

An essay:

ON THE PRACTICE OF HOSPITAL MINISTRY

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## **I. HUMAN NATURE AND HOW PEOPLE GROW, CHANGE AND ARE HEALED**

### **1. HUMAN NATURE**

Fallen man is corrupted, having a natural tendency towards Sin.<sup>1</sup> However, he is not totally corrupt, still being capable of knowing and choosing good over evil. Unredeemed man retains certain Natural Virtues since The Fall: Prudence,<sup>2</sup> Justice,<sup>3</sup> Fortitude,<sup>4</sup> Temperance.<sup>5</sup> These “Natural Graces” are retained since The Fall because we are all made in The Image of GOD,<sup>6</sup> Who is The Source of human dignity and worth. Man’s earthly and eternal purposes rest in GOD.<sup>7</sup>

Secular social and psychological sciences can help people find a certain level of passing peace, but can not replace man’s need for “The Peace of GOD that surpasses all understanding... in CHRIST JESUS.”<sup>8</sup> This is why Saint. Augustine says, O Lord, “...You Yourself encourage... [us] to delight in Your praise, for You have made us for Yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in You!”<sup>9</sup>

### **2. GROWTH**

The kind of growth GOD desires for us is that we be “born again” into New Life in JESUS CHRIST.<sup>10</sup> Only in this way can we enter into a right and intimate relationship with GOD and others in fulfillment of The Two Great Commandments, to love GOD fully, to love our neighbor as ourselves,<sup>11</sup> and have a humble respect of self. Through Baptism, we are Born Again into a life of Growth in Covenant with GOD because of His Love for us, no longer separated from Him because of our sin, but become heirs to The Promise of Eternal Life.<sup>12</sup> True Growth towards our true purpose and peace requires that we be part of The Living Body of CHRIST, The Faithful Church.<sup>13</sup>

### **3. CHANGE**

True change for lasting Good comes only through our cooperation with Divine Grace, that “...free unmerited Love and favor of GOD” that causes GOD to shower Blessings upon us, that favorable influence of “The [HOLY] SPIRIT in renewing the heart and restraining [us]

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<sup>1</sup> 1, CCC, # 1264, p 353-354. Concupiscence, i.e. man’s “inclination to sin...”

<sup>2</sup> 1, CCC, # 1806, p 496. Prudence is “right reason in action” that discerns “true good” and chooses “the right means of achieving it.”

<sup>3</sup> 1, CCC, # 1807, p 496. Justice is the “firm will to give... [what is due] to GOD and neighbor.”

<sup>4</sup> 1, CCC, # 1808, p 496-497. Fortitude is strength that gives “firmness in difficulties... in pursuit of the good... to resist temptations and [determination] to overcome obstacles...” to moral living.

<sup>5</sup> 1, CCC, # 1809, p 497. Temperance is moderation in “...attraction of pleasures..., balance in the use of created goods...” and “keep[ing] desires within the limits of what is honorable...”

<sup>6</sup> 2, NAB, GENESIS 1:26.

<sup>7</sup> 3, WLC 1:1, “Man’s Chief and highest end is to glorify GOD, and fully to enjoy Him forever.”

<sup>8</sup> 2, NAB, PHILIPPIANS 4:7.

<sup>9</sup> 1, CCC, # 30, p 18-19. Saint Augustine.

<sup>10</sup> 2, NAB, JOHN 3:3.

<sup>11</sup> 2, NAB, DEUTERONOMY 6:4-5 & LEVITICUS 19:18; MATTHEW 22:36-40.

<sup>12</sup> 2, NAB, JOHN 3:16.

<sup>13</sup> 2, NAB, EPHESIANS 5:22-32.

from sin.”<sup>14</sup> Only in GOD’s amazing Grace, poured out for us at The Cross of CHRIST, can we be changed to be in a right relationship with GOD and others in a life filled with The Christian Virtues. As Saint Paul says in I CORINTHIANS 13:13, “So Faith,<sup>15</sup> Hope,<sup>16</sup> Love<sup>17</sup> remain, these three; but the greatest of these is Love.”<sup>18</sup>

The Result of The HOLY SPIRIT working in the souls of The Redeemed in CHRIST brings about True Change from lives marked by “Works of The Flesh” to lives marked by “Works of The Spirit.”<sup>19</sup> Saint Paul compares these in GALATIANS 5:19-23, “...immorality, impurity, licentiousness [unbridled lust], idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, rivalry, jealousy, outbursts of fury, acts of selfishness, dissensions, factions, occasions of envy, drinking bouts, orgies, and the like.” In contrast, “...love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...”<sup>20</sup>

#### **4. HEALING**

Healing comes in living daily in The Lord, Who is our Eternal Good Shepherd<sup>21</sup> and our Great Physician.<sup>22</sup> It comes when we realize that we are saved by Grace through Faith, and not by Good Works, which heals from the worry of never being good enough before GOD to deserve salvation. It comes by embracing the life of Good Works that GOD calls us to.<sup>23</sup> It comes when someone offers us a safe space to share our life Stories – our history, experiences and feelings – who listens in empathetic compassion. It comes when, in our affliction, we lay our burdens down at the foot of The Cross of CHRIST.<sup>24</sup>

Healing comes to us by The HOLY SPIRIT via Providence, The Word of GOD, The Sacraments and Holy Community. It comes when we are part of The Church, The Living Sign and Instrument of GOD’s Grace,<sup>25</sup> when we rightly receive The Sacraments in Faith.<sup>26 27</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> 4, Webster’s 1828 Dictionary, “Grace,” noun, entries 2-3, p GRA – GRA.

<sup>15</sup> 1, CCC, # 1814, p 498. Faith means “...we believe in GOD and believe all that He has said and revealed to us, and that Holy Church proposes for our belief, because He is Truth itself. By Faith man freely commits his entire self to GOD...”

<sup>16</sup> 1, CCC, # 1817, p 499. Hope means “...we desire The Kingdom of Heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in CHRIST’s Promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of The Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT...”

<sup>17</sup> 1, CCC, # 1822, p 501. Love is that “...by which we love GOD above all things for His Own Sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of GOD.”

<sup>18</sup> 2, NAB, I CORINTHIANS 13:13.

<sup>19</sup> 1, CCC, # 1812-1813, p 498.

<sup>20</sup> 2, NAB, GALATIANS 5:19-23.

<sup>21</sup> 2, NAB, PSALM 23:1-6.

<sup>22</sup> 2, NAB, LUKE 5:31-32.

<sup>23</sup> 2, NAB, EPHESIANS 2:8-10.

<sup>24</sup> 2, NAB, MATTHEW 11:28-30.

<sup>25</sup> 1, CCC, # 775, p 222-223.

<sup>26</sup> 1, CCC, # 1083, p 306-307; # 1127, p 319. Sacraments “confer The Grace they signify.” They are “efficacious,” i.e. effective, “because in them CHRIST Himself is at work...”

<sup>27</sup> 1, CCC # 1113, p 315. The Sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation and The Eucharist; Reconciliation and Anointing of The Sick; Marriage and Holy Orders.

It comes in receiving forgiveness from GOD,<sup>28</sup> others and self. It comes in making restitution to those whom we have harmed.<sup>29</sup> It comes in forgiving others as GOD forgive us when we repent, as we pray in The Our Father.<sup>30</sup>

Healing comes in knowing The Lord is with us through the bad as well as the good times, that if we humble ourselves before Him, He will lift us up.<sup>31</sup> It comes in knowing that GOD hears the cry of the just and that His eyes are upon the righteous.<sup>32</sup> It comes in knowing that they who mourn before GOD shall in time be comforted.<sup>33</sup> It comes through giving thanks to The LORD in times of joy and blessing, for He is Good, and His Love endures forever.<sup>34</sup> It comes in rejoicing in The LORD, Who is the joy of the souls of His people.<sup>35</sup>

Healing comes in finding meaning and Hope in The Lord, not only in times of peace and gain, but especially in times of trial and losses, knowing that His Promises are trustworthy.<sup>36</sup> And in all times and circumstances, it comes in holding firmly onto our Living Hope, secured through The Resurrection of JESUS CHRIST from the dead on our behalf, securing our salvation through a lively Faith in Heaven Above.<sup>37</sup> This, with an attitude of daily gratitude and a living Faith and Good Works here on earth.<sup>38</sup>

## **II. A THEOLOGY OF HOW GOD IS PRESENT IN THE WORLD TODAY**

### **1. GOD IS PRESENT IN CREATION**

GOD is Present in Creation all around us, of which we are a part, by His calling into being, sustaining from moment to moment and directing the world towards its ultimate purposes. He is Present at the creation of every human soul. In the conception of every child in a mother's womb, in the birth of every child, in the arms of every father and mother that holds a child in love. In all the days of our lives, in all times of joy and all times of sorrow. In the final days of earthly life of all men, and as the last breath is taken. He is Present at the calling before His Throne every human soul from this life to weigh it in His scales.

### **2. GOD IS PRESENT IN HIS WORD**

GOD is Present in His Word, The Divinely inspired and unerring Holy Scriptures, gradually revealed through Israel and then The Faithful Church. He is Present in His Word in Divine Justice, by which He promises to judge all men. He is Present in His Word in Divine

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<sup>28</sup> 2, NAB, I JOHN 1:8-9.

<sup>29</sup> 2, NAB, MATTHEW 5:23-24.

<sup>30</sup> 2, NAB, MATTHEW 6:9-13.

<sup>31</sup> 2, NAB, I PETER 5:6-10.

<sup>32</sup> 2, NAB, PSALM 34:16.

<sup>33</sup> 2, NAB, MATTHEW 5:5.

<sup>34</sup> 2, NAB, PSALM 118:29.

<sup>35</sup> 2, NAB, ISAIAH 61:10.

<sup>36</sup> 2, NAB, HEBREWS 10:23.

<sup>37</sup> 2, NAB, I PETER 1:3-5.

<sup>38</sup> 2, NAB, EPHESIANS 2:8-10.

Mercy, by which He offers forgiveness to all men. He is Present whenever The Good News is preached in whatever form, in Words of Truth and especially in good deeds of doing and being.

### **3. GOD IS PRESENT IN HIS PROVIDENCE**

GOD is Present in His Providence, by which He guides and aides - but does not ordain in fate – the events in the lives of men. He is Present in human and prophetic history, by which He restrains sin, punishes wickedness, blesses the righteous and guides His plan of salvation. He is Present in the respecting of The Free Will which He gives to all men. He is Present in The Grace that precedes, saves and sustains the souls of The Redeemed. He is Present in The Faithful Church on earth and in Heaven, CHRIST being The Head and we being The Body.

### **4. GOD IS PRESENT IN THE SACRAMENTS**

GOD is Present in The Sacraments, rightly administered by The Faithful Church. In Baptism, washing Original Sin away and sanctifying the soul. In Confirmation, enlightening and strengthening the one coming of age. In The Eucharist, both spiritually and physically, in His Spirit and in The Consecrated Elements, to relieve the stains of Venial Sins and to strengthen against Mortal Sins. In Reconciliation, convicting the heart to bring to The Confession, witness to The Penance, giving Authority to The Absolution.

In The Anointing of The Sick, stirring the soul, bringing forgiveness of Sins, healing according to His Will or preparing the soul for the final journey through physical death. In all stations of life, such as those called to remain Celibate. In Marriage, making the two as one in every way in love, and blessing with children. In Holy Orders, consecrating Priests, Religious and Deacons to serve The Church, The Body of CHRIST. And in calling The Laity to be active partakers of the redemptive Work of CHRIST in The Church, the world and their daily lives.

### **5. GOD IS PRESENT IN HIS SPIRIT**

GOD is Present in His Spirit, working in and through His people. He is Present when ever two or more gather together in His Name. He is Present in every true Agape intention, word, act and sacrifice of Love and Mercy given by one man to another. He is Present at The Cross of The Son of GOD, where He calls every man to embrace & bear his own Cross and follow Him. He is there at the remembrance and making Present of The Sacrifice of JESUS CHRIST on Calvary in every Mass at every Altar within The Faithful Church in all times and places.

### **6. GOD IS PRESENT IN ALL TIMES AND PLACES**

GOD is Present in all times and places, even in the still small voice inside every man. He is Present in every time and place of joy and blessing in our lives. He is Present in every time and place of sorrow and loss in our lives. He is Present in every tear of joy and of grief. He is Present when one human hand is lifted up in cruelty to strike down the hand of another. He is Present whenever one human hand reaches out in compassion and caring to the open hand of another. In all time and place, there is nowhere where He is not Present.

### **III. AN UNDERSTANDING OF MINISTRY AND THE MINISTER**

#### **1. A LAY CATHOLIC CHAPLAIN IN SECULAR HOSPITALS**

In forsaking The Anglican Way midway through my seminary studies at a traditional Episcopal seminary, I entered The Catholic Church as a layman. My Anglican Masters of Divinity is not recognized, in and of itself, for ordination in The Catholic Church. However, I found it was accepted for certification as a lay Catholic Chaplain through The National Association of Catholic Chaplains. The NACC, which answers to The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, upholds The Teachings of The Catholic Church in Ministry. I am bound by a Sacred Duty to abide by These Standards.

The secular hospital Chaplain Departments in which I have served owe their worldly allegiance to the secular health care organizations of which they are a part, yet owe their spiritual allegiance to GOD. These two are often in tension, as well they should be. My secondary allegiance as a hospital Chaplain is to the secular institutions in which I have the privilege to serve. However, my primary allegiance is to The Catholic Church and The Author and Finisher of The Faith. These two are often in tension, as well they should be. Yet, by GOD's Grace, and in a spirit of humble service, I am able to navigate and minister in both effectively.

“Clinical Pastoral Education” has provided me with 2 years of deeply meaningful growth and opportunities to practice the art and science of Ministry. CPE has helped me become more aware of my own issues and how they impact my Ministry practice. However, CPE is not the place of my spiritual formation. Secular CPE is fundamentally a secular social sciences program founded on human wisdom that embraces a secular spirituality. CPE is not The Body of CHRIST. It is a vehicle for service. My home on earth is The Catholic Church. As such, my place in both as a lay Catholic Chaplain is a delicate but very blessed one. The key lesson modeled for me in CPE by many skilled but humble people of Faith is to always seek and keep a heart of a servant.

#### **2. GOD IS ALREADY ON THE SCENE**

GOD's Presence and Providence in the midst of difficulties at the hospital bedside is NOT dependant upon my arrival on the scene. He is already there and in control. My place, if I arrive with the proper disposition of the willing heart of a humble and faithful servant, is to be a reminder of GOD's Presence, an instrument of GOD's Providence, a pillar of GOD's Peace and a vessel of GOD's Grace for the time I am present.

#### **3. DOING A SPIRITUAL ASSESSMENT**

I am conscious that not everyone I minister to has the same Faith and worldview that I do. I seek to offer pastoral care that provides for the needs of those I minister to and not what I need. I must be clear in my own convictions, which I am. And I must have some understanding of who people are – their history, experiences and feelings – by listening to their Story. I must therefore do a reasonably competent spiritual assessment. How do they understand The Holy and how do they relate - and not relate - to GOD? What kind of Support systems do they have - family, friends, Faith Community? What is their understanding of Hope – what do they hope for

and where they place their hope in? What is their sense of Meaning – or lack of it - in the midst of their difficulties?<sup>39 40</sup>

#### **4. SPIRITUAL CARE AND RELIGIOUS CARE**

Although not all those I minister to want or need Religious Care from me as a Chaplain, virtually everyone I care for as a Chaplain has Spiritual Care needs. This makes it possible, if people desire, for me to minister to virtually everyone I meet as a Chaplain from our common humanity. This mindset opens so many doors to me when people feel that I am first concerned about them as people.

The Nursing Diagnosis of “Spiritual Well-Being” helpful: 1. Connectedness to self: The expression of “hope, meaning and purpose in life, peace and serenity, acceptance, surrender, love, forgiveness of self, [a] satisfying philosophy of life, joy, courage, heightened coping and meditation.” 2. Connectedness to others: Doing for others, interaction with spiritual leaders, the seeking of forgiveness of others and of relationships with friends and family. 3. Connectedness to the humanities: Appreciation of art, music, literature and nature. A creative spiritual life energy that celebrates higher human pursuits and appreciates the created world. 4. Connectedness to a power greater than self: Prayer, mystical experiences, religious activities and reverence and awe of The Divine.<sup>41</sup>

My Spiritual Care informs my Religious Care of people: Who are they? What is their Story? What kind of history have they been through - medical, personal and family? What happy and shattering experiences have they had? What experiences are they going through now? What are they feeling now? What do they need to feel safe enough to share from their heart? What is their agenda and how can I help get those things met?

#### **5. FROM THERAPEUTIC TO HEALING LISTENER**

I have experienced a marked shift from being first a “therapeutic listener” to being first a “healing listener.” James Miller says of the first, that it is goal centered, “to nurse, serve or cure” the client,” to find solutions to life issues. But of the second, that it is being-with-the-other centered, to “...listen not to [primarily] help someone but... [more so] to be with someone... perhaps to approach understanding them,” to break through feelings of painful aloneness. I use healing listening, not so that I can offer “...insight or advice to another, but so that wisdom can be explored and insight revealed through that person’s words, thoughts and feelings...” Healing listening means “to make whole,” and thus “...affirm the belief that they can become more complete as they express and claim what they have within them to say...”<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> 5, Mount Carmel Medical Center, Pastoral Care Department, “Spiritual Assessment Instrument.” 1989. 1.) “The Holy” – Religion, Spirituality; 2.) “Community” – Family, Friends, Faith community; 3.) “Hope” – hope for; hope in; 4.) “Meaning” – making sense of situation.

<sup>40</sup> 6, “Chaplaincy Services Department, Chaplain’s Orientation Manual,” The Reading Hospital Medical Center, West Reading, Pennsylvania, 2008, p 12. “The Mount Carmel Model for Spiritual Assessment – Meaning Making; Sustaining Hope; Community Support; Concept of GOD.”

<sup>41</sup> 7, Nursing Diagnosis Handbook, “Spiritual well-being,” Defining Characteristics, p 1154.

<sup>42</sup> 8, Miller, “The Art of Listening in a Healing Way,” p 13, paragraphs 2-3.

## **6. BALANCE OF PASTORAL CARE STYLES**

I have developed a reasonably balanced pastoral care style across the following, all of which I value as a Chaplain:<sup>43</sup> 1.) Theologically-centered: I see and carry out my care as a good shepherd, as The Lord is The Good Shepherd to us His people. I look for how GOD is Present and working in each situation and offer to help people find His hand in the midst of their difficulties. 2.) Proclamation-centered: I hold The Word of GOD in very high regard. I see my duty in the care of souls to, in some way and form, speak a Divine Truth of GOD's Word. My model is of a gentle and empathetic Preacher who sits beside those in distress, rather than one thundering from a pulpit.

3.) Relationship-centered: I highly value being in relationship with those I care for and work with as a Chaplain. I seek to be a trusted friend and compassionate companion, offering acceptance, hospitality and understanding. 4.) Health-centered: Although I constantly use my clinical skills of doing professional spiritual assessments, this does not overtly show at the bedside. I observe and analyze those in my care without them knowing that I am doing so.

## **IV. IMAGES AND METAPHORS THAT INFORM A PRACTICE OF MINISTRY**

### **1. THE GOOD SAMARITAN**

"Am I my brother's keeper?" Cain asked GOD of Abel.<sup>44</sup> The answer, "Yes!" If I love GOD, I must love my neighbor. Who is my neighbor? Everyone. JESUS tells of a Good Samaritan man who saw a stranger lying on the roadside half dead, a victim of robbers. The holy men of that day did not stop to help. But this foreigner did. We read in LUKE 10:30-37 that he cleansed and bound up the man's wounds. He lifted him up upon his own animal. He brought him to an inn and cared for him. He covered the cost of care for this man out of his own pocket. The Good Samaritan cared for the one suffering with Mercy.<sup>45</sup>

I am called to cleanse and bind up the wounds of strangers. With GOD's help, I lift my neighbors up with my own hands. I bring the suffering to a place where they may receive care. And though my Master is The One Who has paid the price on behalf of those I minister to, I am called to dispense His care with Mercy. As a hospital Chaplain, I am a Good Samaritan.

### **2. THE WOUNDED HEALER**

I possess a strong sense of empathy with people who are suffering. Because of my own wounds, their healing and my understanding of my own woundedness, I am a model of Henry Nouwen's "Wounded Healer."<sup>46</sup> There are my own personal wounds. There are the wounds of the common human condition. There are the wounds of the Minister struggling to be relevant and effective in an increasingly secularized society. These breed a particular wound of pastoral loneliness which I embrace, so that I can be a healing balm for the wounds of others.

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<sup>43</sup> 9, Praamsma, "Your Pastoral Care Profile," p 1-5.

<sup>44</sup> 2, NAB, GENESIS 4:9.

<sup>45</sup> 2, NAB, LUKE 10:30-37.

<sup>46</sup> 10, Dykstra, "Images of Pastoral Care," Henry Nouwen, "The Wounded Healer," p 79, paragraph 6 – p 80.

“For a deep understanding of his own pain makes it possible for... [the Minister] to convert his weakness into strength and to offer his own experience as a source of healing to those who are often lost in the darkness of their own misunderstood sufferings.”<sup>47</sup> My wounds – and their healing - help me to feel and show understanding of the wounds in others as a Christian, a pastoral caregiver and as a human being. As a hospital Chaplain, I am a Wounded Healer.

### **3. SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI**

When Saint Francis of Assisi sent his Monks out to minister, he is said to have instructed them, “Go forth and preach The Gospel of CHRIST at all times. And when necessary, use words!”<sup>48</sup> To be instruments and vessels of GOD’s Peace to those in turmoil and fear is the image I take from Saint Francis to the hospital bedside as a Chaplain. I pray the words of this prayer, sometimes out loud, sometimes silently and always in my preaching of The Gospel in my actions.

“Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is doubt, Faith. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. And where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned. And it is in dying unto Thee, O CHRIST, that we are reborn to eternal life...!”<sup>49</sup> As a hospital Chaplain, I am a Saint Francis of Assisi.

### **4. THE GOOD SHEPHERD**

This Image of GOD as our Eternal Good Shepherd, as in PSALM 23, brings to mind that He is always near, that His Love is unending and that His Mercy is without limit. JESUS CHRIST, as The Eternal Good Shepherd Incarnate, laid down His life for us His sheep. As a Chaplain, I am called to lay down my life in His Name for the sheep placed in my pastoral care. JESUS says in JOHN 10:11, “I am The Good Shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”<sup>50</sup>

If it is the desire of those I care for, it is my task to accompany and direct GOD’s sheep to The Sheep Gate. JESUS says in JOHN 10:9-10, “I am The Gate. Whoever enters through Me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture... I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly.”<sup>51</sup> As a good shepherd in His Name, my presence with those who are hurting is a reminder that GOD is always close at hand to claim His people for Himself, to guide and protect, to shelter them under His watchful eye. PSALM 100:5, “Good indeed is The LORD, Whose love endures forever, Whose faithfulness lasts through every age!”<sup>52</sup> As a hospital Chaplain, I am a Good Shepherd.

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<sup>47</sup> 10, Ibid., p 1, paragraph 5.

<sup>48</sup> 11, Kiefer, “Francis of Assisi, Friar,” p 1, paragraph 5.

<sup>49</sup> 12, Attributed to Saint Francis, “Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi.”

<sup>50</sup> 2, NAB, JOHN 10:11.

<sup>51</sup> 2, NAB, JOHN 10:9-10.

<sup>52</sup> 2, NAB, PSALM 100:5.

## **V. BARRIERS INHIBITING GOD'S WORK & HOW THEY ARE OVERCOME**

### **1. LACK OF RESPECT OF MEN FOR THEIR FELLOW MAN**

Lack of respect of men for their fellow man stems from man's loss of respect for GOD and His Laws. We see this in a loss of respect for human dignity. If men do not respect The Creator, they will have no reason to respect the created – including one another – beyond mere self interest. So human life becomes cheap. Human value becomes degraded. Human purpose becomes separated from Eternal Purpose. Good becomes relative. Institutions become corrupted. And the blood of the innocent cries out from the ground to GOD. <sup>53</sup>

The correction is in men recognizing the existence and sovereignty of GOD. In keeping The First Great Commandment - to love GOD – we must then keep The Second - to love one another. <sup>54</sup> Thus “The Golden Rule” of Moral Conduct from Judaism and Christianity, as Saint Matthew records The Words of JESUS CHRIST in MATTHEW 7:12, “Do to others whatever you would have them do to you. This is [the sum of] The Law and the prophets.” <sup>55</sup> As a hospital Chaplain, I am called to set an example of respect for my fellow man.

### **2. LACK OF CONNECTEDNESS OF MEN TO THEIR FELLOW MAN**

Lack of connectedness of men to their fellow man arises from forgetting that, even when there is little to no common Religious connectedness with others, there is always Spiritual connectedness to one another. But when our hearts harden towards those that believe differently than we do, we loose sight of the common humanity we share with our neighbors. This gives permission for men to abuse their fellow man.

The correction is in first seeing our own spiritual needs in others, even if we can not see The Image of GOD in those that are different from ourselves. The Image of GOD. <sup>56</sup> The Nursing Diagnosis of “Spiritual well-being” offers 4 points of common human spirituality, which is the finding of “...meaning and purpose in life through connectedness with self, others, art-music-literature... [and] a power greater than oneself.” <sup>57</sup> If we can not have Charity for one another for CHRIST's Sake, we can at least have empathy for one another for humanity's sake. As a hospital Chaplain, I am called to remind others of our common spiritual connectedness.

### **3. LACK OF FORGIVENESS OF MEN FOR THEIR FELLOW MAN**

Lack of forgiveness of men for their fellow man arises from the blindness that answers in error the question, “Is there any among us who is perfect? I am!” Let that man take a closer look in the mirror! Loss of the knowledge of GOD brings a loss of the awareness of GOD's Mercy and Forgiveness offered to us. And if we don't feel we need Divine Mercy and Forgiveness, our hearts are less inclined to offer a part of such forgiveness to others who may wound or offend us.

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<sup>53</sup> 2, NAB, GENESIS 4:10.

<sup>54</sup> 2, NAB, MATTHEW 22:36-40.

<sup>55</sup> 2, NAB, MATTHEW 7:12.

<sup>56</sup> 2, NAB, GENESIS 1:27.

<sup>57</sup> 7, Nursing Diagnosis Handbook, “Spiritual well-being,” Definition, p 1153.

The correction is recognizing, as Saint Paul says in ROMANS 3:23, “All have sinned and are... [fallen short] of The Glory of GOD.”<sup>58</sup> Knowing that we all shall stand before The Judgement Seat of GOD,<sup>59</sup> and that GOD forgives us as we forgive those who have offended us,<sup>60</sup> are sobering thoughts. We are so indebted to our Heavenly Father for His Mercy, when we confess and repent of our sins. Therefore our hearts must be open in Mercy to others. As a hospital Chaplain, I am called to facilitate the finding and giving of forgiveness between people and GOD and one another.

#### **4. LACK OF HOSPITALITY OF MEN FOR THEIR FELLOW MAN**

Lack of hospitality of men for their fellow man flows from insensitivity to the stranger who is our neighbour. Lack of hospitality to the stranger, the widow, the orphan, the suffering and the dying runs rampant where men have no mercy for others or for themselves. In a self-centered materialistic culture that treats people as disposable ends for gratifying self, this should come as no surprise.

The correction is in having compassion for others, especially for those who are vulnerable and in need. As we read in HEBREWS 13:1-2, “Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels.”<sup>61</sup> As a hospital Chaplain, I am called to set an example of hospitality to those in need.

#### **5. LACK OF CARING OF MEN FOR THEIR FELLOW MAN**

Lack of caring of men for their fellow man results from a materialistic worldview divorced from the spiritual, which can not help but result in people using one another as consumer commodities. The disease evidences itself when men see other men as mere disposable “things” to be used, absorbed, digested and the remnants thrown away. It is the epitome of Self over GOD and neighbour.

The correction is embodied in such Faith Traditions as The Catholic Teaching on “Works of Mercy,” both spiritual and physical, which testifies to The Love of GOD working in the midst of cruelty and want. The Spiritual: to admonish sinners; to instruct the uninformed; to counsel the doubtful; to comfort the sorrowful; to be patient with those in error; to foster forgiveness as The Lord forgives us; to pray for the living and the dead.<sup>62</sup> The Physical: to give drink to the thirsty; to clothe the naked; to shelter the homeless; to visit the imprisoned; to visit the sick; to bury the dead.<sup>63</sup> As a hospital Chaplain, I am called to care for others in Works of Mercy, testifying to The Love of GOD in our midst.

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<sup>58</sup> 2, NAB, ROMANS 3:23.

<sup>59</sup> 2, NAB, ROMANS 14:9-13.

<sup>60</sup> 2, NAB, LUKE 11:2-4.

<sup>61</sup> 2, NAB, HEBREWS 13:1-2.

<sup>62</sup> 13, Kosicki “I Demand Deeds of Mercy,” p 13, “Spiritual Works of Mercy.”

<sup>63</sup> 13, Ibid., p 13, “Corporal Works of Mercy.”

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