



# *The Journal*



*October - December 2010*

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*The Kingdom of Heaven is like a landowner.  
He made an agreement with the workers and sent them into his vineyard.*

*Mt 20:1*



The Journal  
October - December 2010  
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The Journal welcomes submissions from small faith communities and individuals that share its vision of the Christian Church as one in which all are equal, decisions are made by consensus, healthy relationships are nurtured, justice is done, and the Good News of Jesus Christ is proclaimed.

All submissions to the Journal must be received by February 15, May 15, August 15, and November 15.

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See the back page for further details.

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*Behold I say to you "Lift up your eyes and see the fields because they are bright for harvest already, and whoever reaps receives a reward and gathers fruit."  
John 4:35-6*

# From The Archives: November - December 1990

*Excerpts by Chris Diamond, Cobble Hill, BC*



impersonal, and with a tendency to become preoccupied (God help us) with the abstract “good of the whole” and forget about real people... The dark side of anonymity is invisibility. The macro church focuses on the largeness of God. Its assembly liturgy, when it is done right, promotes growth in consciousness, prods our minds and hearts to think and feel larger than the here and now, this time, this space. It lets us know and experience that we belong, not just to the present, but to the past and to the future already unfolding. Good assembly liturgy lets me experience that my story might just fit into the larger story of Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mary... I can celebrate myself and who I am and what I do in the midst of the assembly where I experience that Christ is in me and I am in Christ, in the body, and in the holy people, where I can proclaim along with that holy people the greatness of God!

It is my conviction, however, that if married men and women are to be integrated into the presbyterial ministry, we need a better way of thinking about leadership in the church than we have had in the past.

*Tad Guzie*

Twenty years ago on the first weekend of November 1989, the second National Conference of Corpus Canada was held in Edmonton. The Principal Organizers were Jerry & Janet Moran; Jack & Shirley Kirley were the Sessions Moderators; the program was organized by Rosemarie & Bill Hague; Marge & Rick LaPlante looked after Registrations; Ron & Martha Dobbin arranged the Convention Facilities; Liturgies were planned by Keith & Louise Scissons; Bernie & Denise were the Financial Organizers.

Summary Excerpts from The Keynote speaker, Dr. Tad Guzie  
If we look back at the whole history of the Christian tradition, there has been no single consistent theology of the priesthood. This is not surprising because there have been many ecclesiologies in operation throughout the church's history...

The early church was a network of household churches that developed into macro and micro churches. The macro church was oriented towards organization and anonymity; the micro church was oriented towards intimacy and fellowship. The two forms of church are complimentary. Each needs the other.

The micro church without the macro would become inbred, focused on its own interests. It would lack a sense of breadth and largeness. The micro church liturgy focuses on the needs of the individuals who know each other well. Their liturgy fosters real and intimate prayer. It is the model of the Basic Christian Communities approved by Pope Paul VI in 1976. Micro churches exist all over the world today.

The macro church without the micro is likely to become sterile,



*Janet & Jerry Moran*



*Martha & Ron Dobbin*

# Catholic Church Without Priesthood?

by Emil Kutarna, Regina, SK



Pius Sieben with Anthony Padovano

Imagine the Catholic Church without priests? It is almost inconceivable. It would be a change so huge that we are sure it could never happen.

But it has happened! At least in part, in what history calls the Reformation. And before that it happened to the Jews. They lost their priesthood after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. History seems to be eerily repeating itself in the Catholic Church following Vatican Council II. The priesthood has been decimated as never before in history. Not only decimated, but radically changed. Priests are getting married without permission from Rome. Women are being ordained without permission from Rome. Lay people are celebrating Eucharist without permission from Rome.

Did anyone dream this could happen in our lifetime? I surely didn't. When we prepared the Mission Statement for Corpus Canada in 1989, we thought that to include the ordination of women was too radical. That is how far we were then from today's thinking! Prophetically, however, we did include women's ordination.

"This Council changed our lives at almost every level imaginable. If you or I are to be named or identified, it must be done in terms of the Second Vatican Council." Anthony Padovano made this statement at the FCM/CORPUS National Conference, Dallas Texas.

The photo above is Anthony Padovano as our Conference speaker for the Tenth Anniversary of Corpus Canada, held in Regina, Saskatchewan, 1999.

Anthony Padovano is a giant. He thinks BIG. His talk at the Dallas conference strides across hundreds of years of history in a few giant steps that leaves us breathless at the treasures he digs up. The following is a very brief taste of that presentation to whet your appetite. For the full course delicious meal go to the website [www.corpus.org](http://www.corpus.org). Click on "Corpus – a renewed community of faith" then scroll down to Anthony's talk.

## Padovano's talk – bits and pieces

Anthony Padovano wants us to appreciate the *magnitude* of Vatican II. He portrays the fallout of two epochal events: the *Destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem* and the *Reformation*. With that as background he then places the *Second Vatican Council* into that context to hit us with the stunning realization that it is "dèjà vu all over again!"

- The Jews lost the priesthood; there is no sacrifice; there is no High Priest; centralist structure is gone; the Hebrew Bible becomes central;

the people become more central over scribes and scholars.

- At the Reformation the priesthood is eliminated; there is no sacrifice – the Mass becomes a Communion Service; there is no Pope or High Priest; the New Testament becomes central and available in the vernacular to all people.

- The Catholic Church after Vatican II is changing more gradually, but in the same direction as Judaism and the Reformation. The priesthood is less necessary, laity are doing more ministry; the Eucharist is seen less as a sacrifice and more as a sacrament, a community celebration in memory of Christ. The Pope and Hierarchy have lost much credibility.

Anthony Padovano says that "Liturgy has been irreversibly interpreted" because *the liturgy is ours not theirs*. "Some reform Catholics do not hesitate to celebrate Eucharist without an ordained priest presiding".

Looking back I'm sure that many priests during Vatican II were excited, but I for one, did not realize what a huge paradigm shift was taking place. Many of us thought that a Latin tradition hundreds of years old giving way to the vernacular must mean that celibacy was next to go. How wrong we were! But Rome did grant dispensations like never before. Married priests, once considered a scandal, became acceptable when one quarter of the world's celibate priests married.

The Church is the "People of God" declared the Council, creating another major paradigm shift. This new concept took on reality when the laity began doing Liturgy of the Word, distributing communion at Mass and to the sick in their homes, receiving communion in the hand.

## The Pope

Padovano says "We have gone from a rigorous exegesis of Papal encyclicals in 1959 to a virtual neglect of them. Papal teaching was once more decisive than the New Testament or tradition. Indeed we now feel comfortable rejecting Papal encyclicals outright (*Humanae Vitae*)". John Paul II's teaching on women's ordination has backfired. "The vast majority of Catholics who agree women should be ordained has increased since that decree".

"In January, in Rome, for the 150th anniversary of the North American College, the most reactionary bishops and cardinals celebrated some of the major liturgies; everyone celebrated in English even though all of us knew Latin, faced the congregation, gave communion in the hand inclusively to all who came forward; the homilies and ceremonies were little different than what we would say or do at a CORPUS meeting".

WOW! Is all I can say. We've come a long way baby!

Surviving the Retrenchment and what the future holds for us and the Church is the final part of Anthony's talk.

He says that the major levers of power and decision-making (in the Church) have been seized by reactionaries. But hope lies in the fact that there are signs of a radically changed mentality everywhere:

"Today, there is a sense that no healthy person would choose to preside over, live and work, in such an unstable and unreal environment, The defence and promotion of this system now requires a pathological mentality and a corruption of the truth". Mighty strong words, indeed, Anthony!

## Without Priesthood Continued...

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### FOUR STRATEGIES FOR SURVIVAL

#### 1. Conscience:

John Henry Newman wrote: “[in a] collision with the word of a pope...[conscience] is to be followed in spite of that word.”

He called conscience the “Vicar of Christ” for each of us. And he famously toasted conscience first and the pope second. (I wonder if Benedict knew that when he visited Newman’s England this year?)

#### 2. Friendship

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), a singularly unemotional writer, wrote this:

“...without friends, even the most agreeable pursuits become tedious.”

And this:

“There is nothing on this earth more to be prized than true friendship”.

#### 3. Vision

Padovano says: “I do not want the institutional Church to be a teacher but a partner; not a total system, but an occasional source of insight.

It cannot give me Christ or the Spirit; I have them already.

#### 4. Witness

Here Anthony Padavano makes some bold statements for *bishops* to consider, such as:

No one listens; there are adversaries everywhere; sex abuse cases may have at least two more generations to go; everyone looks forward to your retirement or resignation.

As for *the rest of us*, his advice is “Let us be ourselves. We demonstrate that Vatican II was about people at large, the laity or baptized Christians; it was about community. This is our witness.”

Almost no one instinctively defines the institutional Catholic Church as a compassionate community; we seek to change that. This is our witness.

All of this is not about ourselves, but about a Christ whose life makes us breathless with wonder, and a God who has never let go of us, a God we believe who reaches out to everyone, a Spirit who makes us restless and sets us on fire, a fire that cannot be quenched because it is the fire of love itself, the fire that moves the sun and the cosmos and all the stars. This is our witness.

So be it. In the name of Christ.



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## What Do We “get out of” Going To Church On Sunday? by Hank Mattimore, San Jose, CA

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Having breakfast with a friend after Mass last Sunday, I was a little surprised to hear her say bluntly “That’s it for me. I’m not going to Church here anymore. The liturgy is same-o, same-o every week, the music is mediocre, the sermons mostly uninspired. I’m just not getting anything out of it anymore.”

When I asked her “Is that the point?...*what you get out of it*?” She replied, with a little edge to her voice, “Yes, it’s the point. If my soul is not getting nourished, why should I continue to go? If I sign up for a yoga class and find out that I’m not getting my money’s worth, I don’t continue to attend. If I find that the Spanish language class I enrolled in is not working out, I quit.” Makes perfect sense to me.

I have to acknowledge that there are Sunday Mass experiences that are pretty bad. On that particular Sunday we had a foreign-born priest we couldn’t understand, a screechy choir and a little baby who let it be known that he was not ready to be dragged into church. So, I did understand her frustration. And yet, and yet...

Isn’t Sunday Mass somehow different from attending a series of lectures or taking an art appreciation class? Isn’t what we *bring* to a church service, not what we take from it, the point? We show up at our parish church because we are part of a wider family of Catholics. I see it like that semi-obligatory Sunday visit to grandma’s house. It’s something we do because it seems like the right thing. Sometimes, we will experience a rush from the experience but more likely, any spiritual high we feel will

be a pleasant surprise. We’re not there to receive but to give. Isn’t that what the prayer of St. Francis is all about?

When we put our butts in the pews we make a statement that we want to be part of something much bigger than our own needs. We come to honor the God who created us out of love and continues to grace us with the divine presence. That’s what is important, not the fact that the choir is slightly off key or that the old guy in front of me is rattling his rosary beads and making my spiritual experience less meaningful.

That doesn’t mean our priest and parish staff gets off the hook if they are too lazy or lack the imagination to come up with a liturgy that is meaningful. We have a right to expect a well-prepared homily and a ceremony that will help us connect with our God and with one another. It doesn’t let ourselves off the hook either if we fail to participate in the liturgy to the extent we are able. If we’re bored with the same old lectors every Sunday or the same old geezers taking up the collection, maybe it’s time we step up and offer to help.

What I am trying to say, however inexpertly, is that the very fact that we are blessed with the opportunity of celebrating God’s presence in our midst at Sunday Mass transcends any personal good feeling or emotional rush we experience. Ultimately, it’s, dare I say it?, not about how we sing our hymns or when we genuflect but how we show our love and concern to the folks in Church with us and, by extension, our fellow human beings with whom we share our planet.

# Diamond River Books

is delighted to announce the publication of a collection of short stories, illustrations, paintings and poetry on the theme of farm life on the prairies.

## *In My Mother's Garden*

Connie Kurtenbach has crafted a masterful collection of beautifully illustrated short stories that capture farm life on the prairies during the 1940's.



The stories are told through the innocent, yet adventurous eyes of a young girl. The stories charm the reader with the nostalgia, simplicity and authenticity of childhood.

These are not children's stories, but a child's search for beauty and truth.

Connie Kurtenbach was raised in a large farm family in Saskatchewan. She was educated at Sion Academy in Saskatoon and spent twelve years in monastic life, teaching and studying. In 1967 Connie moved to a secular life in Toronto where she continued her teaching career. She moved to Vancouver Island with her husband, François Brassard, in 1986, and continued counselling and writing. She has been a Member of the Chemainus Writer's group since 2000. Connie has been involved in the arts all her life. Gardening, writing, painting, counselling and renaissance studies are part of her life on Vancouver Island. She has the unfailing support of her husband.

*In My Mother's Garden*, Adult fiction, \$16.95,  
ISBN # 978-0-9811376-9-8.



The book is listed in Book Manager, is available on Amazon, as well as from the distributor: [Diamond River Books](#), and directly from the Author: [ckfb@telus.net](mailto:ckfb@telus.net).  
Tel: 250-245-3365.

### Book Review by *Diana Koenning*

Connie Kurtenbach was at the Cudworth Library on Wednesday, September 22nd to launch her new book, *In My Mother's Garden*. It is a collection of stories, poems, pictures, and paintings making it an interesting and entertaining read. The child in the book stems from her own memories of the time when she was between the ages of seven and nine. Leo Kurtenbach, local Cudworth resident and also Connie's brother, spoke lovingly, with memories of Connie, and beamed with pride at his sister's accomplishment.

*In My Mother's Garden* is in fact a collaboration with Leo's daughter, Donna Kurtenbach who did the painting which was made into the book's cover. Donna also provided the 'Four Seasons' artwork inside. The 'Four Seasons' paintings were displayed at the book's launch. Each painting has its own unique beauty and a story behind it. Donna is a member of a group in Saskatoon where they display their artwork twice a year.

*In My Mother's Garden* is a self-published book, which means that the company prints however many copies that the author wishes to have but the author has to do the selling. Many authors take this route because the publishing business is very competitive. In this way, the author is in charge of how the book is marketed.

We wish Connie much success. Writing is a beautiful gift that she has been blessed with.

# Does God Exist?

by Tom Hassett, Victoria, BC



Does God exist - outside the minds of believers? This is a question that is frequently asked in our western world. Richard Dawkins, an Oxford University Professor of biology, published *The God Delusion* in which he simply dismisses our traditional proofs for the existence of

God. He says they are “easily exposed as vacuous” and he makes a mockery of any person who is foolish enough to accept them as reliable. It is time that we reviewed our reasons for saying that God exists. They involve our dependence on God for our existence at this moment.

In a line or series of dependence - as when a child depends on its parents for its beginning and early existence, who depended on grand-parents and ultimately, back to the first humans, then back to the first living cell and to the first matter, nearly 14 billion years ago, it should be understood that it is not the number of dependents in a series nor the total time of the series (whether they be limited or unlimited in number - finite or infinite) which makes each member in the series to become real - or to stay real. It is not just the beginning of our lives that depends on others. Our ongoing life from one moment to the next depends on a similar series of persons and things, such as the air we breathe, the food we eat, the warmth we receive from our surroundings. Each member of a series exists only because each one receives existence from preceding others. Every single member of the series, past or present, is a 'receiving giver' of reality for each is able to give only because it has first received.

If every single member of a series truly came from 'an other' or 'others', then the series, taken as a whole, would be a 'dependent giver'. It would need to receive existence from something outside the series of dependent givers, from 'an other', that is, from a completely “independent giver”. If there were nothing truly 'other' than the series of receiving givers, (if there were not an “independent giver”), then the series itself, with all its members, could never have been.

Without at least one thing in existence that is truly 'other' and, therefore, a non-receiving giver of reality, one which exists independently of, and prior to the various series of receiving givers - then no single member of the series, no mere dependent giver like ourselves, much less an infinite number of them, would ever be real.

To ask the self-contradictory question, “From what did the non-receiving, independent giver receive existence?” would simply betray the questioner's failure to accept the absolutely necessary existence of something that is a non-receiver: something truly 'other', completely independent of the things we experience. Perhaps it is because such a being is beyond our personal recognition and understanding that some try to make it a receiver like the rest of us.

Imagine a train of rail cars, each one of which can start moving only if the one ahead of it moves it. Even if the train of cars were infinitely long, it would still need an engine. G.K. Chesterton pointed out that even an infinitely long coat - would still need a hanger. Without an 'other' who is a pure giver, one that receives nothing prior to giving existence to the whole series of receiving givers which is our cosmos, nothing could have existed today or yesterday. From absolutely nothing comes absolutely nothing.

On page 5 of his book, *The Blind Watchmaker*, Mr. Dawkins explains the title: “Natural selection, the blind, unconscious, automatic process which Darwin discovered and which we now know is the explanation for the existence and apparently purposeful form of all life, has no purpose in mind. It has no mind and no mind's eye. It does not plan for the future. It has no vision, no foresight, no sight at all.”

On the other hand, Dawkins and Darwin certainly believe that the process that they call 'natural selection' is directed to a purpose. They claim it is directed at the improvement of every member of the entire biosphere. For this theory, Dawkins on p.163 of *The God Delusion*, even quotes Darwin:

“Unrelentingly and unceasingly” as Darwin explained, “natural selection is daily and hourly scrutinizing, throughout the world, every variation, even the slightest; rejecting that which is bad, preserving and adding up all that is good; silently and insensibly working, whenever and wherever opportunity offers, at the improvement of each organic being.”

For Darwin and Dawkins, natural selection, evolution's automatic driving force, is not working for mere survival but for development, for “improvement”. What is more, although natural selection “does not plan for the future” for it “has no vision,” it certainly does not act by chance. It acts on purpose. They believe that natural selection is daily and hourly working “at the improvement of each organic being.”

In fact, it is this natural process of evolution by natural selection which, over millions of years, has produced the human species from a combination of single celled living things and non living matter. Now, if atheists insist that this automatic process, being blind, is not self directed although it is clearly and constantly working towards a well defined goal and therefore is not acting by chance, why do they have such trouble admitting that this process is directed by a supreme, creative Intelligence? Do scientists have an alternate source of direction for this blind force? Must we have blind faith in these people that the cosmos is being created only by a blind but purposeful force for its improvement? So, beavers build dams, birds build nests, gastro-intestinal systems digest dead matter (food) to produce millions of living cells and wombs are nurturing single celled zygotes into fully developed children - without any intelligent direction? So, billions of arrows are everywhere pointed at targets (and usually hitting them) but no one is aiming them? Am I expected to believe that? Sorry, but I can't manage that. Perhaps I just don't have enough faith to be an atheist.

I think God exists; they think there is no God. It obviously takes far more faith to think like they do, than to think like I do.

# A Response To Tom Hassett's "Does God Exist?"

by Arthur Menu, Sidney, BC



I begin by saying that I do believe in the existence of God. I don't believe, however, that God's existence can be proven on the basis of universally accepted facts and standards of proof.

Any serious philosophical evaluation of the classical proofs for the existence of God has to take into account the Scottish philosopher David Hume's critique of the philosophical foundations upon which the proofs rest, as may be found in particular in his *Enquiries concerning Human Understanding* (1748) as well as the posthumously published *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion* (1779). I suggest that Journal readers acquaint themselves with Hume's thought.

Tom, in response to your first argument that there must be a self-existent giver of existence to the series of causes and effects that has resulted in the continuous existence of the universe, I would argue as follows.

The only universe that exists is the universe that exists now. The universe that existed a moment ago no longer exists and the universe that will exist a moment from now has not yet come into existence. Our ability to speak of a series of universes, each universe being caused by the previous one and itself causing the succeeding one, is based on our modeling the series as a line of points each of which is assigned a time which has a value greater than the time assigned to the previous point. However, this is a model. It exists in the human brain as a reproducible pattern that may be utilized in various processes of reasoning. In actual fact the series of universes, as something distinct from the model, does not exist. As the series of universes has no existence apart from the humanly created model referred to above, there are no grounds for inferring the existence of a self-existent cause for the series.

All this being said, I think that human beings have a psychological need for explanations of the way things are. Thus we have need for an explanation of why the universe has not dissolved into a random soup

of matter and energy. So the notion that the size of the universe and the distribution of matter and energy within the universe is determined purely by chance, is not one that most people are prepared to accept.

If the laws of probability are assumed to be logically necessary truths, I think it is possible to prove that something other than mere chance has shaped the universe. As I will be dealing with infinite sets, probability will be determined with respect to the empirical properties that define sets of objects.

The proof is based on the following premises: (1) the universe is finite in size; (2) space-time is quantized. The second premise needs some elucidation. What I mean is that (a) no object, be it matter or energy, can be smaller than a certain size, and increases or decreases in size must happen in instantaneous jumps, where each change in size is by a certain set amount, (b) when an object moves, it does so in a series of instantaneous jumps, from one place to another, and the jumps cannot be shorter than a certain set distance, and (c) time must pass between jumps, and the time cannot be shorter than a certain set time. From this it following that the number of objects in the universe is finite, and that if the universe changes from time T1 to time T2, and the changes take place in accordance with the laws of nature as we know them, then the number of those changes must be finite.

However, if the size of the universe and the distribution of matter and energy within the universe is a matter of chance, then the number of possible changes that would not be in accordance with the laws of nature as we know them is infinite. Yet we have observed that the changes of the universe have been in accordance with the laws of nature as we know them. That is to say, the changes the universe has undergone fall within a finite set of changes, while the set of possible changes allowed by chance is infinite. Therefore, the chance of the universe having changed in just the way that it has, is infinitesimal.

When something happens that has an infinitesimal chance of happening, the human mind seeks for a reason. Something other than chance must determine what exists. But what is that Cause? We don't know, and reason can take us no further. We have to say that if we are to know anything of this mysterious Cause, it must reveal itself to us.

It cannot be proven that the Cause has revealed itself to us. But let us suppose that it has.

Many philosophies and religions have claimed to have received this revelation. But which is the true revelation? Once again, we have to say that the Cause itself would have to act upon the minds of people to bring them to accept the true revelation. But none of those who are led to the truth in this way will be able to demonstrate by rational means that their revelation is true (or truer) than the others.

There are those who would say, look at the love and goodness and beauty in the world, surely the Cause must itself be loving, good and beautiful! But there are others who would say, look at the hate, evil and ugliness in the world, the Cause can not be loving, good and beautiful! To which of these groups has the Cause revealed itself? It cannot be proven either way. If your faith, either way, makes you happy, you may as well stick with it.

## Response Continued...

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Tom, to your argument that evolution (Darwinian natural selection) operates with the purpose of improving the organisms that populate our planet, I respond that evolution only improves organisms if you define "improvement" to mean "more adapted to the environment." Thus far evolution has produced successively more complex organisms that have ranges of capability that exceed the ranges of earlier evolved organisms. This is a result of the kinds of environments that have prevailed since earth became capable of supporting life. Should the environment change so that more complex organisms are disadvantaged, evolution will produce less complex organisms. For example, at some point in the distant future our sun will begin to expand. Earth will become hotter and complex organisms such as chimpanzees will die out. Heat tolerant bacteria will survive. Humans, should our species have lasted this long, may use technology to create underground sanctuaries kept to a livable temperature, but eventually the sun will expand to the point that no

human-made sanctuaries can survive, and humans will become extinct.

Even if one supposes that humans achieve interstellar travel, eventually the universe will run out of all possible sources of energy, resulting in the extinction of all life. So the end result of evolution will be anything but improvement as this is ordinarily understood.

When all is said and done, a Christian has to ask, does God want God's existence to be provable? By provable I mean a proof that no rational person could deny. If God wanted God's existence to be undeniable in this way, God simply could appear in a visible manifestation and prove God's existence by a public demonstration of divine power. That God has not done so argues that God wants God's existence to be a matter of faith, not something that can be logically

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## Report From Goa

by Dan Driscoll, Goa, India

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**“Y**ou are old, Father William, “the young man said,  
“And your hair has become very white;  
And yet you incessantly stand on your head-  
Do you think, at your age, it is right?”  
“In my youth,” Father William replied to his son,  
“I feared it might injure the brain;  
But, now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,  
Why, I do it again and again.”  
*Lewis Carroll (1832-1898)*

**M**y friend is intrigued about my riding the piloted bikes at age 80+, even inviting me to write on [tambdimati.com](http://tambdimati.com) about it, and offering to record it with his trusty camera. What can I say?

Well, the first reason for it is that “I can”. Mother Nature has been kind to me; no unsteadiness or stiffness of the joints, as yet; and meds (Metaformin) control senior-onset DB.

But I might add, another reason is a kind of cowardice.

My driving record was not enviable even in my earlier Canadian years-minimal side-vision and poor night- vision, coupled with the fact that my mind was usually on things quite other than driving.

Conditioned to 'left hand drive', I could never face up to the Indian traffic protocol-right hand steering, on left hand side of the road. But a couple of other things I might mention: I think that it makes economic and ecological sense for people like me to be hauled around instead of owning a vehicle.

I'm led to believe that it is only in Goa that there is to be found the yellow- colored motorbikes, and this strikes me as strange. It provides a living for a lot of guys; (no girls so far, but why not?); why cannot one take a bike in Mumbai or Delhi? They get you there faster, and are a godsend in the inevitable traffic snarl.

Same principle holds, up to a point, with the taxis.

I'm happy riding in a Maruti 800, so long as I'm driven; if I was to have gone in for my own car, it would probably be a Honda Civic or bigger.

With the traffic and parking situation in our locale as it is, and perhaps a hundred cars registered in the State on any given day, what's to become of us?

Most of the taxi wallahs now have cell phone, so I can have what amounts to my own driver, without his having to wait on the stair or verandah to see whether 'boss' has someplace to go.

Besides, he has a home to maintain, and probably kids going to school-so half a dozen trips a week with me (with a little something as gratuity) helps him (and me) sleep better at night.



# Is Christian Eschatology Christian?

by Dr. Michael Zarb, Duncan, BC



My answer to the question in the title is "No! it is Jewish." Eschatology involves several concepts basic to Christian doctrine, namely:

The "parousia" of the Son of Man;  
The cataclysmic events of the eschaton;  
The kingdom;  
The resurrection;  
The afterlife.

Most Christians think that these tenets are revelations of Christ or his apostles. The fact is that these concepts were

already current among certain Jewish groups in the centuries around the turn of the era before and during the writing of the New Testament (NT). Although some aspects of these concepts are found in a very basic way in some Old Testament (OT) writings, most are found variously expressed in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha.

A principal source for these concepts is the writing known as 1 Enoch, a composite of writings by authors from different periods and persuasions but all having Enoch as the protagonist of the revelations. The main sections or books comprising this work are the Book of the Watchers, chs. 6-36 (c. 170 BC); Book of Parables or Similitudes, chs. 37-71 (late 1st c. BC -- early 1st c. AD); Book of the Heavenly Lights, chs. 72-82 (c. 110 BC); Book of Dream Visions, chs. 83-90 (c. 150 BC); and Epistle of Enoch, chs. 91-104 (c.100 BC). The book of Parables is the closest to the New Testament and for some time it was highly debated whether or not it was a Christian composition, especially since no fragments of it were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. However, today among the Enoch specialists, none are found to hold that view. The lack of fragments at Qumran is not a valid argument that the possessors of the scrolls, whether they were the group at Qumran or at the library of the temple, did not have 1 Enoch, as much as it is illogical to argue that these groups did not celebrate the feast of Purim since no fragments of Esther were found! Therefore, I shall cite material mostly from 1 Enoch to illustrate the Jewish parallels with the NT.

Zech 13.3 (If one prophesies, his parents should kill him.) indicates that some groups rejected the prophetic element; other groups, however, fostered prophetism in a more vigorous form through apocalyptic as evidenced by the numerous writings of that genre. As shown by the NT, the early Christians were greatly influenced by the Jewish apocalyptic movements prevalent at the time. Some were possibly even members of the Jewish apocalyptic groups, bringing with them their baggage into the Messianic movement. That Christian communities were eschatological or apocalyptic communities is indicated by the Book of Revelation

and the various apocalypses in the Gospels -- Mk 13 -- and Paul. It was not original with them but was inherited from Jewish apocalypticism, especially as expressed in the books of Enoch. It is non-biblical i.e. non-OT. The author of Jude seems to have considered 1 Enoch authoritative since he quotes from it. (i.e. Jude 14f. from 1En 1.9)

## 1. The figure of the Son of Man.

The title Son of Man (SoM) is found in the Gospels only on the lips of Jesus, and outside the Gospels only in Acts 7.56; Rev. 1.13; 14.14; there are passages referring to SoM on earth and others referring to a future SoM. Did Jesus use the title SoM of himself? - possibilities are 1) he used it in imitation of its use in Ezekiel - God addresses Ezekiel 'ben adam' when he orders him to prophesy; Jesus may have adopted that term as a prophet. 2) Jesus may have been an Enochian Jew and presumed that he himself was the Enochian supernatural figure, thus he used the title for himself. 3) Since the gospels are the work of the evangelists, it is highly probable that they applied that title to him in order to present him as the supernatural figure in Enochian apocalyptic in the same way that they presented Jesus on the pattern of diverse other mediator figures -- Moses, Elijah, Elisha, Melchizedek, Adam etc.

The figure of the Messiah in the OT, though never titled Messiah, is presented as the victorious saviour king of Israel. In extrabiblical literature he acquires other characteristics and is sometimes called Messiah. I shall use the term for this figure. In 1 Enoch there are different conceptions: In Visions [83-90] he is represented as the head of the righteous community out of which he proceeds though he has no special role to fulfil. But in the Parables (37-71) the case is very different. Four titles applied to the personal Messiah for the first time in literature are afterwards reproduced in the NT -- 'the Christ'; 'the Righteous One'; 'the Elect/Chosen One'; and 'the Son of Man'. Christ, 'The Anointed One', in 48.10 and 52.4, is for the first time associated with the Messiah figure;

'The Righteous One' which occurs in Acts 3.14; 7.52; 22.14; 1Jn 2.1 first appears in 1 Enoch 38.2; 53.6;

'The Chosen One' likewise appears first in 1 En 40.5; 45.3-4; 49.2, 4; 51.3, 5a, &c. and passes over into the NT in Lk 9.35; 23.35.

'The Son of Man' as a title is found first in the Parables.

Undoubtedly, the source, both for Enoch and the NT, is Daniel 7.13 where the phrase "like a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven" means like a human being in contrast with the other four figures which are in the likenesses of beasts. It is clear from the interpretation given in vv.17f, that they represent the kings hostile to Israel while the human figure is a symbol of Israel, 'the holy ones of the Most High'. It is Enoch however, that develops the suggestive phrase in Daniel into a definite and distinctive title for an individual figure which the NT applies to Jesus.

Jesus in Mark 14.62, answering the high priest, says: "I am; and you will see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." In this context this title is equivalent to "Messiah" and "Son of the Blessed" in the high priest's question, and thus it provides him with evidence to condemn Jesus. Daniel does not have the 'seating'; this comes from Enoch who presents the SoM or the Chosen One seated on the throne e.g. "For that Son of Man has appeared, and has sat on the Throne of His

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Glory” (1En 69.29); “*On that day the Chosen One will sit on the Throne of Glory.*” (1En 45.3)

Further, in Daniel the SoM is not associated with judging, but Matthew presents Jesus under the title of the SoM as the final judge (cf. the judgment scenes in Mt 25.31-46; 16.27). Enoch as well has the SoM as the Judge: “*And he sat on the Throne of his Glory and the whole judgment was given to the Son of Man*” (1En 69.27); “*You powerful kings who dwell upon the dry ground will be obliged to watch my Chosen One sit down on the throne of My Glory, and judge...*” (1En 55.4); “*And the Lord of Spirits set the Chosen One on the throne of his glory, and he will judge...*” (1En 61.8); “*And he will judge the things that are secret*” (1En 49.4). Pertinent here is Jn 5.27, “*he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.*” This does not mean just “... because he is a human being”; therefore, “Son of man” was known as some special figure to the readers; they knew whom he was talking about, namely the figure of 1 Enoch or similar; otherwise, it does not make sense. The author is identifying Jesus with some figure known by this title.

## 2. The kingdom

In The Watchers, 1 Enoch presents a picture of the kingdom of the prophetic type found in the OT (Dan 7.14). The Kingdom of God was to be established on the earth as it is, but cleansed of all iniquity, with Jerusalem as its centre; the righteous were to live patriarchal lives and have a thousand children each. (1En 10.16-22)

In the Epistle, a new heaven is created (1En 91.16) and the righteous are like the angels. (1En 104.4,6) Thus we can understand better the story narrated in Mk 12.18-27 and parallels where the Sadducees expect the hypothetical wife of seven brothers to be married to one or all of them. They are arguing from the perspective of the Watchers while Jesus answers from the perspective of the Epistle.

In the Parables, heaven will be transformed into “an Eternal Blessing and Light” and as to the earth, “*I will transform the dry ground and make it a blessing, and I will cause my chosen ones to dwell upon it...*” (1En 45.4,5)

In the Testament of the 12 Patriarchs, the kingdom is in Eden/Paradise on earth. People live a sinless life there: “*In his priesthood (the eschatological new priest from Levi) sin shall come to an end, And the lawless shall cease to do evil.*” (T. Levi 18.9) They enter Eden and eat of the Tree of Life: “*And he shall open the gates of Paradise; And shall remove the threatening sword against Adam; And he shall give to the saints to eat from the Tree of Life; And the spirit of holiness shall be on them.*” (T. Levi 18.10f) They dwell in the New Jerusalem: “*And the saints shall rest in Eden, and in the New Jerusalem the righteous shall rejoice.*” (T. Dan 5.12)

In the NT, the kingdom is referred to both as present and as future. In a way it is a combination of the two main views in the Jewish writings, on earth and in heaven. There are passages indicating that the kingdom of God is already present either as starting: “*The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground ...*” (Mk 4.26) or it is already active in the actions of Jesus: “*But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you.*” (Mt 12.28). On the other hand, it is also envisaged as an event in the future, even the imminent future: “*there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with power.*” (Mk 9.1) and “*I will never*

*again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.*” (Mk 14.25) The nature of the kingdom is expressed as life. (See Afterlife below.)

## 3. Cataclysmic events of the end

The apocalyptic passages in the NT echo the same concepts prevalent among the contemporaneous Jewish apocalyptic writings. The end will be accompanied by wars, earthquakes, famines, and disturbances in the heavenly bodies:

“*When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs.*” (Mk 13.7f)

“*But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.*” (Mk 13.24f)

“*When he opened the sixth seal, I looked and there came a great earthquake; the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree drops its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. The sky vanished like a scroll rolling itself up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.*” (Rev 6.12-14)

According to Jewish Apocalyptic, woes and tribulations of all kinds were to precede the advent of the Messiah or of the kingdom: “*and there is no peace: For calamity follows on calamity, and wound on wound, and tribulation on tribulation, and evil tidings on evil tidings, and illness on illness, and all evil judgments such as these, one with another, illness and overthrow, and snow and frost and ice, and fever, and chills, and torpor, and famine, and death, and sword, and captivity, and all kinds of calamities and pains.*” (Jubilees 23.13f)

“*And it shall come to pass in those days that all the inhabitants of the earth shall be moved one against another because they know not that My judgment has drawn nigh.*” (2 Baruch 48.32) “*At that time friends shall make war on friends like enemies; the earth and those who inhabit it shall be terrified...*” (4 Ezra 6.24)

“*And in the sixth part, earthquakes and terrors.*” (2 Bar 27.7) “*And it shall come to pass that whoever gets safe out of the war shall die in the earthquake, and whoever gets safe out of the earthquake shall be burned by the fire, and whoever gets safe out of the fire shall be destroyed by famine.*” (2 Bar 70.8) “*Then you will know that it is the very time when the Most High is about to visit the world that he has made. So when there shall appear in the world earthquakes, tumult of peoples, intrigues of nations, wavering of leaders, confusion of princes...*” (4 Ezra 9.2f)

“*You have committed blasphemy, and iniquity, and are ready for the days of the outpouring of blood, and for the day of darkness, and for the day of the Great Judgment.*” (1 En 94.9)

## 4. Resurrection

In the OT, all biblical personalities die and go to Sheol, except Enoch (Gen. 5.21– 24) and Elijah (2 Kgs. 2.11). We do not find the doctrine of life after death or of resurrection except for some late texts in the 2nd century BC, e.g. in Daniel, the latest writing. They believed in an existence of some type in Sheol, irrespective

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of whether good or bad as the story of Saul consulting the dead Samuel illustrates (1Sam. 28.8-25), but quite often it is typically portrayed in terrifying terms: a monster that devours all people and is never satisfied (Is. 5.14, Prov. 27.20); a place of maggots and decay (Job 17.13-16). There is no awareness among the inhabitants of Sheol (Job 14.21-22), nor do they have a relationship with God. (Ps. 88.4-5, 11-13)

Some passages either affirm or approach the idea of resurrection: Daniel, in a context of persecution encourages the faithful: *"Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."* (Dan. 12.2) To the just he says: *"But you, go your way, and rest; you shall rise for your reward at the end of the days."* (Dan 12.13)

The Isaiah Apocalypse (Is 24-27), written at the time of Daniel or a little bit earlier in the 2nd c. BC, says regarding the pious, *"... he will swallow up death forever. Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth,"* (Is. 25:8) and again, *"Your dead shall live, their corpses shall rise. O dwellers in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For your dew is a radiant dew, and the earth will give birth to those long dead."* (Is. 26:19) However, these last two passages, besides being considered in support of resurrection, are often seen as metaphorical for national revival just like Ezekiel's bones scene. (Ez. 37)

From the 2nd century BC to the 1st century AD, the issue of theodicy took a different turn. The old idea that suffering was punishment for sin was no longer satisfactory. People started to question, why be faithful to God if it leads to martyrdom and if there is no reward after death? Why do the evildoers prosper if God does not exact retribution after their death? The Inter-Testamental literature tried to give some answers to these questions. Different writings supply different views.

In The Watchers, the bad are not resurrected but transferred from Sheol to a valley; the good are raised with the body onto a fertile earth.

Jubilees has no resurrection but the spirits of the good enter blessed immortality: *"And their bones shall rest in the earth, and their spirits shall have much joy, and they shall know that it is the Lord who executes judgment, and shows mercy to hundreds and thousands and to all that love Him."* (Jub. 23.31)

In The Dream Visions under the metaphor of animals, the good return to God's house: *"And all those which had been destroyed and scattered, and all the wild animals, and all the birds of the sky gathered together in that house, and the Lord of the sheep rejoiced very much because they were all good, and had returned to His house."* (1En 90.33)

2 Maccabees has a resurrection of body and soul for the faithful but not for the wicked. Some brothers who speak during their martyrdom refer to resurrection. The second brother says: *"You accursed wretch, you dismiss us from this present life, but the King of the universe will raise us up to an everlasting renewal of life, because we have died for his laws."* (7.9) The third brother says: *"I got these (his tongue and hands) from Heaven, and because of his laws I disdain them, and from him I hope to get them back again."* (7.11) The fourth brother tells the persecutor: *"One cannot but choose to die at the hands of mortals and to cherish the hope God gives of being*

*raised again by him. But for you there will be no resurrection to life!"* (7.14) And the mother says: *"Therefore the Creator of the world, ... will in his mercy give life and breath back to you again since you now forget yourselves for the sake of his laws."* (7.23)

In The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, resurrection is to a renewed life on the present earth. (See above in Kingdom.) *"And they who have died in grief shall arise (in joy); And they who were poor for the Lord's sake shall be made rich; And they who are put to death for the Lord's sake shall awake (to life)."* (T. Judah 25.4) [Note: words in brackets are variants.] In T. Benjamin, resurrection is universalized: first the resurrection of the OT heroes; then the twelve sons over their tribes; then all people good and bad: *"then shall you see Enoch, Noah, and Shem, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, rising on the right hand in gladness. Then shall we also rise, each over our own tribe, and we shall worship the heavenly King. Then also all men shall rise, some unto glory and some unto shame."* (T. Ben 10.6-8)

In the 1st century BC a similar universalization of the doctrine is found among the Dead Sea Scrolls in a text known as the Messiah Apocalypse (4Q521 ca. 100-80 BC): v.7 *"For he will honour the pious upon the throne of an eternal kingdom";* v.8 *"freeing prisoners, giving sight to the blind, straightening out the twis[ted.]"* ... v.11 *"And the Lord will perform marvellous acts such as have not existed, just as he sa[id,]"*; v.12 *"[for] he will heal the badly wounded and will make the dead live; he will proclaim good news to the poor";* and v.13 This passage is close to Is. 61.1, but Isaiah does not have the raising of the dead. When in the NT use is made of Is. 61.1, that is in Luke 4.18, since Jesus reads from Isaiah, the passage does not have the revival of the dead, but at Lk 7.22 in Jesus' answer to John the Baptist's disciples, the raising of the dead is included; so also at Mt 11.5 which renders the saying more similarly to 4Q521.

In The Epistle of Enoch, the good are raised in spirit: *"And the righteous will rise from sleep, and wisdom will rise, and will be given to them."* (1En 91:10); *"And the righteous man will rise from sleep, will rise and will walk in the path of righteousness, and all his paths, and his journeys, will be in eternal goodness and mercy. He will show mercy to the righteous man and to him give eternal uprightness, and to him give power. And he will live in goodness, and righteousness, and will walk in eternal light."* (1En 92.3, 4; cf. also 103.3,4)

In the Parables of Enoch, at the end the earth, Sheol and Destruction will "return that which has been entrusted to them," that is everyone, both good and bad, but The Elect One will choose the righteous. (1 En 51.1-2; cf. Rev 20.13) The righteous gain a spiritual kingdom in which they are clothed with a spiritual body described as the 'garment of life' and 'garment of glory': v.13 *"And the righteous and the chosen will be saved on that Day and from then on, they will never see the faces of the sinners and the lawless ."*

v.14 *"And the Lord of Spirits will remain over them and with that Son of Man they will dwell, and eat, and lie down, and rise up, forever and ever."*

v.15 *"And the righteous and chosen will have risen from the earth, and will have ceased to cast down their faces, and will have put on*

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the *Garment of Life* [variant: *glory*].

v.16 "And this will be a *Garment of Life* from the Lord of Spirits; and your garments will not wear out, and your glory will not fail, in front of the Lord of Spirits." (1En 62.13-16)

Verse 14 echoes the idea in Jesus' saying at the last supper about drinking and eating in the Kingdom (Mk 14.25, Mt 26.29, Lk 22.18, and 30, "that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom")

In the 1st century AD, contemporaneous with the NT writers 4 Ezra says: "The earth shall give up those who are asleep in it, and the dust those who rest there in silence; and the chambers shall give up the souls that have been committed to them." (4 Ezra 7.32)

The Sybilline Oracles: "But when all is turned to dust and ashes, and God who kindled it shall put to sleep the mighty fire, God Himself shall clothe the bones and ashes again in human shape, and re-make men as they were before." (Syb Or 4.180)

Josephus tells us what the Pharisees believe: "They also believe that souls have an immortal rigour in them, and that under the earth there will be rewards or punishments, according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life; and the latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison, but that the former shall have power to revive and live again." (Ant.18.1.3) He also comments on the Essenes' belief - "For their doctrine is this: That bodies are corruptible, and that the matter they are made of is not permanent; but that the souls are immortal, and continue for ever; and that they come out of the most subtile air, and are united to their bodies as to prisons, into which they are drawn by a certain natural enticement; but that when they are set free from the bonds of the flesh, they then, as released from a long bondage, rejoice and mount upward." (War 2.8.11) His own view is expressed in a speech against committing suicide, "The bodies of all men are indeed mortal, and are created out of corruptible matter; but the soul is ever immortal, and is a portion of the divinity that inhabits our bodies. ... that their souls (i.e. those who do not offend God by suicide) are pure and obedient, and obtain a most holy place in heaven from whence, in the revolutions of ages, they are again sent into pure bodies." (War 3.8.5) Is this a hint of reincarnation?

In the New Testament, in the majority of passages, (except Acts 24.15 and Jn 5.28, 29, both just and unjust) resurrection is attained by the righteous,

The synoptics (Mk 12.25-27; Mt 22.30-32; Lk 20.35-38) treat the issue of resurrection in Jesus' controversy with the Sadducees where he reminds them that God is God of the patriarchs who are alive, and this is presented more explicitly in Luke v. 38, "for to him all of them are alive"; he is God "of the living." Luke further mentions the "resurrection of the righteous" in 14.14.

In John, there are three layers of thought:

1) Those who believe in Christ never die spiritually; they have eternal life starting in this life: "whoever keeps my word will never see death." (8.51) i.e. spiritual death;

"Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." (11.25f, cf. also 5.24) 2)

"Those who believe in Christ will have eternal life and will be raised on the last day." (6.40)

3) Resurrection is for all, both those who do good and those who do evil (5.28, 29) - this is clearly from a different redactor, vv. 26-30 are a duplicate of vv.19-25 with different views that conflict with the rest of John.

The idea of the resurrection in Paul is mainly presented in 1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians.

In 1 Thess. the righteous dead rise first (4.16) and then those who are alive at the time do not die but are "caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord" (v.17); according to 3.13 they accompany Christ at the Parousia -- if "saints" [*hagioi*] means the faithful and not angels (See 4.14 "God will bring with him those who have died."); the wicked are not mentioned.

In 1 Corinthians (6.14; 15.12-16, 20, 22), the resurrection of people is closely connected with that of Christ: "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised" (v.13,16); in vv.21-29 Paul argues on the analogy of Adam: "for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ." (v.22). (See further Rom 6.4; 8.11) He also deals with the nature of the resurrected body in 1 Cor 15.35-55, on the analogy of the seed and the plant; God gives the seed a body, so also God provides a spiritual, imperishable and immortal body that bears the image of Christ. Then in 2 Cor 5.1-7 in mixed metaphors, Paul compares the earthly tent and clothing with the house in heaven and being clothed with life which echoes 1En 62.15f.

Philippians reiterates that the resurrected body will be similar to Christ's, "He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory." (Phil 3.21)

In the Deutero-paulines, the idea of a resurrection is applied to the time of becoming Christian. Thus in Colossians, resurrection is brought forward to the time of baptism: "when you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God" (Col 2.12, 13; Eph 2.4-6; 5.14) so that the Christian is already dead and living in Christ and at the end he will be revealed with Christ in glory: "for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory." (Col 3.3,4); this approaches one of the Johannine views, namely that believers already have life.

### 5. Afterlife - reward of the righteous

According to the Watchers, the good will enjoy prosperity on a very fertile earth; they will eat of the Tree of Life and live a long life as the Patriarchs: "From its fruit, life will be given to the chosen ... and they will live a long life on earth, as your fathers lived. And in their days sorrow and pain, and toil and punishment, will not touch them." (1En 25.5,6) They will have a thousand children each (1En 10.17) and the plants and trees will produce thousand-fold (1En 10.18,19)

In Jubilees, the good live to a thousand years after the calamities (Jub 23.27ff); after they die, "their bones shall rest in the earth, and their spirits shall have much joy" (Jub 23.31) but it does not say where the spirits stay.

The Epistle of Enoch presents the righteous as raised in spirit only (1En 91.10; 92.3; 103.3,4); a new heaven will be opened to them (104.2); they are guarded by angels, "like the apple of an eye" (1En 100.5); they will "shine like the Lights of Heaven" (104.2) and

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they will have “great joy like the Angels of Heaven.” (104.4)

In the Parables, the righteous will be the community of the Elect One (1En 53.6; 62.8); they will be clothed with garments of life and glory (62.15f), they shine “like the light of fire” (39.7); they will “become angels in heaven” (51.4); they will have their dwelling with the angels (39.5); the “dwelling places of the righteous” (39.4) echoes John 14.2, “In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places.”

In 4 Maccabees (before 70 AD), the righteous, after death are received by the Patriarchs (4Macc 13.16; 5.37) which is close to the parable of Lazarus in Luke (16.19ff.) where Lazarus is with Abraham. However, the afterlife is also described as eternal life (4Macc 15.3) and being with God (9.8)

According to 4 Ezra (c. 100 AD), salvation is for the few: “Many have been created, but only a few shall be saved” (4Ezra 8.1-3; Compare Mt 7.14) The spirit of the righteous “returns again to him who gave it.” (7.78) This writing also mentions “chambers” where the good are gathered and guarded by the angels. (7.95; cf. Jn 14.2) They see the face of God: “for they press forward to see the face of him whom they served in life and from whom they are to receive their reward when glorified.” (7.98)

In the NT, the reward in the afterlife is mainly described as “eternal life”. In the Synoptics, the term is used both by Jesus and others e.g. in Mk 10.17 Jesus is asked by someone regarding eternal life (cf. also Lk 10.25, a lawyer asks; in Lk 18.18 a ruler). Some passages affirm that the reward consists also of prosperity in this life e.g. “receive a hundredfold now in this age ... and in the age to come eternal life.” (Mk 10.30; Mt 19.29)

In John, eternal life is closely linked with belief in Jesus: “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever disobeys the Son will not see life, but must endure God’s wrath.” (Jn 3.15f, 36) It is also connected with the metaphors of water (Jn 4.14) and food (Jn 6.27,54) which mean the teaching of Jesus. (cf. 6.68; 12.50)

Paul also uses the term in Rom 2.6; 6.22f; Gal 6.8; and other writers as well: 1 Tim 6.12; Tit 1.2; Jude 21; and especially 1 John 2.25; 3.15; 5.11 etc.

The nature of life after death is some times expressed with other terms:

the righteous will be in the presence of God and Christ: “with the Lord” (1Thess 4.17); they will see the face of God: “face to face” (1Cor 13.12); they will “see the lord” (Heb 12.14); “they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.” (Rev 22.4); “when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is.” (1Jn 3.2)

They will be glorified: they have “glory and honor and peace” (Rom 2.10); they obtain “the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thess 2.14); they “will win the crown of glory that never fades away” (1 Pet 5.4); they are called to Christ’s “eternal glory” (1 Pet 5.10).

They will eat of the Tree of Life: “To everyone who conquers, I will give permission to eat from the Tree of Life that is in the Paradise of God.” (Rev 2.7; cf. 22.2,14,19; 1En 25.1-5).

They will sit on the throne with Jesus: “To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.” (Rev 3.21; cf. 1En 108.12 “I will set each one on the throne of his honour.”

Their “citizenship will be in heaven” (Phil 3.20); they live in a heavenly country (Heb 11.16) and a city prepared by God (Heb 13.14). They live in a “new Jerusalem” (Rev 21.2, 10; cf. T. Levi 18.11) which has no temple “for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb.” (Rev 21.22,23); “And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.” (Rev 22.4,5)

Metaphorically, “the righteous will shine like the sun” (Mt 13.43; cf. 1En 104.2; 108.13, 14).

Similar to 1 Enoch (1En 45.4,5; 72.1; 91.16), two authors mention the creation of a new heaven and a new earth: “we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.” (2 Pet 3.12; Rev 21.1)



*Chris Diamond, Cobble Hill, BC*

**F**ifteen years ago at the Corpus Canada (CC) National General Meeting in Victoria, BC, the decision was made to add the ministry of developing small faith communities to its aims. Since then it has become an important work of CC members all over Canada. CC members belong to and support many small faith communities. It is a facet that is seldom reported on. CC members draw their encouragement from these groups. Arthur Menu tells some of the history of the relationship between CC and the Xristos Community Society. Here The Journal will feature a few of the many small faith communities that exist all over Canada and elsewhere. I have been part of a small faith community since I read John XXIII's “Pacem in Terris” and then took leave from my Oblate community in 1965. For 30 years, I have been part of the Basic Christian Community (BCC) movement on Vancouver Island with its more than 50 small groups. The BCC organization still coordinates many groups here. I have written in The Journal about a few in the Duncan area and have visited and rejoiced with others up and down the Island and the surrounding Islands. They have nourished my faith in the catholicity of faithful catholics.

# Xristos Community Society Support For Small Faith Communities

by Arthur Menu, Sidney, BC



**H**ere I describe how Xristos Community Society supports small faith communities and those who provide pastoral leadership in those communities.

## **Historical Background**

In the mid 1990s I and other members of Corpus Canada

became aware of two needs. The first need was to establish reliable funding for the Corpus Canada newsletter. The newsletter, founded by Emil Kutarna, and largely funded by him initially, was being funded by the membership dues of Corpus Canada members. This was not always adequate and special appeals for donations had to be made. The second need was to support Corpus members and others to find more spiritual nourishment than was provided by the institutional Roman Catholic Church. It seemed to me that both needs could be met by establishing a charitable religious organization that would take on funding the newsletter and would promote and support small faith communities that would provide the spiritual nourishment that the institutional Church was not providing. People would have an incentive to make donations to the organization because donations would be tax deductible. I proposed the establishment of such an organization to our local Corpus group and received the go-ahead. With the assistance of some of our members I took steps to incorporate Xristos Community Society as a society in BC in 1997, after which I applied, as president of the Society, to Revenue Canada for status as a charitable religious organization. This was granted. When I wrote the constitution of the Society I included the promotion and support of small faith communities among the Society's aims.

A later development, not foreseen when setting up the Society, was the desire of some of the married Roman Catholic priests in our Corpus group to be authorized to solemnize marriages in BC. The law in BC requires that a religious body be in operation in the province for five years before it can be recognized as a religious body that can apply to have its ordained members registered as religious representatives authorized to solemnize marriages. In 2002 I applied to have Xristos recognized as such a religious body and this was granted. Subsequently we have had several ordained members authorized to solemnize marriages. Because the aim of Xristos is to develop and support small faith communities, we have made it a condition that any of our ordained members who wish to be licensed to solemnize marriages be active members of a small faith community that endorses and is committed to support them in their marriage ministry. The marriage ministry of the ordained member thus becomes an outreach ministry of the small faith community, and helps the small faith community to be of service in the wider community.

The goal of Xristos is to help people find spiritual nourishment through participation in small faith communities. Membership in Xristos as such is for those who wish to promote actively the creation of small faith communities and to support small faith communities. There are many more members of the small faith communities that Xristos supports than there are members of Xristos, and it is in these small faith communities that Xristos members find their spiritual nourishment. The members of Xristos meet annually to hold the Society's annual general meeting, and three or four times a year hold a potluck social, but worship and other spiritual activities take place in the small faith communities to which they belong.

## **Current Activities**

At one time I thought that Corpus Canada would grow beyond its core membership of married Roman Catholic priests and friends. I now believe that Corpus Canada will fade away as the founding members grow old and die. If Xristos were to remain auxiliary to Corpus Canada, it too would fade away. This is so despite Xristos' being ecumenical in its orientation and membership (some of our members are not Roman Catholic and one of our ordained marriage ministers is an ordained Anglican priest). Xristos is not growing and probably will not grow by attracting members of other Christian churches.

Xristos may have a longer-term future through its involvement with the Roman Catholic Women Priest movement. Some of the women priests on Vancouver Island have joined Xristos and provide pastoral leadership in small faith communities or are actively working to form small faith communities. Xristos recognizes their ordinations as valid and through Xristos some of them have been licensed to perform marriages in BC. Membership in Xristos offers these pastoral leaders, as it does all its members who are pastoral leaders of small faith communities, the benefit of the support of a group larger than their small faith community. The Xristos annual general meeting and our potluck socials, the opportunity to network in various ways with others with a similar spiritual vision and commitment to small faith communities, membership in a society that has official status as a religious body in BC - all of these help sustain pastoral leaders in their leadership role, which can be difficult and lonely at times.

When someone is a leader in a small faith community, especially if they have been ordained and are working in a professional (and usually unpaid) capacity, the encouragement and support of other members of the ministerial profession is greatly appreciated. In Xristos they can find the peer support that the members of the small faith community they lead may not be able to provide.

And to return to what was one of the original inspirations behind the creating of Xristos, the combination of Corpus Canada membership fees and tax-receipted donations to Xristos has provided stable funding for the publication of The Journal.

# Report Of Alpha & Omega Christian Community

by Leonard Schmidt, Winnipeg, MB



## ALPHAMEGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Seated l - r: Rev. Dr. Neil & Mrs. Gory Parado, Rev. Leonard & Mrs. Adeline Schmidt, Mrs. Paulette Marcotte

Standing l - r: Rev. Dale Duval, Mr. Harry Hawryshko, Mr. Alfred Posaluko.

As you already know, we have begun our sixth year of studying and discussing the spirituality of St. John of the Cross, 16th century Carmelite friar, poet and Doctor of Mystical Theology.

We meet at Crescent Fort Rouge United Church on the last Monday of every month, except December, July and August. The attendance

may vary from five to fifteen.

This year we are using the 2002 translation of "Dark Night of the Soul," by Mirabai Starr. Monthly discussion notes are available to anyone, free of charge, by email. In fact, we do have a regular subscriber on Vancouver Island, thanks to your advertising, Chris. On Sunday, November 7, Adeline and I visited Neil Parado at the Health Sciences Hospital where he has been for the past month or so. Because he is weak and run-down, he welcomes your prayers for his recovery. He is also grateful to Dale Duval who replaced him to officiate at a scheduled wedding on October 16. Neil has been involved in over 20 weddings, as a member of the Rent-a-Priest apostolate. Gregoria, his wife, visits him daily.

I too was in hospital for fifty days starting on June 23. My angiogram revealed an 80% double blockage of the coronary artery. On July 3rd, Dr. Raabe performed a successful double bypass procedure.

Deo gratias, I am still able to cope with the apostolate of our Alpha and Omega Christian Community of Manitoba, Inc., namely, to share knowledge of how to discern the path to divine union or spiritual marriage on earth with the spirit of Jesus, our Beloved and Spouse, and our Eternal spirit. Thanks also to John of the Cross, guide and mentor of our journey there.

AD HONOREM ET DEI GLORIAM

## Autumn Journey

by François Brassard & Connie Kurtenbach, Ladysmith, BC



Very early in the morning of September 5, we set out from Ladysmith on a month long tour of the prairies. This special autumn journey was to promote Connie's latest book: *In my Mother's Garden*. The tour took us on a journey we will never forget.

People from Kamloops to our turnaround stop in Saskatoon, shared their prairie hospitality. As many of you know, the level of care and generosity is second to none in the mid-west. We were blessed with celebration by the Neis cousins in Kamloops, the housing hospitality

of Sr. Helen in Calgary, the meeting of my brother to give him his book and the Corpus family, who feasted us with sacrament and solidarity at the Williams' home.

And the breathless splendor of Autumn's Mother Nature took us from the red desert mountains through to Golden, with its shocking mountain beauty, through the Rockies to Calgary, that city that sprawls beyond the foothills. We visited bookstores and more bookstores, wherever they might take a book. We began the journey north, first to Olds where our niece lives with her partner. The library let us read there and even bought a few books, and another good Corpus person came to visit. Away to Edmonton, where former students, now grannies and grandpas themselves, shared their time, and partied with us at Wayne and Donna Cissell's. The Edmonton "students" never forget and worked hard to make a great book launch. We saw relatives and Sion women colleagues, had a wonderful Ukrainian food dinner, and spent the week promoting the book from stores to garden centres.

This theme of travel, book marketing and visiting relatives and friends was a treasure to behold. The Kurtenbach 'Kollection' around Saskatoon and again a few Sion connections made the McNally Robinson night a splendid event. What a week of blessings!

Although the road threads from place to place, it is the people that make the heart of the whole experience. Regina drew us to the Kutarna clan and also a nephew and his partner who housed us so

## Autumn Journey Continued...

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stylishly. We had breakfast at the beautiful old railway station, now a casino, in our own rail car, first class, arranged by Eleanore and Emil Kutarna who for many years worked very hard to make the Corpus Canada Journal a reality. Jake and Loretta Kutarna joined us with other friends and also another Sion of '57!

Bragg Creek provided us the final glory of seeing Corpus Canada folks and generous students amidst the many coloured fall scenery with the mountains in the distance. Finally, back to Kamloops, our rescue spot with Clarence and Joyce, and then over the windy Coquihalla to the ferry.

Thus ended our autumn journey. We will now tour the Island at a gentler pace. Thank you to all our 'families.'

*In My Mother's Garden* is set in four seasons; it is based on a large farm family in the 1940's, and includes paintings by Donna Kurtenbach, photos prepared by Joe and Shirley Kurtenbach from the Kurtenbach archives, and illustrations by Iris Churcher. This fictional narrative is told by seven to nine year old 'Cally Steinbach.' The setting is Saskatchewan and the theme, through poetry and short stories, reveals the little girls' sense of wonder, joy, loss through the times of war, her mother's illness and the stark life of farming.

The *New and Renewed Victoria Faith Community* met on Sunday October 24th at 11:00 am at the Sands Quadra Street Funeral Chapel in Victoria. Our community that day consisted of eight people. Michele Birch-Conery and I co-celebrated the Eucharist and a brainstorming session to solicit feedback about how the community would like to function as we move forward. Afterwards we adjourned for lunch and had a lovely social time together. "Small but beautiful" was our experience together, and our prayer and hope is that we continue to journey forward and fulfill what we are called to do.

Our next meetings will take place on Sundays, November 28th and December 19th at the community room of the Balmoral Co-op, 1241 Balmoral Road, Victoria. Our liturgy begins at 11:00 am followed by coffee at a local establishment. All our welcome at our table!

Blessings and light,  
Jim Lauder  
RCWP Canada West

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## From Michele

*by Michele Birch-Conery, Parksville, BC*

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In Parksville, BC we have established a new community which meets for Eucharistic Celebrations every other Wednesday from 1 - 3 p.m. in the Maple Room of the Community Center. This new worship community chose this venue because they wished to be in a public setting rather than in homes with rotating house churches. At this time, they have expressed their needs wishing primarily to be in a space for sacramental and prayerful meditative nurture. The core members of the group are Roman Catholics who have been developing in the vision of Vatican 2 and who have for decades been workers for justice. They have a very ecumenical focus. They are very evolved Roman Catholics, having learned and developed a prayer life through retreats and who have stayed current with issues in contemporary Christianity and have for years attended major speaker's talks on Vancouver Island and in other places.

As their priest-facilitator, my task is to meet their expressed needs and to be with them in community and to encourage further evolution in community as we express and discern our ongoing needs. Our invitation to the Public reads "Church in the Round: Open Table Eucharist in Inclusive Gatherings."

The choice of the name, Church in the Round, comes from the 10 principles of the Roman Catholic Women Priests (RCWP):

- Communitarian, democratic organization
- Inclusiveness (ecumenical; gender; sexual orientation)
- Unity in diversity, rather than uniformity

The support for my learning and understanding with confidence in promoting this model comes from a text entitled *Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church* by Letty M. Russell.

Reverend Russell is a Presbyterian Minister with vast experience in working with marginalized persons and in creating liberatory communities of faith. From the streets of Harlem to her roles in

## Christian Eschatology Continued...



the World Council of Churches, she has explored the many aspects of our Churches and their leadership models.

She is a solid inspiration for me as I too am committed to a similar vision and I am learning more about the how-to's as I explore her work and that of other contemporary theologians while staying close to our many Corpus Canada priests and our Anglican and United Church companions "on the way".

My conclusion about how we start Church in the Round as we are seeing it here in Parksville, or as we start any of our RCWP faith



communities modelled on relevant principles from our non-clericalist model of priesthood is that we simply start where we are and walk together from there.

I am also involved in the creation of an on-line faith community for people who are isolated and who as yet do not have a way to build community in their own places or contexts. Thus I am facilitating Conference Calls for Celebrating Eucharist in cyber community. Our experiences so far have been astonishingly welcoming and grateful with a promising build up of community because individuals on these calls are gathering other people at their homes to join in these gatherings.

The next Parksville gathering will be Wednesday, November 24. The next conference call Eucharist will be Sunday, November 28. For more information regarding the Parksville gathering or the Conference Call Eucharists, contact me as follows:  
micheleburchonery@shaw.ca  
Phone: 250-586-3284  
250-248-3777



*Corpus NCR*

# Living Word - Inclusive Christian Community

by Kim Sylvester, Duncan, BC



and non-violent language, as well as emphasizing the theme of thanksgiving for a new priest and a new model of priesthood.

Since that first Eucharist in April, LIVING WORD Inclusive Christian Community has grown some in size and a great deal in spiritual understanding and identity. To hear the people defending women priests in the face of Vatican intransigence is a real blessing to me! They have grown in understanding of how inclusive language - much more than simply changing the he/him's - opens a different understanding and experience of God, of creation, of sisters and brothers together in equal and inclusive relationship, all working together to bring the changes needed in our world. We now meet on three Sundays a month and we will do all four Advent Sundays. Everyone seems happy with that. As for the numbers, the community comprises altogether 18 people, which means that nine or ten come on any given Sunday.

For me, the most important part of this new relationship with a community is **being with them but not above them in any way**. The liturgies are based on the concept of sharing the texts and responses in an antiphonal way; the effect of opening up what was previously forbidden participation, has resulted in a deeper understanding and appreciation of the entire liturgy. And the effect on their prayer life and experience of God and each other is also recognizable. After our celebration, we have light refreshments with talk and questions sparkling around the table! It is a wonderful time for getting to know each other and building trust in what it means to be part of a new way of following of Jesus.

Kim Sylvester, RCWP, November 2010

NEXT GATHERINGS: November 21. Then, we will gather for the four Sundays of Advent: November 28th, December 5th, 12th, 19th. Our Christmas celebration is in the planning stages, and we are searching for the best day and time.

Coming together in peace, justice, and love, we are called to receive the presence and promise of Jesus, to reflect generosity and fairness to all, and to build God's Reign with all people.

In the spring of 2010 while I was preparing for ordination to the priesthood, I began to think about celebrating the sacrament of Eucharist and how it would take place here in Duncan on Vancouver Island. I knew of a good church-hall sort of place which was available for a low fee to non-profit groups, and I decided to start right away on the Sunday a week after ordination.

I sent out an invitation to all of the contacts I had, supporters, family, and friends, around 45 people who were open to women priests. Then I rented the hall and began to plan for that first Sunday Eucharist. It was thrilling to think of my first Eucharistic celebration with a group who could possibly become a little faith community. My excitement ranged over planning how to set up this very plain but functional hall to make it a pleasing, sacred place where all would be at ease: the liturgy of the word texts, some well-known songs to sing, and my choice of a Eucharistic prayer.

For me, the main focus for this first liturgy was to create something that would be recognized as coming from a woman, with inclusive

Schedule of Gatherings: usually on the second, third, and fourth Sundays of every month, at Heritage Hall, corner of Brae Road and Coronation Ave. in Duncan. We will begin at 2:00 pm. All are welcome, so please invite those who may want to hear about this inclusive faith community.

*Kim Sylvester is an ordained priest in the Catholic tradition. Her ministry is developing LIVING WORD, a faith community which is fully Christian, inclusive, and follows a renewed model of ordained ministry in a renewed Roman Catholic Church. Roman Catholic Womenpriests are called by the Holy Spirit to follow Jesus as their model of empowerment and generous service, rejecting all forms of domination and control, and called to live as a community of equals, inclusive and respectful of differences. Kim is also available for sacramental celebrations: funeral, baptism, marriage, as well as personal spiritual guidance by appointment.*

# Corpus Canada

## Who Are We?

We are a faith community of men and women empowered by our baptism in Jesus' Spirit to reach out to others in their need as Jesus did. We also provide support for married Roman Catholic priests, their family and friends.

## Where Are We Going?

This faith community is dedicated to

- Renewal of ministries in the Church, including an ordained ministry open to men and women, married and unmarried;
- A vision of Church that includes all people who profess faith in Jesus Christ;
- Development of leadership among all the baptised in the Church;
- Promotion of a wholesome view of sexuality;
- Justice for all based on Gospel values.

Our message is a healing one and is directed to everyone, especially the marginalized in the Church. It is our hope to reach people through many ministries, and in a special way through the creation of small faith communities.

## How Do We Get There?

Through a collegial approach based on consensus reached through communal discernment in the Spirit, we share our gifts that all creation might be transformed according to God's loving plan.

**Corpus Canada**  
[www.corpuscanada.org](http://www.corpuscanada.org)  
**Corpus-NCR (Canada)**  
[www.ca.renewedpriesthood.org](http://www.ca.renewedpriesthood.org)  
**Corpus USA**  
[www.corpus.org](http://www.corpus.org)

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## How Can I Join Or Show Support?

If you wish to join or renew your membership in Corpus Canada for the year 2009 (membership is open to all regardless of denominational affiliation), write to: Corpus Canada Treasurer, 35 - 10070 Fifth Street Sidney, BC V8L 2X9. Enclose a cheque for \$50 (individual membership) or \$75 (family membership) payable to "Corpus Canada." Corpus Canada will donate \$25 of your membership fee to Xristos Community Society in your name, and Xristos will send you an official tax receipt. At the request of Corpus Canada, Xristos Community Society distributes The Journal free of charge to the membership of Corpus Canada.

## HOW TO GET THE JOURNAL

If you are not now receiving The Journal and would like to, please fill out this form and mail it to the Treasurer, Xristos Community Society, 35 - 10070 Fifth Street Sidney, BC V8L 2X9.

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The Journal will be sent to you free of charge. If you would like to support the free distribution of The Journal, please send a cheque to "Xristos Community Society" c/o the Treasurer, Xristos Community Society, 35 - 10070 Fifth Street Sidney, BC V8L 2X9. Xristos Community Society is a registered charity. All donors of \$10 or more will receive an official tax receipt. Thank you for your support of this Christian ministry.

**Corpus Canada Treasurer**

**Alanna Menu**

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