

Emmanuel

Eucharistic Spirituality



July/August 2014



The Eucharist and Justice

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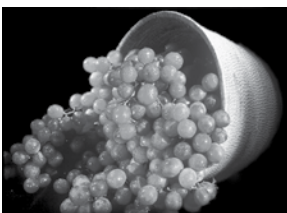
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Emmanuel Magazine

Seeing all of reality in the light of the Eucharist

Volume 120 Number 4



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FROM THE EDITOR

The priest and founder Peter Julian Eymard was a dynamic witness to the presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. Naturally inclined toward contemplation, he was nonetheless a man of action. In May 1856, when Archbishop Dominique Sibour of Paris expressed reluctance to approve his new eucharistic order, Eymard quickly explained the work of the First Communion of adults and youth, a ministry desperately needed in a city teeming with masses of unchurched adults and youth. The archbishop was won over.

Understandably, Father Eymard's first efforts focused on stabilizing the life of the new institute and attracting followers. By the spring of 1858, he was ready to launch the First Communion project. Archival material of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament narrates what happened: "With the help of laypeople, and members of the Saint Vincent de Paul conference, he gathers young workers in the district who had not been catechized. With great patience, he prepares them for their First Communion. On August 15, 1858, he finds joy in giving Communion to twelve young people; the following day they receive confirmation. Thus, the work of the First Communion of adults is born and grows in one of the poorest areas of Paris, the *barrière d'Arcueil*."

Eymard later described these first catechism classes: "Those involved are children workers, vagabonds, or those placed in apprenticeship early and who have let the age of instruction for First Communion slip by . . . there are thousands of them in Paris. Rag pickers, rope and match makers constituted the recruits from the workers' ranks, the rest were drawn from the ranks of the idlers, the indigent, and beggars."

Historian Damien Cash casts further light on the work, writing: "Baptism, Communion, and confirmation were the first spiritual fruits of this mission. For the participants, there were also material benefits as the experience became an upward step, signified by the new set of clothes that every child received for his or her First Communion. To provide ongoing

material assistance, Eymard established a workers' club which offered food, drink, and fellowship. He provided additional spiritual assistance through regular retreats. To obtain funds for these activities, Eymard became a beggar himself by preaching and pleading for aid from the richer parishes in Paris."

What is clear from these sources is that Father Eymard was concerned about both the spiritual welfare of the poor and the forgotten in the *barrière d'Arcueil* and their material well-being. Like Jesus who preached the word of God to the multitudes (see Mk 6:34) and later fed them, Eymard ministered to the spiritual hungers and the material and social needs of those he met.

In missiology, there is an accepted maxim that you first have to feed a hungry person before you can preach the Gospel to him or her. Empty stomachs make for closed ears! But this is more than a pragmatic means to a noble end. It reflects the profound soteriological truth that the Good News touches every dimension of our humanity. And, therefore, because God is interested in the whole person, those who speak and act in his name must be similarly disposed and attend to the demands of justice and compassion.

Saint Peter Julian Eymard moved comfortably between the sanctuary and the streets, where he acquired the reputation of being a friend of the poor. The love of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist moved him to seek out and to serve the suffering members of the body of Christ. He delighted in initiating them into the Christian faith and the sacraments of the church, particularly the Eucharist, and he cared for their bodies as well, helping them to live dignified lives worthy of God's children.

This issue of *Emmanuel*, continuing a longstanding tradition of a summer social justice focus, offers reflections on "concurrent themes" in the eucharistic thought of Father Pedro Arrupe and Pope Francis and on social responsibility as an extension of the solidarity experienced around God's Table. There is Father Dennis Billy's incisive analysis of the Scripture-based morality of Father Bernard Häring; and lastly, the moving story of how one parish reaches out in friendship to people living on the streets of a large American city.



Father Anthony Schueller, SSS
Editor



EUCCHARIST: LIVING & EVANGELIZING

The Eucharist and Justice: Concurrent Themes in the Thought of Pedro Arrupe and Pope Francis

by James Menkhaus

Dr. James Menkhaus is an assistant professor of theology at Gannon University in Erie, Pennsylvania.

On July 31, 2013, Pope Francis celebrated Mass at the Church of the Gesu in Rome to commemorate the feast of Saint Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus. As the first Jesuit pope in the history of the Roman Catholic Church, Francis has not neglected his Ignatian formation. Following the celebration of Mass, the pope prayed at the tomb of Father Pedro Arrupe, SJ, who was superior general for much of young Jorge Mario Bergoglio's Jesuit development.¹ Thus, the spirit of Father Arrupe that animated the Jesuit order as the new superior general sought to update the Jesuits to the call of the Second Vatican Council would have influenced Bergoglio's Jesuit formation.

In this essay, I wish to point out a few examples of the eucharistic theology of Father Arrupe and elucidate the possible influence of Arrupe's theology on Pope Francis through an examination of insights that they appear to share. These observations will be analyzed through the eucharistic model of social justice and solidarity. This model is in no way meant to exhaust the perspectives shared by these two men. Given Francis' love of the poor, Arrupe's challenge to connect the Gospel and social justice, and the Jesuit tradition's emphasis on fighting unjust social structures, the Eucharist as a call for justice is an important point for conversation.

Pedro Arrupe: Eucharistic Devotion from the Fires of Hiroshima

One of Pedro Arrupe's earliest transformative experiences of the Eucharist occurred in Lourdes, France, in 1926. Arrupe was in his fourth year of undergraduate medical studies when he traveled to Lourdes to verify the miraculous stories he had heard. As he observed the Blessed Sacrament carried down the street, a paralyzed nun stood up and praised the sacrament, while a second woman with stomach cancer proclaimed she was cured. Further, a young boy who had suffered from infantile paralysis stood up.²

Arrupe, as a medical student, was able to examine the medical records of those who made these claims. In all three cases, he confessed that there was no natural explanation that could be found. Arrupe reflected, "I had been an eyewitness of a miracle worked by Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, by that same Jesus Christ who had during the course of his life cured so many who were ill and paralytic."³ Arrupe recalled the image of the host raised in the air as he saw the boy jump from the stretcher. Three months later, he entered the Society of Jesus. The love and curing power of the Eucharist was the beginning of Arrupe's vocation as a Jesuit.

A second insight about the Eucharist occurred for Arrupe in Japan, where he was sent in 1938. When the United States dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima in 1945, Arrupe and his novices were living only a few miles outside the city. The powerful experience of trying to save the lives of the bomb victims became a dimension of his eucharistic model of working for justice. After the Jesuits dragged the survivors into the chapel to operate on them, Arrupe said Mass amongst those laying in agony. As he turned and saw the victims, he prayed for both those suffering and those who had caused the suffering by dropping the bomb. Arrupe describes this powerful scene, stating, "Torrents of graces certainly poured forth from the host and that altar."⁴ Few of those in that room died and many eventually converted to Christianity.

This powerful eucharistic experience always remained with Arrupe. He reflected, "Such Masses as these are moments replete with a sacramental intuition which arrives at understanding what is so difficult . . . to understand without faith . . . the value of suffering, the beauty and sublimity of the sacrifice of charity."⁵ From this Mass, Arrupe came to a new awareness of the consoling and transformative power of the Eucharist and the graces that come from Christ's presence.

While looking for survivors, Arrupe discovered Nakamura, a young Catholic woman who had frequently attended Mass. Although she was dying as the skin fell from her body, she did not blame those who caused the tragedy, nor did she cry out in pain. When she saw Arrupe, she merely asked if he had brought her Communion. Her only wish was the healing which Christ offered her in the Eucharist.

Arrupe reflected on how much this encounter taught him, stating, "The value of the Eucharist for souls who have truly experienced it, the desire to receive it that causes one to forget every other kind of suffering and need . . . the strength that Christ gives us under the sacramental species, communicating to us his love and his incomparable joy."⁶ Arrupe was inspired, not only by her request, but by her understanding of the Eucharist. This experience enhanced his own admiration for Christ's



healing power and love as Nakamura died in his arms.

A final dimension of the Eucharist and social justice can be found in an address Arrupe gave in Philadelphia in 1976. In this presentation, Arrupe connects the problem of world hunger with the Eucharist. He begins the address asking those present to imagine the hungry of the world who would die that day, the day of the Hunger Symposium. "There would be thousands of them, probably more than all of us who are gathered in this hall,"⁷ Arrupe noted. And for this injustice, all people must take responsibility, especially those who take the Eucharist, a form of nourishment. Recalling Mathew 25, Arrupe states as Christ did, "I was hungry, did you give me to eat? I was thirsty, did you give me to drink? I tell you solemnly, insofar as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these my brothers, you neglected to do it for me."⁸

Christ is present in those who die from hunger, and those who refuse to share food with the hungry are refusing to share it with Christ. But within the Eucharist, "Jesus becomes the voice of those who have no voice."⁹ Applying the idea of solidarity, Arrupe states, "Yes, we are all responsible, all involved!"¹⁰ Arrupe's challenge is to realize the Eucharist calls out to those who have food to become Christ by feeding those in need. It is both a physical and spiritual hunger as the Eucharist should transform recipients into people who will live for others as Christ did.

Pope Francis: Eucharistic Devotion from Communion with Poverty

While the extent of Jorge Mario Bergoglio's awareness of Arrupe's experiences of the Eucharist is not common knowledge, many of the comments Pope Francis has made concerning the Eucharist draw upon similar themes as Arrupe's.

From his experience at Lourdes, Arrupe came to understand the power of the Eucharist to heal the sick. During a pastoral visit to Assisi on October 4, 2013, Pope Francis met with sick and disabled children and echoed similar sentiments about the power of the Eucharist. When speaking to these children, he stated, "And here is Jesus hidden in these boys and girls . . . in people we find the wounds of Jesus. Jesus hidden in the Eucharist and Jesus hidden in these wounds."¹¹

The pope implores people to see the wounds of the suffering children, rather than turn a blind eye to their pain. Uniting the wounds of the children to the wounds of Christ, he challenges people to see the hope that the

Eucharist can offer. This hope for the transformative and healing power of Christ in the Eucharist recalls the image of the young boy standing before the host on the streets of Lourdes. The broken flesh of those in pain comes from the wounds of Jesus and is never forgotten in the Eucharist.

Pope Francis also draws upon the suffering of the world in his articulation of the value of the Eucharist today. In a beautiful homily given during the Mass of Corpus Christi on May 30, 2013, he calls people to realize communion is part of the Eucharist. As Arrupe looked out over the suffering and broken bodies of the Japanese, he prayed for *both* those who had dropped the atomic bomb and those who suffered as a result of the decision, making no distinction between the two groups.

Arrupe and Francis share an awareness of the consoling and transformative power of the Eucharist and the graces that come from Christ's presence.

The pope also sees the Eucharist as a unifying experience, saying, "It is . . . in nourishing ourselves with his body and blood that he moves us on from a multitude to being a community . . . the Eucharist is the sacrament of communion that brings us out of individualism."¹² Pope Francis echoed these sentiments in another teaching on the Eucharist in February of this year as he stated on Vatican Radio, "The Eucharist affects the way we see others and brings us together with young and old, poor and affluent, neighbors and visitors."¹³ Both Arrupe and Pope Francis understand the Eucharist to call people to come together in solidarity to work for justice, rather than to divide people through animosity.

In many of his homilies, Pope Francis speaks of how indifference toward suffering needs to be addressed. At Lampedusa on July 8, 2013, he decried the "globalization of indifference" that is characteristic of our world. Speaking on behalf of refugees who had been lost while fleeing from Africa, the pope states, "Today no one in the world feels responsible for this . . . we look upon the brother half dead by the roadside, perhaps we think 'poor guy' and we continue on our way . . . and we feel fine with this. . . . We are accustomed to the suffering of others, it doesn't concern us, it's none of our business."¹⁴ These themes of indifference and anonymity can be overcome by the power of the Eucharist to unite people in communion.

Finally, the words of Father Arrupe on world hunger are echoed in the homily of the pope on Corpus Christi. After developing the idea of



communion, Pope Francis draws on the multiplication of the loaves and the importance of solidarity to fight world hunger. He proclaims, "Jesus, this evening too, gives himself to us in the Eucharist, shares in our journey, indeed he makes himself food, the true food that sustains us."¹⁵ The food that is Christ should call one to consistent service for the kingdom of God. The connection between multiplying food as a community and Christ becoming food that sustains a community should not be dismissed. In accepting this food, the Eucharist, the human heart is transformed into one that seeks to serve, just as Christ served when he fed the people.

Pope Francis has stated, "The Eucharist is the sacrament of communion that brings us out of individualism" to solidarity with all humanity.

Conclusion

When Pope Francis met with students from Jesuit schools from Albania and Italy on June 7, 2013, he answered questions about the faith and his own life. In the final question, a young man asked the pope how young people can live with poverty in the world. Pope Francis replied that poverty demands that people show hope. Citing a letter by Pedro Arrupe, he stated that Father Arrupe taught him that it is impossible to talk about poverty without an experience of the poor. The pope then declares, "Poverty is the flesh of the poor Jesus in this hungry child, in the sick person, in the unjust social structures."¹⁶ The hope, though, is in the flesh of the suffering Jesus, the Eucharist. Arrupe's eucharistic experiences were a testimony to the power of the Eucharist over injustice, suffering, and world hunger, and after a year as pope, Francis' pontificate has resembled this insight from his former superior general as he is guided by Christ and sustained by the Eucharist on the same mission of service.



Notes

¹ Pope Francis was formerly known as Jorge Mario Bergoglio. Father Arrupe began serving as superior general in 1965 and held that post until his death in 1983. Bergoglio entered the Jesuit novitiate on March 11, 1958, taking his first vows in 1960.

² Ronald Modras, *Ignatian Humanism: A Dynamic Spirituality for the 21st Century* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2004), 249.

³ Pedro Arrupe, SJ, "The Eucharist and Youth," in *Other Apostolates Today*, ed. Jerome Aixala, SJ (Saint Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1981), 290.

⁴ Pedro Arrupe, SJ, *One Jesuit's Spiritual Journey: Autobiographical Conversations with Claude Dietsch, SJ*, trans. Ruth Bradley (Saint Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1986), 34.

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ Arrupe, "Eucharist and Youth," 297.

⁷ Pedro Arrupe, SJ, "Eucharist and Hunger" in *Justice with Faith Today*, ed. Jerome Aixela, SJ (Saint Louis, MO: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1980), 172

⁸ *ibid.*, 173.

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ Pope Francis, Pastoral Visit to Assisi, October 4, 2013, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/homilies/2013/documents/papa-francesco_20131004_omelia-visita-assisi_en.html accessed 2 November 2013.

¹² Pope Francis, Homily for Mass on the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, May 30, 2013, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/homilies/2013/documents/papa-francesco_20130530_omelia-corpus-domini_en.html, accessed November 2, 2013.

¹³ Pope Francis, Vatican Radio Address, February 12, 2014, <http://www.news.va/en/news/pope-francis-eucharist-as-source-of-encounter-forg>, accessed March 20, 2014.

¹⁴ Pope Francis, Homily at Lampedusa, July 8, 2013, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/homilies/2013/documents/papa-francesco_20130708_omelia-lampedusa_en.html, accessed November 2, 2013.

¹⁵ Pope Francis, Corpus Christi.

¹⁶ Pope Francis, Address to the Students of Jesuit Schools of Italy and Albania, June 7, 2013, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/speeches/2013/june/documents/papa-francesco_20130607_scuole-gesuiti_en.html, accessed November 2, 2013.

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EUCCHARIST: LIVING & EVANGELIZING

A Table for All Peoples: From God's Table to Our Own. The Eucharist and Prophetic Transformation

by Lisa Marie Belz, OSU

Sister Lisa Marie Belz, a member of the Ursuline Sisters of Cleveland, is an assistant professor of religious studies and graduate ministry at Ursuline College in Cleveland, Ohio. She served on the Cleveland Mission Team in El Salvador from 1995-2001.

Have you ever wondered from where the items on your kitchen table originally came? The average North American table will have items on it from a league of nations. Today as I sat at table enjoying breakfast, I counted a number of items that did not come from the United States: sugar, coffee, bananas, avocados, and mangos, all of which, of course, are imported from places south of the border. The next time you go grocery shopping, notice the nations represented in the produce section alone. It is not only the food we eat, however, that comes from abroad. Did you ever read the names of the countries written on the labels on your clothes? Unless you sew your own clothing, you may be surprised to find a number of nations represented in your closet as well; countries like Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, or the Dominican Republic, among others.

More than food and clothing, however, are provided for us by workers from other nations. While serving as a missionary in El Salvador some years ago, I met a florist from a small Ohio town. He was in El Salvador to purchase poinsettias to sell for the upcoming Christmas season. I asked him why he was there buying poinsettias when they grow like wild in Texas, and, because Texas is half way between Ohio and El Salvador, he would surely save on travel and transportation costs. He explained that, given the low cost of labor in El Salvador, he had no other choice than to purchase from where his competition was purchasing, in order to keep his own shop open with a reasonable profit. Before leaving El Salvador with his poinsettias, he kindly slipped us a \$100 bill for our work with the poor.

The Human Cost of Poverty

We used the donation to purchase school supplies and uniforms for children whose parents could not afford them. Their parents worked hard to provide for them, and some parents even worked at greenhouses that grew poinsettias and other flowering plants for American florists. These parents had to take a bus to and from work, which cost them about two

dollars round-trip. After earning only three dollars a day for their labor, they had just a dollar left over after transportation costs, and that dollar went to purchase rice and beans one day and cornmeal the next, those simple foods comprising their daily diet, while they also tried to put aside each week some money for the monthly rent, since they did not own the simple, mud and stick, single-room dwelling which they made their "home." Yet, despite long, often ten-hour or more work days, they did not earn enough to be able to buy their children even the basics for school.

The usual wage for the workers whose labor provides so much for us remains even today astonishingly low. With Mexican currency presently devalued at 13 pesos to one U.S. dollar, wage-earners in Mexico now average the equivalent of five U.S. dollars a day, down from eight dollars ten years ago. For Salvadorans, the average wage is still around three dollars a day for agricultural workers, six for textile workers. The low wages given by the multinational companies that hire and exploit the labor of the developing world hinder poorer countries from any real economic growth. Without robust worker wages, there is no strong tax base, and without a strong tax base, a developing nation cannot provide for its citizens the sort of things that we in the developed world enjoy and take for granted, such as good schools, highly educated teachers, well-constructed bridges, potable water, paved roads, adequate health care, or social security.

Fed and nourished by the greatest feast of all, the Eucharist, we cannot remain indifferent to the hunger and misery of others without risk of becoming hypocrites.

In the small town of El Salvador where I used to live, there was a little boy, Armando, who drowned in a flash flood while walking home from school one day—there was no bridge over the little stream by his school. The stream, which normally was narrow and shallow enough to step over, occasionally swelled with runoff from the nearby mountains after a heavy rain, and on that particular day, it had rained all morning, turning the usually small stream into a raging torrent that swept the little boy's body almost to the ocean some five miles away.

In a country like our own with a strong tax base, that little boy would have never drowned; a bridge would have already been constructed by the local government. Unfortunately, in countries like El Salvador with low wages, such projects are rare because there is not enough tax revenue to pay for them. Without a strong tax base, there is little governmental funding for national infrastructure, local water works, roads, sturdy



bridges, etc. This, in turn, results in dwarfed national development.

But inadequate tax revenue also results in insufficient funds to build enough good schools for all the nation's children. The scarcity of adequate schools leads to an inadequately trained national work force. This severely incapacitates the formation of a robust professional class of competent teachers, doctors, nurses, business leaders, entrepreneurs, etc. Consequently, developing countries will have a more difficult time attracting companies beyond multinational sweatshops on the hunt for exploitable unskilled labor. Nations with poverty wages will also have a diminished capacity to develop thriving businesses of their own that can participate in the global economy. This state of affairs, however, suits multinational corporations just fine. Their profits are highest when their workers remain at a subsistence level, confined to a cycle of perpetual dependence from one generation to the next.

The Eucharist challenges us to make our table resemble God's own.

I have often heard the objection that it is better for workers from poorer countries to have low-paying jobs than no jobs at all. In spite of everything, so I have been told, we are doing poor countries a "favor" by purchasing the things their labor produces for us, right? The truth, however, is that without a fair living wage that provides access to adequate and healthy food, shelter, clothing, and education, workers in developing countries are condemned to a life of dehumanizing poverty, food insecurity, and servitude. What is more, a low-paid workforce is compelled to remain dependent on our handouts. To be honest, as I accepted my florist friend's admittedly generous donation for our school aid program, I couldn't help but ask myself the question: Which is better? To give the parents of our school aid children donations and handouts? Or to give them a fair living wage so that they would not need our handouts at all?

While I learned from my small-town florist friend a valuable lesson in economics, I also learned, while living among the poor of El Salvador and traveling among poor communities in Mexico and Central America, that there is indeed a cost, one often unnoticed, even if we in North America and Europe are not the ones paying for it. It is the cost paid by the children of the developing world. Many of them grow up malnourished because their parents are not given living wages to provide them with adequate food. Many others grow up without parents because their parents have left for *El Norte*, the North, in search of employment that promises to provide a better future for their family back home. And some children

never have a chance to grow up. Without access to potable water or health care—things that countries with a strong tax base are able to provide for their citizens—many children from developing countries never make it to age five.

So why do governments of developing countries not demand fair living wages from the multinational businesses that exploit the labor of their citizens? The problem is that when they do, these businesses threaten to move to another poor country with a more “welcoming” government. Such a move would pose a huge economic loss for a country desperate to keep its already high unemployment rate from going even higher.

What Can Be Done

What are we in the industrialized North to do, we who daily consume and use items produced by underpaid workers in the developing world? Once we realize what is going on, how are we to respond? One option is to ignore or forget this issue and to continue with our busy lives of ministry. Yet, as a people fed and nourished by the greatest feast of all, the Eucharist, we cannot remain indifferent to the hunger and misery of others without risk of becoming hypocrites.

A better option might be to look for ways to provide opportunities for education on fair labor to area schools, parishes, and deaneries. This could include offering lists of local retailers and stores with a known fair labor policy. Encouraging the patronization of fair labor businesses, as unpopular and problematic as this might seem initially, can, in time, become a catalyst for positive change, offering strong incentives for other businesses to conform to a new, higher standard of business ethics.

Ultimately, to effect lasting positive change, a groundswell is needed to demand enforceable and “teethy” governmental legislation which prohibits the sale of products sold off the sweat of the poor, so that only those companies with impeccable evidence of fair labor ethics may be given entry to local, regional, and national markets. Meanwhile, until such legislation is in place, it will be up to churches, schools, parishes, and dioceses to refuse to patronize or invest in businesses that exploit the labor of their employees, whether locally or abroad.

Imagine the sort of transformation that can result if the whole of the Catholic Church in America, from parish to parish and diocese to diocese, were to take a united stand on this issue and to demand a change. Then imagine the global transformation that would happen when Catholics



across the United States, Canada, Australia, and Europe come together to take a united stand in defense of laborers around the globe and their rights to a living wage. Imagine a world where all workers earned a living wage and had enough to eat and to live a full human life. Imagine.

God's Table for All


Perhaps this does not seem so practical. But then we might ask how practical was the prophetic imagination of Isaiah who could envision all humanity coming together to share in God's feast?

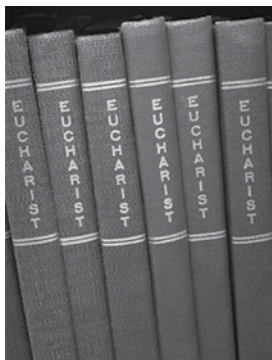
On this mountain, the Lord of hosts will provide for all peoples a feast of rich food and choice wines, juicy, rich food and pure, choice wines. On this mountain, he will destroy the veil that veils all peoples, the web that is woven over all nations. He will destroy death forever. The Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces (Is 25:6-8).

We might ask, too, how practical is the Gospel?

And people will come from the east and the west and from the north and the south and will recline at table in the kingdom of God. For behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last" (Lk 13:29-30).

Yet, this is the divine reality we celebrate in the Eucharist—God's Table for all peoples. The Eucharist, in offering to us God's Table, challenges us to make our table resemble God's own. God has given the world and all good things in it for the enjoyment and proper use of all. As Scripture tells us, the divine intention is for *all* peoples to share in the good things of the earth. Thus, the prophetic imagination must inspire our own. God's Table is for all. This is the reality into which the Eucharist calls us to live with authenticity, boldness, courage, and the power of love.

As we enter ever more deeply into the reality that the Eucharist holds out for us, may our tables come to be transformed more and more into a reflection, in miniature, of God's own: a Table for all peoples, where all are filled with good things and no one is left out or sent away hungry. 



EUCCHARISTIC TEACHINGS

Bernard Häring on the Eucharist

by Dennis Billy, CSsR

Bernard Häring, CSsR, (1912-1998) was a Redemptorist priest and one of the most influential moral theologians of the twentieth century. He was born in Böttingen, Germany, entered the Redemptorist seminary at an early age, professed his religious vows in 1934, and was ordained to the priesthood in 1939. Soon afterwards, his religious superiors sent him to the University of Tübingen to specialize in moral theology. His studies were interrupted, however, by the outbreak of the Second World War, during which time he served as a priest-medical in the German army in France, Poland, and the Russian front. After the war, he resumed his doctoral studies, went on to teach in the Redemptorist seminary at Gars in the Munich Province of the Redemptorists, and later was an ordinary professor at the Alphonsian Academy of the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome, where he taught moral theology from 1949-1987.

Father Dennis Billy, formerly professor at the Alphonsianum in Rome, now teaches at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

A prolific author, he is most remembered for the pastoral approach to moral theology that he developed in his multi-volume works on moral theology, *The Law of Christ* (1954) and *Free and Faithful in Christ* (1978-1981). His teaching on the Eucharist reflects this deep pastoral concern and concern for authentic Christian living.¹

Häring's Spiritual Outlook

Häring's spirituality is closely tied to the Redemptorist order, a congregation of priests and brothers founded by Saint Alphonsus de Liguori (1696-1787) and dedicated to preaching the gospel message of plentiful redemption to the poor and most neglected. The Redemptorists preach fundamental conversion (*metanoia*) through home and foreign missions and are known for their pastoral zeal, their competence as confessors and spiritual directors, and their closeness to the people.²

The Alphonsian Academy in Rome where Häring taught for almost 40 years brings this deep pastoral concern to the study of Catholic moral theology. Häring's work in the academy brought it to international



prominence in the early 1950s, especially through the appearance of what is now considered a classic in modern moral theology, *The Law of Christ*. This three-volume work contributed much to the movement away from the manualist tradition of moral theology that had been in place for almost 400 years and laid the groundwork for a new approach to the discipline, one based on Scripture and dialogue with modern thought.

Aperitus (theological expert) at the Second Vatican Council, Häring played a major role in the shaping of *Gaudium et Spes*, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (1965), and is recognized by many as the father of modern Catholic moral theology.³

Häring's spirituality reflects his deep roots in the mind and message of Saint Alphonsus, the patron saint of confessors and moral theologians. Just as Alphonsus was someone who used his theological acumen in his day to steer a *via media* between the extremes of rigorism and laxism, Häring promoted the responsibility of believers who, through Christ and in the Spirit, live under the law of freedom as adopted sons and daughters of the Father. His spirituality focuses on turning one's heart to God through dedicated prayer and responsible action. His teaching on the Eucharist reflects a pastoral concern rooted in the spirit of the Gospel and a deep love for Christ.⁴

Häring's Teaching on the Eucharist

For Häring, the sacraments are the means through which believers are able to worship God in spirit and in truth. They consecrate us sacramentally to God's glory and enable us to celebrate them as Jesus' disciples in order to render worship to God and be sanctified by grace. In this respect, the sacraments are actions of Christ that lay out the plan of salvation for us. When received with the proper dispositions, they mediate for us a personal encounter with Christ, are concrete signs of our membership in the church community, and are the ordinary means for receiving grace and for working out our salvation.

As actions of Christ, they are also actions of his body, the church. The entire church celebrates the sacraments, not simply those who have gathered for them at any particular place or time. This deep communal dimension of the sacraments emphasizes the catholic (i.e., universal) dimension of the church and brings with it the responsibilities of living in union with the church and her teachings.⁵

Häring's teaching on the Eucharist reflects this profound sacramental spirituality. He calls it "the foregathering of the sacred assembly around the risen Christ, who sits on the throne at the right of the Father, and the most intimate communion with him in commemoration of his death until he comes again."⁶

The Eucharist, for him, is the center of Catholic life and worship: "Mass as center' means above all a life with the church, for the vital center of the church is the eucharistic sacrifice: this is the whole sacrifice of Christ and of his holy bride, the church. *Sentire cum ecclesia* (a bond of feeling with the church, and work in union with her and for her) presumes a partnership in her life."⁷

The church's concern for the common good and the dignity of the person flows from its central act of worship.

He also points out Sunday should be "a day of fellowship in the breaking of bread."⁸ The Liturgy of Word and the Liturgy of Sacrifice, moreover, complement each other so that the eucharistic bread and the bread of the divine word are both broken and distributed to the faithful.⁹ In his mind, "the Logos, the Second Person who is the Word of the Father, gives both to us through the church."¹⁰

One of Häring's key insights is the centrality of the Eucharist for the moral and spiritual life: "If the Most Holy Eucharist is the center of our faith and our worship, then the whole of Christian life—both moral and religious—must be based on this central mystery."¹¹ He sees an intrinsic unity between liturgy and ethics and deplores "that unfortunate catechetical and theological systematization which treated the sacraments *after* the commandments, or only as an *adjunct* to the commandments of the covenant of *Sinai*, and which regarded them principally as a new 'set of duties' and at most as special 'means of grace' given to help us to keep those commandments, which are expounded without any reference to the 'sacraments of the new law.'"¹²

From this insight, he concludes that the eucharistic celebration must be a pastoral liturgy that "speaks with a living voice to Christian people, restores full meaning to the symbolic language of the sacraments, together with the words through which we understand them."¹³ In this way, it will have a powerful effect on our lives and its fundamental themes will "direct us towards a way of life based on the mystery of salvation."¹⁴



These themes include: the mystery of God's holiness (*mysterium tremendum*), the mystery of blessedness (*mysterium fascinosum*), the mystery of faith (*mysterium fidei*), and the mystery of unity and love (*mysterium unitatis*).¹⁵ The holiness of God, in other words, reaches out to us through the liturgy to divinize us so we might commune with him and one another in oneness of faith and in the unity of his love.

Observations

This brief exposition of Häring's teaching on the Eucharist highlights the centrality of the sacrament for the life of the church and its members. The following remarks focus on the implications of his teaching for moral theology and the believer's life of faith.

1. To begin, Häring's formation in the pastoral life of the Redemptorists and the spiritual outlook of their founder, Saint Alphonsus, had a profound influence on understanding of the Eucharist and its relationship to the Christian moral and spiritual life. The Redemptorists' emphasis on closeness to the people, meeting their needs, and even being evangelized by them, helped him realize that moral and spiritual theology were meant to serve the faithful, not be a burden to them. The moral law of the Gospel, in his mind, was a law of freedom in the Spirit, not a duty-oriented law of obligation. For Häring, Christian moral life was rooted in the love of God for humanity as embodied in the person of Jesus Christ. The Eucharist, for him (as for Saint Alphonsus), was the "sacrament of love" and the primary means for personally encountering Jesus in their lives.

2. Häring's life as a Redemptorist preacher and missionary also shaped his approach to the Eucharist and its impact on the moral and spiritual life. Preaching, for Saint Alphonsus, could take place in one of three ways: the spoken word, the written word, and through deeds. Of the three, personal witness was the most important, for it brought credibility to all that the preacher said and wrote. As a Redemptorist, Häring was deeply aware that Saint Alphonsus wanted the Redemptorist Congregation to be a community of saints and that prayer and participation in the sacramental life of the church were the primary means through which their sanctification would take place. Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament through regular visits has a special place in Redemptorist spirituality, for it was seen by Alphonsus as a way of shaping the soul and extending the grace of the liturgy into daily life. The Eucharist, in other words, makes saints of the faithful and enables them to preach the Good News of plentiful redemption through their actions. This witness, rooted in a

personal encounter with Christ in the Eucharist, was essential to Häring's approach to the Christian moral and spiritual life.

3. Häring sees the Eucharist as an important unifying bridge between the spiritual and moral lives of believers. The sacrament, for him, unites rather than divides these two important dimensions of Christian discipleship. It tells us that faith and action are intimately related and gives us a concrete way of rooting moral action in the church's sacramental practice and experience. As "the source and summit of the Christian life,"¹⁶ the Eucharist is the "sacrament of the new covenant" which not only inspires us to follow the way of the Lord Jesus, but also empowers us to walk it. It is central to the church's life and worship and lies at the very heart of all authentic Catholic spirituality. Häring believes the church needs to highlight this intimate relationship between the church's sacramental worship and the daily lives of the faithful through sound teaching, preaching, and catechesis. To neglect this important link is to place the very life of the church and the lives of the faithful at risk.

4. The Eucharist, for Häring, offers believers a chance for a personal encounter with Christ. Because this encounter is mediated through the church, it is at one and the same time both personal and communal. These two dimensions complement each other for the well-being of the church and that of each individual. Häring would be against any approaches to the sacrament that would, on the one hand, emphasize personal piety to the detriment of the communal participation in worship or, on the other hand, focus on communal conformity to the detriment of the dignity of the human person. This dynamic tension between the individual and the community lies at the very heart of the church's eucharistic worship and flows into the way her members are called to interact with the world. The church's concern for the common good and the dignity of the human person, in other words, flows from its central act of worship. By promoting these values through its actions in the world, the faithful give glory to God in the concrete circumstances of daily life.

5. Häring points out that a person must have the proper dispositions for this personal encounter with Christ in the Eucharist to take place. These dispositions include such things as a proper intention, freedom from serious sin, humility before God, faith in Christ's paschal mystery, hope in its redemptive powers and ability to transform the human heart, docility to the will of God, openness to the Spirit and its fruits, and a spirit of gratitude—to name but a few. Although Christ is personally present in the Eucharist, he emphasizes our responsibility to prepare ourselves appropriately with the proper internal dispositions.



Not to do so denigrates the sacrament and obstructs the flow of God's transforming grace into our hearts. The personal encounter with Christ, in other words, requires reciprocity between Christ and the believer. We will meet Christ in the sacrament only if we have prepared a proper place for him to dwell. The Eucharist cannot transform our hearts if we have darkened them by sin and cluttered them with inordinate attachments. To unleash the transformative power of Christ in our hearts, we must open them and allow the grace of his Spirit to do his work.

6. Häring's sacramental spirituality roots the Eucharist in the glory of the risen Christ and sees it as a celebration of the saints who have been, are being, and will be redeemed by him. As such, the sacrament offers the faithful hope in the power of God's redemptive love and inspires them to open their hearts to Christ and allow his Spirit to penetrate their lives. This sacramental spirituality is rooted in the notion that the grace of the Spirit is mediated through Christ and through the church and her sacraments. As Christ is the sacrament of God, and the church is the sacrament of Christ, so is the Eucharist the "sacrament of the church" and the "sacrament of sacraments." Through the Eucharist, his power of mediation extends itself to the very lives of the faithful so that the power of Christ's love manifests itself in a concrete, visible way. From this perspective, the Eucharist brings the glory of the risen Christ not only to the faithful, but also to the world. It enables the faithful to enter into the friendship of Christ and empowers them to live the gospel message in spirit and in truth.

The Eucharist makes saints of the faithful and enables them to preach the Good News of plentiful redemption through their actions.

7. Finally, the Eucharist, for Häring, is a multi-faceted mystery, one that embodies in a simple act of consecration, the mystery of God's holiness, the mystery of humanity's sanctification, the mystery of faith, and the mystery of unity and love. Aware that no theory or systematic presentation could ever fully exhaust the meaning of the sacrament, he focuses on a very limited area of inquiry: the importance of the Eucharist for the Christian life. Once again, this concern reflects his deep pastoral sensitivities and his awareness that Christ came to set us free from the slavery of sin and death. He does so by immersing the faithful in Christ's paschal mystery and effecting a gradual healing, restoration, and transformation of our wounded natures. Even here, Häring does not purport to exhaust the full impact of the sacrament for the moral and spiritual life. He seeks merely to emphasize its importance as the

“sacrament of the new covenant” to the freedom it brings under the new law of the Spirit and its central importance for the life of discipleship.

Although these observations do not exhaust Häring’s teaching on the Eucharist, they cover its major themes and demonstrate the important role it plays in the life of Christian discipleship. They also point to the integrated nature of his theological outlook and highlight the centrality of eucharistic worship for the Catholic moral and spiritual life today.

Conclusion

Bernard Häring was one of the great Catholic authors of the twentieth century and arguably the greatest moral theologian of his day. Seen by many as the “father of modern Catholic moral theology,” he played an instrumental role in steering the church away from a manualist tradition that over the years had become an overly rigid and systematized set of rules and regulations.

His ground-breaking, multi-volume moral theology, *The Law of Christ*, set the stage for the renewal of moral theology by rooting it in the Gospels and by initiating a dialogue with current modes of thought. He continued these efforts as a theological expert at the Second Vatican Council and made a major contribution to its message in the important role he played in the drafting of *Gaudium et Spes*, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World.

As a professor at the Alphonsian Academy in Rome for almost 40 years, he educated more than generations of priests, religious, and laity in his vision of a renewed Catholic moral theology. This message of renewal was further extended through his many writings, not the least of which was his second multi-volume work of moral theology, *Free and Faithful in Christ*. As a Redemptorist missionary and in the spirit of Saint Alphonsus, he also used the spoken word to spread his message of renewal: as a visiting professor at numerous universities, on the lecture circuit, and through countless workshops, retreats, missions, and preaching engagements.¹⁷

Influenced by his Redemptorist roots and his formation in Alphonsian spirituality, Häring emphasized the centrality of the Eucharist for the moral and spiritual life of the faithful, focusing especially on its closeness and accessibility to the people and its ability to lead them to a personal encounter with Christ and empower them to live the gospel message freely and responsibly in the Spirit.



This deep pastoral concern represents the hallmark of his moral and spiritual vision, and it should come as no surprise that the Eucharist, as the “sacrament of the new covenant,” lies at its very heart. This sacrament, in his mind, captures the essence of the Christian life. By immersing us in the mystery of Christ’s passion, death, and resurrection, it puts us in touch with the mystery of God’s holiness, sets us on the path of holiness, and empowers to live authentic lives of Christian discipleship. It does this by shaping our souls and forming our characters in conformity with that of Christ and his Spirit.

As a moral theologian, Häring was involved in many of the controversial ethical issues of his day: abortion, contraception, euthanasia, the just war, nuclear disarmament—to name but a few. He always tried to examine these issues in the light of gospel values and authentic church teaching as interpreted by the magisterium. Although he disagreed at times with official church teaching, he did so from a conviction of conscience and a deep love for the church and its well-being. Although he was often misunderstood and sometimes even suffered for his controversial opinions, he was never discouraged and firmly believed that he was a prophetic voice for the church for both present and future generations.

Through it all, he was sustained by a deep love and devotion to the Holy Eucharist, a sacrament which brought him close to God and to God’s people, and which led him along the way of holiness into the mystery of divine love.



Notes

¹ For a brief chronology of Häring’s life, see Bernard Häring, *Free and Faithful: My Life in the Catholic Church—An Autobiography* (Liguori Publications: Liguori, MO, 1998), 185.

² *ibid.*, 15-22.

³ *ibid.*, 69-103.

⁴ *ibid.*, 147-176.

⁵ Bernard Häring, *The Law of Christ*, trans. Edwin G. Kaiser, vol. 29, Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1963), 139-188.

⁶ *ibid.*, 150.

⁷ *ibid.*, 309.

⁸ *ibid.*, 309.

⁹ *ibid.*, 312.

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ Bernard Häring, *A Sacramental Spirituality* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1965), 125.

¹² *ibid.*, 123-124.

¹³ *ibid.*, 125.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, 126.

¹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶ Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, 11.

¹⁷ See Häring, *Free and Faithful*, 131-176.



EUCCHARISTIC SPIRITUALITY

From the Sanctuary to the Street: Interview with Saint Paschal Baylon's Helping Hands Ministers

by John Christman, SSS

In 2001, three clowns were driving home from participating in the Saint Patrick's Day parade in downtown Cleveland, Ohio, when they saw someone passing out food to the homeless of the city. One of them said to the others, "Wouldn't it be great if we could start doing something like that?" And over the last 13 years that is exactly what they have done. From three volunteers with a dream to help the homeless to a bustling ministry of 100 volunteers, they have made a concerted effort to not only serve the struggling people of the Greater Cleveland area, but to build relationships with them. They have gained a citywide reputation for their work and continue expanding to this day. Centered at Saint Paschal Baylon Parish in east suburban Cleveland, I recently had the opportunity to speak with some of their dedicated members.

Given the great success and recognition the Helping Hands Ministry has achieved over the years, what would you say to Emmanuel readers who feel called to start a similar ministry in their own parishes?

Bob Ukovic: I guess the first thing would be to find someone or some outreach group that is currently attending to the least of our brethren. We just can't jump into trying to help people unless we understand their situations and are willing to accept and love them just as they are. Then we will learn how to approach their situational needs. We must throw away judgment and expectations if we are to represent the Lord's work. We must be ready for a life-changing experience, not only by being the hands and feet of Christ by doing what he calls us for. We must also get out of ourselves, our comfort zone, and become the face and heart of Christ by being responsible and willing to let the Holy Spirit guide us in these times of need.

Deacon Joe Bourgeois, SSS: First of all, you have to have two or three persons interested in the homeless, speak to your pastor, put something in the parish bulletin, and, above all, pray to the Holy Spirit. Contact our Helping Hands Ministry at Saint Paschal Baylon Parish if you need help



getting started.

Rick Costanzo: It has taken many years to get to this point in the ministry with a board of directors and many volunteers. But in any major city across the United States or anywhere for that matter, one will find the hungry and the poor. Just reaching out to others who are in need is a good beginning. Saint John Paul II stated: "Christian love is not simply an act of charity, but an encounter with Christ himself in the poor."

What are the biggest challenges to maintaining a ministry like this?

Deacon Joe: Not doing it for oneself, but first and foremost keeping God as our focal point. It's also important to be alert and watch for burnout. Likewise, one should always be looking for more volunteers, especially among the young.

Bob: The biggest challenge is trying to recognize Satan's attempt to disrupt or frustrate the members by making it about them and not about the mission. Prayer, commitment, communication, and organization are the main components to keeping focused on the ministry's calling. Satan will use chaos and human egos to destroy any work of the Lord.

Rick: I would say communication and coordination with a large volunteer group are major challenges. Having a budget and being able to put the resources where they are most needed is also challenging.

Given that poverty and homelessness have numerous causes, many of which point to larger social justice issues, what difference do you think your ministry makes?

Rick: The Helping Hands Ministry brings hope to the hopeless. It may be their first meal of the day. It may be the clean clothes and underwear they haven't had in sometime. It may be their first hug or only hug of the day. Or it may be the first time anyone has prayed for their needs.

Bob: As I mentioned earlier, we try not to judge or let any religious or political biases divert us from our primary purpose: to let the least of our brothers and sisters know they are loved. We are all about hope and trust. We have made it a point to make their lives and situations personal to us. Plus, we bridge the gap for other organizations by helping get people off the streets and following up with visitation. We make a difference in their personal and spiritual lives.

Deacon Joe: Doing one's best in making the homeless feel they are important, through being compassionate, listening to them, and trying to get them off the streets and rehabilitated. For those who are not homeless but out of work, we try to care for them by giving them necessities (food, etc.) and listening to them to see what kind of work may be available for them.

Could you share with our readers a story that illustrates why this ministry is important to you?

Deacon Joe: A few years ago around the month of October, we were feeding the homeless on the streets in downtown Cleveland. I saw a young man in his late thirties across the street in a doorway near Saint John's Cathedral. He did not want to be bothered when approached! I saw him again before Thanksgiving and approached him with some toiletries and food, and then he began to talk with me. I found out he was a Catholic. He was thrown out by his father years before because his father found him drinking. As an alcoholic on the streets, he never went back home. I told him, "Maybe it is time for you to go home," but he said, "My father would never let me back in!" I said to him, "May I call your home and let them know that I saw you?" He said yes. I called his home, and one of his sisters answered and began to cry. She cried because she "found out he was alive." She told me that their father died a year ago.

I went back on the streets and found him, told him that his father had died, and that his sisters wanted him back home. I gave him my cell phone, and he called his home the day before Thanksgiving. They ran to pick him up and brought him home for the Thanksgiving holiday. His sister called me the day after Thanksgiving and said, "It was the greatest Thanksgiving they had ever had."

Bob: I have many, many stories of changed lives of brothers and sisters whom we attend to, some good and some not so good. But, to me, the importance comes from the changes in the lives of the volunteers. In the past 14 years, I have found a new loving and vibrant group of people I can call my extended family. We all say the people we attend to are "broken" and only the Lord can totally put them back together. And we know the Lord works through us. We also know this will be a never-ending duty for us. We have to continually show up and leave the results to God. But what I didn't know was that many of these beautiful volunteers I walk side by side with are themselves "wounded." This includes me. By that I mean that as life takes its twists and turns, things happen that make us oblivious to others and their situations. What this ministry did was to



give me a new sense or a new feeling. I really can't put it into words. All I know is that it has made me a better husband, son, brother, friend, but most importantly it has made me a better follower of Jesus Christ. And I can attest that many of the volunteers feel the same way. As Jesus was wounded for us, we feel his wounds through them. And we continue to persevere in his name.

Rick: I love the story from the Gospel of Luke where a teacher of the law asks Jesus, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus goes on to tell the parable of the Good Samaritan, and at the end says, "Go and do likewise." I always want to know why we do what we do. This gospel story tells me why we do what we do. It is out of love and obedience to our Lord and Savior.

Finally, and I think this is an important question for the readers of Emmanuel, what makes your ministry eucharistic, that is, how do you see the Eucharist affecting your ministry?

Bob: This may be the easiest question to answer and the longest to put into words. It is slowly repairing the brokenness and frustration I have in myself with the healing power of love and hope. It is happening by way of communion with the Lord. I am convinced the Eucharist presents to us miracles beyond any coincidence. Many, many times in the last 14 years, I have prayed, celebrated Mass, asked the Holy Spirit for direction, sat in the adoration chapel talking to Jesus, spoken with clergy and parishioners on what to do next. I have always received the answer that worked best. *The answer is "in the bread."* And the bread is shared among the body.

The way I share is to try to emulate what Jesus asks us to do, "Love one another." And the best way for me to do that is to attend to the least of my brethren . . . unconditionally. Our ministry has many disciples who share Holy Communion together as well as sharing our lives. We all are on a mission that is directed by the Holy Spirit, we understand what we do has to come from a place of love. *For me, that place of love is "in the bread."*

In our mission, we attend the poorest of the poor in the city: the sheltered, the mentally ill, the addicted, and the spiritually bankrupt . . . and we understand they are our brothers and sisters. They have been put into our lives for a reason. The reason being: we asked to serve the Lord. They come to us not only looking for food, clothes, and hygiene products, they want prayer. They ask for Jesus. We attend to them with these needs, and

as we drive away, we know we have given them one other thing . . . hope. And sometimes, I lose focus but I know where to look . . . *in the bread*. I am blessed to be a disciple in this mission and humbled to serve for him. I really have no idea what my purpose in life would be without it. I could never have planned something more beautiful. All glory goes to God for allowing me to be a trusted servant. It's all about the Eucharist, our communion with the Lord and others, the living bread of our lives which we share with everyone.

Rick: Christ was the ultimate gift and sacrifice for all time. He stated, "Do this in memory of me." He wasn't only talking about the Mass and his body and blood, but was also asking us to sacrifice ourselves for him and his kingdom. The Eucharist is the ultimate gift, Christ himself. God has given so we also may give.

Deacon Joe: Saint Peter Julian Eymard was interested in what we might say are the three most important ministries in the life of my religious order, the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament. One: a great love for the Eucharist; two: love for the priesthood; three: love for the poor. I feel that when we go out to not only feed and clothe people in need, but when we eat with them and listen to their stories of brokenness, then we are truly "breaking bread" with them!



NOTE: See the inside back-cover for images of Saint Paschal Baylon's Helping Hands Ministry.

In Christ's Peace Deceased Members

Father Dana G. Pelotte, SSS
Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament

Priests in the Eucharistic League whose names begin with K, L, M, N, O and P are reminded to celebrate the Eucharist for deceased members during July and August.



PASTORAL LITURGY

Fruits of the Constitution: RCIA—Part IV

by John Thomas Lane, SSS

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

The past three columns reviewed portions of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA). We've discussed how the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy has blessed us with a revision of the rites to help us understand "the mysteries" and their sacredness. In this column, we will consider some of the minor rites of the catechumenate as well as those required during Lent, the Scrutinies.

The restoration of the catechumenate returned the dismissal of the catechumens to the Roman Ritual. RCIA, 67 explains why the catechumens are dismissed after they enter this "order" or state of relationship to the church:

The celebrant recalls briefly the great joy with which the catechumens have just been received [for the Rite of Acceptance] and urges them to live according to the word of God that they have just heard. After the dismissal formula, the group of catechumens goes out but does not disperse. With the help of some of the faithful, the catechumens remain together to share their joy and spiritual experiences.

The dismissal helps the baptized see the distinctiveness and the importance of the gift of initiation:

My dear friends, this community now sends you forth to reflect more deeply upon the word of God which you have shared with us today. . . . We look forward to the day when you will share fully in the Lord's Table.

This part of RCIA underscores that it is "a community project": members are part of the "team" to share the nourishment of the word of God and, at times, the rituals with the catechumens. The mysteries need time to be processed; the RCIA builds in these elements of "mystagogy," unpacking the mysteries to better form people into Catholic Christians. RCIA, 116

states how “the catechumens are normally dismissed at this point” in each eucharistic liturgy. As has been the custom previous in the first millennium, they have this time apart to prepare, deepen their love of God’s word, and recognize the importance of “table membership.”

RCIA, 75-106 identify different rituals that may be used with the catechumens to support their “suitable formation” (RCIA, 75). The process is meant to last a year, but many parishes have the catechumenate from Advent to Lent. RCIA, 76 states that “the duration of the catechumenate will depend on the grace of God and on various circumstances,” some of which are listed. In the National Statutes, the U.S. bishops advised a yearlong catechumenate. Let me share some of the rituals present for further reflection and review:

- Celebrations of the Word of God (RCIA, 81- 89)
 - o Formation in the Lord’s Day.
 - o Gradual admittance to the Sunday Mass.
- Minor Exorcisms (RCIA, 90-94)
 - o “They draw the attention of the catechumens to the real nature of Christian life, the struggle between flesh and spirit, and the importance of self-denial” (90).
 - o These prayers, listed in RCIA, 94a-k, could be used over the weeks of the catechumenate, especially 94i for the gospel call of Matthew or 94j for a reading about Paul.
- Blessings of the Catechumens (RCIA, 95- 97)
 - o Usually given at the end of a celebration of the word, but could be used at the end of a catechesis.
 - o Any person may lead these blessings.
- Anointing of the Catechumens (RCIA, 98-103)
 - o One of the oils blessed at the Chrism Mass, the Oil of Catechumens is to be used after the homily, and this rite may be celebrated “several times” during the course of the catechumenate. “Further, for particular reasons, a priest or deacon may confer the anointing privately on individual catechumens” (100). The anointing is on the breast, on the hands, or “even on other parts of the body. If there are a great many catechumens, additional priests or deacons may assist” (103).
 - o This is not done at the Easter Vigil, but may be done during the Penitential Rite (Scrutiny) for children.
- Presentations (RCIA, 104-105, 157-162, 178-183, 197-199)
 - o “The presentations normally take place during Lent, the period of purification and enlightenment, after the first and third scrutinies.

But for pastoral advantage and because the period of purification and enlightenment is rather short, the presentations may be held during the period of the catechumenate, rather than at the regular times." If there is a longer period of the catechumenate, especially for one waiting for an annulment or for other pastoral reasons, it would be helpful to share the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ephphetha Rite earlier.

The next step before the Rite of Election is an optional rite in the United States edition of the RCIA. The Rite of Sending helps the parish and catechumens see how the bishop is part of the initiation process: "Election belongs to the bishop" (107). "This rite offers the local community the opportunity to express its approval of the catechumens and to send them forth to the celebration of election assured of the parish's care and support" (107). The *Book of the Elect* is a registry that was used centuries ago and part of the history of the New Testament Book of Revelation. Some dioceses ask the candidates for election (catechumens) to sign the book in front of the bishop; others sign it at the parish and present the book to the bishop. The act of signing is quite important and each diocese and its RCIA/Worship Office should make careful preparation for parish and diocesan celebrations of the Rite of Election.

The Enrollment of Names, the second step of the RCIA, is a key ritual and hopefully one in which every pastoral leader has the opportunity to participate. RCIA, 118-128 highlights its importance. RCIA, 128 says the Rite of Election is "celebrated within Mass"; however, not all dioceses follow this practice, citing pastoral concerns, namely, the ritual and celebration is about the catechumens and they are not able to receive Holy Communion.

The next section of the RCIA covers the period of purification and enlightenment (138-140), scrutinies (141-146), and presentations (147-149). RCIA, 141 highlights the Scrutinies on the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent. These rituals go with specific Gospels from Cycle A. In many parishes, pastors have adapted the ritual due to the burden of preparing two different homilies; however, RCIA, 146 makes clear the purpose and connection of these lectionary readings with these Scrutinies.

Lastly, the presentations continue the tradition of handing down our important texts. While the ritual only describes them being proclaimed, many parishes have the custom of including a parchment handout of the prayers (the Creed and the Lord's Prayer). The question always seems

to be “How can we best pass on these texts?” It is interesting to note that these are celebrated during the week after the first and third Scrutinies, respectively. Also interesting to note, RCIA, 160 has the more ancient Apostles Creed rather than the Nicene Creed as the first option to be shared with the elect.

In our next column, we will finish this examination of the RCIA with Holy Saturday and the Easter Vigil.

Note: The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, the Bishops Committee on Divine Worship, and the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions are planning a major consultation on the RCIA from October 1-3, 2014, in Lombard, Illinois. Go to fdlc.org to register and receive more information.

The July and August Calendar

Tuesday, July 1—Canada Day; Friday, July 4—Independence Day

See the special texts in the *Roman Missal* for the national days of Canada and the United States.

Wednesday, July 9—Saint Augustine Zhao Rong and Companions

Monday, July 14—Saint Kateri Tekakwitha

Friday, July 18—Saint Camillus de Lellis

The memorial of the founder of an order dedicated to the care of the sick would be an especially appropriate day to celebrate the anointing of the sick.

Saturday, July 26—Saints Joachim and Ann

Contact Emmanuel Publications for copies of a holy hour in honor of Saint Ann, the grandmother of Jesus and the patron of both this magazine and of the United States Province of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament.

Saturday, August 2—Saint Peter Julian Eymard

Saint Peter Julian Eymard is the founder of the Congregations of the Blessed Sacrament and the Aggregation of the Blessed Sacrament. Contact us at *Emmanuel* for copies of a holy hour honoring the Apostle of the Eucharist and see below for a special holy hour to encourage prayer in the presence of the Eucharist.

Back to School Reminders

In August, most of the country goes back to school now. See the *Book of Blessings* (BB), 522-550, for a blessing for the beginning of the school year. One may adapt the prayers in the *Roman Missal* for the Beginning of the Civic Year for use for a school year Mass.

Another trend in many parishes is a market day or having local farmers bring their crops to share in the bounty. During the summer (Northern Hemisphere), it would be helpful to celebrate BB chapter 59, the Order for the Blessing of Food or Drink or other elements. The solemnity of the Assumption is the traditional day to celebrate the fruits of the harvest in Mediterranean parishes. (See Blessing for the First Fruits of the Harvest (BB, 1007-1022) or Blessing of Produce (*Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers*)).

Taizé Holy Hour for Saint Peter Julian Eymard August 2

The “Taizé style” of prayer is based on a “mantra” where one gets lost in the music and chant by way of its repetition. From GIA Publications, and their ecumenical guide book (800) 442-1358, this form of prayer is meant to join Christians together. It encourages prayer in the spirit of the Taizé Community in France. An instrument, such as a piano playing the melody of the music line, leads the style. Then a cantor sings the melody line. Other instruments and voices, with harmony, are added and build in volume, with the assembly joining in as comfortable. The mantra or line of the music repeats for as long as five minutes or more, with instruments and voices diminishing until all hum the chant line of music.

One way to celebrate this holy hour is in the Catholic setting of prayer in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Prepare ahead of time in church: corporal for the altar, monstrance on the altar, a newly consecrated host for the luna/monstrance, an incense bowl, candles for the altar and around the altar or sanctuary area, and mood lighting.

Opening Song “In the Lord I’ll be Ever Thankful” (Jacques Berthier) (5 minutes)

Opening Prayer

Gracious God,
you chose Peter Julian Eymard to develop his eucharistic vocation
and accepted his call to be an apostle for the Eucharist.

May we contemplate this sacred mystery
and recognize you in our daily life,
living our call to be your disciples for the Eucharist.

May Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament,
model of the Eucharist,
help us to live our lives in service and thanksgiving,
grateful always for this gift of love.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Silent Meditation *5 minutes*

Taizé Song "Confitemini Domino" (Jacques Berthier)
Add incense during this song.

Silent Meditation *5 minutes*

Reading 1 John 4:7-8
(Or a selection from the readings of Saint Peter Julian
Eymard)
Without love, we have known nothing of God, for God is love.

Silent Meditation *5 minutes*

Taizé Song "Nada Te Turbe" (Jacques Berthier)

Silence *5 minutes*

Reading From the writings of Saint Peter Julian Eymard, Office of
Readings.
*It is under the influence of love that we can most easily rise
up to God.*

Homily

Silence *5 minutes*

Explanation of Lighting Candles

Saint Peter Julian Eymard

felt called to focus all attention and glory to Christ eucharistic.

As he brought attention and light to the Eucharist,
he called forth disciples to bring for the eucharistic mission
of the church and the world.

The Eucharist lights our way of faith,
dispels darkness and evil,
and nourishes us for the journey of life.

Let us gather around the altar
to renew our union with the Lord
and our own baptismal commitment to be Christ's disciples,
shedding our faith and light for all to see.

Please bring your candle, light it on the candles around the altar,
bring your song sheets,
and remain standing around the altar as we continue in prayer
and gather to show that we are the body of Christ,
called to bring our light to the world.

*The presider goes to the altar candles to assist the members in lighting their
candles. All gather and stand in a circle around the altar.*

Song "With You, O Lord" (from Taizé or other song)

*After all have gathered around the altar, pause for a couple minutes of
collective silence.*

Intercessions Response: "O Lord, Hear My Prayer" (Jacques Berthier)

We turn to our God, confident that he hears our needs.

1. For an end to all wars and violence, especially in (N. [name]
the country with the biggest struggle currently), we pray:
2. For favorable weather and bountiful crops, we pray:
3. For those who serve our country around the globe, we
pray:
4. For the safety of all this summer, we pray:
5. For the sick and those who care for them, we pray:
6. For those in need of healing, we pray:
7. For others to join the Associates of the Blessed Sacrament,

the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, and the Sister
Servants of the Blessed Sacrament, we pray:

For what else shall we pray?

Spontaneous petitions from the assembly if possible.

And now we pray the perfect prayer of peace that our Savior
taught us.

The Lord's Prayer *Chanted*

Benediction "Jesus Christ, Yesterday, Today, and Forever"
 (Suzanne Toolan)

Closing Prayer:

God of hope and promise,
enliven our hearts with your love and care
that we make the risen presence of Christ known in all we do.

May we allow Christ to mold us into his image
and feed the hungers of the world with our gifts and love.

Saint Peter Julian was your faithful adorer
who brought the fullness of your eucharistic vision
to a world in need of your love,

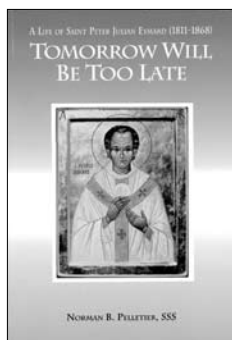
Help us to be your true disciples,
caring for those in need, lifting up the lowly of spirit,
and building your eucharistic kingdom,
for you are Lord forever and ever.

Closing Song: "If You Believe and I Believe"

*After the song is finished, extinguish candles and exchange the Sign of
Peace.*



Discover Saint Peter Julian Eymard, the “Apostle of the Eucharist,” in these books from Emmanuel Publications

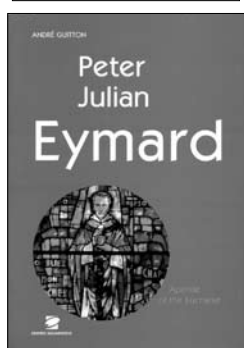


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Norman B. Pelletier, SSS

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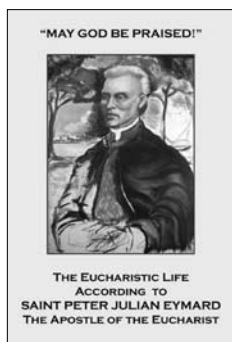
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Translated by Conrad Goulet, SSS

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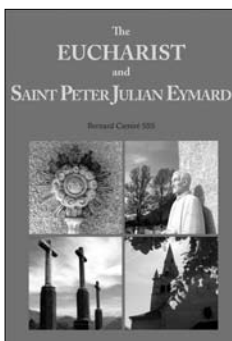


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Edited by James W. Brown

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BREAKING THE WORD

HOMILETICS - Ordinary Time

by Anthony J. Marshall, SSS

Parables

In August 2009, one of my beloved confreres died. Father Donald Jette, SSS, was a shining example of what it means to be a priest and religious, and I miss him dearly. He loved people very much, and he truly was worthy of the title “Father,” for that is what he was for those who knew and loved him.

One of the qualities I admired most about him was his preaching. His homilies were easy to understand and applicable to daily life. One way he conveyed the truth of the Gospel was through stories. I remember one such story he told about people who were happy. I believe he used this in connection with the beatitudes. The story goes that a group of researchers set out to discover why certain people were always happy, despite difficulties and suffering. Their research concluded that happy people see the good in others and they look for what is right with a situation rather than what is wrong. Seeing goodness in others and in all things is what kept them happy. Now I probably didn’t do justice to Father Jette’s story: he would have told it in an inspiring manner, probably drawing three points from the readings too. Nevertheless, it was his use of stories or scenes from everyday life that made his homilies so edifying.

Isn’t this precisely what Jesus did in the Gospels? He told stories or parables to convey the mystery of the kingdom of God and the ideals of discipleship. His audience was captivated not only by his miracles, but also by the parables he told. Jesus’ stories challenged his hearers, and at the same time taught them about God’s tender compassion and love.

What is a parable? “At its simplest, the parable is a metaphor or simile drawn from nature or common life, arresting the hearer by its vividness or strangeness, and leaving the mind in sufficient doubt about its precise application to tease it into active thought” (C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom*, [rev. ed. New York: Scribner, 1961], 5). Being teased into active thought, as Dodd puts it, is what the Sunday liturgical readings seek to do. Evangelization begins by meeting people where they are—even those on the margins—and using parables, scenes from everyday life, to tell the Good News, just like Jesus.

Blessed Sacrament
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Vocation Director.

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
July 6, 2014

Rejoice and Shout for Joy

Breaking the Word

Zechariah 9:9-10

The prophet Zechariah writes to a people in need of hope. He exhorts them to rejoice and shout for joy at the presence of their king, who will come to them in a most unexpected manner: riding on an ass. The evangelist Matthew quotes this pericope for his description of Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey on Palm Sunday (see Mt 21:1-11). This is the reason why Matthew's narrative has Jesus' disciples bringing both an ass and a colt for Jesus to ride, whereas Mark and Luke lack any reference to Zechariah, and thus no reference is mentioned about an ass; Jesus rides solely on a colt in their narratives.

Romans 8:9, 11-13

Paul is illustrating the struggle we face between giving up our former selves (i.e., the flesh) and living in the freedom of Christ (i.e., the life of the Spirit). We are to live a new life in Christ Jesus, who became like us in all things except sin (cf. Rom 8:3-4). In this liturgical context, the reading for today invites us to recognize the power of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives and to let go of that which keeps us from freely following Christ.

Matthew 11:25-30

Today's gospel passage contains a tender invitation from Jesus to be with him and to lay our lives at his feet, for he is meek and humble of heart. This passage follows upon Jesus' admonition of the crowd who took offense at his ministry (cf. Mt 11:6). Jesus is frustrated with the crowd that seeks signs from him, but fails to recognize the mighty deeds he does for them, namely, "the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the Good News proclaimed to them" (Mt 11:5). Jesus praises the Father for those who do recognize his mighty deeds.

Sharing the Word

Recognizing the presence of God in our midst is not always easy, especially when things either go terribly wrong or when our life is filled with so many distractions that no room is left for the Most High. Zechariah had to remind his people that God is indeed a faithful God, who will send the promised Savior to them in unexpected ways. Who would ever consider riding an ass to be a sign of triumph? God is full of surprises.

Some in the crowd had failed to recognize the mighty deeds Jesus performed as signs of God's revelation. Nevertheless, Jesus praises and thanks God for those who do, saying that "no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him" (Mt 11:27).

In our own life, we might find it difficult to recognize the action and power of God at work within us and among us. Just as in Jesus' time, so too in our own day there are many people in need of healing from ailments that are physical and/or spiritual. Jesus invites all of us to come to him for healing, for strength, for mission. "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light" (Mt 11:28-30). May our prayer today simply be "Here I am Lord; I come to do your will!"

Praying the Word

Ever-faithful God,
at every moment of our lives you are present.
Help us to recognize your sanctifying grace
at work within us and among us.
With ever grateful hearts,
we praise and thank you,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time July 13, 2014

The Living and Effective Word of God

Breaking the Word

Isaiah 55:10-11

Today's first reading is situated within a beautiful invitation to lovingly trust in God. Isaiah 55 begins with the famous verse inviting all who are thirsty to come to the water, those without money to eat richly without paying and without cost. The two verses that make up today's reading describe for us the power of God's word; nothing can frustrate God's design or plans.

Romans 8:18-23

Continuing from last Sunday's reading, we find a beautiful theology of creation in today's selection from the epistle. As a result of humanity's fallen state, creation is in need of redemption, and with us "all creation is groaning in labor pains even until now" (Rom 8:22), awaiting the glorious return of Christ Jesus.

Matthew 13:1-23 or 13:1-9

The longer version of the Gospel contains both the parable of the sower and its explanation. It is punctuated by an explanation of why Jesus uses parables to convey the "word of the kingdom" (cf. Mt 13:19) to his disciples. The shorter version simply contains the parable without any additional explanation.

Sharing the Word

God's word is effective. Nothing can prevent God's will from being carried out in our lives, in our world. That's a summary of today's readings. Isaiah said it more poetically in the first reading. His people were no doubt confused and in need of reassurance that God would fulfill the promises made to David his servant (see Is 55:3-5). God is indeed faithful and true; we need only to trust in his divine plan.

Jesus' parable of the sower illustrates for us the kind of trust that

will bear fruit “a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold” (Mt 13:8). Trust is the rich soil in which the word of God is sown. When we trust someone, we let go of some of our autonomy in a given situation. Children are wonderful examples of the kind of trust we need to emulate. They instinctively trust that mom and dad will care for them and provide for their needs. Our children know that they can’t provide for their daily bread, but they trust that when it is dinnertime, there will be food on the table. Parents know the sacrifices involved in providing for their children, and in this they share in God’s handiwork as co-creators.

When we lack trust in God’s purposes and will at work in our lives, we become like rocky or thorny soil incapable of fully receiving the word and letting it bear fruit in our hearts. One example of such soil is when we believe in God, but wish to make him in our own image and likeness rather than recognize that it is we who are wonderfully made in God’s own image and likeness. In this respect, we tend to be selective in our acceptance of gospel values and church teachings, preferring only those that are agreeable with our political views, theological bent, or life philosophy. That’s thorny soil. But the rich soil person, the one full of loving trust in God’s purposes and designs, is the one who accepts the Gospel with integrity and follows a “both/and” approach to theological dialogue rather “either/or.” When we place our full trust in the Christ of the Gospels and the word of God as taught by his church, then we bear abundant fruit for the Master of the harvest from the rich soil of our souls.

Praying the Word

Glorious God,
you are always faithful to your promises
and you never abandon us in our time of need.
Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us
so that we can learn to trust you more fully
and so bear an abundant harvest for you.
This we ask through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
July 20, 2014

God is Ever Patient and Merciful

Breaking the Word

Wisdom 12:13, 16-19

This text from the book of Wisdom is beautifully matched with today's Gospel in that it speaks of God's patience. Presumably addressing the Most High, the author's words point to belief in a just and merciful God who unwearingly awaits the repentance of his people.

Romans 8:26-27

In our lectio continua of Paul's epistle to the Romans, we encounter two brief verses that are packed with a kind of theological "job description" of the Holy Spirit: he aids us in our weakness, prays through us, searches our hearts, and intercedes for us.

Matthew 13:24-43 or 13:24-30

Our gospel passage contains three more parables about the kingdom of heaven: the field with wheat and weeds, the mustard seed, and the woman mixing yeast to make leavened bread. The short version just contains the parable of the weeds and wheat, eliminating the two other parables and the explanation of the parable of the weeds and wheat. The images of the mustard seed and the little measure of yeast yielding a large batch indicate that the kingdom of heaven has small beginnings, but will experience marvelous growth. Patience is an underlying theme in today's Gospel.

Sharing the Word

I find our political commentary in the United States to be quite vitriolic at times and nearly always divisive in nature. Invariably, there are opposing sides and little room for common ground. In fact, those who do seek common ground are frequently portrayed as either weak in their commitment to a particular party or agenda or out to win votes. On cable TV news, talk radio, or in the blogosphere, people are seemingly quick to

judge and condemn another because of opposing viewpoints.

However, as we see revealed in today's readings, the values of the kingdom of God are not those of division or destruction, but rather patience and mercy. In the kingdom, in its small beginning here on this side of eternal life, we Christians can judge—based on the Gospel—one another's actions as either good or evil, right or wrong, but we can never judge our brothers and sisters as such. Saint Augustine was the one who exhorted us to love the sinner and hate the sin (cf. *City of God*, Book XIV, Chapter 6). We can never assume to know the mind or intention of another. Only the Holy Spirit can know the hearts of men and women (see Rom 8:27).

The parable of the weeds sown among the wheat is demonstrative of our duty as Christians to love all of God's people. Love does not equal simple tolerance, for in love we Christians forgive one another, we speak and live the truth in charity (see Eph 4:15), and we reverence God's presence in each other. Tolerance does none of that! We can tolerate a headache, but we don't love it. Eventually, tolerant people desire to remove that which is merely tolerated. There's the fundamental difference. As Christians, we are not called to tolerance, but to love. We are not the judge and jury of another. God's justice is all-powerful and awesome; so, too, is God's mercy and compassion, (see Wis 12:16, 18). What Jesus reminds us of this Sunday is that to be his disciples, we must imitate God's justice and mercy, his patience and tenderness, in order to recognize the kingdom of God beginning to work in and through us, and so ultimately reach its fullness when Christ returns to judge the living and the dead.

Praying the Word

God our Father,
you are so patient with us
and you are quick to forgive us when we repent of our sins.
By the power of your Holy Spirit,
help us to imitate your tender compassion
with all whom we meet this day.
This we ask in faith through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
July 27, 2014

All Things Work for Good for Those who Love God

Breaking the Word

1 Kings 3:5, 7-12

In this passage, we encounter the beautiful prayer of Solomon before the throne of the Almighty. Rather than ask for wealth, power, and earthly domain, Solomon simply petitions God for a heart that is capable of discerning right from wrong, so that he can govern his people with justice. God grants Solomon his request and declares him to be the wisest in all of history. If only our own world leaders today would make such a prayer request of the Most High!

Romans 8:28-30

Paul refers to Jesus as the “firstborn among many brothers and sisters” (Rom 8:29). Earlier in the epistle, Paul was quick to point out that we are God’s adopted sons and daughters and “joint heirs with Christ if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him” (Rom 8:17). This is the glory and justification referenced in the text.

Matthew 13:44-52 or 13:44-46

Today’s Gospel concludes the parables about the kingdom of heaven (Matthew’s preferred way of calling the kingdom of God). Here we see how valuable the kingdom is. While the short version of the Gospel includes only the two brief parables about the treasure in the field and the pearl of great price, the fuller version includes the parable of the fishing net containing good and bad fish and the judgment at the end of time.

Sharing the Word

Pope Francis has frequently referred to our society as a throwaway culture. We are quick to dispose of commodities, food, and even one another—especially the elderly and infirm. In a June 2013 General Audience, the Holy Father spoke thus: “A person dying is not

news, but if the stock markets drop ten points, it is a tragedy! Thus people are disposed of, as if they were trash. This 'culture of waste' tends to become the common mentality that infects everyone. Human life, the person is no longer perceived as a primary value to be respected and protected, especially if poor or disabled, if not yet useful—such as the unborn child—or no longer needed—such as the elderly" (Vatican Radio translation).

Contrast this depiction of modern society with the values of the kingdom of God which, as Jesus tells us, are like a treasure buried in a field, a pearl of great price, and a huge catch of fish of every kind. Because of our baptism, the kingdom is within us and it is spreading all about us. Therefore, our values must be gospel values, the standard of the kingdom of heaven. We should not and cannot stand idly by while our society considers human beings and creation to be disposable commodities rather than valuable treasure. Likewise, we Christians cannot condemn each other simply because of ideological differences or beliefs. That's what the last parable about the net hauling in a huge catch of fish that cannot be separated at sea is all about. We are at sea now, riding in the Barque of Peter, and so cannot judge another; but upon shore (i.e., at the end of the age [cf. Mt 13:49]), Christ will return to judge the living and the dead. This continues the emphasis on God's patience and mercy from last Sunday's readings.

The kingdom of God is indeed a pearl of great price. It is worth everything we have to enter into the fullness of God's reign; it cost God his Son. Jesus paid the price for our pearl, our field with the buried treasure, in his precious blood shed upon the cross. God's kingdom is worth our very selves, our eternal souls, and at the offering of the eucharistic sacrifice of the Mass, we celebrate the joy of finding that buried treasure, that pearl of great price in the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

Praying the Word

Heavenly Father,
grant us an understanding heart,
so that we might discern the values of your kingdom
and manifest them in our lives.
Infuse us with the fragrance of your Holy Spirit,
so that the world may recognize your reign
and render you praise and thanksgiving
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
August 3, 2014

There's Plenty of Room at the Table

Breaking the Word

Isaiah 55:1-3

Our first reading portrays a wide invitation to faith in the God of Israel. All peoples are invited to trust in the salvific goodness of God, who charges human beings nothing for his abundant blessings (see Is 55:1-2). Isaiah offers us a comforting and hopeful image of God's tenderness and compassion.

Romans 8:35, 37-39

Paul continues to describe God's immense love for us as revealed in Jesus Christ. It is a steadfast love, and nothing, either earthly or heavenly, will ever succeed in ending this love. As the preface of the first Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation puts it, "Never did you turn away from us, and, though time and again we have broken your covenant, you have bound the human family to yourself through Jesus your Son, our Redeemer, with a new bond of love so tight that it can never be undone." Amen!

Matthew 14:13-21

Shifting gears in the lectionary, today's Gospel moves us from Jesus' parables to the narrative of the miraculous feeding of the five thousand. What is omitted in the lectionary is the story of the death of John the Baptist and Herod's ideas about who Jesus was. The story of the miraculous feeding is indicative of the kingdom's abundant blessings, and so it echoes well today's first reading: the people come to Jesus who lavishly nourishes them without counting the cost.

Sharing the Word

I learned a lot from my family, especially my mother. One of the most enduring lessons that she taught me is that of hospitality, always welcoming someone to the table. If my mom were to write a book, I'd suggest that the title be *There's Always Enough Food for One More*, because

that's the lesson in hospitality she taught me. My mom and dad both enjoy having company over for a cookout, and welcoming guests and friends seems to be a trademark of my family. All are welcome and are nourished!

Our readings today speak of divine hospitality and God's steadfast love. There is plenty of room at the table in the kingdom of God. And the best part is we don't have to count the cost because Jesus already paid it for us on the wood of the cross.

And what's more is that God's love and mercy endure forever. Nothing can "separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom 8:39), Saint Paul reminds us. God's steadfast and merciful love is manifested in the eucharistic sacrifice, wherein we commemorate the passion, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus and recall how much God truly loves us. Indeed, it is around the altar where each person is welcomed, forgiven, tenderly caressed by our merciful Father, and renewed in his or her ability to manifest the kingdom by a holy and good life. At the eucharistic table of our Lord, there is abundant spiritual food and drink: the bread of life and the chalice of salvation.

Praying the Word

Merciful Father,
you lavishly nourish us every time we gather around your altar
and give you thanks and praise in Christ Jesus our Lord.
May we be renewed always with
the sacrament of Christ's body and blood
and so find the strength we need to proclaim
your steadfast love in both word and deed.
This we ask through the same Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
August 10, 2014

Eagerly Waiting to See the Face of God

Breaking the Word

1 Kings 19:9a, 11-13a

In this reading, we encounter the prophet Elijah on Mount Horeb (i.e., Sinai). Upon the mountain, where Moses had once seen the Lord God, but only from behind (see Ex 33:18-23) and God gave him the law, Elijah, too, was privileged to experience a revelation of the Most High. Elijah is on Mount Horeb because he fled for his life following his killing of the false prophets of Baal (see 1 Kgs 18:40; 19:1-8). From here, Elijah will take Elisha as his protégé and successor in calling Israel back to God's ways.

Romans 9:1-5

Paul shares with the Romans his love for his fellow Jews, and the struggle he has with faith in Christ Jesus and his separation from his ancestral heritage. The struggle comes from Israel's lack of faith in the Messiah and Paul's own acceptance of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 14:22-33

Following last Sunday's story of the miraculous feeding of the five thousand, this week we hear the story of Jesus walking on the water. It is a story that reveals Jesus as the Son of God. If the disciples were unsure of Jesus' identity following the miraculous feeding, surely seeing him walking on the water enabled them to proclaim, "Truly, you are the Son of God!" (Mt 14:33). When coupled with the narrative of God's revelation to Elijah on Mount Horeb, as in today's liturgy, this passage illustrates God's revelation of his glory through his Son, Jesus Christ, only to be surpassed by the crucifixion and resurrection.

Sharing the Word

I suspect that most of us would relish the opportunity to experience the presence of God just as Elijah was privileged to experience it on Mount Horeb. Just the chance to hear that divine whisper and so

be strengthened in our faith would be something we would not want to miss. Our faith in God is strong, but sometimes we need booster shots, so to speak, especially in times of doubt, fear, and anxiety. For Elijah on Mount Horeb and for Jesus' disciples adrift on the stormy sea, the calming presence of God was enough to bolster their faith and to send them forth renewed in their relationship with God.

We need moments of divine revelation like Elijah and the disciples had. And we receive such moments each day, although we are probably unaware of them. God reveals himself to us in a variety of ways, but not always in the ways we expect. Remember, Elijah expected God to be found in the blustery winds, powerful earthquake, and dangerous fire, but God revealed himself in a tiny whispering sound. The disciples weren't expecting Jesus to appear to them walking on the water—they thought they were seeing a ghost—but once he came to them, they acknowledged him to be the Son of God.

From our simple, mundane daily activities to the extraordinary moments in our lives, God is present and constantly revealing himself to us. Clearly, we find the comforting presence of God in the church's sacraments, especially in the Eucharist, and in her teachings. But he is also present in the phone calls we make to loved ones, in the works of mercy we perform daily—consciously or unconsciously—and in the faces of our brothers and sisters, especially the poor, wherein the face of Christ is reflected for all to see. We might never experience a walking-on-the-water moment like the disciples did, but we do experience God's subtle and mysterious ways in our lives, ways which renew our faith in him and strengthen us in his love. This week, let's look for the countless ways God is present to us and through us.

Praying the Word

God our Father,
in the fullness of time, you revealed to us
the depths of your love and mercy
in Jesus Christ.
Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us,
so that we might recognize and praise you,
present and active in our lives.
This we ask through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time
August 17, 2014

God's Gifts and Call are Irrevocable

Breaking the Word

Isaiah 56:1, 6-7

The prophet Isaiah encourages the people to imitate God's own justice and mercy and welcome even strangers into their assembly. Nobody is to be excluded from God's house, which is a house of prayer. All are welcome in God's sacred space.

Romans 11:13-15, 29-32

Paul speaks lovingly about his ministry to the Gentiles. In the wider context of this epistle, it is important to remember that Paul is writing from a Jewish perspective. He uses the image of branches grafted onto a vine to illustrate how the Gentiles are assimilated into the promises of Israel and share in God's salvation wrought by Jesus Christ (see Rom 11:17-28).

Matthew 15:21-28

The gospel story demonstrates the implications of the first reading from Isaiah. Jesus is in Gentile territory, and a Canaanite woman displays great faith in him by worshiping before him (see Mt 15:25). In response, Jesus grants her prayerful request. Earlier in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus sends the Twelve to the "lost sheep of Israel" to the exclusion of pagans (i.e., the Gentiles and Samaritans) (see Mt 10:5-6). Here Jesus demonstrates great inclusion in his pastoral solicitude.

Sharing the Word

If God's house is truly to be "called a house of prayer for all peoples" (Is 56:7), then we must seek people wherever they are. We cannot simply wait for people to come to our sanctuaries; rather, we must go to the margins and find them, as Pope Francis so often reminds us.

I have no doubt that Saint Paul struggled early on in his ministry with the Christian mandate, rooted in Isaiah, of welcoming all people.

From the Acts of the Apostles (22:3-5) and from his own writings (1 Cor 15:9; Gal 1:13-14; Phil 3:5-6), we know that Paul was a learned Pharisee and true son of Israel, and that he persecuted the early Christians because of their faith and differences. His letter to the Romans is an apology of sorts or an explanation of how, following his conversion and baptism, he now finds himself ministering to and with people on the margins of his day, namely, the Gentiles and others who were excluded from the synagogue. His baptism and subsequent apostleship were not taken lightly. Rather than simply go through the motions of conversion, Paul relied heavily upon the Holy Spirit and on his profound faith in Jesus Christ, so much so that at one point in his ministry he stated, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives within me" (Gal 2:20).

Paul's Christian faith is a model for each of us. The people on the margins of society today are the uncatechized, the immigrants, the poor and the hungry, the unbelieving, and so many others. Like Paul, we need to act on our deep faith in and love for Jesus and his church. In the words of Pope Francis, "Being with Jesus demands that we go out from ourselves, and from living a tired and habitual faith."

Praying the Word

Lord Jesus,
just as you welcomed all who came to you in faith,
we ask that you give to our hearts
a generous outpouring of your compassionate spirit,
so that, like Saint Paul and so many saints,
we might serve faithfully in your name,
for you live and reign forever and ever.
Amen.

Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time August 24, 2014

You Are the Christ

Breaking the Word

Isaiah 22:19-23

This text comes from a series of oracles given by Isaiah. Our lectio for today concerns Shebna, with whom God is not pleased. God threatens to remove Shebna (see Is 22:17-18) and replace him with Eliakim, whom God found to be a loyal servant.

Romans 11:33-36

Paul's words contain powerful theology and poetry concerning almighty God. It is truly reflective of his own spirituality and theological depth, born from a theology done on his knees, so to speak.

Matthew 16:13-20

Peter proclaims Jesus to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mt 16:16), and in reply Jesus makes him the rock foundation of the church (see Mt 16:18). This is the only use of the word ἐκκλησία (church) found in the Gospels; it is used at different times throughout the rest of the New Testament. In Greek, ἐκκλησία denotes an assembly or congregation of the people.

Sharing the Word

Earlier this year, we celebrated the solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, the two great pillars of the church. Each had a unique relationship with Christ and was entrusted with varying responsibilities by Christ Jesus. Using broad strokes, we can say Peter was tasked with the pastoral leadership of the nascent church while Paul was sent to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. Christ used their God-given gifts and talents to shepherd his flock and to lead souls to heaven. He knew what each was capable of and missioned them accordingly.

The same is true for each of us. Jesus knows our strengths and weaknesses, just as he knew Peter's and Paul's. And yet, like Peter and

Paul, he chooses us to bear witness to the unfathomable riches of God's mercy and love (see Rom 11:33). None of us is worthy of being a Christian, but each of us is called through baptism to evangelize others. How we do so depends on our particular gifts and talents.

Jesus called Peter his rock, he sent Paul to be the premier evangelist, and he calls us to know, love, and serve God in this life and to sing his praises in eternal life. What a joy it is to be a Christian, to be on fire with the Gospel!

Praying the Word

Loving Father,
you have gifted us in so many ways,
and you are glorified when we use our gifts and talents
to praise you and to serve one another in love.
May we have the faith of Peter
and the courage of Paul
to proclaim Christ, the Son of the living God,
through our words and deeds,
for he is the Lord forever and ever.
Amen.

Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
August 31, 2014

The Cost of Discipleship

Breaking the Word

Jeremiah 20:7-9

Containing one of Scripture's most memorable lines (i.e., "You duped me, O Lord, and I let myself be duped" [Jer 20:7]), the reading depicts Jeremiah complaining to God that his calling to the prophetic ministry was a form of divine trickery. Jeremiah's task as a prophet was not an easy one, as he had to tell God's people difficult things concerning captivity (see Jer 20:1-6), and his youth no doubt made him all the more timid to speak to his elders what God had inspired him to prophesy (see Jer 1:5-10).

Romans 12:1-2

The first two verses of chapter 12 of Romans, which the lectionary proposes for our reflection today, contain a deep sacrificial theology, where Paul urges his readers to offer their very selves to God, including their bodies. Conformity to the present age is not an option for Christians; rather, the recognition that we all belong to Christ and are his—and not our own—is what Paul underscores in his words (see Rom 14:8).

Matthew 16:21-27

Following Peter's profession of faith in Christ as the Son of the living God (Mt 16:16) last week, this Sunday's Gospel shows Jesus calling Peter "Satan" for his obstinacy. Jesus not only describes what must happen to him, namely, his passion and rising on the third day, but he also invites his disciples to enter into the paschal mystery with him through self-denial and taking up their crosses in order to follow him.

Sharing the Word

Nobody ever said being a disciple of Jesus Christ would be easy, right? If ever we were under the impression that being a Christian was meant to be a life of luxury, today's readings should help to squelch such an erroneous notion.

God called Jeremiah at a young age to prophesy to an obdurate people. His message was not “comfort food,” but the difficult truth of life in exile in Babylon accompanied by much suffering. No doubt, Jeremiah had his youthful ideals when he began his prophetic mission, but at this point in his mission—having just been released from custody for his prophetic utterances (see Jer 20:3)—Jeremiah questions God’s purposes vis-à-vis his vocation. Did remaining faithful to God have to cost him so dearly?

Peter must have been thinking along a similar line as Jeremiah, given that when Jesus told his disciples of his impending passion and resurrection, Peter responded that it shouldn’t be such, not for the Messiah (Mt 16:22). Jesus not only rebuked Peter, but he also rebuked the notion of easy discipleship.

Throughout the centuries, remaining faithful to God has never been without cost. From the death of the prophets in Old Testament times, to the brave witness to Christ given by martyrs past and present, we see how being a beloved daughter or son of God costs us our very lives. Here in the United States, discipleship is certainly a lot easier than it is for our brothers and sisters elsewhere in the world where Christianity is not the majority religion or even allowed to be professed openly. But, even here, our secularized culture is making it more and more difficult for us to publicly practice our faith beyond the walls of our churches. The Health and Human Services contraception and abortifacient mandate is just one clear example of the challenges the church faces in remaining faithful to Christ. Nevertheless, through our weekly participation at the eucharistic table, the Lord Jesus strengthens us to remain steadfast in our commitment to the Gospel, and he assures us that God doesn’t dupe us. God’s promises are true to those who hold out until the end.

Praying the Word

Eternal Father,
being a disciple requires great discipline and patience.
May the sacramental life of your church,
the witness of the saints and martyrs,
and the preaching of her pastors
renew us in our commitment
to daily take up our crosses
and follow your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.





THE EUCHARIST & CULTURE

Art • Music •
Poetry • Books

Art Review

GIRL IN A SHOPPING CART

Paul D'Amato,
1989

by John
Christman, SSS

Fyodor Dostoyevsky once famously stated, "Beauty will save the world."¹ No doubt there are generations of artists, theologians, and religious people who would like to believe that this is true. We want to believe that "beauty will save the world." We want to believe that the uplifting and inspiring rays of beauty can shine through the most devastating of circumstances. We want to believe that the horrors and tragedies of life will not have the last word. We want to believe that beauty can lift us out of our suffering and heal our vision. We truly want to believe that "beauty will save the world."

So what then do we do when we are confronted with suffering? Moreover, what do we do when we are confronted with innocent suffering, like the kind witnessed in Paul D'Amato's heart-wrenching photograph *Girl in a Shopping Cart*? Here we see a young girl alone and apparently abandoned in a shopping cart. Her hair is unkempt. Her appearance speaks of neglect. Her eyes are tightly closed as she utters a cry so upsetting that we can almost hear it tear through the silent page. Scattered around this poor child are pieces of garbage and refuse. A chain-link fence in the background bespeaks her condition with a spray painted commentary, "NO CA\$H REFUND." The only warmth in the photograph seems to be the light from a setting sun.

Do seekers of beauty simply wince and turn away from such images? Do they lament these situations of poverty and suffering but do little to work toward changing them? The great twentieth century theologian Edward Schillebeeckx offers an alternative response to such troubling images.

For Edward Schillebeeckx, these moments where we are confronted not with beauty but with real human suffering and injustice are "negative" moments of "contrast."² Schillebeeckx describes a "contrast experience" as an experience that we have of the world that strikes us as being completely wrong or unjust.³ For instance, when we see a young girl

alone and screaming in an abandoned shopping cart, we have an immediate and visceral negative reaction. Something is wrong with the world. Innocent children should not suffer. This is unjust.



But Schillebeeckx doesn't leave us there in that moment of anguish. Instead, he says that this moment of "contrast" also stirs in us an awareness of the world we think should be. In our reaction against the sufferings and injustices of this world, we begin to acknowledge our own sense of the justice and goodness that we desire to exist in the world. Therefore, the "contrast experience" also offers us a choice. As the theologian Elizabeth Johnson says, "The contrast challenges people to a decision: either close their minds and deny what they have experienced, or use it as a springboard to address and struggle with the causes of suffering."⁴ Do we then "close our eyes" to the reality of the "Girl in the Shopping Cart" or do we start to think of a way to work toward alleviating the suffering of innocent people like her.

Emmanuel readers, however, may need to take this a step further. The fact that this young girl is in a shopping cart draws our mind to the presence, or in this case, the absence of food. There is no food in this shopping cart. In fact, it is completely empty except for a plastic jug of water.

At every Mass, after the conclusion of the Eucharistic Prayer, we ask God to "give us this day our daily bread." Certainly, this "bread" of which we speak includes our eucharistic bread, but it would seem misguided if we were to separate the eucharistic bread from the literal bread that sustains our daily lives. The Eucharist isn't just about our spiritual needs. It's about the totality of our needs as human beings, which requires food simply to survive. Moreover, if our Eucharist is to be truly understood as "communion," then we must not only share our bread with the hungry, we must share our lives with them as well.

The young girl in the shopping cart is in great need, like so many people in our world. She is hungry and she is alone. If a eucharistic community will not help her and those like her suffering from poverty and economic injustice, what does our Eucharist mean?

¹ Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Idiot*. Trans. David Magarchack (New York: Penguin Books, 1955), 394.

² Edward Schillebeeckx, *The Schillebeeckx Reader*. Ed. Robert Schreiter. (New York: Crossroad. 1984), 54-56.

³ *ibid.*

⁴ Elizabeth Johnson, *She Who Is* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1992), 63.

Poetry

His Feet

I contemplate the feet of Jesus;
those feet clad in shabby leather sandals
or bare, washed in the waters of the Jordan and the Galilee;
nails cracked, calloused from the miles walked in his Father's name:

Out of Egypt as a child, across the deserts and the mountains;
from Nazareth to Jerusalem, the Boy-Prophet amazing his elders in the temple.

These feet, tender and sweet as a tiny babe's for his mother to kiss,
and again, bloodless and white, for her to kiss at death.

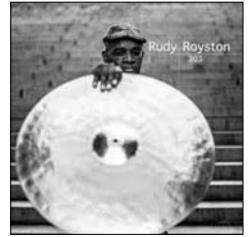
These are the feet that carried him from Tyre to Capernaum, from Olivet to Sidon,
clad in the dust of roads long lost; scratched by thorns.
The feet of a man like all his fellows, and yet,
they bore the divine weight of perfection for all the world.

Swathed in unguents beyond all cost, cleansed with the silk of a woman's hair,
foretelling the myrrh and frankincense of his tomb.
These bleeding feet, dragged through the stones to Golgotha,
skewered together on the wood of his cross of martyrdom;
these are the feet that carry me home.

Ethel Lapitan

Music Review

Jazz may not be the first musical genre that comes to mind when one thinks of religious music. Classic organ pieces or heartfelt gospel hymns may hold pride of place in our minds. And yet, musicians have long been using jazz for religious expression to inspiring effect. From John Coltrane's innovative and expressive religious journey charted in his classic album *A Love Supreme* to Dave Brubeck's jazz-inflected choral Mass setting, jazz musicians have discovered their own way to express their religious beliefs and sentiments through the music they hold dear. In this regard, Rudy Royston's debut album *303* impresses not only with its skillful musicianship, but also with its subtle religious dimensions that adds depth and substance to his sound.



Rudy Royston
303
Greenleaf Music,
2014

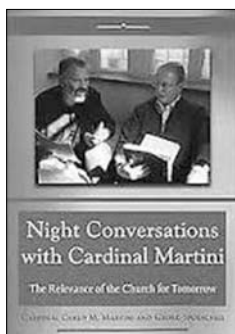
First and foremost, it must be said, Royston is a drummer. The cover photo of *303* leaves no room for doubt on that issue. Royston's drumming, however, offers more than just speed or virtuosity. It offers a genuine sensitivity to the spirit of the pieces being played. This skill no doubt attracted the likes of jazz great Bill Frisell, with whom Royston plays in Frisell's Big Sur Quintet, and it's on display throughout *303*. The stylish horns, piano, bass, and reverberating guitar never have to compete with the drums. Instead, they blend into a dynamic and absorbing whole. For example, in "Prayer (For the People)," Royston quietly creates intricate rhythms on the cymbals as the frantic bass and sustained notes of the trumpet engage in an intense dialogue. In fact, the drums fade out almost completely on one of *303*'s most creative and straightforwardly religious pieces.

Amid the clatter of racing original tunes like "Bownze," Royston offers a reverent and meditative unexpected rendition of Mozart's famous eucharistic motet "Ave Verum Corpus." Here Mozart's eminently beautiful choral work is transformed into an instrumental hymn perhaps less ethereal than Mozart's original, but more experiential. If Mozart's work strikes the listener foremost as a communal prayer of praise, Royston's interpretation seems more like a personal contemplative prayer. The grandeur of the eucharistic mystery is interiorized into a ballad that may just bring unexpected religious reverence into unsuspecting jazz clubs around the country.

Yet, like a good preacher, Royston likes to keep us on our toes. He throws some contemporary indie-rock into the mix as well, with a cool take on a Radiohead fan favorite "High and Dry," and offers us the easy charm of original tunes like "Goodnight Kinyah," that keep you humming and whistling well after the last notes of Royston's album have ended. If jazz were a completely secular endeavor, they certainly forgot to tell Rudy Royston.

by John
Christman, SSS

Book Reviews



NIGHT
CONVERSATIONS
WITH CARDINAL
MARTINI: The
Relevance of
the Church for
Tomorrow.
Paulist Press,
Mahwah, NJ, 2013

"The church is 200 years behind the times. . . ." These words, captured in headlines throughout the world, are those of Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, spoken on August 8, 2012, two weeks before his death, in an interview with Reverend George Sporschill, SJ, and a friend, Federica Radice Fossati Confalonieri.

Originally published in German in 2010, the title of this book is a clue to its contents. *Night Conversations with Cardinal Martini: The Relevance of the Church for Tomorrow* is an English translation of conversations that the archbishop of Milan held with Father George Sporschill in 2007. A world-renowned biblical scholar and author of many spiritual and scholarly works, Cardinal Martini retired in 2002 and lived in Jerusalem from that time until his death.

The night conversations between the two Jesuits focus on questions submitted by young people, friends of Father Sporschill, an Austrian, who since 1991 has developed a care network for street children and wayward youth in Eastern Europe.

The text explores a wide variety of questions including current lifestyles, challenges of faith and practice, decision-making, contemporary social issues, a Christian worldview, etc. Reflection on these questions and their topics provide the focus of the book.

Cardinal Martini evidences great respect for youth. "In Jerusalem, we talked a lot about today's youth. . . . What does youth expect? And what does the world expect of its youth? A difficult world demands their involvement. . . . I am convinced that where there are conflicts, a fire is burning, and there the Holy Spirit is at work. I have seen that by meeting with many young people" (V, Forward One). In other parts of the text, the cardinal speaks of his relationship with young people based on dialogue and his desire to learn from them.

Seven chapters comprise the 119 page text. Topics deal with "What Sustains Life?" "Courage to Decide," "Making Friends," "Close to God," "Learning to Love," "For an Open Church," and finally, "Fighting Against Injustice."

Within this variety of issues, the cardinal addresses contemporary concerns with forthrightness, notably questions of sexuality, Communion

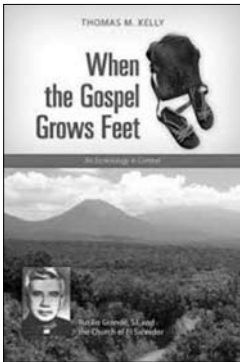
for the separated and divorced, the clash of civilizations, Christianity's relationship to Islam, the church's openness toward women. One example is Chapter Five, "Learning to Love." In the cardinal's response to controversial subjects such as birth control, the AIDS epidemic, etc., he calls for "self-giving love" as a way of dealing with such issues. "By self-giving, people open themselves to God. In all our physical encounters, we strive toward this goal. Having this goal in view is more important than asking whether this or that is permitted or is a sin" (95).

Martini is just as forthright in his recommendations for leadership in the church. To the question of what Jesus would do if he lived today, the cardinal responds: "He would be involved in struggles with those in positions of responsibility in the church and remind them that their work involves the whole world; that they are not here for navel gazing, but need to look out beyond the borders of their own institution" (20). Calling for experiments with the simple life, with less bureaucracy, he asks bishops to be attuned to the Holy Spirit, to listen to the laity, and together to develop a program for the future.

Throughout his conversations, Martini's own spirituality reflects his Jesuit training and his appreciation for the *Exercises of Saint Ignatius*. He lauds the place of spiritual companions in his life and feels that "the church needs nothing more urgently than such masters or companions who understand how to lead others into a relationship with God" (87). Several pithy reflections offer wonderful advice for developing a healthy spiritual life based on a relationship with Jesus, which in turn advances the work of the church as an effective agent for Christ. It is this thesis that he hopes to communicate to youth as the future of the church.

Night Conversations with Cardinal Martini: The Relevance of the Church for Tomorrow would have proved easier reading with a better organization of its varied questions and topics. But, for the patient reader, it can be very informative, inspirational, and hopeful. It is likely that many will see in Pope Francis the kind of leader envisioned in this text.

Father Allan R. Laubenthal, STD
Rector Emeritus
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Cleveland, Ohio



WHEN THE
GOSPEL GROWS
FEET.

Thomas M. Kelly,
Liturgical Press,
Collegeville, MN,
2013

This book, which emphasizes an “ecclesiology in context,” has special significance in view of the election of a new pope—Francis from Argentina—and from the fact that the majority of the Latin American population is under the age of 20. This could be a providential moment for the church in Latin America and even for the larger church as a whole. As Marie Arana wrote in the June 20, 2013, *New York Times*:

The new pontiff represents many beginnings: first Latin American, first Jesuit, first to take the name of Saint Francis of Assisi, first to hail from the Southern Hemisphere, first non-European in 1,272 years. His election represents a clear shift in Catholicism’s center of gravity away from Europe: almost 40% of Catholics today live in Latin America and the Caribbean; in 1910, 65 percent were European. The choice also signals a church in fighting mode. As the late Reverend Edward L. Cleary, an American specialist in Latin American politics, put it, “The future of the Catholic Church lies south of the border.” It is counting on Latin America to save its soul.

Thomas Kelly’s book, which highlights the life and martyrdom of Rutilio Grande, SJ, is a positive contribution to needed reforms in the Catholic Church. Kelly’s presentation is both educational and pastoral. He describes clearly the excellent ecclesial pastoral preparation which Grande received for his ministry—especially from his training at IPLA (The Pastoral Institute for Latin America) based in Quito, Ecuador—and his influence on Oscar Romero.

However, recognizing the importance of Yves Congar, OP, as the key ecclesialogist for Vatican II, I suggest that explicit reference be made in future editions of the book to Congar’s “conditions for reform without schism” (cf. *True and False Reform in the Church*, Liturgical Press, 2010).

Kelly discusses the “reception” of the teachings of Vatican II and he states that “it could be argued that the majority of North American Catholics have not accepted or internalized the profound changes of Vatican II” (73), then goes on to say: “The adjustment has not been easier for the Catholic Church in Latin America.” I wish to disagree here. Whereas both the North American church and the Latin American church have faced challenges in “receiving” Vatican II, I believe that the Latin American church has had a significantly more effective reception of these teachings, since it has experienced them in a more “process” experience. As I wrote in “Chile: The Lived Experience of Vatican II” (*Emmanuel*, August/September 2013):

Historically, the Latin American Catholic Church responded quicker and more vigorously in its efforts to reconfigure itself in the light of Vatican II than either its European or North American counterparts, and CELAM (Conference of Latin American Bishops) has, from the very first, been in the vanguard of innovations despite some differences of opinion within CELAM about how best to live out the council.

Such development in Latin America reflects “the ecclesiology in context” which Rutilio Grande developed so well.

One of Kelly’s very helpful pedagogical contributions is his careful explanations of the inductive and deductive methods of “doing theology.” This is very important for understanding the way that many Latin Americans “theologize.” Correctly understood, this also assists in having a better grasp of how the Latin Americans prepare their official documents, and also how they develop varying versions of Liberation Theology.

It is the manner in which Kelly elaborates on “Lessons for the Church in North America” that I find most helpful (223). He cites three areas for growth in the U.S. church: 1) embracing social analysis as part of pastoral strategy; 2) the promotion of a healthy model for the utilization of lay and ordained ministry; 3) the rediscovery of a truly social dimension of faith for the North American church.

I agree completely with his conclusions, and I thank him for them. Finally, I am encouraged by his “Questions for Discussion,” which follow the major chapters of his book, questions which lead to a clearer understanding of the influence that Rutilio Grande had on the pastoral development of Archbishop Oscar Romero. I definitely recommend this book.

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EUCCHARISTIC WITNESS

Dr. Tony E. And Ethel N. Lapitan

We come from two very different traditions—Tony, a cradle Catholic, born in the most Catholic country in Asia, the Philippines; Ethel, with Quaker, Jewish, and Pilgrim roots, growing up in post-war Germany. Yet, here we are today, after 54 years of marriage (June 2014), with a large family, active in our parish of Saint Vincent de Paul in Holiday, Florida.

We have traveled far to meet each other and to develop our faith life in the Catholic Church. There was a time when Tony struggled with questions about his faith during his sophomore year at the University of the Philippines, but thanks to a wonderful university chaplain, Tony was strengthened in his beliefs. He was active in the church from his youth, as an altar server and in the Legion of Mary working in the slums of the city.

Ethel, on the other hand, attended Protestant services on the army base where she lived, enjoying scripture study. Her first religious memory is of attending Vacation Bible School at a Presbyterian church, learning to sing, “Yes, Jesus Loves Me.” Those words stayed with her through the years, and when Tony and Ethel met at the University of Oregon and started attending Mass together, she felt that she was coming home at last.

We have been so blessed over the years with dear friends who have been priests, religious sisters, and brothers, especially our many close friends in the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament. The example of their faith and joy in living a Catholic life and their love freely given to us have helped us to reach out to others, especially at Saint Vincent de Paul. We serve in that same joy as Associates of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, as Communion ministers, as readers, in faith formation, and in whatever ways we are needed.

All along the way, the reality of what the Eucharist truly means has given us the strength to give back to the church we love so much. The wonder of the Catholic Church is not only that it is the church founded by the apostles over 2,000 years ago; it is that Catholics accept the message of our Lord to love one another without reservation, to care for all peoples and the fragile world we live in, and to make a difference for the betterment of humankind.

The Eucharist is not a symbol of our faith. It is the living heart of that faith, the universality and the future of Catholicism.





Saint Paschal Baylon's Helping Hands Ministry

See article on page 311



[L-R] Anthony Rossi, Father Joselito Hitosis, SSS, Bob Ukovic,
Deacon Joe Bourgeois, SSS, Rick Costanzo





The Eucharist is the life of the people. . . . All can come together without the barriers of race or language. . . . It gives them a law of life, that of charity, of which it is the source; thus it forges between them a common bond, a Christian kinship. All eat the same bread; all are table companions of Jesus Christ.

Saint Peter Julian Eymard

Eymard
hy J. J.