

1. From Fr. Yake's Desk – A Reflection on the Paschal Mystery

Instalment #6

We have considered some dimensions of the Paschal Mystery of the Christ, for example, his suffering (May 10), his need to die (May 17), and his resurrection (May 24). The Paschal Mystery is a totally free and undeserved gift of God but it does not effect salvation unilaterally but it requires human cooperation; love cannot be forced but it is always an invitation as God respects the essential freedom that marks authentic humanity. That truth brings us into the sometimes-uncomfortable reality of human moral decision-making, choices of good or evil that inevitably mean a clash of values (Jn. 17: 14-19); will the baptized reject their baptism in order to fit comfortably into worldly values, will freedom be used to liberate or to enslave?

This is a huge topic that has taken libraries of books to address adequately as divine revelation travels through time and encounters many and various opposing voices and it requires some knowledge of basic principles of fundamental ethics. Our purpose here is simply to point to the fact that the Paschal Mystery (Divine Grace), together with human responsibility that is always influenced by psychosocial realities and the consequences of Original Sin, direct persons' religious lives. Long ago I heard a saying, "That there is a devil there is no doubt but is he trying to get in or trying to get out." On this point St. Ambrose taught, "Our own evil inclinations are far more dangerous than any external enemies;" (From, *Living With Christ*, May, 2020, p. 130.) you might say that, like Dr. Jekyll, there is a Mr. Hyde in all of us.

The effects of Original Sin attack the good human faculties with dire consequences: depriving human beings of supernatural gifts, imposing guilt and eternal punishment, wounding nature where the passions rebel against reason and hinder the functioning of the will. (Emmanuel Doronzo (trans.) *Dictionary of Dogmatic*

Theology. (The Bruce Publ. Co: Milwaukee), 1951. p. 261-262) “Psychologically, it (concupiscence, meaning, with desire) is generally understood as a function of the sense appetite which is divided into *irascible* ... and concupiscible In this sense, like all passions, concupiscence is a natural property itself, but which may be used for good or for bad;” (Ibid. p. 55) all desire happiness but all do not agree on the object that will result in happiness.

On May 15, 1956 the Venerable Pope Pius XII published, *Haurietus Aquas*, (Latin for, "You will draw waters") an encyclical on the need for devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus as the object of all desiring, divine love. It celebrated the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus by Blessed Pope Pius IX. Therein Pius XII indicated that Jesus' expressed love in the Paschal Mystery saves us from three terrors: death, sin, and the Devil. Shockingly, however, as we saw with the original sin of Adam and Eve, many choose these terrors over God by their sinful decisions. In our time many rebel against the notion that any authority can dictate their decisions and some doubt the reality of personal evil, the demonic, believing that choices are just a matter of personal taste but are morally neutral, or as theologian Bernard Lonergan suggested, many are simply “drifters” who ‘sleepwalk’ through life. Pope-Emeritus Benedict XVI explained the predicament of sinners: “At the heart of all temptations is the act of pushing God aside because we perceive him as secondary, if not actually superfluous and annoying, in comparison with all the apparently far more urgent matters that fill our lives. Constructing a world by our own lights, without reference to God, building on our own foundation; refusing to acknowledge the reality of anything beyond the political and material, while setting God aside as an illusion – that is the temptation that threatens us in many varied forms. Moral posturing is part and parcel of temptation ... It pretends to show us a better way.... It claims ...to speak for true realism: What's real is what is right there in front of us.... The things of God fade into unreality, into a secondary world that no

one really needs.” (Source unknown)

The film, *The Exorcism of Emily Rose*, is apropos to the modern situation as it tells the true story of catholic college student, Emily, who gradually became possessed by the devil. Her symptoms of violent self-harm and seeming psychological dysfunction soon involved the medical community. The storyline revolves around the trial of her pastor who argued that her condition was not medical but spiritual and after she withdrew from her meds and being bloodied by the demon she died. On one of her bouts with the devil the demon spoke through Emily listing to the priest-exorcist that she was possessed by many demons: for example, the demon in Judas, Nero, and other loathsome figures throughout history. (Not that in scripture the devil indicated that he was Legion [Mk. 5: 9, Lk. 11: 21-26] and a Roman legion consisted of 6,000 soldiers.) On one occasion Emily found herself in a park veiled in a dark fog. There the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to her and she asked Mary why her, why was she inflicted with this horrible and punishing demonic possession? Mary answered that because the world, while perhaps believing that God exists, had ceased to believe in the devil as personal evil or to engage in the spiritual battle that choosing a godly life requires. Strangely, persons have come to ignore the challenge of the moral life but casually express their *id* (S. Freud) as if there are no eternal consequences. They naively believe that all go to heaven or they remain uncommitted about an afterlife. Holy Mary told Emily that to oppose modern agnosticism on the reality of the demonic God chose her to surface the devil’s work for all to see. Mary then gave Emily a choice: she could come to heaven with Mary now or return to her demonic torturer in order that God’s intention might save souls. Emily chose the latter. She has engraved on her gravestone, “...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ...” (Phil. 2: 12) and I understand that her cause for canonization has been opened.

The demonic does exist and it is not neutral about Christianity but is violently opposed to the redemptive mission of

the Messiah. We see this throughout the New Testament as Jesus is ever confronting the evil spirit from the time of his own temptations (Lk. 4) to the many exorcisms that he performed. There are a number of ways by which the devil draws souls away from God that are less dramatic than possession. The demon wins most, I suspect, by capitalizing on our fallen nature as itemized above; simply by attracting persons to hedonism (avoid pain and seek pleasure) that in our time has become cultural; by accepting “a culture of self-advancement” (Journalist Bill Moyers) as humourously expressed on a license plate, “Whoever dies with the most toys, wins.”

Chapter 11, entitled, *The Cure of Ars and the Devil*, in *The Cure of Ars*, by Abbe Francois Trochu, (Tan Books: Charlotte, North Carolina, 1977) details St. John Vianney’s combat with the ‘Grappin’ who infested the Cure’s home. His Glebe house is now a museum and one can see there the bed that the devil set on fire. Other examples of his demonic infestation: Thinking that the Cure might just need company, and perhaps was imagining things, a young man agreed to stay overnight in the rectory; at dusk the entry gate opened and closed (by itself) and steps were heard coming into the house; the frightened young man ran away. The Cure knew that the confessions on a certain day would win many sinful souls if the Grappin was especially vicious the night before. On occasion when another parish celebrated the Sacrament of Confirmation priests needing to travel long distances would stay overnight. Hearing terrible noise upstairs they rushed to Vianney’s room to find the bed in the middle of the room. The Cure chuckled that ‘this is as far as the Grappin got me.’ The Cure lived like that for decades because of his personal holiness and because he was doing such excellent pastoral work.

St. Pius of Pietrelcina, popularly called Padre Pio, said that there are so many demons on the earth that if they assumed a material form they would completely blanket the world in darkness. The devil has been present in the Judaeo-Christian religious tradition since the first biblical Book of Genesis because

if God made all that is good, then evil needs a source. (Rev. 12: 7-12) Nowhere has the devil been absent in every literary text and in historical events because conflict arises out of a contest between good and evil yet the devil is easily denied today. But signs of his work are witnessed everywhere, for example, Jesus is recorded in the gospels about the fact that his disciples would suffer hateful persecution as he did (Jn. 16: 33) because the truth in a world of lies will always be opposed (Jn. 8: 43-47).

In our time there is a not-so-secret global persecution of Christians that takes many forms. The Venerable Archbishop Fulton Sheen said that there are wet martyrs, those who suffer death for the faith, and dry martyrdom where Christians suffer ostracism, being disallowed from participating in public discourse or the faith is subtly undermined, ridiculed, and only criminal activities of its leaders are reported. The media is often the engine of anti-Christian messages and this means that Christians be aware and defend the faith.

May 24, 2020 was World Communications Day where, "... Catholics are invited to reflect upon the media of social communications (films, radio, television, newspapers, audiovisuals) and how these influence our lives. The media can promote values that lead to a more fully human society. ...At the same time, ...the faithful have a duty to support and promote worthwhile presentations on media and reject those which promote values contrary to spiritual growth." (from the Ordo: Liturgical Calendar, 2019-2020. Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops: Ottawa, Ontario, p. 240) Sheen observed that while 'we have the light they have the heat' to suggest that Christians, even in democratic countries are passive about attacks, however subtly, on their religious freedom. U. S. research has shown that Catholics rank low on recognizing their need to be actively engaged in evangelization. In an article on Christians' awareness of their evangelizing role entitled, *Beyond Dissent*, Knights of Columbus chaplain, Archbishop William E. Lori cited statistics, "In conservative Protestant congregations, some 75 percent answered

in the affirmative; 57 percent of African-American congregations agreed. Among U.S. Catholic parishes, only 6 percent did...” (*Columbia*, May, 2018, p. 5) At a time when Catholic Christians are singled out for wet and dry martyrdom the passive stance of Catholics in free countries is astonishing.

For example, I regularly receive e-mails from agencies that are marking how official, Government-approved organizations like the UN and the World Health Organization are opposing traditional morality for more liberal views, for example, by promoting abortion as a human right and seeking the criminalization of Christianity, declaring the bible as hate speech, because defending pre-born human beings is viewed as obstructing persons’ rights. Here is part of an e-mail that I received from CitizenGo dated May 20, 2020:

“Dear John,

Coronavirus has many around the world stuck at home. And honestly, if your current situation is like mine, you’re spending your evenings checking your phone, reading, or searching for something to watch on the television.

But, the one thing that I hope, besides that you remain healthy, is that you will not forget our battle with Netflix.

We’ve come so far.

We’re thankful as you helped us mount a bold opposition to the Hollywood giant Netflix.

When Netflix announced they were releasing “The First Temptation of Christ” on their platform, we began to fight tirelessly against this so-called “Christmas” film, which depicts Jesus Christ as a homosexual, His disciples as alcoholics and unruly, and the Blessed Mother as a sexual deviant.

In the face of blasphemy and gratuitous offense to the political correctness dissidents, it takes a group of people to stand up and speak the truth....”

And then on May 28 I received this e-mail from CitizenGo:

“Dear John,

We need your help as an *out of touch* Hollywood wages war on Christianity.

Hollywood is set to release yet another wildly blasphemous film featuring Jesus Christ. This time portraying Christ as a woman who engages in a myriad of inappropriate and salacious acts while also serving as the love interest for the main female character.

For faithful around the world who believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, portraying him in this manner is deeply offensive. The CitizenGO team is partnering with the Christian Film and Television Commission to make it clear to the *Hollywood-elite* that this blasphemous content will not be accepted.”

If Christians and their children, are to benefit from the power of the Paschal Mystery they need to participate actively in the spiritual battle that is part and parcel of evangelization, for example by using their democratic voice to confront anti-Catholic media messages and so to defend the truth of the faith. Educationist Paulo Freire taught that education is always ‘for and against,’ for some values and against others. Passivity to these attacks teaches the young that secular culture is more powerful than Christ and so, understandably, we rarely see young persons in church.

Would other religions tolerate the media defaming their religion by doing nothing? Perhaps Christianity is attacked because

Christians permit it, erroneously believing that anger is a sin: We need to recognize the need for holy anger, as did Jesus when he ‘cleansed the Temple.’ Political Correctness (PC) works by instilling fear and affirming conformity to its liberal agenda, and this in the face of the rights to freedom of speech and religion. Lacking courage, even national leaders are afraid to oppose PC despite the fact that they witness an evolution of values away from time-tested traditions. I was happy to see President Trump take a stand this week by calling out the obvious; that media have a bias that intends to shape history refusing to report all perspectives. Faith development researcher, James Fowler, taught that one needs the virtue of courage to be in faith because other meanings will always compete for persons’ loyalty; we may have the light but if we do not let it shine then the heat of anti-Catholic atheism will succeed. We have the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, including fortitude, from our confirmed baptism, and like a workman taking his tools to work, we need only take out the needed gift/tool and use it to address the situation at hand. FDR advised wisely when he consoled, “There is nothing to fear but fear itself.”

In his homily for the Feast of the Ascension (2020) the Rev. Carmelo Caluag pointed out three realities from the gospel (Mt. 28: 16-20): 1. Jesus gathered the disciples on a mount, signalling divine authority and power from on high like Moses’ Decalogue, the Beatitudes, the Transfiguration of Jesus, to suggest the divine-human encounter. 2. From there Jesus commissioned the disciples with power to be disciple-makers. 3. Jesus promised to be with disciples in their ministry. One does not need to be a prophet to recognize growing global atheism with its devaluing of the dignity of human beings that is only upheld when persons are viewed as made in the image and likeness of God. Christians need to recognize evil and confront it because the Messiah mandates them to do so.

“While he was saying Mass in 1884 Pope Leo XIII reportedly had a vision and overheard a conversation between God and the devil, Satan. The conversation purported to be a request by Satan for the 75 to 100 years he needed in order to destroy the Catholic Church. God reportedly granted Satan’s request.” (Internet Source) Because of our weakness vis-à-vis the devil’s clever antics Pope Leo XIII’s vision resulted in giving the Church the prayer to St. Michael the Archangel:

Saint Michael the Archangel,

defend us in this day of battle;

be our protection against the wickedness

and snares of the devil.

May God rebuke him, we humbly pray.

And do thou, O prince of the heavenly host,

by the power of God

thrust into hell Satan and all the evil spirits

who prowl about the world

seeking the ruin of souls.

Amen.

An obvious downside to contemporary devil-denial is that tragic events overwhelm as being incomprehensible and so victimize persons and communities. For example, the shooting that occurred on April 20, 1999 at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, that raised the question, why? Why do such disasters happen? Why the seemingly cause-less, meaningless violence? Although these events seem to be rare they are quite common:

note, for example, that, “From 1990 to 1997, an average of 14 youth under 20 were killed each day by gunfire in the USA. Among youths, gunfire deaths by cause: homicide; 9 every day, suicide; 4 every day, accident; 1 every 19 hours, unknown intent; 1 every 3 days.” (Children’s fund Report on Children dying from gunfire in America, Center for Health Statistics. Reported in, *USA Today: The Nation’s Newspaper*, Monday, Nov. 8, 1999.) These figures indicate that a massacre comparable in scope to that which occurred at Columbine High School occurs daily in the United States. Perhaps because these events are not concentrated in one place they fail to be sensationalized in NEWS reports. That which makes us feel helpless is that we fail to find solutions so that destructive tragedies may be avoided in the future. We will continue to suffer senseless violence because we cannot apply effective remedies when causes cannot be accurately diagnosed. Having abandoned the concept of the spiritual and limiting ourselves to the scientific, to the phenomena that can be proved by the medical, psychological community, we will repeat the error that was made in Emily’s case. We have been conditioned to trust medical community who may use the word ‘evil’ when tragedy strikes but that term is void of content but remains an elusive mystery. In media interviews with psychologists, those who know the science of why we do what we do, we find that no satisfactory answer to the ‘why’ question that is always asked after a tragic event especially if the assailant(s) has no previous diagnosis of a psychological dysfunction. In an anti-religious and certainly anti-Christian culture that has abandoned spiritual perspectives as reliable to have us understand what even psychologists call ‘evil,’ the devil is free to wreck havoc on the world. Granted, there was crime and murderous tragedies when religious perspectives reigned in culture, but we need to ask, what will the world be like without any opposition to the demonic? Were lawbreakers who worked devastation on others church-going persons who struggled at being good, obeying the commandments of their religion, and seeking opportunities to better the lives of others and their communities?

In chapter two of my book, *The Theory of Religious Ministry to Youth: Faith Development and the 'Christ in Others Retreat'* (2005) I tried to understand how culture influences ministry with the young because, being conformists who uncritically accept cultural values, young persons are shaped by their social and cultural realities especially when their parents are conformists themselves and lack moral conviction. That which I have quoted below comes after a brief discussion of the slaughter of the Jewish people during World War II as an example of inexplicable horror that misguided persons can thrust upon inhumanity:

“Their coming to meaning will decidedly be a spiritual quest because they have received a confused array of mixed messages where religion generally, has been reconfigured by secularism. Indeed, their secularized milieu is one at war with the religious. Joseph Campbell presented their unique challenge well when he wrote,

The psychological dangers through which earlier generations were guided by the symbols and spiritual exercises of their mythological and religious inheritance, we today ... must face alone. This is our problem as modern, “enlightened” individuals, for whom all gods and devils have been rationalized out of existence. (Joseph Campbell. Hero With a Thousand Faces, second edition (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 1968. p. 3.)

In the face of such horrendous violations against human life and dignity that continue to be part of daily news reports, our times react with expressions intended to remove or distance listeners

from reality. Reporters respond with descriptors like: mindless, disturbing, senseless, tragically meaningless, etc., but refuse to recognize evil, the *shadow*, when it is there for all to see. Helplessness is admitted in the face of gratuitous violence but the persistent belief is that perfection is still possible by human effort. Of this stubborn denial in the face of one horror after another Carl G. Jung said, “We have no imagination for evil, but evil has us in its grip.”

Our times have demonstrated what it means for the gates of the underworld to be opened. Things whose enormity nobody could have imagined in the idyllic harmlessness of the first decade of our century have happened and have turned our world upside down. Ever since, the world has remained in a state of schizophrenia.... No wonder that the Western world feels uneasy. (C. G. Jung (ed.) Man and His Symbols, p. 83-84)

As with abortion advocates who try to soften its horror with claims that the fetus, an object, is not human and feels no pain, (The ultrasound film, “Silent Scream,” depicts the fetus-person attempting to avoid the deadly needle as it intrudes into the womb at the beginning of the abortion procedure) for example, attempts have been made to deny the Holocaust by revisionist history and thus the need to bear witness. Because the Holocaust no longer seems to disturb students today, perhaps they prefer denial or they have become insensitive, Holocaust survivors like Lisa Raphael continue to address assemblies of high school students.

The denied “shadow” bedevilling humanity has emerged in Hollywood films. For example, *The Devil’s Advocate* depicts Satan (Al Pacino) recall the horrors of the twentieth century, admitting, “I peaked in this century!” His outburst clashes with what I’ve always been taught about the devil in that Satan, wanting to be

effective, must remain anonymous. In effect, Satan says, I am who am not, whereas God was self-identified to Moses; “I am who am.” (Ex 3: 14) The characteristic trait of the demonic is to remain unnoticed so better to undermine the human project, negate the good, deny what is honest and true. At the beginning of the millennium Satan feels confident to come into a welcoming world. (Lk. 4: 6)

A pretence of sophistication, or perhaps because their milieu has been totally psychologized, many Christians are embarrassed by this part of the tradition and so they do not seriously address contemporary issues from this perspective. The story of the demon remains hidden in obscurity, rationalized to give it respectability, and this is perhaps due to cultural distortions that have so caricatured the devil that, “it would be untheological levity to look on Satan and his devils as a sort of ‘hobgoblins knocking about the world.’”ⁱ We need to liberate the devil from the silly and fantastic images that have pushed the demonic away from our consciousness. Retrieving this element of the faith-story can alleviate a sense of helplessness and assist Christians to understand cultural trends that are so obviously demonic because they make no sense otherwise.ⁱⁱ Not to do so means to continue guessing about what is happening in a culture that irrationally persecutes the religious point of view even as it witnesses the ill effects in increased random acts of violence even among the young. The Genesis authors knew that without this piece of the story the Judaeo-Christian faith does not make sense, for then God would be responsible for evil in the world.

The existence of the devil and demons as originally good creatures that freely oppose the Reign of God (Mk. 3: 22-26) is part of official Church teaching.ⁱⁱⁱ Jesus openly referred to the devil and his functioning, for example, the parable of the sower, Lk. 18: 4-15. In his short book, *Reason in History*,^{iv} Philosopher Georg Hegel saw that history was an inevitable movement of the *geist*, the spirit of liberation, and this suggests opposing spirits of

oppression, and St. Paul recognized that history's foundational drama is the conflict between God and the personal evil that infects all dimensions of human life; "principalities and powers" (Ephesians 6: 10-13). Christian conviction testifies that Jesus has destroyed the power of sin and death on the cross but that God permits their tempting effects and persecutions be borne and defeated by Jesus' disciples until he returns." (p. 67-69)

Even as this dismantling of Christianity continues biblical categories continue to be employed. For example, when tragedy occurs the word 'evil' is used but as asserted above, it is understood to be a nebulous term that defies definition. Then to put a positive spin and to offer hope and consolation on the harsh reality there follows the assumption that the deceased are with loved ones in heaven; everyone avoids divine judgment and goes to heaven. This cultural Christianity demonstrates a neglect of scriptur, but by loose and silly applications of biblical categories that do not take divine revelation seriously a religious worldview does not make sense: If everyone goes to heaven, a reward, regardless of lived values, then logically, all actions are values neutral, good and bad do not exist. Yet, evildoers on this side of eternity are punished, and this to serve as a deterrent for others, if they do not comply with legal mores that reflect accepted cultural values. One would think that God, the supreme lawgiver, would do the same rather than give everyone a free pass. Logically, and affirmed by Plato, if there is reward there must be punishment otherwise what incentive is there to be good? Plato taught that the best thing was to be good and the second best thing was to be punished if one was not good so to be made good; for him the purpose of life was to be a purification so to enable entry into the Isles of the Blessed.

A psychoanalyst who took God seriously because he discovered God and the devil through his medical practice with thousands of patients was C. G. Jung (1875-1961). Jung sought an

integration of religion and psychology in his book, *Psychology and Religion*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1971). In part I, 'The Autonomy of the Unconscious Mind,' he offered the foundational concept: Religion is caused by the *numinosum*; a dynamic existence, not caused by persons but an invisible effect external to them that seizes upon persons. (*numen*, Latin for deity, *numena*, reality as it exists in itself [religion], *phenomena*, reality as we experience it [science] (source Robert Doran). The numinous is a mystery, "a non-rational, non-sensory experience or feeling whose primary and immediate object is outside the self." Numinosum, therefore precedes religion. Jung has defined religion as, "a careful and scrupulous observation of what Rudolf Otto aptly termed the *numinosum*." (C. G. Jung. *Psychology and Religion: West and East*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1958, p. v)

The religious ritual can produce the effect of numinosum but requires the belief of persons first. E. g. Catholic sacraments bestow blessings upon the believer whose mind supports the divine action. (p. 4-5) "Religion appears to me to be a peculiar attitude of the mind, which could be formulated in accordance with the original use of the term 'religio,' that is, a careful consideration and observation of certain dynamic factors, understood as 'powers'..." (5) Jung maintained that his views re religion are not due to a predisposing creed of his but observations made professionally with patients. "Creeds are codified and dogmatized forms of original religious experience. The contents of the experience have become sanctified and usually congealed in...a structure." (6) Psychology deals with the human side of the religious problem. (7) Jung's discovery enables us to see that spiritual powers are not psychological but are independent and that religion is a coping mechanism for dealing with these powers. At the time of St. Paul accepted teaching saw that human beings consisted of *soma*, *sarx* and *psyche*, (body, flesh, and mind) but now with Jesus he realized that we are also *pneuma*, the spirit.

In my book, *Talking to Teens About the Mass*, I discussed the significance of rituals in the lives of adolescents. The seventh reason for attending to the religious ritual is cited here:

“Protection and Guidance in the Face of the *Numinosum*

Psychoanalyst Carl Gustav Jung’s work with thousands of patients enabled him to conclude that inside each person’s unconscious mind there is a powerful spiritual energy called the *numinosum*. It is a dynamic existence, an invisible effect independent of persons’ control that seizes upon them from within. Jung strongly endorsed ritual, particularly within Catholicism due to its insistence upon ritual and dogma, as a means to enable persons to make sense out of this mystery and to establish a working relationship with God who resides within every human being.

By our emphasis upon the rational and technological we have discarded our religious roots, relegating the spiritual to superstition. This represented for Jung a loss of the soul, the significant and sacred self. The result has been that the psyche has become a confusing source of disintegration rather than a means of wholeness. Jung believed that religion is the way back to meaning because the Church’s role *via* the symbolic world that it creates is able to balance the conscious and the unconscious minds. The function of religiosity is to exteriorize the inner journey but with religion being ignored or deemed useless today the baffling and often frightening movements of the psyche now confront persons who have no means to deal with its fearful contents.

“John Welch agrees with Jung. In his book, *Spiritual*

Pilgrims: Carl Jung and Teresa of Avila, he writes: Numinous experience, manifested through the unconscious, exerts an irresistible power which both attracts and repels since it is experienced as something far greater than the person herself. Religion as creed is a containment for this primordial experience. The rituals and symbols, including the dogmas, express and channel primordial experience and at the same time open people to their numinous moments." (John Welch. *Spiritual Pilgrims: Carl Jung and Teresa of Avila*. (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press.) 1982. p. 79.)

The Mass thus serves to enhance psychological wholeness; enabling persons to live meaningful lives that are open to the ever-present voice of the unconscious. Perhaps the quiet and gentle young man in the neighborhood shocks everyone when it is discovered that he is the axe murderer who committed horrific crimes. On the surface this was so unexpected but obviously inside there was a terrible and evil power that took possession of him. I have been tempted to wonder about some bizarre behaviours in contemporary youth: Goths in black, immodesty in dress, piercing and tattooing of the body, self-destructive conduct: gang violence, suicide, drug abuse, music that is purposely loud, melodically irregular and lyrically vulgar, etc. as symptomatic of the abandonment of the traditional and inherited means to deal with the *numinosum*." (p. 57-58)

In chapter 5 of Welch's book that compared the thought of C. G. Jung and St. Teresa of Jesus, entitled *Serpents and Devils in the Shadows*, he addressed what Jung called the shadow, that represents the aspect of personality of which an individual is ashamed or will not recognize because it is unacceptable to the conscious personality. The shadow has also been treated by M.-L.

von Franz in the subheading of chapter 3, *The Realization of the Shadow*, in (C. G. Jung (ed.) *Man and His Symbols*, New York, NY: Dell Publishing Co. Inc. 1964) p. 171-185) and others; notably, by psychologist Erik H. Erikson in, *The Life Cycle Completed* (Extended Version) (New York, London: W.W. Norton & Co. 1982), p. 45f and John A. Sanford in, *Dreams: God's Forgotten Language*. (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1989), p. 9-26 Philosophy has also reflected upon our fallen nature: Philosopher Rene Girard has suggested that human beings are basically predators whose violent dimension requires bloodshed. His thought gives credence to the Latin proverb, "Homo homini lupus est," 'Man is wolf to man.' He sees sports, for example, as a venue where our predatory needs are vicariously met and the Catholic Mass does the same because by being present at the representation of Jesus' sacrificial death enables persons' pent up violent urges to be dissipated.

Evil will always be mixed with good. In fact, evil is but a lesser good that may be chosen in a list of options that may be chosen in any given situation. When a lesser good is put ahead of a greater good that good is converted into an evil and when that evil is willed and acted upon it becomes a sin. Therefore a critical stance will always be necessary as both good and evil are processes that advance their values progressively. Some examples:

Plato, whose work strictly followed a logical control of meaning, lived in similar times and he did not write his dialogues to show off his intelligence or that of his respected mentor, Socrates. Plato saw that Greek civilization was heading for ruin and he sought to rescue it by philosophy, by appealing to the 'love (philia) of wisdom (Sophia),' to intelligent reason. Christian philosophy did the same: St. Augustine used Plato's categories at the fall of the Roman Empire, St. Thomas Aquinas built upon Aristotle's philosophy to invent the science of theology, and Jesuit theologian Bernard Lonergan (1904-1984) modernized Aquinas'

theology to a world after the anti-religious influence of the Enlightenment and the scientific and industrial revolutions. The contest between good and evil is not frivolous but we are playing for eternal stakes.

Plato knew by reason that the essence of the human being, the soul, is immortal. He has the protagonist, Socrates, say “I should not wonder if Euripides may not be right when he says: ‘Who knows if life be death or death be life?’ (From Euripides, either the *Phrixus* or *Polyidos*) and if perhaps it may not be we who are in fact dead.” (*Gorgias*, 4. 492e-493) Plato saw that this life served as an opportunity to be corrected so that persons are just and readied for eternal bliss; for him and Augustine time was a preparation for one’s destiny in timelessness. The last speech of Socrates in this dialogue spelled out the last judgment of three possibilities: The Isles of the Blessed (heaven) for those who are just, and then quoting Homer about the incurably wicked there is Hades (hell) as a place of everlasting punishment, and for, “those whose faults are curable; yet both here and in Hades this benefit comes only at the cost of pain and anguish; there is no other way in which men can be cured of wrongdoing,” (*Gorgias*, 12. 525b) purgatory.

In about 387 St. Augustine wrote, *On the Immortality of the Soul*, and in his, *The City of God*, Book 13, Ch. 2, he writes about the second death (eternal damnation) because the soul is immortal and can have one of two destinies. Our modern times ignore these truths as if persons can opt out, can treat the human-divine relationship as an option, can assume that time, a creature that will end, be employed for personal gain, and in short, create their own reality rather than conform to what is and what has been revealed both by revelation and reason.

Dr. Allan Bloom (d. 1992), former professor of philosophy at the University of Chicago and author of the now classic, *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today’s Students* (1987) maintained that what is most needed today is a return to the Greek

and Roman classics as a means to understand our humanity. The contemporary infatuation with techno-gadgets has the young study computers whereas former higher education consisted of philosophy so the young would understand what Cicero called, the Good Life.

Bishop James Conley of Lincoln, Neb. in an article entitled, *The Age of Noise*, a phrase coined by English satirist, Aldous Huxley to characterize our times, pointed out that disturbing commotion was one consequence of technology's influence on contemporary culture. He prefaced his thoughts with, "If we are to live as citizens of heaven, we must seek silence and contemplation amid the world's distractions." (*Columbia*, April, 2017, p. 22) Where Huxley was referring to the radio Conley was alluding to our media-fed frenzy of non-stop and mindless clatter. His observation reminds of an insight of Douglas Rushkoff that formed the thesis of his book, *Present Shock*. Rushkoff claimed that we have moved from being future-oriented to being present-oriented and this represents a major cultural shift. Being driven by having to respond to the demands of *now*, the "constant, perpetual, chronic, emergency interruption" (Rushkoff was quoted saying this in an interview with Steve Paikin on TVO's *The Agenda*, June 10, 2013) Technology, originally welcomed to lessen life's burdens, has disoriented and exhausted us. Being ever connected to the present in a digital age has collapsed narrative wherein the past and traditional no longer are sources for truth. No wonder young persons find the prospect of church going boring; they are over-stimulated beyond imagining and have no taste for silence or prayer! They are perpetually urged to look outside of themselves for significance when Christ invites us to find true meaning by looking in, up, and then out.

What has time become for us? Covid-19 has slowed us down and imposed silence that many find disturbing as demands that distracting noise be our reality once again. The resurrection invites

us to be with the risen Lord in non-conformity with the world (Rom. 12: 2), to contemplate our Christian identity as our way to live the time of our lives with the perspective proposed by St. Paul (Rom. 6: 8-11) and that can draw others to experience the real, God who is love. The disciples of Jesus experienced a new consciousness by the experience of the Risen Lord and every age is mandated to enable that awareness to give life to each generation.

If the Paschal Mystery is truly divine intervention into human history then believers have the duty to defend it, certainly for the sake of their children who were baptized and have the right to be formed in the faith. Today we are witnessing the demonic: A virulent, anti-Christian atheism that is intent on the eradication of Christian faith in order to form atheistic culture. In some countries Christians have no voice, reminiscent of ancient pagan Rome of early Christianity, but Christians who can raise issues, vote in elections, and exercise freedom of speech have no excuse. The resurrection is not the reward to the baptised without effort but to those who actively witness to the gospel. ‘No Cross, no crown.’ ‘Know God, Know peace, No God, no peace.’

ⁱ Karl Rahner & Herbert Vorgrimler. Theological Dictionary, p. 127.

ⁱⁱ The author(s) of Genesis had a similar problem; since the created world is good and the Creator is good, then where does evil come from? A force outside of these two agencies must be at work to subvert the human project where love of God and neighbour are the fulfillment of human nature.

ⁱⁱⁱ Karl Rahner & Herbert Vorgrimler. Theological Dictionary; “...it may be assumed that they are the powers *of* the world insofar as *this* world is a denial of God and a temptation to man. This view preserves the personal nature of the devils, which is laid down by Scripture and the Magisterium (Denzinger # 2318), since every essential disorder in the world is personally realized; it also preserves their plurality... It also means that the devils as elements of *this* world culpably close themselves to God... Since Jesus Christ overcame sin their power is only an arrogant sham, however real the power of wars, tyrants, and so forth is within the world; they are stripped of real power (Lk 10: 18; Mt 12: 28).” p. 127.

iv G. W. F. Hegel. Reason in History: A General Introduction to the Philosophy of History. Robert S. Hartman (trans). (Indianapolis, New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc.), 1953.

2. Letter from Bishop Kirkpatrick

Dear Clergy, Religious and Faithful of the Diocese of Antigonish, (Pastoral Letter 15 / 2020)

In my Lenten Letter, I spoke of the need to have an attitude of gratitude, remembering where we have come from, and where we are going with Christ and most importantly because of Christ. The sacrificial offering of Lent is ongoing as we endure this COVID - 19 pandemic, and our faith continues to sustain us. In addition to the suffering and deaths from this pandemic, we have witnessed wave upon wave of tragedy in our province. We have been isolating and we have felt isolated especially from our families and church communities.

I know it is a great sacrifice not to be able to receive Holy Communion. Social distancing has caused a kind of involuntary fasting from sacramental reception of the Eucharist, and like all fasting, it should increase our desire for its return. This time of fasting also provides an opportunity to understand the Eucharist more fully as an act of self-offering joined to the perfect offering of Christ, the immaculate Victim. The Mass is much more than just celebrating a ritual in order to receive Holy Communion; it is our participation in Christ's perfect offering of himself and all of creation to the Father, and culminates in our reception of Holy Communion.

While we cannot now gather publicly, our priests continue to celebrate daily Masses, and I am grateful that so many pastors have been offering Mass through social media. We continue to pray for an end to the pandemic, as Pope Francis has encouraged. On May 1st, our clergy gathered in solidarity through social media with clergy from every other diocese in Canada to consecrate our country to Mary.

The doors of our churches are closed, but much has been happening in our Diocese and in the whole church. Since my Installation as Bishop in early February, we have had four Council of Priests Meetings through Zoom technology. I am pleased to announce the appointment of our new Vicar General, Father Thomas MacNeil who will assist in serving the Diocese. We have a new webmaster, Deacon Shawn Bigley and within a few weeks, we will launch a new, more user-friendly website. I have expressed our thanks to our retirees, our former Vicar General, Father Paul Abbass and our former webmaster, Deacon Art Riley. I have also written several pastoral letters, mostly informing and encouraging our clergy.

I have participated in six Zoom meetings with the Atlantic Bishops including our Spring Plenary on May 29. We have discussed common issues, including protocols for re-opening our churches. I want to assure you that we are getting closer to re-opening our churches. Our public celebrations of the sacraments were suspended, not out of fear, but out of the deepest respect for human life and health. We are a pro-life church and this

pandemic is a pro-life issue. I participated in a Zoom meeting with Doctor Robert Strang, our Provincial Medical Officer of Health, the two archbishops of Halifax, and several members of other religious traditions to share our concerns and ideas for moving forward; we plan to meet again on June 15. As a Diocese, we are currently working on a plan to establish safety guidelines and protocols when we re-open our churches. All of our parishes will follow a common plan of action. We will wait to open our churches when it is safe and when we are prepared to do so.

Unfortunately, this will not happen on Pentecost Sunday. Pentecost is an important feast day and I have learned that the Mi'kmaq people especially were saddened to cancel their Pentecost celebrations. They have a special affinity to the gift of Holy Spirit at work in our lives. I hope that we can all celebrate the gift of Holy Spirit.

As we know, Jesus had promised his Apostles that "the Advocate, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you" (John 14:26). That promise was fulfilled when the Spirit of God came down on that first Pentecost in wind and fire (cf. Acts 2:14). We should remember though, that what happened on that first Pentecost was not a one-time event. That was only the beginning. This mystery, the coming of the Holy Spirit, continues in our own day because, while the Spirit does not always come in great signs and wonders as it did for Mary and the Apostles, the Holy Spirit is always present and active in our hearts and in the life of the church.

We may struggle to understand the gift of the Holy Spirit. We cannot see wind. We can only see or feel or hear the effects that tell us the wind is there, all around us. We know the wind by its effects that sometimes comfort and at other times, refresh and still other times, destroy. Like the wind, fire can comfort, or refresh, or destroy. Wind and fire are sensual reminders of the power behind and beyond them, like the Spirit of God that we celebrate on Pentecost. The Holy Spirit transforms our minds, hearts and beings.

The coming of the Holy Spirit provided the apostles with the energy, momentum, enthusiasm, courage, and passion to get on with the task Christ had given them. The Holy Spirit would help them, but not do it for them. The change in them did not come about in an instant. It had to be a gradual thing. It had to be a growth process. As we know, growth can be slow and painful. We do not easily let go of our old ways, old habits, old attitudes.

We know people can change when they are given hope, when someone believes in them and gives them a task to do. Above all, people can change when they know they are loved. They come out of their shells and hidden energies are released in them. We too need someone to empower us so that we are able to take charge of our lives, and live them responsibly. This means being willing to change what needs to be changed in our lives. We need empowerment in order to witness to our Christian faith. The power that changed the apostles is available to us too. We need the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit energizes and strengthens our spirits and purifies our hearts. The Holy

Spirit helps us to change our ways and we will need to change our ways as we move through this pandemic. It will not be back to normal but forward to normal.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, may we become more Christ-like and continue to be open to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives as we pray: Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love to renew the face of the earth. May the Holy Spirit continue to guide and direct us during these difficult days.

(Most Rev.) Wayne Kirkpatrick
Bishop of the Diocese of Antigonish

3. If you missed the Novena to the Holy Spirit in preparation for Pentecost you may still engage the presentations of some of the priest-faculty of St. Augustine's Seminary of Toronto: Simply Google, Novena Retreat for Pentecost – St. Augustine's Seminary of Toronto.

Novena Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Holy Spirit! Lord of Light! From Your clear celestial height, Your pure beaming radiance give!

The Holy Spirit

Only one thing is important -- eternal salvation. Only one thing, therefore, is to be feared--sin? Sin is the result of ignorance, weakness, and indifference The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Light, of Strength, and of Love. With His sevenfold gifts He enlightens the mind, strengthens the will, and inflames the heart with love of God. To ensure our salvation we ought to invoke the Divine Spirit daily, for 'The Spirit helpeth our infirmity. We know not what we should pray for as we ought. But the Spirit Himself asketh for us.'

Prayer

Almighty and eternal God, Who hast vouchsafed to regenerate us by water and the Holy Spirit, and hast given us forgiveness all sins, vouchsafe to send forth from heaven upon us your sevenfold Spirit, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and fortitude, the Spirit of Knowledge and Piety, and fill us with the Spirit of Holy Fear. Amen.

*Our Father and Hail Mary once
Glory be to the Father SEVEN TIMES*

ACT OF CONSECRATION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

On my knees before the great multitude of heavenly witnesses, I offer myself, soul and

body to You, Eternal Spirit of God. I adore the brightness of Your purity, the unerring keenness of Your justice, and the might of Your love. You are the Strength and Light of my soul. In You I live and move and am. I desire never to grieve You by unfaithfulness to grace and I pray with all my heart to be kept from the smallest sin against You. Mercifully guard my every thought and grant that I may always watch for Your light, and listen to Your voice, and follow Your gracious inspirations. I cling to You and give myself to You and ask You, by Your compassion to watch over me in my weakness. Holding the pierced Feet of Jesus and looking at His Five Wounds, and trusting in His Precious Blood and adoring His opened Side and stricken Heart, I implore You, Adorable Spirit, Helper of my infirmity, to keep me in Your grace that I may never sin against You. Give me grace, O Holy Spirit, Spirit of the Father and the Son to say to You always and everywhere, 'Speak Lord for Your servant heareth.' Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE SEVEN GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

O Lord Jesus Christ, Who, before ascending into heaven, did promise to send the Holy Spirit to finish Your work in the souls of Your Apostles and Disciples, deign to grant the same Holy Spirit to me that He may perfect in my soul, the work of Your grace and Your love. Grant me the Spirit of Wisdom that I may despise the perishable things of this world and aspire only after the things that are eternal, the Spirit of Understanding to enlighten my mind with the light of Your divine truth, the Spirit of Counsel that I may ever choose the surest way of pleasing God and gaining heaven, the Spirit of Fortitude that I may bear my cross with You and that I may overcome with courage all the obstacles that oppose my salvation, the Spirit of Knowledge that I may know God and know myself and grow perfect in the science of the Saints, the Spirit of Piety that I may find the service of God sweet and amiable, and the Spirit of Fear that I may be filled with a loving reverence towards God and may dread in any way to displease Him. Mark me, dear Lord, with the sign of Your true disciples and animate me in all things with Your Spirit. Amen.

4. World Communications Day (May 24, 2020)

The importance of our story

was the theme for World Communications Day 2020

Read Pope Francis' message here:

http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/communications/documents/papa-francesco_20200124_messaggio-comunicazioni-sociali.html