

Memories of Raymond E. Brown by Peder Borgen, Professor em. University of Trondheim, Trondheim, Norway. (Present residence: Nannestadgt. 3, Lilleström 2000. Norway).

During the years 1959-1971 Ray was Professor at St. Mary's Seminary and University, Baltimore. He was then working on his comprehensive commentary on the Gospel of John. I came to Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C. as a Professor in 1962. Ray wrote me soon after and expressed wish for contact to be established between us as neighbouring colleagues. He had with interest noticed my note on John 6 published in *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* and my article on John and the Synoptics, published in *New Testament Studies*. I told him that the manuscript of my book *Bread from Heaven* was about to be published, and he told me about his ongoing work on the Commentary. We exchanged letters. He came and lectured on John to my students, and I was invited to lecture to his students. Moreover, I became associate member of *The Catholic Biblical Association*.

As documentation of the scholarly fellowship established between us I can quote the opening of a letter I received from Jack Macfarlane and my reply:

“St. Mary's Seminary, Roland Park, Baltimore 10, Maryland. January 4, 1966. – Prof. Borgen, Wesley Theological Seminary, 4400, Mass. Ave. N.W. , Washington, D.C. Dear Prof. Borgen: On April 13, 1966, St. Mary's Roman Catholic Seminary of Baltimore will sponsor its annual Day of Ecumenical Study. The subject this year will be ‘The Ecumenical Implications of Biblical Theology.’ Our guest lecturer this year will be Prof. Krister Stendahl of Harvard. We wish, most cordially, to extend to your seminary an invitation to attend.” My reply reads: “Many thanks for your letter of January 4 concerning your annual Day of Ecumenical Studies on April 13, 66. I shall be happy to extend the invitation to the indicated number of colleagues and students. I plan to go myself (Father Brown has already invited me)...” It was very encouraging to me that Ray was so supportive to my research. He told me that he was happy that my monograph *Bread from Heaven* came out in time for him to include points from it in the first volume of his Commentary of John's Gospel. It was encouraging to me to read: “Peder Borgen has contributed some interesting insights into the composition of this discourse ...” Likewise, later in his second volume he refers to my study on ‘the one who is sent’: “We have also suggested that much of the equivalence between Father and Son is phrased in language that stems from the Jewish concept that the one who is sent is completely the representative of the one who sends him. This idea has now been admirably developed by P. Borgen, “God's Agent in the Fourth Gospel,” in *Religions in Antiquity (Goodenough Volume)*” When I returned to Norway and became professor at The University of Trondheim, we continued to exchange publications and met at conferences. He also visited us once on his way to a meeting in Rome. When he understood that I was thriving in Trondheim, he suggested that I ought to invite the SNTS to arrange a conference at this University. He would support me, if I did so. So I did, and in 1995 the first –and so far only – SNTS conference in Norway was held in Trondheim. Ray attended the meeting. He visited us in our home, and we have his signature in our guest book. In August 1998 I served as President of the SNTS and chaired its Meeting in Copenhagen. On Saturday, August 8, there was an excursion to Roskilde and it's Cathedral. On that same day Ray passed away. A few days later I received a card with his picture from the Sulpician Orders,

and I joined in the praying: “Lord, hear the prayer that we offer for Raymond, your servant and priest. He faithfully fulfilled his ministry to your church. May he rejoice forever in the fellowship of your saints. Amen.” On behalf of myself I added a prayer of thanks for his quiet and steady friendship and support, his rich and stimulating research, and his ability to join together scholarship, openness for sound publicity, and an ecumenical attitude. At the same time, he was faithful to the Church that he served as scholar and priest.

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