

one to blame but ourselves. Once again the enemy is us—we must be more determined than ever to make our scholarship truly public, in the emerging public life of the church and, with our church, in the public life of the nation. So the question is not is there a political theology, but which political theology do we choose?

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### RITUAL AND PEACE

For believers in the Lord Jesus, peace is both a gift from God and a task for Christians. As a matter of fact the gift and the task stand in a reciprocal relationship to one another. Our openness to receive God's gift is conditioned by our own desire and hunger for peace. And that stimulation of desire is part of the Christian task.

By saying this I in no way intend a kind of Pelagian heresy which contends that we earn or create God's peace by our actions. God's gift is always pure graciousness. We do, however, create the conditions of possibility for more readily and radically receiving that gift.

The task of desiring and hungering for peace involves a profound conversion, a transformation of consciousness within individuals and within Christian communities. Making peace must always include making peacemakers. Political strategies, social structure and economic programs will fall on deaf ears unless persons are disposed toward peace instead of violence, toward creative cooperation instead of destructive competition. Ritual can be a powerful action in shaping the makers of peace.

The difficulty of making peacemakers in our society is exacerbated by the over-masculinized mission and values of the Western world and the church in the West. As Daniel O'Hanlon perceptively pointed out in the opening address of this convention, our masculine dominated secular and ecclesial societies are characterized by rationality, aggression, competition, power and control. What tends to be undervalued are the more feminine characteristics of intuition, imagination, receptivity, holistic consciousness, empathy and communing. The latter more likely lead toward peace; the former toward violence.

I must say, parenthetically, that this categorization of masculine-feminine traits cannot be immediately applied to specific men and to women in so categorical a fashion. For surely women, despite feminine traits, and even in a pre-feminist age, have their own methods (masculine-learned?) of aggression, power, and control. All of which prompts me to place the root problem of making peacemakers further back in history than the West's overemphasis on ego and the masculine. It would seem rather to have begun in the beginning and carries the not often heard label of original sin, i.e., oriented toward self and away from peace with others from our origins.

The transformation which creates peacemakers is aimed at converting the very core of us, individually and collectively. And that transformation of vision and values from violence toward peace is a long twilight struggle over the entire course of human history until the Prince of Peace comes in the Parousia. In the meantime we struggle to change minds and hearts and this task is most appropriately the function of the imagination.

It is the imagination which saves people from madness according to Father William Lynch. "It is not too much but too little imagination that causes illness."<sup>1</sup> Imagination allows the person to cope with the perceived collapse of his life and to move toward a new inner and outer world. A new world has to be imagined when all appears dark and disparate and, as such, the imagination is the ally of hope. Without it we would go mad in despair. Surely this is the case as we face the insanity of the nuclear weapons race. Only an imaginative dissolving, diffusing and recreating can draw us beyond, can transcend the impasse which leaves us teetering on the brink of planet-extinction.

At this point it would be appropriate to engage in a brief excursus on what I mean in this context by the imagination. First, I do not mean fantasy, make-believe and escape. By the imagination I do mean the mind functioning to imagine.

In this sense the human imaginative system is a true cognitive power. It knows personal, psychic truth and grasps that truth in a holistic way and with feeling, a feeling that can lead toward conversion and commitment. The imagination perceives truth which precedes and succeeds the functioning of sense knowledge and the knowledge produced by discursive reason. It knows by joining together things which senses and logic could not unite. It is symbolic knowing, throwing together realities that, in sense and rational knowledge, may not compute. Yet, in the imagination, whole new constellations of modes-of-being-in-the-world are conjoined and new truth is disclosed.

As Coleridge says, the imagination involves "a change of mental mode which dissolves, diffuses, dissipates in order to recreate."<sup>2</sup> Isn't this precisely what is called for in transforming persons into peacemakers? Imagination can disclose more than what was, what is, and what predictably might be—things we learn through discursive reason. It can disclose unpredictable modes-of-being-in-the-world such as God's gift of peace, his kingdom in but not of this world. Such dissolving, and diffusing and recreating could unite rather than place in conflictual opposition the governments and peoples of the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, blacks, browns and whites, women and men, straights and gays, Catholics and Protestants, capitalists and communists.

<sup>1</sup> William Lynch, *Images of Hope* (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1965), p. 243. The role of imagination in ritual and a presentation of ritual as an art is explored in Patrick W. Collins, *More Than Meets the Eye* (New York: Paulist Press, 1983).

<sup>2</sup> Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Litteraria*, Chapter 13, cited in John Coulson, "Belief and Imagination," *Downside Review*, 90, 298 (January, 1972), 1-14.

Indeed, the imagination could be the cognitive locus for God's gift of peace being revealed and made present. Kierkegaard's remarks about imagination open up this possibility. He claims that imagination is what providence uses in order to get persons deeply into reality, into existence. It gets us far enough out and deep enough down so that we can experience reality more fully. He holds that in the imagination all our faculties are united into an "equilibrium" or "simultaneity."<sup>3</sup> Doesn't that somehow resemble the tranquility of right order which we commonly call peace?

If God's gift of peace is linked with the divine gift of faith, the imagination is surely involved in preparing the way for the receptivity of these gifts. As my fellow convert to Roman Catholicism, John Cardinal Newman, has said, faith begins not in the notion or the concept but in the image or symbol. He wrote: "For an assent to be rationally adequate it must first be credible to the imagination."<sup>4</sup> Imagination surely then must be at the heart of the task of making peacemakers.

To make peace, peacemakers must come to know a deeper level of moral awareness than is currently common among Americans and Catholics. And this awareness, too, is, to a great extent, dependent upon the active functioning of the human imaginative system. As Shelley has said, "A man to be greatly good must imagine intensively and comprehensively."<sup>5</sup> John Dewey also supports this connection between the imagination and moral awareness and goodness.

Imagination is the chief instrument of the good. It is more or less commonplace to say that a person's ideas and treatment of his fellows are dependent upon his power to put himself imaginatively in their place. But the primacy of the imagination extends far beyond the scope of direct personal relationships . . . the factors of every moral outlook and human loyalty are imaginative . . .<sup>6</sup>

The first intimations of wide and large redirections of desire and purpose are of necessity imaginative. Art is a mode of prediction not found in charts and statistics, and it insinuates possibilities of human relations not to be found in rule and precept, admonition and administration.<sup>7</sup>

Change in the climate of the imagination is the precursor of the changes that affect more than the details of life.<sup>8</sup>

Only imaginative vision elicits the possibilities that are interwoven with the texture of the actual. The first stirrings of dissatisfaction and the first intimations of a better future are always found in works of art . . .<sup>9</sup>

The imagination and the aesthetic expressions of the imagination, then, would seem to be significant factors in making peace and forming peacemakers. The rich ritual tradition of Roman Catholicism is the kind of imaginative, aesthetic expression which can contribute to the "stirrings of

<sup>3</sup> Soren Kierkegaard, *Journals*, p. 243, and *Concluding Scientific Postscript* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), p. 311.

<sup>4</sup> Coulson, *op. cit.*, 14.

<sup>5</sup> Cited in John Dewey, *Art as Experience*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 348.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 345-46.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 346.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 345-46.

dissatisfaction" and those "intimations of a better future" which transform persons into peacemakers.

Ritual, as a human expressive form, is an art. It is a constellation of enacted images, symbols and stories which point to and make present a meaning and a reality beyond themselves, such as a peace the world cannot give. These aesthetic expressions and experiences are patterns of repetitive behavior by an assembly which carry, communicate and create the largely incommunicable meaning and mystery of life, such as the kingdom which is in but not of this world.

In ritual, a performing audience reviews and re-presents that community's vision and values through symbolic activity born of that group's common experience, such as shared scriptures and sacraments. Such aesthetic ritual engages the imagination to know the presence of Mystery and the truth that is more than meets the eye.

As an art, ritual does not address discursive reason in a didactic fashion, calling for a rational assent to the truth explained. On the contrary, ritual art calls for imaginative participation in an exploration of truth as it continues to be revealed by the God who acts in and through such ritual behavior. In this sense, then, ritual's power does not lie directly in explaining, or teaching nor does it primarily present new information. Neither is the role of ritual to decorate or obfuscate the truth.

Ritual art does precisely what Jesus intended to do when he engaged people's imagination through the use of parables. This leads to a participation in the truth, a surrender to the truth that is Real Presence in Word, Sacrament and Assembly. Both parables and rituals evoke from their participants-perceivers what Newman termed a real assent as opposed to a notional assent. The former is transformative and can move persons toward being peacemakers. The latter may change ideas but possibly not persons. The latter may satisfy the needs of the classroom but never the room of the worshipping assembly.

An example may be useful. A man I know was, for many years, treated rather shabbily by his mother-in-law, or so he thought. One Sunday morning he was brooding over his encounters with this woman the previous evening. He went to church for Sunday Mass as was his custom, but he was distracted by his ill feelings throughout the Entrance Rite and most of the Liturgy of the Word. His body was in church but his mind, acting as imagination, was elsewhere, creating all sorts of situations in which he could tell his mother-in-law to get off his case.

During the reading of the Gospel, however, the images of the Scripture for that day began to work on his imagination as well. They were the images and symbols of the story of the prodigal son (Lk 15:11-32). He had heard this story enough to be familiar with its outcome. As he let the tale swim in his imaginative system, that story became his story. He became his story. He became the prodigal son.

Through the power of that story, his imagination was engaged to see himself in a new way. He knew, from this insight, that he could not live

with himself in truth unless he would attempt once again to bring about a reconciliation with his mother-in-law. And he went out and acted upon this disclosure of truth which was brought about by the imagination functioning as a knowing power, knowing personal, psychic, relational truth.

Such knowing through the imagination is not irrational cognition and, therefore false. It is not delusion. It is not a kind of knowledge against reason but rather a knowing that is beyond reason. What is disclosed to the imagination may be inconceivable but it is not self-contradictory. It is simply more than meets the eye of mind or sense. Yet it is indeed truth.

If ritual is to truly become a powerful instrument for peace—both as Christian task and channel for God's gift—it must be created, conceived, choreographed and celebrated as an art. Yet here lies a difficulty.

Liturgical renewal has initially rested solidly and primarily upon the foundations of scholarship. Theologians, exegetes, and historians pooled their expertise to produce our present purified ritual structures and texts. Despite some legitimate complaints from the pastoral quarter about some cluttered structures and unpoetic language, their scholarship has brought about considerable improvement in the church's worship.

However, worship is neither structure nor text. It is not in a book anymore than Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* is what is printed on the five lines and four spaces of a musical score. The text must be translated into an event, the score into sound. We must learn to do ritual more than read ritual recipes at one another. Making Christians—and peacemakers—calls for more than going through the ritual. It demands that the ritual go through us, changing us by the power of our cumulative, week-after-week celebrations. Ritual, therefore, requires not merely the expertise of scholars but also the imaginative and performative powers of ritual artists if it is to be transformed from the printed page into celebration of living assemblies.

The bishops of the United States will, in the months ahead, urge us to share their remarkable pastoral on peace with people everywhere. I submit that the pastoral will not obtain its full potential if it is merely taught. It must also be celebrated in rituals such as I have described. We must do more than talk about peace to make peacemakers. We must also engage persons and communities in aesthetic ritual experiences (liturgical and non-liturgical) which can grasp their imaginations with modes-of-being-in-the-world poignant with the power of peace rather than with the images of aggression, competition, power and control which so dominates the secular gospels preached in our violence-prone society.

Such a transformation toward peace can be forged in the crucible of the imagination through the experience of ritual as art. Such rituals will not give clear answers to the political, social and economic questions of justice and peace. They will, however, create an analogous experience to what it means to be just and build the peace. They create experiences of what it means to be just to oneself and to others and so to sow seed in the

spirit of peace. Such ritual experience, like all aesthetic experience, creates a world in which participants-perceivers can be free to have disclosed new worlds, new modes-of-being-in-the-world as projects for the personal and collective imagination.

An example may help to communicate my point. Among the various ecclesial celebrations of faith, the eucharist itself, as a ritual form of imagination, can open persons to the truth that is more than meets the eye, the truth of God's mystery which can transform persons. Let me share my imagination's experience of a eucharist which was celebrated in a small chapel in Tanzania, East Africa.

While visiting the Maryknoll Fathers' missions there in 1973, I concelebrated a eucharist in a small kegango or subparish with the parish priest and about thirty members of the Sukuma tribe. The church was a hut made of mud, straw and cow dung. The low grass roof touched my head as I stood at an old kitchen table which served as the altar of God. The people—many sick, all quite poor—gathered around, both on the dirt floor and on the few kindergarten-like wooden benches.

The Swahili language was used for the celebration. Since I was, as a concelebrant, to speak some portions of the Eucharistic Prayer alone, I had practiced for some hours in order to make the proper sounds that form the Swahili language. Fortunately this is a relatively easy language to pronounce, even though I did not know exactly what I was saying. I did learn what I was saying, however, in a flash of insight as I took the symbols of bread and wine into my hands that day. The direct understanding of words and concepts did not get in the way.

During the words of institution the eucharist symbol cracked open for me and deep dimensions of meaning swirled through my mind and heart. Lifting bread and wine for all to see and pronouncing the familiar consecratory words in a language I did not understand, I discovered, or had disclosed to my imagination, the fuller truth about bread and wine becoming body and blood.

As I looked across the bread into the faces of my black brothers and sisters and raised the cup of blessing before them, a question stirred in my mind: Why me? Why am I so well-fed, attractively clothed and extensively educated, while these folks eat so poorly, dress so simply and are, many of them, unable either to read or write? By what strange accident of birth was I conceived and born on the rich, fertile plains of Illinois when these people take their origin and eke out an existence in near desert condition? By what quirk of fate am I a citizen of the world's most powerful and prosperous nation and these are natives of weakness and poverty? Why me? Why me?

Through the power of my imagination, stimulated by bread and wine as symbolic forms of imagination, those ordinary things of the table dissolved and diffused for me, as Coleridge said, and a new vision of reality and truth was recreated. A change of mental mode allowed me to "see" these people and myself in a newly disclosed and holistic way. An

equilibrium came about in my center-spirit (or is it Center/Spirit?) And I became more profoundly engaged with reality than either eyes or mind could penetrate.

I knew that day that I could not authentically take bread and wine into my hands and say, "This is my body, this is my blood," unless I was also saying to these people celebrating with me, "This is my body, this is my blood, and it, too, is to be given up for you." I have been gifted to share, not to keep, and this we proclaim as the mystery of faith.

Imagination's engagement in ritual can crack open the truth of the symbols we celebrate and disclose more than meets the eye. It is my contention that the art of ritual can create the conditions of possibility for knowing with transformative feeling the powerful words of the apostle, James: "True justice is the harvest reaped by peacemakers from the seeds sown in a spirit of peace" (James 3:18).

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## RESISTANCE AND DEFENSE: MORAL AND STRATEGIC REFLECTIONS

### I. MORAL ISSUES

#### A. *The Christian Vision*

The Christian tradition has recognized and continues to emphasize the priority of peace-making and the development of structures and social realities that can insure the reality of peace in the world. Recent theological and ethical reflections, evidenced especially in the Bishops' Pastoral Letter, is bringing home to us again the fact that it is violence that needs justification, not peace-making. This tradition of peace-making has received preeminence in papal teaching since *Pacem in terris*, and has been growing and developing steadily since. The teaching has been somewhat negative insofar as much of it has been towards a critique of nuclear war. Yet there is also a very positive dimension to the teaching which encourages participating in the development of structures to bring about the reality of peace. This orientation has showed up most dramatically in various aspects of the peace movement and in the lives of various people, such as James Douglas, the Berrigans, Dorothy Day, and other individuals and movements that have taken the tradition of peace-making seriously and have tried to apply it to their daily lives as well as to political realities.

Such individuals and movements take seriously the traditional theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity by trying to put them into practice in their lives, recognizing that those officially defined as enemies are also our neighbors and we are united to them in charity. Many individuals live out of a spirit of hope in the promise of God to bring new out of old, joy out of sorrow; hope in the God who will wipe away all tears. There are people