

The Inclusive Community

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

June 14, 2009

Homily of Mary Scaine

Corpus Christi

Mark 14:12-16,22-26

Celebration at Ron's House

Today is the feast of Corpus Christi (Latin for Body of Christ)

The appearance of Corpus Christi as a feast in the Christian calendar was primarily due to the petitions of the thirteenth-century Augustinian nun Juliana of Liège. From her youth she claimed that God had been instructing her to establish a feast day for the Eucharist. The celebration of Corpus Christi became widespread only after Juliana had died. Corpus Christi is primarily celebrated by the Roman Catholic Church, but it is also included in the calendar of a few Anglican churches, most notably the Church of England. In the Church of England it is known as "The Day of Thanksgiving for the Institution of Holy Communion (Corpus Christi)" and has the status of a Festival. The feast was also retained in some Lutheran churches up until about 1600.

As Dick (Scaine) in his article in CORPUS Reports, **The Eucharist in an Evolutionary Perspective**, states "We are aware that Christ did not celebrate the Eucharist as we know it, at the Last Supper. Jesus lived and died a Jew. The Last Supper took place in a Jewish context, as a Passover meal. After his death, the Eucharist became a way of remembering him in his Spirit. Yet, the seeds of a future Eucharist were sewn at table that night, and then spread beyond the inner circle."

What did happen that night in that inner circle was the beginning of what we now know and call community. In [Matthew 18:20](#), Jesus said, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them,"

A prime example of this is the disciples on the Road to Emmaus. They met this stranger on the way and were amazed by his understanding of the Scriptures. As dusk came upon them, they asked him to join them at supper. It was in the breaking of the bread that they recognized him.

When Dick and I made our retreat this past Easter. We stayed at a place called the Emmaus Inn. Hanging on the entrance wall to the dining room was a picture of the last supper. I was immediately drawn to it. Why? It depicted Jesus in a Jewish setting at Passover.

A Polish artist, Bohdan Piasecki, was commissioned by a group in Ireland to do a painting that would more accurately depict a Passover meal. The dinner is set at night, with all the family present around the table, including women and children. They wear distinctively Jewish garb and eat traditional Passover food. This is the picture you see on the front of today's bulletin.

Edward Schillebeeckx, the noted theologian, sees Christ's presence as not focused on the bread and wine but focused on the community that is present. We as the Inclusive Community are the community present each and every Sunday. On the 1st and 3rd Sunday, we elect as a community to receive the body by way of intinction. As each pronounces his/her name, the community responds "You are the Body of Christ."

This sense of community was made present to Dick and me in a very personal way as we witnessed the ongoing spiritual, emotional and health struggle that Ron endured these past few months. We visited him, and celebrated with him in the warming embrace of the Inclusive Community. As we did the Liturgy on the Song of Healing this past Sunday, I did not have Rosemary as a healing balm, so I improvised and substituted Basil from my garden instead. This was a particular favorite ingredient that Ron liked in all his foods and especially in his soups. He just loved to eat! At our educational meeting, whenever he could attend from PA all of us always made sure that he got a generous bag of goodies to take home with him.

The Eucharistic table of healing and blessing was Ron's bed in the presence of his cats Hannah (who never left his bedside and Toby who kept his distance), his dear friend Loretta, and his caretaker, Ed and Pat and Nick from nearby in PA. Dick explained that the two last senses to let go were those of hearing and touch. We lovingly touched and stroked him throughout the celebration and played "The Galilee Song" words and music by Fr. Frank Andersen, a member of the Sacred Heart Missionaries, a dear friend of Michael Morwood who was a member of that community. The refrain is:

So I leave my boats behind.

Leave them on familiar shores.

Set my heart upon the deep.

Follow you again my Lord.

He loved to hear that country western beat!

Ron passed over at ten minutes after three on Wednesday morning July 10th in the loving embrace of his caretakers. It was ironic that it was the wedding anniversary of his Mom and Dad.

In our conversation with Loretta that morning, seeing that Ron was being cremated, she felt that a last farewell with him and his caretakers present would be a blessing. Therefore, Dick and I, on behalf of the Inclusive Community did a farewell blessing at the crematorium. We then celebrated Ron in the sharing of a meal together. As his caretakers, they too knew he had voracious appetite. We used part of the Gift money given to us at Christmas by the Inclusive Community. Needless to say, you were all present with us in communion in the breaking of the bread.

Where is Ron now? He is here, present in our community as we call out his name. His presence is made known in the Spirit of Life and Love in ways beyond words and images. He is here now in the breaking of the bread and as we continue to celebrate life in the ongoing dance of creation and listen to the rhythm and beat of its music.