Roots & Wings

The periodical of the Professional Society of Religious Educators

VOLUME 4 NUMBER 3 (June 2018)

EDITORIAL

Welcom to the third issue of 2018 where we feature again a key document from Vatican II and its implications for school liturgy. The inspiration for this comes from a recently published book, *A Liturgical Companion to the Documents of the Second Vatican Council*.

One again we remind you again of the article chosen for CPTD points which continues the focus on the place of art in Religious Education.

Readers will qualify for points by answering and submitting the questions on the article 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.***

PAUL FALLER

CONTENTS

REFLECTION

Patience: The Forgotten Virtue

(BJ Gonzalvo)

In his 1987 encyclical, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, Pope John Paul II warned the world against becoming a "civilization of consumerism" and each of us becoming "slaves of possession and of immediate gratification." With fast food getting faster, with overnight delivery turning into one-hour delivery, with a lot of our material needs instantly available at our fingertips, in our society of instant gratification, there are some basic human skills and attitudes that are getting lost, underused, or underdeveloped—like patience. As Saint Augustine said, "Patience is the companion of wisdom." Yet today patience has become a forgotten virtue.

The Value of Delayed Gratification

I have a deep appreciation for humanity's ingenuity and technological innovations. It has made many of our daily routines much more convenient and comfortable. However, in the process of making our lives easier and more comfortable, we have removed the part of life that naturally developed our "patience muscles." Our patience muscles do not get as developed as they used to in the days before these technologies and innovations. The spiritual gymnasium that used to exist for our predecessors is hard to find nowadays.

As a Gen-X'er, growing up in the 80s and 90s, I never had to walk 10 miles to school unlike my grandparents did. I never had to wait 3 hours for dinner to be served. I'm used to the nice comfortable amenities of this millennium. Thus, many of my patience muscles are not getting that same conditioning that our predecessors' got.

In 1970, Walter Mischel and his colleagues at Stanford University conducted one of the most well-known studies in the social sciences—the Marshmallow Experiment. The experiment was designed to see what strategies preschool-aged children take to resist the temptation of eating a marshmallow set right in front of them by researchers who then left the room. The children were instructed not to eat the marshmallows for at least fifteen minutes until the researcher came back in the room. They were told that if they were able to resist the urge, they would get rewarded with a second marshmallow. Some of the children were able to resist and hold out for the second marshmallow; some were not.

Fast forward several years; the same children were studied as a follow-up to this experiment. What the study found was that the children in the Marshmallow Study who were able to hold out longer as young kids showed better life outcomes in their young adult lives, including having higher SAT scores[1], better educational attainment, and even better BMI (body mass index). Since this groundbreaking study, the ability to delay gratification, not just as children but as adults, has been linked, either scientifically or anecdotally, to marriages and divorces, sexuality, addictive behaviours, spending habits, career choices, the pursuit of higher education, and even sanctity.

To be able to delay immediate gratification for a more positive future consequence is indeed an ability that pays. Patience is indeed a virtue that leads to positive outcomes.

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[1] The SAT is a standardized test widely used for college admissions in the United States. Introduced in 1926, its name and scoring have changed several times; originally called the Scholastic Aptitude Test, it was later called the Scholastic Assessment Test

Exercising Patience

So now in our world with microwaves, fast food, e-mail, texting, and other tools and technologies that have dramatically sped up everything in our lives, one is led to wonder where we stand on our ability to be patient and delay gratification. With our modern advances in society today, particularly in our technologies and our societal values, patience is an ability that is now getting undermined.

Can we still patiently wait three hours for dinner to be ready? Are we still able to wait a couple of days for information to travel via snail mail? A text just came in, but can we still manage to wait a little longer to pick up our smartphone? Do we absolutely have to read that text right now while we are driving? If you get a craving right now, you do not have to wait too long anymore because fast food is everywhere. If we have any material need, it might feel like it is our entitlement that we ought to be able to meet that need immediately.

We have certain expectations to meet our material needs and even wants. Thanks to technological progress of the last century or so, we have set up our environments to allow for our material needs and wants to be met right away. This is not necessarily a negative thing. Progress can be good, and I don't think a lot of us are inclined to go back in time and live in the days before cell phones or digital technology. I've already thrown away my Rolodex and my printed driving maps. I don't think there is anything wrong with advancing in our progress as a human race, and we can always strive for progress and improving our lives. But as we continue making progress and making our human lives better, we must not lose sight of the things that are important. We must look for ways to practice patience.

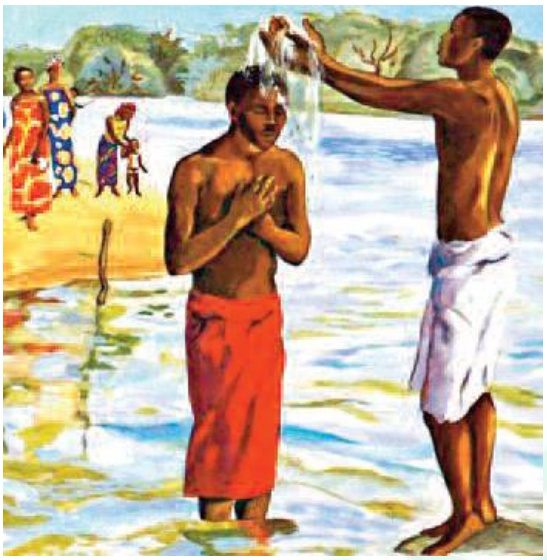
Dietrich von Hildebrand, a Catholic philosopher and theologian, wrote in his book *Transformation in Christ: On the Christian Attitude* about "Holy Patience," noting, "The requirements of the moment, no matter how imperious, can never displace or overshadow his attention to higher values." Patience will always be an important virtue. It allows us to be humble and to submit to God's perfect will. It is the ultimate act of surrender to God. God has his timing, and we must not be too focused on getting things our way and right away that we forget God's sovereignty over time. No matter how comfortable, convenient, and fast things get, we must not forget that it is God who "determines the proper day and hour for the fruitful performance of certain actions and even more exclusively, the ripening of our seeds and the harvest of our labours."

BJ Gonzalvo, PhD, is a psychology researcher and the author of the new book, "Lessons in Leadership from the Saints." For more, visit www.saintlynest.com .

REFLECTION

Was Jesus Black?

(Günther Simmermacher)



WAS Jesus black? What did Jesus even look like? And does it matter? These questions, and others, came up repeatedly in conversation and on social media over the Advent and Christmas seasons.

How Jesus and the Holy Family is represented in art and in Nativity scenes shouldn't matter, yet it does—a lot. The idea that Jesus looked like a central European is self-evidently wrong. He was a Semite from what we now call the Middle East. His skin was more or less swarthy, his hair dark, his eyes brown.

Donald Trump would have denied Jesus entry into the United States. But the idea that "Jesus was black" is equally false, if by black we mean that he had African features. His skin might have been darker than that of the Roman occupiers, but Semites are classified (that awful terminology) as Caucasian.

Does it matter what digits Jesus would have had in his "Book of Life" under apartheid? Essentially, it doesn't. Jesus is the Incarnation; God made Flesh. God has no colour, no race, no ethnicity, no caste, no gender. We all are made in his image, which means God has no image. And if God has no image, then it is immaterial what colour, race or ethnicity one might ascribe to Jesus.

But that is only one side of the story. When people say "Jesus was black", they are saying at least two valid things. Firstly, Jesus was black in as far as he knew oppression. He lived in a time of Rome's brutal occupation of Palestine. It was a Roman colonialist governor who had him executed, at the behest of the colonialists' puppet authorities. It was Rome's stooge, King Herod, who wanted the new-born Jesus dead.

Jesus knew about social oppression as a member of a struggling underclass. Jesus' life has more in common with the experiences of the world's people of colour with their indigenous roots in Africa, Asia, Australia and the Americas than it has with contemporary whites who, generally, inherit much greater social, political and economic privileges.

This does not, in itself, invalidate the faith of white Christians, of course. You can be privileged and also be a genuine follower of Christ. But it does serve as a call to those in positions of social, political and economic privilege to consider Jesus as somebody who did not have these privileges—as a member of the oppressed— and be in solidarity with those who stand against inequality.

Prejudice predicated on race, ethnicity or economic class is prejudice against the historical Jesus (and, obviously, it's sinful and therefore an offence against God).

Those pious white Christians in the US with their red caps who want to keep out people from the Middle East are agitating against Jesus himself, in very real terms. And they can do so only if they believe that Jesus was

white. Saying "Jesus was black" declares that Jesus does not "belong" only to white Christians.

Secondly, "Jesus is black" is also a reaction to the predominant representation of him as a white, European man. That image is the result of what we now call inculturation, the process by which we adapt the symbols and certain practices of our faith to make it relevant to various cultural contexts. In Europe, therefore, Jesus would have been presented in art to look like everybody else in Europe.

So it was a big deal when in the 1600s the Dutch painter Rembrandt used a young Sephardic Jew to model for Jesus' face in a painting. Generally, however, Jesus was inculturated as a white man because to the localized audiences in Europe—those who were catechised by publicly displayed artworks— that made sense.

But as the art of the European master painters spread throughout the world, the pale-faced Jesus and rosy-cheeked Mary became the normative image, even in cultures where people are not particularly pale-faced and rosy-cheeked.

It was the same with the image of God as an old Caucasian with a white beard: the European standard image for wisdom and authority. That's why it was so subversive when the black actor Morgan Freeman was cast to play God in the 2003 comedy film *Bruce Almighty*.

Of course, there are powerful examples of the inculturation of images outside Europe. For example, the Mexican peasant Juan Diego described his apparition of Our Lady in Guadalupe in 1531 as being Aztec in appearance.

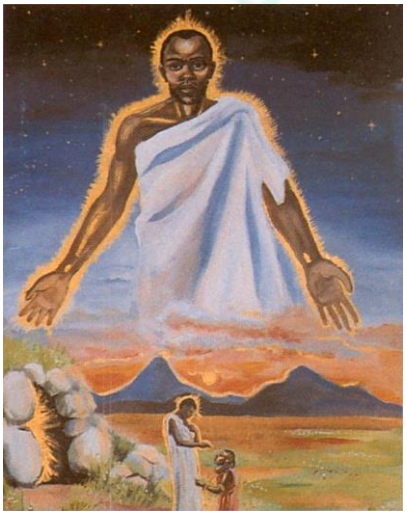
In my office is an artwork of the Ascension from the "Jesus Mafa" art project in Cameroon from 1973, in which Jesus and the disciples are depicted as Africans, and the Gospel stories are presented in an African context. The intent of the project, which produced an abundance of beautiful artworks, was to help the Mafa people of northern Cameroon teach the Gospel in a way that the community could connect with. Why shouldn't Jesus be black, or any colour, when the Incarnation transcends all biological and social markers?

"Jesus was black" is not so much a historical observation—it would be an incorrect one—as an attempt to make him more universal than the general narrative claims. It is a legitimate pursuit.

So, what did Jesus look like? The gospels don't tell us because it isn't important. I looked at what history can reveal about that question in an article published in *The Southern Cross* a couple of years ago (*www.scross.co.za/2015/04/jesus-face/*).

With some imagination we can cast Jesus, the Holy Family, the disciples and all the other people in the Gospel by looking at the Palestinian people, and especially the Christian Palestinians who are the descendants of the original followers of Christ.

It will matter what Jesus looked like until we get to a point where we can simply see Jesus in one another.



THINKING ABOUT TEACHING

Pathic Knowing, Religious education and reflections on children's spirituality

(Brendan Hyde, PhD)

Introduction

Education in Western culture has generally favoured the intellect in preference to other non-cognitive ways of knowing. This can be seen especially in relation to standardised testing measures and instruments, such as NAPLAN in Australia, and the ANA (Annual National Assessments) in South Africa, that attempt to quantify students' learning in various subject areas in terms of their cognitive abilities – their acquisition of knowledge, skills and abilities in various subject areas that comprise the curriculum. Such standardised testing enables government bodies to report on student progress, and to compare such results not only with other students and schools, but also with other education systems in other countries.

However, it has been advocated for some time now that non-cognitive ways of knowing also need to be considered in education, and that such ways of knowing provide valuable information for teachers, their students, parents and other key stakeholders (see for instance de Souza, 2006; Claxton, 2007; Brock, 2015). This article considers the role of the body as a legitimate way of knowing in religious education. Such knowledge is as referred to as pathic knowing.

Pathic Knowing

In her thesis *On the Problem of Empathy* (first published in 1917), student of phenomenology Edith Stein noted the significant role of the body in perception and understanding, signalling the importance of sensual empathy in people's understanding of others. Such bodily understanding is a type of noncognitive knowledge specifically referred to as *pathic* knowledge. Knowledge can be understood to be pathic in so far as it depends on the sense and sensuality of the body, for instance, "personal presence, relational perceptiveness, tact for knowing what to say and do in contingent situations…aspects of knowledge that are in part prereflective, and yet thoughtful" (van Manen, 2014, p. 267).

The term pathic comes from pathos, meaning suffering, and also passion. In the larger context of life, the notion of pathic refers to sensibility, sensuality and the felt sense of being in the world. The pathically tuned body is able to recognize itself in its responsiveness to the things of the life world and to the others who share our world. The pathic sense perceives the world in feeling. The phenomenologist Fredrick Buytendijk (1970) maintains that there is a close connection between the pathic experience and the mood of the lived body. Similarly, Martin Heidegger (1962) uses the word *Befindlichkeit,* meaning "the way one finds oneself" in the world (pp. 172-188). Thus, people have an implicit, felt understanding of themselves in situations, even though it is difficult to put that understanding into words.

These understandings resonate closely with Hyde's (2008) notion of *the felt sense* as a characteristic of children's spirituality, in which the individual draws upon the wisdom of the body as a natural way of knowing. Gendlin (1981) calls this *focussing*. Bodily awareness is not a mental experience, but rather a physical one. It does not manifest in the form of thoughts or words, but rather as a single, though sometimes puzzling and complex, bodily experience. It is a deep-down level of awareness, difficult to describe in words. Supporting such a notion, van Manen (2014) maintains that it is much easier to describe the cognitive than it is to describe experiences which are pathic in nature (hence the appeal of the cognitive to government-imposed testing regimes such as NAPLAN and the ANA). This is because the cognitive is conceptual, objective and measurable. Much research often begins from the assumption

that knowledge is cognitive, but as van Manen notes, pathic knowledge may actually contribute a major dimension of experience and practice. Pathic knowledge is also expressed in the confidence with which ordinary people do everyday things – the way that they feel the atmosphere of a place, the way in which they can "read" someone's face, and so forth.

Pathic dimensions of knowing are pathic because they inhabit, or resonate in, the body, and in the relations people have with the things of the lifeworld. These are corporeal, relational, situational and actional types of knowledge that cannot easily be translated into conceptualizations or theoretical representations. They are "modes of knowing that inhere so immediately in our lived practices – in our bodies, in our relations, and in the things around us – that they seem invisible" (van Manen, 2014, p. 270).

Invisible, perhaps, but knowledge does manifest itself in practical actions. People may "discover" what needs to be known, how to act, or what needs to be done in the things of this world. Gestures, the way a person smiles, the tone in one's voice, and so forth are expressive of the ways that people know the world and comport themselves in this world. While individuals, on the one hand, can do things out of habit or routine, on the other hand, their actions are sensitive to the contingencies, novelties, and expectancies of the life world. Thus, it is possible to distinguish modalities of knowing that are non-cognitive in a pathic sense (van Manen, 1990, 2014).

Therefore, people experience their knowing in how and what they do through actional, situation, relational, and corporeal ways of knowing. All of these modalities are pathic in nature.

An example from Religious Education

While not the only approach to religious education, the Godly Play methodology (Berryman, 2009) is one in which pathic knowing comes to the fore and is visible in students if teachers are skilled in the art of observation. The following short case study was observed and recorded by the author after visiting a classroom influenced by the Godly Play method. The child's name has been fictionalised.

> Daniel was attracted to the Parable of the Good Shepherd materials, which had been presented some weeks beforehand. With care, he unpacked the contents of the parable box. Slowly and deliberately, he manipulated the pieces of the presentation. In particular, he took great care in placing each of the sheep, one by one, onto the shoulders of the Good Shepherd, just as the Good Shepherd put the lost sheep onto his shoulders in the parable. He then manipulated the materials so that the Good Shepherd individually took each one of the sheep on his shoulders into the sheepfold. Daniel seemed to be absorbed in this activity. The care with which he displayed in moving of the pieces suggests that, for him at that moment in time, nothing else existed outside of this activity.
>
> Daniel appeared to have "unfinished business" with this parable. The Storyteller later indicated to me that Daniel had also chosen this parable for his work in the session the previous week. He was in the process of making meaning from this parable. He had taken the Storyteller's words to heart – that if at first you can't get inside the parable, don't be discouraged, but keep coming back to it. For Daniel it seemed that this particular presentation held particular significance. He was searching for that significance by revisiting the parable and manipulating the materials. The significance may have been in his placing, one by one, each of the sheep onto the shoulders of the Good Shepherd so that each could be individually carried safely back into the sheepfold.
>
> Throughout his engagement in this activity, Daniel did not speak. He looked intently at the materials as he maneuvered them, slowly and deliberately. He was engaged in seriously playful play, which carried with it a sense of sacredness, which he honoured through silence and reverence.

In this recorded observation, Daniel's pathic knowing becomes quite evident. It begins with the very way that he unpacks the contents of the parable box and manipulates the pieces of the presentation. His

pathically tuned body is able to recognise the significance of the materials he is handling, and it is almost as if he is preparing himself to discover what he needs to know and to learn from the parable story. His actions are sensitive to the contingencies, novelties, and expectancies of his immediate life world as he begins to internalise the parable by deliberately placing each one of the sheep onto the shoulders of the Good Shepherd, and one by one, taking each into the sheepfold.

As he has previously engaged with the materials of the Parable of the Good Shepherd on at least one occasion, Daniel is relying on his corporeal way of knowing to continue to make meaning from this parable so as to discover the significance of this story for himself. His pathic knowledge is expressed in the confidence with which he attends to something that might be considered ordinary, or even mundane, at a first glance, that is, playing with materials to tell a story – surely an ordinary activity of childhood. Yet in this activity, it is Daniel's corporeality that provides him with knowledge and an understanding of the significance of this parable for his own life. His body knowing is seriously playful. He has deviated from the traditional text of the story, allowing his bodily sensitivities to guide his meaning making. And it may be that, as yet, he is unable to give verbal expression to the meaning he is discovering. This is because his felt understanding is occurring in the immediacy of his experience – the here-and-now. It is difficult to describe in words.

Both Berryman (2009) and Hyde (2008) have indicated the significance of pathic knowing, or body-knowing, as a characteristic of children's spirituality. Approaches to religious education that enable children to draw upon their corporeality as a natural source of knowing, are also helping to nurture their spirituality – their connectedness with self, others, the world and with God. The observation above is then really a reflection on Daniel's spirituality, and the way in which the Parable of the Good Shepherd nurtures his spirituality through a mode of knowing that inheres so immediately in his lived practice. Through his corporeal exploration of this parable, he is learning about and expressing something of his relationship with himself and with God, and possibly with his family if, and as I have suggested elsewhere (Hyde, 2010) each of the sheep taken into the sheepfold by the Good Shepherd could possibly represent members of his own family.

So, while not measurable in the ways that the NAPLAN and the ANA are, pathic knowing is nonetheless a major dimension of experience and practice in religious education, and I would also argue, in education more generally. As teachers, it is important that such ways of knowing are incorporated into classroom practice, and that opportunities are planned in which students can engage in such types of knowing.

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Dr Brendan Hyde is the Academic Dean at BBI-The Australian Institute of Theological Education in Sydney, Australia. He is also a Senior Research Fellow at Federation University Australia.

CLASSROOM PRACTICE

Simulation Games and Role-Play

Simulation exercises are where people complete a task and then discuss how they did it, how they worked, what went well, what they need to improve.

Role-play is where people act out a situation in a way which can broaden perspectives and deepen understanding.

1. Introduction

- Evoke a willingness to participate from the students.
- Introduce the simulation/role-play to the whole class.
- Divide students into smaller groups if required and distribute instructions or role cards.
- Explain rules and patterns of play.
- Set tasks for observers.

2. Role-play

- Engage students in the simulation.
- Keep the simulation moving and introduce refinements where appropriate.
- Stop the simulation at the moment of resolution, or when the time runs out, or the students' interest declines.

3. De-briefing

- Bridge from activity to de-briefing.
- Encourage students to articulate their individual response to the experience and to critically reflect upon it. The students' skills of thinking and behaving are analysed in discussion with a view to extracting principles from the simulation or role-play.
- Note comments from observers.

4. Conclusion

- Summarise, generalise.
- Conclude, relate to unit of work.

USING SIMULATION GAMES AND ROLE PLAY

S*imulation exercises* are where people complete a task and then discuss how they did it, how they worked, what went well and what they need to improve. The purpose of simulation is to have a common group experience, which is then analysed according to aims of the lesson. The teacher's role is to design, direct and de-brief the simulation. An 'observer' may be used to provide an objective perspective on what happened in the simulation. Observers must be clear that this is not an opportunity to criticise. They should know what to look for in the simulation and how to present it in feedback.

R*ole-play* is where people act out a situation in a way which can broaden perspectives and deepen understanding. Students take on roles based on real life situations in which personal skills can be tested and developed. Scripts and role cards are useful in supporting this method. When the 'drama' is over, the main person in the role-play hears how effective s/he is from the other 'actors'. The role-play can be performed again incorporating role-reversal where the actors take on the role of another person in a chosen scenario. This helps the actors to experience an event or issue from another perspective similar or different to their own.

I*cebreakers* can be used to energise a group or to develop a relaxed atmosphere in the class. They can also enhance listening and communication skills.

D*rama* and sketches are powerful tools of learning, change and expression. Within all group settings, drama and sketches can be used to explore and then express any insights or new understandings reached.

ARTICLE (CPTD)

The Arts in Religious Education - A Focus for 'Deep Seeing', Silence and Contemplation (Part Two)

(Peter Mudge)

Dr Peter Mudge is Senior Lecturer in Religious Education and Spirituality at The Broken Bay Institute, Pennant Hills and Conjoint Lecturer, School of Humanities and Social Science, The University of Newcastle. His areas of interest and research include - religious education, spirituality, sacred space, connected knowing, transformative pedagogies, and the role of the arts in religious education. He has received formal training in drawing and painting which he pursues in his home art studio.

Abstract

This is part two of a paper that seeks to examine the essential role of the arts (e.g. visual arts, dance, poetry) in religious education as an authentic focus for the cultivation of 'deep seeing', silence and contemplation among teachers and students. Part One in the previous issue dealt with the topics of attentiveness and 'deep seeing'. This final part of the article deals with the related links between attentiveness, silence and contemplation. The paper argues across both parts, principally from the perspective of painting that the cultivation of these approaches helps to create a slower, more meditative approach to religious education, spirituality, and life. In addition, both stances assist those involved to 'see' more clearly or 'be attentive' at a deeper level to self, others, society, and God, and to respond more effectively to each.

To contemplate reality more deeply

'Art does not reproduce the visible; rather, it makes visible' (Paul Klee, in Copeland, 2004, p.28)

In the context of this paper, 'contemplation' is understood as a simple, prayerful gazing upon the presence of God. One of the common meanings of 'contemplation' throughout the history of spirituality is the pre-rational, intuitive 'awareness of the presence of God apprehended not by thought but by love' (Shannon, 1993, p.209). Furthermore, contemplation is often associated with 'mysticism', which some authors associate not with rarefied experiences, but with the ordinary apprehensions of God's presence in the living out of daily life. Contemplation refers to any number of ways of making oneself aware of the presence of God who is always first present to us. This awareness, mindfulness, or 'paying attention' (see above) is central to contemplation, tends towards the intuitive, and is not to be confused with thinking or 'acts of the presence of God'. Contemplation is the desire and commitment to become more unified with the presence of God (Shannon, 1993, p.209).

'Contemplation' is derived from the Latin *templum*, translated as 'time', but more accurately referring to 'a division or section of time'. Through various mutations, 'contemplation' came to refer to a sacred space, marked off from other space, where Roman augurs would examine the entrails of birds. It then came to be associated with temple practice where designated sacred persons looked at the 'insides of things' (animals) to discern divine meanings, purposes, and directions. Like the finger pointing at the moon, contemplation began to refer to the process of 'looking at' the insides of reality, rather than 'finding' an actual sacred place or state. By looking at these insides of reality, the person given to contemplation eventually finds themselves 'looking at God' (Shannon, 1993, pp.209-210).

Complementing and extending this understanding of 'contemplation' is the Greek equivalent of the Latin *contemplatio,* which is *theoria. Theoria* means 'to look at something intently and for a purpose'. This derivation of 'contemplation' discerns traces of God in created things, and implies 'direct and total awareness of God, in which there is immediate experience of oneness with God' (Shannon, 1993, p.210).

The modern Catholic and Christian approach to contemplation holds that there can no longer be any dualistic dichotomies drawn between sacred and profane, and that all people are called to holiness and contemplation in the midst of their ordinary lives – hence the designation 'ordinary mysticism' (cf. Vatican II documents especially *Gaudium et Spes*, Egan and other contemporary writers on spirituality).

Thomas Merton's writings are emblematic of this contemporary approach in his call for the Christian contemplative to move beyond concepts and descriptions of God in order to truly encounter the divine Presence. In doing so, he is consonant with the spirituality of the arts outlined above, particularly in his orientation towards the apophatic way:

> Now, while the Christian contemplative must certainly develop by study the theological understanding of concepts about God, [they] are called mainly to penetrate the wordless darkness and apophatic light of an experience beyond the concepts…Relinquishing every attempt to grasp God in limited human concepts, the contemplatives' act of submission and faith attains to [God's] presence as the ground of every human experience and [God's] reality as the ground of being itself (Merton, 1973, p.183).

To contemplate a work of art – noticing, connecting, seizing, lingering, savouring

'A symbol or work of art is not exhausted by 'seeing it' or by some final successful grasp via knowledge. The power of the symbol and the work of art is to give or humiliate itself without abandoning or exhausting itself. For it is only in this way – where each truly gives or reveals itself – that both are revealed as the holy mystery, the Logos, the Christ'

(Mudge, 2007, a personal interpretation based on Splett, 1986, p.1657)

Philosopher John Armstrong suggests that this process of paying attention and contemplation is integral to engaging a work of art. Once again, what Armstrong says in relation to a painting could be equally applied to a piece of music, sculpture, craftwork, dance, opera, or other works of art. He argues that teachers and students not only need information or data about the arts. They also need the powers of reverie and imagination 'because they provide such a major way in which we uncover the internal structure of works of art and develop personal relations with them' (2000, p.80). In addition, and perhaps most importantly, viewers of art works require the skills of contemplation. This section concludes with Armstrong's five aspects of contemplation that, with fidelity and persistence, could be learned and practised by teachers and students – animadversion, concursus, hololepsis, the lingering caress, and catalapsis.

My reading of Armstrong's aspects is that they are not mutually exclusive phases but continually overlap, interpenetrate, and interrogate each other. Furthermore they could be applied in any situation, not just in religious education or within a classroom context. Armstrong notes in passing that this 'process of perceptual contemplation of an object…is similar to the route by which many people fall in love' (2000, p.81). One might add 'fall in love with a work of art, with the cosmos, or with the whole of existence'.

Animadversion is the initial aspect of contemplation and involves spending time noticing details about the work. It follows an initial acquaintance with a work of art in which one might become present or attentive to it, or even collect information about it. Animadversion is the art of becoming visually aware of those parts of the picture or art work which our habitual rapid scanning tends to gloss over. 'This is the process which sometimes requires conscious effort, we feel we are literally turning our attention on to different parts of the canvas and saying to ourselves: Well now, what is actually *there*?' (2000, p.83).

The second aspect, *concursus,* is seeing relations or relationships between the parts of an art work. To continue the line of questioning from the animadversion phase, the viewer asks: 'Why is *that* there?' Every aspect of a painting is normally related to the whole work so that the sum of the parts is greater than the whole. Concursus involves, for example, noticing formally 'insignificant' or 'peripheral' details of a work and interrogating their relationship to the whole, and their pattern of meaning in relation to other aspects of the work.

In any work of art, this might include the significance of and contrast and relationship between various elements such as – colours, symbols, gestures, curves and lines, facial expressions, animals, plants and humans, objects, the direction of figures' gazes, light and dark regions, and even physical measurements between people and objects. When the viewer 'sees together' all these various elements, the possible result is 'an enrichment of visual significance, of meaning. Scrutiny of a work of art frequently involves a rhythm of attention to individual parts and to the relations between those parts. This rhythm is required by art and it is also native to the perceiving mind' (2000, p.91).

The third aspect, *hololepsis*, is seizing the whole work as the whole – the 'connected knowing' phase of looking at an art work. It addresses the viewer's question: 'How are the parts I have noticed related to the whole work?' Armstrong notes: 'To seize a work as a whole – as a single complete entity – is an achievement of contemplation which stands at the opposite end of the spectrum from fastening upon it detail by detail' (2000, p.92). Clearly, this is a different type of knowing, implying a different type of spirituality, to that to which we are accustomed. Factual, informative or empirical knowing is different from and yet complementary to contemplative, holistic or hololeptic knowing.

Each type of knowing 'attends to' different aspects of an art work. Both are distinct types of knowing, and yet absolutely necessary. To sum up this aspect: 'Hololepsis yields an archetype of completeness and coherent explanation –

thus responding to two of the great aims of mental activity'. Armstrong adds: 'Hololeptic contemplation…links the experience of art to the wider demands of reflective life and suggests how, to a certain kind of person, the experience of art could be of prime private importance' (2000, pp.94-95).

The fourth aspect, *the lingering caress,* is that aspect of engaging an art work that addresses the questions: Why do we return to works of art? Why look again at something you have already seen? Haven't we already 'seen' what a work has to offer during the first encounter? Armstrong observes: 'Contemplation is an open-ended process; it can get broken off but it can't be completed. When we savour something we hold our attention upon it; and that holding can be extended as long as we wish, or until we become jaded' (2000, p.98). However, the phase or 'art' of lingering has not been enthusiastically applauded by Western society throughout history. It has been pilloried by some as 'wasted time'. Nothing visible gets achieved, produced or finalised.

Nevertheless, the lingering caress is absolutely necessary to the practice of contemplation (some would call it 'hovering near' or 'spending time with' an art work). Lingering before an art work, similar to lingering with a loved one, is absolutely essential if one is to develop skills such as listening, attentiveness, drawing close, happiness, and meaningfulness.

The fifth and final aspect of Armstrong's taxonomy, *catalepsis,* is the ongoing process of mutual absorption with an art work. It interrogates the viewer with the question: 'Why do some works of art not only fix or demand our attention, but absorb us into them so that they in turn get absorbed into us?' This takes the viewer one step further along from 'the lingering caress'. The viewer not only returns to the work of art but begins to somehow absorb/get changed by the work of art in a mysterious morphing process of symbiosis. Catalepsis is the phase or experience resulting from contemplation of an art work, which draws the viewer out of self-centredness in his or her contemplation of the 'other', the 'stranger', or the 'different'.

For Armstrong, 'contemplation is the spiritual analogue of eating' (2000, p.100). It is a two way process where the art work absorbs the viewer and the viewer in turn absorbs the art work. This absorption is not just another quick and easy process in our driven, 'do it now' world. It takes time, pondering, sustained attention, and commitment to a work of art. As Armstrong himself has ventured, it is akin to the relationship with a loved one. One pledges to be present to the art work to savour its wisdom and to deepen this precious relationship.

The value of Armstrong's approach is that – like lateral thinking, cooperative learning, or slow thinking – it provides a systematic way, even 'permission', for those who view works of art to actually spend time with them, notice what they are saying, and respond to them in various ways. This is akin to a process of deep seeing, listening and contemplation which changes the way we look at things as well as the way we understand and engage the world.
Armstrong's five pronged approach represents an ongoing process of contemplation, hololepsis and catalepsis. The five parts are continually moving and in a state of flux. They could be compared to a living and breathing organism. The organism itself is hololeptic – the moving parts are always greater than the sum of its moving whole. In addition, it is enduringly cataleptic – engagement with a work of art continually engages all five aspects: we are repeatedly drawn back to 'great' works of art like the nails to the magnet or the moth to the candle. When this transpires, we are irrevocably caught up in a process of metamorphosis where the artwork morphs, we change the way we look at the art work and, as a result, this changes ways in which we see and interact with the world.

Conclusions

Practical strategies for the cultivation of attentiveness as 'deep seeing' and contemplation

'The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious' (Albert Einstein)

To adapt a famous saying by G. K. Chesterton about Christianity: 'It is not so much that the

arts have been tried and found wanting, they have simply not been tried'. The decision by teachers and others to incorporate the arts into their teaching and reflection has the capacity to open up whole new worlds of 'deep seeing', attentiveness, and contemplation. Andrew Fuller is one who has noted the peculiar power of the arts to open up these new worlds:

> It's surprising the amount of information that can be extracted out of a song lyric or favourite film. The art seems to be to use [students'] own diversion strategies as an entrée to their world. Also, it allows them to *educate you* about something, which often places them in a different position from being misunderstood or not listened to (1998, p.12, my italics).

In the final analysis, incorporating the arts into religious education involves a deliberate choice to meditate upon (look deeply into, chew over) various aspects of nature, creation or the cosmos. By engaging students in this process, the teacher would be hopeful that their charges would begin to perceive the universe reflected in its smallest part – the macro within the micro, a Pandora's box of fractals. In this sense, for example, teachers and students as artists and contemplatives would also begin to see a whole galaxy 'glimpsed' within the middle of a poppy or grevillea, or perhaps within atomic structures revealed through an electron microscope.

Many vehicles can open up these 'faces' of Mystery or the Transcendent to humanity. Nature can achieve this, for example, through a simple walk in a national park, or by viewing a sunset or sunrise. However, the arts are unique in maintaining the relationship between the trinity of image, idea, and reality. The arts preserves and promotes the symbolic and the metaphorical, and calls forth a concrete response from its viewers. As Balan points out, if this tripartite relationship is ever severed, communication between the human and Divine can be rendered mute. He continues:

But humanity needs art only so long as it preserves this relationship. In so doing, art reflects what makes us distinctly human – creations (image) with souls (idea) made in the image of God (reality). And so art continues to be a means of conveying clues in our search for meaning (2006, p.1).

The following resources, ideas and strategies represent a good starting point for opening a 'conversation' about a spirituality of the arts based on 'deep seeing', paying attention, and contemplation. Many of these provide practical examples for what has already been outlined in theory above. The vast majority of these ideas also assume that teachers and students can become creators of art and active meaning-makers as artists in their own right.

- St. Luke's resources provide a good general basis for developing personal, staff, student, and other group spirituality, based on the arts, photography, and symbol. See especially

Signposts, exploring everyday spirituality (Deal & Masman, 2004)[2], *Shadows and deeper shadows, seeing the darkness, looking for light* (Deal, Gardner & Holton, 2005)[3], and *deepspeak, the world according to you* (Deal, 2006)[4].

- Mindful or reflective walking in the midst of nature – the bush, forest or nature trail (Hearn, 2005, p.5).
- Use art as a source for exploring key questions in the search for meaning (cf. Balan, 2006, passim).
- Contemplation and breathing exercises such as Nekashum, Stillness, Silence, and Non-conceptual mind (Edrid, 2006).
- Meditation using 'vehicles' that promote deep seeing, such as stained glass, installations of religious art, and icons.
- Communicating using different media from usual – e.g. photography, digital media,

[2] https://innovativeresources.org/resources/card-sets/signposts/

[3] https://innovativeresources.org/resources/card-sets/shadows-and-deeper-shadows/

[4] https://innovativeresources.org/resources/card-sets/deep-speak-2/

installation, collage, scrap booking, glass painting, sand mandalas.

- Explore the implications of art characterised by an apophatic spirituality – e.g. expressing one's spirituality via images, colours, symbols, textures, collage, or fragments of childhood events.
- Practise silence and contemplation within nature and other similar environments.
- Study selected parables and then reflect on and discuss what a 'parabolic spirituality' might involve. Some commentators have compared parables to the literary genre of poetry – it is a different way of seeing and imag[in]ing the world.
- Many artist have stated that they seek through their works to elicit an emotional (affective) or visceral response, rather than a cognitive or cerebral response. Look at art works that draw forth these type of responses and journal the results.
- Employ a range of responses that challenge students to 'wake up' or 'pay attention' – reflective walking, drawing, journalling, doing without technology, for a few days or even a week.
- Practise the disciplines of 'paying attention' and 'deep seeing' – endeavour to look more closely at something and notice what you have not seen before – e.g. whilst walking in nature, in the city, with a person you love, observing strangers, journalling at day's end.
- Aim to develop what Ruskin called 'heart-sight [as] deep as eyesight' by looking more deeply at the 'surfaces' of things – earth, air, clouds, water, fire – then attempt to translate these material surfaces onto the surface of a canvas, or via another art form.
- Cultivate the disciplines of silence and contemplation – allow a period of quiet time for at least twenty minutes each day. Use a method such as meditative breathing or a mantra to still the mind.
- Utilise a range of resources suggested in the 'References' below, including Brussat and Brussat, the 'Spirituality and Practice' website, and many other books and sites.

These and comparable strategies affirm that there is significant value in incorporating the arts into religious education and other disciplines. The arts provide a vehicle which enable teachers and students to pay attention to what is of greatest value, to 'see deeply' into the core issues and questions of existence, and to employ the oft-neglected tools of silence and contemplation to activate this ability to see more deeply.

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Diagram 1 – the Process of 'Deep Seeing' and Paying Attention

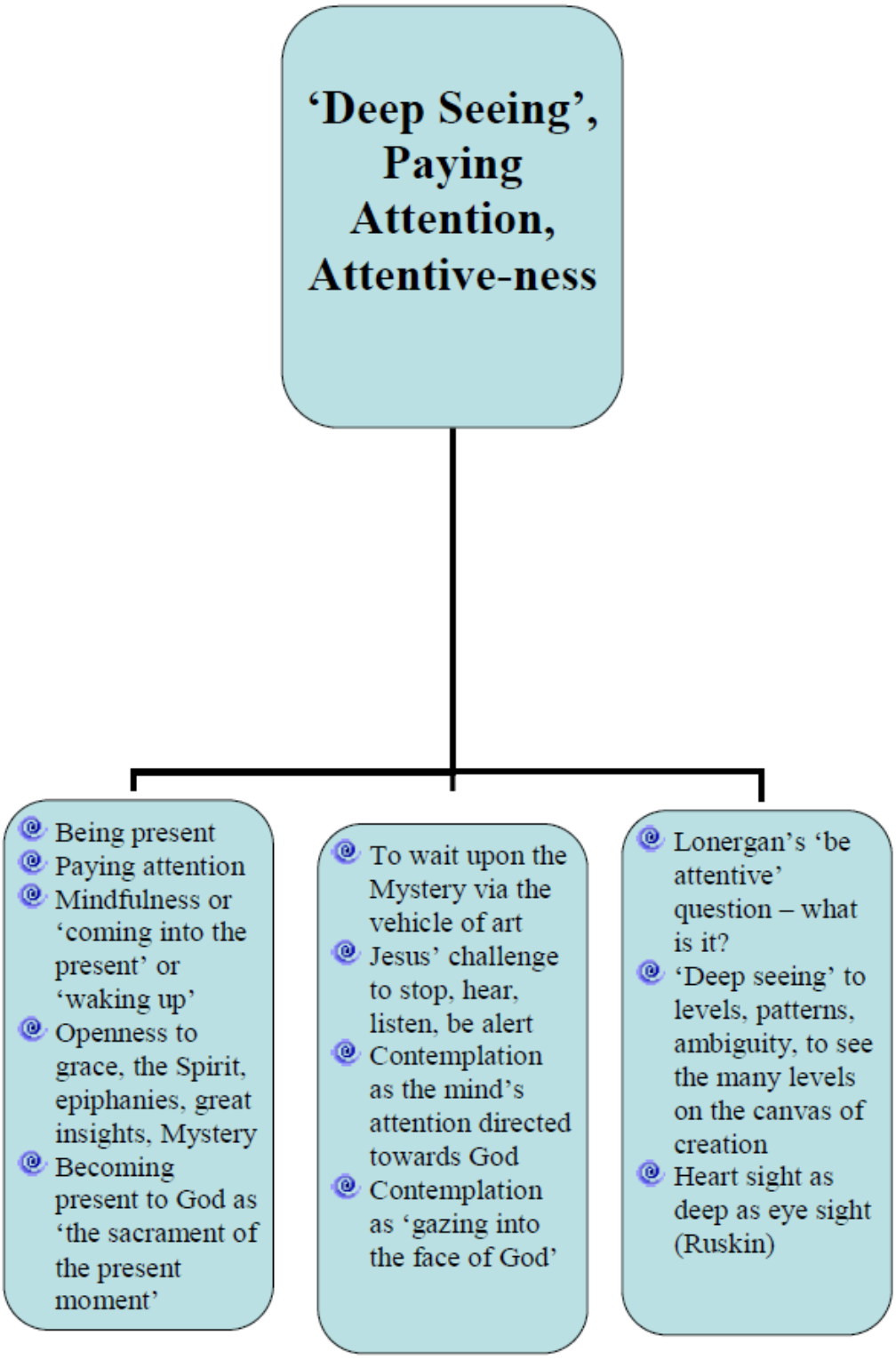
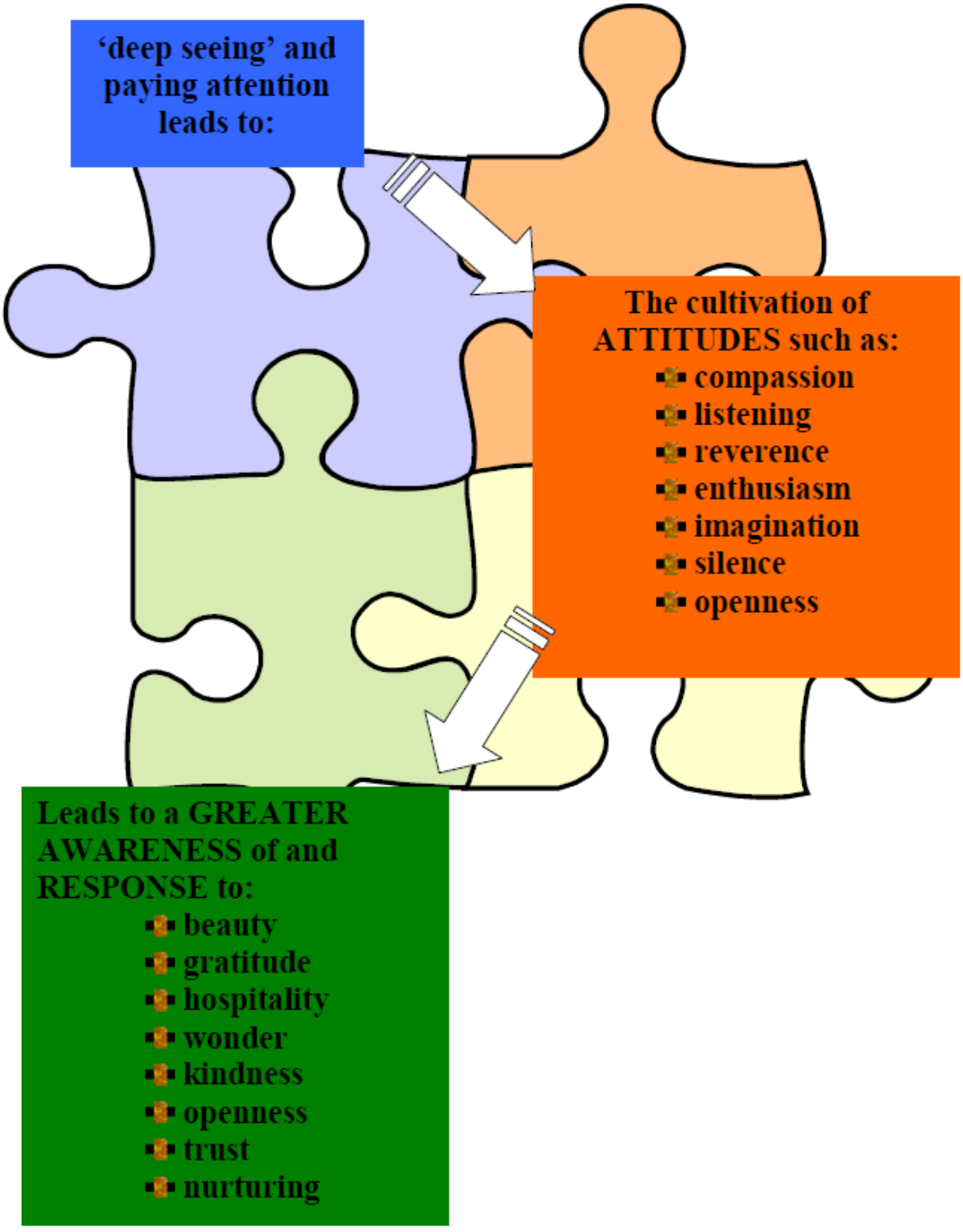


Diagram 2 – some key elements of Spirituality & Practice

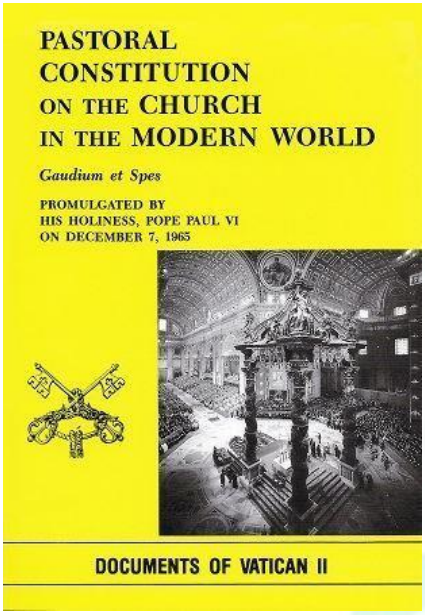


FEATURE: VATICAN II

Gaudium et Spes

PASTORAL CONSTITUTION ON THE CHURCH IN THE MODERN WORLD (December 7, 1965)

THE DOCUMENT



Gaudium et Spes was issued when the Second Vatican Council ended in 1965. The document summarizes the council and gives an outline of the Church's social teachings in a changing world.

The world has seen enormous development and progress that has amazed humanity but it has also caused many to worry about the social implications of a quickly changing society as advances in technology and power threaten people. Never before has there been so much wealth simultaneous with so much hunger and poverty.

Gaudium et Spes noted that economic, scientific and political changes are happening so quickly that it is difficult to keep up with their effects on society. While these developments have brought many people to God, others have left faith behind.

In these transforming times, the Second Vatican Council sought to clarify the role of the church in the world by turning to Scripture and the Church's social teachings. The encyclical emphasizes the dignity of each human being as created in the image of God which comes from their call to communion with God.

God did not create people to live in isolation, but to develop society and community. We are to treat one another in the spirit of brotherhood. Basic equality is required because all people possess a rational soul, were created in God's likeness, and have been redeemed by Christ.

Humanity has laboured throughout history to improve living conditions and scientific advances have made great strides. These achievements are signs of God's greatness and realization of his plan. At the same time, progress has brought about great temptation and we must avoid becoming arrogant when we are successful.

The Church is the family of God's children in this world waiting for the Lord's return. The Church's primary purpose is a religious one, to share God with the world, but also to protect and promote human dignity. She must initiate action on behalf of all humanity, especially the needy.

The encyclical then proceeds to name a number of problems which concern the Church. The wellbeing of individuals and Christian society is intimately linked with the wellbeing of marriage and the family.

In recent years there have been many challenges to the traditional family. The purpose of marriage is to further human life and educate children. Parents should teach their children to follow their vocation and raise them in the Church.

The cultural and social changes in recent years have brought about a new age of human history. In our world all Christians should be united in one family. There is a danger that humanity will put too much trust in the discoveries of today and no longer seek God.

The Church is not bound exclusively and indissolubly to any race or nation and seeks to share the Gospel with all. We should also work to preserve each person's dignity regardless of race, sex, nation, religion, or social condition.

People should also be mindful of changes taking place in the world economy. Some are allowing their personal and social lives to be consumed by economics. While some have benefited greatly, many remain in poverty. Efforts must be taken to reduce immense economic inequality which is connected with individual and social discrimination.

Finally, the nations of the world should work together to create a peace based on justice and love. In order for this to happen, we must respect others and their dignity. War must be avoided and members of a nation's military ought to think of themselves as agents of security and freedom for the people.

The condemnations of total war are repeated – any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities of extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and humanity itself.

In order to achieve peace, the document explains, the causes of discord between peoples must be eliminated. In addition there should be economic cooperation to help underdeveloped nations achieve progress.

https://cacatholic.org/teachings/catholic-social-teaching/social-encyclicals/gaudium-et-spes-hope-and-joy

THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

How might the Catholic school respond to the call of *Gaudium et Spes*? The quotes below from the document give us direction. We might say that the school, sharing in the Church's mission, is called to become a sacrament of the Kingdom of God, a place where God's reign is experienced both within by those who form its community and beyond by those in the society which surrounds it.

> *All must consider it their sacred duty to count social obligations among their chief duties today and observe them as such. For the more closely the world comes together, the more widely do people's obligations transcend particular groups and extend to the whole world. This will be realized only if individuals and groups practise moral and social virtues and foster them in social living. Then, under the necessary help of divine grace, there will arise a generation of new women and men, the molders of a new humanity. (#30)*

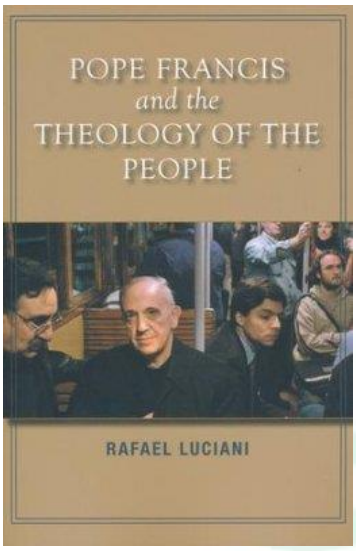
> *We do not know the time for the consummation of the earth and of humanity, nor do we know how all things will be transformed. As deformed by sin, the shape of this world will pass away; but we are taught that God is preparing a new dwelling place and a new earth where justice will abide, and whose blessedness will answer and surpass all the longings for peace which spring up in the human heart. Then, with death overcome, the sons of God will be raised up in Christ, and what was sown in weakness and corruption will be invested with incorruptibility. Enduring with charity and its fruits, all that creation which God made on man's account will be unchained from the bondage of vanity.*

> *Therefore, while we are warned that it profits a man nothing if he gain the whole world and lose himself, the expectation of a new earth must not weaken but rather stimulate our concern for cultivating this one. For here grows the body of a new human family, a body which even now is able to give some kind of foreshadowing of the new age. (#39)*

BOOK REVIEW

Pope Francis and the Theology of the People

(2017. Rafael Luciani. Orbis Books)



I started reading Rafael Luciani's new book, Pope Francis and the Theology of the People, months ago. I had to keep putting the book down and reading something else, not because the book was poorly written or because I found the subject matter uninteresting. Quite the contrary. No, I had to keep setting the book aside because reading it made me realize what a lousy Christian I am.

The theology of the people is not well known here in the United States. A couple years back, I attended a luncheon for Fr. Carlos Maria Galli, one of the leading practitioners of the theology of the people, and the poor, patient man had to cope with the most rudimentary of questions, and not just from the journalists. From the theologians too! Luciani demonstrates how and why the theology of the people had a formative impact on Jorge Maria Bergoglio, and also shows its continuing influence on his writings now that he is Pope Francis. This theology is critical to understanding not just the current pope but the church in Latin America which, increasingly, is not only leading the way at the Holy See but in the U.S. church as well.

This theology emerged in Argentina during and immediately after the Second Vatican Council, which sat from 1962 through 1965. The Argentine bishops, in 1966, issued a pastoral declaration for the post-conciliar period that recognized the paradigm shift Vatican II represented and pointed the Argentine church in a new direction:

Our great task at this time, in order to bring about the post-conciliar stage, must consist of three things: 1) Being imbued by the council, assimilating it by reflecting and internalizing its ideas and its spirit; 2) Consolidating and improving the communal form of the Church and its collegial structures: assembly of bishops, presbyterate, pastoral council, structuring and coordination of the laity; 3) Fostering greater openness to the world on the part of clergy and laity. This entails greater sincerity in fostering the spirit of poverty and service. In order to carry out this program, the Church in Argentina must increase reflection and dialogue in all sectors and on all levels.

So, right out of the box, you see the themes that would ripen in the church in Latin America: poverty, service, collegiality, dialogue, communal form of the church, openness to the world. But, there, unlike so many dioceses in the U.S., the bishops were in the vanguard, not fighting a rearguard action against the implementation of the council.

What was most distinctive about the theology of the people, however, was its understanding of the people as the locus for theological reflection and ecclesial credibility. The Latin American bishops' reading of critical texts of Vatican II, such as *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*, eliminated the possibility of any kind of privatized, pietistic faith, but it did more than that. It demanded that the church adopt the standpoint of the people of God and look at itself and at the world with all its hopes and fears, standing with and amongst the people.

(Michael Sean Winters - National Catholic Reporter)

NEWS

Taize Global Meeting for South Africa

South Africa will welcome several thousand young people next year for an international Taizé pilgrimage of hope, peace and trust. Local young adults aged 18 to 35 will be joined by others from Africa and abroad in Cape Town from September 25 to 29 for the Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth organised by the Taizé Community.

The ecumenical monastic Community was founded in the small village of Taizé, France, by Swiss Christian Br Roger Schütz, known as Br Roger, in 1940. Today the Community comprises one hundred Brothers from more than 25 different countries. Br Roger, who died in 2005, devoted his life to reconciling all Christian denominations, and focused his work on youth.

The Cape Town Taizé pilgrimage, which will help young people in their search for God, will encourage them to have a profound trust in themselves and in others. They will be invited to be attentive to the signs and people of hope present around them, and encouraged to take up responsibilities to become bearers of peace and trust in churches and in society.

The daily programme will include common prayers, times of sharing in small groups, workshops on various themes (faith and life, cultural presentations), visiting and meeting people of hope in the neighbourhood, Bible readings, meditative singing, praying, being in silence, and sharing faith. The morning programme will be in parishes/local churches, and from midday onwards at a common venue.

Participants will be accommodated in parishes and local communities. This personal welcome is an important aspect of the pilgrimage.The young people will be put up in families with simple means.

Every day a shuttle bus service (and/or train) will bring those attending from local parishes to the common venue at midday, and take them back after prayers in the evening.

Attending the Cape Town meeting involves full participation and preparation in advance.

The Taizé Community has organised meetings with local churches each year, in cities such as Johannesburg (1995), Calcutta (2006), Cochabamba, Bolivia (2007), Nairobi (2008), Santiago, Chile (2010), Berlin (2011), Kigali, Rwanda (2012), and Basel (2017).

All young people who participate in Taizé meetings are called to be witnesses of peace wherever they live, in their local communities, cities, and churches.

The Brothers, who commit themselves for their entire lives to the Community and live exclusively from their own work, also welcome young people every week throughout the year at Taizé itself.

The final date to register for the Cape Town Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth is July 21, 2019, and this can be done through your local congregation, chaplaincy, or youth office.

For details contact Brothers from Taizé, Saint Bartholomew's, via e-mail at CapeTown@taize.fr

Killer robots will make war even more inhumane

The Southern Cross, April 25 to May 1, 2018

A robot distributed literature calling for a ban on fully autonomous weapons in Parliament Square

Allowing for the development and use of fully automated lethal weapons systems would make warfare even more inhumane and undermine efforts to achieve peace through dialogue, not an arms race, a Vatican representative said.

"A world in which autonomous systems are left to manage, rigidly or randomly, fundamental questions related to the lives of human beings and nations, would lead us imperceptibly to dehumanisation, and to a weakening of the bonds of a true and lasting fraternity of the human family," Archbishop Ivan Jurkovic told a group of experts at the United Nations in Geneva.

The archbishop, who is the Vatican observer to UN agencies in Geneva, spoke at a session for the"Group of Governmental Experts" on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS).

States that are party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons agreed in 2016 to establish the group to address the legal and ethical implications concerning such autonomous technologies, which are also referred to as robotic weapons or "killer robots".

The International Committee of the Red Cross has defined LAWS as being "any weapon system with autonomy in its critical functions. That is, a weapon system that can select—search for or detect, identify, track, select—and attack—use force against, neutralise, damage or destroy—targets without human intervention."

The first such autonomous weapon was the landmine, but rapid advances in artificial intelligence and machine learning have broadened the potential for weapons with extensive autonomy from human decision-making.

Archbishop Jurkovic told the group that "the development of LAWS will provide the capacity of altering irreversibly the nature of warfare, becoming even more inhumane, putting in question the humanity of our societies".

"Any armed intervention must be carefully weighed and must at all times verify its legitimacy, legality and conformity with its purposes, which must also be both ethically and legally legitimate," he said.

"Confronted with today's challenges, these tasks are growing ever more complex and too nuanced to be entrusted to a machine, which, for example, would be ineffective when facing moral dilemmas or questions raised by the application of the so-called principle of double effect," he said.

"Increased automation will blur or erase accountability and the "traceability of the use of force with an accurate identification of those responsible", he said.—CNS

World Parliament of Religions; Women's Task Force

The Parliament of the World's Religions Stands With Victim-Survivors of Sexualized Violence

The Women's Task Force of the Parliament of the World's Religions calls upon religious traditions and spiritual communities to stand up and address sexual abuse, sexual assault, and sexual harassment that is occurring within religious contexts and throughout mainstream society.

We as people of faith and conscience are called upon to hear and believe the experiences of victim-survivors who are speaking up in every sector of society, and across all cultures, and to do our utmost to challenge and confront the cultures and systems that promote and enable this abuse of power.

Our commitments to stopping sexualized and gender-based violence are outlined in the Declaration for the Dignity and Human Rights of Women, delivered at the historic Inaugural Women's Assembly at the 2015 Parliament of the World's Religions. We invite our human family and especially those in positions of leadership and power to join us in affirming to:

- call upon all religious leaders and adherents to challenge and change harmful teachings and practices that justify discrimination and violence against women and girls
- call upon the world's religions to honor and uphold the dignity, well-being, and fundamental human rights of women and girls.
- commit ourselves to this collective undertaking to heal the heart of our humanity by releasing women, girls, men and boys from the bondage of gender-based discrimination and violence. We do so with hope and with faith in our future.

We stand with all who have shared their most personal testimony of this no-longer-unspeakable truth. And to those who are still yet unable to share their experiences, especially within religious institutions, for fear of retribution or threats to their personal safety: we see you and support you.

We call upon all religious and spiritual traditions and the interfaith movement to join with the Women's Task Force of the Parliament of the World's Religions as we continue to do our utmost to break the chains of silence by strengthening, implementing and enforcing policies and practices that will transform us into a better, more decent and just society. We also give our gratitude to the agencies that have already taken action to demonstrate that sexualized violence and harassment will no longer be tolerated within their institutions.

Religious and spiritual communities, though complicit participants in a global culture of sexual violence, can and should draw from each of their divine and sacred inspirations the courage that is required now to end this cycle.

Victims-survivors of violence and abuse—sexual, physical and emotional— in spiritual or religious communities (as well as in the home or the workplace) have shown courage in raising their voices.

The time is now for us all to be courageous.

Let us be committed and united together against sexual violence and discrimination, wherever it may be.

World Scientists' Warning to Humanity: A Second Notice

William J. Ripple, Christopher Wolf, Thomas M. Newsome, Mauro Galetti, Mohammed Alamgir, Eileen Crist, Mahmoud I. Mahmoud, William F. Laurance, 15,364 scientist signatories from 184 countries *BioScience*, Volume 67, Issue 12, 1 December 2017, Pages 1026– 1028,

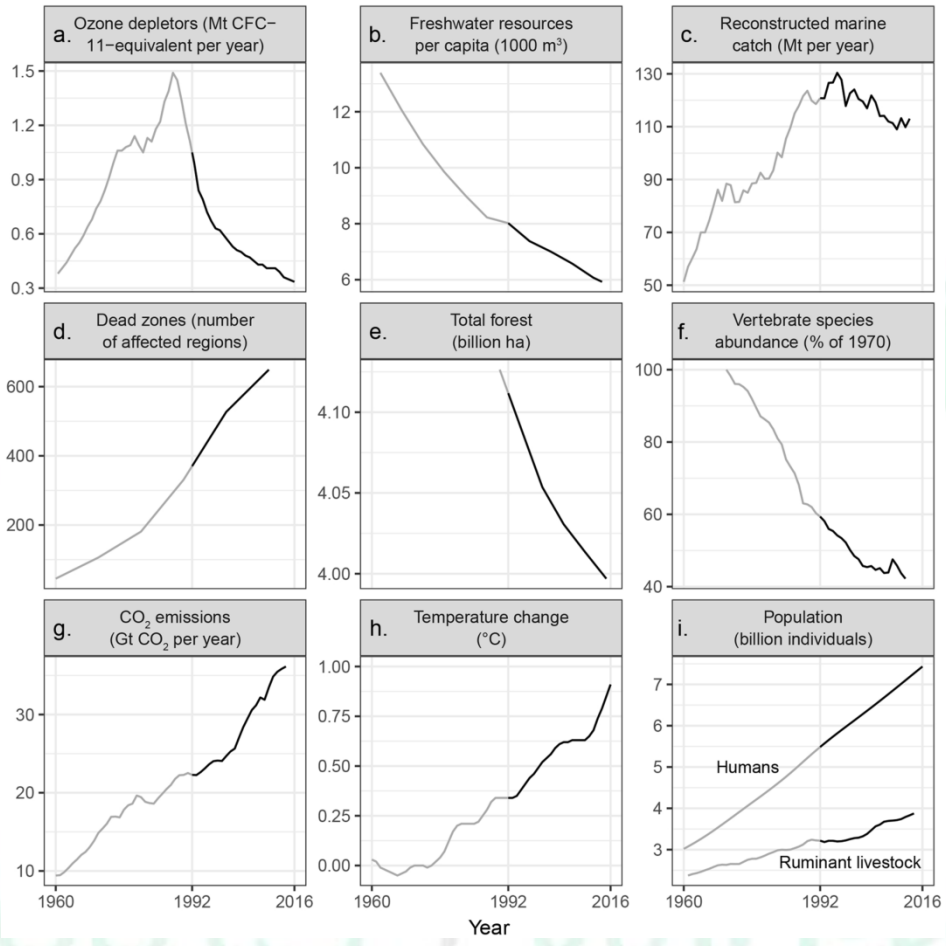
https://doi.org/10.1093/biosci/bix125

Twenty-five years ago, the Union of Concerned Scientists and more than 1700 independent scientists, including the majority of living Nobel laureates in the sciences, penned the 1992 "World Scientists' Warning to Humanity". These concerned professionals called on humankind to curtail environmental destruction and cautioned that "a great change in our stewardship of the Earth and the life on it is required, if vast human misery is to be avoided." In their manifesto, they showed that humans were on a collision course with the natural world. They expressed concern about current, impending, or potential damage on planet Earth involving ozone depletion, freshwater availability, marine life depletion, ocean dead zones, forest loss, biodiversity destruction, climate change, and continued human population growth. They proclaimed that fundamental changes were urgently needed to avoid the consequences our present course would bring.

The authors of the 1992 declaration feared that humanity was pushing Earth's ecosystems beyond their capacities to support the web of life. They described how we are fast approaching many of the limits of what the biosphere can tolerate without substantial and irreversible harm. The scientists pleaded that we stabilize the human population, describing how our large numbers—swelled by another 2 billion people since 1992, a 35 percent increase—exert stresses on Earth that can overwhelm other efforts to realize a sustainable future (Crist et al. 2017). They implored that we cut greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and phase out fossil fuels, reduce deforestation, and reverse the trend of collapsing biodiversity.

On the twenty-fifth anniversary of their call, we look back at their warning and evaluate the human response by exploring available time-series data. Since 1992, with the exception of stabilizing the

stratospheric ozone layer, humanity has failed to make sufficient progress in generally solving these foreseen environmental challenges, and alarmingly, most of them are getting far worse. Especially troubling is the current trajectory of potentially catastrophic climate change due to rising GHGs from burning fossil fuels (Hansen et al. 2013), deforestation (Keenan et al. 2015), and agricultural production—particularly from farming ruminants for meat consumption (Ripple et al. 2014). Moreover, we have unleashed a mass extinction event, the sixth in roughly 540 million years, wherein many current life forms could be annihilated or at least committed to extinction by the end of this century.

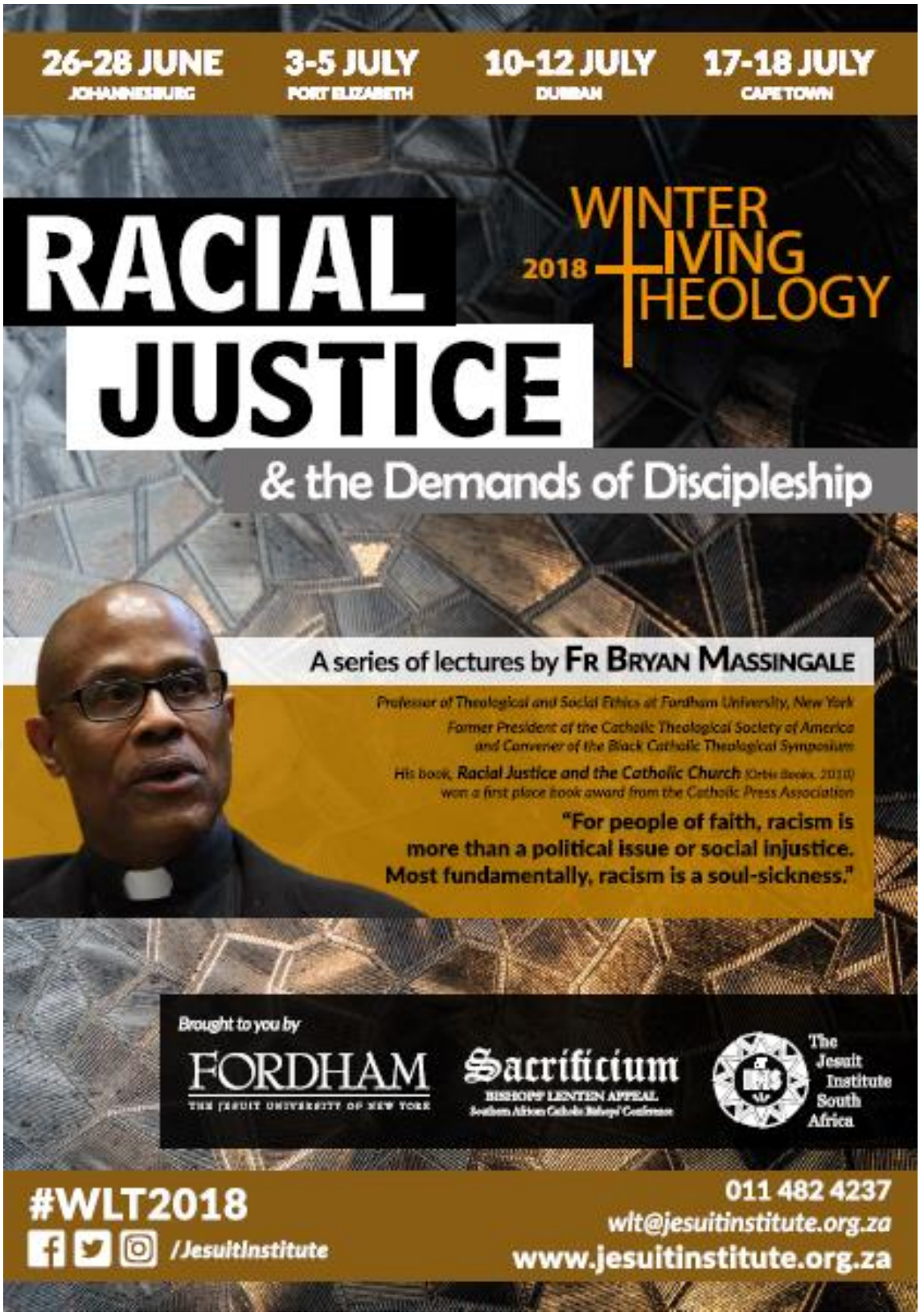


Trends over time for environmental issues identified in the 1992 scientists' warning to humanity.

The years before and after the 1992 scientists' warning are shown as gray and black lines, respectively. Panel (a) shows emissions of halogen source gases, which deplete stratospheric ozone, assuming a constant natural emission rate of 0.11 Mt CFC-11-equivalent per year. In panel (c), marine catch has been going down since the mid-1990s, but at the same time, fishing effort has been going up. The vertebrate abundance index in panel (f) has been adjusted for taxonomic and geographic bias but incorporates relatively little data from developing countries, where there are the fewest studies; between 1970 and 2012, vertebrates declined by 58 percent, with freshwater, marine, and terrestrial populations declining by 81, 36, and 35 percent, respectively. Five-year means are shown in panel (h). In panel (i), ruminant livestock consist of domestic cattle, sheep, goats, and buffaloes. Note that y-axes do not start at zero, and it is important to inspect the data range when interpreting each graph. Percentage change, since 1992, for the variables in each panel are as follows: (a) –68.1%; (b) –26.1%; (c) –6.4%; (d) +75.3%; (e) –2.8%; (f) –28.9%; (g) +62.1%; (h) +167.6%; and (i) humans: +35.5%, ruminant livestock: +20.5%.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Winter Living Theology



To qualify for CPTD points, answer the following questions.

The Arts in Religious Education - A Focus for 'Deep Seeing', Silence and Contemplation (Part Two)

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

	STATEMENT	TRUE	FALSE
1	Contemplation is often associated with 'mysticism', which all authors associate not with rarefied experiences, but with the ordinary apprehensions of God's presence in the living out of daily life.		
2	By looking at the insides of reality, the person given to contemplation eventually finds themselves 'looking at God'.		
3	Paying attention and contemplation is not integral to engaging a work of art.		
4	Armstrong's five aspects of contemplation are animadversion, concursus, hololepsis, the lingering caress, and catalapsis.		
5	Animadversion is the art of becoming visually aware.		
6	Concursus is seeing relations or relationships between the parts of an art work.		
7	Hololepsis is an achievement of contemplation which stands at the opposite end of the spectrum from fastening upon it detail by detail.		
8	The phase or 'art' of lingering has been enthusiastically applauded by Western society throughout history.		
9	Catalepsis draws the viewer out of self-centredness in his or her contemplation of the 'other', the 'stranger', or the 'different'.		
10	Art is a means of conveying clues in our search for meaning.		

Professional Society of Religious Educators

66Nelson Road, Booysens, Johannesburg 2091
P O Box 2083 Southdale 2135;
Tel: 011 433 1888 Web: www.cie.org.za