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## Sacramental Cosmology in the Sacristy: Borderlands of Priesthoods<sup>1</sup>

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During the summer of 2022, Archbishop Joseph Naumann of Kansas City (Kansas) lamented in an interview with a German language newspaper, “I think the Pope doesn’t understand the U.S., just as he doesn’t understand the Church in the U.S.” He went on to suggest that the pope’s advisers had led him astray.<sup>2</sup> The immediate context was a discussion of the pope’s disagreement with several U.S. bishops in the controversy over U.S. politicians who support legal abortion receiving communion. On the one hand, this is a textbook piece of deferential ecclesial rhetoric, avoiding criticizing the pope by suggesting he has been misled by others. On the other hand, it demonstrates the difficulty of what Pope Francis himself describes as creating a “culture of encounter,” a society where everyone opens themselves to the possibility of transformation according to the call of God through our deep listening to the

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<sup>1</sup> My first attempt at writing about this was in the context of a paper for the Association of Graduate Programs in Ministry in early March of 2022, though the incident played only a small part there in a larger paper on the role of cultural practices of deference in stalling or advancing appreciation of one’s baptismal priesthood. I would also like to thank Victor Carmona for both inviting me and for making several suggestions on how I might undertake this paper.

<sup>2</sup> A.C. Wimmer, “Archbishop Naumann Says He is ‘Sad’ Over Pope’s Handling of Biden, Pelosi on Abortion,” *National Catholic Register*, July 12, 2022, <https://www.ncregister.com/cna/archbishop-naumann-says-he-is-sad-over-pope-s-handling-of-biden-pelosi-on-abortion>. For the original interview in German, see Maximilian Lutz, “Wenn wir so weitermachen, kommen wir immer mehr vom rechten Weg ab“ (“If we continue like this, we will find ourselves more off the right path”), *Die Tagespost*, July 13, 2022, <https://www.die-tagespost.de/politik/wenn-wir-so-weitermachen-kommen-wir-immer-mehr-vom-rechten-weg-ab-art-230338>.

perspectives of others, especially others who are marginal or different from us.<sup>3</sup> It remains much easier just to trust in the fullness of one's own position rather than to deeply consider another perspective as part of the Christian call to *metanoia*. I offer this observation as a longtime ally of the Latinx community who initially misread a brief incident, following traditional white-dominant scholarship and assumptions, only to re-evaluate that interpretation many years later in light of Latinx theological scholarship, ultimately in a way that I believe may alter the way I and perhaps other allies think about the retrieval of the ancient concept of the baptismal priesthood in the wake of the Second Vatican Council. The incident in question occurred in 2008, on Good Friday, in a church sacristy in a Midwestern parish.

During 2007-2008, I had spent ten months engaged in ethnographic study of a shared Catholic parish in a small city in the Midwest. A shared parish, for purposes of this research, was a parish where two or more racial, ethnic, or cultural groups had distinct masses and ministries but shared the facilities and usually the clergy leadership of the parish. During my years in ministry before entering academia, I had served in parishes like this, working with both English and Spanish-speaking communities, largely in New York City. The research parish, All Saints (a pseudonym), included a Spanish-speaking Mexican immigrant community that had first arrived in that Midwestern city in the early 1990s, a time when many immigrant communities began to move beyond the so-called gateway cities and states into regions like the Midwest. The parish

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<sup>3</sup> Pope Francis has made this point in countless venues. In the encyclical *Evangelii Gaudium* (November 24, 2013), the pope uses the word *encounter/encuentro* in this sense 34 times, [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20131124\\_evangelii-gaudium.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html).

also included an English-speaking Euro-American community, almost entirely of multi-generational heritage in the city and the parish.<sup>4</sup>

Late in my time at the parish, I found myself engaged in participant observation of Holy Week services, including a bilingual Holy Thursday mass, a Via Crucis *en vivo*, Good Friday services in Spanish and English, Easter Vigil masses in each language, and several Easter Sunday masses in English and Spanish. A brief memorable incident occurred on Good Friday. A priest was standing in the sacristy before the Spanish Veneration of the Cross service. The sacristy was perhaps typical for a parish church in the United States, rimmed with closets and cabinets stained dark brown, and a long Formica counter interrupted by a double sink, one side of which proceeded directly into the earth. Like most sacristies, this was a transitional space. There were only two or at most three chairs, none of them comfortable, and the counters were designed to be accessed while standing up. The room was rectangular with a large empty space in the center, with one door to the parking lot and opposite, another to the sanctuary of the church. The space was designed for transit and preparation, a liturgical crossroads. Like most sacristies, it was a major space where clergy and laity interact before and after worship. And as happens in many parishes, on this particular Good Friday, the sacristy had been converted into a reservation chapel for the Eucharist after the tabernacle in the church was emptied as part of the Holy Thursday mass.

That afternoon, a small group of lectors and Eucharistic ministers, all Mexican immigrants in their twenties and thirties, women and men, entered the sacristy to sign themselves in to serve for the day, using the customary Mexican Spanish expression “me tocó” or “me

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<sup>4</sup> This study was the subject of Brett C. Hoover, *The Shared Parish: Latinos, Anglos, and the Future of US Catholicism* (New York: NYU Press, 2014).

tocaron,” a locution that suggests being called or selected to take one’s turn in a role, rather than the English language that emphasizes individual volunteering. The priest, a Euro-American man around forty, had been alone in the sacristy perusing liturgical books in preparation for the service. The ministers signed themselves to read the Scriptures or distribute communion, and some looked at the readings for the day in the lectionary. Before departing, one of them turned to the priest and gave him a short instruction in the Spanish. The other ministers stood around him as he spoke and nodded along to indicate agreement. On this holiest of days, he told the Anglo priest, only priests should be entering the sacristy-cum-reserve chapel.<sup>5</sup> The priest listened courteously, even though he himself had not heard of such a rule or custom, and he found it odd that they were telling him this while they as lay people stood in the sacristy. Once the short instruction was complete, the ministers departed and the priest returned to his preparations.

Before attempting an interpretation of this brief exchange, it seems important to point out the temporal and spatial context in which it unfolded. First of all, it occurred in the most liminal of spaces in a church, the sacristy, which functions as a liturgical workspace mostly in use before and after the service. The sacristy has served such a purpose since the Middle Ages, when this outbuilding occasionally became a symbolic space in relic competitions between jurisdictions. Even at that time it was filled with cabinets and closets, had a *sacrarium* or sink draining into consecrated ground,<sup>6</sup> and was often one of the few places to possess running water. While apparently there were customs that forbid lay presence during certain celebrations in monastic sacristies, such as the vesting of an abbot, even in monasteries much of the work associated with

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<sup>5</sup> Hoover, *The Shared Parish*, 83.

<sup>6</sup> David Parsons, “Sacarium: Ablution Drains in Early Medieval Churches,” in *Anglo-Saxon Church: Papers on History, Architecture, and Archaeology in Honor of Dr. H.M. Taylor* (London: Council for British Archaeology, 1986), 105.

the sacristy was done by lay women tasked with laundry and sewing.<sup>7</sup> From the medieval period down through the present day, the sacristy was often ruled by a lay person hired as sacristan, who vouched for the cleanliness of liturgical vestments, objects, and the church itself.<sup>8</sup> Since the Second Vatican Council and the proliferation of lay ministries in the mass itself, the sacristy has become more of a crossroads with both laity and clergy coming and going as part of the use of the church.

The incident also took place in a different kind of temporal and spatial borderlands. This occurred just before the “official” Good Friday service, when the Passion of the Lord is read followed by the Veneration of the Cross. At this particular parish, the more popular Via Crucis practice among Latinx Catholics at the parish had already taken place in the parish hall and on the parish grounds. The night before, a bilingual Holy Thursday mass had been held in the church, which included its own remarkable incident. The Euro-American pastor had decided to include his Mexican curate among those whose feet he would wash, as well as lay pastoral leaders from the Mexican community. Latinx children wandered up the aisles to witness this within the packed church, and several members of the Latinx leadership commented on how this apparent reversal of local hierarchies of service made an impression on them. As is customary, at the end of the service the tabernacle was vacated as part of a procession. While the procession initially led to a makeshift reservation chapel in the parish hall, later the Eucharist was removed to the sacristy, which became the reservation chapel until the Easter Vigil. There were actually two Easter Vigils, one in English followed by one in Spanish. In short, the conversation between

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<sup>7</sup> See Matthew Payne and Richard Foster, “The Medieval Sacristy of Westminster Abbey,” *The Antiquaries Journal* 100 (September 2020): 242-249.

<sup>8</sup> See Herman J. Heuser, “The Care of Our Churches and Sacristies,” *American Ecclesiastical Review* 31, no. 6 (December 1904): 557-566.

priest and liturgical ministers took place after the main celebration of a most sacred day for Latinx Catholic parishioners, and while the sacristy was functioning as a temporary sacred space. On several accounts then, this was liminal space.

The short instruction given by the lay leader embodied several reversals of traditional roles and even apparent contradictions. In this moment, the lay leader played the role of teacher to the priest. His matter-of-fact, pedagogical tone suggested the content was something the priest could not be expected to know but *should* know. While the content was an argument for a practice of lay deference to the clergy, reserving the sacristy/reservation chapel to clergy alone, this moment of a lay person teaching the priest was not a traditional practice of deference. Finally, the whole exchange only took place because the sacristy was *not* being reserved to the clergy in the manner recommended, and in fact the lay ministers continued moving in and out of the space. The nature of the sacristy as a liturgical workspace made it structurally impossible to observe the recommended norm.

To the Anglo priest—who was the author in his previous life as a member of the clergy—the incident seemed to be another of many examples of parishioners from both communities elaborating or even inventing liturgical norms as a way of “ensuring respect for transcendence in Catholic worship . . . [offering] structure and boundaries to establish and handle something precious and holy entrusted to them.”<sup>9</sup> While this may in a very general sense be true, at that time I did not fully understand how much of what I observed was formed by a Latinx Catholic sacramental cosmology. The compartmentalized cosmic order of my own Euro-American upbringing instinctively read norms and rules as a means to establish custodial boundaries around an experience of the sacred. Only very late did I see that this teaching moment was a

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<sup>9</sup> Hoover, *Shared Parish*, 84.

means of communicating to me the consequences of living in a broader relational and sacramental cosmos whose presence was intensified in this particular temporal (Good Friday) and spatial (temporary reserve chapel) context.

In their book *La Vida Sacra*, Eduardo Fernández and James Empereur describe the sacramental cosmology implicit in many Latinx cultures, a cosmic order where God’s creative power has sanctified images, objects, and spaces, as well as persons in the context of their relationships to other persons and creation as a whole. This cosmology is most commonly manifest not in formal liturgical spaces but in popular religious practice.<sup>10</sup> It is manifest, according to Fernandez and Empereur, in a variety of sacraments and ceremonies spread out across the life cycle. It can also appear in encounters with creative works as they evoke what Cecilia Gonzalez-Andrieu describes as wonder: “A sensually mediated aesthetic encounter that actualizes its potential to be revelatory situates the human community with Creation while pointing to Creation’s mysterious depth.”<sup>11</sup> Finally, Latinx Catholic views of the environment point to this cosmology. The religious studies scholar Amanda Baugh, relying on Gloria Anzaldúa’s work, speaks of “*nepantla* environmentalism,” characterized by an “active love for nature based on a Catholic sacramental vision,” and “a relational indigenous cosmivision that sees nature as kin and understands humans as part of an interconnected whole.”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> James Empereur and Eduardo Fernandez, *La Vida Sacra: Contemporary Hispanic Sacramental Theology* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 24-45.

<sup>11</sup> Cecilia Gonzalez-Andrieu, *Bridge to Wonder: Art as a Gospel of Beauty* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012), 31.

<sup>12</sup> Amanda Baugh, “Nepantla Environmentalism: Challenging Dominant Frameworks for Green Religion,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 20, no. 20 (2020): 5.



Sacramental cosmology is, in a sense, Latinx theological anthropology writ large, where human beings live in sacred relationship not just with other human beings but with all of creation. Summarizing Roberto Goizueta's work, Michelle Gonzalez writes, "We are intrinsically relational and our relationships are constitutive of who we are. Relationships come prior to the individual."<sup>13</sup> The late interpreter of theological aesthetics Alejandro García-Rivera points to the cosmological significance of this relationality. In an analysis of the *pastorela*, he argues that this cosmic relationality turns the players into both actors and audience at the same time. They enact the birth of the Christ child even as they stand in cathartic wonder at what is transpiring. "This is possible not only because human creatures are the actors but because all of the creatures of the cosmos participate as well. All the members of the cosmic community have their particular roles to play, yet none of them alone is the drama. Moreover, each member needs the others in order to play its particular role."<sup>14</sup>

In such an interconnected universe of wonder, people and things have real aesthetic power to communicate God's presence and to transform us as people. According to Roberto Goizueta, the Latinx universe operates according to a "symbolic realism" rooted in the worldview of medieval and baroque Catholicism and indigenous cosmologies. We do not infer God's presence through sustained reflection on images and symbols (or nature). The concrete things of this world truly *embody* the nearness of God. They do so as part of an interconnected whole. "Latino/a Catholicism is the embodied memory of the integral worldview, with Jesus

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<sup>13</sup> Michelle A. Gonzalez, "Created for God and for Each Other: Our Imago Dei," in *The T&T Clark Handbook of Theological Anthropology*, ed. Mary Ann Hinsdale and Stephen Okey (London: T&T Clark, 2021), 69.

<sup>14</sup> Alejandro Garcia-Rivera, "The Whole and the Love of Difference: Latino Metaphysics as Cosmology," in *From the Heart of Our People: Latino/a Explorations in Catholic Systematic Theology*, ed. Orlando O. Espín and Miguel H. Díaz (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1999), 76-77.

Christ at its center,” writes Goizueta.<sup>15</sup> “For Latino/a Catholics, our faith is ultimately made credible by our everyday relationship with a God whom we can touch and embrace, a God with whom we can weep or laugh, a God who infuriates us and whom we infuriate, a God whose anguished countenance we can caress and whose pierced feet we can kiss.”<sup>16</sup> That aesthetic experience occurs always and everywhere in ordinary times, but it may be intensified in certain times and places. Seen in that light, a short exchange in a sacristy on Good Friday could have much higher stakes than an Anglo priest might have imagined.

With this entire sacramental cosmology in mind, it seems that the lay leaders were teaching me less about a norm to be observed and more about the sacred time and place in which we had all found ourselves, in relationship to a much larger matrix of sacred creation. Thus, it was not in any way incidental that the incident described occurred on Good Friday as a holy day of particular significance in the Mexican and Latin American traditions. Michelle Gonzalez argues:

The Jesus of Good Friday is a central Christological symbol within Latino/a theology. This stems from a theological worldview that strongly emphasizes Jesus’ humble origins, his prophetic message and his active presence in the present-day lives of Christians, in particular his solidarity with the oppressed and marginalized. This strong emphasis on Jesus’ suffering and passion distinguishes Latino/as from other Catholic ethnic groups in the United States.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Roberto Goizueta, “The Symbolic Realism of U.S. Latino/a Popular Catholicism,” *Theological Studies* 65 (2004): 265.

<sup>16</sup> Goizueta, “The Symbolic Realism,” 266.

<sup>17</sup> Gonzalez, “Our Imago Dei,” 68.

All of us present were enveloped one way or another in this mystery of the suffering of Christ on that holy day, and who lies at the center of a sacred cosmos and was especially present in the Eucharist reserved in that sacristy. Thus, on days other than Good Friday and when the room was not being used as a Eucharistic reserve chapel, the ministers did not treat the space in this way nor call for its restriction to the clergy. They exhibited more unambiguous “ownership” over the space in those times—lectors practicing their readings, lead Eucharistic ministers passing out assignments, people milling about. On Good Friday, however, the lay ministers performatively embraced an intensified significance of a Christological and sacramental cosmology.

In that context, the priest, as symbolic person within the relational universe of the Church, was designated by these lay leaders to act as custodian of the holy space. They designated him as such; he had no idea about it. I say this because it may be tempting to read here a recognition of the priest as *alter Christus* in the traditional manner, but nothing in the incident explicitly argues for that identification of the priest with Christ. The priest does not represent Christ in the *Via Crucis*, and in the “official” liturgy he functions more as a kind of curator of the Passion, preaching on the gospel and presenting the Cross for veneration. Nevertheless, the priest is somehow set apart as a sacred person, assigned to sacred duties on the holiest of days. In a different qualitative research project in 2021, a Latinx interviewee specifically located the priest’s authority in a certain “divine proximity”: “I have to just follow everything and go with whatever the priest says. He’s the authority. He’s the boss. He’s the God...the ultimate power and authority and do what they tell you to do. So, that’s how I grew up.”

All this suggests that the priest in the story is being regarded as a sacred person, set apart from the laity, and operating in a particularly sacred time and space. Yet despite the recommendation of a practice of deference toward the clergy by the lay leaders, the incident does not necessarily point toward hard distinctions between laity and clergy so much as contextualized symbolic roles in a sacramental universe. In other events during the Sacred Triduum, include the central Good Friday event of the Via Crucis, the priest's role is not central. Even when the priest plays a more important symbolic role in the context of popular religious practice, he is never the only one in such a role. The woman playing the role of the Virgin of Guadalupe in the *representaciones* on that feast day, for example, would also be imbued with a special sacred role. A *rezadora* or official lay prayer leader for popular religious practice might be treated with deference in a way that also sets her apart as a sacred person. In a sense, this cosmology actually relativizes the role of the clergy. The priest is merely one point in a much larger sacred matrix. One's own grandmother or mother might loom just as large or larger.

The priest's role here is also relativized in terms of requiring a cultural interpreter. The lay leaders did not expect that the Anglo priest would understand or appreciate the sacred cosmology in which he was to play an important role. They were deeply socialized in that cosmology—cultural experts—and they recognized their own knowledge as superior in this case, and that bestowed on them responsibility. They also understood that Euro-American culture has a more compartmentalized cosmology, with a tendency to “turn on” and “turn off” the sacred via clear boundary points in time and space, and to minimize and maximize symbols as needed under human direction. The Anglo priest could not be expected to recognize the sacramental universe that he was ordained to serve. On another less crucial day, the lay leader might have

forgone the instruction for the sake of deference or appearance, but on Good Friday the stakes would be too high.

As a semi-informed outsider looking in, I acknowledge my own limits as an interpreter of the incident in the sacristy. I leave it to well-informed insiders to adjudicate or adjust. But I hope I have learned something. In my original telling of this incident in *The Shared Parish*, I pointed to the irony of a group of lay leaders standing in the sacristy explaining to the priest how they as lay people should not be there on this holy day, while at the same time they made little attempt to curtail their presence in the space. It is easy to see this as some sort of contradiction, but it might be more honest to place this incident in a kind of temporal and spatial borderlands, an ambiguous place of encounter and exchange between cultures and, I would like to argue, between the ministerial and baptismal priesthoods.

The compartmentalized cosmology of Western modernity relies on clear lines between sacred and profane, between spiritual and practical, and accordingly between clergy and the rest of the faithful. These clear lines appear in the strong distinction between the ministerial priesthood and baptismal priesthood in *Lumen Gentium*—where the ordained priest “teaches and rules the priestly people,” and the faithful “join in the offering of the Eucharist” and “receive the sacraments”.<sup>18</sup> Following the work of Yves Congar (which he later disavowed), the same document distinguishes between a “secular laity” in the world<sup>19</sup> and the “spiritual shepherds” who are “representatives of Christ as well as teachers and rulers in the Church.”<sup>20</sup> Both here and in John Paul II’s elaboration of these principles in *Chritifideles laici*, the relational web or

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<sup>18</sup> *Lumen Gentium* 10.

<sup>19</sup> *Lumen Gentium* 31.

<sup>20</sup> *Lumen Gentium* 37.

communion that is the Church relies on these clear distinctions. Even a “progressive” reading of the two priesthoods generally upholds a clear differentiation. The ordained priesthood is to “empower” or to “serve” the baptismal priesthood, usually flagging a kenotic humility that still recognizes an unambiguous difference in spiritual status.

The sacramental cosmology of Latinx cultures may scramble these clear distinctions by situating everything and everyone within a relational, symbolic cosmos. The priest’s role as ordained person is relativized by the presence of other sacred and symbolic roles, including those of lay people in popular religious practice. The clergy in this case operate within a multi-polar sacred matrix rather than a lay-clergy binary, though that binary still presents itself at times in practices and performances of deference. The Argentinian-Mexican cultural anthropologist Néstor García Canclini argues that processes of cultural hybridization associated with Latin American history and contemporary culture frustrate clear distinctions. He speaks of hybridization as “sociocultural processes in which discrete structures or practices, previously existing in separate form, are combined to generate new structures, objects, and practices.”<sup>21</sup> But he also acknowledges that formerly discrete structures and practices were themselves the product of hybridizations, and that the process of hybridization is never stably complete and has a tendency to relativize identities. This does not mean that the modern tendency to clarify and classify never occurs in Latin American (or Latinx) contexts. But it comes and goes. People strategically enter and exit modernity as needed.<sup>22</sup> One can defer to the priest according to clear official category distinctions but also instruct him on his important but relativized place in a

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<sup>21</sup> Néstor García Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity*, transl. Christopher L. Chiappari and Silvia L. López (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), xxv.

<sup>22</sup> García Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, xxiii-xlvi.

sacramental cosmology with deep premodern roots in both medieval Iberian Catholicism and indigenous cosmovisions.

Did the sacristy of All Saints parish, like other borderlands, offer a privileged space for this fluidity and the negotiations that come with it? As with all postconciliar sacristies, this one provided a transitional liturgical workspace for both clergy and laity, a crossroads of the parish. The clergy may lead worship in the church in fairly unambiguous ways, but within the sacristy lay people dominate the processes of preparation and clean up. Practical and sacred freely mix as vestments are inspected or set aside for cleaning, books are laid out, linens are removed from cabinets and then dropped into laundry, and vessels are filled or cleaned. Lay leaders may at times defer to the priest or ask him questions, but at other moments they clearly “rule” in this space, organizing its activities and informing the priest. On Good Friday, of course, the sacristy was both workspace *and* sacred space at the same time, a fact which seemed to occasion this teaching moment where the priest’s sacred role was on full display but it was also possible for him to listen to instruction from lay leaders engaged in preparatory work.

As a parish researcher, I would argue that borderlands spaces like the sacristy actually exist all over a parish plant, essentially all over the primary place where clergy and laity interact. They are often places where a certain fluid movement between the ministerial and the baptismal priesthoods takes place. Most churches, especially Latinx churches, have alcoves and chapels whose primary users (and “rulers”) are devoted lay people, though these spaces exist within a church where the priest pastor has significant say. The vestibule is often the domain of ushers and greeters and other lay leaders exercising their baptismal priesthood, but they may defer to the ordained priest enters just before or after mass when he arrives. The front office of a parish is perhaps the borderlands par excellence between the two priesthoods, where much of the teaching

and ruling is done by receptionists and church secretaries, and who function as gatekeepers for the priest in his sacred role, even as they periodically pause to instruct him on a point or two.

In short, borderlands places and times in parish life disturb the alleged certainties of clear distinction between the ordained and the baptismal priesthoods. It turns out that in daily life, especially in certain kinds of times and spaces, there is considerable ambiguity in the way the priesthoods operate and interact, something more complex and layered than simple deference to the ordained priests who “rule,” and even more layered and complex than the ordained empowering the baptismal priesthood and serving the faithful. Especially seen through the lens of a sacramental cosmology, these spaces and encounters mitigate stereotypes about compliant or deferential laity or priests as unambiguous teachers and rulers. They point toward a cosmos where everyone and everything has a role in the sacred drama. Seen in that light, to ask who teaches and rules, or who is more important in the sacred drama is beside the point. It depends on what scene in the drama is currently playing, and where, and when, and why. The Creator has placed us all in the drama, and our job is simply to get on and off the stage as we are needed.

The richness of this sacramental cosmology points toward other theological questions beyond the specific area of parish research and beyond the scope of this brief essay. How does this tale of ambiguities and fluidities between the baptismal and ordained priesthoods relate to the traditional Christological foundations of all Christian priesthood? What kind of a priesthood emerges from the consideration of Christ as both cosmic and sacramentally particular? How might we talk about it and live it out in pastoral life? What do such reflections do to our theologies of the Eucharist? How does the Latinx sacramental cosmology mentioned here relate more specifically to the cosmologies recorded in the expansive new indigenous theologies that have emerged over the last few decades? These questions suggest the power of theologizing from



*lo cotidiano* as recommended in Latinx theology. Here the reconsideration of a single, undramatic incident in the light of Latinx theological reflections not only challenged the dominant-culture theological interpretations of a Euro-American author, but they also lead to powerful questions that call for exploration. That seems very close to the kind of transformation the first Latin American pope hoped for in his advocacy of a culture of encounter. Theologians like myself from the dominant culture do well to pay attention.