

5-2017

2017 Faculty Summer Seminar - The Message of Matthew

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CENTER FOR CATHOLIC STUDIES

2017 Faculty Summer Seminar



THE MESSAGE OF MATTHEW

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WITH SUPPORT OF THE
THE TOTH/LONERGAN ENDOWED CHAIR
IN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

MAY 24–26, 2017



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CATHOLIC STUDIES

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

2017 FACULTY SUMMER SEMINAR

CO-SPONSORED BY THE CENTER FOR VOCATION AND SERVANT LEADERSHIP
WITH SUPPORT OF THE TOOTH/LONERGAN ENDOWED CHAIR IN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

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ABOUT THE FACILITATOR

Fr. Pablo Gadenz

*Associate Professor of
Biblical Studies*

Fr. Gadenz has been a faculty member in the Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology since 2008. He received his licentiate in Sacred Scripture (S.S.L.) from the Pontifical Biblical Institute and his doctorate in biblical theology (S.T.D.) from the Pontifical Gregorian University. He regularly teaches courses on the Synoptic Gospels and is the author of a forthcoming commentary on the Gospel of Luke (Baker Academic).

THE MESSAGE OF MATTHEW

The Gospel of Matthew has played a significant role throughout history in teaching the Christian message. Its memorable presentation of the deeds and words of Jesus includes the Sermon on the Mount, the Beatitudes, the Our Father and the Golden Rule. It is the Gospel of the kingdom and of the Church. It also serves as a bridge between the Old and the New Testaments. This seminar will explore the background, themes, and impact of Matthew's Gospel. It will be of special interest to Core faculty teaching the Journey of Transformation.

Since 1998, the Center for Catholic Studies has provided the opportunity for faculty to reflect in depth on topics central to the Catholic intellectual tradition. This seminar is open to all administrators and faculty. Faculty participants who write a short response-essay will receive a stipend of \$300. These essays will be collected and made available online at <http://scholarship.shu.edu/catholic-studies/>.



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Center for Catholic Studies
2017 Faculty Summer Seminar

THE MESSAGE OF MATTHEW

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The Gospel of Matthew: What Could Science Educators Learn Today

“They’ve got eyes, but they don’t really see. They’ve got ears, but they’re not listening.”¹

Teaching is an endeavor of the heart. Educators are bestowed with the responsibility not to merely communicate facts but to cultivate their audiences; teach them the true meaning of their message and show them that learning is a life-long experience. The more complicated and significant an educator’s message is, the heavier the responsibility placed upon his shoulders.

God’s word in the Bible is probably the most important message humanity had to accept and understand. It is, thus, not surprising that Jesus Christ was the greatest teacher who ever taught, as stated by the Mormon leader, President Spencer W. Kimball.² In the book of Matthew, a Gospel that contains Narrative History, Genealogy, Parables, Sermons, and some Prophetic Oracles, Matthew reveals the Lord Jesus as the Messiah and the King of Jews, gives an account of his life and his ministry, describes His death and resurrection, and presents the truth of the “Good News.” Aside from the historical and spiritual value of this Gospel, Matthew’s book gives us meaningful insight on the teaching style often employed by Jesus to captivate His audiences and effectively communicate his message.

By reading the Gospel, it becomes obvious that Jesus’ favorite teaching tool was the use of parables. The word “parable” comes from the Greek *paraballo*, which means “to set beside” or “to compare.”³ A parable, therefore, is a simple story in which the narrator compares the common experiences of his listeners to some divine truth. Depending upon his audience, Jesus employed primarily two types of parables: “Parables of instruction” during which the Savior taught basic Gospel principles, such as faith, repentance, and forgiveness, and “parables of rebuke” which the Savior directed towards those who had ill-will for him.

Parables are drawn from everyday life so on first look it would seem that Jesus used them in order to make it easier for his listeners to understand his message. However, Matthew 13:10-17 states that Jesus did not actually expect people to understand immediately what he was saying. It required careful consideration and analysis of his words in order to get to the bottom of his message. The meaning of parables is never too obvious, and indeed, the purpose of the parables is not to settle issues, but to challenge us to think more deeply about them. If one thinks they know the meaning of a parable at first glance, chances are they have missed the point entirely! Matthew’s Gospel includes many of Jesus’ famous parables, including His comparison of “the kingdom of Heaven to a mustard seed,” “the Parable of the Strong Man,” and “the Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard,” among others.⁴ All parables seem easy to grasp, at first, but require careful analysis and philosophical discussion before successfully unraveling their true meaning.

The use of parables as a preferred teaching approach may, thus, leave one rather perplexed. Why choose an unclear method to pass a message? Was Jesus setting us up for failure? Even His own disciples asked Him: “Why speakest thou unto them in parables?” He responded: “Because it

is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them, it is not given.”⁵ Parables were a common cultural form of communication among all people, including religious leaders. Jesus spoke in parables in part because He spoke with authority but most importantly he did it because he wanted to make His message clear to all, but reveal its true meaning only to those who understood those principles and were prepared to receive them. Although there is normally one original interpretation of the elements in a parable, there may be many principles and applications that can be drawn from it. Elder Merlin R. Lybbert said: “The beauty of the parables of the Lord is that they have many applications, and thus, their teaching value is unending.”⁶

Discovering how to interpret and apply the parables of Jesus is essential to getting the most out of them. Understanding the effectiveness of such a teaching strategy can prove very valuable to science professors today. The inherent complexity of science calls for innovative teaching approaches. Parables can be substituted with “cases” and “problems” with clear statements but interweaving solutions. Studying science is a profound and challenging endeavor which, similar to the exercise of our spirit, goes beyond mere facts and numbers. Deep understanding and application of everyday life is essential to make any field of science meaningful and a case-based learning approach can do exactly that! Just like the audiences of Jesus were challenged by his teachings two thousand years ago, students today can be “forced” to develop skills in analytical thinking and reflective judgment by reading, discussing, and deciphering complex, real-life scenarios. A science teacher should not merely communicate facts, but rather create an educational experience where broad concepts are applied to concrete examples. This type of pedagogy would allow students to investigate and learn with enthusiasm. This style of learning will allow students to become more involved in the subject matter, enable further development of important concepts, and encourage problem-solving and synthesis skills. This is particularly important for students in the healthcare fields, as their future professions depend on collaboration and communication with their peers for effective decision making.

The parables Jesus used in His teachings had a time-release effect; they planted seeds and sprouted later. People would remember these parables, discuss them, and try to figure out what they meant. In a similar fashion, presentation of cases in science classes will have a significant impact long after the class is complete. Elder Bruce R. McConkie claimed that parables are a call to investigate the truth and learn more in areas that are “dimly viewed.” Similarly, scientific cases would significantly advance student knowledge and understanding within their field of study. I believe that through such pedagogy, students can walk away from any scientific discipline with lessons that will serve them well in their future professional endeavors in the healthcare field and beyond.

¹ Matt. 13:10.

² Edward L. Kimball, *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball* (Bookcraft: Utah, 1982), p.11.

³ Shmoop Editorial Team. (2008, November 11). *The Parables in Gospel of Matthew*. Retrieved June 22, 2017 from <http://www.shmoop.com/matthew-gospel/parables.html>.

⁴ Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. Frederick William Danker, 3rd ed. (University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 2001), p.82.

⁵ Matt. 13:10-11.

⁶ “A Latter-day Saint Samaritan,” (Ensign: UK, 1990), p.82.

JIM DALY

The Message of Matthew

In his book, *Thank You for Being Late*, Thomas Friedman writes about the need to recognize and address the acceleration of life as we know it. We have become exhausted by the rapid changes around us and our increasingly busy lives that follow. He recalls a time when Twitter was a sound and the cloud was something in the sky.¹ It was in such a context that the Seminar on The Message of Matthew was most welcome.

For several hours each day, we were able to become immersed in the Gospel of Matthew. Classes were over, grades had been entered, and graduation an already rapidly fading memory.

Seminar participants were challenged to reflect on the meaning of Matthew within their professional life on campus. Central to those in The College of Education and Human Services is the concept of caring. Responsibilities include not only caring for one another in classrooms at every level but caring for communities, the environment and global challenges that know no borders. Caring is often cited as an essential attribute for effective teaching.²

Caring, mercy and other themes addressed in Matthew are increasingly at risk in public schools. In his book, *Defying Standardization*. Christopher Tienken examines the movement towards top-down mandated curriculum and assessments. In what he describes as an environment rife with misinformation and incorrect conclusions and use of data, the role of public schooling is once again under attack. The civic mission of the schools, the civic imperative behind much of the move to create public schools, is increasingly marginalized by the focus on global economic competition. Regimentation increasingly becomes the norm and students can be traced throughout their school career by assessment programs prepared by international corporations.³ These international corporations have vast sums of money to illustrate the need for, the value of, and the results of their instruments. The slick digital and hard copy advertising and assessment reports are difficult to refute for organizations or individuals without access to the same resources. As the classic study by Rist demonstrates, as academic data begins to accumulate it outweighs knowledge of students as individuals, and becomes a foundation for consequences made based on “evidence.”⁴

Corporate needs, not those of the young, drive the system. Ravitch points out that President Obama sided with economic interests in his education agenda. Big data was seen as providing the answer to all of the problems schools faced. Particularly in urban settings, Catholic schools had an excellent record of educating poor and minority children. They modeled caring in many ways. Political decisions embraced corporate and foundation preferences to fund marketplace options.⁵ Monies and policies spent pursuing this agenda have helped to marginalize and diminish those schools.

There is a need to care about changes in society. Technology and science impact attitudes and behaviors. CRISPR tools have been the source for new companies and technologies addressing how to meet human needs and desires.⁶ As the potential for gene editing leads to breathless

enthusiasm and clinical trials across the globe, the consequences are not well known. Scientists move beyond eliminating diseases and improving health to designing embryos possessing desired skills. Where will the examination of these forces occur? In a media environment poisoned by false news? In a social media frenzy where bits of information go viral, distort perceptions, and are forgotten as the next outrage surfaces? Caring about these issues in schools is appropriate. This becomes more difficult where the focus is increasingly on preparation for standardized tests and getting the high scores that move students into better economic positions in the future.

Artificial Intelligence, big data and surrendering of decision making to algorithms based on them, pose significant challenges. Olivia Solon recently wrote that Big Data is fueling a new religion.⁷ Algorithms make decisions, often without our knowing, and their outcomes are seen as authentic. She suggests few outside of Silicon Valley can understand the impact or anticipate the consequences as authority shifts to the non-human world. A recent article pointed out that Artificial Intelligence is no longer a programming task but a condition in which it is capable of learning, continuously developing itself without human interference or direction.⁸

The shift seems intriguing and ominous: algorithms as religion, Big Data as God. Power and authority embedded in an artificial context. These forces are already opaquely reshaping the world. Swarm intelligence and its use are growing,⁹ and Hive mentality is increasingly researched.¹⁰ Recent National Geographic specials on the topics demonstrate growing interest in the lay public.

The teachings of scripture seem to be a foundation from which students can examine the host of new issues facing humans today. These could be well examined in schools. Curricula, philosophies, and approaches can be focused on caring. Scripture offers guidelines on how to reflect on modern situations. Matthew's Gospel offers suggestions for dealing with others, of building community, and of a caring community. In schools, a caring setting requires a commitment to academic excellence, to recognizing one's responsibilities for others, and to regular reflection on the exponential changes occurring around us. That framework can guide critical examination of what it means to be human, and how to live well, in the 21st century.

¹ Friedman, T.L., *Thank You for Being Late. An Optimist's Guide to Thriving in the Age of Acceleration*, (Farrar, Strauss and Giroux: New York, 2016), pp. 25-27.

² Noddings, Nel., *The Challenge to Care in Schools*, 2nd ed, (Teachers College Press: New York, 2015).

³ Tienken, Christopher H., *Defying Standardization. Creating Curriculum for an Uncertain Future*, (Rowman and Littlefield: Lanham, Maryland, 2017), pp. 107-113.

⁴ Rist, Ray, "Student social class and teacher expectations: The self-fulfilling prophecy in ghetto education." *Harvard Educational Review* 40.3, (1970), pp. 411-451.

⁵ Ravitch, Diane, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System. How Testing and Choice Are Undermining Education*, (Basic Books: NY, 2010), pp. 183-186.

⁶ "What Lies Ahead: 49 Trends That Will Shape the Very near Future," *Wired*, (Feb 2017), p. 55.

⁷ *Wired*. Solon, O., "The God Complex. How Big Data Will Fuel a New Religion," *Wired*, (March 2017), pp. 18-19.

⁸ Helbing, D., Frey, B. S., Gigerenzer, G., Hafen, E., Hagner, M., Hofstetter, Y. & Zwitter, A., "Will Democracy Survive Big Data and Artificial Intelligence," *Scientific American*, (February, 25, 2017), pp. 3-5.

⁹ Rosenberg, Louis, "Artificial Swarm Intelligence, a Human-in-the-loop approach to AI," *AAAI*, (2016).

¹⁰ Kroski, Ellyssa, "The hive mind: Folksonomies and user-based tagging." *InfoTangle Blog*, December, 2005.

The Message of the Gospels of St. Matthew for Today

The early Christian church examines the Gospel of St. Matthew and contemplates the life of Christ in a unique way. It is the Gospel of the Kingdom. The word, “kingdom” appears over fifty times in the Gospel. For St. Matthew, the kingdom of heaven is referred to as, the ancient kingdom of David. The attraction to this Gospel is evident for the following reasons¹. Matthew was the first Gospel published by one of the twelve apostles. The Gospel is well written and organized with a clear detailed message. It provides us with a portrayal of Jesus including His message and trials as He deals with the path that he must pursue. Matthew illustrates the relationship between the Old and New covenant, which is done by providing the early Christians instructions on what it meant to live as the messianic people of God, which was different from living according to the liturgical traditions of Israel. These reasons seem to make it clear that Matthew’s Gospels add to understanding Christianity and the message of Christ’s mission.

Most scholars agree that the Gospels of St. Matthew, were written by St. Matthew, according to the events that occurred. There are those that question the influence of the Gospels of St. Mark on Matthew’s Gospels. Some scholars feel that St. Matthew gained a further understanding of Jesus from St. Mark and therefore feel that perhaps, the Gospels of St. Mark were written before St. Matthew’s Gospels. There have been questions about these thoughts, but St. Matthew was a follower and companion of Jesus and was witnessed to the message of the Messiah.

Today, research and scholarship cannot hide from the problems that are observed from St. Matthew. Contemporary scholars seek the truth and interpretation from all resources to provide an informed perspective to ponder. Therefore, what we know about St. Matthew is important to consider. He was a Jewish Christian who was familiar with Hebrew. Not only did he write in Greek, in the Semitic style, but quotes from the Old Testament are translated directly from Hebrew.² There have been hundreds of citations and verbal parallels to the Jewish Scriptures embedded in the text of the first Gospel of St. Matthew.³ Matthew incorporates religious traditions in his writings. From these various perspectives, the Gospel of St. Matthew comes from a Jewish Christian author, who has a cultural and religious background about the knowledge of the language, writings, and traditions of Israel. As a Jewish disciple of Jesus,⁴ and being a tax official in Galilee, he would have been conversant in Greek as well as the Semitic language of Palestine and fits the profile of the evangelist, according to most scholars. Yet we know very little about St. Matthew.

Christian scholarship has historically maintained that Matthew’s Gospels were written for a Palestinian Christian audience.⁵ The Jewish perspective seems to point in this direction because Matthew originally wrote his Gospel in a Semitic language.⁶ Matthews’s largest audience was located in Alexandria, Egypt. The majority of modern scholars think that the Gospels of Matthew were for a community of Jewish and Gentile Christians near the Syrian City of Antioch. Antioch had a large Jewish population living near the Gentiles⁷ and was known for their acceptance of Gentiles. In the Acts of the Apostles,⁸ it mentions that a group of Jewish Christians fled from

Jerusalem to Antioch and reached out to the Gentiles. Matthew's Gospels also refer to the authority of Simon Peter.⁹ This is important to note since Peter not only ministered in Antioch¹⁰ but according to an ancient tradition, served as bishop in the city before coming to Rome.¹¹ St. Ignatius, the bishop of Antioch, in the early second century, was one of the first to use the Gospel of Matthew in his writing.¹²

Scholars agree that the Gospels of St. Matthew were written in the first century AD. There have been many interpretations of the dates of these Gospels. Three critical issues are involved with Matthew's Gospels, which are, the synoptic problem,¹³ the fall of Jerusalem, and the Church's relationship with Judaism in the first century. The first synoptic problem is that Mark was the first Gospel written and that Matthew and Luke made use of Mark's gospel when composing their accounts. In Matthew's Gospel, there is reference to the conquest of Jerusalem¹⁴ and the demolition of the temple,¹⁵ which took place in AD 70 when the Romans marched on the Jewish capital and leveled the sanctuary. Some scholars suggest there was a tension between Jesus and Judaism. They also feel Matthew and his followers were in a similar situation with the Jewish community and targets of persecution by Jewish authorities.

The Gospel of St. Matthew presents us with Jesus the Teacher and allows us to follow His words. We observe him teaching the disciples with the challenges and beginnings of Christianity while other times we observe the Jesus reaching out to sinners with a call to repentance. This dual focus is especially important for Catholic education and understanding. Matthew teaches us to read and think about the Bible with reference to Jesus. Matthew clearly recognized that our understanding of the mission of the Messiah was important to discover God's plan in our lives. As in any area of scholarship and research, the foundation of knowledge and the perception of the events from other sources provides a greater understanding of our ultimate goals in life. The Gospels of St. Matthew illuminates the life of Jesus Christ while leading us to appreciate the beginnings of Christianity.

¹ Mitch, C. and Sir, E., *The Gospels of Matthew*, (Catholic Commentary of Sacred Scripture, 2010).

² Mitch, C. and Sir, E., *The Gospels of Matthew*, (Catholic Commentary of Sacred Scripture, 2010).

³ Vatican II's *Declaration on the Relation of the Church to non-Christian Religions*, (*Nostra Aetate*, 1965), p 4.

⁴ Gospels of St. Matthew, *The Holy Bible*, (The New American Bible, Mt 9:9; 10:3).

⁵ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies 3.1.1* (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 3.24.6).

⁶ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies 3.1.1* (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 3.24.6).

⁷ Matthew 24:14; 26:13; 28:19-20.

⁸ Acts 11:19-26.

⁹ Matthew 10:2; 14:22-23; 16:13-20; 17:24-27.

¹⁰ Gal 2:11-17.

¹¹ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 3.36.2.

¹² Matthew 2:2.

¹³ Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

¹⁴ Matthew 22:7.

¹⁵ Matthew 24: 1-28.

NANCY ENRIGHT

Servant Leadership, According to Matthew

The Seminar on Matthew's Gospel, conducted by Father Pablo Gadenz in May 2016, covered such a wide array of meaningful topics that it might seem difficult to select only one. However, as I gave the topic some thought, I realized one idea stood out among all the others—the completely radical inversion of the idea of leadership conveyed by Jesus to his disciples, particularly as portrayed in Matthew's Gospel. This idea completely subverts traditional forms of leadership and must, if we are going to be truly what we claim to be—a Catholic university, radically alter the way we train our students to be, as it says in our mission statement, “leaders,” in our troubled world, which very much needs the model of servant leadership clearly outlined by Jesus in Matthew's Gospel.¹

Father Gadenz pointed out a telling incident regarding leadership in the account of the mother of the sons of Zebedee coming to Jesus in order ask, or perhaps more accurately, to demand: “Declare that these two sons of mine will sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom.”² In Mark's Gospel, the request is made by James and John themselves.³ There is no contradiction here, of course, as the request of the mother clearly reflects the desire of the sons, and the other disciples, in both cases, are annoyed not at the mother but at her two sons. Jesus is not offended by the request but uses it as a teaching moment regarding true leadership in the kingdom of God. In both cases, he addresses this teaching to the disciples, James and John, themselves, though, no doubt, their mother stood there, listening with interest. Jesus asks them, “Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?” And when they reply, “We are able,” he assures them: “You will indeed drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left, this is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.”⁴

Perhaps this answer satisfies or, moreover, baffles the brothers and their mother, but the other ten disciples are indignant. Again, Jesus is not offended by their anger, though it surely must have grieved him to be having this whole conversation just after he has revealed to them what is about to happen to him: “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death; then they will hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified; and on the third day he will be raised.”⁵ However, gently, he explains the difference between leadership in his kingdom and that of the world: “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.”⁶ There can be no “lording it over” others in the kingdom; once again, though he has just mentioned it a few moments before, he reiterates that he is about “to give his life a ransom for many.”

In Luke's Gospel this explanation of the difference from the world's leadership that Jesus wants from his followers is not specifically linked to James and John, or their mother, but simply addressed to all the disciples, who are described as having a “dispute” as to which of them “was

to be regarded as the greatest.”⁷ Perhaps this is a recounting of the same story, with the specific names of the disciples left out, or, given human nature, perhaps the same kind of disagreement has arisen again. In this case, along with the same explanation of the radical difference between the leadership he desires among his followers and that of the world, Jesus also links the teaching to his assurance of his love for the disciples and his high plans for *all of them*. He tells them, “You are those who have stood by me in my trials, and I confer on you, just as my Father has conferred on me, a kingdom, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”⁸ Like a mother gently calming a fight among jealous siblings, Jesus assures the disciples of his love and glorious plans for all of them. Yes, they will, all of them, rule, but it will be in his kingdom, fully realized, and not of this world.

This kingdom, as James and John and their mother are told in Matthew’s gospel, is reached, not through the world’s methods of domination or violence, but through suffering, the “baptism” Jesus mentions as having to undergo himself and predicts that the disciples also will have to undergo. In fact, all the disciples do experience great suffering, martyrdom (or at least the willingness to be martyrs) for the sake of this new kind of kingdom. They—eventually!—come to understand the kind of leadership to which they have been called. Father Gadenz explained how Matthew underscores this powerful point about the willingness to suffer as being central to the new kind of leadership to which Jesus calls his followers in another reference later in the gospel. The next time the mother of the sons of Zebedee is mentioned is at the foot of the cross, where she accompanies Mary, the mother of Jesus, and a few other women, along with John; tellingly, the phrase she had used to describe the desired place for her sons is mentioned again, very differently: “Then two bandits were crucified with him, *one on his right and one on his left* [emph. Mine].”⁹ I had not noticed this connection before, and it is one of the most powerful insights into leadership given in the New Testament. If we are to stand with Jesus in leadership, we must be willing to serve to the point of death. The thieves were not even disciples, but they hold these places of honor, so to speak, and one of them—who repents of his sins—is assured by Jesus of a place in heaven, “today.”¹⁰

So how does this apply to our students, who, as our mission statement says, “are prepared to be leaders in their professional and community lives in a global society”? The implications of Jesus’ words on what he wants from us in this regard are huge. The term “servant leadership” is not simply a catchy phrase or buzz word; it is essential to an understanding of what it means to be a leader according to the teaching of Jesus, and it must be deeply integrated into the kinds of leadership we practice among ourselves and teach to our students. It is a high challenge—and, as it was for the apostles, it is all too easy for us to miss it. But, as with them also, Jesus’ love and mercy are with us as we struggle toward the goal.

¹ *New Revised Standard Version Bible: Catholic Edition*, copyright © 1989, 1993 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

² Matthew 20:20.

³ Mark 10:35.

⁴ Matthew 20:22-23.

⁵ Matthew 20:18-19.

⁶ Matthew 20:15-28

⁷ Luke 22:24.

⁸ *Oxford Annotated Bible*, Fully Revised Fourth Edition, New Revised Standard Version, with the Apocrypha. Ed. Michael D. Coogan. (Oxford University Press: New York, 2001).

⁹ Matthew 27:38.

¹⁰ Luke 23:43.

ROBERT FARACI

**Repentance:
A *Sine qua non* of the Embrace of God's Mercy as Seen in the Gospel of Matthew**

Jesus began to proclaim this theme: "Reform your lives. The kingdom of heaven is at hand."¹

[W]hile Jesus was at table in Matthew's home, many tax collectors and those known as sinners came to join Jesus and his disciples at dinner. The Pharisees saw this and complained to his disciples. "What reason can the Teacher have for eating with tax collectors and those who disregard the law?" Overhearing the remark, he said: "People who are in good health do not need a doctor; sick people do. Go and learn the meaning of the words: 'It is mercy I desire and not sacrifice.' I have come to call, not the self-righteous, but sinners."²

Discussion of the meaning and conditions of *mercy* has received renewed impetus since Pope Francis's announcement on March 13th, 2015 of an Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy extending from December 8th, 2015 to November 20th, 2016, and the publication of his Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* following two synods of bishops gathered in Rome in 2014 and 2015 to deliberate on the themes of marriage and the family.³ Certain parts of the Exhortation's eighth chapter have raised to fever pitch controversies that precede its publication by decades regarding the discipline of the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist in relation to Holy Matrimony and the Church's teaching on the indissolubility of sacramentally valid marriages. Those same parts have been used by a number of bishops, individually and by agreement in bishops' national conferences, to claim magisterial justification for both already-established and newly-instituted sacramental practices that violate perennial Church teaching and introduce an untenable divorce between doctrine and practice.

Due to space constraints, it is not possible to delve into the controversy here, but anyone familiar with it will grasp my partisanship in the way I have chosen to describe it. (I would argue that I am a partisan of authentic Catholicism.) The point I wish to make is that a resolution to the controversy hinges on an authentically Catholic understanding of God's *mercy*. To the Catholic mind, which is the mind of Christ Himself, God's mercy is a wholly-unmerited release from the strict requirements of His justice in response to personal sin through the sheer gift of an opportunity for the sinner to repent of her sin, have it forgiven and removed by God, be reconciled with Him, and enter upon an itinerary of conversion and sanctification leading to the perfection of an eternal participation in the life and mutually self-donating love of the Blessed Trinity. Genuine repentance requires genuine sorrow for one's sin as an offense against God, making amends for it insofar as is possible, renunciation of it, and a sincere (even if fragile) resolution not to commit the sin again. God's mercy is never a free pass on or divine wink at unrepented sin. Mercy may certainly begin with the actual grace of a concrete offer of opportunity to a person in sin, an invitation to turn to the Lord in repentance; but, without repentance, the sinner rejects the offer of mercy, remains in her sin, and may even compound it

through sacrilegious reception of the Sacraments. If the sinner is guilty in the eyes of God of mortal sin, she cannot possibly bear sanctifying grace in her soul and does not participate in the holiness of the Trinity. If the sinner dies in this state, there is no further opportunity for repentance; and, in the face of His justice, her separation from God is eternal. Hell is a risk that Christ warns about no less than fifteen times in the Gospels.

Matthew's Gospel confirms the above rendition of the Church's teachings on the inextricable connection between mercy and repentance, as is seen readily from the two citations that open this essay. From the beginning of His public preaching, Christ urges repentance in view of the imminent arrival of the Kingdom. In His desire for the salvation of all persons, He reaches out to sinners with merciful love, but with no more desire for them to remain sinners than a true physician would have for the sick she treats to remain sick. Christ's cure for the sinner does not permit persistence in sin, but rather prescribes the conversion, repentance, *metanoia* (change of heart and mind) that He preaches from the start.

The element of repentance as a *sine qua non* of the acceptance and reception of God's mercy in Christ can be discerned in narratives in Matthew's Gospel as well as in accounts of Christ's teachings. In 12: 1-8, the disciples of Jesus, picking through standing grain on a Sabbath, have repented of the pride that leads to futile reliance on their own efforts to follow the Mosaic Law to achieve salvation and opened their hearts and minds to recognize in Jesus "something greater than the Temple" and "the Lord even of the Sabbath."⁴ Jesus invites the Pharisees to do likewise. In 15:21-26, the Canaanite woman pleading with Jesus for her daughter's healing foregoes all prideful claims of personal merit and instead embraces and publicly proclaims her lowly status outside the fold of the Chosen People and puts faith exclusively in Jesus's goodness and mercy.⁵ In 17:14-20, the failure of the disciples' efforts to expel a demon from the possessed boy belies their insecure and self-conscious reliance on their own works and status as Jesus's disciples or their doubt of God's power or mercy, which exhausts their perseverance.⁶ The parallel passage in Mark's Gospel highlights also the limited faith of the boy's father and illustrates a progression of repentance under grace from doubt and weak trust rooted ultimately in pride: "I do believe! Help my lack of trust!"⁷

The requirement to turn away from sin by exercise of the will under grace is thus critical to the dynamics of true mercy, and Matthew shows this in both his narratives and his accounts of Christ's teachings. Among other things, this insight justifies fraternal correction (e.g., admonishing the sinner, instructing the ignorant) as a genuine spiritual work of mercy over the false mercy shown by avoiding discomfort and possible offense at all costs. Christ never shies from loving people by speaking truth to them, even bluntly when necessary, and even at the cost of their rejection of Him.

¹ *The New American Bible*, (Thomas Nelson: New York, 1971).

² Matthew 9:10-13.

³ Pope Francis, *Amoris laetitia: Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation on love in the family*, (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City, 19 March 2016 [published April 8th, 2016]).

⁴ Matthew 12: 1-8.

⁵ Matthew 15: 21-26.

⁶ Matthew 17: 14-20.

⁷ Mark 9: 24.

Teaching Love through Indirect Communication in the Gospel of Matthew



There is an ancient Christian tradition of symbolizing the four evangelists.¹ Mark, whose account opens by quoting Isaiah’s prophecy about “a voice crying out in the wilderness,” is depicted by a winged lion. Luke, whose account opens with the priest Zechariah offering incense in the Temple, is depicted as a winged ox, a sacrificial animal. John is depicted by an eagle for its “soaring”—one might even call it cosmic—perspective on the divinity of Christ. Finally, in this artistic schema, Matthew is depicted by a “winged man” because he begins with a genealogy emphasizing human belonging of Jesus of Nazareth to the family of the Hebrew Scriptures.² Father Pablo Gadenz’s series of presentations brought out the degree to which Matthew’s depiction of Jesus is one that is especially attentive to the particularity of his humanity as well as one in which Jesus himself is particularly attentive to *our* humanity.

Mathew’s genealogy opens: “Jesus the messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”³ From the first lines of his gospel, he invites his readers to consider Jesus of Nazareth in the context of the great Patriarchs, Prophets, and Kings of the Hebrew Scriptures. Jesus is presented in the infancy narrative as a new Moses, rescued from the hands of a violent ruler and coming up out of Egypt to Israel, the Promised Land. Later, he is presented as a new David riding triumphantly into the city amidst cries of “Hosanna to the son of David.”⁴ These details help set Jesus within the great themes of election and salvation of the Hebrew people. They also emphasize an important dimension of the doctrine of the Incarnation, its particularity. God did not become “human-in-general,” but rather became a particular person, a man from Nazareth in the district of Galilee in the land of Israel. He was a man who, when he prayed, prayed the psalms of David in the language of his parents.

In addition to the great figures of the Hebrew Scriptures, Jesus is also presented as a teacher. The claim, advanced in many ways over the course of the gospel, is that Jesus has the

authority to interpret Israel's history and her scriptures in his person, his words, and his deeds. This is suggested by the very structure of the gospel which includes five speeches⁵ recalling the five books of the Torah. The first of these is perhaps the best known. It is Jesus's "Sermon on the Mount." In the midst of the "sermon" Jesus provides the essential hermeneutical principle of his teaching: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill."⁶ The particular authority of Jesus as the teacher and interpreter of scripture is rooted in his ability to fulfill the demands of the Law. The beatitudes and the verses that follow them are one example of how he does this. In continuity with the pattern of election evidenced in the Old Testament, the beatitudes call "blessed" or "happy" (*ashrei*) those people and behaviors least likely to garner praise from a worldly scale of values: the poor, the peacemakers, those who mourn and those who are persecuted. The beatitudes are not merely a set of commandments to live by but a set of principles that frame a vision of the religious life, a life of self-emptying and self-sacrificial love for others. They and the passages that follow (the "antitheses" of Mt. 5:21-48) describe what we might call an "ethics of love" and they anticipate the kenotic, self-emptying love of God described in the hymn from Philipians: "[Christ Jesus,] who, though he was in the form of God, / did not regard equality with God / as something to be exploited, / but emptied himself, / taking the form of a slave, / being born in human likeness."⁷

The beatitudes fulfill the Decalogue by developing it. We see an intensification and a deeper internalization of the way of life given Israel on Mount Sinai:

...it was said to those of ancient times... 'Whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment.⁸

You have heard it said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.⁹

It is not only our external behavior towards others that must come into conformity with God's law but the movements of our inner life. The Sermon on the Mount seeks to change, not only behaviors but hearts and minds as well. This vision is an instructive contrast to the common ethical systems of the pagan world. One classic example of this is Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. An account that has stood the test of time, Aristotle's ethics pursues the good or happy life by cultivating the virtues—habits of thought and behavior—that are necessary for it. He, like Jesus, recognizes that truly virtuous living, if it is to be consistent, must proceed from an inner disposition or state of character. In other words, it is not enough to isolated good works or to do them for less than perfect reasons. To be fully good requires that we align our desiring, our thinking, and our doing. Where the two systems are most notably different is in what we might call the "catalogue" of virtues belonging to each.

Aristotle's *Ethics*, though applicable beyond their intent, is an ethics for young noblemen. Thus, while the basic virtues are building blocks anyone would require—courage, self-control, wisdom, prudential judgment—the crowning achievements are justice and "great-souledness" (magnanimity). Aristotle's magnanimous man is a nobleman capable of great deeds and able to estimate his self-worth accurately. He represents the height of natural goodness. This vision is a far cry from the types of people signaled by the beatitudes. Not only do they exhibit a preferential option for the poor, but the suggestion is that, if we are not already, we are to become like them—to enter into the suffering of the world in order to alleviate it. It is not clear to me that any set of

strictly rational entailments could induce one to choose such a way of life. In that sense, *agape* is a distinctly Christian and religiously motivated virtue.¹⁰

Surely, this message must have been hard to hear. Perhaps that is one reason Jesus, in addition to his teachings, also chose to speak in parables, and in this, I think, he shows a particular attentiveness to *our* humanity. Parables represent an interesting form of speech. They are stories; yet, they are neither fantasy nor history. They are realistic in nature, using common occurrences and involving the kinds of people one might meet on the road, but their authority is not based on literal accuracy. We can think of, for example, the parable of the Good Samaritan or the Prodigal Son. Whether or not the Samaritan or the forgiving father actually existed, in either case, is irrelevant to the “point” being made. The point is that they *could* exist, i.e., that we might love or forgive as they did. Parables, then, can speak, in the literal sense, about no one in particular and still speak to us. This, it seems to me, is the point. Parables are a form of what the philosopher Søren Kierkegaard called “indirect communication.” The classic biblical example of this is the conversation between King David and the prophet Nathan after David has taken Bathsheba and had her husband killed.¹¹ The prophet knows if he approaches David directly the king will become defensive leading him to reject the call to repentance and possibly kill the prophet. So instead, Nathan tells a story about sheep. In the story, a rich man unwilling to serve his guest one of his many lambs takes the only lamb of a poor man. The story produces the appropriate emotions in David’s heart and a desire to amend the wrong, only then does the prophet reveal that the story is an allegory for David’s own behavior. David, having already produced the appropriate responses with respect to another, is then able to turn his righteous anger on himself. In a sense, then, David is able to see himself in the story because he cannot see himself there at first. The truth to be communicated is done so indirectly so that David can, quite literally, *be* in a different way, so as to be receptive to the difficult truth.

In Matthew’s gospel, we get what we might call “the parable of parables.” The parable of the sower and the seed¹² is not only a parable but a parable about parables. In the explanation that follows, Jesus presents the rationale and goal of speaking in this way by quoting the prophet Isaiah who writes:

- [1] The reason I speak to them in parables is that ‘seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen,
nor do they understand.’
- [2] With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says:
- [3] ‘You will indeed listen, but never understand,
[4] and you will indeed look, but never perceive.
[5] For this people’s heart has grown dull,
[6] and their ears are hard of hearing,
[7] **and they have shut their eyes;**
[7’] **so that they might not look with their eyes,**
[6’] and listen with their ears,
[5’] and understand with their heart and turn— and I would heal them.’
- [4’] But blessed are your eyes, for they see,
[3’] and your ears, for they hear.
- [2’] Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people
[1] longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.

The quote here forms a “chiasmus,” which means it has a mirror-image structure: A: B:B:A.¹³ This is a common rhetorical technique in the ancient world and it is designed to focus the attention of the reader (or hearer) on the middle lines: “They have shut their eyes; / so that they might not look with their eyes.” We see then that the goal of parables is to help us to see, to soften our hearts so that we can receive the message Christ: that we are called to sacrificial love and that this is embodied not only in the teachings of Jesus but in his willingness to suffer and die. “These are hard words.”¹⁴ Often when confronted directly with them we, like Pharaoh before Moses, harden our own hearts.¹⁵

Parables, then, attempt to remove the callouses from our spiritual senses and render them sensitive and receptive to the *seed* which is also the *logos*. This parable is doubly rich because in explaining what parables are supposed to do it also provides the image of such a venture. We are ourselves the soil—hard, rocky, or fertile. And we must be in a certain way for the seed—the word of God—to take root and live in our hearts. While the parable presents three basic divisions of soil, it is also fruitful to think of the softening of one’s heart and mind as an ongoing process: the more receptive we become, the richer the growth. This parable is itself a microcosm of the scriptures as a whole, containing a spiritual “hermeneutics” of the living word. The scriptures disclose new and unsuspected insights (and so are “living”) to the degree that we can open our hearts and minds. There is a productive and deepening circularity that obtains between the reader and the word: the more we read, the more there is to read. The callous reader asks no questions and so cannot learn. That attentive reader, in a sense, is already at prayer.¹⁶

¹ The four “living creatures” are taken from Ezekiel 1:10 and Revelation 4:7.

² There is some debate in the early church about which animals to assign to which Gospels. The ordering above becomes more or less standard for artists after St. Jerome. See *St. Jerome: Commentary on Matthew*. Translated by Thomas P. Scheck. (Catholic University of America Press: Washington, DC, 2008).

³ Matthew 1:1.

⁴ Matthew 21:9.

⁵ They are the Sermon on the Mount (Mt.5), The Summoning of the Twelve (Mt.10), The Parables of the Kingdom of God (Mt.13), his “Ecclesial” Speech (Mt. 18), and The Great Commission (Mt. 23).

⁶ Matthew 5:17.

⁷ Philippians 5:5-7.

⁸ Matthew 5:21-22.

⁹ Matthew 5:27-28.

¹⁰ This point is made by André Comte-Sponville in his *A Small Treatise on the Great Virtues*, (Holt: New York, 1996). See especially “Love,” p. 222ff. Comte-Sponville notes that while the word *agape* existed in Greek prior to the Gospels, it was hardly ever used. It is the Gospel accounts and the subsequent experience of the early Christian communities that “fill in” the meaning of the word and give it the particular sense it has for us today.

¹¹ 2 Samuel 12.

¹² Matthew 13:1-23.

¹³ Many of our nursery rhymes and songs have this structure: “(a) Old King Cole was a (b) merry old soul and a (b) merry old soul was (a) he.” More elaborately, the entire prologue of John’s Gospel (“In the beginning was the word...”) is an elaborate chiasmus focusing our attention on the “mid-point: “The true light which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world” (Jn.1:9).

¹⁴ John 6:60.

¹⁵ Exodus 8:15, 32

¹⁶ Simone Weil writes, “Prayer consist of attention. It is the orientation of all the attention of which the soul is capable towards God.” “Attention...is the substance of prayer.” In “Reflections on the Right Use of School Studies,” in *Christianity and Culture in Dialogue*. Eds. Scigliano, Choi, and Savastano. (Kendall Hunt: Iowa, 2013), pp. 382-383.

ROSEMARIE KRAMER

The Message of Matthew and the Sociological Imagination

Most Catholic Christians see only the religious aspect of the gospels. They are aware that they consist of four gospels written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. They are also aware that the word gospel comes from the Greek language meaning good or glad tidings which refers to the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

The gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke are known as the synoptic gospels because of the similarities in their account of Jesus' life, passion and death. However, each disciple had a somewhat unique "take" or message behind his depiction of the life of Christ. Apparently each apostle addressed different populations—Luke, believed to be a non-Palestinian focused on Gentile Christians; Mark's audience was believed to be also Gentile Christians who were facing possible persecution from the Romans; and Matthew's focus was believed to be the Jewish population of Palestine. A further indication of this is that Matthew wrote in Hebrew.

Rather than viewing Matthew's gospel in a religious vein, I propose exploring it sociologically, using the Sociological Imagination to present a more objective understanding of Matthew's message. The concept, Sociological Imagination, is a familiar one to sociologists which they use to enable people to see the connection between their lives and the society in which they live. Originally proposed by sociologist C. Wright Mills, "the Sociological Imagination ".....is a quality of mind that seems most dramatically to promise an understanding of the intimate realities of ourselves in connection with larger social realities"¹ Basically, it means our lives are heavily influenced by the time and place in which we live.

As mentioned above, Matthew's gospel, although similar to the other gospels, differs in some important aspects from his fellow evangelists. He is more precise in identifying Jesus as the Son of God.

The way that Matthew then tells the story of Jesus draws on a lot of symbols from Jewish tradition that really convey a picture of Jesus. Jesus goes up on a mountain to teach and there talks about the law. He looks like Moses. Jesus delivers five different sermons of this sort, just like the five books of Torah. There are a lot of elements in this story that resemble Moses' traditions, from the killing of the babies, in the birth narrative, to the Sermon on the Mount, even to the way that Jesus dies, just like some of the prophets dies, as martyrs of their prophetic calling.²

Unlike the other evangelists, Matthew emphasizes over and over the legitimacy of Jesus as the Messiah and that his teachings are the fulfillment of the Old Testament.

But, why this emphasis? From a religious viewpoint, Matthew's gospel, along with the other gospels are ways for the early Christians to learn about Jesus and how to live as His followers. However, from a sociological vantage, his account reflects the time in which he lived and how that era shaped his life and the lives of the Jews of that time.

What was Palestine like in the time of Matthew? It was a time that had a good economy and though ostensibly ruled by a Jewish King, Herod, it was administered by a Roman procurator

or governor. The latter was needed because there was a good deal of upheaval going on in Palestine at that time. This included socio-political as well as religious conflict. There was a large influx of gentiles from other areas which caused tensions to develop between the Jews and these new inhabitants. In addition, their environment was becoming more cosmopolitan as a result of the influx of these foreigners. It was a time of change, upheaval, and confusion.

Because the Roman Empire was always in need of revenue, they taxed the people they conquered mercilessly. This resulted in a good deal of conflict among many factions: the Jews hated and distrusted the Romans; there was friction between the Jews and Gentiles; and even the Jews themselves were divided—about who would lead them in this time of uncertainty. For centuries, they looked forward to someone who would save them from their oppressors. All through the centuries when the Jews had been conquered and sent into exile, released and then conquered again, one belief gave them hope ...

The Jewish people were seeking a “Messiah” or savior – they were waiting for the leader God had promised, who according to their understanding, would bring them spiritual renewal and political freedom from centuries of foreign oppression³

But, even here the Jews encountered frustration—instead of being united behind one religious leader, there were multiple potential leaders who could emerge. “At the beginning of the Christian era Judaism was divided into many different groups. These were the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes, the Zealots and the Jesus Movement.”⁴

The Pharisees were seen as the direct enemies of Jesus. They emphasized the Torah and placed a great emphasis on the strict observance of it. The Pharisees were seen as hypocrites because they did not follow what they preached. The Pharisees were strict observers of Jewish law and believed that salvation would come through strict observance of the law and oral traditions.

The Sadducees were seen as Hellenized Jews; they believed that God was an impersonal being who observed His “creatures” from afar. They also believed in free will but not life after death. They accepted the written law but not oral tradition and basically collaborated with Rome which resulted in their being given special treatment and having considerable political power. Their power and philosophy attracted the rich of that day.

The last group to be considered was the Essenes. This group retreated from the world because they believed that Judaism was corrupted and saw themselves as the real Israel. They awaited the Messiah in seclusion.

In addition to these groups, there were those who were called “wandering charismatics” who travelled around Palestine preaching and making prophecies. These men proclaimed to heal the sick but, in reality, were merely beggars.

Besides the socio political and religious cultures of this era, the educational setting was an important factor in Palestine. Young Jewish males began their education at age five; at age 10 they would start to learn the law and to attain the highest level of education they would attach themselves to “a renowned teacher and become a disciple.”⁵

Using the prior socio-political, religious and educational elements in Palestinian culture at the time Matthew was writing his gospel, one could see how it could affect how Matthew constructed it:

- His audience was the Jewish population of the area of Palestine in which he lived therefore he wrote in Hebrew
- As a Jew, he hated the Romans so his narrative describes the cruelty they displayed toward Jesus and also Jesus' criticism of the Roman overlords
- Because of the religious turmoil and inequities of the time, Matthew was very explicit regarding the ancestry of Jesus emphasizing that He was the Son of Abraham, a term used in the Old Testament to indicate the Son of God
- Having a Jewish audience and knowing their culture, Matthew would know how to convince them about the legitimacy of Jesus being the Messiah.

None of the above is meant to impugn the message of Matthew. Of course, he would be familiar with the people of his day, knowing how to approach them by way of his rhetoric. He knew them; knew what they believed; what they hoped for the future. Therefore, Matthew geared his message in that direction. And, as has happened throughout the centuries, God worked through Matthew, as well as the other evangelists, to deliver His message about His Divine Son.

¹ Mills, C. Wright, *The Sociological Imagination*, (Oxford University Press: New York, 1959), p.15.

² www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/shows/religion/portrait/jews.html. April 1998.

³ www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/shows/religion/portrait/jews.html, The Jesus Movement.

⁴ www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/shows/religion/portrait/jews.html, Judaism in the Time of Jesus.

⁵ ChristianHistory.org/magazine. Issue 59, 1998: Evans, C., *Crisis in the Middle East*. Accessed 06/19/2017

The Beatitudes and Their Relationship to Science

Scientists must consistently strive to deliver the finest teaching, research, and discovery. In order to fulfill this obligation, they must be as ethical as possible in providing their data and results. Scientists must endeavor to lead a good life and help others obtain factual evidence through proper data collection, evidence, and conclusions. Perhaps unknowingly, scientists are exemplifying the ideals of, and adhering to, the Beatitudes. The Beatitudes are eight blessings realized in the Gospel of Matthew, recited by Jesus Christ in the Sermon on the Mount. This paper will examine the Beatitudes and demonstrate respectively how each one bears a relationship to scientific teaching, research, and inquiry.

In his first blessing, Jesus said, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”¹ An interpretation of this Beatitude strongly emphasizes that people need humility in order to succeed. This is especially true for any scientist; every scientist has been through his or her own challenging life journey. Every setback shapes a scientist’s mindset. If directed with an optimistic energy, every setback allows him/her to lead a life of righteousness and maintain the perseverance and willingness to help others through teaching and research.

In the second Beatitude, Jesus declared, “Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.”² This Beatitude highlights how one needs to admit his or her own wrongdoings and misgivings in order to feel fulfillment and subsequently, ease. As a result, when interacting with others, people need to be as honest as possible. Once a scientist, or any person, admit that he or she did something wrong, it shows how courageous he/she is and can receive comfort for telling the truth and wishing the best for others.

The third Beatitude states, “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.”³ The interpretation of this Beatitude demonstrates that there is power under God’s control. Under this power, people show refusal to inflate their own self-estimation and reticence to assert themselves. Therefore, people need to have the strength of temperament to acknowledge their own strengths and weaknesses. Scientists do this by collaborating with each other to integrate ideas with the purpose of achieving a common goal and eventually, scientific breakthroughs.

The fourth Beatitude avows, “Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.”⁴ This Beatitude hints that people are encouraged to cultivate good company and good relationships with other professionals; as such, cultivation leads to beneficence. A prominent example of such cultivation is displaying research at a variety of conferences and seminars, or through journal publication. Through these mediums, scientists meet new people and engage in constructive discussions relating to their research. In addition, new research opportunities inevitably arise given the enhanced transmission of ideas between scientists.

The fifth Beatitude contends, “Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.”⁵ Unsurprisingly, one needs to treat others better than how they were treated. As this principle relates

to teaching courses, scientists should educate students better than how they were taught. In teaching, they should remember how as students, their own path to education might not have been simple, the thought of which should embolden them to ensure that their students succeed. Scientists should learn new teaching techniques that their teachers did not implement, or were not available at the time they were students to help their own students absorb the material. They should nurture an unwavering curiosity, which would allow them to locate methods capable of reaching all types of learners.

The sixth Beatitude utters, “Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.”⁶ One should always possess integrity as well as be honest and loyal. A scientist should do what is necessary to put other people ahead. This also includes doing whatever one could to assist students in the classroom, in order to inspire well-roundedness in their students’ personalities by promoting kindness and goodness as much as possible. Additionally, this Beatitude indicates that scientific findings should be as truthful as possible. Research should not be used to merely gain career elevation; the main priority of research should only be to contribute to academia and to the betterment of society.

The second to last Beatitude expresses, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”⁷ This Beatitude signifies that people should try to avoid conflict and turmoil. Scientists should do whatever they can to act justly. Consequently, scientists should avoid negative confrontation with other people; this should not, however, be understood as a means of avoiding conflict simply because it is unpleasant. In reality, this Beatitude calls for professionals to compromise instead of dispute, and unify, instead of divide. It demands an end to workplace politics and appeals to the progression of a common purpose.

The final Beatitude, and possibly the most relevant to scientific inquiry, states, “Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”⁸ Historically, scientists have been persecuted for advocating a truth to the world which was uncorroborated by the Christian teachings. Actually, this Beatitude supports those few who have the courage to proclaim as true, that which has not yet been adopted by the public. This means that no matter what if a scientist believes that his or her findings have been conducted ethically, he/she has a right to feel that the work is legitimate and true, no matter the opinions of others. As long as the scientist is able to use data, statistical analyses, and experiments to back up their claims and conclusions, there should be no reason to deny the discoveries made.

The Beatitudes are a series of blessings that feature how an individual should act. They promote honesty, humility, and righteousness. These blessings symbolize how people should treat one another. Without the guidance of the Beatitudes, scientists would be lost. They would not adequately treat other people, other people’s work, or even their own work, with the respect and dignity deserved. Upon further close inspection, the Beatitudes also promote transparency, which is the perfect combination of integrity and honesty, fostering candor in all facets of people’s lives. Without the Beatitudes, scientific comity may not be achievable since the blessings are closely associated with science and complement its incredible impact on the advancement of humanity.

- ¹ Matthew 5:3
- ² Matthew 5:4
- ³ Matthew 5:5
- ⁴ Matthew 5:6
- ⁵ Matthew 5:7
- ⁶ Matthew 5:8
- ⁷ Matthew 5:9
- ⁸ Matthew 5:10

**The Ethics of St. Matthew's Sermon on the Mount:
Towards Development of a Modern Ethics of Philanthropy**

When examining the roots of Christian ethics, one might look no further than the Sermon on the Mount,¹ as this “has been regarded as the quintessence of the moral teaching of Jesus.”² In Matthew's Sermon, Jesus gives instructions to his followers for living an ethical and moral life and provides examples for moral living. In a sense, Matthew's Sermon on the Mount provides us with a “Charter for Christian Living.”³

Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”⁴

The Sermon on the Mount is not particularly concerned with ideas or attitudes, rather with action. It is the disciple's good works that make them the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world.”⁵ As understood by Houlden, “Jesus ‘I say unto you’ invites no discussion, uses no logically grounded persuasion. It simply commands obedience.”⁶ In Matthew's Sermon on the Mount, Jesus instructs us on the laws we must follow to obtain the reward of the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus said, “Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven,”⁷ giving his commands the “*character of eschatological judgement*.”⁸

The Charter for Christian Living in Matthew's Sermon on the Mount is essentially an external restraint on individuals, essentially a choice between good and evil.⁹ Pinckaers further suggests that this characterization of the Sermon on the Mount “was based on an interim morality, valid only for the short space of time before the return of Christ.... It could not serve as the basis of moral theory for ordinary Christian life. It remained a morality of ‘the impossible.’”¹⁰ In short, the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount were bound to a particular historical time, when the return of Jesus was regarded as imminent. In this way, the moral law for action laid down by Jesus in Matthew's Sermon on the Mount is similar to Derrida's notion of gifts (of charity) being impossible, calling these the ‘*aporia*’ of the gift:

The only thing I would say about the gift—this is an enormous problem—is that the gift is precisely, and this is what it has in common with justice, something which cannot be reappropriated. A gift is something which never appears as such and is never equal to gratitude, by commerce, to compensation, to reward. When a gift is given, first of all, no gratitude can be proportionate to it. A gift is something that you cannot be thankful for.

As soon as I say “thank you” for a gift, I start canceling the gift, I start destroying the gift, by proposing an equivalence, that is, a circle that encircles the gift in a movement of reappropriation. So, a gift is something that is beyond the circle of appropriation, beyond the circle of gratitude. A gift should not even be acknowledged as such. As soon as I give something if I say, I am giving you something, I just canceled the gift.¹¹

If the interim morality of the Sermon on the Mount as understood by Pinckaers and others is indeed a morality of the impossible, similar to the impossibility of charity or gift giving, Matthew’s call to obedience as the Charter for Christian Living is not helpful to us in developing a ‘Charter for Christian Living’ in today’s modern world, particularly regarding our actions towards our neighbors, one of the foundational commandments of the Sermon on the Mount.

Moral understandings of charity towards our neighbor or “the other,” in effect, gift giving, are central to the work of the nonprofit and voluntary sector. In the United States, there are 62.6 million volunteers who donate 7.8 billion hours of their time, with an estimated market values of \$184 billion.¹² In addition to volunteering their time, individuals give of their treasure through monetary donations to third sector organizations. Giving USA reports a 3.8 percent increase in individual giving over the prior year, amounting to a staggering \$265.6 billion dollars in giving.¹³ Much of our ethical teachings on giving are framed within “Codes of Ethics,” following the obligatory framework of Matthew’s Sermon on the Mount. How can we develop new understandings of volunteer and charitable giving that transcends notions of obligation and law, helping us move toward a charity of the possible?

Pinckaers suggests we move away from a “freedom of indifference” that can be traced back to Matthew’s “obligation moral theory” to a moral system based on happiness and virtue coining this ‘freedom for excellence.’¹⁴

Each concept of freedom gives rise to different systems of moral theology. Freedom of indifference reflects the human power of free choice and stems from fundamental self-interest... The concept of law came to dominate the entire field of moral teaching. (On the other hand,) freedom for excellence (is defined as) the power to act freely with excellence and perfection. This must be developed through education and discipline... (This freedom) springs from our natural thrust toward truth and goodness. Given to us in the form of a spiritual seed, this freedom has need of education in order to grow and gradually come to maturity through the power conferred by virtue, so that we may act with excellence for ourselves and others.¹⁵

Different from the ideas in the obligatory actions required by Matthew’s Sermon on the Mount (freedom of indifference), the ideas outlined in freedom for excellence provide space for us to collaborate with others for the common good through “our attraction to the true and the good.”¹⁶ An ethics based on freedom for excellence nurtured through education and discipline will free individuals in the post-modern world to be virtuous in their gift giving and volunteering.

¹ Matthew 5-7.

² Houlden, J.I., *Ethics and the New Testament*, (Oxford University Press: New York, 1977), p. 53.

³ Pinckaers, S., *The Sources of Christian Ethics*, Translated from the third edition by St. Mary Thomas Noble, O.P., (The Catholic University of America Press: Washington, D.C., 1995), p. 142.

⁴ Matthew 7:24-27.

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- ⁵ Matt 5:13-16 as cited by Schrage, W.j, *The Ethics of the New Testament*, Translated by David E. Green. (Fortress Press: Philadelphia, 1988), p. 147.
- ⁶ Houlden, J.I., *Ethics and the New Testament*, (Oxford University Press: New York, 1977), p. 14.
- ⁷ Matthew 5:19.
- ⁸ Sanders, J. T., *Ethics in the New Testament: Change and Development*, (Fortress Press: Philadelphia, 1975), p. 43.
- ⁹ Pinckaers, *Op. cit.*, p. 37.
- ¹⁰ Pinckaers, S., *The Sources of Christian Ethics*, Translated from the third edition by St. Mary Thomas Noble, O.P., (The Catholic University of America Press: Washington, D.C., 1995), p. 138.
- ¹¹ Derrida, J., *Deconstruction in a Nutshell*, The Villanova Roundtable, (Fordham University Press: New York, 1997), pp. 18-19.
- ¹² Corporation for National and Community Service, "Volunteering and Civic Life in America," <https://www.nationalservice.gov/vcla>, Retrieved from the web, June 25, 2017.
- ¹³ Giving USA, "Giving USA 2016," <https://givingusa.org/giving-usa-2016/>, Retrieved from the web, June 25, 2017.
- ¹⁴ Pinckaers, *Op. cit.*, p. 329.
- ¹⁵ Pinckaers, S., *The Sources of Christian Ethics*, Translated from the third edition by St. Mary Thomas Noble, O.P., (The Catholic University of America Press: Washington, D.C., 1995), p. 375.
- ¹⁶ Pinckaers, S., *The Sources of Christian Ethics*, Translated from the third edition by St. Mary Thomas Noble, O.P., (The Catholic University of America Press: Washington, D.C., 1995), p. 375.

Misery and Mercy

She was middle aged, wearing a thin, tattered jacket, with a child's pink backpack on her back. She held a handwritten cardboard sign that said: "Hungry. Homeless. Mercy." It was a November weekend and I am sure many of us had two things on our minds: the coming winter cold and the coming Thanksgiving feast. I was in traffic on my way out of the Costco parking lot with a good deal of big-package foods in my trunk. I am an "Executive Member," one who buys an almost shameful amount of food for my family of five and at the end of the year gets a "rewards certificate" from the store. Her sign stopped me. I had seen many such signs before but never one that asked for mercy, from me. The line of traffic moved and I couldn't stop. No one stopped. No one gave her anything. It began to drizzle. I continued and turned onto the cross street.

Unique to the *Gospel of Matthew* is the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant. Before it are the Beatitudes which deal more overtly with mercy, the seventh in particular which says: "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy." So that is easy enough to grasp: be merciful to others and God will be merciful to you. It can be all too easy to interpret this in a self-serving way and look for people on whom we can bestow our generosity to add to the running tally of good-deeds that we think will get us into heaven. If we are not being charitable so that others might see our good works we are at least intending that God will see and be impressed by our largess. We indulge in the self-deception because we half believe it will work. We seem to think the beatitude is telling us to be merciful in hope of a future reward as if God gives out "rewards certificates."

The beatitudes demand that we consider our interiority, but they are difficult to grasp and so I like to think Christ provided the parables to help those of us who are a bit slower on the uptake. To experience the conversion of heart alluded to in the beatitudes we must think more deeply and read further into Matthew's Gospel. In Chapter 18 "The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant" is preceded by Christ's response to Peter's question about how many times one should forgive someone, as if there might be a prescribed formula for forgiveness.¹ Peter asks if seven times is enough, presumably before one is no longer obligated to forgive. Christ replies that one should forgive seventy seven times, implying that one is always obligated to forgive if asked. Christ's reply points to the heart of the forgiver, rather than the wrongdoer's need to be forgiven. It is significant that the Lord followed this with the parable which illustrates, in a more concrete way, the deeper truth he wanted to convey, saying "the kingdom of heaven may be likened" to this situation.² While preceded with talk of forgiveness, and titled the "Unforgiving Servant" I would argue that forgiveness is not the core issue here, there is a more profound interior conversion intended. In the parable the king not only relents in his punishment of the first servant and his family but, "moved with compassion" at the servant's pleas, the king goes even further than expected, forgiving his whole debt.³ One can imagine the sense of relief the first servant felt at this gesture. But apparently, no interior change occurred in him for he soon after physically attacks one who owes him far less and jails him. He seems to have completely forgotten his gratitude for the forgiveness of his own debt. His behavior is so shocking that his peers report it to the king whose reaction is severe. He subjects the servant to torture until his debt is repaid. Why this harsh

punishment from a king who was so compassionate before? The answer lies not in forgiveness but in conversion. The servant did not experience a conversion as a result of the king's great mercy. And this is the core of the parable: the transformative power of God's mercy.

In the summer of 2016, during the year, Pope Francis, in his great wisdom, designated the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy, I traveled to Rome and had the unexpected good fortune to experience the mercy of God in a very real and concrete way. In *Misericordia Vultus* Pope Francis invited us to “contemplate the mystery of mercy.... a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace.”⁴ Indeed, the Holy Father makes reference to this very parable saying that in it “Jesus affirms that mercy is not only an action of the Father, it becomes a criterion for ascertaining who his true children are.”⁵ Together with so many of His children, fellow pilgrims to the Holy City, I passed through the Holy Doors of the Basilica of St. John Lateran, praying on my knees for forgiveness and giving thanks for His great Grace. I engaged in prayers for the Plenary Indulgence and went to confession in the basilica. To say that it was a profound experience cannot do it justice, but suffice it to say that it was transformational. I carried the feeling with me back to America and was sorry that the Year of Mercy would end on November 20. I wanted it to go on. It had touched me deeply.

As if in answer to prayer, the Holy Father issued the Apostolic Letter *Misericordia et Misera* (“Mercy with Misery”), in which he closed out the Year of Mercy but does not close the metaphorical door of Mercy on us. Instead, he affirmed the transformational experience of mercy for “[o]nce mercy has been truly experienced, it is impossible to turn back. It grows constantly and it changes our lives. It is an authentic new creation: it brings about a new heart, capable of loving to the full, and it purifies our eyes to perceive hidden needs.”⁶ The Unforgiving Servant of Matthew's Gospel had closed himself off from this conversion. His punishment is a consequence of his own inability to be merciful. I was the recipient of a mercy far greater, from the Lord Himself: the forgiveness of no mere financial debt but the much heavier debt of my sins. The Year of Mercy was coming to a close and here I was leaving Costco. I was being called in a clear and specific way. She was hungry, homeless, and asked for mercy. I had to give it. Only by God's grace was I capable of it.

¹ The Gospel of Matthew, *The New American Bible. Revised Edition*. (Oxford University Press: New York, 2011), 18:21-35.

² The Gospel of Matthew, *The New American Bible. Revised Edition*. (Oxford University Press: New York, 2011), 18:21-35.

³ The Gospel of Matthew, *The New American Bible. Revised Edition*. (Oxford University Press: New York, 2011), 18:21-35.

⁴ Pope Francis, *Misericordia Vultus. Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy*. Dec. 8, 2015. Retrieved from: https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco_bolla_20150411_misericordiae-vultus.html, Accessed June 25, 2017, par. 2.

⁵ Pope Francis, *Misericordia Vultus. Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy*, Dec. 8, 2015. Retrieved from: https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco_bolla_20150411_misericordiae-vultus.html, Accessed June 25, 2017, par. 9.

⁶ Pope Francis, *Misericordia et Misera. Apostolic Letter at the close of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy*. November 20, 2017. Retrieved from: https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco-lettera-ap_20161120_misericordia-et-misera.html, Accessed June 25, 2017, par. 16.

JON RADWAN

**The First of the Good News:
Rhetorical and Relational Framing in Matthew 1-4**

This summer's Center for Catholic Studies Seminar on "The Message of Matthew" was a wonderful opportunity to learn about the first Gospel.¹ Father Gadenz's lectures were detailed and informative, and I am especially grateful for this invitation to write about the Bible from a Communication perspective. This essay approaches the opening chapters of Matthew via a rhetorical frame analysis, asking how the text works to orient us to the New Testament.² The Gospels are a set of biographical narratives,³ and in enjoying a position of primacy Matthew defines terms and sets up themes that readers use to interpret all subsequent text.⁴ Biographies describe the series of relationships that form a person's life, and in Matthew 1-4 the relational episodes leading up to Jesus' public ministry create a causal and developmental frame of fulfillment featuring Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah. In studying how Matthew rhetorically constructs five introductory links (Abraham → Jesus, God → Joseph, Jesus ← → John the Baptist, God → Jesus, and Jesus ← → Satan) we gain insight into how symbolic forms exercise relational functions. His accounts of these relationships work to form archetypal patterns of Christian communication and provide readers with models for engaging God, fellow humans, and Satan.

Relationship 1: Abraham → Jesus

The first words of Matthew's Gospel provide an extended genealogy affirming Jesus' Abrahamic and Davidic lineage. This makes extended family the primary contextual frame, from Abraham, whose faith in God warranted generations, through David the anointed King, down to Jesus the Messiah. Jesus is called "the Messiah" four times in chapter one, so Matthew's Old Testament fulfillment thesis is very clearly stated.^{5 6 7 8} His audience is the Christianized Jews of Palestine, and his primary opening link announces that Jesus is the culmination of Abraham's legacy, news the community has been awaiting for centuries.

In addition to the Abrahamic familial frame, Matthew's thesis that Jesus is the Christ/Messiah, the anointed one, also places him within a sacred and ritual frame. Ritual cleansing is a fundamental Jewish practice, and Matthew does not start there. Jesus is not introduced as the clean or the pure, he is introduced as the Messiah. In contrast to ritual washing, which removes unclean elements from a faithful person, anointing is a contact ritual where blessed oil or chrism is applied and becomes a bodily and constitutive part of the faithful. In a sacramental frame anointing follows cleansing, not vice versa, so Jesus is not any initial preparation but rather a final fulfillment of King David's holy heritage. This sacramental contact theme returns in Chapter three's God → Jesus relationship when the Holy Spirit descends "upon" Jesus.⁹

Relationship 2: God→Joseph

After the opening genealogy, Matthew begins Jesus' infancy narrative. In striking contrast to Luke's gospel, it is Joseph, not Mary, who is the primary human agent and divine communication is unilateral and dreamt rather than conscious and conversational.¹⁰ Joseph has a series of four dreams, each commanding and informing him of God's will for his family. In these dreams, God does not engage Joseph directly but relays messages through an angel.¹¹ Thus God's primary mode of communication, the leading frame for His action in the New Testament, is a mediated output pattern. God is a knowledgeable and concerned message sender, not a listener or responder, and as a dreamer, Joseph's only option is to receive revealed warnings and act. He is a faithful person, the type of Moses, so Joseph acts in accord with God's will and protects Jesus and Mary by first committing to them, then leading them away from human threats, and finally taking them back to Nazareth to set up the ministry phase of Jesus' biography.

Within this context of Joseph's family commitment/protection dreams and journeys the Magi and Herod enact the first conversation in Matthew's gospel. When faithful seekers request directions, Herod consults his priests and scribes and then responds with a self-serving lie. Here Herod is the first powerful aggressor, a Pharaoh type, and the Magi are the first reverent Gentiles, so the potential bond implicit in their conversation is skewed via an ulterior motive. God intervenes by sending another dream warning, this time to the Magi. Its unilateral quality and their faithful obedience directly parallels the God→Joseph interaction pattern; Jesus is protected and Herod's plan is thwarted when they listen to God's message and depart.

Relationship 3: John the Baptist←→Jesus

In Chapter three the scene changes to public gatherings and instead of Matthew's reports about lineage, dreams, and journeys there is an extended quotation of John the Baptist's warning to Judeans. At this crucial point in the narrative, Joseph's function as infant protector is complete and Jesus is becoming the primary agent of His biography. Matthew's third key relational episode is a brief conversation between John the Baptist and Jesus. Enacting an Emmanuel theme, God with us, Jesus' first move is to identify with the large group of sinners and approach John the Baptist for ritual cleansing. When John quickly recognizes Jesus' divinity he asks the first directly quoted question in Matthew, ". . . you come to me?"¹² Jesus' response, His first line in the Bible, clearly states the fulfillment theme that Matthew had introduced with his introductory genealogy—"Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness."¹³ John consents and Jesus' baptism precipitates God's first direct and public communication in the New Testament.

Relationship 4: God→Jesus

Up until this point, God's communication with Joseph and the Magi has been private and mediated, working through dreams and angels. Now that Jesus has begun his mature life via the humble yet righteous baptism rite God acts directly and speaks publicly. The pattern is still unilateral in that Matthew does not describe Jesus' response, but at this point, direct spiritual contact signals a new and defining moment realizing the Messiah theme. Within the ritual frame, anointing follows cleansing, so as soon as Jesus is baptized "he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove (and) coming upon him."⁹ God follows this spiritual contact with a proclamation that

confirms and celebrates the family theme of Matthew's opening genealogy "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."¹⁴ In this way, contact then pronouncement, the sacramental and familial frames are both firmly established by God.

Relationship 5: Satan ↔ Jesus

The final relational episode prior to Jesus' public ministry is an extended conversation between Satan and Jesus. This is the longest continuous interaction in Matthew's first four chapters.¹⁵ Satan comes to Jesus in the desert and challenges Him to prove His divinity three times. Each time Jesus responds by citing Deuteronomy, as with "It is written, 'You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.'"¹⁶ Ultimately Jesus does prove His divinity, but not by performing the petty material miracles Satan proposes. Instead, He demonstrates complete faith in and mastery of God's word, a discursive theme later developed by the evangelist in the Gospel of John where "the Word was God."¹⁷ The tempter is defeated with conversation and scripture, rejected with and through words, not through Jesus' powerful action or His Father's intervention.

Conclusion

Exploring the five relationships Matthew uses to lead up to his account of Jesus' public ministry shows construction of a dual frame that is both familial and sacramental. The opening narratives develop this frame into a completion and fulfillment concentrated in Jesus himself as a divine person. Just as families extend across many years, growing into the next generation, so do sacraments develop into one another. In Matthew's opening, Jesus' Messianic or anointed quality is announced as his thesis, and this idea is developed first through his Abrahamic/Davidic lineage and then in Joseph's obedient attention to God's commands. In Chapter three when Jesus matures and becomes an active agent His humbly righteous baptism and divine anointing prepare Him to defeat Satan via God's word. Formed and tempered through these primary interactions, Jesus can now take His journey through public ministry to final passion and bring Old Testament prophecy to fruition, "for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness."¹³

¹ Matthew is traditionally considered the earliest gospel and when the canon developed became the first book in the New Testament. It was the most widely distributed gospel in the early Church. See Curtis Mitch and Edward Sri, *The Gospel of Matthew*, (Baker: Grand Rapids, 2010). All Bible quotations in the essay are from *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* 4th ed., (Oxford University Press: New York, 2010).

² Erving Goffman is credited with introducing framing as a fundamental social function. See *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*, (Northeastern: Boston, 1976). To the extent that a text or textual frame is approached as a material thing, the interpreter assumes an ontological distinction between subject and object. In Martin Buber's terms this is an I-It relation—the meaning of a textual object is interpreted by a reading subject. See Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man*, (Macmillan: New York, 1969). This psychologistic hermeneutic is only one among many possibilities. Especially with sacred texts, engaging the Word of God can become equivalent to engaging God so reading is experienced as interaction with a divine Thou. This dialogic and phenomenological perspective shifts interpretation from a more or less distant and objective stance concerned with discerning the meaning of a text to a close and inter-subjective relation where meaning emerges between participants. For a clear description of these contrasting hermeneutics see Ronald C. Arnett, "Toward a Phenomenological Dialogue." *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 45 (Summer 1981), 201-212.

³ On the biographical genre of the Gospels see James Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 2003) and Richard Burridge, *What are the Gospels? A Comparison with Graeco-Roman Biography* 2nd ed., (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 2004). In addition, Matthew self-identifies a journalistic genre of *euangelion* or "good news" (4:23; 9:35; 11:5). For a collection of essays on frame analysis in news reporting see Paul D'Angelo and Jim Kuypers eds., *Doing News Framing Analysis: Critical and Theoretical Perspectives*, (Routledge: New York, 2010).

⁴ All critical methods have inherent strengths and limitations. Studying the leading edge or frame of a text has the obvious strength of grasping first principles, and is also necessarily limited in neglecting subsequent developments. In a brief essay one can only do so much. Here I point out a few key connections to other Gospels, such as Luke's attention to Mary and John's attention to the Word, but there are many many more possibilities. A text is a whole, and particularly with a polyphonic text like the Bible, studying only one Evangelist can be very fruitful but any findings cannot be interpreted as fully representing the whole.

⁵ Matthew 1:1.

⁶ Matthew 1:16.

⁷ Matthew 1: 17.

⁸ Matthew 18.

⁹ Matthew 3:17.

¹⁰ Matthew also describes a dream in 27:19. Pilate's wife suffers from it and sends him a message "to have nothing to do with that innocent man."

¹¹ The first three dreams specify the Angel's role as intermediary. It is implied but not specified in his fourth dream.

¹² Matthew 3:14.

¹³ Matthew 3: 15.

¹⁴ Matthew 3: 18.

¹⁵ In chapter 2 Herod made himself the first aggressor by skewing the first conversation with a lie. Now that Jesus has matured the third conversation is with the second aggressor, Satan the tempter. Satan is much more powerful than Herod; he is able to transport Jesus and show him wonders. Despite this power God does not intervene and Jesus sends him away by answering questions with simple quotations.

¹⁶ Matthew 4:7.

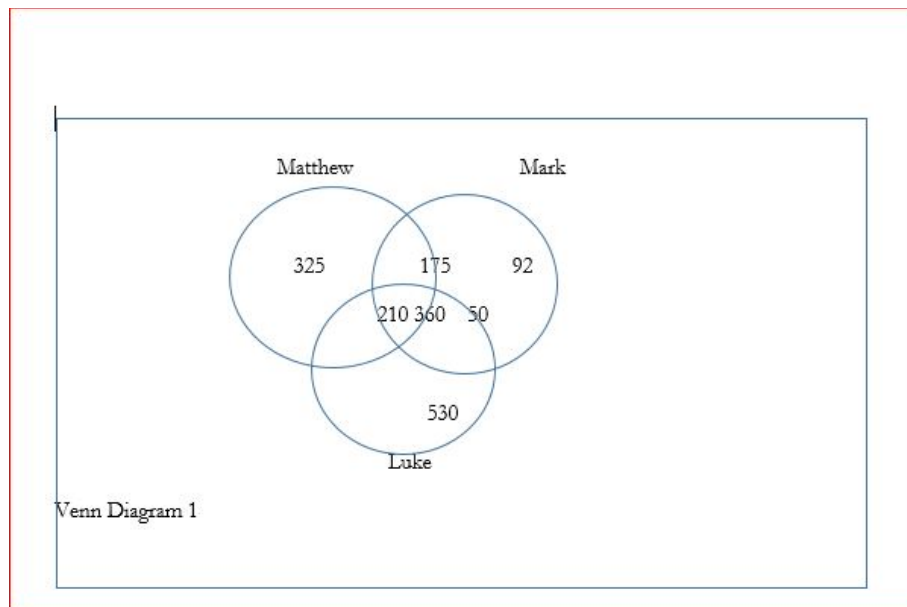
¹⁷ John 1:1.

The Synoptic Problem: A Parabolic Perspective

New Testament scholars have studied the relationship between and among the four Gospels over the course of history. Generally speaking, they have classified the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, the so-called “Synoptic Gospels,” as being interrelated, and at least as far back as the eighteenth century, have tried to determine the order in which they were written as well as any interdependence between and among them. The determination of the amount of material shared, or sources shared, for these gospels is called the Synoptic Problem. It seems that, in recent years, biblical scholars do not like the word “problem” for this situation; however, mathematicians deal with problems all the time, and the word does not have a bad connotation for us. We see problems as “things that need to be solved.”

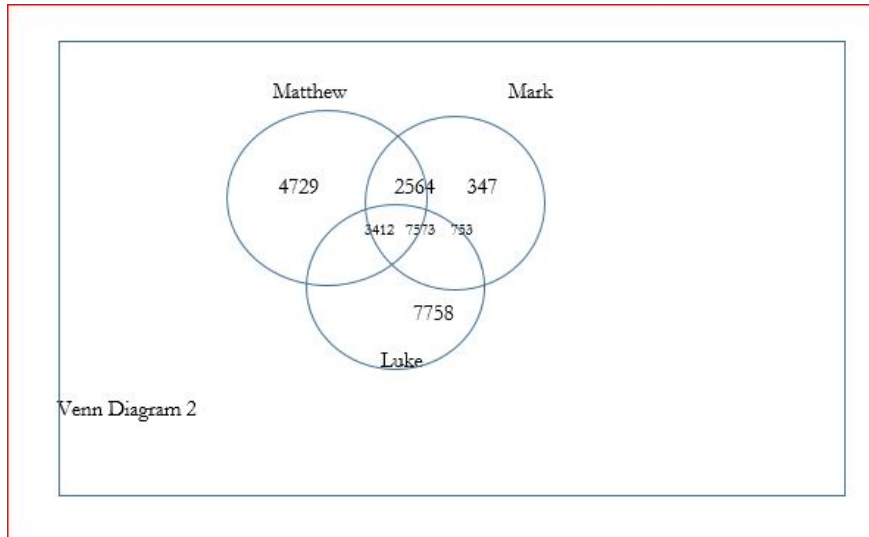
In the book, *The Synoptic Problem: Four Views*, Goodacre writes, “The notion of a direct literary link between the three synoptics is demanded by the degree of similarity between them.”¹

In our paper for the 2009 Seminar *Strategies and Themes of Luke*, entitled “Is the Synoptic Problem a Mathematics Problem?,” we developed a Venn diagram, with the aid of Monsignor Anthony Ziccardi, to show the interrelationship among the synoptics. For example, we claim in the chart that Mark contains ninety two verses that do not appear in either of the other two Gospels, using the original Greek for our numbers.² In addition, we claim two hundred and ten verses are shared by Matthew and Luke that do not appear in the gospel of Mark, and three hundred and sixty shared by all three, which scholars in this field call the “triple tradition.” This is Venn Diagram 1.

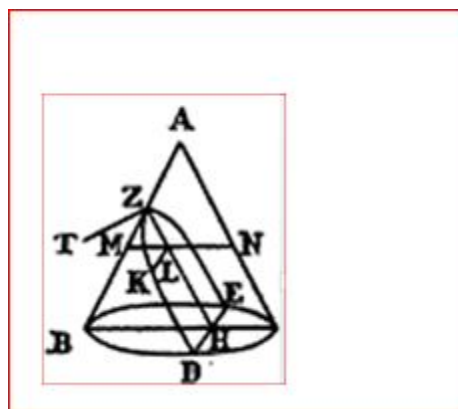


Eta Linnemann goes one step further in the book *Is There a Synoptic Problem?* Based on the number of words used in the Synoptic Gospels, Linnemann does some interesting quantitative

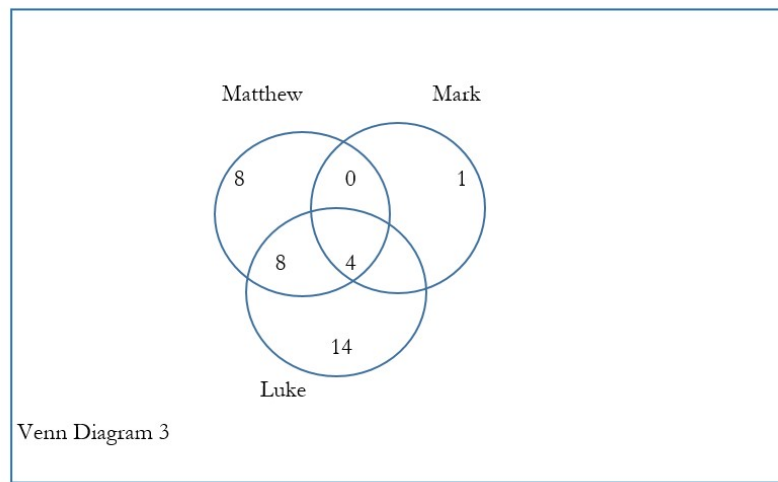
analysis.³ We adapt it here, in Venn Diagram 2, deriving numbers from Linnemann, using both systems of equations and the counting principle of inclusion/exclusion to develop a new Venn Diagram, based on words shared by the gospels. (Simply put, inclusion/exclusion prevents one from “double counting.” For example, if we know that I have authored or coauthored five publications and you have authored or coauthored six, but in those counts are included three that we wrote together, then between us, there are not eleven total publications, but rather $5 + 6 - 3 = 8$ distinct publications.)



The Greek word *παροβολη*, “parabola,” carries the connotation “to throw beside; compare.”⁴ It literally comes from two words, “para” (close beside; with) and “ballo” (to cast).⁵ It is the root word for both parable and proverb, and it is also the name given by the Greek mathematician Apollonius to one of the classic conic figures. Conic figures are formed by taking slices from a three dimensional figure, a cone, and forming two dimensional curves. In the figure below, the line ZH is a “diameter” of this slice, and it is parallel to the line AN on the surface of the cone. The other conic figures (hyperbola, ellipse) have diameters which form different angles with AN, so Apollonius used “Parabola” to indicate the lines’ (nonintersecting) positions. For the other conics, the diameters are not parallel to the line AN.



According to Perkins,⁶ there are thirty six parts of the synoptic gospels that can be unquestionably described as “parables.” Interestingly, there are only four which appear in all three synoptic gospels, and are hence part of the “triple tradition”: The Sower, the Interpretation of the Sower, The Mustard Seed, and The Wicked Tenants.⁷ There are eight that are unique to Matthew, one unique to Mark, and fourteen unique to Luke. We include a Venn Diagram here with the numbers indicating the number of parables that fall into the particular region. Matthew and Luke, for example, contain eight parables that do not appear in Mark, but there are no parables that are shared by Matthew and Mark alone, i.e., the only parables they share are the three that they also share with Luke.



The three parables shared by the synoptics (plus the “explanation of one of them) are a part of the triple tradition, roughly 7,573 words or three hundred and sixty phrases that the synoptics have in common. When the wording agreement is exact, we use quotation marks, or else we paraphrase:

- The Mustard Seed (“... [The Kingdom of God/Heavens] is like/as a grain of mustard [sowed upon the earth]...”);
- The Sower (The sower sowed seed on rocky soil, among thorns, and then good soil—“...he that has ears to hear, let him hear.”);
- The Wicked Tenants (A man planted a vineyard, and “let it to tenants and went abroad,” and the tenants would not turn over the fruits of the vineyard to his representatives, and they killed his son...”The stone that the builders rejected has become the head of the corner.”)

The existence of parables shared by Matthew and Luke that do not appear in Mark is one of the reasons for the Synoptic Problem. Scholars seem generally to agree on a historical ordering of Mark-Matthew-Luke, with the latter two using Mark as something of a source. However, the differences between and among them regarding the parables would indicate that there was a common non-Markan source that Matthew and Luke used, which they have called Q. Much like the quartermaster character in James Bond films having the same name, Q supplies useful items; among those items are these six parables, included in the 3,412 words that Matthew and Luke share that do not appear in Mark. When the wording agreement is exact (and this is certainly an argument for a common source), we use quotation marks, or else we paraphrase:

- The Father’s Good Gifts (“...for everyone who asks receives/and he who seeks finds...”);
- The Wise and Foolish Builders (Everyone who hears my words and does them is like the man who built his home on a foundation of rock);
- The Children in the Marketplace (“...The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and they say: Lo, a man who is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners...”);
- The Leaven ([The Kingdom of God/Heaven] “is like a leaven, which a woman took an covered up in three measures of flour until all was leavened.”);
- The Lost Sheep (A man with a hundred sheep will forsake the other ninety-nine to look for one lost one, and rejoice at his finding);
- The Faithful Steward (“Who then is the faithful and wise slave...but if that slave should say in his heart, ‘My lord is delaying’ and would strike his fellow slaves and also to eat and drink to get drunk, “...the lord of that slave will come when his is not expecting, and in an hour which he does not know and will dismember him, and will put his portion with the unfaithful.”

Now, some might hypothesize that Luke borrowed directly from Matthew here; however, an argument against that might be the ordering; these parables appear in a different order in these gospels. Also, the Faithful Steward in Matthew concludes “Weeping and gnashing of teeth shall be there,”⁸ but Luke’s version ends with the word “unfaithful,” in Luke 12:46. The verse Matthew 24:51 appears as Luke 13:28, in a different context.

The eight parables unique to Matthew (joined by the fourteen unique to Luke) point to yet another twist on the synoptic problem. Besides Q, it would seem that Matthew and Luke each had a source to which the other synoptic gospel writers were not a party, M and L, respectively. Thus, it seems that the best solution to the Synoptic Problem is that the gospels used multiple sources, some common, and some unique.

¹ Dyer, Stanley, Porter and Bryan, *The Synoptic Problem: Four Views*, (Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, MI, 2016).

² <http://scholarship.shu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1015&context=catholic-studies> , pp.17-19.

³ Linnemann, E., *Is There a Synoptic Problem?*, (Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, MI, 1992), p. 107.

⁴ Whitney, W. D. (1895). *Century Dictionary: An Encyclopedic Lexicon of the English Language, Volume 7*. Retrieved from google books.

⁵ Biblehub. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://biblehub.com/greek/3850.htm>

⁶ Perkins,P., *Introduction to the Synoptic Gospels*, (William B. Erdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI, 2007), p. 107.

⁷ Perkins,P., *Introduction to the Synoptic Gospels*, (William B. Erdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI, 2007), p. 107.

⁸ Matthew 24: 51.

PETER SAVASTANO

Reflections on the Message of Matthew

Most people presume that because I am in the Department of Anthropology, Sociology, & Social Work, and since one of the research methodologies I employ in my scholarly endeavors is ethnography, that all of my degrees are in the discipline of anthropology. However, that is not the case. In fact, all of my degrees, undergraduate and graduate alike, are in religious studies & philosophy (BA); and/or religion and society (M. Phil. & Ph.D.) In terms graduate degrees, my areas of concentration were on the early Christian monastic movements (East & West); feminist, queer, and process theology; Christian Mysticism; Esoteric Christianity; Islamic Mysticism; the study of sexuality and gender both in Late Antiquity of the Greco-Roman world and in a contemporary context; and, African Diasporic Religions). Because of these scholarly pursuits, I have had a great interest in the differences between the historical Jesus and the Jesus of theology, in Biblical Studies, and in the development of various Christological doctrines. It is primarily for these reasons that I enrolled in “The Message of Matthew,” so graciously and wonderfully taught by Father Pablo Gadenz.

From the first session onward, I was pleasantly surprised that so much of the scholarship Father Gadenz utilized in the seminar was material with which I was at least cursorily familiar. I was also very pleased to learn that Father Gadenz draws on the scholarly work of many different streams of the Christian tradition and not only Roman Catholic sources. I recognized many of the sources he cited from my own reading in Biblical Studies and I also learned of new sources which I have since the Seminar begun to explore on my own.

Of course, the connection between Biblical Studies and Anthropology is considerable since Biblical Archaeological findings play a great role in accurately portraying the world and the cultural context in which Jesus and the authors of the Gospels lived, taught, and wrote (with the exception of Jesus, of course, who, to the best of our knowledge, never wrote a word on his own). At some point during the course of the seminar, I realized that much of the scholarly information Father Pablo provided us with was a kind of “deconstruction.” What I mean by “deconstruction” is that he sought to help Seminar participants open up possibilities, new spaces, and *aporia* even, for us to understand and appreciate the importance of the structural and narrative elements and of the Gospel of Matthew that we may not have been aware of prior to taking the Seminar.¹ He also provided us with the historical context in which the Gospel of Matthew was written—all important to consider when reading the Gospel of Matthew and when teaching it to our students.

One of the most important things that I learned from this seminar is that this particular Gospel is not a record of a linear unfolding of events in the life and ministry of Jesus. For example, Father Pablo pointed out that Jesus did not teach the parables in the order that they appear in the Gospel of Matthew. Rather, the author of Matthew chose to present the parables in various groupings throughout the Gospel. One must ask why and for what purpose did the author choose to do this in relation to his readers? I found just this simple realization to be very helpful

in how I read the Gospel from this point forward, especially when it comes to studying and meditating up the parables of Jesus and just the idea of parables in general and their use as pedagogical tools in the larger ancient world and culture in which Jesus lived and taught. I also realized how important it is to read the Gospel in its entirety in order to have a better sense of it and its focus, rather than the way I often read Scripture, using the Lectionary to guide my encounters with both the First and Second Testaments. In fact, because of taking this seminar, I decided to read all four of the Gospels through over the course of the summer, something I have not done since I took courses in Scripture in undergraduate school.

Being a student in “The Message of Matthew” also has me wondering about the effects of scholarship on how we read the Gospels for their spiritual benefits. In what ways does knowing, for example, the historical facts and the cultural context of a particular Gospel help or hinder the spiritual benefits of reading it in terms of prayer, contemplation, in short *Lectio Divina*? Here is where the tension between history and theology come into play. Anthropology, I am sure it goes without saying, is much more interested in the historical background of the Gospel and its impact on the production of culture. However, given that I am both a social scientist and a person of faith I struggle with a social science approach that is reductionist. Gratefully, there are contemporary schools of anthropological thought that understand the complexity of human consciousness and that there is a spiritual aspect to being human that cannot be reduced very easily to “social facts.” Still, I confess to not being certain how to reconcile these different approaches to reading the Gospel of Matthew or to reading any sacred narrative or scripture no matter what the religious tradition may be. This challenge often presents itself when I teach “Christianity and Culture in Dialogue” or “Thomas Merton, Religion and Culture” or “The Anthropology of Catholic Mystics and Mysticism.” Here I think is the juncture at which faith and reason come into play, as Thomas Aquinas reminds us,² and is a central aspect of the Catholic intellectual tradition, both of which are fundamental to the design and teaching of CORE 1, CORE 2 and CORE 3 courses.

The extensive notes Father Pablo provided are extremely helpful as I think some of these issues through. I appreciated immensely the many books that he recommend, some of which have already purchased, especially books on the parables of Jesus and, most useful the *Synopsis of the Four Gospel*.³ For many years, I have been using *Gospel Parallels*⁴ but now find Aland’s *Synopsis* so much more helpful in locating and understanding the different ways in which the narratives of the four Gospels are similar and/or different. This find, in-and-of-itself, has already enriched my own scholarship and studies, which I hope and believe can only help improve my own teaching and the accuracy of the information I share with my students as together we learn to appreciate the importance of the Gospel of Matthew, as one of the foundational documents of the Western culture and worldview, and about the influence of Christianity on the formulation of Western culture.

¹ "Deconstruction begins, its gears are engaged by the promptings of spirit/specter of something unimaginable and unforeseeable", writes philosopher of religion, John D. Caputo, in *The Prayers and Tears of Jacques Derrida, Religion Without Religion*. (Indiana University Press: Bloomington & Indiana, 1997), p. xix.

² See especially, Josef Pieper's *The Silence of St. Thomas: Three Essays*. 1963. St. Augustine's Press: South Bend, Indiana; and, *Guide to St. Thomas Aquinas*. (Ignatius Press: San Francisco, 1986).

³ Aland, Kurt, Ed. 1982. English Edition, (United Bible Societies: New York, 1982).

⁴ Throckmorton, Burton, H., Jr. 1992. Fifth Edition, (Thomas Nelson: New York, 1992)

KELLY A. SHEA

What Would Jesus Do? What Would Jesus Say?

As a teacher of writing who also teaches the first CORE course, The Journey of Transformation, I consider my critical work with my students to be focused on reading the texts and trying to get a sense of what they meant when they were written/translated and what they might mean now to the students. I also like them to think of the exigency and audience of the texts' authors. All of the CORE 1101 texts represent some kind of journey of self-discovery or understanding, and the Gospels are no different. For many years I taught the Gospel of Luke, which, it seemed to me, was a Gospel that focused on the journey of Jesus's life in such a way as to show that he was a caring and compassionate person who was most concerned with the poor, the disenfranchised, the infirm, the downtrodden.¹ After reading Luke's Gospel, I often asked my students throughout the rest of the semester, "What Would Jesus Do?" This was not a tongue-in-cheek question, although sometimes students thought it was. As we considered stories of spirituality and of battles among families (*The Bhagavad Gita*); personal discovery (Dante's *Divine Comedy* and Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*); the meanings of life and death (Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych*); the meanings of love and charity (Pope Benedict's *Deus Caritas Est*); and, in my class, the notion of service to others in the film *The Human Experience*, answering the question of what a person like Jesus Christ would do in similar situations (as well as more contemporary situations) was and is relevant and important to students' lives today. Having just returned to teaching the Journey course in Spring 2017 after a few years, I struggled, in some ways, to find a similar sense in Matthew's Gospel, and I wondered why. Father Pablo's seminar on Matthew has helped me to understand Matthew's perspective and teachings and something about how he portrayed the life of Jesus Christ differently than Luke did. Matthew seemed somewhat less interested in talking about what Jesus *did* and more interested in what Jesus *said*. Why is this? Who were Luke and Matthew and why did they write about the life of Jesus the way they did? Ultimately, I am very interested in the rhetorical situation and message of the authors of the Gospels, and it's a lesson that is relevant to first-year college writers who are developing their own sense of authorial voice and exigency of message and argument.

Is it possible that Matthew's depiction, being somewhat closer in time to the death of Jesus Christ and an evident attempt "to encourage Christians of Jewish origin that Jesus [was] the awaited Messiah and fulfillment of the [Old Testament ... [and to] outline the mission to the Gentles"² is less about showing who Jesus was (letting his *actions* speak for themselves, something that seems more characteristic of Luke's Gospel³) and more about convincing readers that he was the Messiah and understanding how his *teachings* would help followers achieve the kingdom of heaven?⁴ In other words, was Luke more concerned about what Jesus did and was Matthew more concerned about what Jesus said?

One way of looking at this question is to look at who Luke and Matthew were, in real life, as it were. It is important to remind students that these writers were not likely people who actually lived at the time of Jesus Christ; instead, the material that they have shared in their Gospels was probably told to them by first- or second-hand witnesses. As Father Pablo points out, "the Gospels [were] written with the intention of writing a historical account ... which

however does not mean they are a videotape replay. They were written down in living memory of the events, that is, while eyewitnesses of those events were still living.”⁵ Furthermore, while Fr. Pablo allows that the apostle Matthew could have been the actual writer of Matthew’s Gospel,⁶ if it was written in AD 70, it seems implausible that the apostle Matthew (who would have been, at the youngest, 90 years old in AD 70) could have been the actual writer. In fact, James R. Edwards takes a much more detailed look at the authorship of Matthew’s Gospel (and the order in which it was produced among the Gospels). He distinguishes between the Canonical Greek Matthew and the Hebrew Gospel, explaining that “Matthew represents a separate and independent tradition from the Hebrew Gospel and cannot be explained as a Greek translation of the Hebrew Gospel. Canonical Greek Matthew and the Hebrew Gospel most probably share the name ‘Matthew’ because both were written for and addressed to Jewish Christian audiences.”⁷ Edwards also suggests that the majority of evidence shows that Matthew was “the final and consummate Gospel in the Synoptic tradition”⁸; as a later Gospel, this would confirm that it was not the apostle Matthew who actually wrote the Gospel, but that it was written in the tradition of Matthew. Of course, as Fr. Pablo points out, there is much disagreement among scholars about the “synoptic problem”: which Gospel came first and which was/were influenced by which other Gospel(s) and other documents? In his seminar notes, Fr. Pablo concludes, “in recent years, many scholars have acknowledged the limits of such models of linear development and literature dependence, because of the importance of the living oral tradition and the likelihood of mutual influence and somewhat parallel development among the Gospels.”⁹ That analysis could extend to the question of the true identities of the Gospel writers.

Luke, for his part, makes it very clear in his Gospel right from the first line of the first chapter what his purposes and sources are:

Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, Theophilus, so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed.¹⁰

Scholars and the actual texts themselves tell us that the writers had very different missions for setting down their Gospels. Consider, on the other hand, the beginning of Matthew’s Gospel: “An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”¹¹ He clearly wants to write, as Fr. Pablo points out, a genealogy, an “ancient biography.”¹² So Luke’s and Matthew’s vantage points and stated missions in writing the Gospels were somewhat different.

Furthermore, Luke’s Gospels are regularly referred to as narratives, the stories of the life of Jesus Christ, while Matthew’s Gospels are regularly analyzed in terms of Jesus’s sermons and discourses – his teachings. So the rhetorical purposes of the two writers seem rather different, as well, even as they’re recounting many of the same events. As Fr. Pablo says, they talk about the life of Jesus in different ways and to different ends. Of course, we can never really know for sure of the mission and purposes of any author, as is true of much ancient and even contemporary literature.

Ultimately, in teaching the Gospel, while I prefer the frame of Luke’s “What Would Jesus Do?” message, perhaps I should stick with Matthew’s “What Would Jesus Say?” frame. More time and study will tell, but it gives me an interesting perspective from which to teach the

Journey students about agency and exigency in their own writing. If I can only teach Matthew, then perhaps “What Would Jesus Say?” is the way to go, and I can thus remind the students to carefully consider what they say/write and how they say/write it, lest their message be lost.

¹ Soards, M., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version*, (Oxford University Press: New York, 2010), p. 1828.

² Gadenz, P., 2017 Faculty Summer Seminar: The Message of Matthew,” (seminar handout, May 23, 2017), p. 5.

³ Soards, M. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version*, (Oxford University Press: New York, 2010), p. 1828-1829.

⁴ Gadenz, P., 2017 Faculty Summer Seminar: The Message of Matthew, (seminar handout, May 23, 2017), p. 1. See also Cousland, J., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version*, (Oxford University Press; New York, 2010), p. 1746.

⁵ Gadenz, P., 2017 Faculty Summer Seminar: The Message of Matthew, (seminar handout, May 23, 2017), p. 3.

⁶ Gadenz, P., 2017 Faculty Summer Seminar: The Message of Matthew, (seminar handout, May 23, 2017), p. 5.

⁷ Edwards, J., *The Hebrew Gospel and the Development of the Synoptic Tradition*, (Eerdmans Publishing: Grand Rapids, MI, 2009), p. 261-262.

⁸ Edwards, J., *The Hebrew Gospel and the Development of the Synoptic Tradition*, (Eerdmans Publishing: Grand Rapids, MI, 2009), p. 261.

⁹ Gadenz, P., 2017 Faculty Summer Seminar: The Message of Matthew,” (seminar handout, May 23, 2017), p. 2.

¹⁰ Luke 1:1-4. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version*, (Oxford University Press: New York, 2010), p. 1829.

¹¹ Matthew 1:1. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version*, (Oxford University Press: New York, 2010), p. 1746.

¹² Gadenz, P., 2017 Faculty Summer Seminar: The Message of Matthew, (seminar handout, May 23, 2017), p. 3.

EDWARD G. TALL

**Matthew's Gospel and Modern Biology:
Structure and Fulfillment as Reflections of the Divine**

During summer of 2017, Father Pablo Gadenz conducted a seminar series entitled *The Message of Matthew*. It was an excellent series, well-prepared and rich in analyses. Among the multiple themes Father Gadenz discussed about Matthew's Gospel are two that can relate to modern biology: *a gospel of order/structure* and *a gospel of fulfillment*. This work seeks to illuminate a parallel of *order/structure* and *fulfillment* as can be seen in the design of the foundation of living entities as we understand them: deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA). The order and fulfillment seen in Matthew's Gospel, and the understanding of the structure and purpose of DNA, can both be regarded as revelations of God.

To begin, an overview of the structure of Matthew's Gospel shows a significant degree of order. As Father Gadenz summarized from Mitch and Sri (2010), Matthew's Gospel has overall chronological structure beginning with Infancy Narrative, then Five Sermons of Jesus, each preceded and framed by narratives of Jesus, and concluding with Jesus's Passion, Death, and Resurrection.¹ However, Mitch and Sri also identify deeper structures within this overall sequence. For example, the authors identify Matthew's concentric arrangements in the Sermons in relation to one another and his concentric structure of different aspects within a Sermon itself.

From Father Gadenz's seminar notes² a concentric arrangement of Sermons can be seen as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| i. Matthew 5-7 | Sermon on the Mount: entry into the Kingdom |
| ii. Matthew 10 | Sermon on Mission: outgoing mission of the community |
| iii. Matthew 13 | Sermon in Parables: Parables of the Kingdom |
| iv. Matthew 18 | Sermon on the Church: inner structure of the community |
| v. Matthew 23 and 24-25 | Woes +Eschatological Sermon: completion of the Kingdom |

Furthermore, Father Gadenz draws from Mitch and Sri again, showing delineation of concentric structure within Matthew's portrayal of Sermon on the Mount.³

5:1-2 Narrative Frame: *Jesus goes up the mountain* (to teach the crowds & disciples)
 5:3-16 Introduction: Beatitudes; Salt & Light Images (*kingdom of heaven* 5:3, 10)
 5:17-20 Theme: Fulfillment of the Law & Prophets
 5:21-48 Relationship with Neighbor: 6 Antitheses: “You have heard it said....”
 6:1-18 Relationship with God (3 practices) — { 6:1-4 Almsgiving
 6:5 Prayer: Our Father (6:9-13)
 6:16-18 Fasting
 6:19—7:11 Relationship with Material Things: Trust in God (3 parts....)
 7:12 Golden Rule: Fulfillment of the *Law & Prophets*
 7:13-27 Conclusion: Contrasting Images: 2 Gates/Ways (cf. Ps); 2 Trees; 2 Builders....
 7:28-8:1 Narrative Frame: *Jesus comes down the mountain* (and the crowds are astonished at his *teaching*).

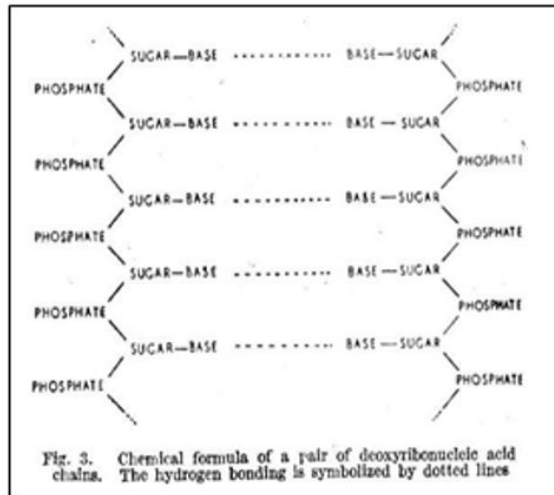
The two quoted pieces above are examples of complexity of structure within Matthew’s Gospel as identified by those who have studied it closely enough to recognize and appreciate such arrangement and symmetry.

Another major theme found in Matthew’s Gospel is that of fulfillment. Father Gadenz pointed out many observations wherein Matthew seems to connect his Gospel to the Old Testament writings, with many Old Testament references and images. The message is that Jesus and His teachings are fulfillments of Old Testament Prophecies: “Jesus says that he has come not to abolish but to fulfill...the Law & the Prophets”^{4 5} and “By means of these fulfillment citations, Matthew shows that the Scriptures attest the identity & mission of Jesus, that in Jesus, God’s plan of salvation is fulfilled. Not just the Prophets but all of Scripture is fulfilled in Him.”⁶

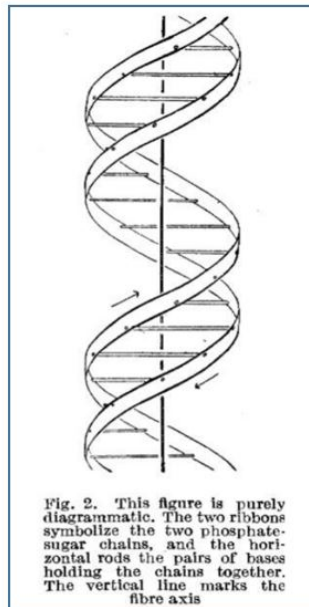
As a former tax collector of Jewish-Christian orientation, Matthew would be someone who has an educated and quantitative mind, and so order, symmetry, and fulfillment would resonate well with him. In this manner, Matthew could be inspired to write about how God reveals Himself (through Jesus) and His plan (of salvation) through attentiveness to order and fulfillment. If we accept the concept that God reveals Himself in different ways, then Matthew’s Gospel is one of multiple views of the Divine... there are others (Mark, Luke, John).

With a quantitative and attentive mindset, perhaps Matthew would be in a position to see, via symmetry and order, Old Testament fulfillment and revelation of God through Jesus. Is there a similar way the God reveals Himself to us today? What if we consider deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA)? This is the largest type of molecule in cells, consisting of two antiparallel strands of nucleotides joined together. Each nucleotide consists of a deoxyribose sugar, a phosphate group, and a nitrogenous base.^{7 8} For the sake of concept, if we were to roughly envision the double-stranded DNA molecule as a ladder, the antiparallel strands of alternating sugar and phosphates residues would comprise the uprights, and the nitrogenous bases extending toward each other from

each sugar group and connecting to each other in the middle would comprise the rungs of the ladder (see “Fig. 3” from Watson and Crick, 1953).⁹



To roughly illustrate the double helix structure of DNA, hold one end of this ladder in place and twist the other end until the ladder is spiral all along its length (see “Fig. 2” modified from Watson and Crick, 1953).⁷ Aside from its double-helical structure, DNA can have other repeating dimensions such as nucleotides per turn through the helix, major grooves, minor grooves, etc. (other deviations are have been seen).^{5 6 7} Therefore, there is much additional complexity in this type of molecule that goes beyond the scope of this discussion. Despite such complexity, there are only four *different* nitrogenous bases in DNA: A, C, G, T.



It is the sequence of these bases as one reads along one of the DNA strands that is the essence of the message—the overall message is our genome. Our genome, or DNA sequence, exists in all of our complete cells (*some cells lack a nucleus/DNA). It is from large DNA molecules such as this, that each living creature takes its form and has life (as per our definition of life). The DNA sequence codes for an RNA molecule (another molecule with structure) which then codes for an amino acid sequence that then will properly fold into a structured protein essential for life. This is fulfillment of that DNA sequence—the production of the protein (or RNA) coded for by the genetic sequences in DNA. In these molecules is order, structure, and fulfillment.

So what does DNA have to do with Matthew’s Gospel? If God revealed Himself to Matthew via Matthew’s ability to discern God’s structure and fulfillments (as discussed above), might God be revealing Himself yet again to us via structure and fulfillment as seen in DNA? Is there precedence for seeking to discover and understand God in science/nature? Consider St. Thomas Aquinas’s *Summa Contra Gentiles*.... In this work, St. Thomas strongly encourages the study and understanding of nature/world to the highest degree in the pursuit of wisdom: “Among all human pursuits, the pursuit of wisdom is more perfect, more noble, more useful, and more full of joy.... through this pursuit man especially approaches to a likeness to God Who ‘made all things in wisdom’ (Ps. 1023:24)”¹⁰ and “....the pursuit of wisdom especially joins man to God in friendship.” Our discovery and understanding of DNA as the ‘blue prints for life’ can be considered God revealing himself to those who seek to learn and to understand... those with a mindset for seeing this aspect of God (there are many other aspects of God appreciated via different insights). St. Matthew had a heightened awareness of Old Testament prophecy and fulfillment, and was inspired to convey his message in an intricately-structured gospel. St. Thomas viewed pursuit of wisdom as a way to come to know God and His creation better. Perhaps if we employ heightened awareness with our pursuit of scientific knowledge, we might see and better understand God’s great design in our discoveries.

¹ Mitch, C., and Sri, E., *The Gospel of Matthew, Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture Series*, (Baker Academic: Grand Rapids, 2010), pp. 15-31.

² Gadenz, P., *2017 Faculty Summer Seminar: The Message of Matthew*, (seminar notes, day 1), p.6.

³ Gadenz, P., *2017 Faculty Summer Seminar: The Message of Matthew*, (seminar notes, day 2), p. 1.

⁴ Matthew 5: 17.

⁵ Matthew 11: 13.

⁶ Gadenz, P., *2017 Faculty Summer Seminar: The Message of Matthew*, (seminar notes, day 1), p. 7.

⁷ Watson, J.D., and Crick, F.H.C., “*Molecular Structure of Nucleic Acid. A structure for deoxyribonucleic acid.*” *Nature* (1953a) 171:737-738.

⁸ Stryer, L., *Biochemistry*, third edition, (W.H. Freeman and Company: New York, 1988), pp. 71-88.

⁹ Watson, J.D., and Crick, F.H.C., “*Genetic implications of the structure of deoxyribonucleic acid.*” *Nature* (1953b) 171:964-967.

¹⁰ Pegis, A., (translated with introduction and notes), *Saint Thomas Aquinas: On the Truth of the Catholic Faith Summa Contra Gentiles: Book One: God*, (Hanover House: Garden City, 1955), p. 61.

GLORIA THURMOND

**Reading the Gospel According to Matthew and Listening to Johann Sebastian Bach:
Integrating Text and Music for *Journey of Transformation***

The Seton Hall University Core Curriculum course, *Journey of Transformation*, provides an excellent opportunity for integrating the reading of the *Gospel According to Matthew* with the listening to *The Passion According to St. Matthew*, a dramatic musical composition by the great Baroque composer Johann Sebastian Bach. Integrating texts and music in the *Journey of Transformation* can stimulate new ways of thinking about the text, initiate new understandings of the text, and open new pathways to an experience of the text that can foster transformation in perspective and attitude.

Since music has the extraordinary ability to connect thinking with feeling, combining a text and a musical composition creates a neural and spiritual capacity for the internalization of the textual message through the head and the heart—thereby preparing the way for humility, empathy, mercy, and compassion—the highest expressive qualities of our humanity.

According to Dr. Ernest L. Boyer, United States Commissioner of Education from 1977 to 1979, “[T]he primacy of music in the human species would indicate that it ‘brings us into the fullness of our humanity [by] awakening emotion through verbal and non-verbal experience and [by] providing a powerful vehicle for general human development.’”

With the assertion that he “has come to fulfill the law,” Jesus fulfilled the law by taking the law “to ‘heart,” which is formulated in his counsel to “do to others as you would have them do to you.”¹ According to Faculty Summer Seminar presenter, Father Pablo Gadenz, Jesus adds himself to the law, thereby embodying a moral awareness and authority that motivate his actions and inspires his teachings. Father Gadenz further posits that “[Jesus’ words] appear to [reveal] who Jesus is, and those who would follow him are called to become like him.”

Authors Curtis Mitch and Edward Sri observe that “[Of] the many specific injunctions in Matthew, we are told that following Jesus means imitating his humility² and shouldering the cross of suffering as he did.³ ⁴ Disciples should be dedicated to integrity of speech,⁵ to exercising a generous mercy toward others,⁶ and to performing works of service.”⁷ ⁸

The community of discipleship as prescribed by the *Gospel of Matthew* is “envisioned in the Sermon on the Mount [as a] community that embodies radical obedience to the [law] as authoritatively interpreted by Jesus. Consequently, such authentic discipleship is possible only through a transformation of character, enabling not merely outward obedience to the law’s requirements, but also through an inner obedience from the heart.”⁹

Western music history has pronounced Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750) as the “most famous and gifted of all composers, past and present.” However, that which is not widely known is that Bach also was a Lutheran theologian “whose heart was devoted to God alone.” In his work as an organist and composer, Bach believed that *[T]he aim and [ultimate] end of all music should*

be none other than the glory of God and the refreshment of the soul. Music—accordingly—is not for ourselves. Rather, *music is about blessing the Lord and blessing others.* The inscriptions with which Bach ended his manuscripts attest to his singular devotion to God. Typically, Bach’s manuscripts included at least one of the following inscriptions: *I.N.J. (In Nomine Jesu: ‘In the name of Jesus’)*; or *J.J. (Jesu Juva: ‘Jesus Help Me’)*; and *S.D.G. (Soli Deo Gloria: ‘Glory to God Alone.’)*¹⁰

Bach’s composition, *The Passion According to St. Matthew*, consists of a complete musical setting of Chapters 26 and 27 of the Gospel According to Matthew. In the *Passion*, “Bach explores and utilizes the full potential of diverse vocal and instrumental sonorities and a wide range of musical textures. The use of two choirs and two orchestras made it possible to employ antiphonal dialogues, and to juxtapose disparate genres (e.g., chorale and aria.) The ultimate aim was to explore the widest possible range of musical expression. Bach used technical mastery, stylistic variety and musical complexity in the service of conveying a complex, multi-faceted emotional message.¹¹ The vocal soloists and choristers in the *Passion* portray “Christ’s disciples and persecutors in the narrative portions, and present-day Christian believers in the contemplative choruses and chorales.”¹²

First performed during the Good Friday Vespers Service in 1727 at the St. Thomas Church in Leipzig where Bach was organist and choirmaster, *The Passion According to St. Matthew* is a “sermon-in-music,” intended to guide the Lutheran congregation toward an appropriate response to the reading of Matthew’s Passion narrative. The musical drama of the *Passion* brings into focus the Christian believer’s highly personalized, emotional grappling with the significance of Jesus’ suffering and death. Bach’s musical composition simultaneously engages the passion of Jesus “while capturing the psychological drama of the Christian believers’ various emotional responses to his passion.”¹³

The opening chorus of the *Passion**—*Kommt, ihr Töchter, helft mir klagen* (“Come, ye daughters, help me mourn”)¹⁴—is a dirge, musically depicting the walking and lamentation of those who followed Jesus on his way to be crucified.¹⁵ Bach’s musical setting is comparable to the literary and expressive style of the Gospel According to Matthew. “This particular chorus is one of Bach’s longest choral movements, and it presents the full ensemble: two four-part choirs, each accompanied by a separate orchestra, and joined by third group of singers who intone the *Agnus Dei* chorale, *O Lamm Gottes unschuldig*, (“O guiltless Lamb of God.”)

The two choirs are in direct dialogue: Choir I exhorts Choir II to reflect upon Christ’s innocence and their own guilt. This emphasizes both a structural principle in the Gospel and one of its principal messages.¹⁶ Throughout his composition, Bach utilizes the “dialogue principle and tonal ambiguity to create intense ambiguity in mood and response to Christ’s suffering through passionate lyrical expressions of sympathy and remorse, and joy and mourning.”¹⁷

“Choir I begins to express its feelings through the mode of E minor and to words of poet Christian Friedrich Henrici (known by his pen-name as Picander): *Come daughter [people] of Jerusalem, help me lament; see the bridegroom [Christ] who is also a lamb.* However, some among the crowd are uncertain of the identity of the condemned man; and, thus, they (Choir II) cry out: *Who? How? Where?* To increase the dramatic, stereophonic effect, Bach positioned the two choirs in different locations in his church. Above the choral turmoil, a moralizing voice—

perhaps representative of the voice of God —enters singing long notes in the soprano section with a chorale tune: *O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig* ("O Lamb of God, wholly innocent"). The chorale text equates Christ with the lamb that Abraham sacrificed; and, thus by referencing the Old Testament, affirms a thematic literary synoptic connection between the Old Testament and the New Testament. The heavenly chorale is in G major, a bright contrast to the earthly E minor."¹⁸

According to the fifteenth-century German theologian and religious reformer Martin Luther, music, as the “handmaiden” of theology, “does not inform the intellect; but rather, it raises the intellect to heights of awareness and consciousness that raw thoughts by themselves cannot attain. Consequently, music as ‘handmaiden’ shapes our religious sensitivities and raises faith to levels beyond the reach of the spoken or the silently read word.”¹⁹

In his April 4, 1999 *Letter to Artists*, Pope John Paul II stated that “music, as a path to the inmost reality of our common humanity and of the world of creation ... connects human experience to its ultimate meaning. Humanity in every age, including today, looks to works of art to enlighten and inspire our journey towards our ultimate destiny.”

Because of this reality, one may come to understand how Bach’s *Passion According to St. Matthew* “continues to inspire admiration and devotion even among people who do not share Bach’s spiritual and religious view. Encountering an expression of humanity that is informed by empathy, mercy, and compassion makes it easier for listeners of diverse backgrounds and creeds to identify with Bach’s *Passion According to St. Matthew*,”²⁰ and, potentially, to experience a connection with the very human message of Matthew’s Gospel.

***Text of the Opening Chorus²¹**

Choir I	
<i>Kommt, ihr Töchter, helf mir klagen;</i>	Come, daughter of Jerusalem, help me lament;
<i>Sehet den Bräutigam, seht ihn als wie ein Lamm</i>	Behold the bridegroom comes like a lamb.
<i>Sehet, seht die Geduld, seht unser Schuld</i>	Look upon his love, look upon our guilt.
<i>Sehet ihn aus Lieb und Huld</i>	Look upon him who for love and grace
<i>Holz zum Kreuze selber tragen!</i>	Carries his own cross!
Choir II	
<i>Wen? Wie? Wohin?</i>	Who, how, where?
Chorale tune in separate group of sopranos	
<i>O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig</i>	O lamb of God, wholly innocent
<i>Am Stamm des Kreuzes geschlachtet,</i>	Slaughtered on the trunk of the Cross,
<i>Allzeit erfunden geduldig,</i>	Patient through all ages,
<i>Wiewohl du warest verachtet.</i>	No matter how much provoked.
<i>All Sünden hast du getragen,</i>	You have carried all sins,
<i>Sonst müssen wir verzagen.</i>	Lest we lose all hope.
<i>Erbarm dich unser, o Jesu!</i>	Have mercy upon us, O Jesus.

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- ¹ Matthew 7:12.
- ² Matthew 11:29.
- ³ Matthew 10:38.
- ⁴ Matthew 16: 24.
- ⁵ Matthew 12: 36-37.
- ⁶ Matthew 18:21-22.
- ⁷ Matthew 25: 35-36.
- ⁸ Mitch, C. and Sri, E., *The Gospel of Matthew*, (Baker Academic: Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2010), p. 26.
- ⁹ Hays, R., *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, (Baylor University Press: Waco, TX, 2016), p. 120.
- ¹⁰ Sohn, P., *J. S. Bach: The Theologian Inside, Composer Outside*, (online article, September 25, 2012).
- ¹¹ Golomb, U., *Liturgical Drama in Bach's St. Matthew Passion*, (Goldberg Early Music Magazine 39, 2006), pp. 48 – 59.
- ¹² Golomb, U., *Liturgical Drama in Bach's St. Matthew Passion*, (Goldberg Early Music Magazine 39: Spain, 2006), p. 3
- ¹³ Golomb, U., *Liturgical Drama in Bach's St. Matthew Passion*, (Goldberg Early Music Magazine 39: Spain, 2006), p. 3
- ¹⁴ Bach, J. S., *The Passion According to Saint Matthew*, Double Chorus, “Kommt Ihr Töchter” (“Come, Ye Daughters”) YouTube recording, Karajan, Conductor, May 7, 2014.
- ¹⁵ Matthew 27: 31-55.
- ¹⁶ Golomb, U., *Liturgical Drama in Bach's St. Matthew Passion*, (Goldberg Early Music Magazine 39, 2006), pp. 48 – 59.
- ¹⁷ Golomb, U., *Liturgical Drama in Bach's St. Matthew Passion*, (Goldberg Early Music Magazine 39: Spain, 2006), p. 5
- ¹⁸ Wright/Simms, *Music in Western Civilization*, (Schirmer-Cengage Learning: Boston, MA, Music History Resource Center website, 2015).
- ¹⁹ Scaer, D., *Johann Sebastian Bach as Lutheran Theologian*, *Concordia Theological Quarterly*, (Concordia Theological Seminary: Fort Wayne, IN, July/October 2004), p. 320.
- ²⁰ Golomb, U., *Liturgical Drama in Bach's St. Matthew Passion*, (Goldberg Early Music Magazine 39, 2006), pp. 48 – 59.
- ²¹ Wright/Simms, *Music in Western Civilization*, (Schirmer-Cengage Learning: Boston, MA, Music History Resource Center website, 2015).

JOHN P. WARGACKI

The ‘Sermon on the Mount’ and its Influence on Mahatma Gandhi

The lasting, global influence of Jesus, primarily depicted through 27 books of the New Testament, and the hundreds of Christian churches that subsequently emerged—particularly from “The Sermon on the Mount” in the Gospel of Matthew—cannot be overestimated. While the term “influence” is as far-ranging as one can imagine: theology and philosophy, to be sure, but also history, law, the natural and social sciences, business, as well the categories found across literature and the arts. The Bible then, as an example of sacred literature, has been the vehicle through which countless non-believers have come to meet Jesus Christ through the words and deeds of Christ that are recorded in the four Gospels, along with the books and letters about Him that constitute the remainder of the Christian Testament.

This was the case with Mohandas K. Gandhi. The evidence of this deep mark upon Gandhi’s philosophy, life, and his pursuit of non-violent revolution is empathized specifically in not only his *Autobiography*, but also supported by countless studies about his life and work. Seton Hall’s Catholic Studies Seminar, led by Father Pablo Gadnez this spring, 2017, served to underscore this remarkable and propitious connection between Christian belief and Gandhi, as well as the importance of re-emphasizing the vast historical significance of this event.

Perhaps it is best to begin with the specific passage from Matthew’s Gospel that apparently left the deepest mark on Gandhi, while consider the magnitude of Christ’s directive from a literary point of view—separate from an exegesis:

You have learned how it was said: *You must love your neighbor* and hate your enemy.
But I say to you: love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you; in this way you will be sons of your Father in heaven.¹

From any perspective, spiritual or literary, Christ’s words are shocking; they are not only antithetical to human nature—in the most basic sense one might define “human nature”—but they also call upon those who hear these words to respond to injury, physical or otherwise, in a way that even supersedes forgiveness, prescribing love for what would seem unloveable. While virtually every major religious tradition foregrounds forgiveness as an essential tenet, from Judaism to Islam to Buddhism, Christ’s command calls for both “forgiveness” of wrongdoers and, more spectacularly, “love” of one’s enemies. By any measure, this stands as an astonishing and seemingly impossible charge from Jesus; and, yet, it is integral to Christ’s “New Covenant.”

Gandhi’s path to the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, was rather accidental. He encountered “a good Christian” while studying law in Britain who urged him to read the scriptures, not to convert him, but to expose him the two Abrahamic religions he would have had little, if any, experience with being a Hindu from India (Islam, the third Abrahamic faith, of course, was the minority religion in India prior the nation’s independence in 1947). Gandhi relates the experience

directly from his *Autobiography*, which occurred during the end of his second year in England where he studied law:

About the same time I met a good Christian friend from Manchester in the vegetarian boarding house. He talked to me about Christianity. I narrated to him my Rajkot recollections. He said... 'Do please read the Bible.' I accepted his advice, and he got me a copy of the Bible... I could not possibly read through the Old Testament. I read the book of Genesis, and the chapters that followed invariably sent me to sleep... But the New Testament produced a different impression, especially the Sermon on the Mount which went straight to my heart. I compared it to the Gita. The verses, 'But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man take away thy coat let him have thy cloak too,' delighted me beyond measure... My young mind tried to unify the teaching of the *Gita*, the *Light of Asia* and the Sermon on the Mount. That renunciation was the highest form of religion appealed to me greatly.²

What occurs here in young Gandhi's delight as he attempts to connect his religious upbringing with Christianity would be the seedlings of a complex philosophy that would ultimately yield remarkable effects upon a violent and oppressive world.

And while it is impossible to map out in detail the salient points from Gandhi's encounter with Matthew's Jesus to the model he would set in achieving India's independence from British rule, Louis Fischer's succinct and powerful biography of Gandhi (*Gandhi: His Life and Message for the World*), written primarily for young readers, comments considerably on Gandhi's profound affinities with Christ. Fischer's account is especially compelling since he had visited Gandhi in India in 1942 and again in 1946. He recalls:

Among those who came to sit at Gandhi's feet were Christian missionaries. He loved Jesus and Hindu bigots even accused him of being a secret Christian. He considered this 'both a libel and a compliment—a libel because there are men who believe me capable of being secretly anything... a compliment in that it is a reluctant acknowledgement of my capacity for appreciating the beauties of Christianity.'³

Fischer further relates another little-known fact about Gandhi which prompted one of the Mahatma's most quoted revelations about his religious identifications. Fischer states:

In 1942, when I was at his guest house, I noticed the one decoration on the mud walls of his little hut: a black-and-white print of Jesus Christ under which was written, 'He Is Our Peace.' I asked him about it. 'You are not a Christian,' I said. 'I am a Christian and a Hindu and a Moslem and a Jew,' Gandhi replied.⁴

It is impossible to speculate about all the ways in which Gandhi's all-inclusive beliefs, his life-long struggle for peace and justice, and his legacy as the world's metonym for non-violent revolution would have been altered, or perhaps never occurred, had he never read the Bible and encountered Matthew's "Sermon on the Mount." Whether the result of Providence or mere circumstance, Gandhi was clearly affected deeply by Christ's command to "Love you enemies." Those three words, and all that followed, proved to be both a prescription for increased holiness and a strategy to combat evil. Undoubtedly, Gandhi's life and legacy paved the way for revolutionaries who both studied his example and followed in his footsteps, from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the American Civil Rights movement, to Lech Walesa and the Solidarity movement in Poland through the 1980s.

While Gandhi's story in both South Africa and later India has become legendary as the alternative means for combating the twentieth century's bloody history of war, mass murder, and subjugation, one can only imagine the millions of lives that continue to be affected by Gandhi. Indeed, from the first century, an encounter of Jesus may occur in any number of ways for untold numbers—from a private spiritual experience to a public conversion. Nonetheless, wherever one turns to in the Christian Bible to learn about Jesus through sacred scripture, it seems safe to say one will begin with or eventually turn to the New Testament's first book, making Matthew's Gospel, as it was apparently for Mahatma Gandhi, the gateway to the words and teachings of Jesus Christ. Neither Gandhi's world, nor the world at large, would ever be the same.

¹ Matthew's Gospel, *The Jerusalem Bible*, (Doubleday & Company, Inc: New York, 1969), p 23.

² Gandhi, M., *Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, (Dover Publications: New York, 1983), p. 60.

³ Fischer, L., *Gandhi: His Life and Message for the World*, (The New American Library: A Mentor Book: New York, 1954), p. 129-30.

⁴ Fischer, L., *Gandhi: His Life and Message for the World*, (The New American Library: A Mentor Book: New York, 1954), p. 130.

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