

# **The Big Burp Theory of Gardening in the Creative's Stomach:**

**An Anglican Diving Mask's View of  
The 2010 Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill**



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# Introduction

The object of this paper is to present the Big Burp Theory as seen from the view of the Anglican Diver's Mask. When we dialog with life as a living web of life on planet earth, sharing our relationship with Our Maker, we all, as living beings in a species and amongst species, work in dialog to make it right whether it be an oil spill or natural disaster. I hope we will take the path together, passing the outdated self-absorbedness or guilt-based drive, that is stuck in an invasiveness mode for our species or also denial of our roles past, present, and future.

Here, I will, in the language of metaphors, present God's Response made visible through the behavior of nature. I will also present the human response to the disaster as how we exist within our relationship with God.

## I. Putting on the Diver's Mask to gain Perspective

When I leave my mother's Garden, from Kwok's figurative nurturing tears, I do not recover. The mending is not done. As a lifelong Anglican, born in the midst of the ministry of the Welles-Swanson family, having been asked from the beginning to do the physical end of the ministry and home chores, as part of staying alive, this work is from the working, ministering mask of every day use with which I greet My Maker. Ministering in just good old daily life, as each day unfolds, and in the continued ministry I was born doing, continuing with the work of [Katrina's Dream](#). And also carrying the work of [Got Zinc](#) dive services forward, to fund the ministry and cover my end in family life. Between the ministry and diving, I wear an Anglican Diver's Mask in my daily work.

The working operational view has evolved to know how crucial shared precise

meaning is in the words we use. This is as one who has shamelessly been abstract or used a Braille-like word choice approach to drawing various points together. How to enjoy precision of use of gender or can we call it A-B'ing, within a set as distinction of male/female, takes not from the intrinsic being-ness nor does distinction take from the rights of beings. Still, my work has only begun to see some small aspects of the myth of gender hierarchy's choking harness on mankind.

I put the Anglican Diver's Mask on to swim into the Creative One's Holy Land. I enter into the waters, an embodiment as a living web of life; even in the midst of the slopping, sludgy oil on the waters of the bay.

## **II. Guidelines to Diving**

Going to the custodial nature of Gardening, not being befuddled by gender myths of hunter-gather times, the Anglican Diver's Mask gives me perspective. I bare my existence to our great heritage, with a filter hopefully well designed, in spirit, for embracing tradition, inclusive and free of gender biases. Now my masculinity is well-balanced, free of cultural conditioning, which would ordinarily bar my heart and mind from the ability to commune with my maker as a Gardener.

My thoughts, words, and actions are now enabled to process present activity as it comes. Yes, being in the here and now is a little Zen-like, Christian in the crossing of time and place into the present work. The here and now, cleared of cluttering biases, is where we each are when we are one with G\_d. It is crucial to understand where we are as humans, in our imaging of ourselves, in order to have and retain our relationship with G\_d.

The stories are important to us; yes, becoming fair-minded as a collective of unique individuals and possibly not always diversely unique as individuals. This is where our world

is evolving in Wakefulness.

That we are beyond gender, in our relationships, is just beginning to assist us; even after the thousands of years of vigil, as the gender relationship with G\_d changed. Godhead, G\_d without gender, is now acceptable to our society. Before, three thousands years ago, we see a text, the Bible, with a preponderance of references to [a male singular G\\_d](#).

Our Mother is with us, even as the water absorbs my body's being. G\_d the Father now "generically spoken" is genderless as we express the flow of continuation of the essence of G\_d's parenting. We are taking ourselves beyond the verbal baggage, baggage that tied up the genders in gender warring, to get us to where we are today. As this is where we are, it is well that we focus with all our individual and collective being.

Collectively, from my experience as an Anglican child in the trenches of the women's underground movement of the Sixties and Seventies, the sisters and brothers used "generically said" in reference to G\_d's gender & human beings alike. The Philadelphia 11 took me through the Women's Ordination before, during and after ministry of no change/change. That is ministering within the women's movement whether of not there was change each point along the way to equality of gender in the American wing of the Anglican Church. The women priests' acts guided and mentored me in that time in an embodied ministry.

"Generically said" embodies the spirit of dialoging where antiquated wordings still have meaning and use. The aspects that hinder our reality, we shed in spirit. They are acknowledged openly without further befuddlement by the simple use of the term "generically said". "Generically said" preserves the timelessness of a message without neutering or subjugating. "Generically said" confirms for me, we are one as beings and as beings of a species, regardless of gender.

When my living work is on the water and is in ministry, nurturing fellow human beings in various aspects of no change/change, the ministry is the same. We are one as we acknowledge the reality, the needs and the spirit calling us forward in time.

### **III. Embracing the Life Aquatic**

Our Mother is with us even as the water absorbs my body's being. Backstitching the thread here, in the first reflection paper, a sermon overtook my focus of the lens of love. The threaded needle pierces once again while Our Creative's burping of the Stomach digests the oil mixed into the brine contents, of what we often refer to as the Atlantic Ocean or the Dead Sea, depending upon where the body of water is located.

Not that they are not good for geographic referencing, they are a distinguishing of the parts. They are the naming of bodies of water as if truly separated and enclosed by land. It is in the fact that we have come to see the bodies of water as separate entities, that one realizes the water requires appreciation as one body without border. Also, we can be clearer in calling out to the water as a whole, appreciating the living place with G\_d.

No, this is not romance. It is in the words, we share, that we respond collectively. I will hope to reveal my belief here.

Not in the hypothesis of G\_d's creation, that I redefine for this paper as the Creative. The Creative can be explained simply as a complement in ministry. It is used in conjunction to the accepted Lord, God, Yahweh, God-the-Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

The use of many accepted words for the One, this Anglican knows, is found in the Book of Common Prayer. Here, for this paper's purpose in tending to the ecological matters of our living waters, adding the Creative is done in honoring the tradition of the Creation found in our testaments.

## **IV. New Terminology arising from the Perspective of the Diver's Mask**

### **A. The Creative Defined**

When we sit out in the night, thinking what G\_d's creation is, could be, or is not; we are considering the creative aspect of G\_d. In some Eucharists, the Creative One is used expressing G\_d. Over the years, in the acknowledgement of the essence of The Book of Common Prayer, the various veneers on the altar and verbiage of a mass make for vivacious waters of life. And, in the rare case, doldrums of spiritual flow. As such, the Creative is used here only with the seaman's veneer, being of the fine and rough-hewn wood. The veneer is combined with the Creative as a facing of the iconic wording of G\_d.

The Creative assists us here, as the making of life aspect of our G\_d combines in dialoging in our thoughts. And this may occur while reading and dialoging ideas in the human community of believers, agnostics and atheists alike. As we travel, we are of one accord that there is only one G\_d. (Isaiah:6-8)

### **B. Disconnection from the Creative in the Modern Era**

How much leeway do we have between the text I know and through life experience? The first moments in life including baptism and later confirmation are all experiences inclusive of understanding the Trinity. We collectively all go through those up and downs that appear to be the breakdown of the Churches. Why this breakdown? Ask anyone why he or she is shaken up when they are. It is because they are not connecting and there is discord. The Church periodically goes through the same lack of orientation. The breakdowns in the Church historically can be read in the lovely work of Moltmann's intensive historic searching in his God in Creation. The only breakdowns in Church are when in the collective Wakefulness seen by the individual works of thought were roads taken in massive

movements which were misinterpreted or misdirected by us in our individual relationships with our G\_d.

Or simply said, when we go at it with one another disruptively, to the point where we stop our dialoging, the Church breaks down. It occurs at times, not for wisdom, but for distraction from the mundane spiritual life, that is vivacious.

The active relationship is so apparent in the Old and New Testaments, in general, wherever spiritual writing, concerning an individual's relationship with G\_d and the world, can be found.

It does not concern me here either, the atrocity of spirit of our species covered in The Body of God. [Sallie McFague, 177] Aruna Gnanadason covers some of this in her view of disgrace in "toward an Eco-Feminist Theology". [Aruna Gnanadason, 90] Explained simply, Aruna asks us to fully realize how we are disgraced in our relation with the earth, so we can then experience the grace of G\_d. This grace, she believes, can lead us to caring for the earth and transforming Christians into an earth faith.

### **C. Connection found in the Natural World**

For me, connectivity is in dialoging with life concerning our relations and our relation with G\_d. We do not become pagan. We do not need to worship trees to dialog with G\_d. We can lean next to the tree, enjoying our relationship with floral life as we reach out to G\_d the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The connectivity as seen with Noah's Ark is an ongoing theme.

My concern is a perspective coming from generational Anglican thinking. Enthusiasm in Christ, abiding in the work of Katrina's Dream and diving almost daily through Cosco Busan's 53,000 gallon spill off San Francisco's Bay Bridge in 2007 brought the Big Burp

Theory home to me.

In short, a theological aquatic Gardener's view, begun by my grandmother's and my mother's encouragement. This communing with the birds, the garden, the shore, the sea, the lakes, plains, mountains and the air just beyond and yet so with us is essential in the ministry and in this diver's life.

On April 20<sup>th</sup> 2010, the news of the [Deepwater Horizon](#) oil explosion and spill marked a milestone for generations. I no longer need to wipe my mother's eyes. Tending to the water begins with entering the water. A diver just equips and enters the Creative's Stomach.

How this metaphor works here follows: Whether I think of an atheist's ocean, taste the agnostic's possibly divine seafood or the Holy Land's viewed by a believer in the Dead Sea's Stomach, it is the same in dialog. When we are carried by this Anglican believer's words into the Creative's Stomach, the diver's motion brings us through murk and clear bits alike.

We, Anglican believers, can water down the spirit of the message as good stodgy folk and authors, all accepting the traditional G\_d's waters in toasting works and words. Though, this is fine to a daily audience, I believe the Creative used here in print, as material for dialog, best in our yearning to go beyond the point of invasiveness, as a species, regarding the oil spill.

We are yearning to dialog for inner strength as a species with all species; even in the midst of shutting off an oil pipe and reconditioning the waters shared by all species in and around the Gulf.

Back to the diver's mask, we do not bother with more than what it takes to complement the world we share, and the task of breathing. Exiting the Stomach is done



before the chill takes over. Back to being in tune in our dialog, internally and externally, as a diver, we often work until almost cold. I have to know myself and my environment by constant interplay.

When there is a spill of oil, I hear the voices of invasive species chatter. Diving the Stomach requires the basic watercraft people's rule: Safety before the water, Safety on the water, and Safety off the water. Every navigational rule embodies this at the core.

Back to the Garden: Now Mother does all the work traditionally for many. That was for me before the finishing lines of Professor Kwok's paper where Letty Russel directs in "Mending of Creation: Women, Nature, and Eschatological Hope". [Kwok Pui Lan, 154] My first reception, out of the Stomach in this life, was at birth from my mother. And for me, the tradition here means nothing, as we are more current in tending to maintenance and mending. Kwok Pui Lan)

## **V. Lessons from the Creative within the Imperfect World**

### **A. HAZ MAT Defined**

[HAZ MAT](#) means hazardous materials. Among the other uses, HAZ MAT embodies application of how to tend to the Creative's Stomach as it contains gardens when hazardous materials must be contained and removed. This HAZ MAT tending takes the same focus and regularity as all the other water work.

The chatter does not go away... Humans continue in the coffee houses, food stops, and gas ups for months to concern themselves with how invasive the spill is. While I simply embrace the sparrows in front of the cafes and places of worship quietly. It is crazy to listen too much; both to the birds and the spectrum of voices.

The listening is, in the reverse, essential to ministry. It is in being in tune and balance.

Listening to the invasive species, I am one with, going through the spectrum of responses to our plight.

The thoughts of these paragraphs move very quickly, from the hazardous materials to the laundry mats, clubhouses and places of worship. They are trying to connect the ideas of connected love and light in ministry. The species we are is going through the realization of its role in a disaster, in relation to the web of life some of us know to be the Holy Land.

We could not conceive, at least a month ago, I could not yet, how many lifetimes the invasive species will still not have finished HAZ MAT tending. The love continues as we tend the Garden, as this writer's cheeks were wet with unrequited love from the Creative's Stomach.

Faith alone gets us suited up, and ready to enter where no recovery is in sight. Faith alone means we need scientific know-how too? Certainly, we rally to find the facts and pray for expedient enlightenment and experience to lead us out of great harm.

Pray for protecting the invasive species especially, as the birds cannot drop enough seeds quickly enough to cover this mess. The dinosaurs will not return, from prehistoric times, to scoop up the oil. The whales are not ready either to penetrate this quagmire realistically.

So when I whimpered on, in dialog with the Creative, the effects were understood. I fathomed not the immensity of the problem, and knew not the solution. When we add to oily saltwater the living algae as creatively as the Creative has, the life particles bodies absorb the oil and tar to a small degree. The Creative can internalize this, within the Stomach, and the dialog proceeds.

How can the Creative bear us (or our HAZ MAT)? My face is almost strangely dry.

The nose requires blowing. What we, the beings of one species, return often to, is that we are not alone. All the beings are dialoging. If we will, the solidarity of species is already here to live and commune organically with the Creative.

As Psalm 78 (Book of Common Prayer p694) depicts, in times of tears and hardship, cuddling up temporarily to G\_d means nothing. As Rev. Dr. Clarence Butler pointed out in a June 2010 homily, Psalm 86(Book of Common Prayer p709) is our tool when we are in great error. We seek G\_d's forgiveness and keep our faith in G\_d. Each individually dialoging, as beings can resonate with the Creative.

The grey stuff seen floating at various depths in the oil spill, comes up later, after settling for a time, in sheets of algae. The algae, combined with the human efforts, are helping the Creative's Stomach in the Gulf.

The Gulf's general recovery, I may well know in my lifetime. While in Harvard Square that seemed impossible. Not long ago amongst ministers in the works, I could not see our way out. I packed for the bayous with given material to pass on to the people affected by the spill. Elastol brings the crude together and to the surface, aiding in the HAZ MAT clean up and saving the fisheries waters from the chemicals when dispersants are used. While in the bayous, I really connected. I connected with Nell Bolton, Executive Director of the Episcopal Relief and Development Fund. I connected with Grace Bayou Community Services. I connected with locals like Todd DeHart . In fact, I wrote a [letter](#) to the Governor Jindal of Louisiana and it has evolved into a Christmas Gift Program, which will match Louisiana families to parishes to fill their Christmas wish list with the idea that they will develop lasting relationships.

## **B. Recovering Connection as a Cleanup Operation / Spiritual Self-Improvement**

Now, having seen what we can do in spirit, nationally and locally in Louisiana, I was encouraged. The process is moving forward. The people, the State of Louisiana, the involved corporations, and the Coast Guard are all moving forward in this matter. Yes, the cleanup is still daunting. Time and experience can certainly help, as they have.

The spiritual recovery can be cooperatively metaphysical and organic, hopefully like the flow of a sponge. And then I ask: Can it? I can find attachment within our species and with the larger set of life. In going forward, not going outside the now by metaphysics, but going through time and place in its present temporal existence, attached with the myriad of life, the solutions become dynamic.

The Big Burp Theory is what I believe was observed by some, though I have still yet to view others' work on this. It is a cycle of burping the Creative's Stomach as the particles of life absorb oil like cotton and absorbent boom.

The algae must somehow enjoy digesting, multiplying cells, and, over time, dropping down to the ocean or Stomach floor. The life will come off the bottom, float up and turn brown, as it appears to die.

It appears to possibly seed more particles than I imagine here. The cycle can be seen, free of oil, in the Stinson Beach Lagoon of California. Yes, these algae may be planetary. We, the current species viewed as invasive, are so not alone.

The theological exploration of Genesis can possibly bring us forward. Can we appreciate the restful Sabbath? [Multmann] In what sense but that of dialog and peace within the intensity of a time of emergency response. What refreshment and respite is there between species? Do we have any ability to envision some zoo-like microcosm and, as such, how long before the planet can heal? As the life fluxes out of the HAZ MAT zone in the Stomach,

how can it return? Is it realistic to envision the return? As some species have motive power, others may require transplanting. Are there other species content to stay in affected areas after an oil spill?

Do there exist more beings than just algae that have dedicated existence, which also may attend to the HAZ MAT absorption process? Can we contain the tar and or does it not just settle and harden? From here, the Stomach's motion over time covers the tar with a sediment/sand/gravel mix. The area around the out-take, where the platform once stood, appears from news coverage and satellite images, to circulate out from the waves, the tides, and the currents. 'How much of the combined states of oil is there?' is an ongoing question.

### **C. Observations on the Effects of the Disaster to the Natural World**

The effects to the shorelines and connecting waterways will be mostly the lighter oil and the constant absorption of live algae. Wherever the spill is not contained and absorbed, the birds get the oil on them and die, as the oil does not come off. The fish cannot breath and their gills get clogged and they die, too. As do the eggs that get covered, they die before hatching.

The Stomach has a large area that becomes a not-completely containable HAZ MAT zone. The life will not come back for a long time beside the algae; and how many other forms of complementary life? Within the bodies of water on this globe can be seen by migration of fish, and, to a lesser degree, seaweed, the plankton and algae along with the first stages of fish all can find their way around. The same is so of the circulation of the Stomach's life laden water mixing with oil. The circulation to a lesser degree will be likely to establish a new basic mix of water, salt, life, sediment, and oil binding with any of the particles in this mix.

Here the Creative has not called our species to do anything as what is there to do? Not so, humankind is quite active in the Gulf clean up process both on the shore lines and the water landing points like Grand Isle, Louisiana.

#### **D. Defining the Human Response to the Disaster**

As to the call for human response to the oil spill, what can we do? We, as human beings, can place booms, absorb oil, pump out oil from the top of the water, and we can continue to dialog in our waking working time, between work and sleep and during sleep.

The Stomach will continue to speak with all the life forms uniquely and together universally. When I listen and speak in dialog, concerning the Garden, thus far of life in the Creative's Stomach, it is with the encouragement of Sally McFague, Professor Kwok Pui Lan and communion found in EDS T1990 God & Creation student body.

The voice is not just mine but often the nudging of thoughts and piggybacking of topical and citing by students and authors alike. The experience has humbled me to realize the immensity not just of the body of work existent, more the beginning springboard to a communal capacity in dialog with the Creative.

The garden of roses is one part, as seen in the Fenway of Boston, where so many generations of untold people, birds, worms, and other flora and fauna have contributed to a wonderful oasis, just a hundred or so yards from the art museum. The base of Barcelona's tradition, in awesome fountains, I confess here was so inspiring. I found my immaturity awakened in having wished to emulate and dialog via production of fountains.

The need for aesthetics is so viewable yet I am chosen elsewhere. The work's mundane nature is granted.

#### **VI. Transformation gained through Enlightened Perspective**

The Big Burp Theory as seen from the view of the Anglican Diver's Mask is well set in the Book of Common Prayer, open for prayer with all of life in dialog with our maker. In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, we give thanks to the transformation of our human beings' view and the collective work of species, in the continuum of time, especially as we as a collective species Big Burp.

The spiritual work of theology's composite blending of this unique life, the Creative and the others, is within each one's wonderful yearning. The autonomy of our species, thrilling as it has been, has come to a crossroads of which Robert Frost's Poem embodies nicely where the harmony between the species is the road. I, too, greet you.

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth.

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same.

And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I--  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

--Robert Frost