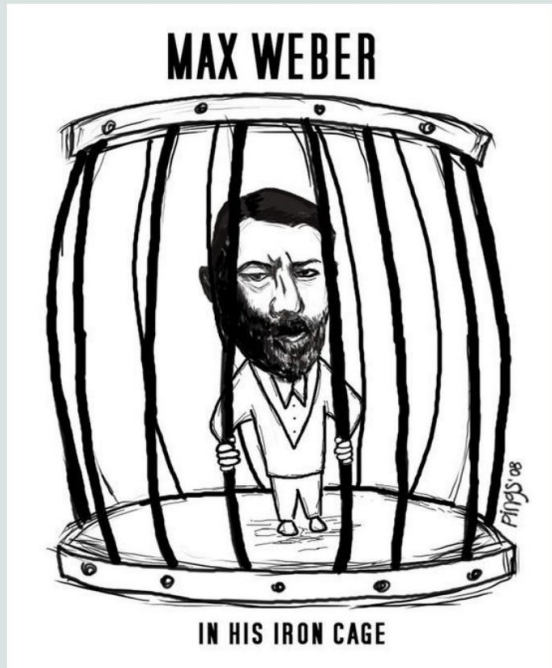


Idolatry and The Eucharist:

How to See God in
Things without Making
a God of Things





Buffered selves?

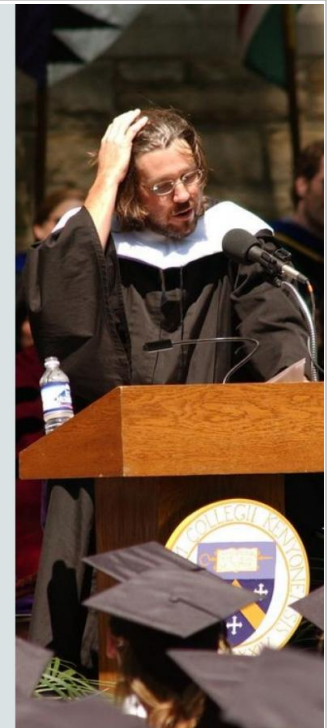


Pope Francis, *Lumen Fidei*

When one stops believing in God, one does not simply stop believing; rather one believes in all sorts of things, “an aimless passing from one lord to another. . . . Those who choose not to put their trust in God must hear the din of countless idols crying out: ‘Put your trust in me!’”

David Foster Wallace, Kenyon College, 2005

“In the day-to-day trenches of adult life, there is actually no such thing as atheism. There is no such thing as not worshipping. **Everybody worships**. The only choice we get is what to worship.” He goes on to say that the reason you might want to worship a real God “is that pretty much **anything else you worship will eat you alive.**”



Thesis and outline

We exalt our own creations, but that ends up diminishing us. The Eucharist points us to an alternative way of life.

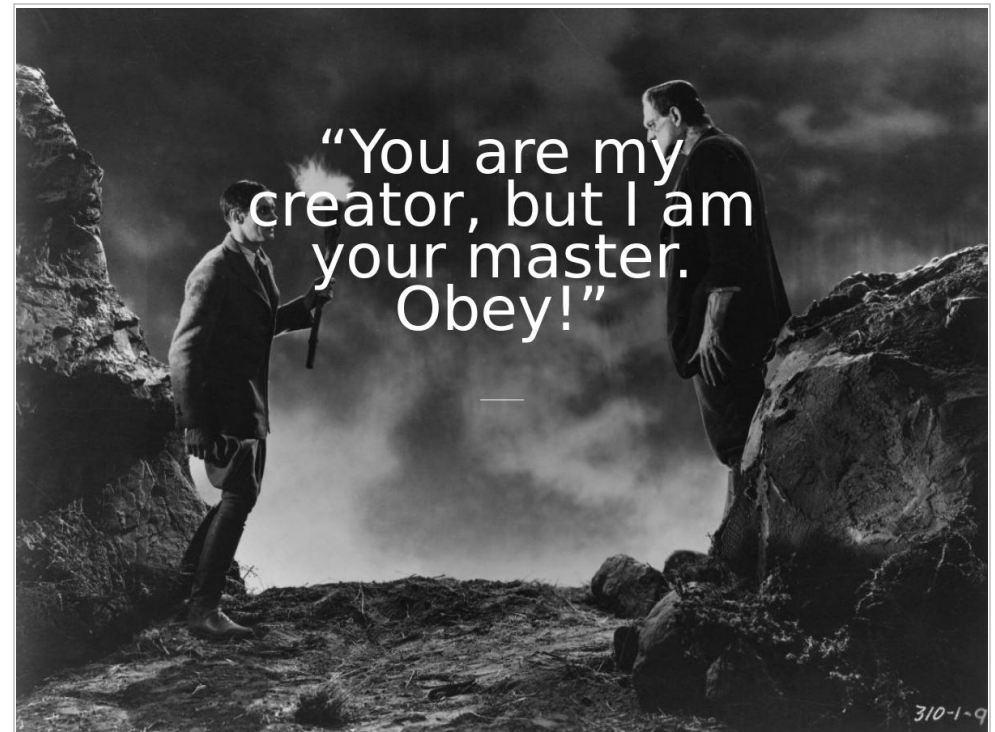
- Idolatry
 - Nationalism
 - Consumerism
 - Bible
- Eucharist
 - Resisting the deification of things
 - Resisting the reification of persons

Weber on the split between otherworldly and worldly

Salvation religions rationalize suffering by positing an otherworldly sphere. This leads to a split between this world and the other world between facts and values, that eventually pushes religion to the private sphere of value and leaves an autonomous disenchanted world of fact governed by science, the state, and the capitalist market.

Weber's polytheism

"Many old gods ascend from their graves; they are disenchanted and hence take the form of impersonal forces. They strive to **gain power over our lives** and again they resume their eternal struggle with one another.

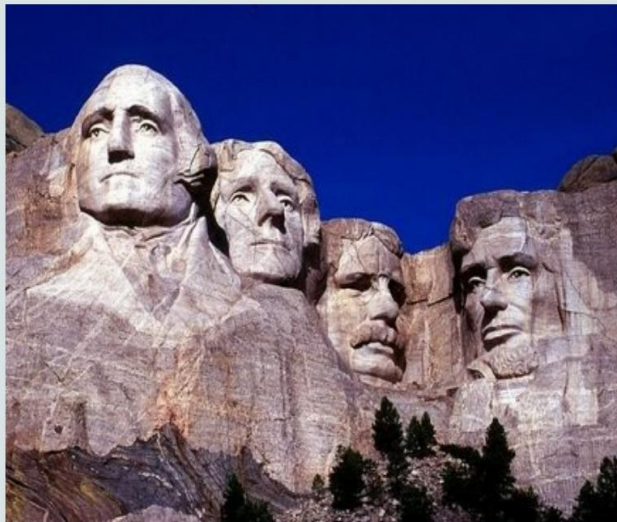


Weber on how war outdoes religion

“War... makes for an **unconditionally devoted and sacrificial community** among the combatants and releases an active mass of compassion and love for those who are in need... In general, religions can show comparable achievements only in heroic communities professing an ethic of brotherliness.’

Prof. Carolyn Marvin

“Nationalism is the most powerful religion in the United States, and perhaps in many other countries.’



Apotheosis of Washington

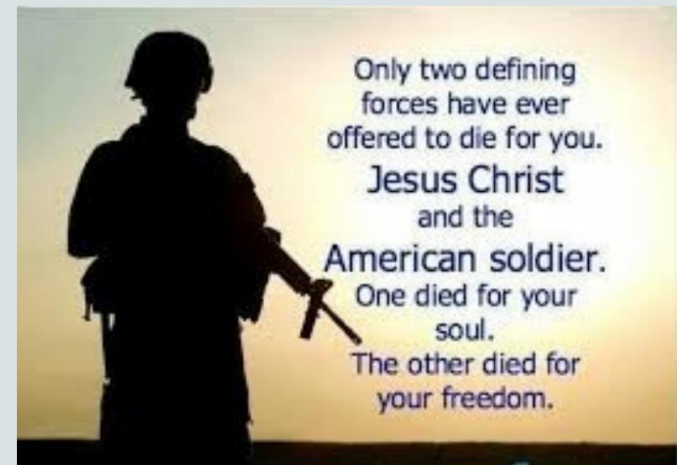




What is really true and sacred

Carolyn Marvin: "What is really true in any society what is worth killing for, and what citizens may be compelled to sacrifice their lives for

President Biden: "We've a lot of obligations as Americans... But only one *sacred* obligation, and that's prepare those we send to war and care for them and their families when they come home from war



Weber on money

"It is thought of so purely as an end in itself that from the point of view of the happiness of, or utility to, the single individual, it appears **entirely transcendental and absolutely irrational**. Man is dominated by the making of money, by acquisition as the ultimate purpose of his life.

Farmers dump a million gallons of milk to protest low prices, 2009

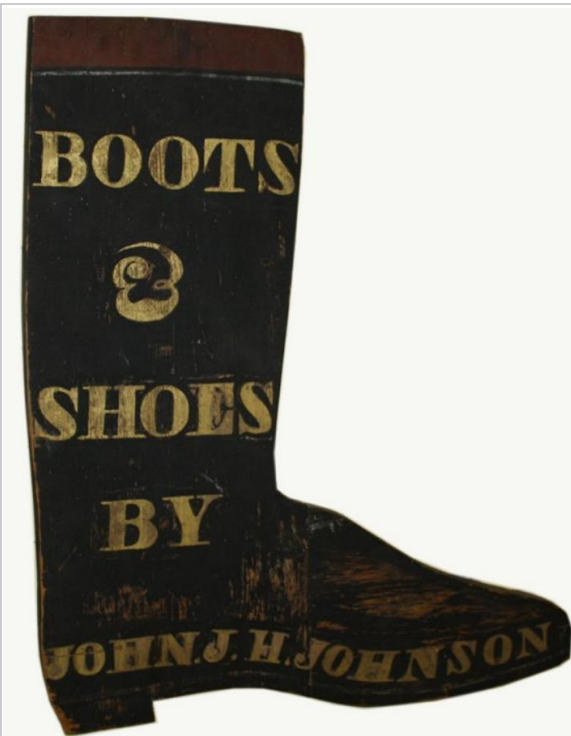


US government cheese warehouse



Thompson Red Book of Advertising, 1901

"People need to be taught that they have wants that they did not recognize before."



19th
century
shoe
advertising



Early 20th
century
shoe
advertising



Mid-20th
century
shoe
advertising



Recent
advertising:
what product is
even being sold
here?



Moloch

Milton Friedman
with General
Augusto Pinochet

"People were
in prison so
that prices
could be
free" –
Eduardo
Galeano





Psalm 115:4-8

“Their idols are silver and gold, made by human hands. They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see...They have hands, but cannot feel, feet, but cannot walk.. **Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them.**”

Idolatry in the Bible

The Bible treats idolatry principally as a matter of behavior, not belief. Idolatry is not primarily considered a metaphysical error, but a betrayal of loyalty to the God of Israel.

I Samuel 8:7-8

God says to Samuel, “it is not you they have rejected but me, not wishing me to reign over them anymore. They are now doing to you exactly what they have done to me since the day I brought them out of Egypt until now, deserting me and serving other gods.”

Idolatry defined

Idolatry in a general sense is when people give an *inordinate* amount of trust or loyalty to something created rather than to God.

Paul on idolatry

Paul criticizes those whose “gods are their bellies...[and] their minds are set on earthly things” (Phil. 3:19), and warns against “greed, which is the same thing as worshipping a false god” (Col. 3:5).



“No servant can serve
two masters;
for either he will hate the one
and love the other,
or else he will be loyal to the one
and despise the other.
**You cannot serve God
and mammon.”**

Luke 16:13



Wisdom 13:6-7

“Yet these people are little
to be blamed, for perhaps
they go astray while
seeking God and desiring
to find him. For while they
live among his works, they
keep searching, and they
trust in what they see
because the things that
are seen are beautiful.”



Acts 17:26-28

“From one ancestor he made all nations to
inhabit the whole earth...so that they would
search for God and perhaps grope for him and
find him—though indeed he is not far from
each one of us. For ‘In him we live and move
and have our being’; as even some of your
own poets have said ‘For we too are his
offspring.’”



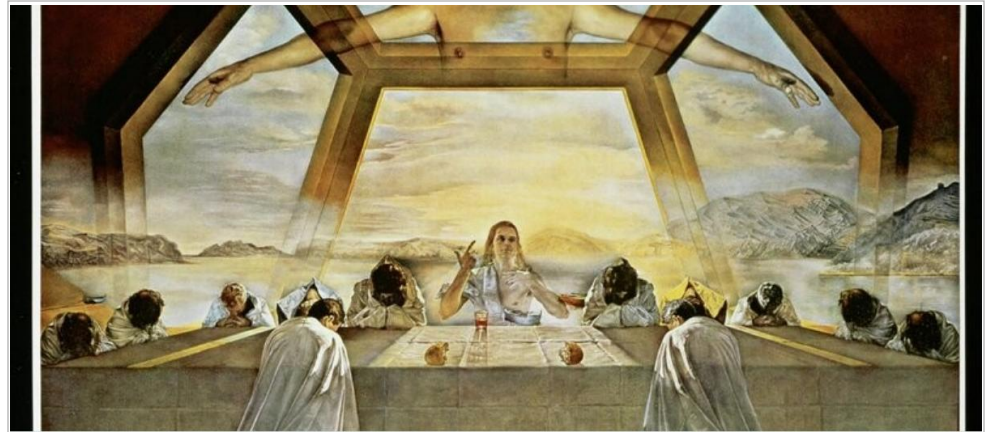
Eucharist,
Donald Jackson

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Christian materialism



Christianity is a certain kind of materialism, rooted in God becoming flesh and dwelling among us. In Christ, God did not disdain material reality but embraced it. Christ is the sacrament of God, the one who reveals God in material form, and thereby reveals the reality of God inhabiting all of creation, including people. The sacraments are the continuation of the Incarnation, the presence of Christ among us.



Salvador Dalí,
*The Sacrament
of the Last
Supper*

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*

"The universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely. Hence, there is mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person's face. The ideal is not only to pass from the exterior to the interior to discover the action of God in the soul, but also to discover God in all things

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*

"It is in the Eucharist that all that has been created finds its greatest exaltation... In the Eucharist fullness is already achieved; it is the living center of the universe, the overflowing core of love and of inexhaustible life."

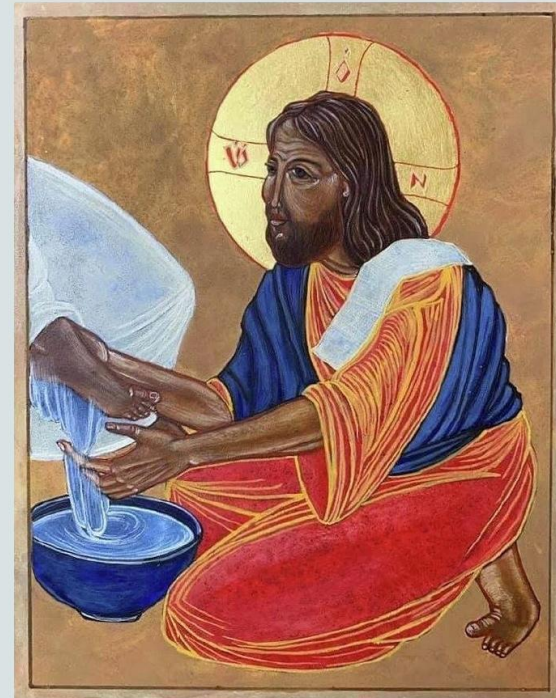
And for all this, nature is never spent; There lives
the dearest freshness deep down things; And
though the last lights off the black West went Oh,
morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs -
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent World
broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

44 quoketancy



Fritz
Eichenberg
, Last
Supper

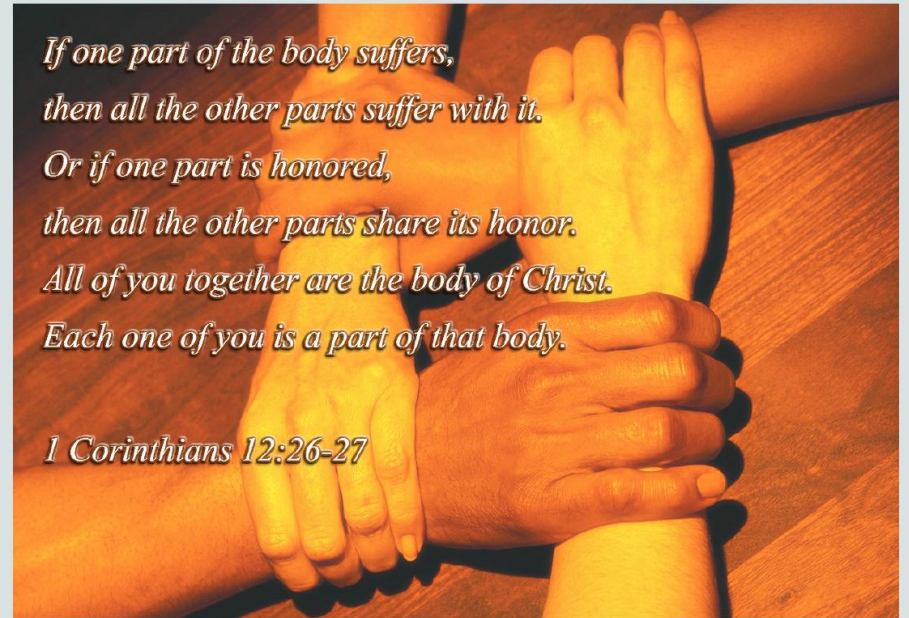


St. Augustine, *Confessions*

Augustine puts God's word to us in this way
"I am the food of the fully grown; grow and
you will feed on me. And you will not change
me into you like the food your flesh eats, but
you will be changed into me.

*If one part of the body suffers,
then all the other parts suffer with it.
Or if one part is honored,
then all the other parts share its honor.
All of you together are the body of Christ.
Each one of you is a part of that body.*

1 Corinthians 12:26-27



Fritz Eichenberg,
*Christ of the
Breadlines*



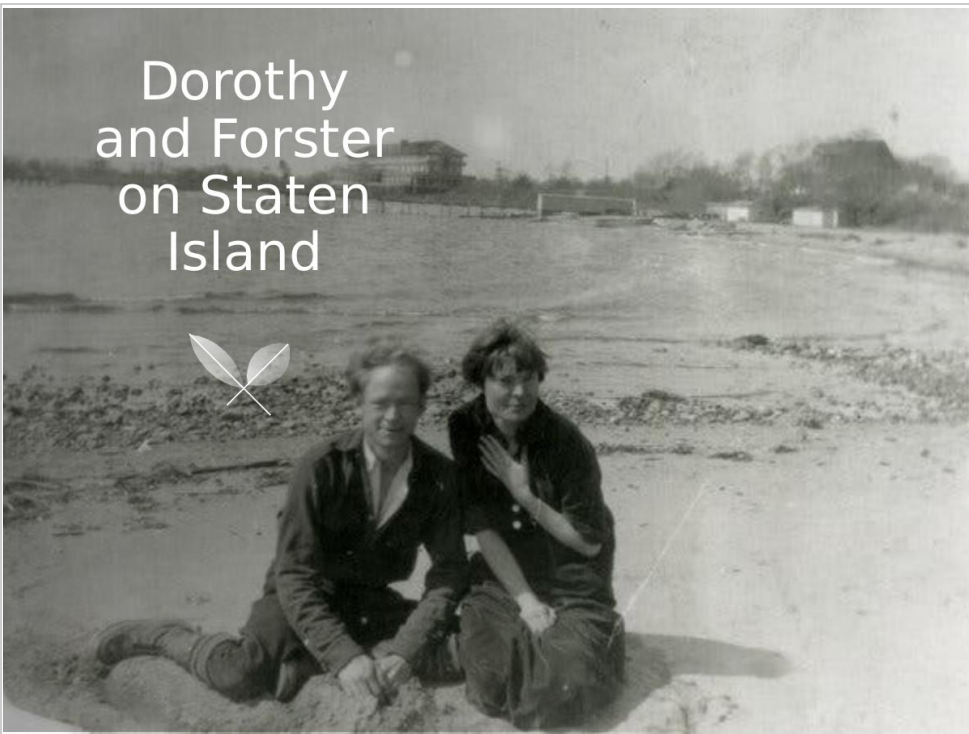
Fr. Pepe Aldunate,
SJ, and the
Sebastián Acevedo
Movement against
Torture



St. Giles
parish
migrant
ministry

Pope Francis

Encountering the true God “depends above all on our openness to being touched and moved by those who knock at our door. Their faces shatter and debunk all those false idols that can take over and enslave our lives.’



Dorothy
and Forster
on Staten
Island

Dorothy Day, *The Long Loneliness*

“His ardent love of creation brought me to the Creation of all things. But when I cried out to him, ‘How can there be no God, when there are all these beautiful things,’ he turned from me uneasily and complained that I was never satisfied. We loved each other so strongly that he wanted me to remain in the love of that moment... He cried out against my attitude that there would be nothing left of that love without a faith

"You go because you need food to nourish you for your pilgrimage on this earth. You need the strength, the grace that the bread of life gives...Christ is with us today, not only in the Blessed Sacrament, and where two or three are gathered together in His Name, but also in the poor."



*Life in
Community,*
Aidan Hart with contributions
from Donald Jackson and Sally Mae Joseph, ©2003
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