

Religion, Theology & Religious Education (RE) ...

'Religion entails the certainty that something is asked of man (sic) and that he (sic) is not a mere bystander in the cosmos.'

Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972)

CATHOLIC THEOLOGY & RE EXPLORE →

- What is asked of each one of us?
- By whom?
- How do we know & discern?
- How will we respond to this summons?
.... Urgency ...!



Theology & RE – Context Crucial ...

'Since the middle of the 20th Century there has been a renaissance of new insights into God in the Christian tradition. On different continents, under pressure from historical events and social conditions,

people of faith have glimpsed the living God in fresh ways.

It is not that a wholly different God is discovered from the One believed in by previous generations. **Christian faith does not believe in a new God but, finding itself in new situations, seeks the presence of God there.**

Aspects long forgotten are brought into new relationships with current events, and the depths of divine compassion are appreciated in ways not previously imagined.'

Elizabeth Johnson 2007,
Quest for the living God, p. 1 (emphasis added)



At the heart of contemporary Catholic Theology & RE →

'God created humankind in God's image ... male and female God created them.'
Genesis 1:27

'I have come that you may have life, and have it abundantly.'

Jesus, in the Gospel of John (10:10)

'The glory of God is the fully alive human being.'

Saint Irenaeus, 2nd Century CE

...Key framing questions for contemporary theology & RE:

→ How do we 'live abundantly' - as 'fully alive persons'
& 'created in God's image' - in 21st Century Australia?

OR - Who are we as human beings?
- What does it mean to 'be human' in our contemporary contexts ...?

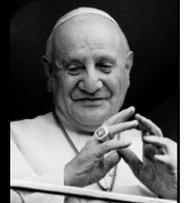
Pope John XXIII's final words (1963) ...

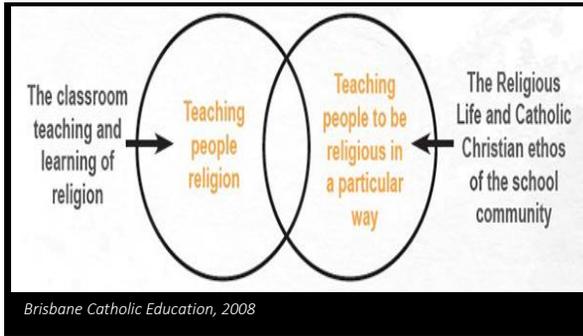
In May 1963, at the end of his life, Pope John XXIII reiterated:

'It is not that the Gospel has changed: it is that we have begun to understand it better ...

the moment has come to discern the signs of the times, to seize the opportunity and to look far ahead.'

Ref: Vatican archive, quoted on cover of
Hebblethwaite, P 1984
John XXIII, Pope of the Council, Geoffrey Chapman, London.





Catholic education in the context of destructive climate change
The New Yorker 26/10/2012

Cf. Pope Francis' critique of 'the cult of money' & 'the globalisation of indifference' ...

"Yes, the planet got destroyed. But for a beautiful moment in time we created a lot of value for shareholders."

POPE FRANCIS HAS A MESSAGE TO THE WORLD LEADERS ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE:

THE TIME TO FIND GLOBAL SOLUTIONS IS RUNNING OUT.

THERE IS THEREFORE A CLEAR, DEFINITE AND URGENT ETHICAL IMPERATIVE TO ACT."

In need of us ... !

'Religious living consists in serving ends which are in need of us. Humans are not innocent bystanders in the cosmic drama. There is in us more kinship with the divine than we are able to believe. Our souls are candles of the Lord.'

Rabbi Abraham Heschel

Heschel, S (ed.) 2011, *Abraham Joshua Heschel: Essential Writings*, Orbis Books, New York, p. 44.