



# The Periodical of the Professional Society of Religious Educators

Vol 5 No 4 (November 2019)

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## EDITORIAL

Welcome to the fourth and final edition of *Roots & Wings* for 2019. This publication, sent electronically free of charge to members of the Professional Society, appears quarterly. It contains regular features as indicated in the Contents table alongside.

Members are encouraged to send material for future editions. What might you send? Here are some examples:

- Lesson ideas or plans
- Reviews of useful materials such as books or websites
- News from your school's RE Department
- Short articles of interest to religious educators
- Adverts for RE posts in your school

## REMINDER

It is not necessary for CPTD purposes to submit your responses to the chosen article 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.



## REFLECTION

### A New Way of Thinking

(Richard Rohr, Thursday, October 3, 2019)



Image credit: *Scenes from the life of Saint Francis: 2. Renunciation of Worldly Goods* (detail), Giotto di Bondone, 1325, Basilica of Santa Croce, Florence, Italy.

God gave St. Francis to history in a pivotal period when Western civilization began to move into rationality, functionality, consumerism, and perpetual war. Francis was himself a soldier, and his father was a tradesman in cloth. Francis came from the very world he was then able to critique, but he offered a positive critique of these very systems at the beginning of their now eight centuries of world dominance. Rather than fighting the systems directly and in so doing becoming a mirror image of them, Francis just did things differently. *The best criticism of the bad is the practice of the better* (one of the Center's core principles).

As Adolf Holl put it, Francis emerged precisely when we started "putting clocks into church towers." When Christian leaders started counting, Francis stopped counting. He moved from the common economy of merit to the scary and wondrous economy of grace, where God does not do any counting, but only gives unreservedly.

As Europe began to centralize and organize everything at high levels of control and fashion, Francis, like a divine trickster, said, "Who cares!" When Roman Catholicism under Pope Innocent III reached the height of papal and worldly

power, he said in effect, "There is another way that is much better!" Exactly when we began a style of production and consumption that would eventually ravage planet earth, he decided to love the earth and live simply and barefoot upon it. Francis of Assisi is a Prime Attractor to what we really want, what we definitely need, and who we finally are. And, apparently, he did it all with a "perfect joy" that comes from letting go of the ego!

*We are only afraid of death as long as we do not know who we are*, but once we know ourselves objectively to be a child of God, we are already home and our inheritance is given to us ahead of time. Then we can begin living and enjoying instead of climbing, proving, or defending. Our false self, as all religions say in one way or another, must "die before we die." Only then can we sincerely say with Francis, "Welcome, Sister Death" which he said on this day in 1226. Those who face this first death of dying to self lose nothing that is real. And so, "the second death can do them no harm," as Francis says in his "Canticle of the Creatures." Death itself will only "keep opening, and opening, and opening," which is what resurrection means.



All of this creates a very different form and shape to our spiritual life. It is no longer elitist, separatist, or competitive, but changes our deepest imagination in the direction of simplicity. Our worldview will not normally change until we place ourselves, or *are placed*, in new and different lifestyle situations. Another of the Center's core

principles is: *You do not think yourself into a new way of living, you live yourself into a new way of thinking.* Francis and Clare displaced themselves into different worlds where their hearts could imagine very different things and they had to pay attention to something other than comfort or convenience.

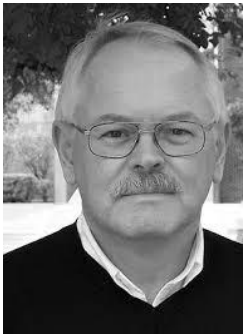
Adapted from Richard Rohr, [\*Eager to Love: The Alternative Way of Francis of Assisi\*](#) (Franciscan Media: 2014), 200-202.



## REFLECTION

### Chastity and Christmas

(Ron Rolheiser)



Scripture and Christian tradition emphasize that Jesus could only be born out of a chaste womb, just as Christian Spirituality emphasizes he can only come to full bloom inside of a chaste heart. Why? Why this emphasis on chastity?

Chastity needs to be properly understood. For too long we have had an overly-narrow and mostly false concept of chastity. Chastity is too commonly identified with sexual abstinence and sexuality is then seen as something that, in itself, militates against chastity and spirituality. But chastity is not the same thing as celibacy; indeed it is not even, first and foremost, a sexual concept. Someone can be chaste but not celibate, just as someone can be celibate but not chaste. My parents were not celibate, they gave birth to a large family, but they were wonderfully chaste persons. The reverse can also be true. Someone can be celibate but far from chaste.

What is chastity? We are chaste when we stand before the world, others, and God in a way which allows them to be fully themselves without letting our own impatience, selfishness, or unwillingness to remain in tension violate their reality and their natural unfolding. What is meant by that?

Allow me to present three images for this:

- In her book, *Holy the Firm*, Annie Dillard shares this story: One evening, alone in her cabin, she

was watching a moth slowly emerge from its cocoon. The process was fascinating but interminably slow. At a point she lost patience and needed to get on to other things, so she picked up a candle and applied a little heat to the process. It worked. The added heat sped up the process and the moth emerged more quickly from its cocoon, but, since a natural process had been interfered with and unnaturally rushed, the moth emerged with ill-formed wings which didn't allow it to fly properly. A fault in chastity led to stunted growth.

- The movie, *Sense and Sensibility*, based on Jane Austen's classic novel, presents its leading character, a woman played by Emma Thompson, as someone who is asked to carry an extremely painful tension for a long time, one having to do with unrequited and unconsummated love. She has no one with whom she can really share her pain and her circumstance requires her to carry on as if she was not carrying this pain. She carries that tension for a long time, sublimating her pain into a graciousness that she extends even to the very persons who are the source of her tension. Only after a long time is the tension finally resolved and her forbearance in not forcing an earlier, premature resolution, her willingness to carry the tension to term, helps bring about deeper life for everyone, not least for herself. This is the essence of chastity.

- After the Italian, spiritual writer, Carlo Carretto, had spent a number of years living as a hermit in the Sahara desert, he was asked what message he would give to the world if someone

asked him the question: What, in your solitude and prayer, do you hear God saying to those of us who are living active lives in the world? Carretto replied: God is saying: learn to wait, learn to wait for everything – for love, for fulfillment, for consummation, for God! Learning to wait, giving God and life the space to unfold as they need to, is the very essence of chastity.

In a number of his books, Nikos Kazantzakis, both fondly and bitterly, makes this assertion: *God, it seems, is never in a hurry, while we are always in a hurry.* He's right: Life unfolds according to its own innate rhythms which try our patience and it will not let themselves be rushed, except at a cost. Life and love demand both the time and the space within which to unfold according to their own internal dictates. Whenever, because of impatience, selfishness, or our unwillingness to stay inside a tension, we short-circuit that process we, in slight or deep ways, violate their reality.

Chastity is the virtue that invites us to live in patience, to wait, to respect what's other, and to carry tension long enough so that the other can truly be other and gift can unfold precisely as gift.

The word sublime takes its root in the word sublimation. Nothing can be sublime unless there is first sublimation. Nobody gives birth to a baby without a long period of gestation, nobody writes a doctoral thesis in two hours, nobody creates an artistic masterpiece without long hours of sweat and labor, and nobody becomes a heroic individual without carrying unbearable tension. Cinderella only got to go to the ball after she had spent sufficient time in the ashes. Jesus only got to the glory and freedom of Easter Sunday by first sweating blood in the garden.

That is why the Messiah can only be born from a chaste womb and come to life fully only inside of a chaste heart. Christmas allows for no shortcuts.



## TALKING ABOUT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### Religious Education and the Imagination

(Marisa Crawford & Graham Rossiter. 1988. *Missionaries to a Teenage Culture*, pp.129-131)

#### Imagination



Imagination is a faculty that we use unconsciously every day. In very humble ways, our imagination plans our evening meal, works out a quicker route to work, or our weekly grocery shopping. Imagination also sparks up our life in dull moments by recalling special times or special places. And imagination enhances and gives vision to our lives as we imagine how things ought to be. Imaginative vision sustains us during times when life or life's situations are bleak and creates new ways of looking at what can be done in the future.

In our teaching lives, imagination is central to our belief that what we do in schools can make a difference to the lives of the students we teach. Our

teaching programs are proof that we believe that knowledge and wisdom are necessary for the development of young people as whole and happy individuals. It is our ability to imagine the end product of all the efforts of planning and executing teaching programs that, along with less altruistic motives, enables us to continue the task of teaching the young.

The power of the imagination to animate the spirit is eloquently documented in many writings. Perhaps the most significant recent book on education which has given special attention to imagination is Elliot Eisner's *The Educational Imagination*.

### *Imaginative Teachers*

When thinking of 'imaginative' teachers we recall the example of three teachers in particular. They did little that would be regarded as 'artistically' imaginative. They were well organised, well prepared and systematic in their work; they maintained a firm, consistent and just discipline; they were always on time and always finished lessons comfortably without a scramble at the end; they had high expectations for student work and involvement and wasted little time; student written work was taken up regularly, marked and returned (usually) within one or two days; they varied the activities in lessons. They could not be described as showing flair or flamboyance and perhaps the description above might initially sound as uninviting as the script for a sort of automaton. However, students flourished in their classes, had a high sense of achievement - even the slow learners - and took an imaginative interest in the subjects being taught. Students went out of their way to see if they could get into these classes. Students were experiencing teachers who were evidently very interested in them as persons, who cared for them and their studies and who communicated some enthusiasm for the subject.

The teachers noted above created a classroom climate in which students could work consistently with few structural factors impeding their imaginative involvement. That sort of imaginative teaching is within the capabilities of most teachers. However, this is not to suggest that imaginative teaching be reduced simply to good organisation. Neither should imaginative teaching be equated with flamboyance, flair, the exotic or the merely different. It involves a sensitivity to student interests and needs, a readiness to try different teaching approaches which may help students, and a resourcefulness to make the best use of available materials and potential learning experiences.

This is not to deny the unique contribution to students' education made by teachers who have a natural flair and ability to transform many lessons into colourful and memorable experiences. We all remember with affection lessons made out of the ordinary by individuals with a quixotic sense of humour, or a *joie de vivre* that was infectious.

Students will be taught by teachers with different personalities and different talents. Working under a variety of tutors can be in itself a valuable educational experience for students.

Teachers will be different in the ways they try to motivate students. Where imaginative approaches are used, these need to be consistent in some way with the teacher's personality. Anything which is apparently artificial is likely to be ineffective.

While intentionally not exhaustive, the above discussion has focused on some aspects of imaginative teaching which create a classroom environment favourable for effective, motivated student learning. This is the type of framework in which we choose to base the following brief comments on the practical dimension to the place of imagination in religious education\*.

At first sight, this material may appear to be more mundane than one might expect - the reason: we often think of the 'imaginative teachers' as exceptional, who have 'flair' in their teaching, and are evidently very 'creative', always doing things out of the ordinary. This effectively puts the label 'imaginative' out of the reach of most teachers. Rather, our concern is to talk about imaginative teaching in a way that is relevant to most teachers and is within their grasp if they make an effort. It involves being thoughtful, practical, resourceful, knowing one's limitations, being careful of pitfalls, being ready to try new things and ready to acknowledge mistakes and try again. One of the most important aspects of imaginative teaching is to avoid the problems which suffocate the imagination of students and fail to motivate them.

[\*EDITOR'S NOTE – This discussion is continued below under the heading *CLASSROOM PRACTICE*.]





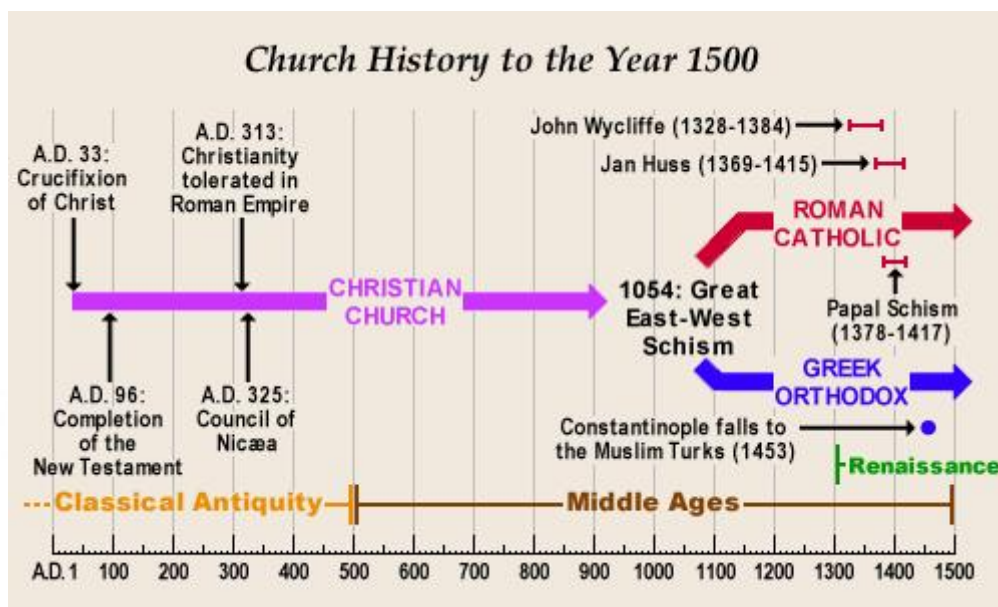
## CURRICULUM FOCUS

### Teaching Church History

(Marisa Crawford & Graham Rossiter. 1988. *Missionaries to a Teenage Culture*, pp.193-196)

The greatest stimulus to progress and belief in the future is knowledge and understanding of a past.

[John Boardman, *The Oxford History of the Classical World*]



Pope John XXIII regarded History "as the teacher of life". His own study as a Church historian made him conscious that the Church has always been in a state of flux. Hence, for him there was no fear of change. Only those who were ignorant of Church History, he claimed, could think of the Church as a static institution resistant to change.

A study of Church history is only one part of religious education. However, it is an essential part. A balanced understanding of the development of the Church and its role in the world is crucial in young people's education. Too often, disenchanted students believe the Church to be an outmoded institution impervious to their needs and incapable of constructive change. They seem to have a half-expressed, amorphous idea of a Church which came into existence after Christ's death and which has changed little since then. To bring the story of Christianity to life for students means involving them in a community of believers and saints, sinners, great thinkers, writers, musicians, artisans and artists who contributed to a heritage that has shaped

Western civilisation.

### Why Study Church History in Religious Education?

The teaching of Church History should try to give students a panoramic view of the history of the Church. They can come to understand how and why the Church has changed over its 2000 year history. They can understand its changing role in society as it responded to the needs of people through the ages, how it shaped society and how it was in turn influenced by the societies in which it existed. They can learn that change is one element necessary for vitality.

Through Church history, teachers can help students understand both the human experience and the theological meaning in what was happening in the changing Church. Not only will this help them recognise that developments in the past can have relevance to their own life experience, but they can learn how to discern patterns in history and how to interpret history in a way that colours their understanding of present events and their ideas of what might

happen in the future. They can become more conscious of historical influences on human beliefs, behaviour and culture.

Andre Godin, in a major review of research concerned with religious development, suggested that an "awakening of an historical consciousness" was one of the five fundamental tasks of religious education in promoting the spiritual maturity of young people. (Out of interest, it is useful to note here the other four developmental tasks suggested by Godin: - 2) the development of symbolic interpretation; 3) the progressive transformation of a magical and superstitious mentality; 4) a progressive reduction of 'moralism'; 5) a gradual 'purification' of Christian beliefs.)

### *Explanation of the Term 'History'*

What is envisaged here about the nature and the scope of Church history in religious education does not aim at a comprehensive, detailed study of the history of Christianity... Perhaps a better description... is 'the story of Christianity' which changed as it continually elaborated and renewed the message of the Gospels to address new needs and different circumstances.

"History can do much to help students orient themselves intellectually in space and time." Past events have shaped the society in which we live. Most people have a natural curiosity to know how this has happened. A balanced understanding of modern society is not possible without some understanding of history. The more one can link past and present, the clearer becomes one's perspective on the present and its problems.

A study of history should not be regarded as a preoccupation with the past, but as an essential component of a future-oriented education. As the historian Pelikan noted:

Knowledge of the traditions that have shaped us, for good or ill or some of both, is not a sufficient preparation for the kind of future that will face our children and our grandchildren in the 21st century - not a sufficient preparation, but a necessary preparation.

Thus the teaching approach for Church history that is advocated is one that retains the value of an historical study but avoids its more daunting aspects.

The study concentrates on important events that reveal the workings of the Church, and it underlines their relevance to the present. These events are chosen as ones that have shaped Christianity; that show the forces that were at work at the time to bring about changes and the forces that tended to stifle changes. The choice of events is to a certain extent subjective. But, in essence, the study of these events answers fundamentally important questions:-

- How do these events show a Church responding to the needs of its people?
- How does it keep alive the message of the Gospels for succeeding generations?
- Who were the people, women and men who bore witness to their commitment to Christ?

### *Problems Associated with the Teaching of Church History*

The best way to study Church history is not an easy thing to resolve. Firstly, there is an emotional response to history which may stem from unhappy experiences of being taught a litany of facts and dates. The teaching of History has come a long way in the last 10-15 years. Good History teachers would always make the subject come to life, but the reality was, and in some cases may still be, that History was perceived as a boring, dull subject. The driest thing that Mouse could think of when the bedraggled company gathered at the edge of Alice's Pool of Tears, was History:

The first question, of course, was how to get dry again ... At last the Mouse, who seemed to be a person of authority among them called out, "Sit down, all of you and listen to me! I'll soon make you **dry** enough ..." "Ahem!" said the Mouse with an important air. "Are you all ready? This is the driest thing I know. Silence all round, if you please! ... William the Conqueror, whose cause was favoured by the Pope, was soon submitted to by the English, who wanted leaders, and had been of late much accustomed to usurpations and conquest. Edwin and Morcar, the Earls of Mercia and Northumbria ..."

"Ugh!" said the Lory, with a shiver.

(From **Alice in Wonderland**, by L. Carroll)

- and quite rightly so; we are with the Lory! However, there have been many changes in teaching method in History, one of the most significant being an emphasis on linking historical material with relevant current affairs to draw out comparisons and to stimulate discussion. A comparison of student history texts at both junior and senior levels in the 1950s and early 1960s with history texts published recently will aptly show how much more the student is drawn into a study of History with photographs, original materials and written and oral exercises which involve the students in the imaginative re-creation and decision-making of historical events.

So too in an historical core Religion syllabus, similar teaching strategies need to be adopted. The teacher is not seen as a "mere passive sustainer of culture". The teaching strategies suggested in the next chapter aim at involving both teacher and students in an imaginative exploration of significant events in the history of Christianity.

Another problem: Teaching a topic entitled 'the Church' is often difficult because of the negative attitudes of many young people to the institutional Church. In fact, adolescent attitudes to the Church can be a prominent part of their indifference to religious education. However, a study of Church history can help them learn about their Church and its traditions in a non-threatening way. Also, for those who feel that aspects of the Church's present official teaching and practice are unsatisfactory, a knowledge that during history the Church has shown a capacity for change can give them renewed hope. If they sense that change is not possible, they may lose heart. A knowledge of changing Church structures and changing emphases in Church

teachings can help students understand the development of the Church through gradual changes brought about by people like themselves.

Some teachers will object to a study of Church history on the grounds that it is not relevant to the needs and interests of students. Such a view may be drawing on a narrow concept of relevance; it may also be reinforcing the tendency in our society to be too present-oriented and to devalue the past. This tendency is highlighted by the media which often seem to equate relevance with the 'here-and-now' and to regard the past as 'out of date' and disposable.

To promote a knowledge of and respect for Church history does not mean that teachers must neglect students' needs. Any good teaching will pick up links between the content and students' experience. However, the aim to be 'relevant' does not require that the curriculum be more or less dominated by current youth interests and concerns, particularly where what is proposed as relevant is defined by the media. In fact, the school is one significant agency which should be able to offer real alternatives to young people as to what might be relevant to their education. As Postman noted in relation to his idea of a 'compensatory' educational role for schools: "What has the most relevance to students is that which the information environment least provides them."

Some teachers may claim that the teaching of Church history does not allow students to "express their feelings". This view may work from a model which is too catechetical, over-emphasising the drawing out of personal responses. It may also fail to understand the way in which a study of Church history can involve students imaginatively.





## CLASSROOM PRACTICE (CPTD)

### The Practical Dimension to the Use of Imagination in Religious Education

(Marisa Crawford & Graham Rossiter. 1988. *Missionaries to a Teenage Culture*, pp.131-136)

#### 1. Curriculum Design and Appeal to the Imagination

One of the foundations of curriculum design should be the engagement of students at an imaginative level. This does not mean that information-giving is not important; it always remains a central part of the educational process. However, if the area under study is to be relevant to the students, then the study must in some sense 'entrance' them; they must be able to relate to it; they need to find some satisfaction in having that knowledge.

Finding this appeal has been a problem in a number of curriculum areas. Take, for example, what has happened in the teaching of History and English. There has been much change in emphasis in the way that History is taught. There has been movement away from a more 'mechanical' way of teaching where facts, dates and chronology were emphasised. Recent approaches have tried to help students identify with the people involved in important moments and events in history, and to feel what it might have been like to be in those situations. This approach has become the core of history teaching at both junior and senior secondary levels. In English, there has been a radical move away from studying the rules of grammar rigorously. Some would suggest that the approach moved too far towards creative writing and oral participation, etc. to the point of neglecting basic grammar. Since then, there has been a swing back to a more balanced approach. No longer would English teachers say, "Just encourage the students to write creatively and grammar will look after itself." The more balanced approach has at its basis an attempt to develop students' imaginative participation. There remains great stress on developing the ability to explore imaginatively and to move away from a purely mechanical writing of good English.

Religion, more than most other subjects, seems to have a special problem in relation to engaging the imagination - a difficult problem, because no matter how religion is approached, a significant number of students are often somewhat antagonised by religion or at least apprehensive about it. Hence the task of writing an effective Religion program has to take this problem into account - a problem that is not there when one is writing English, History, Maths or Science programs.

One of the first things to keep in mind when taking this problem into account is to avoid overloading the Religion program with adult conceptions and presuppositions about religion. Neither should the program be devotional because devotion flows from attachment, commitment and love of the area. A number of the students have not yet arrived at that point. In any case, the usual run of classroom Religion lessons suggests that the classroom is not the place for devotion. (This refers to Religion lessons. The place for prayer in the classroom is a different issue.)

A Religion program which tries to emphasise the fundamentals too often will lack imagination, life and joy. It may suffocate their interest in religion and deprive them of an opportunity to enjoy the study of their own religious traditions.

#### 2. Unnecessary Repetition dulls Motivation

One effective way of discouraging interest in religious education is to repeat the same content year after year, even if it is nominally arranged in a spiral curriculum with different aspects treated at different year levels.

Those who argue for repetition may respond as follows: "Yes, but they do not seem to remember anything about the Sacraments. Therefore it needs to be done again." What other curriculum area would be so preoccupied with one particular topic to want to have it repeated in substance year after year? Usually teachers accept that students will forget many of the details of topics from year to year. But that is not a good reason for doing them again and again.

The Sacraments is a topic that is often repeated at different year levels in the secondary school. It is not a topic which has a wide range of imaginative resource materials and teachers coming to the topic again, repeat in substance what was done in previous years, effectively turning the students off.

A trap that many Religion curriculum planners fall into is the inclusion each year of certain topics. There seems to be a fear that if the program does not have a sufficient sprinkling of readily identifiable religious topics (such as Jesus, the Gospels, Sacraments, Prayer) each year then it will not be regarded as an authentic Religion program - as if somehow the identifiable religious topics will give the program legitimacy.

This does not take into consideration the natural rhythms in a study of religion. For example, why include a study of Jesus and the Gospels every year, risking student boredom and alienation, when a study of saints (past and present) will speak eloquently of Christ's presence in the world through these people? After all, what motivated and continues to motivate such people? A desire to follow Christ can permeate the lives of Christians.

What is done in a religious education program - that is, how the topics are treated - needs to reflect the ordinary way in which Christian beliefs and practices fit into the fabric of everyday life. If certain religious topics are always treated as special entities by themselves this takes away from the feeling that Christian beliefs and practices should fit into ordinary life. When topics like heroes/heroines, friendship and peer group pressures are being taught, reference can be made to reconciliation as being a prominent part of friendship. This would highlight the significance of reconciliation in everyday life and could underline the value of the Sacrament as a useful part of everyday Christian practice.

When Christian communities are being considered, time could be given to a study of the Sacrament of Holy Orders. A study of life choices or human relationships could include segments on Holy Orders and Matrimony.

### **3. Overdosing on 'Imaginative' Activities**

For some topics which are difficult to introduce (for example, ethics, a world religion), an imaginative activity can be used which helps interest the students. Personal development topics often have an immediate interest to the students and may not need imaginative activities as part of the introduction.

However, introductory imaginative activities should be used with discretion or their impact can be lost. An emphasis on having young people imaginatively involved in religious education every lesson would be like asking them to remain on a 'high' all the time. This is evident in the way some teachers talk about their classes: They are naturally elated when things go very well, but, when this is not the case, they are disappointed because: "My students did not 'come alive' in today's lesson." ... "They did not 'fire'." ... "They were not vitally involved." ... "There was no 'spark'." Such a high expectation is unrealistic. It is not an expectation teachers would have in their other subjects, certainly not for each lesson.

To overemphasise imaginative activities would give a false perspective to religious education. Hence, special imaginative activities should not be used too often. Students need to experience the mundane aspects of religious education, as they do the mundane parts of other subjects. This reflects the experience of ordinary life.

### **4. Clarifying Emotions and Values through 'Imaginative Identification' and 'Imaginative Rehearsal'**

Imaginative identification is a form of role playing, putting one's self 'into the shoes' of others to imagine how they might think and feel. To identify imaginatively with another, or with a character in a story, novel, play or film, requires putting aside temporarily one's own views and trying to have empathy for the situation and views of the other.

Imaginative rehearsal is an extension of imaginative identification in which people 'try out for themselves' or 'rehearse what they might feel and think' if they were in the same circumstances or if they were the same person as the individual with whom they are identifying. This is a way of exploring what one's emotions, behaviour and values might be in particular circumstances and what certain beliefs,

commitments and lifestyles might entail. It is a way of testing in advance what would be involved in making decisions - looking at the difficulties and conflicts which might be associated with such decisions.

Young people are engaged in these processes all the time; they are learning about life through imagination. The same processes can be highlighted as methods of learning personally in education. It happens naturally and spontaneously at any time during lessons. Also, teachers can direct students' attention specifically towards imaginative identification. In addition, teachers can set up imaginative exercises in the form of structured activities where the imaginative processes are used as part of a formal study plan. (For example, a student exercise in which they imagine they are acting as Cardinals at the Council of Trent.)

Imaginative identification and imaginative rehearsal can be used by students in religious education to begin to clarify their emotional responses on contemporary personal and social issues. Rather than start by trying to articulate what they feel about an issue, a presentation of new information with examples of how others have thought, felt and acted is often more fruitful. Firstly, the teacher should ensure that there is accurate factual information together with a fund of personal accounts, reactions and stories which will give the students sufficient material to illustrate the complex emotions and values that people have in relation to the issue. The material provides a resource bank through which students can have access to information about emotional and value-laden issues.

By explaining how imaginative identification and imaginative rehearsal serve as personal learning processes, teachers can help students use the processes more effectively. It also helps them become more conscious of the influence of role models - heroes, heroines, pop stars, sporting personalities, fashion leaders, parents, teachers, friends, mentors and peer group leaders.

Elsewhere, a practical account of the use of imaginative processes in religious education shows how they can be applied in a study of Scripture, Church History, Morality and Personal Development.

Imaginative identification and imaginative rehearsal should not be regarded as substitutes for knowledge but as ways of enhancing students' knowledge. They help students find relevance in what is studied through the building of links between students' own experience and the experience of others - even the experience of those from different centuries, cultures and religions.

### ***5. Role Playing Answers to Difficult Questions***

An effective use of role play has been incorporated into a drug education program. A leading psychiatrist who was involved in its development noted that teenagers felt more comfortable and able to refuse drugs, alcohol etc. if they had been able to rehearse 'answers'. Along with the basic information-giving session, this part of the program was seen by participants as being very useful.

Most young people conceded that saying "No" was often a difficult thing for them, and being able to say "No" with style was something they all wanted to know how to do.

Some of the Department of Health television and radio commercials have taken up the method - portraying young people in the situation of being asked to take drugs (or to drink or smoke).

The role playing of answers to questions asked about sexual relationships can be used in personal development education. Making decisions about the appropriate physical expressions of intimacy is very difficult for young people who are endeavouring to find out the place for sexuality and intimacy in their developing personalities.

### ***6. Teaching 'disinclined learners'***

How to involve students who, because of background or a complex of other factors, are uninterested in studying Religion (or for that matter, any school subject) makes a great demand on the imagination and skills of the teacher.



The beginning point is an understanding and acceptance of the situation of the students. This can help teachers discover ways of showing how the study can relate in some way to the interests and experience of their students.

'Disinclined' learners have often had a poor history in the skills of reading, writing, collating and reporting. Books are 'the enemy'. Imaginative learning activities that are not centred on these skills can give them more power over materials and a way of entering into a study that straight research from books cannot.

Similarly, the degree of involvement of disinclined learners can be enhanced if there is variety in the scope of lessons and imaginative forms of assessment exercises. (For example, contracting of assessment tasks such as oral summaries and taped interviews.)

Examples of adjustment of the curriculum and adaptation of teaching methods to help disinclined learners are described in detail in Chapter 6 of TRISS.



## ARTISTS' CORNER

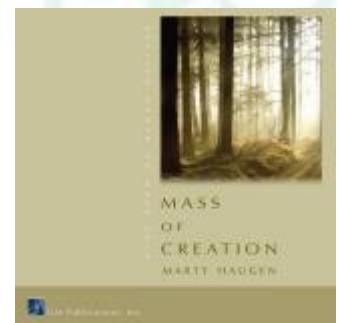
### Marty Haugen



Marty Haugen is a liturgical composer, workshop presenter, performing and recording artist & author from Eagan, Minnesota.

For the past 30 years, Marty has presented workshops and concerts across North and Central America, Europe, Asia and the Pacific Rim. He has over 40 recordings and more than 400 separate printed editions available through GIA Publications. A number of his published songs, including "Shepherd Me, O God," "Gather Us In" and "All Are Welcome" are well-known to many religious denominations. Mass of Creation, and several liturgical settings for Lutheran congregations, including Holden Evening Prayer, Unfailing Light (with Pastor Susan Briehl) and Now the Feast and Celebration, as well as a communion setting for the new Evangelical Worship Book (ELW-Augsburg Fortress).

Marty has served as an editor or consultant to a number of GIA hymnals and has been a contributor to hymnals or supplements for many denominational groups including the ELCA and ELCIC (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and Canada), the United Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Mennonite Brethren, the United Church of Christ, the United Church of Canada, the Anglican Church of Canada, the Church of England, the Church of Scotland, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and Roman Catholic groups in Great Britain, Canada, Ireland and Australia.



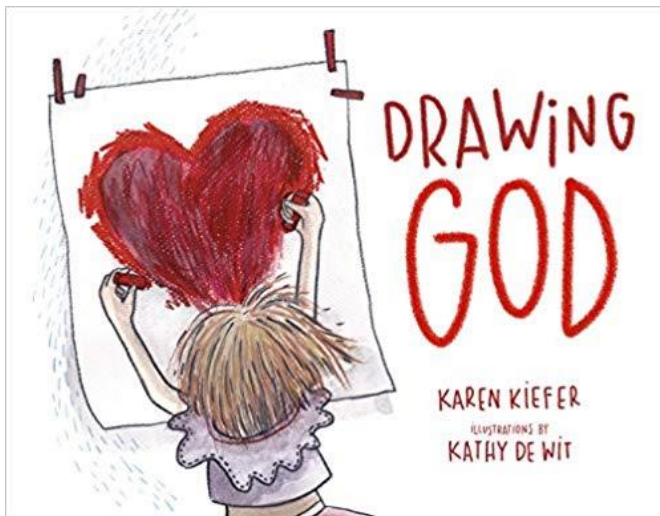
Listen here to music clips from the Mass of Creation -

<https://www.giamusic.com/store/resource/mass-of-creation-cd-recording-g7694cd>



## BOOK REVIEW

### Drawing God



Hardcover, 32 pages

Published October 8th 2019 by Paraclete Press

ISBN 1640601872 (ISBN13: 9781640601871)

In the children's book, "Drawing God," young Emma is inspired to draw like Picasso after a field trip to the art museum. The urge to draw something beyond spectacular would not leave her side. Emma decides to draw GOD.

Emma is so excited to share her images of GOD with her classmates, until she realizes that no one can see GOD in her drawings. However, her contagious faith casts a spell over her classmates

and eventually they are all inspired to draw GOD and every picture is different.

Emma's joyful desire to draw GOD and share it with her world is the spirit behind WORLD DRAWING GOD DAY. Everyone sees GOD differently and yet in a beautiful way. There's also so much opportunity to grow in conversation, love and friendship by sharing our own interpretations of God with each other. Although the story, Drawing God is written for children 3 to 8 years old, the messages are really for any age.

Where do you see GOD? What does GOD look like to you?



## WEBSITE



Teachers Pay Teachers

[www.teacherspayteachers.com/Educators](http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Educators)

### A Platform for Sharing Educator Expertise

We believe the best ideas and approaches to learning come directly from educators who have experience teaching and connecting with students. Each resource on TpT is created by a Teacher-Author and is tailored to a unique need or niche. When one teacher deeply understands how to bring rich, relevant, active learning to a classroom and shares that with other teachers around the globe, the benefits reach everyone, most of all the students.

### A Global Community of Support

Through TpT, our Teacher-Authors are able to quickly respond to the ever-evolving needs of their fellow educators and provide them with the resources they need to teach at their best. When teachers work together, incredible things happen.



## LOCAL NEWS

### Laurence Freeman OSB in South Africa



Laurence Freeman, spiritual leader and director of the World Community for Christian Meditation visited South Africa in early September. Twelve events were held over the 10 days of the visit in Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg and Pretoria. Over 800 people attended.

In addition to these public events three bishops were visited. Archbishop Stephen Brislin (Cape Town), Cardinal Wilfrid Napier (Durban) and Auxiliary Bishop Duncan Tsoke (Johannesburg) were all supportive and recognised the value of meditation and the contemplative way.

Three schools were also visited. In two of them – Holy Family College, Durban & Loreto Convent School, Queenswood, Pretoria – staff members were addressed and Laurence meditated with Grade 5 and 6 students in Holy Family College and St Henry's Marist College, both in Durban. Laurence also had the opportunity of addressing a forum of principals from the Pretoria Catholic schools.

During the visit, Laurence encouraged the idea of a pilot project in schools. The details of the project will need to be worked out, though some ideas were floated:

- Introductory sessions with follow-ups
- The need of a champion in each school to assist in the incorporation of meditation into the school's daily practice
- Journalling the school's experience
- A research project
- School reports to inspire other schools



Fr Laurence with learners at St Henry's Marist, Durban

It is envisaged that this project will commence in 2020 and will follow-up previous work done in schools since 2012.



### Nuns release spiritual mandala in call to unity after xenophobic attacks

(Sheila Pires & Erin Carelse)

A group of Southern African nuns from different congregations has released a graphic mandala—a circular spiritual design—in response to the recent violence, disrespect for human life and xenophobic attacks.

“The mandala is a call for us to go back to the centre, which is Christ himself, and give witness to the Gospel of Peace to promote unity, harmony and dignity among all humankind,” Sr





Nkhensani Shibambu CSA, moderator-general of the Congregation of the Companions of St Angela, explained.

A statement titled “We are family! We are one!” emphasises that “we are all connected to each other and to all of creation, and we call on everyone to promote dignity and unity in whatever way they can”.

The statement continued: “We realise that much of the violence is the fruit of frustration and anger at the unequal distribution of wealth and the greed of those who steal from the majority, and this too is the violence we deplore.”

To facilitate communication, exchange and mutual support, the nuns are gathered in constellations where, in every continent, they incarnate the aim and mission of the group.

Southern African nuns fall under Constellation 6, congregations whose generalates (or headquarters) are based in Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, Eswatini or South Africa.

“The true soul of Africa is one of deep respect for life in all its forms. Jesus Christ as the Prince of Peace is the prototype of this value. Our vowed life as religious is a witness to this peace,” said Sr Shibambu.

Speaking to Radio Veritas, she said the recent spate of violence across South Africa has its roots in the legacy of apartheid.



Sr Nkhensani Shibambu of the Constellation 6 group of nuns' congregations which has produced a mandala (left) in response to recent xenophobic attacks. (Photo from Sheila Pires)

Sr Shibambu noted that the struggle against apartheid included sometimes violent protests. “We’re a very violent society, people bear too much anger within,” she said.

She suggested another Truth and Reconciliation Commission to deal with the trauma and effects of apartheid.



## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### The Imam and the Pastor: From Conflict to Healing Nigerian Lessons for South Africa

Imam Muhammad Ashafa and Pastor James Wuye were enemies in a deadly Nigerian conflict that tore communities apart.

Out of the heat of that hatred and violence, both men discovered an ability to build a unique bond that has inspired people and communities across the world.

Each through his own inner struggle and facing the effects of hatred and violence, discovered the strength to cross the huge gulf dividing them. A strength buttressed by their own very different faiths.



Each man was deeply rooted in his own faith tradition. Pastor James had felt a strong calling to the Church since graduating high school. Imam Ashafa was the thirteenth generation in his family to become an Imam. Both men felt a passion to unify and energize their faith communities, and to protect them against perceived threats.

As the conflict escalated, both men trained militias to intimidate and even kill members of the opposite side. Crops and livelihoods were destroyed. Families were attacked. The need for revenge on both sides fueled an ever-growing hatred, and the leaders' roles became entrenched. Both suffered heavy losses. Imam Ashafa lost two brothers and his mentor in the conflict. Pastor James, in addition to losing close friends, lost his right hand.

But something incredible happened.

In 1995, during a UNICEF outreach program about child immunization against polio, the two leaders hesitantly agreed to put aside their differences for the sake of the larger community. They realized that their voices, speaking together, could convince more people to protect their children against a common threat. Their agreement was cautious and guarded at first - and then, gradually over the years, they built up the respect and trust necessary to form a partnership.

The two men eventually formed the Interfaith Mediation Centre, a grassroots organization that heals rifts between Christians and Muslims throughout Nigeria. With over 10,000 members, they now train former militia members to become peace activists.

Today, Imam Ashafa and Pastor James work together to act as an example to their communities that peace is possible. They teach members of youth militias methods to resolve their conflicts peacefully rather than infinitely escalating violence and have led successful efforts to rebuild the churches and mosques that had fallen during their conflict.



## **Evangelization 'essential' to mission of Catholic schools**

*Catholic schools have a unique opportunity to provide hope in a world that is increasingly beset by hopelessness*

[La Croix International staff (with Catholic News Service), United States, October 17, 2019]

Evangelization is a vital part of Catholic education but all students stand to benefit, says the Washington-based National Catholic Educational Association.



Thomas Burnford, president and CEO of the NCEA, the largest such organization in the world, says the very mission of Catholic schools must be to spread the word of God and the Gospel.

"We are evangelizing students by giving them a real understanding of the world and society," he told the Catholic News Service.

"Everyone in a Catholic school is being moved along in the process of evangelization. The apostles told the good news of Jesus Christ, and

Catholic schools are an essential and integral ministry of the Church."

However, Burford is at pains to point out that a Catholic education embraces students of all faiths.

The U.S. has 6,300 Catholic schools containing 1.8 million students, of whom 20 percent adhere to other religions, and the mission is the same for everyone.

"The teaching of the faith ... is the same for all students. All are invited and welcomed to participate fully in the whole culture of the school, the formation of the school and the life of the school," said the NCEA chief.

His comments echo those made by Pope Francis in June 2018, when he recognized the essential link between education and evangelization.

In troubled geopolitical times, a Catholic education comes into its own, according to Elisabeth Sullivan, executive director of the Institute for Catholic Liberal Education.

"Catholic schools have a unique opportunity to provide hope in a world that is increasingly beset by hopelessness," she said.

[https://international.la-croix.com/news/evangelization-essential-to-mission-of-catholic-schools/11055?utm\\_source=Newsletter&utm\\_medium=e-mail&utm\\_content=17-10-2019&utm\\_campaign=newsletter\\_crx\\_lci&PMID=c846096e5e379ce4c77e681a70eaff9d](https://international.la-croix.com/news/evangelization-essential-to-mission-of-catholic-schools/11055?utm_source=Newsletter&utm_medium=e-mail&utm_content=17-10-2019&utm_campaign=newsletter_crx_lci&PMID=c846096e5e379ce4c77e681a70eaff9d)



## Top 5 takeaways from the Amazon synod



1. The synod was prophetic in placing Amazonian and indigenous communities at the center of the synod process and for making a clear option for these communities over *foreign economic interests*.

2. At the heart of the synod process and the final document is *conversion* at the pastoral, cultural, ecological and synodal levels.

3. This special synod—the first Synod of Bishops to be organized around a distinct ecological territory—sought to practice what it preached regarding “integral ecology” and care for our

common home.

4. All 120 paragraphs of the synod’s final document were approved with the necessary two-thirds majority vote, including proposals related to married priests and women deacons.

5. Since his election as pope in March 2013, Pope Francis has transformed the Synod of Bishops into a privileged place of discernment and conversion.

<https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2019/11/11/top-5-takeaways-amazon-synod>







To qualify for CPTD points, answer the following questions.

### The Practical Dimension to the Use of Imagination in Religious Education

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

	STATEMENT	TRUE	FALSE
1	Information-giving as an element of curriculum is not important.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Religion seems to have a special problem in relation to engaging the imagination.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	The Religion program should be devotional.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Because students forget many of the details of topics from year to year is a good reason for doing them again and again.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Special imaginative activities should not be used too often.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Imaginative rehearsal is an extension of imaginative identification.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Imaginative identification and imaginative rehearsal should be regarded as substitutes for knowledge.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Teenagers feel more comfortable and able to refuse drugs or alcohol if they have been able to rehearse 'answers'.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	The beginning point for involving 'disinclined learners' is an understanding and acceptance of their situation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	The degree of involvement of disinclined learners can be enhanced if there is variety in the scope of lessons and imaginative forms of assessment exercises.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

