

EASTER SUNDAY 2010 :: CULTURAL UPDATING Proposing “Community Education Summits”

HUMAN FAMILY UPDATING: In Christian cultures, the Godhead harmony of Trinitarian Community is the model for human family. The creative resonance of family culture, of community culture is a universal sensibility that well accommodates every religious aspiration, every cultural need. True civility, true religion serves in common the physical needs and spiritual longings of life from the lowliest forms to the highest.

Life’s global updating is a continuous process of change, of evolution. Evolution happens spiritually and physically, one person at a time, one family at a time, one community at a time, and the global community for all time. This is an invitation and program for each person, for each family, for each community to aspire to divine likeness in response to the personal Voice calling everyone from the Deep Within.

ONE HUMANITY, ONE CHURCH: The Google World of broadband communication puts everyone on equal ground. Everyone’s word can virtually spread to every one else. The virtual nerve-linking of global humanity makes universal consciousness possible. The days of secrecy when power structures could deceive and dominate with impunity are over. The “whole truth” is virtually accessible to everyone.

Communication means consciousness; consciousness means conscience. Religion now has a chance of being understood in universal light, not as a tool to be manipulated by power structures and violent overreach, but as a tool of instant and constant education.

Factual information is the stuff of truth; the stuff of truth is the stuff of right conscience; the stuff of right conscience is the stuff of right relationship; the stuff of right relationship is the stuff of religion. Perhaps for the first time, truth has a chance to be the universal option of politics, religion, education, and continued updating—evolution.

What is evolution? It is instant and continuous updating of consciousness, of religious education, of political work. Updating, consciousness, education and religion are a unity in the continuity of the self-reflective person. The task of “One Humanity” and “One Church” is the word and work of all. Let us together put our hands to the task, for it is the human thing to do, the divine thing to do, the political thing to do.

I. Updating Education :: Updating Faith :: Updating Religion: As education goes so goes religion; as religion goes so goes education; each mirrors the other; to defraud education is to defraud faith and religion; to defraud faith and religion is to defraud education. And what specifically defrauds? Self-interest ideologies defraud; political, cultural overreach, and intellectual dimness, ignorance and arrogance defraud.

The future is ours to decide, personally and collectively: will self-interest ideology control culture and defraud education, faith and religion? Or, will we search out how we continue collectively to defraud education, faith and religion? The crisis of today is self-inflicted violence, violent outcomes of conflicted “religious” ideologies; falsely cultured conflicts are antithetical to religion; self-interest ideologies, the stuff of irreligion, still divide us.

Perhaps the most damaging of today’s ideologies dating back to the primal past is the hyped aggression of males toward females. In Roman Catholicism it endures in the male

elitist culture of bachelorhood (celibacy) that alienates women from positions of authority and authentication in religious culture. THE EQUAL AND NECESSARY ROLE OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY CAN NEVER BE ACHIEVED AS LONG AS CHURCHES OFFICIALLY HYPE MALE CELIBATE CLERICALISM AS THE PRECONDITION OF PRIESTHOOD AND HIERARCHICAL PARTICIPATION. Nature and women are objects and victims of deviant male violence.

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Before answers can be found to questions cultures seek, they first have to have in their minds very clear questions posed by competing segments of cultures, and together come to terms with authentic, nature-illuminated answers. What is presented here is why/ how, faith and reason, religion and education co-evolve and authenticate evolution, and why/ how evolution authenticates faith and reason, religion and education.

In discovering evolution and natural, affirmative mandates we will discover the answer to the question: “how do faith and evolution correlate?” And in answering that question we will establish the priority of education, the priority of religion, and the priority of mutuality. The *analysis and synthesis* of education, religion, mutuality and evolution, in the words of Vatican II, “is a matter as important as can be.”

Here are six clear, direct questions that communities, and each of us personally need to ask and answer together in the context of “*religion and education in the community*,” and in context of global urgencies that confront all humankind, all life on Earth. In the end we should be able to challenge ourselves personally and socially, and put before ourselves “Ten Affirmative Mandates” by which we can authenticate life, personally and socially:

What is faith? Truth?

What is education?

What is ideology?

What is religion (irreligion)?

What is evolution?

Where/ how does God Self-reveal?

Culture turning against Nature: The very thought of culture turning against nature is repugnant. Why would a creature of nature want to turn against nature? How perverse is that! No one in his right mind would intentionally do a mindless thing like that. But the fact is humankind does just that; it has trashed nature and degraded it to such a degree that species are going extinct and eco-systems are collapsing. We all contribute to nature’s wasting and our own self-destruction.

Change has always been necessary for survival; the need for change never goes away. Is humanity sufficiently informed in intelligence as to make the kind of change needed now for survival? There are no final answers, but surely there are intermediate answers.

The issue of risk is and always has been “consumption”; the much-used word today is consumerism. The Garden of Eden Story is a moral telling of human wasting of “Garden” ecology. Ancient moralists recognized two “divine” mandates; the first is “increase and multiply.” They also had an awareness of their wasting the Garden, and the need for the second divine mandate, not to consume the fruit of the tree in the middle of the Garden. In evolutionary experience, human populations were forced to move away from places of diminished resources to places where resources were yet abundant.

Today there are no resources on Earth that are not stressed by exploitation. Human appetites and populations have to be kept in some kind of balance with resources so as not to destroy the base of vital existence, human and other life. Consumption, pollution and waste are contributing to massive and likely irreversible collapses of eco-systems. Change is being forced on humankind because of destructive consumption and excess of appetites and populations.

In the Genesis Story Adam complained to God that the woman prevailed on him to take the fruit she offered; Adam didn't admit his inability to restrain his appetites, but resorted to blaming Eve. God didn't solve the problem, but Adam got the message that things would be more difficult in the future and that he would have to pay the price for his inability to control his appetites. Out-of-control consumption, the original and continuing sin of humankind, is exacting a price on everyone. The signs of the times suggest that the wasting of ecologies is accelerating precipitously.

Adam's Original and continuing sin is the sin of prostitution, the exploitation of female grace and fecundity, whether in the person of Eve (woman) or in the prolixity of nature. The sin of prostitution is an instinct-driven passion over which males lose their self-control and become automatons of machismo, a primal power of waste, dominion and overreach.

The wild energy of male machismo is an energy that can be controlled only by female wit and wisdom which sees through male passion and his incapacity of self-control. The Wisdom of Faith needs to control the Passion of Rational Machismo, for except it does, run-a-way machismo spreads violence and irrationality. Reason needs the grounding of Faith. Faith needs the energy of Reason. Faith weaves the energy of male Reason into controlled patterns of beauty and sensibility. Faith and Reason working together by way of mutuality complement each other in the here-and-now recognition of dependency and expand on life's virtues of wisdom, age, and grace. Wisdom supposes nature; age supposes nature; grace supposes nature; God speaks and self-reveals through nature, through the unity and continuity of femaleness and maleness.

Ten Affirmative Garden Mandates: Affirmative Garden Mandates are about natural intelligence and the mutuality of female/male complements in the here-and-now working of Nature/ Grace.

The Ten Affirmative Mandates of Nature recognize both the damage of excess and the virtue of control. God Self-reveals not through excess or bombast, but in the strength of resonance, the quiet harmony of mutuality. Males cannot alone manage the excess of radiant energy, their dominating machismo, any more than females alone can be fruitful without male energy.

Natural sustainability, the fulfillment of female/ male complements is a work of Faith and Reason together, joining their inherently unique complements into a holistic spirituality that engages the virtues of nature even as they sustain nature. In fidelity to the Garden Mandates of nature we can learn affirmative collaboration with nature in her patterns of symbiosis and evolution—God's Plan.

Ten Garden Mandates Personal Life Promises

1. I shall prove my words with work;
2. I shall provision for new life before I procreate new life;
3. I shall in all things live by the civil virtues of faith, hope and love;
4. I shall safeguard the civil virtues in all forums of personal and social conduct;
5. I shall use all accruals of wealth for local and global wellbeing;
6. I shall subject my commerce to the constraints of personal authenticity and public reverence;
7. I shall enjoy the fruits of life but not at the expense of life;
8. I shall exemplify and teach the graces of heart: altruism, reverence and service to the sustaining necessities of life;
9. I shall engage learning for my lifetime and use it for the wellbeing of all; and,
10. I shall worship God by the selflessness of my living.

II. Community Summits Religion / Education Joined in Updating

Inter-faith Opportunity: Religious pluralism in modern societies is a phenomenon that challenges fixation, and enables symbiosis and conscionable evolution. The compulsion to proselytize, to convert others to one's belief/ religion, is driven by group and personal persuasion that one's own group belief/ faith is closer to "the" truth than other religions. When one faith is politicized over others by coercion, the other is deprecated and demeaned while the "preferred" faith is hyped. The history of Roman Catholicism is a history of the manifold ways that threats of punishment and promise of rewards are used to persuade conversion to the political ideology of dominion theology.

Commonsense based on historical experience is now better informed in the ruses of the wrongful political overreach of personal faith. Faith is rightly and creatively open to social/ personal investigation, and invitation to dialog by people seeking civil/ moral mutuality. Interfaith violence and intolerance can be mitigated and reconciled by honest and open dialogue. These times speak to the urgency of symbiotic intention and accommodation of personal differences of belief.

Individual and institutional impulses drive religion; they arise under the different circumstances of times and place. The evolution of faith and reason is mutual and concurrent, i.e., codependent, the same but also unique to the times. The personalizing of Godhead Divinity occurs in personal/ social consciousness, in the mutuality of faith and reason, of woman and man.

Perspective on Cultural Experience: Education is a family matter, vitally important to every individual and every community. Education is about living creatively, morally, productively. Living productively is about personal wellbeing, family wellbeing and communal sustainability. Common issues of interest concern every person in essentially the same way, but also uniquely because of the uniqueness of person and community.

Communities are unique because of their history, their geography, their ecology, their culture. Even across cultures, geographies, histories and ecologies, there are commonalities that need to be identified and incorporated into religious/ moral belief/ practice. Unless commonalities are secured by people together, cultures are set against each other, and out of mindlessness, they inflict violence and destruction on each other.

Education is too much the football of self-interest enterprises, political, business, and religious. When can everyone agree that education is about human wellbeing, about civil, communal harmony? Education is about upbringing children and preparing them to be compassionate, self-assured, open and culturally responsible citizens.

To a large extent, families, communities and civilizations are what education teaches them to be. If violence prevails at any level it should be examined for its causes and should be dealt with by community action. If a community puts in place a compassionate system open to differences, it can use differences to enlarge symbiotic sensitivity.

Within communities there are ideologies that differ and conflict. A communal will to be open to diverse ideas and ways of living can be respectful of others without violence and with benefits. Competitive interests and ideologies across cultures and histories have put people in religious, political, cultural, and economic conflict. The violence of conflicts is mostly gratuitous and unnecessary, and can largely be avoided if cultures are of a mind to collaborate rather than compete.

Prejudices that bedevil nature and humankind don't just happen, they are taught; they are *c-a-r-e-f-u-l-l-y* taught. Religion and prejudice go together like blood and violence. Can prejudice be untaught? What's wrong with prejudice? Prejudice is wrong when it damages relationships. Can prejudice be good? When prejudice is the inner persuasion to do good and pursue the wellbeing of others as of self it is good.

Essentially Unfinished: The more we come to understand the universe, the more it is remarkable to us and the more we are remarkable to it. We are remarkable to ourselves because we are able to grow in understanding of ourselves. Awesome is what awesome does. We are small-minded because our focus is small-minded. By expanding our conscious interests we can expand the trajectory of our personal lives and their impact in the natural order of quantum relativity.

Evolution is an *arrow in time* as others have said; the arrow changes time and time changes the trajectory of the arrow. The cosmos remains open and unpredictable. A matter of personal importance is how our free will judgments affect nature and how much nature controls outcomes of willful choices. Nature owns free will to the extent that nature owns control of outcomes of "free" choices. Natural coherency has speed limits; the coherency of the energetic quantum yields to external forces when speeds exceed the limits of quantum inherency; it's the "**law of attenuation.**"

Nature smiles at human folly for she knows what they believe individually is modified by times' test of sustainability. Self-deception in general is a greater problem for people than it is for nature, so we have believed. The cumulative hurt to Earth, however, by the culture of self-deception, does matter to nature as the evidence of the times is telling us. The change of Earth-life by cumulative human wrongdoing is also the change that alters life's trajectory. As John Donne says, "No man is an island."

The Status-quo vs. New Contingencies & Survival: Presently, the "signs of the times" speak to the need for updating religion and education. This recognized need for updating is consistent with the clear and insistent insight of the Second Vatican Council which addressed the reality of evolution and the conditioned need for ongoing *analysis and synthesis* in order for faith and reason to remain vital to the urgencies of the times. It is self-defeating and ineffective not to respond to urgencies of the times and not to update personal/ social presumptions proven to be ineffective and defective.

Status-quo fixity in past ideology is personally injurious and mortally imperiling to nature. Religion and education are so intimately joined to moral consciousness and natural sustainability that for all practical purposes one is inseparable from the other. Cultural violations of nature are personally/ socially damaging because of ecological disablement and risks of tipping toward irreversible collapses. This awareness is highlighted by the collapses (extinctions) that have already happened and are occurring. Each community, in the uniqueness of local circumstances, needs to analyze its education and religion, collaboratively and holistically.

III. Vatican II "Analysis & Synthesis"

As important as can be: Continuous updating occurs in every organism at the wave/ particle level. Church as an organic institution, like the human person, needs to analyze and update itself in an ongoing basis in order to keep learning and experience in touch with reality. Self-understanding and the deposits of accumulated experience call for change and updated synthesis and analysis. (Const. IV, *Gaudium et spes*, Intro)

If church fails in self-reflection and updating it loses touch with people and the times, and becomes ineffective; worse, it functions disruptively. The more complex civilizations are, the faster changes occur and the greater the need for continued updating.

Precisely because church has failed to update over centuries it has become ineffective in meeting needs of the times; the updating undertaken by Vatican II is now seen as a quantum-leap from the status-quo that prevailed, and that very realization provokes resistance to change by carry-over mindsets of pre-Vatican II thinking.

The status-quo culture that has persisted in church between the Council of Trent to Vatican II has become so entrenched that many of the old culture believe that Vatican II was disruptive and discontinuous with orthodoxies of the past. The challenge is to clarify the continuity sense of Vatican II with past orthodoxies. The common grounding from which the discussions need to proceed is that provided by Thomistic Scholasticism, which is the authoritative philosophical/ theological grounding of official church. At issue in discussion is whether there is continuity or discontinuity between the Vatican I Church and Vatican II Church. Healing is in context of the "Hermeneutics of Continuity".

The Hermeneutic of Continuity: The “hermeneutic of continuity” means to bridge the rift between proponents of Vatican I and Vatican II. The perceived discontinuity between the Councils is a full blown schism between what each Council represents.

Conflicts center on the role of the laity, on attitudes toward Modernity, and on the co-dependency of faith and reason. Vatican I endorsed what was the traditional top-down hierarchical model, while Vatican II allowed more participatory ownership of authority, of collegial relationship of popes and bishops, and need for Church-updating and inclusion of truths scientifically discerned. Fresh air from the “open windows” of Vatican II inspired the Liberation Theology movement, which provoked a retaliatory response by Pope John Paul II, namely, his appointment of replacement bishops who held to the Vatican I model against Liberation Theology. This action returned people to the continued exposure to the “Religious Paralysis Syndrome.”

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In brief, the conflict between the Councils comes down to this: Vatican I proponents say nothing changed after Vatican II, Vatican II proponents say everything changed. What is proposed here is to establish that both are right, but not for the same reasons, and that what developed between Vatican I and Vatican II was acceptance of scientific methods of reconciling orthodoxies of faith by means of scientific methods, i.e., to certify truth in the same manner that scientific methods are used to interpret scriptures.

Reliance on Science: German Lutheran theologians developed scientific methods for interpreting Scriptures; first Catholic response to their use of science was negative until Pope Pius XII published his encyclical “*Divino Afflante Spiritu.*” In his encyclical Pius XII reinforced the notion that scientific methods should indeed be used in the hermeneutics of Scriptures. Pius XII recognized that conditions of the times, local circumstances of the writer, politics, culture and prevailing philosophies, all influenced the content and intent of individual scriptures and writers. This norm of reason, for discerning truth in Scriptural interpretation, was an important continuity shift from delusional reliance on clerics to greater reliance on the rationality of science.

In the early church, Bishop Irenaeus with fellow bishops decided for the church then, and for future Church, that a plurality of bishops could decide what orthodoxy is and what the faithful had to accept under penalty of sin. “Continuity” in this traditional model means that all new orthodoxy has to tie back to the old if would preserve orthodoxy. To modern consciousness, this is an incestuous expectation of closed-minded control. What needs to be explored is the weight and role of the “continuity of science”, also, as it pertains to the “continuity of orthodoxy?”

In fairness to bishops seeking to preserve the integrity of orthodoxy at the time of early Church, the underlying rationale of orthodoxy they proclaimed presumed the “science” of their time. The “continuity of orthodoxy” requires acceptance that the grounding of first orthodoxy presumed the science of the static-centrist worldview, which worldview continues in traditional Church culture until now. On premises of the muddled times, Pope Pius IX condemned modernity (especially evolution), and the Vatican I Fathers rubber-stamped his claim of infallibility. The dire world and political circumstances of the time and the particular animus of Pius IX imposed heavily on the judgment of the bishops. The Pope was under imminent threat of losing his Papal States Kingdom, and in fact did lose it, and he became a “Prisoner of the Vatican.” Pope Leo XIII, successor to Pius IX came to recognize there would be no recovering the Papal States; thus, he redirected

the attention of the Church to the Gospel of Peace and Justice, which was developing in other Christian churches (Cf: Walter Rauschenbusch, The Social Gospel, 1908)

Vatican II retrieved scientific methodology also with respect to the hermeneutics of conciliar deliberations, even as Pope Pius XII had done for the hermeneutics of Scripture. The Council recognized the "sensus fidelium" which accepts the science of evolution. So how can bishops round out the square box of their making to fit evolution's peg? The "hermeneutics of continuity" makes sense if it includes the expectation that the continuity of science applies also to understandings of conciliar intentions. Between the absolute condemnation of evolution and acceptance of evolution there is no continuity, except if both seek factual truths of science to reconcile differences.

The norms of truth are so paramount to credibility that no method or technique should be excluded that can add to the clarity and applicability of truth. Surely, everyone interested in the advancement and application of truth would want to include any method or test of time that clarifies and enlarges on truth. It must be recognized that the muddle of the times not only obscure matters of science yet unrevealed, but also errs albeit in good faith by bringing forward from the past factual mistakes of assumption and presumption. To err is human, and humans will err no matter in what venue they operate.

History and human nature testify to life's mysteries and to truths that come to light slowly over time, and a bit at a time. It is not inconsistent with the "hermeneutics of continuity" to acknowledge this fact and accept clarifications that informed science brings to understandings previously misinformed. A muddle of consciousness and ideological conflicts prevailed inside and outside the Church at the time of Vatican I, so hasty judgments made under pressure certainly reflect the disturbed times.

With respect to pursuit of the "hermeneutics of continuity" and reconciling the two Vatican Councils, it is consistent with factual truth to acknowledge the heat and intolerance of the time, and that under the circumstances less than fully informed judgments were made. In the matter of faith understandings and the natural processing of consciousness, openness to evolving rationality enables faith to grow in effectiveness as it bears on intentional/ practical living. The respect of Church for evolution needs to be evaluated in the light of the "hermeneutics of continuity." To do less is to frustrate the "continuity of hermeneutics." The least norms of integral truth require nothing less than new "analysis and synthesis" of faith correlations with evolution, a "matter as important as can be." (Vatican II, Constitution IV, Gaudium et spes, Introduction, No. 5)

<http://www.secondenlightenment.org/Future%20CHURCH%20of%20RECONCILIATION.pdf>

Religion supposes Science: Religion supposes knowledge "scientia;" science/ religion have in common the pursuit of truth-enlightenment, of knowing details and values of natural relationships. In their joined work, science and religion are co-essential to informed judgment and human betterment. The Latin word "scientia" means knowledge, insights into nature acquired by experience and study; science studies relationships, and religion attends to moral outcomes of relationships.

As consciousness is informed by science, the priorities of moral relationships (the obligations of conscience) are made clearer. Conscionable insight reflects on divinity, so that the pursuit of conscionable knowledge is pursuit of God. The Jesuit priest John Courtney Murray illumined the Second Vatican Council by expanding the Thomistic axiom: "grace

supposes nature;” he linked faith and reason to grace and nature; his axiom reads: “faith supposes reason *as grace supposes nature.*”

The link of faith to religion leads to another correlation; religion is about faith, God-based relationships, that is, graced relationships informed by reason/ knowledge. The link of faith/ reason continuity sets up the logical connection of religion and science; thus, the Courtney Murray axiom can be expanded to read: “RELIGION SUPPOSES SCIENCE *as faith supposes reason as grace supposes nature.*”

The linking of science and knowledge enlightens the essential connection of science to religion, i.e., to the evolution of faith and religion. To exclude the ongoing contributions of science from religious consciousness is to prevent religion from further growth, grace from further growth and spirituality from further growth. Denied evolution denies the continued authentication of religion. To expect spiritual growth without natural, conscious evolution is to expect spiritual growth to happen by divine intervention, as dominion theology “mystically” does. This presumes on God. Open evolution enables spiritual/ communal authentication in the here-and-now. Fixation in fideism, the cult of dominion theology and patriarchal ecclesiology, impairs intelligence and religious growth in the order of Natural Sacrament.

There is yet another set of parallel correlations that link education to religion and faith. Because of the critical correlation of education to religion, the value of this correlation also parallels values of the Murray correlations. Thus the related matters: education supposes teaching; religion supposes clerics; and prejudice supposes pride. So what comes from proud clerics teaching? prejudiced religious education. (Clerical pride is the presumed superiority of male over female and alienation of women from clerical culture.)

Thus the expanded axiom says: religion supposes clerics as prejudice supposes pride as education supposes teaching. Religious/ cultural prejudice against women is an educational, religious problem which cannot be solved by religion and education acting separately, but by religion and education acting collaboratively, concurrently. Religion and education have to work together to solve the common problems of pride and prejudice, of faulty religion and faulty education. Denial of evolution radically prejudices education and religion with harmful outcomes. Religion and science, faith and evolution belong together in holistic teaching, in the vital holism of natural life.

IV. ENLIGHTENED EVOLUTION STUDY PLAN

<http://www.secondenlightenment.org/ENLIGHTENED%20%20%20EVOLUTION,%20TRIMORPHIC%20RESONANCE,%20THE%20PLAN.pdf>

Other Resources at: <http://www.secondenlightenment.org>, <http://www.evolution101.org>, <http://www.justifiedliving.gather.com/nature>

V. The POETREE WORLDVIEW, Leafing through History

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