

The Violence of the Tongue



www.nv.org

By Rev. Emmanuel Charles McCarthy

normalizing and legalizing of a cauldron of cruelties. Today, it is a virulent epidemic being spread systematically to nation after nation by the power of US based multinational corporate mass media. War, of course, initiates and spreads this spiritual and moral disease of humiliation and shame more rapidly and thoroughly than it initiates the spreading of physical disease, for which it is infamous.

*P*ace by way of shaming, belittling, humiliating others, however, is a venomous lie, authored by the “Father of lies who is a murderer from the beginning.” The kind person does not humiliate. Only the cruel shame and belittle their fellow human beings. In a world that revels in humiliating and shaming, the Christian’s task in light of Christ and the Jew’s task in the light of Yom Kippur is to cover the shame of others as they would desire their own shame to be covered before God and humanity. It is not the task of Christians or Jews to shame and humiliate other sons and daughters of the “Father of all, the Holy One, Blessed be He.”

www.centerforchristiannonviolence.org

*P*hysical violence tears the body apart. The violence of the tongue shreds the soul. Shaming, humiliating, demeaning, belittling cut into the very being of the person. They can hurt, debilitate or kill as thoroughly as a gunshot. Belittlement—the normal and accepted daily fare of radio and TV news, entertainment and commentary, of video games and films, of politics, the military, commerce and religion—strangles the Holy within each person. Humility is the gateway to heaven, but humiliation is the gateway to hell for both victim and victimizer.

*T*here is no form of humiliation that is not violence. There is no form of violence that is not humiliation. In our culture and in our time, agents of humiliation, shame, and belittlement are viewed as heroes and admired celebrities to be imitated by most children and adults, whether they be Christian or otherwise. Humiliating, shaming and belittling other human beings for fun, profit, status, and power is the overarching spiritual-social-psychological disease infecting US society. It is the beginning of treating human beings as simply things to serve self-interests. Given a long enough running time this process ends in never-ending abortion and war, and the



**REV. EMMANUEL CHARLES
MCCARTHY**

Melkite Catholic priest of eastern-rite who is presently the acting rector of St. Gregory the Theological Melkite Seminary in Brookline,

MA. He is the father of 13 children.