

## A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH: THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY BETWEEN CALVARY AND GALILEE

"Dime con quien andas y te diré quien eres." So goes a popular Spanish proverb which, literally translated, means "tell me with whom you walk, and I'll tell you who you are." This Spanish aphorism, notes Cuban-American theologian Miguel Díaz, expresses succinctly the Latino understanding of personal identity; the person is defined by the act of "walking with" someone else, by the *act* of accompaniment.<sup>1</sup> "Community," observes Ada María Isasi-Díaz, "is not something added on, but a web of relationships constitutive of who we are. This is why [Latinas/os'] use of the word *individual* is not a positive one. Commonly, when one says *ese individuo* (that individual), one is talking about someone who is selfish, who is despicable in some way or other, someone who for some reason or other is outside the Latino community."<sup>2</sup> What makes us human is precisely the "we" that each person is before he or she is an "I." More concretely, intersubjective praxis is what constitutes the person. If my name is what defines me as a distinct person, a historical agent, that name is one I have received from those persons who have accompanied me. It is in and through intersubjective praxis that we discover not only who *we* are but also who our *God* is, a God who "walks with" us, who accompanies us, and who, in the process, constitutes us as a people and as individual persons.

In this paper, I will explore the close relationship between Christian theological anthropology (Who are we?) and Christology (Who is the Christ with whom we walk and who walks with us?). I will suggest that, only when viewed in the light of an intrinsically communal anthropology—indeed, an intrinsically ecclesial theological anthropology—does the countercultural, liberative power of the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, on the one hand, and of his Galilean identity, on the other, become fully manifest.

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<sup>1</sup>See Miguel H. Díaz, "'Dime con quien andas y te diré quien eres': We Walk With Our Lady of Charity," in *From the Heart of Our People: Latino Explorations in Systematic Theology*, ed. Orlando Espín and Miguel Díaz (Maryknoll NY: Orbis Books, forthcoming). It is important to note that the practical significance of this proverb—as that of all theoretical constructs—is at least partially determined by the sociohistorical context in which it is used. Thus, the saying can be used—and has been used—in both liberative and oppressive ways. Here, I am simply pointing to its heuristic significance for a Latino/a theological anthropology.

<sup>2</sup>Ada María Isasi-Díaz, *En la Lucha/In the Struggle: Elaborating a Mujerista Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993) 171.

## THE CRUCIFIED AND RISEN CHRIST

"One day," recounts Father Arturo, a Mexican-American pastor in El Paso, "I went to visit Doña Carmen, an elderly member of our parish. As I sat in her small living room, I couldn't help but notice the large picture of the *Divino Rostro* hanging above the mantel. (The Holy Countenance of Jesus is a common sight in many Latino homes. Here, Jesus is vividly portrayed at the height of his agony, head bowed, blood streaming from the wounds inflicted by the crown of thorns around his head.) 'How sad,' the priest thought to himself, 'that our people so often seem to look upon Jesus only as one who suffers and is crucified; I wish I could do something to help Doña Carmen focus less on the suffering Jesus and more on the hope offered her by the resurrected Christ, the Christ who overcomes suffering.' So the next time he visited Doña Carmen, Father Arturo brought her a gift, a more optimistic and hopeful picture of Christ, a resurrected Christ with arms upraised. Doña Carmen graciously thanked her pastor and set the gift down in a corner of the room. When he returned to see her several days later, the priest noticed that the gift was still on the floor in the corner. Having expected her to replace the depressing *Divino Rostro* with the more uplifting image of Christ, Father Arturo asked her why she had not done so. 'You see, Padre,' she responded, 'my son is involved in a gang and I'm always afraid something will happen to him, my daughter is a drug addict and hardly comes to see me anymore, and my husband spends most of his time drinking. So, whenever I feel sad and start thinking that I just can't make it through another day, I kneel before the *Divino Rostro*. As I look at Jesus suffering, I know he understands. And that gives me the strength to go on.'"<sup>3</sup>

Another priest, a Dominican missionary, writes: "I remember standing for hours as a young Dominican theology student in Lima, Peru, on Good Friday, holding the large crucifix, along with another brother, as hundreds and hundreds of mourners approached to adore and kiss the feet of the crucified Christ. The women wept as if their only son had just been gunned down by a death squad. It overwhelmed me. Three days later, on Easter Sunday, there was just a scattering of folks to celebrate the Resurrection. 'They are obsessed with suffering,' I screamed in my heart, trying to understand it all. 'Where is the hope? Where is the promise of new life?' I knew that I had seen and experienced every day a deep hopefulness in the people, but I could not make a theological connection between that lived hopefulness and what I perceived as an overemphasis on the Crucifixion of Jesus."<sup>4</sup>

If, among Euro-Americans, nominal Catholics are referred to as "Christmas and Easter Catholics," their U.S. Hispanic counterparts are often called "Ash

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<sup>3</sup>This story is recounted by Father Arturo Bañuelas.

<sup>4</sup>Brian J. Pierce, "The Cross and the Crib: Hope From the Underside," *America*, 2 April 1994, 13-14.

Wednesday and Good Friday Catholics." While no impartial observer can miss this difference between U.S. Hispanics and Euro-Americans, however, what we have not yet begun to appreciate fully are the theological sources and implications of that difference. We have failed to take seriously the theological wisdom inherent in the U.S. Latino understanding and celebration of the Crucifixion. That wisdom is one which, on the one hand, embodies a profoundly catholic theological anthropology<sup>5</sup> and, on the other, challenges the individualistic anthropology underlying modern Western interpretations of the *triduum* that would understand the Crucifixion and Resurrection exclusively as the externally related, diachronic events in the life of an autonomous individual, Jesus Christ, rather than understanding these as, at the same time, internally related, synchronic events in the life of Jesus Christ *in communion with Mary, the apostles, and the Church*.

In this section, then, I will suggest: (1) that our understanding, not just of the Crucifixion and Resurrection but, especially, of their interrelationship, is necessarily influenced by our theological anthropology; (2) that the organic unity of the *triduum mortis*, and, hence, the anthropological unity of the Crucified and Risen Christ, expresses and presupposes an intrinsically relational theological anthropology; (3) that the central role which U.S. Latino Catholics accord the Crucified Jesus as the one who accompanies us in our struggles reflects and expresses precisely such a relational anthropology; (4) that such a theological anthropology underlies the Gospel accounts of Jesus' passion and post-Resurrection appearances; and, finally, (5) that only in the light of such a theological anthropology can we arrive at a truly *liberative* understanding of the Crucifixion and Resurrection and, especially, their interrelationship.

The Crucified Jesus in Latino popular Catholicism can only be properly understood in the context of a theological anthropology that defines the person—and, therefore, Jesus Christ himself—as intrinsically and constitutively social, or relational. Such an intrinsically communal understanding of Jesus Christ's own personhood has important implications not only for trinitarian theology but also for Christology itself, particularly the *triduum mortis* at the very heart of Christology. In the *Via Crucis*, Latinos and Latinas affirm the truth of the Resurrection not as an event that, subsequent to the Crucifixion, "overcomes" or "cancels out" the death of Jesus, but as the inextinguishable love and solidarity that defines the *Via Crucis* itself, as the act of "accompaniment" that constitutes and empowers us as persons and as a community of faith. It is precisely the intrinsically *communal* character of our *confrontation with* and *struggle against* death that already embodies the victory of life—of love—over death. I would like to

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<sup>5</sup>I am using the term here as John Zizioulas and Catherine Mowry LaCugna use it, to refer to "inclusive personhood-in-communion." Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991) 316. See also *ibid.*, 260-66, 294-96; John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion* (Crestwood NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985) 57-58; Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996) 50-55.

suggest, then, that what distinguishes the Latino celebration of the *triduum* is not an emphasis on the passion over against the Resurrection but an emphasis on the passion as an active, communal undertaking over against the passion as suffering passively endured by a solitary individual. The Dominican missionary whom I cited above went on to explain how his own understanding of the Crucifixion and Resurrection had been transformed by his experience in Peru: "Little by little, the scales have fallen from my eyes, thanks to the patient accompaniment of the people. It is only now that I can see the failure of Jesus as a source of hope. There is no contradiction between the bloodied statue of Jesus in the church and faith in the Resurrection. . . . God, like us, is on a pilgrim journey. The Resurrection is experienced not as final victory, but as the close presence of the living God who chooses to walk with and suffer alongside the poor. Resurrection is joyful and faithful reassurance here and now."<sup>6</sup> The hope of resurrection is mediated and, indeed, engendered by the act of solidarity in suffering, where the victim's human identity and dignity as a person are affirmed in the face of those social forces which would reduce personal existence to mere individual existence.<sup>7</sup> It is the corporate, shared, active character of suffering, undertaken in mutual solidarity, that distinguishes suffering from mere sadness and makes possible our common struggle *against* suffering: "If it is experienced as a personal disgrace, an illness is exhausting and engenders self-centeredness and alienation. Seen as part of the pain of all the poor, it allows for rebellion in the face of pain."<sup>8</sup> That solidarity in the midst of suffering is what reveals to us the ultimate powerlessness of suffering: our common life, manifested in our relationships of solidarity, overcomes all attempts to destroy that life. Suffering shared is suffering already in retreat. This is why, when she feels sad, Doña Carmen turns to the *Divino Rostro*, because she knows that the real enemy of life is not suffering but sadness, not pain but isolation.

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<sup>6</sup>Pierce, "The Cross and the Crib," 14.

<sup>7</sup>Similar observations about the power of solidarity as the foundation of the struggle for justice have been made by feminist theologians. Elizabeth Johnson cites the words of a woman who spent many days sitting by the bed of her sick daughter, and other sick children, in the hospital: "On those terrible children's wards, . . . I could neither have worshipped nor respected any God who had not himself cried out, 'My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Because it was so, because the creator loved his creation enough to become helpless with it and suffer in it, totally overwhelmed by the pain of it, I found there was still hope." Elizabeth Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1993) 267. Wendy Farley, especially, has elaborated a phenomenology of compassion as resistance to suffering; see her *Tragic Vision and Divine Compassion: A Contemporary Theodicy* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990) 69-133.

<sup>8</sup>Francisco Moreno Rejón, *Salvar la vida de los pobres: aportes a la teología moral* (Lima: CEP, 1986) 156.

Underlying modern Western suspicions of the Latino emphasis on Good Friday is, I think, an individualistic theological anthropology. If the Crucifixion is merely something that happens to an individual, only a subsequent, similarly individual event could "undo" its effects, namely, an individual Resurrection. However, if the Crucifixion is a common undertaking wherein we accompany each other in our confrontation with death and, most importantly, wherein God accompanies us, then those bonds of solidarity are themselves the assurance of life beyond death. If what is resurrected is merely the autonomous individual, even if that individual is Jesus Christ, then Latinos and Latinas must reject the Resurrection, for such a "Resurrection" does not represent the victory of life over death but the victory of the autonomous ego, *ese individuo*—even if now in a "glorified body"—over the loving relationships that constitute and define embodied, historical human life. This love, this communion, is precisely what makes the Resurrection concrete, physical, personal, and historical.<sup>9</sup> If the truth of the Resurrection were limited to the body of Jesus Christ as an autonomous individual—or, for that matter, to our own individual bodies—then the Resurrection would remain as much an ahistorical abstraction as is the "autonomous individual."

The wisdom of understanding Jesus Christ himself as defined by his relationships to others is powerfully conveyed in another story, this one told by Virgilio Elizondo. The story concerns *una viejita* (the term, though literally translated as "an old woman," connotes *cariño* and respect). Like so many Roman Catholic churches in recent years, her church had just been remodeled. As part of the renovation, all the statues had been removed from the church, save a lone crucifix behind the altar. Upon entering the renovated church and surveying the scene, she became sad and dejected. "Why are you so sad?" asked her pastor. She explained: "Sé que Jesús tiene que estar en el centro de la iglesia, pero eso no quiere decir que tiene que estar solo." (I know that Jesus has to be in the center of the church, but that doesn't mean that he has to be alone.) The source of her dejection was not the crucifix but the *solitary* crucifix, not Jesus' suffering but his *solitary* suffering. The source of our hope is not the Resurrection of a solitary individual but the ultimate indestructibility of the community that accompanies Jesus on the *Via Crucis* and is reconciled with him in the Resurrection.<sup>10</sup> "Dimé con quien andas y te diré quien eres."

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<sup>9</sup>On such a relational Christology, see Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 110-11.

<sup>10</sup>As Hans Urs von Balthasar observes: "What we have already said about the priority of the 'we' in the human 'I' is important at this point. Since we share a world with others, there is in every human subject a formal *inclusion* of all the other subjects. . . . The a priori of the 'we' is the anthropological point of departure for christological representation. . . ., although the latter is something totally new and qualitatively different from it. . . . The unique 'I' of Jesus Christ possesses his milieu, his 'we.' . . ." Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*, vol. 2 (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1990) 407-409.

Thus, the unity of Christ's Crucifixion and Resurrection is not only diachronic but synchronic as well. The locus of Resurrection is not the cross itself, not Jesus' suffering and death themselves, but the bonds of solidarity *between* the Victim and those who accompany him. It is that solidarity which, as the refusal to allow the Victim to die *by himself*, does not passively accept but actively resists the destruction and death represented by the isolation of the person who dies abandoned as a solitary individual; in that interpersonal solidarity, the enduring love of God is made manifest. Indeed, the Victim's anguished cry of abandonment itself represents an affirmation of that solidarity precisely because, as a cry addressed by *someone* to *someone* (even if the latter remains silent), that cry represents the refusal to despair, the refusal to be abandoned; it is the cry of the person who refuses to be left to die as a mere individual.

Only in the light of such an understanding of Christ's personhood, in the context of an interpersonal praxis, can the organic unity of the Crucifixion and Resurrection be affirmed. "It is quite impossible for the Resurrection to be an individual event," writes Karl Rahner, "because our 'bodily condition' (whether glorified or not) is simply the outward aspect of the spirit, which the spirit forms for itself in matter so as to be open to the rest of the world, and which in consequence necessarily includes a community of a bodily kind with a bodily Thou (and not just with God's Spirit)."<sup>11</sup> While Rahner goes on to articulate the soteriological implications of this anthropological statement ("If this is so then the Son of Man 'cannot' have risen alone.")<sup>12</sup>, what remains to be fully developed, I believe, are its implications for a liberative Christology and, especially, for a liberative praxis.

The gospel texts themselves testify to the fundamental importance of interpersonal praxis, communion, or what I call accompaniment, as the liberative mediation of Christ's Crucifixion and Resurrection in their organic unity. That is, what makes the Resurrection the Resurrection is precisely its essentially communal character. In the story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus, the stranger becomes a person, i.e., *some-one* with a name, only as he accompanies the disciples, only in the "breaking of the bread" (Lk 24:13-35). In the Lukan and Johannine accounts of Jesus' post-Resurrection appearances, the truth disclosed in the Resurrection is not limited to the glorified body of Jesus as such—which remains unrecognizable to the apostles; that truth also includes the *wounds* on Jesus' glorified body. "See my hands and my feet . . . handle me and see" (Lk 24:39). "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing" (Jn 20:27). The

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<sup>11</sup>Karl Rahner, "The Interpretation of the Dogma of the Assumption," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 1 (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1961) 219.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

wounds themselves reflect and imply Jesus' own communal identity; it is *this* person, Jesus Christ, who has suffered *at the hands of* other persons.<sup>13</sup>

The Resurrection does not overcome death, if by this is meant that the glorified, risen body "leaves behind" or "cancels out" the Crucifixion; the memory of Crucifixion remains physically inscribed on the resurrected body of Jesus. Though "the women" accompanied Jesus during his Passion, many other disciples had indeed abandoned him to his persecutors. In the post-Resurrection appearances of Jesus, then, the apostles acknowledge the reality of the Resurrection, *but only as a reality that remains marked by the Crucifixion*. "The stigmata," contends von Balthasar, "are more than an external sign, a kind of honorable distinction for having suffered; they are, beyond the gulf between death and Resurrection which reaches to the bottom of hell, the identity of the subject in the identity of consciousness. It is always this man who suffered this life, this cross, this death. 'See my hands and feet, that it is I myself' (Luke 24:39)."<sup>14</sup>

And, simultaneously, the apostles acknowledge their own complicity in Jesus' Crucifixion: "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the scriptures?" (Lk 24:32). In the gospel narratives, the wounds on Jesus' resurrected body and his invitation to "touch the wounds" make possible the apostles' reconciliation with him because the wounds are the visible proof that Jesus has indeed risen, that their faith has not been in vain. Yet, as surely the apostles know, their faith vanished long ago, when they abandoned Jesus to his persecutors. Surely they know that they themselves helped inflict the wounds on Jesus' hands, feet, and side. Surely the sound of the cock crowing must be echoing in Peter's ears.<sup>15</sup> Upon seeing the wounds, the apostles do not immediately rejoice. We read that, at first, they are startled and terrified; they are frightened (Lk 24:36-37). "Why are you frightened?" Jesus asks them (Lk 24:38). Are they frightened simply because they do not recognize this strange apparition? Or, perhaps also, because they recognize it only too well? In the "encounter between the resurrected Lord and Peter," writes Miroslav Volf, "God, resisting the endemic forgetfulness of offenders, restores to them their guilty past, though not so as to condemn them but as to make the restored past

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<sup>13</sup>I am grateful to Alejandro García-Rivera for helping me to clarify this point.

<sup>14</sup>Hans Urs von Balthasar, *A Theological Anthropology* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967) 285.

<sup>15</sup>Indeed, the three-fold question, "Simon, son of John, do you love me? (Jn 21:15-19)" that the resurrected Christ asks of Peter in John's Gospel parallels Peter's earlier threefold denial of Jesus (Jn 13:38). And the charcoal fire "burning on the shore" as the resurrected Jesus appears to Peter recalls the charcoal fire "burning in the High Priest's courtyard on another chilly morning (18:18), the fire at which Peter warms himself as he denies his Lord." Rowan Williams, *Resurrection: Interpreting the Easter Gospel* (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1982) 34. I am indebted to Alejandro García-Rivera for underscoring the significance of Jesus' invitation to touch his wounds.

'the foundation for a new and extended identity.'<sup>16</sup> Resurrection is reconciliation and communion, or it is not resurrection.<sup>17</sup>

So the significance of the wounds is much more profound than their value as the empirical verification of a Resurrection that has already occurred. When Jesus invites the apostles to see and touch his wounds, he is inviting them to believe not merely that he himself, as an individual, has been raised but that what has been raised and glorified are the bonds of love and solidarity that had been destroyed when the apostles had abandoned Jesus on his way to Calvary, bonds without which there can be no true Resurrection of the *person* Jesus. Jesus' invitation to see and touch his wounds engenders belief not only because that invitation allows the apostles to see the truth about the resurrected Jesus Christ but because, at the same time, it allows the apostles to see the truth about themselves as his companions, to acknowledge, confess, and repent of their own complicity in his Crucifixion. In their encounter with the wounded, glorified body of Jesus, suggests von Balthasar, "the disciples know themselves to be not only recognised but also seen through; and more, in their very own reality (which exists in him) he knows and understands them—so they now realize—much better than they know and understand themselves. Hence the broken-hearted confession of, for example, the disciples on the Emmaus road."<sup>18</sup>

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ implies the conversion of the apostles and their reconciliation with Jesus; it demands the reaffirmation of the communion ruptured during Jesus' passion. Without that conversion and subsequent reconciliation, there can be no personal Resurrection—only an individual resuscitation. "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing" (Jn 20:27).

In the practical encounter with their own complicity, the apostles become reconciled to Jesus and come to know the truth of the Resurrection, the victory of love over death, the victory of solidarity over abandonment. The sign of the reconciliation between the apostles and Jesus is that the resurrected Jesus invites the apostles to break bread with him, thereby renewing his table fellowship with them and foreshadowing that ultimate act of solidarity, the eucharistic meal: "Have you anything here to eat? They gave him a piece of cooked fish which he took and ate in their presence" (Lk 24:41-43). "He was known to them in the breaking of the bread" (Lk 24:35). The new life incarnated in the glorified body of Jesus Christ is not the abstract, illusory "life" of the autonomous individual but quite literally, life-as-solidarity, life-as-communion, life-as-accompaniment, life-as-"breaking bread" (*ad-cum-panis*), life-as-*ekklesia*. But that *ekklesia*

<sup>16</sup>Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 136. See also Rowan Williams, *Resurrection* (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1982) 34.

<sup>17</sup>Wendy Farley notes the essentially "relational character" of God's redemptive power: "Redemption consists not only in forgiving or healing isolated souls but in bringing them into relationship with one another and with God." *Tragic Vision*, 101.

<sup>18</sup>Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Mysterium Paschale* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1990) 220.

remains forever marked by the wounds of Crucifixion: at every eucharist, observes Rowan Williams, "the wounded body and the shared blood are inescapably present."<sup>19</sup>

The Resurrection, then, represents the victory of life-as-accompaniment over death-as-abandonment, the victory of personal existence over individual existence. What John Zizioulas says of Pentecost may also be said of the Resurrection itself: "The objectivization and individualization of historical existence which implies distance, decay and death is transformed into existence in communion, and hence eternal life for [hu]mankind and all creation."<sup>20</sup> And that transformation is effected only in Jesus' invitation to see and handle the wounds on his glorified body, and in the apostles' response to the invitation.

Moreover, if communion is not just an extension of individual life but is what defines and constitutes personal life itself, then the experience of death does not preclude the possibility that, even in the very midst of one's death throes, life may be affirmed—insofar as one is accompanied by others in resisting death; insofar as the cry, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" (Mk 15:34) is a protest addressed by *someone* to *someone*; insofar as other voices are joined to one's own cry of abandonment. The victory of life over death is not only the victory of the empty tomb over the cross but, even more profoundly, the victory of accompaniment over abandonment, the victory of life-in-communion over life-in-isolation, the victory of personal life, the only true life, over individual life, which is not "life" at all but death.

Consequently, Calvary need not be *only* a place of death. Insofar as we accompany, enter into solidarity with, and have compassion for those persons crying out to God from their own crosses on Calvary—insofar as we ourselves are willing to risk crucifixion alongside them—then we are already witnessing to the truth of the Resurrection, the truth that the enemy of life is not death but the illusory "life" of individual, solitary, abandoned existence. It is this truth that, I am convinced, is lived out in the U.S. Hispanic community every Good Friday, when we walk alongside Jesus on his way to Calvary; it is this truth that is lived every *Día de los Muertos*, or Day of the Dead, when we reaffirm those bonds of ancestral solidarity, that life, which their deaths as individuals could not destroy; it is the truth lived out by Doña Carmen whenever she kneels before the *Divino Rostro*. These communal actions affirm the ultimate indestructibility of life-as-communion, the ultimate indestructibility of God's love as manifested in our compassion. What is celebrated is not the cross, not the suffering, but the compassion that unites us in our *common* struggle, a compassion that is not destroyed on the cross but becomes the source of human subjectivity and, therefore, the foundation of the struggle for justice. Our compassion for the crucified Victim on Calvary implies and demands ongoing resistance to that

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<sup>19</sup>Williams, *Resurrection*, 40.

<sup>20</sup>Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 112.

violence which would destroy life by reducing the person to a mere individual. Indeed, to suggest that the source of personhood is the community formed between Good Friday and Easter is to insist that the self born from that compassion, that solidarity, is now able to confront the community with the wounds this latter has inflicted and invite reconciliation; the truly relational self is the prophetic self.

"Compassion," observes Wendy Farley, "resists suffering rather than tries to justify it. . . . It empowers life by opposing what degrades it and therefore finds justice to be a constant traveling companion. . . . Redemption requires not only solidarity with suffering but opposition to its destructive effects. . . . As human beings and communities apprehend the presence of divine compassion for them and with them, they experience power to resist the degrading effects of suffering, to defy structures and policies that institutionalize injustice, and to confront their own guilt. Compassion as a form of love is mutual and interactive; as a power for redemption it entails the acknowledgment of freedom."<sup>21</sup> The full meaning of the Crucifixion, as the ultimate act of compassion, can only be grasped when it is viewed as defining not only the life of the victim but our own lives as well, *in communion*. Only then can the destruction of (individual) life and the defeat of (individual) freedom be perceived as, simultaneously, the birthplace of (personal) life and the victory of (personal) freedom.

The event of Jesus' Crucifixion includes the bonds of compassion that are not extinguished on the cross but survive even Jesus' death. For not all of his friends abandoned Jesus; the women accompanied him to the end (and, in John's Gospel, the beloved disciple). What happens to the individual hanging from the cross, therefore, does not exhaust the meaning and significance of the Crucifixion. The crucifix—in itself—symbolizes not just what happens to Jesus, and not just what happens between the persons of the Trinity, but also what happens "between" Jesus and Mary, "between" Jesus and us. This "between" is the *locus* of life itself. What transpires "between" Jesus and us on the way to Calvary is itself life-giving. On Calvary, personal existence is disclosed as a "sign" that derives its meaning predominantly from its practical mediation, its "in-betweenness."<sup>22</sup> As Martin Buber observes: "What is peculiarly characteristic of the human world is above all that something takes place between one being and another. . . . The view which establishes the concept of 'between' is to be acquired by no longer localizing the relation between human beings, as is

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<sup>21</sup>Farley, *Tragic Vision*, 69, 81, 112.

<sup>22</sup>In the words of Charles Peirce, the meaning of personal existence is derived from its "thirdness . . . which can have no concrete being without action." See, e.g., Charles S. Peirce, *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1931–1934), vol. 1, para. 339; vol. 5, para. 436.

customary, either within individual souls or in a general world which embraces and determines them, but in actual fact *between* them."<sup>23</sup>

It is in this "between" that the life of the self becomes identified with love of the other.<sup>24</sup> "No doubt, there is a private dimension to any individual self," writes Vincent Colapietro, "even so, the self is not imprisoned in a sphere of solitude, except through its own cognitive and, even more important, affective limitations. The solitary self *is* the illusory self, a being who has its basis in selfishness; the communicative self is the authentic self, a being who has its roots in agape."<sup>25</sup> This, indeed, is the same truth taught me by my own son a couple of years ago, when he was all of five years old: "Papi," he asked me, "what's more important, life or love?" After a great deal of hemming and hawing, I responded hesitantly: "I don't know, what do *you* think?" "Well," he said in a somewhat smug manner that made me think I was being set up, "I think love is more important, because without love you wouldn't be alive."

Easter, then, is but the historical confirmation of this very truth, a truth that the community has already experienced; we are alive because, on Calvary, we are loved and we love. It is for this reason, I submit, that U.S. Hispanic celebrations of the *triduum* are focused on Good Friday. The fundamental question for U.S. Hispanics is not whether there is life after death . . . we *know* there is life after death.<sup>26</sup> The fundamental question for us is whether there is life *before* death. This question is answered every Good Friday, as we accompany Jesus on the way to his own death.

Having abandoned Jesus on Calvary, the apostles cannot believe in the truth of the Resurrection until they are invited to see and touch the wounds on Jesus' body. Yet the same does not hold true for the women who accompanied Jesus on Calvary. Having remained with Jesus on Calvary, Mary and the other women have already come to know the inextinguishable power of Jesus' love for them and their love for him; in at least incipient form, they have experienced the truth of the Resurrection. Thus, they will become the first evangelists, the first bearers of the Good News. To be converted, the women do not need to see and touch the wounds on Jesus' body, for they did not inflict those wounds, they did not break their communion with Jesus. (Despite the great detail, in John's Gospel,

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<sup>23</sup>Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man* (New York: Macmillan, 1965) 203.

<sup>24</sup>"There are those who believe in their own existence, . . ." argues Peirce, "yet the most balsamic of all the sweets of sweet philosophy is the lesson that personal [i.e., individual] existence is an illusion and a practical joke. Those that have loved themselves and not their neighbors will find themselves April fools when the great April opens the truth that neither selves nor neighbors were anything more than mere vicinities; while the love they would not entertain was the essence of every scent." Peirce, *Collected Papers*, vol. 4, para. 69.

<sup>25</sup>Vincent M. Colapietro, *Peirce's Approach to the Self: A Semiotic Perspective on Human Subjectivity* (Albany NY: SUNY Press, 1989) 79.

<sup>26</sup>For this insight, I am indebted to Professor Otto Maduro of Drew University.

concerning the resurrected Jesus' invitation to see and touch his wounds, the same gospel's account of the resurrected Jesus' appearance to Mary and Mary Magdalene, in 20:11-18, does not mention the wounds.) The women's belief had already been demonstrated as they accompanied Jesus to Calvary. They can know the truth of the Resurrection without first being invited to acknowledge the wounds: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe" (Jn 20:29). Blessed are those who believe, not because they have seen the resurrected Jesus, but because they did not abandon him on Calvary. "Let it be noted," writes Elizabeth Johnson, "that at the moment of final crisis Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, Salome, and 'many other women' disciples (Mk 15:41) appear strongly in the story, and in fact are the moving point of continuity between the ministry, death, burial, and Resurrection of Jesus. Near or afar they keep vigil at the cross, standing in a solidarity with this vilified victim that gives powerful witness to women's courage of relation throughout the ages. Their presence is a sacrament of God's own fidelity to the dying Jesus, their faithful friendship a witness to the hope that he is not totally abandoned."<sup>27</sup> Blessed are those who believe, not because they have seen the wounds on the glorified body of Jesus, but because, as "a sacrament of God's own fidelity to the dying Jesus" and witnesses "to the hope that he is not totally abandoned," they accompanied Jesus on Calvary. Blessed are those who do not need to see the wounds on the Body of Christ to believe in the unity of His Body, to accompany the wounded neighbor on Calvary.

And it is in this very praxis of accompaniment that the Church itself is born, in the Crucifixion-Resurrection event. To understand that event as essentially historical, practical, and communal is to understand it as essentially ecclesial. It is to locate the origins of the Church in the solidarity among Jesus, Mary, and the other women who accompanied him on Calvary, in the solidarity between Jesus and the dead on Holy Saturday, and in the reconciliation between the wounded, risen Jesus and the apostles who had earlier abandoned him.<sup>28</sup> If the person is constituted by his or her relationships, to know a person one must also know his or her family and community: "dime con quien andas y te diré quien eres." To know Jesus Christ, then, we must also know Mary, the Church, and the communion of saints; we must know his brothers, sisters, and friends. If we

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<sup>27</sup>Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is*, 159.

<sup>28</sup>As Karl Rahner avers: "The Church comes from the death and Resurrection of Jesus as part of the eschatological permanence of the Crucified and Risen One. . . . from Jesus, crucified and risen, there is a provenance of the Church, which as such a community of faith is itself constitutive of the reality of Jesus and is consequently necessary as such. He would not be what he is if there were no such Church." Karl Rahner, "The Church's Redemptive Historical Provenance from the Death and Resurrection of Jesus," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 19 (New York: Crossroad, 1983) 29-30, 32. On Jesus' solidarity with the dead during Holy Saturday, see Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The von Balthasar Reader*, ed. Medard Kehl and Werner Loeser (New York: Crossroad, 1982) 150-53.

understand Christ "not in terms of individuality which affirms itself by distancing itself from other individualities, but in terms of personhood which implies a particularity established in and through *communion*," the *triduum mortis* "can never be defined by itself, but only as a relational reality. . . . *Christ without His body is not Christ but an individual of the worst type.*"<sup>29</sup> This, indeed, was the insight of the Mexican *viejita* as she stood before the lone crucifix in her renovated parish church. If the Resurrection is truly historical, practical, and communal, it *cannot* be merely the resurrection of a physical body which, only *after* it is already resurrected, *then* enters into relationships with others—even if that body is Jesus Christ's. Neither can it be merely a private, subjective experience. To understand the Resurrection as either a physical resuscitation or a private conversion experience is to presuppose, in the first instance, that Christ is merely an individual and, in the second instance, that the believer is merely an individual. It is to reduce ecclesial existence to individual existence.

The accounts of the post-Easter appearances are not meant *simply* to give witness to an event that had transpired earlier, when the stone at the entrance to the tomb had been rolled away. If personal resurrection implies the resurrection of the person-*in-communion*, then these are not "post"-Easter or "post"-Resurrection appearances at all; they are essential aspects of the Resurrection itself. Maybe that is why, in addition to all the reasons adduced by historical-critical analysis of the texts, the empty tomb is ultimately insufficient as a symbol of the Resurrection and why the longer ending was added to Mark's Gospel—not only to explain an evidentiary ambiguity (i.e., What happened to the body?) but also to convey the inherently communal character of Jesus' Resurrection as an event that reconciles what had been ruptured on Calvary, when the apostles had abandoned Jesus to his fate, had abandoned him to die as a solitary individual. Without such a reconciliation, Jesus would not be truly raised—empty tomb or no empty tomb.<sup>30</sup> Or, at least, the one raised would not be the same Jesus who had been crucified on Calvary.

An appreciation of the intrinsically communal character of Christ's Crucifixion and Resurrection forces us to confront, moreover, the centrality of pneumatology to Christology, ecclesiology, and theological anthropology. What the Latino community experiences when accompanying Jesus on the way to Calvary is the life-giving Spirit itself, the essentially relational life of Jesus Christ. As Zizioulas observes: "when we now say 'Christ' we mean a person and not an individual; we mean a relational reality existing 'for me' or 'for us'. Here the Holy Spirit is not one who *aids* us in bridging the distance between Christ and ourselves, but he is the person of the Trinity who actually realizes in history that

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<sup>29</sup>Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 182.

<sup>30</sup>This is not to imply that Jesus' Resurrection was "dependent" on the apostles, for the apostles' response to Jesus' invitation to touch his wounds was itself impelled by grace (see, e.g., Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith* (New York: Seabury, 1978) 273-77.

which we call Christ, this absolutely relational entity, our Savior. . . . Christ does not exist *first* as truth and *then* as communion; He is both at once."<sup>31</sup> The Holy Spirit is precisely Christ-as-communion. If this statement, moreover, refers as much to the trinitarian divine economy as to the intra-divine life of God *in se*, then it has implications not only for the divine community but also for the human community insofar as this latter participates in the life of the former. "This means that Christ has to be God in order to be savior," contends Zizioulas, "but it also means something more: *He must be not an individual* but a true person."<sup>32</sup>

Yet the very notion of communion can itself become abstract unless mediated by a *praxis* of accompaniment, a *praxis* of compassion, a *praxis* of justice wherein the starting point and ground of all communion is the victim's invitation to "touch my wounds," wounds that resist all attempts to define the victim in isolation from his or her relationships to others. Only by responding to that invitation, acknowledging one's complicity, and accompanying the victim in his or her struggle, can an authentic reconciliation take place. This, indeed, is the "preferential option for the poor" that forms the basis of all true community. True communion begins with the invitation to "touch my wounds" and the response to that invitation, an interpersonal *praxis* through which we become reconciled to God and each other in the struggle against all those social forces that would reduce personal existence to mere individual existence.

#### THE GALILEAN JESUS

That the reconciliation implied in the Resurrection begins with the transformative act of solidarity with the victims of crucifixion is further revealed in the Galilean identity of Jesus and in the resurrected Jesus' *return* to Galilee. "But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee" (Mk 14:28; Matt 26:32). "Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him" (Mt 28:7; Mk 16:7; see also Jn 21:1-25). As Virgilio Elizondo contends, "the overwhelming originality of Christianity is the basic belief of our faith that not only did the Son of God become a *human being*, but he became *Jesus of Nazareth*. . . . Jesus was not simply a Jew, he was a Galilean Jew; throughout his life he and his disciples were identified as Galileans."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 110-11. "It is noteworthy," writes Zizioulas, "that it is the function of the Holy Spirit to open up being so that it may become relational. Without Pneumatology, ontology becomes substantialistic and individualistic. The Spirit was understood as 'communion' both by the Greek (e.g., St. Basil) and the Latin (e.g., St. Augustine) Fathers—especially by the latter. But the importance of Pneumatology for ontology has never been a decisive one in Western thought" (182n.).

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, 108.

<sup>33</sup>Virgilio Elizondo, *Galilean Journey: The Mexican-American Promise* (Maryknoll

Located in the far northern reaches of Palestine, bordering on the non-Jewish populations of Syria, Philippi, and the Decapolis, Galilee was often viewed by first-century Jews as "a Jewish enclave in the midst of 'unfriendly' gentile seas."<sup>34</sup> "The area as a whole," writes Richard Horsley, "was a frontier between the great empires in their historical struggles."<sup>35</sup> The Roman administrative cities of Sepphoris and Tiberias were centers of Hellenistic-Roman culture. Galilee's history as a crossroads had produced a culturally diverse population:

The bulk of the Galilean population, . . . while not Judean, would likely have been other descendants of former Israelites. While sharing certain common Israelite traditions with the Judeans, they would have had traditions of their own and distinctive versions of the shared Israelite traditions. Yet it is also inherently unlikely that all Galileans in late second-temple times were descendants of former Israelites. . . . Thus at least some of those living in Galilee must have been non-Israelites, ethnically or in cultural heritage. . . . Within the same village, Israelites and Gentiles lived in adjacent houses or shared the same courtyard . . . , or perhaps even shared a house or oven. . . . A great variety of cooperation between Israelite and gentile peasants took place on a regular basis. . . .<sup>36</sup>

Moreover, Jewish worship in these cities was "dramatically affected by the influences of Hellenistic-Roman culture and political domination."<sup>37</sup> "It is possible, perhaps even likely, . . ." argues Horsley, "that some Jews considered themselves faithful even while they utilized what would be classified as pagan or Greco-Roman symbols as a matter of course in their everyday lives."<sup>38</sup> Thus, generations of political conflict and colonial domination had produced what Homi Bhabha and others have called the process of "hybridization."<sup>39</sup>

This was the cultural milieu in which Jesus grew up and exercised his ministry, and the place to which—explicitly in the Gospels of Mark, Matthew, and John (in the chapter 21 addendum)—the resurrected Christ would eventually return. This was the historical reality that takes on theological significance in the gospels.<sup>40</sup>

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NY: Orbis Books, 1983) 49.

<sup>34</sup>Douglas Edwards, "The Socioeconomic and Cultural Ethos of the Lower Galilee in the First Century: Implications for the Nascent Jesus Movement," in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, ed. Lee Levine (New York and Jerusalem: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992) 54.

<sup>35</sup>Richard A. Horsley, *Galilee: History, Politics, People* (Valley Forge PA: Trinity Press International, 1995) 241.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, 243-44.

<sup>37</sup>Richard A. Horsley, *Archaeology, History, and Society in Galilee: The Social Context of Jesus and the Rabbis* (Valley Forge PA: Trinity Press International, 1996) 55.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, 63.

<sup>39</sup>Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994) 112.

<sup>40</sup>Sean Freyne notes that, "while each of the four Gospels treats the region differently

Galilee, especially its villages (such as Nazareth), symbolizes backwardness, ignorance, poverty, discontent, rebellion, and, above all, religious and racial-cultural impurity:

Scripturally speaking, Galilee does not appear important in the unfolding drama of salvation and, culturally speaking, at the time of Jesus, it was rejected and despised by the Judean Jews because of the racial mixture of the area and its distance from the temple in Jerusalem. For the Jews of Jerusalem, Galilean was almost synonymous with fool! . . . The Galilean Jews appear to have been despised by all and, because of the mixture of cultures of the area, they were especially despised by the superiority-complexed Jerusalem Jews. Could anything good come out of such an impure, mixed-up, and rebellious area?<sup>41</sup>

The answer to this question is what Virgilio Elizondo calls the "Galilee Principle," God chooses "what is low and despised in the world" (1 Cor. 1:28):

The apparent nonimportance and rejection of Galilee are the very bases for its all-important role in the historic eruption of God's saving plan for humanity. The human scandal of God's way does not begin with the cross, but with the historico-cultural incarnation of his Son in Galilee. . . . That God has chosen to become a Galilean underscores the great paradox of the incarnation, in which God becomes the despised and lowly of the world. In becoming a Galilean, God becomes the fool of the world for the sake of the world's salvation. What the world rejects, God chooses as his very own.<sup>42</sup>

The Jewish establishment in Jerusalem could not conceive that God's word could be revealed in an "impure" borderland region like Galilee: "Search and you will see that no prophet is to rise from Galilee" (Jn 7:52). As Homi Bhabha asserts, "hybridity is heresy."<sup>43</sup> Yet it is precisely in the midst of a hybrid people that God's truth will be revealed.

As the place from which "nothing good can come," Galilee represents Calvary's *alter ego*; for the Jews of Jerusalem, both were symbols of death. Just as the women's solidarity with Jesus on Calvary could transform that place into a *locus* of resurrection, however, so too would the resurrected Jesus' return to Galilee transform that land of "death," and its inhabitants, into the cradle of new life, the symbol of the new *ekklesia*. As the community which defines Jesus' own identity and into which he is resurrected, Galilee will now define the character of the Church and its members. If the presence of the women on Calvary revealed the powerlessness of death in the face of interpersonal,

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within the overall purposes of its narrative . . . many of their underlying social and religious assumptions are realistic on the basis of what can be reconstructed historically from other sources." Sean Freyne, "Galilee," in *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, ed. Bruce Metzger and Michael Coogan (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) 241-42.

<sup>41</sup>Elizondo, *Galilean Journey*, 53.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 225.

communal solidarity, and if the apostles' encounters with the resurrected Christ revealed the inherently communal character of personal resurrection, the return of the resurrected Christ to the Galilee in which he was raised and exercised his ministry will reveal the precise sociohistorical character of the new community into which he is resurrected, the *ekklesia* which will henceforth define the Christian disciple. That community is the multicultural, mestizo community of the borderland. If to be a person is to accompany and be accompanied by others, thereby transgressing the artificial borders that separate autonomous individuals, then the post-Resurrection community must also be one which transgresses the artificial borders which prevent such accompaniment.<sup>44</sup> As the reality of the Resurrection is revealed in the interstices between Jesus Christ and his companions, so will the reality of the Church be revealed in the interstices between cultures, peoples, religious traditions, and nations.

If the unity of Jesus' death and Resurrection affirms an essentially communal anthropology, his Galilean identity and mission prevents us from defining that communality in either exclusivist or abstract terms; the paradigmatic community is the mestizo, hybrid community. And that hybridity will necessarily be reflected and expressed in the religion of the new community; if the Church must somehow bear the mark of Galilee, the place from which Jesus comes and to which he will eventually go, then the Church must itself witness to its hybrid roots in the Galilean borderland. If the truth of the Crucifixion and Resurrection can only be known in community, that community, like Jesus Christ himself, will be defined by the border. It is there, ultimately, that we accompany the crucified and risen Jesus, for it is there that he bids us follow him.

Consequently, to assert that the person is intrinsically relational is not sufficient; we must define the sociohistorical character of that relationality. Having already argued that, for the Christian, that relationality is made concrete in the invitation to see and touch the wounds on the Body of Christ, and that such relationality is essentially ecclesial, I now suggest, further, that the relationality which defines a Christian theological anthropology will also be characterized by a racial-cultural mestizaje, or hybridity.

Like Galilean Jews, U.S. Hispanics are defined by the mestizo reality of the border, the border that represents the wounds on the resurrected body of Western civilization. "The U.S.—Mexico border," writes Gloria Anzaldúa, "*es una herida abierta* [is an open wound] where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds. And before a scab forms it hemorrhages again, the lifeblood of two worlds merging to form a third country—a border culture."<sup>45</sup>

Yet it is precisely in the midst of impurity that, in the person of Jesus Christ, God's love and power are made manifest: "He has risen from the dead, and

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<sup>44</sup>Miguel H. Díaz, "Dime con quien andas," 1.

<sup>45</sup>Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Spinster/Aunt Lute, 1987) 3.

behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him" (Mt 28:7). The chosen place of God's final self-revelation is there where the history of conquest has produced a mestizo population, where Israelites and Gentiles live side by side, where Jewish religious practices incorporate Hellenistic influences, where popular Judaism remains outside the control of Jerusalem's "official" Judaism, "where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds." The mestizo culture of the borderland is at the very heart of God's self-revelation. Galilee will be to the newly formed *ekklesia* what the wounds on Jesus' glorified body are to the Resurrection, namely, the locus of its fullest historical revelation.

At a time when many in our own nation are tempted to think that we are at the end of history, that we live in post-Easter times, a fundamental role of Latinos and Latinas—indeed of all marginalized peoples—is that of bearing witness to the wounds, remembering and recounting the passion, giving voice to the memories of suffering, thereby reminding contemporary men and women that, in the words of Walter Benjamin, "every great work of civilization is at the same time a work of barbarism,"<sup>46</sup> that the resurrected Body of Christ will always—must always—remain marked by the violence of Calvary, just as the bodies of all mestizos and mestizas remain marked by generations of violent conquest. To seek the resurrected Jesus in Galilee, among its peoples, without acknowledging their history of suffering would be to crucify the victims once again, to abandon them a second time, this time by *forgetting* their passion. Jesus refused to allow the apostles to forget what they had done to him, and that refusal to forget became the precondition for reconciliation, the precondition for new life. A Resurrection without wounds is not possible any more than it is possible to "leave behind" those relationships that have defined who we are as persons, as communities. The entire U.S. Hispanic experience—from the mestizo heritage and the experience of exile to the popular religion of our Latino communities—makes manifest those wounds and, in so doing, reveals the inescapability of our collective identity.<sup>47</sup>

The memories of crucifixion inscribed on the bodies of mestizo peoples and imprinted on our cultures, are what Johann Baptist Metz has called "dangerous memories, memories which make demands on us. . . . Every rebellion against suffering is fed by the subversive power of remembered suffering."<sup>48</sup> No amount of progress, success, or liberation ever extinguishes those memories anymore than Jesus' Resurrection extinguishes his own wounds:

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<sup>46</sup>Walter Benjamin, quoted in David Tracy, *Plurality and Ambiguity: Hermeneutics, Religion, Hope* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987) 69.

<sup>47</sup>Justo González, *Mañana: Christian Theology from a Hispanic Perspective* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1990) 40.

<sup>48</sup>Johann Baptist Metz, *Faith in History and Society: Toward a Practical Fundamental Theology* (New York: Seabury Press, 1980) 109-10.

The history of freedom remains much more and always a history of suffering. Pain, sorrow, and melancholy remain. Above all, the silent suffering of the inconsolable pain of the past, the suffering of the dead continues, for the greater freedom of future generations does not justify past sufferings nor does it render them free. No improvement of the condition of freedom in the world is able to do justice to the dead or effect a transformation of the injustice and the non-sense of past suffering. Any emancipative history of freedom in which this whole history of suffering is suppressed or supposedly superseded is a truncated and abstract history of freedom whose progress is really a march into inhumanity.<sup>49</sup>

However much we may want to "put the past behind us," however much we may hope for a Resurrection that leaves Calvary behind, to do so would be to put behind us the struggles of our own fathers and mothers, our grandfathers and grandmothers, the communion of saints who came before us and gave us birth. We, however, know that the memories of suffering will always remain a part of who we are, and who our children and grandchildren are. Like the wounds on Christ's body, the memories are the evidence of our communal identity.

The dangerous character of those memories is encountered "between" Calvary and Galilee, "between" Jesus and us, "between" Tijuana and San Diego, "between" San Juan and New York City, "between" Havana and Miami. The *memoria passionis* is "neither One nor the Other but *something else besides, in-between.*"<sup>50</sup> And *that* is precisely what makes it dangerous.

The liberative power of the Crucifixion-Resurrection lies in its affirmation of the indestructibility of communion as what defines human life. Yet that communion is not an ahistorical abstraction; it is the communion effected as Christ accompanies us on Calvary, is resurrected in the borderland, and invites us to touch his wounds, the "*herida abierta* where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds." Insofar as communion is intrinsic to resurrected life, that communion is mediated, not by the resurrected body of Jesus Christ *as such*, but, more particularly, by the interpersonal praxis that constitutes resurrected life. The communion represented by the Resurrection takes as its starting point the concrete, historical memories of suffering inscribed on the Body of Christ, and the conversion effected through the practical encounter with those wounds. Thus the epistemological privilege of the poor, of those who continue to bear the wounds even in the midst of historical progress, even in the midst of resurrection, is itself implied not only by the Crucifixion but, more specifically, by the unity of Crucifixion-Resurrection. And it is implied in a communal, or relational theological anthropology. We affirm our identity as persons, as *communio*, as Church when we walk in solidarity with the victims of crucifixion, when we

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 128-29.

<sup>50</sup>Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 219.

accompany them from Calvary to Galilee, where together we encounter the crucified and risen Christ. "Dime con quien andas y te diré quien eres."

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