

# Wednesday Morning Connection

Sunday, June 6, 2004

In a report from Reuters this week the Irish rock star Bono, member of the band U2, said that there are no plans afoot for another "Live Aid 2" nineteen years after the initial event. See the article at:

<http://www.reuters.com/newsArticle.jhtml?type=entertainmentNews&storyID=5311249&pageNumber=0>

"Live Aid," which took place on July 13, 1985, featured 60 of the world's biggest rock stars performing live for sixteen hours at two different venues (London & Philadelphia). The concert was broadcast to an estimated 1.9 billion people in 150 countries and raised over \$70 million to alleviate famine in Ethiopia.

This week Bono was responding to rumors that he and others were planning a sequel to the successful event to raise money to fight AIDS. Bono contended instead that European Union countries needed to keep their commitments to contribute 0.7% of their national incomes to overseas aid as a more effective way of promoting development. Bono said, "For me it's not really about charity at this point, it's about justice."

He suggested that now that countries are feeling more prosperous, giving 0.7% is a greater sum in real currency, and some countries were unwilling to make that commitment. He said, "This is renegotiating your deal with God downward."

This Sunday's gospel intimates that Jesus is making the opposite promise to his disciples. Instead of a lessening of what is offered, there is an increase. The Spirit will give what comes from Jesus, and Jesus offers what he has from the Father. It is an increase in giving, a complete declaration of fulfillment. In John's gospel, at the Last Supper, Jesus renegotiates the deal with God UPWARD, and his disciples are witnesses to it!

The mystery of the Christian God we experience in the Trinity is that we are drawn into God's life and love. It is an unbelievable fulfillment for the believer. God, who is completely outside of us, completely other, pulls us in, to experience incredible love. And that awesome and total love is revealed in the mystery of the Trinity. A number of those who saw the movie, "The Passion of the Christ," expressed exactly that sense of God's complete love. When that realization begins to dawn on us it becomes more difficult to renegotiate our deal with God downward.

We may want to take back some of what we offered in commitment. We may want God to get a little less involved in our lives. We might even be desirous that the complete self-giving exemplified in Trinitarian love might be just that: only an example. But the truth is that God isn't much interested in a downward renegotiation. The only negotiation is upward, as is evidenced in the gospel that we'll hear at the end of Ordinary Time this year. When we celebrate the feast of Christ the King twenty-four weeks from now we'll hear Jesus say, "Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise." Sharing in the life of the Trinity can be no half-hearted measure, no downward trend.

## **This Sunday's Scripture Readings** **The Most Holy Trinity**

**Proverbs 8:22-31**

**Romans 5:1-5**

**John 16:12-15**

Sharing in God's love demands a full-hearted commitment. Even in affliction we cannot turn aside. As Paul writes, "affliction produces endurance, and endurance, proven character, and proven character, hope, and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given us."

Bono's comments about charity and justice point to this endurance. Charity can be a kind act practiced once. Justice is a continuous commitment, a hope that does not disappoint. The love of the Trinity is that justice that does not renege on the commitment. God keeps loving – TOTALLY. Dare we enter the awesome mystery that is the depth of that love?

Paul Michaels

### **PRAYER**

Loving and gracious God,  
you show the fullness of your love to your people  
by calling us to share in the life of your Son  
and in the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit.  
Strengthen the Spirit's gifts within us  
that we may proclaim the love of your Son to all the world  
so that all may come to know your truth  
and come to share in your glory and in the glory of your Son and the Holy Spirit,  
one God who lives forever and ever.

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