

Emmanuel

Eucharistic Spirituality



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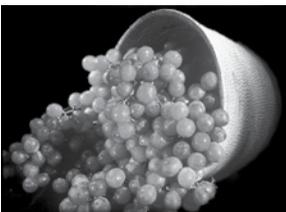
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Emmanuel Magazine

Seeing all of reality in the light of the Eucharist

Volume 124 Number 1



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FROM THE EDITOR

I know I'm dating myself by admitting to having grown up in the tumultuous 1970s and '80s, a time of unrest marked by racial tensions, cultural and social divides, and fierce debate over the U.S. war in Vietnam. Sounds familiar, doesn't it? As we enter a new year, our country continues to wrestle with endemic racism; the gap between the über-rich, the alt-right, and the rest of us grows; and there is widespread anxiety over potential armed conflict with North Korea, Iran, and others.

When I was younger, I felt that political activism could change things and move us "in the right direction." I guess like many people today I no longer feel this way, despite Pope Francis' assertion during his 2015 visit to the Capitol that politics "is one of the highest forms of love because it is in the service of the common good." The Holy Father urged our leaders to orient our nation's politics toward the common good, along the lines of such Christian models as Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Increasingly, I have come to believe that spiritual renewal and a "revolution of tenderness" — again Francis' words — are our best hope. This was Dorothy Day's conclusion after years of embracing Marxist ideology and class struggle as the path forward.

In a voter guide for the 2016 national election, a coalition of Catholic national organizations stated: "Jesus' resurrection marked the end of Caesar's way of doing things. In fact, with God's love in Jesus, Rome is no more and a new community with new rules is established. In this community, hierarchies are subverted, concentrated power is decentralized, and prodigal children are welcomed home. In this new place of mercy, the last are first, the poor are blessed, and enemies are loved."

This vision isn't limited to an election year or to a Jubilee of Mercy such as we just observed. It is not escapism *from* reality but engagement *in* life and its challenges with a spiritual vision, that of the Gospel.

Here's where the Eucharist enters in. National rituals may have lost much of their power to unite and to transform, but religious ritual has not. I have seen this over and over again in the course of my life and ministry: the exhilarating joy of baptism and the other rites of initiation, the healing encounter with the God of mercy in sacramental reconciliation, the reverence shown a loved one who has gone home to God, and especially the breaking of the bread and the sharing of the cup of Eucharist on so many occasions and in different settings.

It does not happen automatically, though. The Church's rituals have endured through the ages and have the power to touch and to move, but they must be celebrated with respect for the mysteries they transmit. The mysteries of redemption and the reign of God transform lives and societies.

In This Issue

We hope that you enjoy this first issue of the new publishing year, *Emmanuel's* 123rd. I want to thank all of our authors and contributors. In a special way, thanks to Paul Bernier, SSS, John Barker, OFM, and Barbara Shanahan for writing our scripture reflections (Breaking the Word) for the coming year, and to Dianne Bergant, CSA, for her reflections last year and for setting up this special relationship with scholars and board members from Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. A blessed 2018!



Anthony Schueller, SSS



EUCHARIST: LIVING & EVANGELIZING

Eucharistic Journey: Epiphany – From the Outside In

by Aaron K. Kerr

Epiphany reminds us that there is a journey to be made, one of mystery, encounter, and transformation.

Aaron K. Kerr is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Gannon University, Erie, Pennsylvania, and a new contributor to *Emmanuel*.

Christmas tends to be a festival of inwardness: family and friends, intimate gatherings, connecting again with relatives. We may unbridle our nostalgia and rehearse customs of familiarity. And just before the feast of Epiphany, we celebrate the Holy Family and honor the roles of father and mother and the holiness that the family will cultivate for the good of all. These intimacies strengthen our identity and maintain within us a confirmed truth, namely, that Jesus is with us in the most cherished parts of our lives.

However, inwardness and the attempt to recapture past intimacies can leave us disappointed. Time cannot be frozen; neither can our souls. To grow, we must seek nourishment from without.

Today, what many have called the “therapeutic culture” strips us of our desire to engage externals because we are so focused on some idea of the self that we confine our experience, thus weakening our desire to discover truth beyond ourselves. Certainly, the Eucharist is the medicine or remedy for this tendency. And I suggest that Matthew’s Gospel is a testimony to the truth that conversion moves us from the outside in, not the inside out. The story of the Magi exemplifies this.

Epiphany expresses that the incarnate Word is on the move and the whole world is set in motion by his self-emptying love. Matthew captures this tremor when he describes wise ones who move out of their familiarity, their certainty, their status as revered figures in order to search for One who disrupts. Epiphany challenges us to question what we think certain, to look to those different from ourselves in order to gain wisdom, and to trust in the journey when we have no clue about what is around the corner. That ambiguity manifests our

faith, and with the eyes of faith we see the truth of a new life.

Externals: Outsiders, Otherwise, Nature

“When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, Magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, ‘Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage’” (Mt 2:1-2).

“Magi from the east. . .” This means strangers, outsiders, unknowns. We know from the plural, Magi, that there were more than one, yet we don’t know much about the kind of wisdom they believed or pursued. We can surmise that they studied the heavens, the stars, and that it was from this exploration of the heavens that they discerned the star that led them to Jerusalem. We can appreciate that living and learning with and from others takes us to richer insights and shared perceptions.

Those from outside our culture and society are often seen with eyes that are scarred or, worse, prejudiced. There is wisdom that is not Christian, not Western, and not American. What we perceive as “strange” or “other” need not be feared. And the “strange” is an invitation to suspend judgment and to consider anew.

Matthew’s intended audience was Jewish, yet he reports that the first persons to adore Christ were not. The Eucharist itself is “strange.” Have we forgotten? For many of our Protestant friends and secular contemporaries who stand outside the Church’s liturgy, the Eucharist is a scandal and “out there.” Epiphany reminds us that all of us approach the incarnation from without. The mystery is beyond us.

Note that the Magi were scientists, empiricists who study externals. Sacramentality means that God speaks not only in the Sacred Scriptures, his revealed word, but nature, too, is a “book” that can incite movements of discovery. Scientists never stop wondering. It is irresponsible to make scientific pronouncements once-and-for-all, for discovery is a constant process of intellectual and emotional movement. As strangers, outsiders, sharing together and journeying together, the Magi exemplify openness to creation, through which the vast expanse of all external reality evokes a hint, a hint on which they were willing to stake their journey.

A Moving Sight: Opening to Another World

“We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage” (Mt 2:2).



The first question the Magi ask is, “Where?” We often know intuitively that we need to move outside of ourselves to come to deeper truths and insight. The manifestation of Christ is not in the familiar but is to be sought elsewhere. To experience the manifestation of God’s truth, we must be “on the move.” When we are caught up in contemplative wonder — holding a baby, watching a play, listening to dynamic music, seeing the sun rise or set — our spirits move in equal parts joy and curiosity. This is holy wonder and amazement.

Even on our best days, we shrink from wonder. That is because when we do inhabit wonder, our conventional thoughts and our satisfaction with the familiar are caught off guard. It was wonder that moved the Magi out; first, to the borders of their familiar world and experience, then beyond them into the darkness of paths never before trodden. They caught a glimpse of something so powerful that they could not place it in the orbit of their everyday experience. They had to go see for themselves, “to do him homage.”

Christ’s star is from another world. Christ’s star opens to us that world. It is unknown and at first seems foreboding and fearful. It is at once a sign from the divine, the “other,” and an invitation to discover firsthand the unforeseen kingdom of boundless mercy. We are ever beckoned to explore, to look, to appreciate, to move, to consider, and to see anew.

Matthew’s Gospel is a testimony to the truth that conversion moves us from the outside in, not the inside out.

The Eucharist is never static, never wholly understood. It is a practice not a routine. A practice involves focus and energy; a routine is something we do without thinking, like brushing our teeth. A good physicist never looks blithely or routinely into a telescope. The star led the Magi as one who leads a dance guides our movement. Their wonder kept rhythm with the power beyond them. They inquired at the door of human power — Herod. He had all the “answers” at his fingertips but failed to make the connection the wonder-filled Magi inevitably made.

Mind in Motion: Receiving Truth

“When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem

with him. Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They said to him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it has been written through the prophet: "And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; since from you shall come a ruler, who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod called the Magi secretly and ascertained from them the time of the star's appearance. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, 'Go and search diligently for the child. When you have found him, bring me word, that I, too, may go and do him homage.' After their audience with the king, they set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was" (Mt 2:3-9).

When we are caught up in contemplative wonder, our spirits move in equal parts joy and curiosity. This is holy wonder and amazement.

Two things disturb me about the Magi and their encounter with King Herod. First, the chief priests and the scribes of the people, that is, the "experts," had knowledge of the origins of the Christ. It was in the Scriptures they studied and prayed every day! But it was the novices, not the experts, who took that knowledge to heart.

Information is one thing, understanding is another, and authentic action is yet another. Appreciating the significance of a prophecy is one thing and knowing its practical implications for our lives is another. But our actions — are they congruent with what we know to be true? What "held" the experts? Was it their comfort, their pride? Something kept their hearts tethered to the routine, the familiar, and their sense of place. The Magi, on the other hand, were diligent in searching, open to listening, and, believing the word of the authorities, eager to act on that word.

The economy of the sacraments, notably reconciliation and the Eucharist, is a gift that never lets us wander aimlessly in meaningless banality and isolation. The sacraments don't "work" because of prominence or privilege; they work in spite of them, inwardly. The sacraments are anchors that allow us to journey onward into new territory.

Secondly, the Magi's trust of those with special knowledge cuts across the grain of my self-certitude. We live in a time of cynicism. I have been taught to distrust every authority figure, especially religious and political figures of all stripes. I presume to know what motivates them,



their ulterior motives, their secret intentions. Matthew makes it clear that Herod kept his fears hidden, and even his experts had ulterior motivations. But that did not stop the Magi from moving ahead because of the implications of that knowledge.

The Eucharist is a living testimony to God's intention to be with us and in us. What if, like the Magi, we were receptive to God's truth, no matter how suspicious we were of others' ostensible motivations? The Magi were not judging the power structure, the institutional apparatus, they were listening for the truth that is all in all.

Movement in the Flesh: Entry Points

"They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then, they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh" (Mt 2:10-11).

The star appeared over the house. The external sign led the wise ones to the most intimate of places, the house of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus. In Hebrew, *Beth-el* is the "house of God" and *Bethlehem* is the "house of bread." How appropriate. At the house, the Eucharistic journey comes to its fullest expression as lofty perceptions give way to the most intimate of human visions, a mother with her child. We are all voyeurs here, seeing with the Magi the simplest and most profound love.

When the Magi arrive at their destination, they respond to what they see with adoring hearts; they worship. This is the "scandal" of the incarnation: that the manifestation of God's love in Christ is to be acknowledged and worshipped. This is the most explicit Eucharistic moment in the journey: Jesus is found in the house of bread, the Magi bow in prostration to worship, they respond by offering gifts.

Matthew is working in a sublime idiom here, teaching us about the purpose of existence, to worship God and offer our bodies and our goods in response to the overwhelming love of Jesus and Mary. The liturgy is a threshold moment and the Eucharist is a doorway into Christ: to go from the outside in.

First, we receive, we take it in, then we respond from all that we have and we give back. This has been the rhythm of the Magi all along, from their study, the steps into the unknown, their trusting the words of

others, their arrival at the house of bread, and their offering adoration to Jesus, the homage of their hearts. Like the ancient Hebrews who left Egypt in order to worship, the travails and travels of life are saturated with the desire to offer ourselves in praise. This is the Eucharist, a manifestation of our eternal destination.

When the Magi arrive at their destination, they respond to what they see with adoring hearts; they worship.

Eucharistic Encounter: Upside Down, Inside Out

“And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way” (Mt 2:12).

The encounter with Christ transfigured the Magi; even the undertow of sleep was infused with wisdom. They could now trust the interior life; it had been restored by their encounter and adoration. In dreaming, external realities are interpreted in a deeper presentation. Dreaming is an intimate form, the most interior knowledge. The dream directs the Magi safely home. They no longer trust Herod and the experts. Notice that they enter the home of Jesus but are still destined to return to their home! They have a purpose in the east that only they can actualize. They have a home to make, renewed as they are by the journey.

Epiphany invites us to go to our homes differently; to strike out anew, to take a different tack, to explore another way . . . home. Advent prepares us for Christmas. Christmas is God’s question to us, Will you come to me? Epiphany is the deep encounter with the many doors (and windows) that make Christ manifest. Our lives will be turned upside down, and living out of the intimacy of the Eucharist, inside out. Are these scary things, assuredly? But they may be just what Christ is calling us toward, to get home by another way. 



EUCHARIST: LIVING & EVANGELIZING

Muslims, Mary and Fatima

by James H. Kroeger, MM

Can Mary, Our Lady of Fatima, be the bridge between Muslims and Christians?

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Catholics reverence Mary under many titles, one of which is Our Lady of Fatima. In the very name of the place in Portugal where Mary appeared six times to three shepherd children between May 13 and October 13, 1917, one discovers a unique Muslim-Christian bond. It all revolves around an interesting historical fact about which most Catholics have little or no knowledge.

Historical Background

It is a fact of history that the Muslims occupied the Iberian Peninsula, which includes Portugal and Spain, for several centuries. The conquest began in 711 when Muslim forces invaded; within seven years, they had conquered the entire Iberian Peninsula. The area became one of the great Islamic civilizations, reaching its summit during the Umayyad Caliphate in the tenth century (929-1031). After that period, Muslim rule declined, ending in 1492 when Granada was captured (the same year Columbus reached America).

At the time of the *Reconquista*, when the Muslims were being driven out, the last Muslim ruler of the area had a beautiful daughter named Fatima. A young Catholic knight named Don Gonçalo Hermingues loved her, and for him, she stayed behind when the Muslims left; the Christian king agreed to their marriage on the condition that she would become a Christian. The husband's love for her was so strong that later he had the town's name changed to Fatima. Thus, the very place where Our Lady appeared in 1917 bears a historical connection to Fatima, a common Islamic name for women, since Fatima was the favorite daughter of the Islamic prophet Muhammad. When commenting on this fact, Bishop Fulton J. Sheen once noted: "I believe that the Blessed Virgin chose to be known as Our Lady of Fatima as a

pledge and sign of hope to the Muslim people.”

Fatima, Daughter of Muhammad

Fatima was the fourth and youngest daughter of Khadijah and Muhammad. Most sources agree that she was born somewhere around the year 605. Fatima is often referred to as *Fatima Al-Zahra*, the “Resplendent One.” She is the only one of Muhammad’s children to give him descendants. Sources assert that she was growing up at a very difficult time in the prophet’s life when he was facing much opposition from the Meccans who were hostile to his preaching of a new faith. Fatima was a sensitive child and was deeply affected by the persecutions her father endured. Yet she stood by him and defended him — even into her adulthood. She took special care of him after her mother Khadijah died.

In the year 622, Muhammad and his followers made the famous *Hijrah* (migration or journey) to the city of Yathrib, which Muhammad later renamed Medina, now a sacred place for Muslims. The *Hijrah* to Medina in 622 becomes Year One of the Islamic calendar. Fatima showed special care for her father during these times. Thus, she became known as *Umm Abiha* (the mother of her father); their relationship was close and deep. After the *Hijrah* to Medina, Fatima was married to Ali; they had four children. Ali is considered to be the first *imam*. Their children Hasan and Husayn became the second and third *imams*. Fatima was respected for several traits; she was known to be deeply spiritual, spending much of her time in prayer and reading the *Qur’an*.

In the year 632 CE, after completing his final *hajj* (pilgrimage) the prophet Muhammad died. Fatima herself died six months later at the age of 29. Of his daughter Fatima, Muhammad had said: “She has the highest place in heaven after the Virgin Mary.” These few historical details provide the background to the fact that many Muslims choose to name their daughters Fatima.

Parallels in Faith

Emerging from our Catholic love and reverence for Mary, known as Our Lady of Fatima, and Fatima’s Islamic roots, Catholics should be delighted to discover how much Christians and Muslims have in common. Reverence for Mary is a dominant element of Muslim-Christian mutuality, a possible source of unity, and a key for superseding hostilities.



Listen to the words of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) on the proper attitude of Catholics toward their Muslim neighbors: "Although in the course of the centuries, many quarrels and hostilities have arisen between Christians and Muslims, this most sacred synod urges all to forget the past and to strive sincerely for mutual understanding. On behalf of all humanity, let them make common cause of safeguarding and fostering social justice, moral values, peace, and freedom" (*Nostra Aetate* [NA], 3).

Most Christians are unaware of the reverence that Muslims have for Mary. Her name *Maryam* appears explicitly in the *Qur'an* 34 times; no other woman's name is mentioned in the *Qur'an*, not even that of Fatima. In 24 of these references, *Maryam* is identified as the mother of Jesus (*'Isā*). One chapter of the *Qur'an* (*Sura* 19) is entitled "Maryam" and narrates events of the annunciation and Jesus' birth. In addition, Muslims call Mary *Sitti Maryam*; *Sitti* is a term of endearment because of her privilege to be the mother of the prophet *'Isā*.

Muhammad's attitude toward Mary was always reverent and respectful. He spoke of her as a sign (*ayat*) for all creation and a model (*mathal*) for all believers. As the *Qur'an* notes (66:12), "she put her trust in the words of her Lord and believed in his Scriptures." The prophet of Mecca saw Mary as a sign and model because she truly submitted (*Islam*) to the will of Allah/God. This same virtue of Mary is recorded by Saint Luke: "Mary said: I am the servant of the Lord. Let it be done to me as you say" (1:38).

Another Marian parallel is found in both the Islamic and Christian faiths: Mary has a special dignity as one favored by God. The *Qur'an* (3:42) says: "Allah has chosen you, and made you pure, and exalted you above all women"; the Gospel of Luke (1:28, 42) states: "Hail, full of grace . . . blessed are you among women."

Muslim-Christian Mutual Respect

The Catholic Church sought to promote a new vision of human relationships at the Second Vatican Council. We read in its documents: "Upon the Muslims, too, the Church looks with esteem" (NA, 3). Yes, "the plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator. In the first place among these are the Muslims, who, professing to hold the faith of Abraham, along with us adore the one and merciful God, who on the last day will judge humanity" (*Lumen Gentium*, 16).

Many Catholics will no doubt be surprised at the words of Vatican II which elaborate Muslim-Christian similarities: Muslims “adore one God, living and enduring, merciful and all-powerful, Maker of heaven and earth and Speaker to all. They strive to submit wholeheartedly even to his inscrutable decrees, just as did Abraham, with whom the Islamic faith is pleased to associate itself. Though they do not acknowledge Jesus as God, they revere him as a prophet. *They also honor Mary, his Virgin Mother; at times, they call on her, too, with devotion.* In addition, they await the day of judgment when God will give each one his due after raising him up. Consequently, they prize the moral life and give worship to God especially through prayer, almsgiving, and fasting” [emphasis added] (NA, 3).

Vision of Vatican II

Again, most Catholics are unaware that the Second Vatican Council produced one entire document on approaches to other faith traditions, *Nostra Aetate*, the Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Other Religions. Although the shortest document of the council, it has had a wide-ranging impact on the life of the Church, especially in her relations with the followers of other living faiths (e.g., Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism). This is particularly true in Asia, where less than three percent of Asia’s more than four billion people are Christian.

Reverence for Mary is a dominant element of Muslim-Christian mutuality, a possible source of unity, and a key for superseding hostilities.

Nostra Aetate (“in our time”) transformed the Church’s view and relationship with other religions. NA asserts: “The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions. She regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and life, those precepts and teachings . . . [which] often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all people” (NA, 2).

“The Church, therefore, exhorts her children, that through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions, . . . they recognize, preserve, and promote the good things, spiritual and moral, as well as the socio-cultural values found among these people” (NA, 2).



Interfaith Dialogue and Service

A popular expression to capture all these attitudes and initiatives is termed “interreligious dialogue.” A similar term, perhaps more accurate, is “interfaith dialogue.” All these efforts to build fraternal relationships and foster communication are anchored in people’s faith. Authentic dialogue is much more than tactics or strategies for community management or the resolution of social tensions and problems.

Interfaith dialogue moves beyond discussion (“dialogue”) about religious beliefs and practices; it is not focused on a comparative study of religions. Beyond mere words, interfaith dialogue means entering another’s experience of God; it demands a growth in faith and a conversion to a deeper religious encounter with one’s God. Thus, dialogue is always “faith-based,” and from this perspective, people will more readily collaborate to address social questions, authentic human development, and the freedom of religious practice.

Dialogue does not happen between religious systems (e.g., Islam and Christianity) or tenets of religious belief and dogma. Essentially, dialogue occurs between persons and among communities; dialogue is people-centered and community-oriented. In a word, dialogue is based on the personal “God-experience” of the participants, be they Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, or Hindu.

Today there are more Muslims worldwide than Catholics: approximate percentages of world religious population (2012 estimates) are Catholics (16.10%), Muslims (22.32%), and Christians [total] (31.50%). In this context, a very helpful guideline for Christians can be found in the scripture passage of 1 Peter 3:15-16: “Reverence the Lord Christ in your hearts and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you have, but give it with courtesy and respect and with a clear conscience.” Indeed, the passage emphasizes both one’s love and fidelity to Christ, the source of hope, as well as a courteous, respectful witnessing of one’s faith before others.

When Pope John Paul II visited the Philippines in February 1981, he spoke some challenging words that promote interfaith respect, dialogue, and service. “Christians will, moreover, join hands with all men and women of good will who share a belief in the inestimable dignity of each human person. They will work together to bring about a more just and peaceful society in which the poor will be the first to be served.”

An Inspiring Encounter

A few years ago, while I was waiting in a Manila office before formal business hours, I found myself in a fascinating conversation with a charming young lady. Although presently employed in Manila, she originates from Jolo, southern Philippines. In the course of our friendly chat, she proudly told me how her name “Mary Ann” reflects her family, which is part Muslim and part Christian.

She narrated her background: “When my parents were choosing my name, it was my Muslim grandfather who insisted on ‘Mary’ because of his admiration for Mary, the mother of Jesus (*‘Isā*) the prophet. Furthermore, he urged that my second name be ‘Ann’ in honor of Mary’s mother. Thus, while acceding to my parents’ decision that I would be baptized a Christian, he believed that my Muslim heritage would not be lost because of the name he had chosen for me.” She concluded her story: “I’m very happy that my own name symbolizes who I am — both Christian and Muslim.”

Nuestra Señora

A second story illustrates the reverence that Muslims in Mindanao, southern Philippines, have for Mary. In Zamboanga, a Muslim high school student explained to his Jesuit teacher why he had missed a day of class: “Yesterday was the fiesta of the Virgin Mary, Nuestra Señora del Pilar. I visited her shrine at Fort Pilar to pray and ask for her help.”

The prophet of Mecca saw Mary as a sign and model because she truly submitted (Islam) to the will of Allah/God.

For Christians and many Muslims of Zamboanga, the Virgin Mary symbolizes their city’s culture, history, and destiny. A legend exists which says that the city will be destroyed if its people ever stop praying to Our Lady of Pilar, a devotion which, in Zamboanga, dates back to the early 1700s. Many devout Muslims from the area are known to implore Mary’s special protection — particularly in difficult times or before they begin their pilgrimage (*hajj*) to Mecca.

Nuestra Señora del Pilar is the principal shrine of Mary in all of Mindanao. It is one of the few Marian shrines that is not located inside



a church; on the wall of the city's old Spanish-built fort is a picture of Our Lady appearing to Saint James the Apostle. The shrine's outdoor location makes it accessible to Muslims and Christians alike.

In Zamboanga itself, the Feast of Pilar (October 12) is a day when a remarkable spirit of unity and community is manifested. It is observed that some Muslims join the celebration and even light candles as an offering at the shrine. Although there are clear historical and dogmatic divergences between Muslims and Christians, a perceptive Zamboangueno has commented: "What is significant about this particular event is the fact that the negative experience that Muslims and Christians associate with the colonial fort has taken on new meaning; a positive level of relationship is being born, shared, and lived. . . . The friendship generated by the feast of the Virgin of Pilar remains an undiscovered miracle." Can Mary's shrine be an omen of continued Muslim-Christian respect, cooperation, and fraternity?

I Will Ask Allah

Permit one more narrative of a personal encounter that reveals the deep faith of Muslims. Over 30 years ago, while I was a professor at the Regional Major Seminary in Davao City, southern Philippines, I received an emergency phone call in the early morning informing me that my younger sister in the United States had been in a serious automobile accident involving a truck. Her injuries were life-threatening and the next 48 hours would be critical. I immediately told the sad news to my fellow faculty members at the seminary; we prayed for my sister during the morning Mass. It wasn't long before everyone, including the kitchen staff, had heard the news.

When I finished teaching my two morning classes, I was surprised to see Utol waiting for me outside the classroom. Well known to all, Utol served as our "fish-supplier," personally delivering quality fresh fish three times a week. Utol lived in a small Muslim coastal village near the seminary. In the early morning, he would collect the evening catch from his Muslim neighbors and distribute the fish to several regular customers, including the seminary. Utol may have finished only one or two grades of school and couldn't read or write well. After years of laboring in the tropical sun, his complexion was very dark. Too poor to afford a dentist, he was missing several teeth. His hands were callused and scarred from years of fishing.

Utol began speaking to me in Cebuano, the local language: “The cooks in the kitchen told me what happened to your sister. I am so sorry to hear the sad news.” I replied: “Thank you very much for your concern and expression of sympathy. You are very thoughtful; you waited for me for nearly two hours. You should be at home sleeping, as I’m sure you were up all night fishing.”

Utol continued, “I want to tell you that I will pray to Allah for your sister’s recovery. Allah will help her, I am sure.” “Thank you, thank you,” I said, holding back my tears. As Utol turned to go, he assured me, “With Allah, all will be okay.”

Interfaith dialogue means entering another’s experience of God; it demands a growth in faith and a conversion to a deeper religious encounter with one’s God.

I was deeply moved. What faith! What trust in divine providence! What beautiful words, coming from the mouth of a man who obviously prays! And, yes, my younger sister is still alive today, over 30 years later.

Concluding Reflection

To be sure, Christians and Muslims are not in total agreement in many aspects of faith and doctrine, including their understanding and beliefs about Mary. Yet this should not prevent them from nurturing a deep and mutual reverence for Mary as “Our Lady” (*Sayidat*). Beginning with the common elements noted earlier, these two great monotheistic religions can grow closer together. Mary can be one bridge to closer fellowship.

Can Mary become the “Common *Kaa’ba*” where Muslims and Christians clasp each other’s hand in worship of the one, true God? What marvels will Mary, Our Lady of Fatima, inspire as Christians and Muslims strive to follow the difficult path of mutual respect and harmony?

United in our love for Mary, together we can say: Our Lady of Fatima, pray for all of us, your children — Muslims and Christians alike! 



EUCCHARISTIC TEACHINGS

The Oxford Movement, Edward Bouverie Pusey, and the Eucharist

by Owen F. Cummings

John Henry Newman and Edward Pusey in the nineteenth century and Geoffrey Rowell in the twentieth stand as great ecumenical witnesses.

Deacon Owen F. Cummings, a frequent contributor to *Emmanuel*, is the academic dean and Regents' Professor of Theology at Mount Angel Seminary in Saint Benedict, Oregon.

"Pusey's sacramental mysticism sometimes drew near to ecstasy as he used biblical imagery to tell of dying and rising with Christ in baptism and continuing in relationship with that body of Christ through the Eucharist." (Frederick H. Borsch.¹)

The Oxford Movement

In the mid-nineteenth century, from 1833 to 1845, there took place a renewal movement within the Church of England centered on Oxford and its university, hence the term "the Oxford Movement." For more than the first decade of its existence, the movement focused on Tracts, pamphlets, and larger theological works, giving rise to the members of the movement becoming known as "Tractarians." The purpose of the movement was to restore those Catholic elements of theology and liturgy exemplified especially by the fathers of the church and by the Caroline Divines of the seventeenth century.²

The question may be asked, "Why the Oxford Movement, and why then?" The answer is complex. Some would argue with much supporting evidence that there was a decline of Church life in England and, moreover, a decline that was exacerbated by the spread of "liberal" movements in theology.

At the same time, it needs to be asserted that the "high" liturgical and sacramental theology, spirituality, and devotion of the Oxford Movement had many antecedents in the Anglican tradition before them and was never lost from the tradition. "If we look at the three main themes or facets of Tractarianism — the doctrine of the Church; its apostolicity,

unity, independence, and relation to the state; the rule of faith, role of tradition and the fathers; and finally, spirituality, and its different elements, along with sacramentalism and the symbolic significance of rite and ceremony — we can find ample evidence of renewal and resurgence in each, within the high Church tradition in the forty or fifty years preceding the dawn of the movement.”³ This fine summary by Peter Nockles is amply verified in the literature referred to in his essay.

The difference between these high Church emphases and the re-Catholicizing elements of the nineteenth century Oxford Movement and its Tracts is twofold: first, the latter had a carefully-structured system for the widespread dissemination of its ideas; second, the degree and length to which some of the Tractarians went was far beyond the horizon of their forebears, with some of their prominent leaders going over to Rome and many others giving institutional expression to Catholic elements of ritual and devotion in their local Church of England parishes.

At another level, the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 was feared by some to occasion a flood of movement from the Anglican Communion to the Roman Catholic Church. Added to this was the British government’s insistence on suppressing ten Anglican Irish bishoprics, bishoprics that made no sense in a predominantly Catholic country. This led the priest-theologian-poet John Keble to deliver his famous sermon in the university church in Oxford entitled “National Apostasy” on July 14, 1833. This sermon is generally regarded as the beginning of the Oxford Movement. Its leaders, apart from Keble himself, were John Henry Newman and his close friend Edward Bouverie Pusey, the major focus of this essay.

Tracts for the Times

In direct and clear opposition to what was seen as the government’s inappropriate meddling in the Church in suppressing bishoprics in Ireland, the movement emphasized the Church of England as a divine institution. Furthermore, it underscored the episcopal doctrine of “apostolic succession,” thus recognizing the descent of the bishops from the twelve apostles and so distancing them from any degree of government interference. These aims began to take shape through what became known as the “Tracts for the Times,” a series of theological pamphlets begun by John Henry Newman in 1833.

As the Tracts continued to be developed, published, and spread throughout the country, there gradually arose within the movement two distinct paths, one that grew more and more sympathetic to Rome and



the other that looked to theological, liturgical, and devotional renewal within the Church of England. Some members of the movement “swam the Tiber,” that is to say, went over to Rome, but the majority remained in the Church of England attempting to renew their Church from within.

In 1841, Newman published the famous “Tract 90,” in which he tried to establish consonance between the Anglican Thirty-nine Articles — the set of doctrinal formulas regarded as definitive by the Church of England — and Roman Catholic theology. The tract was condemned by many Anglican bishops, and in 1842, Newman retired to Littlemore, his little community center just outside Oxford at that time. After a long and difficult personal struggle, Newman was received into the Catholic Church by the missionary Italian Passionist priest, Blessed Dominic Barberi, on October 8, 1845.

Newman returned briefly to Oxford in 1846 to pack his things. A number of his friends came to see him, to make their farewells, including his very close friend Edward Pusey. Meriol Trevor writes: “Pusey, last of all, late at night. Newman left Oxford next morning at half-past eight and did not see it again, except from the train, for thirty-two years.”⁴ All considered, Newman had spent 25 years in his beloved Oxford, and he would not see Edward Bouverie Pusey again until they were both old men. Pusey did not follow Newman into the Catholic Church.

Edward Bouverie Pusey (1800-1882)

Edward Bouverie Pusey was educated at Eton College, and then from 1819 at Christ Church Oxford, going on to become a Fellow of Oriel College, placing him in the company of John Keble and John Henry Newman, also Fellows of Oriel College, Oxford, in 1823. Newman describes his first meeting with Pusey in these words: “His light, curly head of hair was damp with the cold water which his headaches made necessary for comfort; he walked fast with a young manner of carrying himself and stood rather bowed, looking up from under his eyebrows, his shoulders rounded, and his bachelor’s gown not buttoned at the elbow but hanging loose over his wrists. His countenance was very sweet, and he spoke little.”⁵

In 1825, Pusey spent some time studying theology and Oriental languages at the German universities of Göttingen and Berlin, something he was encouraged to do by his tutor, the Regius Professor of Divinity (and later bishop of Oxford) Charles Lloyd. At Göttingen, he attended the

lectures of the Orientalist and Old Testament scholar Johann Gottfried Eichhorn (1750-1827) and at Berlin, he got to know systematic theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) and the patristic scholar Johann Neander (1789-1850).

Schleiermacher seems to have had a particular influence on Pusey. This made him “one of the few English theologians to have firsthand acquaintance with German theological thought.”⁶ The year 1826 saw Pusey yet again visiting Germany, mastering other Semitic languages. In 1828, he was ordained a priest in the Church of England and was also appointed (with the support once more of Charles Lloyd) Regius Professor of Hebrew and canon of Christ Church. Although he was appreciative of German theology, Pusey criticized German scholars for treating Scripture less as the living word of God and more as “a dead repository of barren technicalities.”⁷

Without leaving the Church of England, Pusey was a strong supporter of the Oxford Movement.

Once the Oxford Movement got going, Pusey found himself as a strong supporter. He wrote Tract 18, “Thoughts on the Benefits of the System of Fasting Enjoined by Our Church,” published in 1834. In 1836, he published three more Tracts, 67-69, on “Scriptural Use of Holy Baptism,” really three parts of one volume running to some 400 pages. In this volume, he argued against a very widespread and popular point of view that communion with God took place through many and varied individual practices such as faith, prayer, and contemplation.

Pusey argued that the Church and the sacraments are “the ordained and direct visible means of conveying to the soul what is in itself supernatural and unseen.”⁸ His argument rested on his acquaintance with early Christian liturgies as well as patristic theology. These powerful sources deepened his understanding of salvation as a participation in the divine nature. His very substantial contributions moved the Tracts on from being relatively short theological pamphlets to more academic volumes. Pusey’s interest in patristic theology inspired his support for the *Library of the Fathers*. Newman’s very close friend Hurrell Froude said of Pusey that he was “so uncommonly learned that it is impossible to keep pace with him.”⁹

Pusey’s high theology of the sacraments was matched by an equally



high theology of Scripture. The Old and New Testaments were not to be understood as a set of texts waiting to be analyzed and taken apart by Semitic and Greek philologists, the “dead repository of barren technicalities.” From the fathers and their understanding of allegory and typology, he understood Scripture as the living word of God to humankind. In many ways, he anticipated the contemporary interest in revisiting patristic commentaries on Holy Scripture. Pusey’s position is well summarized by Geoffrey Rowell in these words: “Pusey was a prime mover in making the works of the fathers more widely known, emphasizing the patristic interpretation of Scripture as setting out ‘ancient Catholic truth’ in contrast to ‘modern private opinions.’”¹⁰

In 1828, Pusey married Maria Catherine Barker, and they had a son and three daughters. Pusey’s wife died in 1839, and this left him devastated. Some years later, Pusey asked John Keble to hear his confession and in that regard wrote to him as follows: “My dear wife’s illness first brought to me the review of my past life, how amid special mercies and guardianship of God I am scarred all over and seamed with sin, so that I am a monster to myself; I loathe myself; I can feel myself only like one covered with leprosy from head to foot. . . . I am so shocked at myself that I dare not lay my wounds bare to anyone. . . .”¹¹

By all accounts, Pusey was a very saintly churchman. What we hear in these excessively expressed sentiments is his awful grief at his wife’s death allied to a powerful sense of God’s presence in which utmost unworthiness becomes the natural sense of the soul. Keble was very kind and gentle with Pusey and advised him not to be too hard on himself and to modify some of his austerities.

The Eucharist

After Newman withdrew from the Oxford Movement, the leadership passed to Pusey. In 1843, he preached a sermon at the University Church in Oxford, “The Holy Eucharist, a Comfort to the Penitent,” a sermon that was very supportive of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. The sermon was condemned by the vice-chancellor of Oxford and various theologians and Pusey was consequently barred from preaching in the university church for two years. Nevertheless, the sermon sold 18,000 copies. There was a genuine receptivity in the Church of England to his strongly traditional and Catholic Eucharistic theology.

This Eucharistic theology flows from the profoundly incarnational

Christology of the patristic era. For Pusey, reflecting patristic Christology, “Christ took our nature into himself so that in him it is In-Godded, Deitate.”¹² The language “In-Godded, Deitate” is a little cumbersome and may sound strange to modern ears. But it is exactly accurate. The mystery of Christ’s incarnation flows into the mystery of Christ’s Eucharistic presence.

The mystery of Christ’s incarnation flows into the mystery of Christ’s Eucharistic presence.

If we may describe this as a vertical theology of Eucharistic presence, it must also be insisted that Pusey had a horizontal theology of Eucharistic presence also. The vertical and the horizontal may be distinguished but never separated for him. In a magnificent passage that sounds very like Saint John Chrysostom, we find his vertical and horizontal Eucharistic theology laid out with great clarity: “If we would see him in his sacraments, we must see him also wherever he has declared himself to be, and especially in his poor. . . . Real love to Christ must issue in love to all who are Christ’s, and real love to Christ’s poor must issue in self-denying acts of love towards them. Casual almsgiving is not Christian charity . . . the poor, rich in faith, have been the converters of the world; and we. . . , if we are wise, must seek to be like them, to empty ourselves, at least, of our abundance; to empty ourselves rather of our self-conceit, our notions of station, our costliness of dress, our jewelry, our luxuries, our self-love, even as he . . . emptied himself of the glory which he had with the Father, the brightness of his majesty, the worship of the hosts of heaven, and made himself poor, to make us rich.”¹³

In another sermon, we see his vertical Eucharistic theology most beautifully expressed: “We could not be united to (God) save by his communicating himself to us. This he willed to do by indwelling in us through his Spirit; by making us, through the sacrament of baptism, members of his Son; by giving us, through the Holy Eucharist, not in any carnal way, but really and spiritually, the flesh and blood of the incarnate Son, whereby ‘he dwelleth in us, and we in him; he is one with us, and we with him.’”¹⁴

It comes as no surprise then that Pusey was an ardent promoter of more frequent celebrations of the Eucharist. In Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, where he was a canon, there was but a monthly



pattern for the celebration of the Eucharist. At the same time, Pusey rejected transubstantiation. His primary reason for this rejection is that he considered it a too “physical” and too “rational” approach to the mystery of the sacrament.

From a historical point of view, it may be the case that the term *transubstantiation* carried too much baggage and perhaps too little understanding with it in the post-Reformation era. However, it is clearly not the case that the rejection of the term for Pusey meant the rejection of the reality of Eucharistic presence. He referred to the Eucharistic presence of Christ as “sacramental, supernatural, mystical, ineffable, deifical.”¹⁵ With his strong sacramental awareness, Pusey was also a stout defender of the private confession of sin and of priestly absolution.

Pusey was an ardent promoter of more frequent celebrations of the Eucharist.

After a long life devoted to teaching and preaching and building up his beloved Church of England biblically and sacramentally and through the restoration of the religious life, Pusey died on September 16, 1882, and is buried in the nave of Christ Church Cathedral in Oxford, where he had served for decades.

Conclusion

This little essay was occasioned by the death of Geoffrey Rowell on June 11, 2017. He taught theology at Oxford for many years and then served his Anglican Communion as bishop. He was immensely committed to ecumenism and, in that regard, published and edited a number of books given over to the Oxford Movement, as part of his contribution to the establishment of greater Christian unity. Blessed John Henry Newman and Edward Pusey in the nineteenth century and Geoffrey Rowell in the twentieth stand as great ecumenical witnesses. Remembering them invites us to draw closer to the ecumenical cause.



Notes

¹ Frederick H. Borsch, “Ye Shall Be Holy: Reflections on the Spirituality of the Oxford Movement,” in Geoffrey Rowell, ed., *Tradition Renewed* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock,

1986), 70.

² See the fine essay by Alf Härdelin, “The Sacraments in the Tractarian Spiritual Universe,” in Geoffrey Rowell, ed., *Tradition Renewed* (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1986), 78-95.

³ Peter Nockles, “The Oxford Movement: Historical Background 1780-1833,” in Geoffrey Rowell, *Tradition Renewed: The Oxford Movement Conference Papers* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1986), 26. The original publication was London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1986.

⁴ Meriol Trevor, *Newman’s Journey* (London: Collins, 1974), 118.

⁵ Henry Tristram, ed., *John Henry Newman, Autobiographical Writings* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1956), 74.

⁶ Geoffrey Rowell, *The Vision Glorious* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 72.

⁷ Cited in Geoffrey Rowell, *The Vision Glorious*, 77.

⁸ Cited in Geoffrey Rowell, *The Vision Glorious*, 75.

⁹ Cited in Geoffrey Rowell, *The Vision Glorious*, 74.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 78.

¹¹ Cited in Geoffrey Rowell, *The Vision Glorious*, 79-80.

¹² Cited in Geoffrey Rowell, *The Vision Glorious*, 82.

¹³ Edward B. Pusey, *Sermons During the Season from Advent to Whitsuntide* (London: Forgotten Books, 2016), 58-59. The original date of publication was 1848.

¹⁴ E. B. Pusey, *Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist*, (Los Angeles: Hard Press Publishing, 2015), 9-10. Original publication was 1853.

¹⁵ These terms may be found in Geoffrey Rowell, *The Vision Glorious*, 88-89.

In Christ’s Peace Deceased Members

Father Frederico Joseph G. Ablog SSS
Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament

Since its inception, *Emmanuel* has published a list of deceased members of the Priests’ Eucharistic League, remembering those who have served the church generously and faithfully and have passed into the promised eternal life. Priests in the Eucharistic League whose names begin with A, B, C, D, and E are asked to celebrate Mass for deceased priests during January and February.



EUCCHARISTIC TEACHINGS

Revisiting Roger Haight

by David H. Powell

A noted religious educator invites us to take a new look at the work and methodology of a prominent American theologian.

David H. Powell is a religious educator in New York City who studied theology at the University of Innsbruck in Austria and earned his master's degree in that field from Fordham University. In addition to a long career in high school catechesis, he is an experienced parish religious education director who has conducted RCIA, confirmation preparation, and Scripture study programs.

She was a relatively serious student compared to the other second-semester seniors a few years ago in my religion class. From time to time, she would even begin the class with some outlandish statement to show that science had proven there was no more need for belief in God (as if I had never heard this before).

Looking back on it, I realize now that I was not willing to see that, for this 17-year-old, "religious symbols and their theological rationales no longer made sense and the salvation they once mediated now seemed threatened by a lack of coherence with other experience. New knowledge and the relentless quest of science to dispel sheer ignorance . . . turn what appeared to be simple religious beliefs into sheer nonsense." As for myself, I began to understand that "in the face of new experience and knowledge, theology always seems to be retreating and marshaling a new defense before retreating again." I only came upon these sentences a few months ago from Roger Haight's *Dynamics of Theology* and as I write them now, I am stunned by their insight into the situation just described.

American theologian Roger Haight, SJ, has been called "a theological prophet for our time" on the level of Rahner, Congar, and de Lubac, just in the range of his work (he has specialized in fundamental theology, Christology, and ecclesiology), but also in the depth of his theological acumen.

In the course of writing "The Trinity and the Gospel of John" (*Emmanuel*, May 2015), I found myself struggling with Haight's theology as much as I had with Rahner's back in my seminary days. Just as my struggle

with Rahner became so formative in the early stages of my catechetical career, so my struggles with the theology of Roger Haight have had a profound impact upon me in this late stage of my career.

Theological Symbolism

One of my first areas of struggle was with Haight's approach to theological symbolism. I will always remember a tirade of the Dutch theologian Piet Fransens about the reality and depth of the symbolism of the union of all humankind in the opening and closing ceremonies of the Olympics, those who would call these "just symbols."

So when I came upon Haight's approach to symbolism, I figured this was something with which I was very familiar until the following statements in *Dynamics of Theology* began to shake me up: "All symbols of God are inadequate." "Symbolic statements about God cannot be translated into non-symbolic propositions." "Symbolic theological statements cannot function as objective premises for deductive inferential reasoning."

It seemed as if Haight was dismissing objective knowledge about God. Then I remembered Thomas Aquinas' "doctrine of analogy" which posits that anything we say about God we have to deny at the same time due to the limitations of human language.

For example, the New Testament says that God is love, but not in the way human beings conceptualize love because God is totally beyond the human. Haight puts it more complexly when he points out that "one affirms what is known about God from the data of this world, and then one denies its applicability in precisely the symbolic terms by which God is known, only then to reaffirm this mediated knowledge with a mysterious higher meaning."

It began to dawn on me that Haight was warning all of us that we cannot translate "objective statements about God" into "objective information about God" as if we were dealing here with a positive science. Symbolic interpretation of the reality of God involves what Haight calls dialectical reasoning: a tension between what we know and what we don't.

In *Jesus Symbol of God*, his later work, he cites Cardinal Avery Dulles in this regard when he writes, "The kind of knowledge mediated by symbols may be called engaged participatory knowledge." In applying this to God as creator, Haight says, "God is the creator of all things."



This symbol expresses the immanence and transcendence of God. The epistemology begins with the experience of one's own being as created . . . one encounters through the symbol 'Creator God' the one upon whom one's own being depends and subsists."

Now I don't know how exactly I would have communicated this to the senior referred to earlier if I had been more familiar at that time with Haight's ideas. I might have invited her to reflect on the experience of finitude and the possibility of Being beyond finitude, and then tried to encourage her to check that out in her own experience. It would have been a gentle invitation to appreciate the religious symbolism of creation, instead of an old-fashioned debate between student and teacher.

My struggles with Haight's theology of symbolism bore fruit in my confirmation catechesis with eighth graders over the past two years. I found myself welcoming their questions and challenges on a much deeper level, allowing them, as Dulles wrote in *Theological Studies* 1980 (quoted by Haight), to "become experientially conscious of what is mediated by the symbols."

I have found that students' deeper education in the complexities of evolution has made them more open to the sophisticated, harmonious approach to science and religion that has developed in the new millennium.

For example, in the recent landmark work by Brian Thomas Swimme and Mary Evelyn Tucker, *Journey of the Universe*, the authors state: "Today we know what no previous generation knew: the history of the universe and the unfolding of life on earth through the astonishing achievements of scientists worldwide . . . and yet we thirst for answers to questions that have haunted humanity from the very beginning: What is our place in the fourteen-billion-year history of the universe? How do we connect to the intricate web of life on earth?"

Theologians like Elizabeth Johnson and Roger Haight have developed more scientifically sophisticated approaches to the theology of creation which have allowed me much greater flexibility in dealing with the age-old questions regarding the creation accounts in the book of Genesis.

Deeper Questions

An even greater and more rewarding challenge was to teach eighth graders about the humanity and divinity of Christ. Haight argues for beginning with the scriptural portrayal of Jesus of Nazareth rather than with doctrinal definitions. Nowadays much preaching and teaching begin so emphatically with the reaffirmation of traditional doctrinal definitions about the divinity of Christ that they tend to neglect the scriptural starting-point.

I find that students generally have difficulty accepting the basic humanity of Jesus as expressed so succinctly in Hebrews 4:15, that he was “like us in all things except sin.” This touches on specific areas such as his growth in knowledge, his human and affective development, his experience of rejection and misunderstanding even by those closest to him, and his relationships. We had always assumed that the divinity of Jesus shot right through his humanity, giving him superhuman knowledge even as a child.

Symbolic interpretation of the reality of God involves dialectical reasoning: a tension between what we know and what we don't.

Haight's approach has been helpful to me when talking about the humanity and divinity of Jesus. Many theologians have influenced my thinking and teaching over the years, but his approach has broadened my perspective, deepened my faith, and made a profound contribution to my catechesis.

The title *Jesus Symbol of God* summarizes Church teaching from the time of the councils of Nicaea and Chalcedon. Jesus of Nazareth was so filled with the power of God throughout his life, death, and resurrection that, with the subsequent outpouring of the Spirit upon his followers, they came to be filled with a faith that Jesus could truly be called God in human form, in other words, Jesus is the living sign of the presence of God among us in his very self.

The challenge here is to appreciate the overall limitations of human language in general and the allegorical, analogous, and symbolic nature of theological language in particular. Haight painstakingly



shows in his analysis of the conciliar definitions that they were formulated not just to respond to heresies of their time but also to reflect the prevalent epistemology and philosophy of the era.

As a result of the above, I was inspired one day to allow three small groups of relatively bright eighth-grade students to formulate their own understanding of the humanity and divinity of Jesus after I had introduced the topic extensively the week before.

One student was quite pleased with her own “definition”: “Jesus is the soul of God in a human.” While her language is not quite that of the *Catechism*, she and the others engaged in the process to re-express ancient truths in language more suitable for our time, to paraphrase Saint John XXIII’s rationale for convening the Second Vatican Council.

Over the past three years in working with these students, I have challenged them to reorient their somewhat “magical” thinking about Jesus to a deeper appreciation of his humanity, and then to reflect on how God was at work in his teaching and healing. Watching a clip from the film *Jesus of Nazareth* enabled them to visualize the power of God at work in Jesus. I wanted to help them appreciate the depths of the Church’s doctrine of the incarnation by engaging the Scripture-based experience of his humanity completely imbued with and penetrated by the power of God.

In turn, I was moved even more deeply by the scriptural invitation to become more like Jesus and to allow his living memory and example to transform my life, especially in and through the celebration of the Eucharist.

Eucharistic Insights

Having been challenged at first and even threatened by Haight’s analysis of the supra-historical reality of the resurrection, I slowly began to appreciate his emphasis on the growth of the early Church’s interpretation of the resurrection in connection with their memory of “all the things I spoke about with you while I was still with you” (Lk 24:44).

Especially during the Easter season, as I would listen to the resurrection narratives in a liturgical context, I would realize afterward that I was hearing the message of the words (and of Jesus the Word) at a much deeper level. Everything I had learned over the years about the non-

physicality of the resurrected body and about the mystical dimension of the resurrection appearances had been purified and broadened. What I had believed for years now came much more alive for me.

It is precisely in the celebration of the Eucharist that we experience the power of the risen Christ, just as did the early Christians on the road to Emmaus. When the Eucharist is reverently and joyously celebrated, do not our hearts also burn within us as we have the Scriptures opened up to us and we eat the bread broken for us?

It is in the Eucharist that we experience the power of the risen Christ, just as did the early Christians on the road to Emmaus.

Is not all theological reflection on the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth rooted in the liturgical expression of it? Take for example the beautiful ancient liturgical hymn in Philippians 2:5-11 of Christ emptying himself and that other classic liturgical hymn of the “cosmic Christ” in Colossians 1:15-20). Both became major sources for theological reflection on the preexistence of Christ.

Conclusion

I have discussed these main points of Haight’s theological approach in dynamic interconnection with each other so as to clarify his methodology and conclusions and avoid misconceptions. We have touched on his theological method and its application to many seemingly separate areas: God as Creator, Jesus’ humanity and divinity, the connection between the resurrection and the Eucharist and the Trinity.

Haight’s theology is much more of a “seamless garment” than I have indicated here. For example, his emphasis on theological language as symbolic and analogous allows him to avoid the quicksand of getting stuck in a literalistic approach to the issue of Jesus’ humanity and divinity. He presents the definitions of Nicaea and Chalcedon in such a nuanced and comprehensive fashion that I was challenged to move to the core of these teachings (and their contemporary relevance) while remaining respectful of their Greco-Roman philosophical language of nature, essence, substance, and person.

For example, if we use more contemporary language like “the Spirit fully



at work in Jesus as a human being,” we can more deeply appreciate the Trinitarian dimension of God’s presence in Jesus. We can also appreciate the more dynamically poetic imagery of the Last Supper Discourse (Jn 14-17). In these chapters, the Father, Son, and Spirit interact not as three ontological nouns but more like one verb in ongoing dynamic relationship with one another and in relationship with us.

Aspects of Haight’s approach and methodology have been critiqued by the Holy See. In the thirteenth century, Thomas Aquinas undertook the daunting task of re-expressing centuries-old Platonic Augustinian theology in the language of Aristotelian philosophy. The latter was just being reintroduced to the Western world through the Arab philosophers Averroes and Avicenna.

Aquinas’ approach and methodology were initially condemned by the ecclesiastical authorities of his time. Later, however, thanks to the University of Paris, open debate took place, including Thomas himself, which led to a deeper understanding of his philosophy and eventually to the publication of his classic five-volume work *Summa Theologica*. One can only hope that such open debate in theological and ecclesiastical circles will be not just be allowed but encouraged in this era of Pope Francis.

Haight’s recent works — *Christian Spirituality for Seekers*, *Spirituality Searching for Theology*, and *Jesus and Buddha* — bring to the fore the spiritual and ecumenical dimension of his theological reflection. In fact, my reading of his works the past few years went hand-in-hand with my exploration of Thomas Keating’s works on centering prayer. Like Haight, Keating stresses the connections of God’s revelation in other religions to the depths and riches of our Christian tradition.

Overall, my study of Haight penetrated my prayer (and vice versa) which, in turn, bore fruit in my catechizing. As one of my students, Annie, recently wrote toward the end of her confirmation preparation program: “The more questions I had and the more you allowed me to express them, the more I came to believe.” In her own way, she summed up just one of the contributions of Roger Haight to theology in our time.





EUCCHARISTIC SPIRITUALITY

The Seven Types of Faith

by Victor M. Parachin

What kind of faith does your life witness to?

For 16 long years, Mel Fisher, a Florida Keys treasure hunter, searched for the Spanish ship *Nuestra Señora de Atocha* which sank in 1622. It was filled with precious cargo (copper, silver, gold, gems, and jewelry) from Cartagena and Porto Bello in present-day Colombia and Panama, respectively, and Havana, Cuba, bound for Spain. The ship was named for the parish of Atocha in Madrid. Each day, he would send out search divers, encouraging them by saying, "Today's the day!" Often, he was unable to pay his workers, always promising them, however, to make good on what he owed them. Deeply in debt, he was pursued by collection agencies. To keep going, he and his family lived on a beat up, old, leaky houseboat. The search cost him the lives of his son and daughter-in-law who were lost at sea looking for the ship.

Nevertheless, Fisher just didn't give up. He continued to pursue persistently, never abandoning his dream or giving in to the many cynics and critics he faced. Finally, in 1985, his divers located the sunken ruins of the ship and for the next three decades, they would bring up treasures from the depths.

Fisher is an inspiring example of someone who exhibits *persevering faith*. It's the kind of faith described in the New Testament: "Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest if we do not give up" (Gal 6:9).

Faith is simply "confidence in God." Jesus reminds us that the quality of our living depends on the depth of our faith. "According to your faith will it be done to you," we are told in Matthew 9:29. The word *faith* can be viewed as an umbrella term under which there is a wide variety of expressions. Along with the persevering faith demonstrated by Mel Fisher, here are six other types of faith we can

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*.



tap into on our life journey.

Thankful Faith

This is faith that expresses gratitude for blessings received. Thankful faith can be seen in the apostle Paul who wrote to the church at Philippi: "It was kind of you to share in my distress. You sent me something for my needs not only once but more than once" (Phil 4:14, 16).

This same thankful faith is also present in a letter written by a vacationing couple to the manager of the hotel where they were guests: "Dear Sir, We just spent a two-week holiday in your hotel and wish to bring to your notice the friendliness, courtesy, and helpfulness of your reception staff, especially Claudia, without whose help we would certainly not have enjoyed our holiday so much. You are very fortunate to have staff of this caliber who advance the reputation of the hotel. Praise can also be given to the room service staff where our room was served to a high standard and the facilities were first class. All the facilities and the attitude of your staff point to a well-run hotel which we will recommend to any of our friends. There is no doubt that we will be coming back to stay at your hotel."

Courageous Faith

This is faith in the face of great danger or trial. It is the faith of David standing before the giant Goliath and saying, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel. This day the Lord will hand you over to me" (1 Sm 17:45-46).

This same faith was articulately spoken by Queen Elizabeth I. As the mighty Spanish Armada approached the shores of England in 1588 with plans to invade, Elizabeth met with the defending troops at Tilbury docks, courageously rallying them with these words: "I am come amongst you . . . at this time . . . being resolved, in the midst and heat of the battle, to live and die amongst you all; to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and my people, my honor and my blood, even in the dust. I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king. . . ."

Encouraging Faith

In the Letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul teaches us to reach out

and touch others “in accordance with the measure of faith that God has apportioned” (12:3). Then he adds, “If it is encouraging, let him encourage.”

Encouraging faith was conveyed by Carol Hamblet Adams during a time when her husband was hospitalized. While at his side, she learned from a nurse about another patient who was in the advanced stages of lung cancer. Yet every time he came to the hospital for treatment, he would visit with other cancer patients bringing them hope and encouragement. Hamblet Adams says she was so impressed by what she learned about him that she wrote him a letter letting him know that she was inspired by his strength and courage, that her own life was impacted by his actions.

Faith is simply “confidence in God.” Jesus reminds us that the quality of our living depends on the depth of our faith.

A few months later, Hamblet Adams received a phone call from the man’s wife who informed her that her husband had died. She wanted her to know that her letter had been read not only by her husband but by other family members as well. Additionally, she told her that “the only eulogy delivered at my husband’s service was your letter.” Carol Hamblet Adams says that she learned an invaluable lesson from that incident: “We should never hesitate to tell anyone who has touched our life that they have. We may never get the chance again.”

Confident Faith

“I will trust and not be afraid. The Lord is my strength” is a biblical example of confident faith. It can also be seen in people who boldly take on a challenge, seeing it through.

One who did this was the Argentinian Antonio Abertondo, who swam the English Channel in 1961. The waters of the channel are cold, rough, and highly unpredictable. Of the many who try to swim across, only a handful succeed. Abertondo was 42 when he swam from England to France.

Because of his age, most people thought it would be impossible. When he arrived on the French beach, he was greeted by friends who congratulated him for doing the unthinkable. He thanked them for



being there, took a five-minute coffee break, and said, “You haven’t seen the impossible yet.” Then he dove back into the channel waters and swam another 22 hours back to England. Abertondo became the first person to swim the English Channel *both* ways.

Forgiving Faith

This is faith strong and loving enough to forgive a wrong. It is exemplified, of course, by Jesus himself who, when he was being crucified, prayed for his tormentors, “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do” (Lk 23:34).

George Takei, the actor who appeared on the original television series *Star Trek*, was born into a Japanese American family. During World War II, he grew up in internment camps surrounded by barbed wire and machine guns. “A searchlight followed us on night runs to the latrine. After the war, my parents couldn’t find housing and I had a teacher who called me ‘little Jap boy,’” he recalls. In spite of the injustice and harsh treatment, Takei forgave all. “My parents taught me that being bitter only pickles the one that stews in the brine.” He found forgiving others to be personally “liberating.”

Hopeful Faith

The patriarch Abraham is described as having this kind of faith: “He believed, hoping against hope, that he would become ‘the father of many nations,’ according to what was said, ‘Thus shall your descendants be.’ He did not weaken in faith . . .” (Rom 4:18, 19). However challenging the circumstances may be, this faith maintains hope and overcomes despair.

Television news anchor George Stephanopoulos tells of being moved when he witnessed hopeful faith. At the time, he was spending Christmas distributing food and medicine in a refugee camp in the Sudan, which was in the midst of a famine. “Imagine an empty desert basin with several thousand people, all of whom had nothing. Across the plains, all I could see were the carcasses of cows and dried-up bushes.”

Yet two images were firmly etched in his mind. “The first was the commitment of relief workers who dedicated their lives to helping desperate people. When asked why they were there they would answer, ‘We can do something, so we will.’ The second image was in

the middle of the camp where Ethiopian refugees had constructed a small church made of sticks and cardboard. I saw the priest sweep out the 'sanctuary' in preparation for Christmas services. The people gathered to sing and pray. To celebrate, here in the midst of a hopeless situation, was one determined act of faith and hope."

Faith finds many and varied expressions.

Addendum

The prophet Micah exercised his ministry eight centuries before the coming of Christ. He was a contemporary of Isaiah. Unlike Isaiah, who was a native of the holy city Jerusalem, Micah was an outsider from the countryside, a controversial figure who condemned Judean leadership and critiqued the indulgence of the wealthy. His words continue to speak to our human reality, among them: "You have been told, O mortal, what is good, and what the Lord requires of you: only to do justice and to love goodness, and to walk humbly with your God" (Mi 6:8). Is this not faith?

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states: "Faith is a personal act — the free response of the human person to the initiative of God who reveals himself. But faith is not an isolated act. No one can believe alone, just as no one can live alone. You have not given yourself faith as you have not given yourself life. The believer has received faith from others and should hand it on to others. . . . Each believer is thus a link in the great chain of believers. I cannot believe without being carried by the faith of others, and by my faith, I help support others in their faith" (166).





EUCCHARISTIC SPIRITUALITY

Pondering the Parables: The Parable of the Wicked Tenants

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 parochial vicar of Saint Jean Baptiste Church in New York City. This series on the parables of Jesus originally appeared in the parish bulletin and is being serialized in *Emmanuel*.

This Parable of the Wicked Tenants (Mk 12:1-12) is actually a “hybrid,” a cross between a parable and an allegory. Though not all the details of the story have an inner meaning, many do reveal such a meaning, more than usual. This is so because Jesus was employing images, situations, and facts that were part and parcel of Jewish thought and experience.

The story that Jesus narrates concerns something that could well happen in the Palestine of his day. The country had much labor unrest and many absentee landlords. The owner of the vineyard that is described might be someone who had sought a more pleasant location than Palestine.

If the owner was following the law, the first time for collecting the rental would be five years after the planting of the vineyard. In such a case, the rental was paid in kind. It might be a fixed and agreed-upon percentage of the crop, or it might be a stated amount, irrespective of what the crop came to.

The persons and other details of the narrative are quite easily identified. The *owner* of the vineyard is God, and the *vineyard* itself the people of Israel — a picturization with which Jews were perfectly familiar. In the Old Testament, it is vividly depicted in Isaiah 5:1-7, a passage from which some of the details and language of our parable are taken.

This vineyard was fully equipped. There was a wall to mark out boundaries, to keep out robbers, and to defend it from the incursions of wild animals. There was a winepress, in which the grapes were crushed with the feet, and a wine vat into which the pressed-out juice flowed.

There was also a tower in which the wine was stored and the tenant farmers took shelter, and from which was kept watch for robbers at harvest time.

The *tenant farmers* represent the religious authorities throughout the history of the Jewish nation. The *servants* sent by the vineyard owner stand for Israel's prophets. The *son* is Jesus himself, the one who is seized, taken outside the "vineyard" (Jerusalem), and killed.

The parable contains such a wealth of truths that we can dwell on only a few of them here. For one thing, the parable reveals the generosity, the trust, the patience, and the justice of God. The vineyard was equipped with everything necessary to make the work of the tenant farmers easy and profitable. Overall, human life and creation reveal the abundance of God's gifts.

The parable reveals the generosity, the trust, the patience, and the justice of God.

The owner of the vineyard went away and left the tenant farmers to tend to the vineyard themselves. Similarly, God trusts us enough to make our way through life with much freedom of action. Moreover, the owner gave the tenant farmers many chances to pay the debt they owed; he treated them with a patience they little deserved. It may be that humans take advantage of God's patience, but in the end come judgment and justice.

Insights into Jesus

Central to the parable, however, is what it says about Jesus. In the context of the parable, Jesus regarded himself not as one of the "servants" but as "the son." Jesus was not in the succession of Israel's prophets but was God's very Son, his last and final word spoken to his people. The parable was a deliberate challenge to the Jewish authorities because it contained the unmistakable claim of Jesus to be the Messiah. Besides, the parable tells us that Jesus knew that he was to die violently. The cross did not come to him as a surprise; he knew that the way he had chosen could have no other ending.

Lastly, the parable tells us that Jesus was sure of his ultimate triumph. He knew that his maltreatment and death would not be the end, but that after the rejection would come the glory. Jesus, "the stone which the builders rejected" (Ps 118:22), became the *cornerstone*. He who was



regarded as insignificant to human beings has become the foundational reality of the world's re-creation. This foundational reality was, in the eyes of the New Testament writers such as Luke, Paul, and Peter, Jesus in his salvific dying and rising.

The parable may be seen as a summary of salvation history. With this parable, Jesus, who portrays God as one who longs for a loving response from us, summons us to a conversion. What's more, he warns us of the consequences of rejecting God's continual behest to us. We are invited to think of ourselves as the vineyard workers confronted by a God who, in his Son, continually seeks us, but one whom we are capable of rejecting.



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EUCCHARISTIC SPIRITUALITY

Counsels for Spiritual Life from Saint Peter Julian Eymard

The Joy of Being Baptized

The Apostle of the Eucharist was also a guide to the interior life and to Eucharistic spirituality for many. Here, in a letter to his sister Marianne (who was also his godmother), he reflects on his baptism on February 5, 1811, the day after his birth.

“Today I cannot resist the joy of writing you a few words. I’m sure you can guess why I prayed so earnestly to God for you, for our father, our mother, and my godfather! It’s such a beautiful day for me. It’s the most beautiful day of my life since this is the day when I had the good fortune to be baptized. If I had died then, I would be in heaven now, praying for my godmother still on earth. . . . But the good Lord did not wish it and has left me until now in this valley of exile, tears, and struggles. May he be blessed!

“All is well, provided we reach our goal at the end. Once we reach it, whether the road was short or long, easy or difficult, everything weighs in the scales only as grace and mercy from God. The essential thing is to reach the goal. Pray that I may attain the goal, as I do for you. If you should reach it first, leave a walking stick behind and an open door. At least there will no longer be any more distance or separation there.

“I cannot help but recognize the signs of his mercy and providence in my life — signs so great that I would be ungrateful if I didn’t love him with my whole heart and if I didn’t serve him with all my strength.

“I owe you so much for your vigilant care during my youth and for all the religious practices you would suggest to me. What wonderful times! I loved the good Lord more then than now. Since then, so many different stages in life, so many different situations! . . . I find that life is so precious for a heart that is working for heaven, ruled by the love of a crucifying and crucified God.” 



PASTORAL LITURGY

Concelebration Guidelines Revised at 15

by John Thomas J. Lane, SSS

Concelebration witnesses to the unity of the Church and the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

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

Twenty years ago, I began a journey with you to reflect on the pastoral liturgy of the Church. It has been a great honor to write for this illustrious magazine and continue a tradition of collaboration with the staff and readers who have a reverent care for the liturgy and the Eucharist. As we continue this year, we will reflect on six topics that come from liturgical documents and their anniversaries. The first is concelebration.

Concelebration became possible in the Latin Rite on March 7, 1965 (the First Sunday of Lent in that holy year), following the recommendation of the Second Vatican Council. The council fathers practiced concelebration during their deliberations, returning to this expression of the “unity of the priesthood,” celebrating together with one voice rather than separate voices at different altars simultaneously in a single church building. Each episcopal conference subsequently revised its policy on concelebration, as did the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops 15 years ago.

Now, all these years later, as the shortage of ordained priests is rapidly setting much of the pace for pastoral administration in the Western Church, it may seem a little odd to focus on this topic, especially in the United States and Canada. However, there is a multitude of practices currently taking place when there is concelebration at a diocesan event or jubilee celebrations of priests. This column is a chance to review the norms for the United States that were updated 15 years ago, and for other jurisdictions to revisit their own directives.

First, no priest may automatically concelebrate in this country: they must be in compliance and have a “letter of suitability” from their

ordinary to present to a pastor or parochial vicar in a parish. I know personally that I am often faced with a visiting priest on vacation who wishes to concelebrate.

We are required, as ordained priests, to present a letter of suitability to every place we go and wish to concelebrate (or take part in any priestly ministry, including public speaking). This was not part of these guidelines 15 years ago but is now a contemporary reality due to the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. So, while paragraph 7 says a superior may not prohibit a priest from concelebrating, there is other particular law regarding the guidelines for concelebration to ensure that each priest is “in good standing.”

Another key point in the U.S. guidelines, paragraph 14: concelebrants should be seated together. That can be difficult in some churches for celebrations with a large gathering of priests. This paragraph stresses priests should be together as priests.

Sacrosanctum Concilium, 27 says that concelebration is preferred over the private celebration of the Mass. There is a new generation of priests who do not wish to concelebrate or even attend a Mass: they prefer their own Mass in the privacy of their room or a chapel. This document, as well as other theological and liturgical documents, does not recognize this ecclesiology since we are part of a body and not individuals on our own.

Here are other key points in this document:

- Concelebrants are to “spring into action” and be in the sanctuary before the Eucharistic Prayer begins. They enter during the Prayer over the Gifts and during the Holy, Holy, Holy, and do not wait for an invitation to stand around the altar. Once the presider begins the Prayer over the Gifts, the concelebrants should be listening and moving into place for the preface dialogue. The celebrant needs to wait until all are in place (see paragraph 25).
- Concelebrants are limited to what they may say during the Eucharistic Prayer. They are not to say anything that takes away from the presiding celebrant (27).
- Joining in the doxology is optional; there is no requirement for the concelebrants to participate. In paragraph 37: never should the collective voice of the concelebrants overwhelm the voice of the principal celebrant.
- “The body of Christ” and “the blood of Christ” are not said when concelebrants partake of Communion. If able, the

concelebrants genuflect to the elements. No genuflection takes place if a deacon hands the elements to them.

- *Both hands* are used during the epiclesis; during the institution narrative, only *one hand* (the right hand) is used as a gesture.
- Concelebrants bow during the veneration of the elements while the principal celebrant genuflects (or bows due to his ability).
- Concelebrants lift both arms and hands in the “orans” position during only the anamnesis and the post-consecratory epiclesis of the Eucharistic Prayer.
- The “orans” position is used for The Lord’s Prayer.
- Concelebrants may not wear a stole over clerical garb or a cassock: they must wear an alb and a stole or chasuble. Religious priests may not wear a stole over their habit or cowl (see 19).

These guidelines serve to remind us that the reformed liturgy of the Second Vatican Council was for the entire Church. Concelebrants show the unity of the ordained priesthood; they also witness to being part of the entire liturgical assembly and the body of Christ. Concelebration affirms that we are all part of the Church gathered as one around the Table of the Lord.

Reminders for January and February

There are new readings available in the *Lectionary Supplement* which is part of the United States’ amended edition:

- Wednesday, January 3: The Most Holy Name of Jesus;
- Saturday, January 6: Saint André Bessette, religious;
- Monday, January 22: Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children;
- Tuesday, January 23: Saint Vincent, deacon and martyr, and Saint Marianne Cope, virgin (native of New York and missionary in Hawaii);
- Thursday, February 8: Saint Josephine Bakhita, virgin.

Ash Wednesday is February 14 with the First Sunday of Lent and the Rite of Election in dioceses being on Sunday, February 18.

The Archdiocese of Chicago has published a second edition of *Companion to the Calendar: A Guide to the Saints, Seasons, and Holidays*

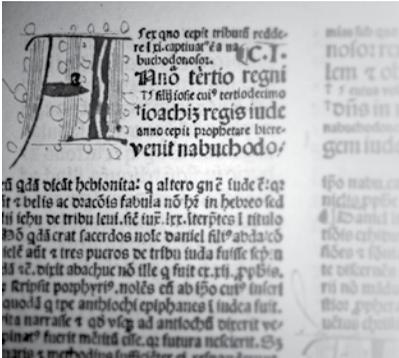
of the Year by a team of writers in 2012. This will be reviewed in *Emmanuel* during this year. To highlight some of the important items of the revised edition, here are some thoughts:

“January comes from the Roman god *Janus*, whose name means ‘gate.’ This is appropriate since January has become the gateway of the year, looking back to the past year and forward to the time ahead” (27).

It is also the Month of the Holy Name of Jesus, hence the feast updated on the calendar with Saint Pope John Paul II.

- **January 1**, besides being the solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, is the World Day of Prayer for Peace. The annual text, released on December 8, is helpful in celebrating this day and providing homily ideas.
- **The Epiphany of the Lord** is Sunday, January 7. Time to bless homes and mark the doorposts with 20 + C + M + B + 18, a custom reminding us that Christ is in every one of our homes.
- **The Baptism of the Lord** is Monday, January 8, and something to celebrate with students due to the shortness of Christmas Time.
- **Martin Luther King, Jr., Day** is Monday, January 15. We would do well to pray for an end to racism in our country.
- **The Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity** is Thursday, January 18, through Thursday, January 25.
- **Filipino communities remember Santo Niño** on the third Sunday of January, this year January 21.
- **Catholic Schools Week** begins Sunday, January 28.
- **The Presentation of the Lord and the World Day for Consecrated Life** is Friday, February 2.
- **The National Day of Prayer for the African American Family** is Sunday, February 4.
- **World Marriage Day** is Sunday, February 11. This year, it is also combined with the World Day of Prayer for the Sick.
- **Presidents’ Day** is Monday, February 19.





BREAKING THE WORD

Scriptural Reflections — Homiletics

by Paul J. Bernier, SSS

Blessed
Sacrament
Father Paul J.
Bernier served
for many years
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Among his many
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Historical and
Pastoral Approach*,
Second Edition,
published by
Orbis Books in
2015.

January 1, 2018 The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God

Numbers 6:22-27; Psalm 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:16-21

Few days have had so many different meanings heaped on it. From a secular point of view, it's New Year's Day. It's also the octave of Christmas, was until recently the feast of the Circumcision of the Lord (as it still is in the Anglican and Lutheran Churches). It is also the World Day of Peace as well as the feast of Mary, the Mother of God (an emphasis that takes us back to the earliest centuries). The readings are varied enough to allow one to focus on any one of these.

If we consider that it is the octave of Christmas, we have the opportunity to appreciate more fully the meaning of this mystery of God's love for his people. The gospel reading shows us Mary lost in silent awe and wonder at the great things God has done. The shepherds also were left glorifying and praising God for what they had seen: a poor baby lying in a feeding trough for animals.

Awe and wonder at the actions of God is more difficult today. We are seldom moved by beautiful sunrises or sunsets. In our crowded cities, most people never see them. The miracles of the Gospels have been eclipsed by what modern science has been able to achieve. Rather than pray for rain, we seed the clouds. Rather than look to God for blessings, we look especially to the medical profession or to other specialists. We have become jaded. There are so many special effects on TV and in movies that we keep looking for new and more explosive stunts. Pre-school children have seen so many murders on TV and video games that even violence has lost its power to shock or to horrify.

As a result, many people, especially in the U.S., feel little need for liberation or “salvation,” whatever that means. Seldom do poor and helpless babies lead us to experience God (unless, perhaps, they are our own!). The shepherds had been told to look for a baby wrapped in swaddling bands and lying in a manger. That manger was mentioned three times in the Christmas story. That was the real sign to look for. All babies were swaddled. Reflection on the deeper significance of the manger has occupied the Christian imagination for ages. The nativity scene in the cathedral of Chartres, for example, does not depict Jesus lying in a manger, but on an altar. That was surely a connection intended by Luke.

We are used to hearing that there was no room for Mary and Joseph in the “inn.” *The New Jerusalem Bible* translates this as there being no room in the “living space.” In a note, it informs us that the Greek word used here is *kataluma*, literally a room. The only other time Luke uses that word is for the Upper Room where Jesus celebrated the Last Supper.

Jesus may have been laid in a place where animals are fed. We are invited to reflect that Jesus himself will one day feed all of us with his own flesh and blood. There may have been no hospitality for Jesus in Bethlehem; Jesus, however, will offer God’s own hospitality to his followers down through the ages, especially when we celebrate the Eucharist. Mary herself stored these things in her heart, where they could continue to inspire in her the awe and wonder of the Christmas event itself. May we do the same.

January 7, 2018 The Epiphany of the Lord

Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13; Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6; Matthew 2:1-12

Despite the story of the Magi having captured Christian imagination through the centuries, in our scientific age, we have difficulty with the idea of a traveling star able to stop at a particular house. As a result, most of us do not really identify with the Magi. The thought of their coming from a long distance, having to overcome great obstacles to follow a star, removes their experience from our own. Furthermore, we tend to feel that we have already found God; we have no need of a journey of discovery.

Perhaps it is precisely this attitude that blinded Herod and all the religious leaders in Jerusalem. All of these should have seen far more clearly than the Magi. They should have understood what was happening in their midst. After all, they studied the Scriptures each day. But they did not really know them. They dealt daily with the sacred. They were not thereby sanctified. Even worse, those whose familiarity with the Bible should have led them to seek and find Jesus had no urge to accompany the Magi.

Epiphany should remind us that unless we become searchers, unless we make an active effort to find God in our lives, we will not find him. Discovering God requires good will, patient endurance, perseverance. We must be willing to overcome the obstacles which block our path and blind us to the signs that are there for us to see. God is seldom found where we expect him. The gospel scene is significant because it has been played out over and over again in the history of the Church. Most people are not searchers or doers, but passive observers of life. God is never found, however, without honest effort.

The first two readings strike the theme of universalism. Isaiah sees all the nations gathering around Jerusalem. The author of Ephesians interprets the results of Christ's coming as bridging the gap between Jews and Gentiles. The key to the gospel reading seems to be the idea that even pagans could bow to Jesus, thus anticipating the day when every knee would bend and every tongue confess him as Lord (Phil 2:10-11).

Some people outside biblical revelation — think of the pagan Balaam and those mysterious astrologers — are often more open to the truth than those with a vested interest in preserving the status quo. This story is the story of seeking: seeking for meaning, truth, and integrity. The star gives unity to the whole story, though its significance is not all that clear. There is no doubt that the belief that great men, at least, had their birth foretold in the heavens was common at that time. Perhaps it is simply a midrash on Numbers 24:17; Balaam's prophecy of a star that shall come forth from Jacob was given messianic interpretation long before the birth of Jesus.

Our Eucharists become meaningless if we cannot look outside ourselves for meaning — and unless we can, like the Magi, become pilgrims bringing the Good News to others. This will be reflected in the total commitment of our lives. For us celebrating the feast today, the struggle might be between that part of us that acclaim Jesus as

Lord and the darker side of us that persistently refuses to let Jesus rule over us completely. Like the wise men, we need to learn that when we finally find Christ, we also find ourselves.

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time January 14, 2018

Samuel 3:3b-10, 19; Psalm 40:2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10; 1 Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20; John 1:35-42

Prosaic as the term “ordinary time” might sound, we have to admit that most of our lives are very ordinary. Feast days represent the mountaintops, but life is usually spent in the valleys. This raises the question about the meaning of life itself and how we can make sense of the ordinary clay of our human existence. What is Christian or redemptive about housework or any kind of manual or intellectual labor?

Is life nothing more than being born, reproducing, and dying? As Scott Peck noted in the opening lines of *The Road Less Traveled*, “Life is difficult.” How are we to face life’s difficulties in such a way that we are not diminished by them?

All three readings today sound a common theme: human life is meant to be lived as intended by God. And as the responsorial psalm reminds us, we are here to do God’s will. We are given the important reminder that sacrifice or offering God wished not; instead, we were given ears open to obedience. True wisdom is being able to hear God’s voice and respond to it positively. Even the sexual purity enjoined by Paul is not an abstract ideal. It flows from the fact that we are not our own property; we belong to God. We have been bought and paid for by Christ.

Even in the case of powerful individuals like Samuel, it is God who takes the initiative, God who issues the call. The same was true of people in the time of Jesus. It may have been because of their friendship — even blood relationship — and their shared ideals that Andrew and Simon, Philip and Nathaniel [the latter not in today’s pericope] were willing to check out the person John had pointed out to them. Ultimately, however, it was because their essential attitude was one of honest seeking that they were open to Christ’s call. The road of vocation, for John, is that of true wisdom, a wisdom making us die to selfishness, making room for

difficulties, for the cross. This is found also in both Samuel's call and in his theology: "obedience is better than sacrifice" (15:22).

The readings suggest that we can make sense of human existence only in the light of God. They also imply that all Christians are called by God to follow his Son in one way or another. Vocation is not only for priests and religious. Baptism itself is a vocation (as Vatican II has reminded us), a vocation to transform the ordinariness of this world in function of the values of God's reign. There is a Christian way of living that allows us to transform daily life into something meaningful and redemptive for ourselves and others. This is the challenge of the Eucharist.

The road of vocation, for John, is that of true wisdom, a wisdom making us die to selfishness and make room for the cross. In this period of vocation crisis, the real question all Christians should ask is not, "What do I want to do with my life?" as much as "What does God want me to do with my life?" We should also stress the role played by those with like ideals, by the community, in helping people hear and respond to God's call.

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time January 21, 2018

**Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31;
Mark 1:14-20**

In the Gospel of Mark, as Jesus begins his public ministry he insists on the need for repentance. The Old Testament reading carries the same message, and Paul's comments are based on a Christian detachment we all need from the values of the world. Repentance here is not a moralistic thing, as much as a total attitude of a mind and a heart formed by Jesus. The difference between Jonah and Jesus, however, is that Jesus is part of the Good News that he announces.

Tempting as it might be to continue the thoughts on vocation begun last week, the first reading makes it evident that the basic message of the Gospel is that contained in the opening statement, which is a sort of manifesto summing up the import of Jesus' entire public ministry. The call of the disciples serves more to illustrate concretely

what it means to repent and believe in the Gospel. It is not attaching oneself to timeless truths, but to the person of Christ. Mark has begun his Gospel with a summary statement of Jesus' message: "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God has drawn near. Repent and believe in the Good News!"

As Mark will show throughout his Gospel, following Jesus is demanding. The main problem with the disciples is that they were fair-weather friends; their conversion was not deep enough for them to follow Jesus all the way to the cross. The shadow of the cross is introduced by Mark even at the beginning with his stark reminder of the fate of John the Baptist. The Jonah parallel which we have in the readings was one used by Jesus himself (Lk 11:29-30), and the irony is clear: a pagan city repented when a very reluctant Jonah called for it; the love and compassion of God personified in Jesus, however, did not produce the same results.

Most people today are rather satisfied with themselves and see little need for repentance. They don't line up at the confessionals as they did in the past. A sense of sin or guilt does not permeate society. People don't appreciate bad news about themselves (a reason why prophets are so seldom appreciated). And modern psychology allows us to blame either our genes or our environment for everything we do wrong. We are not to blame. We are good people.

The total commitment that is at the center of Jesus' preaching is required if we are ever to achieve the kingdom for which he lived and died. This demands renunciation and a conversion from the ways of self and the world to the ways of God.

There were many aspects to the kingdom, which the rest of the Gospel seeks to outline. But Jesus' vision of a world where there could be peace, and where mercy and compassion would replace hatred and revenge, where the forces of alienation in society could be met and overcome, was one which guided him constantly. He never fully achieved it, naturally. And the task is still there for each of us to help complete. We need both to make his vision our own and to commit ourselves to its accomplishment. Each Eucharist should remind us that joining at Jesus' table implies a total willingness to make his way of life our own.

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time January 28, 2018

Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 95:1-2, 6-7, 7-9; 1 Corinthians 7:32-35; Mark 1:21-28

This section of Mark's Gospel begins his description of Jesus' public ministry. Today we deal with the first of a series of five cures; this will be followed by a series of five controversies on the nature and extent of Jesus' authority. In a sense, authority is what this passage is all about, with Mark simply telling us that Jesus' teaching was authoritative. Mark makes little effort to ever tell us *what* Jesus taught; he stresses more the manner and the effect of his teaching; it differed markedly from teachers of the time.

Mark shows the implications of Jesus' authority and teaching in the exorcism, which is described in terms of the struggle between Jesus and Satan begun in the temptations (1:12-13). This and subsequent cures are examples of the continuing struggle Jesus carried on with the spirit of evil — a struggle every Christian is meant to continue. Note that the unclean spirit seems able to see deeper and recognize the origin of Jesus' power. As the Gospel will show, this knowledge was missed by almost everyone else. Jesus, however, silences the spirit. What is the value of a statement from one who is faithless? If the spirit had really believed that Jesus came from God, it would have become a believer.

The challenge of the readings today is to continue Jesus' struggle against the power of evil, to shatter the ignorance of those who walk in the darkness of sin. Our teaching will be authoritative not if we can parrot the words of Christ, but if we can put on his mind and heart. This allows us to see our lives in continuity with his. It allows us to be (and do) in our time what Jesus did in his.

Ultimately, the type of power described today is the power that is always present when the teaching and the person speaking are one, where there is no dichotomy between word and commitment. Jesus was so totally involved in his mission that everything he did became an expression of the struggle he lived against sin and evil in the world. We must do likewise!

Authoritative teaching is effective because of its innate logic and truth, its persuasiveness coming from within. When this is not perceived in those who are in authority, people are not moved. From a practical point of view, teaching will be authoritative not if we can parrot the words of Christ (and there must be a constant effort to learn true teaching), but if we can put on his mind and heart as well. Only this allows us to be (and do) in our time what Jesus was and did in his.

Those of us in positions of authority can no longer be content with invoking that authority. Today people are far more educated than peasants in the Middle Ages. People need to be convinced by reason and the evident sincerity that is ours. Only this prevents teaching from becoming dogmatism.

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time February 4, 2018

Job 7:1-4, 6-7; Psalm 147:1-2, 3-4, 5-6; 1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23; Mark 1:29-39

Today's readings focus on the sufferings of the human condition and how Jesus touches us with his compassion as we journey through life. Last week's gospel passage presented the cure of the paralytic. In today's cure of Simon's mother-in-law and all who came to his door, we are invited to see Jesus again proclaim his authority and his ability to communicate the fullness of life to those who believe in him. These initial acts of healing are key to understanding Jesus and lead up to the ultimate healing when even death itself is overcome.

Once again, Jesus silences the demons. The famous "messianic secret" that runs through Mark's Gospel, whereby Jesus enjoins people not to reveal his identity, is most probably tied to the nature of true belief in Christ. Demons might utter all the right words and expressions, but if they really understood and believed them, their lives would be changed and they would give Jesus their complete allegiance. Anything else falls short of the truth and is not Gospel.

So also for the disciples who want Jesus to stay in Capernaum. The true significance of Jesus' deeds is that they both proclaim and usher

in the kingdom — a message for all of Israel. Any response to them, even seemingly favorable ones which do not recognize this essential truth, falls short — even when it comes from professed followers. Theirs is not the attitude of true disciples; in their shortsightedness, they come more as representatives of the crowds, with all this implies of worldly attitudes and self-interest. Self-interest can prevent us from being true disciples, seeking only to get rather than give.

Only three times does Mark mention Jesus' prayer, and each time the nature of his messiahship is in question. We can seek out Jesus because he is a wonder-worker, and we can try to have him stay with us because we so enjoy his presence. We can call him Lord, Savior, and Brother. But we must also live the full implications of those terms. In this case, it means the necessity of moving on, of spreading the Good News. Unless we give Jesus our allegiance and begin to live in solidarity with him, with the understanding he has of his vocation and mission, we are little better than the curious crowds or the faithless demons. And, in fashioning a new Messiah to our own tastes and liking, we fail to achieve that prayerful appreciation of who Jesus really is and what he challenges us to be and to do.

Whether it be physical illness, setbacks in our efforts to get ahead, the destruction caused by storms, the various debilities that accompany aging, or the dislocation and tragedy of modern warfare, we cannot but agree with one of our oldest hymns that speaks of this world as a "vale of tears." There are two elements the liturgy invites us to consider. The first is that it is from miseries such as we see reflected in Job that Jesus has come to deliver us. However, this deliverance today is meant to be continued in and by the Church. Healing is an important aspect of the "Good News" of Christ. Our Eucharists are meant to fill us with Christ's compassion and for the healing which is ours to give.

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time February 11, 2018

Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46; Psalm 32:1-2, 5, 11; 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1; Mark 1:40-45

So far Mark has had Jesus begin his ministry with a call for repentance, gather followers, heal many, and pray. Mark then details five specific

cures, of which today's gospel passage is the third. For the first time, we see the emotional side of Jesus. Many manuscripts say that Jesus became angry, although the majority state that he was moved with pity. Most of us probably instinctively prefer the thought of Jesus being moved with compassion. It accords well with the appeal the leper makes to Jesus.

If we choose the idea of anger or indignation, there are two possible ways of understanding it. It may reflect Jesus' hostility to the forces of evil in our world, as when he rebukes demons. Or he may have become impatient at being interrupted in his primary task of teaching. Our passage does end with the leper spreading the news abroad "so that it was impossible for Jesus to enter a town openly." In any case, this passage shows Jesus as an emotional human being. The other Gospels tend to tone down Jesus' emotions, much as a good deal of spiritual writing does today because of a higher Christology. It's so easy to forget that Jesus was fully human, as Mark shows him to be. It is comforting to think of Jesus as a person with a normal range of emotions.

Many commentators today are reluctant to think that the person in the Gospel had actual leprosy. *The New Jerusalem Bible* calls it a "virulent skin disease." It matters very little. Any kind of skin condition rendered a person unclean, and he had to separate himself from society lest he render unclean anyone coming into contact with him, as we see in the reading from Leviticus. Jesus, however, did not accept the prevailing attitude of his day. Nor did he see illness as a punishment from God. Jesus was willing to touch the leper, surely as healing to him personally as the actual riddance of the disease.

"Leprosy" is about contamination. It's about designating certain people as unwelcome or unacceptable in our lives. Today, we have lots of leprosy tests; we've just changed the focus of the test slightly. In our society today we marginalize many people: immigrants, Muslims, African Americans, the divorced and remarried, gay and lesbian, and so on. Mark's description of Jesus as a man with emotions encourages us to express our emotions as well. This would imply the ability to empathize with those who suffer marginalization in any way or to have righteous anger at the insensitivity and prejudices in our society.

Jesus' willingness to heal offers us a model for the ministry of healing in the Church. And, in fact, the Church itself has long been known

for its social concern, its hospitals, and its other social services. Being healers is also the task of individual Christians. Everyone can reach out to touch others across the boundaries and prejudices set by society. We know only too well the blighting effects on human lives because of the discrimination they suffer simply because they are “different.” At Jesus’ table, he invites everyone; there are no distinctions of color, class, or status. We are all brothers and sisters.

First Sunday of Lent February 18, 2018

Genesis 9:8-15; Psalm 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:12-15

Why is there so much evil in the world? This question has plagued us for centuries. The more pessimistic answer is that humanity is so depraved that it is incapable of doing anything good, only descending deeper and deeper into sin. The traditional Catholic approach has been more nuanced, seeing people as more deprived than depraved. This still leaves us with the problem of understanding how we can be saved from selfishness and sin, and how Christ makes a real difference in our lives. Linked with this is how we can cooperate with God in making the world what it was intended to be from the day of creation. Then (as we will be reminded at Easter) God could look at this world of ours and say that it was good.

Mark’s Gospel begins by stating that Jesus began his public ministry with a trial of strength with Satan — the tempter. Thus begins the great eschatological battle between good and evil. Jesus was victorious here but, as Mark’s Gospel will show, the struggle continued throughout his life, to end only on the cross. This struggle is meant to pattern the life of every Christian. Jesus’ victory over the wild beasts is meant to evoke that harmony of nature intended by God from the beginning, and is clearly messianic (cf. Ps 91:11-13). Mark gives us no details, which allows us to focus on the *fact* of temptation rather than its exact nature. Jesus went from the desert to proclaim a world where God holds full sway over our lives, urging us to share his victory over evil.

The struggle of Lent is to emerge victorious over the power of evil, as Christ did in the desert. Christ’s temptation (“testing” is perhaps a better translation here) is not so much a temptation to sin, but to

see the purpose of his life not as intended by God, but for his own gratification. 1 Peter reinforces this theme. We need to repent, to believe the Good News, and resist the temptation to “do it our way.” We have seen sufficient examples of people who have overcome evil in human life to know that it is possible to do things Christ’s way.

The flood story evokes the baptismal rite that crowns this season at Easter. God provided an ark that would bear Noah and his family to safety. Now he gives us the Church that we might triumph over the chaos and evil of the world. Through baptism, Christ gives us the tools to restore the world to some semblance of the harmony originally intended for it by God. As children of God, we can expect to be driven into the wilderness and caught up in the cosmic struggle between God and Satan.

One who begins a life of discipleship generally experiences a period of exhilaration. We think that we will always be able to live on this high. Then comes the wilderness of doubt and questioning. The world in which we live can easily call into question everything we believe. That is when we need to avail ourselves of a period of renewal in prayer, worship, and recommitment to Christian living in order to recover our original vision. Fortunately, Jesus has given the Church various avenues of grace to help us. In the Eucharist, we are fed at the table of Christ’s word and flesh to strengthen us in our resolve to live in and through Christ Jesus.

Second Sunday of Lent February 25, 2018

**Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18; Psalm 116:10, 15, 16-17, 18-19;
Romans 8:31b-34; Mark 9:2-10**

No sooner did the disciples acknowledge Jesus to be the Messiah than Jesus confused them completely by telling them that he must suffer and die. A suffering Messiah was far from the glorious king they expected. This is followed by today’s passage, which is generally interpreted as serving to ease the doubts and concerns of the apostles. It was probably equally important for Jesus, contemplating his own suffering and death.

Luke notes that it was about his “exodus.” Mark, however, tells us nothing about what transpired between Moses and Elijah and Jesus. In contrast to the general tenor of Mark’s Gospel, where we are faced with an intensely human Jesus, this one passage gives us a picture of a Jesus who is totally passive. He says nothing and expresses no emotion. Even God’s voice from heaven is addressed to the three disciples. At Jesus’ baptism, the voice was directed to Jesus. Mark’s Christology insists for those who hear the Gospel today that Jesus’ sufferings were part of the plan of redemption, giving him a unique position in salvation history, far superior to Elijah and Moses. He is the one to be listened to and obeyed.

The final sentences indicate that it would take the disciples a while to understand the purpose served by Christ’s death. Ability to do so, however, would yield the hope and assurance reflected in Paul today. Jesus’ physical death was death to sin and endured on our behalf. The liturgy, while telling us that God spared Isaac, reminds us that he did not spare his Son. However, this is not to suggest an angry God exacting punishment for sin. Rather, reference is to Jesus having made the offering of his life on our behalf completely voluntarily.

The transfiguration faces us not only with the paradox of Jesus’ life and how suffering can lead to glory and salvation, but how we integrate life’s hardships, pain, even death, into our lives as servants of the Lord. We can allow life’s pain to grind us down and diminish us, or we can refuse to let it crush our spirit.

Peter’s remark that three booths should be built there to prolong the experience may not appear particularly bright. Mark apologizes for him by saying that he was frightened and did not know what to say. But he no doubt experienced the occasion as good, and his desire to prolong the experience is understandable. But there is a danger in wanting to remain at a fixed point in our experience of Christ. This could result in a faith that has stopped growing. We need to go on in our experiences and understanding of discipleship.

The transfiguration was a peak experience for the disciples, enabling them to integrate the fact of Jesus’ death into their understanding of God’s plan for our salvation. Our moments of transfiguration should come through the celebration of the Eucharist. This enables us to see how the crosses of everyday life can be incorporated into God’s plan of salvation when united with those of Christ.

Transfiguration, thus, becomes complete in us. Ultimately, our ability to make suffering an integrating factor in our lives depends on whether we see and live life as Jesus did. Each Eucharist allows us to benefit from Christ's constant example and intercession for us in heaven. We can be transfigured too!





EUCHARIST & CULTURE

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Art Review

MASTER OF THE HOUSEBOOK



THE LAST SUPPER



WASHING OF THE APOSTLES FEET

John Christman,
SSS

Many years ago, an art professor of mine told a humorous story about a classmate of his in art school. Apparently, his classmate enjoyed signing paintings with a very elaborate and eye-catching signature. During a critique one day, the other students commented upon the fanciful signature, thinking it somewhat distracting. Instead of reducing the size of the signature or working to make the autograph subtler, the young artist increased its size! Much to the consternation of the other students, this repartee continued. They would comment negatively about the increasing prominence of the signature, and the student would enlarge it. Eventually, the signature took over the entire canvas and became the subject of the painting itself.

Although humorous this story is — perhaps not surprising given the art trajectory of the nineteenth, twentieth, and now twenty-first centuries — from the beginning of Modernity to Contemporary Art, there has been a deliberate focus on the unique contribution of the individual artist. Originality of style and uniqueness of artistic vision became prerequisites for success.

This perhaps reached its post-modern pinnacle when the French artist Marcel Duchamp argued that a work of art was a valid work of art based solely on the artist proclaiming it to be so. He famously purchased everyday objects from hardware or furniture stores and placed them in an art gallery setting, proclaiming them to be his works of art. Duchamp called them “ready-mades.” This greatly challenged the audiences and critics of his day. However, his art and ideas eventually revolutionized the art world and dramatically changed how we perceive art today.

Travel back in time to the late 1400s and the world was very different despite the Renaissance trend of placing greater emphasis upon individual artists. In fact, we don’t even know the name of the

artist whose images grace the cover of this issue of *Emmanuel*. Art historians have developed a method of naming artists whose work is of tremendous quality but whose names are lost to history. Often they are named after a body of work, a particular cycle of paintings or etchings for example. The title “master” is given them along with their body of work. Thus, the artist who created these images is known as the “Master of the Housebook.”

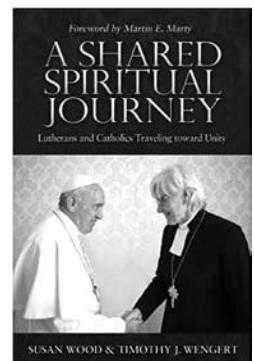
Of course, we don’t know why this artist’s name was lost to history. Nor can we propose some virtuous humility that motivated the artist to not sign the work. It was likely simply not the convention of the time to do so. However, art such as this, so focused on the Eucharist, does give a contemporary religiously-minded person the opportunity to step back and question what all of the obsession with identity and individual recognition is worth. Can the joy of making something beautiful for others be rewarding in itself? Is the knowledge that your artwork is well received and meaningful to those who view it sufficiently fulfilling?

Saint Peter Julian Eymard, who spent a lifetime pondering the great mystery of Christ’s gift of self in the Eucharist, found himself frequently drawn to two scripture passages that spoke to him of how he should live a Eucharistic life: from Saint Paul’s Letter to the Galatians 2:20: “I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me” and John 3:30: “He must increase, I must decrease.” For Father Eymard, both passages emphasize making Christ’s mission our own. Both emphasize God’s primary role in all good things. Moreover, they emphasize directing attention to Christ and not to self.

Gaze upon Jesus insisting upon washing Peter’s feet in this painting, and you see a similar message. The humility of Christ and his complete self-giving in the Eucharist portrayed in these paintings challenge the egocentric tendencies of our times. They also challenge the notion that fulfillment comes from recognition or prestige. It is an uncommon message in our world today, but one that history should not forget.

Book Reviews

The authors are ecumenists and serve on the International and U.S. National Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue and other dialogues. Wood, a theologian, specializes in ecclesiology and sacramentology. Wengert, a historian, has published special studies on Luther and Melancthon and other sixteenth-century leaders in the Reformation. Wood teaches at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Wengert is emeritus Ministerium of Pennsylvania Professor of



A SHARED
SPIRITUAL
JOURNEY:
LUTHERANS AND
CATHOLICS
TRAVELING
TOWARD UNITY
Susan K. Wood and
Timothy J. Wengert
Foreword by Martin
E. Marty
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Reformation History at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. Christopher M. Bellitto, editor for Paulist Press, New York City and Mahwah, New Jersey, suggested the publication of the book and worked with the authors throughout its production. This book marks the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, “a watershed event in the lives of Western Christians.”

Content

This work is truly a joint venture. Wengert wrote Chapter One focusing on the history of the Reformation and Martin Luther’s role in its origin. Chapter Three explains the importance of Scripture and its interpretation in the history and life of both Lutherans and Catholics. He also coauthored with Wood in the writing of Chapter Seven about the past and future of ecumenism. They both exchanged ideas and editorial improvements of each other’s texts — a truly ecumenical approach.

Among the issues clarified is the different world which existed in the sixteenth century from the world today. This is especially true of Christianity. Throughout the presentation, there is an emphasis on the changes in theology, scripture study, and the life of the Church. The importance of reevaluating historic documents is stressed in the book. “Reconciled diversity” has been presented as a methodology that is required both by theology and history as well as in the search for truth about the 500 years since the beginning of the Reformation and the progress of ecumenism in the last century. The topics treated in this work include the Catholic Church and the Reformation, Martin Luther’s role, Scripture and Tradition, baptism, Eucharist, and ministry, historic documents and their reevaluation, reconciled diversity, apostolic succession, the priesthood of the laity, and the ordained ministry.

The Sixteenth Century

Wengert’s contribution of the first chapter is especially valuable. The more one reads it, the more one realizes how different the culture was. He describes how the Reformation was an *unexpected development*. Church and state were completely united and essentially Christian. The Protestant world did not exist until Martin Luther posted his challenge to an academic debate on the matter of indulgences in the Catholic Church as a means of paying for the construction of what we know as Saint Peter’s Basilica in Rome.

The rulers in the Christian countries believed it was their duty to

protect the orthodoxy of Christian teaching. They generally sided with the pope and the Roman emperor elected by German princes. Heresy was condemned as undermining the authority of the realm as well as the Church. And the Protestant uprising challenged the teaching of the Church on indulgences and other practices which did not exist for centuries and provided fodder for a fight on these matters.

Martin Luther

Historians tend to see Martin Luther as either a hero and a defender of Scripture for the Reformation or a heretic and the founder of Protestantism and the churches of the Reformation. Churches began to divide according to their reading and understanding of the Scriptures and their interpretation of Tradition and history. (This issue is treated in Wengert's third chapter.) All the princes in Germany were not behind the pope or the Catholic side. Several, including the prince elector of Mainz, where Luther's monastery was located, were willing to protect Luther for political reasons and for conscience. Freedom of religion was not a prime concern of the sixteenth century. However, given the humanist movement championed by Erasmus, it did have an influence.

The battleground took place at the Diet of Worms when Luther appealed to conscience saying he would not recant what he had written in his controversial 95 theses posted for the historic debate which reportedly started the Reformation of the Church. Then and since the beginning of the modern ecumenical movement, the appeal to freedom of conscience has inevitably been an issue. "Here I am, and here I stand," Luther declared.

Scripture and Tradition

Martin Luther was an outstanding scripture scholar, respected by the academic world of his time. He was charismatic, a master of German, Latin, and biblical languages. He was a great religious leader. This view began to be articulated by historians who specialized in the Reformation, especially due to the more accurate reevaluation of the history of the time and the circumstances surrounding the rise of the Protestant movement.

In recent years, Catholic historians have been more positive in their evaluation of Martin Luther and his role in the Reformation. Lutheran theology gives a predominant role to Scripture in its articulation of faith. It is called "*norma normans*," i.e., not only the norm but the rule by which the norm is to be evaluated. Tradition is also important, but it is not seen as a separate criterion. This view is also expressed by

Vatican II, clarifying 500 years of Tridentine teaching on the subject of Scripture and Tradition.

The Second Vatican Council

Wood begins her presentation in Chapter Two with the background to the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (October 31, 1999). The trajectory to this declaration begins with the Second Vatican Council together with its antecedents in the modern ecumenical movement, generally dated from the Edinburgh Mission Congress in Scotland in 1910. At Vatican II, the Catholic Church recognized the ecumenical movement as the work of the Holy Spirit in modern times and urged all Catholics to pray, work, and be open to this grace of God which will realize the prayer of Jesus to the Father: "That all may be one, so that the world may believe that the Father sent his Son for the salvation of the world" (Jn 17:20ff).

The JDDJ is a clear example of reconciled diversity and ecumenical forward movement toward unity. It expresses Catholic and Lutheran teaching on the subject and what has become the common ground of the two ecclesial communions as a result of years of dialogue.

The Present and Future of the Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue

Throughout the work, the authors explain the common ground achieved over 50 years of dialogue since Vatican II, the gains of common understanding and the removal of mutual "anathemas," and the obstacles to reconciliation between Lutherans and Catholics. It is clear from this reading that full communion is not imminent. Nevertheless, the book expresses the hope that the theological work done and the consensus achieved augur well for the future.

Unity and full communion are not something that human beings create. It is God's gift to be received. The timeline is not determined by God's will in this matter, but by human sinfulness that is the greatest obstacle to its reception. The Second Vatican Council says such a process will require a genuine conversion and an ecumenical spirituality. The way forward is to draw closer to God in Jesus Christ. The truth is something we all must work to find and follow with God's help and mercy.

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Though the idea of receptive ecumenism did not begin with Paul Murray, his creation of a program at the University of Durham, England, to explore the potential of receptive ecumenism for promoting Christian unity and Catholic learning from other churches, has helped to connect his name with the concept in recent years. He has promoted the program in the United Kingdom, the United States, and worldwide.

This book gathers a large number of essays by such well-known ecumenists as Mary Tanner, Rowan Williams, Cardinal Walter Kasper, Margaret O’Gara, Ladislaus Orsy, SJ, Keith Pecklers, SJ, Hervé Legrand, OP, and many others. Authors from other disciplines also contribute critical insights on the subject in helpful ways.

The Concept of Receptive Ecumenism

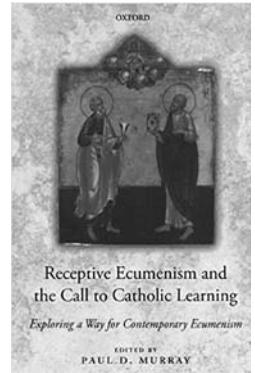
The word *reception* has a long history in the implementation of the decisions and teachings of ecumenical councils. Since Vatican II, the reception of ecumenical documents developed the idea of the reception of documents emanating from bilateral and multilateral dialogues. From this concept, receptive ecumenism was born, especially through programs such as the Lutheran Institute in Strasbourg, France, and in Durham, England. The latter is described in detail in Murray’s book.

By including the pragmatic aspects of receptive reading, which can help or hinder the reception of teachings from churches other than one’s own, the importance of dialogue is underscored as well as the need for openness. Murray includes a number of chapters in the book from authors in the social sciences, journalism, and psychology which highlight obstacles to learning from dialogues and other churches.

Overview

Murray’s *Receptive Ecumenism* begins with the vision and principles of this approach and includes his chapter on establishing an agenda. It includes O’Gara’s reflections on gift exchange and Kasper’s cautions about text and context and hermeneutics. Part II focuses on what Catholics, in particular, can learn from a receptive ecumenism and dialogue. This part deals especially with national and international bilateral and multinational dialogues. Part III studies the question of order/ministry and ordination in the Anglican, Lutheran, and Orthodox bilateral dialogues.

Part IV focuses on the pragmatics of receptive ecumenical learning. Mary Tanner introduces this section of the book with a summary of



**RECEPTIVE
ECUMENISM
AND THE CALL
TO CATHOLIC
LEARNING:
EXPLORING
A WAY FOR
CONTEMPORARY
ECUMENISM**
Paul D. Murray, ed.
with Luca Badini
Confalonieri
Oxford, United
Kingdom: Oxford
University Press, 2010
570 pp., \$52.00;
Kindle Edition: \$49.00

receptive ecumenism in recent initiatives in the dialogues between the Catholic Church and the Anglican and Methodist international communions. Also included are learning opportunities with Eastern Christians, managing the change in the Irish Civil Service, and its implications for transformative ecclesial learning (Tuohy and Conway). Peter McGrail considers social factors inhibiting receptive Catholic learning in the Church of England and Wales. Thomas Reese, SJ, deals with organizational factors inhibiting receptive Catholic learning. Finally, Part V is a retrospect and prospect considering, among other topics, an Orthodox view of Catholic learning and receptive ecumenism (Legrand), a response to Cardinal Kasper (Sagovsky), a dialogue with Yves Congar and B. C. Butler (Flynn), the promise of comparative ecclesiology (Mannion), and receiving the experience of Eucharistic celebration (Philips).

Evaluation

A promotional flyer for the book states: "The essential principle behind *Receptive Ecumenism* is that the primary ecumenical responsibility is to ask not "What do the other traditions first need to learn from us?" but "What do we need to learn from them?" The assumption is that if all were asking this question seriously and acting upon it, then all would be moving in ways that would both deepen our authentic respective identities and draw us into more intimate relationship."

This essential principle follows the principle of Vatican II's *Unitatis Redintegratio*, namely, that the ecumenical process involves a conversion and a spirituality that draws everyone to Christ and through him to one another. Ecumenism is not a contest in which one Church or group wins and another loses. It is a gift from God that enriches all who, in good conscience, focus on being drawn through Christ to the Father and the Holy Spirit, and thus into the circle of grace and salvation that enriches all who so share a common goal, namely, unity in Christ.

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Poetry

A Prayer

Compassionate and loving Jesus,
incarnate Word of God,
you humbled yourself . . .
assuming our human nature;
becoming one with us in Eucharist,
sharing your divine life.

Help us, the people of God,
to become incarnations
of your compassionate love,
through the healing power of Eucharist —
your life given to us . . .
our life given for others.

We pray this in your name, Jesus,
in the renewing power
of your Holy Spirit:
the Glory of God within us!
Amen.



Jeanette Martino Land



EUCHARISTIC WITNESS

Rose Mattax

Maywood, Illinois

I am an Associate of the Blessed Sacrament at Saint Eulalia Parish in Maywood, Illinois, west of downtown Chicago. Three fellow parishioners and I made our Promise Commitment in September 2014. Like hundreds of lay women and men in the Province of Saint Ann, I am inspired by the teachings and example of Saint Peter Julian Eymard, “Outstanding Apostle of the Eucharist.”

The Eucharist shapes my life in many ways. I am especially drawn to the call to build a world of justice and solidarity.

As I was going through the initial formation program to become a member of the Eymardian Family, I began thinking about what activity or program I might commit to as an associate. I had no idea of what might evolve.

Coincidentally, in August 2014, a L’Arche community moved into the house across the street from where my husband John and I live. L’Arche was founded in France by Jean Vanier. A L’Arche community’s purpose is described in this way: “We are people, with and without developmental disabilities, sharing life in communities belonging to an International Federation.”

After renovating the house to standardize it for disability needs, the L’Arche community held an open house which I attended. Soon after the work on the house was completed, I visited the community and got to know the members living there: four “core members” (persons with developmental disabilities) and three “assistants” (persons who come to share life with the core members).

In the course of many conversations, I invited the community to “come visit us at Saint Eulalia.” They liked our celebration of the Eucharist and the wide diversity of people who worship at our parish. They now attend Saint Eulalia as their parish community.

I have become an accompanier to one of the assistants. An accompanier is someone who accompanies a core member or an assistant on their journey in L’Arche. We meet once a month to talk — about life, and especially her involvement with this L’Arche community.

The time John and I spend with our L’Arche friends has been a most rewarding experience. It is one concrete way that I strive to “live the mystery of the Eucharist fully” and to “witness to Christ’s presence at the crossroads of society” (quotes from the *Rule of Life for Associates*). 

Bon Sie,

“Remain always as an apostle
of the God of the Eucharist;
it’s a mission of fire near those
who are cold, of light for those
who do not believe, of holiness
for the soul of the adorer.”

Eymard

S. P. J.

Saint Peter Julian Eymard

Eymard

