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Welcome to Volume 30, a nice round number; this issue is particularly timely as it rather serendipitously happened that we had a number of submissions dealing with various issues around racism and diversity in the church. The ideas brought forth by our authors can cause us to think more deeply about the role of Christianity and theology in the conflicts we see in current events: NFL players not standing for the National Anthem and the protests in St. Louis to bring attention to racial injustice in policing, and the unsettling rhetoric from the president regarding white supremacy, to name just a few.

Further, this issue brings a lot of changes to *New Theology Review*, both substance and appearance. It has been a real challenge to publish this issue still in September, but we have made it! First, we have been early adopters, not necessarily to our advantage, of the new platform offered by Open Journal Systems. OJS is an open source platform for journals out of the Project for Public Knowledge at Simon Fraser University that we have used to publish our open access journal all along. It seemed a good thing to upgrade right away; it appeared that the interface would be more intuitive for the editorial board and staff, and in some ways it is. But other less substantive things haven't been worked out or fixed yet. For example (unless I manage to get it fixed in the next couple of days), the home page lists both our previous editorial board and the new editorial board. This is not all bad—the previous editorial board provided a significant amount of help for this issue and they are to be thanked. Anyway, we ask your patience as we work with the new upgraded platform until we have it looking just as nice as the old one did. Once you get into an article, column, or review it will look just the same. Please let me know about anything that you see that is not working correctly!

The second big factor in getting this issue ready to publish has been the transition of the editorial board. A couple of years ago, Ton, Dawn, and I began making plans for an orderly transition, and, of course, things have changed and it hasn't worked out quite the way we intended. Ton has left the editorial board and has gone on a year-long sabbatical, so he is not even around for us to cry on his shoulder or make us laugh. I have also gone off the editorial board and am now the managing editor. In our places we have chosen our colleagues Dan Horan, OFM, Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology, and Anne McGowan, Assistant Professor of Liturgy, to replace us on the editorial board. It isn't so helpful that they are both young scholars with lots of their own scholarship to be thinking of. AND, in addition, Annie, just this summer as she was coming on board, gave birth; she also has a delightful young toddler. So this transition has had its moments. I have resigned my position as Library Director due to long-term health problems that have caused me to finally go on disability after thirty-five years with a rare blood cancer. The continual quest to deal with symptoms has led to multiple clinical drug trials, chemo, and various other therapies and has left me with fatigue and cognitive impairment that make it impossible for me to work full-time. But it's a blessing that I can still manage to do some things, and I hope that keeping the behind-the-scenes work of *NTR* as one of those. I continue to work on other publication projects as well as I remain passionate about open access,

sustainable, scholarly publishing. Many of you reading this are my friends, so I have no hesitation to ask you for prayers as I am hopeful about starting a new clinical trial in just a few weeks.

As always, we welcome your ideas for articles and your submissions. If you would like to be on the peer-review list, please register with the journal and click on the option of reviewer in the profile. If you would like to review books for *NTR*, please let me know and I'll pass the information along—please indicate for both types of reviewing what your areas of interest are. If you have any other thoughts about *NTR*, ideas for theme issues, or ?, please let me know. You can also use our Facebook page which has now been updated to post ideas and generate discussion with other folks who “like” us on Facebook!

Melody Layton McMahon
Managing Editor

One good Friday: A Re-Focusing of Moral Imagination

by Angela C. Elrod-Sadler

It was a cool morning in Chicago's south-side neighborhood, the day clear and bright. Hundreds of people filled the streets which had been swept clean and cordoned off in preparation of an event— a Good Friday “Walk for Peace.” Its purpose: to gather people of good will in peaceful protest with those living each day under threat of violence.

Together we traced the Stations of the Cross through Englewood, pausing to pray at each of the neighborhood's recent “Golgothas”: the corner of “turf” disputed by rival gangs, a rusted and ramshackle playground, a viaduct, and the community hospital. There, mothers, cousins, and first responders shared their memories of loved ones tragically lost; of the grief and fear that accompanied those losses; and of their anger at living within a system that renders their pain invisible, their needs insufficient. They urged us all to see ourselves as members of one family, one community, in both our dreams and in our pain.

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Listening to these testimonies left me at a crossroads. On the one hand, the survivors' raw emotions were ones with which any person could identify— grief, loss, anger, fear, longing, hope. Who wouldn't grieve for a child whose future is so viciously stolen? Who wouldn't despair if one's cry for help went systematically unheard? Who wouldn't long for a day when fear was not palpable? Who wouldn't hope that one's dignity and the dignity of (her) people are recognized? On the other hand, I had not ever faced such situations. I inhabit a context shaped by white, middle-class, American culture. My life was and is comfortable. My children are safe, healthy, and whole. I can ask for and expect to receive help. I can walk along the streets in my neighborhood without concern. I live a humane life secure in the awareness that others want this for me. But I am privileged. I have benefitted from a system that I and others like me do not (often) question and which has remained (largely)

invisible. And so, that day, I was confronted with a very real, very striking contrast between my life and those I had come to walk with. I heard in their voices an urgent call to solidarity.

Coming to terms with this contrast has been eye-opening. It has meant struggling with the realization that a set of invisible systems of privilege operate in society. These systems have historically utilized power to control who flourishes and who does not. Moreover, their hierarchies are interwoven. They are neither reducible to nor collaps

ible into each other. One system, first named “white privilege”¹ by Peggy McIntosh, confers on those considered “white” a variety of unspoken advantages. Another, male privilege, operates similarly on behalf of men. And still another, class, serves to intensify the other two. The advantages of these systems accrue in almost all aspects of daily life. Whether in popular culture or professional life, in expressions of popular piety or formal theology, these advantages indicate a whole host of assumptions about what is normative.

I was not taught to see them, however. Like McIntosh, I was schooled to see privilege as something one earned and systemic racism as something that existed in the past. (Though, if asked, I would have said I was more aware of systems of male privilege or class than I was of white privilege.) In short, I was told I “belonged.” The cultural assumptions passed on to me exempted me from engaging with the voices of other racial groups. Still, thinking through those Good Friday testimonies, I began to wonder why our society receives them with indifference, to question just whose turf is under fire when peoples’ experiences are ignored and their humanity denied.

Elie Wiesel once famously declared that indifference imperils our humanity. The danger it poses manifests itself in a hardened heart; in an inability to see victims as neighbors, as persons. Yet moments when we are touched by another’s pain or struggle contain an invitation to grow. In what follows I want to focus on what accepting this invitation entails. To that end I will discuss the phenomenon of privilege and its impact on our spirituality. I first suggest the wisdom tradition offers an antidote to indifference in its interpretation of the liberative elements of Christ’s life. Wisdom also inspires us to awaken to the historical and concrete aspects of privilege’s invisibility. Secondly, I want to consider the moral implications of privilege as a set of interlocking oppressions. To accomplish this I briefly describe the concept of white privilege and explore ways to strengthen our moral imaginations through iconographies of womanist theologians.

Wisdom’s Invitation

Womanist and liberation theologians have long noted the presence of both white privilege and male privilege within the Church. Along with feminist theologians, their critical reflections bring to conscious awareness discriminatory interpretations of symbols, narratives, and teachings about the Christ which conceal God’s life-giving love. And they prompt lay persons and ecclesial leaders to conversion. Charles Curran succinctly describes the three dimensions of this conversion as personal, intellectual, and spiritual.² Each is a form of integration; each is a form of awakening to the complexity and influence of these systems within daily life. This is spirituality writ large and small. Beyond acknowledging that such unjust structures exist, one must recognize their connections to the empowerment one enjoys at the expense of others. Rather than seek a return to ignorance, or escape from the institutional and systematic oppression of privilege, spirituality instead evokes a change of practice. For spiritual growth, what has been revealed cannot and should not be concealed again.

Once aware, we must then ask ourselves some critical questions: How did these systems become the accepted norm? What can I learn from those who have been disadvantaged? What is my role now that I am aware? How am I to speak a theology that better images Christ? These and other critical questions will help ensure our conversions continue, for embedded in each of our lives these moments are our windows and doors to Jesus’s transfiguring presence. They show us the tension between living in Christ as the Christ lives in each of us (Jn 15:4).

In answer to the first question, Jamie Phelps chronicles African Americans’ long sorry history of exclusion by the Church. She writes:

1 Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack,” *Independent School* 49, no. 2 (Winter 1990): 31.

2 Charles Curran, “White Privilege, My Theological Journey,” in *Interrupting White Privilege. Catholic Theologians Break the Silence*, eds. Laurie M. Cassidy and Alex Mikulich (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 81.

During the first three quarters of the nineteenth century Black women were not accepted into congregations of religious women. Black men were not admitted to seminaries in the U.S., and Black laypersons had to struggle to have their voices heard. The establishment of separate religious congregations for Black women in 1829 and 1842 was the official beginning of Blacks engaging in the mission of the Church within the U.S. Catholic Church.³

This was due, in part, to the deep divisions among the U.S. Catholic episcopate regarding slavery. Some regarded it as a social issue, while others viewed it as a moral one. Citing Cyprian Davis's *History of Black Catholics in the United States*, Phelps notes that the results of this ambivalence were sluggish displays of leadership at best, and overtly racist (through outright resistance to integration) at worst.⁴ They marked attempts to suppress and control Black spirituality, and they imply, as we have seen above, normativity to white interpretations and experiences of the Christ.

For black women, then, these interpretations continue to result—at times—in multi-layered oppressions. Their experience of racism, sexism, poverty, and other forms of discrimination gather them into “the least” with whom Jesus shares a special affinity. In particular, theology's indifference to their (and other women's) experiences raises hurdles to genuine solidarity. By interpreting God as exclusively male, sexist theology instantiates a hierarchy of privilege both material and divine. Repeated use of Jesus's maleness in metaphor, iconography, and anthropology limits women's abilities to image Christ precisely because of their sex. It reinforces a belief that men have a greater capacity to image Christ while truncating women's own, all of which imply that a certain “dignity, honor and normativity accrue to the male sex.”⁵ Such oppression is magnified and further stifles black women's personhood once it roots itself in structures of racism and caste.

Yet despite barriers past and present, there lives within Christianity something subversive, something inviting a new appreciation of lived daily experiences—the wisdom tradition. Wisdom transcends the limitations we tend to impose on ourselves and others (Jas 1:5). Radically inclusive and radically accessible, wisdom makes itself available to any who seek it (Prv 8:17). Its symbolism embraces an interpretive matrix of dynamic elements crucial for sharing Jesus's loving mission—friendship, hope, and a passion for justice. These three elements are simultaneously relational and oriented toward liberation. They manifest our deeply human desire to live fulfilling, peaceful lives, and these elements appear throughout stories that capture Jesus's inclusivity, generosity, and creativity.

Elizabeth Johnson tells Wisdom's story in her article “Redeeming the Name of Christ.” She brings to critical reflection a survey of Jesus's parables, healings, table fellowship, and restoration highlighting the egalitarian character of communion. Jesus's life and teaching, she concludes, overturn entrenched assumptions about justice and violence and their roles in the search for peace. Beginning with friendship, old patterns of relationship characterized primarily by hierarchy are rejected by the women and men among Jesus's disciples in favor of mutual regard and responsibility. Continuing with Jesus's crucifixion, his death reveals the power of love to create new life. Though his death may have resulted from an act of violence, his life did not end because of it. Hope and wholeness carry the day. Finally, Jesus's resurrection reflects his life of solidarity. It demonstrates the strength of compassionate love allied with Wisdom's concern for justice on behalf of the oppressed (Ws 10:15-19). “Wisdom's gift is ultimately life.”⁶ Wisdom therefore extends an invitation of freedom to all. Not only women, but men also can be free of the

3 Jamie T. Phelps, OP, “Communion Ecclesiology and Black Liberation Theology,” in *Walk Together Children*, eds. Dwight N. Hopkins and Linda E. Thomas (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2010). 274-79.

4 Phelps, “Communion Ecclesiology and Black Liberation Theology,” 276, notes 29 and 30.

5 Elizabeth A. Johnson, “Redeeming the Name of Christ,” in *Freeing Theology: The Essentials of Theology in Feminist Perspective*, ed. Catherine Mowry LaCugna (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1993), 120.

6 Johnson, “Redeeming the Name of Christ,” 132.

constraints that these systems and their hierarchies impose. In other words, men too can be free of the interlocking oppressions of male privilege and white privilege.

Still, as McIntosh points out, men are more likely to express concern over the exclusion or oppression of women than they are to acknowledge ways their lives benefit from unearned privilege and power. Similarly, “obliviousness about **white** advantage, like obliviousness about male advantage, is kept strongly inculcated in the United States so as to maintain the myth of meritocracy, the myth that democratic choice is equally available to all.”⁷ But recognizing and identifying these systems generates strong internal resistance. Even when one experiences a personal or intellectual conversion of the kind Curran describes, the task is difficult. Its multiple levels require phenomenological unpacking to begin to even challenge or change unjust systems of privilege. Two examples may serve to illustrate my points.

As former president of the Catholic Theological Society of America, prolific author and respected teacher Jon Nilson has led a distinguished career as a theologian. But he once provocatively declared himself a white, Catholic, racist theologian “insofar as [he] had rarely read and never cited any black theologians”⁸ in his own work. That is, Nilson felt called to account for his silence in response to the scholarship of black theologians such as M. Shawn Copeland, James Cone, and, in particular, Jamie Phelps, who (just as provocatively) had compared the silence of US Catholic theologians about racism to the silence of leading German theologians about Nazi atrocities during the Holocaust. Hers was a bold and challenging analogy, one that Nilson continued to reflect on repeatedly. And so, Nilson chose his final address as CTSA president to make a public “confession” as well as to highlight the conditions within American Catholic theology and society occasioning its necessity. His confession therefore recounts the sociopolitical turmoil within both the Church and American culture during the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as each grappled with an identity crisis.

During these periods, questions of identity merged with questions of mission in tangled and often counterproductive ways. The realities of racism—e.g., segregation, dehumanization, and oppression—and a lack of reparation for its wounds clashed with the healing intended by the ideal of integration and the hope expressed in the aims of Vatican II. Documents such as *Lumen Gentium*, *Gaudium et Spes*, *Octagesimo Adveniens*, and *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, though articulating a broader, more inclusive vision of each person as the *imago Dei*, gave little concrete direction for developing pastoral support of blacks within parish life. And the council’s project of crafting a distinctively American Catholicism through inculturation found many scholars unprepared to reflect on the experiences and gifts of black Catholics because their distinctive voices had been too long neglected or kept absent. Paradoxically and ironically, Nilson says, American theologians were asked to engage with the “other” as a means for developing a particularly American Catholicism but could not see in black theology’s “fragmentary and charismatic” style its appeals for a dialogue among equals. Black theologians and their message were either misperceived as short-term special-interest theologies or rejected for their anger; these issues are still without consensus today.⁹

If Nilson’s address highlights the factors obscuring racism’s systemic and dysfunctional presence in our society as well as its marginalization by Catholic theology, it also spotlights the internal resistance he and other whites must overcome when responding to the challenges of Wisdom’s voice. In coming to terms with Phelps’s challenge, Nilson began to see himself as part of a system in which he was an oppressor, a system that ignores the value of blacks, their cultural history, and their Christian spirituality and theology by default. For Nilson this default position evidenced itself in a previous lack of engagement with black theology previously in his curricula, syllabi, and

7 McIntosh, “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack.”

8 Jon Nilson, “Confessions of a White Catholic Racist Theologian,” in *Interrupting White Privilege. Catholic Theologians Break the Silence*, eds. Laurie M. Cassidy and Alex Mikulich (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 18.

9 Nilson, “Confessions of a White Catholic Racist Theologian,” 29-30.

research. It further manifested itself in his casual acceptance of this lack of engagement as the legitimate status quo within Catholic theology generally. At that time Nilson could not yet imagine himself to be “the problem” because he could not imagine what black theology could contribute to his own intellectual and spiritual growth as a theologian. This changed over the course of preparing his address, however. As Nilson told one *U.S. Catholic* interviewer:

I used to understand racism the way many people understand racism: as deliberate, overt forms of speech and action that denigrate people of another race. But I came to understand that it's far more than that. It's oppression and marginalization, and this oppression and this marginalization goes on simply as a matter of course. It's a part of the common sense of the dominant white majority.¹⁰

Shedding himself of this “common sense” meant becoming more attuned to the plight of those who are discriminated against or who are disempowered, but just as importantly it meant becoming attuned to his participation in a system that normalizes and perpetuates these injustices.

James Keenan, SJ, reaches a similar conclusion as he writes of his own recollections about male privilege in “The Gallant: A Feminist Proposal.” Reflecting upon his own experiences as a scholar and clergy member, Keenan came to recognize that within the Church, the academy, and society there are all-male domains of power. Further, he explains these enclaves perpetuate a system of unseen, acritical advantages on behalf of men, especially with respect to moments and structures of decision making. In this system women are effectively silenced, whether deliberately or *de rigueur*, either by exclusion from leadership or suppression of their voices. Such exclusion and suppression renders women “silent” because it minimizes their insights, experiences, contributions, and concerns, which are all ways of devaluing women’s agency and their personhood. Silencing women thus becomes a deliberate (if, at times, unconscious) strategy, Keenan argues, to maintain and protect male privilege.¹¹

One instance from Keenan’s work as a scholar bring these insights together in an especially vivid fashion. While planning for the 2006 international conference of Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church, Keenan and his fellow committee members wanted to encourage participation by scholars from Asia, Latin America, and Africa. So, they set out to facilitate inclusion by sponsoring forty invitees from each region. Committee delegates were then tasked with compiling a list of potential invitees. When the lists were compiled, women made up less than 30 percent of the proposed 120 participants. (These absences were most notably among the African delegation: there were none.) Keenan’s questioning of this situation provoked strong resistance from the other male committee members. There were no female *theological* ethicists in Africa, they said; cross-over scholars—those speaking about ethical issues but trained in other disciplines—simply didn’t possess the requisite expertise. Somewhat surprised, Keenan pressed the need for diversity among the conference’s participants. He insisted that African women theologians also be included. With his support, the conference eventually sponsored four women among the forty African scholars who attended.

By Keenan’s own description, this episode has sadly been just one of many where he has noticed the obfuscating and exclusionary practices of his fellows toward women. Rather than illustrate male privilege as a phenomenon endemic to the West or to the United States more particularly, it demonstrates the global and systematic nature of male privilege. This awareness has ultimately moved Keenan beyond recognition and dismay to action. As he points out, “recognition is only part of the change [needed]; one must act to divest.”¹²

10 “Racist Like Me: The Editors Interview Jon Nilson,” *U.S. Catholic*. 71, no. 12, December 2006, <https://www.questia.com/magazine/1G1-155783869/racist-like-me-the-editors-interview-jon-nilson>.

11 James Keenan, SJ, “The Gallant: A Feminist Proposal,” in *Feminist Catholic Theological Ethics: Conversations in the World Church* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2014), 225.

12 James Keenan, SJ, “The Gallant: A Feminist Proposal,” 226.

Keenan's statement represents a fundamental option of sorts. Like Nilson, Keenan's choice to divest reflects a new-found awareness of the historical and concrete impact of the invisibility of (male) privilege, and it underscores the challenges that arise when confronting privilege's various manifestations. For Keenan, divesting involves not only raising awareness of women's discrimination and oppression, not only recognizing his complicity to such behavior, nor simply recognizing his position as beneficiary of such privilege, it entails acting to eliminate male enclaves. Likewise, divesting inspires him to ensure that women's voices are included whenever and wherever decision making must occur, even if it means he must give up his place to do so. In the above instance, stepping aside was not necessary. To the contrary, Keenan's position as committee chair and fundraiser assured both his participation in the conference and those of African women. It added heft to his concerns when he spoke out. Had he remained silent, he realized, he would have been complicit to male hegemony.

But in placing the examples of these two theologians alongside one another I do not wish to imply that experiences of racism are *the same as* experiences of sexism (or caste, genderism, and other forms of oppression). Rather, I wish to highlight, as did the members of the Combahee River Collective in their "Black Feminist Statement," that all oppressions are interrelated.¹³ Disentangling aspects of male privilege from white privilege—so that one clearly perceives which advantages result more from one aspect of a person's social location (i.e., sex, race, religion, caste, or class) than another—is difficult. Perhaps this is why Roger Haight finds "white privilege" a dysfunctional rhetorical category.¹⁴

A Distorted View

When considering his contribution to discussions of white privilege, Haight admits to a bit of difficulty. According to Haight, the critical impact of the term "white privilege" comes not from what it adds to discussions of racism or oppression but rather its pithiness. Why? Because while it may succeed in a consciousness-raising of sorts, the concept of white privilege ignores the complexity of moral agency and its role in creating structural oppression in the first place; further, it diverts what should be critical reflection on the sufferings of blacks and black agency to whites' agency. Worst of all, it offers critique without pointing toward an achievable vision of solidarity.

Some black theologians would seem to agree with Haight's point that, as a concept, white privilege may serve to further disenfranchise blacks. Bryan Massingale, for example, suggests that "the white tendency to treat Blacks as objects of white study, analysis, and charity rather than as subjects capable of independent action or creative initiative has inhibited the recognition of Black agency and the possibility of engagement of Blacks in Catholic moral discourse."¹⁵ Likewise, James Cone—the universally respected "father" of Black theology—initially questioned (white) Catholic theologians' preference for Latin American liberation theology only to conclude that blacks' passionate intensity was too alarming, too non-traditional.¹⁶

However, as Massingale later attests, and as womanists continue to explain, the infantilization and objectification blacks experienced (and still experience) results from the phenomenon of white privilege operative *within Catholic assumptions regarding moral inquiry itself*, not from this privilege's conceptualization. In other words, the methods ethical inquiry assumes to be normative are themselves products of assumptions about what is normatively "human." In both areas, white privilege shapes what practitioners consider ethically neutral and can speak for all. Such

13 Combahee River Collective, "The Combahee River Collective Statement," April 1977, http://americanstudies.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/Keyword%20Coalition_Readings.pdf. Noted by McIntosh in "Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack."

14 Roger Haight, "The Dysfunctional Rhetoric of 'White Privilege' and the Need for 'Racial Solidarity,'" in *Interrupting White Privilege: Catholic Theologians Break the Silence*, eds. Laurie M Cassidy and Alex Mikulich (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 85-94.

15 Brian Massingale, as cited in Phelps, "Communion Ecclesiology and Black Liberation Theology," 285.

16 James H. Cone, as cited in Nilson, "Confessions of a White Catholic Racist Theologian," 29.

unreflective postures, though perhaps unconscious, lead to separation of belief from genuine moral discussion or action in Christian ethics. They skew authentic understandings of justice, the world, and other persons.

Massingale's personal reflections on his life as a scholar supply a powerful example. In them he contrasts African Americans' intuitions about justice with more typical academic methodology:

Indeed, in [the academy] passionate discourse is often seen as a "red flag" that an unwarranted bias has infiltrated one's reasoning and compromised one's objectivity in the pursuit of truth. ... In the African American tradition justice is something visceral; it is an ache, a groan, an inner fire. This visceral or "gut" characteristic of justice is seldom reflected in the standard accounts upheld by accepted academic discourse. Yet as I continued to ponder this disconnect over the years, I have begun to believe that it is the standard accounts that are lacking and deficient.¹⁷

The cultural divide exemplified by the two approaches to justice in Massingale's reflection indicates still another means by which white privilege operates: ethical fantasy. Paul Wadell describes fantasy as a distorted moral vision. While we might ordinarily think of fantasy as something playful or imaginative, in more sober terms fantasy persistently caricatures other people and their experiences "precisely because to see them truthfully would challenge us to conversion."¹⁸ When operative, this kind of fantasy inhibits both moral imagination and moral discourse because it strips others of their agency, as Massingale and Cone foresaw. Those who benefit from privilege therefore need the stories of those who suffer injustice. Their stories show us the narrowness, self-interest, and bias of our moral reasoning. We are challenged to look beyond the "object" of the stories toward the persons alive within them, and to be present there with them. But if we do not see others as persons, we do not treat them justly. Their stories are, then, a gift. Through them we ready ourselves for communion by refocusing the lens of our moral imagination to see each other as co-creators and co-sufferers.

This is what was at work in the testimonies I heard that Friday in Englewood. Those stories vibrated with just the sort of intensity Massingale notices in African Americans' discourse about justice. Rooted in their concrete experiences of tragedy, loss, and indifference, their pain is visceral. As Cone pointed out, hearing their pain can be alarming. It should be. It is a gross injustice. Catholic theologians' neglect of black experience thus amounts to more than enlightened self-interest; it moves beyond and below formations of social contract; it denotes a critical commitment to the American myth of meritocracy overcome only by a more total commitment to the Christ.

Moral Imagination and New Iconographies

Within the dynamics of commitment rests a paradox, however. On the one hand commitment involves a decision leading to action. Action demonstrates whether the decision taken is genuine. On the other hand, commitment also involves a deliberately expansive orientation of self—a way of being—with or toward another. Present in our loving, it appears at first as our active engagement must be continually sustained; that doing must supersede being if the momentum of our loving, i.e., our conversion, is to move forward. In her work *Personal Commitments*, Margaret Farley calls this paradox "relaxation of heart."¹⁹

Relaxation often refers to a lessening of tension or allowing something to go slack, but Farley understands it differently. For her, relaxation describes a state of fruitful tension necessary to sustain a just, compassionate, truthful

¹⁷ Bryan N. Massingale, *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010), 131.

¹⁸ Paul Wadell, "Response to Bryan Massingale," in *Black and Catholic: The Challenge and Gift of Black Folk: Contributions of African American Experience and World View to Catholic Theology*, ie (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1995).

¹⁹ Margaret A. Farley, *Personal Commitments* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2013), 75-76.

love. Akin to the flexibility found in great runners, relaxation of heart imparts both strength and resilience to one's loving. It aids us in rethinking those things we have too long taken for granted, to develop a way of remembering that is inclusive, to fashion new images of mutuality so that our behavior changes too. Relaxation is therefore to be contrasted with the hardness of heart Jesus tells us prevents true compassion and justice (Jn 3:17).

An important consequence of loving this way is that a decentering occurs. It enables moral imagination to develop and helps to explain moral imagination's pivotal role in an ethics of encounter. Because of its twofold dynamism of first filtering and next focusing on certain aspects of our experience, moral imagination processes disparate elements into a coherent whole. With it we infer patterns. We shape our understandings of ourselves and others. Or, as Sharon Parks says, "we imagine our world into being."²⁰

Three features of relaxation articulated by Farley become salient for strengthening moral imagination: patience, hope, and "letting go." These features are both prerequisite to and preparation for an ethic of encounter. Together, these features create a hermeneutic circle of love that resonates deeply with the value of communion found in black culture.

Patience sets the stage for acceptance and trust essential to communion. Farley stresses that patience arises from a belief in fulfillment calling to us from beyond the horizon of our experience. For all who suffer oppression this means God identifies with victims of injustice in images that disrupt interpretations of the gospel favoring the status quo. The liberation promised by these images is decisive. They envision a reality made immediately present by Jesus's loving action: by his words and his deeds. To womanist theologians these images communicate a vision of liberation and agency further nuanced by Jesus's inclusivity. It is a vision oriented toward community. It draws on the strength to wait until the time for action is right so that *all* might find liberation, while trusting (as Hagar did) in God's providence. Patience thus allies itself with hope, and together they hold open the possibility for encounter because they accept our vision is partial. We must grow. At the same time, hope calls us onward toward the realization of a better reality.

Diana Hayes explores these linkages in her essay "Movin' on Up a Little Higher."²¹ Borrowing from Delores Williams, she invokes a broadly inclusive view of solidarity grounded in cooperation with God and one another. Kept alive by the continuity and memory of God's active, comforting presence, cooperation involves both activity and receptivity, not just to survive but also to change and transform. It involves developing communal memories that are as inclusive as the solidarity hoped for. And so, Hayes asserts that cooperation must rely on a new language of liberation, one viable for female and male theologians alike and engaging the injustices of any who experience oppression due to their race, sex, gender, or class. It is a challenging but delicate balance since it requires people to be both with and *for* each other without denying each other's agency, or need for fulfillment. Her insights thus point to another critical aspect of expanding and strengthening moral imagination: developing memory, both personal and communal. With it we learn to re-member—to hope—and so, to grow in mutual presence.²²

Similarly, M. Shawn Copeland develops her idea of solidarity as mutual achievement on the basis of a common anthropology found in the Mystical Body of Christ.²³ We are a single family of God's creation. United in transcendent and self-transcending love, the Mystical Body of Christ is present here through us and among us, but not yet

20 Sharon Parks, *The Critical Years* (New York: Harper and Row, 1986), 116.

21 Diana L. Hayes, "Movin' on Up a Little Higher: Resolving the Tension between Academic and Pastoral Approaches to Black and Womanist Theologies," in *Walk Together Children. Black and Womanist Theologies, Church and Theological Education*, eds. Dwight N. Hopkins and Linda E. Thomas (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2010), 13-25.

22 Farley, *Personal Commitments*, 80.

23 M. Shawn Copeland, as cited in Roger Haight, "'White Privilege' and 'Racial Solidarity,'" 94, note 8.

in its fullness. We are therefore to live as Jesus lived, to be active members of this Body in our one graced world. Such activity has several elements ripe for encounter. For example, naming and analyzing those structural sins that prevent this Body from reaching wholeness—racism, sexism, clericalism, etc.—bring healing. It acknowledges the presence of interlocking oppressions which cannot be reduced or collapsed into one another. It recognizes that these oppressions influence, and, in some cases, intensify each other. Further, in the articulation of new iconographies and new Christologies this activity responds to profound questions having to do with images and symbolism. Through them God invites us to “let go” of illusory images of ourselves and others, to accept others as they are rather than as we assume, and to recognize the truth of our relatedness to them. By accepting the invitation, we simultaneously broaden and deepen the scope of our moral imagination. We relax and enlarge our hearts. Then solidarity’s appeal to a common good—the desire all persons have to thrive with respect and dignity—can be made concrete. We are better prepared to hear the truth in others’ experiences when they share them with us.

To put it another way, the development of new images and new iconographies expresses a longing for unity found within the heart of Christ’s mystical body. Focusing on Jesus as black and as human enables womanists like Copeland to particularize the manner in which they identify with God’s gracious act of solidarity: the incarnation. With this image they describe Jesus as co-sufferer. He stands with them in protest against experiences of racism and indifference. But the significance of his blackness, like his maleness, rests neither with genealogy nor biology. The import of Jesus’s blackness and his humanity lay instead in the circumstances of his life, death, and resurrection. Through these incarnational moments Jesus identifies with all who suffer oppression whether by race, sex, creed, or class. This black Jesus who is also the Christ is, then, no “painted” figure. His very being overturns social and ecclesial systems of privilege otherwise considered normative. As an icon of metanoia “the black Jesus calls us to conversion of heart and mind—to transformation and to change; to embrace the responsibility of resistance and creativity in order to honor and respect the human other . . .”²⁴ Moreover he represents an egalitarian meaning of blackness encompassing the oppressed as well as those allied with them in their struggle for liberation. For the black Jesus can help us all embrace a new way of seeing and imaging the Christ. The imagery and symbolism of this icon give shape and form to what, in our limited understanding, appear disparate experience but are truly one graced reality. Focused in this way, patterns of exclusion for the sake of control become visible. Copeland’s black Jesus offers us a way to recover and reenter moral discourse in solidarity.

Womanists thus respond to Wisdom’s invitation with particular care as they craft their understandings of solidarity. Mindful of the dynamic in which the oppressed may quickly become the oppressors, they advocate a widely inclusive vision, one articulating a way to speak liberation to all and one faithful to the capacity of images to nurture a transformative change of heart. Copeland’s potent images of the black Jesus wedded with the Mystical Body of Christ are especially evocative. They reveal opportunities for moments of encounter drawing us to greater wholeness and unity.

Conclusion

The first two stages of a journey toward spiritual maturity illuminate what it means to awaken to the invisibility and complexity of privilege. One begins in and from a world taken as given. Then she or he encounters a problem that forces the adoption of a drastically different perspective. This opens the person up to a new vision of herself or himself and others as structurally related. New vision results in new perception, with its attendant potential for transformation.

24 M. Shawn Copeland, “The (Black) Jesus of Detroit. Reflections on Black Power and the (White) American Christ,” in *Christology and Whiteness*, ed. George Yancy (London: Routledge, 2012), 194.

Sustaining this openness requires effort, however. Something more is needed to prevent relapsing into blithe immaturity. “This is what many call commitment to a ‘third,’ to something larger than ourselves, in relation to which we share choices, concerns, responsibilities, and hence mutual enlargement of heart.”²⁵ It is a fidelity that expands instead of restricts because through it a person becomes more expansive in their ability to love. They “let go” of fantasy, refusing either to escape into the status quo or to deny the personhood of others.

Franciscan Richard Rohr might describe these stages as moving from a first naiveté to a second naiveté, that is, as a slow process of transformation which arrives at an identity that can include rather than exclude, and which has come to view its starting presuppositions in a broader, fuller way. We may arguably say it is the cultivation of a “lens” whose vision grows increasingly clear. It prepares us to respond to God’s gracious invitation of communion and to treat others justly. Hayes makes this abundantly clear when she proclaims true liberation a life of mutuality in patience, hope, and solidarity for all.²⁶

But is it too much to hope that our Church would wish to move in this direction as well? Rohr contends that this is a process possible more for individuals than for institutions. “They (institutions) must and will be concerned with identity, boundaries, self-maintenance, self-perpetuation. ... This is their nature and purpose.”²⁷ And it is a Church that Copeland and other womanist theologians criticize for distorting and co-opting the Christ; for readings that divinize masculinity and whiteness; for structures that dominate, alienate, segregate, and oppress.²⁸ Yet, as Copeland reminds us, this institution is not the Mystical Body of Christ. Christ’s Body is present whenever and wherever we express Christ’s self-transcendent love.

It was present that Friday on Chicago’s south-side too. By gifting us with their stories, the people of Englewood gave us a glimpse of their courage as well as their struggle. They spoke to us about manifold experiences where systems of privilege weave oppressions together into a single horizon and do violence to their dignity. Jesus knew this kind of violence in his own life. It culminated, finally, in the anguish, brutality, and injustice of his long walk to crucifixion. Tradition recounts this story in the Stations of the Cross. The images, or stations, of this devotion summarize moments of Jesus’s solidarity with us. How fitting it was, then, while in remembering how large God’s heart is, we were also called to enlarge our own. It was a good Friday.

25 Farley, *Personal Commitment*, 83.

26 Hayes, “Movin’ on Up a Little Higher,” 25.

27 Richard Rohr, *Falling Upward. A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 141.

28 Copeland, “The (Black) Jesus of Detroit,” 187.

California Dreams or Colonial Nightmares? St. Serra, the Missions, and the Borderlands of Memory

by Jacqueline M. Hidalgo

On a sunny Wednesday afternoon in late September 2016, Pope Francis rode past large crowds of people in order to celebrate a Spanish-language mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception at the Catholic University of America.¹ Earlier that same year, the California legislature voted to replace its National Statuary Hall sculpture of first California mission president and Franciscan missionary Junípero Serra with a statue of astronaut Sally Ride.² Even though many Californians now perceive Serra as a metonym for Spanish, Mexican, and US practices of cultural and physical genocide against Native Californians, the Church pressed forward with canonization.

The larger portion of the Pope's homily focused on the call of Matthew's great commission and the aspirations and trials of mission in general. Perhaps Pope Francis recognized some of the challenges of honoring Serra when he acknowledged how mission never follows "a very well structured and planned manual." Pope Francis thusly held up Serra as an example but not necessarily an exemplar of missionary drive. When the Pope finally mentioned Serra's name in the latter part of the homily, it was through the lens of memory rather than heroic tribute: "And today we remember one of those witnesses who gave testimony to the joy of the gospel in these lands, Fray Junípero Serra."³

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What if we approach the canonization of Serra, then, through this complex prism of "memory"? What if we then situate "memory" as a terrain of conflict and transformation that calls all of us to bear witness to the complexities of how the gospel has entered into and been received in the U.S. Southwest, the borderlands that has been ruled by three modern nations: Spain, Mexico,

1 This essay is based on a talk given at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago in October 2016. I would like to thank the Louis J. Luzbetak Lecture on Mission and Culture and the Hispanic Theology and Ministry Program's Día de la Raza Lecture funds and organizations for the opportunity to share this work and receive conversation. I especially want to thank Carmen Nanko-Fernández, Eddie De León, and Roger Schroeder for their organizational work, hospitality, and conversation.

2 Matthew Fleming, "Father Serra Statue a Little Closer to Leaving D.C.," *The Orange County Register*, March 31, 2015, <http://www.ocregister.com/articles/serra-656178-father-leaving.html>.

3 All quotations from the papal homily are my translations of the Spanish version because I found what were, for me, important rhetorical distinctions in the Spanish (available at https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/es/homilies/2015/documents/papa-francesco_20150923_usa-omelia-washington-dc.html). An English translation of the homily is also available from the Vatican, https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2015/documents/papa-francesco_20150923_usa-omelia-washington-dc.html).

and the U.S.A.⁴ Especially in our present moment when missionary communities are revisiting the complex colonial histories surrounding missionary practices, memory can be one way to approach the saintly veneration of a man whose legacies remain controversial.

One cannot historically contextualize Junípero Serra and the California missions without cracking under the weight of myriad cultural memories that have been mapped onto those missions. In 2015, some Catholics, including ethnic Mexicans and Native Californians, hailed Serra's canonization as a strategic move to honor Spanish-speaking Catholics in the Capitol of a country rife with anti-Latino rhetorics, and they were touched to finally have California's history, in all its complexity, sanctified.⁵ At the same time, though, numerous ethnic Mexican and Native Californian populations, as well as their allies, protested Serra's canonization throughout the months leading up to September 2015.⁶ They pointed to the Pope's own historic apology in Bolivia where he "ask[ed] forgiveness, not only for the offense of the church itself, but also for crimes committed against the Native peoples during the so-called conquest of America."⁷ In that speech Pope Francis notably called for people to join together in opposition to the "new colonialism" found in a global neoliberal capitalism that fosters economic inequality. Protesters against Serra's canonization wondered how the pope could then turn around and celebrate such a colonial figure.

Following the cue of Pope Francis in challenging colonial violence and legacies of exploitation, I propose that we approach Serra's veneration through the lens of Chicana feminist thought, especially the work of Gloria Anzaldúa, and we cast Serra as a *frontera*/borderlands saint whose veneration bears witness to struggles over how to remember California's missions. I am not arguing that Serra is or was a hero of the borderlands struggle; I argue rather that the struggles over mission memory that culminated in Serra's canonization are borderlands struggles. Struggles over California mission memory expose the entwining of religion, race, gender, and colonialism that have critically formed Catholicism in this hemisphere. We only do justice to that memory if we do not remember Serra alone, but in remembering him, we remember the complex histories of the California missions, the Native peoples who lived there, and the struggles over mission memory that have ensued in the last two centuries.

Frontera Saints: Retrofitted Memory as Borderlands Practice

First, I would like to briefly describe for you the lens of borderlands/*frontera* sanctity. Thirty years ago, Chicana feminist scholar Gloria Anzaldúa published her mixed-genre masterpiece of prose/poetry/philosophy titled *Borderlands/La Frontera*. Anzaldúa inscribes the US-Mexico borderlands as a place where cultures have come into violent contact, often across highly uneven dynamics of power, and contacting cultures have been transformed in the process. The combination of English borderlands with Spanish *frontera* also captures something that the English word alone cannot, the sense of being at the frontiers, a fraught space of settler colonial violence. To be at the borderlands/*la frontera* is also to dwell on the margins of dominating cultural worlds, margins that border on other worlds and that make space for new possibilities that are born out of juggling multiple cultures.

4 Here, I am following Kent Brintnall's call to bear witness to the "arbitrary excess" of social violence, a witness he bases on a rereading of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis. I would suggest that in our present moment and location, we are called to bear witness to the excess of those who have claimed to be doing divine will and have wrought destruction on others, whether such destruction was intentional or not. See Brintnall's essay in *Sexual Orientations*, ed. Kent Brintnall, Joseph A. Marchal, and Stephen D. Moore (New York: Fordham University Press, forthcoming).

5 For instance, see Fernanda Santos, "Latino Catholics See Reflection in a Friar Set for Sainthood," *The New York Times*, September 19, 2015, <http://nyti.ms/1V23yLM>.

6 For instance, see Peter Montgomery's discussion of a rival Tuesday press conference in D.C. on the eve of the canonization mass, "California Tribes Denounce Catholic Church's 'Fraud' and 'Blatant Fabrication' on Serra Sainthood," *Religion Dispatches*, September 22, 2015, <http://religiondispatches.org/california-tribes-denounce-catholic-churchs-fraud-and-blatant-fabrication-on-serra-sainthood/>.

7 As quoted in Jim Yardley and Williams Neuman, "In Bolivia, Pope Francis Apologizes for Church's 'Grave Sins,'" *The New York Times*, July 9, 2015, <http://nyti.ms/1fsAY9h>.

Thus, to dwell in the borderlands is to live in the space of ambivalence and to cultivate “a tolerance for ambiguity”; those who dwell in the borderlands must take that ambivalence and craft a “new mythos--that is, a change in the way we perceive reality, the way we see ourselves, and the ways we behave.”⁸ Likewise, Chicana feminist historian Maylei Blackwell’s concept of “retrofitted memory” imagines cultural memory as borderlands terrain; for her, memory is a process that recognizes the tensions and the limits of the past and the need to constantly rework past memory to suit present and future needs.⁹ Borderlands memory then holds onto a non-innocent past even while revisiting the past to imagine another future.¹⁰

Media studies scholar Desirée Martín has built off the work of Anzaldúa and others on the borderlands in cultivating a category of “borderlands saints.” She argues that “the borderlands symbolize the essence of painful yet valuable contradiction.”¹¹ Although she specifically examines devotion to figures not officially recognized as saints by the Church, figures such as Santa Muerte, she points to how borderlands saints are specifically border crossers who can provide a mirror, sometimes a harsh one, on the struggle for survival.¹² *Frontera* saints are saints who point us toward and accompany us *en la lucha*.¹³

Father Junípero Serra is not a borderlands saint the way Martín defines them, but approaching him as a *frontera* saint draws our attention to the centrality of *lucha* as sacred struggle, where cultural memory is one of those terrains of *lucha*. Pope Francis closed his homily by underscoring *¡Siempre Adelante!* as Junípero Serra’s motto, a motto that Latina feminist theologian Neomi DeAnda translates as “Always keep moving forward in the struggle.”¹⁴ Serra certainly struggled in his work as a missionary, but the California missions also forced Native Californians to struggle for survival in ways they did not have to struggle before his arrival on California’s shores.¹⁵ In asking that we approach Serra as a *frontera* saint, I am not proposing him as a hero of *lucha*. I am asking that we use him as a window onto the complexities of *lucha* in the past and the present, and that we cultivate a tolerance for ambiguities and an imaginative ambivalence in wrestling with the past. A retrofitted *frontera* mission memory can open us up to other pasts that are forgotten when one focuses only on the heroic or villainous character of one individual instead of the broader frontier context in which multiple cultures clash and transform each other across uneven dynamics of power.

8 Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute, 1987), 79-80.

9 Maylei Blackwell, *¡Chicana Power! Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011). Also see Jeanette Rodríguez and Ted Fortier, *Cultural Memory: Resistance, Faith, and Identity* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007) for a discussion of how cultural memory as a religious practice can empower oppressed communities.

10 For a discussion of Latino theologies as the products of “non-innocent histories” produced by descendants of the conqueror, conquered, enslaver, enslaved, and many in between, see Justo L. González, *Mañana: Christian Theology from a Hispanic Perspective* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 39-40; and Jean-Pierre Ruiz, “The Bible and U.S. Hispanic American Theological Discourse: Lessons from a Non-Innocent History,” in *From the Heart of Our People: Latino/a Explorations in Catholic Systematic Theology*, ed. Orlando O. Espín and Miguel H. Díaz (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999), 101-102.

11 Desirée A. Martín, *Borderlands Saints: Secular Sanctity in Chicano/a and Mexican Culture* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2014), 12.

12 Martín, *Borderlands Saints*, 3. Martín also argues that unofficial saints come to the fore because the institutional Catholic church’s attempts to control saintly devotion by focusing on the piety of *imitatio Christi* only “reinforced its top-down structure of authority, to establish distance between saints and humans” (Martín, 14). What *frontera* saints allow for is a fuller memory and mapping of the terrain of humanity’s struggle.

13 *La lucha* has long been a central category of analysis and locus for Latina feminist/*mujerista* theologizing. See the work of Ada-María Isasi-Díaz in particular but also consider Lara Medina’s outlining of the import of “transformative struggle” to the theology of Latina Catholics who were active in Las Hermanas. Lara Medina, *Las Hermanas: Chicana/Latina Religious-Political Activism in the U.S. Catholic Church* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005), 123-46. Also see, for instance, Ada-María Isasi-Díaz, *En la lucha/In the Struggle: Elaborating a Mujerista Theology*, 10th anniversary ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004).

14 Exchange via text message between the author and Neomi DeAnda on October 7, 2016.

15 For a biographical examination that charts Serra’s zealous devotion, see Steven W. Hackel, *Junípero Serra: California’s Founding Father* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2013).

Imperial Dreams, Serra's Missions, and the Limits of Good Intentions

From the beginning, the missions in California depended upon and were necessarily entwined with the dreams of empire. Although the land of Alta California had been known since the sixteenth century, the Spanish only sought to settle it once other European imperial powers seemed interested in California. By the time Junípero Serra arrived in San Diego in 1769, Russian explorers were sixty-five miles north of San Francisco.¹⁶

Inspector General (*visitador-general*) José de Gálvez asked Serra to join forces with the military and civilian populations in settling Alta California.¹⁷ Native converts would live in a “mission compound” that was under the complete control of two missionaries.¹⁸ The missionaries were often bolstered by a small number of military residing at the mission, as well as a nearby *presidio* or military base.¹⁹ The ultimate goal was to place missions as staggered settlements roughly three days’ walk apart from each other, with the hope that each mission could be a “self-contained” economy that nurtured religious life while maintaining a limited exchange with the outside.²⁰ The missions were built to follow the coastline, not the settlement patterns of Native communities. Spanish military needs determined mission structure in key ways.

Serra was no simple shill of the military government. Serra conflicted quite regularly with California’s military governor Felipe de Neve.²¹ The primary critique of Serra’s canonization does not center on whether he intended to do good mission work; anyone who reads Serra’s letters can sense the sincerity of his faith and his hopes. The problem, though, lies with the actual repercussions of that mission work. As historian of Native American Religions Jace Weaver argues, good intent is often insufficient in the face of empire: the “systematic nature of racism” “organizes and structures personal intent (however good) as to make the racist ends it may serve.”²²

Pope Francis’s homily characterized Serra as someone who “sought to defend the dignity of the Native community, protecting it from those who had abused it.” Many contemporary historians would assent to this version of Serra: he was quite critical of some of the more physically abusive practices of Spanish colonial violence, especially when it came to the sexual violation of Native women and children.²³ He argued against the death penalty. In the wake of a 1775 Kumeyaay revolt at Mission San Diego, during which Father Luis Jayme was killed by Native insurgents,

16 J. Harold Ellens, “The Franciscans: A Study in Mission,” *Missiology: An International Review* 3, no. 4 (October 1975): 497. Carlos III received reports of a Russian advance in late 1767. See Donald Cutter and Iris Engstrand, *Quest for Empire: Spanish Settlement in the Southwest* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 1996), 194.

17 Carlos Leon Mujal, “Out of the Apocalypse to the Alta California: Franciscans in the New World (1524-1833)” (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2002), 108-109.

18 Alison Lake, *Colonial Rosary: The Spanish and Indian Missions of California* (Athens, OH: Swallow Press and Ohio University Press, 2006), 43.

19 George E. Tinker, *Missionary Conquest: The Gospel and Native American Cultural Genocide* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 18.

20 James A. Sandos, *Converting California: Indians and Franciscans in the Missions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 49.

21 Francisco Palóu, *La Vida de Junípero Serra* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, Inc. of Xerox Corp., 1966 [1787]), 154-55. All translations of Palóu’s *Vida* are mine unless otherwise noted. One of the main sources of conflicts between Neve and Serra was Serra’s view of Native Californians as children as compared with Neve’s view that they should be more quickly integrated into Spanish civilian society, though his desires seemed to be rooted in a desire to hire them as laborers. Sandos, 69. In Palóu’s biography, he pays attention to one tense moment between Commandant Fages and Serra, a tension that prompts Serra to travel to Mexico City (proving his saintly endurance in Palóu’s mind) and politic with the new viceroy, Antonio María de Bucareli y Ursua. Palóu, *Vida*, 146-47.

22 Jace Weaver, “Introduction: From I-Hermeneutics to We-Hermeneutics,” in *Native American Religious Identity: Unforgotten Gods* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998), 4.

23 Serra wrote of sexual immorality (both concubinage and rape), including molestation of Native Californian boys and sexual assaults on Native men, in addition to women, and the dangers these acts posed for successful spiritual conquest. Not long after the founding of San Gabriel, for instance, some soldiers went out on a supposed cattle round-up in which they used rope to lasso women. On this particular incident, see Fray Junípero Serra to Antonio María de Bucareli y Ursua, May 21, 1773, in *Writings of Junípero Serra*, trans. and ed. Antonine Tibesar, OFM, 4 vols. (Washington, DC: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1955), 2: 360-62. Such violence was not restricted to indigenous women. In this same letter, Serra also describes a priest who discovered a soldier “committing deeds of shame with an Indian,” here specifically gendered male (Serra, 2:362).

Serra argued that Native peoples could not be faulted for these decisions, and that their lives must be spared, even if more missionaries would be martyred, to save the souls of Native Californians.²⁴ Serra argued that, under the right conditions and with the correct missionary efforts, Native peoples could one day be better Christians than the Spanish. In this regard, however, he is not so much more remarkable than many of his compatriots; other prominent figures such as the sixteenth-century Dominican friar Bartolomé de las Casas had already made bolder cases for Native humanity.

Despite Serra's good intentions, the ends of imperial domination built upon white supremacist racism impacted the missions in many ways. Before 1492, Alta California was one of the most densely populated regions north of the valley of Mexico; under Spanish and Mexican rule, from 1769-1846, California Indian populations declined as much as 90 percent.²⁵ The missions undeniably contributed to population decline, though often unintentionally. The technicalities of genocide as defined by the United Nations, which includes direct intent to eliminate an ethnic group, are more appropriately applied to U.S. rather than Spanish behavior in California;²⁶ as Osage theologian George Tinker has argued, cultural genocide is the more relevant concern in examining Spanish practices in California. For Tinker, there are four main facets of cultural genocide that attack the "self-image" of Native peoples by seeking to destroy their political, economic, social, and religious life.²⁷ According to most contemporary historians, Serra's missions were involved in targeting all four of these facets of Native Californian worlds.

Serra and his fellow missionaries generally assumed a kind of cultural conversion to be part of the spiritual conversion.²⁸ Thusly, their missionary aspirations often aligned well with Spanish colonial aspirations, and missionary assumptions were that Native peoples could be remade away from their cultures. Pope Francis's homily described Serra as someone who was interested in "learning to respect [Native] customs and characteristics." Many scholars would dispute these characterizations of Serra. He did not respect Native customs if those customs in any ways ran afoul of Serra's expectations for good Spanish Christian citizenship. His approach to Native culture would be classed instead as a form of what historian José Rabasa terms "love speech," which can be just as damaging, especially since such love speech has disruptive goals masked by a language of doing good and being helpful. Yet such love speech still presumes the inferiority of Native cultures and their need to be remade into the missionary's ideal.²⁹

Missionary love speech in the California case did not just target religious structures, but political, economic, and social structures as well. Serra and his fellow missionaries viewed Spanish economy, agricultural practices, food,

24 "Father Junípero Serra Reports the Destruction of the San Diego Mission," 1775, in *Major Problems in California History*, ed. Sucheng Chan and Spencer C. Olin (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997), 61-62.

25 Norris Hundley, Jr., *The Great Thirst: Californians and Water: A History*, rev. ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 1-2.

26 Benjamin Madley, *An American Genocide: The United States and the California Indian Catastrophe, 1846-1873* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 3. As Madley convincingly argues in his work, the U.S. undertook direct killing, bodily harm, suffering, and the transfer of children to eradicate Native Californian populations (see especially his concluding discussion, 350-53). Spanish, and especially Franciscan approaches, aimed to transform—rather than directly kill—Native populations to bring them under Spanish control.

27 Tinker, *Missionary Conquests*, 6.

28 Tinker, 47. They sought to create a *novus homo*, a new human being, who would be "Christianized and civilized" and be subject to Spanish imperial power. Mujal, "Out of the Apocalypse," 235.

29 José Rabasa, *Writing Violence on the Northern Frontier: The Historiography of Sixteenth-Century New Mexico and Florida and the Legacy of Conquest* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), 6.

and Spanish-style clothing as a draw to mission life.³⁰ At the same time, one of the main goals of the missionary project was to make Native economies dependent on European trade.³¹ Native agricultural practices were perceived as uncivilized and inadequate, and it was assumed that conversion meant Native Californians should adapt to Spanish agricultural life.³² Mission residents were expected to participate in communal labor projects, which even some eighteenth-century observers such as French naval officer François de Pérouse, writing in 1787, equated with “slavery.”³³ Mission Indians were expected to provide crops that could support the missions and the *presidios*. Mission residents ate only a minimum of the food produced so that some could be sold for profit.³⁴ Moreover California Indians were made to build much of the mission structures themselves.³⁵

Spatial organization of the missions also intended to disrupt Native social structures. The walls of the mission and its isolation from local Native communities served “to limit Indian mobility,” especially any attempts to leave the mission without missionary or military approval.³⁶ The inward focusing, square, enclosed mission layout also made missionary surveillance easier.³⁷ Yet the dense packing for surveillance also led to disease epidemics. One significant repercussion of mission life was a high mortality rate among the Native Californians who lived there.³⁸

One of the most controversial of Serra’s actions is his well-documented support for corporal punishment of Native converts. In part his support for the corporal punishment of Native converts may be contextualized within his

30 Serra, *Writings*, 2:202. Given the limits of our primary sources from California Indians, it would be hard to establish what drew them to mission life.

Virginia M. Bouvier provides an extensive list of reasons most scholars have considered. See *Women and the Conquest of California, 1542-1840: Codes of Silence* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2001), 90. Many argued, as the Spanish did, that their agricultural patterns were far superior to indigenous ones, thus explaining why the California Indians came to the missions. Perhaps California Indians ate more on the missions than they did on their own, and that is what attracted them. Harry Kelsey, “European Impact on the California Indians, 1530-1830,” *The Americas* XLI (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America, 1985): 505-6. Yet this argument seems to discount other archaeological evidence, especially the evidence that missions had cycles of surplus and famine, and in times of famine, California Indians were allowed out of the mission to return to old patterns of subsistence, presumably because they would eat more that way (Tinker, 53). Coercion and the relocation of children in large numbers seem to have been primary factors, as children were often the first converts; indeed, any claims about mission appeal based on steady food supply is overly simplistic and discounts Native Californian food skills. Robert H. Jackson and Edward D. Castillo, *Indians, Franciscans, and Spanish Colonization: The Impact of the Mission System on California Indians* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 107-108. Palóu even appears to describe San Francisco Bay Natives as well fed (Palóu, *Vida*, 209, 216-18). Some of the Native Californians may have thought they could use the Spanish against their own Native enemies, or perhaps they thought the Franciscans could mediate between the Native Californians and the Spanish soldiers. It does seem that some perceived the Franciscans as wielding a tremendous knowledge/spiritual power that some may have wished to learn more about. David J. Weber, “Blood of Martyrs, Blood of Indians: Toward a More Balanced View of Spanish Missions in Seventeenth-Century North America,” in *Columbian Consequences*, vol. 2. *Archaeological and Historical Perspectives on the Spanish Borderlands*, ed. David Hurst Thomas (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994), 433-34.

31 The Spanish regularly cited Native interest in Spanish clothing. Tinker, 51. In requesting items be sent to Alta California, Serra mentioned clothing, linking it to the need to clothe innocent Indians, for instance requesting “enough clothing of coarse cotton cloth, canvas and baize to cover in part so many poor naked [people], [who] here [are] very docile, and peaceable.” Fray Junípero Serra to Father Juan Andrés, June 12, 1770, in Serra, *Writings*, 1:170. I have on occasion wondered if Serra’s view that the Natives desired his clothing had more to do with his desire to clothe them than their interest in European clothing.

32 Tinker, 52. Serra also describes the labors of the mission populations. See Fray Junípero Serra to Don Antonio Maria de Bucareli y Ursúa, August 24, 1774, in Serra, *Writings*, 2:142-44.

33 Catherine R. Ettinger, “Spaces of Change: Architecture and the Creation of a New Society in the California Missions,” *Boletín: The Journal of the California Mission Studies Association* 21, no. 1 (2004): 26.

34 Tinker, 49.

35 Jackson and Castillo, *Indians, Franciscans*, 3. Palóu describes how some California Indians immediately went to work in building a house for the priests and a chapel for Mission San Buenaventura. Palóu, *Vida*, 247.

36 Jackson and Castillo, *Indians, Franciscans*, 80-81.

37 Ettinger, “Spaces of Change,” 36.

38 Jackson and Castillo, *Indians, Franciscans*, 109.

own broader devotion to self-flagellation as a means of religious discipline.³⁹ However, in the context of California, it also can be understood as a method of racializing Native peoples as inferior because Spanish and mixed-race subjects who colonized California were not flogged as a form of criminal punishment.⁴⁰ Flogging was a regular sentence for captured runaways; once a Californian accepted baptism, they were forbidden from leaving the mission compound without express missionary permission. In this way again, missionary labor was entwined with the repressive state apparatus of the imperial regime. The missionaries depended on the military to enforce an imprisonment of Native converts.⁴¹

Pope Francis claims that Serra “made [Native peoples] his siblings.” Contemporary historians would dispute whether “sibling” accurately describes Serra’s perceived relationship with Native converts. He quite clearly viewed himself as their father, and he imagined Native converts as children, in need of his protection but never his equal. Serra may have partially wanted Native peoples legally classified as missionary children to ensure missionary protection of Native converts, so that he could prevent Spanish soldiers and civilians from abusing them.⁴² However, legal classification of Native converts as children had significant repercussions. Serra specifically connected corporal punishment to his sense of being a spiritual father teaching lessons to his spiritual children. He also did not doubt that such punishment was normal: “That spiritual fathers should punish their sons, the Indians, with blows appears to be as old as the conquest of these kingdoms [the Americas].”⁴³ Weaver would likely read this statement and see racist structures shaping good intentions to racist ends.

Retrofitted Memory and Rethinking the Lines Between Religion and Culture

Remembering the missions should then challenge us to rethink our assumptions about the lines between religion and culture; it should make us wonder how “religious truths” are culturally conditioned. In our contemporary moment, such memory can help us see how gender and sexuality are especially culturally conditioned social relations that are too often portrayed as religious truths. Historian Clare Sears has used an interpretive method called “trans-ing” in understanding gender during the Gold Rush. Her approach does not posit either “gender” or “sexuality” as unitary or stable identities. Gender and sexuality are social codes of human relationality; gender and sexuality, in many different human societies, have been ways of representing, imagining, negotiating, and contesting relations of power. Yet the gendering and sexualization of power dynamics does not look universally the same across cultures.

39 Serra’s devotion to imitating other saints was actually one of the problematic veins of his missionary activities. After completing the novitiate, Serra dropped his name of Miquel, choosing Junípero, which had been the name of one of Francis’s early followers, known for “simplicity and humor.” He not only imitated Francis of Assisi but also Francis Solanus through the practice of self-flagellation, which he even undertook publicly as a preaching practice. He would use a chain in the pulpit to imitate Francis Solanus. On one occasion in Mexico City, before he came to Alta California, Serra started hitting himself with the chain at the end of his sermon, and this inspired a congregant to rise up and imitate him. The man actually killed himself through the violent use of the chains. See Palóu, *Vida*, 44. Sometimes Serra combined a stone with a crucifix, violently striking his chest at the end of a sermon to demonstrate contrition. At other times, especially if sermonizing on hell, he would use candles lit up, uncover his chest, and burn himself for effect. See Palóu, *Vida*, 261-262.

40 Serra specifically called for “whippings” to be used as “a warning, and may be of spiritual benefit to all.” Fray Junípero Serra to Fernando Rivera y Moncada, July 31, 1775, Serra, *Writings*, 4:425. Such corporal punishment continued after Serra’s death. Second mission president Lasuén justifies the methods of corporal punishment used on California mission Indians by describing the California Indians as “uncivilized” and suggests that they could hardly be classed as human because they practice lewd behaviors, irrationality, and fierce ignorance (seen in a lack of agriculture, government, or religion) that could only be answered with fierce punishments one would not use on more “cultured” citizens. See *The Writings of Fermín Francisco de Lasuén*, trans. and ed. Finbar Kenneally, OFM, vol. 2 (Washington, DC: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1965), 220. Spanish settlers were never so punished, which means that floggings served to maintain a racial hierarchy in California. See Madley, *An American Genocide*, 30.

41 Tinker, 48.

42 In 1773 Serra had it decreed that “just as a father of a family has charge of his house and of the education and correction of his children” then, at least in California, “the management, control, and education of the baptized Indians pertains exclusively to the missionary fathers.” See Palóu, *Historical Memoirs of New California by Francisco Palóu, O.F.M.*, ed. and trans. Herbert Bolton, 4 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1926), 3: 50.

43 See Fray Juniper Serra to Colonel and Governor Don Felipe de Neve, January 7, 1780, in Serra, *Writings*, 3: 413.

Sears's trans-ing approach to history considers how gender normativities are approached and delineated in any given historical moment, and then it considers how these normativities were sometimes breached and broken in a particular historical setting. A trans-ing approach thus examines "not only people and practices that challenge gender normativity but also cross-gender practices that do not provoke censure, and trans-ing discourses that represent men as feminine, women as masculine, and gender difference as impossible to read."⁴⁴ Such gender crossings are often practices of power, so they cannot be understood as necessarily presenting liberative gender relations. As a practice of borderlands retrofitted memory, reinterpreting past gender norms and gender crossings as distinct from our own can open new possibilities for our present perceptions.

Pope Francis's own contemporary comments have revealed how challenging an issue gender currently is for the Church. On the one hand, he has notably argued for pastoral accompaniment of transgender individuals.⁴⁵ On the other hand, he has critiqued contemporary gender discourses as "ideological colonization," especially when the social construction of gender is taught in schools to children and promoted by wealthy and influential nations.⁴⁶ While anti-colonialists can sympathize somewhat with Pope Francis's concern that Western gender norms are often economically forced on less powerful or wealthy nations, a borderlands memory of the missions underscores how the Catholic Church has already committed an ideological colonization of gender in California. Contemporary Esselen/Chumash writer Deborah A. Miranda accuses the Franciscan missionaries of perpetrating "gendercide" among Native Californian peoples whose gender systems did not align with Spanish Catholic binaristic and heteropatriarchal gender norms. Missionary practices that sought to transform gender should make us question any assumptions that there is a "natural" gender or sexual order and organization, even within Catholicism. Why else would so much work be needed to transform distinct gender codes?

The physical layout of the missions worked to sex segregate young boys and girls and men and women, allowing only nuclear families to live together, a structure that intentionally sought to remake many Native Californian kinship structures.⁴⁷ In the missions, the daily catechetical ritual tended to emphasize a binary gender hierarchy of male dominance in part as a modification of indigenous traditions; the ways that services were ordered and organized were meant to suggest male dominance over female participants.⁴⁸ Men, defined by sex, stood on one side of the altar, looking at *santos* symbolizing the "cross," whereas women, specifically defined by and oriented toward

44 Clare Sears, "All that Glitters: Trans-ing California's Gold Rush Migrations," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 14, no. 2-3 (2008): 384.

45 See discussion in Nicole Winfield of the Associated Press, "Pope Francis Encourages Catholics to Stand with Transgender People," *The Portland Press Herald*, October 7, 2016, <http://www.pressherald.com/2016/10/07/pope-francis-encourages-catholics-to-stand-with-transgender-people/>.

46 The initial context of identifying gender as ideological colonization was in Vatican-released remarks the Pope made to Polish bishops. See the Vatican's published transcript, available in multiple languages and posted August 2, 2016, <http://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/it/bollettino/pubblico/2016/08/02/0568/01265.html#es>. He reaffirmed these comments even while promoting pastoral care for transgender individuals, during a recent flight to Rome after his visits to Georgia and Azerbaijan. See John Newsome, "Pope Warns of 'Ideological Colonization' in Transgender Teachings," *CNN*, October 4, 2016, <http://www.cnn.com/2016/10/02/world/pope-transgender-comments/>. A critique of gender ideology as colonizing does not necessarily mean antagonism to lived experiences of gender, but it also does not necessarily provide a path for transformative gender relations either. For an analysis of some of Pope Francis's earlier comments that carefully distinguishes between "gender ideology" and "transgender people," see annamagda4christ's post, "What Does Pope Francis Actually Say about Transgender People?," *CatholicTrans*, July 7, 2015, <https://catholictrans.wordpress.com/2015/07/07/what-does-pope-francis-actually-say-about-transgenderism/>.

47 Sandos, *Converting California*, 8. As Sandos points out, this segregational practice reveals an intriguing assumption that sex only happened at night. Also see Bouvier, 82. Ettinger suggests that male dormitories were a lower priority, built in places where the risk of men running away was higher, which suggests how much such mission housing was associated with imprisonment rather than "protection." Ettinger also thinks that the comparative lack of male dormitories explains "the proliferation of arcades in the California missions, which served as sleeping quarters for men." Ettinger, 39-40. For a sense of how deeply these mission structures were embedded in Spanish logics of gender, see Antonia I. Castañeda, "Engendering the History of Alta California, 1769-1848: Gender, Sexuality, and the Family," in *Contested Eden: California Before the Gold Rush*, ed. Ramón A. Gutiérrez and Richard J. Orsi with Anthony Kirk and Marelene Smith-Baranzini (Berkeley: The California Historical Society with the University of California Press, 1998), 233-35. It is important to remember that not all indigenous systems were the same; gender systems and roles differed among Californian tribes. Bouvier's chapter on sexuality and marriage is especially instructive on this matter. See Bouvier, *Women and the Conquest*, 116ff.

48 Sandos, *Converting California*, 98.

reproduction, stood on another side of the altar looking at birth *santos* such as St. Anthony holding the Christ. The cross *santos* were supposed to teach males their proper role as head of a Christian family, and birth *santos* were supposed to teach women their role within the family as mothers and subordinates to their husbands.⁴⁹

In addition to catechetical rituals, missionaries emphasized women's need for behavior modification, and they reoriented women toward cleaning, laundering, and other labor that both fit Spanish notions of appropriate feminine roles and kept the women inside the mission where they could be more closely watched.⁵⁰ Yet, for many non-Christian Native Californians, women controlled their own sexuality and reproduction, and they appeared to exercise considerable "religious, political, economic, and sometimes, military power."⁵¹ Significantly, both baptism and marriage were "the most widely distributed" sacraments in New Spain.⁵² However, non-monogamous relationships, as well as abortion and infanticide, activities that were severely punished by the Franciscans, were all normal practices in many indigenous Californian traditions.⁵³

Insurgent leaders, such as Toypurina, suggests that the relationship between gender and power, especially spiritual power, could be quite distinct for Native populations.⁵⁴ The case of Toypurina, later baptized as Regina Josepha, opens up a space of alternative borderlands memory from which some facets of a complicated Native Californian Catholicism might be recuperated; both pragmatic politics and spiritual power meet in Toypurina's tale.⁵⁵ A counter-memory around and devotion to Toypurina/Regina Josepha lives on among local Native and ethnic Mexican populations in Los Angeles today as evidenced in her appearance on mural walls in different parts of the city.

It is not only male domination and a rescripting of gender roles that troubled mission gender systems. Francisco Palóu describes in his biography of Serra an incident that took place in what we now term Silicon Valley. During harvest time at mission Santa Clara, in a rare moment of integration, non-Christian Native Californians came together with their mission kin. The mission priest found among the women an individual the Franciscans believed to be a man. Palóu claims that when the father asked some of the Christian converts about this, they explained how the individual fit within their gender system, and then, either because they had been socialized into the Spanish system or Palóu put words in their mouth, the Native Christians claimed "it was not good."⁵⁶ The Spanish dragged

49 The Mexican Virgin of Guadalupe was also a prominent birth *santo*. Sandos, *Converting California*, 45.

50 Lake, *Colonial Rosary*, 84. At the same time, some presumed gender roles varied among missions, depending on whether women settlers were around to serve as exemplars, supervisors, and teachers in the mission. Bouvier, *Women and the Conquest*, 86.

51 Castañeda, "Engendering the History," 233-35. The absence of women among the initial Spanish settlers (until 1774) was a point of significant confusion for Native Californians. The Chumash, for instance, assumed the absence of women meant the Spanish "had been banished from their own land" (Bouvier, *Women and the Conquest*, 39).

52 Mujal, "Out of the Apocalypse," 67.

53 For some Chumash it was traditional practice to kill the firstborn. Lake, *Colonial Rosary*, 151. Women in California generally practiced abortion and infanticide in cases of rape. Jackson and Castillo, *Indians, Franciscans*, 82. Priests at Mission San Gabriel, for instance, assumed that even miscarriages were abortions, and they punished women with head shaving, flogging (for fifteen days), the wearing of iron on their feet (shackling could last up to three months), sackcloth, ashes, and having to appear in church on Sunday with a child of painted wood that represented the dead baby, an effigy that a woman was supposed to carry with her at all times (Castañeda, "Engendering the History," 234). Women who did not alter their behaviors to fit Spanish modes were frequently demonized as witches. Castañeda, "Engendering the History," 235. Ramón A. Gutiérrez argued that the persecution of witches among the Indians could be read "as a struggle over [these] competing ways of defining the body and of regulating procreation as the church endeavored to constrain the expression of desire within boundaries that clerics defined proper and acceptable." Ramón A. Gutiérrez: "Sexual Mores and Behavior: The Spanish Borderlands," *Encyclopedia of the North American Colonies*, vol. 2 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993), 701.

54 That women could exercise political and religious power was evident in the 1785 Kumi.vit (Gabrielino) revolt, led by Toypurina, known to be a medicine woman. Men involved in the revolt were partially punished for following a woman's leadership (Castañeda, "Engendering the History," 236).

55 Toypurina was later baptized as Regina Josefa, married Spanish *presidial* soldier Manuel Montero, had four children, and died from a European disease. We cannot know Toypurina's motives for converting and marrying a Spaniard, other than knowing that she would have gained some status and some protection in such an arrangement. In the decade that followed the San Gabriel revolt, Toypurina's was one of only two marriages between a Spaniard and a California Indian recorded at Missions San Juan Bautista, Santa Clara, and San Carlos. Sandos, *Converting California*, 5-6.

56 Francisco Palóu, *La Vida de Junipero Serra* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, Inc. of Xerox Corp., 1966 [1787]), 221.

this individual to the guardhouse and stripped the person naked, pointing to their genitalia and demanding they behave as a man. Not surprisingly, the terrorized individual fled the mission and never returned.

According to Palóu's biography of Serra, the Franciscans sought further explanation not only from the Natives at Mission Santa Clara but also at Mission San Antonio. There the Franciscans learned of the term "*joya*" after going into a new convert's house where two non-Christian Natives had gone, one sexed⁵⁷ male dressed as a man and one sexed male dressed as a woman. The Franciscans caught them presumably in the midst of "an act of unspoken sin," and the man responded that the *joya* was his wife.⁵⁸ Neither the man nor the *joya* was ever seen at the mission again. Palóu claims there were no reports from any other missions, but that *joyas* can be found in towns throughout the Santa Barbara Channel. Palóu concludes with the prayer that missions will fill the land and that "so abominable [a vice] will be banished."⁵⁹ Tales like these⁶⁰ lead Miranda to accuse the Franciscan missionaries of gendercide, of the willful targeting and cultural and bodily destruction of individuals who did not align with Spanish binary gender roles.

Here is another layer of memory exposed for ambivalent reconsideration. In my recent book, I write more about how the Franciscans worked to build Revelation's new Jerusalem into their mission, and I raise questions about the gender codes used in that biblical imaginary.⁶¹ The medieval and early Christian utopian and spiritual imaginary that informs the Franciscans' vision for the New Jerusalem in Alta California is not one that necessarily enforces gender norms on quite the same terms the Spanish Franciscans appear to take up in their missions.

Both medieval and early Christian imaginations of spiritual power often depend upon the transgression of normative gender roles and performances. As Virginia Burrus, Caroline Walker Bynum, and Gilberto Cavazos-González have demonstrated about bishops and monastics in late antiquity and the Middle Ages, men often traded on certain performances of normative feminine gender roles to claim spiritual authority and power.⁶² These gender-bending practices are not necessarily liberative; indeed, they can be taken up precisely to assert roles of spiritual authority and domination over others. However, these medieval gender-bending practices reveal how gender is employed as a social construct, as a way of representing, negotiating, and remaking relations of social and spiritual power. Gender performances within Franciscan and broader Christian traditions are hence not neatly uniform or simply, naturally binary over time themselves.

As one example, consider the gender play in Francis of Assisi's writings. Francis claimed that true spiritual power only resides among those who can embody and manage both feminine and masculine gender aspects. He asserted that the masculine and patriarchal authority of leadership required that both paternal and maternal symbols and associations be employed.⁶³ Francis was not the only medieval mystic to suggest that spiritual paths lay in being ca-

57 In this essay, I often use "sex" to refer to the sex assigned at birth or by the Spanish based on anatomical features commonly identified as reproductive organs. While gender and sex cannot be as neatly divided as this, I use "gender" when emphasizing socially constructed identities, which are not always simplistically aligned with Spanish claims about the inherent connection between reproductive organs and gender classification.

58 "*en acto de pecado nefando* (in an act of silent/unspoken sin)," Palóu, *Vida*, 222. For my translation of *nefando* as "silent/unspoken" instead of the more conventional "unspeakable," I am using Miranda's translation. Miranda, 261.

59 Palóu, *Vida*, 221-22.

60 Palóu is far from the only Spanish colonial writer to be bothered by Native Californian gender norms. One might also consider examples found in Gerónimo Boscana, "Chinigchinich: A New Original Version of Boscana's Historical Account of the San Juan Capistrano Indians of Southern California," ed. and trans. John P. Harrington, *Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections* 92, no. 4 (June 27, 1934). 7-28. Sandos observes that the translator, Harrington, is so embarrassed by the passage that he does not translate it. See Sandos, *Converting California*, 25 and 189, note 20.

61 Jacqueline M. Hidalgo, *Revelation in Aztlán: Scriptures, Utopias, and the Chicano Movement* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 106-113; 175-180.

62 Virginia Burrus, "*Begotten Not Made*": *Conceiving Manhood in Late Antiquity* (Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press, 2000); Caroline Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); Gilberto Cavazos-González, OFM, *Greater than a Mother's Love: The Spirituality of Francis and Clare of Assisi* (Scranton, PA: University of Scranton Press, 2010).

63 Cavazos-González, *Greater than a Mother's Love*, 138.

pable of enacting both masculine and feminine gender roles.⁶⁴ He also suggests that the path of spirituality requires experiencing multiple gender roles and transforming the self through those experiences. Opening up a *frontera* memory of this history might make possible a different gender politics in our present.

***Frontera* Devotion as Practice of Critical Reflection**

A *frontera* saintly devotion of borderlands memory attends not only to the historical context of the missions but also to their reception histories. How have the missions been remembered and why? To some extent, the bitter binary of California dreams or colonial nightmares that I inscribed in the title to this essay, the wondering about whether Serra is a hero or a villain, are bound up with who has fought for Serra to be canonized and why.

Serra died in 1784 at Mission San Carlos Borromeo.⁶⁵ The earliest proponent of Serra's sainthood was his student, Francisco Palóu.⁶⁶ Three years after Serra's death, Palóu published a hagiography intended to make Serra look like a saint, a hagiography that has cast a long shadow over historiographies of the Franciscan settlement. Palóu's *Vida* concludes with a long chapter that meditates on Serra's saintly virtues, even while emphasizing Palóu's awareness of papal regulations regarding canonization.⁶⁷

Palóu's is the main Spanish voice from that era clamoring for Serra's canonization, and the Mexican government, which eventually secularizes the missions and views them as patronizing to Native Californians, has no real interest in Serra's case.⁶⁸ It is not until the 1880s and among Anglos in what is now the U.S.A. state of California that we begin to see a drive for Serra's sainthood. While they borrow heavily from Palóu's hagiography, these U.S.A. portrayals render Serra as a tireless pioneer and bringer of civilization, embodying the benefits of settler colonial Christian expansion.⁶⁹

The demographic collapse of California Indian populations that started under the Spanish became intentionally pursued genocide under the United States. The California Indian population declined an additional 80 percent in just twelve years from 1848 to 1860.⁷⁰ Critics of US genocide readily found Spanish missionary activity as a preferable model. Helen Hunt Jackson's 1884 novel *Ramona*, which was quite popular for more than fifty years and was made into several films, reimagined the Franciscans' communal-based utopian missions into U.S.A.-style "enterprises."⁷¹ Jackson also wished to convert Native peoples, and certainly saw their conversion as preferable to their massacre.⁷² In an era in which Catholics were not especially loved in the United States, Jackson made the case for thinking about Franciscans as Protestant in their austerity, at least when compared to other Catholics.⁷³

64 Cavazos-González, *Greater than a Mother's Love*, 137-38. I also thank Neomi DeAnda for discussing this paper with me and reminding me of the importance of gender bending to medieval monastic spiritual authority.

65 Steven W. Hackel, "The Competing Legacies of Junípero Serra: Pioneer, Saint, Villain," *Common-Place: The Interactive Journal of Early American Life* 5, no. 2 (January 2005). <http://www.common-place.org/vol-05/no-02/hackel/index.shtml>.

66 Tinker, *Missionary Conquests*, 43. Palóu states that he had known Serra since 1739, and he does, on occasion, worry that their close emotional relationship would be perceived as coloring his work. See Palóu, *Vida*, 287-88.

67 Palóu does, however, on more than one occasion make it clear that he is aware of the rules regarding canonization as set by Pope Urban VIII in 1631, and he is not trying to shirk those rules in any way. See for instance, Palóu, *Vida*, 282.

68 Sandos, *Converting California*, 106. The Mexicans also enacted their own brutal regime racializing Native Californians as a labor base. See discussion in Madley, 39-40.

69 Hackel, "Competing Legacies."

70 Sandos, *Converting California*, 183.

71 Sandos, *Converting California*, 183. Readings of Bryant's account of California likewise suggest this seeming confluence between the California missions and the now more expansive work of U.S.A. "enterprise" that the unworked land requires. Once that is accomplished, "The day is not distant when American enterprise and American ingenuity will furnish those adjuncts of civilization, of which California is now so destitute, and render a residence in this country one of the most luxurious upon the globe." Edwin Bryant, "What I Saw in California," in *A World Transformed: Firsthand Accounts of California Before the Gold Rush*, ed. Joshua Paddison (Berkeley, CA.: Heyday Books, 1999), 270.

72 Roberto Ramón Lint Sagarena, *Aztlán and Arcadia: Religion, Ethnicity, and the Creation of Place* (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 64.

73 See discussion in Lint Sagarena, *Aztlán and Arcadia*, 67.

This recognition of Serra and the missions, besides denigrating other Catholics, also worked as a way of criticizing Mexicans. Besides critiquing US genocide, mobilizing Spanish mission memory was a way in which Anglo settlers could denigrate Mexican rule and cast Mexicans as “foreigners” on soil that had been their home before 1848. Mission revival architecture imprints on California’s landscape the sense of connection that a dominant US culture perceived with Serra’s colonial ideals; moreover, mission revival architecture becomes most prominent especially in the era of the Mexican Revolution when many more ethnic Mexicans moved to California.⁷⁴ The sense

of mission architecture as embodying pioneering Euro-American civilization and strength is why the Reagan Library in Simi Valley chose mission revival architecture in order to communicate the “peace through strength” of Reagan’s “city on a hill.”⁷⁵

Such rhetoric is in marked contrast to Pope Francis’s portrayal of Serra as a missionary “accompanying the life of God in the faces of those he met.” Yet it is not out of step with many early twentieth-century Anglo Californians who fought for Serra’s canonization. Again, racism was a crucial facet of these calls for Serra’s canonization. Claremont Colleges President James A. Blaisdell, speaking at the 1929 dedication of the Junípero Serra Museum in San Diego, affirmed an Anglo connection with Mallorcan Serra in clear racializing tones. Blaisdell casts the Spanish conquest of California and the Anglo museumification of the missions as a racial reunification and a return to racial origins: “by the grace and chivalry of two branches of our common Aryan family which were cradled originally in a common birthplace eons ago but have been for ages diversely educated and moulded in far-separated regions under vastly varying and often distinctly contrasted influences until they are now here reunited in this new community of interest and effort.”⁷⁶ Considering how important white supremacist racism was to those who argued for Serra’s canonization in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, of course Native American and ethnic Mexican populations came to see Serra as the embodiment of racist histories that have marginalized and oppressed them.

In asking you to remember St. Serra through the lens of borderlands memory, I am asking you to hold in tension the ambivalence that surrounds Catholic entanglements in the settler colonization and conquest of California. If we follow Pope Francis’s urging to challenge practices of colonization that create and maintain exploited underclasses, then we must grapple with how Catholic missionaries in California contributed to Native genocide as well as the creation of Native American underclasses, and how Serra’s memory was mobilized in the solidification of a racialized hierarchy of white domination in California. Yet Serra points to a greater challenge of our time: the problem of recognizing good intentions and their limits. Serra wanted to do good but was structurally implicated in colonial and racist harm. Following Weaver, I do not think that colonization can yield saints as heroic figures we should wish to imitate; racist structures will always impact their intentions. But *frontera* saints can open a more complex vein of memory through which we can reflect on Catholicism’s past and present.

I want to conclude by thinking about mission memory as refracted through the performance of a Chumash woman, Ernestine de Soto, who, in the documentary film *6 Generations* (2014) recounts the memory of six generations of women in her family. She starts with her great-great-great grandmother, who was born in 1769 and baptized as María Paula, just as the Spanish first began missions in California. De Soto’s performance of memories recounts the legacies of genocide through a ritualized practice of Chumash storytelling. Problematically, she starts her story with a foremother who enters the missions; we have no access to de Soto’s Chumash ancestors who predate

74 Lint Sagarena, *Aztlán and Arcadia*, 68. Mission revival architecture came especially to dominate California in the midst of ethnic Mexican migration into California during the Mexican revolution. See discussion in Lint Sagarena, 127-128.

75 As stated in the online video, Gary Sinise, host, “Reagan Library Video Tour,” *The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation & Library* website, <http://www.reaganfoundation.org/reagan-library-video-tour.aspx>.

76 James A. Blaisdell, “Address at the Dedication of the Junípero Serra Museum,” July 16, 1929, San Diego Historical Society pamphlet, available in the collection of the Huntington Library, San Marino, CA, 7-8.

the Spanish missions. Yet de Soto also reveals and embodies the stories of women who lived a sacred struggle for survival, who were critical of mission histories even while they were Catholics. De Soto's family stories all center around *¡Siempre Adelante!*, Junípero Serra's motto of "always keep moving forward in the struggle." De Soto offers a way beyond the binary of California dreams or colonial nightmares, between the dichotomy that structures a focus on one man as saint or villain. What would mission memory look like if, instead of focusing on Serra, we centered the women of de Soto's family, if we made their struggles the focus of our mission memory?

Bondage and Freedom

by Murala Marianus Jagadish, SJ

Have we ever reflected on original sin and salvation? It looks like we are guilty because Adam and Eve committed sin, and we are saved because Jesus died on the cross! According to the above statement there is no personal responsibility either in the original sin or in the salvation, whereas spiritual liberation is a *sādhana* (continued practice) by an individual through which s/he gains spiritual liberation or enlightenment. We too recite “bumper-sticker slogans” without deeper reflection and without applying ourselves to the faith. I have given some consideration to this to see whether my belief as a Catholic Christian is like that of the above statement. The whole reflection is the outcome of my reflection based on the scriptural narration of original sin and salvation in Jesus Christ.

Original Sin, Bondage

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In Galatians 5:1 we read “Christ set us free, so that we should remain free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be fastened again to the yoke of slavery.”¹ The whole spirituality of sin and salvation is based on two concepts, namely the “yoke of slavery” (“yoke of bondage” in the King James Version) and “freedom.” In other words, “sin” is bondage and “salvation” is freedom. We need to understand these concepts of bondage and freedom to consciously experience both.

How does sin become bondage? Do we experience this bondage in day-to-day life? These are some of the questions that arise. When Jesus said, “the truth shall make you free,” the Jews objected by saying, “We are free, not slaves”:

To the Jews who believed in him Jesus said: “If you make my word your home you will indeed be my disciples; you will come to know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” They answered, “We are descended from Abraham and we have never been the slaves of anyone; what do you mean, ‘You will be set free?’” Jesus replied: “In all truth I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave.” (Jn 8:31-34).

In the light of this statement of Jesus that sin is slavery and his “word” (when it finds home within oneself) freedom, we shall reflect on sin in general and salvation. The bondage (slavery) is not by someone outside of us but by our own nature. To elucidate this point I recall the following anecdote which I read somewhere:

¹ All Biblical passages are from *The New Jerusalem Bible: Reader's Edition* (New York: Doubleday, 1990) unless otherwise noted. Those indicating King James Version are from the Cambridge 1769 edition.

Once a king wanted to be free and requested the holy monk, who was present in his court, to show him the way. The monk went to a pillar and embracing it he began to cry “free me, free me.” All who were present in the court laughed and the king said, “O holy man, nobody is binding you; you free yourself.” The monk said, “That, precisely is my point, your majesty; nobody is binding you, free yourself.”²

The experience of bondage is within the self of everyone because it is our nature. This nature has been explained as “habit” of the soul by St. Thomas Aquinas.

Original Sin According to St. Thomas Aquinas

There are two kinds of habit:

Habit is twofold. The first is a habit whereby power is inclined to an act: thus science and virtue are called habits. In this way original sin is not a habit. The second kind of habit is the disposition of a complex nature, whereby that nature is well or ill-disposed to something, chiefly when such a disposition has become like a second nature, as in the case of sickness or health. In this sense original sin is a habit.³

“Habit” here means the inherent nature of the soul and its disposition. We are concerned with this “disposition” which is the outcome of original sin. This essay is an attempt to make that nature clear for us to understand the implications of the “story” of original sin.

Original Sin in the Bible

There are certain questions that can be answered by explanation and there are others that can be answered through experience. The question regarding ultimate truth is something to be understood by one with the experience. There is an anecdote regarding attaining truth:

“What is the way to attain the truth?” asked a disciple. “Through silence” the Master replied. After some thought he said, “The next best thing to attain truth is through a story.”

Original sin is the truth; everyone, irrespective of creed, feels two movements within oneself. One is towards the base, worldly, sensual pleasures, and the other is towards lofty, heavenly, spiritual joy. Both are towards happiness (pleasure); they may differ in degrees—one bodily and momentary, and the other an indefinable, lasting, inner experience. The awareness of these movements itself is liberative.

Saint Ignatius of Loyola calls these movements the movements of the spirits and gives certain “rules” to discern (distinguish between) the spirits. Discernment is useful for ascertaining spiritual joy by distinguishing the movement of the spirits. There are fourteen rules. Ignatius differentiates between sensual pleasure and inner joy and then describes “consolation” and “desolation” (roughly put, these terms mean happiness and sadness) and how the “spirits” inspire a person during moments of consolation and desolation. Ignatius gives us some similes to understand the ways of the spirits.⁴ It is told in a crude Telugu proverb, the meaning of which goes something like, “Even if you climb the palm tree your bottom will be facing the earth.” The “climbing up” part is one kind of spirit (urge within) which seeks the spiritual joy whereas the “facing down” indicates the earthly pleasures.

² Anecdotes in *italics* denote those that come from my memory and for which I have no citation.

³ “Questions 82. Original Sin, as to its Essence,” <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/2082.htm>

⁴ George E. Ganss, SJ, trans., *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* (Saint Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1992), 93-96.

The Bible tells us the story of the truth, namely, the two “pulls,” or two “natures.” According to the second creation story (Gn 2:4-25), God makes human beings from the earth (“soil” in the New Jerusalem Bible and “dust” in the King James Version)⁵ and breathes His Spirit into them. The “soil” part represents earthly desires and the “Spirit” heavenly or spiritual desires. These aspects represent the two pulls, the two spirits within us. This is made clear by St. Paul when he says,

I do not understand my own behaviour; I do not act as I mean to, but I do things that I hate. While I am acting as I do not want to, I still acknowledge the Law as good, so it is not myself acting, but the sin which lives in me. And really, I know of nothing good living in me—in my natural self, that is—for though the will to do what is good is in me, the power to do it is not: the good thing I want to do, I never do; the evil thing which I do not want—that is what I do. But every time I do what I do not want to, then it is not myself acting, but the sin that lives in me. So I find this rule: that for me, where I want to do nothing but good, evil is close at my side. In my inmost self I dearly love God’s law, but I see that acting on my body there is a different law which battles against the law in my mind. So I am brought to be a prisoner of that law of sin which lives inside my body (Rom 7:15-23).

There are particular aspects of the truth with regard to human beings in the story of original sin. We shall examine them next.

Knowledge

The first aspect in original sin is knowledge. God created everything good. He created the entire universe in six days and six times He said it was good (cf. Gn 1:1-31). In the creation story, there is a special reference to two trees in the Garden of Eden: one is the life-giving tree and the second the knowledge-giving tree. God tells Adam and Eve that they can eat from any of the trees but should not eat from the knowledge-giving tree. This represents the temptation of human beings; they are prone to do the things that are forbidden. Human beings are attracted naturally towards the knowledge-giving tree precisely because it was forbidden. From the story, we might infer that Adam and Eve never thought of the life-giving tree! The Garden of Eden is a state of mind (or rather no mind, that is, without knowledge because knowledge represents the mind) where there is no knowledge. In this state there is joy that cannot be described but only experienced.

Regarding the mind, there are three types of persons called as *buddhus* (a Hindi word based on the Sanskrit root *bud* which means mind; the stupid, no knowledge), *buddhas* (a Sanskrit word for the “enlightened, those who have gone beyond mind,” that is, knowledge), and the *buddhi jīvas* (a Sanskrit phrase, “the knowledgeable, who are in the mind”). *Buddhus* and *buddhas* both enjoy life. However, the first type of people enjoy it but do not know (are unaware) that they are enjoying life, whereas the second type of individuals experience immense joy and are aware of it. The third type are in constant misery because of the knowledge!

What is this knowledge that the story of original sin speaks of? It is the knowledge that distinguishes the good from the bad (Gn 3:5). It is “discriminative” knowledge. Whenever we discriminate, categorize something as good or bad, we are falling into that sin. Whenever we judge something, we can judge only from our limited experience. In one way by judging someone we are judging ourselves. The following anecdote elucidates this point:

There was a talking parrot with a merchant who had a shop of scented oils. His business was flourishing because of the parrot which attracted the customers by its talk.

⁵ “Yahweh God shaped man from the soil of the ground...” (NJB); “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground...” (KJV).

One day she tipped a jar of very costly scented oil by accident. The merchant was very angry and he began to beat her with a small stick on her head. The poor parrot became unconscious. Taking pity on her the merchant nursed her back to consciousness. Because of the beating the parrot had lost the feathers on her head.

One day a bald man came to the shop. Seeing his bald head the parrot asked him, "Tell me, how many jars have you broken?"

Our judgment is exactly like that! The discrimination gives us the experience of happiness and sadness. Recurring happiness and sadness is the state of human misery. This is the experience of being "driven away from the Garden of Eden." The Garden represents the joy without the opposite experience. The "driven away" represents the "misery."

Attraction

From the knowledge of good and bad two types of attraction form in our mind. The first is the positive attraction towards "good" (which our discriminative knowledge considers as good), and the second is negative attraction or repulsion towards bad. Both are termed as "attraction" because both arise from the discriminative knowledge of good and bad. These two attractions (let us say affection and repulsion, in Sanskrit, *rāga* and *dveṣa*) generate passions in us. These passions are human misery. Notice that the passions do not cause misery, but whenever we are in the state of passions we are in misery.

The attraction is towards the attraction of the "other." This is the enticement that the evil one gives: "God knows in fact that the day you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be *like* gods, knowing good from evil" (Gn 3:5, emphasis added). This too is our day-to-day experience. Recall the times when you went to a hotel and ordered food. When your order came to your table, you looked around and thought that the "other" person was having better food than yours! This is the truth that original sin is telling us, that the attraction towards the other causes us suffering (misery).

There is a mythological story behind the celebration of *Sankranti* (which is celebrated on January 13, 14, and 15) and *Onam* (in Kerala).⁶ There was a demon king named Bali (or *Mahā Bali*, the great strength). He was a benevolent king. He defeated Indra (the king of gods) and usurped Indra's throne. Vishnu, in the form of a dwarf, punished him. What was his sin? To be the other (to become the king of gods) and not to be satisfied with himself (not realise one's own self).

The punishment is not given by someone outside of us. Taking the example of the food at the hotel, the punishment is non-enjoyment. When we consider the food at the other table as better than ours, a feeling of non-satisfaction arises within us. Then we can neither enjoy our food nor can we enjoy the other's food. That is the punishment of becoming attracted. It applies not only to food but also to other things, such as clothes or sandals.

Blaming

The experience of misery because of the original sin that is inherent to human beings is quite clear. The fruit of the original sin is told in the same story. Before committing the sin, when Eve was created, Adam said, "This one at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh!" (Gn 2:23). But after committing the sin he said, "It was the *woman* you put with me; *she* gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it" (Gn 3:12, emphasis added). "The woman" and "You

⁶ These two festivals are related to agriculture. The paddy fields are reaped during this period and people celebrate the occasion as a festival.

put with me” are indications of blame. The aspect of blame is the result of original sin. This too tells us something that is within us. We tend to blame others for our condition/state of mind; whenever we say s/he is the cause for my sadness/happiness, for example, we are under the grip of original sin.

Blaming has deep spiritual implications. When we blame some people or some situation for our condition (happiness or sadness), we become dependent on those people or situations. This is slavery. The responsibility for our state of mind does not depend on us but on others. This dependency/slavery is being in misery. This is another aspect of the result of original sin.

The aspects of original sin are inherent to us. This is the meaning of original sin; the sin has its origin within our nature. It is not attributed to some external factor. This truth regarding our nature is told in the story of creation. In this way human nature seems to lean towards misery. All the above aspects are leading a person towards sadness and misery. The way out is to balance this tendency with the divinity within us. That divinity is diminished by our engrossment with “earthly” aspects and our forgetting the “spirit” aspects with which we are created. This forgotten nature is revealed to us through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Let us see how salvation comes to us through the person of Christ.

Salvation, Freedom

Salvation is described as freedom by St. Paul: “Christ set us free, so that we should remain free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be fastened again to the yoke of slavery” (Gal 5:1). What is the “yoke of slavery” from which we need to be freed? This is pronounced more clearly in Paul’s letter to the Romans:

So by our baptism into his death we were buried with him, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father’s glorious power, we too should begin living a new life. If we have been joined to him by dying a death like his, so we shall be by a resurrection like his; realizing that our former self was crucified with him, so that the self which belonged to sin should be destroyed and we should be freed from the slavery of sin (Rom 6:4-6).

Death to the “self” is freedom. I heard an anecdote:

There was a bird from India encaged in an Arabian country. Once the minister of that country was going to India. So he asked the bird if she wanted to tell anything to her country cousins. The bird sang the sad story of her bondage. The minister went into the forest in India and sang the bird’s song. On hearing it a bird fell down dead! Shocked and saddened the minister returned and narrated what happened in India. When hearing of this incident the bird in the cage dropped dead. Feeling sorry, the minister opened the cage to remove the body and the bird flew away!

Dead bodies are not kept in bondage. Freedom means death, and that death is to the self. The self can be referred to as “ego.” Ego shows itself in many ways in our life; we want to “outdo” others. The moment we want to “prove” our mettle we are under the grip of the self and in bondage. When we let go of this self we become free. Paul compares our baptism as the baptism into Christ’s death. The teachings of Jesus about death (also “cross”) are significant in this regard (cf. Jn 12:24, 25—death of the wheat; Mt 16:25—saving, or losing life; Mt 16:24—“take up your cross”). The “cross” and Jesus’s death on the cross become the saving factor for all humanity when his teaching is understood.

Jesus Christ brings out the divine aspects within by his life, passion, death, and resurrection, which is called “Christ-event.” It is misleading when we say that Christ’s blood/cross/death on the cross saves humanity. The whole

Christ-event is significant in saving the human situation of the aspects of original sin, which was discussed above. The aspects of original sin are real from our own experience (not only for Christians but for all of humanity). Christ shows the way out of this inherent sinfulness within humanity by bringing out the aspects of divinity (spirit) within us. That spirit is “realized” when we die to our self. Let us see some of the spiritual aspects that appear in the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Love

The foremost teaching of Christ that comes to mind when we think of him is love. His way of love is far beyond the earthly way of love. (I say “earthly” and “spiritual” because of the two aspects with which we are created according to the creation story in Genesis; it is not to denigrate the world or the “earthly.”) The summary of his teachings is seen in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5-7). Let us consider the “love” that he has taught us.

The old form of love is to love one’s friends and hate one’s enemies: “You have heard how it was said, You will love your neighbour and hate your enemy” (Mt 5:43). The new love is to love everybody equally: “But I say this to you, love your enemies...” (Mt 5:44). “Love your enemies” seems to be misleading because if there is love there is no “enemy.” It is a way of saying that one should love all. What happens if we love? Our burdens (of life’s toil) become light (cf. Mt 11:30). There is an anecdote to elucidate this point:

A woman who had divorced her husband and married another man was sweeping the house when she found a piece of paper on which her former husband had written the time-table for her, starting from getting up at certain time, sweeping, preparing coffee, etc. “Such a difficult time I had doing so much work,” she thought.

But actually what she is doing now is the same routine work. Only now she does not have a time-table written down by anybody. She does everything out of love and it is not difficult any more.

Our day-to-day experience also tells us that when we love and do something for the sake of the beloved it is not difficult/burdensome but a joy. Even our work at the office and a hobby that we love can be taken as an example. The work at the office, let us say some computer work, is burdensome, but when at home we are engaged with the computer for hours without any difficulty. Hobbies are those that we love to do and they are not burdensome but give us happiness. If we love what we do as work, then that work too becomes light. The love aspect is applied to the persons and the works.

There is a difference between “attraction” and “love.” Considering the two aspects of the creation story (earth and spirit), attraction is earthly and love is spirit. Attraction brings competition, tension, or fighting. Love brings peace and calmness. They are polar opposites, but both are intrinsic to us.

Why are we more prone towards “earthly” attraction than towards “spiritual” love? The question or answer to the question remains a mystery. We are naturally prone towards the earthly aspects within us like bodies having gravity. Levity, the opposite of gravity, is not natural to us. We need somebody to teach us, to show the way. Jesus becomes that “way” who taught us the hidden levity that is a part of us.

Nonviolence

It is more correct to say the “spirit of nonviolence” than nonviolence. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells us of the “old” law and gives us the new law with regard to love and nonviolence: “But I say this to you, love your

enemies and pray for those who persecute you...” (Mt 5:44). Mahatma Gandhi takes up this spirit of nonviolence, not the “old” law of nonviolence.

The old law in India can be taken from the Mahabharata, “*ahimsā paramo dharmah, dharma himsā tathaiva ca.*” (Non-violence is the ultimate dharma. So too is violence in service of Dharma.⁷) The second part of the verse indicates the justification of violence for the sake of Dharma. The spirit of nonviolence in the teachings of Jesus is to fulfill this old law. Violence is not justified in any situation or for anything. It is not justified even in thinking, “You have heard how it was said to our ancestors, You shall not kill; and if anyone does kill he must answer for it before the court. But I say this to you, anyone who is angry with a brother will answer for it before the court...” (Mt 5:21-22).

The mental part (thinking part of a person) reminds us of one of the ‘*angas*’ (limbs) of *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga* (Yoga with eight limbs),⁸ namely, *yama-niyama-āsana-prāṇāyāma-pratyahāra-dhāraṇa-dhyāna-samādhayoḥ-aṣṭāvangāni*. (The eight limbs of Union are self-restraint in actions, fixed observance, posture, regulation of energy, mind control in sense engagements, concentration, meditation, and realization—*Yoga Sūtras* of Patanjali, 2:29.) *Pratyāhāra* is the mind part (2.54). The relation between mind and sense organs is given in this *sutra*. Being “angry” is an indication of the mind.

The spirit of nonviolence means the three-fold way of nonviolence (*trikaraṇa śuddhi*), that is, in the mind (*manasā*), in words (*vācā*), and in actions (*karmanā*). Jesus gives no exceptions for nonviolence. “Just war” in the history of the Church is not according to this spirit but only a distortion of nonviolence as taught by Jesus. The spirit of nonviolence becomes the saving factor if we imbibe the spirit. This spirit is against the “blame” of the original sin.

Forgiveness

“Yes, if you forgive others their failings, your heavenly Father will forgive you yours” (Mt 6:14). This saying of Jesus sounds like “you scratch my back, I scratch yours,” though it sounds strangely compatible with wickedness on the outset. But we need to go beyond the outer meaning of words, remembering that Jesus is a spiritual Master. The words of Spiritual Masters mean something deeper, related to the spirit. Anthony de Mello, SJ, puts it in anecdote form:

Said a disciple to a newcomer at the monastery, “I must warn you that you will not understand a word of what the Master says if you do not have the proper disposition.”

“What is the proper disposition?”

“Be like a student eager to learn a foreign language. The words he speaks sound familiar, but don’t be taken in; they have an altogether foreign meaning.”⁹

Let’s examine the spirit of forgiveness that Jesus practiced in his life even at the point of death: “Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing” (Lk 23:34). We often hear people say “forgive and forget.” Psychologists explicate the meaning of these words something like this: forgiveness is immediate and has outward consideration. I may say, “I forgive,” but it is not a deep-felt experience of forgiveness. Forgetting something is connected to our emotions. When somebody does something wrong towards us the immediate emotional level is high (anger,

⁷ Violence is justified in the case of a king or government to curb crime.

⁸ Patanjali, the propounder of *Yoga* philosophy, proposes eight kinds of practices. The eight kinds (in Sanskrit *aṣṭa*) are called the “limbs” (in Sanskrit *anga*). The term “limbs” indicates that Yoga cannot be practiced part by part, but that all eight parts must be practiced together.

⁹ Anthony de Mello, SJ, *One Minute Nonsense* (Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1992), 1.

rage etc.). As time passes the level of emotion abates. At some point in time we “remember” the incident without having any emotion attached to it. This is forgetting.

When we forget ourselves and become one with the emotion (emotion=“other”) we suffer under the grip of original sin. Getting out of this grip is forgiving the other.

The deeper meaning comes here: as long as we do not forgive others, our emotions are high; we identify ourselves with those emotions, and we are in suffering, misery. When we forgive and the emotions disappear, then we are in the state of happiness. It is not that somebody else is going to punish us but that our own emotions are the cause of our punishment, suffering. This is against the “attraction” towards the “other,” namely, becoming identified with the emotion, and it is a saving factor that is shown by Jesus with the example of his life.

There are still others saving factors in the teaching of Jesus. Only three have been highlighted because of the lack of space.

Conclusion

Looking at the concepts of original sin and salvation, there seems to be no personal responsibility at the outset. However, when we delve deep into the mysteries of these concepts, our responsibility is very clear. Original sin starts with the understanding of our nature (rather two natures within us). This understanding leads us towards salvation, and salvation is linked with the Christ-event.

Bondage is to be self-centered. The result of such self-centeredness is misery. The way out of this misery is death to the self and resurrection of the spirit within us. The spirit within us is to be awakened by the values taught by Jesus Christ. If we are awakened to these values we will be led from bondage to freedom.

Unlearning Racism: The Privileged, Catholic Boomer and the Racial Divide in the United States

by Gary Umhoefer

“We didn’t start the fire. No, we didn’t light it, but we tried to fight it.”¹

July 30, 1967—Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was on fire. I had turned twelve years old a couple of months earlier and lived in the same town that my immigrant German family had settled in 119 years earlier. It had been a rural farming village in the hinterlands of Waukesha County then; while there were still quite a few farms, by 1967 it had somewhat morphed into a commuter suburb on the northwest edge of the Milwaukee metropolitan area. My family of seven lived on a quiet street in one of the modest three-bedroom, one-and-a-half-bath homes that had been built in the post-WWII construction boom. We were members of a large and growing Catholic parish, and my siblings and I attended its recently expanded grade school staffed by dedicated nuns and lay teachers.

On that summer Sunday evening, a riot occurred in Milwaukee over open housing. “Anger. Arson. Gunfire. Looting. Rocks flying. Vandalism. Arrests. Blame. Calls for calm.”² My hometown was one of the suburbs that instituted a nighttime curfew to “keep the trouble from finding them.”³ But I felt that my relatively tranquil world had been literally rocked and I remember my fearful, pre-adolescent mind thinking, “Please don’t let *them* come here and start my house on fire.” I had no real comprehension of what had caused this violence in Milwaukee; I simply concluded that *they* were violent and should be feared. The fire, I learned much, much later, however, had been burning for a very long time.

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Looking back on that vivid, personal experience, remembering my pre-adolescent fear looking southeast toward the City for a hint of flames licking the night sky, I realize that I had no understanding of the systemic and individual causes that fueled the outrage. Perhaps this was not unusual for a pre-teen, white boy in the 1960s. However, my faith formation at that point

had provided no context for me to attempt to understand it either. I recall no discussion that subsequent school year as I entered the seventh grade, and once I entered the public high school two years later I was formally done with my religious formation. If I didn’t “get” my Catholic faith by then, the common wisdom held, I wasn’t going to get it at all.

1 Billy Joel, “We Didn’t Start the Fire,” vocal performance from the album *Storm Front*, Columbia Records, 1989, compact disc.

2 Jim Stingl, “A Look Back at Milwaukee’s 1967 Riot,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, August 17, 2016, <http://www.jsonline.com/story/news/columnists/jim-stingl/2016/08/16/look-back-milwaukees-1967-riot/88825546/>.

3 Stingl, “A Look Back”

No, I didn't start the fire, but I had no way to understand its causes, much less to fight it from a Catholic perspective. My sincere and well-intentioned parochial education, which arguably could have provided a courageous and challenging opportunity to understand the racial divide of which I became so dramatically aware that summer, appeared mute. As I moved through the stages of my life journey, informing my conscience on this critical issue did not appear to be actively encouraged in the various parishes I subsequently joined.

Catholics born, as I was, between 1945 and 1965 were a part of the large post-World War II "baby boom" in the United States. These Catholic "boomers," primarily of European heritage, were educated in the tenets of the faith within an ecclesial and societal environment that was strongly racially segregated. Thus formed as children, from the ecclesial perspective today we potentially approach or already engage our retirement with a nascent or limited understanding of the Church's contemporary teaching on the racial divide in the United States. From the broader societal perspective, we are perhaps reluctant to acknowledge or even consider the ways in which being perceived as "white" has provided advantages and privileges unavailable to others.

Perhaps we didn't start the fire, but if we truly want to fight it, we need more than a squirt gun. To engage in fighting the fire of racial divide in the United States requires significant personal reflection and a larger set of adult Catholic, faith-based tools. This article will examine the ecclesial, educational, and societal contexts within which we received our foundational (and perhaps for many of us our only) structured Catholic formation; explore the concept of white privilege and its potential to inform our consciences; and propose actions that we now firmly adult Catholic boomers can consider to potentially unlearn racism and ground our lived experiences and personal engagement in our communities with a more fully nuanced personal understanding of race and the Church's teaching on the racial divide in the United States.

Formation: Learning about Race

What We Learned About Race in General

"Unlearning" something suggests that it was initially "learned." At least in the primary grades, the acquisition of knowledge for the boomer generation was frequently through rote memorization. We memorized the "times" tables ($8 \times 8 = 64$, $9 \times 8 = 72$), the two types of flowering plants (monocotyledons and dicotyledons), and the different Greek columns (Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian). Other than the cause of the American Civil War (slavery) and the Emancipation Proclamation (Abraham Lincoln's executive order of January 1, 1863), we memorized very little about race. However, while we hadn't formally memorized facts about race, we had learned something about racism. By July 1967, I had somehow learned about *them* and *us*.

This learning had potentially come from a couple of sources. First, that I personally never had a significant individual connection with anyone of a different race was certainly a significant source. Everyone I interacted with in my neighborhood, in my classroom, at my swimming lessons, and in my parish had a northern European background.

Second, my personal lack of significant connection extended to my broader social circle; there were no models for such on-going relationships in my world. My family of German origin had, since its arrival, interacted primarily with other German farm families. (While my grandmother was Irish, even she had been adopted as a child by a German couple.) The homogeneity of the farm village in Germany transferred easily to the farming communities of Wisconsin, so historically no one in my family appeared to have lived near people who were different.

Such homogeneity was structurally sanctioned and reinforced by the federal government. Journalist and Distinguished Writer in Residence at New York University Ta-Nehisi Coates notes that the U.S. government mortgage

insurance programs had actually set the stage for the housing lending industry to minimize my opportunity to have neighbors whose race was dissimilar. Founded in 1934 as part of Roosevelt's New Deal, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) had mapped out neighborhoods that it considered safe risks to insure. Such insurance was a significant catalyst for a surge in single-family home ownership in the financial uncertainty of the times. Single-family home ownership was also an important vehicle for accumulating and passing on wealth.⁴ Coates writes:

On the maps, green areas, rated "A," indicated "in demand" neighborhoods that, as one appraiser put it, lacked "a single foreigner or Negro." These neighborhoods were considered excellent prospects for insurance. Neighborhoods where black people lived were rated "D" and were usually considered ineligible for FHA backing. They were colored in red.⁵

According to Coates, this governmental program "spread to the entire mortgage industry, which was already rife with racism, excluding black people from most legitimate means of obtaining a mortgage."⁶ This meant it was unlikely that black people would obtain a mortgage and move into my hometown, onto my street of modest Cape Cod houses, which was well outside the red lines.

Lacking both interactions with anyone who was racially different and any meaningful, immediate role models of such relationships, I quietly learned within my social and familial worldview that there was little value, perhaps even disvalue, in such interactions.

What We Learned About Race in the Catholic School

Foundationally, at least until the Second Vatican Council, many boomer children were instructed in the Catholic faith with the aid of the Baltimore Catechism. Based on the learning model of rote memorization, mentioning this title frequently elicits a smiling nod and occasionally a recitation of a memorized question and answer. This catechism, initially written in 1885 (roughly twenty-two years after the Emancipation Proclamation) and revised in 1941, was a primary source for pre-Vatican II Catholic faith formation. While the 1941 revision was more coherent and clear, its substance was identical to the initial version, and it remained grounded in the cultural worldview of the late nineteenth century.⁷ Number 189 in the Baltimore Catechism has this question and answer:

[Question] Which are the two great commandments that contain the whole law of God?

[Answer] The two great commandments that contain the whole law of God are: *first*, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength; *second*, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.⁸

In later editions, the questions and answers remained consistent with this 1941 revision, however the commentary and illustrations varied. Father Bennet Kelley, the editor of the St. Joseph Baltimore Catechism first published in 1962, added this explication. "Our love must go first to God and then to all God's children, our brothers and sisters in Christ. All the other commandments simply show us in detail how we are to love God and our neighbor."⁹

4 After 30 years, in 1991 the home in which I spent my childhood sold for about five times its purchase price.

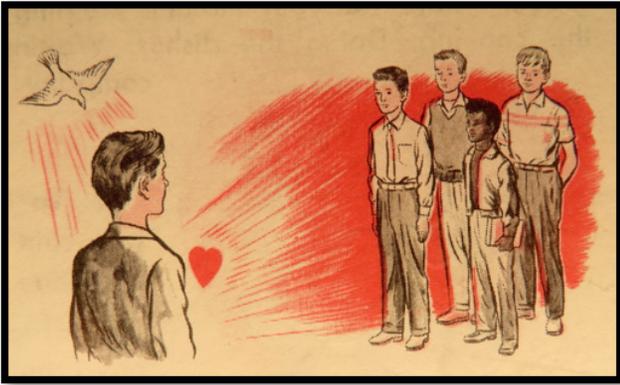
5 Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Case for Reparations," *The Atlantic*, June 2014, 58.

6 Coates, "The Case for Reparations," 58.

7 Melvin Lloyd Farrell, *Theology for Parents and Teachers* (Milwaukee: HI-TIME Publishers, 1972), 12.

8 *A Catechism of Christian Doctrine*: Revised Edition of the Baltimore Catechism No. 3 (Paterson, NJ: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1949), 149.

9 Bennet Kelley, CP, *Saint Joseph Baltimore Catechism: The Truths of Our Catholic Faith Clearly Explained and Illustrated* (New York: Catholic Book Publishing, 1969), 95.



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This illustration is from Fr. Kelley's edition and accompanies Q/A 189. It is captioned, "The Holy Spirit helps us to love others."¹⁰ Throughout this entire edition (the one used during my grade school experience) this is the *only* illustration that appears to portray a person who is not white. (It is interesting to note the diminutive stature of the significantly outnumbered black child and the implied attitude of hierarchical power from those surrounding him.) Throughout the Baltimore Catechism, this is the closest it edges to the racial divide. It is focused exclusively on the individual's requirement to love other people; question 189 and the small black boy in the small illustration in the bottom right corner of page 95 are the

only instances the racial divide is remotely presented.

Attending a Catholic day school during this period did not assist in the development of a significantly different attitude about racial matters between parochial school students and our Catholic friends enrolled in public schools who attended religious education classes.¹¹ Either way, a Catholic child during this period needed to be incredibly insightful, mature, and persistent to see in this instruction a faith-based perspective on racism. As far as understanding and fighting the fire, this really was, at best, a wet sponge.

What We Learned About Race from the Catholic Church

Of course, the Catholic Church is bigger than the parochial school or the CCD class. Of potential influence in our Catholic understanding of the racial divide were the actions of the Archdiocese, individual clergy, and documents from the bishops during this period. Patrick D. Jones, Associate Professor of History at the University of Nebraska, notes, however, that during this period the Catholic Church in Milwaukee, the diocese in which my parish was located, was not particularly active:

Because Milwaukee's black population remained relatively small until the mid-1950s, race played only a minor and occasional role in the Catholic world of Milwaukee. In general, church authorities opted for a hands-off approach to race relations, and when they did weigh in, it was usually to maintain the status quo. For most white Catholics, race, no doubt, went largely unexamined.¹²

Quoting a priest who had been pastor at one of Milwaukee's black parishes during the late 1960s, Jones writes, "[most Milwaukee Catholics] had no sense of social justice or that love your neighbor was just about as important as love God."¹³ From this pastor's observation, it appears that there had been few insightful, mature, and persistent Catholic children in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee who had been able to link the Catechism's question 189 to black people.

While the Archdiocese of Milwaukee overall did not appear to actively engage in a broad concerted bridging of the racial divide among the Catholic faithful, it is important to note that there were individual vowed religious, both nuns and priests, actively engaged in this work who helped inform Catholic consciences on racism. The commit-

¹⁰ Kelley, *Saint Joseph Baltimore Catechism*, 95.

¹¹ William A. Osborne, *The Segregated Covenant: Race Relations and American Catholics* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), 41-42.

¹² Patrick D. Jones, *The Selma of the North: Civil Rights Insurgency in Milwaukee* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 85.

¹³ Jones, *The Selma of the North*, 85.

ment of individual pastors could profoundly affect their congregations and its young parishioners' understanding of race.

From that period, two priests were within my limited sphere of awareness—Father James Groppi and Father Francis Eschweiler. Certainly the better known was Father Groppi; however his activism for open housing and subsequent confrontational notoriety potentially retrenched white immigrant Catholics in Milwaukee who, according to Jones, “embraced a narrow and rigid traditional theology that emphasized hierarchy and tolerated little dissent.”¹⁴

Father Eschweiler, whose parish was within walking distance of my home, had been active in social justice issues for decades. He had historically engaged his congregations in informed discussion and discernment. One of the priests profiled in Catholic writer Paul Wilkes's book *These Priests Stay*, Father Eschweiler said, “[W]e'd take a problem like race relations and after carefully observing and judging on the matter the people would realize they really couldn't go on calling themselves Christians and still harbor these hatreds, and they had to do something about it.”¹⁵ Likely there were others within the Archdiocese who took a similar “see-judge-act” approach with their congregations, but such an approach to understanding and acting on the racial divide was not consistently promulgated, so few of us likely experienced it within our Catholic faith formation.

Likewise, during this period the United States Catholic bishops did not provide proactive direction for the faithful on the racial divide. Following by four years the Supreme Court decision that desegregated schools, in 1958 the bishops published *Racial Discrimination and the Christian Conscience*. According to Father Bryan Massingale, Professor of Theology/Ethics at Fordham University, the statement's delay and its failure to provide specific proposals for action resulted in its having little impact. He notes, “Clearly the bishops had no intention of making this document a bold clarion call to action. Catholics were not being urged to become proactive agents of racial justice.”¹⁶ Massingale more broadly asserts that, “standing against racism is not a core component of Catholic corporate identity.”¹⁷

Unless a young Catholic was in a parish whose clerical staff was personally committed and actively engaged in the quest for racial justice, the overall message of the Church during this period was not a demonstrative and challenging refutation of racial injustice. It was difficult, perhaps impossible, for the young Catholic to learn from the Church how to bridge the racial divide. It wasn't that racism was directly encouraged, but the Church's lack of prophetic and courageous challenge to racism—that racism was and is an actual refutation of Christ's call to love one another—was an endorsement of the status quo. Writing in 1967, William Audley Osborne lamented that

Catholic youth are left with no living heroes. They are not, in effect, inspired to form themselves by the Gospel. Christian character, which is the foundation of future leadership in the Church, seems to be far down on the list of priorities in diocesan education offices, if indeed it is on the list at all.¹⁸

Tragically, the Church failed its critical mission to teach; *in absentia*, it gave permission to this generation of Catholics to either passively accept, or worse actively promote, the racial divide in the United States. It failed to teach and challenge this enormous generation of Catholic boomers how to smell the smoke and fight the fire.

¹⁴ Jones, *The Selma of the North*, 84-85.

¹⁵ Paul Wilkes, *These Priests Stay* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973), 139-40.

¹⁶ Bryan N. Massingale, *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010), 53. Later documents by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops became increasingly direct; however, this exploration is limited to the experiences of this earlier timeframe.

¹⁷ Massingale, *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church*, 77.

¹⁸ Osborne, *The Segregated Covenant*, 242.

Being White Provides Significant Advantages: “I thank God I’m white.”

While it appears obvious that we did not receive a strong and explicit, faith-based grounding to acknowledge and address the racial divide, in being perceived as “white” we did absorb a strong though implicit sense of being inside, of holding a social passport that allowed us ease of movement without concern or fear, of basically having the ability to not even consider how our whiteness—which we could not control—could allow, even stoke, the fire we didn’t start. Passive acceptance was easily absorbed.

The comment of a middle-aged Midwesterner, when asked by a researcher if she thinks about her racial identity, could be reflective of many white boomers’ experience of race. After initially observing that the concept of “whiteness” generally operates outside of her consciousness, not something she thinks about, she candidly added, “I thank God I’m white because I don’t, I don’t (sic) have to go through the persecution.”¹⁹

Perhaps in our unknowing or inability to recognize the relatively privileged ease with which we are able to “live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28, New American Bible Revised Edition), we have been likewise unable to recognize the individual and structural difficulties that have confronted those not perceived as white in likewise simply living and moving and having being. We did not start the fire, but in some ways we may come to realize that we actually benefit from its selective warmth and find ourselves embarrassingly hesitant to fight it.

This structural, rather than personal, manifestation of racism is generally labeled “white privilege.” Framing this dynamic within the language of “white privilege” can certainly risk leading to a visceral and emotional disengagement. As a result, Jesuit theologian Roger Haight asserts that using such language is dysfunctional. He contends that, “it focuses the problem on whites in a negative, accusatory way without a positive, constructive, or visionary horizon.”²⁰ Haight contrasts the concept of “dismantling white privilege” with “striving for racial solidarity,” suggesting that the latter has greater appeal to “a common humanitarian interest and to Christian self-transcendence in the interest of the common good and community.”²¹ Haight is probably accurate in his assessment, but it seems that the necessity to strive for solidarity is in direct response to systemic and perhaps unrecognized privilege; in this realm of human engagement, without privilege there would be less need to strive. It therefore seems necessary, even in its disruption and with the discomfort it causes, to use the language of privilege.

What are the advantages of being perceived as white? Very few of us have been handed our educations, our jobs, and our homes; this all required effort and not infrequently sacrifice. We have earned our place. The American belief is that if you work hard, success will follow. Certainly, work does yield rewards; however, the experience of this type of meritocracy does not have the same veracity for everyone in the United States. Peggy McIntosh, Senior Research Scientist at the Wellesley Center for Women, wrote that such a sense of pure meritocracy is unwarranted because being white in this society provides “an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools, and blank checks”²² unavailable to those who are not white. These special provisions have silently facilitated our living and moving and being. Their invisibility to those who have access is apparent to those who do not have such access. Derald Wing Sue, Professor of Counseling at Columbia University, concurs that white privilege is “premised on the mistaken notion of individual meritocracy and deservedness

19 Andrea L. Dottolo and Abigail J. Stewart, “‘I Never Think about My Race’: Psychological Features of White Racial Identities,” *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 10, no. 1 (2013): 110.

20 Roger Haight, “The Dysfunctional Rhetoric of ‘White Privilege’ and the Need for ‘Racial Solidarity,’” in *Interrupting White Privilege: Catholic Theologians Break the Silence*, eds. Laurie M. Cassidy and Alex Mikulich (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 89.

21 Haight, “The Dysfunctional Rhetoric,” 92.

22 Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondence Through Work in Women’s Studies,” in *Privilege: A Reader*, 2nd ed., eds. Michael S. Kimmel and Abby L. Ferber (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2010), 14.

(hard work, family values, and the like) rather than favoritism; it is deeply embedded in the structural, systemic, and cultural working of the U.S. society; and it operates within an invisible veil of unspoken and protected secrecy.”²³ Hard work and diligence do not guarantee everyone success.

How do these invisible codes, these weightless speed passes, operate? To shine some illumination on what can be illusive, McIntosh reflected on her own experience of privilege, and provided a list of the ways in which these codes can be manifest. Among her examples:

- I can, if I wish, arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.
- I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.
- Whether I use checks, credit cards, or cash, I can count on my skin color not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.
- I can arrange to protect my children most of the time from people who might not like them.
- I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.
- If a traffic cop pulls me over or if the IRS audits my tax return, I can be sure I haven't been singled out because of my race.
- I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having co-workers on the job suspect that I got it because of race.
- I can choose public accommodations without fearing that people of my race cannot get in or will be mistreated in the places I have chosen.²⁴

The invisibility of these “codebooks” once exposed can be surprising and sobering. After walking out of a store in an upper-middle-class area in suburban Pittsburgh, a black friend asked if I had noticed how disrespectfully the sales clerk had treated her compared to me. In frustration, she said that sometimes she feels the urge to go into a place like that and do some physical damage.

While I may have noticed that the clerk had spoken with me when Cheryl was clearly making the purchase, I had not noticed the underlying, unspoken “code,” though it was a code that McIntosh would have immediately identified. As I reflected at the time, however, I realized that I could only vaguely sense what my friend had experienced. Like most of us, I considered my worldview as universal. Sheryl Kujawa Holbrook, Professor of Practical Theology and Religious Education at Claremont College, comments on this phenomenon.

The human tendency to universalize our own experience notwithstanding, it is important to understand that what we value as truth, may not be perceived the same way by persons of different cultures who have their own versions of truth. For white persons, humility means that we can never really know what it means to be anyone other than a white person, and that part of the skills needed are

23 Derald Wing Sue, *Overcoming Our Racism: The Journey to Liberation* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 137. Also see Michael J. Monahan, “The Concept of Privilege: A Critical Appraisal.” *South African Journal of Philosophy* 33, no. 1 (2014): 74.

24 Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack,” in *Gender Through the Prism of Difference*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 235–38. First published in 1988, McIntosh has since expanded her list to include fifty behavioral examples that she believes evidence white privilege.

those that help us identify how to be an effective ally to people of color given our own experience, attributes, and limitations.²⁵

Sue echoes this sentiment. “[P]eople assume universality—that everyone regardless of race, culture, ethnicity, or gender shares the nature of reality and truth. This assumption is erroneous but seldom questioned because it is firmly ingrained in our worldview.”²⁶ Perhaps I assumed that my friend Cheryl’s worldview was my worldview. Or perhaps I really had a sense that her worldview was different, but I chose not to acknowledge that difference.

To “thank God” for being white, even casually, is an acknowledgment of the privilege that comes with whiteness in American society. The irony is that such gratitude, expressed to God, is an evisceration of the Christian message we espouse. In personally considering this contradiction, Mary Elizabeth Hess, Professor of Educational Leadership at Luther Seminary, concluded that “the ‘internalized dominance’ I have been formed in, growing up in the United States, is thoroughly at odds with the Christian commitment I profess.”²⁷

Yet that unguarded “thank God” comment and its underlying belief need to be examined by all Christians. It starts by acknowledging that such a belief may quietly inform our conscience, our most secret core and sanctuary. Margaret Guider, OSF, Associate Professor of Missiology at Boston College, notes how difficult that examination, and where it leads, can be. Her concern echoes the difficulty that Haight noted. She writes,

Speaking from within the contexts of North America and Europe, racism has been largely understood as a system of white supremacy and white superiority. These words fall heavy on the ears of white Christians as we scramble to distinguish ourselves from men in white hoods or brown shirts or youths with Confederate flags, shaved heads, and swastika tattoos. As the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of immigrants, refugees, and exiles, our appeals to our poor and peasant European roots do not alter the fact that we are the white-skinned beneficiaries of the very system we repudiate.²⁸

As the great-great grandson of a German immigrant, I am a generation removed from the net that Guider casts, but I am still caught by the tendrils of her assertion.

In considering some of the examples that McIntosh details, Michael J. Monahan, Associate Professor of Philosophy at Marquette University, questions if it is appropriate to consider them as evidence of privilege. He suggests rather that many of these behaviors are not evidence of privilege but rather normal expectations within society that are withheld from “non-elites.” He writes,

Privilege, therefore, might be best understood in part as the limitation of what should be universal human rights to an exclusive elite that all the while publicly denies its status as elite. This does not mean that all the various exemplars of privilege work like this but it seems plausible that a great many do. Such privileges do not place the elites above and beyond the norm, but rather are straightforward manifestations of that norm. The moral problem is thus not one of the possession of privilege, but rather the illegitimate exclusion of those who *lack* these so-called privileges.²⁹

25 Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook, “Beyond Diversity: Cultural Competence, White Racism Awareness, and European-American Theology Students,” *Teaching Theology & Religion* 5, no. 3 (July 2002): 144.

26 Sue, *Overcoming Our Racism*.

27 Mary E. Hess, “White Religious Educators and Unlearning Racism: Can We Find a Way?” *Religious Education* 93, no. 1 (Winter 1998): 115.

28 Margaret E. Guider, “Moral Imagination and the *Missio Ad Gentes*,” in *Interrupting White Privilege: Catholic Theologians Break the Silence*, eds. Laurie M. Cassidy and Alex Mikulich (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 101.

29 Michael J. Monahan, “The Concept of Privilege: A Critical Appraisal,” *South African Journal of Philosophy* 33, no. 1 (2014): 76.

Monahan suggests that, rather than considering white privilege something that *happens*, it needs to be more directly understood as something that is actively *perpetuated*.

The phenomenon described by the concept of white privilege is . . . not something that white people *possess*, but rather something they *do* or *act out* with the support and cooperation of numerous formal and informal institutions and systems, the collective function of which is the oppression of non-whites.³⁰

Revisiting the partial list of McIntosh's privileges, it appears that these should be norms applied to everyone rather than privileges available only to a select group. Regardless of how these differences are understood or interpreted, what remains is a systemic inequity, sometimes displayed in personal actions but also displayed and supported in broader, socially imposed limits on those who are not white.

If our Catholicism is primarily a sincere, Sunday morning exercise, but not the heartbeat through which we live and move and have our being, then perhaps we experience no need to move beyond the Baltimore Catechism and the wet sponge. However, if as Catholic baby boomers we can discern even the edges of broader systemic inequities and our own personal acquiescence (or complicity) in perpetuating a racial divide in the United States, then perhaps we need to move beyond.

Actually, if we can discern this at all, our Catholic faith requires that we move beyond. Once aware of the fire, how do we fight it? Most importantly, we should not be afraid. As St. Paul noted in his letter to the Philippians, "I have the strength for everything through him who empowers me." (4:13, NABRE) But how then do we become empowered Catholics and engage the conflagration?

Re-formation: Re-learning about Race

"Re-forming" ourselves as we engage the racial divide in the United States is in some ways similar to a personal conversion. Irish Jesuit Peter McVerry discusses the process of conversion as necessarily involving our feet, our head, and our hearts.³¹ These steps are not strictly linear or distinct one from the other, but they can provide a Catholic framework for approaching personal re-formation—encounter with our feet, consider/reflect with our heads, and transform our hearts. It requires an intentional transformation from one state of understanding to another.

This is not an easy process. Shannon Sullivan, Professor of Philosophy at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, notes that the tenacity and generally subconscious nature of habits can make it very difficult. However, such change is possible. Sullivan writes,

While unconscious habits of white privilege will continue to thwart attempts to expose and change them, change can occur and habits of resistance can be developed, but only if a person takes responsibility for her unconscious life.³²

Feet—Encounter

The most human and potentially most sacred encounters we can have are in person, face to face. To look into the eyes, grasp the hands, and hear the words of another provides a window into our being, the best opportunity to feel

³⁰ Monahan, "The Concept of Privilege," 82.

³¹ Peter McVerry, "Sin and Conversion," *The Way*, July 1984.

³² Shannon Sullivan, *Revealing Whiteness: The Unconscious Habits of Racial Privilege* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 197.

the *imago Dei* in each other. Unfortunately, systemic patterns as referenced above have made such relationships within our parishes very rare. As Jon Nilson, Professor Emeritus at Loyola University Chicago, noted,

Urban residential segregation . . . guaranteed that few Catholics and few Catholic theologians would have anything close to friendship with a black person. Without such friendships, there was nothing to impel white Catholics to explore how racial differences could transform an “other” into a “beloved other” and what gifts these differences might bring to the church.³³

The numbers exacerbate the challenges of establishing such friendships or even having encounters within our church. Edward K. Braxton, Bishop of the Diocese of Belleville, observes that less than three million of the seventy million Catholics in the United States are African American. “With such a small number,” Braxton comments, “there are many diocese where there are no black Catholics at all and many where there are very few. This means that many white Catholics, in certain states and rural communities especially, have virtually no contact with African-American Catholics.”³⁴

As Nilson suggests, sincere friendships are catalysts to change; such friendships, however, require commitment and nurturing and cannot be manufactured. Being unable or unlikely to have such dynamics within the confines of many Catholic parishes, feet must be creatively turned in another direction. Moving beyond the pews, pastors and other parish administrators may be involved with or aware of ecumenical or interreligious organizations whose faith communities have greater diversity. Active encouragement by congregants of parish leadership to reach out to such communities can perhaps result in opportunities to establish connections and friendships.

In addition, ministries that extend beyond the parish can provide opportunities to establish relationships. However, recalling Jesus’s washing of the disciples’ feet (Jn 13:4-15), such service must be firmly grounded in personal humility, which may be a subconscious challenge as Sullivan pointed out; a mutuality of willingness and vulnerability must be reflected in such encounters for all the parties to fully engage the omnipresent *imago Dei*.

Less personal encounters can occur by other means. Sue suggests that it is possible to learn about people of color primarily from sources within the group. “Especially important is information that originates from the groups you hope to understand,”³⁵ and Sue suggests that reading fiction and nonfiction literature, acquiring information from media (radio, television, film, magazines), frequenting businesses, and attending religious services or social events that reflect different cultural worlds can all provide meaningful encounters.

Literature specifically about or by black Catholics can provide meaningful insights. According to Cecilia A. Moore, Associate Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Dayton, the genres of biography and autobiography can throw open windows onto the experiences of black Catholics. Prefacing her survey of such literature, she notes,

Black Catholics writing their own life stories and others writing the lives of Black Catholics have shed light on how race and religion have shaped them as individuals as well as the wider communities they represent. These texts also give a more intimate look at what it has meant to be Black and Catholic over time.³⁶

33 Jon Nilson, “Confessions of a White Catholic Racist Theologian,” in *Interrupting White Privilege: Catholic Theologians Break the Silence*, eds. Laurie M. Cassidy and Alex Mikulich (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 22.

34 Edward K. Braxton, “The Catholic Church and the Black Lives Matter Movement: The Racial Divide Revisited” (the 14th Annual Tolton Lecture, Chicago, February 28, 2017), <http://www.ctu.edu/story/article/bishop-braxton-delivers-14th-annual-tolton-lecture-catholic-church-and-black-lives>.

35 Sue, *Overcoming Our Racism*, 205.

36 Cecilia A. Moore, “Writing Black Catholic Lives: Black Catholic Biographies and Autobiographies,” *U.S. Catholic Historian* 29, no. 3 (Summer 2011): 43.

An exploration of the trove of fiction by American black writers can also provide encounters. Willard Motley was born in Chicago into an African American, Roman Catholic family and, while not explicitly Catholic in content, his short story, “The Almost White Boy,” conveys a sense of the social tension and hypocrisy that confronted a biracial young man maneuvering through his first love affair.³⁷ While not strictly Christian or even religious, accomplished black writers such as James Baldwin, Zora Neale Hurston, Langston Hughes, Richard Wright, Alice Walker, and many others provide opportunities for encounters.

The important thing is to have the courage to actively seek encounters, even if such encounters cause discomfort. Sue notes, “The courage to engage in activities that challenge your assumptions or that place you in situations that produce discomfort is a precondition to change.”³⁸ St. Paul has promised that strength will be provided; we will have the courage and the strength to toss out the squirt gun and take up the fire hose.

Head—Consideration/Reflection

McVerry believes that the encounter that results from the movement of the *feet* must lead to a reflection and discernment in the *head*. How do we understand the encounters and how can they challenge and inform us as Catholic boomers? As already suggested, discomfort can be a tremendous obstacle to sincere reflection. Hess noted, however, that the onus for the reflection is on us. She writes,

It is not the responsibility of people of color to “teach” us how not to be racist. Whenever a person [of color] does reach out to us to do so—I am reminded here of close friends who have shared their pain with me . . .—we need to value that gift in all of its preciousness, and accept it with great humility.³⁹

As I reflect on the pain that my friend Cheryl shared with me outside that store that summer afternoon, I did not accept the gift she had provided in “all of its preciousness.” I had neither the language nor the confidence to have the conversation. I had not learned how to ask the sensitive racial questions that could have so profoundly informed my reflection. “Persons subjected to racism seldom get a chance to talk about it with an undefensive and non-guilty person from a majority group,” Sue noted; he continued, “White Americans, for example, often avoid mentioning race even with close minority friends.”⁴⁰ Here was I, a sincere person raised in the Catholic faith, yet this was my case. Regrettably, this missed opportunity may have initiated the slow suffocation of our friendship, and a decade later the sadness still echoes.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) most recent statement on the racial divide, *Brothers and Sisters to Us*, was written nearly forty years ago. Coming after many Catholic boomers had completed their grade school faith formation, this 1979 statement explicitly raised issues surrounding both structural injustices and personal responsibilities for Catholics in the United States. According to Massingale, even though *Brother and Sisters to Us* has rarely been taught and “its existence . . . and its teachings are unknown to most Catholics,”⁴¹ it nonetheless provides the most current teaching on the racial divide from the USCCB. It provides some direction for our reflection and discernment. The bishops call on us personally as individual Catholics.

To the extent that racial bias affects our personal attitudes and judgments, to the extent that we allow another’s race to influence our relationship and limit our openness, to the extent that we see yet close

37 Willard Motley, “The Almost White Boy,” in *The Best Short Stories by Negro Writers: An Anthology from 1899 to the Present*, ed. Langston Hughes (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967), 134–44.

38 Sue, *Overcoming Our Racism*, 194.

39 Hess, “White Religious Educators and Unlearning Racism,” 124–25.

40 Sue, *Overcoming Our Racism*, 213–14.

41 Massingale, *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church*, 74.

our hearts to our brothers and sisters in need,—to that extent we are called to conversion and renewal in love and justice.

As individuals we should try to influence the attitudes of others by expressly rejecting racial stereotypes, racial slurs, and racial jokes. We should influence the members of our families, especially our children, to be sensitive to the authentic human values and cultural contributions of each racial grouping in our country.

We should become more sensitive ourselves and thereby sensitize our acquaintances by learning more about how social structures inhibit the economic, educational, and social advancement of the poor. We should make a personal commitment to join with others in political efforts to bring about justice for the victims of such deprivation.⁴²

As we reflect and discern at this critical juncture in our lives, our influence can likely extend well beyond our children (referenced by the bishops) to our grandchildren and, for some of us, our great-grandchildren! Both our Catholic obligation to reach across the racial divide and the reach of our lived example should not be underestimated.

Heart—Transformation That Leads to Action

In the Gospel of John, Jesus says, “I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (13:34-35, NABRE).

Conversion is incomplete if it does not transform, and such transformation is manifested in love. And love is evidenced by action. Encountering and discernment are not enough, as McIntosh asserts: “Disapproving of the systems won’t be enough to change them. I was taught to think that racism could end if white individuals changed their attitudes.”⁴³ But to bridge the racial divide, to fight the fire, requires leaping the gap between discernment and transformation. The potentially overwhelming, oxygen-depleting nature of this issue, however, can immobilize us, especially in its systemic pervasiveness.

If we are transformed, however, we have no choice. Sue does not advise belaboring the question of personal complicity; rather he suggests, “Perhaps the question you should ask yourselves is not whether you engage in or benefit from racial oppression. The more important question is, Once you become aware of your role in the racial oppression of others, what do you do about it?”⁴⁴ Bishop Braxton echoes this sentiment and accepts no reluctance. “Every one of us can do something,” he asserts. “Do not say that, because you cannot do something radical to change the world, you will do nothing.”⁴⁵ Approximately 24.5 million strong,⁴⁶ Catholic boomers engaging in even small actions are a significant combined force. We could add up to something radical.

42 United States Catholic Conference of Catholic Bishops, “Brothers and Sisters to Us” (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1979), <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/african-american/brothers-and-sisters-to-us.cfm>.

43 McIntosh, “White Privilege and Male Privilege,” 25.

44 Sue, *Overcoming Our Racism*, 65.

45 Braxton, “The Catholic Church and the Black Lives Matter Movement.”

46 “Religious Landscape Study - Catholics,” *Pew Research Center*, May 30, 2014, <http://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/religious-tradition/catholic/>. The Pew Research Center estimates that 35 percent of the 70 million U.S. Catholics fall into the Baby Boom generation.

Conclusion

It is time for us to aggressively fight the fire. While it was our inheritance, we have become its guardian and we may have perhaps unknowingly embraced it. But the consequences of inaction—or squirt guns and wet sponges—to fight this conflagration are too great. We cannot leave these consuming flames as a legacy for the next generation. Massingale argues that “almost every major social question or phenomenon in the United States today—whether education, crime, health care, poverty—is entangled with, and/or exacerbated by, historic racial animus and present-day discrimination against people of color in general and African Americans in particular.”⁴⁷ The stakes have been and continue to be too great.

We cannot accomplish this individually. We need concerted and consistent effort. And we need our Church to equip us as adult Catholics. St. Paul told the Corinthians, “When I was a child, I used to talk as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I put aside childish things.” (1 Cor 13:11) Our bishops and our clergy, in their roles as teachers, must take this responsibility above and beyond the writing of occasional statements; they must preach, encourage, challenge, and model the behaviors of a prophetic Church. Then each of us, working together, can be the face of Christ, the body of Christ living the Gospel message. And whether our personal style tends toward soaking rains or cloudbursts, fire hoses or Super Soakers, we can each engage in fighting the fire. Regardless of our talents, we can fully and actively do our part.

As Catholic boomers, fifty years after that dry and explosive summer of 1967, we need to faithfully do our part to contribute to the Reign of God in a still dry and thirsty world.

⁴⁷ Massingale, *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church*, 87.

The Order of Celebrating Marriage

by Simon C. Kim

In the 1969 edition of the Order of Matrimony, the church, although energized by Vatican II, had little time to reflect on the development of a post-conciliar document on marriage. Thus, “the first attempt at writing such an essay for a revised liturgical book” had a minimal introduction that many often gloss over.¹ Almost fifty years later, *The Order of Celebrating Matrimony* (OCM) is the product of the church’s ongoing reflection, and the introduction (*praenotanda*) has been greatly expanded from the original eighteen paragraphs in the 1969 edition. The current introduction is a deeper reflection relying upon conciliar documents and the richness found in scripture and tradition.²

Of special interest, “matrimony” is used instead of “marriage” to capture the broader religious context. This subtle, yet important, change is significant. While “celebrating” a life event is located within the moment of marriage, “matrimony” goes beyond a specific location and encapsulates a lifelong journey together.³ “The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops hoped that putting the word ‘matrimony’ in the title of this book would set its Catholic meaning in relief against other usages of ‘marriage’ in the culture.”⁴

Paragraph thirty-six of the recently revised order reflects the church’s development as well as ongoing tensions still involved in welcoming non-Catholics into the rite. The liturgist Paul Turner notes that this is not a new legislation, just one that has not always been observed.⁵ Therefore, Catholics marrying baptized non-Catholics should avoid the distraction of disunity and have their union celebrated without mass. Only with permission from the local ordinary can couples from differing faith traditions include the Eucharist.

36. If a Marriage takes place between a Catholic and a baptized non-Catholic, the rite for celebrating Matrimony without Mass (nos. 79–117) should be used. If, however, the situation warrants it, the

1 Paul Turner, *One Love: A Pastoral Guide to The Order of Celebrating Matrimony* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2016), 4.
 2 Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC), *This Sacred Bond: A Pastoral Companion to The Order of Celebrating Matrimony* (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2016); see page 18 for a detailed list of sources in the *praenotanda*.
 3 Turner, *One Love*, 2.
 4 Turner, *One Love*, 2.
 5 Turner, *One Love*, 51.

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rite for celebrating Matrimony within Mass (nos. 45–78) may be used, with the consent of the local Ordinary; but with regard to admission of the non-Catholic party to eucharistic Communion, the norms issued for various cases are to be observed. If a Marriage takes place between a Catholic and a catechumen or a non-Christian, the rite given below (nos. 118-143) is to be used, with the variations provided for different situations.

Celebrating Matrimony Without Mass

A central rationale for matrimony without mass is based on the unity signified in the Eucharist. Since reception of communion reflects union with Christ and the church, the nuptial blessing should ultimately reflect this. When such couples celebrate their union in the church there is disunity when it comes time for communion. “Most importantly, the wedding is a celebration of the unity and equality of the two partners” through the church’s welcome, readings, exchange of rings, universal prayers, and nuptial blessing.⁶ Turner emphasizes that people attending this kind of a wedding, along with the bride and groom, are on more equal footing by uniformly fulfilling “their function as a community that witnesses and prays.”⁷ It should be noted that there are two options for celebrating matrimony without mass, and the second option where the distribution of communion occurs is not an attempt to avoid the parts that may be foreign to non-Catholics. Rather, the distribution of communion should be reserved for those areas where priests are not readily available.⁸

The eucharistic meal has always unified those gathered at the Lord’s table. In *Doors to the Sacred*, Joseph Martos emphasizes this unity in the first three centuries of the early church even when the fellowship meal became a ritual stressing the sacrificial aspect of Christ.

For the early fathers eucharistic worship was both an expression and source of Christian unity . . . In their eucharistic worship they experienced unity with each other in the living presence of Christ: they experience it because they believed it, and they believed it because they experienced it.⁹

Thus, unity is not simply a profession but a way of life. While the bride and groom consent verbally and experience this reality, the experience of eucharistic unity is incomplete due to the inability to receive Christ in his body and blood.

Similarly, the *Catechism* stresses this unity since the Eucharist completes our Christian initiation as well as makes us the church (no. 1396). While the common bond of baptism allows for full participation in the marriage celebration, the divisions are painfully felt at communion (no. 1398). Therefore, the church’s guidance for matrimony without mass is sensitive to what the Eucharist requires, and desires to maintain the joyful hope found in the baptismal bond of matrimony.

Liturgical discordance also occurs as the inability to receive communion is not only limited to the couple but also extends to family and friends. It is not uncommon that one side receives communion while others either wait or come forward to receive a blessing. “If the ceremony takes place during Mass, and only the bride or the groom receives Communion, it signals an imbalance at the very summit of the Liturgy of the Eucharist between the couple who have just been joined as one.”¹⁰ Coupled with this discord is the uneasiness of those in attendance of not knowing why actions such as standing and kneeling are required during the eucharistic prayers. Rather than

6 Turner, *One Love*, 51.

7 Turner, *One Love*, 51.

8 Turner, *One Love*, 53.

9 Joseph Martos, *Doors to the Sacred: A Historical Introduction to Sacraments in the Catholic Church* (Liguori, MI: Liguori, 2014), 247.

10 Turner, *One Love*, 51.

being a moment of prayer that draws people into the memorial of Christ's death and resurrection, non-Catholics may feel further alienated from what is signified. Although this discord is not uncommon during Sunday liturgies, the OCM stresses the aspect of unity not for appearance's sake but for active participation and full communion.

Not every prayer of the church involves mass. The church's prayer reaches its summit in the eucharistic celebration; however, this does not mean that the Eucharist must be included with every sacred encounter. Though every moment of our prayer anticipates full communion, special moments directed to this calling are needed to remind us of our limitation, and more importantly, our potential. For example, baptisms are often celebrated without mass due to overwhelming numbers. Practical protocols are not the only reasons as each sacrament has its own value. How else could the church explain the separation of the sacraments of initiation to be experienced at different moments of people's lives? Renewal in the life-giving waters of baptism involves a lifelong journey with the community into which one is baptized. Periods of formation before sacramental encounters are important milestones in the faith journey. Therefore, each Sacrament is invaluable as it points to communion with the Lord and one another ultimately found in the Eucharist.

Celebrating Matrimony with Mass

In *Amoris Laetitia*, Pope Francis calls for the proclamation of the gospel to those who are not regularly practicing their faith as well as to non-Catholics. This opportunity comes not only during marriage preparation, but also in witnessing the church's celebrations. Rather than discouraging couples and, by extension, the entire assembly, to forego the Eucharist, could this moment serve as "the center and high point of the entire celebration" (GIRM 78), within which the proclamation of the gospel message takes place? Furthermore, this inclusion serves as a pastoral incentive to inform couples and the entire assembly about the deeper unity of matrimony and how this is ultimately realized in communion.

Pope Francis also advocates for couples to be prepared for "a profound personal experience and to appreciate the meaning of each of its signs" (213). If couples understand the reality of their inability to participate fully in communion, yet comprehend the sacramental moment, should they not be encouraged to do so as a fuller sign of their potential lives together? "In the case of two baptized persons, the commitment expressed by the words of consent and the bodily union that consummates the marriage can only be seen as signs of the covenantal love and union between the incarnate Son of God and his Church" (213). Since the love shared points to a deeper reality—Christ and his church—the presence of baptized non-Catholics provides another perspective that enriches the church.

Another liturgical occasion where non-Catholics witness communion without raising the issue of disunity is found when candidates (baptized non-Catholics) are encouraged to participate in the liturgy as much as they can when catechumens are dismissed during the Rite of Christian Initiation (RCIA). This rite recognizes the baptism already conferred on non-Catholics, binding them in a special way to the wider community even when not fully initiated. This baptismal bond is fully recognized since Christians are not rebaptized.

Symbolic discrepancies have accompanied the church's development. Early followers listened to the Word of God at synagogues and then continued at another location for a fellowship meal. By remembering Christ through the hearing of the Word and partaking of the meal, followers underwent a transitional moment until coming together of both parts in our current celebration. Later sacramental developments such as matrimony took place both outside and inside the church to reconcile civil and canonical rituals. Not until the eleventh century did it become customary for weddings to be near a church so that a priest's blessing could be received afterwards.¹¹

¹¹ Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 425.

Liturgy—the people’s participation in “the work of God” (CCC, no. 1069)—had its disruptions since the church’s belief took time to be expressed in rituals (and vice versa). Thus, revisions of sacramental practices should not be viewed as a retreat. Those of differing Christian backgrounds relegated to marriages in convents, rectories, or separate chapels before Vatican II should not feel the return of such attitudes. Otherwise, the message of inclusion becomes blurred when couples are asked to raise their children in the faith. Proper instructions on what baptized non-Catholics can experience, yet not fully participate in, are important lessons in a person’s faith journey.

Just as other sacraments do not include mass, the church still maintains a fuller expression of the sacramental life when it does. Again, baptisms are encouraged to be celebrated within the Sunday liturgy so more parishioners can experience this saving grace as well as the visual benefits of the wider community for those bringing their children to the initial sacrament.¹² Since the church desires that families raise their children in the faith, non-Catholics are not excluded from this initiation. They are present as their children begin their faith journey towards the ultimate realization of full communion.

Conclusion

One should not be so quick to draw the attention of couples to paragraph thirty-six of the introduction of the OCM. The guidelines are clear but also give the option to appeal to the local ordinary out of pastoral sensitivity. This then places the weight not strictly on the status of the couple but equally on the marriage preparation process and those entrusted with such formation. When the local parish journeys with the couple, teaching all the richness and symbolism of matrimony, the decision is reached through a process of prayerful reflection. If the change of terminology from “marriage” to “matrimony” signifies not just a moment but something that reflects the couple’s entire journey—prior to and afterwards—then a more comprehensive vision must be presented.

¹² Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 203.

Toward Linguistically Hospitable Dialogue

by Chava S. Bahle

I recently watched a series of humorous videos produced by a Cincinnati synagogue that take on some of the great “bugaboos” of religious organizational life. One was a faux horror film, complete with a musical score, about the demon “We’ve Always Done It That Way,” named as “the most resistant force to progress in synagogues, churches, and organizations everywhere.”¹ In the film the demon takes over the bodies of otherwise pleasant leaders who become intractable about change. The demon is defeated when the brave woman rabbi, dressed as a Viking, and congregants in red capes banish the demon by giving it advice: “Change is painful but necessary” and “Don’t let the past keep you from moving forward.”

For at least a generation, a core purpose of interreligious dialogue has been to build understanding and cooperation while staying carefully within the lines of our own historically defined traditions. The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue defined the project of dialogue as “a manner of acting, an attitude; a spirit which guides one’s conduct. It implies concern, respect, and hospitality toward the other. It leaves room for the other person’s identity, modes of expression, and values.”² This statement was a wonderful step forward. For some of us, though, the space of “leaving room,” while respectful, can also feel coolly distant.

As a dialogue partner, I am less interested in learning from you what I can read in a book than about who you are and how your religious identity, challenges, and practices inform your soul and might also, if I am willing to take the risk, inform mine. Dialogue is more than conversation. As the physicist David Bohm suggests,

Dialogue...is a way of taking the energy of our differences and channeling it toward something that has never been created before...In essence, a dialogue is a *flow of meaning*...In the most ancient meaning of the word, *logos* meant “to gather together,” and suggested an intimate awareness of the relationships among things in the natural world. In that sense, *logos* may be best rendered in English as “relationship.” The Book of John in the New Testament begins: “In the beginning was the Word (*logos*).” We could now hear this as “In the beginning was the Relationship.”³

1 “The Way We’ve Always Done it Demon,” YouTube video, 6:25, posted by “TEMPLESHOLOMCINCL” October 26, 2016 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U57Nb2N5OX0>.

2 Secretariat for Non-Christians, “The Attitude of the Church Toward Followers of Other Religions: Reflections and Orientations on Dialogue and Mission,” Section 29 (May 10, 1984). http://www.pcinterreligious.org/dialogue-and-mission_75.html.

3 As cited in William Isaacs, *Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together: A Pioneering Approach to Communicating in Business and in Life* (New York: Currency, 1999), 19.

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Relationship is inherently transformative: this is the risky task of interreligious dialogue. Especially in the field of Comparative Theology, those devoted to interreligious dialogue have gone further, questioning the solidity of the lines that carefully define us, and suggesting a more permeable relationship across religious traditions. The theologian Hans Küng asks, “Can one combine openness and truth, plurality and identity, dialogability and steadfastness in the interreligious dialogue?”⁴ In other words, how do we balance “we’ve always done it that way” with the emerging realities created by our intentional togetherness?

This is noticeable in the language we use to describe one another, which is part of the “linguistic hospitality” about which Marianne Moyaert writes. Here I would like to suggest reconsideration of four terms long in use, in the “we’ve always done it that way” sense, within the Christian tradition that might create a field of greater openness with Jewish dialogue partners.

“Old Testament”

The term “old” does not carry, to my Jewish ears, the implications of respect for our elders, but rather a sense of something that is outdated and, most especially, something that has been superseded. One of my rabbis uses the term “Elder Testament” and “Younger Testament” to push the auditory boundary. Too often when Christians speak of Jesus’s relationship to the Old Testament, they do not mean the actual Hebrew Bible and its hermeneutics as known to Jesus. They mean later, multiply-translated, multiply-edited texts birthed out of western Christianity, not Judaism.

Christians would profit greatly from understanding how Jews (such as Jesus) read the *Hebrew Bible* (a preferred term), especially the midrashic process, that is, understanding that Torah in its broadest sense is “black fire written on white fire.”⁵ The words of “the bible” are not to be read in isolation or literally. They were meant to live organically with interpretation, conversation, argumentation for the sake of heaven, and the contemporary situation as dialogue partners: the “white fire,” the space between the words.

Christians spend a great deal of time studying Jesus and his disciples but mostly ignore Jesus’s teachers and their hermeneutical methodologies. In this way, a critical aspect of Jesus’s literary context and ministry is lost. If one means what Jesus read and preached, “Hebrew Bible,” is a preferred term, and the Hebrew *Tanakh* (an acronym for Torah, Nevi’im [prophets] and Ketubim [writings]) is even more precise. Terminology and translations matter.

“Judeo-Christian”

The term “Judeo-Christian” is problematic on three levels. First, Judaism is portrayed as but a precursor to Christianity. Second, the abbreviation of Judaism into “Judeo-” is indicative of undervaluing the rich, independent history and culture I mention above. And, third, “Judeo-Christian” denies important distinctions between two cultures. While I advocate a “moving toward” posture in dialogue, this term’s overtones are more reductive than respectful. “Jewish and Christian” names our commonality without reducing one partner to being just a necessary antecedent.

The Hebrew Name of God

4 As cited in Marianne Moyaert, *Fragile Identities: Towards a Theology of Interreligious Hospitality* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2011), 1. The title of this article borrows from Chapter 6 of Moyaert’s book, titled “Interreligious Dialogue and Hermeneutical Openness: Linguistic Hospitality.”

5 Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish taught: “The Torah given to Moses was written with black fire upon white fire, sealed with fire, and swathed with bands of fire” (Talmud Yerushalmi, Shelamim 6:1, 49d).

Often in dialogue, when well-intentioned folks want to be interreligious about how Jesus named God, they will speak an invented form of the Tetragrammaton, YHVH, the four-letter name of God Jews read as “Adonai” (“my Lord”) which is used in prayer and the reading of the Torah. The intimate name of God is not meant to be spoken aloud, ever; neither is its correct pronunciation actually known. Historically, it was spoken only once a year at the height of the Yom Kippur service in the Holy of Holies of the Temple and at great risk by the *Kohein Gadol* (the “high priest”). The Name is the Mystery, and this can only be known in silence. In dialogue, we go even further: *HaShem*, literally “the name” is as close as one wants to get in conversation about the name of ultimate beingness.

“Pharisee”

Throughout almost all Christian literature and conversation, including contemporary cartoons found on the Internet, “pharisee” is a synonym for everything wrong with religious leaders: judgmental, superior, picayune, rejecting. The treatment of the *perushim* in the New Testament “is the initiating, perhaps the licensing, example of what [scholar Jacob] Neusner derides as the Christian habit of offering derogatory definitions of Judaism for the express purpose of highlighting a more benign Christianity.”⁶

This is probably the term that hurts most, because not only was Rabbi Jesus a Pharisee, all rabbis—myself included—are descendants of the rich, literary, highly practical worldview of the *perushim*, the explainers, as is the very existence of Judaism in the world today. To spit out the term “pharisee” as a derogation is akin to cutting the roots of Judaism from the soil of existence.

I teach full courses in unpacking this word for the improvement of linguistic hospitality and building understanding of Jesus’s Jewish context, but here let me say this: what the New Testament portrays is *one side* of not unfriendly intra-Pharisaic discussions, taken from fuller conversational contexts which reduces them to pull-quotes to make an argument for separating from a parent culture. The only cure for this I have found is for Christian folk to learn like Jesus, and spend time on Midrash and Talmud. This is no small gesture. It means a commitment to meet Jesus and his teachers in their own context and on their own terms.

This consideration is not an invitation to step into the intent but the effect of linguistic naiveté. No harm is meant, to be sure, when these terms are used, but the experience of hearing them in formal and informal conversation is not endearing.

I have been deeply enriched by my immersion in Christian and Catholic cultures and traditions. I have “allowed in” a great deal of spiritual inspiration and been changed by it. By offering these reflections on linguistic hospitality, it is my hope that my Christian dialogue partners may likewise be invited into my Judaism, and the Jewish world of Jesus.

6 James Carroll, *Constantine’s Sword: The Church and the Jews* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2001), 132.

“A Sudden End of All Who Live on Earth”

by Edward Tverdek, OFM

I knew Gene by virtue of a shared political conviction—or so I thought. Some thirty years ago, we were among a handful of people in the Chicago area who would charter a local “Committee of Correspondence”—the cryptic name adopted by similar groups around the U.S. who considered themselves part of the fledgling “Green” movement of radical environmentalists and who eschewed the hierarchical structures of “mainstream” environmental groups as inimical to the cause. Our common interest was expressed, years before a ubiquitous Internet and social media made political organizing virtually instantaneous, in a letter to a P.O. box in Minnesota, where some benevolent soul would in turn put nearby Green sympathizers in touch with each other.

My only recollection of Gene is that he was a proponent of the “Gaia Hypothesis,” a theory that posits the planet as a conscious, integrated living organism that can “willfully” adapt to the conditions foisted upon it by its various life forms—most notably, we featherless bipeds with opposable thumbs and a taste for fossil fuels. One day, Gene opined, Gaia will just swallow us all up and “correct” the blight that humanity has been to the planet. I pointed out to Gene that there are millions of folks who have a negligible effect on the planet, who in fact struggle day-to-day to merely feed their families and protect them from the elements. Should they be swallowed up too? Should they be made to pay twice, denied the benefits of industrial capitalism and later doomed because of *our* excessive use of it? “We are a species,” Gene intoned, “and as a species we will be judged.”

Mercifully, the conception of earth as a sort of indiscriminate mass executioner never quite caught on, and the notion that “Gaia” will justifiably dispatch us all like an annoying rash is now largely a misanthropic artifact of modern environmentalism’s adolescence.

For the faithful, however, a God who levels the landscape and begins again—individual culpability be damned—is not so far-fetched. Hebrew Scripture is punctuated with scenarios where the God of the covenant either acts or at least *threatens* to wipe the slate clean and start from scratch, taking down the humble and loyal along with the idolaters, the adulterers, the fattened wealthy who turn their backs on the poor, and the downright evil. The Flood narrative of Genesis 7 sees the threat come to fruition, but the prophetic texts of the Old Testament also invoke universal punishments beyond the scope of the covenant with the Israelites. In some instances, other nations fall under scrutiny when the Israelites sin, and it is by no means clear on what grounds they are being judged at all: Edom has no particular promises to keep with the one true God, so why should Edomites suffer in a global destruction piqued by the Israelite’s infidelities?

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Zephaniah provides us a lucid example of this wide-angle wrath. The Hebrew prophets in general are notorious for their seemingly bipolar tendencies, warning one minute of God's irrevocable ire, the next minute singing the persuasive powers of repentance. Zephaniah intensifies these "contradictions," alternately focusing the LORD's attention on the surviving southern kingdom yet at other times indicting the world at large, promising "a sudden end of all who live on earth" (as in 1:18). At still other moments, the prophet anticipates the preservation of a "remnant" that will survive the coming destruction. Contemporary scholars are thus divided on how to interpret Zephaniah's prophecy: is it an ad hoc "explanation" of the Babylonian invasion and the destruction of Judah ("the world" of the Israelites) or a failed forecast of more literal, worldwide devastation? Does biblical prophecy *interpret* what is already happening (or has happened), or does it merely anticipate the consequences?

Neither of these interpretations, of course, would be "correct"; biblical exegesis doesn't lend itself to such pronouncements. But that's the point, isn't it? If Sacred Scripture is to guide us, to inspire us millennia after it was written and edited, wrestling with its ambiguities is far more fruitful than expounding its putative "certainties." Zephaniah's prophecy may well be a heartfelt plea to the nation of Judah: return to the covenant, lest we be swept away with the rest of the world. It may be more of a political tract: unite now around the covenant and the law, for our survival in this world is threatened by foreign powers. Indeed, it may well be a message to all nations: you have squandered my patience and my good will; I, the LORD, will start again. Whichever of these interpretations we adhere to, the questions themselves are timeless.

Today's Prophets

An April 18, 2017, BBC.com headline proclaims rather ominously: "How Western Civilization Could Collapse." The author, Rachel Nuwer, recounts recent work of scholars such as Thomas Homer-Dixon who have built their careers assessing current conditions and projecting them several decades into the future. Despite superficial similarities, this is of course not the same thing as the prophecy of Scripture, where one is called by God to deliver God's message; it is just that the biblical prophetic message often involves an exhortation to self-reflection and conversion—*perhaps* to stave off a desolate future, but not necessarily so.

One who finds some solace in reading the Hebrew prophets might encounter articles such as the BBC piece and wonder: should a "remnant" of humanity survive the coming catastrophes—by merit or by blind luck—will they look back on writings of people like Homer-Dixon and Nuwer and struggle with their meaning in the same way we struggle with interpreting the message of the prophets who preached centuries before us, in a world far less capable of self-destruction? There was no literal "sudden end of all who live on earth" that Zephaniah spoke of, though we read him now as less a prognosticator than a preacher—one who could use vivid, apocalyptic imagery to make his point. That his words survive today and inspire us as Scripture suggest that even the generations immediately succeeding him were less concerned about the accuracy of his "predictions" than the exhortative power of his message of repentance and his assurance that the God of the Israelites was ultimately a God of mercy.

Our contemporaries predicting global climate disaster, on the other hand, are most assuredly prognosticating on our planetary fate. They will either be right or wrong about that. If, like my old colleague Gene, they anticipate no survivors, there won't be anyone left to marvel at their accuracy. If they can foresee a "remnant" of humanity surviving, however, those individuals will no doubt consider whether or why they merited their longevity. And they will ask themselves whether the predictions of global catastrophe that their forbearers circulated and routinely ignored were a political warning intended to reverse ship or a cynical admonition to abandon it. Should they still have access to the texts of the Hebrew prophets, perhaps they'll be able to interpret the message with more nuance.

I want to suggest that today's prophets are not necessarily the ones predicting doom and catastrophe in the future, however much that doom and catastrophe may be inevitable on our current path. Ecological malaise is not strictly an end result that threatens the longevity of *our* comfortable Western, post-industrial way of life in the long run, and it makes no more sense to pitch it that way than it would for Zephaniah to simply caution the wealthy elite of Judah to curb their appetites and ration consumption of their earthly riches for the longer haul. Ecological malaise is here *now* if you are among the people of this earth struggling to secure food for tomorrow. For them, the rising temperature of the oceans is no more an indicator of environmental "alarm" than is the current market price of wheat or maize. To lecture the affluent on their extravagant lifestyles is only half the battle if it leaves us believing that the point is to preserve that affluence for a few more years. Today's prophetic voice must be the one that, much like Zephaniah's, reminds us that a divine flick of the global reset button—this time minus *homo sapiens*—would be scarcely worse than what we have now, if what we have now is a conscious rejection of what we believe to be God's will for God's creation.

Suppose you had somehow lost the ability to feel the searing pain we normally feel when staring directly at the sun. You might find it a pleasant, even enrapturing experience to gaze into the beauty of the solar display. Nonetheless, you would be damaging your retinas beyond repair within the first minute. Any number of people might counsel you to stop, warning you that you'll regret the consequences later. Such are today's politicians, "thought leaders," TED-talkers, and cable-news pundits. We have no shortage of public figures capable of admonishing us to heed the remote, potential consequences of what we do. Little changes.

What we need, perhaps, are prophets who can help us feel the pain again—to regain the sense of discomfort we rightly *ought* to be feeling *now*.

Healing the Political and Social Divide in America

by John T. Pawlikowski, OSM

The deepening divisions in American society present a new pastoral challenge for the Catholic Church. If Catholicism is to make a positive contribution towards healing this current divide it will need to develop an ecclesiological vision and spirituality rooted in the conciliar reforms of Vatican II. In a perceptive short volume titled *Catholicism and Citizenship: Political Cultures of the Church in the Twenty-First Century*,¹ the Italian and American theologian Massimo Faggioli from Villanova University argues that Pope Francis in his approach to the regeneration of the church basically takes the ecclesiology found in Vatican II's *Gaudium et Spes* (The Church and the Modern World) as his foundation. This ecclesiology, according to Faggioli, profoundly anchors the church in the social and political structures of our time. This is not to say that the church is merely another social service institution in contemporary society. It has a sacral dimension that can never be obscured.

The church's response to the ongoing rift in American society needs to be developed within the context of Pope Francis's efforts to renew the church worldwide, a context that has the spirituality and ecclesial understanding found in *Gaudium et Spes* at its very heart. This vision must become the engine for American Catholicism's pastoral response now and in the future.

This response will necessarily entail a number of key components. The first is a recognition that any meaningful pastoral response will necessarily involve political activity. So very often I have heard pastoral leaders define Catholicism's response to social issues as fundamentally "apolitical." If the use of this term is intended to avoid an exclusively "partisan" political approach than I can agree. However, there is simply no effective pastoral response that is devoid of some political dimensions. Otherwise the response would merely be "charitable" and not a genuine effort to create more just structures. Without question, activities such as clothing drives and meals for the poor are important and need to be continued, but they can touch only a small handful of people and are essentially holding and transitory efforts. The call of the hour is for structural reform, something that Paul VI clearly articulated in his groundbreaking social encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (On Human Development) and by having the first two Roman Synods focus on structural change. As we are clearly seeing in the intense public debate about medical care in

1 Massimo Faggioli, *Catholicism and Citizenship: Political Cultures of the Church in the Twenty-First Century* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2017).

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America, structural change can impact the lives of millions of people for the better or the worse. An organization such as Bread for the World has demonstrated how a faith-based perspective can contribute to positive structural change in a relatively nonpartisan way.

In his above-mentioned new volume, Faggioli underscores the inevitable political nature of the struggle for justice by quoting a remark from Father Theodore Hesburgh, CSC, the late president of the University of Notre Dame, who in many ways served as a personal model for a faith perspective closely integral with politics. Hesburgh once termed voting a “civic sacrament.” More recently, Cardinal Blaise Cupich of Chicago, addressing a Catholic-Jewish gathering during a budget crisis in the State of Illinois that was having an increasingly disastrous impact on the work of Catholic Charities and other social service organizations, argued that voting carried a moral responsibility.

In any contemporary discussion of a political ecclesiology, it is helpful to recall the twentieth-century history of American Catholicism. In the document *A Program of Social Reconstruction*, issued by the U.S. Bishops in 1919, the Church in the United States committed itself to active involvement in the social situation of American Catholics, who were overwhelmingly blue collar in terms of social status and suffered from the injustices associated with that class.² This ecclesial effort was primarily devised by Monsignor John A. Ryan, the first director of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. Ryan’s vision was largely rooted in the principles advanced in Leo XIII’s groundbreaking social encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. This plan for confronting the structural injustice experienced by blue-collar Americans, including the vast body of Catholics, was implemented through strong support of the growing unionization movement often led by Catholics with the participation of clergy, sometimes, as in Detroit, in direct-action demonstrations as well as by lobbying on an interreligious basis for passage of the Roosevelt administration’s New Deal legislation. In gratitude for this mobilization of interreligious support, President Roosevelt invited Ryan to deliver the invocation at two of his inaugurations. The New Deal had a significant impact on the social and economic status of American Catholics. Ryan’s vision clearly anticipated the political ecclesiology adopted by Vatican II in *Gaudium et Spes* and further advanced through ensuing social encyclicals such as *Populorum Progressio*.

A second key component of an effective pastoral response to the current crisis is interreligious inclusivity. This goes beyond ecumenical collaboration (inter-Christian) towards an integration of diverse religious practices. Interreligious partnership is a growing reality in America. When we were planning the celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the original Parliament of the World’s Religions held in connection with the 1893 World’s Fair in Chicago, our motto was “The Religious World was not coming to Chicago; the Interreligious world already existed in Chicago” (and many other metropolitan centers).

Interreligious perspectives still remain largely on the periphery of Catholic identity. This needs to change. Theological and spiritual perspectives from outside the classical Christian traditions must assume a greater presence for Catholics (and Christians in general) in the process of generating social healing and social cohesion. As Archbishop Michael Fitzgerald, formerly head of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, insisted in a speech originally presented at the Australian Catholic University in Sydney, an interreligious perspective was integrated to Vatican II: “It can be concluded...that the relationship of the church to other religions has not only received, for the first time in an ecumenical council, special treatment in a specific document *Nostra Aetate*, but has permeated the whole teaching of the Council.”³

2 See “Bishops’ Program of Social Reconstruction,” American Catholic History Classroom, http://cuomeka.wrlc.org/_exhibits/show/bishops/background/1919-bishops-reconstruction.

3 Michael Louis Fitzgerald, “Vatican II and Interfaith Dialogue,” in *Interfaith Dialogue: Global Perspectives*, ed. Edmund Kee-fook Chia (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 11.

A third essential ingredient of a political ecclesiology for American Catholicism is a deep rootedness in spirituality. Without such rootedness (which needs to have an interreligious dimension) the church becomes another of many mediating institutions in society. Surely there is more to the church than that.

But a spirituality for an ecclesiological vision based on *Gaudium et Spes* must promote an understanding of spirituality that recognizes the reality of what Peter Henroit, SJ, called “simultaneity.” Such a view understands an intimate linkage between involvement in the cause of justice and spiritual growth. Experiencing structural injustice in and through such social action becomes an occasion for advancing spiritual development. Spiritual consciousness and social structures remain deeply intertwined. So a commitment to the struggle for justice does not merely follow upon spiritual development, it also aids and abets such development.

A political spirituality also needs to lay to rest the destructive notion often found in classical manuals of spirituality that portray “action” as an obstacle to authentic spiritual development. Such a view was reiterated some years ago by Cardinal Avery Dulles, SJ, when he expressed concern that the renewed commitment to social justice generated by *Gaudium et Spes* and ensuing encyclicals and synod documents might undercut the sacral dimension of the contemporary church. While I would agree with Dulles on the need to preserve the sacral aspect of the church, contemporary Christianity cannot preserve the church’s holiness without a significant involvement in political society. A truly “holy” church is also a “political” church. A meaningful political ecclesiology also requires the presence of two virtues strongly emphasized in post-Vatican II social teaching. The first of these, participation, is a hallmark of Paul VI’s social vision. He often emphasized it as a core element in any ecclesiology grounded in *Gaudium et Spes*. In many ways, for Paul VI, participation replaced the more traditional stress on subsidiarity.

Faggioli, in the book under discussion, has argued that a political vision of the church will result from the joint efforts of the laity, some new ecclesial movements, and religious orders of men and women. This “from below” approach is also evident in the current attempts at comprehensive restructuring underway within several dioceses such as Chicago. It is also a clear message emerging from the closing mandate given to the some 3,000 local Catholics who assembled in Orlando this past July.

The other important virtue is solidarity, strongly promoted by John Paul II. A sense of solidarity with its focus on human dignity within community helps to create a political ecclesiology that is anti-tribal and anti-insular. It represents a direct counter to the political theology rampant in certain American political circles at the present time. The issues that Pope Francis has identified as central for the church, indeed for all religions, such as migration, economic inequality, sustainability, and peace, are global, not merely national, in scope.

Finally, I would bring to the fore what Pope Francis has identified as the critical dimension of the *Gaudium et Spes* ecclesiology at the heart of his vision of Catholic renewal—ecology. The integral ecology he has advanced in *Laudato Si’* surpasses any other social justice goals. If we fail to achieve creational sustainability we will simply erode the possibility of continued life on our planet, rendering any other achievements in social justice moot and meaningless.

In striving for the sustainability of creation the interreligious spirituality spoken of earlier will prove especially critical as integral ecology requires a multi-national approach. Hence, all religious traditions and spiritual communities must contribute insights. Christians certainly can and must reflect on a Christological basis for integral ecology. But we cannot make Christ alone the ultimate norm in the public sphere. The present challenge for Christians is to integrate our fundamental bonding with all of creation into our political ecclesiology. Such bonding will require eliminating from Christian spirituality the notion that heaven is our only true home and, while in the world we live in an exilic condition. Many traditional prayers such as the *Salve Regina* highlight such an exilic condition

for humanity, but such a view creates a sense of alienation from the world which runs counter to the spirituality urged upon us today which ties profoundly to our earthly home, a spirituality that enfolds the vision of *Laudato Si'*.

In closing, let me suggest some follow-up materials. Faggioli's volume is a must read both for its layout of Vatican II's political ecclesiology and the effort to make it integral for contemporary Catholic consciousness as well as for its further bibliographical suggestions. The two papal statements on economic justice⁴ and ecology⁵ are also crucial resources. And many available websites will prove useful. I would especially single out those of the Center for Concern⁶ and the Catholic Climate Covenant.⁷

4 Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013), http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html#Culture,_thought_and_education.

5 Francis, *Laudate si'* (2015), http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html.

6 See <https://www.coc.org/about-us>.

7 See www.catholicclimatecovenant.org.

“Murder Your Darlings”: Still Good Advice

by Deborah L. Wilhelm

I first “discovered” onionskin paper as a Marist High School junior, typing my assignments on Grandma Evelyn’s old cast-iron Underwood, praying not to run out of ribbon, not to accidentally type a line of text into the margin that I’d reserved for footnotes, and NOT to commit typographical errors, each of which required a labor-intensive application of Wite-Out[®]. Remember? Onionskin was erasable and thereby diminished the tragedy of errors, but erasable paper or not, the typewriter was still a lot of work, with its stiff keys, manual returns, scruffy letter alignment, dilemmas about word hyphenation, and of course the ribbon that always, *always* ran out at midnight before the paper was due. “How long does it have to be?” we’d whine to Sr. John or Mr. Zuber, and getting to 1,500 reasonably correct words was like digging up 1,500 diamonds, each a precious gem from our teenage minds, cut and polished in spiral notebooks before being set into place on those aged Underwoods or Smith-Coronas.

These days, of course, the “delete” button vaporizes mistakes instantly. “Cut,” “copy,” and “paste” move words, paragraphs, entire sections in seconds. **Bold?** One click. *Italics?* One click. Spell check, thesaurus, quotation from esoteric online source? Click, click, click. Nevertheless, modern word processing hasn’t been an unreserved good. When words are too easy, they can easily become cheapened. Our challenge today, frankly, isn’t finding enough words to say. It’s knowing when we’ve said enough.

How true this is in our liturgical assemblies, where people gather to be fed with God’s Word from ambo and altar. Preachers understand this hunger, and we want to help fill it, and richly.¹ To do so, we know that we should pray, study, ponder, write, revise, edit, practice; that our preaching should have a single point; that the point should matter, and that it should be a gift to the hearers. We know what to do. Why aren’t we doing it? Whether it’s the pressure of frantic days, the relief of a long-awaited preaching idea, or the conviction that people won’t really notice, for many preachers the rough draft is the only draft. I’m convinced, however, that the reason some preachers don’t revise is simply that they don’t know how. “Richer fare” doesn’t mean more words. It means better words, words that better open us to the holy and living God.

¹ Most preachers know by heart the admonition from *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: “The treasures of the Bible are to be opened up more lavishly so that a richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of God’s word” (51).

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Help is available, Dear Preacher, in the form of the e-word, and I don't mean *electronic*. I mean *edit*. And editing for preaching doesn't mean agonizing over whether that comma should be a semicolon; it means revising and cutting so that the words invite your hearers—and you—into deeper communion with God.

First, let's discuss revising. To revise is, literally, to "re-see," and re-seeing demands perspective, so your first draft should cool off a bit before revision. After all, you need not edit sentences before you have edited ideas, and big-picture editing works best after you have begun to forget exactly what you've written—and how attached you are to it. Put that initial draft away, and after it has relaxed in a drawer or a closed computer file, question it carefully for meaning and coherence:

1. Does this preaching have a single point that *matters*?
2. Is the point illustrated with specific, relevant, accessible, interesting details?
3. Does the preaching have an observable² beginning, middle, and ending, all of them logically connected?^{3,4}

Revise so that the big picture is meaningful, concrete, and connected. Then you're ready to cut, which happens in two main areas: content (ideas) and verbiage (word count). Any first draft, whether for reading or speaking, should include everything you want to say. It should reward your diligent study and allow you to write freely without worrying about what works, what's correct, or how much is too much. But in subsequent drafts, you delete everything that isn't the one point that matters or its support. The task is to examine that cooled-off first draft and further interrogate its ideas, removing waste, such as any cliché, any joke present for its own sake, any re-telling of the scripture reading (you'll never say it better than the original!), any description of how you created the preaching, any words that a reasonable listener won't be able to understand or remember, any interesting "side" idea, any ending that isn't the actual ending, or any words that deprive your hearers of the joy of doing additional reflection on their own. Go ahead and write all of these things in your first draft, especially if they help you get started. Then delete them. If you can't bear to part with them, open a computer file called "Awesome Stuff that I Cut from My Preaching," and save away. When you're done, even if you've beefed up the main idea with a specific detail or two, your content should be significantly shorter, more focused, and more unified.

When your draft is focused and unified, it's time to cut excess language, a challenge for modern writers. For example, my preaching and theology students rarely struggle to reach 1,500 words. They struggle not to exceed that limit, and I receive last-minute panicked e-mails pleading that the paper cannot take more cutting; it's down to the bare bones; additional cutting will ruin the carefully crafted ideas and ruin their elegance; and who dreams up these arbitrary length requirements anyway? So I'll request a sample paragraph and can usually remove 20% or more of the word count with no loss of meaning. You can do the same.

Unconvinced? Pull out one of your own preaching texts and take a look. Excess verbiage can exist at phrase level:

In the event that ... versus ... *If*
It is often the case that ... versus ... *Often*
Until such time as ... versus ... *When*
At the current time ... versus ... *Now*

2 In this case, "observable" really means "well spoken." The hearers need language signposts so they can follow your ideas. They haven't done your research. They don't have your notes. Their children's crayons may be straying off the coloring books, into the songbooks, and onto the pews. Their granddads may be innocently but loudly asking people in the back to help with the collection. Enough said.

3 Moving listeners from idea to idea by using transitional language is a skill all its own. Perhaps for another column!

4 I've written more about all of these items elsewhere, including *Preaching Matters: A Praxis for Preachers* (Sylvester Ryan and Deborah Wilhelm, Chicago: Paul Bechtold Library, 2015).

Or at sentence level:

It was decided by the disciples to undertake a journey to the city of Jerusalem, which they did. Eighteen words.

The disciples journeyed to Jerusalem. Five words.

Even Mark, which is the shortest among the four gospels, has a significant number of parables that have an agriculturally related theme. Twenty-two words.

Even the shortest gospel, Mark, has six agriculturally themed parables. Ten words.⁵

It has been determined by biblical scholars that a number of interpretations of the word “rebiristos” are possible and that of these multiple interpretations, two are considered the most likely. Thirty words.

Biblical scholars offer two main interpretations of the word “rebiristos.” Ten words.

Sometimes you’ll seek both inflated language and unnecessary content:

I’ll never forget the day that I first “discovered” onionskin typing paper, when I was one of about a hundred high school juniors at Marist High School, typing all of my papers on my grandmother’s old cast-iron Underwood typewriter. 39 words.

I first “discovered” onionskin paper as a Marist High School junior, typing my assignments on Grandma Evelyn’s old cast-iron Underwood. 20 words.

At some point, honestly, it’s time for murder.

Don’t worry—I’m not suggesting crime, but rather the ruthless excision of redundant, inflated, or ineffective words. It just takes a little practice. As Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch advises writers, “Murder your darlings,”⁶ and the most important word in his instruction is “your.” When I focus on what I want to say, my erudite language, my scholarly research, my meticulous quotation of obscure philosophers and poets, my assessment of what this assembly needs to hear from me, I’m thinking about myself and what I’m saying, rather than about God and what God is saying. The resulting words are darlings—my darlings—and I’m polishing and caressing them, when the only darlings that belong in the preaching are God’s. Editing’s purpose isn’t to make the preaching brief or to fit an arbitrary time limit, but to strip away the excess so that our human words reveal God and invite our hearers to listen for God in the same way that we’ve listened. Pope Francis reminds us “that it is God who seeks to reach out to others through the preacher, and that he displays his power through human words.”⁷ How can we use our language, then, with anything other than respect for its source and its destination?

“Wait,” you may say here, “I don’t see how cutting a few words here or there helps anything.” With practice, however, conciseness becomes habit at both the technical level (the words themselves) and the spiritual level (how those words point to God). Others may protest that because they preach without notes, this type of editing doesn’t make sense. As a notes-free preacher myself, I assure you that writing and revising a text—not to read, memorize, or perhaps even use—helps develop the habits of mind that make editing second nature.

⁵ If you look carefully, you’ll notice that the revision actually includes more information than does the original!

⁶ Arthur Thomas Quiller-Couch, “XII: On Style,” in *On the Art of Writing: Lectures Delivered in the University of Cambridge, 1913-1914* (New York: Putnam, 1916), 281.

⁷ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, (2013), no. 136, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html.

“OK, fine, but I just don’t have this kind of time,” you could be saying now, and it’s true—indeed, it’s true for almost everyone. Pope Francis himself offers strong encouragement here in his discussion of preaching preparation: “I presume to ask that each week a sufficient portion of personal and community time be dedicated to this task, even if less time has to be given to other important activities.”⁸ Given the importance of the preaching ministry, I suggest that we don’t have time *not* to edit.

Today, whether my texts are penciled on envelope backs or tapped out on a tablet, I approach editing as practice and discipline. Meanwhile, the only typewriter keys I’ve seen lately have been pried from their former homes and fashioned into jewelry at chic boutiques. Perhaps that’s a good metaphor for how preachers can think about their words: crafted into jewels, given rather than sold. Of course, some things haven’t changed: Your printer may still run out of ink at midnight before your paper—er, preaching—is due.

⁸ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, no.145.

Clemens Sedmak. *A Church of the Poor: Pope Francis and the Transformation of Orthodoxy*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2016. 218 pp. \$32.00. ISBN: 9781626982062.

Reviewed by Anthony William Keaty
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In this book, Clemens Sedmak draws out the implications that Pope Francis's vision of the Church as a Church of the Poor has for the "epistemic praxis of the church" (xv). The book "sets out to show that a Church of the Poor will also be characterized by a particular way of knowing, learning, and understanding, and these epistemic practices have consequences for the understanding of what it means to be orthodox" (xxi). If, as Aquinas held, the object of faith is both simple, that is, God, and complex, that is, creedal propositions (ST, II-II.1.2), and if, as Avery Dulles suggested, the propositional model of revelation had been emphasized in neo-scholastic theology prior to Vatican II, Sedmak in this book attempts to elucidate the epistemic praxis of the church if the simplicity of the object of faith is given its rightful share of attention. This more balanced approach to the object of faith correlates with a church that is more aware of its poverty in relation to God.

The book develops its thesis in five chapters, followed by an epilogue. The first four chapters elaborate the implications that a heightened awareness of the simplicity of the object of faith has for the Church, in Pope Francis's vision. The first chapter, "The Joy of the Gospel: A Call to Respond to Love," focuses on Pope Francis's apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii gaudium*, and the effect that joy of the gospel has on our epistemic praxis. The second chapter, "The Gospel of Joy: Orthodoxy as Discipleship," focuses on the gospel accounts of the joy and (the epistemic) transformation that encounters with Jesus bring. This gospel joy and its epistemic transformation should make disciples of Jesus open to further transformation and wary of establishing an orthodoxy that limits the transformation that the gospel brings. Chapter 3, "Poverty and the Wound of Knowledge," links gospel joy with "the gift of tears." The encounter with Jesus brings joy as well as a deepened awareness of one's vulnerability and dependence, which also enables a person to be a person of compassion, a person who is not indifferent to the plight of the poor. In Chapter 4, "A Church of the Poor," having linked poverty of spirit and the joy of the gospel, Sedmak now raises an important question concerning the epistemic practices of a church that is poor. "A Church of the Poor will rethink concepts and realities of privilege. Could it mean the challenge of forgoing the privilege of infallibility and of taking epistemic risks?" (133). Furthermore, in a Church of the Poor, the epistemic goods of the Church (true judgments, true cognizance) will be properly redistributed (134).

In addition to advancing the book's thesis, each of these four chapters contains insightful and instructive discussions of such topics as *Evangelii gaudium* (ch.1), the gospel accounts of encounter with Jesus (ch.2), the experience of poverty (ch.3), and the church's grappling over its history with the issue of poverty (ch.4). Each chapter is well organized and well written. It might be helpful to observe here, before turning to chapter 5, that in Christian faith there is not only a tension between the simplicity and complexity of its object, as Aquinas notes, but there is also a tension between the unsurpassable mystery of God's revelation given in Christ and the eschatological, definitive nature of God's revelation in Christ. A ministry, generally associated with the ministry of the magisterium, devoted to preserving the apostolic faith is a ministry that is based on an important dimension of Christian faith,

namely its eschatological, definitive nature. Chapter 5, “Orthodoxy in a New Key: Faith in Practice,” can be read as making the case that the epistemic practices discussed in the previous four chapters will enable those whose ministry it is to preserve the apostolic faith to do so in a way that safeguards the sense of the unsurpassable mystery of God’s revelation in Christ.

This book belongs in libraries of theological institutions preparing men and women for ministry. I personally have benefitted from reading it.

Gerald O'Collins. *Revelation: Towards a Christian Interpretation of God's Self-Revelation in Jesus Christ*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. ix + 229 pp. \$40.00. Hardbound. ISBN: 9780198784203.

Reviewed by Robin Ryan, CP
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Gerald O'Collins has engaged in theological reflection on the topic of revelation since the time of his doctoral dissertation at the University of Cambridge. In his works on fundamental theology – *Fundamental Theology* (1981), *Retrieving Fundamental Theology* (1994), and *Rethinking Fundamental Theology* (2013) – O'Collins has offered in-depth explorations of the meaning and dynamics of divine revelation. His works have influenced many students and teachers of theology. In this book he returns to the topic, engaging the thought of contemporary theologians and philosophers (e.g., Richard Swinburne and Jean-Luc Marion) as well as clarifying and correcting some of his own previous positions.

Rather than offering an account of the history of Christian reflection on revelation, this work is an essay in constructive theology in which O'Collins “examines themes for a Christian theology of revelation” (viii). The book is divided into twelve chapters: revelation as self-revelation and communication of truth; the love that reveals and conceals; revelation informs and transforms; the sacramental character of divine self-revelation; means and mediators of revelation; believers receive revelation and are themselves revealed; evidence of revelation and human freedom; revelation then, now and to come; handing on revelation; revelation and inspiration; the canon and the truth of Scripture; divine revelation reaching the “others.”

The careful, balanced approach to theological themes and issues that is characteristic of O'Collins's previous work is also evident here. On the question of revelation as personal or propositional, he emphasizes that these views are not mutually exclusive. While the personal nature of divine self-revelation is primary, the propositional content of revelation “maintains its proper, albeit secondary place” (13). As he puts it, “the faith that responds to the self-revealing God announces what it now knows of God” (12). O'Collins also upholds the traditional position that envisions revelation as a free disclosure and unmerited gift of God, who could have remained silent. And like other prominent theologians, he employs the language of “self-communication” as a way of integrating talk about revelation and salvation.

In his discussion of the sacramental character of revelation, as articulated in *Dei Verbum*, O'Collins emphasizes that God discloses God's Self through both word and deed, though he concludes that the word remains subordinate to the event. Engaging the work of ecological theologians critically, he affirms the significance of cosmic revelation, though he argues that in the Judeo-Christian tradition the cosmic form of revelation is surpassed by a set of historical events and persons. Addressing the evidence for revelation, O'Collins maintains that the theology of revelation should be related more directly to Christian spirituality through an examination of the lives and works of people who have chronicled their personal journeys from unbelief to belief. On the issue of past and present revelation, O'Collins preferences terminology he has proposed in the past: “foundational” and “dependent” revela-

tion. The witness of the Spirit brings it about that foundational revelation (recorded in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures) “is not only more fully understood but also is actualized as God’s living revelation to the church and through her to the world” (114).

Influenced by his former colleague Jacques Dupuis, O’Collins discusses the relationship between Judeo-Christian revelation and other religions in several places throughout the book, especially in his final chapter. He corrects his own previous use of the terms “definitive” and “absolute” for God’s self-revelation in Christ. He concludes that describing God’s self-revelation in Christ as “definitive” obscures the belief that there is a final revelation yet to come. The language of “absolute” (even Rahner’s description of Jesus as the “absolute savior”) is inappropriate because only God is absolute; absoluteness should not be predicated of any finite reality, even the human existence of the Son of God made human. Citing *Dei Verbum*, O’Collins employs the language of “full, complete and perfect” (109) to describe revelation in Christ. In his discussion of universal revelation he highlights the biblical witness of the covenant with Noah, the Old Testament stories of Jonah and Job, and Paul’s reflection in the first chapter of Romans on the knowledge of God available to everyone. Though there is no revelation outside of Christ and the Spirit, Christ and the Spirit are present everywhere and to everyone. In a characteristically balanced formulation, O’Collins asserts, “Other’ religions can, to a greater or lesser extent, prove revelatory and, therefore means of salvation. This effect depends always on the work of Christ and his Spirit” (204).

In a work that is as comprehensive in scope as this one, readers will find some formulations and positions with which to quibble. For example, O’Collins draws on Paul Tillich to argue that human experience is not a source of revelation; it is a medium through which the sources of revelation speak to us. This position stands in contrast to the late twentieth-century recovery of experience as a *locus theologicus*, especially in contextual theologies. Overall, however, O’Collins presents a well-researched and balanced theology of revelation that reflects his profound engagement with the tradition and contemporary scholarship. This work recapitulates much of the earlier thought of this eminent theologian, while also engaging new questions and contexts. Students of theology, especially at the graduate level, will certainly benefit from a careful reading of this book.

David E. DeCosse and Thomas A. Nairn, OFM, eds. *Conscience & Catholic Health Care: From Clinical Contexts to Government Mandates*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2017. 226 pp. \$35.00. ISBN: 9781626982123.

Reviewed by Regina Wentzel Wolfe
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This volume is the second book published as part of the Project on Conscience and Roman Catholic Thought at the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics at Santa Clara University. The first, *Conscience & Catholicism: Rights, Responsibilities, & Institutional Responses*, edited by DeCosse and Kristin E. Heyer (Orbis Books, 2015), is a collection of essays by international authors that together present a comprehensive examination of the theology of conscience in light of contemporary challenges in various parts of the globe. *Conscience & Catholic Health Care* focuses more narrowly on issues of import for Catholic health care in the United States. That said, the fourteen essays in the book address a broad range of issues and perspectives.

The first few essays focus more directly on the theology of conscience in light of the richness of the Catholic tradition. In their essays, Ron Hamel and Anne Patrick, SNJM, point to ways of moving beyond a limited appeal to conscience. Hamel turns to the notion of reciprocity of conscience advanced by Bernhard Häring as a way to recover a deeper awareness of and appreciation for the social dimension of conscience needed to respond to the complex and diverse contexts in which Catholic health care functions. For her part, Patrick focuses on the rhetoric surrounding conscience and makes a compelling argument for “forming creatively responsible moral agents” (19) in order to respond to disparities in health care not only at the level of policy but also at the level of patient care, particularly as these impact racial and ethnic minorities and the poor.

In a more theoretical piece, Roberto Dell’Oro explores conscience as expressed in documents from Vatican II and the theological grounding they provide for a renewed understanding of conscience “needed to articulate both the importance of *institutional* conscience and the respect accorded to its *individual* exercise” (48). In a clear, helpful discussion of *epikeia* and probabilism, Lisa Fullam demonstrates the value these principles have for practitioners facing the complexities and fast-paced advances in medicine. Finally, Thomas Nairn moves beyond the debate about whether or not there is such a thing as “institutional conscience” and invites readers to consider Catholic health care institutions as social structures. As such, they both impact and influence the behaviors of their various constituents while simultaneously being influenced by other social structures such as governments and licensing bodies. This calls for acknowledgement of the tensions that result and must be negotiated in the diverse, pluralistic society in which Catholic health care in the United States functions.

The remaining essays take up some of the issues and perspectives that arise from being situated in such a society. Kristin Heyer examines conscience through the lens of the Church’s public witness in debates around the passage and implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA). In their essay, John Paris, SJ, and Patrick Moore consider conscientious objection, both individual and institutional, while Cathleen Kaveny brings her critical eye to conscience in the public square. Focusing on the case of the Little Sisters of the Poor, she argues

that the “exigencies of litigation have required them [the Little Sisters of the Poor and their attorneys] to distort Roman Catholic moral teaching on cooperation with evil and scandal ... [and] prevented them from helping all of us to discern what sorts of conscience protection are appropriate for everyone in an independent and pluralistic constitutional democracy” (120).

The complexities presented by the constant advances in medicine and biotechnology are addressed by Kevin FitzGerald who argues for developing a process of conscience formation to address the complexities of biomedical issues; such a process, he argues, should invite broad participation—not just from experts but also from members of the general public, particularly the marginalized and oppressed. The issue of physician-assisted suicide (PAS) is taken up by Gerald Coleman who provides a clear and concise description of Church teaching on PAS with emphasis on the need for whole person care as a response to medical, political, and cultural biases grounded in individual autonomy that view decisions about end of life as resting solely with the patient. Lawrence Nelson examines the legal cases brought by the American Civil Liberties Union over the thorny issue of termination of previability pregnancies.

Margaret R. McLean and Shawnee Daniels-Sykes take up issues facing those on the margins. McLean’s focus is on unrepresented patients, the ones who are unable to make their own health care decisions and have absolutely no one to speak for them. Thus, she is not concerned with questions “about what conscience is and does but [wants] to consider the ramifications of its absence, of its inaccessibility” (171). For her part, Daniels-Sykes presents a powerful picture of how racism, structural injustice, and prejudice have influenced the attitudes of African Americans toward health care and health care providers, attitudes of “fear, mistrust, frustration, and despair” (197). Building on the work of Bryan Massingale and Joe Feagin, she calls for “an African American liberation bioethics” (196) and proposes a “Lay Ministry Ally whose role is to partner with an African American patient as he or she moves through the health care delivery system” (197). Grounded in an authentic interracial solidarity, it is her hope that patient and ally together can negotiate the health care system, raise questions, and challenge medical judgments based on stereotypes and racial injustice, thereby contributing to ending systemic racism and overcoming long-standing disparities in health care, including health care provided by Catholic institutions.

The final essay in the volume, by Carol Taylor, focuses on teaching health professions students about conscience or, as she puts, it a “moral compass.” Her years of teaching in a medical center setting with students and faculty from disparate backgrounds and belief systems are obvious in the materials she presents, including very practical tools for assisting students in learning how to navigate the many ethical challenges they will face in myriad clinical settings.

The tone of the essays in this volume reflects Pope Francis’s emphasis on mercy and his insistence in *Amoris Laetitia* that the Church is “called to form consciences, not to replace them” (#37). The book is a needed resource for those teaching medical ethics from a Catholic perspective and for those working as ethicists in Catholic health care. However, the book is not only for specialists. With one or two exceptions, the essays are written in a manner that is approachable for the general reader. As such they will be valuable in furthering discussions on the relationship of conscience to health care whether these are among employees in Catholic health care institutions, at the parish level, or among friends and family.

William A. Clark and Daniel Gast, eds. *Collaborative Parish Leadership: Contexts, Models, Theology*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017. 232 pp. \$78.72. Hardcover. ISBN: 9781498533683.

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Collaborative Parish Leadership is an intentionally collaborative effort that pulls together various practical theologians, institutions of higher education, and seasoned ministers in multiple international contexts to focus on strengthening and supporting the leadership of local church communities. As the editors state in their introduction, local church communities “are under great stress in many parts of the world, and are in need of careful, thoughtful reform” (1). This work offers a next step in congregational studies with a focus on what makes successful local communities flourish.

The chapters offer a balance of contextual analysis, and they draw attention to creative models and theological reflection that reimagine how the wider church can support local communities by strengthening the ways their leadership teams collaborate with one another. The research includes sobering data on the demands on and attitudes of today’s parish leaders and the accompanying opportunities these issues present. There are also detailed notes on the efforts of Loyola University’s Project INSPIRE and its focus on parish consulting as a way of reinforcing successful parish leadership teams in the Archdiocese of Chicago.

After the chapters on contextual analysis, the volume next evaluates communities and styles of leadership in the midst of stressors such as parish reorganization and changing demographics. The chapter written by Mary and Bryan Froehle offers helpful highlights about the efforts of Project INSPIRE and elements that surfaced as critical pieces for successful parish leadership. Brett Hoover also offers an excellent chapter on leadership practices in multicultural parishes. Hoover states that the role of leadership is critical in “managing the harmonious coexistence of distinct racial, cultural, and ethnic groups” (107).

There are a variety of international models offered from Mexico, Germany, and France. The chapter on the Archdiocese of Poitiers, France, by Reinhard Feiter offers a particularly inspiring model of church reimaged that is based on the truth that “community (*communio*) and mission (*missio*) belong together” (166). This creative approach to mission, call, and response rooted in the local church community but completely supported and even fiercely defended by their local archbishop is an exceptionally refreshing vision worth the read.

Marti Jewel provides a solid reflection on the theology of collaboration that invites those in leadership to take a critical look at the roots of their ministerial authority and find in it the context of collaborative leadership so necessary today. William Clark’s final chapter builds on this reflection, expanding the theology of collaborative leadership to touch on some of the most central themes of the Christian faith.

There are a myriad of resources found throughout the pages of this volume, which make it a great resource for parish leadership teams. However, as a layperson, I found myself a bit discouraged, not by the book, but by the reality of leadership today. Time and again, the writers point out how critical it is for the pastor of the parish to be

on board for any collaboration efforts to be fruitful. Examples of this are found when Project INSPIRE participants point out that “the role of the pastor emerged as a critically necessary... factor in INSPIRE’s success” (55), and when Brett Hoover acknowledges that “research shows that effective, collaborative pastoral leadership depends on the pastor (or on an equivalent key leader, in some cases) and the pastoral vision he articulates for the parish” (111). Even the incredible work of the Archdiocese of Poitiers would not have been effective if Archbishop Albert Rouet had not had the commitment to see it succeed.

What became clear throughout is that the church will flourish if its leaders, both lay and ordained, understand the importance of collaboration on the local level. Those in positions of authority have the most ground to cover to meet in a collaborative center. This book is a great resource for those who have already decided to try collaborative leadership. It might also be an important argument for those who need to be convinced that shared authority is theologically critical.