

## Faith!? Are we losing it?

Submitted by **Sylvester L. Steffen** on October 11, 2006 - 3:29pm. --- **Diocesan Life**

What is faith anyway? Because faith is intuitively natural and transmitted from generation to generation, we recognize it when we see it. But do we recognize that it is missing when we don't see it? For example, as parents we better pay closer attention to the feedback we get from our children because it tells us about ourselves, about our faithlessness. **Are we missing the message?** Oh sure, I know that religions, preoccupied at their preferred polarities, give a bad name to religion and faith by association; and that it isn't a lot better with middle religion. But if we are honest with ourselves we should be asking **"how much is religion about faith anyway?"** Don't get me wrong, I believe religion and church are very important, but they are no better than we are because we are church. And we are misguided in our religious pretenses.

The waste of our wealth and children to the violence of choice is criminal; and I speak to all the offspring of Abraham! Violence in any of its forms is not about faith! It's about despair (among other things). And what causes despair? Alienation!? Poverty!? Fear!?

*Faith is wisdom, collective intelligence, naturally evolved. Faith is a treasure of great and incalculable worth. Cosmic processing, going back to the big bang, is responsible for faith's formation and its collected value. All life preceding has contributed to the faith we now have. We should be aware of and sensitive to nature's unrelenting investment in us, in faith potential encoded in our DNA. Surely we have enough decency and good sense not to trash something so irreplaceable, so valuable and long in the making!?*

Cultural bad habits of exploiting natural resources and wasting ecology (repositories of wisdom/ faith) are now challenged with demands of payback. **The greater cost of payback is going to fall on our children. And they know it and they are getting madder, and madder about it.** Should we expect them to thank us for it? I don't think so. What kind of faith lesson are we giving them? Is the unprecedented anger in children today any wonder? NO. It's what we might expect.

**To answer the title question "are we losing faith", my answer is "yes", and at an accelerating pace.**

## Keeping Faith Alive

**Cosmic Call & Universal Rationale:** As a parent I'm sufficiently chagrined, ashamed and guilt-ridden by our collective infidelity as to feel compelled to do something about it. Over a long period of time I have struggled to frame a rationale of universal conscience, sufficiently informed so as to expose to ourselves the life and treasure we are wasting; and to attempt to reverse habits, personal and social, that waste nature and faith at the same time. Loss of nature/ ecology is direct loss of faith! We trash ourselves when we trash them! The call of nature to us to change is "Call to Church", a personal mandate to (re)discover and recover fidelity to nature, to life, self and God.

Even with the diversity of global cultures and the uniqueness of bioregions, all humankind, all religions, as global community, are obliged morally and practically to the universal Covenant of common Faith. **As community, as Church, we are called to journey together in trust. This is faith's universal Call to religion, to civility. All religions should be able to agree on the need for universal response and collaboration.**