Thesis Title

What is Julian of Norwich’s contribution to contemporary Christian Spirituality?

By

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Abstract

Julian of Norwich’s text *Revelations of Divine or Showings* has become a very popular text within Christian spirituality today and a great literary text. Julian’s text opens our eyes to the second person of the Trinity in her perceptive insights and powerful use of metaphorical language.

The first section of this thesis highlights the rich Christian tradition that Julian’s text has developed from including earlier Christian writers such as Saint Anselm of Canterbury and Saint Bernard of Clairvaux as well as the period of history within fourteenth century Norwich that would have influenced the writing of her text.

The Suffering Christ forms Section Two after the introduction whereby the significant themes that relate to the suffering of Christ will be explained in detail. The key motifs deal with the three wounds of contrition, compassion and a longing for God as part of Julian’s and our spiritual journey in life. In addition the important aspects that emerge from Julian’s fourth, eighth, ninth and tenth and thirteenth revelations in terms of her vision of the bleeding body of Christ on the cross, include the precious blood of Christ, the crucifix as a journey through love and salvation, the open side of Christ’s body as a movement into the Church and the spiritual thirst of Christ from the cross.

Section Three draws us to an understanding of Christ within the Holy Trinity and the image of God. How does God view the sinner? The compassionate, merciful and tender image of God indicates the face of God that Julian desires for all of us to know and understand. Closely following this section the great account of the Parable of the Lord and Servant provides Julian with the answer as to how God looks upon the sinner.

In the next part of section three, Christ as the Holy Mother Church restores our human nature and as the Mother of Mercy and Grace, spiritually sustains us through his body and blood within the Eucharist. Christ our Mother of Grace cares and nurtures us in our mortal life and our eternal life. The Holy Spirit completes the union within the Holy Trinity.

Section Four indicates how within Julian’s fifteenth and sixteenth revelations, the glorious indwelling of Christ within our soul shines for us today for our faith in this life and the next. The final section indicates the contribution Julian’s text has today for our contemporary Christian spirituality.
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I wish to dedicate my thesis to a close friend Eva Wurfel from the Dominican laity who passed away on the 15th of June 2010.
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2. Jacob Cornelisz ca 1470 -1533, Man of Sorrows – cited on May 30th 2010 from Web Gallery of Art- Northern Renaissance- Jacob Cornelisz 1472-1533. www.wga.hu/support/viewer/1.html Appears on page 59

3. Michael Dillon pictured in Julian’s cell and shrine attached to St Julian’s Church Rouen Road Norwich on May 8th 2010 Appears on page 89