

THREE PRINCIPLES, AND THE PURPOSE OF THE WORKSHOP

THREE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. We are called to build a house where all can live and everyone belongs.
 - Jonathan Sacks' (*The House We Build Together*) contrasts: the family home as an evolving, organic entity, with rights and duties, accountability, and mutual respect.
 - "If identity resembles a hotel, identity will be, not in integration but in separation" (82).
2. God creates difference. Therefore difference is GOOD (Sacks, *The Dignity of Difference*).
 - Difference must be *negotiated*, consistent with the community's sustaining vision.
 - We do not survive or manage *despite* our differences, but *within* them.
3. God created an inclusive community (Gen 3:8). But every culture, humanity, or "*original sin*" – divides community and opposes people (woman/man, rich/poor, haves/have-nots, etc).
 - This is the "cultural flaw" which undermines harmony and peace.
 - Everyone had *sin* and *grace*. Our cultures and communities are redeemable, but need redemption or will collapse.
 - "Peace involves a profound crisis of identity. The boundaries of self and other, friend and foe, must be re-drawn" (J. Sacks).

PURPOSE OF THE WORKSHOP

1. To shift us from *dialectical* (either/or; one is right/the other is wrong) to *analogical* (both/and, compromise can be striven for and attained) thinking.
 - "In a Jesus society, you repent, not by feeling bad but by thinking [and acting] differently" (R. Wiebe).
 - "We have just enough religion to make us hate one another, but not enough to make us love one another" (Jonathan Swift). This *must* change.
2. To face, as religious, the urgent task of identifying and learning the skills and virtues necessary for living "interculturally" despite the challenge this presents to every one of us. It is the Gospel call to conversion, but it offers a particular challenge to today's religious, especially those socialized in strongly ego-focused and rights-based cultures.

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Documents, G file.