

Building a Missionary Parish Part I



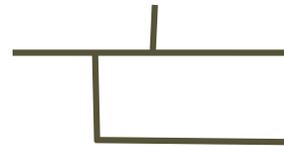


Caravaggio 'The Call of Matthew'

Too busy - Iso gashii



Heart



Destruction

Jesus said to his apostles, “Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure ... And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves.



Matthew 11:28-29

Creation as a **Sacrament** of God

Gerard Manley Hopkins : God's Grandeur (1877)

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reckon his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs –
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and ah! bright wings.

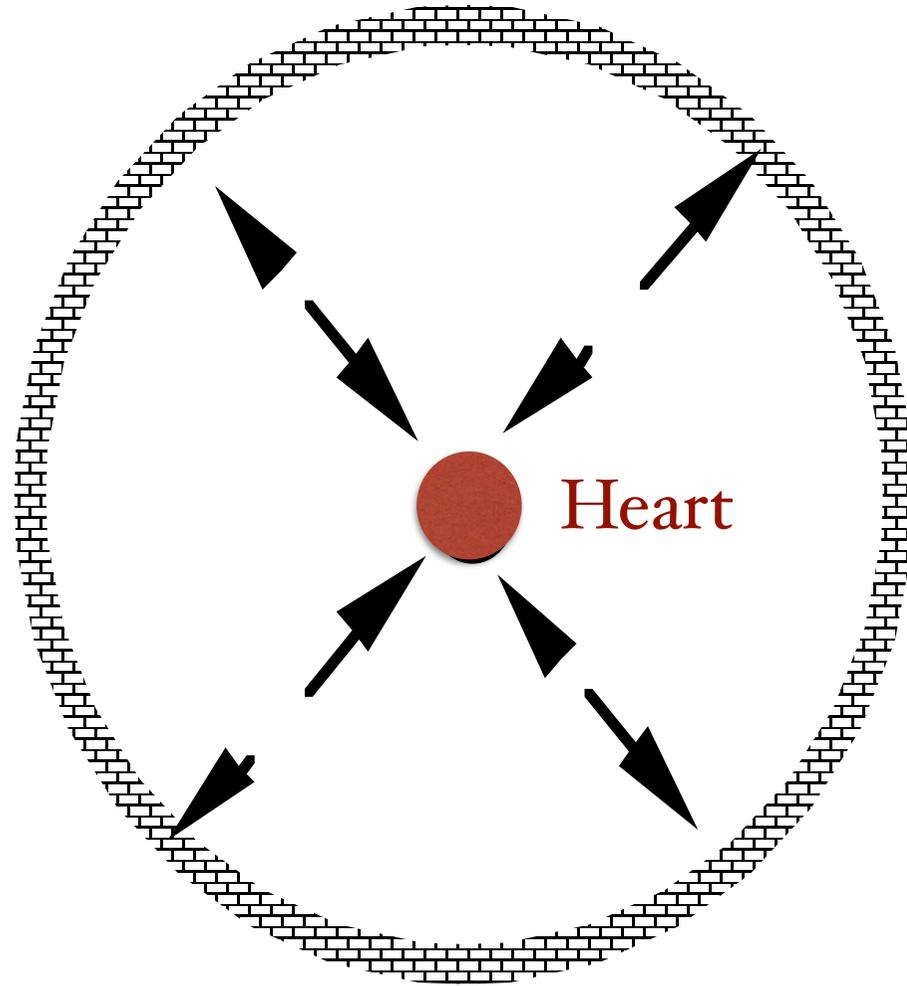
Eyes to see



- Michelangelo

Religious

Experience



Re + ligare To bind back



Jesus is THE **Sacrament** of God

‘The **Word** became flesh
and lived among us,
and we have seen his glory,
the glory as of a father’s only son,
full of grace and truth ...

From his fullness
we have all received,
grace upon grace’ (John 1:14,16).

‘He whom God has sent speaks
the words of God, for he gives the
Spirit without measure.’ (John 3:34)

The Church is THE **Sacrament** of Jesus

his 'body' in the world,
living the life given to us by his Spirit –
the Spirit he shares with the Father.



Tintoretto 1592

Bernard Lonergan SJ Philosophy of God and Theology 1973

The person does not come first.

What comes first is the community.

It is within community
through the way persons relate
that the individual person emerges.

Since persons are the products of community,
and since the strongest and best of communities is based on love,
religious experience and the emergence of personality
go hand in hand.

‘The joys and the hopes,
the griefs and the anxieties
of the men and women of this age,
especially those who are in any way afflicted,
these are the joys and hopes,
the griefs and anxieties
of the followers of Christ.

Indeed nothing genuinely human
fails to raise an echo in their hearts,
for theirs is a community composed of men and women.

United in Christ,
they are led by the Holy Spirit in their journey
to the kingdom of their Father
and they have welcomed **the news of salvation
which is meant for everyone**’(n. 1).

The 'Catholic' Church: All-embracing

Paul VI announcing the Secretariat for Non-Christians, Pentecost 1966

'To take away from the Church its qualification of "catholic" would mean to change its face, the face Christ wants and loves; it would mean to go against the ineffable intention of God who wanted to make the Church the expression of his unbounded love for mankind.

Pope Paul VI speaks of how small the human heart can be, and goes on:

‘But when the name “catholic” becomes an interior reality,
all egoism is overcome,
all class struggle develops into full social solidarity,
all nationalism is reconciled with the good of the world community,
all racism is condemned,
and all totalitarianism is unmasked in its inhumanity.
The small heart has been broken open or, better,
acquires a completely new capacity to expand.
As Saint Augustine says: ‘Let the space for love be widened’.

‘A catholic heart means a heart with universal dimensions: a heart that has overcome its basic narrowness that prevents us listening to our calling towards supreme love.

It means a magnanimous heart, an ecumenical heart, a heart capable of embracing the whole world.

This does not make it a heart that is indifferent to the truth of things or to sincerity of words. It does not mistake goodness for weakness, nor does it confuse peace with cowardice or apathy.

It lives the marvellous synthesis of St. Paul: ‘Doing the truth in love’(Ephesians 4:15).’

‘Catholic’ is not a brand name

We are to reverence and respect the unique mystery of each person’s experience and the many ways in which people’s experience is expressed culturally.

Unity	not	Uniformity
Communion	not	Conformity

‘Make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace’(Ephesians 4:3).

Pope Francis: 'The Joy of the Gospel'

'When properly understood, cultural diversity is not a threat to Church unity. The Holy Spirit, sent by the Father and the Son, transforms our hearts and enables us to enter into the perfect communion of the blessed Trinity, where all things find their unity. He builds up the communion and harmony of the people of God. The same Spirit is that harmony, just as he is the bond of love between the Father and the Son. It is the Spirit who brings forth a rich variety of gifts, while at the same time creating a unity which is never uniformity but a multifaceted and inviting harmony. Evangelization joyfully acknowledges these varied treasures which the Holy Spirit pours out upon the Church. We would not do justice to the logic of the incarnation if we thought of Christianity as monocultural and monotonous' (n. 117).

The Church's mission is to share (with everyone who wants to listen) the Good News of what Jesus revealed about God

about the meaning of life

about how we can best live to the full.

A truly 'Catholic' community

- open to embrace every person in his or her uniqueness
- open to welcome each person's gifts and insights
- open to respect each person's freedom

‘While preserving unity in essentials,
let everyone in the Church,
according to the office entrusted to them,
preserve a proper freedom
in the various forms of spiritual life and discipline,
in the variety of liturgical rites,
and even in the theological elaborations of revealed truth.
In all things let charity prevail.
If they are true to this course of action,
they will be giving ever richer expression
to the authentic catholicity and apostolicity of the Church.’

Unity not Uniformity

Communion not Conformity

Imperfect belonging to the Body of Christ

- We are all imperfect in Faith, Hope and Love
- We all belong to a community that does not fully acknowledge all parts of the Catholic Tradition
- We are all called to constant repentance, to open our hearts to let Christ live more and more in us.
- We are all called to draw nearer to Jesus, and so to each other, and so to mutual enrichment

We are to create communities that live the love that filled Jesus' heart and to invite people to share this experience.

The Church is not given a mission to control or force.

The Church is only to present and attract,

leaving people free to accept or reject,

for that is the nature of love.

That is the nature of God as revealed by Jesus.

Respect for people's experience and freedom

- Central to the mission of the Church is respect and reverence for each and every person

for the ways in which God is acting in their lives

and the ways in which, whether they realise it or not, they are responding to grace.

This means respecting people's freedom as to how they choose to respond to the Good News that we never cease to offer them.

‘I have come that you may live, and live to the full’(John 10:10)

Mature persons are **generative**. That is, they are able to spend their life in creative communion which is life-giving both to themselves and to those with whom they relate.

To be generative, a person must have experienced **intimacy**: the kind of loving and being loved which is experienced as being the fruit of being deeply known and accepted by another whom we intimately know and accept.

To be truly intimate one must have a sense of one’s personal **identity**: a sense of self that is experienced as being affirmed by another who is significant to us.

Finding our identity within the church

Treasured Possession : segullâ

‘If you obey my voice and keep my covenant,
you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples’(Exodus 19:5).

‘YHWH has chosen Jacob for himself,
Israel as his treasured possession’(Psalm 135:4).

‘They shall be mine, says YHWH of hosts,
my treasured possession’(Malachi 3:17).

‘You are a people holy to YHWH your God;
YHWH your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on earth
to be his people, his treasured possession’(Deuteronomy 7:6; 14:2).

‘Today YHWH has obtained your agreement: to be his treasured people,
as he promised you, and to keep his commandments’(Deuteronomy 26:18).

As regards what we present in our communities, the 1994 Catechism of the Catholic Church quotes with approval a statement from the Preface to the Roman Catechism published in 1566, just after the Council of Trent:

‘The whole concern of doctrine and its teaching must be directed to the love that never ends. Whether something is proposed for belief, for hope or for action, the love of our Lord must always be made accessible, so that anyone can see that all the works of perfect Christian virtue spring from love and have no other objective than to arrive at love.’

‘I have come to cast fire on the earth,
and how I wish it were blazing already’(Luke 12:49).

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin SJ in an essay on purity of love wrote:

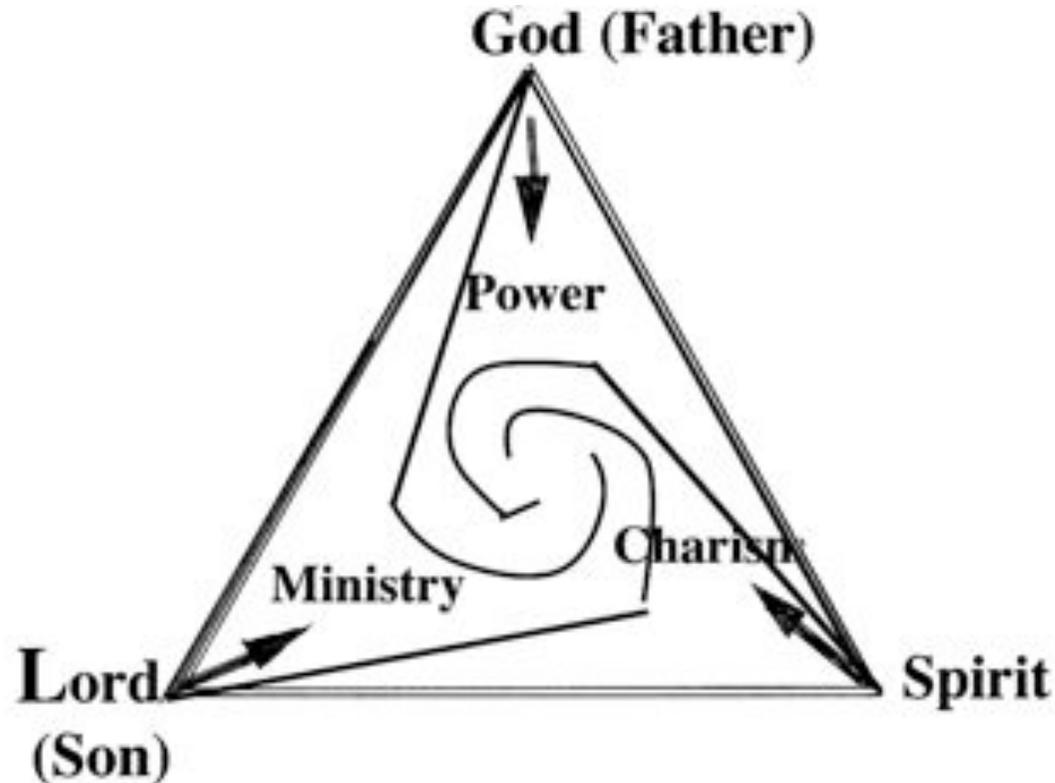
‘Some day, after harnessing space, the winds,
the tides and gravitation,
we shall harness for God the energies of Love.
And then, for the second time
in the history of the world,
we shall have discovered fire.’



Tintoretto 1592

1 Corinthians 12:4-7

there are varieties of ways of exercising power [energema]
but it is the same God who activates them all in everyone.



there are varieties of ministries
[diakonia]
but the same Lord;

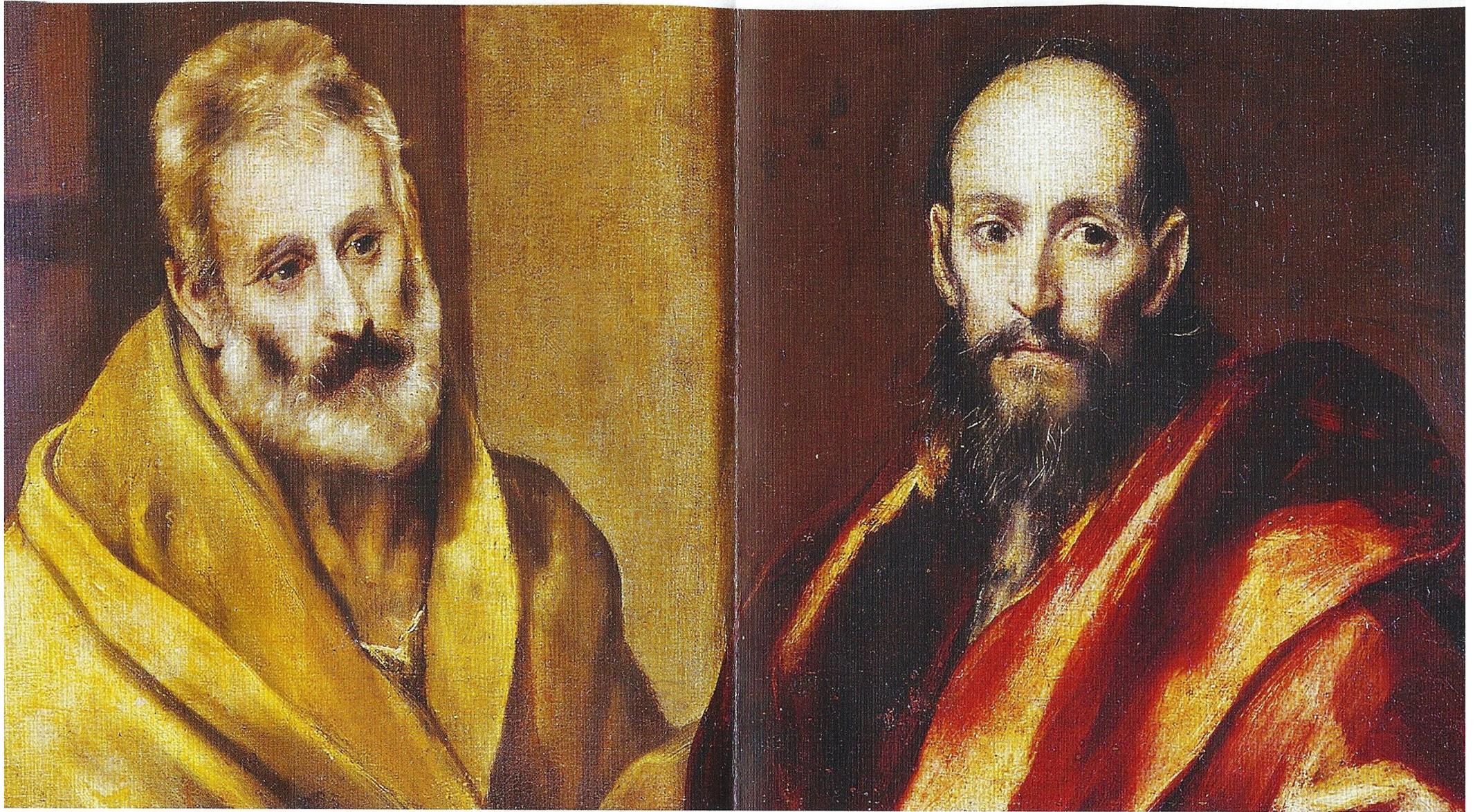
‘There are varieties of gifts
[charisma]
but the same Spirit;

Mark 12:41-44

The widow's mite



Caravaggio 'The Call of Matthew'



El Greco (Theotokopulos, Domenico 1541-1614): Saints Peter and Paul (detail). St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum. © 2013. Photo Scala, Florence



Open my eyes, Lord