

THEOLOGY for the TIMES

Theology like mythology loses meaning if its insights fail to connect with the sense of the times. The Aristotelian/ Scholastic worldview, yet presumed in Christian theologies, does not make sense in the worldview of Postmodernity, of modern science.

The topics that follow speak to worldview differences and facilitate theology in shifting from a 2000 year old worldview to a contemporary, updated one.

1. REALITY

I confess that perhaps nobody complicates simple things as badly as I do. So you may expect that it's likely I will make complex things even more complicated. I apologize for my complexity-complex, nevertheless, I will soldier on.

Where to start? Two approaches present themselves: one, is to approach reality from the surface of things, as our senses present them to us, the sights we see; the sounds we hear; the tastes we savor; the textures we feel; the aromas we sense; the memories we cherish.

On the other hand, we might take the depth-science, neurological, approach to the senses and plumb their intricacies. This latter approach pursues energetic processes and cosmic relationships at subatomic levels. I'm really not competent to go there, so we will be more superficial in our approach.

From the micro-level approach we might resort to Einstein's elegant equation, $E=MC^2$, which says energy is matter, or in reverse, matter is energy. This description is generally accepted as definitive of all reality, of all relationship. In that regard it is elegantly complex even as it is elegantly simple. It reveals that reality is complex.

My first exposure to the nature of the cosmos as substance and process, to quantum relativity/ reality, was more graphic than mathematic. I was told to look at a newspaper print picture, say, the face of a person, and note the distinctive features of the person's face. Look at the picture with a magnifying glass and see how the features of the face are distinguished by the ink on the page. See that the ink is put on the page in forms of many little dots of different density, size, color, etc. Now, enlarge a dot on the page with higher power magnification and you will see that the dot is made up of smaller dots. Keep enlarging an enlarged dots and eventually the dots become so small as to disappear.

What gives definition and qualification to visible things is the relation of micro "dots", and of wave energy that marshals collections of micro dots into some manner of distinction, as for example, a seed, a tree, a frog, a flea, an elephant. This is the quantum world of energetically managed dots (photons, electrons) arranging the physical structures of life in the quantum-electric universe.

What is real is relationship, the enduring and transforming arrangements of energetic constructs that are informed and conformed by and to programmed dot-relationships. All relationships are conformed to some purposeful rationality, e.g., by DNA; all relations are nature-arranged dot-conformations. The matters and manners of purposeful relations endure and secure habits and associations that correlate.

Life in all its complexity of process reduces down to conforming individual “dots”, micro-particles, to laws of natural transformation, whether in structures large or small, as in a tree, in its leaves, in the cells of the leaves, in the chlorophyll in the cells of leaves.

Chlorophyll is the organic mechanism (molecule) that steals sparks of light from the radiant energy of sunshine and uses it to disassemble water and carbon dioxide molecules, and to reassemble their parts, oxygen, hydrogen, carbon and nitrogen to create the carbon structures that are the basic building blocks of all life. The process is called “photosynthesis”. The complex molecules of diverse life are the stuff of our own selves. <http://www.evolution101.org/PRINTBKXa.pdf>

All life, all relationships are in and from the same cosmic cloth and spun from the same threads of deep cosmic energy. The spinning of vital cloth is always in process. The fabric ever changes, eventhough from the same cosmic stuff. It is the fabric who we are, what we become, what we know: reality is relationship. That is “reality”.

Then there is that about what religion talks, “Ultimate Reality”. What is “ultimate”? One way to understand ultimate is to reduce things down to least particles, which is the ultimate, the least level of reduction, the wave/ particle interface of all relationship-reality.

Another way of understanding ultimate reality is to understand it in the universal sense of from where material originates and returns, i.e., non-physical energy, “spirituality”. The organized energy of living constructs (bodies) is called “soul”, spirit — Spirit — that in which all has being and which empowers all becoming, the beginning (Alpha) of all and the return (Omega) of all, Whom/ what we call “God”.

The correlative of “ultimate” is “contingent”, that which is always in flux, in process of changing in its relational forms. WE, all life, belong to the order of “contingent reality”, always subject to relational necessity. So, there you have it.

From the personal perspective, “ultimate reality” seeks the fulfillment of a lifetime of relationships. Transformational relationship is life’s ongoing process by which the Unconditioned comes to be conditioned in human potentials. The consciousness of being/ becoming is about understanding relationships. Remembrance and re-membering are a conscious unity, the continuity of reflective being and physical becoming. In being and becoming, human consciousness shares the divine purposes of destiny in the self-fulfilling processes of change.

The fulfillment of being is in the experiences of becoming, of transformation from means to end, from end to means. In the community, in common relationships, higher purpose seeks higher wellbeing, the transformation of intention from subject to object, from object to subject — the hypostasis of the divine/ human, of the human/ divine. Paul Tillich says: “Religion...is ultimate concern...religion is substance, the ground and the depth of man’s spiritual life.” [Quoted in Robert W. Whalen’s SACRED SPRING, pg 304]

2. Maturity

From personal experience in life we learn what maturity is. In our own life cycle we know that it takes many years, many seasons of growing to become mature. An apple, on the other hand, takes but a single season to form, grow and mature (ripen).

Maturity like reality has two aspects, the physical-material and the psychical-spiritual. Our understanding of “What is real” helps us understand what maturity is. Maturity is a physical/ spiritual process of advancing in wisdom, age, and grace. Growth into maturity is growth in interactive relationships and personal change — what transforms from less implicated to more implicated thinking-being.

Moment by moment, at the deep particle level of every molecule in every cell of our bodies, we are changing and being transformed, physically, psychically. Implicated growth is a process of formation, information, reformation, in a word — maturing — what happens from conception, through life, to the final dissolution of our “dot” substance — what is death.

Maturing is nature’s programmatic processing of enduring relationships, structures and, is mindful purpose that progresses from less mature complexes to more mature ones.

Human consciousness is highly self-reflective, what is “introspection”, the ability to look within ourselves and see ourselves in context with other life. We discern the causes and effects of choices that bear on us and on others. We sense the need of conforming our choices and actions to what serves common wellbeing, the wellbeing of others as well as our own. Being purposely mindful and behaving sensitively, sensibly, is “maturity”.

Maturity is the habit of discerning authentic relationships, is diligence in being faithful to them, and advancing sustainable relationships. A mature person is a person who is trustworthy, who is as sensitive for the wellbeing of others as for self. Such manner and attitude of relating facilitate personal/ social responsibility with respect to resource usage, and the preservation of resources.

Maturity is about purpose and processes — purpose that mindfully advances life’s open potentials, and processes that engage trains of interactions that endure and advance the commonweal, on understanding of need, not driven by passions of greed.

3. The Company You Keep

Mother always cautioned us as children to mind the company we keep for our character and reputation defines us by them.

Both, the Republican Party and the Religious Right (Catholic bishops) now have to examine who they have become, for in the public mind they have come to define each other by their choice to cast their lot with each other.

The public resoundingly rejected both Republicans and the Religious Right in electing Senator Barack Obama to be the next President of the United States. Perhaps the issue that exposes the joined dishonesty of the Religious Right and the Republican Party is their united determination over the issue of doing whatever it takes to elect a president

who will appoint Supreme Court Justices who will reverse the Supreme Court decision “Roe vs. Wade”.

In letting this single issue define them, each has demeaned the other. The public rejects both because there is so much more to being “pro-choice/ pro-life” than the single issue as they narrowly construe it. President-Elect Obama expanded the pro-choice/ pro-life vision in the global arena to include the growing ecological/ human disaster that originates in capitalized corporate consumerism (“privatized”, unregulated profiteering).

Corporate (consumer) Capitalism as it has evolved roots fundamentally in Hegelian philosophy that presumes to have public “estates”, public corporations control and capitalize the wealth of people and nature. Unregulated corporate capitalism is “disaster” capitalism, disaster politics. The corporate culture of disaster roots back to antiquity’s patriarchal politics and to dominion philosophy/ theology.

President-Elect Obama must now preside over a world situation that has witnessed the rise and fall of imperialism, feudalism, colonialism, communism, and now, consumer capitalism. We are all party to the disaster, to the blindness of the times. Together we must open our eyes to the NEW REALITY and put past mistakes behind us, and become together a “pro-choice people” that is resoundingly “pro-life”.

The challenge to all of us is to get on the “Right” side of history.

4. Sense and Sensitivity

I’ve been told that what America needs, what the World needs, what the Church needs, is a healthy dose of “reality” and “maturity”. I’ve contributed my thoughts to the subjects at <http://ncrcafe.org/node/2134> and, <http://ncrcafe.org/node/2145>

Why REALITY and MATURITY? Because right understanding of them matters to our understanding of sense and sensitivity, our way of behaving toward each other and nature.

Informed, uninformed and misinformed sense of reality colors how we reason. The more informed our sense of reason, of purpose, of reality, the more sensibly we can relate to nature and to each other. Informed sense means right understandings of the correlations of faith and reason.

Maturity is a process of ongoing growth, of informing wisdom, age and grace, of growing into ever more fulfilled understandings of the correlations between faith and reason, of our correspondence with nature and others.

Growth in reality, in maturity, in sense and sensitivity, is what evolution is about, what civility is about, what religion is about.

Our personal ownership of faith/ hope/ love should be manifest in our personal behavior, in family, in community, in Church, in Parish. Practically, what can we do to project faith/ hope/ love? One way might be to facilitate group sharing in our own Parishes and growth in understanding the joined sense of reality, of maturity, of faith and evolution.

5. SPIRITUALITY IS—Self-Reflective Consciousness

Personal/ social consciousness (spirituality) is kept vital by self-reflection. Spirituality is consciousness, the energetic awareness that gives character to purpose and effectively elaborates the correlations of individuality and community.

The dynamic agency of self-reflective purpose is kept vital in the design and function of personal/ social intelligence — embodied in the hemispheres of the cortical brain, in perpetual dialog. Hemispheric, cortical brain intelligence is characterized as “emotional” (female, faith) and “rational” (male, reason). The individual personality is continually active in process of transforming, “naturally”, genetically, and “nurturally”, memetically (culturally). The group interfacing of individuals characterizes the self-reflective persona of the group, the collective, the society.

Sustainable purpose is enabled individually/ collectively in the intentional pursuits of common wellbeing. The self-reflective interfacing of faith and reason happens by way of communication, which authenticates consciousness and personal/ social wellbeing. In the purposes of mutual intention and wellbeing, women and men together advance personal/ social reflection and moral relationships. [See <http://ncrcafe.org/node/1999>]

In essence, religion and civility are communally characterized in authentic engagement of intentional spirituality, of moral relationships. The failure of emotional/ rational dialog effectively defeats purposes of good intentions and truncates spirituality from doing its resourceful role of vitalizing individuality and community.

Individuality supposes community as community supposes individuality; religion and civility suppose spirituality as spirituality supposes religion and civility. The reciprocal relationships of individual/ community, of religion and civility are sustained by the “process of reason”, which involves communication, consciousness and conscience — see “trimorphic protennoia/ resonance”, <http://www.piney.com/GnosTrimProten.html> , and [http://www.evolution101.org/newdownload%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.evolution101.org/newdownload%20(1).pdf),

6. Conversion from Schismatic Culture

Because we are cosmically one in origin and in expressive community, we are, by nature, human and divine. The voice of personal conscience is divinity speaking within and seeking expression without; “paradigmatically human”, indivisibly female/ male.

The ever perfecting expression of spirituality is intuitional (emotional) and purposeful (intentional, rational). The intuitional is experientially grounded faith; and the purposeful, rational, is reason, engaged and challenged by contingent reality. Intuitional awareness supposes maturity as purposeful rationality supposes changing reality.

Paradigmatic spirituality is intuitional/ intentional in its self-perfecting potentials. The motivational integrity of faith, of maturity, supposes purposeful rationality in dealing practically with contingent reality. If either aspect of intelligence (faith’s integrity or reason’s purpose) fails, the outcome, spiritual and physical, is defective — “truncated”.

Cultural patriarchy, and the evolution of cultural dominion by males over females, has led to the cultural breakdown of faith and reason. The hyperculture of male fideism (male arrogation of superiority) has deformed the culture of faith. Defective dominion rationality continues to suppress the intuitional health of emotional intelligence (faith). This defect is at the root of cultured distrust, of “the culture of death”.

Conversion from schismatic culture can restore humankind to its paradigmatic role of essential mutuality, effective complementarity, and functional emotional/ rational subsidiarity. Sabbath and Jubilee are celebratory occasions of necessary remembrance, of ecozoic health and spiritual sanity; we need to recover and celebrate them anew.

Male Church hierarchy needs to evaluate its role in inauthentic cultural habits and make necessary theological (rational) and ecclesiological (structural) adjustments.

7. Agent & Agendum

It seems evident that Tridentine Theology/ Ecclesiology clings to long in-place traditions of dominion theology. The old truisms structured in presumptions of the static-centrist universe no longer illumine common sense in the Postmodern world. As Vatican II tells us, new analyses and syntheses that correspond to insights of the evolutionary universe have to be put in place. [Vat. II, Const. IV, “Gaudium et spes” Introduction, #5]

To the extent that theology fails to inspire and enlighten the conscionable task of every person in evolving reality, it becomes irrelevant to the times.

Creation, Nature, is an unfinished “agendum”. Who is the “agent” who completes Creation’s, Nature’s work? Faith tells us that ultimately God is Agent in all matters. Obviously, the Cosmos and the ultimate working of Creation is way above the pay grade of human beings, nevertheless, what happens in Nature, to diverse life on Earth, to the environment and to ecozoic relationships, is very much the doing of each of us.

In this regard, every individual person is “agent” of Nature’s “agendum”. As self-reflective agents at the top rung of the ladder of life, outcomes in evolving Nature are very much of human doing, of human agency.

Philosophically and practically, it seems to make more sense to use the terms “agent” and “agendum” rather than “subject” and “object”. As “agents” in the working of Nature, everything that falls within the sphere of human relationships is the personal agendum of each of us. In effect, this makes each of us “ecopriests”. [See POETREE Chapbook 9, “Personal Conscience”, pg 1 “Ecopriesthood”, www.evolution101.org/PRINTBK9a.pdf]

From this perspective, practical sense is better served in understanding ourselves as “agents” rather than “subjects”, and of understanding “other” as “agendum” rather than “object”. Using the terms “subject/ object” is too impersonal, too “rational”, for everything about human relationships is personal, and every person, male and female alike, is agent (ecopriest) in the matters of interpersonal (natural) relationships. Every person is ecopriest and the agendum of every person is foremost the conscionable cultivation of relationships that serve fulfillment and common wellbeing.

As agent, every person is equal on an “ontological” basis with respect to the common agendum. Cosmic wisdom advances the golden rule “do unto others as you would have others do unto you”. The Christian mandate is “love one another”, and Jesus tells us explicitly, “Do as I have done.”

The personal cultivation of moral relationships binds us individually, socially; it is what makes us “religious”, what makes us “civil”. In the Sacrament of Natural Order, we cannot separate the geological from the geophysical, the material from the spiritual, or religion from civility.

Our common conscionable agendum is religion and civility, how we relate with “other” interpersonally inside the spectrum of Natural Order. Religion and civility advance the agenda of Natural Sacrament, Nature’s evolving work. We are self-determining agents who determine wellbeing and interpersonal relations, “nature’s agendum”.

Division, speculation, self-electionism (claims of inferiority and superiority), dominion, are all mindless exercises except they advance the sane sense of natural codependence. Religious culture, disconnected from the reality of evolving Nature is destructive except it accords the agendum of the “Naturalis Sacramentum Ordinis”.

8. Liturgy/ Sacrament/ Natural Order: “The Evolution of Symbiosis”

The agents of Liturgy are The People; the agents of Sacrament (ritual remembrance) are The People; the agents of self-reflective purpose in Natural Order are The People. By decree of the Second Vatican Council, Church is The Whole People. The Whole People as Church is the intentional agency (subject) and agendum (object) of reason, of faith and of purpose.

The interrelationship of Liturgy, Sacrament and Natural Order is reciprocal, that is, each is the correlative of the other — Liturgy bears upon Sacrament, Sacrament bears upon Natural Order, bears upon Church; Natural Order, Church, bears upon Sacrament, Sacrament bears upon Liturgy, etc — all bear upon human self-reflectivity, the evolving continuity locus of purposeful agency and agenda.

Co-essential to each other, Liturgy, Sacrament and Natural Order are about inter-personal, ecozoic relationships. Natural Order, ecozoic relationships subsist in divine immanence, inclusive of all life, as Sacrament and Liturgy.

No artifice of mental division can cleave the continuity relationships of energy/ matter, spirituality/ materiality, soul/ body; matter subsists in energy; materiality subsists in spirituality; and body subsists in soul. Energy, spirituality, and soul are transcendent; matter, materiality, and body are necessarily changing and impermanent.

The insensitive culture of dominion theology (exclusionary patriarchy) is counter-intuitive, anti-social, ungodlike and self-destructive. Sensitivity is the soul of mature awareness, as intention (committed purpose) is the self-reflective soul of Natural Order — what is intelligent design.

Sensitivity supposes sense (faith/ reason) as maturity supposes reality (Natural Order). Reality is the premise, the sine-qua-non supposition of sensitivity. Religion is committed

fidelity to faith/ reason, to the symbiotic sense of Eucharistic transformation and the necessary transformation of the impermanent into other/ Other.

As the supposition of Natural Order, intelligent design is the agency and agendum of faithful living, of grace in nature, and of symbiotic Sacrament. Agency and agendum are by way of communication, consciousness and conscience.

God is without hands, except for human hands; God is without voice, except for human voice. The People are the voice, the Word of God on Earth; The People are the hands, the Work (leitōs ergon) of God on Earth. Word/ Work are about Liturgy, Sacrament and Natural Order — what self-reflection and symbiotic evolution are about.

[The following segment is excerpted from Monica Steffen's "The Evolution of Symbiosis", 1982, QUANTUM RELIGION, pp 117-123, www.secondenlightenment.org]

"...As science explores the symbiotic phenomenon, it is becoming more and more evident that symbiosis is a common occurrence rather than a rare event, and according to Margulis, "...it is a product of an evolving interspecific relationship."

"Symbiosis: The human realization.

"The species Homo sapiens is the highest evolved organism on this planet to date thanks to symbiosis and myriad other forces such as natural selection. Given the evolved human intellect, man has the potential to grasp the essence of his existence, to perfect himself, and to direct himself toward a purpose.

"Within the last couple of decades, we have witnessed a knowledge explosion in all areas of science. This scientific period of enlightenment has given us much insight into our existence. It is now time to coalesce this knowledge and direct it toward a universal purpose. Man can no longer afford to continue his exploitive abuse of this knowledge without running the risk of destroying himself.

"Man has yet to realize that in order for humankind to survive as a species, he must learn to live symbiotically with fellow men, with other species of the earth, and with earth itself.

"Symbiosis: A tool for learning.

"Science and religion provide vehicles by which man can realize his potential; unfortunately, they too have yet to be symbiotically united. In essence, science in its pure form and religion in its true sense are one and the same; their main pursuit is that of truth. The problem exists in the vocabularies of the two institutions. Their teachings are the same, but they are speaking two different languages.

"Because of this miscommunication, misunderstandings arise, thus, polarizing the pursuers of the same truth. This polarity is found not only between the school of science and the school of religion, but it is also found within the individual schools. Within the religious institution there are many denominations with their many different beliefs, and those who hold a particular dogma would profess that theirs is the only truth. Within the scientific institution there are many schools of theory and thought, and those who pursue a particular theory in a defined manner without considering other schools of thought and other consequences run the risk of discovering only a half-truth.

"It is not that these polarized institutions are all together wrong, for there is much truth in their teachings, but they are representing only a part of the truth and thus are only partly correct in their teachings.

"Polarization between and within these institutions serves only to complicate the search for truth. Men of science and those of religion need to strive for a symbiosis of

the two institutions; the language barrier must be bridged so those who seek to learn the truth may be taught a whole truth.

“Symbiosis: Hope for human society.

“Our society, both national and global, is suffering from an acute case of the Old Testament’s Cain and Abel Syndrome. The two brothers represent two contentious forces. Rather than trying to accommodate one another, they allowed their differences to create bitter resentment. The consequences of this animosity culminated in the demise of one and the long-term suffering of the other.

“There are many contentious forces acting on the world which set individual against individual, culture against culture, and nation against nation. The consequences of these contentions and our failure to make accommodations are displayed daily in the many Cain and Abel scenarios that color the news media—and looming dangerously on the horizon are the consequences of a major contention between two nations that threatens the existence of all mankind and other life forms.

“Perhaps this is the message of the New Testament’s Book of Revelation. Taken literally, as many do take the Bible, this writing conjures up all sorts of unimaginable terrors. But if the mystical propositions are reduced to an applicable perspective, the choices it offers and the consequences of each choice may be brought to new light.

“Apocalypse (from the Greek “apokalypsis” which means “uncovering”) may be said to represent the uncovering of the true purpose of our existence, the symbiosis of all nations such that a unified, interdependent world society is created.

“Armageddon, the antithesis of apocalypse, may be said to represent the consequences of pursuing a contentious purpose, the maintaining of individual nations such as to perpetuate a divided world.

“Unfortunately, we are currently living in a divided world, a contentious world with a nuclear holocaust impending, and man is still applying his evolved intellect and acquired knowledge to self-serving purposes. He has yet to learn to be accommodating, to become symbiotic. He is still parasitic and sometimes even pathogenic in his relationships to other men, to other forms of life, and to the earth. But even so, there is still hope for mankind; according to Margulis, “...parasitic relationships may become benign and even obligate...” and thus these relationships would become symbiotic.

“The laws of love that are taught by many of the world’s religions, Christianity to name just one, are the laws of symbiosis. When man learns to become accommodating, when he learns to live interdependently, then would true religion and symbiosis be experienced.

“We have seen how symbiotic relationships between organisms have been used to solve problems of survival. Human symbiosis may well be the key to solve many of the problems that face mankind. But in order to take on such grandiose tasks as achieving world peace and feeding the millions of hungry people in this world, we must first learn to be accommodating in our daily existence. We cannot become a symbiotic world society unless we learn to become symbiotic individuals.

“It is time for us to realize that we live on a physically finite planet. The material things we borrow from this earth in order to survive are precious and must be shared. Yes, symbiosis is the way.”

9. TRUNCATED SPIRITUALITY & Clerical Culture

More and more, people are coming to the unconventional understanding that the **body is IN soul, matter is IN energy, and, matter IS energy**. Spiritual energy is amniotic consciousness nourishing self-reflective purposes in cosmic evolution.

Male and female, we receive our being from the past and shape the future for better and for worse. The “religiously” cultured schism between spirit/ matter, between the spiritual and the secular, between faith and reason drives misdirection and disables movement toward purposes of intentional symbiosis. Transformational change-for-the-better begins with deep personal respect for life and societal conversion toward conscionable relations and societal probity. Individually, we are the art and artists of nature. We need to trust and discover our personal inwardness, our intuitional promptings, for, whether we realize it or not, we are the highest development of nature and we become more developed by intentional symbiosis.

More than instinct, respect for life is an intuitional, “natural” virtue. Counter-intuitively and irrationally, patriarchy and Modernity have in many ways promoted a “culture of death”, which continues on into Modernity. When faith (religion) and reason (learning, *scientia*) are stood against each other, spirituality, sense, sensitivity and purposeful relations are truncated from their roots.

Disconnection from “reality” (<http://ncrcafe.org/node/2134>) and misdirected culture (immaturity, <http://ncrcafe.org/node/2145>) are subtly corruptive, but together are ultimately lethal. Disconnection and misdirection effectively cloud conscience, distort civil sense, and disable personal probity. Sociopathy, the alienation of women, greed, the exploitation of nature, brute instincts and violent overreach, contribute directly to the frustration of spirituality.

Truncated spirituality, the frustration of sense and sensitivity, and disrespect for life are outcomes of inauthentic culture. Cultured disrespect for life happens in small and in large, corruptive ways, as in unbridled self-arrogation, in human/ ecological abortions, dysfunctional family, ecozoic exploitation and the trashing of environment. Intentional openness to and respect for life, for one another’s uniqueness, inspire sensitivity and discovery of hidden human potentials. These are the wonders of divine potential, of Eucharistic outpouring — what are “natural” graces of self-authentication.

Eucharistic sensitivity informs conscience in the Covenantal Sacrament of personal/ social self-giving. The perpetual processing of Eucharist is about personal/ social wellbeing, the “natural” graces of self-authentication — the concentration of divine/ human purpose in the Natural Order of Sacrament. The interests of collective wellbeing are advanced in collective effort to sustain nature’s wellness, in cultural respect and sensitivity for life’s least and most vulnerable forms.

The illusion that “bigger is better” distorts rationality, for, “big” is not viable except for the “small” that edifies and holds together the integrity of the big. Personal integrity transfers to social integrity, to the integrity of civil/ religious institutions.

A vital sense of “divine instance” in nature, and sensibility for the processes of nature are what Eucharistic consciousness is about. The processes of nature and the symbiotic sense of divine instance are frustrated when the mutuality of faith and reason are

frustrated. The working of Eucharistic purpose is frustrated when the mutuality of faith and reason is truncated.

Truncated spirituality, as practiced in the cultural alienation of the sexes, is a flawed aspect of clericalism (bachelorhood). The culture of permanent bachelorhood is a cult of disconnection from “reality” with permanent risks to growth into “maturity”.

All-male Christian “societies”, e.g., the clerical priesthood, the Knights of Columbus, advocate for the male arrogation of primacy over females, as has been handed down from Tridentine theology/ ecclesiology. This historical myopia (see Posting “The Fraudulent Prerogation of Male Primacy” <http://ncrcafe.org/node/1999>) of male fixation blinds self-reflection to “reality”, deforms “maturity”, and inflicts psychological trauma on the deep psyche.

The trauma of psychic fixation in male arrogation aggravates instincts of dominion and imposition. Dominion over nature and impositions on women are “of a piece”. Except and until humanity converts from the fraudulent prerogation of male primacy, dominion, exploitation, violence and wars will continue to plague life on Earth and stymie humanity from ever achieving full spiritual/ social potential.

The psychic disorder of women being driven to abort unborn life (and even to commit infanticide) links directly to the violence of cultured male dominion and self-imposition. The “culture of death” as prevails in consumer corporatism roots in male self-assumed arrogation over females, over all life — a radical form of idolatry. As faith and reason necessarily evolve together, so must religious/ civil institutions together culture moral/ civil integrity in keeping with personal/ social authenticity.

10. THEISTIC EVOLUTION, Catholicism & Bruno's Acentric Universe

Dominion theology, premised in Earth-centric cosmology, is irreconcilable with process theology that arises organically from evolving cosmic consciousness. Roman Catholic fixation in its own centrism (infallibilism) obscures the organic understanding of Divine/ Human Covenant and compromises fidelity to Covenant.

If Catholicism means to be universal in its truth-sense, and if truth is expressed organically (physically/ psychically) in ongoing evolution, then evolution and Catholicism, necessarily and morally, converge in intentional consciousness. If human intention would avoid imperiling itself it needs to seek out authentic truth revelation in evolution. Truth-sense endures in the unity and continuity of cosmic evolution (what symbiosis does); disdain toward cosmic evolution is disdain toward truth's unity and continuity, the frustration of truth-sense.

One of the more remarkable findings of space science is that the expansion of the universe continues at an accelerating pace. What this suggests is the ongoing de-centering of the cosmos and increase of cosmic acentricity.

The original gravity of maximum centeredness that preceded the bigbang continues to be diffused at an accelerating rate, and ever more distributed, and shared, in expanding quantum-electric relationships. The distribution and expansion of gravity energy are what

cosmic evolution is about, what the personalizing and complexifying of self-reflective consciousness are about. “Dominion Theology” obsesses in pre-bigbang centrism while “Liberation Theology” celebrates personal liberation, self-reflective autonomy and cosmic openness.

The liberation and distribution of gravity, i.e., the process of expanding consciousness, is at the heart of "intelligent design" which values human autonomy and personal worth. Cosmic personalizing is an apex accomplishment of cosmic evolution. Faith and reason together work to sustain and advance the personalizing process, which secures purpose and meaning by focusing intention on the centering means of self-sustainability.

If focused intention on centering collapses, then the process of decentering (entropy, chaos) accelerates and puts human personalizing in peril; the outcome of unmoderated decentering (entropy) is greater chaos. At the other extreme, the outcome of unmitigated centering, centrism, is the frustration of personal autonomy and the suppression of personal conscience.

The cosmic process of CONSCIOUSNESS RECONCILING TRUTH-SENSE is what “Theistic Evolution” is about; what conscionable living within of the God/ Human/ Nature Covenant is about. Church should seek truth/ covenant understandings with enthusiasm for truth-sense is the primacy “business” of religion; notwithstanding this fact, Church remains dismissively minded toward theistic evolution.

Before the Catholic Church can realistically embrace theistic evolution, it must first deal with its entrenched misdirection and with its overt sins of the past, e.g., against Bruno, <http://ncrcafe.org/node/2021>, Galileo and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, whose evolving insights enlighten the reconciling Christian Theology/ faith with quantum science.

Whether or not institutional Catholicism is capable of making the quantum leap of accepting the evolutionary insights of theistic evolution remains an open question — that a growing segment of Catholics have made the leap isn't a question any longer. But, based on very recent remarks of Pope Benedict XVI it seems quite clear that he has not made the shift. [<http://www.ncrcafe.org/node/2039> Transcript of Benedict XVI's Q&A with priests in northern Italy, Posted on Aug 8, 2008 11:45am CST,

“When, in our time, we discuss the rationality of the faith, we should discuss precisely the fact that reason does not end where experimental discoveries leave off, it does not end in positivism. The theory of evolution sees the truth, but it sees only half of it. It does not see that behind evolution there's the Spirit of creation. We are struggling for the expansion of reason, and thus for a form of reason that is open to the beautiful, not leaving it aside as something totally different or irrational.”

It is quite clear that the present advance of theistic evolution does accept “that behind evolution there's the Spirit of creation.” Will the two Catholic churches (Vatican II and Tridentine) persist in their schism or will they (can they) reconcile on workable terms available in insights of theistic evolution?

Roman Catholicism and Christian churches in general have a problem with evolution because they persist in their antagonism toward science and Enlightenment rationalism, (evolution, specifically) even as Enlightenment rationalism persists in its antagonism against cultures of fideistic religions. It is my sense that “Second” Enlightenment opens avenues of dialog that can reconcile faith consciousness with reason/ science.

Perhaps the most recognized protagonist for theistic evolution is the French Jesuit Paleontologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ, who has advanced a scientific sense that is consistent with Bruno and Albert Einstein; contemporary of Chardin such as Thomas Berry and James N. Storer advance theistic evolution even further. Even though Chardin's theology/ cosmology had a powerful influence on the thinking and conclusions of Vatican II, Chardin is not yet officially acceptable to the Church.

What is immediately relevant to the global predicament of Church's eco-social breach is that Teilhard de Chardin opens up a rationality that is a framework on which the impasse between theistic evolution (Christian) and atheistic evolution (Enlightenment) can be clarified; significant developments of Catholic theistic evolution exist beyond the ancient worldview and the theology of Chardin.

I began seriously my journey of science/ faith reconciliation in February 1957. [See at <http://www.secondenlightenment.org/REASON%20the%20Supposition%20of%20Faith,%20of%20Grace.pdf>]. The body of thinking that I have put together since 1957 has been organized into the Syllabus of Faith/ Evolution Study. I invite all to become part of the effort to facilitate Church in its progress toward greater eco-social relevance.

11. Religion is a Green Apple

The Apple of Eden is a metaphor for divine Prevision and Provision. Prevision is divine anticipation of need, and divine Provision supplies for the need. Wisdom, Prevision and Provision are tasted in nature's largesse.

The mindless consumption of green nature is the frustration of Wisdom, what is the "original" and the persisting sin of consumptive consumerism. Dominion theology and patriarchal politics are the religion and culture of idolatrous self-obsession, of greed, of ignorance and arrogance.

Perhaps, in spite of humankind's consumptive capitalism, enough green fruit has yet escaped consumption and can still ripen. Ripeness is a matter of conscious "maturity" and authentic understanding of "reality". Only if green fruit is secured from consumption can humankind experience fullness of divine Prevision and Provision.

Mature consciousness, the prizing of nature's fruitfulness, lets us experience Eucharist and the capacity of human maturing beyond compulsive consumption, which doesn't know how to wait for the fruit to ripen. God's Angel at the Garden Gate still warns, "Don't eat the Green Apples!"

<http://www.evolution101.org/Manuscript%20GREEN%20RELIGION.pdf>