

threatened upon the Jewish community. On the feast of Purim in 1994 Baruch Goldstein entered the mosque in Hebron and opened fire on the Muslim worshippers, killing twenty-nine and wounding many more before he was killed. While most Jewish leaders condemned this act as an atrocity, a vocal minority of Jews, including some rabbis, honored him as a martyr who died for the sake of Jewish honor and to sanctify the Name of Heaven. Followers and admirers of Goldstein began the custom of gathering at or near his grave each year on the feast of Purim to celebrate his action.

Lefebure suggested that at their best, each of the Abrahamic traditions has resources to challenge rigid models of self-righteous vengeance, to break the cycle of shame, and to frustrate the scapegoat mechanism by demanding that believers accept responsibility for their own actions. While believers have frequently sought God's forgiveness only for sins committed against members of their own tradition and have neglected crimes against members of other traditions, each of the Abrahamic traditions does contain a vision of a broader community embracing all humanity and honoring the dignity of every human being.

In her response, Jean Donovan emphasized that rituals are so powerful because they effect social change. She also noted that early in the history of Islam the Caliph Omar entered Jerusalem in peace with only a small number of followers, and she held up Sayyed Hossein Nasr's retrieval of Islamic law regarding toleration of other religions as a challenge to Christians, whose history of missionary activity often involved disrespect for other religions and led to failure.

Daniel Speed Thompson suggested that the dynamic of shame and expiation and possible violence lies closer to the heart of the Catholic tradition than to Shi'a Islam or Judaism. He also noted the important difference that original sin makes for Christianity, requiring expiation through a sacrificial interpretation of the death of Jesus. This doctrine can help illumine how all traditions can be twisted to violent ends.

LEO LEFEBURE
Fordham University
New York City

* * * * *

MORAL AND SACRAMENTAL THEOLOGY

Topic: Eucharist and Social Reconciliation
 Convener and Moderator: Joyce K. McClure, Oberlin College
 Presenters: William Cavanaugh, University of St. Thomas
 John Berkman, The Catholic University of America
 Respondent: David Fagerberg, University of Notre Dame

William Cavanaugh and John Berkman presented considerations of the way in which Eucharistic reconciliation, understood primarily through either scripture or tradition, has important social implications for Christians, the life of the church, and broad social issues. Cavanaugh opened the session with his presentation, " 'Already a Defeat for You': The Clergy Sexual Abuse Scandal, the Eucharist, and the War." "Already a defeat for you" is Paul's description of the state of affairs when Christians file lawsuits against each other in the Roman courts (1 Cor. 6:7). Drawing a parallel to the current sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church, where the church on the whole seems unable to achieve reconciliation with victims without redress to civil courts, Cavanaugh argued that Paul's words concerning the early Christians in first Corinthians, in particular his understanding of the Body of Christ and eucharistic reconciliation, should be instructive regarding the current crisis.

For Paul, the eucharist is the context for the church's gathering, the event where the Body of Christ is constituted. Eucharistic practice requires and produces reconciliation, wherein the wounds to both individuals and the Christian community itself are healed. When divisions and wounds still exist, Christ is present in the eucharist, but as judge. Only when the church celebrates the eucharist as a unified body, beyond concern for worldly justice, is the celebration itself a reconciliation, where, as Cavanaugh put it, "[d]iversity is not overcome but is integrated into a well-functioning body."

Cavanaugh went on to draw out the implications for the current sexual abuse scandal, in particular the church's defensive and litigious response, noting that the church needs to "ask itself whether the divisions created by this abuse are making a mockery of the eucharist" and thus also calling judgment upon ourselves in place of reconciliation. He called upon the church to seek reconciliation with the victims penitently, and pointed to the national tribunal of Catholic laypeople, called for by Patrick Schlitz, as a better forum than civil courts for allowing the church and victims to work together for genuine reconciliation. Cavanaugh concluded by observing that for Paul, eucharistic communities have a reconciling role to play for the world. To the extent that the church fails to reconcile with its own members, it fails to serve the important function of modeling reconciliation for the world. This is another sense in which the way in which the church's handling of the sexual abuse scandal is "already a defeat for you," because it compromises the church's ability to witness to a reconciling peace regarding the war in Iraq.

In the second presentation, John Berkman offered a theological reflection on punishment in light of reconciliation in his paper, "Transformation and Restoration: Eucharistic Reconciliation and Civic Punishment," in order to show how eucharistic reconciliation can shape the way we think about the purposes and goals of punishment. Berkman began by noting that Eucharistic reconciliation has both transformative and restorative elements. At various times the catholic tradition has emphasized one element over the other, but has approximated the ideal

only when it has held together both elements of reconciliation. He noted, moreover, that Christian conceptions of sin profoundly influence our understanding of reconciliation. Because of sin, we stand in need of reconciliation that both transforms us, aiding in our growth as individuals, and restores us to community, healing our status before God and the community.

Tracing the place of the key elements of reconciliation in penitential practices of the tradition from the earliest times, through ecclesiastical and tariff penitential practices, monastic incarceration, and modern prison systems, Berkman argued that eucharistic reconciliation best informs a theology of punishment when both restoration to the community and transformation of the individual are goals. The implication for the current debate about punishment is that retribution falls short as a goal, lacking as it does the richer demands and possibilities of reconciliation. Berkman concluded by acknowledging the limitations of civil punishment, but also reminding us that "God's reconciliation of us is a drama rather than an event"—a drama whose celebration is the source of charity and hope in the face of despair.

David Fagerberg opened his response to these papers by applauding the presenters' efforts to bring liturgical practice to bear on the Christian life, observing that they both illustrated how liturgical practice can have political consequence. Fagerberg addressed numerous salient points in each presentation. Reflecting on Cavanaugh's contribution in making us see how eucharistic practice unites its participants, vitiating harmful divisiveness in resolving disputes, Fagerberg asked, "What if our common bond in the altar community could get us to think in terms of 'us' rather than 'them'" even as we face the divisiveness of the clergy sexual abuse scandal. He further suggested the grievous possibility that victims of abuse themselves choose civil rather than ecclesiastical remedies because they might see ecclesiastical courts as biased towards clerics.

Considering Berkman's presentation, Fagerber highlighted Berkman's point that Eucharistic practice indicates that the goal of punishment is not punishment but reconciliation, but wondered what impact a world view that excludes an eschatological horizon has on secular penal theory. He also pointed out that using a Christian theology of reconciliation to understand and shape punishment suggests, at least, that prisons might be appropriate places for evangelization. A lively discussion among attendees and presenters ensued.

JOYCE K. MCCLURE
Oberlin College
Oberlin, Ohio