

Introduction

After writing *Glimpses of Grace*,¹ I realised that there was much more to ministry than what I had termed a “frenetic” response to the “cauldron effect” of constant demands within a prison environment.² Although these pastoral challenges shape one’s ministry, they do not define the nature of chaplaincy. A chaplain needs to think carefully about what they are trying to accomplish.

This book has been written to address the latter question of purpose. Chapter one proposes that a chaplain’s goal in interviewing an inmate is to shore up their identity and resolve deeply conflicted feelings about life. This assignment can be achieved with the help of psychology and sociology. Sigmund Freud has shown how the division of the self into id, ego, and superego helps to name issues of the inner child, parental influence, sense of responsibility, and need to be loved. Emile Durkheim has demonstrated the importance of peer pressure in shaping identity, along with the need for a canopy of fellowship and faith to create a sense of belonging and care.

The chapter suggests that projecting these issues onto fictitious characters is one way for an inmate to deal with matters that are of a deeply personal nature. Shame and guilt, repression and suppression, introversion and fear of punishment, lack of trust and hurtful experiences, are just some of the reasons that an offender may not feel comfortable in sharing their experiences with another person. A chaplain can appear as an intimidating figure who simply reinforces an attitude of condemnation once they have learned what the inmate has done. Chaplains learn to be receptive, build rapport, gain trust, actively listen, and empathize with the situation of an offender. A safe environment goes a long way in providing an inmate with the impetus and wherewithal to share.

Projection of actions and feelings onto fictitious characters helps an inmate to name aspects of their lives that are difficult to own up to. Bruno Bettelheim has done the most in this regard in his work with mentally damaged children.³ He has used fairy tales to help children understand the deeply Oedipal nature of their acting out behaviours.

A similar therapeutic process is outlined in the second and third chapters. The fictional characters of Tom Riddle and Jean Valjean are useful in helping offenders understand the nature and possibility of transformation. As chief antagonist in the

Harry Potter series, written by J. K. Rowling,⁴ Tom is driven to feel less and less remorse as he murders his father and other people, justifying these acts on the basis of his feelings of revenge and perverted sense of justice. The ability of offenders to feel remorse for what they have done is the beginning of a transformative process toward the good. Inmates' recognition of a conscience that determines right from wrong goes a long way in starting the conversation on the right foot.

Feelings of remorse lead to conviction, repentance, forgiveness, and a second chance, demonstrated by a second main character, Jean Valjean. Appearing as the protagonist in the novel, *Les Misérables*, written by Victor Hugo,⁵ this nineteenth-century figure mirrors the possibilities of change that acts of grace, faith, repentance, and the ability to love offer inmates. Hugo follows this ex-offender through one thousand pages of script, outlining the steps to be taken: from justification to sanctification, from bitterness to admission of guilt, from hard heartedness to love, and from secrecy to transparency. Similar changes occur as chaplains journey with inmates.

Chapter two considers the difficulty of feeling remorse within the larger context of Tom's decision-making processes. Given the dire situation of his upbringing, in which he was abandoned by both parents and raised in an orphanage, what chance did Tom have in "turning out right"? Some inmates use these excuses as fall-back plans to justify their actions. The poverty and violence in which they were raised, the abuse they suffered, the poor choices that their friends made them make, the failure of their marriages, and the injustice of their sentence can result in a "poor me" attitude which debilitates their views of what is possible. There appears to be some justification, as it appeared to Tom, to take their anger out on the world.

The chapter notes that other people in Tom's situation made different choices. Snape, Regulus, Harry, Hermione, and even Narcissus, characters in J. K. Rowling's novels who have come from humble beginnings, prejudiced families, and broken homes, and who have suffered injustices and been treated unfairly, are able to forgive and let go of their past, moving forward with courage and honour. Appeals to these characters' decisions provide inmates with hope and the ability to make right choices in the context of restricted circumstances and crippled imaginations.

The third chapter continues this voyage of discovery through an exploration of the factors involved in Jean Valjean's transformation. Acts of grace shown by Bishop Bienvenu and the nuns of Martin Verga, acts of love offered by Fantine and Cosette, acts of gratitude demonstrated by the gardener Fauchelevent and the accused prisoner Campmathieu, and acts of forgiveness given by Marius along with his grandfather Gillenormand, go a long way in softening Jean's heart.

Jean himself is deeply remorseful of his intention to kill the priest and ashamed of his theft of the bishop's silver plates. He comes to the realization that much has to change if he is going to live as a law-abiding citizen. These acts of transformation form the basis for chaplains of knowing how to help inmates. Each aspect of a person's life needs to be scrutinized and owned in order for them to recover and be renewed.

Chapter three reflects on this journey of transformation in the context of a discussion of the law and the good. Prisons represent the good writ large in the sense that criminals have been brought to justice, been convicted, and sentenced to a prison term. The policeman Javert in Hugo's novel represents this embodiment of justice. Javert pursues Jean right to the end of the novel because Jean has not been convicted of the forty-sou piece that he stole from Petit Gervais after he had left the bishop's residence.⁶ Jean is a repeat offender who needs to be punished for what he has done.

The idea that the good can turn vicious is entertained in the context of Javert's suicide. Punishment for its own sake represents the Achilles heel of the law. While the justice system can, and at times, has been extended to take into account every contingency of wrongdoing, there is a point when the law falls upon itself in order to be refitted into the *telos* of the good. The chapter considers how the law from a biblical perspective is fulfilled and oriented toward the good.

Various chapters reflect on the life of Jesus as a resource for chaplains and inmates alike. The transformative effects of salvation are mentioned in the first chapter in regard to the role of the trickster in fairy tales. A trickster represents an outlier⁷ in a story that attracts evil to itself in order to defeat it. The cat in *The Cat in the Hat* series,⁸ written by Dr. Seuss, represents a good example of this process. After eating cake in the bathtub and messing up the house, the cat cleans everything up again, just in time for mother to come home and see if "Sally and me" have been good children while she was away.

The idea that one needs to attract evil in order to defeat it is a powerful experience in a chaplain's ministry. I have listened to countless stories of horror and evil in my days as a chaplain. I have done so because I believe that it is only as an inmate accesses those dark moments through sharing that they come to terms with the reality of what they have done. Acknowledgement of sin enables one to comprehend the need for salvation.

This therapeutic process is fraught with dangers. An inmate (together with the chaplain) can spend so much time dwelling on the past that it debilitates them from moving forward. Offenders can become so wrapped in themselves and their issues that the process regresses into a narcissistic focus on self or the sheer horror of the

evil, rather than on the manner in which one can be saved from the situation. This approach is paradoxical because sin needs to be acknowledged in order for the requirement of salvation to be understood. The sharing, nevertheless, can get out of hand, as the cat found out when he and his two Things and twenty-five little cats tried to clean up the mess. The situation got worse before it got better.

The second chapter outlines the dialectical relation between good and evil. It highlights the escalating tension between Harry and Voldemort (Tom Riddle) as they battle for the hearts and minds of their friends and wizards of Hogwarts. Tom gives in to, and embraces evil. He justifies the killing of his father because of neglect, his attempt to kill Harry on the basis of “self-defence,” the need to become immortal because of his initial, disembodied state, and the necessity of killing again in order to assure the victory of his mission. Tom allows himself to be overpowered by the darkness of power and might, receding ever further away from the moderating effects of love and remorse.

Harry, in turn, attracts the negativity of his alter-ego, adolescent peer group, Malfoy (bad faith), Crab, and Goyle, along with the ill intent of Malfoy’s parents who are part of Voldemort’s death eaters. Harry embodies the original sin of Voldemort’s curse as it becomes part of his being in the act of his mother and father being killed. Harry is a lot like Tom, being able to speak to snakes, having his magical wand made of the same fibres as Tom’s, and being able to intuit Tom’s every move.

Curiously enough, this attraction of evil is what defeats it. Harry recognizes the limitedness of power and might when it is not harnessed to love and justice. Harry recognises the power of feeling remorse, admitting one’s errors, and making it up to one’s friends and enemies. The very attraction that Tom feels toward Harry proves his undoing.

The attraction of evil to good is also relevant in the case of Jean Valjean. This time, an ex-offender attracts negative attention, first in regard to further punishment, and secondly because other criminals assume that he is an easy mark. Policeman Javert is particularly incensed that Jean Valjean continues to go free because he cannot believe that a convict can be reformed. “Eternal punishments” are what the law requires, regardless of the change exhibited by an offender. Jean’s goodness makes him a mark for Javert’s zealousness, thereby creating a denouement in which Javert cannot live with the kindness and compassion demonstrated toward himself by Jean.

A similar dynamic is at work with Thenardier and his fellow bandits who attempt to kill Jean for money. Thenardier lures Jean into his home, appealing to his

generosity so that Jean will be undone. Foiled in his attempt, Thenardier continues to pursue Jean, informing Marius, Jean's new-son-in-law, that Jean is a bandit who deserves no mercy. Initially taken in by this new revelation, Marius bans Jean from his house, only to find out from Thenardier himself that Jean had saved his life at the barricades. The very negativity that Jean attracts is resolved into a rapprochement of forgiveness and reconciliation because of his role as a Christ figure.

Each of the above actions can be related directly to Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Evil is tied up with the very birth of Jesus when Herod kills all the children under two years of age in Bethlehem. Jesus continues to attract negative attention as an adult, first as a religious and political threat to the Jews and Romans, and then as a social and cultural threat because he keeps associating with the wrong people. Each of these issues throws into sharp relief the reason for Jesus' salvation. He has come to save the Jews from religious straight jackets, the Romans from political pretensions, the lower class from alienation and self-disdain, and the rich from economic preoccupations. The negative side-effects of worshipping these idols requires people to be liberated.

Salvation is enacted through sacrifice and death, a judgment placed on Jesus as a result of his perceived threat. Jesus is a real threat in the sense that he questions the adequacy of power and control on the basis of selfless love. His willingness to die as an innocent man at the hands of his enemies results in the cathartic effect necessary for rapprochement, resurrection, and reconciliation. Jesus' attraction of evil in order to defeat it is the basis of the other three stories noted above.

The fourth chapter reflects on the role of the divine and human will in Jesus' life. Inmates are sometimes so overwhelmed by the consequences of what they have done that they sink into despair and paralysis. Alternately, they may accept the extrinsic, salvific sacrifice that Jesus represents while remaining spectators in the divine and human drama of their lives. These offenders have not yet learned what it takes to move courageously from denial to acceptance, from remorse to forgiveness, and from entitlement to surrender.

The chapter offers a way out by suggesting that the human and divine will were equally represented in the life of Jesus. Jesus willingly gave himself up to die as a human being while fulfilling the divine purpose of his sacrifice through God, his Father. The actions of the divine will upon his life did not intercept, interrupt, negate, alleviate, neglect, or obviate the necessity of Jesus acting on his own will in regard to his life, ministry, miracles, parables, death, and resurrection. The importance of this matter is highlighted in Jesus' statement to the Pharisees that he has the power to lay down his life, and he has the power to take it up again (John

10:17-18). This statement is meant to safeguard the integrity of Jesus' own will, both divine and human, vis-à-vis his Father's.

Offenders would do well to reflect on Jesus' statement, especially in regard to their own faith, recovery, and journey of transformation. They have not been let off the hooks of accountability and responsibility just because they have been saved by Jesus. They have been liberated from themselves, their self-condemnation, their dread, guilt, and shame through claimed assurance of divine intervention (Hebrews 10:19-25). At the same time, their human will acts in concert with the divine will in their recovery and faith. Action on the basis of human will is possible because human beings have been created in the image of God. Divine intervention is required because of human beings' need to be recreated. This dialectical dynamic is at work in every act of surrender, and in every act of courage.

The fifth chapter turns to Saint Francis as a human exemplar of spirituality and discipleship. The fact that inmates are forced, for the most part, to be celibate, restricted to a limited amount of funds, and need to obey direct orders means that they have to come to terms with their own sexuality, desire for money, and respect for authority. The chapter suggests that this involuntary situation can flourish into a spirituality similar to that of Saint Francis'. Saint Francis adopted three vows that are similar to what offenders are forced to undertake, a vow of celibacy, a vow of poverty, and a vow of obedience. The difference in Francis' case was that he adopted these disciplines on a voluntary basis. He believed that human beings have alienated themselves from God because of their preoccupation with sex, riches, and anti-nominalism. These very human pursuits block people's ability to place these desires into a proper perspective. Only a radical spirituality, Francis believed, would result in a proper faith and correct religious practice.

The inmates with whom I work have the opportunity to practice these three disciplines every day. Deprived of physical love, they ask themselves whether it is possible to be fulfilled by becoming emotionally bonded with another human being. Faced with loneliness, dread, and despair, inmates ask whether divine intimacy is possible.

Sustained by the necessities of life -- food, shelter, and work -- inmates ponder whether this basis for survival provides the wherewithal to become spiritually rich? Given the amount of (dead) time that offenders occupy their lives with, can they use these infinitely boring routines to good use? What does it mean to become spiritually poor?

Respect for authority is curiously enforced onto a population for whom the word has many negative connotations. Physical and sexual abuse at home, harsh

parental control, and a tight-knit adolescent peer group have resulted into a disdain for elders and the law that is hard to fathom for those of us have internalized authority for ourselves. The love/hate relationship that many inmates have with whatever authority comes their way is exacerbated in a prison context. Another opportunity to learn what respect for authority entails.

The sixth chapter provides a social and political context to the theological emphases and pastoral concerns of the first half of the book. A chaplain will thrive if they take into account the fact that they are working in a prison environment. Inmates with whom they work have gone through a long process of arrest, trial, conviction, recriminations, and incarceration before they show up at a chaplain's door. The correctional service took years to be established: for prisons to be built, for policies to be written and rewritten, and for staff to be hired as correctional officers.

All of these things need to be taken into account by a chaplain, who may be more interested in their pastoral and theological reflections and practice than in the milieu in which they work. This appeal to matters pastoral is dangerous because it has not been integrated into the larger picture of what is known as the justice system. A chaplain can only be effective in their work if they have integrated the wrath and love of God, the punishment and grace of God, the forgiveness and consequences of offences, and the ability to find grace and love in the midst of much less than that.

The last chapter has been written to make chaplains aware of the so-called larger picture. Jonathan Haidt's book, *The Righteous Mind*, is helpful in this regard because it places care and compassion alongside and within the ethical categories of loyalty and authority, and love and forgiveness within concerns for safety, sanctity, sacredness of life, and the collective good. Haidt's ethical reflections on these matters provide for a richer understanding of punishment and rehabilitation than a so-called liberal or conservative response to the situation. It is only as a chaplain embodies within themselves respect for authority, loyalty to staff, and a policy of no more harm than their compassion and care can shine forth as bright beacons. Trust, respect, and honour are earned, not demanded. Love, forgiveness, and grace are freely given only if there is nothing expected in return.

Chapter One

Purpose of a Pastoral Interview

I gained a better understanding of my work as a prison chaplain when I read Bruno Bettelheim's book on fairy tales, *The Uses of Enchantment*. He suggests first and foremost that our work as counsellors should build on a client's "existing knowledge and emotional preoccupations."⁹ This statement struck a chord in me. Thirty years ago, I was asked during a job interview about the type of content I as a chaplain would provide for the offenders with whom I would be working. Somewhat puzzled by the question, I suggested to the interviewer that it was "important to listen to the life experiences of an inmate and understand what the needs of his situation to be."¹⁰ The person is more willing to listen to advice, counsel, or explanation if it is related directly to his way of thinking and experience of the world.

This inductive approach is necessary because, like the severely disturbed children with whom Bettelheim worked, inmates often have a weakly developed ego. They have kept their opinions to themselves because of an overbearing parent or authority figure that ruled over their lives. Conversely, they may have allowed their feelings and actions to run wild – when given a chance -- because they had no way of knowing how to rein in these thoughts or channel their desires in an appropriate manner. The overbearing influence of a superego, in the form of a parent, or the unmanageable forces of an id, in the form of desires, ran amuck of the ego that was not adequately integrated to deal with this situation.

The first purpose of a pastoral interview is to shore up the ego by building on the knowledge, experiences, views of the world, and beliefs of an offender. Whether integrated as a self or not, the person, as an adult, has had to live with the consequences of their actions and criminal behaviour. Many of the inmates that I meet are baffled by what they have done. They have little, if any comprehension of the reasons for their crimes. It is only as they explore the nature of their lives that they discover the often, unconscious reasons for their acting out. A world that was blocked -- because of repression or suppression -- is suddenly opened up to them. The basis of their healing comes from the building blocks of life that are intrinsic to

their being. The counsellor's role is to nudge these insights into recognition by serving as a mirror to the person's life experiences.

Separation of Self into Id, Ego, and Superego

One reason for the person's repression or suppression of what they have done is because it is so difficult to believe that they allowed themselves to act out in that manner. They have caused serious harm. They have hurt loved ones or murdered a stranger. They have violated their children and/or step children. An inmate finds it difficult to believe that they are the same person who did such harm. It is as though there were a second person, at arm's length, that did such a horrible deed.

This duality within a person is the reason that Sigmund Freud's separation of the self into three parts, id, ego, and superego, is helpful.¹¹ The id represents the infantile desires within an individual, known variously as libido, life force, sexual drive, fantasies, or inner child. It is similar to what a baby does when it is hungry: it cries and cries until it is fed. These desires are natural aspects of the self that need to be fed and nourished. Otherwise, the baby will simply keep on crying until the parent (ego) figures out what it needs.

The superego represents the self-regulating demands of the self, those whispers of conscience that tell a person what is right and wrong. Conscience is something that is built into a person and does not have to be taught. I have lost count of the number of times inmates have told me that they went ahead with their crimes, knowing that it was wrong. Knowing the difference between right and wrong is not what stops a person from committing a crime. Other factors need to be understood and explained before a person is willing to allow their superego to guide them.

The ego represents the integrated aspect of the personality, channeling their libido in an appropriate manner, calling off the judgmental echoes of their superego that sometimes control their lives, thereby enabling a person to live a normal existence. Most of the problems encountered have to do with inmates' unresolved conflict between an over active superego that continues to cause severe repression, depression, or suppression of a person's feelings and actions, and an over active id that runs amuck as soon as the superego is out of sight. Finding a balance between the influence that one's parents has had in one's life, and the freedom a person experiences once liberated from these influences, is known as reaching maturity, adulthood, and integration.

The second goal of a chaplain is to help the inmate balance these two aspects of their life so that the self becomes integrated. The question at hand has to do with

how this solidification of identity and reintegration of one's personality can be accomplished. The first step has been outlined above, namely to provide an environment in which the inmate feels safe enough to share these deep thoughts and feelings. Acknowledgement of a person's ideas and experiences, even if they are viewed as false by the chaplain, is one way of doing this. It is only when half-baked ideas, lies, misconstrued beliefs, insufficient or misguided information, along with traumatic experiences, poor choices, and addictions are recognized that they can be named for what they are. Trust and willingness to share represent key building blocks in establishing rapport. The chaplain is sometimes seen as a superego who will censure a person's thoughts once shared. That presumption stops a person from sharing in the first place. In this instance, the chaplain is reinforcing the superego's role in the inmate's life, thereby shutting down further communication.¹²

Given the possibility of empathetic listening that builds rapport, trust, respect, and mutual sharing, the next step has to do with facing the demons that have been named. Offenders are often reluctant to share because they have repressed their feelings for so long that they are afraid of what might happen if they open up. The fact that they have come to a chaplain's office shows that they believe, however remotely, that healing is possible. They are brave enough to begin the process. A chaplain's task is to validate their courage and help them in the steps to recovery.

Freud's division of the self into id, ego, and superego is helpful in this regard because it allows the inmate to project their crimes onto the id or superego. Witches and ogres, dragons and ghosts appear in children's fairy tales precisely because, as Bettelheim notes,¹³ it is too difficult for children to name these fearful monsters as their parents. Acknowledging the fact that there is sometimes an "evil stepmother" lurking within the good mother, that the intimidating influence of a parent is experienced as a dragon that can not be defeated, or that one's desires feel like a raging lion that cannot be stopped, are ways of naming one's emotions and thoughts.

Identifying feelings through projection is a way of dealing with the matter in a more objective manner. The chaplain goes along with the inmate's feelings that it must have been a different person who committed the crime. Removing that person from the scene of the crime, so to speak, allows the person to look back at the situation in a more realistic manner.

Example from Grief Recovery

An example from grief recovery helps to name the process at work. John James and Russell Friedman have suggested that the best way for a person to recover

from the losses in their lives is to think intentionally about what would have been *different, better, and more* if that person were still alive today.¹⁴ One needs to allow one's fantasies to "run wild" in order to understand the depth of feelings, heights of expectations, and length of attachment that one had toward the other person. Far from repressing one's feelings, one needs to allow these emotions to come to the surface. Reliving the depth of one's emotional attachment to that person enables one to become aware of what has been lost. Grief recovery, in other words, means not only thinking about the person that has been lost, but also owning the innumerable expectations, love, commitments, hopes, dreams, joys, and sorrows that one experienced with that person.

I recommend a similar therapeutic process in regard to helping an inmate deal with their offences. The offender can only find healing if they are able to name the height and depth and breadth and length of their emotions and thoughts that they felt at the moment of their crime. These emotions and thoughts are precisely their reasons for committing the crime in the first place. It is better to name these beliefs and feelings and actions than pretend that they were not real.

One way of naming these feelings is to project them onto a second or third party who "was responsible for the crime." I often suggest that inmates should blame as many people for their crimes as possible. It was the booze, their spouses, their sense of entitlement, entrapment, drugs, money, debts, circumstances, parents, abuse, children, neglect, suffering, experiences of mistreatment, the "other" person, and jealousy that made them do it. Naming these influences is an effective means of identifying the innumerable factors that led up to the crime.

It is true, of course, that the inmate did it. But the fact that all of us tend to blame others for our acting-out behaviours shows how difficult it is for us to own that part of ourselves which is less than good. The therapeutic process of naming "others" through projection, blame, accusations, and diffusion who, so-to-speak, committed the crime, is a way for inmates to objectify the factors that have been difficult for them to own within themselves.

A comparison can once again be made to the grieving process. A person may have recovered from the loss of his parent, spouse, or child by attending their funeral, commiserating with friends and family, going to a counsellor to speak about their grief, visiting the grave site, and lighting a candle once a year on their anniversary. These actions, while helpful, may not yet have been thoroughly satisfactory. Years later, a person may still feel that something is missing, that they have not "fully" recovered, that there is more to do. The reason for this vague sense of incompleteness is because of the hopes and dreams, wishes and loves that keep arising in different

circumstances in regard to the person one has lost. A recognition of these relived feelings helps the person understand that they have not yet fully recovered. The person has to relive these feelings yet again in order to move on.

Difficulty of the Healing Process

The difficulty of this healing process can be illustrated by the fact that some inmates have never shared information about some incidents in their lives with any other person. They waited until they were thirty or forty or fifty years of age -- and in jail -- before they felt safe in relating an experience that happened many years ago.

In some cases, it was only because of the probing of a psychologist or chaplain that the person was willing to share. These incisive sessions are sometimes necessary because the circumstances of a person's crime do not make sense without these specific details. Most of us would not offend against a child, assault another human being, or rob a bank to "solve" our problems. Chaplains, counsellors, parents, volunteers, friends, pastors, and inmates can only make sense of the situation if the relevant information is brought to bear on the situation. Healing can only take place if one knows about the wounds that are there.

An example of the difficulty of this task helps to clarify the situation. A psychologist asked a male offender to write an autobiography about his life. After the inmate provided a synopsis, the psychologist recounted each of these experiences and asked the person how these incidents had shaped his life. The offender responded in kind. Not satisfied with the inmate's answers, the psychologist suggested that there was a gap during one of his teenage years that had not been adequately explained. The offender broke down and told her what had happened. This information was invaluable in understanding why the inmate had acted out during the next twenty years of his life.

In spite of this information, the inmate still did not see himself as a victim. He continued to tell me as a chaplain, after several months of working with the psychologist, that this experience had not been "that" formative of his subsequent behaviours. He was not ready to speak about this experience to his parents. There was much work left to be done. The person has continued to struggle, several years after these sessions. Merely admitting a problem does not mean that it has yet been reintegrated into a person's sense of being and acting.

Let us return to the matter at hand. Projection of a problem or reason for one's crime is a way of objectifying the situation so that it becomes more manageable.

Naming one's parent as a dragon is a way of recognizing the overbearing influence that they have had in a child's life. Suggesting that this dragon needs to be defeated is a way for the child to realise that they can only move on after they have diffused the parent's sense of control. A parent, in other words, can be viewed as human again once the parent's power has been unfastened by the child.

Let me give another example of how this works. A young man was sent to jail because he had threatened to kill one of his co-workers. In explaining the situation to me, the man said that he had not really meant what he had said. He was simply trying to make it clear that the other person should stay away from him.

This incident reminded me of how many times that I, as a young child, told one of my friends with whom I was particularly upset that I was going to "kill them." Looking back in hindsight, everyone in my friends' group knew that I was joking about the "killing" part, but serious about the fact that I was very upset. This fine distinction between idle and real threats is what makes the interview so real. We are joking and serious at the same time, without always knowing how serious or how much joking we are doing. Projection of these feelings onto fictitious figures, in the way that fairy tales do in relation to real life feelings and conflicts, is one way of validating the fantasy part of the equation while allowing the reality of the situation to be named and diffused.

Usefulness of Fairy Tales

Let us review what has been stated so far. The chaplain's first task is to shore up the inmate's confidence and trust in sharing about his or her past. The fact that the offender has showed up in the chaplain's office demonstrates that they believe in the healing process. The chaplain's job is to facilitate this possibility.

The chaplain's second task is help the inmate name the many factors in their lives that have led them to come to jail. This facilitation should be as open and inviting as possible in order for the inmate to access their feelings about the offence that they committed. It takes time, sometimes many sessions, for the inmate to feel free enough to share personally. Encouraging this process moves the discussion from facts to feelings, from reality to imagination, from consequences to reasons for these consequences.

Separation of the self into id, ego, and superego is one way of enabling the inmate to project the reasons for their acting out behaviours onto a "fictitious" person. Feelings of being trapped in a relationship can be assigned to the dominating role of the superego, both in terms of a parent's influence along with a spouse's sense

of control. Robbing a bank to solve gambling debt can be assigned to the irrationality of the id, which acts impulsively to gain immediate gratification and a quick resolution to the situation. Projecting these problems onto the superego and id allows the inmate to see how much influence these aspects of their lives have had on them. The offender realises the extent to which an integrated personality has not been achieved. They, as the ego in the equation, have given permission to their two alter-egos to exercise control.

I am suggesting that chaplains use fairy tales to help offenders name these superegos and ids, under-developed egos and repressed selves, as heroes and villains in the piece. A man remains a dwarf because he is unable to mature in his emotional and sexual attraction to women. His wife is an evil witch because of the control he has allowed her to have in regard to his lack of self-worth and feelings of not being loved. A man's sexual desires are like a ferocious animal that knows no bounds. A woman is paralysed in her emotional growth because of conflicting feelings between being loved and being controlled by her boyfriend. Parents are like dragons because of their willingness to interfere in their son's love of a woman of whom they do not approve. A person is lost in the woods because of deep feelings of abandonment, isolation, and loneliness.¹⁵ A man inadvertently wrecks everything that other people have built, or conversely, fixes things *ad infinitum* without finding any relief in the matter.¹⁶ This person has become part of a co-dependent equation of a two-sided problem.

Projections of these feelings onto fantasy figures is a delicate matter that needs to be explored with caution.¹⁷ Taboo subjects, particularly ones that a person has not only fanaticized about, but acted upon, are grave matters that require careful parameters of confidentiality, trust, and respect. At the same time, these projections provide concrete ways of talking about feelings and actions that are difficult to put into words or abstract language.¹⁸ The imaginative use of characters in fairy tales enables one to own deeply conflicted feelings and situations that are portrayed through a narrative approach.

Possibilities of Healing and Hope

Fairy tales are useful in regard to counselling because they are infinitely optimistic in terms of what is possible. Faced with huge obstacles well beyond their skill levels and ability to cope, children find magical solutions to their problems and come out on the other side of danger, not only intact, but thriving in their feelings of

success and contentment. Living happily ever after appears to be possible, at least on an infinitely infantile level.

There are several reasons for the success of this approach in counselling. Fairy tales feature boys and girls in their adolescent years who are growing up and becoming responsible. One could say that a similar process is happening with inmates in regard to solidification of identity. This is made possible by identifying with characters that are growing in their maturity.

A series of tests and stages of development occur in fairy tales. One thinks of the three pigs, two of whom are eaten by the wolf because they made their houses out of straw and wood.¹⁹ The third pig learned from these failed experiments by not only building his house out of brick, but also by luring the wolf down the chimney and into his boiling pot of stew. The pig tricked the wolf into doing his bidding.²⁰ Inmates need to learn to do the same in regard to their superego and id.

The story of Simpleton is also relevant. He and his two brothers go into the world to prove their worth. While the two brothers regard everything in relation to how it can benefit themselves, Simpleton pleads with them not to crush the ants, shoot the ducks, and destroy the bees' nest. The youngest brother is rewarded for his display of empathy and respect. The ants, ducks, and bees help Simpleton achieve impossible tasks so that he can marry the princess. His brothers, in turn, are changed back into human form after Simpleton has solved the three tests.²¹

The point of these stories is to solidify identity by shoring up the weakly formed ego of the protagonists. Some characters fail in this process, while the one who learns (from his own mistakes) moves on to maturity and responsibility. Rewards are available for those who succeed.

A second purpose of fairy tales is to resolve conflicts between two deeply held beliefs. The stepmother locks Rapunzel in a tower because she wants to protect her from harm. Rapunzel pines away for freedom, achieving it by letting down her hair for a prince. The prince and Rapunzel go through a series of adventures and misadventures before they reach maturity and fall in love. Rapunzel overcomes the controlling nature of her stepmother by transferring her (co)dependency onto the prince. Her stepmother realises that possessiveness and jealousy had as much to do with locking her daughter up as regard for her daughter's safety.²²

These fundamental conflicts throw into sharp relief the tug of war that goes on between superego and id. The stepmother wants to exert control over her daughter while the young girl wants to experience life for herself and is willing to risk facing danger. These two forces are resolved when the stepmother admits her

mortality and the girl shifts her love and need for security from her mother to the prince.

Use of Magic to Achieve Success

Another aspect of fairy tales has to do with the fact that magic often comes into play in helping protagonists achieve success. Simpleton is helped by the ants, ducks, and bees (earth, water, sky) to fulfill impossible tasks. The magic beans that grow into gigantic beanstalks enable Jack to steal a golden egg from the giant, so that he and his mother can prosper and live in peace. Rapunzel uses the growth of her own hair to win a prince. Cinderella is helped by the spirit of her mother to go to the ball. Little Red Riding Hood is saved by a woodsman. A king who hates all women is saved by a suitor who is brave enough to tell him one thousand stories of healing, forgiveness, and hope. Hansel uses a bone to trick the witch into thinking that he is not getting fatter.²³

These human, natural, and supernatural forces represent empathetic forces that are enlisted by the protagonist to achieve success. They represent solutions that are intrinsic to the children themselves (Rapunzel's hair, Hansel's wits), human forces that come to their aid (the woodsman in Little Red Riding Hood, the suitor for the Arabian king), natural forces that have magical powers (magic beans for Jack, creatures for Simpleton), and supernatural forces that are invoked (Cinderella's fairy godmother). The stories are suggesting that many resources are at hand for anyone who is willing to ask for help. Increasing awareness of one's intellectual, physical, and emotional attributes enables one to channel them into a proper direction. An understanding of natural forces shows how they can be put to good use. Openness to other people's empathy for one's own situation provides a way out. Recognition of the spiritual world offers opportunities for escape, comfort, and reconciliation.

Chapter three of this book addresses the nature of these magical solutions. Tricks of sorcery are considered in relation to a person's own ability to solve the problem, the need for other people to save the day, the requirement of a naturalistic force to come to one's aid, and the necessity of a supernatural presence to provide a way out. Each of these solutions is offered in countless modern fairy tales, books, and movies.²⁴ It remains to be seen how these approaches are applicable to a chaplain's work with inmates.

Role of the Trickster in Fairy Tales

A complicating aspect of being saved by magic has to do with the role of a trickster in fairy tales. This character often appears as an external, destructive force, turning everything upside down in the story. More often than not, this same character makes everything that has been disrupted right again, showing in the process that healing and hope are possible.²⁵

Dr. Seuss' stories about a cat and a hat offer some good examples. In the second tale of the series, entitled *The Cat in the Hat Comes Back*,²⁶ the cat enters the home while "Sally and me" are shovelling snow outside. The boy runs inside because he knows that the cat is up to no good. He finds the cat eating cake while bathing in the bath tub. A pink stain remains in the tub after the boy shoos him away.

The rest of the story involves the cat cleaning up the mess that has been created. He produces twenty-six figures named after the letters of the alphabet to remove the pink stain. While the first twenty-five little cats make a worse mess, blowing the pink colour around with pop guns and rakes until it fills the whole page, the last letter "z" cleans up the snow with Voom. The children's work is now all done: the sidewalk has been swept clean to the curb and the snow has been made white again.

Eating cake in a tub while bathing represents the repressed desires of the children. They would rather be playing than shovelling snow on the orders of their mother. The pink stain left behind represents the guilty pleasure they feel at having such thoughts. This guilt is hard to get rid of. The harder they work, the more "Sally and me" think about what they would rather be doing. It takes a lot of effort to manage the id, bring it under control, put it back into the hat, and finish cleaning the sidewalk.

Dr. Seuss suggests that management of the id is possible through the use of language and communication. The children's ability to name these desires becomes a way of handling them. This approach has been effective in my work with inmates. Naming repressed desires that may or may not have been acted upon is one way of understanding one's life. I asked the men in my young adult group to name the most impulsive actions they had taken in their lives. They cited everything from high-speed car chases to using drugs, from having near-death experiences to partying, from being stabbed to robbing banks. These brash and reckless adventures helped them – and me – to understand the extent to which they were willing to risk death through (self) destruction. My task was to help the men comprehend whether the cat

that had been so destructive could be channeled into more pro-social pursuits. Could the genie that had been let out of the bottle be put back in again?²⁷

The cat reflects the ongoing conflict between two deeply seated needs. On the one hand, the men did not care for themselves or the world around them because they felt – for whatever reason – that life was not worth living. On the other hand, the various adventures upon which they embarked demonstrated to me that they had a love of life that literally knew no bounds. They simply did not know how to channel their energies into something less destructive. Each of the men with whom I worked had to decide whether life was worth living, whether they loved and cared for themselves, and whether they cared about anyone else. The solution to this problem remains to be seen. Is it language and knowledge, as Dr. Seuss would have us believe, an empathetic naturalism to which many fairy tales point, or is there a spirituality and religiosity that can speak to these needs?

Differences Between Myths and Fairy Tales in Effecting Change

Myths and fairy tales differ in relation to their ability to effect change. Bettelheim points to the fact that myths feature superhuman characters on a world stage that are involved in a cosmic conflict. These dramas often end in tragedy because of the fated nature of the characters involved. The god Paris does the bidding of Zeus and chooses Helen as the most beautiful woman among three goddesses. The resulting jealousies trigger the Trojan War. In another story, Oedipus blinds himself after learning that he unknowingly has killed his father and fallen in love with his mother.²⁸

Shakespearian dramas offer similar results. Most of the characters in Hamlet die as a result of misinformation, misguided efforts at revenge and justice, and heroic actions that end in failure.²⁹ Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* offers a similar, providentially foretold, ending. In spite of the fact that Ahab is a successful whaling captain, he becomes obsessed with the idea of killing a great white whale that he has seen. After following the beast to the end of the world, the nicknamed whale, Moby Dick, does Ahab the honour of destroying his ship and killing all crew members on board.³⁰

Fairy tales are significantly different in that they feature ordinary people, often unnamed except for a generic designation, such as boy, girl, uncle, and stepmother, or by the nicknames Dick and Jane, Sally and me, Hansel and Gretel. They are universally human characters with whom children can identify and empathize.

These protagonists face dangers and fears that are like the experiences of children. At one time or another, most people have been afraid of getting lost in the woods, of being eaten by a wolf, of something hiding beneath their bed, of being unable to afford a treat, of being given a task that appears impossible to complete, of being outwitted by one's older siblings, of being picked on, or of being considered too stupid to make something of oneself. Children naturally identify with an underdog who is attempting to be noticed, to succeed, and to flourish.

Fairy tales offer happy endings to characters who achieve victory after a series of adventures and misadventures. These successful outcomes give children hope that they, too, can accomplish what they wish for, and arrive "safely on the other side." These stories give children motivation to find imaginative solutions to seemingly impossible situations. In reading myths, people become spectators as they watch the unfolding of a superhuman divine drama. Conversely, they become vicarious participants with the actions of fairy tale characters because there is so much symbolic similarity with their own circumstances.

A foray into theology illustrates the difference in therapeutic approaches. Some people view God as a divine being that stands over and above the world as an extrinsic being. This God, all-powerful and omniscient, effects salvation through his Son, Jesus Christ. This divine person descended to the world in the form of a human baby, lived life on earth, was crucified, and ascended again to heaven after being raised from the dead.

This emphasis on God as Divine Other moves believers psychologically from paralysis of fear, guilt, and shame, authorized by a convicting judge (superego), to subjective releases of euphoria engendered by repentance, acceptance of forgiveness, and experience of divine grace. Christians who adopt this view see themselves as part of a providential unfolding of history. They are a small part of the greater destiny that God has ordained.

Other believers view God as intrinsic to the world, acting in an immanent manner through natural, human, and supernatural ways.³¹ People consider themselves in this scheme of things as fellow participants, whose actions are based on their identification with the birth, life, fellowship, miracles, parables, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Their salvation through Christ motivates them to identify with the many ways in which the divine is acting in and through them, other people, history, and natural events (ego driven by id).

These two views of God point to the difference that myths and fairy tales make in effecting change. An understanding of God as Divine Other can result in a believer becoming a mere spectator of predestined events after he or she has experienced

salvation and been promised eternal life. Belief in God as Immanent Presence, on the other hand, assumes that divine destiny is integrally linked to the way in which believers and the church are engaged in this world. This latter, empathetic approach, echoing the epistle's reference to Jesus as "someone who in every respect has been tested as we are" (Hebrews 4:15-16), enables a (re)integration of personality and faith that is not as easily achieved through a mythic understanding of divine agency. Chapters two, three, and four outline the merits of this immanent view of God.

The *Harry Potter* Series

The time has come to look at stories that relate directly to the experiences of offenders. The *Harry Potter* series, written in seven volumes by J. K. Rowling over a ten-year period (1997 to 2007),³² has been chosen because they reinforce the four aspects of the pastoral interview noted above. J. K. Rowling follows her young protagonist as Harry matures from the age of twelve to eighteen. This aspect fulfills the first purpose of the book, namely to shore up the identity of inmates as they grow in responsibility and take ownership of their lives. Work on their inner child, a chance not afforded them during their formative years, offers offenders an opportunity to relive their adolescent lives in a new way in order to make things turn out right.³³

J. K. Rowling features Harry Potter in relation to a group of peers with whom he becomes friends.³⁴ Emotional attachment and bonding are important indicators of whether offenders will be successful in their reintegration into society. Their ability to trust another person, share personally, and establish an emotional attachment that is known as mutual friendship goes a long way in re-establishing normality in an abnormal world. The ability of inmates to build healthy relationships in prison is one indication of how well they will do when released.

Re-integration of personality represents a second aspect of the pastoral interview. Harry Potter is thrust early on into a conflict situation with another pale faced boy about his age while buying school supplies.³⁵ He ends up disagreeing almost immediately with Malfoy's attitude toward Muggles and a teacher named Hagrid. Harry is made woefully aware that he knows little about the house into which he will be inducted and about a game called Quidditch.

Inmates are faced almost immediately with conflict situations when they enter prison. They are asked the nature of their crimes, taken advantage of, challenged to stand up for themselves, and categorized according to an inmate pecking order. This

can all happen within the first day of their arrival. More challenges await them on the second day.

J. K. Rowling's willingness to explore the nature of evil and sin dovetails nicely with a third aspect of an inmate interview. Rowling does not candy coat the fact that young people are faced with temptations and compromising situations. As a youth pastor, I spoke to high school students about the dangers of drugs and sex, the challenges of dating, and choosing wrong friends. After listening to me politely for over twenty minutes, the students told me that they had had to deal with all of these things when they were in grades seven and eight. I realised how naïve I had been when I first grew up, and the assumptions I was making about when to talk to young people about adult matters.

J. R. Rowling suggests that these conflicts are not only internal to a person (as intimated above in relation to one's parents and one's libido). They are fundamental to the nature of the world. Facing sin in one's own life and evil in relation to other people's actions are a part of what it means to grow up and become responsible.

Bettelheim confirms this point when he states that "much that goes wrong in life is due to our very natures – the propensity of all men for acting aggressively, a socially, selfishly, out of anger and anxiety . . . children know that they are not always good; and often, even when they are, they would prefer not to be." He observes that "the dominant culture wishes to pretend, particularly where children are concerned, that the dark side of man does not exist, and professes a belief in optimistic meliorism."³⁶

Rowling introduces Malfoy, Crabbe, and Goyle as alter-egos to Harry, Hermione, and Ron as a means of showing how adolescents naturally form opposing groups to test character and resolve. The four houses of the Hogwarts School represent differing aspects of the self: intellect (Ravenclaw), courage (Gryffindor), cunning (Slytherin), and loyalty (Hufflepuff).³⁷ These houses are pitted against each other through sports matches and laboratory tests at school. Groups of friends naturally congregate together to form potentially rival factions.

These adolescent feats of camaraderie and conflict become more ominous as the story goes along. Dumbledore, the principal of Hogwarts, is pitted against a former student named Tom Riddle, who is bent on achieving immortality through any means possible. His malevolent character grows from a disembodied spirit to a bodily force that encompasses minions of followers, dedicated to getting rid of the non-magical Muggles. Good and evil are writ large as Tom Riddle takes on the name "Vol-de-Mort" (stealer of death), increases his killing sprees, and takes over the Ministry of Magic.

This conflict becomes personal when Harry is forced to choose between searching for a sword that Voldemort is pursuing, and looking for Voldemort's soul, hidden within Horcruxes.³⁸ This inner conflict speaks to the second purpose of this book, focusing on the re-integration of character necessary for inmates to achieve to become mature and responsible citizens. Harry is tempted to fight fire with fire, beating Voldemort in his chase for the elder wand so that Harry can use it against his arch rival. His friends, to the contrary, counsel him to take the advice of his mentor, Dumbledore, and continue searching for the objects in which Voldemort's soul is hidden.

Harry's situation speaks directly to the dilemma of offenders. Violence is a common "go-to-position" in jail, assumed to be normal to keep one's life, limb, honour, respect, and status intact. Refraining from a violent solution while eating humble pie is regarded as a weak response, viewed with suspicion in regard to motives. Alternatives to violence are part and parcel of what it means for an inmate to move forward, cascading down security systems in order to "reach the street."

Inmates make difficult decisions. After spending ten years in a high security jail, two lifers who were about thirty years of age came to a "high" minimum-security facility where I was working. Many inmates were afraid of these two men because they had been enforcers in the other prisons. One of these men found out that partying and drinking was even easier in this new facility than in the one he had left. He was soon on his way back to a higher-security prison. The other person, friends with his "buddy" who had been transferred with him, was left alone to face the numerous anonymous notes ("kites") sent to security by other inmates who continued to be afraid that he would beat them up.

Another inmate faced a similar choice when he and a friend of his signed up to take the Christopher Leadership course, a volunteer program that builds confidence by teaching public speaking skills. The friend began to make fun of the course and the participants in it. Finding it too hard to continue, the man ridiculed his friend so that they would find company in misery when they both quit. His friend decided to stay, losing a compatriot in the process.

Harry's choice was similar. He was tempted to fight violence with violence precisely because he felt he was the "chosen" one to defeat evil. He had in his hands the invisibility cloak and resurrection stone. All he needed was the elder wand to make it a threesome of power and might.

His other choice looked weak. Dumbledore had asked Harry to look for the Horcruxes in which to find Voldemort's soul. What a wonderful metaphor that points to what inmates' search for meaning is all about in their sojourn in prison!

Does one have a soul left when one is faced with innumerable incriminating and compromising situations? One's bowels literally twist and turn when one is "forced" to give up a friend by testifying against him, when one comes clean on what else one has done, thereby receiving a longer prison sentence, when one drops one's hands in the face of danger even though the use of these hands is the only respect and reputation one has earned in the last five years of jail. Surrender of one's soul to fate and destiny is all that one feels when one "gives in" to such a weak choice.

Rowling chose this metaphor of looking for Voldemort's soul precisely to make this point. If one does not have a soul, what is left? Harry, Ron, and Hermione's mission consisted of searching for Tom Riddle's soul in order to find out whether he could feel at all. Did the division of his spirit into multiple pieces and hidden within different objects render him beyond help? The most dangerous man in the world is one who has no feelings for himself or others.

On the advice of his friends and mentor, Harry chose a course far from certain of victory. He chose to continue to look for the Horcruxes in which Voldemort's soul was hidden. This choice, for better or worse, made him a more mature adult, regardless of the outcome of the story. These choices are integral to what chaplaincy is all about as ministers help offenders make mature decisions, based on their own self interest, to the benefit of society, in the name of the victims for whom they are truly sorry, and for the sake of the future to which they are committed.

Harry's choice brings into relief a fourth aspect of the pastoral interview, namely to ascertain the natural and supernatural sources of a decision. Harry made a series of choices along the way, some of them on the basis of his own abilities, some with the help of nature, some with the help of his friends, and some on the basis of a spiritual presence. For example, Harry summoned his wand during the first part of the Triwizard Tournament.³⁹ This newly learned skill helped Harry defeat the dragon. He used Gilliweed during the second task of the Triwizard Tournament to stay underwater for a longer period of time.⁴⁰ This shows the intervention of natural forces on Harry's behalf.

Harry relied on the advice of his friends and his mentor, Dumbledore, in making a decision to continue to search for Horcruxes. The peer group and friendship they had forged during many adventures enabled Harry to rely on Ron and Hermione during this critical time of crisis. They were in this battle against evil together, come what may.

In addition to these human and natural forces, a spiritual one is mentioned as well. The reader will recall two magical objects that Harry had in his possession and a third one that he was seeking. The first was the invisibility cloak, which he received

from Dumbledore, having been passed down as a present from James, his own father. The second was the resurrection stone that Dumbledore bequeathed to him at the time of his death. These two objects are clear references to the Holy Spirit and Jesus, with the elder wand, not yet in Harry's possession, referring to the Father.

Harry's choice to leave these three Deathly Hallows alone while searching for Voldemort's soul invites some rich theological queries. Is J. K. Rowling suggesting that the doctrine of the Trinity has been used by the church as a weapon of power and control over its adherents? Is she suggesting that being more concerned about one's own soul is a preferable option?

Whatever the answer to this question, detailed in the first chapter of the book, Harry decides to drop the resurrection stone in the forest and not use his invisibility cloak as he confronts Voldemort and his followers. Left without any defences, Voldemort uses the "Avada Kedavra" curse to kill Harry.

The fact that Harry survives this second onslaught of death speaks directly to the role of the trickster noted above. Instead of killing Harry's body and soul, the curse strikes the Horcrux of Voldemort's own soul that became part of Harry when Voldemort tried to kill him the first time. Harry's mother Lily protected him from harm by stepping in front of Voldemort's wrath. Her death enabled Harry to live, while leaving the stain of original sin behind in the form of a Horcrux.

This phantom reality of evil, discussed in chapter thirty-five, entitled King's Cross,⁴¹ points to the fact that there is good and evil in all of us. Harry, for example, is very much like Tom Riddle. His wand is made of the same fibres, he can speak Parsel tongue (reminiscent of the fact that Adam and Eve can speak to the snake in the garden),⁴² he has visions about what Tom Riddle is feeling and doing, and he dreams of grasping power in the same way that Tom wishes for immortality. Harry speaks of this fear of turning out like Voldemort to Dumbledore.⁴³ Dumbledore agrees that the origins of good and evil are similar, but that Harry has been chosen for the right path.

Good and evil in the character of Harry is resolved in a similar manner to that of the Cat in the Hat. The initial result is increasingly destructive, with lives being lost and the conflict continuing to escalate. Harry remains unsure about the right course to follow. He is somewhat like the twenty-five letters in Dr. Seuss' story that spread the pink stain all over the page while trying to be helpful.

The climax of the story nevertheless shows how love and forgiveness, combined with power and might, triumphs in the end. Harry makes great sacrifices in order for good to prevail. The combination of effects is truly magical, like the Voom that is created by the letter "z" in order to clean up the mess.

These theological allusions demonstrate the deeply spiritual and religious aspects of Rowling's novels.⁴⁴ Harry's decision to look for Voldemort's soul, his willingness to die, the expulsion of original sin, and his ability to defeat Voldemort because the elder wand does not claim Voldemort as its rightful owner, makes these actions important from a religious point of view. Supernatural as well as natural forces need to be considered when life and death, good and evil, redemption and sin are involved.

Summary

To summarize, the *Harry Potter* series deals with four aspects of life relevant to chaplains' work with inmates. The first has to do with shoring up the identity of inmates. Rowling's depiction of Harry and his friends growing up in their adolescent years is similar to the experiences of inmates as they work on emotionally weak areas of their lives in order to face their past, anti-social "short term energy-relieving behaviours (STERBs)."

Re-integration of personality is a second phase in this process. Inmates deal with inner conflicts related to peer pressure and the use of violence in the same way that Harry and his friends had to decide between searching for the elder wand and Voldemort's soul. Fighting violence with violence in prison is a "go-to-option" that mimics the larger world of political and cultural conflicts. Offenders need a lot of maturity to "turn the other cheek" and swallow their pride.

Rowling's acknowledgement and depiction of evil is a third reason why her novels are so powerful. She understands how easily internal and external forces of sin can escalate into fundamental battles between good and evil. Prison dynamics place into sharp relief choices between right and wrong that inmates make on a daily basis.

The fact that Rowling offers a spiritual resolution to this situation is a fourth reason that her novels are a helpful guide for chaplains. She does not shy away from speaking the truth that help has to come from outside of one's own intellect and will in order for the matter to be solved and resolved. The fact that evil spills beyond human will to social and political actions and consequences means that a supernatural reality is needed to counteract a deeply harmful collective force.

Remorse: First Step in the Healing Process

Rowling's detailed depiction of Tom Riddle as a principal antagonist and her focus on the issue of whether he can feel remorse for his crimes are two specific

reasons why the *Harry Potter* series has been chosen as the first agenda of this book. Chaplains need first and foremost to understand that the person sitting in front of them is in prison for a reason. In spite of the fact that many offenders appear pro-social, well-adjusted, and incapable of committing a crime, the truth of the matter is that in more than 95 per cent of the cases in which a chaplain is involved, inmates are guilty of the crimes of which they have been convicted.

Inmates are more than happy to oblige chaplains who are squeamish about talking about the reality of sin and evil in their lives. There have been many times in my career when an inmate and I never really got around to the reasons that an offender was in jail. Every time that an opening for confession and acknowledgement of sin was afforded, the offender -- with my help -- was able to steer the conversation to safer ground. It has often been only in hindsight that I have regretted not asking the offender more pointed questions. These queries may have helped me understand the strained nature of their marriage relationship, the fact that none of their children want to have anything to do with them, and the reason for their secrecy in regard to their sub-cultural activities in jail. My reticence emboldened the person to keep the charade of illusion intact.

Rowling's willingness to deal directly and transparently with evil in the human form of Tom Riddle has helped me be more effective in my chaplaincy work. It is a little bit like the suicide prevention training that I received many years ago. I initially thought that talking about suicide with a person might trigger these ideas in their mind (somewhat like the Suicide Help Phone Line that a Monty Python skit is famous for, in which the counsellor sees their job as helping the person on the other end of the line to commit suicide).

The counsellor told me that I was to ask the person specifically if they had a plan, a method, and a time when they were going to commit suicide. I remember the first time that I followed these procedures while working with an inmate in segregation. The inmate told me freely that he planned to commit suicide the following week, that he was going to hang himself with an available towel, and that he would do it after security had made its rounds during count time. I was shocked. Pretending that he did not want to commit suicide or avoiding the subject altogether could have had the opposite effect. In this case, I was able to convince him that the window of hope had not narrowed down to an infinitesimally small point. He had spent over half of the last nine years in jail in the "hole." Isolation, alienation, and inability to cope made him feel that suicide was a solution to the problem.

A similar, open approach is needed in speaking about offences. The longer I have worked in prison, the more I have become convinced that the matter of guilt

and innocence, remorse and confession, denial and minimization is an integral and vital aspect of the pastoral interview process. I am not doing the inmate any favours by avoiding the matter of guilt and innocence, then finding out in their parole hearing that there are many aspects of the person of which I was not aware. An inmate answers some very hard questions if they appear in a hearing before the parole board. Having that conversation early on in a person's sentence saves a lot of grief and disappointment if the person is not made aware of what conviction and incarceration means in his or her case.⁴⁵

Rowling's depiction of Tom Riddle is effective because she leaves open the possibility that he does not feel any remorse for what he has done. In spite of the many opportunities for change provided, Tom Riddle becomes worse, hiding behind his unfeeling persona as Voldemort. This made Harry and others realise that evil had to be confronted for what it was. Opportunities for remorse turned into the necessity of fighting against evil.

An inmate's ability to feel empathy for their victims, remorse for their crimes, and willingness to change are foundational signs of effective chaplaincy interviews. Given a chance to speak about these heartfelt convictions enables an offender to move from a victim stance to taking responsibility, from defensiveness to acknowledgement, from confession to forgiveness. Various characters in Rowling's novels reach this pivotal point in their lives: Snape, Regulus, even Narcissa out of self-preservation and fear for the safety of her son Malfoy.⁴⁶ This openness to weakness represents the beginning of a transformative process.

At the same time, a chaplain needs to accept the fact that some inmates with whom they work may become, like Voldemort, worse. While this is a sad fact, it behooves a chaplain to safeguard their own integrity, emotional stability, and spiritual capacity to continue ministering in light of this reality. Prisons have been built to keep society safe from these offenders. As in the case of Voldemort, good can only triumph and prosper if evil has been defeated and kept in its place.

Stages of Redemption

Victor Hugo's novel, *Les Miserables*, has been chosen as the second story for this book because it follows so closely on the heels of Rowling's question of remorse. Unlike Riddle, who becomes increasingly secretive, Jean Valjean is convicted early on about the sinfulness of his deeds.⁴⁷ He feels remorse, repents of his ways, and continues on a path of intimidation before mellowing and finding the means to make up for what he has done.

Victor Hugo's novel is like Rowling's in that they both take time to develop their characters. While Tom Riddle progresses to full-fledged malevolence, Jean Valjean moves from remorse to repentance, from justification to sanctification, from conviction of sin to truth telling, from narcissism to parenting, from discipline to love, and from secrecy to transparency.

Each of these developments takes place over time. After repenting of his ways when given a second chance by the bishop, Jean Valjean changes his name and becomes a law-abiding citizen, contributing to society by starting a factory and becoming the mayor of a town.

This idyllic life is interrupted when another man is arrested and identified as the infamous Jean Valjean. After anguishing with his conscience that takes up fifteen pages of script,⁴⁸ Jean rushes to the courthouse to confirm the fact that Champmathieu is not who people think he is. These sequences of events take another forty pages of script,⁴⁹ before Jean Valjean is returned to the prison from which he had been released a short time ago.⁵⁰

Having repented of his ways, become a law-abiding citizen, and come clean in regard to his identity, Jean Valjean begins the fourth chapter of his new life by escaping from prison and adopting a young girl as his own. Jean first jumps from the convict ship on which he has been placed.⁵¹ He then visits the home of the Thenardiers and informs them that Fantine, a mother once in the employ of Monsieur Madeleine and now on her death bed, has granted him legal custody of her daughter, Cosette. He takes the six-year old girl away and raises her as his own in a rural suburb of Paris.

Unfortunately, Jean Valjean is suspected once again of being the old convict, this time because of his penchant for giving away money to strangers. He flees the area, climbs over a convent wall with Cosette in hand while in hot pursuit by the police. He meets an old friend who is been employed by the Catholic Sisters of Martin Verga. Jean is accepted to work as a gardener in the cloistered order. Cosette is inducted as a novice.

The tranquil setting of this fifth sojourn provides Jean with time and space to revisit the cauldron of care afforded him in the past. The bishop's act of grace is reinforced by the nuns' demonstration of devotion to their Master and Lord. Jean observes them lying prostrate for hours in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.⁵² This voluntary suffering and penance throws into sharp relief the deep scars of his own incarceration. While outwardly at peace, the anger and rage at his "wrongful" conviction and umpteenth reincarceration continues to manifest itself in the form of a sullen and bitter man.

Jean recognizes the brittleness and breakability of his demeanour and identity. No matter how far he has come, the sacrifices of habit and changes of heart necessary for transformation feel as though they are too much to internalize. His heart truly has to melt before it can be remade and refashioned.

I worked with a man who was suspended five times from parole and sent back to jail. In spite of the fact that he was able numerous times to convince the parole board that he deserved to be released before his nine-year sentence was up, he repeatedly returned to his old habits. He started using drugs when he could not cope with being a provider for a new family he had met, he sold black market cellphones the second time he was released, he stole groceries on his third try, he went bankrupt after he started his own company on the fourth try, and he had his ex-wife and children move in with him the fifth time he was released. He continued to gamble.

This man was exactly like Jean Valjean. In spite of his remorse, repentance, acceptance of grace, willingness to change, ability to find legitimate employment, and efforts at rehabilitation, he continued to let the previous twenty years of criminal association and addictions rule his recent, three-year change of heart. He had to look much deeper into his own heart and mind if he was going to be totally transformed. Making me believe that he had changed was the easy part. He had a silver tongue and musical charms to prove it. Real change was much harder, especially when I asked him why he had been suspended from parole – again.

The relevance of Victor Hugo's novel stands out in light of this situation. His digressions from the main plot are legendary. He spends fifty pages on adolescent boys' pursuits of their lovers before revealing the devastating results of this fanciful immaturity: Fantine's pregnancy and abandonment to her own devices.

The Battle of Waterloo represents Hugo's next long digression. The reader is convinced that this story has nothing to do with the plot, until Hugo introduces the shady characters Thenardier and wounded officer Pontmercy on the last page of the chapter.⁵³

Hugo challenges the reader to stay with him, even as I am challenged to listen one more time to the inmate in front of me who is sorry yet again for what he has repeatedly done. Perhaps the inmate acts this way on purpose, just to see how far I am willing to travel with him. I have got off that road many times, only to come back to see what type of ending is available.

Hugo does the same thing with his main character, returning again and again to Jean's foibles and the wherewithal of society that is more than willing to keep him entrapped. Less than half the novel covers these five stages of Jean's development.⁵⁴ There are another six hundred pages to go.

Ability to Love

In his biography about Victor Hugo, Graham Robb makes the point that characters in *Les Miserables* are a “remarkably disparate group of personalities . . . family relations are either non-existent, illegitimate, adoptive, bogus or posthumous.”⁵⁵ The only real family depicted is a largely dysfunctional one, the Thenardiers. The father is a thief and swindler, the mother hideous and self-centred, the daughters lost and forlorn, and the son a vagabond in the street. This is perhaps why Hugo named the novel after them. He wanted to show the world how not to live as a family.⁵⁶

This negative rendition of what family entails is supported by other characters in the cast. Javert was born to a father in the galleys and to a fortune-teller of a mother.⁵⁷ Jean stole some bread to provide for his orphaned siblings. These two men remind us of Tom Riddle and Harry Potter, one abandoned and left in an orphanage and the other raised by an aunt after his parents were murdered. None of these scenarios make for a happy beginning.

I have been drawn to Hugo’s book precisely because of these negative views of family and resulting alienating behaviours and attachments. The inmates with whom I work have lost almost everything, including their spouses and children. The first agenda of pastoral care has to do with addressing grief over these losses. People cannot heal and learn how to love if they have not understood why and what they have left behind. More often than not, their criminal actions were a direct cause of their subsequent abandonment.

Coming to terms with these interrelated issues is similar to what Javert had to do in his understanding and execution of justice, what Tom Riddle had to do in response to his father’s betrayal and mother’s neglect, what Harry had to accept about his father and mother’s human failings, and what Jean had to do in learning how to care again. Each of these characters is placed in less than ideal familial settings in order to see how they will respond.

The genius of Hugo’s novel lies in the fact that it moves beyond the self-centred nature of Jean Valjean’s rehabilitation by placing a young girl to care for in his life. Hugo is asking a universal question. Are we truly able to love someone besides ourselves? Are we able to love someone who is not a blood relative, someone who falls into our laps, so to speak?

Jean’s feelings of guilt in regard to Fantine’s death and sense of responsibility to care for her daughter are the initial reasons for his willingness to care. Is this

enough? Does he care whole-heartedly enough not to attach strings of self-interest in regard to Cosette? Does he love Cosette for his own sake or for her sake?

This question is answered in the last six hundred pages of Hugo's novel. We follow the story of these two cast offs, finding comfort and care in their growing ability to look after each other. Jean's true love for Cosette becomes most real when he realises that he is about to lose her. Finding a note in which Cosette expresses her love for Marius, Jean's world is torn apart.⁵⁸ He realises that the only person he has truly come to love is loved by another. The mutuality of love that was so real has faded into a selfless love that he shows yet again as penance for all the wrongs that he has ever done.

Jean is portrayed as a Christ figure in the latter part of the novel. He saves Marius from the barricades, gives up Cosette to her fiancé, lives with the disgrace of being a former convict, and dies in the solitude of his loneliness. Hugo opts for the image of a Christ figure because of his own failings in love and familial relations. He is not sure, as Robb points out,⁵⁹ that he wants a happy ending to the story. Hugo suspects that sacrifice in love is about all that can be hoped for. Mutual fulfillment may be possible, as evidenced by the marriage of Marius and Cosette. And yet, Jean, the author and provider of care, is relegated to the background in spite of a last ditch happy ending. Jean comes to the realization that the parental care provided has paved the way for his daughter's happiness, but perhaps not his own.⁶⁰

The same sad result is true for other characters in Hugo's novel. Thenardier's daughter Eponine falls in love with Marius even though she knows that his love has been claimed by another. Notwithstanding Marius' rejection of her, Eponine protects Marius from her father and his friends, intent on robbing the house where Marius is visiting Cosette.⁶¹ Later on in the story, Eponine again protects Marius behind the barricades by taking a bullet for him and dying in the process.⁶²

Gavroche is another person with whom the reader falls in love. He is a young street urchin, caring of abandoned others, and courageous in regard to the rebellion. His death at the hands of the police while trying to retrieve some bullets for the revolutionaries leaves the reader emotionally drained.⁶³ The victims of all perpetrators are acknowledged and mourned in that heart-felt moment.

Marius' torn affection between his rich monarchist grandfather, Monsieur Gillenormand, and his republican father, Colonel Pontmercy -- disowned by his own father and dead before Marius can get to know him -- is another example of the difficulties of love.⁶⁴ This inter-generational tension is a metaphor for the political conflict between Empire and Revolution that occurred in nineteenth century France. The Restoration that came about after the rebellions of 1848 represented a

rapprochement between these two contradictory ideals and events. While freedom and equality were gained through bloodshed and war, they could only be sustained within a type of democratised, authoritarian rule and religious rights reminiscent of king and church before 1789.⁶⁵

The fact that Marius was able to reconcile the republican actions of his own father with his love and regard for his grandfather represents a rapprochement of familial ties, at least in this instance.⁶⁶ It is reminiscent of the trickster in the Cat in the Hat. While the Revolution wrecked initial havoc on all that was dear to the imagined propriety of Monarchy, its entrenchment of liberty and equality resulted in a better state of affairs for all concerned after 1850. The fact that Hugo's novel was written during this time period shows how he was able to reconcile these two political realities, even while in exile for his part in various political affairs. His story, published in 1862, is bitter-sweet because he has not yet returned to Paris in all of his glory.

The above examples of love and loss, unrequited longing and tragic consequences, leave open the effects of love. Nothing is guaranteed, given the searing disabilities of these characters' upbringing and inability to know how to love. It is even worse for the inmates with whom I work. They have not only loved and lost, but were directly responsible for the anger and betrayal their loved ones experienced as a result of the hurt and harm that they caused. The return path of being able to love in a proper manner is a long one for them.

Similar to the case of Jean Valjean, a bitter-sweet ending is what can be realistically expected of the broken family lives of the inmates with whom I work. As noted above, the optimism of fairy tales can morph into something less than that, a happy ending that appears on the horizon, in the same way that Moses saw the promised land without entering it. Hope lives eternally because of the ephemeral reality of love.

At the same time, these offenders' emotional availability to love again speaks volumes about what is possible. Jean Valjean continued to grow in love, even as he grieved the sacrifices he had made, and he experienced seeming finality of love that occurred when Cosette transferred her affections from her father to her lover. This is as it should be. Cosette nevertheless represented the first person, besides himself, that Jean had been able to love. That is why the parting can be viewed as tragic.

Stigma of the Past

The stigma of past criminal activities is a final reason that Hugo's novel speaks so directly to my work with inmates. Jean does not reveal his identity to Cosette, Marius, or his family because he is afraid of what would happen if he did. His worst fears come true when Marius finds out who he is, bans him from the house, and allows Jean to visit his step-daughter once a week in the basement. In spite of his revolutionary sympathies, Marius continues to reflect the general views of society in regard to offenders. A convict is a creature:

“who, on the social ladder, has no place, being below the lowest round . . . he is no longer the fellow of the living . . . certain infractions of the written law should be followed by eternal penalties, and he (Marius) accepted social damnation as growing out of civilization.”⁶⁷

This ongoing stigma reflects how deeply taboos in society are sacrosanct. People who break these taboos are often ostracised for long periods of time, even though time spent in jail represents the proportional punishment for their offences.

A chaplain should keep this reality in mind while helping offenders to reintegrate. I have always been surprised how ferocious some of this opposition and hostility can be. Often, it is the people or churches who have been deeply hurt by offenders in the past that are most vehemently opposed to ex-offenders becoming part of their community. Consequences of harm continue to have a ripple effect.

A chaplain needs to own this oppositional aspect of their work as normal. It is similar to the way that offenders, harmed by priests, find it difficult to trust and establish a rapport with myself as a chaplain. Projection of anger onto someone else for harm done by another person is a fairly common way of grieving and coping. Chaplains need to realise that this transference of anger is often the reason that individuals and churches have difficulty in accepting ex-inmates into their midst. Safety is necessary for both victims and ex-offenders so that they can flourish and live to the best of their abilities in society.

One scene in the book stands out in regard to this stigma. Jean Valjean and Cosette happen to meet a group of convicts who are chained and riding on a caravan of wagons, with guards marching on either side. Overcome with anxiety and fear, Cosette cries out to her father, “Are they still men?”⁶⁸ Jean replies, “Sometimes.” Cosette has nightmares about them and exclaims, “If I should meet one of those men in my path, O my God, I should die just from seeing him near me!”

This retort makes one understand why Jean restrained himself from revealing his identity to Cosette. One never knows how a person might react if they find out

that a new acquaintance, friend, or parishioner has done time in jail. This is, after all, private and personal information, not something that needs to be revealed unless necessary. This situation, nevertheless, can be awkward for all concerned. To make that which was abnormal normal again is a challenge for us all.

A final personal story is in order. My uncle was a mental patient who worked in a sheltered workshop for many years after he received a lobotomy because of his violent behaviour. My mother would come to visit him and take him on excursions for the afternoon. When the visit was over, she would drive him back to the work area. My uncle would finish a cigarette by the car before going back inside. He looked over the fence and commented to my mother, “Did you know that all the people I work with over there are crazy?”

Magic of Salvation

The story of Jesus stands somewhere between the salvific, fictional characters of Harry Potter and Jean Valjean, featured in the second and third chapters, and the role of Saint Francis and prison reform in the fifth and sixth chapters. The lightning rod of Jesus’ life and death echoes the havoc and restoration of the Cat in the Hat. Jesus attracted to himself a lot of opposition, the Pharisees and Sadducees, King Herod, High Priest Caiaphas, and Roman governor Pontius Pilate, along with the general population who clamoured for his death. A member of his own flock betrayed him for monetary rewards.

Raymond Brown makes the point in his commentary on the Passion of Jesus that there were real reasons for Jesus’ death.⁶⁹ Jesus’ actions were offensive to many people. According to them, Jesus blasphemed against the Jewish God by calling himself a son of God. He questioned the authority of Rome by calling himself a king. He predicted the destruction of the Temple. He repeatedly broke Jewish laws by eating and healing on the Sabbath. This complicated political situation caused Pontius Pilate to acquiesce to his death for expedient reasons, in spite of the fact that he believed Jesus to be innocent (Luke 23).

Jesus also attracted people who were outside of the good graces of the social, political, and religious establishments. Tax collectors, fishermen, prostitutes, Galileans, and others received his message as good news, causing the political and religious authorities to wonder whether Jesus was subversive.

This type of negative publicity is familiar to inmates and staff alike who work in correctional facilities. The type of crimes that inmates have committed are fodder for newspapers and others who want punishment. The incidents that occur in prisons

result in a lot of recriminations, suspicion, and retribution. The prison is a toxic environment that generates and attracts more toxicity.

The place of religion in correctional facilities, and more generally in society, is indicative of this ambiguity and ambivalence. I am convinced that chaplaincy has failed to be integrated into the goals and structure of the correctional service because of deep suspicions about its salutary effects. There is something threatening about the fact of faith and phenomena of religion that keeps chaplaincy as a peripheral endeavour.

Part of this ambiguity has to do with the fact that the church, and more generally chaplaincy, stands in solidarity with those who are most vilified by society. Unsure of the role of redemption, rehabilitation, reintegration, forgiveness, reconciliation, religion, and reform, society prefers to keep these matters at arms length by including these aspects of life within the broader reality of incarceration. The church does not have that luxury because it is beholden to a founder who not only attracted crowds of misfits, but was willing to question law as a good.

The question at hand has to do with Jesus' negative publicity. On a grand theological level, one could say that Jesus became sin, both on a personal and political level, in order to overcome it. The magnetism of Jesus forced everyone to come to terms with the underlying reasons for the law and gospel. Jesus first and foremost invited destruction of old ways of thinking and acting.

This destruction is real for the inmates with whom I work. The wrath of God has been visited on them precisely because of the evil they have committed. Paths in the wilderness can only be made straight after they have been acknowledged as crooked.

Jesus' infractions of the law, both religious and political, resulted in his death, the ultimate physical punishment. This effect brings to mind the pink stain that was left behind by the Cat in the Hat. The more that the little cats tried to clean up the mess, the worse it got. It was only as the impossibility of the task was acknowledged, that success was achieved. The effects were magical rather than practical.

This brings us to the heart of what is discussed in the fourth chapter of the book. The word "magic" is invoked because no practical solution to the proportionality of punishment can be prescribed for the crime that has been committed. What is a person's life worth, another person's life? Are the everlasting effects of sexual and physical assault to be met with everlasting punishment? Are the deaths by drug overdoses to be met with deaths of the drug dealers?

Every sentence of incarceration has a degree of arbitrariness simply because of the ever-receding or ever-increasing sanction that can be imposed on the taboo

that has been violated. The end of practical solutions to incarceration and rehabilitation represent the beginning of essential reasoning and religious reform.

Jesus is invoked as a person who attracted the negative in order for the positive, end result to be accentuated. The Cat in the Hat is a paradoxical figure precisely because it represents destruction and salvation at one and the same time. The repressed desires of the children are acknowledged as such in order for them to internalize prosocial values. The Cat uses its powers of language to solve the pink stain of misinformation that it produced. Jesus turns the propriety of his own death into something much more, a forgiveness and salvation for all, including that of his perpetrators.

This juxta-positioning of wrath and grace, death and life, incarceration and reform can be enunciated in numerous other ways. Jesus identifies in infinite humanity with the weakest of the weak, and yet stands tall as the Lord of the cosmic universe in a divine manner. Worshipped and showered with presents as a god and king at his birth, he is tortured and executed in a most difficult manner at the height of his manhood. Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, he is revered and honoured as a shepherd of all sheep. While hated and vilified by many, he embodies love of the same and others.

These dualities are heightened and dramatized within the setting of a prison. A sharp pecking order is established by inmates to put the weak down in order to build up their own prison status. A code of silence is a daily fact of life that is enforced with informers (rats) being beat up and sex offenders being told to “go to the hole” or else. Bullying of the insecure is viewed as normal while the vacuum of power left by the last *caid* (leader of a gang) is quickly filled by others more than happy to claim the status and control afforded by their new-found leadership role.

Faced with these upside-down values, staff are pulled into countless scenarios that compromise their authority and make them feel as though they need to fight “fire with fire.” Chaplains are caught in similar situations, pitted against their colleagues, made to feel as though they have to choose between staff and inmate, between inmate and inmate, between one religion and another, etc. These oppositional realities make the gospel message of Jesus all that more relevant. Jesus continued to embody love in spite of the challenges he faced.

The most important paradox relevant for our purposes as chaplains has to do with issues of power and control. The first step of Alcoholics Anonymous entails admitting that one’s life has become unmanageable. The second step involves surrendering one’s life to a higher power. These two steps are the hardest to take for the inmates with whom I work. They have managed to live a double lifestyle for so

long that they consider themselves invincible. They were not killed in a high-speed car chase. The other gang member missed them in a drive-by shooting. They survived one or two drug overdoses. They were able to hide the molestation of their (step) children for a long time. Their girlfriends had no idea that they were selling drugs on the side.

These so-called invincible behaviours came crashing down only after these inmates had been caught and convicted of their crimes. Even then, some of them have continued to plead their innocence, working on an appeal of their conviction for the next twenty years. Regardless of whether they are innocent, the reality of the matter is that they, for better or worse, have ended up in jail. Surely, there is something that they can do from their invincible victim stance to something more refreshing. Is it possible for them to move from step one, which speaks about unmanageability, to surrender, which represents step two.

The fourth chapter of the book concentrates on the fact that Jesus was both helpless victim and controlling lord over his destiny. Jesus states in the Gospel of John that he has the power to lay down his life and the power to take it up again (10:18). The book of Acts takes a slight different tack by stating that it was God who raised Jesus from the dead (2:32). These contradictory statements are resolved once again in the idea that Jesus was both human and divine. The will of God as divine and the will of Jesus as human are the same. The church took five centuries to come up with an adequately theological pronouncement during the Council of Chalcedon (451) about this paradoxical fact.⁷⁰

Inmates take control of their lives by admitting that their lives have become unmanageable, that they need to surrender to a higher power, and that they can work on their recovery by owning the sinful and saintly aspects of their lives.

Blondel's view of the actions of God within history is helpful. From an anthropological perspective, "every man, by the logic of his action, is led to discover the impossibility of exhausting the deep willing at the core of his being in a finite universe."⁷¹ More broadly, "it is in the dynamics of the will seeking ever greater self-realization through continued action, that God is present to human beings. It is in their actions that they say Yes to the divine presence."⁷²

This way of stating the matter neither squashes the importance of human will nor obviates the necessity of divine intervention. These two actions are interrelated in the same way that Jesus claimed that he could rise from the dead and God claimed that it was he who raised him. We are helpless and hopeful at one and the same time, a lamb and a ram, a baby and a man, a believer and an unbeliever. The acting of

willing, rather than the power of the intellect, is the spark that engages divine longing and invites further intervention on the part of God.

Introduction

¹ Donald Stoesz, *Glimpses of Grace: Reflections of a Prison Chaplain* (Victoria: Friesen Press, 2010)

² *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 10.

³ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment* (New York: Vintage Books, 1975).

⁴ J. K. Rowling published the first book in the series, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* in 1997 (London: Bloomsbury, 1997) and the last one of seven books, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (London: Bloomsbury, 2007), in 2007.

⁵ Victor Hugo, *Les Miserables*, trans. Charles Wilbour (New York: Modern Library, n.d.).

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 91ff.

⁷ This word comes from Malcolm Gladwell's use of it in his book, *The Outliers* (New York; Little, Brown and Co., 2008). Note his discussion of the role of an outlier in "Reading Group Guide" at the back of the book, pp. 1ff. I am using the term to represent a unique individual that can represent the catalyst of change within a situation. For an academic interpretation of the role of a trickster, see Jeanne Campbell Reesman, ed., *The Trickster Lives: Culture and Myth in American Fiction* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001).

⁸ Dr. Seuss, *The Cat in the Hat* (New York: Random House, 1957), *The Cat in the Hat Comes Back* (New York: Random House, 1958).

Chapter One

⁹ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment* (New York: Vintage Books, 1975), p. 48.

¹⁰ Donald Stoesz, *Glimpses of Grace* (Victoria: Friesen Press, 2010), p. 54

¹¹ Note Bettelheim's discussion, *The Uses of Enchantment*, p. 75. For someone who explicated the role of psychology and sociology for religion, see Gregory Baum, "The Discovery of the Symbolic: Freud and Durkheim," *Religion and Alienation* (New York: Paulist Press, 1975), pp. 115-140.

¹² A chaplain may have difficulty in not invoking his or her superego when he or she learns about the inmate's crimes. The sheer horror of a person's offences can make it difficult for a chaplain to be empathetic. The same thing can happen to an inmate as he or she finds the wherewithal to share very personal details. Once these actions and beliefs have been brought to the surface, the offender may be unable to live with these realities. One thinks of the fictional example of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Once Dr. Jekyll realised what he had done as Mr. Hyde, he retreated from reality, unable to communicate any further. This is a real possibility within the context of a pastoral interview. I have had several experiences of inmates not returning for more counselling after they had shared something very personal in their lives. They were shocked at the very nature of their own revelations. Integration and reintegration of these aspects of their lives were not yet possible.

¹³ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, pp. 66ff.

¹⁴ John James and Russell Friedman, *The Grief Recovery Handbook* (New York: William Morrow, 2009), pp. 61ff.

¹⁵ *Into the Woods* (Disney Pictures, 2015, 125 minutes) is the name of a movie that follows several fairy tale figures in their journey to maturity. Stephen Sondheim, the producer of the musical, made explicit use of Bruno Bettelheim's works to fashion a decidedly anti-climatic, very adult-like, fairy-tale ending.

¹⁶ The cartoon movie, *Wreck It Ralph* (Walt Disney Studios, 2013), is alluded to here. Fix It Felix and Wreck It Ralph serve as two co-dependent alter-egos of each other.

¹⁷ The delicacy of this matter became all too real when I first presented a paper of the usefulness of fairy tales more than twenty years ago (*Dr. Seuss Meets Daniel Bell in the Showdown between Hedonism and Capitalism*, American Academy of Religion, Boston, Mass., 1995). Using Dr. Seuss' story about *The Cat in the Hat Comes Back* (New York: Random House, 1958) as the basis for my analysis, I made the mistake (sic) of asking why a pink stain on Sally's (sic) "white wedding" dress appeared on page 18 of the book. The taboo nature of this and other images in this tale (such as twenty-six children emerging from the hat of the cat) made me realise that enunciation of this process is fraught with dangers. The taboo nature of inmates' crimes makes it necessary to explore these subject matters through imagination and projection in order to see if some resolution to the problem can be found. Bettelheim, at least, believed

in the usefulness of fairy tales in regard to his work with severely disturbed children. I have found the same type of therapy to be effective in regard to inmates.

¹⁸ Many authors use fantastic beasts to name things, expressions, experiences, and life that are difficult to define. To name only two examples, Dr. Seuss came up with letters that were not in the alphabet and associated each one with an imaginary animal, *On Beyond Zebra* (New York: Random House, 1955). J. K. Rowling has done the same in her recent book, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2017).

¹⁹ I am referring to only one version of this story.

²⁰ Note Bettelheim's analysis, *The Uses of Enchantment*, pp. 41ff.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 76ff.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 66ff, 148ff.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 159ff.

²⁴ To give an example of each, Harry Potter used his own wits to summon his wand and defeat the dragon in the first task of the Triwizard Tournament, J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (London: Bloomsbury, 2000), pp. 309ff. A woman intervenes halfway through the movie, *Inception* (DVD, Warner Brother Pictures, California, 2010), and saves the protagonist from his vicious cycle of guilt in regard to the death of his wife. Gared Diamond, in his book, *Guns, Germs, and Steel* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1999), shows how it took centuries for humans to domesticate the right type of animals and raise the right kinds of crops to become successful sedentary beings. And Rene Girard shows how it was necessary for a god man to break the cycle of violence by becoming a scapegoat, *The Scapegoat*, trans. Yvonne Freccero (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986). Each of these diverse examples points to the intricate role of the natural and supernatural in relation to the success and salvation of human beings.

²⁵ For an academic analysis of the role of the trickster in North American stories, see Jeanne Campbell Reesman, ed. *Trickster Lives* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2001).

²⁶ Dr. Seuss, *The Cat in the Hat Comes Back*.

²⁷ The story of the fisherman and the ginny (genie) is recounted in Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, pp. 28ff.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 35ff.

²⁹ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (Dover Publications, 1992).

³⁰ Herman Melville, *Moby Dick* (Signet Edition, 2013).

³¹ Gregory Baum refers to this immanent understanding of God as a Copernican Revolution in his recent autobiography, *The Oil Has Not Yet Run Dry* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2017), pp. 54ff. Maurice Blondel helped him realise that "it is in the dynamics of the will seeking ever greater self-realization through continued action, that God is present to human beings. It is in their actions that they say Yes to the divine presence."

This is the way Gregory Baum states the matter in his earlier book, *Man Becoming* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), p. 15-17. "Every man, by the logic of his action, is led to discover the impossibility of exhausting the deep willing at the core of his being in a finite universe. Man's unending concern leads him to wider and wider action . . . The distance between himself and himself is (still) infinite. A man is summoned to the inevitable option: either, following the drive of his limitless concern, he opens himself to the infinite; or he encloses himself in the finite order and thus violates the thrust of his own action."

Another author who has compared the differing effects of fairy tale and myth is Paul Nathanson, *Over the Rainbow, The Wizard of Oz as a Secular Myth of America* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991). He outlines a psychological interpretation of Dorothy's adventure in relation to the need for her to grow up, pp. 8-13, 63-104. He goes on to suggest that this "ordinary" fairy tale, point of view is inadequate because it does not take spirituality into account. He settles for a mythic interpretation while referring to "fairy tales as fallen myths," pp. 246ff. An intrinsic view of God, as outlined by Baum, assumes that spirituality is a natural part of life. One does not need to move to a mythic interpretation in order to validate the importance of the supernatural.

³² J. K. Rowling published the first book in the series, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* in 1997 (London: Bloomsbury, 1997) and the last one of seven books, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (London: Bloomsbury, 2007), in 2007.

³³ The popularity of the John Bradshaw DVD series on the inner child, *Homecoming: Healing and Championing Your Inner Child*, ten-hour DVD workshop (John Bradshaw Media Group), his book, *Homecoming* (Bantam, 1992), along with other books such as Robin Casarjian's *Houses of Healing* (Lionheart Foundation, 1995), shows that offenders find a lot of healing in revisiting the woundedness of their past.

³⁴ Ron Weasley is first introduced on page 70 and Hermione Granger on page 79 of J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.

³⁶ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, p. 9.

-
- ³⁷ J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, p. 88.
- ³⁸ J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (London: Bloomsbury 2007), pp. 351ff.
- ³⁹ J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, p. 309.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 426.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 565ff.
- ⁴² Genesis 3:1-7.
- ⁴³ J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (London: Bloomsbury, 2005), pp. 477ff.
- ⁴⁴ Authors who have delved into the spiritual and Christian aspects of the Harry Potter series include Connie Neal, *Gospel According to Harry Potter* (Print on Demand, 2016), and John Granger, *Looking for God in Harry Potter* (Tyndale Publishing, 2006). I have written my own unpublished article on the subject, "The Christian Basis of the Harry Potter Series" (2015).
- ⁴⁵ I worked with a man who wanted to apply for a judicial review after he has spent fifteen years in prison. Judicial reviews are available to inmates with life sentences who want to ask the courts for a reduction of the time they have to wait until they are eligible for parole. This man had recently been married and had a good relationship with his mother. In preparation for his application, he started a six-month program at the Regional Psychiatric Unit to deal with the nature of this offences. In spite of the fact that this inmate was a pro-social individual and heavily involved in chapel activities, he was kicked out of the program after one month and sent back to the facility where I worked. He had lived for fifteen years with delusions about where he was at in his life without coming to terms with the nature of his offence. His wife divorced him shortly afterward and he did not apply for his judicial review.
- ⁴⁶ J. K Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, p. 581.
- ⁴⁷ Victor Hugo, *Les Miserables*, trans. Charles Wilbour (New York: Modern Library, n.d.), pp. 88ff.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 184-199.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 199-237.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 249.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 316.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 481ff.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 303.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 485.
- ⁵⁵ Graham Robb, *Victor Hugo: A Biography* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), p. 399.
- ⁵⁶ He has a long unflattering description of the Thenardiens in the middle of his book, *Les Miserables*, p. 627.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 143.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 968ff.
- ⁵⁹ Graham Robb, *Victor Hugo*, p. 399.
- ⁶⁰ Victor Hugo, *Les Miserables*, pp. 970ff.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 855ff.
- ⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 955, 959.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 1021.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 865-877.
- ⁶⁵ A rapprochement of regret and forgiveness of what happened during the French Revolution is offered at another place in Hugo's novel. In reversed roles between the secular and the sacred, Hugo has Bishop Bienvenu bowing in obeisance before a dying revolutionary, even though this parishioner was responsible for the reign of terror and ransack of destruction hurtled on king and church, *ibid.*, p. 39.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 1118-1136.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1180.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 767-768.
- ⁶⁹ Raymond Brown, *The Death of the Messiah* (Boston: Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 391-392.
- ⁷⁰ The formula of Jesus being both human and divine was drawn up in the Council of Chalcedon (451), see Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in the Christian Tradition: Volume 1*, translated by John Bowden (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975), p. 544.
- ⁷¹ Gregory Baum, *Man Becoming*, pp. 15ff.
- ⁷² Gregory Baum, *The Oil Has Not Run Dry*, pp. 54ff.