SUN & BALANCE

Vol. 43, No. 3
THE RENSSELAER
NEWMAN FOUNDATION
April 2009

April 2009

Dear Alums, Parents and Friends,

Springtime is in the air and with the change of seasons we encounter renewal! The students have returned from spring break with peeling sunburns; nevertheless, they are rejuvenated and refreshed with a new burst of energy and creativity.

Looking out my window as I write my spring appeal letter, I see the buds on the trees are swelling. Just hours ago, I saw my first robin taking nourishment from the flowering crab tree on the lawn. Within the next few days there will be more of them feeding and soon that tree will show the renewal of the seasons with a beautiful coat of blossoms which is always uplifting.

As we deal with a struggling economy, most of us have concerns for the future of our families and our country. It takes fortitude to maintain a positive outlook, as we are bombarded by the media with negativity on a daily basis. Remember the new season ahead and its promise of renewal. While it will take more than a new season to resolve the problems we face, we will get through this. We must focus on the positives in our lives.

For Christians, Lent is a time of soul searching and replenishment. It is our fervent hope and prayer, as collegiate ministers here at the C+CC and on campus, that we do our best to assist the community both publicly and privately in their Lenten retreat. Our Lenten Wednesday Speaker series is significant to our personal restoration. This Lent our speakers have been particularly inspiring and insightful. In addition, Fr. Lawrence Boadt, one of our speakers, has given us permission to use an edited version of his presentation in our newsletter.

Money is tight, as we make our appeal for your support/continued support. Please know all monies received, and then spent, are done so with the understanding we are good and responsible stewards of very precious gifts. We are extremely grateful for your tremendous commitment, support and trust in us!

Our presence on campus is both an inspiration and a sign to all that we care and bring love that is not always found. The assistance we receive from you allows us to be the living reality of renewal here and elsewhere. Our students receive from us; and thus, take values, hope and joy wherever they go to live life to its fullest.

May the joy of Easter, which we are preparing for these days, inspire everyone to renew themselves and each other in the light of Christ Sun of Justice.

Sincerely,

Fr. Ed

On 3 March we were privileged to have as our speaker Rev. Lawrence Boadt, CSP publisher, editor and president of Paulist Press. Father Boadt spoke about Paul the Apostle, letter writer and Evangelist to a number of communites of the ancient world outside of Isreal. These are edited remarks he offered to us as Paul the Evangelizer for the 21st Century.

THE SPIRITUAL VISION OF ST. PAUL FOR TODAY

Lawrence Boadt, CSP

Introduction

Paul is our originating and most profound of theologians. To understand him means getting to know him. For me, several aspects of his thought stand out as the key to achieving the same vibrant, zealous and dynamic faith as he held for our world today.

The coherence of all his letters together

Protestants often emphasize Paul's key doctrine as justification by faith and reject letters such as Colossians, Ephesians, 1-2 Timothy, and Titus because they seem too "Catholic" in their view. But as a Catholic reading these same thirteen letters, I see all of them radiating the centrality of God's salvation coming to all people through the Jewish Messiah who fulfilled the Old Testament vision of Israel as God's community.

The surprise of his conversion

Nothing makes me more aware of Paul's integrity and strength of character than the story of his conversion. It is told three times in Acts of the Apostles (chaps. 9, 22, 26) and Paul recalls it himself in Gal 1:13-24, Phil 3:4-6, and 1 Cor 15:9. His zeal for Pharisaic Judaism was total, but when Christ confronted him on the road to Damascus, he fasted and prayed for three days in blindness until he realized that God was changing his mission in life; and once he saw it, he never wavered from that conviction (Phil 3:7-8).

His personal humility about his abilities as an apostle

2 Cor 10:1-18 gives us a touching picture of Paul defending his role as an apostle despite his poor speaking ability and meek manner. Paul writes bold letters, but realizes that he does not succeed because of his skill but because of the power of Christ that comes through his words. See 2 Cor 11:30, "If I m boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakne and in 13:9, "We rejoice when we are weak, but y are strong."

His absolute conviction that he knows Jesus Ch personally

In Gal 1:15-24, Paul assures us that he did not le what he preached from being taught by the ot apostles, but God had set him apart from birth a instructed him in the Spirit after his conversion. In 2:20, he goes on to acclaim, "I live now not I, but Ch lives in me!" Similar expressions found in Rom 14:7-8; 2 Cor 5:15; 5:2. As he once lived solely in zeal the Law, he now lives in the service Christ.

His Makes the concept of Jewish Messiah alive for both Je and Gentiles.

Biblical scholar Bruce Chilton recen wrote a book called *Rabbi P* emphasizing Paul's deep belief in Jewish hopes for a coming mess and savior. But Paul's revolution insight was that the longing of Gentiles for salvation would be met by this sa Messiah Jesus who came for the Jews. Jesus did come just as "King of Israel" but as the divine s who humbled himself to be *human* for the sake of mankind, and by being subject to the lowest in hum treatment was able by his death and resurrect to raise all to union with God (see esp. the hymn Phil 2:5-11).

The soaring vision of God's universal plan salvation

Rom 1:1-6 sets forth Paul's understanding of commission from God. It surveys the whole of salvat

history and foresees its purpose in the coming of Christ and the Church. Later in the same letter (chapter 5) he traces the history of sin from Adam until Christ brought salvation. Here and elsewhere Paul constantly emphasizes that all people are called to share in the covenant promises revealed to Israel. In 1 Corinthians 15, e.g., all humanity will be raised with the Lord on the last day.

The power of the cross for God's victory

1 Corinthians 1-3 is a lengthy reflection on the mystery of the cross as God's chosen means of salvation. Precisely because the cross, the instrument of total despair and rejection, is a sign of contradiction to the world's values, God chose it to show his saving will for every human being, even the lowliest. Paul declares, "The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but it is the power of God to those who are being saved" (1 Cor 1:18).

The central role of the Holy Spirit.

The Old Testament often speaks of God's spirit coming upon people to give them God's power to act. For Paul, the Spirit is the sign that God is again sending his power among us in Jesus and his Resurrection. The Spirit is God's gift to us (1 Thess 4:8; 1 Cor 2:10; 6:19; Gal 3:5), makes Christ known to us (Eph 3:5), and is the Spirit of Christ for our redemption (Rom 8:11; 1 Cor 6:14). Rom 8:1-17 is a beautiful meditation on the Spirit who unites us with Christ to bring us God's eternal promise.

The incredible understanding of being "In Christ

Paul uses the expression to be "in Christ" 93 tim in his letters, and the related expressions, to be "wi Christ" and "through Christ" 10 times and 19 tim respectively. God's plan of salvation was not just heal the world of sin and reconcile it to himself (2 C 5:19), but to give us union with him with and throu and in Christ. As Christ united himself to us, so in resurrection and through his Holy Spirit we are unit to him and he is united in glory to his father. We a not merely justified, we are sanctified!

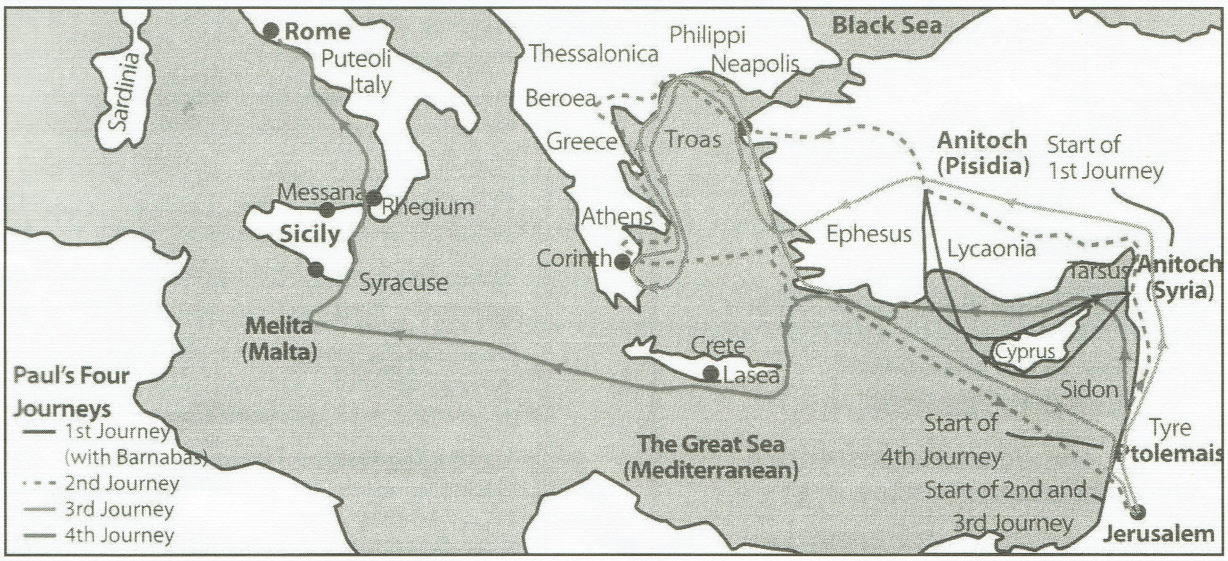
The unbreakable love of God

Romans is Paul's most important statement of understanding of what the Gospel means. And Roma 8 is the finest statement of the end purpose of th Gospel. He brings his reflections to a climax when says "We know that all things work for good for tho who love God (Rom 8:28)…If God is for us, who can against? (Rom 8:31)…And what will separate us fro the love of Christ? (Rom 8:35)…For I am convinc that neither death nor life, nor angels…nor height n depth…will ever separate us from the *love of God Christ Jesus our Lord*" (Rom 8:38-39).

Conclusion

Reading Acts of Apostles is essential to understandi Paul. Combined with his Letters, it gives us a livi portrait of both an apostle and a believer. We kno more about Paul than any other NT disciple. Throu his eyes, we discover the power of Jesus as the Ris Lord, far different than the Jesus of Nazareth found the Gospels.

Paul's Missionary Journeys



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UPCOMING EVENTS

9 April	Holy Thursday Agape Mass and Dinner 6:30PM
10 April	Good Friday Dramatic Reading of Jesus' Passion and Communion Service 7:30PM
11 April	Easter Saturday, The Easter Vigil 8:00PM
12 April	Easter Sunday, Mass at 9:00AM, 10:30AM and 5:00PM
16 April	America Red Cross Blood Drive, 11:30PM - 5:30PM
28 April	RPI Choir Concert, 7:00PM
1 May	Capital Pride Singers, 8:00PM
7 May	Roarke Center Gallery Opening Reception, 6:30PM - 8:00PM

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