



Roots & Wings

VOLUME 8 No. 4 NOVEMBER 2022

The Periodical of the Professional Society of Religious Educators

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the fourth issue of *Roots & Wings* for 2022. 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 with one addition to the previous issue. 'Festivals' will provide information anticipating a major religious festival.



Members are encouraged to send material for future editions. What might you send?

- 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

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REFLECTION

How to Pray When We Don't Feel Like It

(Ron Rolheiser)



If we only prayed when we felt like it, we wouldn't pray a lot.

Enthusiasm, good feelings, and fervor will not sustain anyone's prayer life for long, good will and firm intention notwithstanding. Our hearts and minds are complex and promiscuous, wild horses frolicking to their own tunes, with prayer frequently not on their agenda. The renowned mystic, John of the Cross teaches that, after an initial period of fervor in prayer, we will spend the bulk of our years struggling to pray discursively, dealing with boredom and distraction. So, the question becomes, how do we pray at those times when we are tired, distracted, bored, disinterested, and nursing a thousand other things in our heads and in our hearts? How do we pray when little inside us wants to pray? Especially, how do we pray at those moments when we have a positive distaste for prayer?

Monks have secrets worth knowing. The first secret we need to learn from them is the central place of ritual is sustaining a prayer-life. Monks pray a lot and regularly, but they never try to sustain their prayer on the basis of feelings. They sustain it through ritual. Monks pray together seven or eight times a day ritually. They gather in chapel and pray the ritual offices of the church (*Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, Vespers, Compline*) or they celebrate the Eucharist together. They don't always go there because they feel like it, they come

because they are called to prayer, and then, with their hearts and minds perhaps less than enthusiastic about praying, *they pray through the deepest part of themselves, their intention and their will.*

In the rule that St. Benedict wrote for monastic life there's an oft-quoted phrase. A monk's life, he writes, is to be ruled by the monastic bell. When the monastic bell rings, the monk is immediately to drop whatever he is doing and go to whatever that summons is calling him to, not because he wants to, but because it is time, and time is not our time, it's God's time. That's a valuable secret, particularly as it applies to prayer. We need to go pray regularly, not because we want to, but because it's time, and *when we can't pray with our hearts and minds, we can still pray through our wills and through our bodies.*

Yes, our bodies! We tend to forget that we are not disincarnate angels, pure heart and mind. *We are also a body.* Thus, when heart and mind struggle to engage in prayer, we can always still pray with our bodies. Classically, we have tried to do this through certain physical gestures and postures (making the sign of the cross, kneeling, raising our hands, joining hands, genuflection, prostration) and we should never underestimate or denigrate the importance of these bodily gestures. Simply put, when we can't pray in any other way, we can still pray through our bodies. (And, who is to say that a sincere bodily gesture is inferior as a prayer to a gesture of the heart or mind?) Personally, I much admire a particular bodily gesture, bowing down with one's head to the floor which Muslims do in their prayer. To do that is to have your body say to God, "Irrespective of whatever's on my mind and in my heart right now, I submit to your omnipotence, your holiness, your love." Whenever I do meditative prayer alone, normally I end it with this gesture.

Sometimes spiritual writers, catechists, and liturgists have failed us by not making it clear that prayer has different stages – and that affectivity, enthusiasm, fervor are only one stage, and the neophyte stage at that. As the great doctors and mystics of spirituality have universally taught, prayer, like love, goes through three phases. First comes *fervor and enthusiasm*; next comes *the waning of fervor along with dryness and boredom*, and finally comes *proficiency, an ease, a certain sense of being at home in prayer that does not depend on affectivity and fervor but on a commitment to be present, irrespective of affective feeling*.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer used to say this to a couple when officiating at their marriage. Today you are very much in love and

believe that your love will sustain your marriage. It won't. *Let your marriage [which is a ritual container] sustain your love*. The same can be said about prayer. Fervor and enthusiasm will not sustain your prayer, but ritual can. *When we struggle to pray with our minds and our hearts, we can still always pray through our wills and our bodies*. Showing up can be prayer enough.

In a recent book, *Dearest Sister Wendy*, Robert Ellsberg quotes a comment by Michael Leach, who said this in relation to what he was experiencing in having to care long-term for his wife suffering from Alzheimer's. *Falling in love is the easy part; learning to love is the hard part; and living in love is the best part*. True too for prayer.



REFLECTION

My Ideal Church

Reflections of an older historical theologian

(John Alonso Dick) Published March 17, 2022



I'm often asked to describe my ideal Church. There are several qualities I would like to find in a Church that is a healthy Christian community:

I would begin my response by saying I want a Church that is truly a supportive community of friends: men and women striving to live in the spirit of Christ. Not a doctrinaire, authoritarian institution.

Some institutional structures of course are necessary but they should be understood as provisional. They, along with institutional leaders, should be regularly critiqued and changed.

Institutional structures are tools – a means – constructed to help and support Christian communities. The innate danger in all institutions is that, if left unchecked, they cease being service-oriented structures and become hard-nosed self-serving institutions demanding unquestioned loyalty. A kind of institutional idolatry.

A healthy Church affirms the dignity and equality of all men and women, regardless of race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. It does this not just in official rhetoric and documents but in personal and institutional behaviour. We need male and female ordained ministers. LGBTQ people should be welcomed in Church ministries and employment. For too long Church leaders have patronized, insulted, or simply removed people who do not fit their mould. It still happens.

An honest and humble Church must realize that it does not possess all the truth and has to collaborate with a variety of people in pursuit of the truth. It has to acknowledge as well

that all Church doctrines are time- and culture-bound. They are provisional and changeable. Some doctrines may have been meaningful in the past but just don't work today. Others evolved more from religious fantasy and folklore. Gabriel Moran mentioned the great assumption about the Assumption.

A healthy Church asks questions and welcomes the questioner. Asking questions brings greater self-knowledge, a more realistic life understanding. It is an essential element in personal conscience formation.

All the great advances in human knowledge have come from people who dared to ask questions. Isaac Newton asked: "Why does an apple fall from a tree?" and "Why does the moon not fall into the Earth?" Charles Darwin asked: "Why do the Galápagos Islands have so many species not found elsewhere?" Albert Einstein asked: "What would the universe look like if I rode through it on a beam of light?" By asking these kinds of basic questions they were able to start the processes that lead to historic breakthroughs in human and scientific understanding. And of course, Jesus of Nazareth asks in the synoptic gospels "Who do people say that I am?" In John 7:19 he asks "Has not Moses given you the law? Yet not one of you keeps the law. Why are you trying to kill me?"

I want a Church that stresses and practices tolerance and freedom of inquiry: a Church that realizes that all doctrines, even infallible papal pronouncements, evolve. All "official teachers" must also be humble learners. A healthy Christian community rejects intimidation and realizes that conflicts must be resolved through patient and humble dialogue. It may not be easy but it has to happen.

I want a Church in which the higher-up ordained leaders dress and act like healthy contemporary leadership people not museum-piece Renaissance princes. It costs between four and five thousand dollars to dress a cardinal. I often think about the comment of Jesus in Mark 12, 38: "Watch out for the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes.

I want a Church in which leadership people are elected by the community for set terms of office, like five or ten years. They - like professors where I taught for many years -- should be regularly evaluated. They should be replaced by new leadership people when their terms of office expire. If a bishop knew that he or she would only be bishop for about five years, his or her behaviour would be greatly modified. Can you imagine, for instance, what would happen in places like the Archdiocese of New York? And of course the Diocese of Rome?

I want a Church in which openness to the signs of the times is a key virtue rather than a closed-minded condemnation of all that is contemporary. We live in the present. God - whatever one wants to call God - is alive and closely with us right now. Not as a controlling authority but as a loving companion.

And yes indeed... I want a Church open to the bigger questions that touch on a contemporary understanding of Jesus Christ and a contemporary understanding and experience of God. For many people today the old anthropomorphisms just don't work anymore. God is just as much Mother as Father, but much more than that. Why don't Christian religious leaders sit down with, pray, and meditate with leaders of non-Christian religions? God is much more than a Christian. It is not too late to make a few good New Year's resolutions: To ask more questions about contemporary Christian belief and practice. To support those who question. To explore together, in respectful and earnest dialogue, the complete range of answers. More questions will arise of course. We are on a journey. We have not yet arrived. And a healthy Christian community is our GPS.

Read more at: <https://international.la-croix.com/news/religion/my-ideal-church/15805>



TALKING ABOUT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Advanced Certificate in Religious Education

(TEEC: Theological Education by Extension College)

In the previous issue (Volume 8 Number 3) we featured a discussion of what makes for an occupation being regarded as professional. Two of the characteristics were:

Special Knowledge and Skills

An occupation becomes a profession when it assumes responsibility for developing a shared knowledge base for all of its members and for transmitting that knowledge through professional education, licensing, and ongoing peer review.

Specialised, Advanced University Training

Specialised training is needed for religious educators in addition to their personal spiritual formation. "In this area, especially, an unprepared teacher can do great deal of harm. Everything possible must be done to ensure that Catholic schools have adequately trained religion teachers; it is a vital necessity, and a legitimate expectation." (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988. The religious dimension of education in a Catholic school, #97.)

It is for this reason that the Catholic Institute of Education (CIE) in collaboration with the Theological Education by Extension College (TEEC) has spent the past six years in developing the Advanced Certificate in Religious Education to provide a firm grounding in the disciplines that support a sound and relevant religious education.

The courses on offer are:

Core

- 5RE 01 Revelation, Scripture and Tradition
- 5RE 02 Human Existence, God and Human Destiny
- 5RE 03 World Religions and Interreligious Dialogue
- 5RE 04 Religious Education in Theory and Practice

Elective Streams

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| RELIGION & SOCIETY | 5RE 15 The Search for Meaning and Values |
| | 5RE 16 Religion, Morality & Society |
| | 5RE 17 Science & Religion |
| RELIGION IN PRACTICE | 5RE 25 Spirituality & Life |
| | 5RE 26 Principles of Social Justice |
| | 5RE 27 The Worshipping Community |
| HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES | 5RE 35 The Jesus of History and the Christ of Faith |
| | 5RE 36 The History of Christianity |



Study Path

For the certificate, the students must first complete the four core courses in the above order and then choose four electives – at least one from each stream.

For non-degree purposes, the student may choose any of the course on offer.

For more detailed information, go to

Programme description [web-AdvCertRE.pdf \(tee.co.za\)](http://tee.co.za/web-AdvCertRE.pdf)

Fees Sheet [Fees-AdvCertRE.pdf \(tee.co.za\)](http://tee.co.za/Fees-AdvCertRE.pdf)

Registration Form [RegistrationForm-AdvCertRE-b.pdf \(tee.co.za\)](http://tee.co.za/RegistrationForm-AdvCertRE-b.pdf)



To give you some idea of the course material and process, we provide excerpts from two of the core courses –

5RE 02 Human Existence, God and Human Destiny, and

5RE 04 Religious Education in Theory and Practice

**Registration for
First Semester
is open from 1
November till 5
February**



CLASSROOM PRACTICE (CPTD) ¹

Theological Standpoints

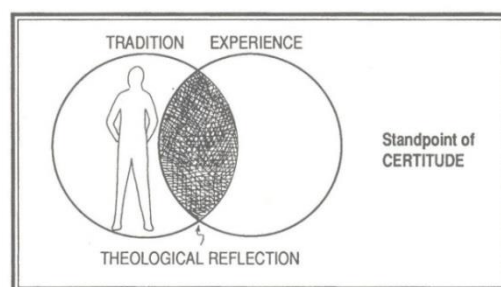
(Course 5RE 02 - from Unit 3)

Ways of thinking about life, and acting on them

Killen and De Beer (1994: 4) invite us to consider the general standpoints from which we approach our lives and our religious heritage. Not every standpoint, or way of acting and thinking about life, is conducive to fruitful theological reflection.

The Standpoint of Certitude

Often we long for a set of rules to direct our lives clearly and effectively. A given set works for a time when we are following familiar paths and our horizons are stable. In this case we may draw on familiar precepts from our religious tradition, or from the practices and values of those around us, and rest content. But when life thrusts us into unfamiliar territory and when our paths take us among those whose standpoints and habits are very different from our own, then our rules are often unclear or ineffective or simply contradictory.



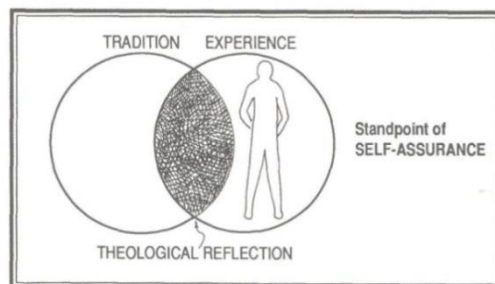
When we find ourselves on unaccustomed ground in this way, we tend to adopt one of two very different standpoints. One is the exclusive standpoint of certitude. From this standpoint we see the unfamiliar only in terms of what we already believe. From certitude we can tolerate only that which fits our predetermined categories. If some aspect of the

¹ Do the two exercises – Journal and Let's Think for CPTD points. See Page 19.

new landscape is too difficult to fit into the picture we wish to see, we bulldoze it until we are satisfied that the world is as we know it 'ought' to be.

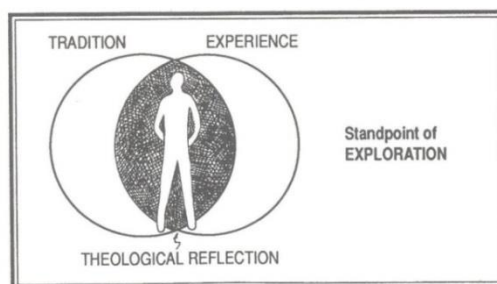
The Standpoint of Self-Assurance

Sometimes our world overwhelms us with its complexity; our social, religious, and familial traditions appear unreliable, irrelevant or oppressive; and we fear that we cannot count on the people around us. Fed up with the frailty and fallibility of our contexts, we may decide to trust only ourselves, our own experience, how we think and feel now, in each new situation. We choose to be our own compass, map, and guide and reject our need for any other. This may work for a while, if our contexts remain stable. But when life presents us with new situations and we continue to rely only on our own perceptions, we can miss much. We become like Christopher Columbus who was sure that he had reached India, despite massive evidence to the contrary. This is the standpoint of self-assurance: to rely solely on my current experience and perspectives, what I think and feel now.



The Standpoint of Exploration

The alternative to the exclusive standpoints of certitude and self-assurance is a standpoint of exploration. Sometimes we break out, or are jolted out, of our habitual tendency to see only what fits our preconceived notions or to rely only on our immediate responses. At this point we may move into the standpoint of exploration if, instead of landscaping the ground to our own taste, we attempt to discover where we are and how we are to proceed. What sources are we to consult? How, for example, can the Christian locate and draw appropriately on the wisdom contained in the Scriptures and teachings? How can he test the value of his previously held positions in the new situations in which he finds himself? How can she make use of modern scientific frameworks without abandoning her commitment to understand her place in life primarily as a follower of Jesus? When Christians understand themselves as explorers charged with finding their way as disciples of Jesus in their time and place, how shall they proceed?



Reflect on the questions below and record your responses to them in your journal.

- Consider the three standpoints described above. Where would you place yourself in the two overlapping circles?
- Does the place where you stand vary depending on whether you are reflecting on your own, with other adults, or with children or young people in a classroom situation?

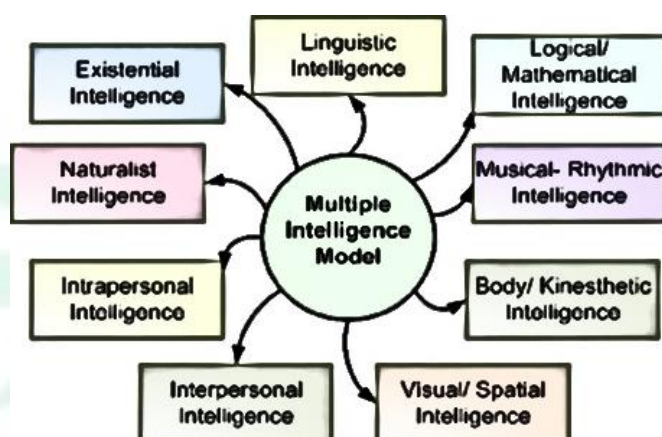
The Theory of Multiple Intelligences

(Course 5RE 04 – from Unit 8)

Howard Gardner, a professor of education at Harvard University back in 1983, expressed his concern that the traditional notion of intelligence based on IQ testing was very limited. Educators were using only two of the intelligences through which people learn – the verbal-linguistic and the logical-mathematical (Stankard 2003:9).

His theory, supported by extensive research expanded our awareness of human intelligence by adding to the two above-mentioned aspects. He argued that intelligence is centred in many different parts of the brain which are nevertheless interconnected. The different intelligences rely on each other yet can act independently.

So what are these other largely forgotten intelligences? Gardner named seven in total, but since his initial listing the theory has been expanded to include two more.



(Synergy Brainpower Solutions 2015)

Here is a short description of each².

1. Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence

Verbal-linguistic intelligence is the ability to think in words and to use language to express and appreciate complex meanings. Linguistic intelligence allows us to understand the order and meaning of words and to apply meta-linguistic skills to reflect on our use of language. Linguistic intelligence is the most widely shared human competence and is evident in poets, novelists, journalists, and effective public speakers. Young adults with this kind of intelligence enjoy writing, reading, telling stories or doing crossword puzzles.

2. Logical-Mathematical Intelligence

Logical-mathematical intelligence is the ability to calculate, quantify, consider propositions and hypotheses, and carry out complete mathematical operations. It enables us to perceive relationships and connections and to use abstract, symbolic thought; sequential reasoning skills; and inductive and deductive thinking patterns. Logical intelligence is usually well developed in mathematicians, scientists, and detectives. Young adults with lots of logical intelligence are interested in patterns, categories, and relationships. They are drawn to arithmetic problems, strategy games and experiments.

² These edited descriptions come from Mark Vital. *The Nine Types of Intelligence*. <https://blog.adioma.com/9-types-of-intelligence-infographic/>

3. Musical-Rhythmic Intelligence

Musical-rhythmic intelligence is the capacity to discern pitch, rhythm, timbre, and tone. This intelligence enables us to recognize, create, reproduce, and reflect on music, as demonstrated by composers, conductors, musicians, vocalists, and sensitive listeners. Interestingly, there is often an affective connection between music and the emotions; and mathematical and musical intelligences may share common thinking processes. Young adults with this kind of intelligence are usually singing or drumming to themselves. They are usually quite aware of sounds others may miss.

4. Bodily-Kinaesthetic Intelligence

Bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence is the capacity to manipulate objects and use a variety of physical skills. This intelligence also involves a sense of timing and the perfection of skills through mind-body union. Athletes, dancers, surgeons, and crafts people exhibit well-developed bodily kinaesthetic intelligence.

5. Visual-Spatial Intelligence

Visual-spatial intelligence is the ability to think in three dimensions. Core capacities include mental imagery, spatial reasoning, image manipulation, graphic and artistic skills, and an active imagination. Sailors, pilots, sculptors, painters, and architects all exhibit spatial intelligence. Young adults with this kind of intelligence may be fascinated with mazes or jigsaw puzzles, or spend free time drawing or daydreaming.

6. Interpersonal Intelligence

Interpersonal intelligence is the ability to understand and interact effectively with others. It involves effective verbal and nonverbal communication, the ability to note distinctions among others, sensitivity to the moods and temperaments of others, and the ability to entertain multiple perspectives. Teachers, social workers, actors, and politicians all exhibit interpersonal intelligence. Young adults with this kind of intelligence are leaders among their peers, are good at communicating, and seem to understand others' feelings and motives.

7. Intra-personal Intelligence

Intra-personal intelligence is the capacity to understand oneself and one's thoughts and feelings, and to use such knowledge in planning and giving direction to one's life. Intra-personal intelligence involves not only an appreciation of the self, but also of the human condition. It is evident in psychologists, spiritual leaders, and philosophers. These young adults may be shy. They are very aware of their own feelings and are self-motivated.

8. Naturalist Intelligence

Naturalist intelligence designates the human ability to discriminate among living things (plants, animals) as well as sensitivity to other features of the natural world (clouds, rock configurations). This ability was clearly of value in our evolutionary past as hunters, gatherers, and farmers; it continues to be central in such roles as botanist or chef.

9. Existential Intelligence

A person with existential intelligence tends to ask the deeper questions, such as 'Who are we?' 'How did we get here?' 'Why are we alive?' 'Do we have a purpose?' 'Why and how are we conscious?' 'What is the meaning of life?' Philosophers, theologians and life coaches are among those that have high existential intelligence.



Let's think about this...

Imagine that you are presenting the theory of multiple intelligence to a large adult or teenage audience and that you would like each person to come away with a good understanding of the theory.

- How would you go about planning and delivering your presentation?
- Hint: Apply the theory!

Record your reflections in your notebook.



PORTRAIT

Albert Nolan: Priest, Activist, Author, and Renowned Theologian

(Terence Creamer)



Well-known South African Catholic priest, anti-apartheid activist and internationally renowned theologian and author Fr Albert Nolan OP died on October 17 at the age of 88.

Born in Cape Town in 1934, Fr Nolan entered the Dominican Order in 1954, and died peacefully in his sleep under the care of the Dominican Sisters at Marian House in Boksburg in the early hours of Monday.

Awarded the 'Order of Luthuli in Silver' by then President Thabo Mbeki in 2003 for his "life-long dedication to the struggle for democracy, human rights and justice and for challenging the religious 'dogma' especially the theological justification for apartheid", Fr Nolan inspired a generation of Christian activists and theologians.

His dedication to the anti-apartheid struggle saw him decline the prestigious role of Master of the Dominican Order to which he was elected in 1983, as it would have meant him being transferred to the Order's Rome headquarters. Instead, he convinced the Dominicans to allow him to remain in South Africa.

At the height of the second State of Emergency in 1986, he was forced into hiding in order to escape from the Security Police. Fr Nolan was particularly vulnerable to arrest for steering the drafting process of the Kairos Document in mid-1985, which arose primarily from the work of grassroots theologians in Soweto and Johannesburg, but which he and Rev Frank Chikane of the Institute for Contextual Theology (ICT) played a central role in editing. Described as a "theology

from below”, the document critiqued the role of the churches in apartheid South Africa, dismantled any theological justification for racism and totalitarianism, and proposed instead a “prophetic theology” akin to Liberation Theology.

From 1973-1980, he served as national chaplain for the National Catholic Federation of Students (NCFS) and also, until 1980, for the Catholic Students Association (CASA), which was formed in 1976 after black students began organising themselves into separate formations as Black Consciousness flourished.

In 1977, Fr Nolan was instrumental in establishing Young Christian Students (YCS) in South Africa after he attended an International Movement of Catholic Students gathering in Lima, Peru, in 1975, where he was introduced to the See-Judge-Act method of social analysis and was inspired by Gustavo Gutiérrez, who later also became a Dominican and who is regarded as one of the pioneers of Liberation Theology.

From 1977-84, Fr Nolan served as national chaplain of YCS, which affiliated itself to the United Democratic Front.

Nolan also played a brave role in the “underground work” of the liberation movements, notably the African National Congress, offering his support to activists, especially those who became victims of the apartheid regime’s violent and repressive security police. He was part of a secret underground network that managed logistics, including the transportation and movement of activists, providing safe houses and a means of communication while in South Africa. The full extent of his role in these networks is not known, as much of the work was done on a disciplined ‘need-to-know basis’.

Having been elected provincial of the Dominicans in Southern Africa in early 1976, Fr Nolan relocated from Stellenbosch – where he had received his religious formation, and also served as university chaplain for several years up to the early 1970s – to Johannesburg. Poignantly, the move took place on June

16, 1976, a date synonymous with the Soweto Uprising which was violently suppressed and is today commemorated as Youth Day.

As provincial from 1976-1980, Nolan supported several of his priests – including Frs Joe Falkiner, Benedict Mulder and Finbar Synnott – in their establishment of a simple-lifestyle community in a run-down building opposite the station on Central Avenue in Mayfair, a working-class suburb on the western edge of the Johannesburg central business district. He then made the bold decision to sell the provincial’s house in the leafy suburb of Houghton, in the richer northern suburbs, and relocate to Mayfair himself, where CASA, NCFS, YCS and the Young Christian Workers also set up their national offices.

He would serve as provincial of the Dominican Order for two more terms, from 1980-84 and from 2000-04. Besides serving as provincial, Fr Nolan played various other roles within his Order, including that of novice master and student master, which allowed him to continue to nurture and guide young people, as he had done for many years as a student chaplain.

A gifted biblical scholar and theologian, Fr Nolan completed his doctorate in Rome in 1963 – a period that coincided with the Second Vatican Council and which ushered in significant reforms across the Catholic Church. Having completed his thesis, Fr Nolan decided it was “too expensive” to have it published, a pre-requisite for being awarded the title of “doctor” and thus he never formally secured the title that he had duly earned.

He was also initially denied the distinction of being awarded an honorary doctorate when the Holy See, without explanation, disallowed the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, from bestowing such in 1990, presumably owing to misgivings at the time about Liberation Theology. However, in the same year, as a sign of solidarity, the Jesuit-run Regis College of the University of Toronto granted him an honorary doctorate.

The Dominican Order recognised his contribution as a theologian and preacher of the Gospel when, in 2008, the Master of the Dominican Order promoted Fr Nolan to a Master of Sacred Theology.

Fr Nolan, however, preferred to see himself as a preacher rather than a biblical scholar. He wanted the Gospel to make a difference in people's lives, and did not view debating small issues of textual interpretation as the purpose of the scriptures. In his view, the scriptures were there to inspire, convert and transform people and lead them to change their lives and the world in which they live.

Outside of South Africa, Fr Nolan became highly regarded for his 1976 best-selling book *Jesus Before Christianity*, which has been translated into at least nine languages. The book was the product both of Fr Nolan's deep knowledge of the Bible and his work in the student movement where he gave regular inputs on "That Man Jesus" in student conferences.

While in hiding in the late 1980s, Fr Nolan went on to write *God in South Africa*, which is the outcome of what he described as "doing theology in a particular context", and *Jesus Today*, which explores the spirituality of Jesus as a "spirituality that leads to unity with God, ourselves, others, and the universe". A collection of his talks, edited by fellow Dominican Father Stan Muyebe, was published as *Hope in an Age of Despair*.

Fr Nolan, who was one of the first staff members of the Institute for Contextual Theology (ICT) in 1981, later became editor of the ecumenical *Challenge* magazine, widely circulated across all denominations, which offered a considered perspective on how Christians should respond to the struggle for democracy in South Africa before and after the democratic elections in 1994.

Ecumenism was a theme throughout Fr Nolan's life and was evident not only in his

student ministry and at ICT but also in his close relationship with leaders outside of the Catholic Church, including Rev Chikane, Dr Beyers Naudé and Rev Cedric Mayson.

Despite his criticism of the Catholic Church, Fr Nolan also remained respected by the Catholic hierarchy for his biblical proficiency, his theological insight, and his commitment to preaching the Gospel. He was thus regularly requested to deliver inputs and retreats, including to the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, particularly when it was led by Archbishop Denis Hurley during the last decade of apartheid.

Nolan was also a source of support to other religious in the Catholic church who took up an active role in the struggle, notably Sr. Bernard Ncube and Fr. Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, who was detained several times and banned. Ncube was a member of the first democratic Parliament in 1994, chairing the portfolio committee on arts and culture, and in 2002 became mayor of the West Rand municipality. In 1996, Mkhathshwa became the Deputy Minister of Education, a post he held until 1999. He was elected to the ANC National Executive Committee in 1997 and in 2000 he became the Executive Mayor of the City of Tshwane.

In addition, Nolan taught at St Peter's Seminary, in Hammanskraal, in the late 1970's when a strong Black Consciousness focus was developed there, working particularly closely with Mkhathshwa and Buti Tlhagale in attempts to promote this voice in the church. Tlhagale is the current Archbishop of Johannesburg.

As a priest, activist, author, and renowned theologian, Fr Nolan offered a forceful yet gentle message of hope, particularly hope in the building of a non-racial, non-sexist, peaceful and environmentally sustainable South Africa and world.



WEBSITE

Spirited Arts 2022

[Spirited Arts \(natre.org.uk\)](http://natre.org.uk)



Art in Heaven'

The Art in Heaven competition started in 2004 and has been held every year since! Over 340,000 participants (averaging 20,000 per year!) have been sent in to NATRE for judging. Hundreds of UK schools get involved, and we get entries coming from as far afield as Cyprus and Australia, Indonesia and **South Africa**.

The annual competition starts at the beginning of every school year and runs through to 31 July, in order to enable teachers to incorporate the art competition into their RE lessons. Many schools have an 'Art in Heaven' unit of work, or a special learning RE/arts week.

Judging by RE Today Advisers and students, takes place in August and winners are announced in the new academic year.

Spirited Art's Gallery

For inspiration, take a look at some of the amazing entries we've received over the years in our Gallery. Go to [Spirited Arts Gallery 2021 \(natre.org.uk\)](http://natre.org.uk)

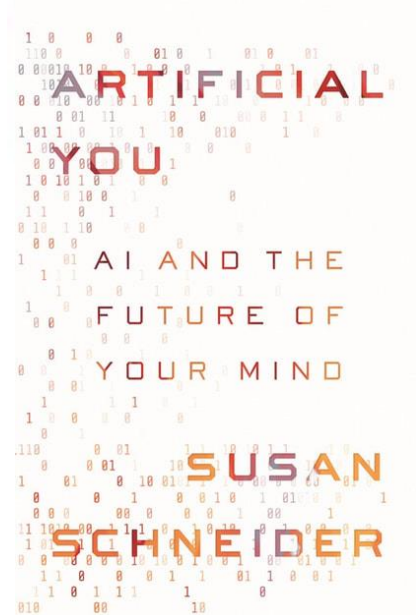


BOOK REVIEW

Artificial You: AI and the future of your mind

(Susan Schneider)

A sober-minded philosophical exploration of what AI can and cannot achieve



Humans may not be Earth's most intelligent species for much longer: the world chess, Go, and Jeopardy! champions are now all AIs. Given the rapid pace of progress in AI, many predict that AI could advance to human-level intelligence within the next several decades. From there, it could quickly outpace human intelligence. What do these developments mean for the future of the mind?

In *Artificial You*, Susan Schneider urges that it is inevitable that AI will take intelligence in new directions, but it is up to us to carve out a sensible path forward. As AI technology turns inward, reshaping the brain, as well as outward, potentially creating machine minds, it is crucial to beware. Homo sapiens, as mind designers, will be playing with "tools" they do not understand how to use: the self, the mind, and consciousness. Schneider argues that an insufficient grasp of the nature of self, consciousness, and mind could undermine the use of AI and brain enhancement technology, bringing

about the demise or suffering of conscious beings. To flourish, we must grasp the philosophical issues lying beneath the algorithms.

At the heart of her exploration is a sober-minded discussion of what AI can truly achieve: Can robots really be conscious? Can we merge with AI, as tech leaders like Elon Musk and Ray Kurzweil, suggest? Is your mind just a program? Examining these thorny issues, Schneider proposes ways we can test for machine consciousness, questions whether consciousness is an unavoidable by-product of sophisticated intelligence, and considers the overall dangers of creating machine minds.

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FESTIVALS

Purim (6 March 2023)

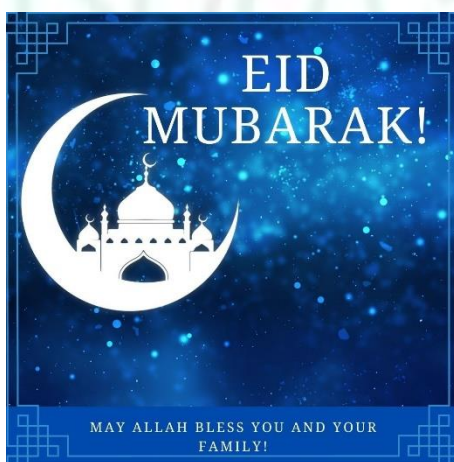


Purim is a minor Jewish festival, falling in the late winter, marking the Jews deliverance from Haman's plot to destroy them, recorded in the book of Esther. Purim is celebrated through reading of the Scroll of Esther, the use of noisemakers to drown out the name of the enemy Haman, by the exchange of gifts, and through the giving of charity. The celebratory atmosphere is enhanced by children's and adults' wearing of costumes and, especially in the modern period, by synagogues' or other Jewish institutions' hosting of carnivals. Despite the merriment,

the holiday presents a serious theological message. By recalling the potential danger of Diaspora life to the Jews, Purim reflects upon the evil of complacency. At the same time, it declares that, because of the ever-watchful God who works quietly to make the right thing happen, the Jewish nation will outlive history.

(Alan Avery-Peck in Orlando Espin & James Nickoloff (eds.). 2007. *An Introductory Dictionary of Theology and Religious Studies*. Dublin: Columba Press, 1107-1108)

Ramadan (22 March 2023)



Ramadan is the 9th month of the year according to the lunar calendar used by Muslims. During Ramadan, practising Muslims fast from dawn until sunset. The fast, called *sawm*, involves abstinence from food or drink, including water; from sexual intercourse; and from any kind of enjoyment that would detract from the spirit of prayer that surrounds this holy season. Children, women who are pregnant or nursing, the elderly and sick, and people on long journeys are exempt from observing the fast. Considered one of the Five Pillars (foundational beliefs or practices) of Islam, the Ramadan fast commemorates the month in which the Qur'an was first revealed. It is also understood as a time of spiritual cleansing and renewal when believers reaffirm their

submission to God. The month ends with a joyous festival cold Eid al Fitr, the Feast of Fast Breaking.

(Ronald Pachence in Orlando Espin & James Nickoloff (eds.). 2007. *An Introductory Dictionary of Theology and Religious Studies*. Dublin: Columba Press, 1124)

LOCAL & INTERNATIONAL NEWS

St Augustine College



At present, the ideals underlying the foundation of St Augustine seem more critical for the future of African people than ever before. Today only 10% of South African students get their degrees from private universities and almost 50% of them get a degree from UNISA. Being a relatively new phenomenon in South Africa, private independent tertiary institutions such as St Augustine can respond to the need for higher educational standards as well as smaller classes allowing face-to-face interaction with lecturers. And that is precisely what enables students to master their chosen subjects.

Today, St Augustine offers a full range of degrees in the humanities: from Honours through Master to Doctoral degrees. Fields of study include Education, Applied Ethics, Peace Studies, Theology and Philosophy. (Registration for Bachelor's degrees are not currently accepted.) In addition, the Private Tertiary Institution offers a 2-year mixed mode programme for the Higher Certificate in Biblical Studies. As St Augustine seeks to serve also those who want to study for their own enrichment or the development of their skills, a number of short, non-degree courses, workshops and public lectures for lifelong learning are available at the Private Tertiary Institution.

Committed to small lecture classes and giving every learner individual attention, St Augustine is big enough to make a difference and small enough to care about all its students. It is one of the few private institutions of higher education in South Africa to design and develop its own degrees, all of which are approved and accredited by the Council for Higher Education, the South African Qualifications Authority, and registered with the Department of Education. Due to its unique teaching programmes, the outstanding commitment of lecturers and personalised tuition, St Augustine has a very high pass rate when compared with other South African universities.

As a private institution, St Augustine receives no financial support from the government; however, the fees at the Private Tertiary Institution are comparable to those at state universities. St Augustine works collaboratively with the Catholic Schools Office in Johannesburg and Pretoria, the Catholic Institute of Education and the Jesuit Institute of South Africa.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ST AUGUSTINE COLLEGE HAS MOVED
WE'LL GIVE FULL CONTACT DETAILS IN THE NEXT ISSUE



Beating Big Oil



Indigenous women like us know how to beat big oil – if only the world would listen to us



Nemonte Nenquimo and Nonhle Mbuthuma

We are two Indigenous women leaders writing from the frontlines of the battle to save our oceans, our forests, and our planet's climate. And we have good news to share: we know how to beat big oil.

My name is Nonhle, which means “beauty” in the language of my people, the amaMpondo of South Africa. In September, I led my community to a huge victory against Shell. We succeeded in getting a court to revoke a permit that would have allowed the company to despoil Indigenous farming communities and fishing grounds along South Africa's pristine “wild coast”.

And my name is Nemonte, which means “many stars” in the language of my people, the Waorani of the Ecuadorian Amazon. In 2019, I led my people against the Ecuadorian government and the international oil industry, protecting 500,000 acres of primary rainforest from oil drilling, and setting a legal precedent to protect millions more.

No one thought these victories were possible. That's because big oil has bottomless resources to fight and

intimidate those of us who have the courage to stand up to them.

But we have the law on our side. In 2007, the UN General Assembly adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which recognised our right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) for any activity that affects our ancestral lands. Our shorthand is “Nothing About Us Without Us.”

In our victories in South Africa and Ecuador, we mobilised grassroots campaigns focused on our international right to free, prior, and informed consent. We found that extractive industries are vulnerable to highly organised grassroots campaigns that increase their legal exposure, reputational risk, and shareholder concerns about sinking money into projects that might not materialise.

If you want to help us power Indigenous-led campaigns against big oil, you can support the frontlines of this fight, so that we can protect our leaders, organise our communities, and leverage our legal advantages. Only a fraction of 1% of all climate funding currently makes it to Indigenous communities on the frontlines

of the climate battle. You can help change that.

But we also need allies to share our stories, so that local courts and politicians know that the world is watching. The Guardian is one of the very few media outlets that has consistently shined a spotlight on our victories and struggles. We need many more allies in traditional and social media to pay attention.

And we need allies to join us in pressuring governments around the world to adopt in their national laws and constitutions our internationally recognised right to decide what happens in our lands. This is not just a matter of helping Indigenous communities survive; it's about the survival of our entire planet. Our territories store the vast majority of the

planet's forest carbon, and 80% of our planet's biodiversity. Nemonte's Amazon, for example, stores nearly half of the planet's forest carbon, and every year it absorbs 5% of global carbon dioxide emissions. Without this natural reservoir and sponge, the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5C will be impossible to achieve.

We are writing this together as preparations are under way for Cop27 next month, where world leaders, businesses, and NGOs will gather, once again, to look for solutions to the climate crisis.

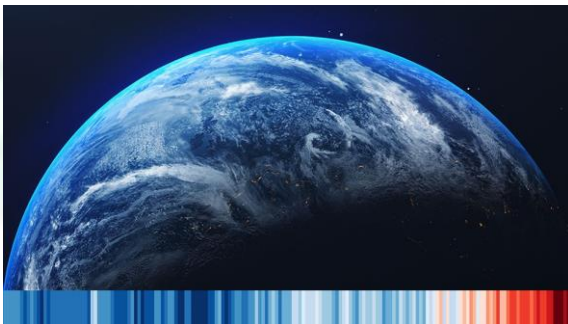
Well, here's one idea from two Indigenous women leaders that beat big oil and protected our oceans and our forests: listen to us for a change.

- Nemonte Nenquimo, co-founder of Amazon Frontlines and the Ceibo Alliance, is a Waorani leader and Goldman Environmental Prize winner
- Nonhle Mbuthuma is a leader of the amaMpondo people in South Africa



What Is Climate Change? A really simple guide

SHARMEL-SHEIKH CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE - NOVEMBER 2022



World temperatures are rising because of human activity, and climate change now threatens every aspect of human life.

Left unchecked, humans and nature will experience catastrophic warming, with worsening droughts, rising sea levels and mass extinction of species.

The world faces a huge challenge, but there are potential solutions.

What is climate change?

Climate is the average weather in a place over many years. Climate change is a shift in those average conditions.

The rapid climate change we are now seeing is caused by humans using oil, gas and coal for their homes, factories and transport.

When these fossil fuels burn, they release greenhouse gases - mostly carbon dioxide

(CO₂). These gases trap the Sun's heat and cause the planet's temperature to rise.

The world is now about 1.1C warmer than it was in the 19th Century - and the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere has risen by 50%.

Temperature rises must slow down if we want to avoid the worst consequences of climate change, according to climate

scientists. They say global warming needs to be kept to 1.5C by 2100.

However, unless further action is taken, the planet could still warm by more than 2C by then. A 2021 report by the independent Climate Action Tracker group calculated that the world was heading

for 2.4C of warming by the end of the century.

If nothing is done, scientists think global warming could exceed 4C in the future, leading to devastating heatwaves, millions losing their homes to rising sea levels, and the irreversible loss of plant and animal species.

What is the impact of climate change?

Extreme weather events are already more intense across the globe, threatening lives and livelihoods.

With further warming, some regions could become uninhabitable, as farmland turns into desert. East Africa is currently facing its fifth season of failed rains, which the UN's World Food Programme says has put up to 22 million people at risk of severe hunger.

Extreme temperatures can also increase the risk of wildfires - as seen in Europe this summer. France and Germany recorded about seven times more land burnt between January and the middle of July 2022, compared with the average.

Hotter temperatures also mean that previously frozen ground will melt in places like Siberia, releasing greenhouse gases trapped for centuries into the atmosphere, further worsening climate change.

In other regions, extreme rainfall is causing historic flooding - as seen recently in China, Pakistan and Nigeria.

People living in developing countries are expected to suffer the most as they have fewer resources to adapt to climate change. But there is frustration from these nations as they have produced the least greenhouse gas emissions.

The planet's oceans and its habitats are also under threat. Research published in April 2022, funded by the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, suggests that between 10% and 15% of marine species are already at risk of extinction.

In a warmer world, land animals will also find it harder to find the food and water they need to live. For example, polar bears could die out as the ice they rely on melts away, and elephants will struggle to find the 150-300 litres of water a day they need.

Scientists believe at least 550 species could be lost this century if action is not taken.

How will climate change affect the world?

Climate change will have different effects across the world. According to the UN climate body, the IPCC, if global temperature rise cannot be kept within 1.5C:

- The UK and Europe will be vulnerable to flooding caused by extreme rainfall
- Countries in the Middle East will experience extreme heatwaves and widespread drought

- Island nations in the Pacific region could disappear under rising seas
- Many African nations are likely to suffer droughts and food shortages
- Drought conditions are likely in the western US, while other areas will see more intense storms
- Australia is likely to suffer extremes of heat and increases in deaths from wildfires

What are governments doing?

Countries agree climate change can only be tackled by working together, and in a landmark agreement in Paris in 2015, they

pledged to try to keep global warming to 1.5C.

Egypt is hosting a summit for world leaders, called COP27, in November, where countries will develop more ambitious plans for cutting emissions including reducing fossil fuel use.

Many countries have pledged to get to "net zero" by 2050. This means reducing greenhouse gas emissions as much as possible, and balancing out remaining emissions by absorbing an equivalent amount from the atmosphere.

Experts agree that this is still achievable, but requires governments, businesses and individuals to make substantial changes now.

COP27 will focus on three main areas:

- Reducing emissions
- Helping countries to prepare for and deal with climate change
- Securing technical support and funding for developing countries for the above

What can individuals do?

Major changes need to come from governments and businesses, but scientists say some small changes in our lives can limit our impact on the climate:

- take fewer flights
- live car-free or use an electric car
- reduce consumption of meat and dairy products
- reduce your energy use
- buy energy efficient products, such as washing machines, when they need replacing
- improve your home insulation
- switch from a gas heating system to an electric heat pump

The COP27 global climate summit in Egypt in November is seen as crucial if climate change is to be brought under control. More than 200 countries will attend the summit to discuss further measures to cut emissions and prepare for climate change, and it could lead to major changes to our everyday lives.

[What is climate change? A really simple guide - BBC News](#)



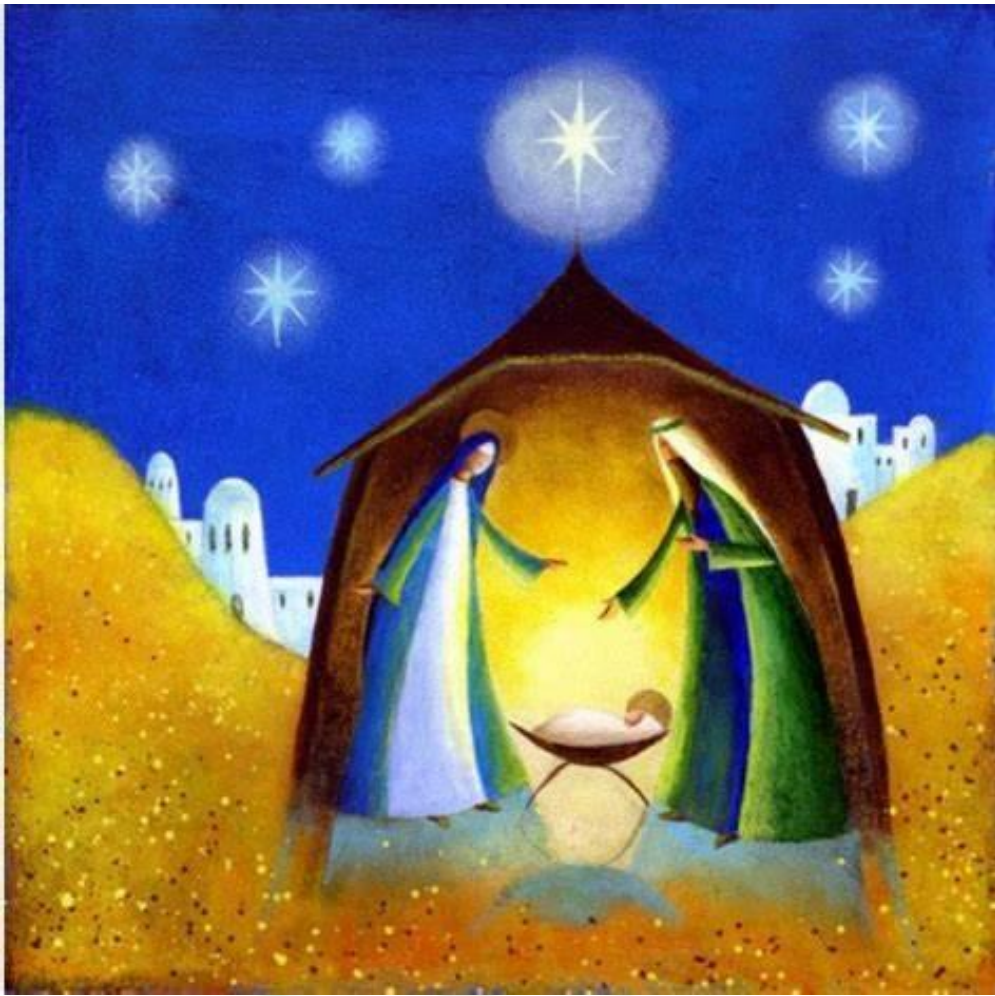
CPTD

Theological Standpoints & The Theory of Multiple Intelligences

Read the articles for CPTD points and record your response to the tasks found at the end of each article.

Professional Development Points Schedule

<https://www.sace.gov.za/Documentation/PROFESSIONAL%20DEVELOPMENT%20POINTS%20SCHEDULE.pdf>



God grant you the light in Christmas, which is faith;
the warmth of Christmas, which is love;
the radiance of Christmas, which is purity;
the righteousness of Christmas, which is justice;
the belief in Christmas, which is truth;
the all of Christmas, which is Christ.

(Wilda English)

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