

Emmanuel

Eucharistic Spirituality



July/August 2018



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Emmanuel Magazine

Seeing all of reality in the light of the Eucharist

Volume 124 Number 4



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FROM THE EDITOR

In the early 1980s, a trio of Blessed Sacrament religious arrived at Saint Joseph's Church in downtown San Antonio to begin a new foundation. Their mandate was clear: to establish a Eucharistic center (shrine) in the heart of the city's burgeoning convention and tourism district. The church, built by German immigrants as a witness of faith 150 years ago, is near the famed Alamo, one of a string of Spanish missions in the area later celebrated in Texas folklore as the site of the epic battle-to-death by patriots during the 1836 revolt against Mexican rule.

I knew these priests well, having lived with one or other of them at various points during initial formation. They were pastoral men and outstanding preachers and liturgists.

One of the things they quickly discovered on arriving at Saint Joseph's was that they could not "compartmentalize" their ministry and attend only to people's spiritual needs when the surrounding streets were filled with the chronically hungry and homeless. So, they reached out to ecumenical agencies and civic organizations, and called forth the goodness and generosity of the parishioners, to meet the material *and* spiritual needs of the poor.

There was good precedent for this in the history of our order. In 1856, when Peter Julian Eymard was hoping to found a new religious congregation dedicated to the Eucharist in Paris, he was challenged by the city's archbishop, Marie-Dominique Sibour, to care for the growing population of young people who labored at menial jobs and sold scraps of paper and rags to survive. Eymard responded that his religious would not only promote the cult of the Eucharist but also serve such needs. Thus was born the first "work" of the new Society of the Most Blessed Sacrament — the evangelization of the "ragpickers" and their preparation for First Communion.

Besides readying them for Communion, Eymard and his companions fed and clothed these bands of youth and gave them a sense of belonging and dignity in an urban environment that previously only tolerated their existence.

I believe that any priest or deacon or lay minister who has been “*salted with the fire of Holy Spirit*” — a favorite expression of the late scripture scholar Eugene LaVerdiere, SSS — understands that the Church must serve the full range of human needs, not simply the spiritual, especially when people are hungry, hurting, and overlooked by society and its institutions.

Saint Peter Julian Eymard was equally at home in the sanctuary and in the streets, celebrating the liturgy of each. His grasp of the Eucharist compelled him to do both. He proclaimed the mystery of Christ’s body and blood in the sacrament, deepened his awareness of it in prayer, and served the needs of the body of Christ, the Church, with compassion and care.

In This Issue

The summer issue of *Emmanuel* focuses every year on the social dimension of the Gospel. Richard Gribble, CSC’s article offers insights into what it means to live counterculturally, in imitation of the prophets and Jesus. Next, I suggest you read Victor Parachin’s essay on Dom Helder Càmara, a prophetic figure of the Church in Brazil, and Peter Riga’s short reflection, “Poor at Heart.” You will also find articles commemorating two August anniversaries: the 150th anniversary of the death of Saint Peter Julian Eymard (August 1) and the 40th anniversary of the passing of Pope Paul VI (August 6). There is “A Poetry Retreat” for your meditation and prayer; also scripture reflections by *Emmanuel*’s former editor Paul Bernier, SSS. Enjoy!



Anthony Schueller, SSS



EUCHARIST: LIVING & EVANGELIZING

Do Not Be Afraid: Living Our Christian Faith in Today's World

by Richard Gribble, CSC

What do we offer the world today as followers of Christ? And how are we to live and to witness to the light of God's love and truth?

Father Richard Gribble, a member of the Congregation of the Holy Cross, has been at Stonehill College in Easton, Massachusetts, since 1995. In addition to teaching, he is actively involved with local parish ministry as well as campus activities.

ON OCTOBER 16, 1978, THE DATE OF HIS ELECTION AS THE 264TH SUPREME Pontiff, Pope John Paul II proclaimed to the world from the balcony of Saint Peter's Basilica, "Do not be afraid; open wide the doors to Christ." For the next almost 27 years, Pope John Paul lived these words by demonstrating to all that we must never live in fear, but rather by embracing Christ find the courage to live in a world that often embraces values, principles, and ideas which are counter, even antithetical, to those professed by Christ and his Church.

While this message is important for all, it is especially relevant and applicable to priests and religious who stand as symbols and agents of evangelization in the contemporary battle to fight secularism and the tendency to relativize all Christian teaching to a lowest common denominator acceptable to society. The challenge that Saint John Paul II proclaimed and lived is indeed one that requires constant effort and daily vigilance. We are called to cast out fear and to trust Christ in order to live as countercultural people in our contemporary world.

Evidence of Scripture

The Hebrew Scriptures provide numerous examples of people of faith who were asked to and successfully lived in a way that was countercultural to their society. Although most people of his day transgressed God's law, Noah was faithful. Thus, God asked him to do an absolutely crazy thing, to build a huge ark and to house in it one male and one female of each animal species.

Imagine being asked to do such an irrational task; to say the least,

it would be difficult to carry out. But Noah was willing to accept the barrage of words and possibly physical actions of those who saw his effort as ludicrous. He was willing to do something that no one else had done, to be completely countercultural because the Lord had spoken to him personally. Even if there had been no one to ridicule him, still Noah's task was immense, certainly not one for the fainthearted or those who were not completely dedicated. Noah's ability to follow the command of God allowed creation to survive the great flood (Gn 7:1-8:22).

Later, God came to Abram with a message and a command. He was asked to follow the instructions of a God with whom he had just entered into a relationship and move with his family to a new land. He was asked to completely trust with no specific guarantees other than the promise that he would be the father of a great nation. But like Noah before him, Abram was able to take the crazy route, follow the countercultural path. In the process, he became the first great patriarch of the Hebrew people, and indeed became the father of a great nation (Gn 15:1-21).

The work and the message of the Hebrew prophets were equally countercultural. While people today, when considering the concept of prophecy, think of future predictions and foretelling, the basic message of the Hebrew prophets centered on the ongoing problems and challenges in society and the need to find solutions that were faithful to Israel's covenant with God.

Amos was a prophet in the Northern Kingdom of Israel some 700 years before Christ. He challenged the ruling elite of his day to fulfill the responsibilities they had been given by God to lead the people. Rather than leading the people to find the common good and following God's law, many of the Jewish rulers fulfilled their own needs and desires. Thus, Amos was forced to "buck the system" of his day and speak God's word boldly.

Speaking to the elite of Israel, he proclaimed: "Thus says the Lord: For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not revoke the punishments; because they sell the righteous for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals — they who trample the head of the poor into the dust of the earth, and push the afflicted out-of-the-way; father and son go to the same girl, so that my holy name is profaned; they lay themselves down beside every altar on garments taken in pledge and in the house of their God they drink wine bought with fines they imposed" (Am 2:6-7).



The message of social justice proclaimed by Amos to the rulers and citizens of Israel was matched by his contemporary, Hosea, who chastised the elite for their idolatry. Rather than worshiping Yahweh, who had rescued them from Egypt, brought them into the Promised Land, and established their nation, the leaders chose to worship the false gods of the peoples among whom they lived.

Like Amos, Hosea was forced to speak boldly, but he did so in a straightforward way, even though he realized his message would probably not be received. For example, he proclaimed, “My people consult a piece of wood, and their divining rod gives them oracles. For a spirit of boredom has led them astray and they have played the poor, forsaking their God. They sacrifice on the tops of the mountains and make offerings upon the hills, under oak, poplar, and terebinth, because their shade is good” (Hos 4:12-13).

Being a prophet in ancient Israel put one in harm’s way. Amos, Isaiah, and Jeremiah all felt unqualified for their prophetic role, yet each answered the call of God, despite the fact that the personal cost would be high. Hearing the abuse and the ridicule of those in the society around them emboldened them, making them able to speak the truth even when facing death, as in the case of Jeremiah (Jer 37:11-38:13). They proclaimed their message without fear, confident that God was with them every step of the way.

The New Testament is equally full of examples of those who were countercultural in their pursuit of Jesus and his message. John the Baptist, living on wild honey and locusts, proclaimed a message of repentance. People needed to reform their lives and prepare themselves for the coming of the Lord. John said what needed to be said even when he knew his words would cause him great personal suffering. He denounced Herod and his lifestyle, an act which landed him in prison and eventually cost him his life (Mk 6:14-29). But John was not afraid; he possessed an inner strength that prompted him to go forward. He lived a countercultural existence.

Mary and Joseph showed no fear, but rather followed the path mapped out for them with boldness and confidence. Both violated the norms of their day, but they did so because of God’s message and promise delivered by the angel Gabriel. They stood against the prevailing tide in order to bring Jesus into our world.

Obviously the best example of one who lived a countercultural life was Jesus himself. In every conceivable way, Jesus challenged the prevailing system. He violated the precepts of the Sabbath law on several occasions asking, "Was the Sabbath made for man or man for the Sabbath?" He went even further, claiming that he was the "Lord of the Sabbath" (Mk 2:28). Jesus turned the norms of society upside down; he reversed roles and expectations.

So countercultural was he that he claimed that a Samaritan was a hero and a priest and the Levite, the respected religious authorities, were in error (Lk 10:25-37). He offered compassion over the law. What he said and did was so antithetical to the accepted norms of his day that the Jewish authorities sought to kill him.

We are called to cast out fear and to trust Christ in order to live as countercultural people in our contemporary world.

Why was Jesus crucified? Yes, he claimed to be a king; yes, he indirectly claimed to be the Messiah. Yes, he identified himself with God, a blasphemous claim. However, Jesus was crucified because he simply didn't fit into the established categories of the society and religious conventions of his day. He died because he was countercultural.

The Contemporary Situation and Challenge

Clearly, our twenty-first century environment is vastly different from biblical times, but Pope John Paul II, demonstrating great insight, realized that in many ways today's world is not that much different from any time in history. Since the dawn of humanity, the three great temptations of power, wealth, and prestige have tantalized society. When Jesus went to the desert and spent 40 days on what one might call his own personal retreat before inaugurating his public ministry, Satan tempted him with these same ideas: turning stones into bread, desiring worldly pleasures, and knowing that angels will save him because of his divine status.

As in biblical times, a popular elitism prevails in our contemporary society. Sometimes described as the "haves" and the "have-nots," the "ins" and the "outs," people are defined in society and placed in categories based on their educational level, economic means, family



heritage, religious preference, race, and ethnicity. Those on top tend to dominate those on the lower rungs of society.

This hierarchy generally defines what happens in life and how events unfold for people, with a definite favoring of those on top. Today as in the past there exists a constant battle between good and evil. Evil seems so much more profitable, and enticing. To profess goodness and manifest it in one's choices and priorities often seems to be the fate of "losers" and the "less fortunate," those who come up a dollar short, a step behind, or a minute late.

Still, contemporary society has its own unique problems. We have rapidly moved to a permissive society where almost nothing is wrong and almost everything can be found acceptable in some way. This particular trend has created a slippery slope that threatens to plunge society into a deep pit from which it will be difficult to extricate itself. Natural law, the law of God, has been relegated to the trash bin as outdated and irrelevant for a "modern" society that claims human mastery over every aspect of existence. Additionally, today we find those who seek to have God's law ostracized because we refuse to accept the big picture of a society that claims no limits on human activity.

The teachings and example of Jesus serve as an invitation to be countercultural as the primary way of following in his footsteps.

Living as a committed Christian in the twenty-first century indeed presents numerous challenges. But in many ways the basic need is to follow the advice articulated by Saint John Paul II in his first public words as pontiff: to cast off fear and to bring Christ into every word and action of our lives and society.


As described above, such a message is completely countercultural to the rhetoric proclaimed by many in today's world. Thus, the challenge is real and significant. It is not easy to stand against the tide, to take the road less traveled, the more difficult path of faithfulness to one's ideals. It is much easier to take the well-trod path, the less demanding way.

Yet Jesus' understanding of this reality challenged people of his day and all of us when he proclaimed in his Sermon on the Mount: "Enter

through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it" (Mt 7:13-14). The teachings and example of Jesus serve as an invitation to be countercultural as the primary way of following in his footsteps.

While the whole Christian community bears the responsibility to walk this less-traveled, more encumbered road, priests and religious have a special responsibility to do so. The faithful look to us for leadership; they want and deserve a clear, unambiguous message of what it means to be a follower of Christ today.

This will require us to be bold in word and action. We must stand tall, be willing to be criticized, even ostracized, willing to lose friends and status if we are to faithfully walk the countercultural path that leads to true life. The people of God deserve our good leadership; they need to be brought to Christ.

Jesus challenged the people of his day; we must do the same to those we meet on the journey of life. Let us be bold, loving, and faithful in living the life of Christ and in assisting others to do likewise. Goodness and the courage of conviction are to mark our lives in all things, as we are reminded in 1 Peter 3:15-16: "Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, but do it with gentleness and reverence." 



EUCHARIST: LIVING & EVANGELIZING

Dom Helder Càmara, Defender of the Poor

by Victor M. Parachin

Admired by many as a prophet, denounced by others as a radical, Dom Helder Càmara steadfastly spoke out and worked for the rights and dignity of the poor.

Victor M. Parachin is a minister and writes extensively on matters of spirituality. He has authored a dozen books and is a regular contributor to *Emmanuel*.

ON AUGUST 5, 1973, THIRTY-EIGHT BRAZILIAN BISHOPS AND TWO CARDINALS gathered for the installation of Brazil's newest archbishop. As they processed into the cathedral, the Master of Ceremonies announced, one by one, their names and the cities they represented. At the end of the processional and the last one to be introduced was the archbishop of Olinda and Recife. When his name was announced, all those inside the majestic cathedral burst into loud, sustained applause. According to one eyewitness, representatives of the military and of the government who were present were visibly upset by the public endorsement given to Dom Helder Càmara.

This incident illustrates the relationship between Càmara and the people of Brazil. Appreciated and adored by the general population, he was, nevertheless, renounced by the country's wealthy, powerful elite. Internationally respected as "a man of God and a defender of the poor," at home he was distrusted and disliked by influential Brazilians who described him dismissively as a "communist," a "socialist agitator," and the "red bishop."

Helder Càmara's Life

Helder Pessoa Càmara was born on February 7, 1909, in Fortaleza, Brazil. His father, Joao, worked as an accountant while his mother, Adelaide, supplemented the father's modest salary by teaching in an elementary school. He was one of 13 children born to the couple, but, sadly, six of his siblings died in childhood. His parents were devout Christians whose home included a tiny chapel where the family was led in evening devotions and prayers. Càmara was four years old when he began to express a desire to become a priest. His earliest and

fondest memories are of the many times he pretended that he was already a priest saying Mass.

He enrolled in the diocesan seminary, graduating at the age of 22, and was ordained a priest on August 15, 1931. Because he was two years below the ordination age specified in canon law, Càmara needed and received special ecclesiastical permission for the ordination to take place.

At the request of his bishop, Càmara devoted his energies to revitalizing religious and secular educational organizations in the diocese. Soon he was in demand as an educational consultant across the country. In 1952, he was named auxiliary bishop of Rio de Janeiro. Càmara was instrumental in setting up the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops, the first such organization in Latin and South America. He served as its secretary general for twelve years, guiding the group to become vigorous defenders of human rights, outspoken in their support of the poor.

In 1964, he was appointed archbishop of Olinda and Recife in the northeast part of the country. In his first message to the people of the archdiocese, Càmara made clear his commitment to the poor and to those who “thirst for social justice.” He said: “We shall care for the poor, with special concern for shameful poverty, and trying to prevent poverty sliding into destitution. . . . Destitution is revolting and degrading; it wounds the image of God in every human being; it violates every human being’s right and duty to achieve all around perfection. . . . Anyone who is suffering in body or soul, anyone, poor or rich, who is in despair, will have a special place in the bishop’s heart.”

Càmara’s appointment and his inaugural sermon came barely two weeks after a coup had taken place in Brazil that put a military dictatorship in power. Part of his address was a reminder to the military of its responsibility to eradicate poverty: “We have no time to waste. The long awaited reforms must come without delay. . . . Let the reforms come. . . . Let us not denounce as communists those who merely hunger and thirst for social justice and for Brazil’s development.”

Càmara’s Advocacy for the Poor

The area encompassed by the Archdiocese of Olinda and Recife is referred to as a “triangle of hunger.” A third of Brazil’s population lives there. At the time of his appointment, sixty to seventy percent of the population was illiterate, unemployed, and barely existing from day



to day. More than half lived in *favelas*, shantytown slums adjacent to cities. The infant mortality rate was sixty percent, and life expectancy was estimated to be about 35 years. Placed in that context, Càmara's identification with the poor was so complete that he refused to live in the episcopal palace in Recife. Instead, he resided inside a small room within a church. Previously, the room had served as the church sacristy.

Speaking out on behalf of the poor was dangerous for Càmara, who was viewed with suspicion and disapproval by those in power. That disapproval was reinforced by physical threats. A writer, while researching her book on the archbishop, visited his residence. She was surprised by its modesty — one small room, sparsely furnished. What alarmed her, though, was noticing that the outside wall of the room was pitted with holes where Càmara's humble dwelling had been machine-gunned. Graffiti, spray painted on the wall, read: "Go home, communist archbishop!"

On one occasion, someone paid to assassinate Càmara went boldly, directly to the archbishop's residence where he knocked on the door. Càmara opened the door, and the man demanded: "I wish to speak with Dom Helder." "I am Dom Helder." Astonished and disbelieving, the man asked: "You are Dom Helder?" "Yes, come in," Càmara said, offering him a chair to sit on. "How can I help you?" the archbishop asked. The man was shaken by Càmara's gentle spirit and hospitality and explained, "I have been paid to kill you but cannot do it. You are one of the Lord's." The man quietly exited.

Aware that he was criticized not only by military and government officials but from within his own Church as well, Càmara answered with this simple observation: "When I give food to the poor, they call me a saint. When I ask why they are poor, they call me a communist."

Càmara's Spiritual Vision

Prayer was the sustaining strength of Càmara's life and ministry. For her book *The Spirituality of Don Helder Càmara*, Mary Hall, RJM, spent several days with the archbishop. She reports that Càmara identified lengthy periods of daily prayer and meditation as foundational for him. "From my youth, I have had the ability to rise early from sleep, and as a priest, I make a practice of rising each morning at 2:00 a.m. and spending some hours in prayer. At present, my routine is to retire

at 10:30 p.m.; rise at 2:00 a.m. for prayer and preparation of my work; sleep again from 4:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m.; rise, shower, and celebrate Mass at 6:00 a.m.” He added that upon being ordained he knew that he “would need a close relationship with God in order to have something of value to share with others.”

The practice of intense daily prayer was something Càmara established immediately at ordination. Later in his life, he explained: “I was ordained a priest in my twenty-third year, in 1931. I was then living in Fortaleza, a small capital of northeast Brazil. From that moment, I understood that, in view of my decision to give myself unreservedly to God and my neighbor, it would be absolutely necessary for me to devote space and time to prayer, speaking and listening to God. Otherwise, in no time at all, I would be depleted and having nothing to offer either my brothers or the Lord.”

“We have no right to blame God for injustice and its attendant evils; it is for us to do away with injustice.”

It was his spiritual depth and insight which constantly provoked him to challenge his society. Sounding much like a biblical prophet, he repeatedly called on people to “go beyond aid or charity and demand justice.” Too many individuals falter at demanding justice, Càmara said, noting this contrast:

He who asks the powerful to give aid to the poor, or helps the poor himself . . . is regarded as a splendid man, a saint. But he who chooses to demand justice generally, seeking to change structures that reduce millions of God’s children to slavery, must expect his words to be distorted, to be libeled and slandered, viewed with disfavor by governments, perhaps imprisoned, tortured, killed. . . . But this is the eighth beatitude: “Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

In spite of potential persecution for demanding justice over aid and charity, Càmara warned, “If the effort is not made, the scandal will continue and the rich will go on getting richer and the poor poorer.”



As other priests joined Càmara in demanding structural social changes to alleviate poverty, there was a fierce military crackdown. There are accounts of many priests being arrested, tortured, and murdered. On hearing of an arrested priest, Càmara often presented himself to the military police with his bag packed, offering to exchange himself for the one arrested. Though the military did not dare imprison Càmara, they did seek to silence his voice and influence others by censoring all news of him in the press and on radio or television.

While demanding structural change in his country, Càmara also continued to offer aid and assistance to individuals in need. When he was an auxiliary bishop in Rio, a man from his hometown of Fortaleza made an appointment to see him. The man — Antonio — explained that he could not find employment and asked Càmara if he could help him find a job, any job. The bishop said he would try to help and immediately wrote a letter to a friend in Fortaleza who owned a manufacturing plant. “Dear friend, see if you can take Antonio on. He is my brother, my blood brother. He hasn’t any work and he’s hungry. Can you give my brother, my blood brother Antonio, a job?” he asked in the letter.

Within a day, Càmara received a phone call from the businessman: “Look, your brother Antonio’s just arrived. I’ve given him a job. But, Dom Helder, how can your brother have possibly fallen into such poverty — your own brother?” The businessman explained: “I’ve given him some clothes and shoes since he was looking like a tramp. But I suspect you told me he’s your brother so that I wouldn’t be able to refuse.”

Here’s where the conversation becomes interesting and reveals the depth of Càmara’s compassion, driven by his faith: “Not at all. He is my brother, I tell you.” “Brother, brother: I know, all the world’s your brother!” the businessman declared. “Honestly, he is my brother. We’ve got the same Father,” Càmara said, and then added: “We call blood brothers those who have the same blood of the same father in their veins. So there you are: Christ shed the same blood for you, for me, for Antonio. So we’re brothers in the blood of Christ.”

Càmara retired from his official duties as archbishop at the required age of 75 on July 15, 1985. Though he attempted to keep a low public profile, Brazilians continued to remember and honor him, especially on the occasion of his 80th birthday in 1989 and on the 65th anniversary

of his ordination in 1996.

Retirement led him to think more deeply about death, but in neither a morbid way nor in one tinged with fear. "A kind old age means growing old on the outside without growing old inside," he wrote. "One by one, signs appear pointing to the final destination. You no longer have as much energy. You have difficulty in seeing or hearing. As a matter of fact, all my faculties are still functioning and I can still cope with my marathon trips abroad. But my heart tells me that the time has come to prepare to reach the final destination."

"We are never completely converted. We have to keep on converting ourselves every day."

Dom Helder Càmara passed away on August 27, 1999, at the age of 90. Immediately, worldwide accolades referred to him as one who "embodied the Church's option for the poor," "bishop to the slums," "a twentieth-century saint and prophet," and "defender of the poor."

Wisdom from Dom Helder Càmara

"We have no right to blame God for injustice and its attendant evils; it is for us to do away with injustice."

"Without prayer there is no current, no Christian respiration."

"We are never completely converted. We have to keep on converting ourselves every day."

"Some atheist humanists are very impressive. They love truth, justice, and peace. They are willing to serve and give of their utmost; they are brave and resist suffering and torture; they are examples to the believer."

"Today's world is threatened by the atom bomb of squalid poverty."

"Let us liberate, in the highest and most profound sense of the world, all the human beings who live around about us."

"Being holy means getting up immediately every time you fall, with



humility and joy."

"What we've got to achieve is a world without oppressed or oppressors."

"It is useless to dream of reforming society without a corresponding deep change in our inner lives."

"Am I mistaken, Lord, is it a temptation to think you increasingly urge me to go forth and proclaim the need and urgency of passing from the Blessed Sacrament to your other presence in the Eucharist of the poor?"



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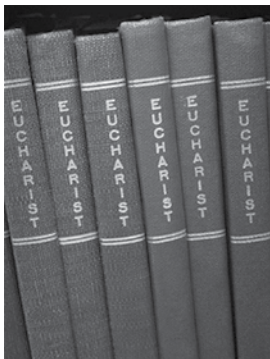
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EUCCHARISTIC TEACHINGS

Remembering Paul VI (1963-1978)

by Owen F. Cummings

Giovanni Battista Montini was a conciliar bishop before the council. As pope, he was charged with the task of implementing Vatican II's program and shepherding the Church through turbulent times.

"WHEN CARDINAL MONTINI BECAME PAUL VI, THIS MEANT THAT ONE OF THE most thoughtful and determined of the moderately progressive conservatives was now pope." (Adrian Hastings¹)

"Paul VI was a good and holy man who in 1975 proclaimed the need for a 'Civilization of Love' which prefigured the 'New World Order' so desperately needed in the 1990s. He was, in short, a modern man and the 'first modern pope.'" (Peter Hebblethwaite²)

This year is the fortieth anniversary of the death of Pope Paul VI. For many, he is remembered, perhaps almost exclusively, as the author of the 1968 encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. That is unfortunate because there was so much more to this man than that particular issue, whatever position one takes on it. This essay does not consider that encyclical but rather sketches what is hopefully a broader image and memory of Paul.

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From Giovanni Battista Montini to Pope Paul VI

Giovanni Battista Montini was born at Concesio, near Brescia, on September 26, 1897. His father, Giorgio Montini, was a friend and collaborator of Don Luigi Sturzo, the founder of the Popular Party, and represented the party in three legislatures from 1919-1926. When Mussolini suppressed the party in 1926, Montini retired to Brescia, continuing to support freedom in the face of aggressive Fascism. The young Giovanni Battista's health was poor, and he studied much of the time at home. He was shy but possessed of a great appetite for books and learning, something that never left him.



Ordained in 1920, he went on to graduate studies in Rome, staying at the Lombardy College. His bishop, Giacinto Gaggia, had been an historian, and he advised the young priest to avoid Scholastic manuals and throw himself into church history, an interest that would have been solidified by seeing each day the church historian Louis Duchesne walking slowly to the École Française.³ Coming to the attention of Monsignor Giuseppe Pizzardo in the Secretariat of State, the young priest entered the Pontifical Academy of Noble Ecclesiastics as well as continuing studies at the Gregorian University in canon law, a subject he did not especially like and in which he did not excel. From 1922-1954, Montini worked in the Secretariat of State, except for a brief spell in 1923 when he was in Warsaw. He rose through the ranks in the Secretariat of State until he left for Milan in 1954.

From 1924-1933, Montini was deeply involved in the Catholic student movement. Constantly mediating contemporary European thought to his students, he made quite an impression on them, able as he was to converse about such contrasting philosophers as Jacques Maritain, Henri Bergson, Oswald Spengler, and Thomas Mann. These authors informed his talks to the students. Montini translated into Italian and wrote an introduction to Jacques Maritain's *Three Reformers*. Maritain and Montini became friends. The book dealt with Martin Luther, René Descartes, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Each was seen as promoting a subjectivity that moved away from objective truth and authority and as preparing the way for the "modern world."

Attracted to Maritain's *Art and Scholasticism*, Montini began to develop a genuine interest in art, reading all he could on the subject, again to write an article for his students in 1931. Maritain's influence on Montini was to last a very long time. As pope, he quoted the French philosopher in his encyclical *Populorum Progressio*. At the end of Vatican II, Paul placed in Maritain's hands the Church's message to the intellectuals of the world.⁴ If Pius XII could be characterized as pro-German in many respects, Montini could be described as pro-French.⁵

Montini did not abandon the reading of theology. In 1925, he read and absorbed the Tübingen theologian Karl Adam's *The Spirit of Catholicism*. Crafted as a reply to Adolf von Harnack's *The Essence of Christianity*, this work had a profound impact on Montini, not least Adam's notion that the Church was constantly in need of reform. When the book was censured by the Vatican and consequently withdrawn from Roman bookshops, it is said that Montini bought up the remaining copies and

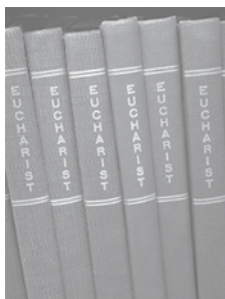
distributed them to his friends.⁶ Montini was also influenced by the theology, and especially the ecclesiology, of the French Jesuit Henri de Lubac. He had a copy of de Lubac's *Méditation sur l'Église*, in English *The Splendor of the Church*, which had been pondered so much its pages were dog-eared.

In the years running up to the Lateran Treaty in 1929, Montini observed firsthand the inevitable clashes between the Catholic student movement and the rising Fascists. There were clashes at the intellectual level between Catholic and Fascist students, but more seriously there were violent encounters resulting in injury. He has been described as "the covert leader of the intellectual opposition to the Fascists."⁷ Despite the agreement of 1929, Mussolini suppressed all Catholic youth movements in 1931. Despite his strong denunciation of the Fascist action in the encyclical *Non Abbiamo Bisogno*, Pius XI still entertained some small hope of accommodation with the Mussolini regime. Not so Montini; his criticisms led to his dismissal as national chaplain to the students in 1933.

Montini's pastoral objective as archbishop was to persuade his people that Christianity could raise the people up anew, bring about justice, elevate the working class. These same goals governed his papacy.

In 1937, Montini became assistant to Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli, the Secretary of State. He was to remain in the Vatican for 17 years. When Pacelli became Pope Pius XII, Montini was named in 1952 Pro-secretary of State. While increasingly buried in mountains of diplomatic paper in his Vatican office, Montini found time for teaching church history at the Pontifical Academy for Noble Ecclesiastics. Peter Hebblethwaite comments with insight: "Montini turned to the past as a refuge from an uncongenial present, but also as a pointer to the future."⁸

In 1953, it is said that he declined a cardinal's hat. The following year, he was appointed archbishop of Milan and ordained by Cardinal Eugene Tisserant — Pius XII was ill at the time — in Saint Peter's Basilica. Montini's apartment was lined with books of all kinds. One of his biographers rightly says, "His only passion of acquisition centered in books. . . ."⁹ When he left for Milan, 90 crates of his books went with him, a collection that came to some 6,000 volumes. When the new archbishop reached Lombardy, the region of his archdiocese, he got



out of the car, prayed, and kissed the ground. Montini understood the importance of symbolic gesture.

Rome to Milan

Why the move to Milan? Various answers are proposed, but the most compelling account is as follows. Five influential curial cardinals (Ottaviani, Pizzardo, Piazza, Canali, and Micara), affectionately known as the “Pentagon,” were suspicious of what they took to be Montini’s liberalism. He was too favorable to “the left.” He had tried, for example, to get the somewhat notorious Catholic novelist Graham Greene to write in *L’Osservatore Romano*. He had even recommended Greene to Pope Pius XII. There seems to be truth in this but, when all is said and done, it probably was Montini’s desire to remain in touch with the Catholic youth movement that brought Vatican suspicion upon him.

With so many others, including his father Giorgio, Montini had seen the youth movement, with its inspiration and training of future Catholic lay leaders, as a means of discrediting and countering lingering neo-Fascist elements in Italy well after the downfall of Mussolini. One of these neo-Fascists was Luigi Gedda, a Turin-educated doctor who was very active politically. Gedda was totally opposed to the communists who were fast gaining ground in post-war Italy.

Gedda was also a favorite of Pope Pius XII. Both were prepared to do whatever it took to keep the communists out of power, even if that meant appealing to the right and the far-right, including the post-war neo-Fascists. Montini’s history of opposition to the Fascists, including his unease with the resurgence of Fascism to oppose Communism, meant that he was a rather difficult member of the curial team. In some respects, then, his appointment to Milan was effectively being “kicked upstairs.”¹⁰ Montini himself must have had some thoughts along these lines.

Archbishop Montini did not wait for the people of Milan to find him. He went out to find and meet with them. He threw himself into pastoral work. Visiting the northern Italian steel city of Sesto San Giovanni, sometimes known as “little Stalingrad” because of communist presence and influence, he let the workers know that he identified with them, and he became known as “the workers’ bishop.” His pastoral objective was to persuade his people that “Christianity will have the power to raise the people up anew, to bring about the

return of justice, to elevate the working class.”¹¹

Montini refused to see the world in which his working-class people lived as one that had to be opposed and avoided and corrected. He set out to persuade the industrial masses of Milan that the Gospel and the Church was on their side, not locked into self-serving opposition. He took this message to the factories, celebrating Mass there for workers. Not all appreciated his efforts. He was vilified in some quarters, but he was making an impact, an impact that led to the communists bombing his residence at 2:00 in the morning on January 5, 1956.

Paul was open to the modern world, dedicated to the cause of ecumenism, interested in the liturgy even before the council, and pastorally sensitive.

Naturally enough, Archbishop Montini showed an interest in the liturgy in his diocese. He had been interested in the liturgy and liturgical renewal for some years. In the summer of 1928, for example, he had visited various Belgian Benedictine monasteries that were engaged in the promotion of liturgical renewal in various ways: Maredsous, Mont-César, and the Abbey of Saint André near Bruges. He probably at this time viewed parish liturgy as an adaptation of monastic liturgy, since so much liturgical renewal had come from monastic quarters. He probably also hoped for a vernacular liturgy, at least in part. Thus, in 1947, he wrote in a letter to the liturgical theologian Aimé-Georges Martimort, the editor of the journal *Maison Dieu*, that he thought a significant part of the Mass would be one day in the vernacular. Martimort responded that he judged that such a development would take a century. Montini replied: “No, a development that would once have taken a century can now be realized in twenty years.”¹² Montini, through the liturgical reforms of Vatican II, was to be proved right.

Recalling that this is well before Vatican II, Montini wrote to his diocese: “There are still those who consider the liturgical renewal as an optional matter, or as one of the numerous devotional currents to which a person may adhere or not as he chooses. (There are still those) who think that the liturgical movement is a troublesome attempt at reformation, of doubtful orthodoxy; or a petrified, external ritualism which has to do merely with rubrics; or an archeological fad, formalistic and ‘arty’; or else a product of the cloister ill adapted to the people of our world; or finally, a preconceived opposition to piety and



popular devotions."¹³

Here was a bishop who had absorbed the spirit of Pius XII's encyclical on the liturgy, *Mediator Dei*, and who had in his own way anticipated the thrust of Vatican II's *Gaudium et Spes*, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World. Montini was a conciliar bishop before the council.

The Anglican Connection

During his time in Milan, in 1956, he was also involved with ecumenical discussions with Anglicans in whom he always seems to have been interested. As early as February 1948, Herbert Waddams, the archbishop of Canterbury's secretary for foreign/ecumenical relations, paid a visit to Montini in the Vatican. Among other things, Montini was keen to talk about the upcoming inaugural meeting of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam and the Lambeth Conference, a meeting of Anglican bishops throughout the world. Montini showed himself interested in the Church of South India. This was an ecumenical union of Anglican and Free Churchmen that came into being in 1948.

In 1949, the archbishop of Canterbury, Geoffrey Fisher, had sent the Anglican patristic scholar and theologian George Leonard Prestige to Rome to sound out the ecumenical climate. Prestige had been advised by his close friend, the Anglican Benedictine Dom Gregory Dix, to seek out Monsignor Montini in the Vatican. Among the reasons given by Dix was the fact that "he knew him to have a real understanding of the Church of England."¹⁴ On December 29, 1949, the English Dominican Gervase Matthew wrote to Prestige: "I am happy that everything went so well and particularly that you liked Monsignor Montini. He (and in a sense he alone) is the key to the situation. It is difficult to overestimate his significance as he may so easily be Pius XIV."¹⁵

Matthew certainly got the papal succession right, and was equally correct in hinting at Montini's positive ecumenical attitude. Later, in 1955, during Montini's time in Milan, the famous Anglican bishop-ecumenist George Bell visited him. Bell wrote of the occasion: "I was never more impressed, even by my friends among Catholic bishops in the north of Europe, than by that man's desire to learn."¹⁶ Other visits by Anglicans took place in 1956. As Paul VI, he maintained some of these friendships, especially with the Anglican church historian John Dickinson and the New Testament scholar Colin Hickling.

These ecumenical encounters between Archbishop Montini and Anglicans led Sir Owen Chadwick in 1966 to make the following statement: "Pope Paul VI, during the years when he was Monsignor Montini, had taken a close interest in the Anglicans. In 1956 . . . he asked Bishop George Bell to send him some Anglicans . . . and [they] accompanied him on his daily work. When he visited or confirmed, he would ask, how do Anglican bishops do this? What is the custom in the Church of England? It is an understatement to say that this pope knew more than any other pope about the Church of England. He was the only pope who had given the necessary time and trouble to understanding the Church of England."¹⁷

Years later, on the occasion of the canonization of the English and Welsh Martyrs in 1970 — an occasion that could be seen as contrary to the new growing spirit of ecumenism after Vatican II — Montini as Pope Paul VI made the following statement crafted in his own hand: "May the blood of these martyrs be able to heal the great wound inflicted on God's church by reason of the separation of the Anglican Church from the Catholic Church. . . . Their devotion to their country gives us the assurance that on the day when — God willing — the unity of faith and life is restored, no offense will be inflicted on the honor and sovereignty of a great country such as England. There will be no seeking to lessen the legitimate prestige and usage proper to the Anglican Church when the Roman Catholic Church . . . is able to embrace firmly her ever-beloved sister in the one authentic communion of the family of Christ. . . ." ¹⁸

Montini refers to the Anglican Church as "ever-beloved sister," a clear indication not only of his affection for Anglicans but also of his understanding of the ecclesiological relationship. To Montini's outreach to the modern world and to his liturgical commitment must be added his ecumenical concern, well before Vatican II.

Pope Paul VI and Vatican II

Very soon after his election, Pope John XXIII made Montini a cardinal in 1958. He had known Montini for decades in the Secretariat of State. They had been friends. After John made the announcement of an ecumenical council, news that was not universally well received, Cardinal Montini wrote to the people of his diocese: "This council will be the greatest that the Church has ever celebrated in the twenty centuries of its history, the greatest in numbers and in spiritual impact,



called in complete and peaceful unity with the hierarchy. It will be the most 'catholic' in its dimensions, truly reaching out towards the whole world and all civil societies."¹⁹

Montini went on to submit a plan for the council, one that would put a degree of coherence and order on Pope John's grand but unstructured vision. The Montini plan along with Cardinal Suenens' reordering of the first drafts of the circulated schemata shaped the agenda of the council's sessions to a remarkable degree. In fact, the seventeen projected documents provided by Montini-Suenens turn out to be "astonishingly close, in form and content, to the final tally of the sixteen council documents."²⁰

Montini followed his friend Pope John XXIII in 1963 when he was elected pope as Paul VI. He had been one of the very few who stayed with John XXIII in the Vatican during the earliest sessions of the Second Vatican Council. Apparently, John had written in his private diary that it was Montini whom he would like to succeed him as pope. Reactions in the Vatican and the Roman Curia must have been quite varied, but the following judgment of Michael Collins seems balanced and fair: "For the conservatives who had been polarized by John, Montini offered a track record of faithful and unobtrusive service. For the liberal wing, Montini was a cultured man with an open and generous attitude to a rapidly changing world."²¹

Balanced and fair as Michael Collins is, the fact remains that some 22 to 25 cardinals did not vote for Montini, and they "were mostly Italian and mostly in the curia."²² This did not augur well for collaborative ministry from the halls of the Vatican and may explain something of Paul VI's subsequent behavior.

Seeing a council through is far more challenging and difficult than opening one. In respect of the council, Pope Paul VI was performing a constantly balancing act. While working with the progressives, he made interventions to accommodate conservative worries, including perhaps his own. He felt the need deeply to bring the conservatives, and even perhaps the intransigents along with him. Yet he steadily pushed the council's changes ahead. Fergus Kerr says that "he did his best to prevent disputes over the implementation of the council's decisions from issuing in secessions and schisms," and Kerr concludes that "his policy succeeded: there was no secession comparable with that of the 'Old Catholics,' after 1870, refusing to accept the dogma of

papal supremacy.”²³ To say the least, this is no mean accomplishment.

After Vatican II

Paul VI was the first pope to travel by plane and helicopter, visiting five continents. As Peter Hebblethwaite once wrote: “If Pius XII could be called . . . ‘the Pope of the Atlantic Alliance’ and John XXIII ‘the Pope of the Opening to the East,’ Pope Paul VI merited the title of ‘Pope of the Third World.’”²⁴ He was the first pope since Pius VII’s forced exile by Napoleon to travel outside Italy. Especially memorable was his 1965 visit to the United Nations when he spoke those outstanding words “*Jamais plus la guerre*” (“No more war”).

Paul instituted the International Synod of Bishops. This was an attempt to establish episcopal collegiality in action. The synod, however, was to be merely a consultative body, an instrument of assistance to the pope. Paul was being careful not to collapse the papal office into the college of bishops. “However much he believed in the Church of the Second Vatican Council, however sincerely he fostered episcopal collegiality, he had been formed in the Church of Vatican I and never abandoned the lofty and lonely vision of papal authority which underlay the earlier council’s teaching.”²⁵

In 1970, Paul made Saints Catherine of Siena and Teresa of Avila the first women doctors of the Church. Admittedly, in 1976, his *Inter Insigniores* took up a negative position on the vexed question of the ordination of women, but, as Hebblethwaite points out, “It was not presented as a definitive statement for all time and was wholly devoid of the male chauvinist vehemence found in some clerics.”²⁶

More on Ecumenism

At the beginning of the second session of the council, Paul VI committed himself to the ecumenical cause with these words: “If among the causes of division any fault could be imputed to us, we humbly beg God’s forgiveness and ask pardon, too, of our brethren who feel offended by us. And we willingly forgive, for our part, the injuries the Catholic Church has suffered and forget the grief endured through the long chain of dissensions and separations.”²⁷

Some took issue with the minimalism or the parsimony of Paul’s word “if” in this statement — one thinks of Gregory Baum, OSA, who



was a consultor for the Secretariat for Christian Unity — but more subtle ecumenical observers saw in this word very considerable courage, given that Paul was offending very deeply powerful curial presences.²⁸

His ecumenical outreach took practical form in December 1963 when he announced his intention to visit the Holy Land as a pilgrim. Almost immediately, the patriarch of Constantinople expressed his wish to join the pope on pilgrimage. Thus pope and patriarch, Paul VI and Athenagoras I, met in Jerusalem in 1964. They prayed together the great prayer for unity of Jesus in John 17. It was prayed verse by verse, Paul praying in Latin and Athenagoras responding in Greek. On December 7, 1965, before the celebration of Mass, a joint declaration by himself and Athenagoras I was read out, deploring and lifting the mutual anathemas of 1054.

The same day witnessed the abolition of the Holy Office with its Inquisition and the Index of Forbidden Books. The Holy Office was replaced by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The next day Paul confirmed all the decrees of the council. He signed them not as the Supreme Pastor of the Church or the Roman Pontiff, but simply as *Ego Paulus, Catholicae Ecclesiae Episcopus* — “I, Paul, Bishop of the Catholic Church,” an action of considerable ecumenical significance, an expression of collegiality.

Needless to say, these important events did not dispel the suspicions of many Orthodox about the pope and Roman Catholicism. Such suspicions made it impossible for Athenagoras to visit Paul in Rome lest he be seen as subordinating and submitting himself to the pope. And so, Paul made the decision to visit the patriarch of Constantinople in his own city Istanbul. One historian says that the pope’s letter to the patriarch concerning this visit “seemed so incredible that Athenagoras had to read it three times before he could believe it,” and when the actual visit occurred in July 1967, the patriarch described the pope as “the bishop of Rome, the first in honor amongst us, he who presides in love.”²⁹

In October of that same year, the patriarch of Constantinople, for the first time since 1451, visited the pope of Rome. In 1975, when receiving in the Vatican Metropolitan Meliton, the representative of the patriarch of Constantinople, Paul got down on his knees and kissed his feet. His gesture before the people of Lombardy when he went to Milan as its

bishop was repeated before the Orthodox.

In 1966, Paul received the archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsey, in the Sistine Chapel as his “dear brother” and referred to the Anglican Communion as a “sister church”: “By your coming, you rebuild a bridge which for centuries has lain fallen between the Church of Rome and Canterbury.” Pope Paul VI had been interested in rebuilding this bridge with Canterbury for some time. Montini had an informed feel for the Anglican Communion long before his election as pope, as has been noted. In his own words, he had “a great affection for (the) *Book of Common Prayer*.”³⁰ The path was not difficult, then, for Archbishop Ramsey and Pope Paul VI to set up the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission to promote dialogue, which continues to this day even in the face of considerable challenges.

While collegial, Paul was careful not to collapse the papal office into the college of bishops.

At the level of sheer, ordinary practicality — though replete with theological and ecumenical presuppositions — Paul VI issued a *motu proprio* on the controverted subject of interchurch marriage. This permitted what had been called “mixed marriages” to take place without a Catholic priest as witness, and, for good reasons, Catholics to marry before non-Catholic ministers. The non-Catholic party was no longer required to put in writing a promise to bring up the children as Catholics. An interchurch marriage, that is, a marriage between a Catholic and a validly-baptized non-Catholic, could be celebrated within the context of the Eucharist.

This amounted to a huge step forward in interchurch relations. At a very personal level but still reflecting ecumenical concern, Paul ordered the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (Acts of the Holy See) and the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano* to drop the monarchical titles and to refer to the pope simply as the “Holy Father.”


Conclusion

Eamon Duffy writes of Pope Paul VI: “No pope since the time of Gregory the Great has had so daunting a task.”³¹ Paul had to steer the Church through the turbulent years following the Second Vatican Council. This turbulence was exacerbated by the fact that Western societies



were passing through a time of rapid and multifaceted change, and this broader societal change had an enormous impact on the council and its reforms.

In 1975, Paul at 78 wrote of himself: "What is my state of mind? Am I Hamlet or Don Quixote? On the left? On the right? I don't feel I have been properly understood. I have had two dominant feelings: *superabundo gaudio*. I am filled with comfort. With all our affliction, I am overjoyed (2 Cor. 7:4)."³²

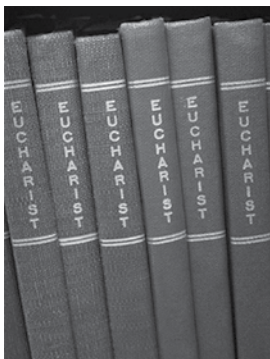
It may be sentiments such as these that led papal historian Philippe Levillain to say of Pope Paul VI: "He responded to the political and theological or reception of the work of Vatican II by retiring into little-noticed years of mysticism."³³ It may be that this mystical milieu in which he spent his last years served him well on the day of his death. On Sunday, August 6, 1978, at Castel Gandolfo, he was anointed by the Cardinal Secretary of State, Jean Villot, and continued to pray to the very end. "His last words were an unfinished Our Father."³⁴ 

Notes

- ¹ Adrian Hastings, "Catholic History from Vatican I to John Paul II," in Adrian Hastings, ed., *Modern Catholicism: Vatican II and After* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 5.
- ² Peter Hebblethwaite, *Paul VI, The First Modern Pope* (New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1993), 1.
- ³ *Ibid.*, 54.
- ⁴ Bernard Doering, "Jacques Maritain (1882-1973): A Beggar for Heaven on the Byways of the World," *Theology Today*, 62 (2005), 307.
- ⁵ In his *The Year of Three Popes* (New York and Cleveland: Collins, 1979), 2, Peter Hebblethwaite writes: "He was theologically formed by reading Maritain, Congar, and de Lubac, and intellectually formed by Pascal, Bernanos and Simone Weil."
- ⁶ Peter Hebblethwaite, *op. cit.*, 95.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, 93.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 120.
- ⁹ John G. Clancy, *Apostle for Our Time, Pope Paul VI* (New York: P. J. Kenedy, 1963), 79.
- ¹⁰ Peter Hebblethwaite, *op. cit.*, 255.
- ¹¹ Cited in John G. Clancy, *op. cit.*, 96.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, 218.
- ¹³ Cited in John G. Clancy, *op. cit.*, 106-107.
- ¹⁴ Owen Chadwick, "The Church of England and the Church of Rome from the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century to the Present Day," in *Anglican Initiatives in*

Christian Unity: Lectures Delivered in Lambeth Palace Library 1966 (London: S.P.C.K., 1967), 95.

- ¹⁵ Peter Hebblethwaite, op. cit., 219.
- ¹⁶ Bernard and Margaret Pawley, *Rome and Canterbury through Four Centuries* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1975), 327.
- ¹⁷ Owen Chadwick, op. cit., 104.
- ¹⁸ Cited in Peter Hebblethwaite, *The Year of Three Popes* (New York and Cleveland: Collins, 1979), 22.
- ¹⁹ Cited in Peter Hebblethwaite, op. cit., 284.
- ²⁰ Ibid., 314-315.
- ²¹ Michael Collins, *The Fisherman's Net: The Influence of the Papacy on History* (Dublin: The Columba Press, 2003), 242.
- ²² Peter Hebblethwaite, op. cit., 331.
- ²³ Fergus Kerr, OP, *Twentieth-Century Catholic Theologians* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 204. See also Peter Hebblethwaite, *The Year of Three Popes* (New York and Cleveland: Collins, 1979), 15.
- ²⁴ Peter Hebblethwaite, *The Year of Three Popes*, 29.
- ²⁵ Eamon Duffy, *Saints and Sinners*, rev. ed. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 368.
- ²⁶ Peter Hebblethwaite, op. cit., 6.
- ²⁷ Cited in J. Derek Holmes, *The Papacy in the Modern World 1914-1978* (New York and London: Crossroad, 1981), 225.
- ²⁸ Peter Hebblethwaite, op. cit., 350-351.
- ²⁹ J. Derek Holmes, op. cit., 227.
- ³⁰ Cited in Owen Chadwick, *Michael Ramsey, A Life* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 317.
- ³¹ Eamon Duffy, op. cit., 364.
- ³² Peter Hebblethwaite, op. cit., 7.
- ³³ Philippe Levillain, "Paul VI," in Philippe Levillain, ed., *The Papacy, An Encyclopedia* (New York and London: Routledge, 2002), 1146.
- ³⁴ Peter Hebblethwaite, *The Year of Three Popes* (New York and Cleveland: Collins, 1979), 3.



EUCCHARISTIC TEACHINGS

Poor at Heart

by Peter J. Riga

How can we be happy or blessed when we lack?

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"BLESSED ARE THE POOR AT HEART, FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN" (Mt 5:3). Poor in fact, but also poor at the deepest level of personhood, is what Christ is talking about.

Some have translated this as "Happy the destitute, the miserable," which is a profound misunderstanding of Jesus' words. In this view, God will reward them in another world. In this life, meanwhile, they must learn to accept their plight and suffer patiently so as to be rewarded later. This is really a digression from and a misinterpretation of the Gospels.

The Example of Jesus

Jesus' conduct during his ministry goes directly contrary to an understanding of destitution as a desirable existential reality. His response to hunger and pain is feeding and healing those who come to him, quite the opposite of simple resignation to one's lot in life. He feeds the multitude and heals lepers and the broken in body and spirit. He comforts and reassures those who have lost hope. His very presence is a sign of God's closeness and care.

The risen Christ is visible among his followers in the needy, the poor, the hurting, and the forgotten: "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me." (Mt 25:40). This is how others will know they are Christians: by the love they have for one another, particularly the poor and the deprived.

It is true that the Beatitudes generally relate to the future, that is, to life in the coming reign of God. But the first relates to the present, underscoring that God is present to the one who is poor in the very

depths of his or her being. God will give to the poor even now an unforeseen and unexpected joy. This does not make the Gospel a pious consolation for the unfortunate. Quite the opposite: the Gospel is a forceful appeal to be sensitive to the presence of the poor and the destitute and help them in practical ways (cf. Mt 25:34-45). Jesus reveals himself in and through those in need, and we prove our love for Christ by helping them.

True Riches

What does it mean to have true riches? There is a paradox in this beatitude. How can we be happy or blessed when we lack? We often observe that someone has everything necessary to be happy, but is not and know that *having* is not the equivalent of *being*. But to be poor, to really lack the basic necessities of life, how can this be an occasion of happiness?

Critical to answering this question is to realize that true happiness is never something one earns or procures, but something one is given and which comes to us freely. Love, real love, is always given as a free gift. The condition is that we seek the pearl of great price, love, which is true riches (Mt 13:44-46). Only the poor have access to the kingdom of love, the kingdom of God. The poor expect everything from God and return everything to God in openness and gratitude. Whoever recognizes the giftedness of life understands that he or she has only one thing to offer to God: himself or herself in the beauty and nakedness of one's being.

By declaring the poor blessed, Jesus places himself at the heart of the kingdom of God.

By declaring the poor blessed, Jesus places himself at the heart of the kingdom of God. The rich man is condemned (Lk 16:19-31) not because of his riches, but because he did not share them with the needy and wasn't even aware of the presence of a hurting, desperate man at his door. The poor man goes to the heaven and rests in the bosom of Abraham not because he is poor but because he has the capacity to love and to feel things deeply.

Christ does not say that we must be miserable and desolate, sick or in agony. He warns that even if we have all the goods of this world, something essential is lacking. God does not demand that we strip ourselves of material goods and possessions, only that we recognize



that they cannot give us what they promise: life, happiness, love. Only God can do that.

A rich person can be poor in that which truly matters; a poor one can be rich and happy in loving and sharing freely with others.

One Man's Example

Born into a wealthy family, Francesco Bernardone's early life was filled with indulgence, privilege, and pleasure. Following a powerful conversion experience, he voluntarily renounced all of this. He later said: "What had previously nauseated me became a source of spiritual and physical consolation. . . . After that, I did not wait long before leaving the world."

A rich person can be poor in that which truly matters; a poor one can be rich and happy in loving and sharing freely with others.

Poverty was not an end in itself, however, for Francis. His choice to live simply and poorly reflected his love for God and his absolute reliance on God. The son of a prosperous merchant became a mendicant friar, begging for what he needed to live on as he crisscrossed Italy preaching the Gospel of Christ and gathering followers along the way.

Freed of possessions, Francis found an inner freedom unlike anything he had experienced before. It made him grateful for the goodness of those who supported his ministry by their generosity. It also engendered in his heart an overwhelming sense of God's goodness and benevolence. What he and his companions were given, they shared joyfully with the poor and with others in need. They learned compassion and sensitivity, as Jesus himself lived and taught them.

Francis, the Little Poor Man of Assisi, understood poverty deeply. "Men," he said, "lose all the material things they leave behind them in this world, but they carry with them the reward of their charity and the alms they give. For these, they will receive from the Lord the reward and recompense they deserve."





EUCCHARISTIC SPIRITUALITY

On the 150th Anniversary of the Passing of the Apostle of the Eucharist

by Catherine Marie Caron, SSS and Anthony Schueller, SSS

Saint Peter Julian Eymard died on August 1, 1868, ending a remarkable journey of Eucharistic service in the same small town where it had begun.

"A MEMORIAL GRAVESTONE MARKS THE FIRST BURIAL PLACE OF PETER JULIAN EYMARD whose grave was located in the cemetery [of La Mure] from the time of his death in 1868 until 1877, when his remains were removed and reinterred at the Corpus Christi Chapel in Paris."

"In a reference to the prayer before the Blessed Sacrament that characterized Eymard's religious life, his memorial is in the form of a prie-dieu surmounted by a monstrance. Around the monstrance is a liturgical stole, symbolic of the cross of Christ that Eymard carried throughout his life's mission as a priest. Resting on the prie-dieu is an open prayer book with the inscription: 'Let us love Jesus who so loves us in his Divine Sacrament.'"

"Alongside, a tombstone marks the grave of Eymard's adoptive sister Annette Bernard, usually known as Nanette, who died on November 18, 1885. Another tombstone marks the grave of Eymard's sister Marie Anne (Marianne) who died on February 17, 1876."

In these brief paragraphs, Damien Cash describes with an archivist's eye for detail the original resting place of the Apostle of the Eucharist in the graveyard of the church in Eymard's home town in the south of France. Elsewhere, Cash tells of his last days:

"In declining health, Eymard lived long enough to see the Congregation [of the Blessed Sacrament] move beyond France when a community was opened in Brussels, Belgium, on February 2, 1866. That year, he suffered his first attack of shingles, his 'belt of fire,' as he called it, followed by bronchitis, influenza, and the recurring migraines he already knew as his 'little crown of thorns.' 'We die by degrees,' Eymard

Sister Catherine Marie Caron is a former superior general of the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament and an Eymardian scholar who has translated the letters of Saint Peter Julian Eymard and published them in a multi-volume series. She lives in Waterville, Maine. Father Anthony Schueller is the current editor of *Emmanuel* and the provincial superior of the Province of Saint Ann, Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament.



wrote in July 1868: 'We must resign ourselves to it!'

"At that time, what Eymard had first thought was 'rheumatic gout' turned out to be a severe stroke. He set out for La Mure to recuperate with his family, but was partially paralyzed and losing speech by the time he arrived on July 21, 1868.

"Drifting in and out of consciousness during his final days, he was able to farewell his sister Marianne and receive the Eucharist and last rites of the Catholic Church. On August 1, 1868, Peter Julian Eymard died peacefully at the age of 57 in the town of his birth and boyhood. Some years later, in 1877, his remains in the local cemetery at La Mure were removed for interment in a new Blessed Sacrament Chapel (Chapelle du Corpus-Christi) in Paris. The exhumation ignored the protests of the people of La Mure and did not occur until after the death of his sister in 1876."

Eymard's Life and Spirituality

It is a challenge to summarize the life and spirituality of Peter Julian Eymard. Briefly we can say that he was born in 1811, after the French Revolution when society was moving from being predominantly agricultural to an industrial one. The political world was in shambles; people were migrating from the countryside to the city. A new working class had emerged, leaving many poor or homeless. Perhaps we can identify with some of this reality in our own times.

The Church had been dismantled by new "free thinkers." Dioceses, parishes, seminaries, and religious orders needed to be reorganized. The education of priests was minimal and their formation for pastoral ministry deficient. Catholic laity hungered for guidance in knowing and in living the faith.

How do people find their moorings in such stormy seas? How do they become beacons of hope for others, steady, sure guides on the path of faith and love? Lives of holiness abound in the Scriptures. The teachings, words, and actions of Jesus, and especially his love unto death, call forth commitment and imitation. For Teresa of Calcutta, it was caring for the sick, the homeless, and the dying. For Peter Julian Eymard, the center of his life and spirituality was the Holy Eucharist.

Where, then, shall we find our place of inspiration? Eymard said astutely:

"When Jesus told his disciples to go into the city to wait for the Holy Spirit, he did not tell them *where* they should wait. . . . But their hearts went directly to the Cenacle where he instituted the Eucharist, where he instituted the priesthood, where he showed them his tenderness and said his farewells. The Eucharistic Cenacle is where I want to be on retreat with Jesus, in Jesus. The Eucharistic Cenacle is the Sinai of the law of grace, the Tabor of love, the divine Eden where fallen humanity is recreated. . . . This Cenacle will be my dwelling place."

The Eucharistic Cenacle is the place where we are invited to dwell, to learn and to relearn the meaning of the Gospel and be empowered by the fire of the Holy Spirit.

The Eucharistic Cenacle is the Sinai of the law of grace, the Tabor of love, the divine Eden where fallen humanity is recreated.

Father Eymard did not consider himself to be a theologian. But he came to believe that the Eucharist could reach the people of his day by two principal means: frequent Communion and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. He often quoted the fathers of the Church in speaking of Holy Communion as a remedy for human weakness, not a reward for holiness. He returned over and over again to this principle in letters written to those he directed. By exposition, he wanted to awaken an awareness of the need for worship and a sense of the grandeur of the divine presence. After all, we learn by seeing; it is by seeing that our hearts are stimulated.

The Last Supper discourses, recounted in Chapters 14-17 of the Gospel of John, became the channel which fed Father Eymard's desire for total union with God. "I am the vine, you are the branches" (Jn 15:5). Saint Peter Julian saw himself only as a guide; the Lord himself is the origin and the principle of the unity which only he can bring about in us.

Eymard's Writings

More than 2,000 letters and extracts from an extensive correspondence Father Eymard carried on with those he directed throughout Europe, with colleagues, and with Church leaders continue to exist today. These, in addition to the conferences and the drafts of the constitutions he wrote for his nascent congregations, as well as his substantial retreat



notes, constitute his rich spiritual patrimony to us.

Many people have noted and commented that as they have probed Eymard's writings, seeking not only to understand his Eucharistic theology and teaching but also the unfolding of his Eucharistic vocation, they have found him to be a gentle guide. Profoundly affected by the negative Jansenist spirituality of his youth and his first years of ministry as a priest, he could be hard on himself, critical of his actions and motivations. But with others, he was a compassionate confessor and an encouraging guide, affectionately known as "le Père amable," the loving Father.

The more we learn about him, the more familiar we become with his teaching, the more he feels like a very dear friend, just as he was to so many people of his own time. With him, we learn to praise God in all the events of our lives, large and small, joyful and painful. Eymard teaches us the goodness of God.

Eymard came to believe that the Eucharist could reach the people of his day by two principal means: frequent Communion and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

He learned of God's goodness through powerful personal experiences in nature. When he looked over the beauty of the Matheysine Valley near his birthplace, he recognized the overwhelming love and mercy of God. When he celebrated the memorial of Christ's faithful love on Calvary in the Mass and partook of Holy Communion, the conviction of God's goodness and love for him and for all humanity grew in his heart.

The Dominant Grace of Eymard's Life

His love for the Eucharist was the dominant grace of Saint Peter Julian Eymard's life. During his final retreat at Saint Maurice just months before his death, he wrote: "The greatest gift of my life has been a vivid love for the Eucharist." This Eucharistic grace marked and directed every activity of his life and his ministry. In that sense, he was a precursor to the Second Vatican Council in its assertion that the Eucharist is the source and the summit of the Christian life.

On the 150th Anniversary of the Passing of the Apostle of the Eucharist

In one of his last talks to the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament, Father Eymard exhorted them to “find the Eucharist in all things and all things in the Eucharist.” When we have simplified our vision to “see all things in the light of the Eucharist,” as the *Rule of Life* of each of his religious congregations states, everything falls into place.


We understand suffering in the light of Christ’s great sacrifice of love memorialized in the Mass. We remember God’s faithful love reflected in the Scriptures of the Liturgy of the Word. We offer our lives to God with the gifts of the bread and wine. We adore the Source of our life and are transformed like the bread and the wine through the presence and action of the Holy Spirit. We discover our unity in being broken and given for God’s glory and the good of others. All of life becomes an offering and a prayer of praise to God.

In order that the Eucharist may radiate everywhere, it must be our life’s inspiration.

Saint Peter Julian Eymard taught the following prayer to the Servants in June 1858: “My God, form me yourself in your Eucharistic life. I can sense how much I need to die to myself, to become detached from everything, so that I may live only for you. Let me die to the old self and bring about within me that new self which you are.”

Eymard would later give concrete expression to this powerful intuition through the gift of self that he made to God and to Christ in the Eucharist during a long retreat in Rome three years before he died.

A century-and-a-half after his passing, Father Eymard’s teaching continues to resonate: “Let the Holy Eucharist be your starting point; just as the rays all emanate from the sun, this source of all light will radiate. . . . But in order that the Eucharist may radiate everywhere, it must be our life’s inspiration. It must become the predominant study of our mind and our heart’s sovereign love. Then it will become our life’s noble passion.

“Our life is fully defined by our dominant passion” (PG, 356:1). 



EUCCHARISTIC SPIRITUALITY

Pondering the Parables: The Parable of the Wheat Among the Weeds

by Bernard Camiré, SSS

Parables were integral to Jesus' teaching ministry. His stories engaged the minds and hearts of his listeners and revealed the deeper meaning of their lives and God's power at work in and around them.

Blessed
Sacrament
Father Bernard
Camiré is the
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This series on
the parables of
Jesus originally
appeared in the
parish bulletin
and is being
serialized in
Emmanuel

WITH THIS INSTALLMENT OF PONDERING THE PARABLES, WE MOVE FROM THE GOSPEL of Mark to the Gospel of Matthew. In contrast to Mark, Matthew has a great number of parables, many of which are impressive narratives wherein human actions and decisions engage the hearer.

Matthew loves the grand scale; for example, the treasure and the pearl exceed all value (13:44-46), and the ten bridesmaids are the retinue for a rich man's daughter (25:1-13). Also, Matthew exhibits a fondness for "end of time" imagery to underscore the crucial life decisions occasioned by the teaching of Jesus. The stakes are heaven or hell, darkness, weeping, and gnashing of teeth. Dramatic interaction, imaginative language, and religious awe provide the grand setting of the theological world Matthew wishes to convey.

A striking thrust in the Parable of the Wheat Among the Weeds (13:24-30), a parable peculiar to Matthew, is the contrast between the householder who is prepared to wait until the harvest and the servants who are eager to root out the weeds at their first appearance. Also, the parable contains the paradox that the action of the enemy, which was meant to harm the owner of the field, ends by benefiting him in as much as the weeds are used for fuel.

The series of pictures within this parable was familiar to the people of Palestine. The weed in question was the *bearded darnel*, a vegetation curse against which farmers had to labor. In its early stages, the bearded darnel resembled wheat so closely that it was impossible to distinguish the one from the other. It was only when they had grown to maturity that it became possible to tell them apart.

By that time, however, their roots were so intertwined that the darnel could not be pulled out without tearing up the wheat with them. But the two had to be separated because if the darnel, a poisonous plant, were ground up with the wheat, it contaminated the flour. Any bread made with such flour caused nausea if eaten.

The picture of a man deliberately sowing darnel in the field of an enemy is by no means far-fetched. Such a thing was actually done from a motive of personal vengeance, and it was considered a crime for which Roman law prescribed penalties. Even today, in certain countries of the Near East, one of the direct threats that a man can make to an enemy is: "I will sow bad seed in your field."

In Matthew's community, as in every church, and in the world itself, there is the paradox of evil among good, indifference among fervor.

This parable is to be read along with the Parables of the Mustard Seed (13:31-32) and the Leaven (13:33). The three capture in some way the paradoxical nature of Matthew's church. The paradox, here, is that in Matthew's church, as in every ecclesial community, there was to be found the lax among the fervent, the bad among the good.

For all its simplicity, the parable is one of the most practical ever told by Jesus, and contains important lessons. The refusal of the householder to allow his servants to separate the wheat from the weeds, while they are still growing, is a warning to the disciples, and of course to *us*, not to attempt to anticipate the final judgment of God by a definite exclusion of sinners from the kingdom. In its present stage, that kingdom — we must think, here, of the Church also — is composed of the good and the bad. It is not to be thought of as a community of the pure or righteous only.

The parable clearly conveys the truth that though evil individuals may seem to thrive in this world and be exempt from indications of divine judgment, judgment will indeed come when God will separate the sinful from the good (Mt 25:31-46). Until then, there must be patience and the preaching of repentance; there must be mercy, forgiveness, and the refusal to judge and condemn (Lk 6:37).





EUCCHARISTIC SPIRITUALITY

A Poetry Retreat

by Jo Dirks, SSS

Father Jo Dirks is the provincial leader of the Province of the Holy Spirit, Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, in Australia. With a deep, abiding concern for social justice and welfare, he has only recently retired from the chaplaincy team at RMIT University, Melbourne, after years of combining this with leadership in his religious community and province. His latest book of poetry is *The Surprise of Walking: The Camino and Other Poems*.

The Wedding Feast of Cana

For Team 24

Four panels in Arcabas' polyptych but the mystery dazzles with simplicity. Water into fine wine and Mary at the heart of the banquet puzzle. Waiters do as they are told; steward tastes the selection; groom chastised for keeping the best to the last. Brilliant pastel colors tell the tale of humanity reconciled with God and the wedding guest who is the unknown Lord. Flesh no longer opposed to spirit, sex blessed and joined in Christ, human and divine, in-hearted and concorded as intended by the hands of the Creator Artist. High on the Salette Alp stand the ski slopes and corniches crowned by the basilica's rainbow burst quadritych.

Death Shall Have No More Dominion

For Michael and Michele

Naked came I out of my mother's womb . . .
Rineke Dijkstra captures the proud mother clad in white birthing pants standing upright holding her newborn to her chest, one hour after birth, hand shielding head from light; we all make this journey, from womb, warm, safe, pulsing, into the unknown. Artists love to show the infant Yehoshua in his mother's arms, cradled, held aloft,

playing blissfully with his Baptist cousin
through school, synagogue, and temple visits
to the house of the Father, learning the trade
from the carpenter abba. Then as adult
plunged into the Jordan as a public sinner,
clothed as we all are, unless born in the Amazon,
Africa or Oceania, on the road to adulthood,
challenged by Miriam to aid the bridal Cana couple,
launched on the way to the kingdom, cut off at 33,
laid in the tomb *and naked shall I return there . . .*
but having given his life for us, we have become
his body. He lives, we live and Paul who knew him
only in the spirit, not the flesh, wrote:
death shall have no more dominion!

[“Nudus egressus sum de utero matris mei,
et nudus revertar illuc, dixit Iob” (*Vulgate Bible*, Job 1:21);
Rineke Dijkstra is a Dutch photographer
who specializes in mothers and children.]

Made-Over Church

Climbing the same six stone steps of the red brick
church as a pre-teen, but now a senior, surprised
to feel the spongy carpet underfoot and the cool air-con
where once I heard the Irish PP bawl out some
hapless penitent in the confessional. The magi still adore
the new born babe in the four gothic windows
above the altar. The unchasubled priest three times
comes down to the wheel chaired woman to lay hands,
anoint and give Communion, switching to Italian
as is meet. I sit on the comfy padded cushion,
glance at the bilingual pew sheet of today’s readings
and admire the lovely Mimovich Mary in the garden
as I leave.

In the Land of God

For the 2017 Capitulars

What does it mean to live in God’s land?
Driven out by the seraphs how return to the garden
when the fiery swords bar entrance?
Promised land flowing with milk and honey,



guarded by giants — nightmare or dream?
We live so much in our doing, not being.
Eymard wrestled in the Rome retreat:
Into your hands, I commend my spirit.
Acclimatized to God, a new world emerges,
fogs vanish at the divine call to *eat and drink*
the self is given away, hardest act of all
not the sociology, psychology, theology
of love, but opening my door to Christ
with widow's-mite-union with him
into total abandonment . . . no other hope,
being to Christ what he was to God,
gift of self making mission fruitful . . .
nuptial life with the Lord, no other relationship,
to be the cardiologists at the heart of the Church,
as Frank Little said at renovation time:
we were the sacramental heart
of his archdiocese. Did Paul not ask:
what artist does not speak of his art?

[Sir Frank Little was the Archbishop of Melbourne (1974-1996)
and Patron of the 150th Saint Francis Restoration Appeal]

Dispelling the Diabolical

For Peter Murnane, OP

Bishop Geoff Robinson warned the Church
of caste, class, and displays of priests versus people
in those called to be servants, the least of all.
Reclaim the compassionate spirit of Jesus,
birth hierarchs of holiness, not power!
The Messiah came to serve, not to be served;
his 'bodiment shows the unity of sacred and secular,
it's not about preserving privileges. *All comes from God*
and will return, so Julian of Norwich. As we approach
ninety years of service at Saint Francis, let us dispel
the diabolic cleft of caste, for Christ united flesh and spirit,
giving us his body and blood, double helix word and symbol:
Take and eat, take and drink, all of you.
Letting go status and rank — what a centenary
there might be in 2029 if we were a truly servant

community bringing God's people fully on board!
For Jesus did not shun the sick, sinners, poor, unclean,
and outsiders, welcoming everyone into the kingdom.
*When privilege, power, and dominance are more evident
than love, humility, and servant-hood in the church,
then the very Gospel of the servant Jesus is at risk,*
says Bishop Vincent Long, OFM Cap.

Pauline Music

Habakkuk the prophet sang in half a sentence
the upright will live by faith energising
Paul to compose sonatas, concertos
and symphonies of faith. *All have sinned,*
Jew and Gentile alike need God's grace;
which enacted breeds *Zadoks*.
Faith is such a slippery word, almost audio
invisible, not crashing, clashing on the hammer
of our inner ear; it's bread and butter stuff
wrapped in a hifalutin word. Would we had
strong speech like German *Glaube*, Scandi *Tro*
or Gaelic *Chreideamh*! Not a heady word is faith,
nor a ghost in a machine, but full bodied
and blooded, a winged word, which seizes
eagle-like our humdrummery and raises us up
into transcendence and godliness.

The Free Gift

Too good to be true? We are on guard
for the fine print, the unticked box, the never-ending
list of conditions. This is not a "double Irish"
tax scheme, an accountancy trick to avoid tax
by becoming a tax haven. No, this is about eternal life,
about really accessing heaven; this is no junk freebie;
not "where's the catch?" not "too good to be true."
Gift with no strings attached, no tit for tat,
joyously given, no reciprocity, no covenant
of equal rights, totally beholden to you Lord.



How Beautiful the Feet

What sound do the feet make? I mean the gospel feet
bringing good news not the marching and thudding of boots
hitting the road in thunderous unison; more the dance,
more the tinkle of the scallop shell on the backpack;
more the slosh of water in the drinking bottle.

How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!

A joyous noise, happy and expectant,
as a brook nourished by spring rains rills and trills
along its winding course, like the two foot wide
Goulburn River at Woods Point where you scoop
up a trout with one hand.



Interpretive Notes by Father Dirks

1. The Wedding Feast of Cana

- a. Team 24 is the name of a specific group of married couples in teams of Our Lady (Equipes de Notre Dame) movement of whom I am the chaplain.
- b. Arcabas is the name of the French priest-artist who worked in Grenoble.

2. Death Shall Have No More Dominion

- a. Michele is my personal assistant in the Provincial Office. She lost her adult son through illness two years ago.

3. Made-Over Church

- a. Leopoldine Mimovich is a religious sculptor in Melbourne, working primarily in wood.

4. In the Land of God

- a. Written for the members of the General Chapter of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament held in Chicago in June 2017.

5. Dispelling the Diabolic

- a. Geoffrey Robinson is the retired auxiliary bishop of Sydney who has written eloquently on sexual abuse and clericalism in the Australian Church.
- b. Vincent Long is the current bishop of Parramatta, adjacent to the Archdiocese of Sydney.

6. Pauline Music

7. The Free Gift

8. How Beautiful the Feet

- a. Goulburn River at Woods Point, an extremely remote area in Archdiocese of Melbourne. Mountainous area for trout fishing, deer hunting, and gold mining even today.



EUCCHARISTIC SPIRITUALITY

Counsels for Spiritual Life from Saint Peter Julian Eymard

A Life That Inspires

August 1, 2018, marks the 150th anniversary of the death of Saint Peter Julian Eymard, the Apostle of the Eucharist. A guide to the interior life and to authentic Eucharistic spirituality for many in his day, his life and example continue to resonate today, inspiring all to unite faithful participation in the Lord's Supper, contemplation, and service of others in living the dynamism of the Eucharist. And so we pray:

Saint Peter Julian, the Lord has given you, as he once did to Jacob, his servant, an ever-searching faith. All your life long, you sought the way to deepen your union with God and to satisfy the hungers of humanity.

In the Eucharist, you discovered the answer to your searching: God's love was there for you and for all humanity. Answering this gift of love, you made the gift of yourself to God and gave yourself completely to the service of his people.

Your life, modeled on that of the Cenacle where Mary and the apostles were united in prayer, inspired your disciples to live in an atmosphere of prayer. Their apostolic zeal caused them to build Christian communities where the Eucharist is the center and the source of life.

Saint Peter Julian, accompany us on our journey of faith. May our ardent prayer and our generous service help us to contribute to the establishing of a world where there is justice and peace. May our celebrations of the Eucharist proclaim the liberating love of God for the renewal of his church and the coming of his kingdom. Amen.





PASTORAL LITURGY

Instruction on Sacred Music and Sacred Liturgy at 60

by John Thomas J. Lane, SSS

The Church has long appreciated the intimate connection between sacred music and the liturgy.

Blessed Sacrament Father John Thomas Lane is the pastor of his home parish, Saint Paschal Baylon Church in Highland Heights, Ohio. He has degrees in education, music, theology, and liturgy and speaks and writes regularly about vocations and liturgical theology and ministry. For questions or further materials, please contact him at jtlanesss@gmail.com.

WE CONTINUE TO EXAMINE IMPORTANT LITURGICAL DOCUMENTS WHOSE anniversaries fall in this calendar year. As pope, Pius XII wrote many milestone documents, including *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (September 30, 1943) on Sacred Scripture and its study, and *Mediator Dei* (November 20, 1947), the first pontifical encyclical on the liturgy. In 1958, his last year as pope, the Sacred Congregation of Rites promulgated *De Musica Sacra et Sacra Liturgia* (Instruction on Sacred Music and Sacred Liturgy), which was issued on September 3, the feast of Saint Pius X. This date has significance and will be explained below.

Some people maintain still today that the liturgy never changed prior to Vatican II. Contrary to this view, the Instruction on Sacred Music and Sacred Liturgy (MSSL) highlighted the continued development of the liturgy and music in the period from the Council of Trent to the twentieth century. It also addressed certain issues and concerns related to these in “modern times” which have relevance in our day.

The instruction emphasized the importance of the Church’s liturgy and the care that has been shown it over the centuries. MSSL presented the liturgy as essential to church life and rejoiced in the treasure of sacred music. It held that music is integral to deepening participation in the liturgy and the spiritual life. The feast of Saint Pius X was chosen for its issuance because Pius X was the first pope to write an encyclical on music during his pontificate: *Tra Le Sollecitudini* (1903). MSSL quotes the encyclical frequently.

MSSL provided guidance that was needed in the 1950s and 1960s, touching on Gregorian chant, classical polyphony, modern sacred composition, and vernacular hymnody. Latin was to be used in worship

(MSSL, 14); but even before the introduction of the vernacular into the liturgy at Vatican II, vernacular hymns could be sung (14). MSSL advocated strongly for the popular piety of the laity and for music that was theologically sound and uplifting in order to assist them in their faith life. MSSL, 9 says:

Hymns are songs that spontaneously arise from the religious impulses with which (hu)mankind has been endowed by its Creator. Thus, they are universally sung among all peoples.

MSSL, 10 even adds, surprisingly, that religious pieces may be performed in concert in churches “to arouse devotion and religious sentiments.” It also notes distinctions between “low,” “high,” and “solemn high” Masses.

There are other key points that come from this instruction:

- The term “private Mass” is never to be used (2).
- The dialogue parts of the Mass are to be sung and the people should learn these and pray them for their “active participation” (25).
- There is to be singing during the Communion Rite (27).
- Parishes are encouraged to restore the tradition (“the venerable custom”) of Sunday Vespers (45) — now called Evening Prayer — for specific seasons and occasions during the year, such as Advent, Lent, Easter, the anniversary of the parish, etc.
- The pipe organ is the principal instrument of Catholic worship (61). If not feasible, a harmonium (63) or an electronic instrument may be used. The organ should be located in a suitable place near the main altar (67). (This led to architectural changes that were prevalent in church buildings of the period and after Vatican II.)
- Television cameras should be kept out of the sanctuary as much as possible (75). The instruction highlighted other issues, e.g., the location of noisy social halls next to sacred spaces (73), the use of loudspeakers (72) and projection screens, and broadcasting Masses on radio (78).
- Church musicians are to be paid a just wage (101).
- Each diocese is to have a Commission on Sacred Music (102) and perhaps a joint Commission on Liturgy and Art (118). The former has been required since the time of Pius X.

MSSL was a groundbreaking document that brought together theological reflection and practical issues of liturgy, music, and

technology for the first time. It is timeless due to the breadth of the subjects addressed. While there are a few antiquated topics, for example, male-only choirs (93), the value of revisiting this document with parish liturgy committees, musicians, architects, school principals, and teachers (see 104-109) is undeniable. The instruction proves beneficial as we continue to wrestle with “age old issues” for the last 60 years!

Reminders for July and August

National Days of Canada and the United States

Happy Birthday to Canada (July 1) and to the United States (July 4)! There are special readings and prayers in the *Roman Missal* of each country.

Additional Readings in the New Lectionary Supplement

- Thursday, July 5: Saint Elizabeth of Portugal, queen, Third Order Franciscan;
- Monday, July 9: Saint Augustine Zhao Rong, priest, and Companions, martyrs;
- Saturday, July 14: Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, virgin;
- Friday, July 20: Saint Apollinaris, bishop and martyr;
- Tuesday, July 24: Saint Sharbel Makhluf, priest;
- Thursday, August 9: Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, virgin and martyr.

Feasts of the Patrons of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament

- Thursday, July 26: Saint Ann, mother of Mary, grandmother of Jesus, Province patron;
- Wednesday, August 1: 150th Anniversary of the Death of Saint Peter Julian Eymard;
- Thursday, August 2: Saint Peter Julian Eymard, priest, religious, and founder.

Book of Blessings

Review the *Book of Blessings* (BB) for seasonal opportunities to gather parishioners, young and old, to encourage their devotional life or by visiting them to enhance the sense of the sacred in their lives:

- Chapter 21: Blessing of Various Means of Transportation (teens with their first cars!);
- Chapter 22: Blessing of Boats and Fishing Gear;

- Chapter 23: Blessing of Technical Installations or Equipment;
- Chapter 24: Blessing of Tools or Other Equipment for Work.

Wednesday, August 15 — The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

In some cultures, the blessing of the harvest or of the planting of the fall crop takes place on this solemnity (see Chapter 27: Blessing of Seeds at Planting Time, or Chapter 28: Blessing on the Occasion of Thanksgiving for the Harvest).

Opening of the School Year

Increasingly, the school year for many of our young parishioners and their teachers begins well before Labor Day in the United States. See BB, Chapter 5: Blessing of Students and Teachers. Also work with your youth minister in planning a farewell picnic or potluck for collegians heading off to campus.

Other Parish Blessings

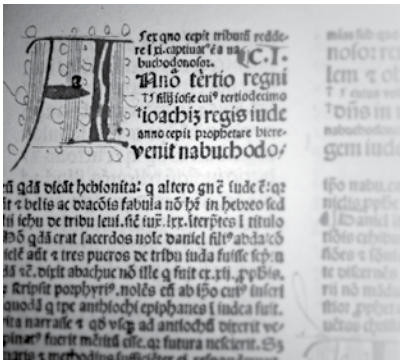
- Chapter 6: Blessing of Those Gathered at a Meeting;
- Chapter 7: Blessing of Organizations Concerned with Public Need;
- Chapter 60: Blessing of Those Who Exercise Pastoral Service;
- Chapter 64: Blessing of a Parish Council;
- Chapter 65: Blessing of Officers of Parish Societies
- Chapter 66: Blessing of New Parishioners.



In Christ's Peace Deceased Members

Rev. Charles E. Gormley
Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Since its inception, *Emmanuel* has published a list of deceased members of the Priests' Eucharistic League, remembering those who have served the church generously and faithfully and have passed into the promised eternal life. Priests in the Eucharistic League whose names begin with N, O, P, and Q are asked to celebrate Mass for deceased priests during July and August.



BREAKING THE WORD

Scriptural Reflections— Homiletics

by Paul Bernier, SSS

July 1, 2018 Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Blessed
Sacrament
Father Paul J.
Bernier served
for many years
as the editor
of *Emmanuel*.
He is a popular
writer, preacher,
and director
of retreats.
Among his many
published works
is *Ministry in
the Church: A
Historical and
Pastoral Approach*,
Second Edition,
published by
Orbis Books in
2015

**Wisdom 1:13-15; 2:23-24; Psalm 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-13; 2
Corinthians 8:7, 9, 13-15; Mark 5:21-43 or 5:21-24, 35b-43**

This is perhaps the most famous of Mark's "sandwiches." He begins one story, interrupts it to tell another, and then returns to the first story. In this case, we might be tempted to think that this is a clever way of indicating the passage of time, allowing the little girl to die, thus resulting in a greater miracle than a simple act of healing. The stories, however, reinforce one another. The link, in this case, is the touch of Jesus.

Every time the word *touch* is used in Mark's Gospel, it is connected to healing. When people bring children to Jesus so that he might touch them, it is a petition for their healing and well-being. When Jairus in today's Gospel asks Jesus to come and lay his hands on his daughter, it is a plea for healing, for life, for salvation. Jairus showed that he had faith in Jesus. So likewise did the woman who had been hemorrhaging for twelve years. Her case was different, however. She had been ritually unclean all those years, and she risked making all those who touched her unclean as well. She was probably afraid to ask Jesus to cure someone like her, especially since he was surrounded by so many people. She had sufficient faith, however, to feel that all she needed to do was touch Jesus' garment and she would be healed.

Jesus sensed that there was something different about her touch. It was not just the jostling of the crowd that surrounded Jesus. It was a touch of desperation, but one filled with love and deep faith. Jesus was approached by two desperate but faith-filled people; both were

rewarded with a miracle of new life. Both the girl and the woman were restored to the community. Meanwhile, those who laughed at Jesus just reinforced their lack of faith in his power and ability to be the source of life. Jesus showed tenderness to both the girl and the woman. He helped the girl rise from her bed and saw to it that she was given something to eat. He called the woman “daughter,” thus restoring her to the community of Israel. More than simply a cure, Jesus made possible a personal relationship.

These two encounters were also confrontations, confrontations between an old order and a new one. It was a conflict between a religious system rooted in purity codes and the fear of bodies (women’s especially) and an alternative practice meant to signal God’s coming reign of wholeness and well-being. The woman approaches Jesus — a social and religious taboo of the highest order. Not only will she render Jesus unclean by coming into contact with him, she will compromise the purity of the whole group. Jesus does not reprimand her for this. Instead, he calls her “daughter” and tells her that her faith has been her salvation.

For Jesus, healing is not mainly an individualized event. Rather, it is part of making all of creation whole, of bringing about the reign of God on earth. People did not go to Jesus simply to receive a clean bill of health, but to experience the wholeness of the kingdom of God. Here the hungry are filled with good things, people forgive one another, and enemies become friends. Here people give the cup of cold water in Jesus’ name, visit the sick and comfort the afflicted. Here diseased and broken bodies become part of the one body — taken, blessed, broken, and shared with a suffering, waiting world.

July 8, 2018

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Ezekiel 2:2-5; Psalm 123:1-2, 3-4; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Mark 6:1-6

There is always a danger of our behaving in one way or another simply to be part of the crowd. High school students all dress alike and seem to enjoy the same fads. When conformity affects only dress, it matters little. When, however, it causes us to water down our ideals and convictions in order to “fit in,” it is far more serious. How many people get hooked on drugs because their peers are all doing it. Likewise, there will always be the temptation to live a comfortable Gospel, one

that does not require us to make too many sacrifices, thereby losing sight of the countercultural aspects of the gospel message and lose our prophetic edge. Such are the dangers of longing to be accepted.

All three readings today warn of the very real possibility of being rejected, even by those for whom we are concerned and are trying to help. Even the miraculous deeds of Jesus or of Paul and Ezekiel led to their being rejected. Jesus' countrymen could not see beyond his human origins — a reminder that rejection often stems from blindness and sin. On the other hand, the readings also imply that God has given his prophets impossible tasks. Ezekiel was sent to a rebellious people with only God's word. Paul was seemingly outdone in charisms by those who sought to discredit him. Jesus had to contend with people who thought his pedigree was not distinguished enough.

Christian baptism/confirmation/Eucharist is a call and commitment to prophethood. Ours is a message given us by God, a way of life to proclaim what is truly life-giving for the world. In doing this, we should not be surprised by rejection. While we should make every effort to root the Gospel in the world by inculturating it as deeply as possible, we are not called to water it down to the extent that it is no longer the word of God. We are called to fidelity. Our willingness to stand alone, if necessary, against the value systems of the world, however, does not imply "going it alone." We always remain part of a faith community which should support us in our knowledge of and relationship with God, and prevent us from becoming discouraged when others ridicule our efforts.

Last April, Pope Francis issued an apostolic exhortation, *Gaudete et Exsultate*. It calls us to become more fully who we are, the people of God. This call to holiness is one that we have received in baptism, and it is at once personal and communal — pushing us to actively build the kingdom of God. Holiness, says the pope, is impossible apart from our embracing the dignity of every human person: "Our Lord made it very clear that holiness cannot be understood or lived apart from these demands, for mercy is 'the beating heart of the Gospel'" (97). Affirming the absolute dignity of the migrants and those suffering from poverty, the pope hopes the exhortation will challenge Catholics to stop and think whether they fully integrate Catholic teaching into their practice, and not lean to one side or the other because it fits better with what is politically correct.

Catholics are called to be prophetic witnesses to the dignity of all God's people, to stand up for a consistent ethic of life. At a time in the U.S. when it seems all too easy to demonize refugees and immigrants, the pope asks us to incarnate the mercy of Christ in our world. We are our brothers (and sisters) keepers, even though that might not be the popular thing to do or preach these days.

July 15, 2018
Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Amos 7:12-15; Psalm 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14; Ephesians 1:3-14 or 1:3-10; Mark 6:7-13

In his pontificate, Pope John Paul II has written two encyclicals on mission, reminding us that mission, spreading the good news of Christ, is of the very nature of the Church. To be a Christian means being one who is sent by God to proclaim his salvation to others. The pope says in *Redemptoris Missio*, "There is a new awareness that missionary activity is a matter for all Christians, for all dioceses and parishes, Church institutions and associations. . . . No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church can avoid this supreme duty: to proclaim Christ to all peoples." Pope Francis turned to the same subject in his encyclical *Evangelii Gaudium*. Stating that "the great danger in today's world, pervaded as it is by consumerism, is the desolation and anguish born of a complacent yet covetous heart, the feverish pursuit of frivolous pleasures, and a blunted conscience. Whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own interests and concerns, there is no longer room for others, no place for the poor."

Unfortunately, especially in America, something else which prevents us from sensing this urgency is the feeling that as long as people have good will, one religion is pretty much as good as another. We have learned tolerance for a wide variety of beliefs and practices, so that the thought of going public with our religious beliefs is distinctly unpopular.

There is little doubt that the liturgy today asks us to focus on the mission of the Church. Running through the first reading and the Gospel is the conviction that God has a definite plan for his world, and he uses us to help bring it about. We see the Twelve today engaging in the same activity as Jesus himself, preaching repentance and healing

ills. Jesus may have been rejected (last week's Gospel) as was Amos, but he still continues to bring his message to the world. Given the generally poor showing of the disciples in Mark's Gospel, here he offers an alternative to betrayal or running away when the going gets tough. We can be true to the Gospel and become its faithful witnesses to the world.

When Christians are dismissed at the end of Mass with "Go and serve the Lord," it is more than an invitation to live their faith in the privacy of their homes. It is a challenge to go out and transform the world. The first thing that needs to be done is to revive the urgent sense of mission that permeates the Gospel today. The sparseness of material support indicates both eschatological haste and the total trust in God that should be ours. We are to act not out of self-interest, but in fidelity to the one who has called and saved us. In some places, it is obvious that we must deliver the word of God even in the teeth of opposition from governments. If that is not the case in the U.S., we meet instead with ridicule or indifference for our beliefs. None of these obstacles should prevent us from remaining faithful to the truth that has set us free, and offering the same salvation to others.

July 22, 2018 Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jeremiah 23:1-6; Psalm 23:1-3, 3-4, 5, 6; Ephesians 2:13-18; Mark 6:30-34

In the political wrangling at federal and state levels, the poor are often left out of consideration. Reforming the welfare system, the Affordable Care Act, and our immigration policy has removed the safety net from many needy people. The hungry are denied food stamps, and we hear of fathers and mothers of families being ripped from their families and deported for one reason or another. Under the guise of caring, government can be very uncaring — especially for those who otherwise have no power. In situations like this, as well as when faced by life's pain, we can begin to wonder if even God cares. The difficulties of life can either cause us to turn to God, or to doubt his presence and concern.

The figure of God and Christ as shepherd of his people dominates

today's readings. Jeremiah, at a time when Judah faced destruction from Babylon, calls the religious leaders false shepherds, and states that God himself would one day pasture his people. This is followed by that paean of trust, Psalm 23. The gospel passage ends in a sentence that introduces the feeding of the multitude, telling us that Jesus had compassion for the crowd because they were like sheep without a shepherd. This sentence, however, also ends the present gospel pericope, where Jesus gives the Twelve a chance to rest and be alone "by themselves" with him after their missionary journey. Mark uses this expression seven times, each instance indicating a special revelation being given the disciples to enable them to become good shepherds also.

Today, if the people lack good shepherds, it is because those who claim to be disciples have not gone apart sufficiently to be alone with Christ, there to imbibe his own spirit of caring. As we learn in the story of the miraculous feeding which will follow, it is easier to notice that the people are hungry than it is to desire to do something about it (other than send them away!). In his encyclical *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis lists several temptations faced by pastoral workers. The first is not accepting the challenge of a missionary spirituality. This requires saying no to selfishness and spiritual sloth and to a sterile pessimism. Also harmful to good shepherding is spiritual worldliness and any warring among ourselves. This will then allow us to be open to the new relationships and challenges given us by Christ.

The Sunday liturgy is a time when Jesus still performs his shepherding role in our behalf, enabling us to learn directly from the Master the secret of a caring heart. In the Eucharist, we are fed both from the table of his word and of his flesh (a theme mentioned in the third stanza of the psalm). The word of God in the liturgy is not meant to be only informative or consoling. It is to challenge us to view others as God himself does. Then, in the strength of Christ's flesh, we will have the courage to go forth and continue the work that Jesus has begun in our behalf. It enables us to take seriously his charge: "Give them something to eat!"

July 29, 2018
Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

**2 Kings 4:42-44; Psalm 145:10-11, 15-16, 17-18; Ephesians 4:1-6;
John 6:1-16**

Starvation is a fact of life in many parts of the world. The United Nations keeps statistics on the millions who go to bed hungry each day — and how many starve to death as well. Wars as well as social systems that pit the rich against the poor contribute much to this reality. So also do various natural disasters in various parts of the world. In America, more than 20 million are on food stamps. Meanwhile, America gobbles up more than one fifth of this world's goods to feed an economy that benefits only a tiny minority of the world's people. Worse is the fact that in our throwaway economy, there is tremendous waste of what could provide hope for millions.

Both the Gospel and the Old Testament passage face us with hungry people, whose need is attended to. This is the refrain of the responsorial psalm: "The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our needs." In a time of famine, Elisha is able to feed a crowd with only 20 barley loaves. Jesus, in a passage which closely parallels the Elisha story, does even better. He feeds 5,000 people, and there is so much left over that Jesus instructs the disciples to gather it up lest any be wasted. Food is a gift of God, not to be wasted. Both passages stress the protest of those around Jesus today and that there isn't possibly enough food for everyone. Jesus shows us, however, that where there is a will, there is a way. First, however, one has to want to do something about the situation. John also evokes the theme of the messianic banquet, when all will be fed by God.

For the next four Sundays we will leave Mark's Gospel and switch to John's. Mark's Gospel is so short, that the Church wanted to give an extended treatment of the Eucharistic discourse in John 6 that follows the miraculous feeding. It would be helpful to look ahead in order to give a systematic homiletic treatment of this important discourse. This is the only miracle in Jesus' life that it is found in all four Gospels. In fact, it gets double billing in Mark and Matthew. The four great Eucharistic verbs: taking, blessing, breaking, and giving are found in all the accounts. Thus the linkage to the Eucharist is one that goes back to the early church.

The Eucharist is not intended to simply make us feel good; it is to challenge us to *be* good. When considering the commandments, we run across many injunctions to feed the poor, but little to insist that we preserve the goods of the earth. These responsibilities, however, form a large part of the social teaching of the Church since the time of Pope John XXIII. We have been reminded time and time again that we must practice stewardship, and that we must become a church of the poor. Did God intend a world where there was such a disparity between the rich and the poor? Aside from public policy (which we can still try to influence), how do we ourselves use material things? How concerned are we about the issues of climate change, or the pollution of our environment? Is our life filled with luxuries while we give little or nothing to the less fortunate? Do we add to the burden of a throwaway society by a wasteful lifestyle? What percentage of our income do we set aside for alms for those in need? These questions could well be discussed today.

August 5, 2018 Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Exodus 16:2-4, 12-15; Psalm 78:3-4, 23-24, 25, 54; Ephesians 4:17, 20-24; John 6:24-35

People are searching for meaning today. Traditional religions do not seem to provide it. Thousands have gone off to India to find an enlightenment which seems to elude them at home. New Age cults and quick paths to self-actualization are eagerly sought. Despite the materialism of American culture, there is a realization that we cannot be satisfied with simply more *things*. Somehow it is the quality of life that matters, and that requires having a sense of purpose, of being committed to a way of life that enhances our awareness of life's direction and goal — and at the same time helps us to attain it. Our gospel reading today moves us from the desire of the crowd to alleviate physical hunger to spiritual hunger and Jesus' desire to address it.

One thing all the readings (and the psalm) take for granted is that the source of all blessings is God. Jesus insists that true life consists not in doing religious things, but in accepting the revelation of God which he brings. Jesus warns against being fixed on material food and reminds

us that the true heavenly bread is found in himself alone. Yet, he is quick to tell the crowd that their seeking him to make him their Messiah/King is shortsighted. Jesus has come to give them *spiritual* bread. Salvation, Jesus tells his audience, comes not from human endeavors; it is from God. This was true of the manna as well as the revelation we have in Jesus. John here uses the first of his seven "I AM" statements. Those who come to Jesus and believe in him will never hunger and never, ever thirst. As John has already told us, "The law was given through Moses, grace and truth come through Jesus Christ" (1:17).

As the climax of this discourse makes clear, John has the Eucharist in mind throughout the chapter. Today's passage may stress more the teaching that Jesus has come to bring and the necessity of faith in his being truly the only bread of eternal life. For many people, who are not familiar with the Bible, the Liturgy of the Word may be the only time they can imbibe Christ's teaching. The word of God is already food and drink in the Old Testament, but there the images may be taken as metaphor. In this chapter, the metaphor, the symbol, has become a physical reality and even a person. It refuses to be spiritualized or allegorized; Jesus says: I am your food. I have come to be consumed and assimilated, first into your hearts and minds through listening and faith; then into your very bodies which I will transform into my own.

The Johannine discourse today hinges on two things: the crowd has eaten perishable food; Jesus insists that there is another and better food that lasts forever. Secondly, they were seeking a miracle worker, perhaps even a king; the only work that really matters is basing one's life on Christ. This tells us baldly that the only revelation that matters comes through Jesus, not some far-off guru. Neither is it to be found in ourselves, as so many self-actualization books would imply. God's revelation is available to us today in the Scriptures. What can we do to make them come alive so that people will see them as life-giving? How can we reveal Jesus as the only truly enlightened one, the one who can give us true and lasting life? Life's meaning is exemplified only in Jesus.

August 12, 2018
Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

**1 Kings 19:4-8; Psalm 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9; Ephesians 4:30—5:2;
John 6:41-51**

We need strength from above to live well today. Modern society puts enormous pressures on people that more settled times did not. This is reflected in rising divorce rates, increase in teen-age crime, and other indications that people are adrift. Many people, doing their best to cope, whether economically or socially, find life a struggle in our pluralistic society. For most people, there is concern about job security, having enough money to raise a family, worry about how well the children will turn out. Every section of the country has different variations on these and similar themes.

The responsorial psalm invites us to “taste and see the goodness of the Lord.” It invites us to total trust in a loving God. The Old Testament reading is a powerful reminder of the ability of God to nourish us for life’s journey. This is also the theme of the Gospel. This whole section of the Gospel insists that — despite the incredulity of the people — the whole purpose of the incarnation is that Jesus could give us true life. This life comes only from eating Christ’s bread. Eating is mentioned three times. In the desert, the Jews ate manna and died; the bread of heaven which is Jesus is nourishment which lasts for a lifetime. We find it in his teaching. But we should be aware that his teaching goes beyond doctrine to embrace the mystery of his person. The allusion to Christ’s death notes not that it is not for sin, but for the *life* of the world.

This section of John’s Gospel is built around the fourth of the seven “signs” in the Fourth Gospel. The first is turning water into wine at the wedding at Cana, the last is the raising of Lazarus. Seven is the number signifying perfection and completion; these seven give us a complete picture of Christ. The fourth sign in this Gospel is the feeding of the 5,000. Right after this central and most important sign, Jesus proclaims himself “the bread of life.” This is the first of the seven “I AM” statements in John’s Gospel. (The others being “I am the light of the world,” 8:12; 9:5; “I am the door of the sheep,” 10:7, 9; “I am the good shepherd,” 10:11, 14; “I am the resurrection and the life,” 11:25; “I am the way, the truth, and the life,” 14:6; “I am the true vine,” 15:1.)

Jesus remains present to us in several ways. Two which are highlighted in this section of the Gospel are his presence in his word, as well as his presence in the [Eucharistic] bread. As Ezekiel shows, God is able to feed us throughout life's journey so that we make it to God's mountain and reach the end of our journey safely. So also does John present the Eucharist as food for the journey. More than the Synoptics, he draws the parallel with Moses. Contact with Christ in the sacrament allows us to be energized by the power of Jesus' cross and resurrection. This requires a faith that is more than intellectual assent, but the willingness to entrust our lives completely to Christ. On life's journey, Jesus nourishes with himself in order to sustain our flagging spirits. With his ideals and strength, we need not worry about fainting along life's way.

August 19, 2018 Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Proverbs 9:1-6; Psalm 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7; Ephesians 5:15-20; John 6:51-58

The Eucharist is the central celebration of our faith. Yet, how well is it understood by Christians?

As Reginald Fuller points out, it would be very congenial for us to have a form of Christian worship consisting [only] of a fellowship meal that celebrates Jesus as the bread of life and proclaims him to be incarnate wisdom. This would surely solve a number of ecumenical problems. What has always characterized Catholicism, however, is an insistence that we cannot leave out the reality and the sacrificial aspect of this mystery. Our communion with Jesus is communion with a sacrificial victim.

This section of the Gospel makes it clear that the realistic talk about eating Christ's flesh and drinking his blood has provoked horror from the beginning. The dominant thought of the first part of the discourse, *coming* and *believing*, has shifted to *eating* and *drinking*. This is an obvious reference to the body and blood of Christ that we receive in the liturgy. Despite the shock that Jesus' statement provoked, Jesus doubles down and repeats it with even greater emphasis. We are assured that the sacramental eating and drinking of Christ's flesh and blood will result in mutual "abiding." The relation to Christ on the part of the believer who so eats is even akin to the relationship of Father

and Son. The discourse ends with a summary statement which takes us back to its beginning (verse 31): the true bread from heaven is the Christ in his incarnate life and redemptive death, both Revealer and Redeemer. Whereas before we were dead, now we can enjoy life in faith and through the Eucharist.

The climax of every Eucharistic celebration is Communion. Here we enter into a deep personal relationship and “abide” with the risen Lord who is present for us in the bread and wine of the liturgy. Unfortunately, a full grasp of all the extraordinary riches contained in Communion seems to be rather rare. Many seem entirely satisfied with the thought that Jesus has come to them. Overawed by the presence of Christ within them, they forget that they are consuming a sacrificial victim. The liturgical symbolism of the rite makes it clear, however, that it demands something of us as well. Receiving the bread tells us *who* we are called to be: the body of Christ. Receiving from the cup tells *how* we become Christ’s body: in the same sacrificial way that Jesus gave himself to us. It is by a total commitment, a willingness to drink the cup that Jesus accepted to drink in the garden. Anything less fails to bring about the “common union” with Christ that Communion is meant to bring about.

Pope Paul VI put it this way: “Participation in the Lord’s Supper is always communion with Christ offering himself for us as a sacrifice to the Father.” In a sense, two bodies meet: the glorified body of Christ and the unglorified body of the communicant. Communion is a restated pledge on the part of Christ that we, too, can be glorified one day both in soul and body. It cost him to be able to do this! Receiving Communion should also be a pledge in our part that everything that Jesus stands for we are willing to commit ourselves to as well.

August 26, 2018

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

Joshua 24:1-2a, 15-17, 18b; Psalm 34:2-3, 16-21; Ephesians 5:21-32 or 5:2a, 25-32; John 6:60-69

One of the complaints made, especially of American Catholics, is that they have a lunch-counter approach to their religion. They pick and choose what they like, and ignore the rest. The widespread dissent


in regard to the question of birth control by people who consider themselves good Catholics is a case in point. A more recent issue is that of the reaction to the apostolic exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* in regard to the position of divorced and remarried in the Church. The present polarization in the Congress is mirrored by polarization in the Church as well. If pastors preach about unpopular social realities of our day, they can count on people objecting, leaving the Church, or ignoring the collection basket.

This section of the Gospel follows Jesus' teaching on the necessity of eating his body and drinking his blood if we want to be alive with the life of God. His teaching is declared to be impossible to believe by many. Even a number of disciples decide that this is too much, and no longer walk with Jesus. Jesus responds that "flesh" has nothing to offer; that is, our natural human reason can never give us eternal life. This remains a gift of the Spirit, the same Spirit that Jesus' death will allow him to send.

Jesus' question to the disciples contains a certain pathos. He asks, literally, "You also do not wish to go away, do you?" Peter speaks for all who remain, and are willing to entrust themselves to the person of Christ. Two sentences (left of out today's Gospel) end this pericope. They would reinforce the idea that those who walk away and do not abide in the apostolic confession of belief in Jesus are joining the company of Judas, and risking the ultimate apostasy, the willingness to betray Christ himself.

Joshua faced the people with a choice, just as Jesus does today. He is not simply asking people to promise allegiance to God, but to accept him and his gift of self as the expression of God's love and life. Thus, it is a question of rejecting an offer of personal friendship and trust that Jesus offers us. It is also a fact that we profess to find Jesus today in the Church. How far can we depart from the teaching and practice of that Church and not join ranks with those who find Jesus' teaching too difficult and decide to walk away? While there is room for a legitimate plurality of views and expression within the Church, it remains an organic body. This means that individuals are not the ultimate norm of truth or of practice. We all have a duty to inform our consciences based on the teachings of Jesus and of the Church.

It's significant that the gospel issue here is the Eucharist. Today there are some who do not really believe that Christ is present in its celebration.

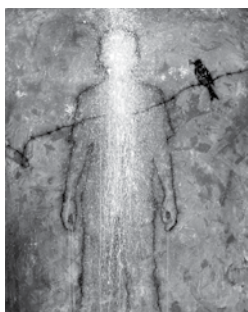
Others effectively walk away and do not consider it important enough to participate each week. It is hard to believe that this is the reality for which Christians were willing to give up their lives. How far removed from the attitude of the martyrs of Abitina in North Africa during the reign of the Emperor Diocletian, who were tortured and killed because they illegally celebrated Sunday worship. Emeritus, who admitted that the Christians had met in his house, was asked why he had violated the emperor's command. He replied simply, "We cannot live without the Eucharist" (*Sine dominico non possumus*). 



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John Christman,
SSS

I first encountered Sergio Gomez's art at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. Along the main staircase can be found a bold envisioning of Jesus gathered with the apostles entitled *The Last Supper*. Here the only light is a type of divine illumination radiating from inside Jesus and igniting within his followers. Gomez portrays Jesus' actions at the Last Supper like a fire that spreads through the hearts of the gathered community. As Saint Peter Julian Eymard once observed, "Read and reread the sermon of the Last Supper in Saint John, and you will find from the beginning to the end a fire burning with love." Making the connection with John's Gospel is particularly instructive as the Eucharist is explicitly connected with hospitality, service, and the profound recognition of the dignity of every human being. We see this especially in John's portrayal of Jesus washing the feet of his disciples. Gomez's art appears to be infused with these same values. The human being is central to his artwork, and whether they are images of struggle or liberation the dignity of the human person shines through.

Particularly relevant in this regard are a series of paintings where Gomez creatively explores the interactions between three visual elements: the outline of a human figure, a bird, and barbed wire. The evocative convergence of these three elements stirs numerous interpretations. The outline of the human figure signifies a presence. Whether past (as in a crime scene chalk outline) or present (as an open ended symbol for "Every person"), these outlines give primacy to the human person. Placed as they are behind barbed wire, they convey a sense of confinement. This combined with the "Every person" quality of the images evokes an empathetic response in the viewer. This is further enhanced by the placement of a bird on the barbed wire. The bird, a symbol of freedom, is at liberty to fly where it will, beyond the limits demarcated by the barbed wire. This makes it all the more emphatic by comparison that the person depicted, sadly, is not free.

However, the images are more complex than this. Again, in Gomez's painting *The Other Side* (see Front Cover), the figure and background seem to radiate their own warm light, making the bird and barbed wire appear heavy by comparison. Moreover, a deluge of white paint cascades from above, like divine or artistic intervention, severing the wire and setting the captive person free. From a Christian perspective, it is difficult here not to think of Jesus' reading from Isaiah in Luke: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free..." (4:18).

Gomez uses some of the same elements in his painting entitled *Night Watcher* (see Back Cover) to slightly different effect. Here the figure is shrouded in darkness. The bird, however, is illuminated with its own light, placed near the heart of the figure. Here we may recall that a bird is also used in art as a symbol for the soul.¹ Seen in this light, though the figure is still restrained by barbed wire, there remains an inner freedom that cannot be dimmed or darkened. In fact, the light from above mingles with the light from the bird as if assuring again that the Lord hears the cry of the oppressed.

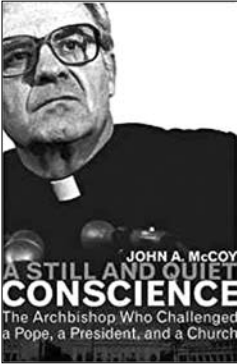
It is difficult in today's politically charged atmosphere to not think of the current reality of migration when looking at Gomez's figures restrained by barbed wire. Pope Francis has been a strong, vocal proponent of protecting those forced to flee their countries and preserving their inherent dignity throughout the process. In his 2018 message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Pope Francis reiterated the Church's values of "welcoming, protecting, promoting, and integrating migrants and refugees."² In paintings like *The Other Side* and *Night Watcher*, Sergio Gomez gives us art that harmonizes well with Pope Francis' message and powerfully visualizes the grandeur of the human spirit in the face of whatever seeks to imprison it.

Notes

¹ *The Book of Symbols*. Ed. Ami Ronnberg and Kathleen Martin (Koln, Germany: Taschen, 2010), 238.

² Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2018. January 14, 2018. www.vatican.va (accessed April 13, 2018).

Book Reviews



**A STILL
AND QUIET
CONSCIENCE:
THE
ARCHBISHOP
WHO
CHALLENGED
A POPE, A
PRESIDENT, AND
A CHURCH**
John A. McCoy
Maryknoll, New
York: Orbis Books,
2015
288 pp., \$26.00

If there were ever a tragic Greek hero in the history of Catholicism in the United States, a strong candidate would be Raymond Hunthausen, the archbishop of Seattle from 1975-1981. His fatal flaw was that his pacifist, antinuclear stance was in direct conflict with the two most powerful men in the world at that time: President Ronald Reagan and Pope John Paul II. Until that stressful and personally-devastating experience, Hunthausen had served the Church with great fidelity and confidence.

Raymond Hunthausen was born in 1921 in a small, former mining town in Montana. He was the oldest of seven children in a middle-class family. He attended the local Catholic grade school and graduated in a class of 17 from Saint Peter's High School, both of which he would later close for financial reasons. He then attended the diocesan Carroll College where he excelled in all areas of school life. While a chemistry major, he was encouraged by several priests on the faculty to consider the priesthood.

On their recommendation, he enrolled in Saint Edward Seminary in Seattle and was ordained a priest on June 1, 1946. His first assignment was to the faculty of his alma mater where he taught math and chemistry and served as the football coach. Bishop Joseph Gilmore saw great potential in Hunthausen and soon named him the president of Carroll College, where he made many positive and helpful changes.

Unbeknownst to Hunthausen, in March 1962, Bishop Gilmore sent a letter to the apostolic delegate in Washington, DC, in which he placed "Dutch's" name in consideration for the episcopacy. Things moved fast for the young college president. Two weeks later, Bishop Gilmore died of a heart attack and on August 31, Hunthausen became the bishop of Helena. In October, he arrived in Rome as the youngest American bishop to participate in the Second Vatican Council.

The newly-ordained bishop came to the council with little theological expertise, as his seminary theology was a traditional Scholastic-textbook variety with little if any exposure to the world beyond America's Northwest. He did bring with him a strong pastoral sense and for the next four years he was introduced to a whole new theological perspective and a new vision of the Church which included a dynamic concept of the role of the laity. He gained a new appreciation for the

concept of sacramentality as it related to the nature and mission of the Church. The liturgy and the Eucharist took on a whole new meaning. He encountered a greater openness to other Christian churches and world religions. The conciliar document on The Church in the Modern World had the greatest and most long-lasting impact on him.

Like most bishops who returned to their dioceses at the conclusion of the council, Hunthausen began to implement some of the new theology and changes in the liturgy. His efforts were met with enthusiasm by many and anger by others. Some of his older priests refused to make the changes he suggested and he was accused of being too liberal. But he brought to each situation the ability to truly listen to the other's point of view. Slowly, the council was implemented in a pastoral way in his diocese.

As the archbishop of Seattle reached retirement age, Archbishop Jean Jadot, the apostolic delegate, sent three names to Rome for consideration with his stated preference being the bishop of Helena. Pope Paul VI had asked Jadot to seek out men in the United States "who were healers and bridge-builders, modest, unassuming men who modeled Christian virtues" (129). Jadot saw those virtues and a strong pastoral sense in Hunthausen.

In 1975, Hunthausen accepted Pope Paul VI's invitation to become the archbishop of Seattle. He set about with his own sense of what a bishop was. Instead of his installation being held in the cathedral, which had very limited seating, Hunthausen chose to be installed in the Seattle Center Arena, where everyone could be accommodated. He opened up opportunities for the laity to be involved in all areas of the archdiocese, including the chancery staff. He increased ecumenical involvement. He wrote a pastoral letter in which he called for full inclusion of women in the life of the Church. He invited Dignity, a Catholic organization for homosexuals, to use his cathedral for their national convention Mass in Seattle.

He exhorted his priests to maintain a strong pastoral orientation in their ministry and allowed for greater use of general absolution. Of course, there were laymen and priests who did not appreciate his "liberal tendencies" and sent frequent letters to Rome complaining of Hunthausen's failure to abide by Church teaching.

The Archdiocese of Seattle was located in an area which had one of the largest concentrations of military bases in the country. President

Reagan, in his wish to crush the Soviet Union, had begun a massive military build-up which included the Trident nuclear submarine, the first vessel that could deliver a nuclear attack anywhere in the world. Its home base was to be in Seattle. Since this was such a military-oriented area of the country with the Trident due to arrive, Seattle also became the epicenter of antinuclear activities and demonstrations.

Hunthausen had been greatly impacted by the antiwar and antinuclear proliferation discussions at Vatican II in reference to *Gaudium et Spes*. He was working with other members of the Bishops' Conference on the peace pastoral, which had taken a strong antinuclear proliferation stance with a call to unilateral disarmament. (Pope John Paul II later deleted much of the letter's strong antinuclear stance). Hunthausen saw young men and women being arrested and serving prison sentences for acts of civil disobedience. He felt called to take his own stance against the nuclear build-up and decided in 1981 to withhold half of his federal tax "to protest our nation's involvement in the race to nuclear arms supremacy" (27).

The year 1983 began a sad chapter in Hunthausen's life. He was informed by the apostolic delegate, Archbishop Pio Laghi, that the archdiocese was to undergo a special investigation. It was designed to look into the many letters being sent to Rome about liturgical, pastoral, and doctrinal issues in conflict with Church teaching and practice. Hunthausen was horrified and did everything he could do to prevent the visitation. He met with Archbishop James Hickey, Rome's chosen delegate. Hickey showed him a folder of complaints against him. Despite Hunthausen's wish to keep the investigation a secret, it went public and was a great embarrassment to him.

Hickey made the visitation and mandated a number of changes that Hunthausen was to initiate. But in his final interview with the archbishop, Hickey told him that the real reason for the visitation was his tax-withholding and his strong antinuclear-proliferation stance. Hunthausen had unknowingly entered into an area of global repercussions. President Reagan was intent on destroying or at least limiting the power of the Soviet Union and his close ally was Pope John Paul II, who had personally experienced the repression that the "Evil Empire" exerted on its bloc. Hunthausen was seen by both president and pope as interfering in their geopolitical goals. The investigation and consequent punishment were meant to sideline him.

Archbishop Hickey sent the results of his investigation to Rome, and

a few months later, the apostolic delegate informed Hunthausen that the investigation would be closed if he accepted a coadjutor bishop who would have final say in several areas of administration: liturgy, the marriage tribunal, clergy and seminaries, ex-priests, and moral issues related to health care and homosexuals. Hunthausen rejected this and worked vigorously to prevent it, but was eventually told to either accept the plan or resign.

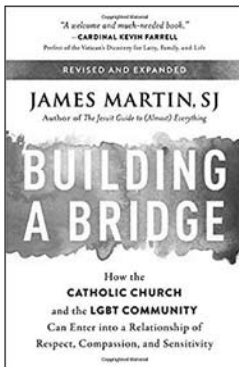
With great reservations, he signed his acceptance in October 1984. Father Donald Wuerl, a Rome-educated priest of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, was named coadjutor bishop of Seattle. When the plan was announced, it was greeted with anger and resentment in Seattle and throughout the country. Wuerl was not well-received in the archdiocese and suffered greatly, but fulfilled his mission. When he and Hunthausen disagreed over the issue of an anti-discrimination law regarding the rights of homosexuals in housing, the situation in Seattle became intolerable.

The situation could not continue. In 1987, Rome asked Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago, Cardinal John O'Connor of New York, and Archbishop John Quinn of San Francisco to assess the situation in Seattle. Rome would agree to move Wuerl, but wanted another bishop to serve as coadjutor of the archdiocese. Hunthausen was not happy, but he was told that he could suggest the names of bishop-candidates to Rome. In the end, Bishop Thomas Murphy of the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings was named and Hunthausen was ostensibly given back full authority, although Murphy retained the same powers as Wuerl. The understanding was that Murphy was to oversee the five areas, but that he and Hunthausen would work collaboratively.

Murphy and Hunthausen were very different people with different theologies and pastoral approaches. There was much stress between them. When Hunthausen reached the age of 70 in August 1991, he submitted his resignation, which was immediately accepted. After Murphy died of a stroke, a succession of men served the Archdiocese of Seattle and most of his initiatives were dropped as the "restoration" continued.

At 92, Hunthausen, who had returned to his home state of Montana, suffered a stroke and lived out his last years in a nursing home. He lived to see the pontificate of Francis, who ended the restoration program of Popes John Paul II and Benedict XV. Hunthausen remarked, "Francis is doing the things I tried to do" (299).

Hunthausen was the last bishop in the United States to have attended the Vatican Council. He learned at that special moment in the history of the Church what the Church could be, and throughout his service as bishop of Helena and archbishop of Seattle he sought to make that vision a reality. That vision subsequently fell out of step with later conceptions of Catholicism. In his last years, his hopes were renewed and enlivened with the pastoral orientation of Pope Francis. Raymond Hunthausen will long be remembered as a man of conviction and courage.



**BUILDING A
BRIDGE:
HOW THE
CATHOLIC
CHURCH
AND THE LGBT
COMMUNITY
CAN ENTER
INTO A
RELATIONSHIP
OF RESPECT,
COMPASSION,
AND SENSITIVITY**
James Martin, SJ
San Francisco,
California:
HarperOne, 2017
160 pp., \$19.99

Jesuit James Martin is a very popular author, whose earlier books, which have been pastoral in nature, have won numerous awards and been widely acclaimed. He serves as editor at large of *America* and is consultor to the Vatican's Secretariat for Communication. In other words, he has earned the credentials to weigh in on pastoral issues.

The subtitle of this, his latest book, clearly defines what he hoped to accomplish in writing it. He wanted to initiate or encourage an openness or a dialogue between the Catholic community and the members of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender communities. He believed that on a basic human context such a dialogue or openness could be grounded in a certain level of mutual respect, compassion, and sensitivity.

What prompted Martin to write this book was what he perceived as the "invisibility" of the gay community in the Church. He noted that when a terrorist slaughtered 49 people in the popular gay Pulse nightclub in Orlando in 2016 (then the largest mass shooting in U.S. history), there was a great outpouring of rage and sorrow. Among the 250 Catholic bishops, only a handful expressed their concern for and solidarity with the gay or LGBT communities. This bothered Martin who had worked with and ministered to many LGBT persons over the years. The book is meant to make each community — the Catholic Church and the LGBT community — able to recognize and relate to each other positively.

It is a short book with simple suggestions on how the members of these two communities can come to know each other and grow in sensitivity. It is my experience that the issue from the Church perspective exists primarily, although not exclusively, on the hierarchical level. In plebiscites in traditional Catholic countries like Ireland, Spain, and Australia, civil rights for homosexual persons were won, even in the face of pressure from Church hierarchies.

For so many young people and many older people that I know in this country, there is great acceptance of and respect for members of the LGBT community. They see efforts against gay rights and gay marriage as discriminatory.

The key factor here for Martin is “encounter.” Many Catholics have met and developed friendships with LGBT people. They have come to know the person as a person who happens to be gay and not as a “gay person.” Their starting-point is not the person is “objectively disordered,” which creates a barrier from the beginning and hinders the development of mutual respect, compassion, and sensitivity.

Martin’s book bears the endorsement of Cardinal Kevin Farrell, the prefect of the Vatican Dicastery for Laity, Family, and Life, Cardinal Joseph Tobin, the archbishop of Newark, and Bishop Robert McElroy of San Diego, as well as Sister Jeannine Gramick, who has long argued for a more pastoral and positive approach by the Church toward the LGBT community.

How has Martin’s book been received? When I asked a priest friend of mine how he reacted to the book, his comment was that the book was a Hallmark card to the gay community. His reaction was positive as were those of many people with whom I have spoken who had read it.

On the other hand, in October, Martin was disinvited to give a talk at the seminary department of the Catholic University of America. This was the direct result of his book. African Cardinal Robert Sarah chose to focus his critique on homosexual acts being gravely sinful, sexual activity being an area which Martin purposely avoided in his book.

While not directly the result of Martin’s book, a further slap in the face of gay Catholics came from the Diocese of Madison, Wisconsin, which prohibited church funerals for Catholics who entered into same sex marriages. The reasoning was to avoid scandal.

Martin hoped that this book would cause conversation and dialogue and encourage further encounters between straight and gay Catholics. It is in such encounters that hearts speak to hearts and greater understanding, respect, compassion, and sensitivity emerge and grow. From what I have seen, Martin’s book has accomplished that.



Patrick J. Riley, DMin
Book Review Editor, *Emmanuel*



EUCCHARISTIC WITNESS

Eleanore Spetrino

Highland Heights, Ohio

“O God, you are my God — for you I long” (Ps 63:2).

During the past nine years, it has been a privilege for me to bring the precious gift of the Eucharist to the sick at University Hospital. I did not realize the impact this ministry would have on me.

As I drive to the hospital, I pray that I may worthily bring the Lord’s sacred presence to those who await him.

I have witnessed the full gamut of human emotions during these visits: from peace and serenity, to agitation and fear, and the shedding of tears while receiving the Eucharist. There is a need to touch another human being.

One particular day stands out in my mind . . . August 26. As I was completing my assigned visits, I was summoned to a patient in the Intensive Care Unit, an area that we do not normally visit.

Approaching the room, I suddenly realized that it was *the same room* that my husband occupied during the last days of his life. Coincidentally, August 26 was the date that he was admitted to the hospital a few years before.

I was a bit shaken as memories of his final days flooded my mind. I had to put these thoughts aside, and at that point the Holy Spirit stepped in with the strength and courage I needed to enter the room calmly and focus on “Alice,” who was waiting.

We prayed together, and Alice received the Eucharist. She then shared with me the distressful night she had endured, thinking she was about to die and how much she yearned for the Eucharist.

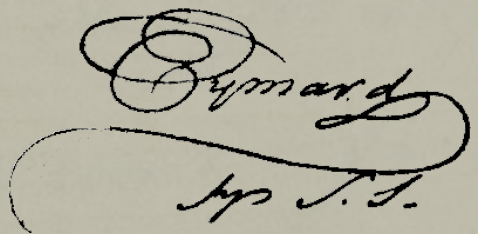
I remained with her a little longer as the words of Saint Augustine echoed in my mind: “You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our soul is restless until it finds rest in you again.” 🙏

vos vocations commencent.

que faire, car je desire bien
à toute votre manière

Tout votre amant

“Spiritual freedom comes when
a soul has found its energy of
love. Keep your freedom in your
affections and actions.”

A handwritten signature in dark ink, featuring a large, ornate initial 'E' that loops around the name 'Eymard'. Below the signature, the initials 'S.P.J.' are written in a smaller, simpler hand.

Saint Peter Julian Eymard

