

La *lectio divina* d'Irénée de Lyon : canon, exégèse, et l'exemple du mariage¹

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Abstract

Saint Irenaeus of Lyons, a pre-monastic author, cannot be said to be a specialist of *Lectio Divina*. He is too ancient and too polemical. Furthermore, what we consider today as Scripture was still in a formation process at his time. The oral tradition often took precedence over written texts. Nevertheless, together with the Rule of faith and the Apostolic succession, the Holy Writ is a pillar of Christian revelation, according to Irenaeus. This standpoint provides him a key role in the formation of the biblical canon. Though the canon in the second century is not yet a defined list of biblical books as we know it today, it is already a structured series of writings with a threefold status : prophetic, evangelical and apostolic. On these grounds, Irenaeus confidently unfolds his theological argumentation in an anti-gnostic context and for the promotion of a theology of the body and the flesh. The theme of marriage is a good illustration of this strong and flexible biblical hermeneutic and this approach can be useful for our *Lectio Divina* today.

Keywords: *Irenaeus of Lyons, Lectio Divina, biblical canon, marriage, apostolic succession.*