

SECOND THOUGHTS [Author's musings on *The Seven Sacraments*. - Stratford Caldecott]

The Seven Signs

A number of scholars have questioned the inclusion of Walking on Water as one of the seven “Signs” in John’s Gospel, because it is not described as such by John, and they substitute the Resurrection of Christ, as the ultimate “Sign” that confirms the authority of Jesus. This is discussed, for example, by Scott Hahn in his article “Temple, Sign and Sacrament” (*Letter and Spirit*, Vol. 4, 2008, p. 116).

Again, this would necessitate changes to my book. However, I am inclined to stay with my original interpretation. As I have written, the fifth Sign corresponds to Ordination, and indeed the Walking on Water is very closely associated in the Gospel with the Feeding of the 5000, which symbolizes the giving of the Eucharist, a gift that is made possible by Priesthood. The fact that the miracle of Walking on Water is not made much of or described explicitly as a *semeion* may be explained by the fact that it is intended to be witnessed only by his disciples, and is therefore in a sense an esoteric sign, intended for those who will be the priests of the New Covenant.

The Lord’s Prayer and the Seven Virtues

An alternative correlation of Lord’s Prayer with Seven Virtues according to p. 113 of Jean Hani, *The Divine Liturgy* [www.sophiaperennis.com/shop/perennis/18.html]:

The first three petitions refer to the divine world

Hallowed: Faith

Kingdom come: Hope

Will be done: Love

The last four petitions refer to the human and earthly domain

Daily bread: Fortitude

Forgive us: Justice

Temptation: Prudence

Deliver us: Temperance

If accepted, Hani’s suggestion would wreak a certain amount of havoc on my “Wheel of Sevens” (page 101 of my book). Let us look at some of the elements, starting with this table from page 48 in chapter 3 of *The Seven Sacraments* (the first two columns immediately following). To this I have added a third column showing the Lord’s Prayer, with the order of petitions determined by the correlations I tried to establish in chapter 4 between the virtues and the sacraments. The underlined petitions are the ones that do NOT correspond to Hani’s list above:

<i>Sacrament</i>	<i>Virtue</i>	<i>Petition</i>
Baptism	Faith	Hallowed
Confirmation	Hope	<u>Temptation</u>
Eucharist	Love	<u>Daily bread</u>

Reconciliation	Justice	Forgive us
Anointing	Fortitude	<u>Deliver us</u>
Marriage	Temperance	<u>Kingdom come</u>
Ordination	Prudence	<u>Will be done</u>

Only two are the same in my list and Hani's. If there is an error here on my part, does it lie in the correlation of the *Virtues* with the Sacraments, or the *Petitions* with the Sacraments? The former is based on arguments set out in chapter 3 that I still feel are strong, but changing it would do little to cause problems in the Wheel of Sevens. To alter the correlations of the Petitions with the Sacraments (not a correlation that Hani makes) would be much more serious. So I will revise the Wheel of Sevens minimally, by changing the Virtue that is correlated with the Sacrament, and the result is shown below (changes from the printed book in red). The rest of the book is unaffected.

Sacrament	Petition	Gift	Beatitude	Virtue
<i>Sign</i>	<i>Last Word</i>	<i>I Am</i>	<i>Commandment</i>	<i>Day</i>
Baptism	Hallowed be	Fear	Poor	Faith
Second	Accomplished	The way	Fourth	Sixth
Marriage	Kingdom	Piety	Meek	Hope
First	Behold	Vine	Fifth	Seventh
Ordination	Thy will	Knowledge	Mourn	Love
Fifth	Forsaken	Shepherd	Sixth	Third
Eucharist	Bread	Fortitude	Hunger	Fortitude
Fourth	Thirst	Bread	Seventh	Fourth
Reconciliation	Forgive	Counsel	Merciful	Justice
Third	Forgive	Door	Eighth	Fifth
Confirmation	Temptation	Understanding	Pure	Prudence
Sixth	Spirit	Light	Ninth	Second
Anointing	Deliver	Wisdom	Peacemakers	Temperance
Seventh	Today	Resurrection	Tenth	First