

A Theology Of Disgust

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ABSTRACT

A Theology Of Disgust.

‘A Theology of Disgust’ is a personal journey through the bodily experience of physical impairment and the social oppressions of sexism and disabilism. This journey has highlighted the extraordinary power of the emotion of disgust to distort relations throughout the natural order. Utilising the phenomenological approach of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and the theological critique and insights of feminist theologies as well as the resources of contextual theological reflection, a new appreciation of the human body and body of the earth is sought by engaging more viscerally with the fears (and hopes) of flesh which have troubled the Christian tradition. It is claimed that the effects of human disgust have compromised Christianity’s life giving message of divine love and God given power of relationality throughout creation.

It argues for a deeper consciousness of the need for psychic and social change in our human relationships, with each other and with the whole earth, believing this can be achieved through renewed ecomystical liturgy in the church, labelling and uncovering paralyzing fears so that the church could be seen as a beacon of hope and knowledge for all sentient life. A variety of methods to revitalise and empower liturgy are considered as pointers to enable the church to become an ‘ecclesial spa’ which would lead to deeper engagement with the often neglected physical realities within creation. The aim is also to help all those who suffer, to become theological agents of their embodied lives. The overall goal is

to love at a deeper level those constitutive elements of the earth which sustain the world, before the disabled earth founders due to human indifference to both the joys and suffering of creation which, it is believed, are captured and held in tandem at the heart of the gospel of the incarnation and resurrection of Christ.

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