

from Christ's pierced heart can heal and melt the frozen condition of our hearts. By deciding to follow his call and by accepting his invitation to discover "the fullness of love which alone is eternity," our hearts are transformed (McCaffery 30). This transformation will affect our being and our actions in the world.

The change of heart is gradual and takes time. It also brings a challenge to become transformers, and not only to be the ones who are undergoing transformation. Journeying with Jesus will lead us on the road he travelled, the road of reconciliation; "Jesus offers us a role model of the one who works for the reconciliation of others" (Schreiter, 71). By accepting the call of Jesus, we accept the challenge to love the way he loved, and live the way he lived. We will become "kingdom people," who are "signs of life and hope to any who turn and trust Jesus for healing and transformation, because the kingdom has come and is working in and through us" (Venter, 141).

In building the kingdom by walking the road of reconciliation, we allow God's grace and love to use us for his purposes. We become sowers of God's love. Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field" (Mt 13:31). Even though it is a very small seed, when it grows "it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree" (Mt 13:32). Our hearts and the hearts of others are like the field that Jesus mentions. Sometimes we cannot see the kingdom of heaven around us, as it is like a small seed, still growing. We are living "between the times," caught in the tension of two ages that overlap, because God's government is both

"already" and "not yet" (Venter, 141). The kingdom grows as God's love grows in and among us; Love grows through love. Love is 'divine' because it comes from God and unites us to God; through this unifying process it makes us a 'we' which transcends our divisions and makes us one, until in the end God is 'all in all' (1 Cor 15:28). (Benedict XVI, 29)

The Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI, in his first encyclical *Deus*



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## "Representative"

Unadorned Representative  
endorsing illusions of reform,  
latent pain, the festering  
of concrete boiling in the sun  
on raceways of pavement  
stretching across aching  
plains and rivers and mountains  
and homes and cities and  
people.

But only the perspicacious notice  
cracks in the coruscating oaths—  
and only they are left to contend  
and reveal the contradictions

of the ballyhoo of beliefs upheld,  
of the promulgation of policies,  
of marriages of morality  
and imperfect mankind.  
Sifting through sounding sycophants and  
cryptic curtains cloaking  
byways of bashing  
trivialities

and the wildness of false  
dichotomies. The vines have  
overtaken the telephone poles,  
wires and willows  
weeping overshadow the road.

They must be trimmed  
by absent highway  
men.

Prison bars glare across the page,  
reflections of rays through blinds,  
print blurs and only the inquiring  
choose to wrestle with wounded hip  
for verisimilitude.

*Caritas Est*, emphasises the need of "a formation of the heart" (Benedict XVI, 47). He speaks of charity workers and the need for them "to be led to that encounter with God in Christ which awakens their love and opens their spirit to others," so that their faith may become "active through love (cf. Gal 5:6)" (Benedict XVI, 47). The same may apply for those working on reconciliation.

Jesus challenges us to embrace those who are very different from us - to embrace "Samaritans" as they are also our neighbours (Luke 12:30f). In the kingdom that Jesus brought, enemies can bring blessings, as a Samaritan brought them to a wounded Jew (Luke 10:29-37). A journey of reconciliation brings uncertainties because "embrace is a risk," similar to love (Stevens, 54). We do not know if the embrace will be accepted or despised, nor if it will bring an enriching encounter and transformation. We must release; the "final act of an embrace is a letting go. The arms must open again. The 'other' remains the 'other'" (Stevens, 54). We are to continue our journey towards understanding our differences and building sustainable peace by trusting each other.

## CONCLUSION

Wars and conflicts start in human hearts (Mk 7:21f). If a heart undergoes transformation, all that a person carries in the heart will undergo transformation

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