

Corn is Biggest Culprit in Gulf Dead Zone

While the BP oil spill clearly is the worst environmental catastrophe in recent U.S. history, biofuel production is contributing to a Gulf of Mexico "dead zone" the size of New Jersey that scientists say could be every bit as harmful to the gulf... and last indefinitely.

Each year, nitrogen used to fertilize corn, about a third of which is made into ethanol, leaches from Midwest croplands into the Mississippi River and out into the gulf, where the fertilizer feeds giant algae blooms. As the algae dies, it settles to the ocean floor and decays, consuming oxygen and suffocating marine life.

Known as hypoxia, the oxygen depletion kills shrimp, crabs, worms and anything else that cannot escape. The dead zone has doubled since the 1980s and is expected this year to grow as large as 8,500 square miles and hug the Gulf Coast from Alabama to Texas.

The only cure would seem to be in sharply reducing agricultural runoff by using low-till contour farming and crop rotation.

WHAT'S WHERE:

July 11 – St. Benedict's parish, Avon. **Parish Festival.** Mass at 10:30 am, Quilt Auction 3:00 pm. Grand Raffle at 7:30 pm, \$1,000 Grand Prize. Live Music all day – the Gene Ostendorf Band from noon till 3:00 pm; Kentucky Thunder from 3:30 – 7:30 pm. Food, Fun & Family!

A Different Take on the Oil Spill

"Something came to me during my adoration hour," Bob told me. "Something about the oil spill that is making Jesus sad."

Bob loves animals, and the spill has been bothering him lately. He's seen the pictures of the pelicans and the dead fish, and he wants the oil to stop leaking into the Gulf more than most people do—especially people like me who can drive and want it to stop before the cost of gasoline begins to skyrocket.

"Tell me, Bob," I said.

"The oil leak goes on and on and lots of dolphins are going to die," he said somewhat prophetically. "It's all because of an abortion, and Jesus is frustrated because of it." I thought I heard him correctly. He said "an abortion," and not because of abortion in general. "I wish I could let the world know. It came to me... in front of Jesus," he added, just so I wouldn't think he was crazy about what came to him in prayer.

"An abortion?" I said. I was puzzled.

"Uh huh," he said. "The person who has the smarts to come up with a plan to stop the oil..." Then the reality of what came to him descended on me.

"There should be a smart person in the world who knows how to fix it!" he exclaimed. "There is someone, but he's not down there in the Gulf to help out. He or she has been aborted."

I truly did not know what to say. Then it dawned on me. This unsophisticated man could very well be right. With all the minds that never got a chance to go to college because of 50 million legal pregnancy terminations, it's quite likely that at least one of the "terminated" would have had a brain with the capacity to provide a solution. I looked at the tabernacle and wondered why Bob's best friend would trouble him with such a thought. I tried quickly to come up with something that would console this gentle guy who holds all living creatures so dear in his heart. Then something came to me.

"Bob, I think the Lord just told me something," I said, breaking our silence. "We can pray. If a person with the solution was aborted, then he is now with our Lord. And if he's with our Lord, then he's a saint..."

"You mean pray...like ask for his intercession?"

"If he... or she... would have had the solution, then that person still has the solution. We just have to ask God if that person can somehow share it with someone now here on earth."

~excerpted from *The Catholic Exchange*

The swat-slap-repeat routine of weeding gardens ruled by deerflies and tiger mosquitoes, and I'm feeling poorly this week. What to do? Mop the kitchen floor? Tinker with fishing tackle? Go to bed? A flitting thought brushes the dogeared Bible and I fixate on what some wag said as recorded in John 7: 52:

"They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet."

Baloney. People were just as ill-informed then as they are now. Most of the Bible deals with past and future history, seen through the "lens" of Israel. But three short books focus on non-Jewish history and each has specific application to you and me today. There are at least three prophets in the Old Testament called specifically to forewarn the Gentiles. All can be tagged as 'coming out of Galilee.'

One of the wildest miracles in the Old Testament is in the Book of Jonah, and it wasn't the whale story. God called Jonah to go convert Nineveh, which had served as capital of the world for several centuries. Decadent Nineveh was the enemy of Israel, and at first Jonah scoffed at his assignment. These were enemies! God explained it to him a bit more clearly and they negotiated a deal.

When Jonah finally did go there, he preached no wimpy "seeker friendly" sermon. God had said that Nineveh was 40 days from divine destruction. Jonah went into the city and declared, "Forty days and you get yours!" He clearly hoped they'd get wiped out, heh heh. His biggest fear was that God might show mercy. (In fact he went up on a hill and pouted when God did spare them).

It's interesting to me that Jonah didn't preach repentance, he simply announced their impending doom. And yet we're told that within those 40 days, the offending king speculated that, just maybe, if they repented, God might change His mind. They did and God did. From the king on down, everyone wore sackcloth (traditional ritual for repentance). They even draped sackcloth on the cattle!

The repentance of Nineveh is astonishing — forty short days to becoming "ground zero," and yet they earned another century to get it together! Later the book of Nahum announced the sad end of the story. Nineveh backslid, crumbled and was lost to history.

Both Jonah and Nahum came from the Galilee area. In fact, Capernaum (Caper Nahum) means the "Village of Nahum."

The third prophecy concerning Gentiles (including us) is to be found in the shortest book in the Bible: the prophecies of Obadiah. And it's not pretty. Obadiah is the basis for End Times speculation.

Slouching Toward GOMORRAH...

Is America ripe for judgment? Years ago, Billy Graham quipped, "If God doesn't judge America He'll have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah." Perhaps prophetically, Thomas Jefferson actually said much the same thing a couple hundred years ago.

But no prophets from Galilee? How about the Son of God? Are we paying heed to *his* homely little homilies? Almost everything Jesus said was a warning. But instead of donning the sackcloth of sacramental Confession, America dithers with Gay Pride, fixates on celebrity dancing, partying like there's no tomorrow. Just like Sodom, Gomorrah ... and Nineveh. *yr. obt. svt.*

The **Parish Council** meeting was held on July 8th. Fr. Corwin led the meeting with a prayer. Minutes from the May meeting were read and approved. Financial report to the end of June 30 was given. All entries for the Fiscal year are complete with the exception of the net proceeds from the Annual Festival. The Council completed a short walk-thru in the basement of the hall. Work started on Tuesday, July 6th. Parishioners are assisting with the labor as needed. Some additional painting in the kitchen will be done. **New business:** Robert Kalthoff is your new Trustee; the council congratulated Bob. Bingo tent is trash. No new tent will be built and a tent will be rented. With the cemetery clean-up there are three gates that will be placed into storage for future installation(s). Motion made to sell some older school desks that are of no use any more. Desks will be available for parishioners to purchase during the first week of August. Discussion of filling in ground South of the Parish Hall to have rain water drain around the festival grounds. Council was informed that a final report will be printed and submitted to the Diocese by early August. Meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Submitted by Jack Kaschmitter

**Eucharistic Adoration:**

**Have you made any commitment yet?
One Hour, alone with the Real Presence...
Imagine the unimagineable.
Call Fr. Corwin at 548-3550 and sign up!**