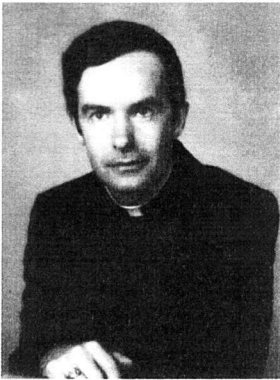


Chaplain's Corner, Hughes Camp Chaplain Richard W Rudd



Robert L. Stevenson's Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde made its debut in 1886. The story is related by Gabriel Utterson, a lawyer and friend of Henry Jekyll. Struggling to suppress his dark inclinations, personified by Edward Hyde, the good Doctor, being a man of science, relies on his own efforts by

concocting an elixir. When taken for an extended period of time, the body develops a resistance to a drug and increasingly stronger doses are needed until the drug is finally rendered ineffective. So it was with Jekyll and Hyde. Jekyll became more reliant on the serum while Hyde built up a resistance to it, becoming stronger and stronger. Fearing Hyde would eventually achieve dominance over him, Jekyll, in desperation, ceases to exist, presumably due to suicide. Without the proper antidote, Hyde ultimately destroys himself by simultaneously destroying his host.

This duality of conflicting natures or philosophies can be observed between two people and between two groups of people, as Jacob contended with Esau, David with Saul, and the Israelites with the Canaanites. However, "Jekyll and Hyde" has become a euphemism for two diametrically opposed forces competing for dominance within the same body, whether it be that of an individual or a corporate body of people, especially a nation. From its founding, the US has been a nation struggling to reconcile two different political philosophies. The South, striving to preserve the spirit of '76 embodying the ideals of the Founding Fathers and true federalism, sought to repress and ultimately to free itself from the dominating spirit of the North. As Jekyll resisted Hyde, so Confederate resisted Yankee. A series of political remedies were tried and failed, intensifying to the level of armed conflict. The Yankee grew stronger, overpowered the Confederate, and the spirit of '76 became a casualty.

Although the search for a remedy through open warfare ended in 1865, the Jekyll and Hyde duel continues to this very day. Some groups like Antifa would like to revive fighting in the streets, but the epicenter of battle has reverted back to the political

arena for now; the liberal vs the conservative, the Democrat vs the Republican. Congress is a microcosm of the nation; the House of Representatives vs the Senate and the members within each house jockey for dominance against each other. "And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand." (Mk. 3:25) The America of the 21st century remains as divided and contentious as that of the 19th century. Like once mighty Rome, will America collapse, not by foreign force, but by domestic crumbling from within? Will America share the same final fate as Jekyll and Hyde—a national suicide? It does not have to be, but if the current course continues to be followed, then it has been said, "What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; and there is nothing new under the sun." (Eccles. 1:9)

The drama being acted out on the national stage is an external and visible consequence of the internal and invisible dramatic struggle playing out within each one of us. St. Paul personifies the two natures competing for dominance over us as two men engaged in conflict. He says, "Put off the old man (old nature) that...is corrupt through deceitful lusts...and put on the new man (new nature) ..." (Eph. 4:22, 24) The old man is the natural inclination to do evil we receive from Adam. When we place our trust in Christ, we receive the new man Who is "...the Holy Spirit Who dwells within us." (II Tim. 1:44) Then the struggle intensifies, as Paul explains, "For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other..." (Gal. 5:17) As Jekyll became increasingly aware of Hyde, so the Christian becomes increasingly aware of their sinful nature and exclaims with Paul, "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but do what I hate." And again, "For I do not do the good I want,

but the evil I do not want is what I do." (Rom. 7:15) In the heat of the battle, we cry out, "Who will deliver me...?" (Rom. 7:24) Unlike Jekyll, who underestimated the strength of his adversary and relied on himself by formulating a potion and lost the battle with Hyde, the Christian can declare with confidence, "But thanks be to God, Who gives us the victory through out Lord Jesus Christ." (I Cor. 15:57) And so we, as a corporate body of Americans, can experience victory and regain our place in this world among nations if we as a people return to the faith of our Fathers.

Deo Vindice

Father Richard Rudd

Hughes Camp Chaplain