



Plenums

The Broken Christ on Death Row: Moving Toward Restorative Justice

Helen Prejean, CSJ

The broken Body of Christ is what Sr. Helen Prejean witnessed with the state execution of Patrick Sonnier in 1984. A broken legal and penal system allows the state to torture and murder those who are deemed “the worst of the worst.” Sr. Helen’s life as a Christian religious woman began to change course, and she has made it her life’s work to abolish the death penalty in the United States. As a natural born southern storyteller, she realized that what the state did in secret had to be exposed and then, and only then, would the heart and soul of the US begin to change in favor of abolition. Sr. Helen’s life and story are a testimony to what happens when the broken body of Christ sends us forth toward activism on behalf of justice: we become what we share. A movement from prayer to action on behalf of all those marginalized in society is the evolution of her life’s path, her own River of Fire.



Sister Helen Prejean is known around the world for her tireless work against the death penalty. She has been instrumental in sparking national dialogue on capital punishment and in shaping the Catholic Church's vigorous opposition to all executions.

Born on April 21, 1939, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, she joined the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1957. She worked as a high school teacher and served as the Religious Education Director at St. Frances Cabrini Parish in New Orleans before moving into the St. Thomas Housing Project in the early '80s.

In 1982, Sister Helen began corresponding with Patrick Sonnier, who had been sentenced to death

for the murder of two teenagers. Two years later, when Patrick Sonnier was put to death in the electric chair, Sister Helen was there to witness his execution. In the following months, she became spiritual advisor to another death row inmate, Robert Lee Willie, who was to meet the same fate as Sonnier.

After witnessing these executions, Sister Helen realized that this lethal ritual would remain unchallenged unless its secrecy was stripped away, and so she sat down and wrote a book, Dead Man Walking: An Eyewitness Account of the Death Penalty in the United States. That book ignited a national debate on capital punishment and spawned an Academy Award winning movie, a play, and an opera.

Sister Helen's second book, The Death of Innocents: An Eyewitness Account of Wrongful Executions, was published in 2004; and her third book, River of Fire: My Spiritual Journey, in August, 2019.

Living as a Eucharistic People

John Thomas Lane, SSS

How do we take our life, our brokenness, and recognize the presence of Christ in others? We are on our own Emmaus Journey. We are called to live the Mass, serve the liturgy and witness as a disciple of Christ. We will explore the Eucharistic spirituality that the Mass offers us as we make it more part of our lives and our ministry in service to the Body of Christ.



Blessed Sacrament Father Lane currently pastors his home parish, Saint Paschal Baylon, in Highland Heights, Ohio. He has degrees in music, education, divinity and liturgy. He has served as a diocesan director of

worship (Salt Lake City), on the SWLC and FDLC boards and also in vocation ministry. He began serving as a columnist for Emmanuel Magazine in 1998. He authored Guide for Celebrating Worship of the Eucharist Outside of Mass, Daily Prayer 2019, and was a collaborator with Sourcebook for Seasons (2012, 2013, and 2017) by LTP as well as other periodical articles over the years. Father Lane professed religious vows in 1988 and was ordained as presbyter in 1992.



Christ of the Fringes

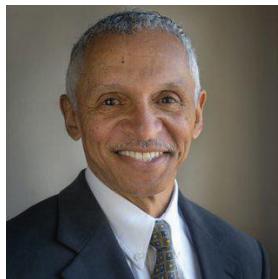
Ansel Augustine & Richard Cheri

Pope Francis has often told us that Christ can be found on the fringes (peripheries) of society. It is there that we discover how our society is BROKEN. It is when we encounter the BLESSED people on the fringes, that we tend to encounter Christ himself. It is also on these populations on the fringes, that Christ has SENT us, not to save, but to encounter and journey, to be saved. In this workshop Richard Cheri and Dr. Ansel Augustine will share their unique experiences as Black Catholics from New Orleans and how this has impacted their faith and how their respective communities and demographics challenge the Church to be One Body of Christ.



Dr. Ansel Augustine is the Executive Director of Cultural Diversity and Outreach for the Archdiocese of Washington. He is the former Director of the Office of Black Catholic Ministries for the Archdiocese of New Orleans. Previously he

served as the Associate Director/Coordinator of Black Youth & Young Adult Ministry for the CYO Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office. He is also on the C&E Faculty of the Institute for Black Catholic Studies at Xavier University of Louisiana. Ansel has served on the board of directors for the National Catholic Young Adult Ministry Association (NCYAMA) and the National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM). He has worked in Campus Ministry at Loyola University New Orleans, Xavier University of Louisiana, and St. John's University in Queens, NY. He began his career in ministry over 20 years ago when he became the youth minister at his home parish of St. Peter Claver in the Treme area of New Orleans, which he helped to rebuild following hurricane Katrina. He has presented workshops and keynotes around the country and has written various pieces related to ministry. Ansel has worked in prison ministry for over 25 years in various capacities. He is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. the Knights of Columbus, the Knights of Peter Claver, and the Wild Tchoupitoulas (Black Masking) Mardi Gras Indians. He is also an Associate Member of the Sisters of the Holy Family in New Orleans.



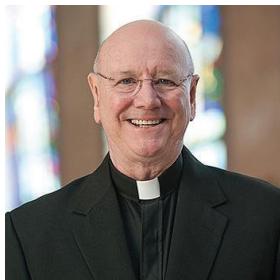
Richard Cheri lives with his wife Cynthia, and son, Richie, in Montz, Louisiana, near his place of birth, New Orleans. Richard has earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, a Master of Arts in Theology and a Master of

Science in Teaching Mathematics. Formerly an adjunct professor of theology at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans, a mathematics professor at St. Joseph Seminary College in St. Benedict, Louisiana, a member of the faculty at the Xavier University's Institute for Black Catholic Studies and a high school teacher (retired May 2018), Richard is currently an adjunct professor of mathematics at Loyola University in New Orleans and South Central Louisiana Technical College. He also serves as the Director of Liturgy and Music at Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church, the coordinating director of the Archdiocese of New Orleans Gospel Choir, and the Executive Director of the Lyke Foundation which sponsors the Archbishop James Patterson Lyke Liturgical Conference. He has toured with the Moses Hogan Chorale and is a composer, arranger, and producer with World Library Publications, a division of GIA.

Singing the Lord's Song in Time of Trouble: How can the Eucharist be a celebration of reconciliation, hope and joy?

John Baldovin, SJ

In these tumultuous times, we look to the liturgy for guidance, inspiration, and strength. How can our celebrations let Christ's presence work in us and shine forth in our world today?



Fr. Baldovin has taught at Fordham University, the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, and, since 1999, at Weston and now BC's STM. He has also been visiting professor at The University of Notre Dame and St. John Vianney National Seminary in Pretoria, South Africa. He served on the advisory committee for the

John F. Baldovin is Professor of Historical and Liturgical Theology at the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry. He is a priest of the New York Province of the Society of Jesus. He received his BA from the College of the Holy Cross, an MDiv from Weston School of Theology, and an MA, MPhil and PhD from Yale University.

Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy of the USCCB (1989-1993) as well as the advisory committee of the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) from 1994-2002. His fields of expertise are the history and theology of the liturgy, sacramental theology and the theology of ministry ordained and lay.

Fr. Baldovin has a number of presentations with Now You Know Media, the latest of which, The History of the Mass, has recently been released as a DVD.

His latest books are Living Bread, Saving Cup: Understanding the Mass (Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), Reforming the Liturgy: A Response to the Critics (Liturgical Press, 2008) and Catholic Sacraments, edited with David Turnbloom (Paulist Press, 2015). He has also co-edited a commentary on the revised Order of Mass with Mary Collins, Edward Foley, and Joanne Pierce (2009).