

Jesus on Coke

I introduce this essay from a previous reflection on the sacred nature of this illness that afflicts – multiple sclerosis.

Before and during my sojourn to Mexico I made offering to Eshu Elegba – the Yoruba lord of the roads who opens the way to deep and true rites of passage.

Eshu is the spirit of merchants and thieves. A trickster.

In Jesus I met Eshu as thief.

“Eshu Elegba loves to undo us in our certainties because in our certainties we are most blind. In our certainties we are deaf to the sacred nature of what afflicts, deaf to the profound intelligence of what ails us.

His persistent and sometimes cutting wisdom reveals what is eclipsed by certainty.”

Jesus is a cocaine addict and as with most such cases a thief as well. He stole my wallet, knapsack, ATM card (so I have no access to the money I have), all the money I had in my wallet, drivers license and my passport.

I hear the refrain of Janis Joplin

Freedoms just another word nothing to lose.

Obverse, of course, is slavery is just another word for thinking you have everything to lose.

Well I certainly have nothing and there is a very real and spacious freedom in

that.

Yesterday I shared coke with Jesus.

That is to say Coca Cola.

As we know Coca Cola was once the crack cocaine of the Victorian era. It was marketed, rightly, as medicine. An altogether tasty med - with the mysterious secret ingredient.

Coca and cola -- the cola nuts being a West African hallucinogen that the tribal folks still use for divination, for talking with the dead

As medicine, coke has a long and honorable background. We will begin with the lengthiest and most venerable.

To this day the Quechua natives of Bolivia - in fact many natives all over South America - chew the coca leafs to make it through a hard work day of having the shit exploited out of them in the gold mines. The natives rightly see the white man as the devil - who most certainly wants to buy souls to eat.

A little coke to make it through the workday

And then the coca leaf that refreshes.

Hanging with your buds after having survived yet another shift.

The old Quechua cave painting shows the grandfather of the Llamas passing the coca leaf to a two legged shaman.

This is entirely contemporary.

Not contemporary is Sigmund Freuds' discovery of cocaine as the cure for neurosis that laid the foundation for his "discovery" of the unconscious.

Fast forward to Jesus having a pause that refreshed.

Jesus had heard from our landlady Adelina, that somebody had stolen my wallet - and everything else of any value.

Jesus - being Jesus - was compassionate in his concern and promised to watch my apartment for me and report if he saw anything suspicious.

A su servicio, saith the lord

At your service, kind sir.

(I added the kind sir part because I was feeling especially kind).

Then Jesus said the most remarkable thing.

"Not only will I look after your possessions, but I will pray to Jesus for you."

I take/took Jesus prayers seriously.

Around his neck he had the scapula of the Virgin of Guadalupe as well as a rosary with its' obligatory cross.

Tu eres catolico - You are Catholic?

Por supuesto - of course.

We agreed that the Mormons were good people, but sorta nuts.

(Are you screwing Adelina?)

"Adelina es una mormona who Jesus thinks is a slut).

We chatted about the divine weirdness of the los Mormones. I restrained from kvetching about the Bimbo bread and water sacrament.

I did indulge in an imaginary conversation with Jesus.

"Bimbo Bread' the body of Christ? Water the blood".

"Of course water the blood of Christ," said Jesus the thief.

"Wine is intoxicating.'

That's the point - if you couldn't get just a little intoxicated with the sacrament what will you use - coca cola?"

But I knew better than to bring up these theological concerns with Jesus.

I was still dizzy with Jesus praying to Jesus Christ on behalf of my wallet.

Jesus detonated any fundamentalist refuge I may still have in my soul with that one.

The theological implications are immense.

Need I at all be concerned with my mis-prognosis of eventual dementia when God herself says, join the party bro.

We're all demented down here and God herself is out of her friggin' mind. We re definitely made in her image

I had a busy day ahead of me - so I rushed off to check my email and such.

And I was hungry!

I passed by the sex shop around the corner from the cathedral. Checked out their vibrators and their blow-up sex dolls (with real

vaginas - hey sometimes you just have to be flexible with what you call real.) A bargain on vibrating butt plugs and suction devices if you're worried about how dinky your penis is.

(The mystery of God becoming human is the basic mystery of the Christian faith - whether you're a Mormon like Adelina or a Catholic like Jesus).

Bopped out of the sex shop and into the Cathedral where mass was happening.

I mean the kind with real bread and real red wine.

I thought about ducking in out of sheer hunger but that would be cheating. I haven't had a confession for about a million years.

(Forgive my father for I have sinned. My last confession was long before you were born and I've sinned magnificently all over the world.)

I left the church scheming for brunch. Walked a few blocks and saw a small patch of the wild edible herb portulaca and then decided to rely on my skills as a retired free lance freegan.

BINGO

In the garbage can in front of Thrifty Ice Cream there was the body of Christ himself - a couple of rather bulky ice cream cones - one with melted ice cream in it.

Que dulce!

Life is so sweet!

Walked back home and had another remarkable plactica with Jesus - wanted to check on his efforts to retrieve my wallet.

Jesus invited me to share a pint of beer and share a joint and listen to the BeeGees and Cindy Lawper.

When Jesus himself offers you some smoke you' re certainly tempted. ("lead us not into temptation" always puzzled me in the Lords' prayer.

Why would God even think about tempting?

Was she possibly the serpent in the Garden also?)

I restrained from saying, "Jesus baby.

I'm a clean and sober dude. You might try it out sometime.

Please focus on finding who took my wallet.";

I think I'll pass on the smoking with Jesus.

I've finally conceded that I am terminally ill.

So aren't we all? you respond.

Indeed smartass.

But the secondary progressive multiple sclerosis thing will play itself out as God intends "so of course I'm busy putting my ducks in order." Jesus, as a recovering addict, likely knew more about death and resurrection than Jesucristo.

After all, Christ crucifixion happened only once .

Every recovering addict has had multiple crucifixions and resurrections

There are two past tenses in Spanish - the preterit (once and only once). And the imperfect (multiple crucifixions) Jesucristo crucifo.

Jesus - the anonymous thief - is definitely imperfect ..

Imperfect - aren't we all?

Jesucristo-- may he rest in peace.

A little note on my recent crucifixion -- I've finally come out of my psychic closet and have conceded I'm terminally ill.

The prognosis for my future is -- look forward to dementia and death.

Hey I m a nurse so I cant take the prognostcators at all seriously.

They re not a trustworthy clan.

But there HAS been a wakeup call.

I have advanced to secondary progressive MS.

Right on time.

It usually hits 10 years after diagnosis and

its been 10 years since I was first diagnosed.

