

One Body Initiative: Week Two – Incarnation

September 14, 2020

Scripture: [John 1:1-5, 14](#)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

Commentary:

Part of a commentary on John 1:1-18 from Prof. Karl Kuhn

Finally, John's prologue, with eloquent simplicity, reveals that the Divine Word became incarnate among and within humanity: "and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (verse 14). Together, these themes help us to recognize that the extraordinary ontological claims John makes here and throughout his narrative about Jesus -- while significant on their own terms -- are inextricably connected to the claims he makes about why Jesus is sent from the Father into the world.

But in order for Jesus to serve as this conduit of God's grace and truth, he must be of God in the fullest possible sense. And, in order for the Divine Word to serve as this conduit of grace and truth, he must also become enfleshed within a human being who could walk, talk, share table, laugh, and mourn with us. More extraordinary still, he must suffer the rejection and bloody outrage of his own who choose not to know or accept him.

For John, the scandal of particularity is not just that in Jesus the Divine becomes incarnate and dwells among us. The scandal is also that the transcendent Word becomes so deeply enmeshed in our twisted affairs, that he is even willing to endure the humiliation and hatred embodied in the cross. The Word condescends to this, no, embraces this, to enlighten all those who would receive him. He comes to his own, and loses his life for them, that they too might become children of God (verses 12-13) and, like him, close to the Father's heart (verse 18).

For God so loved the world...

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1960

Full Text of the Pope Francis' Message on George Floyd from June 3, 2020

Dear brothers and sisters in the United States, I have witnessed with great concern the disturbing social unrest in your nation in these past days, following the tragic death of Mr.

George Floyd. **My friends, we cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to racism and exclusion in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of every human life.**

At the same time, we have to recognize that “the violence of recent nights is self-destructive and self-defeating. Nothing is gained by violence and so much is lost.” Today I join the Church in Saint Paul and Minneapolis, and in the entire United States, in praying for the repose of the soul of George Floyd and of all those others who have lost their lives as a result of the sin of racism. Let us pray for the consolation of their grieving families and friends and let us implore the national reconciliation and peace for which we yearn. May Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of America, intercede for all those who work for peace and justice in your land and throughout the world. May God bless all of you and your families.

(<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-06/pope-francis-usa-george-floyd-protests-no-racism-violence.html>)

Servant of God Sister Thea Bowman's 1989 address to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on her experience of being black and catholic

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2SotD6qFIA>

For further reading: an essay from Fr. Bryan Massingale

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/opinion/assumptions-white-privilege-and-what-we-can-do-about-it>

Questions for Reflection:

-How do I see other people? Do my words affirm their dignity? Do my actions treat others with respect?

-The Incarnation means that we have a shared experience with God of being human. How does this affect the way you see yourself? What effect does this have on your relationship with God? Does this have an effect on the way you pray? On your experience of suffering?

-What does it mean for your actions to affirm or deny someone's human dignity? Can you think of an example?

-Does the knowledge that Jesus was human impact the way you see others? How?

-Last week, we talked about the idea of being called. I am called to relationship with God, and my neighbor is also called to relationship with God. How can I be an instrument of the relationship between God and my neighbor? How does knowing that my neighbor is called to a relationship with God effect the way I interact with my neighbor?

-When faced with racism, especially systemic racism, it is easy to feel overwhelmed. The Prologue says this: “*The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*” This verse talks about hope that cannot be lost in darkness. Where do you see hope in the face of the darkness of racism?