



Digital Commons@

Loyola Marymount University
LMU Loyola Law School

Graduate Theological Studies Journal and
Newsletter

Theological Studies

2016

2016 Graduate Theological Studies Journal and Newsletter

Theological Studies

Loyola Marymount University, jennifer.scott@lmu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/theo_graduate_journalandnewsletter



Part of the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

Repository Citation

Studies, Theological, "2016 Graduate Theological Studies Journal and Newsletter" (2016). *Graduate Theological Studies Journal and Newsletter*. 1.

https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/theo_graduate_journalandnewsletter/1

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the Theological Studies at Digital Commons @ Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Theological Studies Journal and Newsletter by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@lmu.edu.

GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

JOURNAL & NEWSLETTER SPRING 2016



In Memoriam
Of Our Beloved Graduate Theology Student
Jose de Jesus Juarez

Our beloved first year Graduate Theology Student, Jesus (Jose de Jesus) Juarez passed away on October 30, 2015. He was 40 years old. Jesus joined the Graduate Theology Program this Fall 2015 with the interest of integrating philosophical ethics with themes in Gaudium et Spes, focusing on the dignity of the human person. Jesus was serving as Director of Religious Education at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, located in Oxnard, California. Our graduate theological studies community will always remember him.



“Sueño de Daniel” by Diego Isaias Hernandez was commissioned by Graduate Student Leonel Yoque as part of his very creative term project for the new course: “Cultural Readings of the Bible.” The painting represents a stunning Mayan “reading” of the Book of Daniel, Ch. 2. Since Jose de Jesus Juarez was also an enthusiastic member of this same class, Leonel and the Graduate program have agreed to acquire the painting and frame it as a memorial tribute in honor of our late theology student. This painting will forever reside in our Theology Village in his honor. See if you can work out the various themes in the painting, representing Nebuchadnezzars’ famous dream in the Book of Daniel.

Contents

The Cloud of Unknowing: A Comparative Theological Examination	PAGE 5
Dynamic Creation: The Coalescence of Science and Religion.....	PAGE 7
<i>The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance</i> : The Value of Virtuous Character.....	PAGE 9
HBO's <i>Bessie</i> : A Portrait of the Complexity of Sexual Freedom.....	PAGE 12
"The Holy Embrace" Spirituality of the Brothers of the Common Life Revealed in Thomas Kempis' <i>Imitation of Christ</i> , <i>Soliloquy of the Soul</i> , and <i>Sermons to the Novices</i>	PAGE 14
"And He was Made Known in the Breaking of the Bread".....	PAGE 15
Trump and Theology: Migration as a Pastoral and Theological Concern.....	PAGE 17
Thinking About Embodiment.....	PAGE 18
The Ecclesiology of Pope Francis: The Genesis of a Book.....	PAGE 20

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL STUDIES CLASS OF 2015!



*Pamela Bender
Cristina Castillo
Dulce Castro
Marissa Cornejo
Dave Fontes
Amy Glenane
Thomas Haas
Ana Halland*

*Karen Hernandez
Rachel Lang
Patricia Ledezma
Miriam Lopez
Yarette Macedo
Anthony Mbaegbu
Colleen Murray
Lincoln Nguyen*

*Anh Phan
Cecilia Phi
Cristina Robles
David Savage
Susan Stankis
Erica VanSteenhuysen
Grace Zambrana-Sutton
Katie Zeigler*

RSHM Gailhac Pastoral Leadership Scholarship

This scholarship supports graduate students pursuing an MA in pastoral theology who demonstrate pastoral leadership potential. The scholarship is awarded by the graduate director of the Theological Studies Department. The recipient of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary Gailhac Pastoral Leadership Scholarship is Sr. Linda Buck, CSJ.



Sr. Linda Buck, CSJ has worked on several projects which focus on practical applications for therapists and spiritual directors. She continues to work in the areas of social justice and mental health as a teacher, clinical supervisor, and psychotherapist.

Elisa Z. and Neil R. Shambaugh Scholarship

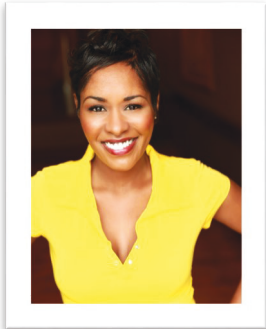
This scholarship supports graduate students with high academic merit. It is awarded by the rector of the LMU Jesuit Community in collaboration with the Financial Aid Office. The recipient of the Elisa Z. and Neil R. Shambaugh Scholarship is Jason Reeves.



Jason Reeves' studies in theology allow him to explore more deeply the relationship of faith and the Church with the oppressed and ignored, past and present. He is currently working on how mystical experiences, especially Native-Christian blending, transforms entire groups of people from within.

Endlein Scholarship

The Endlein Scholarship supports American Indian and/or African-American graduate students on the basis of academic merit.



Audrey Harris

"I am grateful for the continued opportunity to learn and grow in the Pastoral Theology program at LMU. It has greatly reinforced my passion for the Bible, service, and Catholic ministry. I look forward to using what I have learned in my ministry centered around abused women and children."



Lauren Warner

"I am the director of campus ministry and a religion teacher at St. Mary's Academy; an all girls college preparatory, Catholic high school in Inglewood. I am also a pastoral musician, very involved in music ministry at Transfiguration Church in South Los Angeles. I am very excited to have begun my theological studies at LMU. I cannot wait to take what I learn in this program, and apply it to my work with students, as well as with my parishioners and church administrative staff at Transfiguration Church."

THE CLOUD OF UNKNOWING : **A COMPARATIVE THEOLOGICAL EXAMINATION**

By Catherine Bando

The *Cloud of Unknowing* reveals a spiritual realm that is remarkably similar to the mysticism of other religious traditions that are distant in both time and location from the Christianity of medieval England. The treatise, written by an author who intentionally cloaked his identity in anonymity, describes a mind that is grounded in Christian tradition and supernatural faith, while using the potentially dangerous path of *via negativa*. This challenges a person's very existence as the mind is emptied of every thought; even thoughts about God, such as goodness and wisdom. The text uses ordinary language that ebbs and flows through a series of exercises in seventy-five chapters. The mind, voided of thoughts and images, creates a darkness which is the cloud of unknowing. The cloud is the place that both separates man from God and is the place where man is mystically united with God. In the emptied mind, love is stirred and God is reflected as in a "mirror" with "a ray of spiritual light" that mystically unites the human soul with God. The author describes the mystical union as being "Oned" with God.

It is notable how relevant *The Cloud* is as a basis for contemporary dialogue among Christians and various traditions of mystical contemplation. In other religious traditions, mystical experience is described as something that is real but inexpressible; an experience that is apart from the world where the soul is unified with ultimate truth. The union with God described in *The Cloud* can be compared to ecstasy, enlightenment, *baqā*, *Brāhman* and *nirvana* in various religious traditions and philosophical practices. Dialectical analysis of the text reveals that the author was a well-educated monk and priest who lived in an isolated part of Northeastern England during the late fourteenth century. It therefore is unlikely that the author had access to the meditation practices from distant parts of the world. Perhaps the author was subconsciously accessing Carl Jung's (c. 1875 – 1961) *collective unconscious*; the whole spiritual heritage of mankind's evolution.

Beginning with medieval *Kabbalah*, a form of Jewish mysticism, similar characteristics to *The Cloud* are observed with a focus on "divine manifestations of the Ultimate and the Unknowable One." The *Kabbalist* believes that love operates on the same continuum as awareness, drawing everything to 'It', which is the Unknowable, *Ein Sof*, or Infinite Nothingness. Both *The Cloud* and *Kabbalah* emphasize an encounter with the divine by means of negation, forgetting, and unknowing. Hindu *Vedāntin* contemplation leads to the experience of *Brāhman*, or ecstatic encounter; the highest reality of consciousness-bliss. *The Cloud's* claim that the contemplative is "Oned" with God may be comparable to the Hindu *Vedāntin* assertion that the soul *is Brāhman* or "I am the Truth...I am God." It may simply be a difference in terminology that separates being "Oned" in *The Cloud* from the *Vedāntin* statement. The practitioners of Zen meditation strive to reach enlightenment in terms that are similar to the cloud of unknowing. In Zen practice, a person seeks to come into the awareness of their true nature by freeing their mind from images and thoughts through the use of rhythmic breathing exercises. The breathing action aids in controlling the mind through the sustained concentration on the breath. *The Cloud* also encourages the use of rhythmic word exercises that have a similar quality to the breathing instruction in Zen practice.

During the 1970's, the spiritual practices of *The Cloud* were revived by American Trappist monks in a form of Christian meditation called Centering Prayer. Similar to the instruction in *The Cloud*, Centering Prayer directs the mind to a single, sacred word as the symbol of intent in a breathing exercise. Buddhist contemplative practice is comparable to Centering Prayer as it directs the contemplative to meditate on a single word. However, Buddhist practice more closely parallels *The Cloud* with its intentional detachment from the world.

It seems to me that the rising availability of physical comforts and new technological developments in recent centuries have distracted humanity from the spiritual realm and created a barrier to the mysticism identified in *The Cloud*. Human attachment to materialism has created a roadblock to spirituality that may be directly related to the precipitous decline of mainline Christianity in the industrialized West. The renewal of the mysticism identified in *The Cloud*, with its common elements in Medieval *Kabbalah*, Zen meditation practice, Hindu *Vedāntin* and Buddhist contemplative practice, may be the key that could unlock the dilemma caused by humanity's increased attachment to the physical world. The broad renewal of mystical practice may be a means to return humanity to the perfection of the Garden of Eden, described in Genesis and to restore mankind to divine, mystical union with the One that is All.

Bibliography

- Phyllis Hodgson, ed. *The Cloud of Unknowing and the Book of Privy Counselling*. (London, UK; Oxford University Press, 5³ 88).
- Moshe Idel. "Jewish Mysticism." In *Comparative Mysticism: An Anthology of Original Sources*. Steven T. Katz, ed. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013).
- William Johnston, ed. and Introduction. *The Cloud of Unknowing; and, The Book of Privy Counseling*. (New York, NY: Image Books/Doubleday, 2005).
- William Johnston. *The Mysticism of the Cloud of Unknowing: A Modern Interpretation*, with foreword by Thomas Merton. (New York, NY: Desclée, 1967).
- Carl Gustaf Jung. *The Portable Jung*. Joseph Campbell, ed. R.F.C. Hull, Translator. (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1976).
- Dom Justin McCann, ed. *The Cloud of Unknowing and Other Treatises by an English Mystic of the Fourteenth Century; with Commentary on the Cloud* by Father Augustine Baker. (London, UK: Burns Oates and Washbourn, original translation dated 1924, fifth edition dated 1947).

James Walsh, ed. *The Cloud of Unknowing*. (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1981).

R.C. Zaehner, *Mysticism, Sacred and Profane; an Inquiry into Some Varieties of Praeter-natural Experience*. (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1957)

Catherine Bando joined the LMU graduate theological studies program after concluding a career in investment banking in 2013. She resides in Los Angeles, is an Episcopalian and the Executive Director of a statewide financing agency in Sacramento; The California Statewide Communities Development Authority. A more extensive research paper on *The Cloud* is available upon request to catherinebando@me.com.



DYNAMIC CREATION: THE COALESCENCE OF SCIENCE AND RELIGION

By **Margaret Butterfield**

According to popular culture, Creation is usually denoted as a static, past event. From this stagnant definition, arguments from diverse empirical and theistic factions arise, causing significant division on various issues. By unpacking the popular, inactive understanding of Creation, we can better understand life on earth, both scientifically and theologically. Using both Elizabeth Johnson's framework on Creation, that of Creation as past, present and future, as well as John Haught's language of conflict, contrast and convergence, we can see Creation has a strong dynamic evolutionary and eschatological purpose that can be understood through the coalescence of objective science and well-informed, mature faith.

Elizabeth Johnson establishes three topics in her understanding of Creation: *creatio originalis*, *creatio continua*, and *creatio nova*—the idea of past, present and future. *Creatio originalis* denotes Creation as much more than an event that happened in the past to create the cosmos; it is *only* the beginning. Characterized by the onset of physical being, or what we observe in the known universe, this understanding is commonly applied to the subject of ecology, but more divisively on the concept of a creator. Fierce debate rages between theistic and empirical factions on the latter, with many viewing them as diametrically opposed. In 2014, Australian scientist Ken Ham, the

Creation museum founder, and empiricists, such as American scientist Bill Nye, a developer of various science television programs for children, held a three hour debate on the subject of whether or not a Creator exists. Both of these men term themselves scientists, which asks the question: what is science? Science itself is theoretically objective. Creationists and empiricists agree on the *methods* of attaining data in various scientific fields, however, the interpretation is relative; no one was present to witness the primordial occurrences. In addition, not all empiricists are atheist, and not all theists are Creationist. Because of this variance, it is not so easy to split the factions into two parties.

It is here that John Haught's language broadens the understanding by introducing three main approaches to interpreting faith and science, the first being *conflict*, in which, "science and faith are opposed and irreconcilable." When putting Ken Ham's suppositions about Creation and evolution directly against more militant atheists such as Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens, it is clear that *conflict*, is an apt descriptor. Does this also characterize Ham and Nye's debate? Not necessarily. Their particular debate is more appropriately characterized under Haught's *contrast* model, that is, that "no conflict can exist between science and faith since they respond to radically different questions." These two, although attempting to prove each other wrong, are actually just contributing to two different routes of discovery.

However, since neither will convince the other to change his mode of procedure, Haught introduces a third approach, that of *convergence*, which builds upon contrast. However, *convergence* also moves beyond these obstacles to question how they can be linked for the better understanding of our world and universe. Johnson's investigation into *creatio continua* and *creatio nova* creates the framework for a more detailed discussion of *convergence*.

The admission that earth has existed, and continues to exist and regenerate, is Johnson's definition of *creatio continua*. Not only is all of Creation still present, alive and beating, but God is also working through it. Without the influence of God, as Johnson says, "Creation would sink back into nothingness." The world is not static, but orienting toward something and moving through its story.

If we look at humanity, we see a simultaneously good and imperfect creation, one in need of God's grace in order to attain a natural and supernatural perfection. In order to connect the liminal and mysterious movement from God to humanity, there needs to be a mediation that speaks to the importance

of humanity. Jesus as Christ, the living embodiment and revelation of God, characterized as the logos in John's Gospel, is said mediator. By God becoming incarnational and getting rid of divisions, we do not only foster an individual relationship with God but also develop a sense of *koinonia*, or community.

Delio speaks of Rahner's characteristic theology of "human longing for fulfillment," using it as a springboard to characterize other theologians' effort to seek Christ amidst changes in the observable world. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, along the same lines, took this progression as a movement towards a more developed "consciousness," which relates back to the Thomistic modality of God flowing continuously through the human. In this, de Chardin was able to see Christ as a perfecting influence on humankind, transcending death not only in the account of the Resurrection, but also constantly through the continuing humanity in the world. Christ is not a static life, lived, suffered, and dead. In order to accept God's revelation and grace, it is imperative to perfect oneself in the teachings of Jesus—we evolve to be like Christ.

Creatio nova, or new Creation, then must not only encompass our primordial origins and continued evolution, but must also include a discussion of human mortality. Death is an observable reality. In our own epistemology, we are aware that there is a finite quality not only to our own lives but also to Creation that is around us. By understanding this, we can understand the ending to the story.

However, in a theological mindset, is it truly the end of the story? The criticism of atheism by many Christians is this idea that we simply cease to be, even after living full individual lives within a colorful history of humanity—a connotation of existential fear. And on a grander scale, the question: Is the universe simply cooking itself into destruction? To Christians, the most pressing question lies in God's role—would God simply abandon the world toward entropy? It is a question that can be divided into even smaller, more complicated issues—does one retain a type of body? Does one go to Heaven or Hell to be judged? For these questions, there are no empirical answers. However, in Christian faith, we are still orienting toward something, becoming perfected in Christ, and by dying, we transition into a state of new life and awakening. Our story is complete on the one hand, but persists in another. For humanity, death has always appeared to be a final ending, and certain traditions have attributed

anemic understandings of a permanent Hell: both a literal inferno filled with graphic punishment or Hell as a state of isolation from and rejection of God. Yet, how could it be so limited, when there is such a strong salvific connotation to the Gospel message and within the structure of the Trinity? Revelation, despite the violently chaotic war imagery, shows a dualistic final battle where Christ rises as the victor. In this, there is a new heaven and earth; everything is transcended, whether it is from the old Creation or something completely new. Yet, even in this, the story's ending is still being approached, and without mystery and faith, it cannot survive nor have viable meaning. It is in this that the full scope of the story is realized.

By utilizing convergence, and not lapsing into conflation, theology and science become more defined in their own individual utility: the conclusion is that both empiricists and theists characterize Creation as a story. The Big Bang and Genesis both show an inherent beginning to the cosmos. Subjects such as evolution should not be restricted to empiricism, as its facts need to be understood by a variety of different faiths, so that the science is not misinterpreted and then demonized. Death can still embody physicality and mystery.

In all of this, theologians can delve more deeply and dynamically, with the aid of science, into our role within Creation, and understand how God's movement and unconditional love permeate the plan that orchestrates both observed and faithful reality.

Bibliography

Ilia Delio, *The Emergent Christ: Exploring the Meaning of Catholic in an Evolutionary Universe* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 6455).

John F. Haught, *Science and Faith: A New Introduction* (New York: Paulist, 2012).

Elizabeth Johnson, *Creation: Is God's Charity Big Enough for Bears?* (Loyola Marymount University Mary Milligan Lecture, 2014).



Margaret Butterfield is a member of the Class of 2016. In addition to science and religion, her primary interests include apocalypticism and the interdisciplinary study of theology and literature. She also serves as the co-lead sacristan during the annual Los Angeles Religious Education Congress.

“John Wayne and Theology” Essay Contest



This summer, the Graduate Theological Studies Program hosted the “JOHN WAYNE and THEOLOGY” essay contest through the generous donation from Mrs. Gretchen Wayne, Daughter-in-Law of the late John Wayne. She sponsored this creative and interesting essay competition for students in the MA Studies in Theology and Pastoral Theology at LMU. \$1,000.00 was to be awarded to the best six page essay, analyzing one or more Moral/Ethical Themes, raised in one of John Wayne’s films.

The winner and recipient of the award for Fall 2015 is graduate student Josie Carrillo. Carrillo is in her third year of graduate studies in Pastoral Theology. She holds a Master of Arts degree in Education. She serves as catechist at Holy Name of Mary Parish, and ministers as spiritual director at the Loyola Institute for Spirituality. Her primary theological focus is in retreat ministry and spiritual direction.

THE MAN WHO SHOT LIBERTY VALANCE

THE VALUE OF VIRTUOUS CHARACTER

By Josie Carrillo

I begin by thanking Mrs. Gretchen Wayne, daughter-in-law of the late John Wayne for sponsoring this creative essay competition for MA Studies in Theology and Pastoral Theology.

At the heart of Jolyon Mitchell’s essay on ethics is the question: “To what extent can films be a site of ethical debate and a catalyst for moral reflection?” She explains, “The very fact that such a question is now regularly asked, and sometimes answered positively, illustrates how discussions about the place of ethics in film have evolved” (Lyden 2011, p. 482). According to Mitchell, “Some religious leaders, scholars, and educators go further, arguing that many films actually do realize their potential and can be catalysts for reflecting upon what makes for genuine human flourishing (Ibid., p. 483). Mitchell helpfully explains:

« Over the past half century many contemporary ethicists have shown a renewed interest in the ethical thought of the ancient Greeks. For example, philosophers such as Alasdair MacIntyre and Christian theologians such as Stanley Hauerwas have drunk deeply at the well of Greek ethics, especially Aristotle’s work on the virtues found in texts like the *Nicomachean Ethics*. This has contributed to a critical turn against “quandary ethics,” in which scholars analyze difficult individual cases in order to derive ethical principles or foundations. In its place, many ethicists now regularly highlight an approach to ethics rooted in the formation of virtuous character. The primary issue is not what the moral subject should do but rather what kind of person she or he should become. This has led scholars from widely divergent traditions to think further about the importance of nurturing virtues as a way toward human and global flourishing. Confucian ethicists tend to underline the importance of cultivating character which is like polishing a rough stone (*Analects* 1.15), thereby developing the virtuous human life. The recrudescence of virtue theory provides a valuable resource for reflecting critically upon the moral worlds presented in films » (Ibid., p. 486).

The purpose of this paper is to reflect upon the value of virtuous character found within the narrative in John Ford’s film, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, and its implications for human flourishing.

Often embedded within the motif of the classic Western film is a duality, a conflict which draws out the boundaries of good and evil. Westerns frequently illustrate the mysterious stranger who rides into town, saves the hardworking folk from marauders, and rides off again into the sunset. Storytelling is powerful because it engages the emotions of the narrator and the listeners. Feelings which are often ignored in moral discourse, connect or disconnect us to particular situations and actions. Author, Mark Miller writes, "...Stories can challenge us to go beyond accepting an answer. ...Stories capture, albeit from one perspective, many of the subtleties of a situation with which logic does not concern itself. Much modern storytelling that we encounter in movies and books takes advantage of these nuances to 'play with our minds.' A movie may begin with the story of a man on trial for murder. Slowly, however, as the details of the story are revealed, we may begin to wonder if the man is a hero rather than a murderer. Some stories show the good guys with moral weaknesses or the bad guys with good intentions. And some stories make it clear that no one has the whole story!" (Miller 1997, pp. 17-19).

When Senator Ransom "Ranse" Stoddard (James Stewart) arrives with his wife Hallie (Vera Miles) to the western frontier town of Shinbone to attend a funeral for Tom Doniphon (John Wayne), reporters are quickly on site to investigate why a United States Senator would journey from Washington to bury a local rancher. They want to know, "Who was Tom Doniphon?" This simple question unveils a complex history, rich with emotion of a proud man of principle at the heart of a gun slinging town in desperate need of transformation. Stoddard reflects and retraces the events of the past twenty-five years when he arrived on the scene as a young, idealistic attorney.

The essence of the man called Doniphon is captured when he enters the narrative, guiding a horse-drawn wagon, carrying Stoddard after being left for dead on the road by a gang of outlaws led by Liberty Valance. Doniphon calls for help from Hallie (his love interest) who together with restaurant owners Peter and Nora Erickson provide assistance to Stoddard. Doniphon offers to pay for his keep until he can get back on his feet. This scene reflects the dramatic and compassionate parable of the Good Samaritan.

Acts of violence are a regular part of the lawlessness inflicted on the townsfolk of Shinbone by Liberty Valance and his gang. Considering that Link Appleyard, the town Marshall lacks ambition and the necessary skills to confront the outlaws, Doniphon is the only one who dares to stand up to them by equal

use of force. However, enforcing the law becomes Stoddard's main tenet as a member in the community; he aims to restore justice, not by force or violence. He reacts determinately to Doniphon when he suggests to pack a handgun in defense of Valance:

"A gun, I don't want a gun, I don't want a gun, I don't want to kill him, I want to put him in jail." Doniphon responds, "Oh, well I know those law books mean a lot to you, but not out here. Out here a man settles his own problems." Stoddard, quips back, "Do you know what you're saying to me? You know, you're saying just exactly what Liberty Valance said. What kind of a community have I come to? You all seem to know about this fella, Liberty Valance, he's a no good, gun packing murdering thief! But the only advice you can give to me is to carry a gun!"

Stoddard's moral character and sense of righteousness is evident by this very statement. To underscore the moral and just nature of Stoddard's conviction, philosopher, Joshua P. Hochschild writes, "If there are some actions such as murder, adultery, or theft—that by their very nature frustrate human flourishing, then these things should not be done. But the emphasis here is not just prohibiting what is bad, but pointing one in the direction of what is good" (McCarthy 2009, p. 119). At this point Stoddard recognizes the enormous challenge facing him in seeking to establish a law abiding community in Shinbone. Nevertheless he opens a law practice in town and maintains that he is an advocate for justice under the law and not brute force. Moving forward in the direction of what is good, Stoddard's sense of social justice is observed when he opens a school to teach literacy skills, history and government to the community (Hallie and other adults as well as children).

After a major confrontation with Valance and the gang in the restaurant where Stoddard works, Stoddard acquiesces to an offer from Dutton Peabody, publisher of the Star News, and accepts a revolver. When Hallie learns from Peabody that Stoddard has obtained a gun she appeals to Doniphon's sense



Courtesy of Google Images

of justice and compassion to teach Stoddard how to use the weapon. Doniphon complies, meets up with Stoddard and takes him to his ranch for target practice. Doniphon teaches Stoddard a lesson by shooting a can full of paint that splatters all over him, and Stoddard retaliates by punching Doniphon in the jaw. Doniphon warns Stoddard that this sort of trickery is to be expected from Valance.

A mass meeting was being held in town for the election of two delegates as representatives for statehood at a convention being held at the territorial capital. Stoddard is called upon to lead the meeting and explains the benefits of statehood for the community as opposed to the self-serving interests of the cattle ranchers who want to maintain an open range. Valance and his gang interrupt the meeting by demanding that he be nominated. He is not successful, instead Peabody and Stoddard are elected. Infuriated with these actions, Valance threatens Stoddard and challenges him to a shootout that evening in the town square. Doniphon advises Stoddard to leave town but Stoddard is not persuaded.

Intent on printing the truth in the *Star News*, Peabody becomes Valance's next victim. In defiance of what Peabody had been reporting about Valance in the newspaper (his terrorizing actions and his defeat), Valance beats Peabody nearly to death and vandalizes the *Star News* office. Hearing the commotion, Stoddard and Appleyard make their way to attend to Peabody. Valance and his gang took flight across the street to a saloon where Appleyard was instructed by Stoddard to go for the doctor and to let Valance know that Stoddard would be waiting for him outside.

The showdown between Valance and Stoddard takes its course as they come face to face in the street. As Doniphon warned, Valance performs his trickery, first shooting at a hanging planter near Stoddard's head, then his right arm, which causes his gun to fall to the ground. Valance orders Stoddard to pick up the gun with his other hand and pronounces that the next shot will be "right between the eyes." Amazingly Stoddard fires his gun and Valance falls to the ground, mortally

wounded. Stoddard makes his way back to the restaurant where Hallie compassionately and lovingly tends his wounds. While Hallie begins to share her deep feelings for Stoddard, Doniphon appears on the scene. Doniphon apologizes for not getting there earlier to help, and leaves feeling dejected after witnessing the tender moments between Hallie and Stoddard. He is unable to hold his pain and disappointment about Hallie and drowns his sorrows at the saloon. His ranch hand, Pompey, manages to get him home and in a drunken rage sets fire to an addition on his home which he was preparing for Hallie in anticipation of their marriage. Pompey rescues him along with the corralled horses.

Peabody nominates Stoddard as the Washington delegate at the statehood convention. He elucidates



Courtesy of Google Images

Stoddard's qualifications as someone that will protect the rights of every man and woman, however humble and within the last few weeks comes to be known as, "A great champion of law and order." This glowing introduction is challenged by a rival candidate who argues the killing of Valance as unjust and accuses Stoddard as, "A man who usurps the function of both judge and jury and takes the law into his own hands." Stoddard's conscience begins to weigh heavily on him concerning the circumstances surrounding Valance's death and he leaves the meeting

room feeling unworthy of the leadership role for which he has been nominated. He is concerned about building a life on the reputation of having killed a man. Doniphon recognizes Stoddard's dismay and takes him aside, revealing that Stoddard was not responsible for Valance's death. Doniphon explains that he, Doniphon, killed Liberty Valance from an alley across the street, while firing their weapons at the same time. Stoddard questions his motives. Doniphon's response reflects his love for Hallie, "Hallie's happy, she wanted you alive." Doniphon's deep affection and love for Hallie appears to provide the courage for him to free himself of his egocentric resentment, and act altruistically by keeping Stoddard alive. He is able to transcend his own losses. Reinvigorated, Stoddard accepts the nomination and is elected to the Washington delegation. Stoddard returns to present day in his story and highlights his

successful political career over the years, based on the merits of “the man who shot Liberty Valance.” The reporters are now aware of the truth behind Valance’s death. Scott, editor of the newspaper takes the notes and tosses them into the fire. Stoddard asks, “You’re not going to use the story, Mr. Scott?” Scott replies, “No sir, this is the West sir, when the legend becomes fact, print the legend.” I believe Scott’s decision not to print the full story gives credence to what was emphasized earlier about the power of story “... some stories make it clear that no one has the whole story!”

Bibliography

Bella, James Warner and Willis Goldbeck. 1962 Film: *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*.

John Lyden Ed., *The Routledge Companion to Religion and Film* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

David Matzko McCarthy, Ed., *The Heart of Catholic Social Teaching: Its Origins and Contemporary Significance* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2009).

Mark Miller, C.Ss.R. “Stories: Tools for Teaching Moral Values” in *Liguorian: A Leading Catholic Magazine*. July 1997.

HBO’S *BESSIE*: A PORTRAIT OF THE COMPLEXITY OF SEXUAL FREEDOM

By Rachel Lang

Blues legend Bessie Smith has been heralded as a model of feminist consciousness because of the ways in which she exercised sexual freedom, tenaciously pursued her career in the spotlight, and defended herself against abuse. The HBO biopic film *Bessie* features the blues legend as a sexually liberated, relationally autonomous, tenacious, and fearless individual whose life and art reflected the complexity of emancipation for black women in the 1920s. In this paper, I offer a critique of the film. I specifically focus on the portrayal of Bessie Smith, played by Queen Latifah, whose sexual freedom symbolizes deeper themes present for African/African American women post-slavery. The film features Smith’s sexual exploits as liberative. However, the depiction of her life from this lens may not have adequately portrayed the deeper root of pain from racism and childhood trauma.

Bessie emphasizes the subject of sexual liberation, which was a prevalent theme in the genre of blues music because it correlated to a newfound sense of freedom Africans/African Americans had to make relationship and sexual choices after emancipation from slavery. Sexual freedom symbolized the deeper sense of freedom. It was a form of empowerment for women, who could finally possess personal agency over their bodies.

In the late 1800s to early 1900s, music provided African/African Americans with solidarity as well as a sense of cultural connectedness, especially the blues. James H. Cone writes, “Black music, then, is not an artistic creation for its own sake; rather it tells us about the feeling and thinking of an African people, and the kinds of mental adjustments they had to make to survive in an alien land.” Sexuality and sexual freedom are predominant themes featured in music of this genre.

During times of slavery, the freedom to love and engage sexual relationships had been denied, and black bodies were commoditized and used. Slave owners would often “breed” more slaves, especially after the importation of African slaves became illegal. In addition to this, slave owners and their children, slave traders, and other white men sexually abused slave women. Because of this, African/African American women had to find ways after slavery to reclaim their bodies as sites of pleasure. Sexual pleasure was one step toward loving their bodies. “Loving her body, the freed woman took control of her sex and sexuality, denying neither sexual pleasure nor desire, resisting both coercion and intimidation. Loving her body, the freed woman fleshed out autonomy, self-determination, decision, and action.”

Smith’s lyrics encouraged “women to be as strong and independent as they were loving and caring.” Her music empowered women. The film, *Bessie*, highlights this characteristic of Smith’s life and music as well as the solidarity expressed by female Blues artists during that time. The relationship between Blues artist Gertrude “Ma” Rainey and Smith shown in the film exemplifies this cohesion by depicting Rainey as a mentor to Smith. Rainey and Smith gather large audiences in tents, clubs, and venues sought as alternatives to church communities. Their performances affirmed black culture while also offering an alternative to male-dominated systems, like religion.

Rainey’s music emphasized social concerns faced by Africans/African Americans, and she is credited with assisting in developing an African-American social consciousness through the blues. Emancipation from slavery led to a class of African and African Americans who had to exercise creativity to meet basic survival needs. Poverty and oppression were prevalent themes for African/African Americans at the time.

Smith’s history of childhood abuse and domestic violence are depicted in the film. In the film, themes of

violence and fractured relationships show in Smith's life as well as other characters. This seems to support Davis' claim, "Performed lyrics provide a glimpse of a kind of working-class women's community-building that, rather than advocating violence, proclaims women's complexity by refusing to deny or downplay female antagonism."

Though the film expresses a potential connection between Smith's childhood trauma and her drinking, domestic violence, and challenges with intimate relationships, it downplays the effects of racism on the consciousness of Africans/African Americans. M. Shawn Copeland writes of the ways in which the history of slavery and racism have influenced black embodiment. She writes, within a racially biased system, "the black body, when isolated, may be enticed to deny 'other' black bodies." Much of the violence in the film featured black bodies fighting other black bodies.

Furthermore, Copeland asserts that white racial bias projects stereotypes of blacks as "promiscuous, loud, illiterate, and diseased." Even sexual autonomy, which could be considered liberative, raises questions about racism because for blues artists like Smith, singing about sexual freedom and sexuality may have inadvertently fed a racial stereotype. Cone would disagree with this, stating that the blues connects the body and the soul, and theologically, this integration is an expression of human freedom. The blues "tell us that there is no wholeness without sex, no authentic love without the feel and touch of the physical body. The blues affirm the authenticity of sex as the bodily expression of black soul."

Copeland asserts that race and gender are socially constructed, based on normative ideals that have historically privileged white males. Healthy sexuality encompasses a "reverence for 'other' bodies and our own, a refusal to insult the dignity of sexual pleasure through narcissistic and dominative sexual repression, and a grasp of authentic freedom through which we realize our 'body grace.'" In the film, Smith is shown engaging in relationships that involve dominance and submission, ones in which her wealth and resources provide her with more power than her lovers. This is especially evident in the film's portrayal of the relationship with Lucille. Gee's character also expresses hurt in the film when he discusses the issue of infidelity with Smith.

At the end of the film, I questioned whether or not Smith's sexuality could have been the result of either a racially biased social construct or an unhealthy behavior pattern stemming from abuse and oppression. Though I did see the allusion to the latter, the film adopted Davis's perspective that sexual freedom was a mark of blues. Therefore, Smith's independence and personal agency, as represented by the sexual autonomy featured in the film,

could have held significant importance for black people after slavery. Davis writes, "The focus on sexual love in blues music was thus quite different in meaning from the prevailing idealization of romantic love in mainstream popular music. For recently emancipated slaves, freely chosen sexual love became a mediator between historical disappointment and the new social realities of an evolving African-American community." Sexual love and freedom, therefore, were part of a larger framework of freedom for the black community, but it was not without complexity because of the racial stereotypes and the system of oppression that marginalized black bodies.

The film focuses on Smith's feminist consciousness by emphasizing her autonomy, business acumen, independence, and courage to stand up for herself against racist and sexist individuals. It showcases the intimate correlations between her music and her personal life experiences. However, it may have missed some prevailing themes about gender, race, and sexuality. Specifically, it did not adequately address the ways in which her exercise of sexual freedom may have resulted from the effects of trauma rather than liberation.

Bibliography

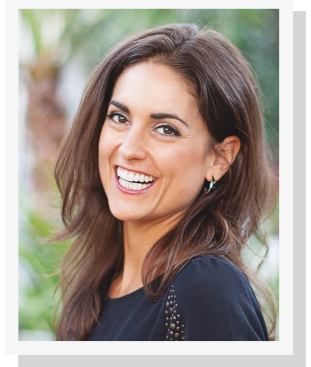
Angela Davis, *Blues Legends and Black Feminism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998).

Bessie. Dir. Dee Rees. (HBO Films, 6459).

James H. Cone, *The Spirituals and the Blues* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1991) Kindle Edition.

M. Shawn Copeland *Enflesing Freedom: Body, Race, and Being* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010).

Rachel Lang recently earned her MA in Theology, and her emphasis is in ethics and *feminist* theology. When she is not studying theology, she works as a consultant, helping individuals, businesses, and nonprofit organizations develop marketing and business strategies. She is passionate about helping causes that empower women and children. She plans to pursue a PhD and will begin the application process after taking a year to learn languages and prepare.





David Savage completed the graduate theological studies program in Spring of 2015, with a focus in historical theology. David teaches AP European History at Notre Dame High School in Sherman Oaks and enjoys travel, cooking, surfing, and running marathons.

**“THE HOLY EMBRACE”
SPIRITUALITY OF THE
BROTHERS OF THE COMMON LIFE
REVEALED IN THOMAS KEMPIS’
*IMITATION OF CHRIST, SOLILOQUY
OF THE SOUL, AND SERMONS TO
THE NOVICES*
By David Savage**

Several years ago, I attended a retreat at Serra Retreat House in Malibu with students from Notre Dame High School, and while there I visited the Franciscan’s library. Finding a copy of *The Imitation of Christ*, I read it during quiet periods over the next three days. At the end of the retreat I had not finished the reading, yet the book continued to crop up in my life. I developed a curiosity for it beyond just the superficial reading I afforded over a four-day retreat, so I returned to the *Imitation*, resolved to do a deeper reading and analysis, and in so doing, I developed a respect for its author, Thomas a’ Kempis, a member of the Brothers of the Common Life. My admiration for Thomas stemmed from the sense that, in reading, the two of us had conversed; indeed, I sometimes wondered aloud over Thomas’ writing, and he at some later point in the book, provided clarification. For instance, I often wondered if Thomas allowed for failure in the *Imitation*. What if, after a heartfelt effort to imitate Christ, I back-slid? Thomas’ answer provides the title of this paper. He writes in Section 52 of Book III what I think is his most beautiful passage:

“And what do you ask most, O Lord, of such a wretched sinner save that he be contrite and humble himself for his sins? For in true contrition and humility of heart is found the very hope of forgiveness of sin, and the troubled conscience is thereby cleared, and grace before lost is again recovered. Man is also thereby defended from the wrath to come, and Almighty God and the penitent soul meet in the holy embrace of heavenly love.”

The more I read of the *Imitation* the more I desired to know if there were certain qualities unique to Thomas’ spirituality. I began reading and researching many of his other works. Thomas was a prolific writer and so it was no easy task choosing samples of his writing that would reveal this. I settled on the *Soliloquy of the Soul*, a collection of writings in the form of dialogues, and his *Sermons to the Novices*, a gathering of his sermons during his years of service as director of novices.

The unique quality of Thomas’ spirituality only revealed itself as I researched further into the community to which he belonged, the Brothers and Sisters of the Common Life. In the light of understanding the community’s spirituality, Thomas’ writings reveal his own voice within that of the Brethren. The question I formed and the one I responded to in my graduate thesis is this: in what ways does Thomas reveal the spirituality of the Brothers of the Common Life in his own *Imitation of Christ*, *Sermons to the Novices*, and *Soliloquy of the Soul*?

A common perception of Thomas' *Imitation* is that it is too despairing of the world. As William Creasy states in the Introduction to his edition of *The Imitation*,

"A classic though it may be, the *Imitation* was written by a man in a cloister for other cloistered men, and it was written in a time and culture far removed from our own. When a person with even the best of intentions picks up a copy of the *Imitation* and reads that 'this is the highest and most profitable lesson: truly to know and to despise ourselves' or 'this is the highest wisdom: through contempt of the world to aspire to the kingdom of heaven' he or she is likely to put the book down again, to wonder how people could have clung to such depressing and mistaken notions for so long a time."

Initially I too perceived Thomas to be presenting a spirituality of flight from the world; here was yet another mystic encouraging readers to take comfort in the walls of a monastery. But as I read more of Thomas' works I began to see that within them was a spirituality of great hope. I propose that a fuller appreciation of Thomas' spirituality calls for a reading of *The Imitation of Christ*, *Soliloquy of the Soul* and *Sermons to the Novices* in tandem as these books provide the spiritual context of Thomas' notions of God, humanity, Christ, the world, and the individual person. Each book introduces Thomas to us. Each reveals his complexity, his simplicity, his uniqueness and his role in defining the spirituality of the Brothers of the Common Life. To read Thomas is to read their spirituality, and of all Thomas' writings, these three works provide an opportunity to fully appreciate the qualities and characteristics of the *devotio moderna*.

I consider an appreciation of how and why Thomas wrote to be equally important to understanding and appreciating what he wrote. The daily life of the Brethren included spiritual reading *and* writing, the latter being a method of reflection and inner-spiritual dialogue. Hence, not only are these three works windows into the Brothers' spirituality, they are windows into Thomas' own heart. With this in mind an individual who reads the *Imitation*, *Soliloquys* and *Sermons* will see throughout them not a pessimistic view of human nature coupled with a negative view of the created world, but rather, a joyful hope for his own spiritual journey and that which his readers undertake. Thomas' works offer a beautiful and profound spirituality suitable for spiritual reading in the twenty-first century as it was in the fifteenth and throughout the centuries between them.

Bibliography

Thomas Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, trans Harold Gardiner, SJ., (Colorado Springs: Image Press, 1955).

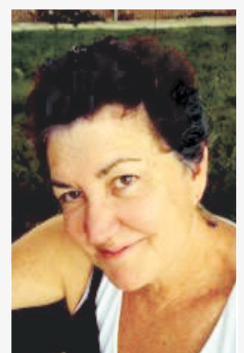
Much of the secondary research on Thomas and his writings is in Dutch; therefore I have had to limit myself to a select few journal articles and books in English. Additionally, those English translations in existence often omitted sections conflicting with the Anglican Church.

"AND HE WAS MADE KNOWN IN THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD..."

By Michele Volz

A recent report released in August 2015 by the Economic Roundtable, a nonprofit research group based in Los Angeles, reveals that about 13,000 people fall into homelessness every month in Los Angeles County. That sheer number surprises even those who work in the field, and challenges those of us with faith to ask what we can do to help our sisters and brothers with no place to live. Besides advocating for affordable and subsidized housing, as well as effective public assistance programs, what can we do? How do we put into action, in our commute to work or daily activities, the directive Pope Francis gives us when he says "Go out. Go out and share your testimony, go out and interact with your brothers (and sisters), go out and share, go out and ask. Become the Word in body as well as spirit?"

We might begin becoming the Word for others by coming to terms with the reasons we shut people out-communally and individually. Miroslav Volf proposes the radical notion of embrace as a response to exclusion. "And if we, the communal selves are called into eternal communion with the triune God, then true justice will always be on



the way to embrace—to a place where we will belong together with our personal and cultural identities both preserved and transformed, but certainly enriched by the other.”

Every Sunday we re-enact the expansive actions of a God who modeled for us complete and utter embrace, “The Eucharist is the ritual time in which we celebrate this divine ‘making-space-for-us-and-inviting-us-in.’” It also centers around a table. This is not a coincidence. The table is where all come to be fed, physically and spiritually. Even if not at a table, can we offer to share a snack, or meal, with someone obviously in need?

The table fellowship that is so prominent in Lukan writings reveals the radically different meal partners Jesus had. “While meals in the ancient world often function to consolidate the boundary of an existing community, many meal scenes in Luke aim instead at breaking such boundaries.” Jesus eats with those one might not expect, “tax collectors and sinners” (Lk. 5:30, 7:34, 15:10). The tax collectors represent those not in the mainstream, the outcasts (cf. 3:12; 18:9-14, 19:1-10), the sinners, the unclean and impure (cf. 6:32-34; 18:13; 19:7). “By participating in fellowship with these stereotypical groups, the Lukan Jesus challenges the traditional boundaries of God’s community.” Might not the local homeless shelter be a likely place to mimic the example of Jesus?

In three years of weekly visits to Isaiah House, I have observed that there are different manners of practicing hospitality to strangers, some more Christian than others. Some pray before serving, either with the women or not. Several weeks ago, a well-meaning gentleman began the prayer in their backyard, “welcoming” them, which was awkward, as it is actually their space, more than his. Some food preparers socialize with the residents before meals are served, chatting with those they are familiar with, and eating with them. Others do not. Some food-servers have the women come up to the high pass-through counter to receive their plates of food through the window area, while others invite the ladies to come directly through the large kitchen to receive their meal, an experience allowing for much more interaction.

If we have not often experienced need or marginality, we might not be able to identify with

being on the receiving end, and all that that entails. Evagrius Ponticus, a Christian monk and ascetic of the fourth century, writes, “there is great shame from accepting the necessities of life from another.” Father Gregory Boyle speaks of shame being the root of all addictions. It affects not only our relationship with others, but that with our Creator, “Shame has a profound effect on one’s intra-and interpersonal life. It has the power to induce feelings of inadequacy about oneself, inferiority relative to others, and a sense of deficiency relative to a relationship with God.”

There is a danger of perpetuating this debilitating sense of shame if we are not able to approach the other with humility. Spending time is necessary, as is a willingness to spend self. We can insist upon maintaining the distinction between server and served, giver and recipient, or we can realize that as Father Boyle proclaims: “we are mutually in need of healing.”

Meister Eckhart was “not so much concerned with works as with the spirit with which we perform them.” Boyle speaks along the same lines when he says that the measure of compassion does not equal service, but the willingness to be in kinship with another. If we insist on taking the role of hosts, and therefore allocate the role of guest to the one in need, we reinforce the stigma already there. The provider of food/resources must be able to receive also, even, and perhaps especially, from one who has little to give. “There is a complex dance between recognizing our own need, ministering to those in need, and recognizing their ministry to us.”

Looking at someone without judgment and with love, with what Leia Smith of the Orange County Catholic Worker calls an “eye blessing,” can help with healing. There might be some awkwardness at first, on both sides, but putting ourselves, deliberately in a new situation might be the first step towards softening our stony hearts and replacing them with more compassionate ones. Being open to conversion experiences may not come naturally or comfortably to those of us who are wary of new situations. However, exposing our lives, and hopefully therefore, our hearts, to others who differ from us may, with time, reintroduce us to the Savior who resides in each of us.



Bibliography

David W. Pao, "Writers or Preachers: Acts 6:1-7 and the Lukan Table Fellowship Motif," *Journal of Biblical Literature*. April 2011.
Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion & Embrace* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996).

Michele Volz is the Orange County coordinator for the Ignatian Spirituality Project, which provides overnight retreats for women and men experiencing homelessness and in recovery.

**TRUMP AND THEOLOGY:
MIGRATION AS A PASTORAL AND THEOLOGICAL CONCERN**
By Brett C. Hoover, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Theological Studies

On June 16 of this year, Donald Trump argued in his campaign announcement speech that Mexican immigrants were largely criminals (as the speech continued, he implied the same for other Latin Americans as well). This strategic deployment of hateful speech has landed Trump a place as Republican front runner for his alleged plain-spokenness. But in no sense can anything about his perspective be deemed properly Christian. What then should Christian teachers and scholars do when such language appears not only socially acceptable but even popular? This question lies in the background of a small conference to be convened in October by the Center for Migration Studies, a Catholic research center in New York dedicated to question of immigration (founded by the Scalabrini Fathers). Scholars, activists, non-profit service providers, and immigrants themselves will gather on the U.S.-Mexico border in El Paso to talk about the relationship between academic research on migration and the work of practitioners—pastoral ministers, advocates, and those who provide material help.

For me and for several others participating in the conference, studying migration is a labor of love we do in partnership with people we have known personally. Many of my years in pastoral ministry on the East Coast, in the Midwest, and here in California, I spent pastorally accompanying immigrants from Mexico, the Caribbean, Central and South America, and the Philippines. When Trump and others speak of "illegals," I think of people with names, faith stories, ministerial commitments, and children. In writing *The Shared Parish: Latinos, Anglos, and the Future of U.S. Catholicism*, for example, I hoped that reporting on the stories of Mexican immigrants in the pseudonymous All Saints parish would help to turn stereotypes into full-dimensional human beings. I hoped that readers

would understand these parishioners' difficult struggle to have standing in their Catholic parish—to not be stereotyped as stealing pencils from the parish school, to have their ministries represented in the parish directory, to not have to cancel a parish dance because of the risk of the police apprehending persons without papers afterward. In short, even in a scholarly book, I hoped not only to inform but to elicit empathy, "a compassion that can stand in awe what the poor have to carry rather than stand in judgment at how they carry it."

I understand that a few may complain that this is not a proper task for a teacher-scholar of theology. This is advocacy or ministry, not research. Yet drawing anything close to such a line is of recent vintage in Christian theology. For the first few centuries of Christian life, the activity that we call *theology*—speaking and reasoning about God and human life before God—was nearly always performed by church leaders addressing the questions and dilemmas of their own people. Only in the Western medieval period, with the shift of theology to universities independent of the monasteries and cathedrals, did theology begin to turn into a more speculative discipline performed for its own sake and devoted to standardized topics. After the Enlightenment, theology became a *Wissenschaft*, an area of specialization where scholars pursue knowledge according to the warrants and standards of a disciplinary guild.

There are decided advantages to these shifts. Our rigorous attention to *how* we do theology is ultimately designed to keep us from falling prey to fuzzy thinking, outrageous cultural bias, and religious group-think. We can scarcely afford to



lose the precision of a specialized vocabulary and communal standards of procedure and evidence in making theological claims. But neither can we risk losing a sense of theology as a *scientia practica* that “mediates between present and future praxis.” The way native born American Christians behave toward their immigrant brothers and sisters matters—not only ethically but ecclesiological. A church where *koinonia* is disrupted by discomfort with newcomers, preoccupation with legal procedures, political grandstanding, or even racism itself, is a church whose fidelity to the apostolic witness is potentially undermined.

This would hardly have been a point lost on Christians of the first millennium, whose noisy theological debates were not infrequently occasioned by the considerable movement of peoples at the time. Thus, the Didache has advice for judging the sincerity of itinerant teachers and apostles. Benedict of Nursia is said to have taught his monks to welcome strangers as Christ. The very word “parishioner” comes from an ironical Greek term for an immigrant—*paroikos*. The Letter to Diognetus asserts that, in view of their ultimate destiny, all Christians are sojourners and aliens in every country in which they dwell (5:5). Whatever we make of these reflections in our very different context, they remind us that migration is very far from being a new or historically marginal pastoral and theological concern. We have a solid foundation on which to address migration anew in our own society, to make sense of it as teachers and researchers, and thus to contribute to the reform of persistent anti-immigrant practices that do not belong in Christian communities of faith.

Bibliography

Gregory Boyle, *Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion* (New York: Free Press, 2010).
Randy Maddox, “The Recovery of Theology as a Practical Discipline,” *Theological Studies* 51 (1990).

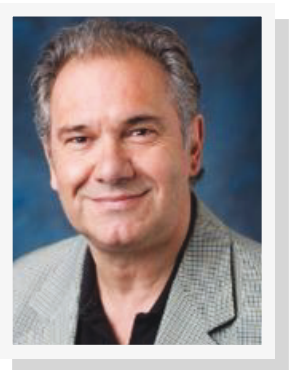
Brett C. Hoover is Assistant Professor of Theological Studies at LMU and the author of *The Shared Parish: Latinos, Anglos, and the Future of U.S. Catholicism* (NYU Press, 2014). He teaches in the graduate programs in pastoral theology here in Westchester and down in the Orange diocese.

One of the themes on which I have been meditating and writing, in my recent scholarship, is the

THINKING ABOUT EMBODIMENT

By Roberto Dell’Oro, Ph.D.

question of embodiment. It is a question that hardly surfaces as a relevant topic of discussion in contemporary bioethics. The focus on normative dimensions, further exacerbated by the pragmatic concerns of a consensus-based strategy that is geared to public policy solutions, tend to push to the side premises of a deeper philosophical nature, unquestionably central to any ethical reflection. Consider the case recently publicized in the news concerning the FDA discussion for approval of an *in vitro* fertilization technique which, in an attempt to prevent certain illnesses, like muscular dystrophy and respiratory problems, uses DNA from three people. Most commentators, especially scientists and doctors, welcome the advent of yet another technological fix to a congenital predisposition with an attitude of unquestionable awe. On the other hand, the more critically minded, among them ethicists, are willing to grant that some moral problems for this “three parent baby” solution do exist after all: doubts about safety are raised, together with the fear of unforeseen eugenic slippery slopes. Strangely passed over in silence, though, remains the most obvious question, “whose child will this baby be?” Of course, experts are quick to rebut this preoccupation as scientifically naïve, if not totally unfounded: they reassure the concerned public that because the female donor of healthy mitochondrial DNA to the defective biological mother provides, in the end, a very negligible genetic contribution, she cannot be described appropriately as “a parent.” However, when considered from another angle, namely, that of the *personal* identity of a child thus produced, the question “whose child will this baby be?” comes to the fore as actually very serious. This is so because personal identity is now imperiled by what I would call “an ambiguity of belonging,” in which the embodied matrix of traceable biological



debts represents for the child in question more an opportunity for doubt, than a condition for self-identification. The lack of evidence about one's *distinct* genetic lineage turns the trust in the source that gives to be, under normal circumstances the syngamy of two genomes, into puzzlement about one's *own* origin and identity.

The ethical judgment on the technology in question is not the point here. What concerned me most, as I became aware of the issue, was not the ethics of artificial reproductive technologies *per se*, but the discussion on the more recessive premises about the body, embodiment, and the "embodied self," premises that drive these technologies in the first place and, more in general, our understanding of medicine's goals. I ask several questions: how important is it to unpack what remains tacit in the bioethical discussion, and why? What are the philosophical models of embodiment presupposed by medicine and bioethics today? Finally, what are the conditions for the articulation of a "theology of the body" in the Christian framework? A theologically defined anthropology speaks to the nature of the body as gift, the person as a "unified totality," and the inter-subjective quality of the body as a medium of relationality. How is one to make *philosophical* sense of those categories, unequivocally rich, yet also culturally opaque?

A reasoned approach to these questions, especially one that relies upon the resources of Christian anthropology, would have to come to terms with the "unified totality" that expresses the mystery of our embodied condition. The body is not the separated substance existing next to, or behind, some mysterious personal presence (the soul), but the very incarnation of that presence in the "communication of properties" (*communicatio idiomatum*) that defines the fleshed embodiment of the self: in the person, the material is the spiritual, the spiritual is the material. It is in the logic defined by this identity that we can understand the statement of Gabriel Marcel: "I am my body in so far as I succeed in recognizing that this body of mine *cannot*, in the last analysis, be brought down to the level of being this object, an object, a something or other." Nothing that belongs to the body in the person is secondary to her, as if expressing something like the "animal," and therefore inferior, part in her. In virtue of its own expressiveness, all of the body is rehabilitated, so to speak, in its ontological meaning and value. Against any dualistic paradigm, the countercultural model of Christian anthropology points to the body as much more

than raw material. In this paradigm rather, the body becomes the intentional field of a possible expressiveness of the subject, of its motivations, intentionality, and emotions. The ethical claims to bodily integrity, privacy, respect, even reverence for the body are grounded in the presupposition that, as a document of the church puts it, "in the body and through the body, one touches the person herself in her concrete reality."

What I have highlighted, so far, speaks of the last reserve of the body as mine, of its most intimate incommunicability. There are things I experience in my body – pain, pleasure, for an example, I can never communicate fully. The language of the body is in the end, less articulate than words: laughter or tears, a scream, a sigh, a yawn. And so I celebrate the *idiocy* of my body, its radical sharing in the deepest recesses of my hidden interiority. What then of its irreducible resistance? What of its otherness? Consider the experience of illness: while healthy, I feel my body as an unquestionable medium of my presence to the world, almost oblivious to the embodied condition in which I live. When undergoing the *pathos* of disease, on the other hand, I suddenly perceive my body as *other* to my-self, as literally "ant-agonistic" (a term which entails the Greek root of the word struggle, *agon*). In my suffering, not only do I become aware of a part of myself I had so far taken for granted -- a limb now broken, a physiological function become progressively pathological, or a mechanism of the body that will be chronically compromised. Moreover, in the fragility of my diseased body parts, I reckon with the possibility that illness will turn my *whole* self into somebody else: a patient, a disabled person, an invalid. What could then mean to experience the alterity of the body, its being *other*, at the heart of its deepest immediacy to myself? If such alterity is a sign, or a pointer, what does it allude to? I like to go back to the famous statement of Nietzsche, from his *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, in the paragraph titled "Of the Despisers of the Body" (62):

What the sense feels, what the spirit perceives is never an end in itself. But sense and spirit would like to persuade you that they are the end of all things: they are as vain as that.

Could the body, in its most radical otherness, be the symbol, the ultimate, in fact the most real, of our being given to be? Could it be that in our em-

bodied condition, in the flesh that nourishes our joy and suffering, pain and pleasure, there lies the trace of the source that releases us into being, the subtle allusion, most often forgotten, at times denied, of the gift that we are, not from ourselves, for how could we credit to ourselves the price of our own indebtedness, but from another. Some call it life. Some others dare to call it God.

Roberto Dell'Oro is the Director of the Bioethics Institute and a Professor in the Department of Theological Studies at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. He teaches in the areas of bioethics, fundamental moral theology, and ethical theories, with a special interest in anthropological themes at the crossroad of theology and philosophy.

THE ECCLESIOLOGY OF POPE FRANCIS: THE GENESIS OF A BOOK

By Thomas P. Rausch, S.J.

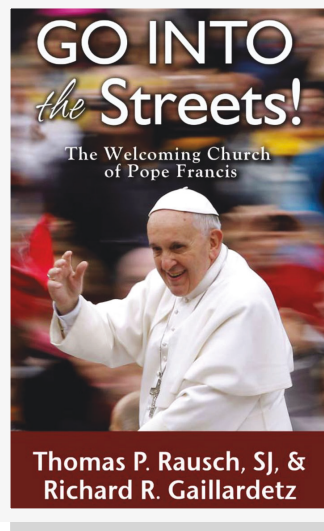
Towards the end of last year an editor friend from Paulist Press emailed me to ask my opinion on a proposed book on the ecclesiology of Pope Francis. I made a few suggestions, then added that I might be interested in doing it myself. Almost as soon as I popped off the email, my phone rang. It was the editor, asking if I would do the book. The result is *Go Into the Streets: The Welcoming Church of Pope Francis*, edited jointly with my colleague and good friend, Richard Gaillardetz of Boston College. We wanted a book with relatively short chapters, easy to read and digest, popular but based on the best scholarship, covering the various aspects of how Pope Francis sees the Church. After emailing back and forth, we assembled an international group of ten contributors.

Robert Imbelli traces the similarities, not always recognized, between Benedict XVI and Francis. Both men owe a debt to the French Jesuit and *ressourcement* theologian, Henri de Lubac, with his conviction that dogma is not to replace but point to the living Person of Jesus Christ. As Benedict wrote in his first encyclical, "Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction." Similarly in a homily on January 1, 2015, Francis said, "Our faith is not an abstract doctrine or philosophy, but a vital and full relationship with a person: Jesus Christ" who we encounter in the Church. Maria Clare Bingemer, from Brazil, traces the development of Liberation

Theology in Latin America, with a particular focus on its distinctive Argentinian version, the *Teología del Pueblo* or Theology of the People. This theology emphasized the popular symbols and narratives in which the faith of the people was given cultural expression, and included a critique of a Marxist analysis which from a theological perspective was not always sufficiently critical or appreciative of popular religion.

Our own Cecilia Gonzalez-Andrieu in her chapter further developed these themes, specifically the important place that *la religiosidad popular* or popular religion plays in Francis' writings, with his holistic approach to the human person--body and spirit. Francis sees the practices of popular religion as growing out of a longing for God, and so they are to be valued, not disparaged by contrasting "popular" rites or practices with "official" ones. She also emphasizes how as a Jesuit, with a long tradition of missionary inculturation, Francis shares their respect for the customs, traditions and beliefs of new groups encountered and their ability to value their aesthetic objects and rituals in the proclamation of the Christian Gospel, in this way bringing about an integration of the transcendent with the immanent, the eternal with *lo cotidiano*.

Australian Gerard Mannion contributed a chapter tracing Francis' efforts to reclaim the ecclesiological spirit of Vatican II, especially to re-engage the People of God, using the council's core image for the Church largely neglected in re-



cent magisterial documents because some suspected it of implying an ecclesial democratization. Thus the vision of Francis is reforming, preaching forgiveness and compassion rather than admonishing and moralizing, placing mercy at the heart of the gospel. He is calling the papacy and central structures of the Church to conversion and for a decentralization of the Church, including the recovery of a greater sense for collegiality.

My chapter stresses Francis' efforts to fashion a "listening Church," appealing to Ignatius of Loyola's principle of "thinking with the Church," which for Francis means thinking with the whole Church, not just the hierarchy. In other words, the Church is not divided into a "teaching Church" and "learning Church," as an earlier ecclesiology held, but is a true *communio* of pastors and faithful. Vatican II taught that the faithful share in the Church's charism of infallibility, so that authority teaches what the Church believes, or in Francis' words, the whole Church is infallible *in credendo* (in believing). The 6458 document, *The Sensus Fidei in the Life of the Church* argues that the faithful "are not merely passive recipients of what the hierarchy teaches and theologians explain; rather, they are living and active subjects within the Church" (no. 67), playing a role in the development of doctrine and in the church's moral teaching.

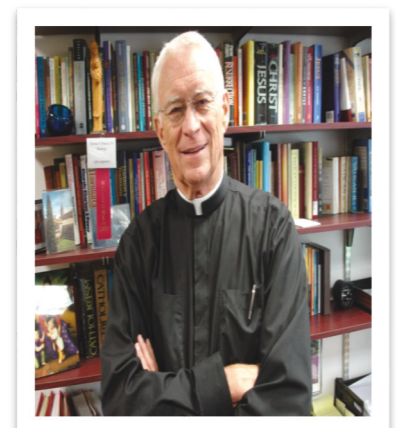
Canadian Catherine Clifford argues that Francis has sought to reclaim the emphasis on dialogue so important to John XXIII in calling the council, dialogue with modern science, culture, and with contemporary people in a world increasingly characterized by religious pluralism. Paul VI sought to carry this program forward, and Francis in *Evangelii gaudium* called for structures to support dialogue so that the faithful might truly participate in the mission of the Church and stressing that it grows not by proselytizing but by attraction. Christopher Ruddy shows how Francis is attempting to reconfigure the relationship between the center and the peripheries, the universal and the local churches, symbolized by his use of the title Bishop of Rome rather than the more familiar Sovereign Pontiff. He has made significant efforts to respect the teaching authority of episcopal conferences and to revitalize the Synod of Bishops. Co-editor Richard Gaillardetz argues that Francis' intention is not to change doctrine, but to recontextualize it in the service of the Church's pastoral mission, an understanding quite different from the intellectual approach in the Neo-Scholastic tradition. After all, the gospel is oriented towards ordinary people. Thus, he has not moved beyond the teaching of Paul VI's encyclical on contraception, *Humanae vitae*, but placed it in the content of Vatican II's teaching on responsible parenthood.

Richard Lennan addresses the pope's concern for ministry, particularly in light of the post Vatican II "explosion" of lay ministries which meant that ministry was no longer the exclusive concern of the ordained. Rather than focusing on ministerial identity, Francis writes on the challenges, temptations and opportunities pastoral workers face. He wants them to open, not close doors, rejecting the "excessive clericalism" that excludes lay members of the Church from its decision-making.

In the final chapter, Christine Firer Hinze shows how Francis' social concern is rooted in over a century of official papal statements, supplemented by the work of the Conference of Latin American Bishops (CELAM), especially the documents of their meeting at Aparecida, Brazil in 2007 in which then Cardinal Bergoglio played a major role. All these teaching documents prioritize the poor, though Firer finds a distinctively Ignatian flavor in Francis' approach to justice. At the end she cites the pope's biographer Austen Ivereigh who observed that in Jorge Bergoglio, the cardinals of the 2013 papal conclave found a "once-in-a-generation combination of two qualities seldom found together: he had the political genius of a charismatic leader and the prophetic holiness of a desert saint."

In the Epilogue, Richard Gaillardetz suggests that Francis' papacy may mark the decisive moment in which the full force of Vatican II's reformist vision was finally realized. Please God may it be so.

Thomas P. Rausch, S.J. is the T. Marie Chilton Professor of Catholic Theology at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.



SAY SOMETHING THEOLOGICAL NINE

At the ninth annual graduate student theology conference, the following students were selected to present their papers in front of their colleagues, faculty, and staff.



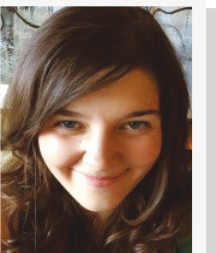
ALEJANDRA ANGEL

“Liberation Theology and the Carteles: How Drug Cartels Disrupt the Popular Religiosity, Culture, and Dignity of Mexican Catholics”



CATHERINE BANDO

“*The Cloud of Unknowing*: A Comparative Theological Examination”



MARGARET BUTTERFIELD

“Dynamic Creation: The Coalescence of Science and Religion”



LINDA DAKIN-GRIMM

“Pope Francis’ Implementation of the ‘Reform’ Theology of Yves Congar”



DAVID SAVAGE

“‘The Holy Embrace’ Spirituality of the Brothers of the Common Life Revealed in Thomas Kempis’ *Imitation of Christ*, *Soliloquy of the Soul*, and *Sermons to the Novices*”

Earn a Master of Arts degree in a dynamic learning community

Where Faith Is...

Vibrantly Expressed
Critically Examined
Ultimately Transformed

Learn more about our areas of study at:

<http://bellarmine.lmu.edu/theology/graduate>

Graduate Theological Studies
1 LMU Drive, Suite 3700
Los Angeles, CA 90045
310.338.7772

LMU|LA Loyola Marymount University



ARTICLE CONTRIBUTORS:

Catherine Bando
Margaret Butterfield
Josie Carrillo

Roberto Dell'Oro, Ph. D.
Brett C. Hoover, Ph.D.
Rachel Lang

Thomas P. Rausch, S.J.
David Savage
Michele Volz

EDITOR

Jennifer Scott, Administrator

LAYOUT DESIGN

Linda Claros, Sr. Administrative Coordinator
Emilie Grosvenor, Graduate Assistant

COVER PHOTO

Courtesy of LMU

GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

is published by the Bellarmine College of Liberal Arts
at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, CA.

For more information, visit:

<http://bellarmine.lmu.edu/gradtheology>

or call 310.338.7772

LMU|LA
Bellarmine College
of Liberal Arts

<http://bellarmine.lmu.edu/theology/graduate>