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Love in Evolution

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This pamphlet and the previous pamphlet are taken from the first presentation in the summer Godweiser series.

For Christians evolution is not accidental, random, without purpose or goal. The Jesuit Teilhard de Chardin, a well known paleontologist and theologian of the 20th century, wrote about the goal of evolution. Chardin recognized there is a unifying influence in the whole of the evolutionary process; evolution has direction. The ultimate mover of the entire cosmogenesis, he indicated, is something that is simultaneously within and in front of the advancing wave of development, beckoning it, as its ideal culmination.

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Chardin identified this prime mover with God. He described Christ as the future fullness of the whole evolutionary process, the “centering principle” and “Omega point” where the individual and collective adventure of humanity finds its end and fulfillment.” This is a philosophy of hope not doom and destruction, as children would say, we are getting more better.

Karl Rahner said that we are “pressured” from within to evolve. The pressure is what we have always called the Holy Spirit. And the Spirit is creatively at work at this moment, urging us to evolve, to become a new kind of human being such as the world has rarely seen before. See preface in [Field of Compassion](#) by Judy Cannato.

Creation is moving toward oneness, fullness of life, wholeness. Delio tells us all creation is involved in this movement toward oneness through the power of love: She writes: *“Contrary to the classic notion of Godhead, creation does not return to its source; rather creation moves forward, driven by the power of love into an ever new horizon of love. Christ is the symbol of creation’s future in God, a future in newness in love and our hope that love will endure.”* (Delio, p. 5) This is the meaning of love—it is the power of evolution driving us to ever new horizons of love. Love is the driving force of our union with God, with one another, with all creation.



Let me give a small example of how this operates in everyday life. The Sisters of St. Joseph have an annual Gala of St. Joseph in which 3 persons of outstanding works of charity are recognized and celebrated. This year the Sisters honored Jane Corbett for her work in Haiti and serving the poor in St. Louis. After she received the award Santa presented her with a check from the students at St. Joe’s who collected change for Haiti during Lent. It was \$1,372, now a man came up afterward and offered to make it an even \$2,000. Then another man, offered to go over and help in the clinic. He is a retired surgeon. Now that is love moving to new horizons!

The Consensus Statement of the central ideas of Jean Pierre Medaille expresses the vocation of the sisters of St. Joseph as a call to unifying love. “The Sisters of St. Joseph move always toward profound love of God and love of neighbor without distinction.” For Fr. Medaille the love of neighbor flows out of love of God. He is describing contemplation in action which is at the heart of Ignation spirituality. Seized by love, grasped by love, impregnated with love we cannot but love others.

God's love flows into love of neighbor and note the added, without distinction. No one and no thing is to be excluded from this love. And what does she work to achieve through following Christ, unity. Unity of neighbor and neighbor with God. The charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph is loving unity. Love and unity, are two sides of the one single act.

Thus beginning with Jesus' prayer, that they may be one, Father as we are one, and continued by Paul's vision, all creation is groaning toward fulfillment, and Fr. Medaille and Teilhard de Chardin and many other men and women saints, we see that the mystics knew all along what the scientists are confirming today. The universe is interconnected, we are all one. From the Christian tradition we know that love is a movement, transcending itself toward greater and greater union of all creation with each other and with God. No one, no thing is outside this movement, not even God. All are included. And with Christ as the leading edge we have nothing to fear and we have the fullness of life, of love to hope for.



What does love mean for us today? It means we embrace evolution, the movement of all creation toward oneness. Yes, love changes everything. It changes who we include in our circle of relations. It reconciles enemies and creates new life. Jesus said love your neighbor.

Who do you include among your neighbors? Your family, friends, coworkers, fellow students? Do you avoid or exclude anyone or anything from your love? Do you exclude pedophiles, drug addicts, politicians, or terrorists. What about spiders, rats, copperheads or even crab grass? Can you embrace all in your love? Are you helping creation to evolve toward unity or devolving through acts of exclusion and hatred? Love in evolution is the challenge to embrace all of creation without distinction, to move all toward unity. And to imitate God's perfect love, "for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust." (Mt 5: 45)

Go Deeper

Contact Sr. Linda for a chat at 935-9191 x202 or e-mail her at straub@washucsc.org.



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