

THE JOHANNINE SACRAMENTARY

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EXEGETES, theologians, and plain readers of the *NT* owe to Professor C. H. Dodd for his crowning work on John's Gospel¹ a debt not likely to be repaid in this generation by anything that will surpass it. We have the feeling, in fact, that Dodd has done much which need never be done again, and that he has established some sureties which will remain and on which it is only necessary to build. Among these I would instance the fixing of the sacramental character of John, at which Dodd has long been at work, together with Oscar Cullmann² and others.³ The preoccupation with the sacraments is by no means confined to John: Cullmann has made a convincing case for the interpretation of Mk 10:13-16 and parallels in the Synoptic Gospels as (in addition to the original historical sense of the passages) a kind of *disciplina arcani* inculcating infant baptism,⁴ and there are other evidences that John had been anticipated in his "spiritualizing" of the gospel kerygma. But it is certainly in the fourth Gospel that this tendency has come to full term and the gospel form has become a vademecum for the faithful rather than a proclamation of the good news of salvation.

This fact is to be explained by the Church's developed knowledge of its own destiny. The Pauline Epistles are eloquent testimony that the earliest days of Christianity were lived in expectation of an imminent parousia,⁵ and the Gospel of Mark, which has most faithfully preserved the primitive catechesis, in general holds to this perspective by

¹ *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: University Press, 1953).

² *Early Christian Worship* (London: S.C.M., 1953) translates the author's *Urchristentum und Gottesdienst* and its supplement in *Les sacrements dans l'évangile johannique*.

³ For example, A. J. B. Higgins, *The Lord's Supper in the NT* (London: S.C.M., 1952).

⁴ *Baptism in the NT* (London: S.C.M., 1950), esp. pp. 71 ff.

⁵ As to whether Paul shared this notion, cf. L. M. Dewailly, O.P., and B. Rigaux, O.F.M., *Les épîtres de saint Paul aux Thessaloniens* (Paris: du Cerf, 1954) p. 24: "Avec l'Église primitive, il a vécu dans l'attente. Il a certifié que le jour du Seigneur n'était point arrivé. Mais il a tenu compte de la vraisemblance d'une parousie prochaine. . . . Il a teinté son message des couleurs de son espérance. . . . Proclamer une espérance n'est point porter un jugement ni enseigner une erreur."

contenting itself with reporting rather than applying and extending the kerygma. With Matthew and Luke the change is already apparent.⁶ Here Christ is the new Moses proclaiming a new and enduring Law from a new Sinai. Luke leaves the Temple of Zachary's Jewish sacrifice a place of Christian worship, and in Acts he leads the Church from Jerusalem to Rome, whence it looks into an indefinite future. The development in Christian thinking has been, as David Stanley has called it, "from kingdom to Church." What solidified this development and confirmed it was the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., which separated Church and Synagogue forever in fact as well as in principle, and left the Church in the world with its work beginning, not ended, with no parousia but rather the reign of the Spirit, the other Advocate.⁷ When the Gospel of John was written towards the end of the first century in this fuller recognition of the Church's part in the divine economy, we correspondingly find in it a "realized eschatology" instructing the Christian how he must live in the world, with a consequent emphasis on grace, the sacraments, and the indwelling of the Trinity.⁸ For John was written "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (20:31).

⁶ Cf. H. Conzelmann, *Die Mitte der Zeit: Studien zur Theologie des Lukas* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1954); D. M. Stanley, S.J., "Kingdom to Church," *THEOLOGICAL STUDIES* 16 (1955) 1-29.

⁷ Among Catholic authors, A. Wikenhauser, *Einleitung in das NT* (Freiburg: Herder, 1953) pp. 144, 161 f., hesitantly with regard to Greek Mt, more positively with regard to Lk, is inclined to date the first and third Gospels between 70-80 A.D.

⁸ I trust that it is unnecessary to point out that, in using "realized eschatology" or in speaking of development, nothing more is meant than the normal unfolding of revelation which has occurred through Christian thinking as circumstance and providence decreed. That the Church became anything other than what her Founder intended is, apart from dogmatic considerations, unthinkable because it is opposed by the historical witness of the Scriptures. Modern study continues to show how arbitrary were the historical reconstructions of the last century according to which Pauline, let alone Johannine, Christianity was a betrayal of Christ. A fine capsule statement can be found in W. F. Albright, "The Bible after Twenty Years of Archeology," *Religion in Life* 21 (1952) 547-50, with the conclusion that "the thought content of John's Gospel reflects the Jewish background of John the Baptist and Jesus, not that of later times. Sayings and deeds of Jesus, narratives and sermons are all of one piece and cannot be separated from the person of our Lord. . . . The Gospel of John carries us straight back to the heart of Jesus. . . . There is no reason to date the Gospel after A.D. 90; it may be earlier."

The appreciation of this function of the Gospels, one of the happier fruits of Form Criticism, has claimed the attention of too few Catholic authors. There are, of course, brilliant exceptions,⁹ but while Catholic scholars—exegetes, if not theologians—have accepted with enthusiasm and even to some extent have taken the lead in the *Gattungsforschung* of the *OT*, there has been a reluctance to apply the same criteria to the *NT*. The already well-known and invaluable *A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture* may, I presume, be taken as a fair cross-section of what is in the main a conservative Catholic view of the Bible. With a few deplorable lapses, the *Commentary* handles the literary forms of the *OT* quite adequately. But if we check the paragraphs under the rubric “Form Criticism” and its allies, we will find—or so is my impression—that the aberrations of Bultmann and Dibelius loom larger in the authors’ minds than any of the positive contributions of this school of criticism. Yet what is wrong with Bultmann, when all is said and done, is not his Form Criticism but his theology and his philosophy.

For some reason there is a hesitancy about accepting the fact that the Gospels were for the first Christians precisely what they are for us, and that they were written with this purpose in mind. Though we are fond of declaiming that “the Church wrote the *NT*,” there is a reluctance to concede that the needs of the apostolic community, which were basically the same as our needs today, to some extent determined the Gospels’ form and content. Surely to recognize that at least one reason for the inclusion of the story of our Lord’s temptation immediately after that of His baptism in the catechesis was to teach that “the newly baptized Christian must be ready, like his Lord, to face immediately the onset of the Tempter,”¹⁰ does not minimize the fact that it was included also because it really happened. The same may be said for seeing Mk 2:18–22 and parallels as a story to answer the question: why do we Christians fast? To take a less certain example, could not Matthew’s modification of the words of the crowd, “they glorified the God who had given such power to men” (9:8; cf. the

⁹ On John has recently appeared an English translation of the excellent but all too brief *Revelation and Redemption*, by William Grossouw (Westminster, Md.: Newman, 1955).

¹⁰ A. E. J. Rawlinson, *St. Mark* (6th ed.; London: Methuen, 1947) p. 12.

parallels), be a deliberate accommodation, a reminder of the power of the keys in the Church? That the Apostles are "other Christs" is part of the catechesis, and it is a commonplace of theology that one aspect of the Incarnation is the exemplary value of our Lord's life.

Only by an uncritical sacrifice of tradition and sound judgment can the Gospels become simply the projection of the aspirations and imagination of the early Church. Their authorship and historical trustworthiness are, if anything, more assured today than ever before. Yet we must recognize that for their authors history as such was secondary to something far more important, that they were not written principally to provide texts for the tract *De ecclesia*. They are first and foremost—and here John is only the enlargement of a tradition already found in the Synoptics and in the oral catechesis underlying them—theological treatises. They are theology in the grand Semitic tradition of which the Pentateuch and the Book of Chronicles are earlier examples. They are, in their own manner, *Heilsgeschichte*. This means that they are selective history, history with a purpose, that their omissions may be more important than what they include. To explain away the divergences of the Synoptics by the plea that they are "in substantial accord" is to miss the whole point, since discord was in some cases what the evangelist wanted to achieve. The Synoptic and Johannine "questions" are quite as important to exegesis and theology as they are to criticism.

To make an end of it, what the evangelists *mean* by the use of the pericopes they have chosen is often of greater importance than the original sense of the narrative or saying recorded. Mk 10:13–16 can serve as a proof, if we need one, that our Lord loved children. It means more when we understand it as a parable in action concerning the spirit of the true disciple. It means still more—and I do not believe that this added meaning is of any less importance—if we can understand it as Cullmann does, as containing a liturgical formula used in baptism: a passage, then, which had been shaped to the needs of the Christian community without the sacrifice of any of its other values. No one who believes in the inspiration of Scripture can afford to make light of this meaning of the Gospels and of the research necessary to get at it. If it is what the evangelist intended to put there, it is his literal sense and therefore the teaching of the Holy Spirit. It is, in

David Stanley's words, "the induction into the *sensus plenior* of the kerygma."¹¹

The realization that there is in John so much of this quality, which Dodd is pleased to call the "Johannine irony," concealing as it does spiritual teaching under the apparently trivial details of a story, has led to the restoration of a rule of interpretation that has always remained cardinal with Catholics, that of the *analogia fidei*. It is frankly acknowledged that the fulness of John's meaning is to be seen only against the background of the belief and worship of the Church that brought it into being. And it is precisely for this reason that there is a need for Catholic scholars to interest themselves in this study. Men like Dodd and Cullmann, whose insights and erudition are prodigious, nevertheless belong to a religious tradition which has considerably obscured the origins of Christianity. That they have found so much is a tribute to their honesty and scholarly integrity,¹² but the fact remains that men for whom the religion of the early Church can be summed up as "the two sacraments of primitive Christianity" will not find all that John has put into his Gospel.

In the following pages I wish to offer a couple of suggested lines along which I believe a study could be made to reveal the complete sacramentary of the Church for which John was writing. They are suggestions only, and I offer them with all diffidence as ideas rather than as conclusions. This will not be an excursion into eisegesis. We know that the determination of "seven sacraments, neither more nor less" is a development of doctrine centuries later than the *NT*. When Cullmann concludes from his analysis of Jn 9:1-39, for example, that "in the earliest days of Christianity the act of Baptism was bound up

¹¹ David M. Stanley, S.J., "*Didachē* as a Constitutive Element of the Gospel-form," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 17 (1955) 345. The entire article is recommended to the reader who wishes a clear concept of the Gospels as "teaching" (*didachē*) in addition to "preaching" (the kerygma proper).

¹² That the early Christians had a sacramental Church and a rather developed liturgy has been largely a Protestant discovery, as far as the *NT* evidence is concerned. Here again is the curious paradox that while Protestant authors readily recognize that the great Christological poems of Col 1:15-20, Phil 2:5-11, and Eph 1:3-14 are primitive Christian liturgy (for example, cf. Charles Masson in *Commentaire du NT* [Neuchâtel: Delachaux & Niestlé] 10: *Colossiens* [1950] 104 ff.; 9: *Ephésiens* [1953] 148 ff.), we often look in vain in Catholic sources even to find the matter considered, apparently from a misplaced determination to preserve Pauline "originality."

with the laying on of hands, and in this connexion the double act of the laying on of the clay and the washing in Siloam constitutes an analogy,"¹³ there is no reason to suppose, in fact, that the Johannine Church did make a conscious separation between the two signs (which are still inseparable in Oriental rites), any more than to suppose that the Johannine Church would have defined these signs as they are defined by Peter Lombard or in the *Summa theologica*. It is quite enough to recognize that for John the laying on of hands which we see throughout Acts was, like the water, a *sēmeion*. What we would see are his other *sēmeia*.

THE ANOINTING AT BETHANY

In Jn 12:1-11 appears one of the rare parallels with the Synoptic Gospels, the record of the anointing which occurs in the passion story of Mt 26:6-13 and Mk 14:3-9. Luke, who avoids even apparent repetitions, has omitted the story in view of his similar account of an anointing in Galilee in 7:36-50.

That John has the story at all, is significant.¹⁴ As before, when he paralleled the miracle of the loaves to make it a *sēmeion* of the Eucharist, we should expect something of the same order here. Hence, we should attend closely to those points on which he diverges from the Synoptic account, to which he has otherwise adhered even verbally. The points of divergence are these: (1) In the Synoptics the event takes place two days before the Passover. Neither Mt nor Mk makes an issue of the time element, which they bring in simply to announce the coming betrayal of the Lord. John, however, specifies that the anointing took place six days before the Passover. (2) The Synoptics place the scene in the house of Simon the leper. John does not contradict this, but he relates the story to the preceding one of the raising of Lazarus by noting that Lazarus and his sisters were also present. One would get the impression, if he had only John's Gospel, that the anointing took place in Lazarus' house, though this is not stated. Lazarus reclined at table with the Lord, Martha served the supper,

¹³ *Early Christian Worship*, p. 104.

¹⁴ It will not do to say that John and the Synoptics follow "a common passion tradition." They are not more noticeably parallel in the passion than elsewhere; they agree on more facts, but the facts are presented in vastly different ways. Secondly, John has not begun his passion story, which is marked by the solemn entry into Jerusalem.

and Mary is identified as the woman of the anointing, who is anonymous in the Synoptic story. (3) In the Synoptics the anointing is of the head of Jesus, while in John it is of His feet. Here, I think, and in the events that follow from this, is the essence of John's symbolism. (4) The Synoptics say that "the disciples" were indignant at this apparent waste of precious ointment, while John specifies that the protest was made by Judas, and because he was a thief. (5) The application of the story is different in the two traditions, as we shall see.

Legault has already submitted this narrative to a Form-Critical analysis¹⁵ and has concluded that the stories in Lk 7 and Jn 12 represent mutually contaminated traditions. This may be quite valid to explain the genesis of the Johannine story; the question hinges on the larger one of the undeniable affinities between Lk and Jn. But the fact remains that John (or the disciple of John, as Legault prefers), who both knew the Synoptic tradition and is faithful to the Palestinian scene which he portrays, has nevertheless kept an anointing of the feet, "something unheard of in the Orient."

First, I think it necessary to point out that John's chronology is more likely to be symbolic than the Synoptics'. Probably both are. If the Synoptics have put the story in relation to the beginning of the passion kerygma, it is doubtless because of their interpretation of it as a symbolic preparation of Jesus for death (less obviously, as Legault would have it, because "it brings out the cupidity of the traitor Judas," since it is only in John that Judas' cupidity is featured, in anticipation of what the Synoptics have in Mt 26:14-16 and parallels). But it does not therefore follow that John is "perfectly correct" in his chronology, if by this is meant the triviality of determining one day of the week rather than another. John has put the story within his "Book of Signs" six days before the Passover, i.e., seven days before the resurrection, for the same reason that he put the first of Jesus' "signs," the miracle at the wedding feast of Cana, seven days after the first witness of the Baptist. John intends to connect the anointing with the resurrection.

This connection is apparent also from the stress on the presence of the resurrected Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, just as the story of the

¹⁵ A. Legault, C.S.C., "An Application of the Form-Critique Method to the Anointings in Galilee and Bethany," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 16 (1954) 131-45. This article may be recommended for a concise explanation of the relevance of Form Criticism to the Gospels.

raising of Lazarus had already anticipated the present one by referring to Mary as the one who anointed the Lord's feet (11:2). The raising of Lazarus is a sign of the divine life which comes through faith in Christ (11:25 f.), a manifestation of the glory of God (11:4, 40). So, I believe, is the anointing at Bethany.

Dodd hesitantly takes the anointing as a symbolic burial or designation of Jesus for burial.¹⁶ But while it is this in the Synoptics, it seems that John excludes precisely this idea. "In pouring this ointment on my body she has done it for my burial," writes Mt 26:12. According to Mk 14:8, "She has by anticipation anointed my body for burial." But John has our Lord say (v. 7): "Let her keep it for the day of my burial" (*hina eis tēn hēmeran tou entaphiasmou mou tērēsē auto*).^{16a} The meaning of this we must try to see in a moment.

The anointing is of Christ's feet. The washing of feet in Jn 13:1-20 is a sign of at least certain aspects of the Eucharist, and Higgins may be right in saying that "the answer of Jesus, 'He who has bathed has no need to wash, except his feet, but is wholly clean', means that baptism washes away sin and cannot be repeated, but that from time to time purification from post-baptismal sins in the Eucharist is necessary."¹⁷ That any such meaning is intended here, I doubt. I rather think that the anointing of the feet, whether it is a tradition contaminated by Lk 7 or deliberately connected with it by the author, has been preserved for the reference to the woman's wiping the feet dry with her hair, which in turn is the explanation for the seemingly irrelevant statement, not found in Lk, that "the house was filled with the odor of the ointment" (v. 3: *hē de oikia eplērōthē ek tēs osmēs tou myrou*).

In Jn 12:41 the author cites Is 6:1 in summing up the "Book of Signs" and explaining why Christ was rejected. Isaiah saw His glory, but the Jews loved the glory of men rather than the glory of God (v. 43). The glory of God, which is the glory of Christ, He has manifested by His signs. Is 6:1 (cf. Ez 43:5; 44:4) is, if the symbolism I suggest is correct, in parallel with Jn 12:3: *plērēs ho oikos tēs doxēs autou*. There may also be an allusion to Jer 25:10 (LXX), which lists

¹⁶ *Fourth Gospel*, p. 370.

^{16a} The *textus receptus* has *teērēken*, an obvious harmonization with the Synoptics.

¹⁷ *The Lord's Supper*, p. 84.

among the things to pass away with the Babylonian captivity the *osmēn myrou*; in Jn 6:45 and elsewhere Jeremias' prophecy of restoration is seen fulfilled in Christ's presence (Jer 31 [LXX 38]:34). The anointing, then, or indeed the ointment, is a *sēmeion* of the glory of Christ, related to His resurrection, or pointing to it. Like wine, water, and the laying on of hands, it has a relation to the grace and truth which come through Jesus Christ, not through the Law.

"Let her keep it for the day of my burial." While the word *tēreō* is not exclusively Johannine, it is preeminently so.¹⁸ When placed on the lips of the Lord it always has reference to the Johannine "realized eschatology" (ordinarily with *entolas* or *logon mou* as object). This is an additional reason to see the ointment as meaningful for the Christian life, a means of divine grace. "For the day of my burial" obviously does not refer to our Lord's physical burial; for John—alone of the evangelists—is careful to point out that such could not have been the case (quite apart from the fact that the oil was now in Mary's hair). While the Synoptics seem to presuppose that the Lord's body was simply wrapped in a linen cloth in view of His hasty burial, with the proper use of spices and ointments reserved for later, which was however precluded by the resurrection (cf. Mt 27:57 ff. and parallels), John stresses that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus did first prepare the body with a mixture of about a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes (*migma smyrnēs kai aloēs hōs litras hekaton*), and consequently that everything was done properly "as is the custom in Jewish burials" (19:40). The ointment that Mary was to keep was not for Jesus' "Jewish" burial, but that burial which is described in the following 12:23 ff., the burial of the seed which is the font of life, the *hypsoōsis* (v. 32 f.) which is both death and resurrection: the burial (*taphē*) of the Servant of the Lord (Is 53:9) which is His exaltation and glorification (52:13, *hypsothēsetai kai doxasthēsetai*). The day of Christ's burial is the day of the Church.

We already know, of course, that anointing with oil was a practice of the primitive Church. Mk 6:13 describes the Apostles anointing, evidently as an adjunct to miraculous healing,¹⁹ and Jas 5:14 f. wit-

¹⁸ Cf. R. Schnackenburg, *Die Johannesbriefe* (Freiburg: Herder, 1953) p. 87. John (if 1 Jn and Ap are included) uses the word more often than all the other NT writers together.

¹⁹ V. Taylor, *The Gospel according to St. Mark* (London: Macmillan, 1953) p. 306.

nesses to a religious rite in which anointing with oil is featured. Both Mk and Jas use the LXX *aleiphein elaiō*; the word *elaion* occurs nowhere else in the NT. Catholic tradition has constantly related the passage in Jas to the Christian sacrament of "final" anointing, as exemplified by the Council of Trent's use of it.²⁰ That a Gospel as sign-conscious as Jn should have witnessed to this same practice of the apostolic Church should not be surprising. Whether or not it did depends on the validity of the analysis above.

THE WOMAN AT CANA

Likewise, in the province of primitive Mariology we should not expect that much will be forthcoming from those who have been trained in the view that the cult of the Virgin is at least foreign, if not treason, to the Gospel. Dodd dismisses Jn 19:26 f. with these few words and a footnote: "The episode of the Mother and the Beloved Disciple is peculiar to the Fourth Gospel. Whatever its motive, it does not seem to be dictated by the Johannine theology. It may belong to a special form of the tradition."²¹ It is surprising that an author so sensitively attuned to the resonances of the Johannine narrative should have heard in such a passage as this not even a distant echo.

In Jn 2:1-11 and 19:25-27 Mary is introduced into the Gospel, and in 6:42 she is mentioned in passing. In no case is she called by name; she is always "the mother of Jesus." In both instances when Jesus addresses her, He uses the singular title "woman." Strack-Billerbeck give one instance of the use of "woman" as a title (of another's wife),²² and there is evidence of it aplenty in the NT (Jn 4:21, etc.), but it is a strange way for a son to address his mother. Catholic commentators as a rule have been occupied with maintaining that it is a title which

²⁰ DB 908 (capitulum) and 926 (canon) *de extrema unctione*. The text was used also by the first and second Councils of Lyons and the Council of Florence, but in no dogmatic decree.

²¹ *Fourth Gospel*, p. 428. A. Oepke in the thorough article on *gynē* in *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum NT* 1, 776, feels obliged to say only that "die Anrede ist keineswegs uneherbietig oder geringschätzig. Wenn aber Jesus bei Johannes seine Mutter so nennt, so ist das Sohnesverhältnis ausgeschaltet."

²² *Kommentar aus Talmud und Midrasch* 2, 401.

connotes no disrespect²²—a pertinent enough observation but hardly a positive aspect of interpretation. Johann Michl in a recent article²⁴ points out that, as *gynai* does not appear as a title in the *OT*, it was probably borrowed from Hellenistic usage, that it would, consequently, not have been a title actually used by our Lord in speaking to His mother and is, therefore, part of the Johannine symbolism.

What that symbolism is has been suggested by Mollat in *La sainte Bible de Jérusalem*. Noting that in 19:24, 28, 36 f. John has put meaningful *OT* words upon the lips of the Savior, or seen such meanings in what He did and endured, he concludes with regard to v. 26 f. that "there seems to be no doubt that the evangelist who has so faithfully examined the hidden meaning of words and deeds in the light of the Spirit here too has seen in this expression of Jesus' will something more than filial piety. It is a divine mystery, namely, the proclamation of the spiritual motherhood of Mary, the new Eve, with regard to the faithful represented by the Beloved Disciple."²⁵ Here he refers us to 15:10–15. Thus he explains his note to 2:4, where he interpreted the "woman" as an allusion to Gn 3:20: *kai ekalesen Adam to onoma tēs gynaikos autou Zōē, hoti hautē mētēr pantōn tōn zōntōn*.

I not only believe this interpretation to be correct; I fail to see how it can be avoided. From the prologue on, John's Gospel has set up *zōē* as the expression of Christ and of the divine life shared in Christ. "Because I live, you also shall live; in that day—the day of the Church—you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you" (14:19 f.). The disciple is the living Christ. As John has suppressed Mary's name to underline her common motherhood of the faithful as

²² Without intending to minimize the achievement of a great scholar I must protest the translation of Jn 2:4 and 19:26 in the Kleist-Lilly *NT*, where we read: "Leave that to me, mother!" and "Mother, this is your son." The footnote on p. 238 explains that "in modern American daily life a son is not expected to address his mother as 'woman.'" Neither in Palestinian daily life of the first Christian century was a son expected to address his mother as "woman"; therein lies the whole significance of John. If it is really necessary to prove that our Lord observed the fourth commandment, surely it can be done without a *hiqqām sōferim* no different, in principle, from what Luther or Tyndale did to the biblical text. As was recently said of the Knox Bible, this is dragoman work rather than translation. Cf. Edmund Hill, O.P., "Religious Translation," *Blackfriars* 37 (1956) 19–25.

²⁴ "Bemerkungen zu Joh. 2, 4," *Biblica* 36 (1955) 492–509.

²⁵ D. Mollat, S.J., and F. M. Braun, O.P., *L'Évangile et les épîtres de saint Jean* (Paris: du Cerf, 1953) p. 188.

mother of Jesus, mother of the living as mother of Life, he has suppressed his own name throughout his Gospel to make himself the "ideal" disciple, the sign of all the living. He is always "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (13:23; etc.), even as "the Father loves the Son" (3:35; 10:17; 15:9; etc.); love is the sign of true discipleship (8:42; 13:34; etc.) and the principle of the divine life shared by Christians (14:21, 23; etc.). It was "the disciple whom Jesus loved" who "was reclining on Jesus' bosom" (13:23: *anakeimemos en tō kolpō tou Iēsou*), even as "the only-begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, has revealed Him" (1:18: *ho ōn eis ton kolpon tou patros*).²⁶ By precisely the same process which the Synoptics use to present the Baptist as a second Elias, or Christ as a new Moses, John has shown our Lady to be the new Eve, mother of those born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Following a somewhat different tack (beginning with the "woman" of Ap 12²⁷), Cerfaux-Cambier have arrived at a very similar conclusion. They note the prevalence of Genesis throughout this scene, though as always, of course, the Apocalypse has mingled with it allusions to a variety of OT, apocalyptic, and midrashic themes. The "woman" of Ap 12 depends evidently on the picture in Is 66:7 ff., for the woman is the new Sion. Her child is given the messianic attributes of Ps 2:9. But the oracle of Gn 3:14 f. is the central theme of the vision. The woman is in pain at giving birth (v. 2; cf. Gn 3:16; the description of the woman's cry, however, is from Mi 4:10, of the *thygater Sion*); in v. 9 the dragon who is the devil and Satan is identified with the *ophis* (*ho archaios*) of Gn 3, and in v. 17 he is at war with "the rest of her seed" even as in Gn 3:15. The Apocalypse has seen this text of Genesis as the beginning of a messianic theme carried throughout, as Genesis continually parallels blessings and curses and submits the one accursed to the one blessed. One might add that the picture of the woman fleeing into the desert, "into her place," where she is nourished after her Son is taken up into heaven (vv. 6, 14), while

²⁶ The word *kolpos* is used only in these two passages by John; elsewhere in the NT only by Lk (once in Acts). Rudolf Meyer in *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum NT* 3, 824, cites from the second epistle of Clement (4, 5) an alleged logion of the Lord: *Ean ēte mei' emou synēgmenoi en tō kolpō mou kai mē poiēte tas entolas mou, apobalō hymas.*

²⁷ L. Cerfaux and J. Cambier, S.D.B., *L'Apocalypse de saint Jean lue aux chrétiens* (Paris: du Cerf, 1955) pp. 102-11.

it contains an unquestioned allusion to Israel's desert wandering and Is 66, has some affinity with Gn 21:14-21, the protection of Abraham's seed.

Certainly the woman of Ap 12 is the Church, the new Israel, bringing forth Christ as the first-born of many brothers. But in the Apocalypse an image is not exhausted by a single application.²⁸ One has only to recall the problem of the personality of the angels, or the symbolism of the stars in that book. The woman *is* the mother of the Christ, and the Apocalypse does see her against the background of Gn 3.²⁹ We cannot be persuaded that the application of the figure which has been so obvious to subsequent generations, and to which the author himself has contributed the foundation, was hidden from him alone.

The *gynē* of the Apocalypse who is the mother of the Christ is likewise the bride of the Lamb (19:7, 9; 21:2, 9 ff.; 22:17). This *OT* typology is found also in the Synoptics and in John. It is at a marriage feast that Mary first appears in John, a feast in which John sees a symbol of our Lord's whole life-work, in which the water of Judaism is replaced by the new wine of Christ. It is the first of Jesus' signs, and Mary, whom He addresses as *gynai*, assists at the inauguration. It is she who presents the petition that begins the sign. The ordinary interpretation of the scene regards our Lord's answer as only an apparent refusal, which Mary evidently recognizes as no refusal at all. Michl, by interpreting the second clause as a second question, would have us shift the emphasis of the refusal to the necessity of Mary's petition rather than place it on the substance.³⁰ In either case, her

²⁸ This principle and its application to the case at hand is the thesis of B. J. LeFrois, S.V.D., *The Woman Clothed with the Sun* (Rome: Orbis Catholicus, 1954).

²⁹ M. Meinertz, *Theologie des NT 2* (Bonn: Hannstein, 1950) 329, n. 3, will allow only an applied reference to Mary. "Denn die Farben sind eben nicht von der geschichtlichen Maria entnommen, vielmehr müssen sie erst anders gemischt, d.h. das Bild muss so gedeutet werden, dass es bei der Beziehung auf Maria gekünstelt wirkt." But there are some "Marienfarben" present. The horned Lamb of 5:6 ff. is a composite of several *OT* and apocalyptic figures; but because it has been taken whole and entire from no single one of these does not mean that it does not refer to them all.

³⁰ Michl, *op. cit. supra* n. 24, p. 506: "Was brauche ich deinen Hinweis, Frau? Ist denn meine Stunde noch nicht gekommen?" This interpretation is not new. In *L'Évangile selon saint Jean* (8th ed.; Paris: Lecoffre, 1948) p. 556, Lagrange opposes it (addenda to the 5th ed., 1936) with the objection that *oupō* cannot have this meaning. Nevertheless, some

solicitude is brought out. Is not this the act of a mother? That Mary "had apparently some special interest in the wedding" has always been remarked; not only does she present the request, she "is represented as having some kind of authority in the house."³¹ Are we really to believe that the wedding feast itself, which is most certainly of messianic significance to John, the *sēmeion* of the water and wine, and the rest, are meaningful to the Johannine theology, but that the role of Mary is not?

If there be a demonstrable connection between the passages in the Gospel and the woman of the Apocalypse,³² we may also see a continuation of the Genesis theme. Jn 19:27 echoes Gn 3:20. In 2:5 Mary speaks to the servants in the words of Gn 41:55.³³

"Clearly the sacraments mean the same for the Church as the miracles of the historical Jesus for his contemporaries" is Cullmann's summation of the significance of Cana.^{33a} What, then, of the corresponding significance of "the mother of Jesus"? If our Lady has become for John a symbol of the Church as mother of the living, even the apparently documentary detail that "the mother of Jesus was there" must be seen in a new light. The presence of Mary-the-Church at this wedding forecasts the sacramental nature of Christian marriage once the glorification of Jesus is accomplished. It is the Johannine reflection of the same regard for Christian marriage that caused Paul to find in its union a type of the union of Christ and His Church (Eph 5:25 ff.), which is also attested by the Synoptic and other *NT* traditions (cf. 1 Cor 7:10 f.) of the Lord's new word spoken on marriage.

of the Greek Fathers so interpreted it. Lagrange's argument may prove that Gregory of Nyssa's exegesis was faulty, but not that he did not know his Greek.

³¹ J. H. Bernard, *The Gospel according to St. John* in *International Critical Commentary* (New York: Scribner's, 1929) p. 73 ff.

³² In another connection Dodd, *Fourth Gospel*, p. 215, n. 3, expresses his view of the literary connection between the Gospel and the Apocalypse: "That this muddled fantasy-thinking proceeded from the same mind that produced the notably sober and rational doctrine of *pneuma* which we find in the Fourth Gospel—credat Judaeus Apella, non ego!" But even if the differences between Jn and Ap were as profound as Dodd believes, the fact remains, as he admits, that they were produced by the same religious environment and, along with some of the Pauline epistles, share some of the same ideas and images.

³³ The words of Pharaoh regarding Joseph. The theme of the Christ as a second Joseph is part of the primitive catechesis, as may be seen from Acts 7:9 ff. In this connection it is interesting to compare the description of the woman in Ap 12:1 with the details of Joseph's dream in Gn 37:9.

^{33a} *Early Christian Worship*, p. 70.

The more we understand the Johannine literary forms, and the more we penetrate the subtlety of the evangelist's mind—which must surely be approached with more of *OT* than of *NT* hermeneutica—the more likely I think we will find these conclusions. The author of Wis 16:6 f., who wrote the midrash on Num 21:4–9 and saw the brazen serpent as a *symbolon sōtērias*, was an earlier preceptor of the school of the John who wrote 3:14 ff. It is not for nothing that John is now being called the most Jewish of all the Gospels.

We must always avoid the danger of finding a significance that the author did not intend, of deserting the author's allegorism in favor of our own. It must be acknowledged, nevertheless, that not a little of the "modern" interpretation of John was long ago anticipated by so-called allegorizers, chiefly among the Greek Fathers.³⁴ This points up another matter worthy of attention, which, in fact, was urged on us in *Divino afflante Spiritu*: the reexamination of the Fathers. As Wright has pointed out, "When allegory is used, all parts of Scripture are made to say the same thing and the significance of history is set aside. . . . Properly speaking, allegory finds Biblical truth in external ideas without reference to the discipline of historical exegesis. The spiritual meaning is eternal truth unconditioned by history."³⁵ Allegorism as a principle of interpretation is thoroughly subjective, thoroughly discredited, and, as anyone knows who reads the breviary, thoroughly annoying at times. What should be seen, however, is whether *some* of the patristic exegesis which has too readily been dismissed as allegorizing might not have rested on historical principles after all.³⁶ Whatever is to be said of allegorism as a scriptural method, as a religious phenomenon it was honestly inherited.

I have made no mention of such obvious texts as Jn 20:22 f., concerning which, once again, a virtual silence prevails among those otherwise most anxious to get below the surface of John. If the recognition of John's sacramental interests does nothing more, it will, I believe, demonstrate anew how straight was the path that led from Ephesus

³⁴ It is amusing to see Dodd, *Fourth Gospel*, p. 299, n. 2, for example, forced to chide Origen for having the right exegesis for the wrong reason, i.e., a "spiritual" rather than a literal interpretation.

³⁵ G. E. Wright, *God Who Acts* (London: S.C.M., 1952) pp. 61, 65.

³⁶ Cf. the survey and bibliography in R. E. Brown, S.S., *The Sensus Plenior of Sacred Scripture* (Baltimore: St. Mary's University, 1955) pp. 34–55.

to Rome, how little he accounts Christianity who would confine it to a book, how subordinate is the letter to its spirit, how adaptable and how little fettered it is by the circumstances of one or another time, and—in a word—how like is Christianity, the Christianity of the *NT*, to the faith we have inherited from our fathers.