

## Eucharistic Nature, “Nightmarish” History

The objective of education is practical and religious, namely, to find “at-homeness” in the Cosmos and with God. The dominion theology of the patriarchal male has conspired with imperial culture to extract Eucharist from its natural venue and to objectivize it as a device of control. In Roman times, nothing was more dread than the cross and the sword for both were used to instill terror and to administer violence. Except humanity can discover at-homeness in the Cosmos, at-homeness with the God of Nature will not be found.

We belong to the universe, to Earth, as Earth and Universe belong to us. In this reciprocal relationship there is mutual purpose, namely: in holding sacred the Natural Order, humankind treasures it and preserves it in perpetuity. When Nature is violated, exploited to death, repercussions come back full weight on violators. We are there now.

In essence the Great Work proposed by Thomas Berry and joined by David S. Toolan, SJ, is to discover the God of Nature and to worship Divinity in the venue of Revelation. Nature is the Primary Scripture writ bold in the DNA of flesh and blood and in which Divinity Consciousness Self-reveals in intuition (faith) and reason (science,)

Religious education is failing nature, humankind and God. Evolved consciousness brings with it hope for conversion, for redemption. Ecological collapse brings down global economies and religions. The “signs of the times” are there for all to read.

Creationists and evolutionists alike believe in God, and for their lifetimes seek greater intimacy with Divinity. It perhaps is more correct to believe that God seeks greater intimacy with humankind than humankind does with God. In any event, knowledge of nature and intimacy with God are the great works of creation/evolution. Knowledge is intimacy and intimacy is knowledge — to own “Divinity Consciousness” is to open oneself to greater experience of intimacy with God and creation.

Quantum science opens new insights into new experiences of nature and people — instructive of Divinity. New insights are continually available in the intimate working of God and nature, without ever exhausting the mystery. Awareness of the oneness of all things becomes ever more amazing, inspiring and humbling as we learn more about the nature of wave/particle dynamics and Divine Intentions.

From the Christian point of view, the summit insight of intimacy and transformation is Eucharist, in terms both of religion and science, faith and reason. The convergence of purpose, human and divine, is the mutual motive of faith and reason. Until now, faith and reason work at cross-purposes in religious culture and people’s lives. This schizophrenia is intolerable for it is at the root of self-wasting and destruction of global ecologies.

The primary lessons of religious and civil life are to be found in evolving life’s scriptures. If we are eager to learn to be at home with God, we will be eager to understand where it is that God Self-reveals. In learning to be “*At Home in the Cosmos*” we learn how to be more familiar with God and how God is familiar with us.

The summation of symbiotic laws that compels all life is: that individual life exists for other, what is “Eucharist.”. Individual life fails in self-fulfillment unless it enters its role in life with intimacy, understanding and purpose. In his book, “*At Home in the Cosmos*,”

Jesuit priest, theologian, former Associate Editor of AMERICA Magazine, David S. Toolan speaks compellingly to the at-home sense of Eucharist. (© 2001, published by Orbis Books, P.O. Box 308, Maryknoll, NY 10545-0308). Father Toolan writes:

“...within the great span of evolution, we [humankind] represent a turning point for nature... Two significant events happen simultaneously, or converge, once humans emerge from the prebiotic soup... [First] consciousness or mindedness...would not be there except for participation in the mindfulness of the Poet-Maker of all things... Secondly... consciousness is also nothing else than great nature more or less awake and reflective... the spiritual task is to deepen our inwardness and at the same time intensify our outer associations, and therewith, stretch our imaginations and understandings to include as much of this world as we can tend and care for. We are nature’s black box, her vessel of soul-space — and hence her last best chance to become spirited, to be the vessel of God, the carrier of the message that all creation is not only “very good,” but glorified. That’s the script, the big theo-logical drama. (pg 216)

“A post-Einsteinian cosmos reconnects us with these natural wonders...we can now understand ourselves as no longer alien intruders in the cosmos, but belonging. The universe’s history, its groaning to give birth to something glorious, comes together in us. The great outdoors is inside us, and we are its interiority.

“It’s as if all the stardust in our DNA, the microbes that swim in our cells, the humble algae that give us breathable atmosphere—yes, all of nature—were expectant, waiting on us to finish the cosmic symphony...

“..We are members of the orchestra, the choir in a great project, a ‘mystery hidden from the foundation of the world.’ (pg 214)

“What is our function, our great work, in the vast cosmos? What are we here for? ‘Do this in memory of me,’ the man said. We have work to do — good work. (pg 213)

“Jesus identifies with the earth. And consecrates the earth to new purposes. Of bread and wine, he says, ‘This is my body, take and eat...This is my blood take and drink.’

“There are no hysterics here, no magic, simply the highly charged action of a man who knows he will die in the morrow and must make every word and gesture count. Two great movements converge in what Jesus shows here: the everlasting desire of cosmic dust to mean something great, and God’s promise that it shall be done. There is first a centripetal movement. We the followers and disciples center in on Jesus, identify, become one with him. Then there is the centrifugal decentralizing movement. Jesus, both conduit of Spirit-energy, and cosmic dust himself, freely identifies himself with us and with the fruits of the earth — the ash of a dying star present in bread and wine — and converts these gifts of earth, the work of human hands, into another story than the nightmarish one we have been telling with this.” (pg 210)

Knowledge and intimacy open us to escape from the “nightmarish” dream to a vision of hope and expectation.

Sylvester L. Steffen, [www.divinicom.com](http://www.divinicom.com)  
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