



JUNG AND CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

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I would like to start by sharing with you the vision of our soul, or deeper self, in Christ, from the writings of St Teresa of Avila –

'The soul is innately as capable of sharing in this divine light as a crystal is in reflecting the radiance of the sun. All streams flowing forth from a clear spring are also clear. So it is with a soul in grace. Planted like a tree in the spring of life, her deeds delight both the human and the divine. If it were not for this spring sustaining the tree and keeping it from drying up, there would be no cool shade, no sweet fruit. This fountainhead that shines like the sun from the centre of the soul never loses its radiance. It is ever-present within the soul and nothing can diminish its beauty'

(Teresa of Avila, Interior Castle, 1, 2)

In this talk, I will be exploring three particular themes –

- Firstly, how Jungian (or depth psychology), I believe, is increasingly important in revitalising Christian spirituality today,
- Secondly, exploring some of the similarities and differences between Jungian psychology and the Christian contemplative tradition.
- Thirdly, exploring two ways of thinking, or two ways of knowing

I am convinced that Jungian (or depth psychology) is increasingly important in revitalising Christian spirituality today. Several contemporary Christian authors regard Jung's most important contribution was his essentially pastoral response to counter the corrosive and personally debilitating effects of modernity on the psyche (Ulanov and Dueck, pg 8). As modern secular psychology is generally unable to contain, and relate to, the importance of mystery, paradox, ambiguity and contradiction, Jungian psychology tends to value, and respect, a much wider spectrum of psychological/subjective states and attempts to integrate them into a coherent theoretical, developmental and psychospiritual understanding of growth, maturation, integration and wholeness.

In particular, the symbols of religion, particularly the Christian symbols, were a major preoccupation throughout the life and work of Jung, and is integral to his depth psychology - where he was attempting to show the psychic roots of religion and the psychological relevance of Christianity, with his epistemology diverse enough to emphasise the existence, and reality, of unseen factors indirectly, via our subjective experience of feelings, dreams, symbols of transformation, fantasies, imagination, intuitions, hunches, awe and dread.

At the heart of Jung's work was his lifelong exploration of the psychology of the *homo religious*, which means that we are hardwired for belief, and immersion, in God's love and presence. In this regard, one of his central contributions was the recognition and value that he accorded the 'religious function' of the psyche – the innate religious urge which he regarded as an inborn need of the psyche which, he firmly believed, could not be neglected or violated without grave injury to psychic health and well-being, particularly in the second half of life.

His particular interest and emphasis lay in what he regarded as the central role of experience, or encounter, with the numinous, sacred, the Holy Spirit or with all that is holy, as one of the authentic ways to a renewed faith in, and sense of, connection to the transcendent reality, or God, for many individuals in our modern times. His main concern was to present a psychology of life integration and wholeness, and particularly wanted the religious dimension of the psyche - the quest and longing for God, the sacred or holy to be seen as absolutely natural and innate, as a 'fact' of the psyche, rather than as supernatural or as an object of 'belief'.

Spiritual Revolution in the Modern World

His treatment of religion may look disrespectful to some, but underneath he saw himself as an alchemist in the laboratory of faith, consisting in creatively exploring new postmodern expressions of the eternal religious spirit (Tacey, 2007).

He viewed his depth psychology as providing an essentially modern psychological bridge between traditional Christian dogma and doctrine and authentic and healing human experiences and encounters with the holy, the numinous or the Holy Spirit. He was convinced that man's perennial religious impulse would rise again in self and society in new and creative ways, and his explorations took him back to the ancient past and the late medieval period, and forward to the world yet to be born.

He knew that profound changes were happening both in society and in the psyche of modern men and women, and that fresh and new expressions of religion were both necessary and in the making. Of course, what Jung was looking forward to, and was prophetically writing about, in the 1940's and 1950's is now happening in many quarters in our postmodern world, as a quiet spirituality revolution (Tacey, 2004). This is, often, not always religion in traditional forms, but religion in the sense of mythos, journey or sacred story - as a searching for, and re-connection to, all that is holy, and for Christians, how our individual life is part of, binds and conforms us to the human, and divine, life of Jesus in ever more life giving and transformative ways.

In this regard, over the past few decades, many people have become more psychologically and spiritually aware, and are awakening to self-consciousness - and many are returning to, and re-exploring, their Christian roots in different, exciting and challenging ways through engaging in new movements of religious reform and renewal and seeking to deepen their understanding, and practice, of Christian meditation and contemplative prayer. Many of these new currents are well documented and are known as the spirituality revolution (Tacey, 2004), the great emergence (Tickle, 2008), new monasticism (Karper, 2008), wisdom schooling (Bourgealt 2003) or the movement towards the contemplative, or unitive, mind (Rohr, 2003, 2009).

Individuation, Integration and Spirituality

Jung's other vital contribution was his vocation as healer of the soul, and his depth psychology is basically a psychology of healing of psychic disturbance, which he states clearly in a late letter – *'I am simply a psychiatrist, for my essential problem, to which all my efforts are directed, is psychic disturbance: its phenomenology, its aetiology, and teleology. Everything else is secondary for me.'* (Jung, Letters, Vol 2) The main thrust of his psychology was to articulate, and describe, from his working with thousands of people for over fifty years, the way of healing of human neuroses.

He called it the journey of individuation, the integration of psychological opposites where unconscious material is raised to consciousness and is incorporated by it. Individuation is, in a way, a rounding off of the psyche and is therefore often symbolised, in art and dreams, by mandala patterns – where we can become a separate undivided conscious unity, a distinct whole, first by unifying ego consciousness, and then the whole psychic system of conscious and unconscious, in order to approach wholeness. In his writings, C.G. Jung emphasized that the process of individuation is mainly a psychological one, and not a spiritual one.

From a Christian perspective, usually our psychological journey towards individuation and integration can't really be separated from our spiritual journey of prayer and longing in our heart and soul to be immersed in God's love and real community, and when we generally use the term 'soul', 'true self', or 'essence', we are including what we would call 'psyche'. All experienced phenomena can be expected to have at least some connections with unconscious psychodynamics and these connections are neither good nor bad in and of themselves. It is only on considering their fruits – their effects upon the experienced, lived and expressed life of the person – that we can begin to appreciate and appraise their true value.

Since we come to know God through our psyche, we must be prepared to heal and transform all the muck of our own interior stable in which the divine can be born. Inherited with the pure gracious gift of God's self are the unacceptable parts of our lives that get attached to our views of God and ourselves. In our journey towards the centre of ourselves and beyond, the way deepens and darkens as it progresses, and as soon as we turn towards the interior world of self-reflection, self-knowledge, self-awareness, meditation, and prayer, we usually encounter whole dimensions of ourselves that have previously been unconscious, hidden and unknown.

In modern psychological terms, these are called the 'shadow' parts of the psyche (Jung, CW9/2, pg 8-11), which describes all of our psychic contents that have been driven back into the unconscious: all the neglected, undeveloped, unacknowledged parts of our personality which need to be constantly recognised and accepted, so as to be dissolved and transformed – 'made new' – by God's love, throughout our psychological, and deeper prayer journey. (McLean, 2003) It is a mysterious paradox that the place of our greatest pain, vulnerability and powerlessness is the door through which our heart can be so broken that it forces us to turn away from the outer world and trace the thread of our own darkness back to our source in God.

So, conscious and unconscious stand in a reciprocal , dynamic relationship; out of the unconscious rise contents and images, and they show themselves to the conscious mind as though secretly asking to be grasped and understood, so that 'birth' may be accomplished and 'being' created. So, the aim of the individuation process is a synthesis of all partial aspects of our conscious and unconscious. It seems to point to an ultimately unknowable, transcendent 'centre' of the personality, which Jung calls the Self (or our soul), which is always there, as the central, archetypal, structural element of the psyche, operating as the organizer and director of all psychic processes.

The symbol of the quaternity, usually in the form of the square, is one of the oldest symbols, besides the circle, of the self, which symbolizes all the parts, qualities, and aspects of unity (Jung, CW11, para 98 - 102). These 'uniting symbols' most vividly represent the fundamental order of the psyche, the union of its polaristic qualities, and are the prime symbols of the self and of psychic wholeness. Jung called them the 'atomic nuclei' of the psyche, representing the *coincidentia oppositorum*, or union of opposites, in particular of conscious and unconscious contents, and transcend rational understanding.

Symbols of Transformation

Symbols of transformation are an important part of psychological and spiritual growth, development and maturation, particularly in times of profound transition, threshold, crises and change. Jungian psychology asserts that mental concepts and processes alone often fail to grasp psychological and spiritual realities as a whole, so our psyche is often driven to use symbols, images and metaphors. This is because they speak to our whole person – to our mind, heart, senses, memories, body, experiences and imagination – and have the capacity to engage us more fully than mental concepts alone (Jung, CW5).

Throughout his writings, Jung highlighted, and expanded on, two important roles and functions of symbols, or the symbolic life, or function, in our psychological and spiritual life. Firstly, symbols can provide an integrative, healing function, which have the capacity to unite, connect and heal the many disparate, dissociated and unconscious parts of ourselves. In this way, symbols can allow a different way of holding, reflecting on and expressing a spiritual wisdom that often cannot be articulated in words alone. Here, symbols and images can act as mediators – as integrating, unifying agents - between the known and conscious parts of ourselves and the unknown, unconscious parts.

Living, dynamic symbols have the power to unite and transcend psychological opposites, which can lead to new syntheses and integration at deeper levels of our being. Thus the development and use of what is called, in psychological terms, 'symbolic thinking' or the 'symbolic function' can help and assist in the growth, development and synthesis of new understandings and new perspectives, where, simultaneously, different aspects and points of view which were not previously accessible have the possibility of becoming more available and integrated.

Secondly, symbols provide a transformative and transcending function. Symbols are figurative constellations which point beyond themselves to a more objective spiritual reality. Jung described, in some detail, the dynamic role of living symbols as facilitating fundamental change and transition of attitude and perspective, which he described as the transcendent function of symbols, which is psyches symbol making capacity, of its creative power, the process of transformation to new attitudes and perspectives and paths to psychic renewal. The transcendent function is one of the central tenets of Jung's model of psychological growth through dialogue with the unconscious with application both as a vital clinical tool, understanding the workings and dynamics of everyday life with profound spiritual implications. (Miller, 2004)

In relation to some of the more familiar and dynamic Christian symbols of transformation, St Teresa, in her famous text on contemplative prayer, 'The Interior Castle', used a creative, living and dynamic mix of many and varied symbols and metaphors to convey meaning and understanding of the deeper dimensions of our contemplative journey of prayer towards 'union with Christ' - at different times within her writings, she describes the soul as a garden, a tree, a castle and a butterfly. She also used a whole range of other imagery, such as fountains and water, to describe the spiritual journey and the action of the Holy Spirit in the life of the soul. In her own writings, she often seemed to move, effortlessly and spontaneously, between various symbolic representations of the dimensions and stages of the spiritual life, using different symbols and metaphors to suit her style of writing and unique expression of the life of prayer and the fruits of contemplation (McLean, 2003).

Similarities and differences between the Christian Contemplative tradition and Jungian Psychology

What is the Christian contemplative, or mystical tradition, and what is mystical theology, attempting to describe? Essentially, mysticism is describing the sort of knowledge of God that is obscure to the ordinary mind or the intellect. The meaning of 'mystical' lies in the Greek root 'mu-', which has to do with hiddenness, that which is closed or concealed to ordinary human consciousness. In his book *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition*, Professor Andrew Louth succinctly describes mysticism as –

'characterized as a search for, and experience of, immediacy with God. The mystic is not content to know about God, he longs for union with God. 'Union with God' can mean different things, from literal identity, where the mystic loses all sense of himself and is absorbed into God, to the union that is experienced as the consummation of love, in which the lover and the beloved remain intensely aware both of themselves and of the other.

How the mystics interpret the way and the goal of their quest depends on what they think about God, and that itself is influenced by what they experience: it is a mistake to try to make out that all mysticism is the same. Yet the search for God, or the ultimate, for His own sake, and an unwillingness to be satisfied with anything less than Him; the search for immediacy with this object of the soul's longing; this would seem to be the heart of mysticism.' (Louth, page xv)

One of the basic ideas in the western Christian mystical, or contemplative, tradition is that spiritual life moves through various classical stages - the triple way or threefold path is the ancient classical map of the Christian spiritual journey of transformation in Love towards mystical union. Although not as widely used today, this threefold concept has had considerable influence on the development of the Christian tradition. The threefold path refers to the stages of *purification or purgation, illumination and union*, and this classical division into purgative, illuminative and unitive stages was established by the early Christians and the Desert Fathers and Mothers of the 4th - 6th centuries. The tradition has survived most of the transitional differences and school polemics over the centuries - variations and subdivisions multiplied, but the core of the doctrine has remained the same for more than a thousand years (McGinn, 1990 – 2005).

This classical map and ancient tradition can be seen particularly through the mystical writings of the high middle ages and into the modern period. St Ignatius of Loyola (1491 –1556), St Teresa and St John all make use of this threefold path in

their writings. Ignatius relates the first week of his spiritual exercises to the way of purification, while weeks two and three correspond to that of illumination. Likewise, in Teresa's mystical text *The Interior Castle*, the first mansions refer to the state of purification, those in the middle to that of illumination and the final mansions to that of union. John's masterful exposition of the purgative way in his *Dark night of the soul* and *Ascent of Mount Carmel* are justly celebrated, while his *Spiritual canticle* and *Living Flame of Love* related more to the other two stages of illumination and union.

Similarities and differences

So, there are clear similarities and analogies between Jungian psychology and the Christian mystical tradition, as highlighted by the life and writings of St Teresa of Avila and St John of the Cross, as well as key divergences and differences. For both traditions, the immediate experience of the numinous, of the Holy Spirit, of the presence of God, or the perceiving of an originally hidden transcendent reality imminently in the soul, plays a pivotal role.

However, in general, Jung did not like to be regarded as a mystic: he preferred to be recognized as an empiricist, and thought of himself as a natural scientist. As a scientist and empiricist, he confined himself to the investigation of human assertions about the religious, about God, and grounded his psychology of religion on the interpretation and comparison of these facts. The metaphysical God, 'God Himself' remained untouched.

Jung's language and his scientific ideas also differed profoundly from the language of the mystical tradition - the mystics tend to concentrate on direct encounters with God, whereas these experiences were subjected by Jung to a critical examination. Analytical psychology tends to be limited to the observation and study of accessible archetypal images and contents that is, to our human, or psychological, assertions. That this background remains hidden does not, of course, reduce its significance. Quite the contrary – for Jung, precisely the inability to 'know' in this connection signified, in his own words, richness and a treasure that he sought always to preserve, and appeared to acknowledge when he reached the end of his empirical psychological knowledge, and the possible beginning of another deeper wisdom.

In this regard, there are tremendous similarities and analogies with the Christian mystical, or contemplative, tradition. In fact, Jung's writings contain much of

the psychological teaching of this ancient tradition transposed into the idiom of twentieth century psychology. In his concept of the Self, Jung shares the belief that God's presence lies within the centre of the soul, expressed from a psychological, rather than a mystical, perspective. His writings on the psyche contain much of the teaching of Christian spiritual direction and guidance from past centuries, in the idiom of modern depth psychology. Not only does Jung's account of the structure of the psyche match very closely the teaching in the mystical tradition, but the general depth psychotherapeutic method is similar too.

So, there are also significant overlaps – both lay great emphasis on increased consciousness, on increased self-knowledge, so that we can relate more objectively towards the world around us. In both traditions, what is going on below the level of our conscious thinking and agenda is explored and analysed, and instead of ignoring the signs and signals from the unconscious, we are encouraged to pay serious attention to our dreams, to waking fantasies and daydreams, and to our thoughts and impulses. We are encouraged to look at them consciously, to try to understand the unconscious wishes, drives, impulses and unknown parts of ourselves, to become aware of ourselves in depth. This very closely resembles the ancient injunction of spiritual direction in the Christian contemplative tradition to dwell in the cell of self-knowledge, in order to direct our surface attention constantly to the hidden motives underlying our conscious aims and actions, what is called 'dwelling in the room of self-knowledge.'

Two ways of thinking/ two ways of knowing

So, Jung's notion of the self was reaching to describe, intuitively and theoretically, a psychological dimension that was far exceeding the limits of individual's usual conscious self-awareness, identity, sense of self and experience of psychic reality. Jung's notion of the self stretches our psychological and ontological understanding *towards* the unknown within, *towards* the mystery of existence, *towards* the personal relation to, and encounters with, a transcendent reality, which is normally hidden from everyday awareness.

Indeed, the mystical writers down the centuries, and the Christian contemplative tradition in general, suggests that there are even deeper dimensions of experience that are able to be awakened and engaged, and that the individuation process is but a threshold, a transition, to another way of knowing. This deeper

spiritual journey in essence, is regarded as a continuation of the Jungian integration/individuation process, but on a deeper, or higher octave, so to speak.

In the ancient tradition, this is called a transition from, or threshold between, the 'journey towards God' to the 'journey in God'. From this wider spiritual perspective, individuation is not an end point in itself, but the completion of one journey and an arrival, a preparation for another, as yet unknown journey. This is well expressed by Jung, as quoted by Jacobi in her book, the *Way of Individuation* - 'one might say that in the course of the individuation process, a man or woman arrives at the entrance to the house of God. Whether he or she opens the door and penetrates to the inner sanctuary where the divine images are, this last step is left to him or her alone. (Jacobi, 1967)

Jung, himself, movingly writes of the beginning of this cusp between two ways of knowing, or the entrance to another way of knowing. Mystical knowledge, Jung claims, differs from ordinary knowledge in that it effects a transformation, and it is found not in the succession of images which pass across the imagination and from which we abstract our concepts, but by a penetration of the mind into the centre of its own being – in mystical experience that transforms, Jung writes, 'it is not that something different is seen, but that one sees differently. It is as though the spatial act of seeing were changed by a new dimension.' (Jung, CW11, para 890/891) And, Jung writes, this new way of seeing, this new dimension, is dependent on the birth of a new centre, which he called the self.

Here, Jung is referring to that important cusp, or transformation, between two ways of knowing or being, towards a more mystical or contemplative consciousness, towards union in the centre of the soul. The 14th century text the *Cloud of Unknowing* speaks of the 'the sovereign point of the spirit', called the *apex mentis* or the 'substance of the soul,' or 'the centre of the soul. St John of the Cross often speaks of the 'centre of the soul' e.g. In *Canticle*, I, 6: *And it is to be observed, if one would learn how to find this Spouse (as far as may be in this life), that the Word, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, is hidden essentially in the inmost centre of the soul.* Mystical union or the spiritual marriage was the primary metaphor of St Teresa to describe this mystical dimension. Among other major mystical categories are those of contemplation and the vision of God, deification, the birth of the Word in the soul, ecstasy, or radical obedience to Divine Will.

Whereas ordinarily we think horizontally, one image or concept being replaced by another, the language of the contemplatives indicates that mystical thought is vertical: it does not entail the acquisition of new ideas and concepts but is a descent into the darkness of one's own mind, void of images and conceptual thinking. This world of perpetual solitude' found by the descent into oneself, is the sovereign point of the spirit, the centre of ones being: it is the world of silence and stillness. In short, mystical knowledge does not move in successive images but spirals down into the depth of the soul to encounter God in the obscurity of silence.

This distinction between two ways of knowing or different forms of awareness has been described by Christian saints and mystics throughout the centuries. St Teresa and St John of the Cross use ways of speaking which have been employed by numerous mystics from St Augustine to the great Rhineland mystic Jan van Ruysbroeck that view the movement into the 'contemplative mind' as an interior movement not horizontally but vertically, not in space but in silence, not in motion but in rest, not in time but in timelessness. St Augustine speaks of a higher part of the mind reserved for the contemplation of God and a lower part of the mind that reasons.

Evagrius of Pontus, the fourth century monk and writer, is one of a host of contemplative writers to make an important distinction between the calculating, reasoning mind that makes use of concepts in a process we call discursive thought and that dimension of mind that comes to knowledge directly without the mediation of concepts, which he called *nous*, an intuitive spiritual intelligence. So when Evagrius defined prayer as '*communion of the mind with God*' he meant a dimension of our consciousness that runs deeper than discursive thought. St Thomas Aquinas took up this same distinction and, speaking for virtually the entire tradition, called the aspect of the mind that thinks and calculates 'lower reason' and the aspect of the mind that communes directly with God in contemplation 'higher reason'.(Laird, page 26).

Within the Christian Orthodox tradition, the contemplative dimension is known as *hesychia*, which is a term describing the quality of stillness and silence. (Kallistos Ware, page 89) The hesychast tradition describes these two types of knowing or understanding by distinguishing between what they traditionally call the mind and the heart. The term 'heart' refers to this nonconceptual form of knowing, what Augustine

and Aquinas later call 'higher reason'. In this tradition, the heart was not the seat of emotions (emotions would be located at roughly the same level as thoughts) but the deep centre of the person. The heart communes with God in a silent and direct way that the conceptual level of our mind does not.

Prayer of Recollection to Prayer of Quiet

This important cusp is described by St Teresa in the *Interior Castle* as the movement from the prayer of recollection to the prayer of quiet. In her description of the prayer of quiet and its evolution towards the deeper prayer of union, she uses the metaphor of Light, which is reaching out from the deep interior toward all the human faculties – our emotions, imagination, senses and intellect or reason', as a primary way to describe the approach of God toward the human being, when the Divine 'arms of love' are reaching out towards the human mind –

When His Majesty wishes the mind to rest from working He employs it in another manner, giving it a light and knowledge far above any obtainable by its own efforts and absorbing it entirely into Himself. Then, though it knows not how, it is filled with wisdom such, as it could never gain for itself by striving to suspend the thoughts. In this prayer of quiet, when the water flows from the spring itself and not through the conduits, the mind ceases to act; it is forced to do so, although it does not understand what is happening, and so wanders hither and thither in bewilderment, finding no place for rest.... Let the spirit ignore these distractions and abandon itself in the arms of Divine Love; His Majesty will teach it how best to act, which chiefly consists in its recognizing its unworthiness of so great a good and occupying itself in thanking Him for it. (Teresa of Avila, Interior Castle, IV, 3, 6-7)

The mystical tradition, as exemplified in the writings of St Teresa and St John, believe that there is a form of consciousness which goes beyond sense impressions, beyond the knowledge we can get from touching, smelling, seeing, tasting and handling, which has to do with essences and the inner being of things. This knowledge has to do with the core of our existence, and that is why it is so intensely intimate. It is also why the process of discovering it is can be also disturbing, because it forces us to confront the *silent core of our being*. Ultimately, it is divine knowledge, and we can participate in it if we are prepared to embark on the journey into stillness, into quiet, through entering an ascetical process of interior detachment and purification from attachments and identifications with sense impressions.

In personal terms, the fruit of this deeper journey is that we come to know our self in new ways, this knowledge coming from the Divine, and not from our ego-centric, perspective. So, it is really describing that cusp, or transition, when the

integration of the natural personality, or the process of individuation, has generally occurred, and a deeper process of spiritual transformation is underway. It is arguable whether depth psychology has yet evolved to the point where it can speak meaningfully about these deeper contemplative states of mind – that dimension of experience which lies beyond the familiar polarity of consciousness and unconsciousness.

It is important to clarify that for St Teresa (and St John of the Cross) their beginners are those souls who have already entered into a state of serving God, and so the realm of grace must be taken into account, and they are mainly writing for those further along the way. There is a well-known theological principle that *grace builds on nature* – if nature is in a mess then grace, as a rule, waits, for nature to be put in order before acting in a strong and paramount manner.

So, for Teresa, the journey of prayer, and wholeness and union with God, is a deepening journey of the heart to the innermost chambers where God's Divine Love, through Christ, infuses into, and unites with, the life of our soul. This is traditionally known as bridal mysticism, a deepening love affair where the bride is the soul and the bridegroom is Christ. Her experience and expression of contemplative spirituality throughout her writings are suffused with the language of symbols and imagery - describing the soul as a garden, a tree, a castle, a butterfly, and the action of the Holy Spirit through symbols of water and fountains. (McLean, page 74)

In Teresa's anthropology of the soul in the text, *The Interior Castle*, in order to distinguish mystical knowing from ordinary knowing, she separated the interior part of the soul, where supernatural objects are 'felt' and 'understood' from the exterior part, where merely natural sensation and knowing occurs. Teresa bases her anthropology on an interior/exterior division of the soul which she uses to show which operations are to be considered natural, and which, beyond that, are supernatural and mystical, using this division to differentiate ordinary knowing of the world from mystical knowing, as pertaining to different regions of the soul, called the exterior and the interior respectively. (Howells, page 71)

Teresa goes a long way towards developing a formal doctrine of the spiritual senses, in a tradition going back to Origen, and takes the view that there are two sets of senses in the soul, by which the soul 'feels' natural things and supernatural things separately, between what the soul feels in the interior and what it feels

materially in the bodily senses. For example, what the soul feels in the interior are 'spiritual impulses' which 'wound' the soul 'as though an arrow is thrust into the heart, feelings of pain, she says, which have no resemblance to bodily pain. She clearly describes the additional set of senses in the soul - *'it appears just as the soul has exterior senses; it also has other senses through which it seems to want to withdraw within itself, away from the exterior noise.'*

When the soul 'withdraws' within itself, which Teresa calls interior recollection, it uses 'other senses' as distinct from the 'exterior senses'. It is through these other senses 'within itself' that the soul attains 'communication with God in solitude'. Thus, the soul possesses two sets of senses, with two separate epistemological abilities associated with each of these sets - there is the ordinary sensory knowing ability through the exterior senses, and a parallel spiritual knowing ability through the interior senses. Just as the soul comes to feel and know things through the exterior senses, so it attains communication with God through a similar but distinct set of interior senses and operations. (Ibid, page 75)

She makes her own distinctions to show how the two kinds of knowing are related, introducing the symbolic figures of Mary and Martha to refer to this division in the soul. She explores the relationship between Mary and Martha as the analogy for the two parts of the soul – firstly, to emphasise the division in the soul caused by mystical transformation, and also looking forward to the final unity of the soul, in a unity patterned on Christ's union of natures and the distinction-within-unity of the persons of the Trinity.

In speaking about Martha and Mary, her aim is to show the two types of operations, relating to the interior and exterior of the soul respectively, are distinct, but also pointing to the possibility of their reconciliation: where the worldly-directed activity of Martha becomes fully consistent with the interior life of Mary, so that there is one unified operation of the soul in union, in which Mary and Martha 'work together'. This is the gradual development of division in the soul to unification, where the virtuous activity of Martha becomes completely unified with the interior life of Mary. (ibid, page 79)

Conclusion

The Christian contemplative tradition teaches us that the centre of the soul may be trusted, a centre which reveals itself as life giving, not annihilating, pointing not to our personal life alone but to the image of the crucified, and resurrected, Christ

as the symbol and reality that contains our whole life. Our Christian journey is graced by divine presence accompanied by emergence of the figure of Christ, where the movement towards the innermost chambers of the human heart in prayer, relationship and community is a response to His divine call of Love. This divine image not only expresses the growing intimacy with God, but also, as a psychological symbol, signals the emergence of a more completely individuated personality, a fuller realization of our true self. From this perspective, the writings of St Teresa of Avila, in particular the *Interior Castle*, are regarded as important documents of Christian individuation.

Not only is union with Christ a goal of St Teresa's journey through the castle, but Christ and the symbols of religion were a major preoccupation in the life and work of Jung, where he was attempting to show the psychic roots of religion and the psychological relevance of Christianity. Beginning with childhood dreams and continuing through to reflections on God by an elderly Jung in his autobiography, religious questions were never far from his concerns – *I find that all my thoughts circle around God like the planets around the sun, and are as irresistibly attracted by Him. I would feel it to be the grossest sin if I were to oppose any resistance to this force.* (Jung, 1993, page 13).

This longing for union with the love of God remains as a permanent feature of the psyche, despite this longing not always fitting in with traditional religious forms. Modern Christian people long for relationship with the transformational healing love of God, through Jesus, enabling them to live in truly authentic, life giving ways. Jung was explicit in saying in a 1945 letter that this was what his work was all about - *The main interest of my work is not concerned with the treatment of neuroses but rather with the approach to the numinous. The fact is that the approach to the numinous is the real therapy and inasmuch as you attain to the numinous experiences you are released from the curse of pathology.*

He was describing the psychological healing path towards direct authentic encounters with the living God, and part of Jung's contribution was to show that such experiences are not reserved for an elite, but belong to the normal range of human life and what might have once seemed rarefied, remote and reserved for saints and monastics is now in great demand and longed for by many ordinary people.

I would like to finish with Ann Ulanov's helpful wisdom of the psyche -

We live in the psychological century, where explorations of inner space probe as far as those that go into outer space. Theology and the church hobble themselves when they fail to recognize the broad, deep, rich life of the unconscious already there in religious ritual, symbol, doctrine and sacrament. It is a failure to take seriously the transcendent in its persistent immanence, in and among us. Within the system of the psyche, we experience unconscious contents as transcendent to our egos. Theology's failure to take the unconscious seriously leaves the immanence of God unreceived, incarnated. Consciousness of the psyche's reception of God is essential if we are to perform the ministry of the ego in housing all that we are given to be.

(Ulanov, 1998, page 118-119)

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*****Description of 'The Interior Castle' Icon on First Page**

The icon is describing, in symbolic terms, the 'interior castle' of our soul, where 'the secret union, or spiritual marriage, takes place in the innermost centre of the soul, where God Himself must dwell' (Interior Castle, Seventh Mansions, Chapter 2, 2). Above the symbol of the spiritual marriage, and within the castle, a butterfly can be seen - St Teresa used the symbol of the metamorphosis of a silkworm into a butterfly to describe the journey of spiritual transformation. (Interior Castle, Fifth mansions, Chapter 2). A section of the famous prayer of St Teresa is depicted on the scroll in her hand - 'Let nothing trouble you, let nothing frighten you, all is fleeting, God alone is unchanging, Patience obtains everything, Who possesses God wants for nothing, God alone suffices'.

In the lower left hand section, the four waters of prayer are depicted, through symbols of how a garden is watered and different ways of drawing water. The early stages of prayer are depicted by either the laborious work of drawing water from the well or the slightly easier method of using a water wheel and buckets. The third and fourth waters, or the interior dwelling places of prayer, are depicted by a stream running through a garden or by 'heavy rain, when the Lord waters it himself, without any labour of ours'. (Autobiography of Teresa of Avila, page 78). The figure in the lower right hand section is St Joseph, towards whom Teresa had a particular devotion, and her signature is depicted across the top of the icon.

It was commissioned by Julianne McLean, and painted by the Melkite sisters from the Monastery of the Annunciation in Nazareth, Israel, in 2005.