have been more and more rigidly

structured by the popes. The pope decides the topic of the particular synod and has at times taken certain aspects of that topic off the table for discussion. The bishops give speeches, but there is little opportunity to formally enter into discussion and dialogue. Sometime after the synod, the pope issues a Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, which expresses the pope's thinking on the topic. (It need not take into consideration the ideas expressed by the bishops.)

Pope Francis seems to be envisioning a much more honest and open consultation at the synods he will convene. There appears to be some of that openness to consultation in his recent meetings with the eight cardinals. The cardinals were instructed to seek the concerns of the people of their continents before coming to the meetings.

The *image* that caught my attention was that of the church as a field hospital after a battle where the wounded are tended to and healed. While there is no doubt that there has been great value to human culture by the church's unwavering support for great moral issues like the indissolubility of marriage, its opposition to abortion and euthanasia, its proclamation of the dignity of the human person and human rights, there are, nevertheless, individual men and women who are hurting, who need to feel loved and cared for, who need to be assured that they matter.

Pope Francis has made it clear on a number of occasions that priests, religious, and lay pastoral ministers need to get out of their sacristies, offices, convents, and monasteries to find the broken, the hurting, the lonely, those hungry for human compassion and touch. While the church has in recent times projected itself as a "fortress of truth," the pope is imagining this new image (which is as old as Jesus). "I dream of a church that is a mother and shepherdess. The church's ministers must be merciful, take responsibility for the people and accompany them like the good Samaritan who washes, cleans, and raises up his neighbor. This is pure Gospel."

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Pope Francis and the “People of God”

Upon reading the interview with Pope Francis conducted by Antonio Spadaro, SJ, editor-in-chief of *La Civiltà Cattolica*, I felt much joy and hope. The interview reveals a man of great spiritual depth, a priest and prophet for our times who appreciates and understands human nature and the relationship of humanity with the church and God.

I had been experiencing a growing uncertainty about the ability of the church to attract people of good will to live a spiritual life based upon the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It seemed to me that the catechetical and doctrinal focus of the church as a means to evangelize lacked some of the essential elements which are basic to an understanding of who Jesus Christ is. I was filled with joy and hope as I read the interview and began to appreciate this extraordinary man who now leads our church.

Although there are many insights which could and should be further developed, in this reflection I would like to focus on how Pope Francis “thinks with the church,” a notion Saint Ignatius Loyola writes about in *The Spiritual Exercises*.

The image of the church Pope Francis favors is “that of the holy, faithful people of God.” Vatican II followers will recognize this phrase from *Lumen Gentium*. The pope explains that belonging to a people has a strong theological value. In the history of salvation, God has saved a people. No one is saved alone, as an isolated individual, but God attracts us looking at the complex web of relationships that take place in the human community. God enters into this dynamic, this participation in the web of human relationships.

He further asserts that the church is the people of God on the journey through history, with joys and sorrows. “I see the holiness,” the pope continues, “in the patience of the people of God: a woman who is raising children, a man who works to bring home bread, the sick, the elderly priests who have so many wounds but have a smile on their faces because they served the Lord, the sisters who work hard and live a hidden sanctity.”

I immediately thought about Yves Congar as the wounded but smiling priest. A Dominican and a theologian, he spent most of his priestly life under suspicion because of his prophetic ideas regarding ecumenism and the role of the laity in the church. It was Yves Congar, at the invitation of Pope John XXIII, who introduced the concept of the “People of God” at the Vatican Council.

Congar believed that the laity has an equally important role to play with the ordained in living faithfully and proclaiming faith in Jesus Christ. In choosing "People of God" as a model of the church today, Pope Francis has again refocused on the responsibility of the laity, by virtue of their baptism, to be church through the way they live out their lives and relate to each other, in love and reconciliation.

He asserts that the church is the people of God on the journey through history, with joys and sorrows.

What has been said above can equally be applied to Saint Peter Julian Eymard. Although he lived before the "People of God" as a model of the church was formulated, his life was a prophetic foreshadowing of these same values. His love and concern for the weak and the poor and his consistent involvement of the laity in the life of the church surely resonate with the words of Pope Francis. His focus on the Eucharist for all people resonates with the pope's observation that God enters into the "web of human relationships." The Eucharist is fundamentally about God's presence in our communities and in our world.

As an associate of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, and underlying the ministry of eucharistic evangelizing I have done in the name of Jesus Christ and inspired by Saint Peter Julian Eymard and Yves Congar, I look to Pope Francis to lead our church, the "People of God," toward a more loving, merciful, and reconciling community.



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EUCHARIST: LIVING & EVANGELIZING

Welcoming with the Heart of Christ

by James W. Brown

James Brown serves as a process consultant as well as the Administrative Assistant of the Center for Eucharistic Evangelizing and an Associate of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament.

Pope Francis has turned heads in many ways since his election on March 13 of last year. One custom he began that has endeared him to millions of people across the globe is the spontaneous mini-homilies he delivers in the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae, the Vatican guesthouse where he has been living. Each morning, he gives a somewhat spontaneous, unscripted homily to groups of about 50 people.

This past summer, Pope Francis referred to an “eighth sacrament,” one that he suggested requires of people to be—in my words—so *regular*, overly *flawless* in the practice of the faith, sinless even (as if anyone is truly without sin). Here is what he said: “We are many times controllers of faith instead of becoming facilitators. . . . And there is always a temptation to try and take possession of the Lord. And so, when we are on this road, have this attitude, we do not do good to people, the people of God.”

Furthermore, he said, “Jesus instituted the seven sacraments with the attitude of an open door, and we are establishing the eighth: the sacrament of pastoral customs! . . . Jesus is indignant when he sees these things because those who suffer are his faithful people, the people that he loves so much.”

At the Table

These words were very heartening to many of us who have begun to wonder about our real priorities as a Catholic community, especially when it comes to the celebration of the Eucharist.

It seems that, at times, we worry more about the words said during the Eucharistic Prayer, who touches what, what songs are allowed to be sung, where the cross is situated, etc., and less about the heavy hearts many in the congregation have, the secret sins and addictions all of us bring to the table of the Lord, or the concerns we have for so many who are not at our table: the homeless, “those who have quit or grown indifferent,” the “sinners,”

the “irregulars,” and anyone who feels “unworthy” to come to church.

In this context, it is ironic that the first act at every Eucharist is to come together in humility, each of us, to confess to a merciful God our own individual flaws, idiosyncrasies, and wounds; and plenty examples of our not being our “best selves.”

It is this long-held tradition that the Mass begins with forgiveness and a rousing *Welcome, one and all!* Jesus welcomes us to the liturgy: to be healed, to be reconciled, to be shown mercy. In fact, Jesus had rather harsh words for the rich man full of self-congratulatory pride and kind words for the publican who prostrated himself, asking only for God’s forgiveness and mercy.

So the first gesture of our Eucharist is, in spirit, “Welcome.” Come in and join with me (a sinful presider) and us (a community of sinners and wounded people). Let us praise and thank God for all the gifts we have been granted, whether we are ritually pure or ritually impure. This celebration of the Lord’s Supper is to be an inclusive experience.

The above incident about Pope Francis reminds me of a story related in André Guitton, SSS’s book *Peter Julian Eymard: Apostle of the Eucharist*. Readers of this magazine will recall in my January/February 2013 article and other articles stories of Saint Peter Julian Eymard reaching out to engage street kids (“rag pickers”), factory workers, and poor young women and men who had never set foot in a church in order to prepare them for First Communion. (He would go into parts of Paris where “neither police nor clergy would dare to set foot.”)

As this one story goes, the sisters of Saint Peter Julian’s newly founded Servants of the Blessed Sacrament were assisting him in the preparation of young girls about 17 years of age for First Communion and confirmation. The male religious were preparing young men. These were poor street urchins with little or no possessions of their own.

The leader of the sisters, Mother Marguerite Guillot, tells the account (in part) in this way:

All the children were edifying. The girls stayed three days on retreat in our house. They wore a uniform, a pretty dress which we had made. . . . They all wore long white veils . . . and a First Communion medal around the neck.

Our dear children had really brought us some life and distraction. We fed them on their beautiful First Communion day. They were the queens of the feast, and we waited on them at table. The



Fathers did the same. To do a bit of good, what sacrifices were we not ready to make!

It is so easy—maybe yes, maybe no—to think that we could reach out to invite in and treat like little “queens” and “kings” the churchless poor, the tattooed adolescents, or the cell phone addicted young among us. It may not be so easy—maybe yes, maybe no—to think that we could be welcoming to those with an irregular marriage, a couple who underwent an abortion, a gay person or couple, someone who doesn’t fully believe as we do in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist or the infallibility of the pope.

The Catholic world has been celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council held from 1962-1965. In fact, Pope John XXIII wanted an ecumenical council for the whole world, one that would include Protestant and Orthodox religious leaders. He had a vision of church unity that would break through the divisions and the lingering “hard feelings” among the churches. Among the major documents produced at this historic gathering of the leaders of the Catholic Church was the Decree on Ecumenism (*Unitatis Redintegratio*), ratified in November 1964.

For those of us raised to think that the Catholic faith was the only true faith, that attending a Protestant service was a sin, that Jews, Muslims, and atheists could not be saved unless they expressed a faith in Christ, this was truly a revolutionary shift in the teachings of the Catholic Church. For us with Protestant and/or Jewish friends and family members, this spirit of ecumenism was a welcome shift in how we understood our church.

The Decree on Ecumenism was and remains such a heartening document and concept that peoples of all faiths and traditions can come together to work for a common good, to make the world a better place, to serve the poor, to fight unjust political, corporate, and ecclesial systems, as well as the overwhelming realities of war, violence, and hunger. Though we cannot share in the Lord’s Supper, it is a grace to be able to celebrate weddings, funerals, memorial services, and other events in each other’s churches, synagogues, houses of worship, and temples, especially when all are made to feel welcome.

There is a song we occasionally sing at our parish, one that I am sure is sung often throughout our country and our world. Its name and theme are the same, “All Are Welcome.” It goes like this:

Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive.

Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace.

Here the love of Christ shall end divisions;

all are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

The first act at every Eucharist is to come together in humility to confess to a merciful God our individual flaws, idiosyncrasies, and wounds.

In the Liturgy of the Eucharist, we first come together as sinners and are welcomed to the table of the Lord. We partake in the body and blood of Jesus that we might become what we eat. The last act in the liturgy is a missioning—“*Ite, missa est!*” in Latin; “Go, the Mass is accomplished” (not ended).

In other words, the Mass continues as we go out to love and serve the Lord, to take Christ’s spirit of mercy and forgiveness, inclusion and hospitality, compassion and love to our workplaces, our homes, and into the marketplace. We are missioned to put on the spirit of what Pope Francis calls “a heart of Jesus for the wounded and suffering,” which, in reality, is nearly every one of us in some way or fashion, whether we be Catholic, non-Catholic, non-Christian, or whatever our stance with God and the world.

All are welcome.





EUCCHARIST: LIVING & EVANGELIZING

Francis in Name and in Truth

by Peter J. Riga

Peter J. Riga lives in Houston, Texas, where he practices law.

The conversion of Francis of Assisi in the thirteenth century arose from his encounter with a leper, which horrified him. Francis initially ran away, as most would do, but suddenly stopped, returned to the man, gave him his cloak, and embraced and kissed him. Analogous situations abound, including HIV-AIDS today, in which people instinctively stay clear of victims. They will not admit as much, but it is true.

Not, however, when Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio (Pope Francis) was the archbishop of Buenos Aires. He visited the Muñiz Hospital and asked for water and a towel and proceeded to wash the feet of twelve men infected with HIV-AIDS. And then he kissed their feet. Reenacting what for many priests is a familiar ritual on Holy Thursday, his actions expressed a real concern for the most rejected. He remarked: "The poor are the most neglected people of the earth," poor not just materially but in the estimation of their fellow human beings.

Simplicity

As archbishop, he lived the poverty of Saint Francis as well, dwelling in a modest apartment in a poor section of the city and cooking his own meals. He chose this over moving into the episcopal mansion and having others wait on him and cook for him. He had no large limousine or chauffeur, but instead took public transportation to and from his office and his pastoral engagements.

It was Saint Francis all over again, who refused to have a wooden floor in the shack where he lived. He traveled on foot and begged food for himself and his companions. Pope Francis made a point of doing this in order to be able to relate to humble people and to listen to their problems as he made his way through the streets of the city.

Sensitivity

The only time those who knew him saw him angry was when he found out that some of his priests were refusing to baptize the children of unwed mothers. He rebuked them and went himself to the parishes to baptize the children. “They are God’s children, and you are forbidding heaven for them,” he was heard to say.

It was like Christ who defended the woman caught in adultery who had been brought to him for condemnation. He refused to do so and asked only that she not commit this sin again. So, too, Francis did not condemn the unwed mothers, but proceeded to minister to them without condoning what they had done. He blessed and baptized their children, believing that it was not his prerogative to judge them. This gentle act probably did more to deter them from repeating their sin than all the admonitions in the world.

On becoming pope, the first thing Francis did was to break tradition. He knelt before the throngs of pilgrims and well-wishers assembled in Saint Peter’s Square and, in all humility, asked them to raise their hands over him to pray the Our Father that his pontificate would be a holy one of service to all people.

This was a powerful expression of his desire to be the *Servus Servorum Dei*—the Servant of the Servants of God. Like Christ, who refused power and prestige and resisted the temptation to use his ministry to advance himself, Pope Francis humbly implored the people to pray that he be worthy of the work entrusted to him in serving the Catholic Church and all humanity as representative of the cosmic Christ.

Humility

In the history of the Catholic Church, there have been great popes of extraordinary holiness and popes of equal sinfulness, even scandal. One of the latter, Pope Alexander VI, who had a mistress and illegitimate children (Cesare and Lucretia Borgia), would fall to his knees before visitors and say, “You know what kind of a sinful man I am. Please pray for me here and always.”

Pope Francis acknowledges his sinfulness, his unworthiness of the office bestowed upon him, and his absolute need of prayerful intercession from all he would serve for the rest of his life. As in the story of the paralytic brought to Jesus by his friends (Mt 9:2-8), “seeing their faith,” the prayer of



others helps another. Pope Francis understands this and seeks it.

Pope Francis does not lack a sense of humor. During the dinner with the cardinals after his election, he toasted them saying, "May God forgive you for what you have done to me!" His last thought was for his people as he retreated from the balcony of Saint Peter's: "Please go now. You are tired as you need rest." No great spiritual sobriquet, just a warm admonition that he thought even of their physical need. His words were similar to those of Christ himself, who urged his followers to take time apart from the demands of ministry and rest.

Pope Francis upholds the teachings of the church as guardian and guarantor of the faith, while recognizing the need for a pastoral response to people who are struggling with matters of faith and conscience. Mercy, understanding, and forgiveness are needed, not condemnation.

As one who left the active ministry to pursue a calling in the practice of law, I am deeply moved by Pope Francis' human and spiritual qualities. His style of servant leadership will touch many within the church and beyond, and bring countless others into its embrace. He already has.



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EUCHARISTIC TEACHINGS

Giving Form to the Vision: Trent, Vatican II, and Curial Reform

by Jeffrey Gros, FSC

Fifteen years ago, Archbishop Emeritus John Quinn was widely criticized for suggesting some ideas for the reform of the papacy and Roman Curia in response to Pope John Paul II's request for "patient and fraternal dialogue" in his 1995 ecumenical encyclical. On the eve of the conclave that elected Pope Francis, cardinals from dioceses whose incumbents were so critical of Quinn now joined the chorus for curial reform.

The commemoration of the Reformation in 2017 will give the churches the opportunity to reassess the sixteenth-century Catholic and Protestant renewal impulses of that era as they might contribute to reconciliation in the twenty-first century. Part of the Catholic curial reform will, I believe, entail integrating ecumenical relations and the results of the dialogues into every element of Catholic life at every level. However, even when the internal reforms are begun, the dialogue will need to continue in full force. Both internal reform and ecumenical reconciliation are dialectical processes which need to reinforce one another in service to the Gospel.

In this 450th anniversary year of the Council of Trent, we can look back at its lessons and the groundwork it laid for Vatican II. At both the councils of Trent (1545-1563) and Vatican II (1962-1965), curial reform was very much in the air, for different reasons and in different circumstances. In both instances, the popes, Paul III (1534-1549) and Pius IV (1559-1565), and Paul VI (1963-1978) were successful in withdrawing the issue of papal and curial reform from the councils' agendas. Trent's decisions on episcopal residency and the obligation to preach, and assigning liturgical and biblical reforms to the pope had curial implications.

Lumen Gentium provided some priorities (9, 10), but did not give details for change in such areas as adding local bishops from around the world and laity to congregations and councils, and upgrading curial working methods. The debates on collegiality, especially in the second session, brought the issue to a head. Likewise, any discussion of the bishops, councils, and popes in the context of a theology of the church was excluded from Trent, only to

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be clarified later with Vatican I and II. Unfortunately, many read the sixteenth century as though these problems had been resolved in the direction of the centralized ultramontane exercise and understanding of the papacy so prevalent in the late nineteenth century.

Any redirection of the mission of an organization of the size and importance of the Roman Catholic Church will require a reordering of its leadership structures. While Trent didn't reform the papacy and the curia, important steps were started then and soon thereafter on which post-Vatican II reforms can build.

The development of church order like the development of doctrine is not a linear process. It is always contextualized by the given theological constitution of the church and its interpretation at any moment in history; by the historical, political, cultural values and demographic characteristics of the era; and by the leadership given to the church at any moment in that journey. Reform in the structures is one minor element in the reception of a conciliar event, but one which enables the community to embody its faith in ways better able to serve and support its mission of evangelization in its own times.

It is important that there be many proposals and models for curial organization, as no one proposal will encompass the final outcome. Rather, each will contribute to the discussion and dialogue needed to create the structure if the church is to be more faithful to its mission and calling. This essay is just one such contribution, offered as a prayer for the well-being of the people of God in its service to the human community and its quest for the visible unity for which Christ prayed.

In the midst of confusion and conflict, the fathers at Trent had to ask themselves what would best serve the clarification of Catholic orthodoxy, what practices had to be reformed to improve the integrity of the church, and what steps would lead to the unity of Christendom. Trent succeeded in large measure with its first two goals, but the third was only taken up again at the Second Vatican Council.

Here, we will note some of the challenges in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that necessitated the reforms seen in Trent and how they were received. Next, we will touch on three areas among those in need of renewal in light of the Vatican Council: 1. the diplomatic corps; 2. the episcopal appointment system; and 3. the coordination of current curial operations. The resident bureaucracy in Rome that serves the Holy See needs to be considered within the context of Rome's appointment of the worldwide

Latin Catholic episcopate, and its international network of ambassadors for relations with both states and local/national hierarchies.

The process of reorganization was well begun under Paul VI, John Paul II, and Benedict XVI, a process that will undoubtedly be continued, deepened, and expanded under Francis. This article is offered as an encouragement to those who feel the church has moved too slowly to adapt its pre-Vatican II operation to its renewed vision. It is offered as a stimulus to those who don't want more change. The Spirit works with both patience and with urgency.

While a dominant culture does exist in the Roman Curia, it is important not to over-generalize or to presume a uniform mentality and set of priorities. It is unfortunate that some histories use "Roman Curia" when speaking of the councils' histories rather than "members of" or "groups within" the curia, as though there was one mind. This can easily lead to a demonizing or a defensiveness that doesn't take account of the nuanced reality and history of Catholic governance structures.

At both Trent and Vatican II, curial reform was very much in the air, for different reasons and in different circumstances.

How are all of the elements of the Catholic Church to be coordinated to serve the visible unity of the church? How are we to live out of an understanding of the common baptism of all Christians? To fully integrate the baptized laity, women and men, into the leadership of the church? To see that all who serve in church leadership identify with the church of the poor? To realize that all are called to share the Gospel and to witness in the world to the healing love of Christ? Both the structures of leadership and the persons who inhabit them are called to serve and enable the faithful in their pilgrimage toward the kingdom.

Some of Trent's Gifts of Reform

From the time of the reunion of divided Western Christianity at the Council of Constance (1415), there were calls for reform in "head and members." The pleas of the sixteenth-century reformers who spawned the movements that became Protestant churches shared reforming values that had been around Western Europe for a century or more. The divisions did not occur because of the call to reform; they came from doctrinal differences, though the lack of Roman reform strengthened the case of its critics.



Various strategies had been used to reach this end: prior to papal elections, cardinals would make “capitulations” to reform the curia if elected, only to “forget” them afterward. Councils and threats of councils were used to stimulate reform. Individual reformers, both within the College of Cardinals and outside, along with kings, emperors, and prophetic preachers, proposed steps forward.

After more than 25 years of pressure following Luther’s challenges, emperor and pope were able to inaugurate a council in 1545 with a feeble 30-plus prelates at the opening and serious divisions among the civil rulers making truly universal participation weak almost to the very end. However, by compromise, the council was able to work on both doctrinal and reform decrees in tandem, producing important initiatives in authorizing seminaries; insuring the residency of bishops, pastors, and abbots among their people; initiating biblical, sacramental, and liturgical reforms to be entrusted to the papacy for completion; and encouraging synodical implementation of the council through diocesan and (arch-episcopal) provincial synods; as well as clarifying doctrines touching revelation, salvation, the sacraments, and the like.

Decisions about liturgy—the universality of the Roman Rite and the exclusive use of Latin, for example—were left in the hands of the pope. The implementation of local diocesan reform was more a case of the interpretation and implementation of the general directives of the council. So, for example, Charles Borromeo (1538-1584), to signify his commitment to bishops pastoring the dioceses from which they gained their income, moved out of the influential position of cardinal nephew/secretary of state in 1565 after being appointed Milan’s bishop in 1560. The records of his reforming synods became models, not only in Italy, but in Gallican France, Spain, and other parts of the empire, filling out the reforms of Trent in a specific and intentional way.

Neither the Catechism of the Council of Trent nor its profession of faith included the content of the Decree on Justification. Indeed, even the 1992 *Catechism of the Catholic Church* doesn’t focus on this Catholic doctrine in the central way that Trent did. The 1999 ecumenical *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* may enable the reception, among Catholics, of this focal doctrine in a way that Tridentine trajectories have been unable to do.

Among the most glaring sectors calling for reform in “head” was the financing of the papacy through the sale of church offices and indulgences; the multiple dioceses, abbeys, and parish incomes (benefices) necessary to support the cardinals and other curial officials; the absences from

these benefices of those charged with the pastoral care of souls; and the interlocking family connections of extended Italian clans who created a closed Italian cultural hegemony at the center of the church. Reforming cardinals had no choice but to compromise with this system if they were to have any influence at all.

Trent was unable, directly, to correct many of these problems, and indeed many continued into the seventeenth century until alternate modes of financing could be found to fund the papacy and the curia. After the council, Pius IV had to send two-thirds of the curial cardinals, their families, and retinues out of Rome to comply with its provisions for bishops to live in their diocese. Only then was he able to implement reforms.

Both the structures of leadership and the persons who inhabit them are called to serve and enable the faithful in their pilgrimage toward the kingdom.

One can attribute important reforms to Trent, but it is the reception of Trent over the following centuries which insured the detail of reform in both head and members. However, new opportunities presented new challenges as Catholicism became a worldwide movement after the age of discovery. Gradually, it became disentangled with state patronage and control. It developed a defensive centralization in the era of European and Latin American revolutions in the nineteenth century, and it finally began to adapt to the modern world in the twentieth century—opening to lay participation, episcopal collegiality, ecumenical engagement, interreligious outreach, and a prophetic stance toward the modern world.

The Diplomatic Corps

At the time of the Council of Trent, the Catholic powers, especially the German Holy Roman Emperor and other Catholic kings of Europe, were represented by ambassadors who did not have a formal vote unless they were also bishops. Their ambassadors were in Trent to organize caucuses and dictate policy preferences, so they could be said to have had more importance than individual bishops. Papal ambassadors at the royal courts were crucial if the council was to work, during its convening and sessions, and for its results to be received after its decrees were promulgated.

In the revolutionary years of turmoil during the eighteenth and nineteenth



centuries, these ambassadors became important during the instabilities of both governments and church. However, they also vacillated in their effectiveness. This network of papal ambassadors (nuncios) continues, usually with the responsibility of relating to the civil authorities, to the local hierarchy, and surfacing names to be proposed for bishop. These representatives of the Holy See around the world are as important to Catholic governance as are the curial officials in Rome.

At the time of Vatican II, there were calls for the modification of this system, especially from bishops in the global south where nuncios often meddled in affairs more appropriately attended to by local hierarchies. Since the reestablishment of diplomatic relations with the U.S. in 1983, the Holy See has downplayed its role in domestic political affairs, leaving that task to the bishops' conference, though working closely together with the conference. In Eastern Europe, the diplomatic service was an important element in reestablishing normal functioning of the church after the fall of Marxism in 1989.

Whether the rationale still holds for these diplomats being ordained to sacramental ministry beyond baptism remains a question. If there is a reform of the episcopal appointment system, the role of nuncios will also need to evolve. Both the Secretariat of State, which oversees the diplomatic corps, and the Congregation of Bishops, which oversees the selection and assignment of the bishops, are integral and influential elements in the Roman Curia.

The Selection of Bishops

Requiring bishops to live and draw their income from their dioceses was a major achievement of the post-Tridentine era. Although the council itself could not enforce the residence of bishops in their diocese, popes were able to dismiss cardinals to their sees and to clear Rome of the 100-plus bishops residing there in hopes of curial favors or career advancement. Unfortunately, through the use of titular sees, some bishops are still offered status delinked from the care of souls. Whether diplomats, Roman bureaucrats, or diocesan auxiliaries should be invested with the "fullness of the priesthood" remains a question of theological consistency and pastoral effectiveness for the church.

At the time of the Council of Trent, most bishops were presented by their sovereigns with only a nominal confirmation by the pope. Others were nominated by cathedral chapters or other means. Very few, outside of the Papal States, were appointed directly from Rome. With the popular revolutions

of Europe and Latin America, this royal patronage no longer prevailed, though some countries—for example, in Latin America—continued to claim for the new republics the prerogatives of the monarchies they had displaced. It was only with the death of Francisco Franco in 1975 that the church was able to regain its rights to episcopal appointments in Spain. Even in Marxist states, governmental veto was the norm—it is said that seven candidates were rejected before Cardinal Wojtyla was allowed for Krakow.

Many Catholics are aware that the episcopal appointment system as it now stands encourages careerism; does not always match the talents of the man to the people with whom he is to minister; and often does not prepare him for the particular culture, history, religious composition, and hopes of the local community. The global sex abuse crisis and its mismanagement demonstrate, even to those beyond the Catholic community, the limitations of the present system.

A style of servant leadership with reconciliation skills and a vision of mission in the world will need to emerge at the center of the church's leadership.

However, as an ecumenist having worked with the wide array of Christian churches, Orthodox through Free Church Protestant, it is not at all clear what one system of leadership selection is most faithful to the Gospel and most effective in enabling the mission of God's people. We can learn from all of them. Pope John Paul, in his 1995 encyclical, has committed us to the dialogue that will make that happen.

As we come to the ecumenical table, we dare not lose sight of the universal interdependent catholicity which is our gift and which is symbolized most vividly in the presidency of the episcopal college by the bishop of Rome, however this presidency is exercised and adapted in the future. How do we see to it that local bishops are both culturally adapted and universally attuned? Some have suggested the primitive practice of episcopal election and permanent marriage to the original see of his election. This probably will not be practicable in the twenty-first century context. However, the role of the local church, the brother bishops of a conference, as well as a component of global input need to be considered.

Catholics may not be able to be as intentional as United Methodists, who elect their bishops for life, evaluate them every four years, and move them



routinely, at least every eight years to serve people who might most benefit by their gifts—or retire them if there is no fit. However, methods of accountability more close to home are necessary if bishops are to attend to their local flock before attending to their prospective next assignment.

The Roman Bureaucracy

By all accounts, the Roman Curia is one of the most efficient, best informed international bureaucracies in the world of business, government, or religion; staffed—as Pope Francis reminds us—by dedicated, able, and often saintly people.

However, like every other great organization, it has a culture of its own and structural features that may or may not serve optimally for its mission in the world today. There are clearly different styles of operation and occasional competition, tensions, and inconsistencies. Interpreting these to our ecumenical partners, interreligious colleagues, and even the secular press is a challenge.

During a 1989 visit by the U.S. National Council of Churches to Pope John Paul II and the Vatican, an African Methodist bishop asked a young Monsignor at the Secretariat of State, “How is the internationalization of the Roman Curia developing?” The given answer was that one might better speak of “de-Italianization” rather than “internationalization.” Indeed, culture has a tenacity that transcends ethnicity or national origins. The Orthodox are quick to note that mid-twentieth century Northern European corporate culture dominates the Geneva World Council of Churches, whether the faces are Indonesian, Bulgarian, or Kenyan.


When local U.S. Catholic churches are assigned a bishop whose primary pastoral experience has been the Roman Curia, they often note a focus on internal church matters, an attention to patronage, and an ultramontane ecclesiology. If dialogue is to be a hallmark of the Catholic Church, with the joys and hopes of the whole human family, identification with the poor, and a collaboration among all the baptized, a style of servant leadership with reconciliation skills and a vision of mission in the world will need to emerge at the center of its leadership.

How is this culture to be changed to become more collaborative, more collegial with the worldwide episcopate, and more informed by the richness and diversity of contemporary Catholic culture? Again, the inconsistency becomes transparent, as with dealings with religious in the 1990s in Latin America and today with women in the United States have shown.

Our interreligious partners are taken aback when a text comes out in 2000 that uses a different linguistic form that appears to negate 30 years of collaborative work. When work has proceeded smoothly in liturgical translation and coordination with ecumenical partners and principles laid out in the council and the 1993 ecumenical *Directory* seems to be abandoned, what is to be made of our commitment to a common future?

If Pope Francis would like to see a church turned outward in mission, one that identifies with the poor, what formation is to be given to his staff so their spirituality and lifestyles are infused with the identification with the poor? If Pope Francis is used to a monthly prayer meeting with Pentecostals and other ecumenical colleagues, how are his coworkers to develop this same ecumenical spirituality in service to the unity of the church worldwide? Again, for a church of the baptized, which of the offices in the Roman leadership, if any besides the bishop and his diocesan clergy, require further sacramental ordination? Should baptism, competence, and commitment to mission be the criteria for curial service?

The Council of Trent started on a positive note after 25 years of struggle to begin. Its numbers were modest, but its impact monumental, as much for what it inspired as for what it said in its texts. Some hopes for reconciliation had to be deferred to Vatican II. Let us hope and pray that however the Roman Curia may be reformed under Pope Francis and his successors, it may also serve the hope enunciated in the opening prayer of Trent:

Gathered as it is at the gate of the Empire, may it effect the reunion of Germany with the Roman Church. To the realization of so high a purpose all must contribute—Latins and Greeks, Spaniards and Frenchmen, Germans and Italians—everyone must give of his very best. May Saint Vigilius, the patron of the diocese of Trent, also watch over the council until its successful conclusion, until it could be said of it, “Great are the works of the Lord” (Ps 110: 2). (Cornelio Musso, OFM, Bishop of Bitonto, December, 13, 1545). 



EUCCHARISTIC SPIRITUALITY

Discerning God's Guidance

by Victor M. Parachin

Victor Parachin is a minister, journalist, and author of a dozen books.

Author and educator Parker Palmer was once offered the opportunity to become a college president. He visited the school where he met with faculty, students, administrators, and trustees. Before leaving, he was told that he would most likely be offered the position. However, Palmer, a Quaker, was not completely certain about accepting the role. In keeping with his Quaker tradition, Palmer called on a half-dozen friends to meet with him as a "clearness committee." In that process, the group refrains from giving advice, but spends a few hours asking honest, open questions in order to help the individual discern the right path.

Most of the first questions were routine and easy, he recalls, until one person asked: "What would you like most about being a president?" Palmer answered with a volley of negatives: "I would not like to have to give up my writing and teaching. . . . I would not like the politics of the presidency, never knowing who your real friends are. . . . I would not like having to glad-hand people I do not respect simply because they have money." Gently, but firmly, the questioner interrupted: "May I remind you that I asked you what you would most *like*?" Compelled to give an honest answer, Palmer found himself appalled at his answer as the words came out of his mouth. "Well," he said in a quiet voice, "I guess what I'd like most is getting my picture in the paper with the word *president* under it."

Palmer recalls that although his answer was "laughable," not one of those present laughed. Rather, they went into a long, serious silence which made Palmer extremely uncomfortable. Finally, his questioner broke the impasse with this question: "Parker, can you think of an easier way to get your picture in the paper?" With that, everyone broke out in laughter. The clearness committee ended, and later Palmer called the school, withdrawing his name from consideration. "Had I taken that job, it would have been very bad for me and disastrous for the school," he says.

Seeking God's guidance is a vital spiritual discipline. Without it, people can end up in unfocused pursuits, unhappy relationships, and unfulfilled lives.

That may be why the psalmist prayed: "Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground" (Ps 143:10, NIV). Here are some proven, effective ways to discern God's guidance and will.

God Guides through Prayer

Jesus lived a God-directed life. The basis of it was fervent prayer. The Gospels consistently report Jesus was a person who prayed regularly. Jesus prayed in the morning: "Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed" (Mk 1:35). Jesus prayed in the evening: "Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God" (Lk 6:12).

Henry Edward Manning, a nineteenth-century clergyman, wisely observed: "It is prayer, meditation, and converse with God that refreshes, restores, and renews the temper of our minds, at all times, under all trials, after all conflicts with the world. By this contact with the world unseen, we receive continual accesses of strength. Without this healing and refreshing of spirit, duties grow to be burdens, the vents of life chafe our temper . . . lower the tone of our minds, and we become fretful, irritable, and impatient."

God Guides through Silence

The Bible frequently reminds us to be silent before God: "Be still and know that I am God" (Ps 46:10); "Search your hearts and be silent" (Ps 4:4); "Be still before the Lord. . ." (Zec 2:13).

In his book *The Other Side of Silence*, Morton Kelsey defines quiet meditation as "the art of letting down the barrier that separates our rational consciousness from the depth of our souls." He also notes that "silence unbinds a person from ordinary perceptions and attitudes and offers a fresh look at life and reality."

Whenever you are troubled or whenever the path is unclear, take some time for silent meditation. It is in silence that the "gentle whisper" (1 Kgs 19:12) of God will be discerned. Consider the example of one woman who heads for her sacred space each morning after taking her children to school. "It's the place where I go to center myself," she says of the routine she began five years earlier. There she spends time in silence and concludes by asking God to "send me someone to love today." She adds: "I think everybody needs a place where they can be still. We are all very busy. It changes your perspective on the day to have this time of silence."



God Guides through Darkness

Tense times in our lives should not be construed as unproductive and infertile. They may, in fact, be the precise moments when God is most able to guide us. Human extremities become God's opportunities. Speaking through the prophet Isaiah, God promises: "I will lead the blind by the way they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them; I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth" (Is 42:16).

This was precisely the experience of singer Johnny Cash, who tells of a dark, despondent time in his life. His drug addiction was causing him enormous problems personally and professionally. Cash decided to end his life by driving out to a complex of caves near Chattanooga, Tennessee. There he entered Nickajack Cave, which wound under the earth for miles. He walked and then crawled for hours until his flashlight finally burned out. "I lay down and gave up. . . . I'll just lay here and die," he remembers thinking.

Tense times in our lives should not be construed as unproductive and infertile. They may, in fact, be the precise moments when God is most able to guide us.

As he lay there, prepared to die, he began to sense God: "I felt something—that love, the warm presence of God that I knew as a boy. I understood that I wasn't going to die; there were still things I had to do. . . ." He heard God instruct him, "Get up and go." Although he didn't know the way out, Cash realized that if he followed the movement of the air, it could lead him to an exit point. When he emerged from the dark cave, "everything was beautiful and good." After that divine encounter, Cash regained sobriety and self-control over his life.

God Guides through the Step of Faith

God's guidance and blessings often emerge when we take a risk and step out in faith. After living in New York for two years, a woman realized she was lonely for friends. When she moved from her native Kansas City to New York, her new job was satisfying, but her life was incomplete without the kind of good friends she'd had in Kansas City. She told herself, "This time next year, I'll have a circle of friends like the ones I left behind."

A few days later, she received a mass e-mail announcing that peace discussion groups were forming in homes around the country. She clicked on the New York City link and wrote to a stranger: "What part of the city do you live in?" A woman named Linda replied. Amazingly, she lived across the street. The two made a date for coffee and are now good friends, the beginning of the circle of friends she hoped for. It began when she took a risk and stepped out in faith.

God Guides through Teachers

All of us come into contact with teachers. They may be called priests, ministers, elders, deacons, rabbis, Christian educators, counselors, therapists. Pay close attention to them because they are often the source of spiritual unfolding and divine guidance.

The Acts of the Apostles reports that the apostles were spared death because a teacher intervened on their behalf. For their preaching about Jesus, the apostles were arrested by authority of the high priest. During questioning, Peter refused to back away from his message saying, "We must obey God rather than men!" (Acts 5:29). The crowd was furious and wanted to put the apostles to death.

Gamaliel, a highly revered teacher of the law, cautioned them saying: "Leave them alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God" (Acts 5:38-39). His words persuaded the crowd, and the apostles were released. When the way is not clear to you, talk with your pastor or other spiritual leader. Doing so can provide you with a new perspective.

Finally, it is always helpful to remind ourselves of this reality: at any given time, the specific will of God may be unknown, *but* the presence of God is certain. That reality can give us the motivation to patiently wait for greater clarity and insight.





PASTORAL LITURGY

Fruits of the Constitution: RCIA—Part 1

by John Thomas Lane, SSS

Father John Thomas Lane is the pastor of Saint Paschal Baylon Church, his home parish, in Highland Heights, Ohio, and a liturgical consultant and presenter.

JUST last month, on December 4, we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the first document of the Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (SC), the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. Last year, this column devoted six reflections to this hallmark of the liturgical renewal. Over the course of this year, we will review some of the significant “fruits” of SC that were instrumental in setting in motion a revolution in the way we worship as Catholics.

One enduring gift of the renewal was the catechumenate, the revised process of Christian initiation. This column will give attention to this important gateway to the church, especially through the documents that guide the process of becoming a Catholic Christian.

There are “introductions” to three such documents. The first is *Christian Initiation*, General Introduction; the second, the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults: Introduction*; and the third, the *National Statutes (USA) for the Catechumenate*. A separate introduction for the new *Rite of Baptism for Children* will be discussed in a future column.

Christian Initiation: General Introduction

When the “General Introduction” to *Christian Initiation* (CI) was originally published in Latin in 1969, it served the purpose of guiding the two rites of initiation approved by the council: one for infants (up to the age of reason) and one for adults. This was an important development; previously, there was only one rite for many centuries up to Vatican II. Years of research, experimentation, review, and pastoral care set forth a new model for Christian initiation, and the words of the rituals demonstrated the significance of that fact.

In 1972, a Latin provisional text, *Ordo Initiationis Christianae Adultorum*, promulgated a new process for the initiation of adults. The Catholic Church considers anyone seven years of age and older to be an “adult,” to be led through the rites of initiation to full membership in the church. Later, in 1974,

the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) translated and received approval for the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA). Because of the Latin word *ordo*, many used the comparable English word “order” to describe the rituals that would mark the stages of initiation.

The “General Introduction” defined separate rites for infants and for adults and children seven and older, as mentioned above. More importantly, it fostered a new understanding of the history and theology of the sacraments of initiation. For the first time, baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist (First Communion) were presented as three sacraments, but really one sacramental action flowing from baptism into a life of discipleship in Christ. “Joined to Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection” (CI, 1) became the new normative language for our sacramental reality. Quite frankly, we rediscovered Saint Paul’s letter to the Romans (6:3-5) and its theology, being made aware of the importance of Christ’s baptism, our own burial with Christ, and our own rising with Christ.

A new vision for evangelization was a priority of the Second Vatican Council.

With the recovery of the notion of the unified nature of initiation, and a structure for this in CI, a new spirit also came to the sacrament of confirmation, which shed the understanding of being a “marching order for battle”—as some theologies described it—to become a sacrament that strengthens us to more competently reveal Christ’s image in our world, “so that we may bear witness to [Christ] before all the world and work to bring the body of Christ to its fullness as soon as possible” (CI, 2). With these words, we returned to the theology of Saint Thomas Aquinas, who hoped for the faithful to fully witness in the Holy Spirit their whole life long.

It is remarkable to reread these words and see the importance of confirmation “as soon as possible,” yet know that in many countries, including the United States, confirmation in the Roman rite is alternately viewed and delayed. Rather than seeing it as tied to baptism, confirmation became in our Roman Catholic history a carrot used to populate high school formation programs.

Lastly, CI stresses the importance of the culmination of the sacraments of initiation in reception of the Eucharist, both the word and the body and blood of Christ. Communion seals us in the living body of Christ. This language presses us in the Roman rite to follow the history and practice of the Eastern rites and the Orthodox who keep these three sacraments together. Perhaps this will be the “fruit” of another council.

CI also indicates that initiation is not a private affair. It is to be celebrated in the context of a community, and the community is represented in many ways: by catechists who train parents, godparents, and relatives, and by neighbors, friends, and other members of the local church who also take an active part (CI, 7). Being a Christian is a public action. People have died for their profession of Christ. Furthermore, godparents play an important role of walking with the baptized, and the instruction gives significant attention to them. There is to be only one celebration of baptism on the same day in a church (CI, 24), a practice that does not always happen. Again, the general principle of community, together as one family, is lost when we separate families of faith.

Baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist are presented as three sacraments, but really one sacramental action flowing from baptism into a life of discipleship in Christ.

Another significant point is brought up in CI with regard to water (pure, clean, heated as opposed to cold in the natural state of many streams) and either immersion or pouring. The ancient tradition of “living water”—fresh and running—is stressed rather than stagnant pools or stoops. There can be no stagnant faith; therefore, one’s life is to begin with the agitation and Spirit-filled water symbolizing the Spirit-filled life to come (CI, 21).

Introduction to the Catechumenate

The second document we examine is the Introduction to the RCIA, first published in Latin in 1972 for the Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. It was translated into English by ICEL in 1974.

An experimental study edition of the ritual and an interim liturgical document assisted the pastors of the world with these new rituals. While this new process of learning, embodying, and celebrating the sacraments was received with mixed feelings, it was crucial to their eventual finalization and success. A new edition was published by ICEL in 1985 and confirmed in 1988, with some amendments. The official edition was issued in 1988 and remains in effect.

The RCIA introduction was a driving force behind the “new evangelization.” One must remember that a new vision for evangelization was a priority of the Second Vatican Council. This led to Paul VI’s remarkable *Evangelii*

Nuntiandi (On the Evangelization of Peoples, 1975).

The restored catechumenate became a source of celebrating the conversion of so many to live the Gospel. Words reentered our Catholic lexicon: catechumen, catechumenate, scrutiny, dismissal, inquiry, mystagogia, etc. The church wanted the rites of initiation to be part of a process of coming to the Lord over time and in stages, mirroring the actual stages that most people go through in responding to the call to be formed as a disciple in Jesus Christ.

The initiation of catechumens is a gradual process that takes place within the community of the faithful. By joining the catechumens in reflection on the value of the paschal mystery and by renewing their own conversion, the faithful provide an example that will help the catechumens to obey the Holy Spirit more generously (RCIA, 4).

This paragraph speaks of a “process” done with and in a community. No longer is there the pastor and a convert meeting for a few times in the rectory to discuss the catechism. Rather, there is a process of journeying, discerning, and fostering growth—not just of the individual who is entering the church, but of the whole community reflecting, renewing, growing, and changing to become ever more truly the body of Christ.

Next we will look at the last of the three introductions, the *National Statutes (USA) for the Catechumenate*, that guide our initiation process and begin reflecting on the stages of becoming a Catholic Christian.

The January and February Calendar

This year, I will highlight dates differently, reminding you of just a few of the rituals, blessings, and music that are available.

Wednesday, January 1—Mary, the Mother of God and World Day of Peace

Visit the Vatican website for the special message from Pope Francis and for resources that call us as Catholics to pray for and live the gift of peace. “Let There Be Peace on Earth” is a resounding end to the liturgy of the day.

Sunday, January 5—Epiphany of the Lord

Continue to celebrate the Christmas season by focusing on the many epiphanies that are part of our tradition: the Magi, the Lord’s manifestation at his baptism in the Jordan, and the wedding feast of Cana. Bless chalk and encourage writing the new year 20 + C + M + B + 14 on the doorposts of the homes of parishioners.

Sunday, January 12—Baptism of the Lord

Use the Rite of Sprinkling found in the appendix to the Roman Missal. Prayers for vocations are appropriate on this day which commemorates the beginning of Christ’s ministry.

Saturday, January 18-Saturday, January 25—Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Celebrate a Taizé prayer service of praise and song with other Christians. See below.

Monday, January 20—Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday

There is still much work to be done for justice and reconciliation in society. The fourth volume of the Lectionary has special readings for social justice. “We Are Marching” and “We Shall Overcome” resonate with God’s vision of justice and harmony for all people.

Sunday, February 2—Presentation of the Lord

This feast of light is an opportunity to bless candles for home and devotional use and have a procession in church with candles, as the Roman Missal suggests.

Saturday, February 22—Chair of Saint Peter

Pray for the unity of the church in its life and mission. “Faith of our Fathers.”

Taizé Prayer—Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

From GIA Publications (800-442-1358) and its ecumenical guide book, this prayer is meant to unite Christians in prayer and praise. The service is modeled on the meditative prayer of the ecumenical community of Taizé, France. Gathered in the presence of Christ, around a special cross, uncomplicated, repetitive songs, with few words, allow the mystery of God to become palpable through the simplicity and beauty of the music. A few words, sung repetitively, form this mantra style of prayer, expressing a faith that moves from the head to the heart and penetrates the whole body.

Gathering Song “Bless the Lord” or similar song

Gathering Prayer *In these or similar words*

We gather to celebrate our oneness in Christ our Lord.
Our baptism in the Lord unites us
and calls us to discipleship as members of his body.
May our faith draw us together

to serve the needs of the world
and build the kingdom of God.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Penitential Chant "God is Forgiveness" (or similar song)

Reading Ezekiel 36: 24-28
A new heart and a new spirit.

Silence

Song "O God, Keep Me Safe"

Silence

Reading Ephesians 4: 30-5:2
Forgive one another as God has forgiven you in Christ.

Silence

Meditative Song "Come and Fill Our Hearts"

Gospel John 17: 20-26
May they be one!

Song "Nothing Can Trouble"

Intercessions O Lord, Hear My Prayer

We gather to present our specific needs to the Lord.

1. For peace in troubled countries.
2. For leaders to serve the common good.
3. For our church structures to serve the needs of the least.
4. For renewed efforts at Christian unity and ecumenical dialogue.
5. For our youth to live, worship, and celebrate their growing faith.
6. For our young to serve the church as leaders.
7. For the sick and the unwell.
8. For those marked with the sign of faith who have gone before us to God.
9. For what else?

We sum up our prayer in the perfect prayer that our Lord Jesus Christ taught us.

The Lord's Prayer

Closing Prayer

Loving God, we have gathered in your Son's name to pray and ask your blessing on us.

Help us to grow in unity and love,
to become your living witnesses of one faith.
Teach us to remove the barriers
that hold us from serving you more fully
and being your one church.

Give us hope and patience,
a new spirit of compassion and fortitude
to build your place of care on earth.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Closing Song "There is One Lord"
or "In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful"

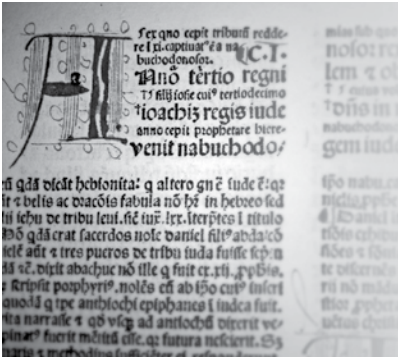


In Christ's Peace Deceased Members

Father Thomas Fitzgerald, SSS
Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament

Father Julian Rousseau, SSS
Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament

Priests in the Eucharistic League whose names begin with A, B, and C are reminded to celebrate the Eucharist for deceased members during January and February.



BREAKING THE WORD

HOMILETICS - Christmas/Ordinary Time

by Anthony J. Marshall, SSS

A Light for the World

As we transition from the Christmas season back to Ordinary Time, we are reminded through the readings that Christ expects great things from us as his disciples. The theme of light is recurrent in the liturgy of this period. Not only is Jesus Christ the light for the nations, recognized and adored by the Magi, but he calls his disciples to become the light of the world (see Mt 5:14).

This is a tall order for anyone to accomplish on his or her own. Thankfully, we do not live a Christian life without support. The church is the family of believers, thriving on the word of God and the church's Tradition, and nourished and sanctified through the sacraments. Jesus promised that he would never abandon us: "And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age" (Mt 28:20). Is this not the meaning of his name Emmanuel (see Mt 1:23)?

In the midst of life's trials and tribulations, joys and celebrations, we are assured of Christ's loving and merciful presence. We are not left alone in the world. As we live in communion with Christ and his church, the light of faith dwelling in our hearts, given us at baptism, shines so brightly that the darkness of sin and evil is overcome through Christ's tender love and mercy.

Being a Christian is not easy; it was never advertised as such. But the Scriptures for Eucharist in January and February remind us that we have a remarkable support system in the church—on earth and in heaven—where we readily call upon one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Editor's Note

Please note the change in format for these reflections, now divided into three sections: "Breaking the Word," "Sharing the Word," and "Praying the Word." The first section features a précis of each Scriptural text; "Sharing the Word" begins the process of applying God's word to the life of the disciple and the church; and "Praying the Word" offers a short prayer based on the Sunday readings. These prayers are written in the first-person singular, but can easily be changed to the plural for liturgical and corporate use.

The Octave Day of the Nativity of the Lord
Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God
January 1, 2014

Giving Thanks and Praise to the Most High

Breaking the Word

Numbers 6:22-27

The first reading from the book of Numbers depicts Moses relating God's blessing to Aaron and his kin. It is typically called the "priestly blessing," as it was used by Aaron and his sons as they blessed the people of Israel. It is one of the optional blessings found in the Roman Missal. In Hebrew, the word blessing (*berākā*) suggests a gift that is given and received. Usually, it leads the recipient to offer praise and thanks for the gift. This is often the sense in which a blessing is found in some psalms (e.g., Ps 34:1—"I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall always be in my mouth").

Galatians 4:4-7

Paul reminds the Galatians of the human and divine origins of Jesus Christ. It is important to note that in this pericope, Paul mentions that "God sent his son" Jesus, born of a human mother, (see Gal 4:4). Like the evangelists Matthew and Luke, who reveal through their infancy narratives that Jesus had a human mother but not a human father (see Mt 1:20; Lk 1:35), Paul stresses the same point: Jesus' father is divine. This second reading then continues the Christmas theology for this Octave Day. Jesus is both God and man, divine and human, and we are called to share in his divinity as adopted sons and daughters of God, calling out, "Abba, Father!" (see Gal 4:5-6).

Luke 2:16-21

The gospel passage for the Octave Day of Christmas is the narrative of the shepherds proclaiming the good news of the Messiah's birth while giving God thanks and praise for what they were privileged to see and hear (see Lk 2:17, 20). In addition, since it is the eighth day of Christmas, the Gospel includes the verse that describes what happened eight days after Jesus' birth, namely, the circumcision and formal name-giving. Mary and Joseph were obedient to the dictates of the law, and Luke demonstrates this with today's story.

Sharing the Word

On this Octave Day of Christmas, and first day of the civil calendar, today's readings invite us to make three spiritual New Year's resolutions: 1. to bless and be blessed; 2. to pray more intensely; and 3. to be ever thankful. The first resolution flows from the first reading, the priestly blessing of Aaron. As Christians, we are called to be a blessing for others and to recognize God's abundant blessings in our own lives.

Blessedness leads to prayerfulness. To truly call on God as "Abba, Father" (Gal 4:6) means much more than simply reciting the Our Father. What Paul is suggesting here is that, as Christians, we are to be in such an intimate and deep relationship with God that we can dare call upon the Most High, the Creator of heaven and earth, as Father, Abba (i.e., daddy). This intimacy is a blessing that we have received because we are adopted sons and daughters. When we bless others and receive God's many blessings, when we intensify our prayer life and trustingly call upon God as our Father, this naturally leads to our third New Year's resolution: thankfulness.

Thanksgiving is what today's Gospel depicts. The shepherds came to adore the newborn Christ, to be blessed by his presence in the midst of the Holy Family. Following this, Luke indicates "the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told to them" (Lk 2:20). Giving God glory and praise is an act of thanksgiving. The Eucharist is the church's sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and it is why we gather every Sunday to offer him thankful praise around the eucharistic table of the Lord.

Praying the Word

Abba, Father,
you have given us this feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary
to conclude the annual celebration of Christmas.
In this year of grace,
help us to recognize your many blessings,
and so offer you thankful praise at the altar.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord January 5, 2014

Every Nation on Earth Will Adore the Lord

Breaking the Word

Isaiah 60:1-6

Isaiah speaks of a time when Jerusalem will be the shining light for the world to see, a guide to the nations as they come to worship the Most High. This will be a time of new hope and promise after the clouds of despair have vanished. In its fuller context, this pericope denotes that although God's people were oppressed and seemingly forsaken, God will bless them beyond imagining so that "the children of your oppressors shall come, bowing low before you; all those who despised you shall fall prostrate at your feet" (Is 60:14). In its liturgical context for today's feast of the Epiphany, the passage lends itself to foreshadowing the church as a beacon of hope, reflecting the light of Christ whom all the nations will come to adore.

Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6

The reading emphasizes the universal mission to preach the message of faith to the nations, the Gentiles (cf. Eph 3:6), proclaiming the glory of God revealed in Jesus Christ. This short passage comes from a larger pericope wherein Paul offers the Ephesians a justification for his mission to the Gentiles, ultimately arguing that the mission of the church is indeed the proclamation of the Gospel to all the world (see Eph 3:8-10).

Matthew 2:1-12

Unique to Matthew's Gospel is the story of the Magi coming to pay homage to the infant Jesus, offering gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, (see Mt 2:11). Important to note is Matthew's use of the verb *proskuneo*, rendered in our English translation as "homage," when describing the action of the Magi. In Greek, *proskuneo* means to worship and adore. By using *proskuneo*, Matthew is pointing to the divinity of Christ very early in his gospel text, something that the nations, as represented by the Magi, came to recognize.

Sharing the Word

Epiphany traditionally celebrates three miracles that manifest Christ's glory. These are suitably described in the Magnificat antiphon for Vespers II of Epiphany from the Divine Office: "Today the star leads the Magi to the infant Christ; today water is changed into wine for the wedding feast; today Christ wills to be baptized by John in the river Jordan to bring us salvation." Each miracle is a mini-epiphany whereby the church recognizes in all three the revelation of Christ's divinity.

Recognition is at the heart of the human journey. Each of us seeks to be recognized for being who we are and become. The theme of recognition is also at the heart of today's liturgy. As Christians, we are called to recognize Jesus as the long awaited Messiah and Savior. Now the task that remains is our response.

The Magi offer a paradigmatic response to the presence of Christ. They traveled a great distance, following a star, facing dangers and political strife along the way. Nothing deterred them from their destination. And once they arrived in Bethlehem and beheld the infant Jesus with his mother Mary, they worshiped and adored. They offered him their gifts and their hearts.

Just as the Magi worshiped Christ and offered him their treasures in an act of thankful praise, the risen Christ now empowers us to do likewise through the Eucharist.

Praying the Word

Eternal Father,
in every age you reveal your glory
through mysterious signs and wonders.
By the power of the Holy Spirit,
enable us to recognize your presence and glory
at every moment of our lives.
To Christ be glory in the church,
now and forever.
Amen.

Feast of the Baptism of the Lord January 12, 2014

"This is My Son with Whom I am Well Pleased"

Breaking the Word

Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

The first reading is taken from the suffering servant oracles of Deutero-Isaiah. The author never identifies the suffering servant mentioned in his texts. Later Christian tradition and the evangelists see in the oracles the figure of the suffering Christ. Today, however, in its liturgical setting, the pericope nicely dovetails with the gospel passage wherein the Father declares his pleasure with Jesus, his servant and Son (cf. Is 42:1, Mt 3:17).

Acts 10:34-38

Luke recounts Peter's magnificent speech to Cornelius and his household. Peter preaches Jesus Christ and recalls how Jesus was baptized and anointed "with the Holy Spirit and power" (Acts 10:38). Peter's speech, his proclamation of the Gospel, results in the baptism of Cornelius and his family (see Acts 10:48). The inclusion of this passage from Acts for today's feast is likely because it alludes to Jesus' baptism by John and shows forth the universal mission of Christ, "who is Lord of all" (Acts 10:36).

Matthew 3:13-17

Today's Gospel depicts Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. The result of Jesus' baptism is that the Spirit descends upon him and a heavenly voice declares Jesus to be the "beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Mt 3:17), thereby reflecting the first reading from today's liturgy. Immediately following this scene in the Gospel, the Spirit thrusts Jesus into the desert to face the ancient foe for forty days. Interestingly, Matthew adapts Mark's baptismal story in a few ways. First, whereas Mark simply describes Jesus' baptism by John, Matthew portrays a hesitation on the Baptist's part since Jesus is the greater figure. Second, only Jesus seemingly hears the heavenly voice in Mark as it was addressed to him alone: "You are my beloved Son. . ." (Mk 1:11), while in Matthew's account the voice declares Jesus' status and is presumably heard by all.

Sharing the Word

In a General Audience last September, Pope Francis asked the crowd if they knew the date of their baptism. He did this in order to highlight the importance of baptism for every Christian and how each should take to heart the great gift of baptismal grace, being a part of the family of God that is the church. Today's festival, which concludes the Christmas season, is a fitting time for us to recall our own baptism and the great gift we have received in being bathed in the saving waters of baptism.

Immediately following upon the account of Jesus' baptism, Matthew states that the Spirit led Jesus into the desert where he was tempted for forty days (see Mt 4:1-11). Baptisms are a great celebration for families and the newly baptized. But immediately following upon the festivities comes the reality of being a Christian, of taking up the mission of Jesus Christ and following him in and through his church. Just as it was not an easy path for Jesus to travel from the baptism in the Jordan to the passion in Jerusalem, so, too, the life of the baptized Christian involves moments of sacrifice and ordeal before we reach the heavenly banquet feast where the Father will recognize us as his beloved sons and daughters.

Praying the Word

God our Father,
through the waters of baptism
you opened for us the door of faith.
Renew in our hearts the flame of your love
and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit,
so that we might preach Jesus Christ
in our words and in our deeds.
This we ask through the same Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
January 19, 2014

Behold the Lamb of God

Breaking the Word

Isaiah 49:3, 5-6

The first reading is taken from the suffering servant oracles. It describes the faithful servant of God who will not only restore Israel in its relationship with God, but also be a beacon of light for the Gentiles (i.e., the nations) “that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth” (Is 49:6). The first verses of the oracle, not included in today’s reading, describe the calling of the servant from his mother’s womb, reminiscent of the prophet Jeremiah’s own call (see Jer 1:4-5). Taken in the liturgical setting of today, the reading points to Jesus as the Father’s faithful servant and Son who, in the words of the responsorial psalm, comes to do the Father’s will.

1 Corinthians 1:1-3

Beginning today and continuing for the next number of Sundays, the second reading is taken from Paul’s first epistle to the Corinthians. It is a fabulous text that reflects Paul’s rich theology and insights on a number of different topics important for the ecclesial community. Today’s pericope sets the stage for the letter, reminding the church of Corinth of its baptismal calling to holiness in Jesus Christ. The final sentence of the text is taken up in the Roman Missal as the second form of the celebrant’s liturgical greeting of the assembly.

John 1:29-34

The Gospel follows the scene where the Baptist stated that he baptized with water alone and pointed to his unworthiness to untie the sandal straps of Jesus. Today’s reading follows nicely upon last Sunday’s feast of the Baptism of the Lord as John the Baptist recalls how he saw the Spirit come down upon Jesus like a dove (see Jn 1:32), presumably at his baptism. As a result, John believes that Jesus is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit (Jn 1:33). The connection with today’s first reading is found in the Baptist’s declaration of Jesus as “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (Jn 1:29). This is because Jesus is the Father’s faithful servant who does his will (cf. Jn 3:16-17). The Roman Missal modifies the words of John the Baptist (i.e., “Behold the Lamb of God. . .”) and places them as the invitation to Holy Communion.

Sharing the Word

At the end of today's Gospel comes the important lesson for the church: "Now I have seen and testify that he is the Son of God" (Jn 1:34). John the Baptist saw the Spirit of God rest upon Jesus, the Lamb of God, and he was commissioned to testify to the truth about Jesus to the whole world. This is called evangelization! When we give testimony—through our words and actions—of our faith in Jesus Christ, when we share the Good News of salvation, we are following in the footsteps of John the Baptist and countless saints from ages past and present. And what gives Christians the commission to evangelize? Baptism!

The Second Vatican Council reminded us that as baptized members of the church, the family of God, we are called to holiness and are thereby commissioned to preach the Gospel according to each one's vocation in life (see *Lumen Gentium*, 39ff). This call to holiness is what Saint Paul speaks of in the second reading. Holiness requires fidelity on our part: fidelity to God and the church of God, which is the body of Christ.

Praying the Word

Lord Jesus,
you are the Lamb of God
who takes away the sins of the world.
Through the sacrament of your body and blood,
may we be strengthened to boldly and charitably
testify to your love and mercy in the world.
For you live and reign forever and ever.
Amen.

Third Sunday of Ordinary Time
January 26, 2014

Walking in the Light of the Lord

Breaking the Word

Isaiah 8:23—9:3

Referring to northern Galilee as “the District of the Gentiles,” Isaiah recalls how God glorified that territory and its people. They were once in darkness, but now light has shone upon them. There is a sense of restoration and comfort, of newness and hope in Isaiah’s words. Jesus refers to this passage in today’s Gospel.

1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17

Paul addresses the divisions within the church of Corinth and their pettiness. “Chloe’s people” might refer to people Paul sent to evaluate the situation in Corinth and report back to him. A plea for unity in Christ’s name is at the heart of this passage, a theme that will be developed throughout the letter. Today’s pericope might lead us to falsely believe that Paul did not baptize, since we read: “For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the Gospel” (1 Cor 1:17). However, in verses 14-16—not included in today’s reading—Paul admits to baptizing Crispus and Gaius along with the household of Stephanas.

Matthew 4:12-23

Following his baptism and temptations in the desert, Jesus embarks on his mission in Galilee, challenging the people, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Mt 4:17). Repent is the English translation of the Greek word *metanoia*, which means a complete change of mind and heart. It demands turning around 180 degrees. With this proclamation, Jesus continues the preaching of John the Baptist (see Mt 3:1). Jesus invites Andrew and his brother Simon Peter to become “fishers of men” (Mt 4:19) along with James and John, the sons of Zebedee.

Sharing the Word

The Christophers' slogan, "It is better to light one candle than to curse the darkness" comes to mind with today's readings. Jesus did not come to condemn the world but to be its Savior (see Jn 3:17), to enlighten it with the light of the word of truth. Today's Gospel, read in conjunction with the first reading from the prophet Isaiah, underscores that Jesus is the light of truth. His love and mercy shine on the dark areas of our lives, our relationships, and all our reality.

Nevertheless, to set out on the road leading to salvation and redemption, to be a disciple of Jesus Christ requires much sacrifice. Simon Peter and Andrew his brother along with James and John realized this when they left their profitable fishing business and families to follow Jesus and become fishers of men. *Metanoia*, repentance/conversion, is costly. Thankfully, the Holy Spirit helps the church and each of us in every age to undergo conversion and renewal for the sake of the kingdom of God.

Praying the Word

Lord Jesus,
you are the light of the world.
Continue to shine the light of your truth
on your church,
so that she may more perfectly become
the sacrament of salvation for all the nations.
You live and reign forever and ever.
Amen.

Feast of the Presentation of the Lord February 2, 2014

Christ is the Light of Salvation for the Nations

Breaking the Word

Malachi 3:1-4

Today's reading comes from the last book of the Old Testament, the prophet Malachi. The prophet speaks of a time when a divine messenger (Elijah is referenced in Mal 3:23) will prepare the way before the Lord God who will suddenly appear in the temple. Two poignant questions are raised: "But who will endure the day of his coming? And who can stand when he appears?" (Mal 3:2). These questions are asked of the people because in chapter two Malachi catalogues their sins. Taken in the context of today's liturgical feast, Jesus is the Lord who suddenly appears in the temple.

Hebrews 2:14-18

The author of Hebrews writes of the reality of Jesus' incarnation as a necessity for salvation: "He had to become like his brothers in every way, they he might . . . expiate the sins of the people" (Heb 2:17). Since Jesus experienced life as every human being does, he is able to empathize with and help those who are being tested and tried (see Heb 2:18). This illustrates God's concern for the redemption of all through Jesus Christ.

Luke 2:22-40

This Gospel depicts the presentation of Jesus by Mary and Joseph in the temple, acting in accord with the law. The rejoicing and prediction of Simeon are recalled, along with the devout witness offered by the prophetess Anna. Simeon's thankful praise for the presence of Jesus is sung nightly at compline.

Sharing the Word

Like last week, the readings for this Sunday invite us to rejoice in the fact that Jesus is the light of salvation for the world. In the midst of the doubts, pain, and anxieties we face in life, it is comforting to know he was likewise tested, according to our second reading. Jesus faced temptations just as we do. But he was faithful to the Father. He knows what temptations and suffering we endure for his sake, and Jesus offers us his merciful and tender love daily.

Today's feast encourages us to strive each day to remain faithful to our calling as disciples. The Christian life is never easy, but for those who remain steadfast in their faith, God's promised salvation will be fulfilled. Anna and Simeon remained faithful to God, whom they loved and served. Their fidelity was eventually rewarded by the presence of the Christ child in the temple along with Mary and Joseph. Surely they had doubts and faced temptations, but they remained steadfast in their faith. God fulfilled their hearts' desire.

Praying the Word

God our Father,
your servants Simeon and Anna
rejoiced as they recognized
the presence of Christ
in their midst.
Help us to recognize your Son
at every moment of our lives
and to remain loyal and steadfast in our faith.
This we ask through the same Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
February 9, 2014

Light Shall Rise for You in the Darkness

Breaking the Word

Isaiah 58:7-10

Isaiah speaks of the true fasting and worship of God which result in concrete actions. Mere desire is not enough in the sight of the Most High (see Is 58:5-6). Today's passage reveals that God expects his people to be merciful and just; to worship with their lips and their lives. Again, the theme of light is found in today's readings as Isaiah notes that when God's people live in accordance with his commands, then the Lord's light will shine upon them (see Is 58:8, 10). The responsorial psalm echoes this, referring to the just one as a light for those in darkness.

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Paul tells his readers how he came to preach Jesus Christ crucified and nothing else. This is the heart of the Christian message. Paul's words were not eloquent, but they conveyed the power of God (see 1 Cor 2:5). Evidently, some of the divisions in the Corinthian community concentrated on preaching style and apostolic personality rather than substance (e.g., see 1 Cor 2:12). What Paul is driving home is that his message is basic and true, for it is the Gospel of Jesus Christ and nothing else.

Matthew 5:13-16

Today's pericope from the Sermon on the Mount follows immediately after the beatitudes (Mt 5:1-12). Jesus refers to his disciples as salt and light. The light of the disciples shines upon their good works so that those who see them might in turn glorify the Father. Since the beatitudes precede today's passage, the good works to which Jesus refers are presumably encompassed in them. In Greek, the word "good" is *kalos*, which has a number of meanings, including "beautiful" or "lovely." Jesus tells his disciples that their works are to be beautiful and lovely, reflective of God's beauty and goodness.

Sharing the Word

At our baptism, we received a candle symbolizing the light of Christ. The baptismal rite charges us to keep the light of Christ burning brightly. We do this by living as children of the light, keeping the flame of faith alive in our hearts. Our works of mercy, charity, and justice for our neighbors, which Isaiah alluded to in the first reading, are like candles with blazing flames shining the light of Christ ever more brightly in a darkened world. Jesus invites us to reflect God's goodness and beauty in our daily living in order that all might glorify him.

People are naturally attracted by beauty and goodness. And attracting people for God is our mission. That's what Jesus speaks about today. He wants our lives to be beautiful and good, to image God's own beauty and goodness. He preached a way of life that leads others to God and to the kingdom of heaven.

Praying the Word

Lord Jesus,
through your church
you have called us
to be brightly shining lights
for the world.

May our thoughts, words, and actions
reflect your beauty and goodness,
so that the Father may be adored
in spirit and in truth.

Amen.

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
February 16, 2014

*Let Your "Yes" Mean "Yes,"
and Your "No" Mean "No"*

Breaking the Word

Sirach 15:15-20

Human free will is vividly portrayed in this text from the book of Sirach. The verse before today's passage clearly describes free will: "When God, in the beginning, created man, he made him subject to his own free choice" (Sir 15:14). In this context, it is clear that the author wishes to place the responsibility for one's actions on one's own shoulders and not on God. God does not command us to sin (see Sir 15:20); instead, God guarantees us the freedom to choose his will or ours.

1 Corinthians 2:6-10

Paul now declares that he speaks with wisdom, not that of the Greeks or of the learned, but the wisdom of God. The wisdom with which Paul preaches is God's glory for us in Christ Jesus (see 1 Cor 2:7). He urges the Corinthians to base their faith on the Gospel, the mysterious wisdom of God, rather than on the eloquence of the times and contemporary culture. Those who love God are promised a future that no eye has seen, no ear heard, nor any mind conceived (see 1 Cor 2:9).

Matthew 5:17-37

Continuing with the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus instructs his listeners about some basic conditions for discipleship. He assures them, firstly, that his teachings are not contrary to the law but, rather, he is the law's fulfillment. The commandments still hold for his disciples, but Jesus offers clarity. He teaches about anger, adultery, divorce and remarriage, and oaths. The final verse of today's Gospel summarizes the Christian life of integrity: "Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.' Anything more is from the evil one" (Mt 5:37).

Sharing the Word

Often in our culture, people wish to celebrate and uphold their rights, but not their duties. Freedom of speech comes with the duty to speak truthfully and for the common good. The right to bear arms comes with great responsibilities for gun owners. Rights always have duties and responsibilities, a point which the first reading and today's Gospel demonstrate.

God has blessed us with free will, indeed, with the right to choose our destiny. But with that right, with the gift of free will, comes the responsibility to seek the truth and the duty to choose wisely. Choosing wisely means living in accordance with the wisdom of God and not the wisdom of this age, as Paul reminds the Corinthians. It is all about integrity.

Jesus went further than Sirach when he told his disciples that they are not to just follow the precepts of the law, but to live them with integrity. Worshiping God on the Lord's Day, but then living a different way of life Monday through Saturday is what the readings are advising us against. Our baptismal "Yes" must mean "Yes" to Christ and his church every moment of our lives.

Praying the Word

Almighty and ever faithful God,
from the dawn of creation
you blessed man and woman
with the gift of free will and intelligence;
the grace to know and to love you.
Pour out your Spirit of wisdom on us
so that we may endeavor to become
people of holiness and integrity each day.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time
February 23, 2014

"Be Holy, for I, the LORD, your God, am Holy."

Breaking the Word

Leviticus 19:1-2, 17-18

Leviticus 19 presents several ways of being holy as God is holy. The author denotes dietary restrictions, precepts for right worship, commands against dishonesty, sexual prohibitions, etc., as ways of living a holy life in accordance with God's will. The text selected for today's liturgy proposes that holiness is rooted in love and mercy.

1 Corinthians 3:16-23

Paul continues to remind the Corinthian community that belonging to Jesus Christ and to him alone is what is essential to being a Christian. There is no popularity contest for the ministers of Christ's church since Paul, Apollos, and Cephas belong to Christ, as do the Corinthians. Additionally, Paul speaks once again of God's wisdom as being different from the wisdom of this age, and since Christians are temples of the Holy Spirit they are holy (see 1 Cor 3:16-17).

Matthew 5:38-48

The Gospel echoes the first reading's command to love one's neighbor and to strive for holiness (perfection). Jesus extends the Levitical precept of love of neighbor to include even one's enemies (see Mt 5:43-44). Just as God commanded his people to be holy, so Jesus asks his disciples to be perfect as the heavenly Father is perfect. Luke's Sermon on the Plain uses "merciful" instead of "perfect" (see Lk 6:36).

Sharing the Word

The quest for perfection in human activities is sometimes fatal. Perfectionists are always second-guessing themselves and their work; nothing will ever be perfect enough. This is not the perfection that Jesus invites us to in the kingdom. Rather, the perfection Jesus advocates is that of holiness. Being holy means living a life of union with and relationship to God and one another. Jesus invites us to holiness by loving God and our neighbors. And not just those people whom we find it easy to love, but also those whom we might label as our enemies. What a challenge!

Often, we are quick to label our fellow Christians as “conservative” or “liberal” and to dismiss them as one would discard peels from an onion. In the light of Jesus’ call to perfection, to love of our neighbors and our enemies, perhaps we might reconsider using such labels and instead refer to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. This is certainly what Paul would remind us to do, just as he reminded the Corinthians to focus on what united them rather than what divided the church of Christ.

Praying the Word

We praise and thank you, Father,
for the gift of our baptism,
by which we are cleansed of sin
and made your adopted sons and daughters in Christ.
Free us from all hatred, jealousy, and sloth
so that we can love you and one another,
and so become disciples of your Son,
outstanding in holiness.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

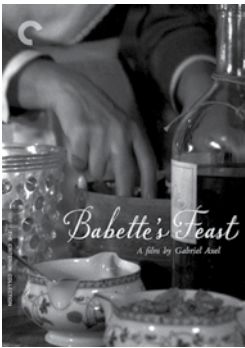




THE EUCHARIST & CULTURE

Art • Music • Film •
Poetry • Books

Film Review



BABETTE'S FEAST
Gabriel Axel, 1987,
Denmark—The
Criterion Collection
by John Christman,
SSS

In this, our first film review for *Emmanuel's* new “Eucharist & Culture” section, what could be more fitting than the quintessential “theology and food” film, *Babette's Feast*. Gabriel Axel's 1988 Academy Award winning film not only abounds with eucharistic undertones, but it is impossible to watch on an empty stomach. Add to this a lusciously restored and newly converted Blu-Ray edition stuffed with delectable extras and insightful documentaries, and you may just have the meal of the century.

At first glance, the film may appear deceptively simple and somewhat familiar. A stranger arrives upon the desolate and windswept shores of a distant country. The people of the town take her in. They are a cold, somewhat austere community whose religion defines them, but doesn't quite enliven them. Through her lovingly crafted cuisine, she slowly nurtures the fractured community back to life.

And yet, as one looks more closely, deeper meanings emerge in the film. For those gathered around the table nursing long held hurts and injuries, Babette's gracious and abundant feast brings reconciliation and rosy-cheeked satisfaction. A community is forever altered by the meal they shared.

Liturgists and theologians have been basking in the afterglow of Babette's wondrous meal since it first flickered across movie screens. In fact, the lessons of *Babette's Feast* for a eucharistically minded people are many. It brilliantly illustrates the difference between an empty ritual and the transformative possibilities of truly sharing a meal. It also shows the redemptive and reconciling possibilities of gathering to break bread. Even Babette's sacrifice in bringing the feast to the table evokes theological notions. The film does all of this and so much more with its subtle humor and mouthwatering dishes. It is an absolute delight.

In upcoming issues of *Emmanuel*, we will continue to look at films like these. Films like *Babette's Feast* which dialogue so easily and fruitfully not only with a sacramental perspective, but often with a eucharistic perspective as well.

These films will come from around the world and will span from classic to contemporary. They will be useful for personal reflection or for engaging parishioners in film viewings and discussions. Most importantly, they will engage the world we live in. They will help us to see “all of reality in the light of the Eucharist” and, as we will no doubt find, reality may just have something to say in return.

Music Review

In 2010, Mavis Staples received one of the greatest accolades of her career. She won a Grammy Award for her critically acclaimed album *You Are Not Alone*. From early soul and gospel songs performed by her family group, The Staples Singers, to big 1960s hits like “I’ll Take You There,” to lending her voice to the civil rights movement and singing duets with Bob Dylan, Mavis Staples had already forged a name for herself in American music. Fearlessly exploring different styles and musical collaborators, Staples eventually crossed paths with indie-rock musician and producer Jeff Tweedy, and their inspired collaboration garnered Staples’ first Grammy Award after a lifetime in the music industry.

On her new album, *One True Vine*, Staples and Tweedy have paired up again. Discontent to simply repeat themselves, however, they embarked on a more bold and daring path. *One True Vine* finds them exploring the religious stirrings of the heart in a subtle array of differing musical genres. The album begins with a bare-boned gospel rendition of Alan Sparhawk’s poignant and pleading song “Holy Ghost.” This is quickly followed by a dark and groovy blues tune penned by Tweedy entitled “Every Step.” Here Staples’ rich voice acknowledges God’s ever-present grace among a litany of world-weary experiences. In fact, God fills these songs, from the exultant praise of “Woke Up This Morning (With My Mind on Jesus)” to the faithful longing expressed in “Far Celestial Shore.”

Staples imbues each of these songs with a voice steeped in experience, but still sparkling with hope. Tweedy judiciously pares down the recording, giving it an unembellished, clear, and crisp sound. But there is an edge here as well. It can be heard in the big drum hits of “Sow Good Seed” and the raw, upfront bass of the infectious “I Like the Things About Me.”

The album ends with the title track, “One True Vine” and, given the religious tone of the album, it easily calls to mind John 15:5 where Jesus says, “I am the vine, you are the branches” (NAB). Here again, Staples offers Tweedy’s words of



Mavis Staples
ONE TRUE VINE
Anti-, 2013
by John Christman,
SSS

thankful praise after a time of crisis when she sings, "Life had ceased, I was lost and tired, You set me free, from this mighty, mighty fire, Just in time to be 'my one true vine." And after an album of hope and longing for God, thanksgiving for God's gracious response seems an all too appropriate response.

Poetry

Epiphany — A Haiku Sequence —

Three Wise Men seeking,
Faithfully follow The Star
In their search for God.

Lo! In the far sky,
The Star's shattering brightness
Points to Bethlehem.

The Magi's search ends. . . .
They have glimpsed Divinity:
The Epiphany!

We are to be stars,
An epiphany to all:
Reflecting God's Light!

Jeanette Martino Land

Book Review

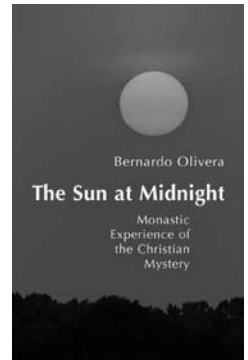
Are we all really mystics, most often unaware of just how close we are to experiencing union with God? Bernardo Olivera, Abbot of Nuestra Senora de los Angeles in Azul, Argentina, describes mysticism as a profoundly human reality, and Christian mysticism as inseparable from Christianity, oriented to the mysteries of Trinity, redemption, and incarnation. A mystic is anyone who experiences God's mystery. However, many of us "live divine grace and the theological virtues, but we do not experience what we live" (34). In *The Sun at Midnight*, Olivera explores the Cistercian charism, rooted in mystical experience, as a response to a rise in twenty-first century postmodern hunger for the transcendent, evoking the witness of this mystical tradition and provoking a deeper understanding of faith and religion.

In the first few chapters, the author situates the thirst for the experience of mystery in a cultural context, suggesting that the desire to grasp mystery reflected in today's society is not so different from the twelfth, the Cistercian century. Providing "a word about mystery, mysticism, mystics, and the mystical experience" provides clarification and important reference points for this study on mystical experience. He notes the biblical, liturgical, spiritual, and divinizing dimensions of the patristic texts on mysticism.

Olivera then leads the reader into the Christian mystical experience by engaging hearts, imagination, and understanding in "Christ, the Supreme Mystic." It is at this point that the text called me into a more reflective, meditative mode. Through scriptural reflections on the mystical encounters with Jesus, I felt invited to consider more intimately the meaning of mystical union with Christ. Olivera describes mysticism as the "flowering of revealed truth which is in turn the root of mysticism"—those truths we encounter in the experience of Jesus' baptism, the transfiguration, the Last Supper, and the Garden of Gethsemane (40).

In the second half of *The Sun at Midnight*, Olivera brings into focus the mystical experience of Cistercian monks and nuns. He grounds this reflection in what he identifies as the most common experiences of the Lord's mystery: the liberating goodness of God's friendship; compunction; transforming darkness; desire for the infinite; spousal covenant; communion of wills; and an alternating succession of spiritual phenomena such as interior shifts (59).

The theme that receives the most attention, and the language that is perhaps most elusive in my own understanding, is that of the spousal relationship. Olivera emphasizes that our experience of the risen Jesus is a spousal relationship because "that is how he (Jesus) experiences the divine plan of salvation" (122). Olivera emphasizes that this particular focus is based on our daily encounter with the risen Lord in eucharistic



THE SUN AT
MIDNIGHT:
Monastic
Experience of the
Christian Mystery.
Bernardo Olivera,
OCSO. Collegeville,
Minnesota:
Liturgical Press,
2012.

Communion, making us one body, one spirit in Christ, a means of mystical transformation. Olivera refers to Bernard of Clairvaux's homilies on the Song of Songs as primary sources of reflection on this mystical expression.

The richness of *The Sun at Midnight* lies in Olivera's continual reference to the writings of the great mystics and teachers. I was introduced to the voices of the medieval Cisterian mystics Beatrice of Nazareth and Hadewijch of Antwerp. The writings of Bernard of Clairvaux, William of Saint-Thierry, and Aelred of Rievaulx, among others, describe the mystical experience as unity of spirit. Through the Rule of Saint Benedict and the words of Saints Gregory the Great, Augustine, and Bernard, Olivera shares the mystical experience of joy in spiritual desire.

Olivera concludes his study with a synthesis of assertions regarding mysticism, a reference to the importance of the mystical experience in any process of renewal or evangelization, and the role of the Cisterian monks and nuns as witnesses for all Christians searching for authenticity. If the reader has already experienced the pull toward mysticism, he or she would find a deepening appreciation through the perspective of the Cistercian experience. If this is a new consideration in one's spiritual journey, Olivera makes clear how the mystical experience is accessible and meant for all searching for divine union. He writes, "God grant that the good wishes of Hadewijch of Antwerp be accomplished in us: May new light give you new zeal/new works, the fullness of delights..." (125).

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EUCCHARISTIC WITNESS

Patty Pizzitola

As a young girl, I attended daily Mass. If you were on the school grounds before the end of Mass, it was a requirement. I didn't mind going and have fond memories of this time.

Vatican II arrived, and for next several years, like most Catholics, I dealt with the far-reaching changes. I embraced them with an open heart and mind. For the first time, I understood what the priest was saying and witnessed lay people fulfilling various ministries at Mass.

I married my high school sweetheart, Bubba. When we purchased our first home, I left the comfort of the parish of my youth and joined Corpus Christi Parish. It wasn't the same, but I persisted. I wanted my daughters to have what my parents and teachers had instilled in me—faith in God and a strong trust in his care.

In 1987, the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament arrived at our parish. It was a turning point in my faith journey. I wanted to do more than just be a parishioner in the pew. I convinced Bubba that these priests were different. He started attending, and soon both of us became Communion ministers and lectors and organized the youth group.

In 1990, we accepted an invitation to attend the Life in the Eucharist program. The experience was life changing. We later accepted another invitation to form the first Life in the Eucharist lay team and have never looked back.

By placing the Eucharist at the center of our lives, we have continued serving our parish and the congregation. We serve on the board of the Center for Eucharistic Evangelizing, are Associates of the Blessed Sacrament, and now organize the formation process for others interested in becoming associates.

I have been blessed by the Eucharist in ways too numerous to express. I am in a loving, faithful marriage. I am blessed by the many people I have met who have shared their faith stories. I have received far more than I have given. I have been able to express my love for Christ in the Eucharist by enhancing our parish liturgies through art and environment.

My faith journey thus far has been rewarding and enriching beyond my dreams. I never thought as young girl that I would embrace my faith so openly. I look forward to all that Jesus has yet in store for me.





WITH APPRECIATION

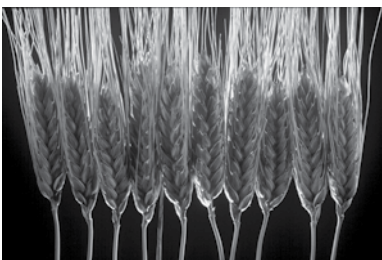
Tribute to Brother Gary LaVerdiere, SSS

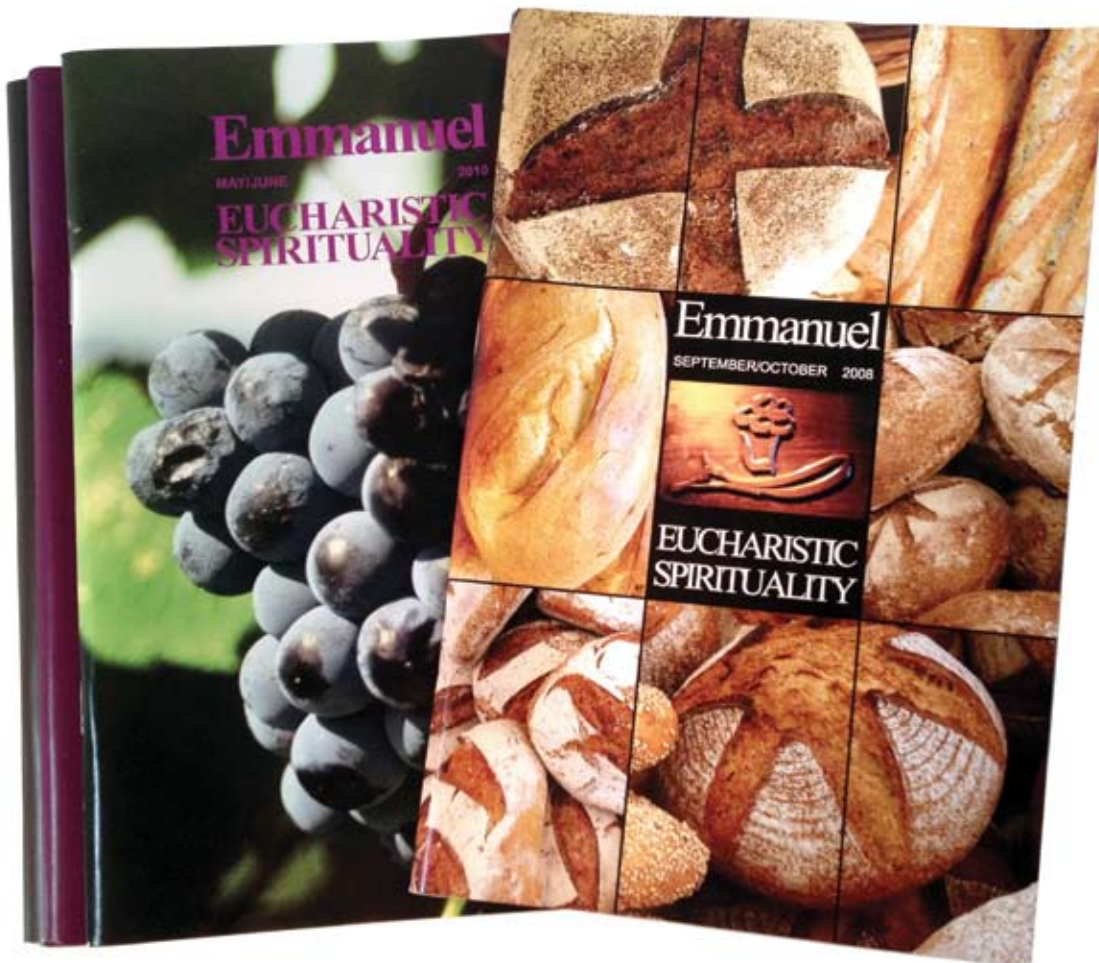
Brother Gary LaVerdiere, SSS, has been a tireless mainstay at *Emmanuel* Magazine for over 30 years. During his tenure as art director, numerous editors and writers have come and gone, but his artistic vision, attention to detail, and love for the Eucharist have remained true. He has received numerous awards for the striking imagery with which he has filled the pages of *Emmanuel*. And the publication will long be influenced by his stamp.

A number of months ago, when I first arrived at *Emmanuel* as the new art director, Brother Gary proved to be a gracious and insightful host. He regaled me with stories of when he first started at *Emmanuel*. In those early days, he not only had to do everything by hand but he didn't even have an office to work in. Since then, he has helped shape *Emmanuel* Magazine and Emmanuel Publications into what they are today. Through bold transitions over the years from black and white to color designs, to iconographic imagery that has become synonymous with his name, Brother Gary has led the magazine to the cusp of its 120th year of publication. This is a truly impressive feat that I can only hope to emulate. Luckily for me, however, Brother Gary is still here if I should have any questions or creative ideas to run by his discerning eyes.

In the end, however, I would simply like to add my voice to all of those who greatly appreciate Brother Gary's contributions to *Emmanuel* over the years. Andrew Wyeth, one of his favorite artists, once said, "One's art goes as far and as deep as one's love goes." Judging by Brother Gary's art, his love for God, God's creation, and especially for Jesus present in the Eucharist "runs deep" indeed.

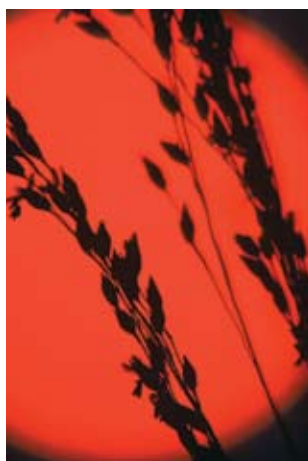
John Christman, SSS





"One's art goes as far and as deep as one's love goes."

Andrew Wyeth





“Be serious about the presence of God,
the knowledge of Jesus Christ, a definite
thought of some virtue, and you will have
a center of strength and consolation.”

To Mme. Mathilde Giraud-Jordan, 1868

Saint Peter Julian Eymard

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Eymard" in a large, flowing cursive script, with "S. P. J." written in a smaller, simpler script below it.