

What Self-Donation is: KENOSIS, EUCHARIST & GREEN RELIGION “Right as Grain”

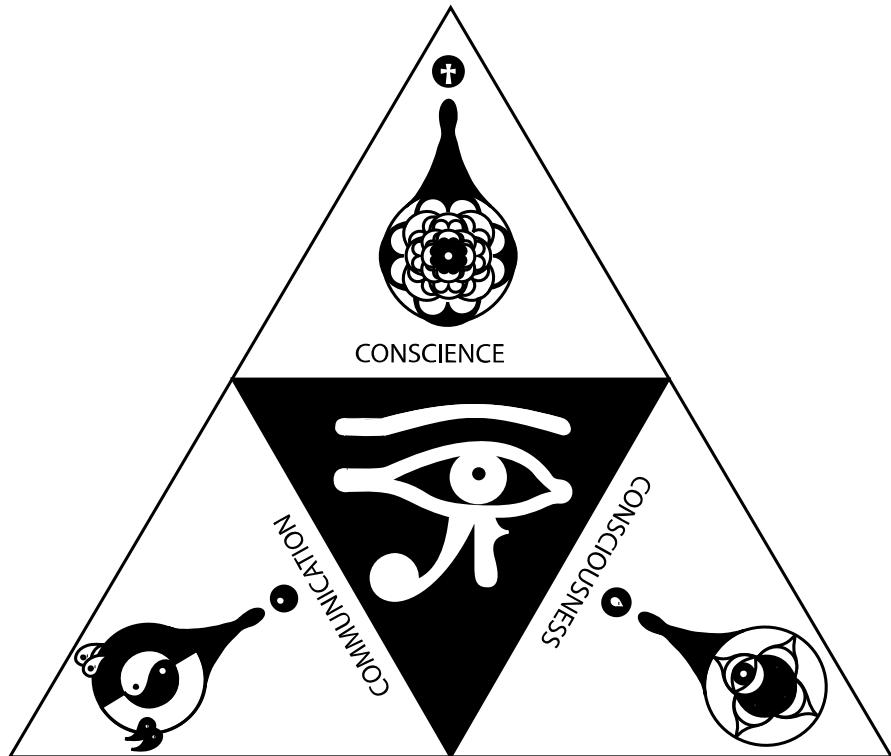
THE EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL CONSCIENCE

FAITH-SHARING IN GROUP DISCUSSIONS
From The Universal/Christian Perspective

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What is WISDOM?

Wisdom is collective intelligence captured in cosmic *communication*. Communication occurs throughout the cosmos. Wisdom is cumulative energy harmonically ordered in purposeful design (*consciousness*) and engaged actively in conforming accessible energy / matter to design purposes (*conscience*). The Intelligent Design of nature becomes self-reflectively discernable in the processes of Trimorphic Resonance.



TRIMORPHIC RESONANCE

Communication — KENOSIS — Self-outpouring
Consciousness — GREEN RELIGION — Sentient
Conscience — EUCHARIST — Faithful Living

Wisdom is the continuity base of the three-sided pyramid of knowledge.

WE ARE FAMILY — WE ARE CHURCH KEEPING FAITH ALIVE

The Divine Call: "As I have done, you also should do."
KENOSIS: divine self-outpouring—what Jesus did, does.

Faith-life is a journey, a pilgrimage. The wheels of consciousness turn by the intentional graces of Spirit. Gravity attraction holds the connections of consciousness together in sacred remembrance, and Eucharistic sense celebrates life's many iterations. The Eucharistic Cosmos nourishes faith-life, sustains and empowers all relationships. Life's vitality roots in and reaches out by the Intentional Power of Cosmic Eucharist.

The personal pilgrimage is divined in cosmic intelligence. It is re-minded and re-membered in conscientiable living. Mindfulness embraces the open insights of enlightenment and intelligence—the conscious spark kindling the personal self from within. The common journey remains ever open to uncommon possibilities. Rationality engages the wheels of consciousness; mindfulness turns on the wheels of conscience.

The wellbeing of life on Earth depends on alertness and communal fidelity. The journey into the possibilities of Eucharistic consciousness is certainly original for every person, even as it is the inescapable and common trip that everyone must travel. Open yourself to Eucharistic consciousness, to cosmic communication, consciousness and conscience, to life's unique and diversifying experiences and discover worth and meaning. Experience the fullness of fidelity in universal connectedness.

Take seriously this day for it holds in it the desire and destiny of your life and the life of the intentional cosmos. What a privilege and responsibility this day is, every day is. Be not reckless. Travel lightly. Cut no tracks and tear no turf as you travel. Life-to-come depends on the fidelity of the living. Grace and peace be with you!

**Sylvester L. Steffen
EASTER 2007**

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OVERVIEW

In Traditional Christianity, spiritual consciousness tends to answer life's questions with something of a detachment from the material world, even a sort of disregard for it. We know that things material come and go. Spirituality lives on. We know that we live on in the Realm of Spirit beyond the insecurity of chaotic matter; and through life's trials we can advance spiritually. Faith in spirituality is satisfying, convincing and sustaining.

If on the other hand we come to understand and believe that the "spiritual" and the "material" are one reality, then we may discover a different set of issues and find that we are morally compelled not to disregard the world of matter, much less disrespect it. We may well realize that if we detach ourselves from the material, the natural, we detach ourselves also from the spiritual in damaging ways.

If we assume a certain spiritual arrogance toward the material, we tend to justify ourselves in behaving abusively toward material things. The cultural custom of hyping spirituality and disregarding materiality has brought about ecological/environmental issues that are gathering catastrophes. We can no longer blithely sacrifice (prostitute) materiality without at the same time desecrating spirituality.

Humankind's (our) desecration of the material, the natural, has caught up with us globally. If we would escape the peril of destroying ourselves, we will discontinue the bad habits of detaching the spiritual from the material.

Each of us is compelled to ask our self, "Where am I at? How did I get here? Where do I want to go? How do I get there?" These are issues of faith-sharing that compel morally and communally. The issues are global and local. Are we ready to join in faith-sharing from the holistic sense of oneness with cosmic Matter and Energy? If we are, we can all benefit communally and personally from holistic faith-sharing; and global sustainability may be advantaged also by the enlightenment we come to.



www.secondenlightenment.org

www.justifiedliving.gather.com

COSMIC CALL: to Discover and Recover Covenant Consciousness

Historical Context

Christian Salvation History roots deeply in Old Covenant (Testament) History. Today's struggle of life is still about fidelity to the God/Land/Human Covenant. Human wellbeing flourishes with fidelity, woe comes with infidelity. The expulsion of first parents from Eden's Garden resulted from mindless human consumption of the "fruit" of the Tree of Vitality. First awareness of infidelity grew in the Middle East context; today, it needs to spread to global awareness. Mass expulsions of humankind will happen yet again unless there is repentance of ecological infidelity and a return of fidelity to Covenant — the condition of ecological/social sustainability.

Call to Repentance, to Restoration

Christian Colonialism participated in the unconscionable promotion of global ecological exploitation and desecration. Christian Church specifically failed and now fails to reject the fundamental immorality of the corporate waste and exploitation of indigenous people and resources. Now needed is specific effort toward recognition and remedy of *original sin* iterations, e.g., of "globalization", if global collapses of ecologies and mass death from the "fiery sword" of the Garden Angel are to be averted.

In Denial

Humankind is in denial of its waste and desecration of divine/ecological providence and its infidelity to Covenant. Churches fixate excessively in spirituality without connecting it to the secular/material necessity of the God/Land/Human Covenant.

Strategy of Return

Presently, faith instruction is deficient in sensitizing adult conscience to trust obligations in the God/Land/Human Covenant. The faith pabulum generally dispensed in childhood does not adequately feed adult consciousness, namely, to global maturity and awareness of trust-obligations in Covenant. A strategy of ongoing adult faith education is needed.

THE POSSIBLE JOURNEY

"Uncompromised trust" focuses on lessons of adult moral obligation and fidelity to the God/Land/Human Trust. The book is structured to accommodate "Seven Group Study Sessions", which address human awareness/unawareness to crises of infidelity, personal / communal effort in returning to fidelity and redress of social/ecological disintegration. Presented here is schema for Four Faith-Sharing Sessions.

UNIVERSAL RATIONALE: For Sustained Growth in Faithful Living

Universal Faith Sensitivity

Global awakening to massive global degradations of ecology is creating a moral hunger, especially in young people, for making the religious connection of self-identity with nature and ecology. Continuing growth in faith understanding provides opportunity for awakening to the ethics of issues as they arise daily and relate to personal authentication.

Procedural Strategies

On a non-ideological basis churches should together invite the people of the community to participate in group dialogue and discussions that focus on faith/moral commonalities, specifically, with respect to mutually sustaining co-dependencies, which bind all life to nature's ecology/economy. *Meetings should include discussions of actions specifically appropriate to local bioregional circumstances.*

WHAT IS FAITH? Are We Losing It?

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 close 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 are religions 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, cosmic intelligence, naturally evolved. Faith is a treasure of incalculable worth. Cosmic processing, going back to the big bang, is responsible for faith's formation and its collective value. All life preceding us has participated in birthing the faith we now have. We should be aware of and sensitive to nature's unrelenting investment in us personally, in faith potential encoded in DNA instructions. Surely we have enough good sense and decency not to trash something so irreplaceable, valuable and long in 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 anger in children today any wonder? NO. It's exactly what we might expect.

To answer the headline question "are we losing faith", my answer is "yes", and at an accelerating pace. As a parent I'm sufficiently chagrined, ashamed and guilt-ridden by our collective infidelity as to be compelled to do something about it. Over a long period of time I have struggled to frame a rationale for a universal conscience, sufficiently informed so as to expose to ourselves the life and treasure we are wasting; and to inspire us perhaps to change habits, personal and social, that waste nature and faith at the same time. Loss of nature/ecology is a direct loss of faith! We trash ourselves when we trash them! The call of nature to us to change is "Call to Church"; it's a personal mandate to rediscover and recover fidelity to nature, to life, self and God.

Even with cultural diversity and the uniqueness of bioregions, all humankind, and all religions, as global community are obliged morally and practically to the universal Covenant of common, cosmic 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 sensitivity and collaboration — morality.

CATECHESIS: Questions & Answers

What is “The Cosmic Catechism”?

Nature is the universal, common, “cosmic” catechism. Nature provides to all life, to all matter, the apt and necessary consciousness that enables ongoing cosmic dialog by which nature’s own sustainability is secured and by which individual consciousness and nature advance together in mutual complexity. The natural process of self-aware advancement in cosmic complexity is by energetic *question/answer* in which cosmic complexity self-explores potentials and advances incrementally in the process of “what is evolution”.

The complexity-process of evolutionary consciousness is aptly characterized by the term “Trimorphic Resonance” (q.v. at google), which advances intelligence by way of the interactive processes and harmony of communication, consciousness and conscience. The rules of engagement in evolutionary consciousness are encoded and repeated in *primary scripture*, in nature, the first and universal catechism of cosmic religion. The genetic code, transmitted and transmitting in each cell is nature’s ongoing “catechesis”.

What is Catechesis?

For thirty years or so Johnny Carson was the television host of the popular “Tonight” show on NBC. In a favorite skit he clothed himself in the robes of an Egyptian diviner, whom he called “The Great Karnak”, and produced ceremoniously an answer to an unasked question. Based on the answer, the audience was expected to guess what the question was. After some bantering, Johnny would with great fanfare call for a sealed envelope which contained the question. Always the question served as the punch line for some dependably funny outcome.

Johnny Carson’s Karnak skit is a variation on the religion-teaching method of “Catechesis”, which however doesn’t intend to be funny. Catechesis is the traditional question-and-answer method used by Roman Catholicism to teach religion to children. Generations of Catholics grew up on the Baltimore Catechism, which was surely more studied than the Bible itself. Before Vatican II, the theology of infallibility prevailed in Church; after Vatican II Catholics became aware of Church fallibilities. The Baltimore Catechism is no longer used.

Today, in the “People Church” of Vatican II it is more or less accepted that every person in his/her lifetime is expected to be learner and teacher, “disciple” and “apostle”. In other words, no one is ever too old to learn nor too young to teach. At every age there are new lessons to be taught and learned. The pace of today’s expanding knowledge-base requires perpetual openness. In modern understanding, religious “piety” puts greater emphasis on humility and respect, in the knowledge that each of us is the gratuity of life preceding us; as such, life represents the updated accomplishment, up to this moment, of nature’s self-reflective Intelligent Design. This recognition is open to personal equality,

equality in dignity and humanity, equality in rights and incompleteness regardless of race, sex or status.

Life's complexities are bigger than what any person can grasp and what any institution or organization can manage. Religious/political arrogance, to the contrary, has brought upon humankind today's heavy burden of cumulative predicaments. Honesty demands awareness that communication is a two-way process of information-exchange and -gain. Questions have neither simple answers nor one only answer; they almost always raise new questions. The authentic teacher is open to learn new perspectives on "truth", and so are "disciples" and "apostles". Teachers/learners are catechists for life.

Who is a Catechist?

A catechist is a person who makes it his/her profession to engage with others in dialog (question/answer learning) about God, nature and self, for purposes of coming to greater understanding of mutual co-dependencies and of moral obligations that derive from essential interdependencies.

A catechist is aware of nature's dependency on God and of the interdependency of the human person on nature and other life. Morality is understood as intentional consciousness and personal commitment (mindfulness) to seek informed understandings of right relationships so as not to violate the Intelligent Design of integral nature and the Providence of God, and not to violate sustainable relationships of codependent organisms in the webs of life; "sustainable relationships" include the communal dependencies of all human beings on each other, on Earth-life, ecology and environment.

In the tradition of "dominion theology", catechists are institutionally trained for the explicit purpose of advancing and proselytizing religious orthodoxy (faith fixation), that is, the preference of one denomination over others. In the process, self-serving interests of a particular religious ideology are preferred over others and are bases of conflict and competition amongst the churches seeking to win greater public allegiance for their preferred religious ideology. In this unseemly warfare, the integrity of common cosmic faith is shredded, people behave violently toward each other by artifice and wrong headedness, God is demeaned, religion is discredited and life on Earth is trashed.

A right-minded catechist puts his/her personal house in order by becoming rightly informed in essential matters of authentic relationships between self/other/nature/God; such right-ordering is what Old Covenant and New Covenant Order are about. Covenant Order is what the call of personal vocation is about. Catechesis is about nurturing nature, what everyone is obliged to do. Because each of us is called for life to be nurturers, learners and teachers of cosmic religion, each of us is called to be a catechist.

This Faith-Sharing Manual approaches conscious complexity with awe and humility, but confident that successful nature is competent and trustworthy to teach symbiosis as we experience it in the "Naturalis Sacramentum Ordinis".

What is Church?

Church is a body of like-minded people who are held together by common beliefs and rituals. The root word is from the Greek "kurios", meaning Lord, in the sense of God. The common beliefs of church members pertain to received understandings of God, human dependency, and the need to acknowledge the divine source and sustainable provider of and for life. The characteristic ritual has to do with worship, which expresses

personal/social dependency, honor and thanksgiving to the Divine. The common beliefs embody the religious content of ritual worship and remembrance.

What is Religion?

Religion is the group-practiced expression of personal/social belief. The motivation of belief and culture is a complex consciousness that includes understandings of essential relationships and the need of personal conformity to communal interdependencies that enable self-fulfillment while sustaining common health and wellbeing. Two Latin words, *religere* and *religare*, give to “religion” its two defining aspects, namely, aspects of “knowledge”, and of “purpose”, which pertain to the faculties of intelligence and of will.

What is Reason?

Reason is a faculty of consciousness, intuitional and intentional, that underlies patterns that make up conscious reflectivity. The credibility of established understandings is reinforced or challenged by the sense of experience and culture. Reason is the basis of understanding what makes sense, and of motivating one to pursue “right reason” in order to be informed and better equipped to live in community and in a manner that is self-fulfilling and other-fulfilling.

What is Faith?

In the church-appropriated sense, faith has come to be understood as beliefs which one’s religion requires one to believe. This meaning is a cultural artifice. More than artifice faith is an experientially acquired consciousness of beliefs that have accumulated in the codes of consciousness from times immemorial. Faith is the certitude of knowledge and experience. Knowledge is acquired by personal experience and reflection, and it becomes the basis of certitude upon which new experiences, dialog and reflection continue to add on to the cumulus certitude of personal understandings. Cultured habits are based on certitude, which remains open to correctives of new experience and knowledge. Faith is the wisdom-consciousness of universal experience.

What is Consciousness?

Consciousness is self-reflective alertness. It involves the complex webs of reason, remembrance, and habit, and it is consciously and subconsciously engaged by reflective self-awareness in every moment and circumstance of life and wakefulness; it is active, aware, but not always completely aware. Consciousness is a psychic faculty that informs judgment, that is, that puts before the mind the reasons and consequences of actions. Consciousness enables judgment to choose actions that have beneficial outcomes and to avoid actions that have bad outcomes—what “mindfulness” is, does.

What is Conscience?

Conscience is the pursuit of mindfulness. Conscience is the decision making faculty of reason that seeks first to be informed as to consequences of actions before taking action. Circumstances affect outcomes. Circumstances are not always the same, so that in one circumstance a choice, an action may have good outcomes, but in other circumstances it may have hurtful outcomes.

What is Eucharist?

Eucharist is an evolved understanding of religious consciousness about divine presence in the agency of spiritual transformation. As religious ritual, Eucharist is about the formal consecration rite of and consumption of bread and wine during the Mass. In its universal sense Eucharist represents the instance and agency of divinity in life's shared place in the transformational cosmos. Eucharist is intentional focus on and growth into Godlikeness — what is the desire and destiny of self-revelation in reality — ultimate reality.

What is Enlightenment?

Enlightenment is a condition of consciousness coming to new awareness, new insights. Intentional openness enables consciousness to come to new enlightenment and thereby to be better informed in making judgments and in understanding mutual needs and rights of every person. Enlightenment is a means of authenticating religious and civil relationship.

What is Evolution?

Evolution is a process of Earth/cosmic transformation advanced in and by all the joined processing of energy/substance, of soul/body. Transformations happen everywhere and always, and involve the wave/particle flux of least substance. The flux of particles/waves is actively engaged in all aspects of atomic/molecular activity, including the cellular activities of gene coding, cell division, etc, and at levels of cultural/ecological awareness. These are physically enabled by energetic *communication*; by responsive changes of *consciousness*; and by the preservation of sustainability — *conscience*: what are together otherwise called “Trimorphic Resonance”.

What are Modernity, Postmodernity, Worldview and Second Enlightenment?

Modernity is a time-period of history in Europe (that coincides with beginnings of Enlightenment) characterized by the rise of science and humanism. This time-period seamlessly flowed out of the middle ages (c. 1000-1400). The hard-fixing of dates may misrepresent actual occurrences. Modernity (continuing Enlightenment) is reasonably understood to be the time-period in Europe from c. 1400 to 1905. Postmodernity, by my reckoning continues now from 1905. Why 1905? Because that is the year Albert Einstein first published his insights into light, wave/particle correlations and quantum relativity. I identify the beginning of Second Enlightenment with Einstein's science of the “meta” identity of energy (spirituality) with matter, the co-evolution and co-identity of energy (spirituality, consciousness) with material forms, e.g., ecology, economy and Eucharist.

AND NOW, the life-and-death Questions, as to fidelity to Cosmic Eucharist, to evolutionary necessity:

Are humans causing global warming and climate change?

Yes. A simple way to grasp the reality is to consider the time-equivalent required to collect and store heat and CO₂ from the atmosphere (by photosynthesis) in terms of tens of million — billions — of years against the present time-equivalent to mine, burn and release heat and CO₂ (from fossil fuels) into the atmosphere in terms of tens of decades. It

doesn't take rocket science to understand this energy equation; *the time variable, of heat/CO₂-in and of heat/CO₂-out tells the reason for global heating and climate change.*

What is the role of air/water pollution?

The pollution of air, land and water results from resource-consumption and industrial processing. In nature, the interdependent webs of life, from micro-organisms on up to the “top-feeders”, preserve balance (pollution control) by way of lesser organisms processing the wastes of higher organisms and higher organisms feeding on the lesser organisms. Industrial processing and manufacture changes everything. Industry produces kinds and volumes of wastes that lesser organisms cannot deal with. Manufacture amasses death-inducing waste. The only workable corrective is to reduce and reuse wastes of industry. Hyper concentrations of human populations and accumulations of waste are accelerating the extinction of species and aborting co-essential live species. Humans do have control over the coming and putting off of “end-time”. Mindless waste is hastening its day for life as we know it.

SENSE of RELIGION

UBI CARITAS (Destiny) ET AMOR (Desire), DEUS IBI EST
(Where there's charity and love, there God is)

The Conscious Ascendancy (evolution) of the Cosmic Continuum

WE ARE THE SELF-REFLECTIVE UNDERSTANDING OF THE COSMOS

Background:

We are destiny's (Omega) answer and desire's (Alpha) question. We belong to the never-ending-story of the Cosmos—from desire to destiny, from destiny to desire. We are Sacrament, the Sacred Remembrance of destiny and the desire of fulfillment. We are Eucharist, the intelligent impulse of desire and destiny. Desire and destiny are beginning and outcome of transformation; transformation's motive is by way of Divine Instance, the intelligent process and product of every cosmic occurrence. Intelligent Design compels desire toward worthy purposes, honorable destinies. Our due is our destiny authenticated by desire.

We are what destiny is — desire: “**desiderata**” are things desired, original things “of the stars” (sidera). We are “star-things”. Desire and Destiny are intentional star complexes, what we are, what we experience, the unity and continuity of the Cosmos.

1. The Cosmos is: The “hypostasis” (understanding) of Intelligent Design
2. Intelligent Design is: The hypostasis of the Sacrament of Natural Order
3. The Sacrament of Natural Order is: Eucharist (Self-donation, Amor/Caritas)
4. Eucharist is: Intentional self-donation expressed in cosmic unfolding
5. We are: The unfolding of the self-conscious Cosmos — Trimorphic Resonance

D e S I D E R A t a

Go placidly amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence.

As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even to the dull and the ignorant, they too have their story. Avoid loud and aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit.

If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain and bitter; for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism. Be yourself. Especially, do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love, for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is perennial as the grass.

Take kindly to the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. **You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.**

Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be, and whatever your labors and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace in your soul.

With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world.

Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.

Max Ehrmann c.1920

COSMIC DESTINY as EARTH DESIRE

Hypothesis: Soul is in/by/from the Cosmos: Religion & Science correspond essentially
Connection: Earth Desire (intension/intention) is Cosmic Destiny (life's outcome)

FOUR FAITH-SHARING SESSIONS

Week One: Historical Orientation

At Home in the Cosmos (social reciprocity)

Week Two: Catechesis as Communication

What We Are: the harmonic community of persons

Faith as Continuity-Truth-Wisdom

Definitions

Catechesis is: the communication of natural lessons of authentic relationships/living

Communication: the transparent correspondence of subjects (mutuality)

Week Three: Sacrament as Consciousness

What Sacrament is: awareness of Cosmic Order (sustaining nature)

Hope as Expectation

Definitions

Sacrament is: the trustworthy iteration of live experience/remembrance

Consciousness is: the reflective enlargement of co-relationships (complementarity)

Week Four: Eucharist as Conscience

What Eucharist is: the wholly connected, Self-giving Community

Love as Desire (Amor) and Destiny (Caritas)

Definitions:

Eucharist is: self-expenditure in intentional fulfillment of cosmic purpose

Conscience is: the faithful pursuit of personal/social Destiny (subsidiarity)

MATERIAL FOR FIRST SESSION: At Home in the Cosmos

Evolution, Devolution and Chaos

Deep down, evolution and devolution are wave/particle dance, the rhythmic process of creation unfolding — sometimes pretty and sometimes...not so pretty — but always awesome. Evolution and Devolution are ancient, really ancient dance partners. They've been dancing for thousands, millions, even many billions of years. Shall we call them Evo and Devo? [But don't tell them I called them *ancient*; they've gotten sensitive in their later years. OK!?] They are really important because they are responsible for all vital sustainability, including the maintenance of ecology.

Evo is the stronger partner who takes two steps forward; Devo is the weaker partner who falls back one step. [To let you in on a little secret: Evo and Devo are Faith/Reason personifications of nature's strategies for syntropy against entropy, the evolutionary struggle of sustainability against chaos.] In humankind, Evo has taken a quantum-leap beyond the tension modes of particle physics to the intentional mode of symbiosis. It's hard for Devo to keep up with her! But their development of intentional symbiosis has made it possible for their dance to advance in remarkable ways if only Devo could overcome his clumsy drag. Evo has had to create strategies just to overcome his backwardness. She has even had to come up with multiple ways (redundancy) of arriving at the same outcome.

Science informs us that at the subatomic level our bodies are way, way more space than substance. A problem for Devo, I think. At deep subatomic levels, substances move in and out of wave/particle relationships. Devo favors being *wave* — *emotion* and Evo favors being *particle* — *substance*. It figures. But their dance of vital sustainability is also the proving mechanism by which cosmic energy/matter continually renews and reiterates redundancy in the energy particle maintenance of body molecules and by which humans come to self-justification.

From the looks of things now, it seems that humanity is and has been in Devo's wave mode for a long time, taking two steps backward for every one step forward. This is a dance that works to the advantage of chaos and against evolution. Devo's two steps back is antithetical to Evo's substance choreography that calls for two steps forward. The evolution of intentional symbiosis advances by the three-step dance of communication (trust), informed consciousness (hope), and committed conscience (love); devolution counters with his three-step dance of distrust, dysfunction and frustration. Wave (emotion) without substance (reason) isn't adequate to the task of symbiosis.

The intelligence of self-reflectivity is enlarged in evolutionary potential by its capacity to anticipate outcomes and selectively (intentionally) choose beneficial outcomes. Evolving processes of living systems incorporate energetic redundancies (iterations) that secure purposeful design-outcomes of repeatable intelligence. Advanced well beyond the merely physical tensions of energetic redundancies are self-reflective complexes by which intelligence continues to develop more profoundly and purposely. Choosing has outcomes favoring either evolution or devolution; emotional/rational intelligence opts for the purposeful process of choice that intends and acts on best interests of personal and social wellbeing. Failure to understand damaging options puts one at risk of inadvertently making choices favorable to devolution and chaos. When

choices favoring devolution are politicized, all of human culture is set back, even catastrophically, as is evolution.

Outcome-awareness is the means that can better choices, actions, and their outcomes. Fixation in status-quo knowledge gives false security even though there may be some escape and comfort in misguided faith/understanding. Advancing wellbeing can be achieved with due diligence in knowledge-updating even as back-peddling expectedly results from the neglect of intelligence-updating. Life is and is about ceaseless struggle against disintegration and chaos.

As renewal and recovery from chaos at the subatomic level are incessant processes, so life at the conscious level is and must be incessant in contesting with the entropic forces of chaos. When struggle ceases, evolution ceases; when struggle ceases, disintegration and devolution set in. As David C. Korten says, "Struggle is an incessant condition of living...God's own struggle manifest through us." ["The Great Turning", Part IV, pp 271-273] Evo and Devo have understandings of divinity personification and Trinitarian processing (divine/human hypostasis), the understanding of divine/human likeness — divine in design (intelligence) and human (clumsy) in development. Sorry! But I have to be honest!

Religion and civility are caught up in the evolve/devolve dance. The cultural animus between faith and reason, which has persisted for millennia even amongst monotheistic religions, interferes and interjects internecine bloodshed and chaotic violence. [An aside: amongst other things, the West's deeply cultured habit of "religious" violence factored in the Bush Administration's choosing to go to war with Iraq. Neglect of outcome anticipation, on the part of the Bush Administration to plan and foresee the war's consequences, has broad and lasting intercultural consequence.]

Intentional purpose, whether at the inter-personal level or the inter-national, can accomplish personal/social harmony in the same manner as evolutionary harmony is accomplished, namely, by three-step processing: the exchange (communication) of understanding/differences; the enlargement of understanding (consciousness) by way of openness to differences and commonalities; and commitment to accommodate each other mutually (conscience) and mitigate differences. Globally, cultures suffer devolution and chaos from the wasting disease of rational intelligence (male arrogance) suppressing emotional (female) intelligence. The three-step pursuit of trust and the advancement of intelligence can calculate to avoid the destructive outcomes of devolution and advance the constructive outcomes of evolution.

Trust, religion and civility advance on the mutuality of emotional/rational intelligence. The crises of our time are cumulative outcomes of failed mutuality. Personal religion and social civility together evolve or devolve on the choices we make personally and socially, on whether we opt for personal/communal resonance or dissonance. Unless and until public political consciousness understands and lives by the reciprocal necessity of faith/reason mutuality, self-wasting and chaos will perniciously visit upon us.

Religion & Culture

Faith, Reason and Apocalypse: APOCALYPSE and ENLIGHTENMENT essentially have the same meaning, namely, "uncovering, coming to new understandings"; but, worldview and culture have nuanced the words to have very different meanings. "Apocalypse" in the understanding of the Static World View (SWV) since the time of Christ has acquired the

meaning of “end-time”, of global destruction, Second Coming and final judgment. In the understanding of the Evolutionary World View (EWV), “enlightenment” means new insight, the gradual awakening of consciousness aided by the process of reason.

Notwithstanding cultural fixation in SWV evolution continues, and consciousness comes to new and rational understandings. Evolution and consciousness advance together in small and sometimes imperceptible ways, and sometimes in leaps that cause unsettling. When change is incrementally accommodated to new insights, pressures are relieved and social adjustment happens peaceably. But when cultural restraints obstruct adjustments and change, pressure builds to the point of rupture and the shredding of the social fabric. Under such circumstances, accommodation is more complicated and difficult.

It is the thesis here that "dominion theology" (patriarchal theocracy) has been the long-time cultural restraint that has frustrated the working of evolution and the insights of enlightenment. I would offer that Vatican II represents a quantum-leap in consciousness away from apocalyptic fixation in SWV and to the liberating enlightenment of EWV. At the beginning of the Third Christian Millennium, humankind is at the verge of making a quantum-leap from SWV to EWV, from enthrallment in "dominion theology" to the open consciousness of "liberation theology", and the accommodation of faith and reason.

Historical Background At the time of Christ and in early Christianity, “end-time expectation” dominated public thinking. The larger populace was persuaded toward apocalyptic expectation while a lesser group of intellectuals drew back into perhaps a more insightfully reasoned approach but also a more esoteric one. This group morphed into a band of people called Gnostics and their movement became known as Gnosticism, which in a matter of several centuries was effectively suppressed.

Between the extremes of Apocalypticism (end-time fixation) and Gnosticism sprouted a “wild” field of speculation. This proliferation of speculation agitated Bishop Irenaeus (c. 130-202), who believed the havoc needed quieting before Christianity could get on with its mission. So he took up a crusade to quash “heresy” (choice). In this work he was joined by Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus (lawyer by training) who wrote well in Greek and Latin. The destiny of Christianity has been very much determined by these two early patriarchs. [Search: **Irenaeus** and **Tertullian**, at google or wikipedia.] Their writings largely contain Catholic dogmatic theology. Their institutionalizing of Christian religion won the favor of Constantine and became the approved orthodoxy of the “Holy” Roman Empire until the Reformation (c.1500-1600).

Early church conflict was between institutional authority and personal authenticity. From the beginning there were conflicts over the orthodoxy of belief and the authority of bishops to control the public flow of ideas, the freedom of people to choose, and what canons of scriptures would be institutionally adopted. Church orthodoxy then and now is about controlling ideas and individual freedoms. To this day, the conflicts between lay freedom and church are over the same root matters, the tensions between faith and reason, control of public discourse and individual freedoms.

“Gnosticism” takes its name from the Greek word “gnosis” which means knowledge. Because it intellectually challenged the culture of patriarchy and beliefs long in place, it was distrusted and derogated by those who were determined to systemize the work and words of Jesus Christ and bring about institutional order. Gnosticism was a

movement mostly of intellectuals; ordinary people were more inclined to accept ideas of apocalypse and liberation from oppression.

Bishop Irenaeus obtained Episcopal approval for the proposition that, bishops as a group had the authority to impose faith obligations on the people and to determine which scriptures were orthodox and which were not. Among their concerns in choosing orthodox scriptures was the selection of scriptures that supported church institution. Though the tactics and objectives of the early bishops may be problematic today it is clear that what they did has well served the establishment of a sustained belief system and method of faith transmission.

Knowledge is a good thing. Who in his right mind can deny that? Knowledge is a tool of greater understanding and accommodation, what is the process and product of reason and of understanding. It cannot be known if respect for knowledge is greater today than it was in earlier times even if the deposits of knowledge are greater today and more accessible. It was true then and is true now that knowledge (and faith) is acquired by way of communication and experience; we continue to grow in knowledge (faith) by their coming together. These are tools of intelligence. Intelligence is conflicted when experience and communication conflict. Conflicted intelligence (faith) is reconciled with clarification of communication and experience.

In the early years of Christianity, as now, the political and social culture of patriarchy favored the authoritarian approach of institutional order; perhaps for the practical reason that opportunities to pursue intellectual professionalism were limited while patriarchy was already familiar. So it is hardly surprising that Gnostic professionalism is even now distrusted by many, and that such distrust is encouraged by patriarchal institutions.

The anti-institutional bias of Jesus was a problem for early hierarchs who meant to make church an institution based on the teachings of Jesus. Unlike Jesus and for cultural reasons, early church authoritarians put their trust in institutions rather than in the people. What occurred early was the spread of the good news of Jesus. The people developed their own stories, recollections and interpretations of the Jesus experience. They weighed their experiences against ancient and contemporary scriptures and gave their variant interpretations to the meaning of it all. Early Christianity was a diverse body of people who found different ways of incorporating the good news into their daily lives and relationships with each other. New scriptures came to be written with accounts and explanations of direct and indirect contact with Jesus and his teachings. The open-endedness and contagious excitement of early Christianity was bothersome to people cultured in institutional structure, and so it is today.

While the action of early authorities in establishing institutional policy was not malicious, the fact is that they meant to erect walls against public dilution of belief and authority. Even though their beliefs of orthodoxy were rationalized on premises of the worldview of the time, bishops arrogated unto themselves claims of authority, even inerrancy, which they intended also for successor bishops. Their organizational presumptions are credible if it is true that their worldview understanding and derived sense of orthodoxy apply for all time. They set up policies in anticipation that their successor bishops would advance the same orthodoxy (same presumptions?) and would safeguard the institution. However, what they did was attach defective presumptions of worldview to faith, dogma and culture.

The meager deposits of knowledge in antiquity do not compare with today's cumulative learning. Does that mean that people are more authentic or religious today than in the past? Certainly not! Authenticity is about how we individually inform our intelligence and how we commit ourselves to the moral, communal obligation of loving one another in the context of the times. It isn't knowledge or faith that determines authenticity, but it is fidelity to the requirements of love as faith and reason inform. Through history, the relationship between faith and reason has been stormy. This is true for Church today as it was for early Christianity.

Christianity was born out of Jewish tradition and culture, a culture that was oppressive and intrusive in intimate aspects of everyday life. Because of the harsh culture of religious pretense and the hurt compounded by the violence of imperial Rome, Jesus was moved to make it his life work to seek the liberation of the people from manifold religious/political abuse. Jesus frequented the company of the disenfranchised and sought to bring them hope and relief from despair, disease and exploitation. Jesus showed his disdain for institutions. His church and his kin(g)dom were the people; he believed in them, not in the institutions. Jesus was vigorous in showing his scorn toward the religious authorities and his anger at the misuse of the temple as a market bazaar.

At the time of the Reformation, Gnosticism somewhat revived due to crass corruption within the church, the rise of science and the spread of new knowledge. The Counter-Reformation reaffirmed orthodox faith traditions against reason and enlightenment. The divide between faith and reason grew wider due to the polarizing actions of Reformation and Counter-Reformation (stamped formally by the decision of the Council of Trent and true to the heritage of Irenaeus). Catholicism in practice today is still the Counter-Reformational inheritance of Trent/Vatican I.

Over time, the errors of worldview identified with dogma/faith have become practical and political problems. This gathering defect has incrementally caused church to lose credibility; as its old worldview fails, belief and credibility are called into question. Vatican II recognized the problem and acted in the interest of regaining authenticity and credibility. Vatican II opened church to reason and the analysis and synthesis of new problems caused by the changed worldview.

Bishop Irenaeus is emblematic of what bishops do, in the past and even now, namely, control the orthodox content and faith rituals that sustain institutional authority against lay liberalization. This is increasingly problematic for the church because as ancient orthodoxies fail so does the institution unless it reforms to the renewed *sensus fidelium*.

Specifically, the problem is that Vatican I and Vatican II espouse radically different “ecclesiologies”; Church of Vatican I understates reason in favor of faith and Church of Vatican II favors balance of reason and faith. The difference of Church's self-understanding is a schism of critical circumstance throughout Catholicism. The disconnection of faith from reason weakens credibility. The fact that Christian belief and authority always link back to prior authority (fixated in the SWV of the early church) is an obstacle frustrating to EWV, cultural change and Church credibility.

Everything happens in context, and for church, context is history and tradition, but also cultural worldview. People are appointed to hierarchy today based on fidelity to church's tradition of safeguarding the institution against lay encroachment. The problem

is if the laity loses faith in the hierarchy because of its fixation against reason, church may have leadership but not a following. No one now accepts pre-Copernican cosmology and the Aristotelian worldview (SWV) or a theology derived from presumptions on it. This conundrum is something Christian Churches have yet to deal with. Catholicism has yet to move on to Vatican II ecclesiology and evolutionary consciousness.

It is certainly true that institutional religions, organized church, give people occasion and place for graced opportunities of reconciling relationships. Faith experience in communal living importantly enables the learning of authentic relationships. Except for communal relationships and interpersonal regard for one another, it is difficult to learn and live faith life authentically. In the reformation and restoration of church, the necessary role of laity needs to be recognized. The bishops need help. They should realize that people do not become adversary without context, without reasons. Nothing less than the future of the church is at issue. It remains true as always that the greatest obstacles to reconciliation are closed-mindedness, selfishness and the refusal to admit one's obsession in them. No person is immune from being human.

MATERIAL FOR SECOND SESSION: Catechesis as Communication (Take up the Catechism Questions, pg 8ff.)

Desire and Destiny

“Catechesis” is what happens when destiny and desire communicate. Intentional consciousness is what communication is about. We are what destiny is, and desire is destiny yet to come. “Desiderata” (things we desire) are what make up the stuff of desire and destiny; desiderata are desire and destiny in process and outcome. Desire is destiny’s means of accomplishment (end), and destiny is desire’s means of accomplishment. An “end” is a beginning; a beginning is a new journey in search of a new destiny, a question in search of an answer.

The fabric of the universe is a superstring sea, a waving vastness of harmonic energy psychically disposed to create and sustain, to give and receive, and to inform and reform. It is an all-conforming power, sustaining and fulfilling all desires and destinies. Creativity is openness to the interplay of order and chaos. In the energetic patterns of wave/particle relationships, all creativity is substantiated.

So who are we? We are destiny’s answer and desire’s question. We belong to the never-ending-story of the cosmos, our home, our destiny, our desire. We are Eucharist, the destiny and desire of the transformational cosmos; we are consciousness of the “instance” of divinity, of Intelligent Design. Intelligence stimulates desire to seek its true destiny. Intelligence enables us to follow the compulsion of authenticity and to choose wellbeing. Desire does honor to all who give destiny its due. Sacrament (purpose and remembrance) motivate desire; Eucharist (self-donation, intentional commitment) fulfills the destiny of informed desire. By Sacrament and Eucharist we own our lives, our destiny.

Trinity here is seen more as process than as structure, even though in human experience consciousness has both aspects, i.e., material structure and spiritual process wherein matter and spirit correlate. A sense of process leads to the insight of communal harmony that comes with good-faith mutuality, mindful complementarity and respect for subsidiarity (means-end reciprocity). [“The Possible Journey”, see page 42]

The Sacrament of Natural Order

“Natural relationships are sacred because nature is sacred. The word “Sacrament” means *sacred remembrance*, from the Latin, “*sacra meminisse*” (mentum). Nature *remembers* workable outcomes and evolves on encoded, workable *memories*. At the micro-level for example, electrons suppose the atomic nucleus, and the atomic nucleus supposes electrons in their mutual edification of molecules.

“The supreme measure of love is to give one’s life for another — the ultimate act of “nurture”, self-donation. Eucharist, Self-donation, is the essential Sacrament of the Natural Order. Natural holiness informs truth and compels trustful, respectful and faithful living. Except for mutual self-donation there is no natural fruitfulness. Grace supposes the natural fruitfulness of self-donation as reason supposes faith, as masculinity supposes femininity.” [ID, pg 55]

MATERIAL FOR THIRD SESSION: Sacrament as Consciousness

Maternal DNA

Isaiah famously said, “All flesh is grass”. Another way of saying it is “DNA is green (grass) before it is red (blood)”. Beginning with the ovum, every human cell has three distinct strands of DNA, maternally sourced; two are outside the cell-nucleus and in the cell plasma, and one is within the nucleus. Plastids are outside the nucleus and carry their own distinctive DNA; mitochondria are outside the nucleus and carry their own distinctive DNA. The nuclear component of genetic DNA is provided half in the nucleus of the ovum and the other half from a single sperm. The only male contribution to embryonic cells and the consequent human person is the DNA component carried in the sperm. Life in the main is maternally sourced.

Plastid DNA programs food production, as in photosynthesis; mitochondrial DNA regulates metabolic processing of energy in cells; nuclear DNA programs genotypical / phenotypical processing, as in the staged processing of the life journey of every person.

Bread is grainseed, the “transubstantial” vitality of self-reflective consciousness. Life’s capacity for changing sunlight into starch (by way of plastids and photosynthesis) is maternal (light-sourced); life’s capacity for recovering energy from starch (by way of mitochondria) is maternal (light-sourced); and life’s capacity for “intending integrity” (nurture) is maternal (light-sourced). Maternal resources nurture genetic memory, what is “sacred remembrance”; by another word, “Sacrament”. The Sacrament of God-Present is maternally sourced.

DNA intends and attends to the intentional wholeness of evolving energy/matter, what is called “Eucharist”, the transubstantial processing of cosmic energy/matter. The Sacrament of Eucharist is Intelligent Design, the “sacred memory” of intentional divinity Self-expressing in cosmic integrity. We are personally and individually expressions of Intelligent Design, of “sacred memory”, the intentional Sacrament of Life, the presence of divinity in humanity, humanity in divinity.

Sacrament: Opportunity for Encounter with God

Worthiness of purpose shapes the values of our actions, whether their outcomes advance or diminish wellbeing. The point and purpose of ritual Sacraments are to activate the conscious graces of wellbeing in order to enlighten judgment to make decisions that

advance wellbeing. The better we grasp the graces that advance wellbeing, the more fulfilled our lives will be. Deeper insight into the theological dictum “grace supposes nature” helps greatly our efforts toward more fulfilled lives. For example, understanding the relationship of DNA coding to Sacrament gives perspective on how grace depends from and advances in the Intelligent Design of vitality and intentional living. Sacrament, intentional living, is the end/means of Intelligent Design, of DNA coding.

The singular Sacrament that overarches all other Sacrament is EUCHARIST. Eucharist celebrates the dependency of human life and consciousness on the natural potentials of “trans-substantial” matter. If it is true what Isaiah says that “all flesh is grass” then the substance of our own persons is grass in origin. Bread is made from the flour of grass seeds and best represents the intentional Presence of Intelligent Design in the correspondence of Sacrament and DNA. Notwithstanding the convergence of all other Sacraments in Eucharist, they serve as marker events in the journey of every life and deserve ritual celebration in their own right for their edification value to all.

Sacraments can be identified for their vital roles in nurturing natural structuring, Sacraments are both the natural structures (signs) of life and the spiritual, energetic dispositions (grace) that nurture the relationships that advance and sustain wellbeing.

Sacraments can indeed be characterized in the grace they convey (nurture) and in the edification (sign) they leave in life’s (nature) edification. Nature and nurture are characteristically both sign and grace of Sacrament encoded in DNA expressions. The celebration of Sacrament is an individual as well as communal action.

Sacraments are physical (material) and psychical (spiritual). Birth occurs with a rush of water. The essential roles of water in every aspect of life are celebrated in the Sacrament of BAPTISM. CONFESSiON is a spiritual exercise and celebration of communication by which we personally learn right from wrong in the trustful exchange of words, understandings, etc. CONFIRMATION commits to informed consciousness and to fidelity in relationships. Conscience-formation and conscientiable behavior are the objectives of confessional communication and confirmed commitment. PRIESTHOOD and MATRIMONY are commitments to ways of life. Matrimony is both nurture/nature Sacrament. Priesthood pertains to a life commitment of instructing and celebrating social/personal integrity. Priesthood is commitment to be learner/teacher for life, especially in areas of God/human relationships.

Marriage (matrimony) is a commitment to woman/man relationships, to their personal wellbeing, to self-fulfillment and to building community by procreating new life and together provisioning for life’s needs. Competency to teach and to provide are talents obviously, and universally, important for all. The “ordination” of religion and civility imposes on all with respect to conscientiable social living.

ANOINTING before death and burial after death fulfill birth celebration in the fullness of the just life just lived. Life’s substances derive directly from the soul and the substance of Earth’s energy and matter. Individually, when a life has reached its end, and that varies for every individual, the energy and substances of life must be returned whence they came. Photons return to the rainbow spectrum and disintegrated dust returns to Earth.

The iterations of life, conception, gestation, birth, growth, maturity and death are Sacrament events of soul growing into understanding, wisdom and grace; these are the realizations of self-worth, of life’s true valuation and fidelity to Intelligent Design.

Sacrament as Scripture

Intelligent Design is about self-development, self-replication and the inner tendency of genetic programming toward personal integrity. Intelligent Design challenges life and the quest of enlightenment toward greater integrity.

It is proper to question whether the penned scripture is more credible than DNA scripture. The spirit of scriptural intent is not locked in stone; both are open to correction and rewriting. Arrogance that fixates on human words is a product of small mindedness; to over-write the proven scripture of DNA with the small mindedness of human script is an arrogance of a whole different category. Such arrogance flies in the face of divinity encoded in natural integrity. Where is the humility and moral probity? The answer might credibly be found in the consensus culture of integrity that celebrates and respects Divine Presence in the Sacrament of Life and Light.

Understanding DNA as life's primary scripture directing individual life in proven patterns of cosmic iteration goes a long way in enlightening life's mysteries and the meaning of Sacrament. Sacrament means "sacred remembrance". That is "sacred" which makes whole (holy); in human terms, that which makes life whole are the imprint codes of genetic patterning that direct and maintain personal integrity through all phases of life, embryo, infant, child, youth and adult. Memory/remembrance is a psychosocial faculty substantively programmed in DNA.

The power (genius, grace) of Sacrament is the intentional nurture (spiritual) of natural (material, secular) events. Human competence, judgment and choice make a difference in outcomes. Mechanistic theories (first enlightenment) would have us believe that nature is without "meta" physical aspects (spiritual, conscientiable) that transcend in their consequences beyond death and from generation to generation. The self-reflective complex of psychic transcendence is conscious soul, the intelligent agency of purpose transmitted in and by DNA.

Life is more than mechanical iterations of successive events following one after the other in predestined outcome. Modern enlightenment according to Peter Berger led human consciousness to an awareness of the open possibilities of choice over destiny. Our lives are not doomed to pessimistic fatalism. Awareness of intention and choices of purpose qualify human implications in life events and outcomes, from birth to death.

The conscious complex programmed in DNA is a quality of spirituality resourced in original big bang energy. The intended and purposeful outcomes of choice characterize the "grace" that comes from them, beyond mere mechanics. Grace potentials, in their capacity to benefit, enrich and inspire others, depend on individual initiative and talent. Sacrament and grace are enhanced by informed, purposeful choice.

Sacrament is about communication, consciousness, conscience and the iterative processing of these; Sacrament is about faith, hope, love and the iterative processing of these; Sacrament is about trustful word, informed insight, intentional love and the repeat processing of these. Preserving the integrity of motive in one's actions is love, which is also their outcome and that which we all need and can give.

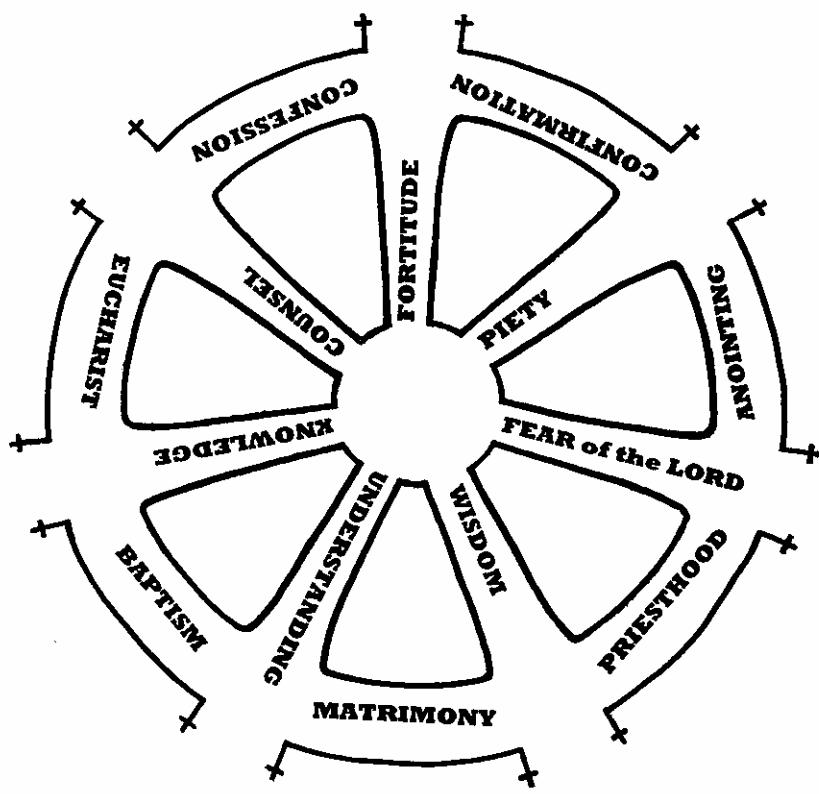
The intentional processing of life's repetitious events is spiritual and physical, that is, with psychical and physical consequence on self and others. Human physiology, psychically and physically characterized, is impacted by interpersonal relationships. Soul suffers when body does, soul prospers when body does. Over time, good sense registers

in social benefit; culturally habituated actions can incorporate codes that register preference for actions that benefit over those that don't benefit.

By repetition, codes of habit become imprinted in memory texts and accepted as faith (wisdom) bases for living. Such packets of cultural preference are called "memes". Nurtural codes may imprint in intuition and associate with developmental stages of genetic processing. In the practical realm, genes and memes are mutually interactive in personal and cultural determination. They work together to advance wholeness of mind/body. [The words remembrance (mentum), mind (mental) and meme originate from the same Latin word "meminisse", meaning, to remember.] Sacraments are typically associated with religion and not with secular life, but in reality, they are about the joined processing of soul/body, spirituality/materiality. And so, Sacraments are essentially characterized in both their spiritual and material significance.

THE WHEEL OF LIGHT AND LIFE

SEVEN Sacraments and the SEVEN Charisms (Gifts) of Spirit



Life, like all cosmic substance, has the two aspects of energy and matter; the human person differs from all other in the higher capacity of self-reflective consciousness and conscientable behavior. Every aspect of human living involves energy (spirit) and matter (body) transformation. Religion celebrates the signal events that occur in every life, both with respect to intentional (grace,

spirit) and non-intentional (physical) processing. In order to live proactively it is helpful to understand the physical/psychical dependency of spirit/matter (soul/body). In Christian culture, the spiritual charisms of soul are identified with the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit in correspondence with the seven Sacraments.

Sign of the Cross

Every life has passionate aspects to it, but in different ways. Aspects of passion are active (affirmative) and passive; affirmative passion involves intentional motivation in matters of interpersonal relationships; the passive aspect is about pain a person suffers outside the person's control. In Christian belief, Jesus exemplifies the Godlike way of affirmative / passive living. The emblem of authentic Godlike living is the cross, both, a despicable object but also a hallowed object because it was the instrument involved in the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. [Ref: Sylvester L. Steffen, Religion & Civility, pp 100-105]

The Passion of the Christ — The Stations of the Cross

Not surprisingly, the graces (Gifts of Spirit) correspond not only with Sacraments but also with the events in the Passion of Jesus Christ on his *Way of the Cross*. Reflection on correlations can inspire and focus one in the face of unavoidable and destructive events. The Wheel of Life sometimes turns on torture.

1. Jesus is condemned to death — Fear of the Lord
2. Jesus takes up his cross — Priesthood
3. Jesus falls — Wisdom
4. Jesus meets his mother — matrimony
5. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus — Understanding
6. Veronica wipes Jesus' face — Baptism
7. Jesus falls — Knowledge
8. Jesus talks to the women — Eucharist
9. Jesus falls a third time — Counsel
10. Jesus is stripped naked — Confession
11. Jesus is nailed to the cross — Fortitude
12. Jesus dies on the cross — Confirmation
13. Jesus is taken down from the cross — Piety
14. Jesus is laid in the tomb — Anointing

MATERIAL FOR FOURTH SESSION: Eucharist as Conscience

Conscionable Transformation

The Wheel of Light and Life is the grand expanding cosmos. It is the intricate splendor of the filigree wheel on a circus wagon. It is the mass of blown-up balloons softening the gravity of centrism. The many wheels of light and life are whirling, swirling galaxies, over-reaching and making magic in many ways. Our bodies are inflated with connected cell-balloons containing structures of coiled stairways sharing the reaches of knowledge, spinning new steps, recalling experiences of light, beauty and purpose. The mind's light is a wire mesh, a sparkling web of wisdom, lighting the dark recesses of possibility. We are the newness, the work, the play, the pray, the song, the dance, and the turning of the great wheel of the cosmic continuum.

Each moment affects the momentum of the turning wheel. Each moment, each day offers creative possibilities of electrical potential that excite the arcing sparks of the

imagination. The imagination illuminates the intentional potentials of awareness that define the arcs of fortune, intelligent design and misfortune.

Personal relationships are circles of purpose, are connecting spokes that empower and hold together the intentions of body-spirit, of soul-substance, the magnetic holiness of Spirit. Sacred Purpose, Sacrament, is substance of radiant energy, of spokes holding together the Wheel of Light and Life; light waves reach from the center and substantiate the perimeter rim, where “the rubber meets the road”.

Our souls are graces of composite energy exhaled from the center and reaching to the myriad and wonderful aspects of life, to each moment of transformation and turning. The spiritual spokes of centering belong personally to everyone; they constantly inform, illuminate and serve the need of every turn.

Individual life has wheels of individual turning, spiritually informed in the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, fortitude, piety, and fear of the Lord. The continuity of their harmony enlightens the way of purpose and Sacrament in marking and capitalizing on important events of life, of stages completing individual life from beginning to end, from birth to death, from light to light ad infinitum.

The outer arc of the wheel, connecting to the spokes in a continuous circle, are the Sacraments of nurture and nature, what are the virtues and substance of Love, *caritas* (self-donation) and *amor* (affection). These virtues implicate the Eucharistic continuum of the cosmos in the personal continuum of life. Personally and individually, we are the deep purposeful soul of Cosmic Eucharist, the individual and intentional expression of love that drives the cosmic wheel in all its dimensions of expansion and transformation. In our persons we are and we express the holographic nature of the cosmic continuum; our souls are the consciousness of nurture.

The webs of life are harmonic agencies of cosmic consciousness; they are our souls, our bodies. They are the condition and resource of intentional nurture/nature. The self-aware consciousness of humankind is in the driver’s seat directing the Wheel of Light and Life. Its sustainability and continued creativity depend on fidelity to cosmic purpose, to the webs of life to which all belong. Our consciousness is too easily distracted in self-interest. The cosmic continuum looks to us to drive carefully. Fidelity to life, to love, demands of us to be faithful, sensible, and dependable drivers; to be otherwise is to crash and burn and wreck from within.

The Sacraments “of nature” are birth (baptism), Eucharist (the transformational processing of life) and death (the release of soul and the return of Earth substances). Marriage and priesthood are intentional Sacraments “of nurture” and “of nature”. The Sacraments “of nurture” are: confession (communication), confirmation (consciousness) and conscience (intentional embrace of Eucharist). Eucharist, Love’s nature/nurture, is the intentional soul/body of the Great Cosmic Continuum. It is our great privilege and responsibility to celebrate Eucharist faithfully and intentionally, with our whole heart, soul and body, with our minds and all our strength. Go and make this moment and every moment count. [See: Sylvester Steffen, PRIMARY SCRIPTURE, “The Sacrament of God Present”, pg 64]

Intentional Eucharist—Mindfulness/Conscience

Eucharist is a process of self-donation, naturally (ex opere operato) and nurturally (ex opere operantis), what nature already requires of everyone. Focus is on the “nurtural”

aspect of Sacrament, that is, on our personal, intentional embrace of the processes of becoming human in the evolving consciousness of cosmic nature.

Individual life is an arrow in time, unstoppably moving through marker events of life (what are mysteries of the rosary) and challenging consciousness to ever higher reflectivity. The Graces of the Holy Spirit specify what mindfulness is about, what intentional Eucharist is. Taken together in context, the marker events of Sacraments are graces that bring consciousness to higher reflectivity.

Evolution is the revelation of the divine to consciousness in mindful unfolding; it is conscious transformation being wrought in the human person by the working of Spirit-mindfulness of the Godlikeness. Christian living is motivated in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and it reveals the working of Spirit in the personal/communal bonding of grace, of the “natural” working of the Gifts of Spirit.

Faithful living is the perpetual “greening” of religion—the organic flourishing of authenticity—the intentional enlightenment of moral consciousness. Eucharist is inner spirit/matter transforming substance and potential to higher consciousness and purpose, the inherent process of Intelligent Design. We personally reveal the Holy Spirit to the cosmos and to each other. This is the mission, the commission, the “sending” that binds us in word-made-flesh community, a harmony that is reflective of divine harmony, Trinitarian Community. “Go teach the whole world in the name of Trinitarian harmony”.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Evolution and Theology

With the development of a body of knowledge on any subject, certain truths or “axioms” eventually become clear. This is true of evolution as it is of theology. The first axiom of evolution may well be stated that all evolved subtleties of life originate in wave dispersal of first big bang “substance”; similarly, the first axiom of theology may be capsulized in the phrase “grace supposes nature”, namely, that the subtleties of conscious life continue to be expressions of first big bang substance/wave. It is well for us to apply these axioms of evolution/theology to our selves personally; in doing so we may come to the sense of at-homeness in the cosmos

The Sacrament of Life

I make here a pleading for the religious imperative of Eco-Morality. I trust that my own life witnesses not just talk but also the “walk”. It matters how we construct our personal worldview for by it we construct the ethic by which we live.

It is hard to think of any two subject matters more important to each other and to wellbeing than religion and education, and how they belong together. Fidelity to personal authenticity, zeal (!) for fidelity and authenticity, safeguard common wellbeing.

Christian life focuses on the possibilities of fullness and growth into the enriching experiences of belonging to each other, and the final fulfillment of being at peace with returning to God what God has given us in the sun-rise, sun-fullness and sun-set of life.

Religion is green. Relationships in organic life show that except the seed is buried in good soil and grows un-blighted in its destined purpose, it will not bear the valued fruit that enriches and renews life. All life, the wholeness of personal experience is Eucharist. Eucharist is the greening experience of life and the production of abundant new life. Greening and seed production are the fulfillment of soil, of air and sunlight. In the joined fulfillment of these, organic life depends. Isaiah says, "All flesh is grass", and so we are.

New grain growth is the bread-of-life experience of God present in the least and greatest leap of quantum relationship by which we grow into the fullness of other even as we recede into the diminishment of self. Being bread to each other is what Eucharist is about, is what the fullness of life is about.

Every end is a new beginning. In our final years it is well that we return to our beginning and recap understandings of common origins and destinies, how God connects with and in us; how we connect with God; and how the old is ever renewed. We are individually grass/grain to each other, destined to green, to ripen and yield food and life renewed. We are bread. The song of our life is desire's lyrical fulfillment of destiny, the song of Eucharist, the song of fullness — the "Panis Angelicus".

Right as Grain

Faith, science and business: these define my life. My childhood experience was religion-based. From early childhood, faith attraction took me to the Seminary (1946 until 1957); the science of grain has been the business of my life.

The serious linking of religion, science, and business happened early in the 1950s. My brother Arnold and I were both seminarians at Techny, Illinois, preparing for the missionary priesthood with the Society of the Divine Word. Two other brothers, Norbert and Vincent, were in business together at New Hampton, Iowa, doing business as STEFFEN FARM SUPPLY. Vince's work included the selling of grain storage bins to farmers in the area. Early in the fifties he began installing perforated floors in grain bins and equipping them with ventilation fans to remove moisture and prevent grain from heating and spoiling.

Sometime in the Winter/Spring of 1952, Arnold and I talked about the grain bin business and the innovation of drying grain in bins. We reflected how reminiscent was this development to the biblically storied life and times of Joseph of Egypt, who had the responsibility of preserving grain *in times of plenty against the years of want*. The linkage in history of messianic lessons to the modern situation was compelling.

I became occupied with the reflection. Joseph the "grain guardian" image struck me as a compelling business trademark. So I made a logo sketch of Joseph, the Pharaoh's Grain Keeper, with pyramids in the background and the caption word "EGYPT".

When I left the seminary in 1957, I was invited to work with Norbert and Vince in New Hampton. My interest was in the grain storage business. My brothers agreed that it would be useful to understand grain science more deeply. I was told about grain research at Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, by Agricultural Engineer William V. "Bill" Hukill and his associates. So, I contacted him and told him of my interest; he put me in touch with the Botany Department at ISU.

Shortly after, I matriculated in the Botany Department as a special student of Plant Physiology, prior to approval as a regular graduate student. Becoming a student at ISU also occasioned my thirty-year membership in the American Society of Agricultural

Engineers. Within two years I completed studies and a research project, and I graduated with a Master of Science (MS) degree in May 1960. My thesis “The Effects of Drying Method on the Germination of Corn” is in library at ISU. During that time I developed also the final version of the HARVESTALL logo and literature promoting the business of on-farm grain storage.

Around this time the Harvestall business separated from the Steffen Farm Supply business and relocated in downtown New Hampton. Harvestall business was unique in the industry in that it alone was sensitive to preserve seed integrity by avoiding exposure of the grain to heat; this was done by the use of ventilation fans to keep the grain cool, unlike other systems that used gas furnaces to heat air and forcibly accelerate the removal of moisture from the grain. As we developed the business and science of grain care I procured a number of pioneer process patents and Vince developed product patents. Over the years, our grain storage system and process of grain-care acquired a unique market identity, HARVESTALL Grain CHILLCURING.

The originality of the Harvestall business gave us a distinct marketing advantage. Because of the special economics of the keeping/curing/drying of grain, and of securing seed integrity, our business was well received and enjoyed the high approval of farmers who discovered its benefits. The petroleum industry had a vested interest in the “hot air” drying of grain and continued to fund research at Land Grant Universities, including Iowa State University. Notwithstanding the soundness of our original science, the land-grant universities gave us no favor; instead they moved in the directions of corporate business interests, toward vertical integration, energy-intensive agriculture, and the manufacture and use of gas-heated grain dryers.

During the 1970s there was an energy/economy crisis in the U.S. As an incentive to save energy, the government encouraged farmers to use energy-conserving products. One incentive allowed an energy tax credit for purchase and use of *active solar* products. Harvestall’s Chillcuring System fit the government’s original definition of “active solar” and the Harvestall Marketing Company used the credit incentive in its selling strategy.

In the early 1980s the IRS began to disallow tax credits on Harvestall systems, and it pursued recovery of credits earlier taken by farmers. Some unhappy people testily quipped “*The Government giveth. The Government taketh. Praised be the Government!*” The threat of farmer lawsuits became a real and serious matter. Because of these threats, the Marketing Company and its dealers were understandably unsettled. Farmers directed their displeasure with the IRS at Harvestall business. Another hurtful matter followed with the “coincidental” decision of the Secretary of Agriculture and the US Department of Agriculture (c.1983) to end the storage facility loan program which until then had made money available to farmers on favorable terms to purchase grain storage and drying equipment. Faced with this looming disadvantage, the Marketing Company canceled its marketing agreement and effectively ended Harvestall business.

While our original science stood out in the market to our advantage, it also made us a target. The “Grain Guardian” trademark was copied by a competitor bin company and my patents were put at issue in federal courts in Minnesota and Indiana, and in class-action lawsuits in Iowa. For the reasons above and for health reasons my business activity effectively ended by 1985, but I continued on into the 1990s to defend myself and my patents against lawsuits. When all was said and done, the business of Harvestall ended even though the validity of my patents was sustained in courts. The farmers withdrew

their class-action lawsuits because it was clear that the Harvestall Chillcuring process fit the IRS definition of “active solar” as it was represented.



HARVESTALL science has never been more *right* for farmers, for grain, and for global ecological economics than it is now. Environmental and ecological economics are issues of social and moral urgency. The resource bases of agriculture have been radically degraded over the years as have other segments of the economy, in part because of institutional misdirection (governmental, educational, and corporate) toward energy-intensive agriculture — “vertical integration”. Authentic farmers work with nature, “with the grain” and produce renewable food products while securing the economic bases of agriculture, what belong to the public but are increasingly appropriated by corporate money and used to “farm” farmers.

Aggravating the crises of environmental degradation and social injustice further torques the “wheel of light and life”. The return to sense and sustainability is the clear moral and economic call, the best and only way a healthy environment and future can be preserved.

What is the “Shape” of Intelligence?

Ancient wisdom, Egyptian and Greek, understood First Knowledge (Protennoia) to be “Tri-Form” (Trimorphic). Collective intelligence is symbolized in the three-sided pyramid and the all-seeing eye, as printed on the dollar bill. The three triangular sides of the pyramid represent each an aspect of the tri-form process of intelligence: communication, consciousness and conscience. The evolution of intelligence is a continuity process that enlarges and transforms the deposits of wisdom. The resonance of energy accommodates the “shape” of intelligence to conform to changing complexity. Wisdom is frustrated in its purposes when the intelligence process is frustrated. Ignorance, arrogance and obsession in clutter frustrate wisdom. Intelligence accommodates “shape” to fit wisdom. If there is no new intelligence to add to wisdom, wisdom and intelligence lose their edge

Trinity Godhead personifies Trimorphic Protennoia in the human likeness.

ISAIAH 40 6-8

A Voice instructs, “Speak out!”

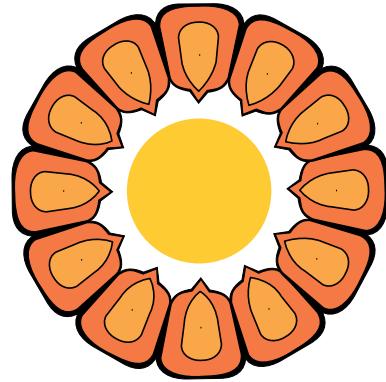
I ask, “What shall I speak out?”

**The Voice answers,
“Mankind is a field of wheat corn,
whose glory is the corn in flower.
By divine inspiration the flowers wither
and the corn stalks break.”**

Yes, God’s People is a wheat corn field.

**Though the wheat flowers wither
and the cornstalks break,
not so God’s Word, which endures forever.**

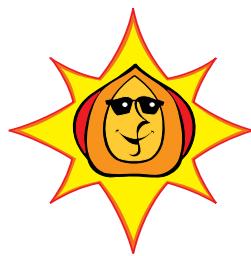
Each turn of “The Wheel of Light and Life” is an iteration of divine purpose, an advance of the cosmic journey—life’s never-ending story.



EUCHARIST is the Sacrament of universal kenosis, of transformation into Self-realization—the Spirituality that turns the Wheel of Life, cosmic destiny and Earth’s desire.

In its religious and cosmic meanings, EUCHARIST is a transformational process implicating the Instance/Presence of Divinity. EUCHARIST is the centerpiece Sacrament of Christian consciousness and ritual, a governing spiritual awareness by which all can live conscientiously, harmoniously.

In an ultimate sense, EUCHARIST is the central motive of Love, of living by conscience enabled in the conscious virtues of Faith, Hope and Love. EUCHARIST is Love, the means/end (Alpha/Omega) of Divine Instance in nature, of conscious ascent into Divinity.



GREEN RELIGION “Right-as-Grain”



Art by Monica Steffen