

Schroeder Summer Sabbatical

Colleagues, Today's ThTh posting is number 260. That is 5 times 52 Thursdays—5 full years of ThTh. I don't remember that we missed any Thursday, but it could have been. Five full years suggest that it's time to take a time out, especially for a guy who's been retired for a decade already. So I propose NOT to write anything for ThTh for the next three months. It'll be hard to desist. But encouragement to do so has come—of all places!—from Teresa of Avila. Imagine that. In morning devotions at our breakfast table recently one of her prayers was designated for the day. Here it is.

Lord, you know that day by day I am getting older—and one day I'll simply be old.

Protect me from the compulsion to HAVE TO say something on every occasion.

Save me from the great passion to straighten out the affairs of others.

Teach me to be reflective and helpful, but not yearning to be in charge.

Teach me the marvelous wisdom that I might be wrong.

Keep me as lovable as you possibly can.

When I prayed that out loud—it was my turn—Marie looked at me. But I'd already gotten the message. "Teresa's talking about me."

Ergo, three months self-imposed silence with ThTh postings. Well, sortuv.

Silence from EHS, but still postings (maybe) for most of the Thursdays of summer 2003 in the northern hemisphere—June, July, August. All from other theologians. Anticipated are a couple of book reviews from co-editor Robin Morgan, a Tim Hoyer review of the ELCA's "preliminary study" on homosexuality ["not Lutheran,

despite its claim”], some responses to recent ThTh postings on looking fro the Gospel in “Entertainment Evangelism,” possibly some words from Chris Hedges, author of “War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning,” and some articles from the “Ed Schroeder Festschrift.” And what, pray tell, you ask, is that? It’s a desktop-published book presented to me by Crossings colleagues on my retirement as honcho at the Crossings office exactly ten years ago. All 20 of these Festschrift tributes are gems. We’ll use as many as we can in the coming weeks. The Festschrift was not widely distributed, so most of you have seen none of it.

One of the longer pieces we hope to post—most likely in segments—is Bob Bertram’s “Theses on Revelation. Crossing a Modern Theme with its Biblical Original” of September 1993. The almost-finished book by the same title was still in his computer when he died last March. There is a good possibility that we can coax it out of the computer and into the hands of a willing publisher. We’re working on it—as well as on a couple more of his book-length manuscripts hiding on the hard disc.

But I digress.

Input from others is the intended fare for the next 12 Thursdays. Deo volente I’ll be back in September. In the meantime I’ll be working on praying Teresa’s prayer and seeing where God leads me. If the results are communicable, I’ll tell you in September. If not, I’ll tell you that too.

Besides the good counsel from blessed Teresa, there is also the counsel of my spouse of 48 years:

Ed has been somewhat of a Jeremiah in many of these Thursday Theologies (I know. I’m the proof-reader), and sometimes his words sound like Lamentations. It brings to mind one of the most startling verses I came across in my daily Bible reading some time ago, namely Lamentations 3:20f. Jeremiah has been going on

for page after page about his troubles and afflictions, like v.17, "my soul is bereft of peace; I have forgotten what happiness is." And then all of a sudden comes this gem: "But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." In, with and under everything Ed writes is this certainty, sealed by the cross of Christ. He'll never get over it. I thought you'd like to know. Marie.

[Ed here again.] With these two feminist theologians as counselors I'll surely be a more edified Ed at summer's end.

And now in closing, one more thing. This Crossings listservice survives by contributions. Crunch the numbers for yourself. Five years for 52 weeks equals 260. To suggest a dollar per posting would be brazen. Some may not have been worth a buck. But there were others. How about 25-cents each—or at least a dime? Place to send your 5th anniversary contribution is The Crossings Community, PO Box 7011, Chesterfield MO 63006-7011.

Peace & Joy,
Ed Schroeder