Roots & Wings

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the fifth and final issue of *Roots & Wings* for 2017.

We remind you again of a new feature this year in the form of two articles chosen for CPTD points. Readers will qualify for points by answering and submitting the questions on the two articles that appear at the end of this magazine.

NOTES

- ***It is not necessary to submit your responses to the articles to CIE since this exercise falls under the category of Teacher initiated activities also called Type 1 activities: Activities initiated personally by an educator to address his/her identified needs. For example, enrolling for an ACE programme, writing an article for an educational publication, attending a workshop, material development, participating in professional learning communities, engaging in action research in your own classroom.***
- ***We have not yet received official endorsement from SACE but hope that it will be soon forthcoming.***

Again we offer a variety of articles, newsbytes and resources as an invitation to reflect on classroom practice and to try out new approaches.

Just one article has been included for CPTD purposes as it is very rich though quite long and will require carfeul reading.

PAUL FALLER

CONTENTS

REFLECTION
The Hiddenness of God and the Darkness of Faith

REFLECTION
A Plea for the Soul

THINKING ABOUT RE
What is RE for?

WEBSITE
Diocese of Rockhampton Religious Education

CLASSROOM PRACTICE
An open, inquiring study of religion

ARTICLE (CPTD)
Spiritual Development and Religious Education in the Early Years: A Review of the Literature (Part 2)

NEWS
A Call to Overcome Racism

World Day of the Poor

Disentangling the Myths of the Reformation

Top Priority Is Protecting Children in This Digital Age

UPCOMING EVENTS

QUESTIONS (CPTD)

REFLECTION

The Hiddenness of God and the Darkness of Faith

(Ron Rolheiser)

When I first began teaching theology, I fantasized about writing a book about the hiddenness of God. Why does God remain hidden and invisible? Why doesn't God just show himself plainly in a way that nobody can dispute?

One of the standard answers to that question was this: If God did manifest himself plainly there wouldn't be any need for faith. But that begged the question: Who wants faith? Wouldn't it be better to just plainly see God? There were other answers to that question of course, except I didn't know them or didn't grasp them with enough depth for them to be meaningful. For example, one such answer taught that God is pure Spirit and that spirit cannot be perceived through our normal human senses. But that seemed too abstract to me. And so I began to search for different answers or for better articulations of our stock answers to this question. And there was a pot of gold at the end of the search; it led me to the mystics, particularly to John of the Cross, and to spiritual writers such as Carlo Carretto.

What's their answer? They offer no simple answers. What they offer instead are various perspectives that throw light on the ineffability of God, the mystery of faith, and the mystery of human knowing in general. In essence, how we know as human beings and how we know God is deeply paradoxical, that is, the more deeply we know anything, the more that person or object begins to become less conceptually clear. One of the most famous mystics in history suggests that as we enter into deeper intimacy we concomitantly enter into a "cloud of unknowing", namely, into a knowing so deep that it can no longer be conceptualized. What does this mean?

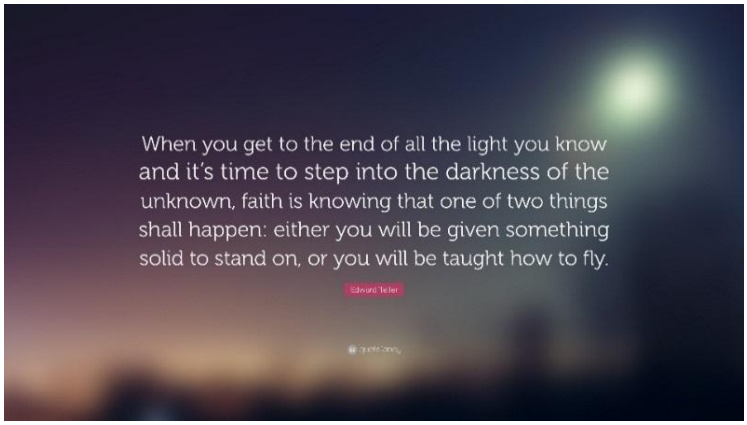
Three analogies can help us here*: the analogy of a baby in its mother's womb; the analogy of darkness as excessive light*; and *the analogy of deep intimacy as breaking down our conceptual images:*

First: Imagine a baby in its mother's womb. In the womb, the baby is so totally enveloped and surrounded by the mother that, paradoxically, it cannot see the mother and cannot have any concept of the mother. Its inability to see or picture its mother is caused by the mother's omnipresence, not by her absence. The mother is too-present, too-all-enveloping, to be seen or conceptualized. The baby has to be born to see its mother. So too for us and God. Scripture tells us that we live, and move, and breathe, and have our being in God. We are in God's womb, enveloped by God, and, like a baby, we must first be born (death as our second birth) to see God face to face. That's faith's darkness.

Second: Excessive light is a darkness: If you stare straight into the sun with an unshielded eye, what do you see? Nothing. The very excess of light renders you as blind as if you were in pitch darkness. And that's also the reason why we have difficulty in seeing God and why, generally, the deeper we journey into intimacy with God, the deeper we are journeying into Light, the more God seems to disappear and become harder and harder to picture or imagine. We're being blinded, not by God's absence, but by a blinding light to the unshielded eye. The darkness of faith is the darkness of excessive light.

A final analogy: Deep intimacy is iconoclastic. The deeper our intimacy with anyone the more our pictures and images of that person begin to break down. Imagine this: A friend says to you: "I understand you perfectly: I know your family, your background, your ethnicity, your psychological and emotional temperaments, your strengths, your weakness, and your habits. I understand you." Would you feel understood? I suspect not. Now imagine a very different scenario: A friend says to you: "You're a mystery to me! I've known you for years, but you've a depth that's somehow beyond me. The longer I know you, the more I know that you are your own mystery." In this non-understanding, in being allowed to be the full mystery of your own person in that friend's understanding, you would, paradoxically, feel much better understood. John of the Cross submits that the deeper we journey into intimacy, the more *we will begin to understand by not understanding than by understanding*. Our relationship to God works in the same way. Initially, when our intimacy is not so deep, we feel that we understand things and we have firm feelings and ideas about God. But the deeper we journey, the more those feelings and ideas will begin to feel false and empty because our growing intimacy is opening us to the fuller mystery of God. Paradoxically this feels like God is disappearing and becoming non-existent.

Faith, by definition, implies a paradoxical darkness, the closer we get to God in this life, the more God seems to disappear because overpowering light can seem like darkness.



REFLECTION

A Plea for the Soul

(Ron Rolheiser)

It's hard to find your soulmate in someone who doesn't believe you have a soul.

Recently on *The Moth Radio Hour* a young woman shared the story of her breakup with her boyfriend, a young man for whom she had deep feelings. The problem was that she, a person with a deep faith, a Mormon, struggled with the radical materialism of her boyfriend. For him, there were no souls; the physical world was real, and nothing else. She kept asking him if he believed he had a soul. He couldn't make himself believe that. Eventually, not without a lot of heartache, they broke up. Why? In her words: *It's hard to find your soulmate in someone who doesn't believe you have a soul.*

Her frustration is becoming more universal. More and more our world is ignoring and denying the existence of soul, becoming soulless. It wasn't always like this. Up until modern times, often it was the physical and the body that weren't properly honored. But things have changed, radically.

It began with Darwin, who rooted our origins more in the history of our bodies than in the origins of our souls; it took more shape in the mechanistic philosophies of the last century, which understood both our universe and ourselves as physical machines; it became more firm as modern medicine and experimental psychology began more and more to explain the brain primarily in terms of carbon complexification and biochemical interactions; it seeped into our higher educational systems as we produced more and more technical schools rather than universities in the deeper sense; and it culminated in popular culture where love and sex are spoken of more in terms of chemistry than in terms of soul. It is not surprising that for most pop singers today the mantra is: *I want your body! I want your body!* We're a long ways from Shakespeare's marriage of true minds and Yeats' love of the pilgrim soul in you.

Religion of course has always lodged its protests against this but often its understanding of the soul was itself too narrow to have much power to lure a materialistic culture back into wanting to rediscover and listen to the soul. Ironically, it took a non-religious figure, Carl Jung, to speak of soul again in a way that is intellectually intriguing. And it was in the sick, the insane, the suicidal, and others whose lives were broken that Jung began to hear the cry of the soul (whose demands are sometimes very different from those of the body and whose needs are for much more than simple comfort and the prolonging of life).
Much of Jung's teaching and that of his followers can be seen as a protest for the soul. We see this, for example, in the writing of

James Hillman. It's ironic that as an agnostic he was able to speak about the soul in ways that we, who are religious, might envy and emulate. Like Jung, he also drew many of his insights from listening to the soul cry out its meaning and pain through the voices of the sick, the insane, the broken, and the suicidal. Religion, medicine, and psychology, he believes, are not hearing the soul's cry. They're forever trying to fix the soul, cure the soul, or save the soul, rather than listening to the soul which wants and needs neither to be fixed nor saved. It's already eternal. The soul needs to be heard, and heard in all its godly goodness and earthy complexes. And sometimes what it tells us goes against all common sense, medical practice, and the oversimplistic spiritualities we often present as religion.

To be more in touch with our souls we might examine an older language, the language that religion, poets, mythologists, and lovers used before today's dominant materialism turned our language about the soul into the language of chemistry and mechanism. We cannot understand the soul through any scientific description but only by looking at its behavior, its insatiability, its dissatisfactions, and its protests. A soul isn't explained, it's experienced, and soul experience always comes soaked in depth, in longing, in eros, in limit, in the feeling of being pilgrim in need of a soulmate.

Happily, even today, we still do spontaneously connect the soul to things beyond chemistry and mechanism. As Hillman points out: "We associate the word 'soul' with: mind, spirit, heart, life, warmth, humanness, personality, individuality, intentionality, essence, innermost, purpose, emotion, quality, virtue, morality, sin, wisdom, death, God. As well, we speak of a soul as 'troubled', 'old', 'disembodied', 'immortal', 'lost', 'innocent', 'inspired'. Eyes are said to be 'soulful', for the eyes are 'the mirror of the soul'; and one can be 'soulless' by showing no mercy."

Soullessness: We understand the make-up of something best when we see it broken. So perhaps today we can best understand our soullessness in the growing acceptance of pornography and hook-up sex, where the soul is intentionally and necessarily excluded from what is meant to be the epitome of all soulful experience.

THINKING ABOUT RE

What is RE for?

The following statement cards can be used in a variety of ways to stimulate discussion about the role and purpose of RE in the curriculum. Blank cards can be used to add the groups' own statements.

Copy, cut up and use the following statements to stimulate discussion in one of the following ways:
Ask groups to sort these statements, putting the ones they feel are most important at the top and those they feel are less important lower down. They should add any of their own statements on the blank cards. Draw up an agreed statement about the value and contribution of RE in your school.

Ask groups to pick out 2-3 statements which members agree are the most essential elements of good RE. Identify how these are provided in your school. Identify any aspects which need to be improved.

Pick and explain: place the cards face up, in turn each person picks one card, reads it out and suggests an example of what this might mean in practice in RE. Others add their own suggestions. Note any questions which need further explanation. Take back for whole group discussion.

Good RE...

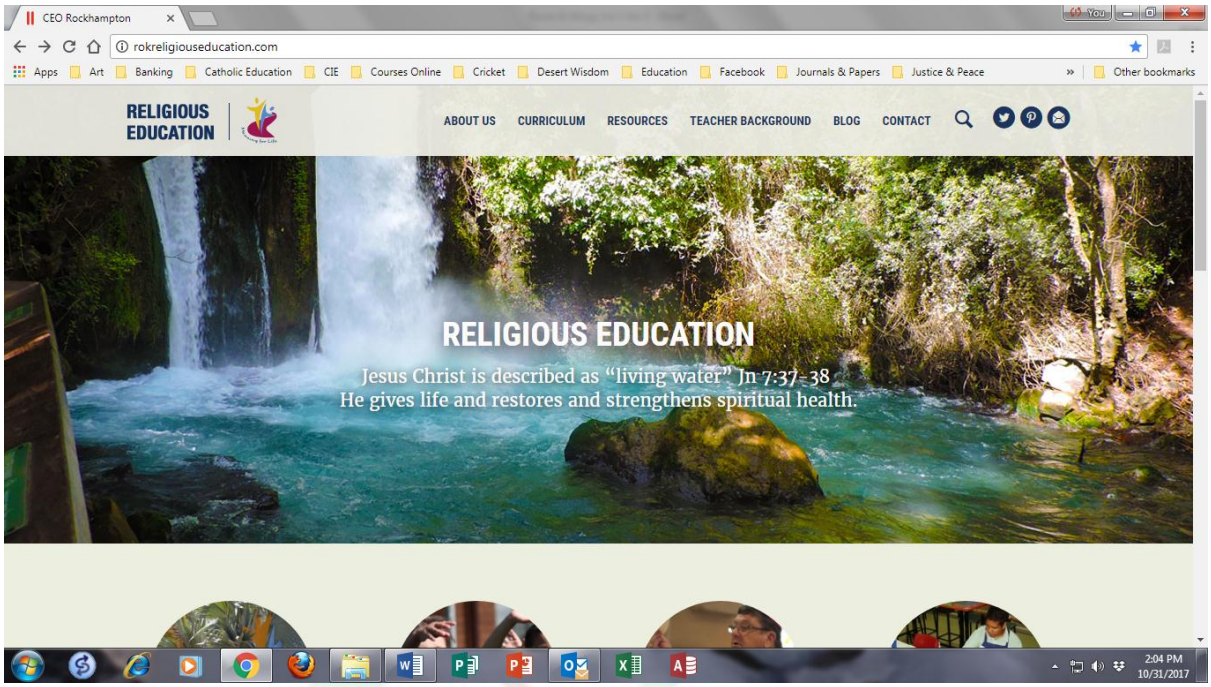
provides pupils with a chance to think about their own experiences of life, in the light of the insights from religion and belief	makes a significant contribution to whole-school aims, and to pupils' personal, spiritual and moral development	is an essential part of the school curriculum, equivalent to national curriculum subjects
is not about teaching pupils to be religious but values the beliefs of those with a faith and those with none	enables pupils to spend some time building up understanding of different world religions and beliefs	is not limited to exploring religious belief but includes secular philosophies such as humanism
is open and inclusive of all	encourages respect and understanding of other people	is imaginative, engaging, creative, challenging, relevant and fun
provides space to explore pupils' own beliefs and values	develops confidence and thoughtfulness about pupils' own beliefs	

(Adaptation of an idea from the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education – NATRE http://www.natre.org.uk/)

WEBSITE

Diocese of Rockhampton Religious Education

http://rokreligiouseducation.com/



- Click on RESOURCES and you will be taken to a page of that name.
- Scroll down to SEARCH FOR RESOURCES.
- Under RESOURCE CATEGORIES select TEACHING STRATEGIES.
- Under RESOURCE TYPES select WORD DOCUMENT.
- A 150 page document A-Z Learning Strategies will open for download.

See what else you can find on this site.

CLASSROOM PRACTICE

A simple example of an open, inquiring study of religion

(Crawford & Rossiter. 1985. *Teaching Religion in Secondary School*, p.80-81)

The following looks at four ways in which the devotion of the Rosary might be taught. The descriptions of the approaches taken are stylised. The first three approaches are regarded as unsatisfactory. They have been included to show how the religious commitment of the teacher can be misused. They serve as a foil to the recommended approach (iv), which is described in more detail.

(i) Avoiding the topic because the teacher does not like the devotion.

Although the topic is listed in the program, the teacher will not teach it. He does not like the rosary as a prayer and he only teaches those aspects of Catholicism that he believes in personally.

(ii) Exhortation to pray the rosary.

This teacher has a strong devotion to the rosary and wants to encourage pupils to have a similar devotion. The students perceive that the teacher's aim is to improve the rosary-saying performance of the class. She laments the decline in devotion to Mary and is obviously disturbed that things have slipped since the days of Father Peyton's crusade[1]. She appears to want the class to feel guilty about not keeping up the Catholic tradition of the rosary; she delivers a strong moral exhortation on the theme "the family that prays together stays together"; she tries to convince the class of the personal value of the rosary and urges pupils to say the rosary more frequently.

(iii) An exhortation to pray the rosary by a teacher who gives a false impression of his/her own commitment.

This teacher does much the same as the teacher in (ii). However, the students consider that he probably has no personal devotion to Mary or the rosary at all, and that he has put up a front for good appearances in the hope that it might make them more prayerful, better Catholics.

(iv) An inquiring study of the rosary.

The aim of the unit on the rosary is to acquaint students with this Catholic devotion, and to help them assess how it has contributed to Catholic piety. The task for the students is explained as follows: An exploration of what the rosary is and what it has meant for Catholics in the past; what does it mean for Catholics today and what might be the future of the devotion? The teacher gives a historical outline of the devotion which addresses such questions as:- What is the rosary? Who invented it? When was it first popularised? To what social and religious circumstances did Dominic and his followers address this devotion? How did the rosary fare as a devotion over the centuries? Working in groups, the class has to do mini-research projects and present written reports on the following: What does the rosary mean to contemporary Catholics, particularly individuals for whom the devotion is very dear? This would involve pupils in interviewing their parents or some other adult Catholics. The students would temporarily suspend their own views and judgments to find out how some adults felt about the devotion. The survey could also give an indication of how popular the devotion is amongst Catholics. To add further perspective to the study, the teacher shows that rosary like devotions have been practised in Hinduism and Buddhism for many centuries. After the completion of the projects, part of a class period is spent in the school chapel to give pupils an experience of saying the rosary together. They are told that there are different ways of praying the rosary; one did not always have to think intently about the particular words or set mysteries. In the concluding lesson, the students submit a simple assignment in which they try to assess some of the strengths and difficulties with the devotion, together with

[1] Family Rosary Crusade is a worldwide campaign that eventually became a Roman Catholic movement founded by Patrick Peyton, an Irish-American priest

comment on what the devotion could mean to contemporary Catholics. Then follows a discussion of this assignment. The students comment on the main ideas that have emerged from their study; there is also comment on what is liked and disliked in the rosary together with some ideas on why it has declined as a popular devotion and on what might happen to it in the future. When giving her own views, the teacher notes that the rosary is not a regular devotion in her life, although she says it occasionally at funerals or in times of personal trouble. One student comments about the front page newspaper photograph of Benigno Aquino ceasing his conversation with reporters to pray the rosary as the plane began its descent to Manila airport, minutes before his assassination[2].

Example (iv) shows how the religious traditions of the Church can be made accessible to young people in a way that does not carry a pressure to take up particular practices.

ARTICLE (CPTD)

Spiritual Development and Religious Education in the Early Years: A Review of the Literature (Part 2)

(Dr Jan Grajczonek, School of Religious Education, Australian Catholic University)

3. Nurturing young children's spiritual and religious development

It is helpful to understand both the distinct natures of children's spiritual development and their religious development, as well as the nature of how they relate to each other. The first part, Section 3.1, elucidates the key research and findings concerned with the development of young children's spirituality, while Section 3.2 overviews research related specifically to the development of their religiosity. Finally Section 3.3 presents a summary of the key insights highlighted in the literature concerning the nurturing of young children's spiritual and religious development.

3.1 Nurturing young children's spiritual development

The intentional nurturing of young children's spiritual development is argued to be of the highest and most significant importance with many claiming that if young children's spirituality is not intentionally nurtured it will fade and be lost (Crompton, 1998; Eaude, 2003). In the context of early childhood Christian settings, many advocate that the starting point for religious education for young children should begin with, and seek to develop, their spirituality ahead of a more formal religious education (Hyde, 2007; Liddy, 2007; Nye & Hay, 1996). This argument is premised on two contemporary realities: first, young children entering early childhood settings reflect our increasingly multi-cultural and multi-religious society; and second, that an increasing number who are not practising members of their own faith communities, lack or have limited knowledge and language to engage with specific complex religious concepts. Indeed, although referring to the rich diversity of students who attend Catholic schools, nevertheless the following claim by Liddy (2007) also applies to young children entering all Christian early childhood settings, "...it leaves me asking if we can really undertake

[2] Aquino was assassinated on August 21, 1983, when he was shot in the head after returning to the Philippines.

contemporary religious education unless we have a much richer understanding of the worldviews and meaning-making of the students in Catholic schools" (p. 6). In other words, as in other Key Learning Areas, teachers' starting points in religious education need to be with children's own experiences and understandings of life and relationships, their spirituality. Following is an overview of approaches that seek to nurture children's spiritual development that can be implemented in various contexts including child care centres and educational settings. Such approaches provide a number of practical ideas, strategies, and activities that could contribute significantly to the design and development of a religious education framework that seeks to nurture young children's spiritual and religious development.

Bradford (1999) proposes by nurturing and satisfying children's fundamental needs - that is nurturing the "human spirituality" - can lead to the development of a more "religious (devotional) spirituality". The fundamental human-spiritual aspects of the essential needs of children according to Bradford include the need for:

i. the experience of a profound quality of love;
ii. a sense of ultimate security;
iii. play, exploration, humour, hope and wonder;
iv. affirmation of others; and;
v. encouragement to participate in and contribute to the spiritual and social well-being of their family, friends and community. (pp. 3-4)

These aspects can be simplified as love, peace, wonder, joy and relatedness. As noted in Section 1 of this review, Bradford argues that these five essential needs or categories are fundamental to religious identity of all kinds. In other words, if a child's fundamental human-spiritual needs are not met or indeed not nurtured, they then have no way or means of establishing a religious identity. A critical implication that arises from Bradford's insights is that in the nurturing of these essential needs (which are fundamental to establishing a religious identity of all kinds) a pluralist approach that would acknowledge and respect all children's religious backgrounds or their diverse religiosities, would be enabled.

Bradford argues further that, "religious practice most certainly can help a child in his or her spiritual development by providing a framework of a common code, creed and pattern of worship which values and gives space to spiritual experience" (p. 8) and suggests the following as guidelines of what membership to a healthy faith community should offer:

i. a network of kind and respectful relationships – a community of friends;
ii. membership in a community, which has a sense of awareness about its place in the wider scheme of things;
iii. an involvement with others who are reverently and thoughtfully open to 'signals of transcendence';
iv. participation in a community which is mutually affirming in experiencing the qualities of love, trust, wonder, and so on;
v. roles for contributing to shared symbolic actions expressing the values of community. (p. 8)

Whilst a church affiliated child care or early childhood centre could not be considered as a faith community as such (given the diverse and pluralist nature of the children and their families in such settings), Bradford's guidelines nevertheless provide some practical and effective actions that would nurture young children's spiritual development.

From the research conducted by Hay and Nye (1998, 2006), Hay (1998) claims that spiritual education is the reverse of indoctrination and suggests that teachers have four major responsibilities: (i) helping children to keep an open mind; (ii) exploring ways of seeing; (iii) encouraging personal awareness; and (iv) becoming personally aware of social and political dimensions of spirituality.

(i) Helping children to keep an open mind as explained by Hay begins by gently encouraging or reawakening children's natural disposition to spiritual awareness. This involves teachers creating an environment that enables children's personal freedom and self-confidence. Hay argues that matters which can be closed off in the classroom or schoolyard but need to be openly addressed include: discovering a purpose in life, understanding their dependency on the community in which they find themselves, what it means to be just, facing the reality of their own death, the need for meaning, what it is to be a free human being and how to stand alone (pp. 163-165).

(ii) Exploring ways of seeing involves encouraging children to take different perspectives on issues and not feel pressured to conform to a particular way of seeing or illegitimating different interpretations. This would entail open discussion that seeks to counter narrow views (pp. 165-168).

(iii) Encouraging personal awareness which is related to relationship, relatedness or connectedness with one self. Time is needed to enable children to come to know themselves deeply, to be conscious of who each is: their gifts, likes, dislikes, responses to certain stimuli and so on; and how they do things, such as eat an apple (pp. 168-172).

(iv) Becoming personally aware of social and political dimensions of spirituality requires teachers' own consciousness of all that is the realm of spiritual education. Spirituality is expressed in and through a range of stories, rituals, symbols, art, architecture and so on and can be revealed in all subjects. A critical aspect of this awareness argues Hay, is to acknowledge that spirituality is not the preserve of religious education and indeed needs to be integrated in and across all disciplines and school life which in turn has both social and political implications for the school curriculum (pp. 163-175).

This same point has also been highlighted by Ryan (2007b),

> being religious is a condition known to children inclusively, regardless of religion, culture or social background. Adults need not be concerned with instructing children in the beliefs, narratives and practices of a particular tradition. In early childhood, the child's education and religious education are not distinguishable; whatever is education for the young child is religious education. (p. 39)

Both Hay and Ryan's insights suggest that given the natural and ordinary nature of children's religious or spiritual experiences in the early years, as well as the varied ways through which spirituality is expressed, an integrated approach which included all aspects of the curriculum would be an effective means of developing young children's spirituality.

Children have a range of ways in which they express their spiritual experiences or thoughts. Some simply describe the experience (Hart, 2003 as cited in Adams, 2009), others express

through questions (Hyde, 2008 as cited in Adams, 2009), whilst others may be observed being absorbed in moments of awe and wonder (Champagne, 2001 as cited in Adams, 2009). Many such experiences are significant or profound and are carried into adulthood (Robinson, 1991; Scott, 2004 as cited in Adams, 2009). However, many remain silent about their experiences or thoughts for fear of ridicule, dismissal or embarrassment (Adams, 2009).

An important aspect in relation to enabling children's personal freedom in expressing their thoughts and experiences is their sense of feeling safe which in turn can contribute to "increased self-confidence and self-esteem which play an important part in shaping identity; identity being a key factor in spirituality" (Adams, 2009, p. 118). Therefore the learning and teaching environment not only needs to be open so that children feel safe to express their thoughts and experiences, but it also needs to be sensitive to the spiritual. Further, according to Adams teachers and adults need to reflect on their own spirituality and be attentive to the spiritual.

Teachers' roles are also key at the planning stage of a curriculum that seeks to nurture children's spirituality and are urged to not only attend to the cognitive domain in their planning, but also to both the affective (the felt sense) and spiritual domains (De Souza, 2004; Hyde, 2006). De Souza and Hyde (2007) argue that teachers need to go beyond the cognitive domain as it pays little attention to the development of spiritual qualities and characteristics, "in other words, do they (teachers) provide time and, perhaps, silence for inner reflection, for creative, imaginative and intuitive responses, and for transformed action?" (p. 100). Such a stance finds alignment with Francis (1979) and Priestley (1981) both of whom advocated for an inclusion of the affective and sensory domains.

Hyde's (2008) own research conducted in Catholic primary schools in Australia, led him to make the following suggestions for nurturing children's spirituality in the classroom:

i. Include the use of tactile and sensory or "hands on" activities in religious education which can engage children physically;
ii. Begin with students' personally created frameworks of meaning. In other words begin by asking them what they think; the chance to wonder and imagine about events and happenings; and
iii. Create space to nurture spirituality which might entail teachers removing themselves from the activity or space to allow students freedom of expression and authentic wondering. (pp.125-126)

A comprehensive and integrated approach which reflects and adds to several aspects noted in previous research (Bradford, 1999; Coles, 1990; Hay & Nye, 1998) is offered by Hart (2003) who describes his spiritual curriculum as one that is meant to:

> provide touchstones for parents and friends in the midst of a teachable moment with a child or even with ourselves. Instead of providing answers, these ideas tend to ask questions...that help to activate and open our life to the sacred. (p.174)

Hart's (2003) research into children's spiritual development led him to design a series of steps or what he calls the "Ten Sources *of* Power *and* Perspective" (pp. 171-209) which rather than being about following rules or commandments, offers instead, "ways of empowering that

deeply felt impulse that is the innate spirituality of children" (p. 173). The essential elements of each source follow:

- **"Who Am I?"** The first step or source (as Hart calls it) seeks to pay attention to the notion of "Know thyself". Hart emphasises that it is as important to invite children to explore their *inner* landscape as it is to teach them about the outer world. He suggests that teachers, parents or friends should have children focus on their bodies as that is where they feel, by asking questions such as "What is happening in your body when you're angry (happy, tired, sad)? What do you hear (taste, touch, and so on)?" For Hart, it is through the inward reflection and then the outward articulation that we reinforce connection (p. 178).
- **"To Thine Own Self Be True."** For Hart, "to *know* who we are creates an obligation to *be* who we are" (p. 178). In this second source Hart emphasises that spiritual characteristic of 'wholeness', as he argues that children must "bear themselves" (p. 180). In other words, we must embrace all parts of ourselves, including those that cause us pain for it is in this way that we bring all parts together; a point emphasised also by Eaude (2009).
- **"What Am I Here to Give?"** This third source seeks to draw out our particular purpose or "calling". For Hart, it is not only important that we come to know who we are, but "also to find (and create) what we are to do, what we have to offer" (p. 181). Parents and teachers then need to help children to listen to themselves, to articulate their own desires and choices so that they might come to discover their purpose and calling.
- **"What Am I Here to Learn?"** Hart argues that a shift in perspective is required for us to learn the big lessons. He suggests that rather than see life as "in competition with others that leads towards to success or failure, or as divine punishment or reward from the gods," that we should instead see life "as an opportunity for learning" (p. 186). It is important to give children the space to fail and to feel and ask such questions as, "If you could teach someone about this, what would you tell him or her?" Hart claims that the lull after anguish "is among the most teachable moments in a life" (p. 187).
- **"Finding My Voice".** This next source follows on from the previous ones as Hart asserts that we must help children find their voice to express their purpose, to bring the vision to form. By voice Hart means, "the confidence, skill, and power of creative expression" (p. 190). The lesson entails teachers to encourage, to provide constructive feedback and to have children practise a certain skill, or to find colourful words, learn to read and write. Or in Vygotsky's (1967) words to 'scaffold'. Hart also cautions us that sometimes we might also need to help children "adjust the vision itself...to help them be strategic in their approach and holographic in their understanding" (p. 192). We must however, never stifle the creative expression and silence the voice.
- **"Mastering Myself."** Hart argues that inner freedom wherein we need to control our impulses rather than be controlled by them is the hallmark of spiritual development (p. 194). Hart argues that we must help children to take that deep breath and work through the initial frustration or discomfort, to persist rather than to give up. In other words, assist children to build resilience, self-efficacy, self-confidence and so on. For Hart, spiritual work is in everyday struggles; working through those is spiritual growth.
- **"Seeing Our Future."** This step in the spiritual curriculum is about "manifestation; ...the power of the mind to create the future...being crystal clear and bringing it to life first in our mind" (pp. 196-197). This step seems to align with and harness Hay and Nye's (1998, 2006) spiritual sensitivity category of 'awareness sensing' which involves tuning, the here and now, flow and focusing. Hart argues that we need to link children's "ability for *absorption*" to their "*intention*" as "intention means maintaining a clear focus" (p. 197). We

need to assist children to visualise and rehearse their intentions in their minds, "clearly, simply, and positively", in other words to "focus consciousness" (p. 198).

- **"Where Am I Now?"** The goal of this source is to "witness the contents of our consciousness" (p. 200), which is a lifelong skill we can nurture in children by simply asking them to notice the flow of their feelings, sensations, and thoughts, "What does that feeling (or thought or headache or whatever) look like in your body? What is its colour, shape, texture, hardness, sound, movement?" (p. 202). Hart contends that by asking such questions we can help "children develop their witness consciousness through recognising, for example, that they *have* a feeling but they are *not* the feeling" (p. 202).
- **"Hearing the Inner Voice."** This source centres on intuition; on listening to the inner voice. Hart describes two primary internal human voices: the first is the ego's voice which chatters constantly offering commentary and judgement about all sorts of things including self-criticism, fear, judgement of others; the second less obvious voice is what Hart calls the "inner voice" which "lives deeper down" and "recognised throughout wisdom traditions as the still, small voice, inner teacher, Holy Spirit, inner light, genius, or guardian spirit" (p. 205). Hart goes on to suggest three general dimensions of the inner voice: focus, opening, and discernment.
    - Focus involves articulating, voicing, imagining a clear question or *focus* on an issue for which we seek clarity. As teachers we can help children find that focus and articulate it.
    - Then, according to Hart, we need to let go, to stop and be still in order to *open* to the inner voice. This might involve the previous step's question, "Where am I now?" and help children find a place of silence or reflection to ponder. Hart goes so far as to suggest that we should, even once a week for fifteen minutes enable a time and space for "wise silence" which can help reinforce the inner voice (p. 206).
    - And finally then, we need to discern and that requires determining the difference between the ego-generated voice and the inner voice. Hart suggests that the inner voice generally feels more generous and limitless working from abundance, rather than feel self-interested, and limited working from lack. If we practise and become more aware or conscious, we are better placed to recognise the differences between the two voices. He adds that the inner voice can arrive in unexpected ways: through a dream, a gut feeling, or a flash of an idea. Teachers need to inform children about these different ways.
- **"Listen With Your Heart."** In this final source Hart focuses especially on the preposition 'with' arguing that it calls for listening *with* the heart rather than *to* the heart. Listening *to* the heart involves "paying attention to our feelings and sensations about something", which "is important for staying in touch with the flow or our feelings and sensations." Listening *with* the heart on the other hand, "turns the focus outward, toward others" wherein "we listen in order to understand, to appreciate, and to love" (pp. 208-209). In this step we are to assist children to become empathetic, compassionate, and loving.

In the British educational context children and young people's spiritual development is a specific aspect of the religious education curriculum. The Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) (2004, as cited in Ruddock & Cameron (Sean), 2010) has included a list of activities that schools encouraging students' spiritual development would be likely to exhibit:

- giving pupils the opportunity to explore values and beliefs, including religious beliefs, and the way in which they affect peoples' lives;
- where pupils already have religious beliefs, supporting and developing these beliefs in ways which are personal and relevant to them;

- encouraging pupils to explore and develop what animates themselves and others;
- encouraging pupils to reflect and learn from reflection;
- giving pupils the opportunity to understand human feelings and emotions, the way they affect people and how an understanding of them can be helpful;
- developing a climate or ethos within which all pupils can grow and flourish, respect others and be respected;
- accommodating difference and respecting the integrity of individuals;
- promoting teaching styles which:
    - Value pupils' questions and give them space for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns;
    - Enable pupils to make connections between aspects of their learning
    - Encourage pupils to relate their learning to a wider frame of reference – for example, asking "why?", "how?" and "where?" as well as "what?"
- monitoring, in simple, pragmatic ways, the success of what is provided. (p. 29)

Baumgartner and Buchanan (2010) also offer some practical strategies for the early years educator that support the young child's spirit. These resonate with many aspects already explored through the literature. They contend in similar ways to Hart's (2003) idea of capturing the teachable moment, that like all good early childhood practice, "practices that address spirituality should be grounded in learning opportunities that arise naturally during the children's day" (p. 91). Baumgartner and Buchanan's (2010) understanding of, and approach to, spirituality includes three elements:

i. A sense of belonging - nurtured when children are given opportunities to contribute and given important things to do or thanked when they have shared, helped, cooperated so that they experience their value as members of the classroom community.
ii. Respect for self and others – nurtured when children are encouraged to manage conflict peacefully; when their opinions, likes and dislikes are asked for; setting open-ended art projects.
iii. An awareness and appreciation of the unknown – nurtured when curiosity is encouraged; organising mini spiritual retreats; noticing and appreciating the beauty and mystery of nature; allowing children to question; not over-emphasising facts. (pp. 91-93)

This section has overviewed some of the practical approaches taken by researchers and teachers alike that seek to nurture young children's spiritual development in a variety of settings. Such approaches do not depend on children's religiosity, but rather their starting points are with children's innate spirituality. The following section investigates those approaches that seek to nurture children's religious development.

3.2 Nurturing young children's religious development

The following approaches seek specifically to nurture young children's religious development and are specific to Christian faith sharing communities. It is important to bear in mind that such approaches are catechetical in nature as they seek to specifically develop children's Christian faith. These approaches presume that the child is a believer and therefore have limited relevance in settings that reflect more diverse child populations. Having noted this though, some might lend themselves to being adapted for wider contexts.

An influential person in the area of children's religious development was Maria Montessori (as cited in Berryman, 1992) who argued that children are not blank slates but rather are born

with unique potential to be revealed. Her approach paid much attention to the actual environment which she saw as having significant influence on children. She advocated the use of sensory materials with which children play as a means of engaging them with others and with God.

Cavalletti (1992) a student of Montessori developed the program *Catechesis of the Good Shepherd*, which incorporates the use of three-dimensional materials (such as wooden figures) to tell the gospel parables to young children. Children then can play with the figures retelling the parables to themselves. In this way children are not only becoming familiar with the stories but also developing their inner religious language, an essential aspect argued by Bradford (1999) and Tacey (2000) to be an important feature that enable children to express their spirituality.

Berryman (1992), influenced by Montessori and Cavalletti, suggests the way of learning religion is through language. He developed the *Godly Play* program the goal of which is to teach children religious language, parable, sacred story, silence and liturgical action all of which would make them more aware of God's presence in their lives. A key feature of Berryman's *Godly Play* is the time given to wondering with children as they are invited and encouraged to wonder about many aspects of the scripture story at the end of its sharing. Berryman (1991, as cited in Ryan, 2007b) emphasised the importance for children coming to know and believe in God as loving and benevolent and in doing this they would be better able to face the existential issues such as death, freedom, aloneness and meaninglessness (p. 34).

Yust (2003) proposes that faith development must be in line with human development and offers Bruggemann's framework which emphasises the imagination as one way forward with toddlers' spiritual development. Again, along similar lines as Bradford (1999) and Tacey (2000), Yust claims that spiritual formation requires language acquisition of religious information but even more so, the stirring of the imagination. For him, the imagination helps toddlers conceive of the world and of life as being potentially different from the way it is.

Eaude (2005) discusses aspects or elements of spirituality that teachers can include in their classroom programs which include time and space for reflection, wonder and awe, and prayer. According to Bellous and Csinos (2009) four important aspects which religious educators might create within their educational setting to enable children to express their spirituality include an explicit education of four styles of expression: words, emotions, symbols and actions. They argue that these four styles characterise the expression of spirituality and further that they convey how people try to make the world a better place.

Each of these approaches pays attention to young children's religiosity as they seek to provide children with a language to articulate and express this religiosity. Many aspects within these approaches call upon and develop those spiritual characteristics or attributes previously explored including imagination, wonder and awe, creativity, and relationship.

3.3 Nurturing young children's spiritual and religious development: A summary

A number of suggestions that might serve to nurture both young children's spiritual and religious development have been brought to light in the literature. A significant aspect of children's spiritual and religious development raised in the literature is concerned with the starting point of such intentional development. Nye and Hay (1996) argue that the starting point should be with children's innate spirituality or, as described by Bradford (1999), their human

spirituality, rather than with their religiosity. In other words, if teachers nurtured those features or characteristics common to both spirituality and religiosity, such as relationship, imagination, wonder and awe, and so on, they would, in the first instance, be nurturing children's spiritual development, which could then lead to their religious development. Certainly, by commencing with their innate spirituality, children's diverse religious backgrounds are acknowledged and respected, a point made explicit both by the Catholic Church and the United Nations.

The Congregation for Catholic Education (1988) stated in its document *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*:

> Not all students in Catholic schools are members of the Catholic Church; not all are Catholic....The religious freedom or the personal conscience of individual students and their families must be respected, and this freedom is explicitly recognised by the Church. On the other hand, a Catholic school cannot relinquish its own freedom to proclaim the Gospel and to offer a formation based on the values to be found in a Christian education; this is its right and its duty. To proclaim or to offer is not to impose, however; the latter suggests a moral violence which is strictly forbidden, both by the Gospel and by Church law. (para. 6)

The United Nations (1989) placed emphasis on children's participation rights including their right to participate in their own religious traditions and that these religious beliefs are respected, as explicitly stated in Articles 1, 14 and 29 in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child.* Article 1 requires that children's religious rights be respected without discrimination; Article 14.1 requires that "State Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion"; and Article 29 concerns the role of education in ensuring that it be directed to the "development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms" (Article 29, para 1.[b]), and further, that the preparation of the child as a responsible citizen, is done "in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin" (Article 29.1.[d]). The values expressed in this final Article are aligned with the key characteristics of spirituality as revealed in Sections 1 and 2 of this review.

The essential common areas of focus for nurturing both children's spiritual and religious development include approaches, strategies and activities that pay attention to and activate: their imagination and creativity; their senses of wonder and awe, of mystery, of identity and belonging, of connectedness to themselves, others, nature and for some to God or an Ultimate, of security and serenity; their participation in, and contribution to, community and to the wellbeing of family, friends and community members (Adams, 2009; Adams et al., 2008; Baumgartner & Buchanan, 2010; Bellous & Csinos, 2009; Berryman, 1992; Bradford, 1999; Eaude, 2005, 2009; Hyde, 2008; Yust, 2003). Also emphasised in the literature was the critical nature of the creation of a safe and secure environment in which children would feel free to share their spiritual experiences (Adams, 2009; Hay, 1998) as well as the inclusion of the spiritual and affective domains in the curriculum (De Souza & Hyde, 2007). The use of sensory and tactile materials integrated with story, symbol, ritual and action that would stimulate children's imagination and enable their acquisition of a language to express their spirituality also featured throughout the literature (Bellous & Csinos, 2009; Berryman, 1991; Bradford, 1999; Cavalletti, 1992; Hyde, 2008).

This section has presented an overview of the literature that explored specific approaches to nurturing children's spiritual and religious developments. Finally, the following section presents the implications that the literature has for the development and design of a religious education framework for young children's spiritual development in Catholic early years settings including child care centres.

4. Implications for the design and development of a religious education framework

Each of the three key themes of children's spirituality and their spiritual and religious development surveyed in Sections 1, 2 and 3 of this review, have implications for the design and development of a religious education framework for the Catholic child care centre and early years setting. These implications are outlined in the following sections.

4.1 Implications of the nature of spirituality and its relationship to religiosity or religion for a religious education framework

The literature regarding spirituality and its relationship with religiosity or religion has suggested two significant findings. First, that it is not possible to articulate either a clear singular definition for spirituality or the nature of spirituality's relationship with religion or religiosity as many describe both aspects in a variety of ways. Two immediate implications for the design of a religious education framework can be drawn from the literature regarding the description of spirituality and its relationship with religiosity:

First, it is important for the purpose of designing a relevant and appropriate religious education framework that seeks to develop young children's spirituality within a religious context in the early years, that a shared understanding or description is articulated for the *particular* or *specific context* of that religious education framework. In other words, what understanding of spirituality does the framework use as its starting point and how does such a framework understand the relationship between spirituality and religiosity?

Second, it is not only important that the framework be responsive to, and relevant for, the development of young children's spirituality as articulated for that particular context, but also that the framework captures and reflects that context's philosophy, ethos and mission. In other words, for a religious education framework to be authentic it must be aligned with and reflect the organisation's *aspired*, *articulated* and *lived* mission or value system.

4.2 Implications of young children's spiritual and religious development for a religious education framework

Significant implications raised in the literature concerning young children's spiritual and religious development directly concern the Christian context of the early years settings. These implications insist that a religious education framework pays attention to how young children's spirituality is recognised and acknowledged. Explicit time and space need to be created in ways that facilitate, enable and activate children's freedom of expression. To what do we attend: the cognitive only, or do we include the affective and sensory awareness dimensions? Also the relationship between children's spiritual development and their religious development needs to be articulated clearly so that all children's diverse and pluralist backgrounds are acknowledged and respected in accordance with Church authority (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988) as well as with the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (United Nations, 1989).

4.3 Implications of nurturing children's spiritual and religious development for a religious education framework

The literature focuses on two aspects of nurturing children's spirituality:

The first is set within a secularist, almost neutral, view of young children's spirituality that seeks to nurture/develop those spiritual elements such as identity, belonging, relationship, wholeness, wonder and awe.

The second is to work within a religious framework to nurture/develop all of the above aspects of young children's spirituality within a Christian religious tradition/context which at the same time seeks to pay attention to, and respects, the other.

The development of a religious education framework within a particular religious tradition would need to consider the above two aspects carefully as the subsequent choice taken raises implications for the nature and purpose of such a framework. In other words, the aims or outcomes, as well as the elaborations and suggested pedagogies that seek to develop those aims and outcomes, need to align with the setting's focus.

5. Conclusion

Children's spirituality and their spiritual and religious development have been shown in the literature to be of central relevance and importance to who they are and who they will become. Their identity, sense of belonging and sense of meaning, as well as purpose in life are all linked to, and affected by, their spirituality and the ways through which that spirituality might be nurtured. Therefore, a religious education framework that pays attention to, and implicitly and explicitly seeks to nurture, all aspects and characteristics of children's spiritual and religious development within the Catholic child care and/or early childhood centre occupies a significant place across all aspects of, and within, that centre.

It has been shown in this review that a fundamental function of such a framework would be to consider and incorporate the three themes highlighted in the literature. First, it would be necessary to articulate a clear and concise understanding of the notions of spirituality and religiosity and their relationship with each other relevant to the specific context, and that such an articulation would inform all aspects of the framework. Second, the framework would need to consider the characteristics attributed to children's spirituality, highlighting those that are of specific relevance to its context. And finally, the framework needs to incorporate an approach that encompasses appropriate pedagogical and environmental elements to develop those noted characteristics in ways that nurture and contribute to young children's spiritual and religious development.

All children are born with an innate spirituality and as they grow and develop it is vital that they are educated in the ways and means to not only express that spirituality, but also provided with the ways and means that will nurture and activate their spiritual and religious development thus enabling them to become whole persons.

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NEWS

A Call to Overcome Racism

PASTORAL LETTER

SOUTHERN AFRICAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." (Luke 4:18-19)

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,
We need to have a candid conversation on racism and its manifestations in order to adequately and seriously address racism and racial divisions in our country.

We realise that this is not an easy conversation, one that many of us may prefer to avoid. Our invitation to such a dialogue may in itself evoke a range of emotions, including self-justification and self-righteous feelings; or, guilt and denial; on the other hand, feelings of anger and sadness. Dialogue, rational and respectful, is necessary so that we open ourselves to receive God's healing.

The belief that race accounts for differences in human character or ability and that a particular race is superior to others was something which St. Peter and the early Church overcame through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. **"Truly I now perceive that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him."** (Acts 10:34-35)

Our invitation to become part of this dialogue comes from a realisation that the Holy Spirit calls us as a country to be healed; to build and develop relationships of equality, dignity and mutual respect.

In this third decade after gaining our democratic freedom and rights,

- We need to address the issues of our social trauma as a country which result from the violence of centuries of colonialism and the violent decades of apartheid. We need to dialogue and work together to achieve healing as a nation.

- We need to acknowledge the link between race, power and privilege.

- We need to redress urgently the economic inequalities present in our society as a result of past racial discriminatory laws and practices; to allay unfounded fears and promotes justice.

Our responsibilities within the Church

In this Jubilee Year of Mercy, as Church in Southern Africa, we commit ourselves to a credible and comprehensive conversation on racism. This will mean acknowledging the presence of racism in the Church before and during the apartheid era and in these years of democracy. In humility, as St. Peter confessed, we your pastors prostrate before God and before all who are in pain, ask for forgiveness for our historic complicity with racism in the Church.

As we seek God's mercy that comes with the Jubilee of Mercy, we challenge ourselves as your pastors and we call upon all the faithful and all people of goodwill to do all in our power to address the problem of racism in our society and in the Church. To this effect, our Conference will be adopting a process to be used in small group reflection in our dioceses and parishes engaging all in dealing with the issues of racism.

Furthermore, we encourage this open dialogue at the level of our parishes, availing parishioners of the opportunity to look at how people can grow in positive appreciation of cultural diversity and how this is expressed in the liturgy and other activities of the parish. Our experience of the Gospel call us to rejoice in diversity, to become more culturally inclusive and more enthusiastic in our appreciation of God's gift of racial diversity. This leads us to appreciate that in our parishes, in our religious communities and in our dioceses, the glory of the body of Christ is enriched and mediated through the various rich cultural, social economic contributions that each race and all ethnic groups contribute from their basket of traditions and social identities.

Through our celebration of the Eucharist, the symbol of unity in the body of Christ, we ask the Lord to heal and transform the relationships in our dioceses and our parishes so that we become communities of faith where **"there is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female."** (Galatians 3: 28).

Personal responsibility of each

If we want our conversion to contribute to the building of a South Africa freed from racism, we must strive to lead lives worthy of the Gospel (cf. Phil. 1.27; Eph. 4.1), refrain from loving only people who are just like ourselves. In loving only those who share our racial and ethnic backgrounds, we fall short of fulfilling the demands of love which the Gospel calls for. The words of our Lord challenge us that if we greet only our brothers and sisters, **"what more are you doing than others? Do not even the non-believers do the same?"** (Matthew 5: 47)

While reaching out to one another, in open and honest dialogue, the sacrament of Reconciliation becomes especially important and meaningful because through it we come in our sinfulness to our all merciful Father for healing and forgiveness.

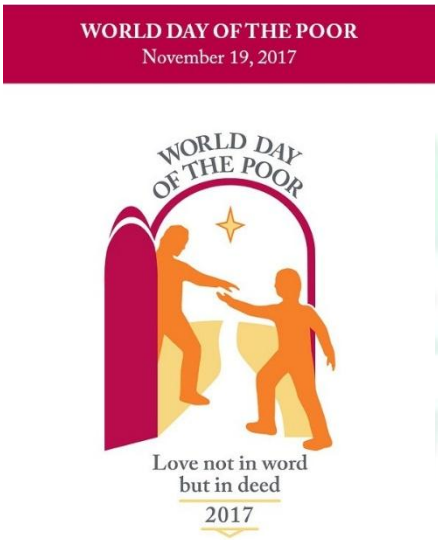
A call to prayer

The task of reconciliation therefore requires watchfulness and ardent prayer on the part of each. In this Jubilee Year of Mercy, we ask all parish priests and parishioners to commit themselves to a parish campaign to overcome racism, e.g. a parish prayer campaign or a family prayer, special days of prayer and fasting, co-operating with other parishes across racial lines and working with organisations promoting the dismantling of racism. We ask each parish to organise and commit themselves to do this.

May the Lord of Peace grant our nation the peace, the healing and the reconciliation that we seek. (cf. 2 Th. 3.16).

Archbishop Stephen Brislin
President of Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference

World Day of the Poor

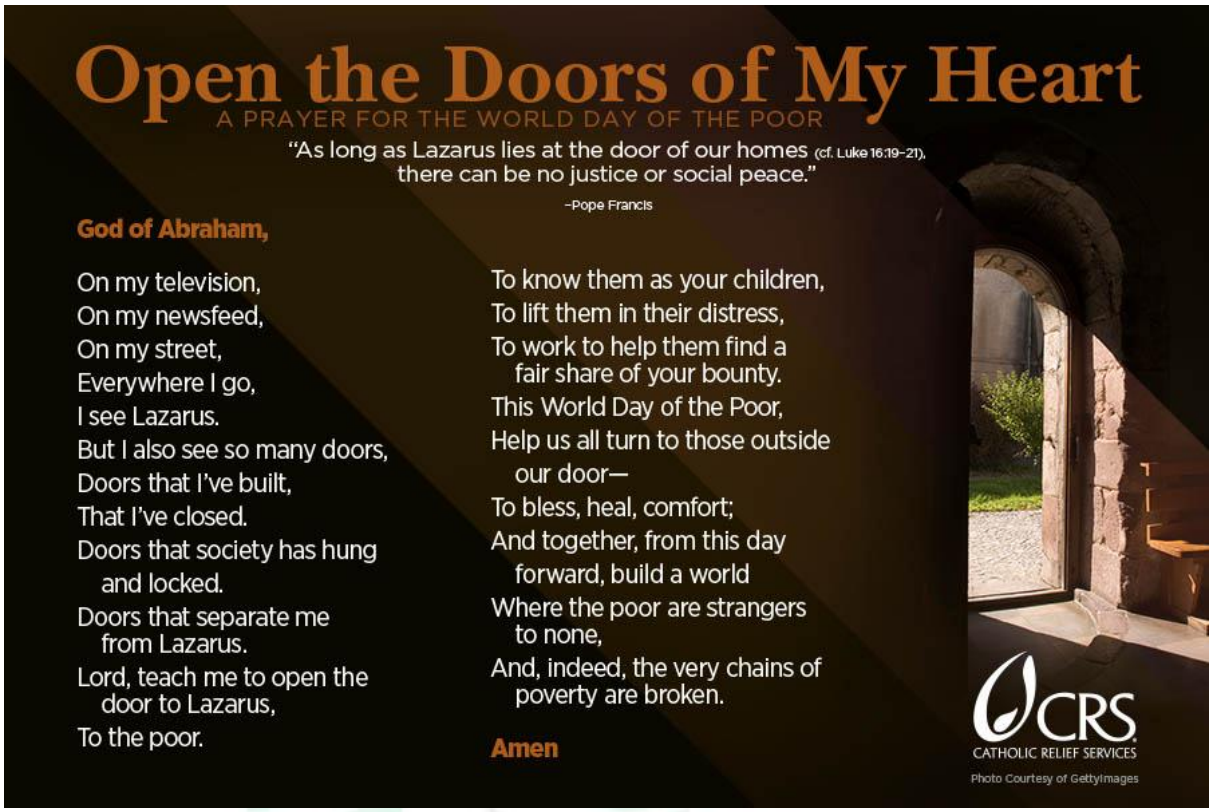


Pope Francis has named the thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary time the World Day of the Poor. The inaugural World Day of the Poor will be celebrated November 19, 2017. What should parishes do to mark the World Day of the Poor? Pope Francis shares several ideas in his recent message about the day, including that parishes should spend the week leading up to the day creating moments of "encounter and friendship, solidarity and concrete assistance" with people who are poor:

"It is my wish that, in the week preceding the World Day of the Poor, which falls this year on 19 November, the Thirty-third Sunday of Ordinary Time, Christian communities will make every effort to create moments of encounter and friendship, solidarity and concrete assistance. They can invite the poor and volunteers to take part together in the Eucharist on this Sunday ... This Sunday, if there are poor people where we live who seek protection and assistance, let us draw close to them: it will be a favorable moment to encounter the God we seek." — Pope Francis

Catholic Relief Services has created a parish packet with prayers, homily helps, general intercessions, and a bulletin insert to help parishes learn about and observe the World Day of the Poor.

https://www.crs.org/get-involved/learn/resource-center/world-day-poor-resources



Disentangling the Myths of the Reformation

25 October 2017 | by Alexandra Walsham

Five hundred years ago an obscure Augustinian monk in the small university town of Wittenberg carried out an act of protest that is widely recognised as a watershed in western European history. Though scholars now debate what exactly took place on 31 October 1517, the nailing of Martin Luther's 95 theses against indulgences and the papacy's power to pardon sin to the door of the castle church has acquired a pivotal place in the historical imagination. It has become a shorthand for the beginning of the movement that we call the Reformation.

The mythology of enlightenment and progress that still clusters around that moment half a millennium ago is a flattering projection of the values our society claims to hold dear: freedom of conscience, reason, and principled resistance to corruption and tyranny. It has helped to create a vision of the Middle Ages as a period blighted by superstition, intolerance and fear.

Whether we are atheists or people of faith, professional historians or members of the general public, this is a story that has helped to shape our culture and outlook.

The big birthday that the Reformation is celebrating this year may even help to entrench this further. Many of the commemorative events that are being organised across the globe are being conducted in a spirit

of ecumenical understanding. Much of the literature that is flooding from the presses is subjecting enduring and confessionally coloured legends about the Reformation to critical scrutiny. Some have made the very invention of this tradition the subject of sophisticated investigation.

Yet there is a distinct danger that the anniversary is serving to perpetuate a Luther-centred version of Reformation history, along with its attendant myths. It is arguably eclipsing the significance of initiatives and impulses that did not have their taproot in Wittenberg in the autumn of 1517. In short, it is encouraging us to remember some dimensions of the Reformation at the expense of others.

In England, this anniversary of the Lutherjahr, like its predecessors in 1617, 1717, 1817 and 1917, has been comparatively subdued. There has been a late surge of activity in the lead-up to 31 October, but it cannot be denied that the event which allegedly took place on that date lacks the resonance in Britain that it has elsewhere. Luther may be a household name, but he does not occupy centre stage in accounts of the idiosyncratic version of Reformation that changed religious life in England for ever after Henry VIII broke with Rome in 1534.

This is partly because Lutheranism was only one phase in the somewhat haphazard and protracted process by which England became a Protestant nation. But the illicit Lutheran books and biblical translations that were smuggled across the Channel did help to sow the seeds for a grass-roots movement.

Despite Henry VIII's own learned Latin attack on the teachings of the Wittenberg friar, published by the king in 1521, Luther's agendas did leave their mark on the legislation laying out a programme for liturgical and ecclesiastical reform, and on the government propaganda that justified Henry's claim to royal supremacy over the Church and the largest land-grab in this country's history, the Dissolution of the Monasteries. They also helped to bolster his sense of himself as a godly monarch following in the footsteps of the Old Testament kings of old.

With the accession of his evangelically inclined son Edward VI, however, the theological centre of gravity of the English Reformation shifted in a decidedly Swiss direction. The infant Church of England increasingly took its bearings from reformers other than Luther – from Ulrich Zwingli and Heinrich Bullinger in Zurich, and from exiles such as Martin Bucer and Peter Martyr Vermigli who found asylum in Cambridge and Oxford during this period.

In the cities in which English Protestants themselves sought refuge during the reign of Mary I, including Frankfurt and Geneva, they in turn were exposed to a new set of influences emanating from John Calvin, which left their imprint on the religious settlement of 1559. The "strange death of Lutheran England" of which some historians speak was the product of swirling political, dynastic and ecclesiastical contingencies that collectively reset the compass of Protestantism in the middle decades of the sixteenth century.

By the 1560s, the process by which England had cast off the papacy had already become the subject of myth-making. Tracing the origins of Protestantism back to the pristine purity of the primitive Church and heralding the heretics who had resisted its descent into "error" as heroes, John Foxe's Actes and Monuments presented the Reformation as a providential act to liberate the people from spiritual thraldom. Propelled by divine force, this was a swift and popular revolution whose success was never in doubt, for all the fires of persecution it faced.

International in scope, Foxe's history allocated Luther's protest a prominent place in the drama, though it distanced itself from his views on the real presence in the Eucharist. The Actes and Monuments was simultaneously an empowering patriotic narrative whose defining moment was the accession of Elizabeth I, whom it celebrated as a latter-day Constantine, even as it sought to admonish her into perfecting what Puritans regarded as a half-baked Reformation.

In time Elizabeth's refusal to abolish the institution of episcopacy and instead to uphold a via media between Geneva and Rome became the subject of legend in its own right. With the rise of Laudianism in the 1630s, the English Reformation was recast as a movement that had only reluctantly resorted to schism and that steered a safe course between the equally pernicious extremes of popery and radical Calvinism. In this climate its Lutheran roots and legacies might be expected to have undergone a revival, but the longer-term effect of these trends was to distance English Protestantism from the sister churches on the Continent with which it had previously felt a deep sense of affinity.

Reinforced following the Restoration, the status of England's Reformation as sui generis was never uncontested, but the myth of its unique moderation gathered strength within Anglicanism over the course of the next century and a half, reaching its peak in Victorian Anglo-Catholicism. This reinvention of the Reformation entailed forgetting the influence exerted by foreign reformers in favour of dwelling on its indigenous character.

The more radical varieties of Reformation that the Puritans and sects had striven to consummate during the English Civil War and Interregnum were likewise ones from which Martin Luther was largely excluded. In so far as he featured in this millennial vision it was as a stooge. Refashioned for the politics of the 1640s and 1650s, his Reformation simply served to underline the more far-reaching religious achievements of this revolutionary era. It was presented as merely an interim stage on a journey towards spiritual and institutional reform that would culminate with the rule of Christ on Earth.

There is a further element in the forgetting of Luther: the Catholic counter-narrative of Reformation history that began to emerge as early as the mid-sixteenth century. This, too, served to occlude his part in the process by which England had abandoned her allegiance to Rome, seeing Lutheran ideas as alien imports that had seduced the English people from the faith of their forefathers. Suffusing the pages of recusant history that grew out of the polemics of Nicholas Sander, Thomas Stapleton and others, this sentiment remains an undercurrent in the revisionist histories that still dominate our understanding of the Reformation.

These have also arguably had the effect of making us forget thinkers who were swept away by Luther's ideas in favour of conservative voices who wistfully recalled a world that was lost and who, actively or passively, pushed back against Protestantism's steady advance. To remember a time before and without Luther was – and remains – a mode of resisting the whole project of the Reformation.

The Reformation that we now remember in England is thus one in which Luther has been consigned to the margins. Devoid of much theological substance, he remains a site of memory in our society and culture. If we view the past through the prism of the present, we also view the present through the prism of the past. We see it with the aid of individuals and events to which our societies have assigned historical significance.

Luther is one such cultural matrix and icon who has proved to be a flexible and adaptable tool. He may never have nailed 95 theses to a church door on 31 October 1517 – but remembering him, and the Reformation he is credited with initiating, reminds us of how we repeatedly remake history in our own image. We must not, therefore, fall into the trap of forgetting it.

Alexandra Walsham is one of the speakers at the symposium being held on 31 October in St Margaret's Church, Westmnster Abbey, marking the 500th anniversary of the start of the Reformation.

http://www.thetablet.co.uk/features/2/11557/disentangling-the-myths-of-the-reformation

Top Priority Is Protecting Children in This Digital Age

Pope Francis says we cannot underestimate the harms done to minors in this digital age and says we must take action.

Francis stressed this while addressing this morning, Oct. 6, 2017, "Child Dignity in the Digital World," the Congress organized by Rome's Pontifical Gregorian University's Center for the Protection of Minors, and held at the Gregorian, Oct. 3-6, 2017. Its objective is to highlight the dangers of the Internet and to foster action to protect children and young people.
Children and adolescents make up over a quarter of the more than 3.2 billion Internet users worldwide, according to the Center. This generation of over 800 million young users is in danger of becoming victims of sextortion, sexting, cyberbullying and harassment.

In his discourse, the Pope said he firmly supports the commitments the Congress participants have undertaken to help protect minors.

"These include," Francis observed, "raising awareness of the gravity of the problems, enacting suitable legislation, overseeing developments in technology, identifying victims and prosecuting those guilty of crimes. They include assisting minors who have been affected and providing for their rehabilitation, assisting educators and families, and finding creative ways of training young people in the proper use of the internet in ways healthy for themselves and for other minors. They also include fostering greater sensitivity and providing moral formation, as well as continuing scientific research in all the fields associated with this challenge."

Pope Francis also assured those present of the Catholic Church's commitment and readiness to help.

"As all of us know, in recent years the Church has come to acknowledge her own failures Zenit Newsletter Page 2 in providing for the protection of children: extremely grave facts have come to light, for which we have to accept our responsibility before God, before the victims and before public opinion."

"For this very reason," he continued, "as a result of these painful experiences and the skills gained in the process of conversion and purification, the Church today feels especially bound to work strenuously and with foresight for the protection of minors and their dignity, not only within her own ranks, but in society as a whole and throughout the world."

The Holy Father concluded, asking those present to do an examination of conscience: 'What are we doing to ensure that those children can continue smiling at us, with clear eyes and faces filled with trust and hope? What are we doing to make sure that they are not robbed of this light, to ensure that those eyes will not be not darkened and corrupted by what they will find on the internet, which will soon be so integral and important a part of their daily lives?'

https://zenit.org/articles/pope-we-cannot-underestimate-harm-to-minors-through-digital-age/

UPCOMING EVENTS

Conference on Catholic Religious Education 2018

University of Malta and La Salle Academy for Faith Formation and Religious Education Australian Catholic University announce the '1st International Conference on Catholic Religious Education in Schools'

MALTA: 07-10 February 2018; Venue: Catholic Archbishop's Seminary, Rabat, Malta

Sponsored by the

La Salle Academy for Faith Formation and Religious Education

ACU

and the Ministry for Education and Employment

education.gov.mt

http://www.um.edu.mt/events/iccre2018

To qualify for CPTD points, answer the following questions.

CPTD ARTICLE: Spiritual Development and Religious Education in the Early Years: A Review of the Literature (Part 2)

TRUE/FALSE (Tick the correct box)
According to the author of this article or those quoted

	STATEMENT	TRUE	FALSE
1	If young children's spirituality is not intentionally nurtured it will fade and be lost.	✓	
2	Teachers' starting points in religious education need to be with children's own experiences and understandings of life and relationships.	✓	
3	If a child's fundamental human-spiritual needs are not met or indeed not nurtured, they then have no way or means of establishing a religious identity.	✓	
4	Children should not be encouraged to take different perspectives on issues and feel pressured to conform to a particular way of seeing.		✓
5	The cognitive domain pays little attention to the development of spiritual qualities and characteristics.	✓	
6	It is as important to invite children to explore their *inner* landscape as it is to teach them about the outer world.	✓	
7	Listening *with* the heart "turns the focus outward, toward others"	✓	
8	The starting point for children's spiritual and religious development should be their religiosity.		✓
9	It is possible to articulate a clear singular definition for spirituality.		✓
10	Children's spirituality and their spiritual and religious development have been shown in the literature to be of central relevance and importance to who they are and who they will become.	✓	

Professional Society of Religious Educators

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