

## **Being human, being divine. What makes us human?**

**29 October 2009**

### **In whose image? Competition and collaboration**

#### **In whose image?**

- First creation story, Genesis 1:26, 27
- Second creation story (Eden), Genesis 2:7 the earth-creature from the dust. Genesis 2:15 ff: the earth-creature. Ravenna mosaic. Modern biology.
- Creation *ex nihilo*. From nothing. From nothing (else), so from God?
- God within? Wisdom 7:26: reflection of God's image. Refulgence. Psalm 8. Hebrews 1. Matthew 5:48. Galatians 2:20; 4:19. 2 Peter 1:4. 1 John 3:2; 4:12; 5:18. 2 Corinthians 3:18.
- Mystical body: Everyone is in God? Everything? We are all bits of God?

#### **Body and soul?**

- Body *and* soul: separable or not? 'Holy Scripture nowhere splits the person into bits.' Christianity proclaims the unity and wholeness of the human person. The whole person matters (HR managers, please note). Healing and wholeness.
- Hebrew: adam (soil), nephesh (soul), ruach (spirit), basar (flesh).
- Greek: soma (body), sarx (flesh), psuche (mind, soul), pneuma (spirit).
- Latin: corpus, anima/us, mens, intellectus, ratio.
- Ego, id, superego.
- Where is self? A major issue in interfaith dialogue (eg Buddhist – there is no self, self is part of illusion). What am I? Who am I? Persona (mask), but masking what?

#### **God looked at all he had made, and it was good**

- so, natural desires must be good.
- What is unnatural?
- Genesis: man and woman in the image of God. Is this the only model for Christian life?
- Aggression: natural? If so, is it divine? Deliver us from [the] evil [one]. Demons – God's creation?

#### **Urges—hard wired for survival?**

- Urges, tendencies, addictions. Brain chemicals: reward dopamine.
- Competition or cooperation? Competition is hard-wired in—so must be part of divine creation too.
- Where is Jesus of Nazareth in all this?
- Do we, as Christians, have anything special to say about human life? If not, why bother with Christianity? Irenaeus.
- Why do others call us hypocrites?
- Why do some men say they feel as if they have to leave their maleness at the church door?
- Why is the daily Mass attendance at the CS predominantly male?
- Why does the 8 am service attract proportionately more men than women?
- Why do men 'hate' going to church?
- What vision of the CoE do you have for 10, 20 years' time? All female?

#### **Continuing creation**

- Primary ontological intentionality. Augustine. Rahner.
- Mirrors or glasses: reflection or beyond. George Herbert, Lewis Carroll, Umberto Eco, JK Rowling
- Pauline theology. 2 Corinthians 3:18 (again).
- Clement of Alexandria; Gregory of Nyssa, Irenaeus.
- 'Finish then thy new creation' – Charles Wesley.
- What does this mean for us all within the application of the Christ-event to daily life?

Abortion, Euthanasia, In vitro fertilization, Embryo research, Competition or cooperation?, Eternal life—now or then?  
Rituals—waking to sleeping, So what makes us human?