

[Opinion](#)

[Letters to the Editor](#)

by NCR Staff

[View Author Profile](#)

[Join the Conversation](#)

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. [Learn more](#)

September 1, 2023

[Share on Bluesky](#)[Share on Facebook](#)[Share on Twitter](#)[Email to a friend](#)[Print](#)

As we prepare for the National Eucharistic Congress in 2024, something is missing, [said Fr. John Heagle](#) in a recent essay where he urges the U.S. bishops to reclaim the Gospel vision and early Christianity's practice of nonviolent love. Following are NCR reader responses to that opinion with letters that have been edited for length and clarity.

John Heagle's article, "Where is the call to peacemaking in the eucharistic revival?" was nourishment to my soul. From the introduction to the Eucharistic Revival and even from the portrayal of the Eucharist before then I have felt so removed from the pietism that replaced the understanding of the Eucharist as it comes from the Gospels and Vatican II on the liturgy. It perturbs me that this pietism continues to be promoted. I am relying on the hope that the Holy Spirit will nourish my soul with the Eucharist as described by John.

MARGARET BITZ

Fargo, North Dakota



Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. John Heagle's recent article on the bishops' plan for a eucharistic revival is a huge beam of light and truth. Where else could one find such a broadening, challenging, healing message than in NCR? Heagle, in a few paragraphs, gives us a sparkling lesson in the deep meaning of the Eucharist. He writes, in the spirit of St. Oscar Romero and Pope Francis: "The Eucharist is not only a presence. It is an insistence, a summons to follow the Suffering Servant in his final act of resistance on the cross."

He quotes Cardinal Cantalamessa, the preacher to the papal household for over forty years: "The Eucharist is the sacrament of nonviolence." He recommends that the U.S. bishops invite the cardinal to give the keynote at the closing of the eucharistic revival next year. If the cardinal is not available, I suggest inviting Heagle to fill the bill.

TERRENCE RYNNE
Winnetka, Illinois

Advertisement

There is much I agree with in Heagle's article regarding the call to peacemaking. However, I was startled to read this: "But Jesus didn't die for our sins." Since reading

this, I have done more research and found another Catholic writer who says the same thing in [a U.S. Catholic magazine article](#). I am confused. Is it not the official teaching of the Catholic Church that Jesus died for our sins?

CATHY GUETHLEIN

Floyds Knobs, Indiana

The multi-year multi-million dollar Eucharistic Revival has no measurable goals. It's another amorphous attempt to beg people to come back to the church, doomed to fail in the same manner as the "Welcome Home" Catholics of a decade ago. The USCCB regularly rolls out these marketing schemes hoping people will respond, as they go about business as usual knowing their religio-political ideology is the reason people left. One is left shaking their head at such brazen stupidity.

Using the Eucharist as a marketing ploy is about as low as the bishops can get. It's similar to businesses that use religion in their marketing plans. Religion is used as a means to an end including using the Holy Eucharist for an ill-defined questionable purpose.

MICHAEL J. MCDERMOTT

North Brookfield, Massachusetts