



The Journal



October - December 2011

A Letter From The Publisher

Dear readers of The Journal,

Beginning in 2012 the print edition of The Journal will cease publication. The Journal will continue to be published four times per year on the Corpus Canada web site (www.corpuscanada.org). Readers will be able to read The Journal online, and may also download it and print it. Permission is granted to print and distribute as many copies of The Journal as one wishes.

If you wish to receive an e-mail message reminder when a new edition of The Journal is posted on the Corpus Canada web site, please send your e-mail address to Chris Diamond, The Journal's principle editor (diamondcnf@shaw.ca).

The immediate reason for discontinuing the print edition of The Journal is the retirement of François Brassard from overseeing the assembly and mailing The Journal, although he will continue to be an active member of the editorial board. The volunteers who assemble the print edition are growing older, and more retirements could be expected. It would be increasingly a challenge to find people to take their place.

Since 1997 The Journal has been published by Xristos Community Society, with a mandate to serve small faith communities, whether they be Corpus Canada small faith communities or other small faith communities. Elsewhere in this edition François has written an article acknowledging the Corpus Canada members who started and carried on the Corpus Canada newsletter that was the forerunner of The Journal. I would here like to acknowledge the team that has published The Journal since Xristos Community Society became its publisher.

I thank François for the praiseworthy job he has done for a long time as a key member of the team that publishes The Journal. Without François, the print edition of The Journal would not have achieved the standard of excellence it has maintained over the years. It has been a pleasure to work alongside François in putting out the print edition. His keenness, hard work, and sense of humour have made it a joy.

We are blessed to have a capable editorial board under the calm and competent leadership of Chris Diamond. I thank everyone involved in publishing both the print and online editions, and the many people who have contributed articles over the years.

In particular I thank the many people who have volunteered their time to collate, staple, label and place in containers the print edition, some of whom have died but are fondly remembered. Besides François, the following people come to mind: Don Robinson, who computerized the subscriber database, Connie Kurtenbach, Tony and Edith Gvora, the late Dick and Marguerite Perrott, Ray Smith, Tom Hassett, the late Bob Reckeweg, Jessie Kelly, Louis and Sylvia Hofstetter, Al Czap, Gene and Helen Dizzy, Joe and Shirley Rigby, Tom Boyle, Guy Jensen, and Alanna Menu. Special mention must be made of Jim Doyle, who led the assembly team for several years. We never kept a roll, so I may have forgotten some folks. Whether your name is listed above or not, I thank all of you.

While dropping the print edition will reduce costs, we need donations to fund the online edition. We will soon make it possible for people to make online donations with their credit card. See the back page for the mailing address to which donations may be sent the old fashioned way. Donors of \$10 or more will receive a Canadian tax receipt.

If there is a group of people who share the aims of Xristos Community Society who would like to take over production of the print edition, they are welcome to contact me with a proposal (menu@islandnet.com).

Finally, I thank you our readers for reading The Journal and for sharing the ideals that motivate us to publish it.

Yours faithfully,
Arthur Menu
President, Xristos Community Society

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The Journal welcomes submissions from small faith communities and individuals that share its vision of the Christian Church as one in which all are equal, decisions are made by consensus, healthy relationships are nurtured, justice is done, and the Good News of Jesus Christ is proclaimed.

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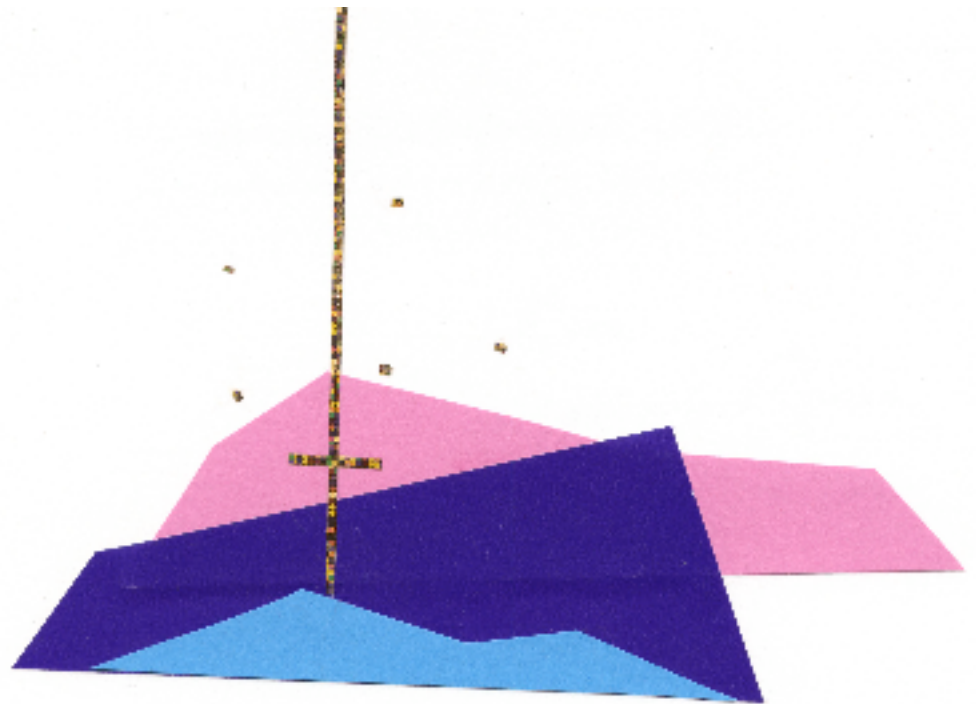
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See the back page for further details.

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The Death Of Jesus In Hebrews

by Dr. Michael Zarb, Duncan, BC



Different writers of the New Testament saw Jesus in different ways, e.g. Matthew saw Jesus as a second Moses, Luke as a prophet, and the author of Hebrews saw him as the heavenly high priest of God, the only writer who considered this aspect. On the face of it nothing can seem more crudely, more uncompromisingly expiatory than the language of this writer, e.g. "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins" 9.22; however, such expressions acquire a

different meaning when they are considered in the light of the whole context of the writing. In order to understand the meaning of Jesus' death, we have first to examine both the nature of Christ and of his work as presented by this author.

The main point of Hebrews is the presentation of Christ as the heavenly high priest who offered his sacrifice in the heavenly sanctuary once and for all in order to make human beings suitable for direct communion with God.

So I shall present the priesthood of Christ and his sacrifice and at the same time see how the death and blood passages fit within this picture.

Christ the heavenly high priest.

While the Levitical priests inherited the priesthood from Aaron who was called by God, Jesus was appointed high priest directly by God by two statements, "You are my Son ..." 5.5 quoting Ps 2.7 and, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek" 5.6 quoting Ps 110.4. The Old Testament priests were such without an oath but Jesus' appointment was even confirmed by an oath: "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, 'You are a priest forever'" 7.21 quoting Ps 110.4.

The author of Hebrews presents Jesus' priesthood as superior to that of the Levitical priests especially in insisting, by mentioning it six times [5.6; 5.10; 6.20; 7.11, 15, 17] that Jesus' priesthood was "according to the order of Melchizedek." So who was this Melchizedek for this author? In 7.1ff. he refers to the story in Gen 14.18-20 and argues for his superiority over Abraham because he blessed Abraham and received tithes from him [7.6] which leads to the other argument that his priesthood is superior to the Levitical one since Levi, being in Abraham's loins as his grandson, was considered paying tithes to Melchizedek, the inferior pays to the superior [7.9f]. However, for this author, the story of Genesis is not all. For him, Melchizedek is an immortal being: in 7.8 he distinguishes between tithes being received by mortal men and by one "who lives." In 7.3 he describes Melchizedek as a heavenly being: "He is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest forever."

The author most likely had a similar conception of Melchizedek to that of some Jewish groups who believed him to be an angelic being as we find in some Dead Sea Scrolls. In *11QMelchizedek*, a fragmentary writing dealing with the year of jubilee, Melchizedek, an angelic being who is even called "god" [*el, elohim*], is given a role in the eschatological salvation of the righteous and judgment of the wicked. The members of the community are called the "inheritance of Melchizedek" and it is said that Melchizedek will be the one who will "proclaim liberty to them and will release them from the [debt] of their iniquities." He will also execute judgment on Belial (Satan) and the spirits of his lot. Compare Heb 2.14: Jesus "through death might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil." In another text, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifices*, copies of which were found at Qumran and Masada, there is reference to angels who functioned as heavenly priests in the heavenly Temple; these were, in other words, angelic priests. There is one angel presiding over all other ranks of angels, "head of priests of inner sanctum" and there are also two probable references to Melchizedek as one of these angelic priests. The inference from this is that by the phrase, 'according to the order / type of Melchizedek' is meant a heavenly angelic priest performing rituals before God in his heavenly sanctum which for our author was the main function of Christ.

In Hebrews Christ and Melchizedek are said to resemble each other: Jesus resembles Melchizedek in 7.15 and Melchizedek is "like the Son of God" in 7.3; however, they are not equated, Jesus is far superior.

Further, Jesus' priesthood is superior to the Levitical "through the power of an indestructible life" not through the legality of physical descent [7.16]. Jesus was descended from Judah but Moses, i.e. the Torah, says nothing concerning Judahite priesthood [7.14].

Jesus priestly function - his sacrifice.

Hebrews' argument is all based on the sacrificial customs of the Old Testament and formulated in that ritual language so that the terms used must be understood against that conceptual background. He was writing to people who were familiar with that language not to people 2000 years later with different concepts and sensibilities. Thus "sacrifice" by this author is used in the cultic sense, i.e. a ritual offering to God, not in the sense is generally employed today, for example, soldiers who die in action are said to have made the ultimate sacrifice as the "sacrifice of Christ" is usually understood.

The location where Jesus performed his high priestly function was in the heavenly sanctuary in the presence of God, described as, "the greater and perfect tent, not made with hands, that is, not of this creation" in 9.11; "the true tent" set up by God in 8.2 and "the holy places" in 9.12; 8.2. "For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf." 9.24 says it all. In his comparison, the author uses the word "tent" since he does not have in mind the Jerusalem temple but the desert tent of Moses and Aaron, the ideal sanctuary. The temple is not mentioned at all.

Therefore since the sacrifice of the high priest Jesus took place in heaven it was not on the cross at Calvary. The sacrificial act is not

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the killing of the animal but the offering of its blood or body to God at the altar. The cross is mentioned once, 12.2, as part of the sufferings of Jesus as a human being without making too much of it and without connecting it to sacrifice. Heb 13.12 states that Jesus “suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood,” but in the author’s mind this is not the sacrifice since he compares this event with activities ‘outside the camp,’ i.e. the burning, the disposal of the bodies of “those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin” 13.11. So Jesus’ suffering “outside the gate” was not the location of his sacrifice but the place where he acquired the blood i.e. his life, to be offered in the heavenly holy places. That his priestly functions were not performed on earth is confirmed by the statement, “Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all” 8.4; that is, the levitical priesthood was earthly but not that of Jesus; his sojourn on earth was the ‘preparation’ for his priesthood.

The nature of the offering

8.3 points out that, “every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; hence it is necessary for this (i.e. priest, Jesus) also to have something to offer.” His one offering is described from different aspects, a. as an offering of his own blood; b. as an offering of his body; c. as an offering of himself;

a. Jesus offers his blood: Heb 9.12, applying the central blood ritual of The Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur [Lev 16], fully describes Jesus’ function as high priest, “he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.” In order to understand the full import of this passage and others similar, we have to bear in mind what blood meant for the Jews in those days. Blood for them was equivalent to “life” “For the life [Gk. *psyche*; Heb. *nefesh*] of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement [or to appease] for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement [appeases] by the life.” [Lev 17.11, 14; cf. also Gen 9.4; Dt 12.23]. The offering of blood in the Levitical system was not a presentation of death before God, but a presentation of life. There was no thought whatsoever of the victim being, in any sense, a substitutionary offering. The slaughter of the animal was simply to release its blood i.e. life, and in presenting it to God the worshipper believed that the estrangement between him and God was annulled, or that the defilement which separated them was cleansed. Thus it is not Jesus’ blood/death that effects atonement /appeasement, but the presentation of his blood/life before God in the heavenly Holy of Holies. The blood/life of Jesus is redemptive and has eternal value because it is his own, a most special figure, superior to all others: better than the angels [1.4-14], better than Moses [3.3], better than Joshua [4.8], and better than the Levitical priests [7.20ff].

Again, in parallel to the main point of the Yom Kippur ritual i.e. the sprinkling of blood on the cover of the Ark, the Mercy Seat [Lev 16.14f], Hebrews refers to the sprinkled blood of Jesus in 12.24, “to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than that of Abel.” The reference to Abel here is to his pleasing offerings to God, not to his murder by Cain, as supported by 11.4, “By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, ... God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks.” Thus, Jesus’ sprinkling of his blood before God speaks better

than Abel’s offerings, does not refer to Jesus’ blood shed on the cross. In other words, the offering of Christ speaking a better word, pleases God more than the sacrifices of Abel. Jesus’ blood was not collected to be offered in heaven, as the blood of the animal was collected and taken into the holy of holies to be sprinkled by the high priest on Yom Kippur. So Hebrews does not mean the physical blood shed on the cross; blood means his blood/life obtained by his dying like other human beings irrespective of the manner of his death; death on the cross is incidental; in fact, the cross is mentioned only once in 12.2, and the emphasis is on the shame of crucifixion, “despising the shame,” rather than on the gore.

Heb 9:22, as it is usually translated, “shedding of blood”, with its connotation of violence, seems to point to the blood on the cross. However, this writer here has in mind the ritual use of the blood, i.e. cleansing, not the killing of the animal; the verb *ekcheô* “to pour” is used of the ritual of pouring the remaining blood at the foot of the altar after the priest had put blood on its horns [Lev 4.7, 18 etc.] Thus the translation should be, “Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the pouring of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.”

b. Jesus offers his body: The body of Jesus is said to have been offered in 10.10, “And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” In 10.5-7 the author attributes Ps 40.6-8 to Christ when on earth: “v5 ... Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; ... v7 Then I said, Behold, I have come to do your will, O God.” [[Hebrews quotes the LXX; the Hebrew text does not have “body” but “you have cut for me ears.”]] The “will” in v.7 is the same as the “will” in v.10; therefore, this amounts to, “you made me a human being to do your will by offering my body (i.e. myself) as your high priest” thereby abolishing “the first”, old sacrifices, by establishing “the second”, Christ’s sacrifice [v. 9].

One may also note that in Hebrews there is no hint that the offering of his body is parallel to the body of the animals burned on the altar outside the tent as in the whole burnt offerings. “Body” is not his physical body but metaphorically means “himself.”

c. Jesus offers himself: In 9.14, comparing the purification of the flesh by the sprinkling of the blood of animals of the Levitical sacrifices, the author says, “how much more will the blood of the Christ, who through eternal spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve (i.e. worship) the living God.” Some translations capitalize “spirit” and insert the article making it refer to the Holy Spirit, but this is not the case, Jesus offers himself directly to God not through a third agent; “eternal spirit” corresponds to “indestructible life” in 7.16, that is 1. in that new sphere of existence that he enters at the time of his exaltation, that is 2. a heavenly not an earthly offering. Likewise the blood and body offered by Jesus are those spiritualized through the resurrection not the earthly, physical blood and body. Jesus entering the holy of holies, carried with him the new glorified life - blood, body, himself - which God had given to him at his

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resurrection. Note also, “without blemish”, and hence he, “has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.” [7.27; cf. also 9.26]

Jesus’ sacrifice is unique.

It is stated categorically that it is one, single event: “when Christ offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God” [10.12, and vs. 14, “by one offering...”]. Five times the author says that the offering was “once for all” [7.27; 9.12, 26, 28; 10.10] and in 9.25 he contrasts Jesus’ offering “not many times” with the high priest’s offer every year. Furthermore it is not an event that occurred once in the past and was done with, but it is a perpetual ever-present offering of life in the presence of God: both the high priest and the offering are now ever present in the real holy of holies “on our behalf” [9.24]. He is truly a “priest for ever” with “an endless life” [7.16]; “he holds his priesthood permanently because he continues forever.” [7.24, 25 cf. 13.8].

This author is unaware of the later Catholic doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass which would have been anathema to him. There is absolutely no need of any repetition, *sacrificium incruentum* or not, by any other priest. Priesthood of any type was abolished by the unique sacrifice of Christ. Further, Heb 13.10 says “We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat” that is, unlike others who partake of the meat offered at their altars. This clearly indicates that the author was unaware of the Eucharist. The “altar” probably means the continuous sacrifice of Christ, in which the believers, “those who serve the tent,” participate but not as a meal. Apparently his community, like that of the Gospel of John, did not hold a Eucharistic celebration. Note also that in his application of Melchizedek’s priesthood the author expresses no hint whatsoever of a connection regarding the bread and wine brought by Melchizedek [Gen 14.18] and the bread and wine at the Last Supper which would have bolstered his comparison. This community, however, is enjoined several times to worship i.e. “serve” [*latreuo*] in other ways: 1. “sacrifice of praise,” 13.15; 2. “offer acceptable worship with reverence and awe” 12.28; 3. “Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices, ie offerings, are pleasing to God” 13.16.

The suffering of Jesus

How is the suffering of Jesus viewed by this author? Heb 2.17 states categorically the reason why Christ became a human being: “Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.” Jesus’ earthly stage was the preparation for his heavenly role. This earthly stage involves being a human “in every respect” namely in testing, suffering, dying, and being perfected like other human beings in order to be able to sympathize with them and help them: “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted [tested] as we are, yet without sin.” [4.15]. As Jesus “himself has suffered when tested, he is able to help those who are being tested.” [2.18] As the son he learned obedience, i.e. do God’s will, through his suffering [5.8]. Through his suffering Jesus was made perfect by God [2.10], and “being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation ...”

[5.9, cf. also 7.28] It is not moral perfection which is here thought of since Jesus is without blemish [9.14] and without sin [4.15; 7.26], but official or ritual perfection, namely, a growth in his state, getting to the goal, to make him most apt to discharge the priestly office, as indicated in the following verse, “designated by God a high priest.” [5.10]

For this author, Jesus’ death is the last event, the culminating point, in Jesus’ earthly stage that perfected him for the priestly function. Heb 2.9 applies Ps 8.4-6 to Jesus: “But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. 10 ... should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.” “Taste death” means experience death like other humans [for the expression cf. Mk 9.1; Jn 8.52]. “for everyone” is not “instead of everyone”, not a vicarious death, but “for their benefit” in that he is thereby perfected to qualify him to make the offering as the eternal high priest before God on their behalf. Again in vs.14 it is said “that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,” and in vs.17 it is made clear that all this is in view of Jesus’ main role, i.e. his high priesthood. The death was the indispensable preparation and condition of the true work of Christ rather than the work itself.

The one and only sacrifice of Christ in heaven replaced all sacrifices including that of the renewed covenant. Therefore, this author argues that death as well as blood was also required for the new covenant. Jesus is further superior to the Levitical priests in that since he is a “priest for ever” with “a more excellent ministry” appointed by oath of God, [7.21f; 8.6] he is also the guarantor, the mediator (8:6; 9:15; 12.24), or surety by his death (9:15), for a better covenant established upon better promises.

Heb 9.15 says, “Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.” In the following verses the author, combining the two meanings of the word *diatheke*, i.e. contract and will, explains the reason for the necessity of death, namely that “the death of the one who made it [i.e. the will] must be established” and that it “takes effect only at death” i.e. of the testator [9.16f].

Moreover, the blood of Jesus’ sacrifice in heaven is the seal of the second covenant which analogically corresponds to the blood sprinkled by Moses on the people and the book in the sacrifice that inaugurated the first one [9.18-21]. Thus the references, in 10.29 and 13.20, to the blood of the covenant with respect to Jesus are to be understood in this sense not in that conveyed by the words of the Last Supper.

The effects of Jesus’ sacrifice

The result of Jesus’ offering is the establishment of a true covenant relationship between God and the people, “bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God” [7.19] This is viewed as a. cleansing; b. consecration; c. perfection.

a. Cleansing: Heb 1.3 summarizes the whole work of the Son, “... After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.” “To cleanse” [Gk. *katharizō*, Heb.

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tahar] for this author is a cultic term expressing a main priestly act, especially on Yom Kippur which is clearly before the writer's eyes, "For on this day shall atonement be made for you to cleanse you. You shall be clean before the LORD from all your sins." [Lev 16.30] In 9.13-14, explaining "by means of his own blood" in v. 12, the author argues *a fortiori* that if the blood of bulls etc. "sanctifies for the purification of the flesh" even much more does the blood of the Christ purify "our conscience from dead works to serve the living God"; that is, it purifies the inner personality. The Old Testament ceremonial cleanness was at best an outward cleanness, not an inner cleanness. It did not touch the conscience or make the worshipper perfect: "cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper" [9.9]. At 10.2 the writer argues that had the old sacrifices cleansed and perfected "those who draw near" they would have ceased since the worshipper would have had "no longer any consciousness of sin." In 10.22, the author urges his readers, "let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience ...". Therefore, this is all an issue of the inner man, the 'heart', and here fits the point of the quotes from Jeremiah regarding the new covenant: "... I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." [8.10; 10.16, cf. Jer 31.31-34] The newness of the covenant does not consist in "I will be their God, and they shall be my people" for this existed even under the old [Deut 7:6]. Its newness consists rather in its interiority, in the people's knowledge of God [8.11], and in the forgiveness of sins [v. 12]. These are the "better promises" [v. 6] upon which the covenant is based. Since the law or will of God is written on the heart, the conscience of the member of the covenant is in full conformity with it. There is no infringement, in other words, a clean conscience. Thus the purity of conscience is seen from two aspects, as the effect of the heavenly sacrifice and as the effect of the new covenant. In view of this, one can see the writer's reason behind his drastic thinking regarding backsliders when he says that "it is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have once been enlightened ... if they then fall away, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt." [6.4-6]

Thus, regarding the forgiveness of sins we have this picture, the heavenly Yom Kippur sacrifice that cleanses sins and the New Covenant which promises that God "will remember their sins no more." [quote from Jeremiah 31.34 in 8.12] This refers to the believer's past sins not any future sins which are not supposed to occur since the law is written on his heart. Similarly, the cleansing by the sacrifice is also understood as happening once; it does not keep repeating every time a believer sins: "Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin." [Heb 10:18] and "if they then fall away, they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm" [Heb 6:6] This writer had no use for the Sacrament of Reconciliation!

b. Consecration: The state of the believer is described also as one of "sanctification" or better "consecration" in such passages as, "And by that will we have been sanctified/consecrated through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all," Heb 10.10 and vs. 14, "For by one offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified/consecrated." [cf also 2.11; 13.12; 10.29] In this writing the term "to sanctify" does not mean a growth in holiness. As Hebrews

uses cultic terms, this also has to be understood in the context of sacrificial language. In conformity with the Old Testament usage of the term "sanctify" applied to the dedicating, setting apart of the priests, the tabernacle, and its vessels to God's service [Ex 1, 27; 30.30; 40.9]. The references here are to the placing of God's people, through Jesus' offering, in a true relationship to him, that of belonging to him, set apart for him, and to make them suitable to be in his presence, which renders possible the attainment of the promised inheritance or rest. "Pursue peace with everyone, and follow after the holiness/ consecration without which no one will see the Lord." [12.14] This is an exhortation to preserve the condition of consecration actually realized, and to seek to prevent whatever would undermine it.

c. Perfection: Both the Levitical priesthood and the Law are unable to make anything perfect [cf. "if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood..." 7.11; "cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper" 9.9; sacrifices cannot "make perfect those who draw near" 10.1; "for the law made nothing perfect" 7.19]. In contrast, the priesthood of Christ made the faithful perfect: "For by one offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified." [10.14] By "perfection" as applied to Christ, our writer understands not his moral perfection, but his reaching the full capacity for the work to which he has been designated, so, in turn, by their perfection, we can only understand the faithful as having been brought into a like state of development, a state that qualifies them to attain salvation, to be in the presence of God.

The three words "cleansing, consecration, and perfection" are intended to describe, not so much different states in the believer's progress, as the same state viewed from different standpoints. a. When the thought of the sin, from which he has been delivered, is uppermost, then we hear of him as cleansed. b. When the thought is rather of him as separated from the world, set apart for God, dedicated, then he is consecrated. c. When the thought is of his having reached his true end or goal, then he is perfected. The believer is adequately suited to "see the Lord" [12.14] because Christ has cleansed him, consecrated him and perfected him.

Salvation

The final objective of or the principal benefit from Christ's priestly act is the salvation of the believer. This idea is expressed in various ways by this writer. Apart from appellations of Christ as "founder/pioneer of their salvation" [2.10], and "source of eternal salvation" [5.9] the main passage that describes Jesus' saving activity is 7.24-25: "but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. 25 Consequently he is able for all time to save those who approach God through him since he always lives to make intercession for them." The saving act is his priestly act itself, the cleansing, sanctifying and perfecting of the believer. This was done once but "continues for ever." It is not an event done in the past and terminated. "To make intercession for them" does not here convey anything like 'petition on their behalf', but as the context shows it is a priestly intercession through his sacrifice, in other words, the eternal presence of the priest and his offering performs an eternal pleasing act before God, which makes him gracious towards the

The Death Of Jesus Continued...

believer who comes into his presence.

Another aspect of Jesus' saving act is said to be performed at his second coming: "so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him." [9.28] This "waiting" is elsewhere expressed as the hope, "a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain," [6.19] "where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf ... as high priest for ever." [6.20] Jesus has not only entered the heavenly sanctuary, but entered it as the "forerunner" [6.20] of his brothers whose destiny it is to join him there. Hence "to save" in 9.28 can be understood as taking with him "those who approach God through him" [7.25] into heaven.

The believer's entry into heaven is even more explicitly stated in 10.19, "we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus" i.e. by his sacrifice in heaven, and "by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh," [10.20] The veil/curtain is his flesh, and therefore not the veil of the sanctuary - flesh means his humanity which through limitations, suffering and temptation was a barrier, same as the sanctuary veil between him and God but, being perfected and passing through this himself, he opened a way for his brethren also to pass through.

The believer's dwelling in heaven is also described as "the rest" promised in Ps 95.7-11 quoted in Heb 3.7-11,15 and 4.3, 5. In Heb 4.1-10 the author argues that the second Jesus is superior to the first, i.e. Joshua [same name in Hebrew and Greek], in that Christ is able to bring about the "rest" that Joshua could not [4.8]. In the author's view the land of Canaan was not the real "rest" for the people of the Exodus,

but the real one is the "rest, the Sabbath" of God, ["there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God" 4.9], where "whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his." [4.10] The author is confident, "For we who have believed enter that rest ..." [4.3] This heavenly state is also referred to as "living" in the author's exhortation to be submissive to God compared to earthly fathers' discipline, "Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live?" which is paralleled in the following verse by, "that we may share his holiness." [12.9-10]. In Heb 12.28 this state is also called, "a kingdom that cannot be shaken." Further the author proleptically envisages this entry into heaven as if it is already happening, "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" [12.22; 13.14].

For this author, in order for sin to be considered forgotten by God, God had to be pleased by the ritual offering of glorified humanity in the person of Jesus Christ. This offering also sealed the New Covenant that placed the law, the will of God, in the heart of the individual whereby he becomes a member of the people of God, qualified to enter into his presence. The death of Jesus, instead of being the principal means of salvation, is considered as a step towards the qualification of Jesus to make him fit for his role of heavenly high priest. The effect of the death of Christ is a moral effect which could hardly be supposed to operate merely *ex opere operato*; hence the author's exhortations to his readers to keep their trust in the promises and not turn back; such turning back would be irreversible.

A Meditation On A Meditation

by Hank Mattimore, San Jose, CA

Driving to the meditation chapel at St. Eugeenes, I listen to this morning's news broadcasts: Occupy Wall Street demonstrations, Greece in financial turmoil, unemployment rates hanging tough, a couple of gang-related murders etc. etc. I want to keep connected with the world around me but not THAT connected. Know what I mean? The news of the day can be a major downer. So I am on the run, escaping the bombardment of troubling news by doing some meditating.

I am trying to stay grounded in the consciousness that God is present in our universe and in my life. I want to believe that He is in charge. "God's in His heaven; all's right with the world," we used to say in more innocent times.

Arriving at St. Eugene's, I take my seat with five or six other people. It's quiet in the chapel, peaceful. I take a few deep breaths and relax. Yes, I think to myself, this is just what I need.

Not two minutes have gone by when I'm distracted at the antics of a little two-year-old girl interacting with her mommy in the bench in front of me. The grouch in me mutters "A meditation chapel is no place for kids."

At first the little kid does manage to stay pretty quiet. But as her mom kneels in prayer, the kid decides to "help" her mommy pray. The little girl gets up close and personal, like about six inches from Mommy's

face. She plants an affectionate kiss on her mom's forehead. Not drawing a reaction, the little tyke reaches out and knocks the prayer book out of her mom's hands. "Hey mommy." her actions fairly shout, "pay attention to me."

When he mother tries to shush her, the girl starts to cry. Mom, conscious that now she is creating a distraction to other people trying to pray, picks up her little tot and leaves. I breathe a sigh of relief.

I try to get my own mind back on target. Good grief! Where was I? I was trying to focus on the presence of God before I got interrupted, right? Did I hear God chuckle? Duh! Could it be that He was there right in front of my nose in that little kid? It dawned on me that if we can't manage to see the image of God in little children, we are "hecka" blind, don't you think?"

I leave the chapel with more questions than answers. But it's okay. Maybe my attempt at meditation didn't turn out as I expected but it was okay. God has a way of showing up where you don't expect him.

<http://yagrowsoryadies.blogharbor.com>

Matthew's Christmas And Epiphany

by Chris Diamond, Cobble Hill, BC



The first two chapters of the *Gospel According to Matthew* (Mt) tell Mt's genealogy of Jesus and his Christmas and Epiphany stories. The stories were written for a mixed community of Judeans and non-

Judeans living in a mainly helenist world to show Jesus of Nazareth as fully human, a true Israelite son of God, anointed with God's life-giving authority, and worthy of all honour. Mt uses material that was Judean in origin but reshaped with an understanding of how to present someone worthy of praise.

Mt's Genealogy of Jesus

Mt begins: "Book of origin of Jesus anointed, son of David, son of Abraham..." In this way through Ismael and Isaac, the sons of Hagar and Sarah, Mt confirms that Jesus, descendent of Abraham, came for Judeans and non-Judeans alike. In his selective genealogy of Jesus, Mt includes four non-Judean foreign women, Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Uriah's wife Bathsheba, each of whom played an important part in Yahweh's plan. Women were not usually part of a genealogy; in this way, Mt uses tradition but adds a new twist! The genealogy ends with Mary betrothed of Joseph who acknowledges Jesus as his legal son and thus gives him legal title to being a son of King David and rooted in Israel's history.

Mt's 'Christmas' Account

Mt then picks up on Israel's salvation history by very simply saying: "The birth of the messiah was like this." He goes on to relate that Mary is found to be with child before she has lived with Joseph and that Joseph, being one who does what is right (living in imitation of Yahweh) and who does not know how Mary has become pregnant, resolves to divorce her quietly. When Joseph "in a dream from the Lord's angel" learns that the child is a son conceived "by the power of holy spirit" (of God), he takes Mary home, and when the boy is born, he calls him Jesus, the name given him by the angel.

Mt's Epiphany Story

In Chapter 2, Mt tells the story of the Epiphany: "After the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, magi from the east came to Jerusalem". The magi are most likely from Babylon; they are dream readers, astrologers, priests -- not kings as in the popular carol. A rising star has alerted them that a new "king of the Judeans" (the non-Judeans' title for Jesus) has been born. They ask long-reigning King Herod the Great, a non-Judean Idumean appointed by the Romans as King of the Judeans, who is upset to hear their news of a new king. They expect him to know that a new king has been born and where. Herod consults with Jerusalem's

religious leaders who quote texts from the Hebrew scriptures that indicate that Bethlehem, King David's city 5 miles from Jerusalem, is the place.

Bethlehem has been called in the Hebrew scriptures "One of the least clans of Judah from whom a ruler will come who will shepherd (lead, feed, and rule) my people, Israel." Herod surreptitiously questions the magi and asks them to return when they have found the new king. They set off for Bethlehem. Once again the magi see the star and follow it to the house of Joseph and Mary in Bethlehem. There they bow down to the child Jesus and present him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, three types of perfumed incense. They are warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, and so they return to their own country by another way.

Egypt and Back

According to Mt, an angel of the Lord tells Joseph in a dream "to take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt and remain there until I tell you." On the angel's advice, Joseph takes the family to Egypt to avoid Herod's resolve to kill the new-born "king of the Judeans" by killing all male infants of Bethlehem under two years old. To this situation Mt quotes from Jeremiah speaking about the children of exiled northern tribes: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and lamentation."

Egypt was a traditional place of refuge for many diaspora Judeans in hard times. When Herod dies, Joseph in a dream is told by the Lord's angel "Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel." Joseph then takes the family not back to Bethlehem in Judea but to Nazareth in Galilee. In this way by quoting scripture texts, Mt depicts Jesus as the new Israel being called out of Egypt by Yahweh. Joseph gives Jesus the home in which he can grow and mature.

Conclusion

Joseph is a key figure in Mt's short narrative of Jesus' birth and what follows the visit of the magi. No matter what way events happened in history, Mt's first two chapters proclaim Joseph's faith in God's power. Joseph has concern for Mary's reputation and he listens carefully to the dream messages from Yahweh through the angel. Joseph accepts the unborn infant as conceived by God's power; he names the child as God's angel told him; he flees to Egypt and returns when it is safe to do so; he cares for the family; all these confirm the completeness of his faith. Though he never appears again in the gospel, Mt's Joseph is an example of complete faith for Mt's community. Later in 5:48, Mt urges all his hearers "to be complete even as your Father in heaven is complete."

It is the faith of the community that accepts Jesus as the anointed one, the christ, in God's plan. Mt aims to show this community that Jesus has relived the history of Israel and that foreigners are part of God's plan. Mt brings the old Judean traditions up to date. He relates in 8:11 that "Many will come from east and west and will sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." Jesus is the Nazorean, the holy one of God, and Emmanuel whose abiding presence remains in the faith community.

Searching For A More Inclusive Spirituality #2

by Dave Pogue, Corpus Calgary



The birth of the Savior, the redeeming symbol, occurs just when one is least expecting it, in the most improbable places - Carl Jung

In Jesus' time, Matthew noted the doubts of complacent skeptics: "Can there be any good thing come out of Nazareth?" After the barbarian hordes had all but destroyed European civilization, who could believe that renewal and redemption would be delivered by monks from a remote island beyond the pale of Church or Empire?

From the time of Patrick, the Irish increasingly devoted their skills and energy

toward learning and Christianity. As Europe slid into the Dark Ages, the Irish built great monasteries at Armagh, Kildare, Lindisfarne and many others, until they dotted the entire Irish landscape. As we have seen, these were not only spiritual retreats, but in fact little city-states which offered hospitality, learning, protection and employment. Then, with renewed zeal, many turned their attention to other lands.

COLUMCILLE, otherwise known as Columba, was the first of many Irish missionaries. An aristocrat and warrior, he must have been an imposing figure. He reformed himself and became a monk dedicated to spreading the Irish brand of Christianity. He was a force that could not be resisted. After founding Irish monasteries including, he sailed north with 12 companions to the island of Iona, which became a famous teaching centre. From that base, he is credited with christianizing the fierce Picts of Scotland and building 41 monasteries in Ireland, Scotland and northern England. After his death about 597 AD, his successors established colonies in the Faroe Islands and eventually in Iceland. Today, Icelanders treasure their Irish heritage, dating from 825 AD.

A more combative missionary, **COLUMBANUS**, departed Ireland for Gaul with the requisite twelve companions about the year 540. Immediately, he proceeded to build three monasteries in the forested territory of the unruly Sueves, a region neglected by the local clergy. He berated the clergy and bishops for their laxity and was arrested and put on a return boat. But the boat sank, and he along with a few companions escaped. He continued to found many more monasteries, write extensively, teach the forgotten wisdom of Greece and Rome, and nettle the establishment. He was a major figure in founding the Swiss church along with his successor, St. Gall. He died in Bobbio in northern Italy where his name is remembered today in an annual Irish festival.

Starting in 793 AD, Viking raids ransacked the north-east coast of Ireland, and wreaked destruction on the great Lindisfarne monastery, among others. It was reconstructed twice, but it had to be abandoned in 875. To escape the Norsemen, many students and monks turned toward the continent. They brought precious books and learning and something of the Irish character with them, proceeding to found monasteries that became the beating heart of the great cities of Cologne, Liege, Wurzburg, Reichenau, Salzburg, Vienna and many more. St Vergil (Fergil in Irish) became the first archbishop of Salzburg. The scholar Donatus, "born of Irish blood" according to his epitaph, was chosen by election to be the bishop of Fiesole where he

ruled for 50 years. Several churches in France are dedicated to St. Brigid. Irish monks reached as far as Kiev, the cultural centre of Russia. Thomas Cahill notes that "astonishingly decorated Irish manuscripts of the early medieval period are today the great jewels of libraries in England, France, Switzerland, Germany, Sweden, Italy and even Russia" 1

Finally, Celtic Christianity was mirrored in the great works of three Rhineland Mystics of the 12th and 13th centuries, shining stars in a dark age of corruption and villainy:

HILDEGARDE OF BINGEN (1098-1179), abbess of male and female convents, painter, musician, composer, poet, healer, spiritual visionary and fearless critic of corruption in the Roman Church, She exemplified the Irish love and respect for all of creation, the unity of art and life, the fiery apprehension of the presence of God, and unbounded creativity. Seen as a threat at age 83, she was excommunicated by the pope. Although the originals of her art were tragically destroyed in the Allied bombings of 1944, her art, music, and poetry continue, one thousand years later, to inspire a world-wide following.

MECHTILD OF MAGDEBURG (1210-1280), theologian, the first spiritual writer to use the German vernacular, leader of the Beguines, a popular movement of women and girls who banded together for protection, spiritual development, education, and service. They were not nuns and they had only informal connections to the Roman Church. A bishop at the time estimated that there were over 200,000 Beguines in the German states. The official church became fearful of their influence, and in a botched declaration, condemned Mechtild and the Beguines, failing to distinguish them from several weird apocalyptic groups. A later declaration partially restored most of the Beguines from infamy but condemned those who were transient (and harder to control). Mechtild's spirituality owes much to her Irish predecessors.

MEISTER ECKHART (1260-1329) was a superbly educated Dominican teacher, visionary, and loyal servant of the Church during turbulent times. One of his assignments was to succeed Thomas Aquinas in the Chair of Theology at the University of Paris. He left after 3 years, disgusted with the decadence and formalism in education. He returned to Germany to do the great work of his life, teaching, preaching, and counseling among the Beguines, convents, and churches in the Rhine valley. Most of his sermons and other writings survive today, thanks to the dedication of a Beguine sister. His relations with the official church deteriorated until he attended a papal court to vigorously defend himself. He died before the excommunication verdict reached him.

Eckhart's spirituality cannot be reduced to a few words. He was strongly influenced by the Irish tradition, as well as the prophets of the Old Testament and the mysticism of the East. Many of his themes are an outgrowth of the Irish characteristics listed in my first article, one of which was laughter and joy. Eckhart warns us never to trust a so-called spiritual person for whom laughter is not central to his or her spirituality! He famously preached the art of "letting go" and "letting be" in order to clear our mind and soul to experience the presence of God.

Searching Continued...

Though Eckhart was erased from church records, he has undergone a recent revival and has never been forgotten by countless poets, writers, psychologists and philosophers who have valued his unique insights. He skipped the modern age, but fits comfortably in the post-modern world of today.

*And that is how the Irish introduced their own brand of spirituality to Europe and the world.
In the third article I will examine the relevance of Irish creation spirituality to the problems we and our world face today.
I Thomas Cahill: How the Irish Saved Civilization. p.169*

Ex Cathedra Roles *by Jake Kutarna, Lumsden, SK*

If the title suggests this article is about pronouncements, it is not. It is intended, hopefully with some humour, to provide ambulatory people with a little insight into the life of someone living in a wheelchair.

In 2007 I suffered a spinal stenosis, which required surgery and left me in a wheelchair. After almost five years I have experienced the daily struggles facing the handicapped, including the humorous. So I thought I might share some of these with you.

After several months in rehab I was ready and anxious to go home. But first I had to get tested by my physical therapist to assess my ability to survive on my own in a wheelchair. I was feeling good about my ability to sit up, stand for a couple of minutes, bend over and pick up my shoes, etc. After consulting the results chart, my worker announced the results: I had a 100% chance of falling when I left the rehab centre. What follows are the five falls within the first few months.

These I have classified as 1. Bed, 2. shower, 3. hallway, 4. driveway and 5. chairlift. The first had to do with slippery bed sheets: wishing to go to the bathroom at 3 a.m. I swung my legs over the side of the bed and promptly slid to the floor on my butt. Oh, yes, I grabbed for something to hold onto and got a pillow. Luckily I was able to reach the quilt, so I slid the pillow under my head, covered myself with the quilt and slept until the 911 call brought help.

The next fall, also requiring a 911 assist, was when I stepped on my own

foot and took down the shower curtain as I fell.

By this time I was mastering circumnavigation around the house. No one told me you cannot make a 90 degree instant turn. 911 again (I think the paramedics considered making me an honorary member of their team for training purposes.)

The next fall should have been captured in slow motion: I was out on my driveway pulling some weeds when, because I was so absorbed in my work, the wheel on my chair slipped off the pavement onto soft dirt, causing the chair and me to slowly tip sideways, pitching me to the ground. I was close to a well-travelled road, so I waved frantically at every car that passed my house. They all waved back, thank you very much. Eventually my neighbours heard my call for help and lifted me back into my chair. No 911 call this time.

The last of my falls (with fingers crossed) was wheeling on to my outside chair elevator. I guess I forgot that the bottom of the ramp was an inch or two off the ground when I hit it at full speed. I realized then why some folks are strapped into their wheelchairs. I was not, and shot put of the chair like out of a catapult. Again, no injuries except my bruised ego. By now, with my wife's help, I was able to get back into the chair.

There are a lot of things I could add, moving around at navel level, people stepping backwards and landing in my lap. But this is enough for now.

Eucharist With Ordained Woman *by Eleanor Kutarna, Lumsden, SK*

On September 17th, approximately 40 people gathered in Regina for a one-day event with Monica Kilburn-Smith, an ordained priest from Calgary. The key organizers of the event were a group of ladies who meet regularly and are called The Celebration Circle. Another active group, called the Sophia Sisters, offered financial assistance to help with the expenses of the day.

The gathering was held at a church that is shared by three congregations, Lutheran, Anglican and United. All three of the pastors are women who welcomed us and were very supportive of our event. Our main intent in hosting such a day was to give interested women and men an opportunity to meet an ordained female and to engage in dialogue and discussion.

We found Monica to be a very confident and gifted speaker. She is very knowledgeable, open and committed to her ministry. She shared her 'journey to the altar' and spoke about the challenges that are inevitable when confronting the Great Wall of Rome. Her commitment to ministry and determination in spite of all the obstacles are truly inspirational. As you can imagine, she answered countless questions and did so patiently and eloquently. Monica brought several DVD's with her and shared parts of them with us in her presentations. Of particular interest were those with Patricia Friesen, who ordained Monica in Victoria, BC.

She also generously shared printed materials with participants that were

informative in regards to women's ordination. They continue to be a great resource for our ladies groups.

We concluded the day with a celebration of the Eucharist, at which Monica presided. Emil graciously offered his chalice that Monica used at the Eucharist. I could not help but see this as a powerful symbol of unity and solidarity. One of the ladies made purple scarves which we gave each participant at the offertory as a reminder that it is through our baptism that we share in the priesthood of all believers. We also continue to wear them proudly as a symbol of our solidarity with all ordained women.

The Eucharist was a powerful expression of God's great love and abundance of blessings. Inclusive language, a shared homily, uplifting music, and a concluding 'round dance' made it a very memorable experience.

Emil and I hosted a social gathering for about 20 of the participants after the conference. We truly felt that we had been part of something very special. Our ladies groups are already planning for our next event. We simply refuse to sit back and allow 'the boys in Rome' to tell us what we can or cannot do.

It is Joan Chittister who said that there is nothing we can do that will change the past but everything we do now will change the future. Bring it on.

The Journal As I Remember It

by François Brassard, Victoria, BC



Corpus Canada was born at the Saskatoon Conference in the Fall of 1989. Connie and I were there. In fact, I can still remember all us men sitting in a circle and being distracted by noticing that we were all wearing black shoes, black socks and black pants, all except Ron Dobbin who was always quite colourful. Thank God, our wives brought technicolour to the gathering. It was a very energizing event and Connie and I agreed to be the Regional Contacts for

Vancouver Island. All this was reported in the first issue of The Journal in November 1989. Felix & Jane Kryzanowski were the first editors and Daniel and Mary Ann Gerwing were the first National Coordinator Couple.

A Planning Meeting in Calgary (Nov. 1989) and a National Conference in Edmonton (March 1990) brought more structure to the organization. The leadership remained in place, but Emil & Eleanore Kutarna became the Journal editors and there they would remain until late 1995. I am truly amazed at the energy and proficiency that Emil brought to the task of almost single-handedly publishing The Journal six times a year for five years.

Things began to change in the Fall of 1994 when Arthur Menu and Connie Kurtenbach spearheaded the publication of the BC Corpus Connector Newsletter. It was an inspired endeavour highlighting Corpus life on Vancouver Island and in Vancouver. Articles were written by Tony & Edith Gvora, Dick & Marguerite Perrott, Jennifer O'Rourke, Ray Abadicio, Jessie Kelly, Chris Diamond and myself. It paved the way for ground-breaking structural changes to Corpus Canada that emphasized collegiality and consensus. All that happened at the Sixth National Conference in Victoria in July of 1995. The BC Connector was morphed into The Journal in September of 1995. In 1996, publication of The Journal was transferred to Vancouver Island and I became the head of the editorial team comprising Connie, Chris Diamond, Edith Gvora, Arthur Menu and Dick Perrott. Dick was in charge of the assembly of The Journal with assistance from Arthur and myself. I can still remember assembling The Journal at Dick and Marguerite's house in Sidney. We usually made it a pot luck event that was wonderfully spiced with Marguerite's inimitable British wit. It was always a fun time. When Dick and Marguerite died in 2001, Jim Doyle took charge of the assembly crew of The Journal and very capably executed that function until 2010 when I took it over til this very day.

In 1999 Chris Diamond became and still remains the Principal Editor of an evolving editorial team, though I remained as the Desktop Publisher until July 2000 when Michael Irving, Chris Diamond's son-in-law, carried on that task right to the present. With time Michael also became the manager of the Corpus Canada web site (www.corpuscanada.org) which publishes and archives the online version of The Journal. Under Chris' direction, the Journal's appearance has been vastly improved by the inclusion of an array of photos.

In my view, Chris' major contribution to The Journal over all these years has been to encourage and maintain a stable group of writers such as himself, Arthur Menu, Michael Zarb, Emil Kutarna, Phil

Little, Connie and myself. Better yet, he has consistently invited others to write articles for The Journal and he will continue to do so for the online version of The Journal.

The Journal had served as the Corpus Canada newsletter and been financed by Corpus Canada membership fees until Xristos Community Society took over publishing The Journal in 1997 with the new mandate to serve as a newsletter and resource for all small faith communities, including Corpus Canada's various small faith communities, in accordance with Xristos Community Society's aim to promote and support small faith communities. As a registered charity Xristos has been able to provide tax receipts for donations in support of The Journal, and this has assured a stable source of funding for The Journal to the present time.

However, as explained elsewhere in this issue, the hard copy publication of The Journal is coming to an end. So, this is the last time that I will be attending to its assembly. In appreciation for all who have in the past fulfilled this function, especially Emil Kutarna, I want to list what I do to make this happen.

Michael Irving informs me when he has sent the desktopped file of The Journal to the printer. I place the printing order with Island Blue Print which has generously discounted the cost for almost three years, and I tell them when I will be picking up and paying for the order.

I get in touch with Arthur Menu to secure the date and venue for the assembly, e.g. Dec. 12, 2011 at St. Elizabeth's in Sidney. I also email him any changes to the subscribers' label list, so that he can update the database. In due course Arthur sends me the updated number of the Canadian subscribers, so that I can properly process online with Canada Post the necessary NDG Publications documentation.

I recruit volunteers to help with the assembly. On Dec.12 I pick up the printing order, drive to the Canada Post RVU (Regional Victoria Unit), pick up three plastic 'letterainers,' and then drive to St. Elizabeth's in Sidney for the assembly. At St. Elizabeth's, together with the expertise of Alanna Menu, I organize and manage the collating, stapling, folding, tabbing and labelling of the Canadian subscribers, while I handle separately the U.S. and International subscribers. Alanna oversees the distribution of the Canadian subscribers into 22 distinct piles according to strict Canada Post NDG Publications postal code requirements. Each pile is then carefully counted, elasticized, bundled and correctly placed in the three Canada Post 'letterainers.' I then take the U.S. and International copies for separate mailing at the local post office in Sidney which has to be paid for in cash. Finally, I take the three 'letterainers' of Canadian subscriber copies to the Canada Post RVU in Victoria and process the paper work. Job done!

What has been left out of this description is the fun everyone has in the execution of this task. We have coffee and sometimes donuts or healthier muffins, relate stories, tell jokes (Jim Doyle and Tom Hassett are great at this) and even, sometimes sing songs. Often, a few of us go out for lunch when we finish and that's always very enjoyable.

I finish with a request that you all continue to read The Journal online in the future. And for that to happen, we are counting on your ongoing donations for the success of this ministry. Blessings!

Corpus Canada

Who Are We?

We are a faith community of men and women empowered by our baptism in Jesus' Spirit to reach out to others in their need as Jesus did. We also provide support for married Roman Catholic priests, their family and friends.

Where Are We Going?

This faith community is dedicated to

- Renewal of ministries in the Church, including an ordained ministry open to men and women, married and unmarried;
- A vision of Church that includes all people who profess faith in Jesus Christ;
- Development of leadership among all the baptised in the Church;
- Promotion of a wholesome view of sexuality;
- Justice for all based on Gospel values.

Our message is a healing one and is directed to everyone, especially the marginalized in the Church. It is our hope to reach people through many ministries, and in a special way through the creation of small faith communities.

How Do We Get There?

Through a collegial approach based on consensus reached through communal discernment in the Spirit, we share our gifts that all creation might be transformed according to God's loving plan.

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How Can I Join Or Show Support?

If you wish to join or renew your membership in Corpus Canada for the year 2012 (membership is open to all regardless of denominational affiliation), write to: Corpus Canada Treasurer, 35 - 10070 Fifth Street Sidney, BC V8L 2X9. Enclose a cheque for \$50 (individual membership) or \$75 (family membership) payable to "Corpus Canada." Corpus Canada will donate \$25 of your membership fee to Xristos Community Society in your name, and Xristos will send you an official tax receipt. At the request of Corpus Canada, Xristos Community Society distributes The Journal free of charge to the membership of Corpus Canada.

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