

The Church must confront its past

Alan Betts Rutland Herald, May 6, 2023

There have been many news reports of how the Roman Catholic Church makes determined efforts to cover up cases of abuse mostly of women and children in church communities, as well as abuse in orphanages. Remarkably there is no public discussion of the history of this dark side of the church, and no discussion of when the church will confront its dark past so that change is possible.

Pope Francis appears to understand the issues, even though his power is limited. Last summer he visited Canada to apologize to Indigenous peoples for the Catholic Church's role in the abuse and oppression they suffered at residential schools, where they were taken away from their families and cultures and subjected to forced assimilation. He has broadened the role of women in the Catholic Church. He added women to the committee that advises him on picking the world's bishops. In 2021, Francis amended the church's laws so that women could be Bible readers at Mass, serve at the altar and distribute communion. He has given women voting rights in the synod of bishops this October, which makes plans for the future of the Church.

The fundamental issue, which is easy to understand, but extraordinarily difficult for the church to face goes back to the creation of the Roman Church at the Council on Nicea in 325 AD by the Roman Emperor Constantine to meet his needs, not the teachings of Jesus Christ. Specifically, Emperor Constantine needed male power for warfare, and specified male power over women, male power over indigenous people and male power over nature. The Roman church has followed this "male power" doctrine for 1700 years and this has led to much abuse. Even worse we now face the destruction of most of life on Earth from climate change, because without thinking capitalism adopted male and corporate power over the natural world.

Jesus (or Yeshua) was an Aramaic speaking indigenous saint, who understood both the Creation of the Earth, and how the deep understanding of this Truth sets us Free to serve the Creation; rather than the male power which then ruled both Rome and the Jewish religious authorities. Yeshua's teachings were absolutely incompatible with these male authorities, so he was executed (crucified). However Yeshua left his Aramaic gospels outlining his indigenous teachings. Constantine ordered the destruction of the Aramaic gospels as he must have known they were a deep threat to his Roman Church. One crucial issue was that in the Aramaic world the Creator was not a male "Our Father which art in Heaven" but the "Birther of the Cosmos and the Creation" (1).

Stepping out of the past into the actual present is a critical issue for science and society as well as for the Roman Catholic Church, and other Christian churches. Mother Nature (the birther of the Creation) is taking over the climate system to save life on Earth (2) since capitalism is destroying life on Earth for profit. We simply cannot ignore the radical new climate extremes that go beyond our current scientific analyses, since the Creator is infinitely more powerful than humanity.

Understanding the Truth that sets us Free is very difficult in a society that is buried in webs of lies and deceptive advertising, as well as almost universal political dishonesty. Yet we must face the Truth as Mother Nature the Creator takes over. Since she can read our minds, her blessing

and love return to us when we join the Truth, and we are connected to all as Jesus taught so long ago.

(1) Douglas-Klotz, N, 1990: Prayers of the Cosmos. Harper Collins Publishers.

(2) Betts, A.K, 2023: Accelerating Climate Change and the Living Earth. International Journal of Environment and Climate Change, 13, 2, pp 1-11. DOI: [10.9734/ijecc/2023/v13i21639](https://doi.org/10.9734/ijecc/2023/v13i21639).