



Of Seeds and Flowers

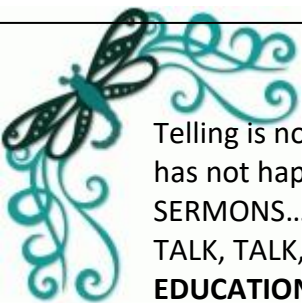


Volume 38 Issue 7 – Founded in 1982

Summer 2022

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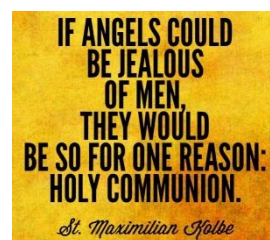
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“NO SUBSTITUTE FOR EXPERIENCE” – Advice given by business coaches.

Telling is not the same as DOING! Telling is not EXPERIENCING! Telling is not having IT HAPPEN FOR YOU! If it has not happened for you, HAS IT HAPPENED AT ALL? – NOT REALLY!! WORDS... WORDS... WORDS... SERMONS... SERMONS... SERMONS... BOOKS... BOOKS... BOOKS... YOUTUBE VIDEOS, MAGAZINE ARTICLES, TALK, TALK, TALK.... AND NOTHING INSIDE OF US REALLY CHANGES! **INFORMATION, EXPLANATION and EDUCATION ARE NOT the same as TRANSFORMATION.**

Recently the Catholic Bishops have launched a three-year program to rescue belief in God's real presence in the Eucharist – 70% of Catholics no longer believe this. Is the solution more WORDS, DOCUMENTS, TALK, HOMILIES ETC? Three years from now, little will have changed. Are we just saving the saved! Programs like the Cursillo, ACTS program, Life in the Spirit Seminars, the Charismatic Renewal ALWAYS WORKED because they gave the participants an EXPERIENCE of God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Religion Alive, shared by people who were already living the excited, meaningful, Christian life with their brothers and sisters. Another poignant example of the TRANSFORMED... TRANSFORMING others.



"I do not envy the Seraphim and their fire for I have a greater gift deposited in my heart. They admire You in rapture, but YOUR BLOOD MINGLES WITH MINE."

- Saint Faustina

Father Richard Rohr, a Franciscan priest, a hero of mine, and a great spiritual, theological, scriptural, cultural, psychological, philosophical teacher and much more. He is an author of many truly ground breaking books, (N.Y. Times Best Seller List), founder of the influential Center for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, recently had a personal meeting with Pope Francis. Father Rohr brought a copy of his latest incredible book, *"The Universal Christ"* to give to the Pope... but the Pope said he already read and loved it.



Their conversation focused on the importance of rediscovering the CONTEMPLATIVE MIND (A REAL ENCOUNTER WITH GOD – NOT JUST WORDS) can serve the renewal of Christianity and help to HEAL OUR WORLD. Three times Pope Francis said, **"I want you to keep doing what you are doing, keep teaching what you are teaching."** Father Rohr has the wisdom, depth and spiritual maturity that all 75-year-old people only hope to possess.

Some words from Thomas Merton



"There is no greater disaster in the spiritual life than to be immersed in unreality, for life is maintained and nourished in us by our VITAL RELATION WITH REALITIES OUTSIDE AND ABOVE US."

"Society depends for its existence on the personal solitude of its members. When society is made up of people who **know no interior solitude** (Centering Prayer, Contemplation) it can no longer be held together by love. No amount of technological progress will cure the sickness that eats away at the vitals of a materialistic society like a spiritual cancer. The only cure is, and must **ALWAYS** be, spiritual. The ears with which one hears the saving message of the Gospel are hidden in people's hearts, and these ears DO NOT HEAR ANYTHING UNLESS THEY ARE FAVORED WITH INTERIOR SOLITUDE AND SILENCE."

– We Americans, no, no most HUMAN BEINGS, have lost touch with REALITY, with TRUTH, with the spirituality that brings TRUE LIFE AND LOVE.



You can find five Mary's Field Podcasts on Centering prayer in our Mary's Field Podcast library. Also check Thomas Keating and Cynthia Brougeault on YouTube, as well. "Open Mind Open Heart", "Invitation to Love" and "Intimacy with God" are the books to read by Keating. LIFE-CHANGERS!!

The same Father Rohr mentioned above, in his book, *"The Universal Christ"* shares a wonderful experience that Caryll Houselander, a British author, tells in her 1955 book, *"A Rocking Chair Catholic"*. There is a message in here for all of us who are looking to have our thinking go to our hearts and maybe, vicariously, EXPERIENCE the presence of Christ in others.

Caryll Houselander writes: *"I was in an underground train, a crowded train in which all sorts of people jostled together, sitting and strap-hanging—workers of every description going home at the end of the day. Quite suddenly I saw with my mind, but as vividly as a wonderful picture, Christ in them all. But I saw more than that; not only was Christ in every one of them, living in them, dying in them, rejoicing in them, sorrowing in them—but because He was in them, and because they were here, the whole world was here too . . . all those people who had lived in the past, and all those yet to come."*

"I came out into the street and walked for a long time in the crowds. It was the same here, on every side, in every passer-by, everywhere—Christ."

"I had long been haunted by the Russian understanding of the humiliated Christ, the lame Christ limping through Russia, begging His bread; the Christ who, all through the ages, might return to the earth and come even to sinners to win their compassion by His need. Now, in the flash of a second, I knew that this dream is a fact . . . Christ in

The poet Francis Thompson says it more simply: "Lo here, Lo there, Lo Christ, is everywhere."

In another place in his book *"The Divine Dance"* Rohr writes *"In my now broad and worldwide experience, I do not find most Christians to be naturally more loving than those of other faiths. We just think we are! It is rather disappointing to find this out, but it's inevitable if you're basically relating to God out of fear and if your religion is, by and large, FIRE INSURANCE JUST IN CASE THE WHOLE THING TURNS OUT TO BE REAL."*

VISION AND REALITY

CAFETERIA CHRISTIANS, CAFETERIA CATHOLICS, CAFETERIA CULTURE – People who pick and choose which aspects of reality and truth they are willing to put on their plate and reject the rest as inedible. I am most familiar with "Cafeteria Catholics and Cafeteria

humankind." **"My Me is God, nor do I recognize any other Me except my God himself."** - St. Catherine of Genoa



"I also saw the reverence that everyone must have for a sinner; instead of condoning his or her sin, which is their utmost sorrow, one must comfort Christ who is suffering in them. And this reverence must be paid even to those sinners whose souls seem to be dead, because it is Christ, who is the life of the soul, who is dead in them; they are His tombs, and Christ in the tomb is potentially the risen Christ."

"Christ is everywhere; in Him every kind of life has a meaning and has an influence on every other kind of life. . . Realization of our oneness in Christ is the only cure for human loneliness. For me, too, it is the only ultimate meaning of life, the only thing that gives meaning and purpose to every life."

"After a few days the "vision" faded. People looked the same again, there was no longer the same shock of insight for me each time I was face to face with another human being. Christ was hidden again; indeed, through the years to come I would have to seek for Him, and usually I would find Him in others—and still more in myself—only through a deliberate and blind act of faith." Christ is in everyone and everything and not limited by anything.

"The day of my spiritual awakening was the day I saw and knew I saw all things in God and God in all things."

Mechtild of Magdeburg



Christians. Cafeteria Catholics and ex-Catholics together make up the single largest religious identity group in America. If you are not in this group, I am sure you have friends that are.

Our culture is falling apart like a cheap sweater and at age 85 I see things more clearly and my faith is stronger and real and I know what I can change, and where I can make a difference, and where I need to let things alone and move on, because no amount of words are able to change anyone. Too often we are like blind people touching the side of an elephant and describing, (TELLING, with WORDS, AGAIN!!) the TINY PORTION we feel with all of the conviction we can muster. And, one more time we are wrong! Rohr to the Pope: That only real, permanent change can come about by a serious commitment to prayer and especially Centering or contemplative prayer. The Pope agreed.

**“Something
we were
withholding
made us weak,
until we found it
was ourselves.”**
ROBERT FROST

A man went to the doctor with a big boil on his skin. The doctor took a look and said, “O, you have a boil. Let’s lance it.” Two weeks later the boil was back on the man’s arm. To the doctor again, and the doctor said, “Let’s lance it.” They did and they were back in the doctor’s office with the same boil three weeks later. So, the man went to another doctor and this doctor asked the man what he was eating and changed his diet and the boil never came back again. The second doctor didn’t deal with symptoms but dealt with the CAUSE of the problem and the problem went away. Our culture deals ONLY WITH SYMPTOMS and the problems will NEVER GO AWAY. WE HAVE LOST OUR WAY! WE ARE LOST UNTIL WE SEE THE RIGHT DOCTOR!! Check above: The doctor is in.



Paul had similar problem with the Romans (The Roman culture, like ours, was a mess in Paul’s time) and the communities that Timothy was pastoring. “Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, so that you may judge what is God’s will, what is good, pleasing and perfect.” Rom.12: 2. And to Timothy: “The time has come when men will not listen to true teaching, but will follow their own desires, and will collect for themselves more and more teachers who will tell them what they are itching to hear. They will stop listening to the truth and wander off to fables. As for you be steady and self-possessed.” Tim.4: 3. So little has changed!

CHRISTIANS ARE IN THE WORLD, NOT OF THE WORLD BUT FOR THE WORLD

“I am done with great things and big plans, great institutions and big success. I am for those tiny, invisible human forces that work from individual to individual, creeping through the crannies of the world like so many rootlets, or like the capillary oozing of water, which, if given time, will rend the hardest monuments of pride.” - William James



I ask for your understanding and forgiveness. I have not been able to get out proper “**THANK YOU’S**” for all of the generous donations we have received in recent months. In August, I will be 85 years old and my energy level is not quite what it used to be. So sorry!! “Heavens how you’ve aged!” exclaimed the Master after speaking with a boyhood friend. “One cannot help growing old, can one?” said the friend. “No, one cannot, agreed the Master,” **“But one must avoid becoming aged.”** Summertime is the most difficult time financially.” If you are able to help?



Abortion is evil and the news about evil abortionists always gets worse. Evil begets evil. The Curtis Bay Energy company is burning the bodies of aborted babies to generate electricity for people who live in the Mid-Atlantic region. Their website proclaims: “**We manage the largest medical waste incinerator in the US and the only**



facility utilizes Waste-to-Energy incineration to safely convert infectious/biochemical waste and non-hazardous pharmaceuticals into useful energy.”



Dear Reader: *If you have had an abortion, God will and does forgives you. Do forgive yourself! Move on!*

SPEAKING SOFTLY

THE FINAL EXAM

It was the end of a long course for three devils. Satan said to them, *"Only one of you will graduate; the one with the best plan to entice people to sin will be sent to earth."* The first devil said, *"I will tempt humans to see evil to be so attractive, so enjoyable and so filled with pleasure that they will not be able to resist."* "Not bad", replied the head devil. The second devil said, *"My plan is to get people to want money and power and control and do all kinds of bad things to get them."* "Very good", replied Satan. The third devil, after thinking and thinking said, *"I will tempt them to be so busy, so distracted from essential matters that they will not do any serious thinking about anything important. - so busy that they will have no time to think about God, family, prayer, church and they will totally mine and think they are saving the world."*

"What a great plan", said Satan, "Busyness, and the anxiety and stress that comes with it, will keep them always in the palm of your hand -and they won't recognize it or even know that it is happening"! "You, my devil friend, are the winner."



So much of what is passing for the message of Christ (especially on college campuses) is secular humanism cloaked in Christian language. We welcome immigrants. Black Lives Matter. Soup kitchen. Mission trips. Clothing drives etc. ALL, ALL of which are good and a part of the Christian life, BUT, BUT ONLY, ONLY if it is an overflow of a FULL, FULL prayer life. Otherwise, the church has become a mere social agency with a cross on top. **Good works should always point away from self to the grace of God. "Apart from me you can do nothing." says Jesus. The cafeteria is open! Where there is no wisdom, the people perish.**

In every age, the church carries the responsibility of reading the signs of the times and OF INTERPRETING THEM IN LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL." - Gaudium et Spes, Vatican II



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