

WHY DO IMAGES AND WORDS FOR GOD MATTER?

Session 6, "Going Deeper"

Faith, Sexism, Justice:

Conversations toward a Social Statement

2016

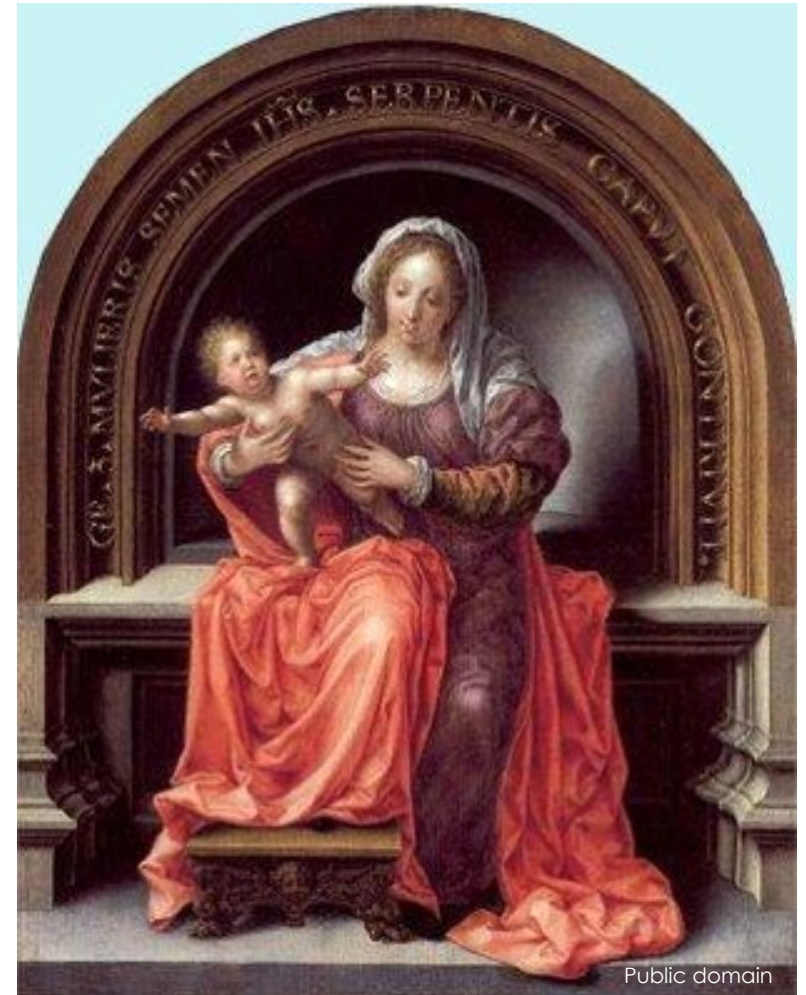


Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Madonna and Child

Jan Gossaert, 1527

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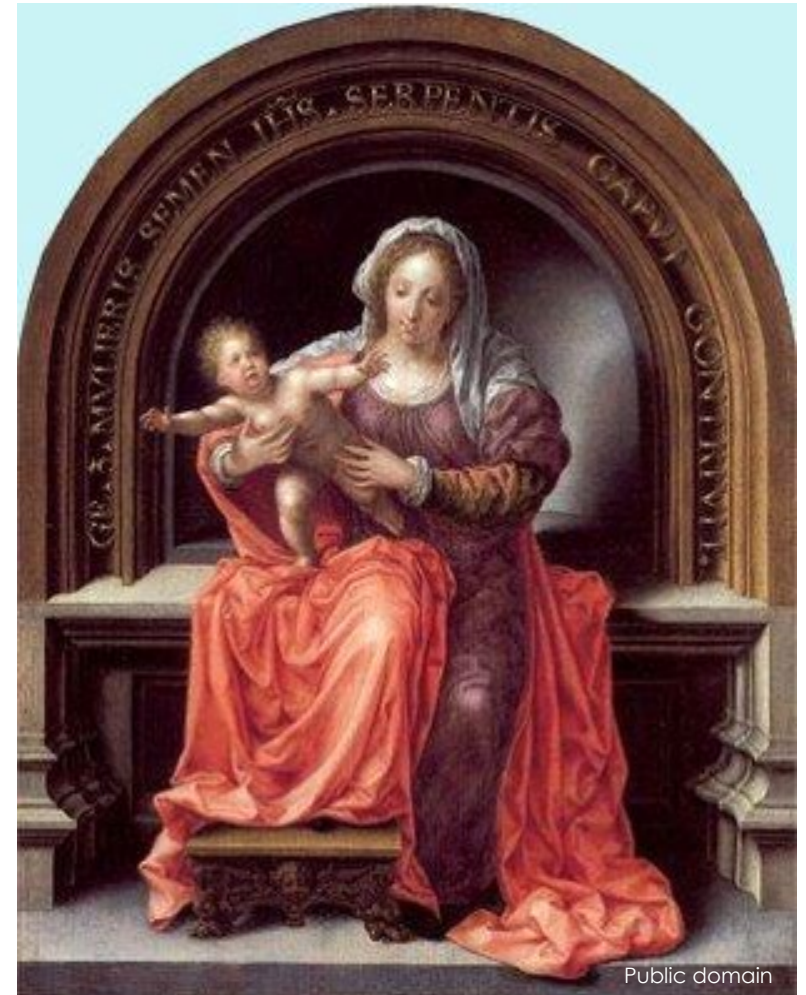


Madonna and Child

Jan Gossaert, 1527

Public Domain

- A number of artists showed the theological meaning of Jesus feeding us linked to the incarnation.
- Thus, in the picture, like others, the baby Jesus' breast is being cupped to show its importance and draw the eye.



Jesus on Cross

Tatlarin Church, Goreme,
Turkey, 11th century

©Heiner Straesser -
derPanoramafotograf.com



©Heiner Straesser

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Tatlarin Church, Goreme,
Turkey, 11th century

©Heiner Straesser -
derPanoramafotograf.com

- This piece has been named Jesus on Cross; it is in the Tatlarin Church in Goreme, Turkey.
- What is remarkable is that it is from the 11th century. It depicts Jesus Christ on the cross with a bleeding breast.
- Quite often, when women nurse babies, their nipples do bleed.
- Theologically what is communicated in this image is that Jesus feeds and sustains the Church with flesh. In this image, the blood is coming from the wound the Roman centurion made in Jesus' side.



©Heiner Straesser

The Man of Sorrows

Jacob Cornelisz van Oostsanen, c. 1510

Museum Mayer van den Bergh, photo:

Hugo Maertens



The Man of Sorrows

Jacob Cornelisz van Oostsanen, c. 1510

Museum Mayer van den Bergh, photo:

Hugo Maertens

- Five hundred years later, in a different part of the world, a similar message is given in this painting, *The Man of Sorrows*, by Jacob Cornelisz, which he painted around 1510.
- Notice how the wound in Jesus' side is quite close to his breast and that he is cupping his hand under the wound in order to extract blood for the Eucharist.
- Women who nurse babies cup their hands in the same way under their breasts so that the milk flows freely to the baby about to latch on. This tenderness in the painting is remarkable.
- Theologically, just like the last painting, Jesus Christ is depicted as the one who feeds and sustains the Church through the flesh.



The Savior

Quirizio of Murano,
mid-15th century

Public Domain



Public domain

The Savior

Quirizio of Murano,
mid-15th century
Public Domain

- Jesus offers the Eucharist to a kneeling young nun with the bread seemingly offered from Jesus's breast through slits similar to clothing worn by nursing mothers.
- Angels in background carry banners with phrases from the Song of Songs that were historically interpreted as references to Eucharistic wine.
- This image represents common Mother Jesus devotional literature in Medieval Europe.



Legenda Maior

M. Fiorini after F. Vanni,
St. Catherine of Siena, 1597
Courtesy Bibliothèque
nationale de France



Legenda Maior

M. Fiorini after F. Vanni,
St. Catherine of Siena, 1597
Courtesy Bibliothèque
nationale de France

- This is a rendering of St. Catherine of Siena's vision of her feeding from Jesus' side.
- The central image is suggestive of a nursing relationship.



Bibliothèque nationale de France

Created under the supervision
of Hildegard of Bingen
c. 12th Century
Courtesy Brepols

"[T]his miniature of the sixth vision from the second part of Hildegard of Bingen's *Scivias* shows what Hildegard calls the 'image of woman' (that is, Church or Humanity) marrying Christ and receiving his blood as her dowry."

(Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*, Plate 12)



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- (Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*, Plate 12)





- This is simply a closer look at the detail.
- Notice the blood issuing forth from Jesus' nipple.

*Lamentation of the
Holy Trinity*

Jean Malouel, c. 1400

Public Domain



Lamentation of the Holy Trinity

Jean Malouel, c. 1400

Public Domain

- Medieval images of Jesus often emphasized both the vulnerability and generativity of Jesus Christ.
- Here, the vulnerability of Jesus' body is emphasized, particularly as the wound in his side flows to his crotch, where he was circumcised as a baby, which also made him vulnerable.



Ecclesia Lactans

Giovanni Pisano (d. 1314),
Detail from pulpit, The Cathedral at Pisa
Courtesy Scala/Art Resource, NY



Ecclesia Lactans

Giovanni Pisano (d. 1314),
Detail from pulpit, The Cathedral at Pisa
Courtesy Scala/Art Resource, NY

- The church itself was also often understood as a nursing mother.
- Here is what Caroline Walker Bynum calls “a stern-faced ecclesia nursing two tiny Christians at her breast”
(Holy Feast and Holy Fast, Plate 17).
- This carving is also called “charity.”



Illustration from French Moralized Bible, 1240
The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, MS. Bodl.
270b, fol. 6r.

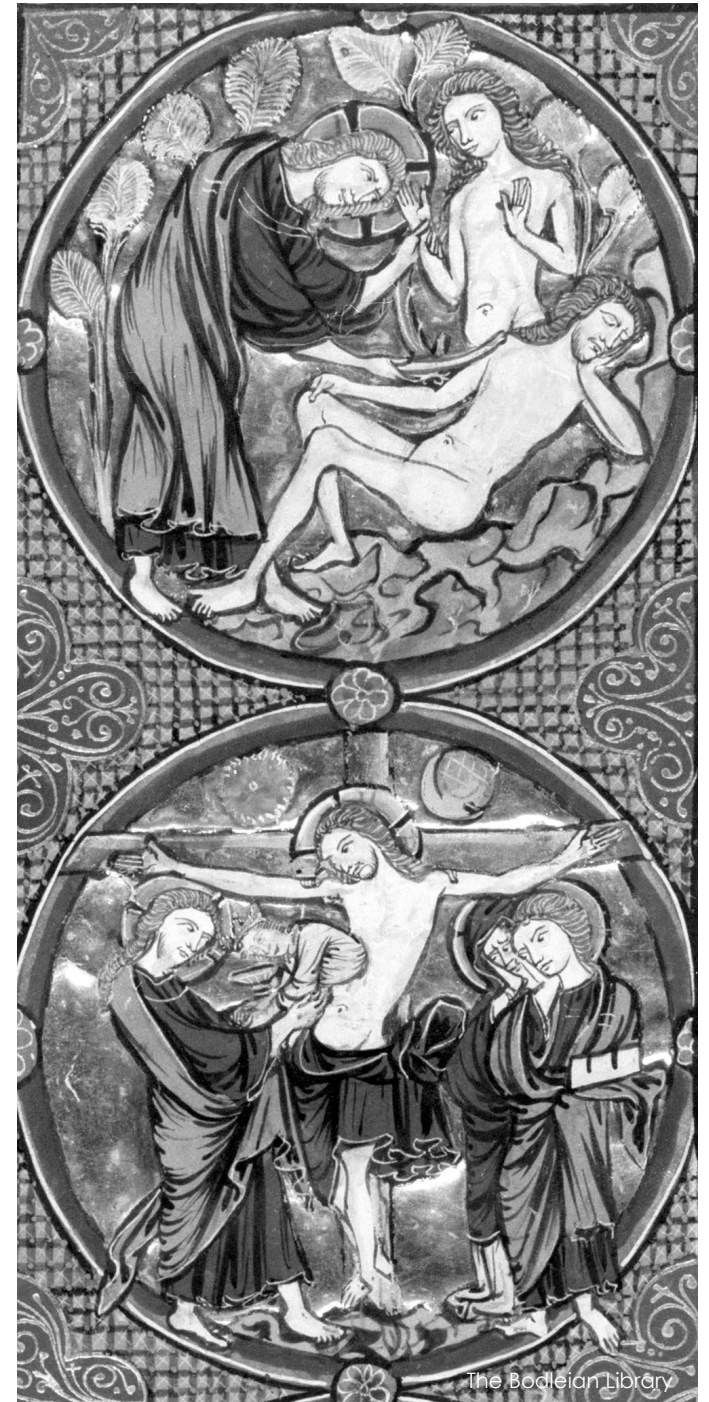


Illustration from French Moralized Bible, 1240
The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, MS. Bodl.
270b, fol. 6r.

- Caroline Bynum writes: "Using the inversion so common in medieval religious imagery, artists depicted Christ as a mother giving birth to Church on the cross, and drew a parallel to the birth of Eve from Adam's side" (*Fragmentation and Redemption*, 99).
- The top image shows Eve being created from a rib in Adam's side. The second image is a parallel birthing image where the church is born from the side of Jesus. This inversion was common in religious imagery of the Medieval period. (*Fragmentation and Redemption*, 99).
- Walker, Caroline Bynum. *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion*. New York: Zone Books, 1991.





Russian Orthodox Archbishop's House Chapel, Sitka, Alaska, perhaps mid-19th century
Courtesy St. Michael's Cathedral/Sitka National Historical Park



St. Michael's Cathedral/Sitka National Park

Russian Orthodox Archbishop's House Chapel, Sitka, Alaska, perhaps mid-19th century
 Courtesy St. Michael's Cathedral/Sitka National Historical Park

- This painting also depicts Jesus Christ as pregnant, but rather than crucified, Christ is here seemingly in a tomb or womb prior to resurrection.
- This Plashchinitsa is displayed on the altar after Good Friday in the Russian Orthodox Archbishop's House in Sitka, Alaska, the former seat of Russian Orthodoxy this side of the Pacific until 1969.
- Although this site is now part of the United States National State Park system, the Chapel of the Annunciation is still a consecrated site.
- The painting is from perhaps mid-19th century, but the artist is unknown.

Jesus on the Cross,

Cologne or Upper Rhine Valley, Germany,
c. 1000-1050

Courtesy Foto Marburg/Art Resource, NY



Foto Marburg/Art Resource, NY

Jesus on the Cross,

Cologne or Upper Rhine Valley, Germany,
c. 1000-1050

Courtesy Foto Marburg/Art Resource, NY

- This sculpture is most likely from Cologne or the Upper Rhine Valley, Germany, sometime between 1000-1050.
- There are remnants of painted decoration, a blue robe to signify the incarnation and red blood.
- Again, theologically, Jesus Christ is shown to be both the source of the Church and the sustainer of the Church.



Foto Marburg/Art Resource, NY

Crucified Jesus Christ

Rural Theological Institute, Madurai, India

Courtesy DeAne Lagerquist



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- Here Jesus Christ and the disciples are depicted as Indian.
- While this body is very different than the other depictions, this icon represents the ideal male form in some cultures of the Indian subcontinent.
- Compared with the other crucifixes in this series, this image shows a serene, nearly smiling crucified Christ.



Jesus Dies Upon the Cross 1963

By Ettore "Ted" DeGrazia Courtesy of DeGrazia Gallery
in the Sun, DeGrazia Foundation, Tucson, Arizona.

All rights reserved.



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By Ettore “Ted” DeGrazia Courtesy of DeGrazia Gallery
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- “The Way of the Cross” is a series of paintings that represent the classic stations of the cross.
- *“Jesus Dies Upon the Cross”* by Ettore De Grazia is a contemporary piece.
- Notice how the gender and sex of Jesus Christ are not evident, but there is still clear reference to physical embodiment.
- De Grazia’s painting presents a crucified human body, but not one that is either an idealized male or female form.
- If one makes a gender identification, it has to be on the basis of the (narrative) assumptions one brings to the artistic image.



Resurrection

Fr. John Giuliani

Courtesy www.Hillstream.com



Resurrection

Fr. John Giuliani

Courtesy www.Hillstream.com

- Here the resurrected Jesus Christ is depicted as an American Indian chief.
- Notice how many of the artists in the series have painted in such a way to see themselves in Jesus.
- Are there other ways that people appropriate sacred imagery in this way?



*Woman Searching for a
Lost Coin*

St. Jacob's Lutheran Church,
Anna, Ohio
Courtesy Mary
Ann Klopfleisch

"Holy Divinity has lost
her money, and it is us!"—
St. Augustine



Mary Ann Klopfleisch

Woman Searching for a Lost Coin

St. Jacob's Lutheran Church,
Anna, Ohio
Courtesy Mary
Ann Klopfleisch

- How often have you seen Jesus depicted as the woman searching for the lost coin?
- Many churches have stained glass windows of Jesus as a shepherd, which is paired with the story of the woman and the lost coin.
- An ELCA congregation in Anna, Ohio, has this window!



Mary Ann Klopfleisch



The Great Commission, 2002

Copyright by Nalini Jayasuriya and OMSC



The Great Commission, 2002

Copyright by Nalini Jayasuriya and OMSC

- This contemporary piece by Sri Lankan artist Nalini Jayasuriya shows Jesus and the disciples.
- What do you see in this image?
- What do you see in the figures?
- Are they distinguishably male or female?

The Crucified Land

Alexandre Hogue
(1898-1994)

The Crucified Land,
1939, Oil on canvas,
GM 0127.2000,
Gilcrease Museum,
Tulsa, OK



The Crucified Land

Alexandre Hogue
(1898-1994)

The Crucified Land,
1939, Oil on canvas,
GM 0127.2000,
Gilcrease Museum,
Tulsa, OK

- At first glance Hogue's painting appears not to include a body – until one remembers that Jesus was a human or “earth creature” (adam) formed of the earth (adamah).
- This picture links the crucifixion of the one body of earth to the other.



© Alexandre Hogue

A mother hen, depicted at
Dominus Flevit Roman Catholic
Church in Jerusalem.
Renata Sedmakova/
Shutterstock.com



Renata Sedmkova/Shutterstock.com



A mother hen, depicted at Dominus Flevit Roman Catholic Church in Jerusalem. Renata Sedmakova/ Shutterstock.com

A mother hen, depicted at
Dominus Flevit Roman Catholic
Church in Jerusalem.

Renata Sedmakova/
Shutterstock.com

- This is an ancient mosaic of a mother hen, depicted at Dominus Flevit Roman Catholic Church in Jerusalem.
- It depicts Luke 13:34 and Matthew 24:37 where Jesus says “How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!”



Renata Sedmkova/Shutterstock.com

John 13
*Jesus Washing Peter's
Feet*, 1852-1856
Ford Madox Brown,
Public Domain



Public Domain

John 13
Jesus Washing Peter's Feet, 1852-1856
Ford Madox Brown,
Public Domain

- Notice the contrast between Jesus' divinity, marked by the gold nimbus, and Jesus' humanity, marked by the towel around his waist, a symbol of a female slave or of a wife.



Public Domain

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

Soichi Watanabe, 1996

Copyright by Soichi Watanabe
and OMSC



The Coming of the Holy Spirit

Soichi Watanabe, 1996

Copyright by Soichi Watanabe
and OMSC

- This contemporary abstract piece by Soichi Watanabe, a Japanese artist, shows genderless figures and abstract interpretations of traditional Christian symbols.

