

Spirit, Soul & Body

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Based on an address given at The Pleshey Retreat House, Essex for Alcoholics Anonymous on the 23rd of May 2009

"I shall light a candle of understanding in thy heart." 2 Esdras 14: 25

Deep in our hearts, we all know that the Soul is a 'hole' that alco-hol... cannot fill. We are made in the image of God, and that means our Integral Thirst for The Infinite can only be satisfied, or quenched by The Infinite, and the moment we discover how to tap into The Infinite One within, we like St Photini (The Enlightened One), the Samaritan woman at the well of St. John's Gospel, we too shall draw on the Living Waters of Strength, Life and Health - The Holy Trinity as the ancient Egyptians knew God, or Light, Life and Love as Mother Julian of Norwich knew God, or Faith, Hope and Love as St. Paul knew God or Goodness, Truth and Beauty as Plato Knew God. As St. Augustine said *"Our hearts are ever restless, until they find their rest in thee"* and handling our Integral Thirst for The Infinite can indeed be a tricky business...

Listening to the actor Martin Shaw on Radio 2 last Sunday being interviewed by Michael Ball, he, like so many people, took alcohol to his personal limit, discovered its limitations (the soul coming from and consciously returning to The Infinite does not like limitations...) and managed to draw back from the one way Catch 22 dialogue of *"Oh, bottle, I shall grasp you, but please do not grasp me..."* Last year, and which is why I am so pleased to be here today, as I am so pleased that everyone is here today, is because three people who could have been here today are not. They lost out to the mirage of alcohol. Instead of being a good, disciplined servant, a sacramental means of Grace, or a tasty liquid - or a temporary primary or secondary pain reliever, it became their master, blowing their bodies' fuse and they passed over, so I was asked to take their Services. (Need help? www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)

Being of a sensitive disposition, I discovered that Services for alcoholics and their families and friends are like no other. A haunting emptiness - of dissatisfaction pervades the air, questions 'hang' in the air - and these need answering, preferably on this side, and preferably from the Living Reality within - out of our own experience. Yes, the Soul can and must answer its own questions, "To Be or not to be.." etc. It can and

must tap into the Light, the liquid Light within, for our well is deep - not only does "Deep call unto Deep" but Deep answers unto Deep.

So, listen to the best advice ever, from the Mystic Meister Eckhart: " *The very best and utmost attainment in this life is to remain still and let God Act and Speak in you*". Yes, if we tap into the Serene Liquid Light - The Holy Spirit - the Divine Immanence - The I AM within - rather than go for the quick fix goblet of fire without, we shall truly, substantially, wholly / holy quench our thirst for the Infinite - as Plotinus says "*The Soul knows itself truly only when it knows itself as Spirit*". So, let us enter The Silence, open the door of the Spiritual Pub of the Soul open 24 / 7, wherein the Good, the True and the Beautiful spontaneously arise - refreshing, renewing, indeed resurrecting those parts of our nature that exterior bottles and cans, bubbles and burps can-not and never will be able to touch.