

Dear friends,

I have recorded a reflection on the readings set for this Sunday known informally as Candlemas but otherwise known as the presentation of Christ in the Temple. What does following Christ mean? To watch it just click on this link. <https://youtu.be/VOLMRnCtoao>

Alternatively, if you'd prefer to read it just click on this link to my Blog. <https://revmartinjacques.blogspot.com/2021/01/follow-jesus-by-imitating-him.html>

Living as we do in one of the most secular societies in the world which tends to dismiss questions of ultimate meaning, truth, beauty, Divinity etc. I listened to this video by Bishop Barron with great interest and recognition. He attests that treating such questions so lightly does immense damage to your very self. He calls this short video "The danger of toying with religion". Just click on this link. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0KrkU-XsNbU>

Live-stream link to the service at All Saints

I will be presiding at this service and if you cannot get to the service but would like to take part virtually, at 9.30am on Sunday you just click onto this link. <https://app.faith.online/p/events/mv5LGPJ7B>.

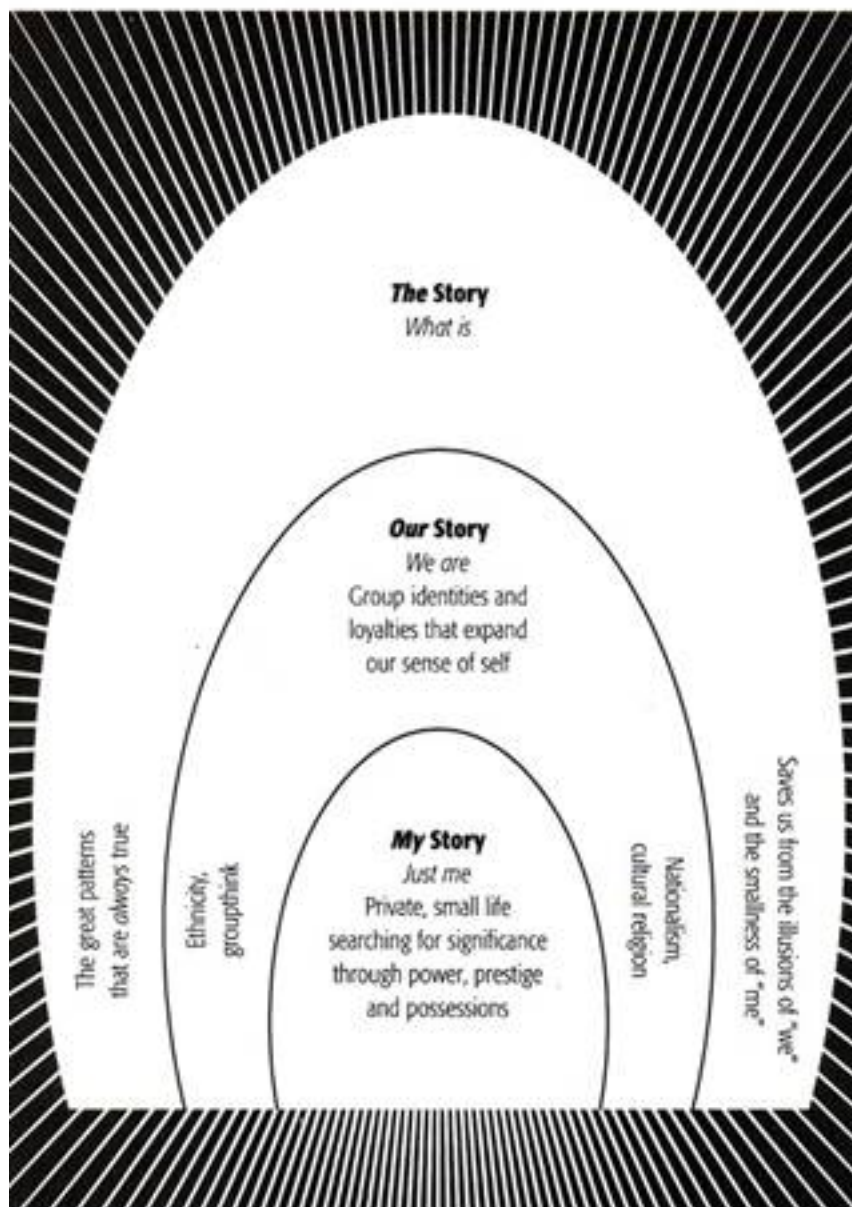
The phone number to dial in and listen is 01395 891035.

The Cosmic Egg – Layers of meaning that shape our lives

On that same subject of taking questions of ultimate meaning seriously, Fr. Richard Rohr offers this picture of how we are shaped and how our sense of where we "fit" shapes how we view our life and the world around us that informs our sense of self, truth, the world and God. He says that every person is shaped by a story and that there are three stories – Domes - that shape us. The first is common to everyone and that is **MY story**. This first dome contains my private life, those issues that make me special, inferior or superior, right or wrong, depending on how "I" see it. "I" and my feelings and opinions are the reference point for everything now. This is the small self we must let go of through contemplative prayer; and yet most people, including Christians, take this very tiny and even false self as normative and sufficient. The larger realm of meaning beyond My Story is **Our Story**. To continue the

model of the three domes, this is the dome of our group, community, church, nationality, gender, and ethnicity. We seem to need this for our own identity and security as social beings. The largest and final dome is the realm of universal meaning. This sacred canopy is **The Story** that is always true, the patterns that every culture and religion discover in some manner. This level assures and insures the other two. It holds them together in sacred meaning. This is true transcendence, authentic Spirit, which informs all soul and body work. Healthy and Biblical religion includes the whole cosmic egg. The gospel of Jesus Christ is The Story breaking through and illuminating those two other stories and accepting that it encapsulates the other two. Jesus called this the Kingdom of God.

The Cosmic Egg



Healthy and biblical religion includes the whole cosmic egg.

The Prayer for Today was written by St. Augustine of Hippo

“Late have I loved you, beauty so old and so new: late have I loved you. And see, you were within and I was in the external world and sought you there, and in my unlovely state I plunged into those lovely created things which you made. You were with me, and I was not with you. The lovely things kept me far from you, though if they did not have their existence in you, they had no existence at all. You called and cried out loud and shattered my deafness. You were radiant and resplendent, you put to flight my blindness. You were fragrant, and I drew in my breath and now pant after you. I tasted you, and I feel but hunger and thirst for you. You touched me, and I am set on fire to attain the peace which is yours.”

Love and peace,
Martin

Please note my new email address is vicar@rmcommunity.co.uk