



The Journal



January - March 2014

Evolution

by Charles Callanan, St. John's, NL



It is not the easiest reading in the world but it all comes together to make some dynamic points. I am referring to a book called, "The Unbearable Wholeness of Being"-God, Evolution and the Power of Love" by a lady intellectual whose name is Ilia Delio. Ilia is a Franciscian sister who teaches in Washington, D.C.

She goes back to Teilhard de Chardin when she writes, "Christianity is a religion of evolution" and "the reluctance of the Church to embrace evolution as the human story" is the real problem with the "new cosmology"

She then goes on to say that "the heart and mind are not connected because we live religiously in the middle Ages and culturally in a scientific age. The Church still operates out of a Greek metaphysical and an Aristotelian philosophy of body and soul.."

Having our religious practices and beliefs based on an ancient cosmology and living in a scientific age "is comparable to having a brain lesion".

The beauty of reading today is that some religious writers are finally pulling things together. When I was a boy there was only one galaxy as we all thought but in reality there are billions of galaxies. A lot of thinking in the past was well intended but had nothing to do with science.

We say that we are "losing our youth". That is true to the extent that the Church has made no serious attempts to merge ancient beliefs with the true scientific human story. For all people throughout the world there is only one truth, one reality and one God.

Since the Church does not promote the idea of evolution, the modern writers who deal with the "new" cosmology are receiving no pats on the back.

Maybe this really is a new age of the laity. The Spirit seems to be guiding people to put things together for themselves. Writers like Ilia Delio, Diarmuid O'Murchu, Brian Swimme, Michael Morwood and many others are leading the way. The dean of all this new thinking is of course Teilhard de Chardin, who at the time of his death in 1957 had yet to become a popular writer.

If the young are presently ignoring the Church it is because they no longer accept the "Adam and Eve" story. They are siding with modern science(why wouldn't they?)

If our Church does not come out publicly and embrace the evolution story, they forever remain in the middle ages and the generations to follow us will remain "lost" to the institutional Church but not "lost" to God or to Jesus.

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The Journal welcomes submissions from small faith communities and individuals that share its vision of the Christian Church as one in which all are equal, decisions are made by consensus, healthy relationships are nurtured, justice is done, and the Good News of Jesus Christ is proclaimed.

All submissions to the Journal must be received by February 15, May 15, August 15, and November 15.

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Response To Phil Little's Article

Hi Phil

I just read your article about your trip to South America. I really appreciated your thoughts about the meaning of the Eucharist. I am beginning to realize that the sacraments of the church are not the only doors to the Sacred, as the examples of the meals you shared and the experiences you had are proof of that.
Gratefully,

Emil

Theological Soapbox: Alzheimer's

by Arthur Menu, Sidney, BC



Recently I read an article by Richard Taylor. Diagnosed with early-onset, early-stage dementia of the Alzheimer's type while still a

successful teacher, father, husband, and grandfather, Taylor has written about what it is like to go through the early stages of Alzheimer's disease from the point of view of the person with Alzheimer's. It is a moving account and I was especially struck by his description of how he is treated by many people once they learn he has this disease. Taylor writes:

"Eighty years ago, theologian Martin Buber was concerned that our society was moving from I-Thou relationships to I-It relationships. We were treating each other as if we were objects rather than human beings like ourselves. This dynamic occurs in the relationship between caregivers and patients with Alzheimer's. It is happening to me...Inevitably, I will become an It. I will look, smell, and walk like a Thou, but I will not think and act like a Thou. It's no one's fault this happens. It just does...So, how do you relate to a Thou who does not act or think like Thou? I don't have a solution. I don't want it to happen to me. Just on my own, I don't know how to avoid it. I do know that I continue to need to be recognized as a 'Thou,' to have my personhood recognized. Please understand, I am still here."

"I have become keenly aware of a patterned response from some individuals as soon as they find out I have Alzheimer's disease. They switch their eye contact and attention to whomever I am with. It is as if knowledge of the disease immediately cloaks me in invisibility. Richard has left the room. His body may still be here, but no one who can understand what you are saying is at home! This happens with doctors, suit salespersons, haircutters, produce managers, appliance

repairpersons, and many other individuals."

"Look me in the eyes. Make sure I am attending to what you are about to say. Don't make a speech; just tell me what you want me to know. If you have questions about if I "got" it or not, engage me in conversation and check to see if I understand. If I am having trouble understanding, use examples and comparisons with which I should be familiar. Get more of my senses involved than just words. Attribute any misunderstandings to yourself. You wrestle with trying to say it in a way I understand, don't force me to wrestle with trying to understand what you said."

Alzheimer's is a disease with stages. Each stage has a corresponding level of cognitive ability. In the beginning stages it is possible to carry on a fairly normal conversation. In later stages the ways in which one can communicate become more limited. It is a sign that we respect and value a person with Alzheimer's when we make the effort to discover the level of communication that works for them. If we are in a situation where we do not have the time to do this, we can at least spiritually connect with them by *looking upon them with love*. From my own experience as a hospital chaplain in a residential care facility, I have learned that just because a person has dementia, they have not ceased to be a person and they have not ceased to be aware of how they are regarded. They may not understand a word I am saying but they are aware of the feeling behind the words. They are aware that I am paying attention to them, they are aware of my emotional state. They respond to my emotions with emotions of their own. If I smile and am relaxed it will put them at ease. If I am annoyed, they may become afraid or angry.

Above all if I treat them as a "thou" and not an "it", and do so with love and skill, it will enhance their self-worth, it will lift their hearts and spirits.

In the parable of the sheep and the goats, in which Jesus says, "Whatever you did to the least of these, you did to me", to all the ways we show love for our neighbour, we can add, "I had dementia, and you still saw the person that I was".

The article of Richard Taylor quoted above is published in *Alzheimer's Care Quarterly* 2005; 6(2):85-98. ©2005 Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, Inc.

Victoria Corpus would like our readers to know that Edith Gvora died on February 24, 2014.

GVORA, Edith Eleanor November 20, 1946 - February 24, 2014 I am very saddened to announce the passing of my beloved friend and wife, Edith Eleanor with whom I celebrated our 40th wedding anniversary on June 29, 2013. Edith will be forever missed by those who loved and knew her.

Grateful thanks to our many relatives and friends, both in Canada and in the United States. Appreciative thanks to Doctors and staff at the Royal Jubilee Hospital, including the Clinical Training Unit, Victoria General Hospital, B.C. Cancer Agency and Victoria Hospice.

No service by request.

Good Bye My Angel

Love Tony



“Spot Players,” Subs And Coming Off The Bench

by *Hank Mattimore, Santa Rosa, CA*



My brother Dan and I were reminiscing the other day about Dan’s high school basketball career. My brother’s role on the team was to be the “spot man.” Dan’s defensive skills were modest at best and he was not known for the spring in his legs or his speed, so he was not a first stringer. But man, the kid could shoot. Give Dan a clear shot and it was good for two points. So, when the team was down a couple of points and needed a shot in the arm, the coach would call on Dan. Invariably, he would oblige SWISH! A basket for our team.

Our conversation got me thinking about the roles we play in our lives. Few of us are called to wear the mantle of super stars, whether it is in politics or sports or the entertainment business. We are destined to be bit players in life’s drama. We may as well face it; our

demise when it comes will not grab headlines in the media. Headlines are reserved for the JFK’s or Martin Luther King’s or the Brad Pitt’s of our day.

Yet, like a spot player on the basketball court or a bit player in a movie, the parts we play are important. I recall a high school teacher saying to me “You have a gift for writing. Use it.” I doubt if he remembers the moment when he said that to a boy struggling with his own self-esteem and how much that mattered to me.

On another occasion, a “spot player” entered my life in the person of an older Afro-American woman. I was grabbing a pizza at Union Station waiting for the train. The tables were all taken so I asked a young man if he would mind sharing his table. He agreed and just before we began scarfing down our pizzas, the black lady asked if she could join us. “Sure no problem,” we said. But before we could begin to eat, the lady, a complete stranger, asked us to wait a moment. Spreading out three paper napkins in front of us, she bowed her head and said a prayer. We waited politely until she finished. Then she turned to us and said with a warm smile, “Gentlemen, now we can dine.”

I was impressed by the way this lady turned the prosaic act of downing a pizza into something sacred. She went out of her way to share this meal with a couple of people she had never met and would probably never see again. She, as it were, came off the bench to teach us a valuable insight, one that has stayed with me all my life. She had her moment with a couple of strangers and played the role to perfection.

As the years have gone by I have come to believe that the Divine Director has a role for us to play. The world is still in the process of creation and we are in the cast. For most of us, we have only a bit part but, as any good director will tell you, bit parts done well can make or break a production. Spot players can win a game.

St. Iris Faith Community

by *Jim Lauder, Victoria, BC*

All is well at our monthly gatherings of our St. Iris Faith Community. We meet on the fourth Sunday of each month. My wife Janine co-presides with me and together we model a team with both our voices and the voices of our wise community during our shared homilies.

For example, on Sunday Feb. 23 in a shared homily, we explored the profound challenge that “love your enemies and pray for your persecutors” Mt 5:44 offers us. One person spoke about a recent funeral and of the anger she felt at the health authorities. We reflected on the huge challenge it is to love your enemies and put aside the anger and rage and pray for them. I think a lot of us are on equal footing when it comes to the challenge of loving enemies. We are far from Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela, both saints in this regard.

We are all here for a reason. In *Anam Cara*, John O’Donohue writes “Each of us was sent for a special destiny... prepared for you... and given the freedom and creativity to go beyond the given, to make a new set of relationships and to forge an ever new identity.... This is the secret pulse of growth, which is quietly at work behind the outer

facade if your life.”

Jim and Janine Lauder, Victoria, BC jimlauder@telus.net



Saint John's Bible

by Chris Diamond, Cobble Hill, BC



I first became aware of *The Saint John's Bible* (SJB) in September 2013 when Naomi and our daughter, Christie, returned from Rochester, Minnesota. They were there for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of

Naomi's nursing graduation from St. Marys Hospital. They had seen and were very impressed by the Heritage Edition of SJB which the Mayo Clinic has on display.

Without knowing the full story of the SJB, all who see the display find it to be a beautiful, inspiring, and extraordinary experience. SJB is an illuminated Bible in English in seven volumes on calf skin vellum with 160 illuminations. It was produced in the scriptorium in Monmouth, Wales. This outstandingly beautiful masterpiece was commissioned by the Benedictines monks of Saint John's Abbey and University in Collegeville Minnesota in 1998. True to their Benedictine tradition, they commissioned production of SJB to enrich biblical spirituality throughout the world.

Opened for display, SJB measures two feet by three feet. The script was created by Donald Jackson. The artists and script writers in the Monmouth scriptorium worked under the guidance of scholars and theologians for the text and illuminations; they used gold and platinum leaf, and with their quills, lamp black ink from Chinese stick ink, and pigments ground by hand and mixed with egg and water to make paint. The project, from Genesis to Revelations, took 13 years to complete. The result is not a copy of the centuries-old style of illuminated Bibles, but an illuminated Bible for the 21st century.

For more information about SJB, check the website at www.saintjohnbible.org; it is fascinating to read and see. Eric Hollis OSB of St. John's Abbey comments that the SJB will still be around when the Abbey is long gone. Michael Patella OSB explains the underlying purpose of their work: "The illuminations are not illustrations. They are spiritual meditations on a text. It is a very Benedictine approach to Scriptures."

Besides the original SJB, there is The Heritage Edition of SJB. Each volume of the Heritage Edition is signed by Donald Jackson. The edition is limited to 299 signed and numbered seven-volume sets, each set the exact full size reproduction of the original manuscript. In addition, an eighth volume of commentary relates the historical context and describes several of the illuminations in the seven volumes of SJB.

Also available is a 10"x15" seven volume Trade Edition of SJB.

The good news for us in western Canada is that Bishop Emeritus Remi J. De Roo who celebrated his 90th birthday on Feb. 24th. has begun a project to buy and bring a set of The Heritage Edition SJB to Victoria. This set will be entrusted to the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society and through it to the University of Victoria as part of the Archbishop Seghers Library. This Bible will be made available to ecumenical and interfaith faith communities, galleries, museums and universities "so that the entire community might enjoy this gift; (it is a) literary, artistic, and spiritual gem." I encourage you to help in this project with your prayers and/or donations and whenever possible to see the SJB..

The names of all donors will be recorded in a special perpetual memorial book and, if you wish, progress reports will be sent to you occasionally through email or regular mail. Donations can be made out to "University of Victoria" with a Memo indicating "Saint John's Bible"; a tax receipt for donations over \$25.00 is also available.

Book Review: Can We Save The Catholic Church?

by Emil Kutarna, Regina, SK

CAN WE SAVE THE CATHOLIC CHURCH?

- by Hans Küng, 2013 (williamcollinsbooks.com)

Should we care about saving the church?

Lately it seems that the old saying "outside the church there is no salvation" is losing its power. People are making a distinction between *religion*, usually meaning that which churches do, and *spirituality*, which is what an individual can do with or without the help of organised religion. So if I can relate to God without the mediation of a church, then why would I care about a dying church? Well, some people take that attitude and quit going to church.

On the other hand, if I am to love my neighbour as myself, I must be concerned for so many of my friends who still feel they need religious guidance. The question is, however, whether the present version of the Catholic Church is worth repairing. Hans Küng writes:

"... *the Church's only alternative to what would amount to assisted suicide is radical cure*".

Küng writes that the three outstanding features that mark the Roman system to this day (which started with Gregory VII's Reform Pope, 1073-1085), are:

- a centralist-absolutist papacy;
 - clericalist juridicism; and,
 - obligatory celibacy for the clergy;
- ...and these are what need to be reformed.

About the absolutist papacy, Küng writes (p.71):

"But there is nothing in the New Testament or in the early history of the Church that supports a claim to domination or jurisdictional primacy by either the apostle Peter or the church in Rome, and much less by its bishop. In fact ... the exercise of this claim promoted neither unity nor harmonious interaction, but increased

Book Review Continued...

dissension and even led to schism”.

Therapy proposed by Küng for this (p.111):

“Instead of an Absolutist Primacy of Domination and Rule, a Pastoral Primacy of Service”.

A start was made in December 1965 when Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I nullified the mutual anathemas of 1054. Pope Francis seems to be going in the right direction.

About clericalist juridicism, Küng writes (p.113):

“The twelfth-century popes issued more laws than all their predecessors put together”. A large number of them were forgeries. The pope became the absolute legislator and final judge. This generated a system of privileges, despotism, partisanship and greed – which survives even to this day.

Therapy Küng proposes (p.119):

“Instead of Hierarchy and Domination, a Community in Freedom, Equality and Brotherhood/Sisterhood”.

- Pope Francis’ Questionnaire on the Family is a hopeful sign.

About obligatory celibacy for the clergy;

Clerical celibacy established a new social order. Clergy became a class apart from and elevated above the people or laity. Küng writes (p.115):

“This unheard of clericalization assumed such proportions that ‘church’ and ‘clergy’ came to be used synonymously, leaving the laity completely excluded from the power structure of the Church”.

Therapy Küng proposes (p.123):

“Remove the Augustinian Doctrine of Original Sin, Abolish the Law of Celibacy, and Improve the Status of Women”.

Celibacy is not an article of faith. It is a Mediaeval Canon Law that should have been openly debated at Vatican II and abolished.

“The traditional arguments against preaching by women and the ordination of women are not merely outdated, they are also theologically dubious and untenable”.



Emil visiting Stonehenge in England

Breaking Bread Twice

by Phil Little, Cedar, BC



*Naomi and Phil
with Rudisinda*

As a Catholic from the womb, during my childhood, passing through my years in the seminary which began in 1965 at the conclusion of Vatican II, and in my years of ministry as an ordained priest, the “Eucharist” was something done exclusively by those ordained as priests. Through the anointing of his fingers and the laying on of hands by a high priest bishop, the ordained could change bread into God and wine into the blood of Christ. The common folk, known as the laity, traditionally “listened” to the mass and when permitted could share in “ministries” restricted to the more theatrical or non-essential ceremonial functions (altar servers, music, readings, maybe even a socio-drama before the gospel). The essential elements were restricted to the ordained clergy. Without a priest there could be no mass. In those areas where there is a growing shortage of ordained clergy, the church could permit community celebrations involving a communion service, but still the essentials (consecrated hosts) rely on the actions of a priest from a different time or place imported for this community celebration. The action of breaking bread and sharing wine as a Eucharistic prayer without the participation of an ordained clergy person is simply not contemplated or allowed.

The sacraments of the Catholic Church came to be the private property of the managers of this great transnational that is called “Church”. These mid and high level executives can decide who is eligible to receive the sacraments and can impose restrictions on the 99% of the membership of this church. The priest as the local manager can impose restrictions according to criteria dictated by the

head office (Vatican), the top supervisor of the region (bishop), and at times he could invent his own criteria to demand certain behaviours or favours. There are many examples of clergy who would restrict the sacraments, for example to persons who voted for candidates favoured by the church. Thus the 1 % of the church could exercise a control over the 99% who were taught to believe that the sacraments (controlled by the 1 %) were necessary for salvation. Those sins not forgiven by the 1 % were in theory never forgiven by God, even if God wanted. Thus the 1 % of the church, which traditionally came from and identified with the 1% of those with wealth and temporal power, could use church and religion as a mechanism of control to defend their privilege and exclusive powers over the 99%.

The “Eucharist” as liturgical action began in the early churches as an act of memory of that person whose life and witness had profoundly changed the thinking and behaviour of his followers. These early communities were mostly Jewish communities, who never thought of not being Jewish or of being something else. They were inspired by one of their own, an itinerant preacher from the north in Galilee called Jesus of Nazareth. He preached about a new kingdom and enunciated a new ethos for those who embraced this new vision. In the turbulent times under foreign occupation, he was perhaps misunderstood by the Romans or most likely well understood. He was defined as dangerous to imperial security and executed in a ritualistic manner devised to stifle opposition - crucifixion.

These early communities of Jewish disciples of the slain preacher gathered in their own tradition, using the prayers of blessing typical of a Jewish family meal, more often lead by the head woman in the family. There would be dialogue and discussion, remembering the examples and words of their rabbi. In the breaking of bread and sharing of wine, they had an experience of closeness with their prophet and teacher. This experience of closeness gave them courage and conviction to continue sharing his message not only among his people but even with the gentiles.

In 2013, with two trips into Latin America, I had two “meal” experiences which have “touched me to the bone”. In neither meal were there religious prayers or readings from sacred texts. Still both meals were like “eucharistic” meals, not in a traditional sense, but in the profound experience of what originally developed into that commemorative meal. Both meals were moments of sharing, with those who had much less sharing with the stranger, the visitor, the guest. Both meals were offered with open arms and a concern for the other. Generosity was the guiding rule. And both who so generously shared these meals with others were followers of that same preacher from Galilee from 2000 years ago.

In August 2013 I was traveling in southern Peru with one of my daughters and a niece. A Peruvian friend, Nicanor, knowing that I was of course going to be visiting Cuzco insisted that I also visit his home town, a Quechua village which was a six hour trip climbing over a mountain pass 5000 meters above sea level. We arrived in the village of Lares on a very cold and rainy day after a difficult trip in a van which broke down 3 hours into the trip. Arriving at the main plaza of the village we were met by Eulalia, our friend's sister, who had been notified of our coming. We were

Breaking Bread Twice Continued...



*Doña Ramona and
two sons Chabelo*

taken to the home of Doña Rudisinda Yupanqui, the mother of our friend Nicanor. Eulalia helped her mother and at the same time translated for us from Spanish to Quechua, the ancient language of the Inca empire. Doña Rudisinda had already begun preparing for our arrival. We were happy to sit in her kitchen, which was quite small with a fire in an open oven only a few meters away. There was a large pot of hot water waiting for the poor family rooster who had no idea that he was the main offering of the meal to come. The hot water helped to quickly pluck the feathers off the rooster which was quickly cleaned and separated into pieces which were then added to a second pot of boiling water.

Doña Rudisinda then made repeated trips to her garden and each time returned with fresh vegetables - a giant cabbage, carrots, onions, and different varieties of potatoes. While we sat and watched this process, we were occasionally distracted by more than a dozen guinea pigs that warmed themselves near the fire and scurried about looking for some vegetable peelings or a few shafts of barley. They were possibly rejoicing that they were not part of the menu.

In the hours we sat at a small table near the door, enjoying the warmth of the kitchen, different family members came by to greet us and some were directed to bring more wood for the fire. The time passed quickly in this rustic and warm setting where we were made to feel comfortable and welcome. As is my bad habit, I took advantage to take some photos of this unique gathering. The table was small, so we were directed to stay at the table and others found other means to sit nearby. Each one received a large soup bowl with a thick stew made directly from the garden of Doña Rudisinda. The hundred mile diet was reduced to a 100 meter diet, everything was so fresh. Doña Rudisinda is normally found each day in the main plaza of the town with a small kerosene stove where she boils water and prepares herbal teas for travellers who know that she has knowledge of natural herbs that help with different ailments. There she earns a small amount to help with family expenses. That day she was dedicated to her guests preparing for us a meal of the very best that she could offer, prepared with affection and concern because we were her honoured guests, friends of her son. We were humbled knowing that it would be difficult to be so welcomed and received with such hospitality. We were given the very best that could

be offered and invited into the circle of this family.

A few months later I was again in Latin America, visiting a dear friend and Jesuit priest, Father Ismael (Melo) Moreno. Melo lives in the city of El Progreso where he is the director of two Jesuit apostolates - an independent radio station known as "Radio Progreso" and a human rights centre known as E.R.I.C. (Centre for Research, Investigation and Communication). In Honduras, an extremely violent country governed by a traditional oligarchy with strategic involvement of the US embassy, either position is in itself dangerous. In 1983 an American Jesuit in Honduras was assassinated by a notorious military unit with involvement of the US government. The radio station has twice been raided and shut down by the military after destroying the transmission equipment.

Father Melo has headed a campaign on behalf of a political prisoner, a poor illiterate peasant farmer, who has been imprisoned for more than 5 years in the notorious penitentiary near La Ceiba. Twice I accompanied Melo to visit José (Chabelo) Morales, who in spite of a Supreme Court ruling that his conviction was irregular and that he should be set free, remains in the penitentiary. There are powerful people, including a highly ranked police Coronel, involved in an effort to evict poor peasant farmers from their land.

Our visits to the penitentiary were a bit strange. We arrived at the prison both times to find Chabelo standing outside the prison entrance waiting for us. The warden knows that Chabelo is not a criminal and no threat to anyone. As a gesture to us, he allowed Chabelo to meet us outside the prison walls where a few benches



*Melo and
Ramona*

Breaking Bread Twice Continued...

Melo and Ramona



had been arranged under the shade of some tall pear trees. Thus we were spared entering the prison where a few years before 64 prisoners were burned to death in a suspicious fire.

Shortly after arriving on our second visit, Chabelo informed us that his mother and others coming from his village would soon arrive. He knew this because he was allowed to carry a cell phone. They were traveling by bus which would leave them on the highway. From the highway stop, the prison was a 4 km. drive or walk along a dirt trail through a Dole pineapple plantation. Fr. Melo left with his truck so that with luck he could meet them and spare them the long dusty walk. In less than 30 minutes he returned with Doña Ramona, the mother of Chabelo, a brother and also an American peace volunteer who lives in the village of Guadalupe Carney as an international peace observer. After some moments of tender reunion between mother and her prisoner son, Doña Ramona announced that we should have something to eat. We were intending to stop somewhere for lunch along the highway, so we had not prepared to eat at the prison.

Doña Ramona announced that she had prepared food before coming. She took out of her bag a chicken which she had cooked and a large stack of tortillas which were wrapped in some towels. At first we protested and suggested that the food should be saved for Chabelo for the next few days. Doña Ramona insisted that what she brought was for now. Fr. Melo said he had two bags of snack food in his truck. But we had nothing to drink. Someone gave Chabelo some money and he promptly returned into the prison to buy from the prison

cantina. He returned with a 3 litre bottle of syrupy orange soda drink, and plastic plates and cups. Someone produced a small knife and Doña Ramona proceeded to cut up the chicken. Everyone received a plate of delicious roast chicken and homemade tortillas. Some sat on the benches, while others preferred to stand. This was a meal in solidarity with Chabelo, his imprisonment and the hope that justice would be done. Doña Ramona watched for anyone whose plate was empty and she provided more chicken and tortillas. Guadalupe Carney, for whom the village is named, was a Jesuit priest who was assassinated in 1983 because he identified too closely with the poor peasant people in their struggle to defend their land. In this meal we were present to all those in the village who daily fear another attack by those who covet their small parcels of land. Chabelo is in prison for them. His cause is their cause. All he wants is to return to his wife and family and to grow corn again. Doña Ramona's tears are the tears of all mothers whose sons and daughters are victimized by the greed and power of such evil in the world. Many people in Honduras and in the exterior have been part of solidarity actions on behalf of Chabelo and the people of Guadalupe Carney. In March 2013 a thousand people walked to the capital city demanding justice for Chabelo. This was in a country where a walk down the street can be dangerous. All of this somehow became present to me as we shared the roast chicken and tortillas, along with the syrupy beverage from the prison cantina.

This picnic at the prison had no ceremony or even prayers of blessing. Doña Ramona was the only one who spoke, and that was to ensure that everyone had enough to eat. This was her gift to those who supported her son the prisoner. As we ate I had an experience of disconnect and connection. Here we were at a notorious prison, but outside the prison walls sharing tortillas and chicken. In doing so, standing only a short distance from Chabelo, I entered momentarily into his space and time. It was more than a physical presence. I had an experience of communion with this man who was oppressed and wounded, separated from his family and his land. I felt extreme poverty in that I could do nothing to liberate him or take him away. I became a part of his struggle for liberty and one in solidarity with his mother and brother, the

Rudisinda and daughter Eulalia



Breaking Bread Twice Continued...

Ramona



American peace witness, and especially with Padre Melo who has made this struggle so personal.

These were two rather simple meals, even ordinary, but full of significance and closeness. They were a sharing that took away slight tinges of hunger, but meals that brought people together as brothers and sisters of the same family. Two meals given in generosity by families close to the land sharing from their own gardens not because of an abundant harvest but because of abundant love. We experienced a sharing of today's bread,

maybe tomorrow's bread too, because hospitality and generosity are such important values among those who have less.

With the experience of these powerful meal experiences, I wonder if with all the rubrics and prayer formulations what is celebrated as a church "Eucharist" has lost some essential elements over the centuries. When we share the bread do we enter into the life of the other (neighbour) who may be standing right beside us? Do we share the joys and suffering, the successes and failures, the comings and the goings, and the voyage of life step by step with fellow parishioners or neighbours? We listen to the mass, we take the host if allowed, and then we escape to our private devotions to escape from any closeness with the "other".

The tortilla, made from the corn pressed and ground into flour transformed by Doña Ramona into daily bread, was an invitation to me to be present with the political prisoner Chabelo and with him all those who suffer injustice. To be present is to enter into the history of the other. And possibly, the tortilla and shared pieces of chicken from the garden of Doña Ramona carried us to a communion with the creative and loving force that some will call "God" from where all life flows. The gospels show how important it was for Jesus to share a meal with others, even if he risked giving scandal to the pious because he ate with "sinners" and others less appreciated by the righteous. It would seem that the preacher from Nazareth also enjoyed a celebration, a wedding where the guests drank the wine more quickly than expected. Somehow Jesus was left to solve the problem of an impending shortage which would embarrass the host and perhaps cause the feast to end early. Where did Jesus ever celebrate a meal that was only a religious function? The famous "Last Supper" was a real meal celebrated by the entire Jewish nation to remember the myth of their founding story. It was full of ritual and traditional phrases that elicited historical

proclamations. And it was a meal where the women of the community had a prominent role. It was also a meal with plenty of food and drink.

The early Christian communities which mainly consisted of Jewish followers, disciples, of the slain preacher from Galilee, continued to share Shabbat, Pesach, and other religious holy days as was their custom. When doing so they remembered Jesus who had shared these meals with them, especially the Passover meal which so much spoke of suffering that led to liberation. In these meals they would retell the experiences they remembered or the teachings of their Rabbi. Later generations would retell the experiences told to them, continually adapted within their own story as written in their holy texts. In doing so, even with ritual, like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, there was an experience of closeness or presence of Jesus still with them.

Perhaps the sacrament to be able to recover something of the original will need to accept that which is common and ordinary before it can attempt to speak to a more transcendent value. Attempting to simulate a higher level of experience without passing through what is common and ordinary risks transforming a sacred moment into a ritual that is cold and disconnected. Such rituals are then transformed and appropriated by professionals who twist the meaning and value for their own power and gain. Thus was the conflict Jesus had with the priests and temple masters of his time. No doubt he would confront those who do the same today.

Two mothers - universal mothers - Doña Rudisinda, a Quechua woman from Lares near the Incan capital of Cuzco, and Doña Ramona, peasant woman of the coveted village of Guadalupe Carney, country women who took what they had in their gardens and generously transformed their produce into a communion meal of solidarity and fraternity. The bishops with all their clergy in grand cathedrals don't come close and probably can't. For the organization called church, this "take and eat in my memory", in solidarity with those who suffer and those who seek peace and justice, just has not been the same since the Roman empire took possession of its rituals, its dogmas, its leadership and its memory.



Rudisinda

Corpus Canada

WHO ARE WE?

We are a faith community of men and women empowered by our baptism in Jesus' Spirit to reach out to others in their need as Jesus did. We also provide support for married Roman Catholic priests, their family and friends.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

This faith community is dedicated to

- Renewal of ministries in the Church, including an ordained ministry open to men and women, married and unmarried;
- A vision of Church that includes all people who profess faith in Jesus Christ;
- Development of leadership among all the baptised in the Church;
- Promotion of a wholesome view of sexuality;
- Justice for all based on Gospel values.

Our message is a healing one and is directed to everyone, especially the marginalized in the Church. It is our hope to reach people through many ministries, and in a special way through the creation of small faith communities.

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

Through a collegial approach based on consensus reached through communal discernment in the Spirit, we share our gifts that all creation might be transformed according to God's loving plan.

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How Can I Join Or Show Support?

If you wish to join or renew your membership in Corpus Canada for the year 2013 (membership is open to all regardless of denominational affiliation), write to: Corpus Canada Treasurer, 35 - 10070 Fifth Street Sidney, BC V8L 2X9.

Enclose a cheque for \$50 (individual membership) or \$75 (family membership) payable to "Corpus Canada." Corpus Canada will donate \$25 of your membership fee to Xristos Community Society in your name, and Xristos will send you an official tax receipt.

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Thank you for your support of this Christian ministry.

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