



The Journal



October - December 2014

Dear Friends,

We share a dream: a Church that celebrates what is good in us and calls forth what is best in us; a Church that is honest enough to confess not only the sins of its members but the sin that is built into its very structure and corporate practices; a Church that is catholic enough to include the children of Rome, Constantinople and the Protestant Reformation; a Church that proclaims the intrinsic goodness of human sexuality and any expression of it that creates and sustains loving relationships; a Church that gives its members full scope to exercise all the gifts and charisms the Holy Spirit has bestowed on them; a Church that makes assistance for the poorest and most persecuted of people its highest priority. Through Corpus Canada we keep this dream alive.

If you are already a member of Corpus Canada, I invite you to renew your membership for the year 2015. If you are not a member, I invite you to join. The annual membership fee is \$50 for individuals and \$75 for families. Corpus Canada will send \$25 of your membership fee as a donation in your name to Xristos Community Society, the registered charity that publishes The Journal online. You will receive from Xristos Community Society a tax deductible receipt for the \$25 donation, and from Corpus Canada a receipt (not tax deductible) for the rest of your membership fee. As a member of Corpus Canada you will be eligible to join the CORPUS-N internet mailing list and take part in the discussions of the National Coordinating Team. **Make your cheque payable to "Corpus Canada" and mail it with this completed form to "Corpus Canada, 35 – 10070 Fifth Street, Sidney BC V8L 2X9, Canada."**

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Yours truly,

Arthur Menu

Arthur Menu

On behalf of the Corpus Canada National Coordinating Team

Editorial Team

Chris Diamond François Brassard
Arthur Menu Phil Little
Jim Noonan (NCR Regional Editor)
Emil Kutarna (SK Regional Editor)

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.

Address all submissions and correspondence to the **Principal Editor:**
Chris Diamond
4390 Kingscote Rd.
Cowichan Bay, BC V0R 1N2
Phone: (250) 743-5088
Email: diamondcnf@shaw.ca

Desktop Publisher:

Michael Irving
Email: trumpetgod@shaw.ca

Publisher

Xristos Community Society
35-10070 Fifth Street, Sidney, BC V8L 2X9

Xristos Community Society, a non-denominational society incorporated in British Columbia, serves the Gospel of Jesus Christ through worship and the promotion and development of Christian small faith communities across Canada. Xristos Community Society is a registered charity in Canada. Xristos Community Society needs and welcomes donations in support of its ministry. See the back page for further details.

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Book Release:

On October 15, 2014, *Transforming Addiction* by Victoria Marie was published.

Addiction is a problem of concern in many communities around the globe. Assorted strategies have been studied or implemented to address the problem with varied amounts of success. This study investigates spirituality, a largely unexplored factor in recovery from addictions, and its role in the learning processes that transformed the participants from addicts to abstainers. In addition to examining sociological factors, this study explores the questions of how powerlessness and surrender translate into sobriety as well as the motivation to help others in the recovery process. Through exploring the participants' stories, this study deepens understanding of the role of spirituality in recovery from addictions and presents spirituality as the catalyst that led the participants to undertake compassionate service with people still in active addiction. This exploration should provide new insights into addiction issues for health care professionals, spiritual leaders, students of the social sciences and anyone concerned about addiction and recovery issues.

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A Meditative Walk Along Dallas Road

by Jim Lauder, Victoria, BC



Matthew's Jesus said, "you must love the Most High God with all your heart soul and mind". This passage invites me to discern this Most High God, and the story I am about to share provided me with some insights. Insights derived by experiencing loss.

The other day, I took my dog girls on our usual meditative walk along Dallas Road. I walked my usual route. The skies were clear and it was a beautiful serene evening. The Olympic Peninsula Mountains fairly visible, and the Port Angeles shores a little shrouded with mist. Soon, I noticed a crowd gathered at the edge of the path; all eyes fixed on something swimming out into the ocean strait towards Port Angeles. "What is it?" I asked. "It's big buck that just got chased by dogs." Sure enough, I could see the tall antlers and an unmistakable V shaped wake made by the deer on the calm sea. I stood and watched in horror, as the deer swam towards Port Angeles.

I thought, "Oh my God how is this possible? He can't make it that far in the cold water; he has to turn back!" But the deer kept swimming and swimming further out until he was barely visible. In my heart, I begged him to turn around, and for a time, it looked like he might as he started to parallel the shore, but soon after, it was apparent he had changed directions. Feeling helpless, I continued my walk and caught up with another dog walker. He knew what had happened and said, "he'll survive, it's survivor of the fittest, and deer can swim from island to island." "I hope so", I said. I kept walking and kept watching the deer swim further ashore, and then I prayed, "Oh God please help this deer."

But the poor and confused animal was still swimming for what seemed an eternity.

I said to the dog walker, "I wonder if there is anyone I could call," and he said, "its no use calling anyone, if you call CRD they will tell ya, call the city, and then they will tell ya, call the Coast Guard, there's no point," he said. His words caused me deeper despair, and so I walked ahead of him to be with my thoughts and escape his negative attitude that I didn't want to hear. I felt guilty for not doing anything but pray for the poor deer. At this point, I couldn't stand walking any further and turned around. My peaceful and meditative walk was ruined.

Along the path, a couple of the original onlookers were still looking for the deer, but it was so hard to tell where he might have been. We

looked for any sign, and collectively, we refused to give up looking. But not a sign. We knew in our hearts that he had drowned.

This sad incident disturbs me and raises all kinds of questions. How do we pray? To a God in the sky who can save this exhausted creature who is so scared and swimming to a certain death? Why didn't I call 9-11, and ignore the other dog walker's complacent and hopeless Darwin advice?

Why are so many people willing to stand by and watch a creature swim to its death and not do anything to help? How sad, that I am one of the onlookers who did nothing to stop this tragedy.

My prayer to a God who could somehow save the deer was perhaps a desperate plea, and a wish for magic, an old theology that is all about a controlling God in the sky, theism at it finest. A prayer to this God to deliver magic to save the deer was dashed, and I face the realities of evolution, the cycle of death and life, and the forces of nature.

I am also reminded of Sister Joan Chittister who speaks of an evolutionary God, a God that evolves in us by the choices we make to enliven God in our world. The God of the possible; the possible up to us. The term, Loving Presence also comes to mind as a way to describe an enlivened God, a God of compassion with us on the banks of the shore as we watch one of our creatures sink before our eyes. My meditative walks along Dallas forever changed when I look to the sea. I will never forget my glorious deer that was scared to death.

I think we all swim in icy waters from time to time, feeling frightened of life. I often look for a safe haven on a distant shore, and I want to run away from what frightens me. By not calling 9-11, I was in effect, swimming away from the frightening image developing before my very eyes. This image brought to mind a poem by Henry Van Dyke I sometimes read at funerals. It is about immortality. He wrote:

I am standing upon the seashore. A ship at my side spreads her white sails to the morning breeze and starts for the blue ocean. She is an object of beauty and strength, and I stand and watch until at last she hangs like a speck of white cloud just where the sea and sky come down to mingle with each other. Then someone at my side says, "There she goes!"

Gone where? Gone from my sight ... that is all. She is just as large in mast and hull and spar as she was when she left my side and just as able to bear her load of living freight to the place of destination. Her diminished size is in me, not in her. And just at the moment when someone at my side says, "There she goes!"

There are other eyes watching her coming and other voices ready to take up the glad shout, "Here she comes!"

How ironic that I would be standing on the seashore and be watching a majestic animal swimming to save its life, but only to a certain death? It's a haunting image.

However the gift, for me, is knowing that the deer's spirit is etched into my soul and is immortal, a gift that forces me to discern the kind of God image I wish to actualize in my life. And, every time I walk on Dallas Road, I can pray and thank the deer for the gifts he has given me. I can "love this Most High God with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my mind." Amen.

Marriage And The Family

by Hank Mattimore, Santa Rosa, CA



I remember taking a college course entitled “Marriage and Family.” In those quaint olden days it seemed fitting to put the two subjects, “marriage” and “family” together. Most

couples got married and had children. That’s just the way it worked. Putting the two topics into a single course made sense because in the vast majority of cases, people planned to raise children.

Not so much anymore. A scholar by the name of Cormac Burke, a participant in the current synod on the family in Rome, reminded us recently that family is, fast becoming a dispensable part of marriage. He says “Modern marriage is basically an ‘a deux’ arrangement, an agreement between two people that has nothing to do with children.” A family can of course be added on later but only if convenient. “Children,” he adds, “instead of being the natural fruit of married love and the glue that holds it together in times of stress are reduced to the category of minor accessories to the personal happiness of two

separate persons and so dispensable, (like the marriage itself) if they do not serve each individuals happiness.”

We talk a lot these days about the rights we are owed as married people (gay or straight). We want tax advantages and inheritance rights perhaps forgetting that these rights and privileges were by and large given to married folks in order to protect and provide for the offspring of their marriages.

Was it the 80’s that was referred to as the “me generation?” I’d suggest that we could call ourselves the “me and you generation.” We have become so obsessed with a couples personal relationship and fulfillment that the broader social nature of marriage and family has faded into insignificance.

I submit that marriage is greater that the personal relationship between willing partners. A married couple becomes part of a society bigger than themselves. They have certain rights as members of society but they also have obligations to that same society. This includes being open to raising a new generation of children themselves, or fulfilling their obligation in love and compassion to those children who have no one to take care of them. Foster kids and homeless kids are “our kids” too.

We are not doing very well by our children. They are the ones who suffer when we separate marriage from family, when we pursue our individual lives as though they are an afterthought in the scheme of things, as though their welfare is not the most important aspect of marriage.

The Early Meaning Of Church Unity

by Chris Diamond, Cobble Hill, BC



Following the mind of the Apostle Paul, the writer of the so called *Letter to the Ephesians* urges the groups of Jesus’ followers to walk worthily bearing with one another diligently in love, keeping the unity of God’s spirit in the bond of peace (shalom) “one body and one spirit... one master, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is above all and through all and in all.” (Eph 4:4) This was the inspired way that the faith unity of the church was expressed close to the end of the first century of christianity. This unity was the catholic

faith of the *early church*. It was to assure the third generation of christians in the Greco-Roman world that what had been proclaimed, taught, and handed on to them by their founders was the genuine faith teaching of God’s apostle Jesus, through the preaching of the Apostles.

At the end of the first century, most christians were Judeans. They were “the Jews” whether raised in their traditional homelands or scattered throughout the known Greco- Roman world. They lived their Judean way of life more or less under the influence of the Jerusalem Temple with its hierarchy, codes, rules, worship and sacrifices. Jesus’ hearers were freed by his example and his teaching from the restricting discipline of these codes, rules, worship and sacrifices which had been accumulated over centuries of Torah development.

Third generation Christian living and practice, however, was surrounded by the traditions, beliefs, and religious observances of Greeks, Romans, and other peoples. The time after the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple was difficult for Judean christians. Newly-minted, they had given up the way that they had lived before hearing the good news of Jesus’ Kingdom of God. Many diaspora Judean christians, living as they did among non-Judeans, were seriously tempted to return to the common way of living practiced by such non-Judeans. Many still feared the vagaries of the spirit realm, and they envied the “protection“ felt by their neighbours

The Early Meaning Of Church Unity Continued...

through the prayers and offerings made in worshipping lesser gods. The pressures of society weighed heavily on new christians who were feeling like outcasts. Stronger, more long-standing, more convinced believers in Jesus' way urged these new christians not to be fearful but to be confident, united in the one radical Apostolic faith transmitted from God through Jesus and his Apostles: God had raised Jesus above the spirit realm and his followers had no longer to fear the demons.

Jesus had behaved as a "cafeteria" believer. Jesus' trust in God was radically new. In the light of carefully listening to the traditional scriptures and history of his people, he faithfully observed the Words of YHWH given through Moses on Sinai and later through the prophetic holy ones. However, Jesus' faith did not make him feel obliged to observe in the same serious way the other codes of Torah conduct that had accumulated over time. In a situation of conflict

between the codes and the welfare of someone in need, he had no hesitation in choosing the latter. Neither he nor his first disciples left any written records and instructions that we know of. As then, God's Way is lived in the present. It was understood that it allowed for diversity. It was more important to live rightly than to insist on restrictive conformity. God approved what Jesus had said and done. His concern for others and his hospitality towards those who in the main were shunned continued to be the hallmarks of genuine christians. In partnership with God and God's chosen christ Jesus, God's Kingdom had begun in their midst; they were loosed from the oppression of their former way of living. They trusted in the reliable love of God, in Jesus, and in the unity of their inspired community.

Christmas International

by Charles Callanan, St. John's, NL



In his latest book "It's Time", Michael Morewood suggests that all our church dogmas need to be restated in the light of modern times.

I believe this is true but that the

essence of the belief must be rediscovered and passed on to us in language we can readily understand. I can't tell you how this can be done but I believe that it can be done with a combination of theologians and scientists.

Of this I am certain. The Good News is not being adequately received or transmitted today. If it were, our churches would resound with joy and this joy would be oblivious to all visitors.

Christmas is a good time to begin this process of reexamining the dogma. Is salvation being proclaimed today? By way of background, the Jews, out of respect, would not even pronounce their word for God. Jesus grew up in this culture.

It is important to realize that for the Jews, God was "wholly other". In other words He was in no way like us. We can not conceive of God in our minds nor capture Him with human thoughts, no more than a horse can perceive what "man" is. All of this background makes the belief "the word became flesh:" so utterly amazing. The thought that the ultimate, infinite creator of the universe could "become flesh" is nothing to take for granted. This fact is the very

essence of Christmas. The rest is froth and tinsel. Are we being helped to consider this astounding fact during the Christmas season?

The "Good News" is that every one of us is saved from a temporary existence in the present world to the opportunity to live forever. This is a great mystery but that is no reason for us to take it for granted and not be filled with joy.

I can easily believe how difficult it was for the Jews of His own time to believe that Jesus was their God.

Jesus was the guy who lived down the street. You can see why the religious leaders of the time saw Him merely as a blasphemer in their midst and a dangerous character.

This Jesus was suddenly getting all kinds of people to follow Him. He was challenging the traditions of the Jews, breaking laws and claiming to be a healer and the fleshly face of the God who was "wholly other". He was eating and drinking with "sinners" and freely talking to women.

How could they believe this. That is why Jesus said to Peter: "Blessed are You", for humans have not told you this but my father who is in heaven."

Enjoy Christmas. Be happy, rejoice for this Good News is the best news that was ever revealed in the history of the world.

The birth of Jesus was a world shattering, mind blowing experience. We have no words adequate to explain it. Through Jesus Christ we have eternal life and eternal happiness.

I no longer believe that people are lost. Whatever being saved means, it is the fate of all people in the world. God is so fantastic that he can and will save everybody. Scripture tells that "it is the will of God that all be saved."

Christmas we all have every reason to be filled with love, peace and joy because Jesus came to show us the way. Merry Christmas and may the Peace of Christ be with all and with everyone in the world.

A New Paradigm Of Christianity

by Emil Kutarna, Regina, SK



Do we need a new paradigm? What's wrong with the "old" one? Some people think we need a new paradigm because they experience problems with the old one. For example, science tells us that humans evolved from lower species of animals. If this is true, then there was no Adam and Eve in a Garden of Paradise, and there was no Original Sin. What kind of

cruel Judge is God to demand the death of Jesus as payment for the sin committed by Adam and Eve and inherited by all of humankind? And one could go on with many more examples.

Religious practices are based upon the paradigm that is currently accepted. So there is a heavy emphasis upon sin and redemption in the Mass and the Sacraments – not a welcoming thought to remind us of a loving God. It's like a mom or dad always first asking the children how bad they were today, instead of saying "I love you" first.

Besides what we have from the Bible, what other way of viewing our relationship with God is there?

Take a look at:

Evolution-based Theology of Juan Luis Segundo. I came across this article in the August issue of www.ca.renewedpriesthood.org Corpus NCR's website, Jim Noonan, Editor. You can access the full 55 page version directly at Vol. 1, issue 2 of www.ohmygodjournal.org/?page_id=288.

Here I will set out a very brief outline of this new paradigm and hope it whets your appetite to read the full version and be inspired by it as I was.

What follows is a list of the 20 sections in the article. I will briefly list and digest each one with some quotes. Finally I can't resist offering a few observations of my own.

1. THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

"The fact that so many people today no longer find Jesus to be significant for their lives led Segundo to propose a new way of interpreting the meaning of Jesus of Nazareth that would make him attractive both for the current and future generations".

2. CREATION & EVOLUTION

"The reality of evolution establishes that a perfect creation never existed. There was no paradise at the beginning. There was no original sin that imposed suffering and death on every succeeding human being. Evolution means that creation is a work in progress with continuous adaptation, formation and transformation perpetuated by randomness, chance and entropy".

3. THE DYNAMISM OF ENTROPY

"Entropy . . . is a neutral cosmic force which can contribute to either destructive or creative changes. Just as it is involved in massive destruction, entropy can also work within the random flow of evolution to bring forth incredibly beautiful and fecund features of nature and innumerable species of beings along with the emergence of reflective

consciousness in human beings

4. NEGENTROPY: GUIDING EVOLUTION

"He [Segundo] interprets redemption as the universal force of love that existed from the very beginning. . . He uses the word 'negentropy' or 'negative entropy' to identify this force of divine love which creatively propels creation towards its ultimate purpose and meaning".

5. CREATION IS AN ONGOING PROCESS

"Evolution advances in a dialectical process that involves two factors that are "indispensable and complementary each in its own way: the positive factor is "love, grace, life and God's gift. The negative factor is the destruction that is prompted by entropy. The engagement of both forces shape the ongoing dialectic of evolution until creation arrives at its ultimate goal of being totally good. . . God intends humans to have a role in making creation truly good.

6. JESUS IN THE CONTEXT OF EVOLUTION

"Segundo adopts a corollary formulated by Teilhard de Chardin: everything which is observable in the cosmos has already existed in some fundamental and primordial way from the very beginning. . . . Segundo says that Jesus was an ordinary human being. His uniqueness came from his faith and how he lived. . . . However, Segundo's primary focus is not the person of Jesus, but the proclamation of the kingdom of God."

7. POLITICAL CLIMATE AS KEY TO UNDERSTANDING JESUS

"Segundo stresses that Jesus of Nazareth can only be appreciated as an ordinary man who struggled with the destructive forces that resulted from the religious-political structures of his day".

8. THE KINGDOM OF GOD SUBVERTING THE POWER OF ROME

"Jesus attacked the scribes, Sadducees and priests who had vested interests in maintaining law and order for the sake of preserving their offices and wealth.

Segundo details how twenty-one of the thirty-eight parables in the Synoptics are polemical "attacks on the oppressive religious ideology".

9. THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS IN THE CONTEXT OF EVOLUTION

". . . the living dynamism which has always existed in creation advances exceedingly slowly through a series of adaptations and chance which, by the force of nature itself, take life in new directions. Over time, as new developments occur, thresholds are crossed, and new realities arise. These are not miracles that occur despite nature. They are natural, wondrous developments that are part of the flow of nature. For Segundo, the resurrection of Jesus is such an event".

10. THE ROLE OF THEOLOGY AND THE GOSPELS

"The goal of theology is to demonstrate how Jesus is relevant to people whose humanity is being disparaged.

For instance, what is the suffering experienced by people whose natural resources are being usurped by another nation, or by people who experience systemic oppression or bigotry, or by people who are poor and defenseless in a country filled with riches, or by the entire human race facing ecological challenges

A New Paradigm Of Christianity Continued...

that portend a holocaust of nature and the end of human life?”.

11. FREEDOM FULFILLS HUMAN POTENTIAL

“The ultimate purpose of human freedom is to enable humans to find their fulfillment by participating as partners with God in the evolutionary process of creating a world that is good, to become co-creators with God in the process of bringing an unfinished creation to its completion”.

12. GOD’S SELF IMPOSED LIMITATIONS

“The course of human history lies in human hands. God will not compensate for lack of human action nor for destructive human decisions”.

13. DEVINE-HUMAN PARTNERSHIP

“In a world that is not complete, grace incarnates the dynamic presence of God’s love in human action, enabling humans to participate as co-creators with God in the evolutionary process of creating a world that is ultimately good”.

14. GRACE AND THE INFINITE VALUE OF LOVE

“Segundo insists that grace is not a “state” or attribute of living. . . Nor is grace a prerequisite for salvation. Rather it is a part of human nature itself, constituted as such by God’s gift to humanity. Every human being by virtue of existence is endowed with God’s gift of grace”.

15. FAITH AND RELIGION

Religious beliefs, doctrines, creeds and practices are culturally and historically relative, adaptable and functional. They can never be absolute and immutable because they are enshrined in institutions which evolve with changes in knowledge, culture and history. Segundo warns that religion as an ideology can be turned into a sacralization of vested interests, “a system of ideas designed to conceal and justify a reality that people prefer not to change, and that is in direct opposition to the values one claims to uphold”.

16. SIN

“Segundo differentiates individual, personal sin from the structure of sin. . . .

The forces of sin which must be addressed today are those powerful forces of destruction that are fostered by dominant magnates over the powerless; the incredible disparity of wealth amidst the suffering of working classes and the poor; economies and corporate structures that drain benefits while neglecting evils such as: endemic diseases, poverty, hunger, neo-colonialism, and militarism . . .”.

17. DESTINY OF CREATION REVEALED BY THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

“But God is not looking to another world beyond this life. It is this physical world that is moving forward on an evolutionary trajectory towards completion. The resurrection of Jesus reveals the ultimate significance and destiny of creation. It is a new creation in which Jesus is the “first fruit”.

18. SACRAMENTS: RITUALS OR STIMULANTS TO ACTION

“Segundo maintains that Jesus never meant to establish any sacred rituals: “Jesus wants signs [of a transformed life], not rites” that lead to salvation or provide opportunities for adoration. . . .

He says that the Church is not made to celebrate sacraments. Rather, sacraments are intended to create and implement the mission of the Church as an extension of Jesus by forming a human community and engaging in the common struggle to humanize the world as Jesus

did”.

19. THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH AND THE ROLE OF THE PRIEST

“The Church was not instituted for the exclusive or particular benefit of those who are in it. It is not an absolute in the plan of God, at least not insofar as it is a visible, historical institution. Indeed it is not even a direct means of salvation independently of the non-Christian world that surrounds it”

Towards that goal the priest is not a sacred person who uniquely possesses extraordinary power to confer sacraments. He is a minister who guides the faithful in fulfilling the Church’s mission to advance human liberation by ushering the kingdom of God into history.

Segundo maintains that celibacy is indispensable for a priest because it is a form of love that gives visible expression to the priest’s consecration directed toward the liberation of all humanity. Only by being celibate can a priest be free enough from familial responsibilities to be as truly radical as Jesus was”.

20. POPE FRANCIS AND SEGUNDO

“The more Pope Francis speaks and acts, the more one hears echoes of Juan Luis Segundo. Clearly Francis does not espouse everything that Segundo says, but Segundo resonates so much that one can readily hear the influence he has on Francis.

Francis says that, already assured of salvation, we can get on with the process of creating a humanized world and protecting the ecological world, not be afraid to “make a mess” in the process of being creative. . . . He talks about “the church as a relic of the past”.

All this suggests that the approach of Pope Francis is rooted in a fresh theological perspective, one that sounds very much like the approaches found in the theology of Juan Luis Segundo”.

My personal response:

On the whole I like Segundo’s theology. It answers a lot of questions that I have with the current atonement style of theology and practice in the Catholic church.

Segundo’s theory of the resurrection of Jesus is new to me. It is also intriguing in how he uses the theory of evolution to explain it. Maybe it’s a stretch, but I like it better than other theories I’ve come across.

I humbly (who am I to argue with a mind like Segundo’s?) disagree with his stand on celibacy.

I don’t buy the old argument that celibacy is necessary because it frees the person from family responsibilities. Many great statesmen and women that are married do great good in this world. In fact many attribute their success to their partners. And as for not being married being a sign that you love God more than a married person does, please explain to me how marriage shows a lesser love of God.

I get the impression that Segundo implies that only men can be priests. If we are all created equal by God then why did Segundo not say anything about women? Do I detect a cultural and clerical (SJ) bias here? It is obvious that we are experiencing a cultural revolution regarding women. Maybe it is an evolution. It is time theologians began to address this issue. Maybe now that theology is open to women it will happen.

Reflection From Heart Of Compassion Memorial Ministries

by Dr. Michele Birch-Conery, RCWP, Windsor, ON



When grief opens the doors to the sacred, we come to the thinning seasons, summer to Autumn and then to Winter when eternity enters our awareness keenly. We diminish somewhat within the great spaces of our universe while parts of our planet enter a dying and resting time, a fallow time to prepare, without apology, for the renewals of Spring. Our dying, at any time of the year, is like this. It is as if we could see through to

and reach into eternity as our bodies surrender to their necessities and then weaken towards the moment of our last breath. We are held and embraced by spaciousness beyond ourselves. It is one we are, perhaps, slowly coming to know though yes, this could happen in a flash with no prolonged preparation time. We could be taken as if by lightning, a sudden blizzard, a flood of something we don't have time to name.

They said, "She loved greatly and always. For this she was dearly loved."

They said, "We were always together, 3 sisters a year apart in age, and now the very fabric of ourselves is torn."

She said, "I built a dream home deep in nature and we have immersed ourselves in tis joy."

She said, "It is yours now. You are dearly loved here."

He said, "She loved us dearly here and she was dearly loved. Three years and then our living, our loving place became the place of her dying. I was with her always in the ravaging of her cancer."

They said, "Every day she sat before her windows. She observed her world for hours and often, we observed with her. Everything became quiet. We were deeply loved."

We said, "Their grief is profound. It feels impenetrable. Let us hold it as our mothering God holds it. We ask our God to hold their grief in the infinity of her compassionate embrace.

And then? Art expression and poetry came to us.

A Woman
sits before her living
room window.
Long and wide
the window reflects
vistas of green

against a cloudless sky
where eagle and hawk
drift in easeful flight.

Their motionless wings
reflect on the wall behind her,
while the wall casts out shapes

that hang in the trees.
Inside out, outside in
she is drawn

towards the great
universe that has come
to meet her.

She receives everything
given. She gives all
she has ever received.

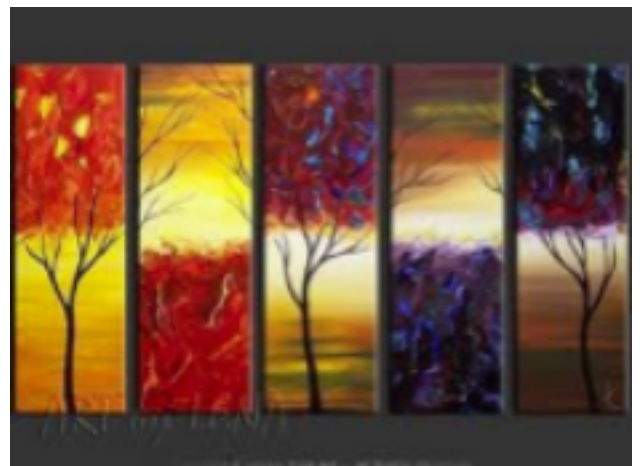
She greets the immense
surrounding space
she has sought

all her life. The reality
of surround space
is an embrace,

she now knows
is a gift
of loving presence.

A woman sits
before her
back-yard window.

Long and wide,
the window reflects
stands of White Spruce,



Reflection From Heart Of Compassion Memorial Ministries Continued...



and her Fuchsia colored Gooseberry.

The window casts a vision of Paradise
on the wall behind her
while the wall returns images

of stained glass vases, golden spheres,
crystal gems that hang from the ceiling.
They fill the trees and the sky

as far as she can see.

On the surface of the glassed in patio door
she sees how thin she has become.

A yellow color dots her nose
as if it had been kissed by a buttercup.
She sees that the yellow pervades her face

and neck. She sees that her hands are becoming
almost Autumn orange and brown
just like the markings on the leaves

drying a bit at the edges
of her cherished trees.
Every day she sits here,

her favorite quilt
wrapping her knees and her feet.
She needs this warmth now

in the thinning,
deepening season.
Questions arise within her

She accepts them while
allowing them to quietly
find their place. Now she enters

the inner sanctuary of her heart.

Outside in, inside out,
the vast universe
claims her further than

she has ever been.

This is not a strange place.
She sees she is again
in a vast surrounding space

so organically lush
she cannot resist
its seductions.

All her life she attended
her beautiful world,
the one given and the one she created.

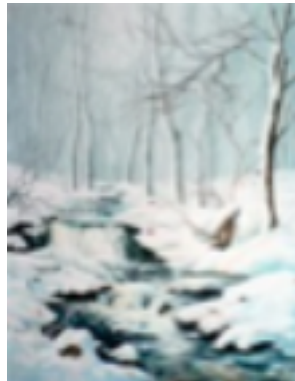
She knows she is entering it now.
Her fulfillment is at hand.
She will be home always

where home has always been, inside and out,
outside and in, there is no difference.
The reality

of surround space
is an embrace,
a kiss of peace, a welcome

she now knows
is a gift
of loving presence.

Composed by Michele Birch-Conery
August 11, 2014.
Memorial Service presided
by Michele Birch-Conery, Priest
and Barbara Billey, Deacon



Thoughts Of Peace On Remembrance Day

by Dr. Victoria Marie, RCWP, Vancouver, BC



Today, the whole of creation is certainly groaning. We know the earth and all its species, including us, are experiencing ecological devastation. Remembrance Day is the day we remember those who died in war. It's the day we are supposed to remember that we should no longer wage war.

In ancient Israel, when the ruling classes forced peasants to fight their wars, unlike the military class, they were not provided with armor or weapons. Rather they had to reforge their farm tools such as pruning-hooks, hoes, rakes, and ploughs into weapons. When we learn to live as God intended, peasants will have no need of weapons and can return the spears and swords back into tools for farming. Their tools will not longer be death-dealing but tools of life-giving. A few current statistics tell us that, although we should be, we are not there yet.

In 2013, there were 28 active armed conflicts in 25 countries. Currently taking place are 586 armed conflicts, not technically classified as such because the fighting isn't between nations or political parties but between militias or guerrillas within a nation over territory. Of the estimated 740,000 people who die each year from armed violence, 490,000 - or the majority of these deaths - take place in these unofficial war zones. According to new research by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), the last seven years have seen a rapid deterioration in world peace. The cost of global violence stands at \$9.8 trillion, as much as the economies of Britain, France, Germany and Italy combined." Enough to end poverty and hunger worldwide

With statistics like these, how can we not know that the whole creation is groaning, groaning for us to help her bring forth life-- life lived in peace. With statistics like these, it's hard to have hope. Paul writes, "For in hope we are saved." Paul is writing to the early church in Rome, but it has never been more relevant than today. It is our hope that health and peace will return to our war-loving world. Right now things may seem hopeless but the Gospel tells us another story. But we look at the word "blessed in Matthew 5."

Throughout history, makarios (????????), the Greek word meaning "blessed", had always referred to those who were rich and powerful.

Jesus turns this upside-down. Matthew, reflecting Jesus' thoughts, uses this word in a totally different way. It is not the elite who are blessed. It is not the rich and powerful who are blessed. It is not those with the weaponry and power to wage war who are blessed. Rather, Jesus pronounces God's blessings on the the poor, the hungry, the thirsty, the meek and those in mourning. The elite in God's kindom, the blessed ones in God's kindom, are those who are disposable, those who are dismissed as collateral damage.

But the beatitudes are not statements about general human virtues. They do not describe different kinds of good people who get to go to heaven. They are declarations about the blessedness of a community living in accordance to God's plan. Today, that means the global community-- and like all else in Matthew, the beatitudes point to life together in the community of discipleship. There is an ethical dimension to the beatitudes. The community that hears itself pronounced blessed does not remain passive, but acts in accord with the coming kindom. Matthew's beatitudes are not practical advice for successful living, but prophetic declarations made on the conviction of the coming-and-already-present kindom of God. The beatitudes are promises of Jesus, who told us the kindom of God is within us. So what this means for us today is that we are to nurture that kindom of God within us. We are cultivate peace within ourselves individually and-- as communities, support each other in this.

This Remembrance Day, we remember that it is only through internal transformation that we become co-creators of the peaceable kindom. It is not through desiring others to change or through changing the our external circumstances that we will achieve peace and happiness. Rather, it is through committing ourselves to the process of inner transformation that we may become better human beings with each passing day; more conscious and compassionate. This is the way we are gradually transformed and endowed with extraordinary possibilities to transform creation's groaning into the joy of a renewed creation, where nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Rev. Dr. Victoria Marie, (RCWP Canada West)
Our Lady of Guadalupe Tonantzin Community Society
Vancouver Catholic Worker
SisterSea Blog
https://www.amazon.com/author/victoria_marie_sistersea@gmail.com

I pray for the strength, fortitude, wisdom, trust, and faith to cease acting out of fear and accept the responsibility to act out of love and truth.

St. Brigid's Catholic Faith Community

by *Monica Kilburn-Smith, RCWP, priest/pastor of St. Brigid's, Calgary, AB*



St. Brigid's Catholic Faith Community in Calgary passed a significant milestone on our journey this summer. After much work on the part of community members, and celebrating our sixth anniversary of being a community, we have incorporated as a

Religious Society in the Province of Alberta. This is important as a foundational step for the future we are building. We have clarified our objectives and our membership process, and have established a coordinating team whom we call The Hearthkeepers. The Hearthkeepers are now busily working to build upon this foundation with structures that will support our community. We are working to design decision-making processes and write a vision statement and in the process, we are learning new things about each other and about the adventure of community. Our story continues!

Some thoughts from Sister Joan Chittister, O.S.B., are meaningful for us at this time:

[Building community] requires that we explore and support



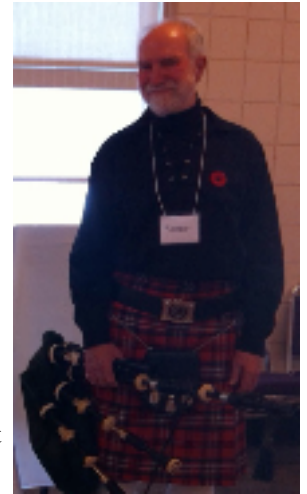
the gifts of each in conscious and committed ways.

It demands that we work together to release one another's gifts to strengthen the communal voice.

It insists that the ideas of each must be both solicited and respected, that the needs of each must be met, and that the energies of all must be put in the service of the whole community.

None of that can be done totally alone. All of that requires mutual support.

Chittister, Joan. 2011. *The monastery of the heart: an invitation to a meaningful life*. [Katonah, N.Y.]: BlueBridge, p. 82



Robert Scott



Bern Scott, Miriam and Brendon Fletcher



Jenny and Garth Miller, Kathleen Ryan



Catherine Williams and Betty Tait



Fred Williams and Robert Scott



Louis Girard and Robin Stanford



Young people of St. Brigid's Anna, Genevieve, Emma with Don Tait

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.

Corpus Canada
www.corpuscanada.org
Corpus-NCR (Canada)
www.ca.renewedpriesthood.org
Corpus USA
www.corpus.org

Corpus Canada Contacts

Francois Brassard: Victoria, BC

Email: ckfb@shaw.ca

Chris Diamond: Cobble Hill, BC

Email: diamondcnf@shaw.ca

Joe Gubbels: Edmonton, AB

Email: jgubbs@shaw.ca

John Palardy: Calgary, AB

Email: palardy@shaw.ca

Jim Lynn: Yellowknife, NT

Tel: (867) 873-8529

Emil Kutarna, Regina, SK

Email: emil@kutarna.net

Leonard Schmidt, Winnipeg, MB

Email: adeline.leonard.schmidt@shaw.ca

Roman Catholic Womanpriests (RWCP) Contacts

Priest, Michele Birch Conery

#1103 140 Bridge Avenue

Windsor, ON, NN9BB3R0

Tel: (519) 962-7016; Email: liberata999@gmail.com

www.romancatholicwomenpriests.org

Priest, James A. Lauder

St. Iris Faith Community, Victoria, BC

Tel: (250) 519-0055; Email: jimlauder@telus.net

Priest, Victoria Marie

Our Lady of Guadalupe Tonantzin Community

Vancouver, BC

Tel: (604) 339-6413; Email: Sistersea@gmail.com

www.vancouvercatholicworker.org

Priest, Monica Kilburn-Smith

St. Brigid's Community, Calgary, AB

Tel: (403) 256-3408; Email: gemstones@shaw.ca

www.saintbrigid.org

Priest, Rose Mewhort

Chapel of Sts. Clare and Francis, Mayne Island, BC

Contact: Patricia Fitzgerald

grandmas@saltspring.com

Phone: 250-539-5310

Priest, Kim Sylvester

Gatineau, QC

kim.sylvester@videotron.ca

Phone: 819-931-4400

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.

HOW TO SUPPORT THE JOURNAL

If you would like to support The Journal, please send a cheque to "Xristos Community Society" c/o the Treasurer, Xristos Community Society, 35 - 10070 Fifth Street Sidney, BC V8L 2X9. Or by PayPal (see link on website)

Xristos Community Society is a registered charity. All donors of \$10 or more will receive an official tax receipt.

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