**HEALING IN THE DARK[[1]](#footnote-1)**

*Research into the premises for the ministry of deliverance in relation to the Catholic Church in Australia today.*

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**INTRODUCTION**

1. **Context**

Deliverance ministry is the effort, through prayer and spiritual counseling, to help someone take the authority they have been given in Christ, that they can uncover and renounce the sin by which the devil has ensnared them, and break free of the physical and mental oppression with which the evil spirits afflict them.

I am undertaking this research into deliverance ministry partly because of my own experiences in this area of theology and spirituality, and partly because of the present increase in migrants from Asia, Africa and the Pacific regions in Australian Catholic congregations who bring into the Catholic Church here an understanding of the spiritual world that is different to the Western/European way of thinking.

Much has been written about the figure of Satan and the history of his role in the Christian churches; much has been written about the place of evil spirits or demons both in Scripture and in Christian life today. There has also been some research published about beliefs and practices relating to possession and evil spirits in the cultures of Africa, the Pacific and Asia. There is little documentation of the actual practice of deliverance ministry in Australia today. All of these topics will be examined in greater depth in the course of this paper.

Deliverance ministry (as distinct from the rite of exorcism) happens on the fringes of the Christian churches in countries of Europe, the USA and Australia. It is somewhat disparaged and devalued by the mainstream Western clergy as a practice that belongs to more primitive and less scientifically knowledgeable societies.[[2]](#footnote-2) It is time that this ministry was re-evaluated both in theory and in practice. Such an investigation occurred in the UK in the 1970’s when a Bishops’ Commission there (chaired by Robert Mortimer, Bishop of Exeter) produced a report on exorcism and deliverance (The Exeter Report) that provided local clergy with a serious foundation for its practice and guidelines to prevent abuses.[[3]](#footnote-3) Since then many dioceses in England have personnel and resources available for a ministry of deliverance by the local clergy.

All those who work in the realm of the spirit, whether as academics or as practitioners, have to confront their prejudices about Satan and evil spirits. For some there is no question that these malevolent entities exist and influence human lives for the worse; for others there are many questions and much doubt, if not incredulity. Christians have to consider what the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures disclose about the spiritual realm of God, angels and demons. Our initial mindset will influence how we receive what others write about this field. We have to recognise that the Western, rational, secular worldview is both late in the history of humankind and a minority position in the world.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Two competing perspectives that are relevant to this paper are those of dogmatic theology and pastoral theology. Some theologians formulate a picture of the spiritual and material dimensions of creation from what is revealed in Scripture and through the use of reason reflecting on what we can see or infer; others formulate their picture through the very life experiences of people of faith, listening to and integrating what their imagination and unconscious inform them as well as their cultural and educational backgrounds.[[5]](#footnote-5) Sometimes their conclusions do coincide (as we would hope if they are dealing with the same reality) but sometimes they do not. The difference in their perspectives may be stated somewhat baldly in terms of reporting on something as a spectator and participating in the experience as someone involved.

John Richards discusses this issue in relation to deliverance ministry, writing that it is the theologian’s task to evaluate and interpret what a pastor or a pew Christian presents as genuine spiritual experience. In his study of demonic affliction and deliverance he has gathered contemporary experiences of Christian men and women of all denominations, who “have not provided a theology, but the raw stuff about which theology must be hammered out.” [[6]](#footnote-6) He also reports that “A number of ministers … told me how, after witnessing their first exorcism, they have had to modify certain aspects of their theology in the light of the reality which they have seen.”[[7]](#footnote-7)

The ground between theology and pastoral experience is the position I would like to take, which considers accounts of evil spirits from both points of view: taking into account both the academic research on evil spirits and the written experiences of people whose lives have been impacted on by such phenomena, whether as victims or as ‘deliverers’. Each is able to inform the other.

Despite this topic being one that would seem to belong to the discipline of theology alone, my approach is multi-disciplinary. In the last one hundred years or so ‘possession’ by spirits has been the focus of study by anthropologists, psychologists and philosophers as well as theologians and pastors in the field. These specialists approach this topic from a phenomenological perspective. Christian theology understands that humans are not purely spiritual beings but also beings of a physical nature whose identity as a ‘person’ is inseparable from the history and culture, geography and society that each is born into. These disciplines can offer very helpful insights into the nature of the human experience of demonic affliction. A healthy theology will enter into dialogue with other scholarly disciplines.[[8]](#footnote-8)

1. **Methodology**

My approach in this research is based on the methodology described by Kees Waaijman as ‘systematics’.[[9]](#footnote-9) Waaijman explains this dimension of research with reference to the term, ‘collatio’. Collatio is the process in which the truth of a given subject matter becomes apparent in a learning community by means of critical articulation and testing. It involves examining the subject matter from different points of view, comparing and weighing up different statements given by different voices. The learning community in my context consists of the scholars from a variety of disciplines who write, publish and present papers at conferences or in academic periodicals on this topic.

The ‘systematic’ approach appraises definitions of concepts, the structure of categories, and the relationship of the parts to the whole. The aim of collation is “to bring the subject matter of darkness into light, so that participants gain insight”. [[10]](#footnote-10)

I have restricted my research to what others have written on this topic, both academic and personal*.* There were a number of key areas in which I sought source material. Firstly I approached biblical scholars from whom I learnt the different ways in which the stories of demons and possession in the Scriptures are interpreted, and how those interpretations have changed over the last century. I wanted to have a philosophical basis to my arguments as well as a Scriptural one as the Catholic Church confirms the truth of its teachings through the use of reason (investigation into the natural world) as well as through Revelation. This took me to the area of theodicy. The arguments from philosophy lead naturally into an elementary study of neuropsychology and ‘consciousness’. I uncovered accounts of the presence and activity of malignant spiritual beings by a significant number of people in the present time, both churched and un-churched. While it used to be thought that all demonic oppression or possession was attributed to mental illness (to neuro-psychological deficiencies) there is a current of thought now that holds open the possibility that some symptoms of mental illness may be the result of the influence of evil spirits. When I read histories of the figure of Satan and of exorcism I learnt of the influence of group dynamics (the need for tactics of survival by minority groups in the Church) from within the field of anthropology. Satan and demons might not be such a significant issue in the Catholic Church today in Australia if it were not for immigration from Third World countries: my conjecture that there was a strong belief in spirits among those new arrivals to this country was confirmed upon my reading accounts of possession and exorcism in cultures of the Asia/Pacific region. I was aware that many Christians of European origin are skeptical about the supernatural and spirit beings because of the reductionism of science (and philosophy) of the 20th century: in my reading in this area I came across some very interesting material on ‘worldview’ and on the influence of the entertainment industry (particularly movies and TV series about the devil and the supernatural). In reading accounts of deliverance ministry from charismatic groups and Catholic priests I uncovered the problematic area of Church governance in relation to exorcism and deliverance: these ministries have generated much debate over definitions and authority (who can and cannot exercise a ministry of deliverance).

In all these areas of scholarship my sources have been Catholic and Christian, skeptics and non-believers. Many of the books, papers and articles I read presented evidence in the form of stories from pastors and from those who sought deliverance or exorcism who had experiences of evil that they interpreted as demonic. The authors recognised the difficulty of interpretation and addressed it logically. My research has taken me into many different disciplines over a wide period of history. What has held this material together has been my focus on a specific ministry of the Catholic Church in one country at this time.

In Section A of this paper I shall review those arguments that explain how the devil and evil spirits, as evil, may fit into a world created by a loving God (theodicy). I shall then offer an overview of what the Hebrew and Christian Testaments reveal about Satan and evil spirits. I shall present in brief the writings of the Catholic Church on this area of theology from the Patristic Fathers through to today. This has not been a key concern in the Church since the Enlightenment, but the core of what has been pronounced is unambiguous.

In Section B I will clarify some of the key terms in this area of study (evil spirits, deliverance, exorcism, etc.). I will draw attention to two distinct worldviews, a naturalist and scientific worldview held by the dominant culture of the Western world, and a religious/spiritualist one held by indigenous cultures of Africa, Asia and the Pacific. I will also show how the media (film and TV) has influenced how people in the Western world conceive of the devil and his activities. I will clarify the difference between ‘possession’ and ‘oppression’ and the distinctions that need to be made between these and psychological disorders and mental illnesses that are recognised by medical practitioners today: these distinctions are vital for a helpful response to a person who presents with symptoms of demonic attack.

In Section C I will sketch the role of the Pentecostal and charismatic movements on the development of this ministry, describe in what ways the ministry of deliverance is offered in the UK, USA and some Asian and Pacific nations, and show what of this ministry is operating in Australia at the present time.

In Section D I will present some moral arguments for Catholic clergy to take up their responsibility in the ministry of deliverance, and present some of the options for action a priest might take in his parish to support a person reporting affliction by evil spirits. I will offer some recommendations for further research and action in this area of theology and pastoral ministry.

Among the Catholic clergy in Australia today the current attitude towards people’s reported experiences of affliction by evil spirits is one of disbelief and helplessness. My aim in this paper is to provide evidence that demonstrates how the ministry of deliverance, practiced with due care, is a practicable ministry for Catholic priests to offer in their parishes in Australian churches today for those who suffer from demonic oppression.

**SECTION A THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS**

**Arguments relating to the existence and activity of Satan and evil spirits**

**i) Arguments from theology**

For the ministry of deliverance to be feasible the arguments for and against the reality of the devil and evil spirits, and their influence on human beings must be taken seriously. One of the most challenging questions Catholic clergy in Australia have about Satan and evil spirits is: is the existence of evil spiritual beings or an evil personal entity at all possible in God’s creation? This question is related to the larger one of the presence and origin of evil in the world.

The problem of evil has been cause for much debate in the Western world since the time of the ancient Greeks; [[11]](#footnote-11) the existence of invisible spiritual beings (not merely ‘a spirit of evil’ that can pervade human society) that may be the cause of evil in the human, material world is even more problematic. Different religions have proffered different explanations for the presence of evil and suffering in the world.[[12]](#footnote-12) In Asia, African, and the Pacific where Western philosophy and religion are not indigenous, belief in spirits and the supernatural is commonplace. [[13]](#footnote-13)

Suffering experienced by humans has been attributed to many causes. Natural disasters are the result of the laws of physics to which men and women are subject by reason of their small size and limited powers. Sickness and death bring suffering. Then there is the suffering that men and women inflict on each other, emotional and physical, which Christianity calls ‘sin’. Sin can be understood as the capacity that men and women have to act contrary to what they believe or know is right or good.[[14]](#footnote-14) A vital element in any monotheistic explanation for evil has to include the doctrine of free will: that some created beings can choose to act contrarily to the known will of God for them, and that God permits such choices.[[15]](#footnote-15)

As a monotheistic religion Christianity has had to confront the question: how can an all-powerful and loving God permit the existence of evil and suffering in the universe God created?[[16]](#footnote-16) To this problem of theodicy there are two broad schools of Christian response.[[17]](#footnote-17) These schools do not by necessity have to find a place for Satan or evil spirits in the universe: evil can be simply posited in human nature and behaviour. Nonetheless, there is room in both schools for the belief in evil spirits that influence human

behaviour. [[18]](#footnote-18)

While men and women produce evil by their own intentions and actions, it has been argued on the evidence of Scripture and experience that evil spirits also induce them to turn away from their proper relationship with God though temptation and physical trials, adding to the experience of evil in the world. These spirits cannot make men and women sin, but they are understood to influence their faith and behaviour by acting on their minds, their bodies and their environments to impede their relationship with God.[[19]](#footnote-19) Few Christians will deny the fundamental responsibility of men and women for their evil acts: the excuse that ‘the devil made me do it’ is not supported by any mainstream Christian theology.[[20]](#footnote-20) Sometimes, however, one person has chosen so much evil that after a certain point it seems to move beyond his or her control. Sometimes human inflicted evil at the group level is of such a dimension that it is out of the control of any group of humans to counteract, like the Holocaust or the activity of I.S. in Iraq and Syria.[[21]](#footnote-21) In such cases some Christians have looked to supernatural causes for an explanation.

According to traditional Catholic teaching, based on Scripture and theological reflection over the centuries, spiritual beings exist that oppose the will of God for the destiny of men and women.[[22]](#footnote-22) In the time of the early Church Fathers it came to be believed that these evil spirits were fallen angels who had rebelled against God before the world was made. In the medieval Church it was conceived that as with the hierarchical human society so in also in the spiritual realm there is a hierarchy of spirits, the ‘chief’ of these has come to be known as Satan or the devil.[[23]](#footnote-23)

This understanding of the devil and other evil spirits was mainstream in Christianity until the sixteenth century. After that time belief in a realm of created spiritual beings was gradually eroded in the Western world, firstly by the Reformation and secondly by the developing secular sciences.[[24]](#footnote-24) The traditional division between the secular and the sacred was gradually broken down. The advent of the science of psychology with an increasing understanding of the workings of the human mind and the unconscious has put belief in spirits under increasing scrutiny.[[25]](#footnote-25) Sociologists of religion today explain apparent supernatural manifestations as projections of a certain group dynamic*.*[[26]](#footnote-26)As humans came to perceive and understand the complexity and depth of the human psyche, both on an individual level and in communities, the spiritual dimension of existence shrank.[[27]](#footnote-27)

Contemporary theology, informed by the modern human sciences, argues more commonly against the reality of evil spiritual beings: human nature is capable of all the evil that is experienced by humans. ‘Sin’ is a supra human (but not supernatural) power that can keep humans in bondage.[[28]](#footnote-28) Temptation is a struggle of the human heart and mind that does not require external agency.[[29]](#footnote-29) Affliction by evil spirits and deliverance from them is a matter of personal conviction, not ‘scientific’ reality.[[30]](#footnote-30) ‘Demonic’ is a term that has come to mean extreme evil and suffering. The devil is more commonly understood to be a metaphor or a personification of evil, rather than a real spiritual entity.[[31]](#footnote-31)

Nonetheless, few skeptical theologians will deny categorically the non-existence of an evil spirit; rather they say that it cannot be proved conclusively from Revelation nor from the point of view of the natural sciences.[[32]](#footnote-32) Michael Ramsay has commented, “It is arbitrary to assume that we human beings are the only rational beings, knowing good and evil, in the universe, and it seems to me a reasonable assumption that there are, outside the human sphere, beings who can do good and evil.” [[33]](#footnote-33)

Modern philosophical ideas about evil have not been able to replace the Christian belief in and the experience of entities such as evil spirits. The Christian faith puts human existence in the context of a cosmic battle against the powers of darkness.[[34]](#footnote-34) As with the existence of evil in general, the existence of any creatures of evil in the universe is a mystery to the human mind.[[35]](#footnote-35) The ministry of deliverance has its place in this theological context.

In the next section of this paper I will examine the basis of belief in Satan and demons from Scripture and Church Tradition, and in a later section I will explore the contribution of the field of psychology to this debate.

**ii) Arguments from Scripture.**

The data presented in Jewish and Christian Scriptures, both canonical and apocryphal, is the basis of much speculation and theorizing about the devil and evil spirits, and of exorcism and deliverance ministry. Much has been written about the evidence for (evil) spirits in Scripture so here I will merely outline the arguments and refer the reader to more detailed studies.

Denis Hamm states clearly: “Theories of the origin and structure of the demonic world do not exist in the canonical Christian Scriptures. The existence and activity of the devil and his demons is, however, pre-supposed.” [[36]](#footnote-36) Parts of the Hebrew Scriptures witness to the existence of angels as spiritual beings that serve God and humanity but there is little indication of the existence of evil spirits in these texts. ‘Satan’ is a Hebrew term that means ‘accuser’ or ‘adversary’. ‘Diabolos’ is the Greek translation of that term. This figure is not understood to be any kind of evil entity in opposition to God, but rather an angel who works for God by testing God’s people (Num 22, Job, Ps 109:6, Zech 3).[[37]](#footnote-37)

Only in the few centuries before the time of Jesus did belief in evil spirits become prevalent among the Jews.[[38]](#footnote-38) Most scholars attribute this to the influence of the religious beliefs of the dominant culture of Babylon at the time when the Jews lived among them in Exile.[[39]](#footnote-39) The later books of the Hebrew Scriptures, such as Daniel and Tobit, and the Intertestamental literature both provide evidence for the popular belief in evil spirits (Daniel 10, Tobit 6, Enoch, Jubilees, Assumption of Moses, The Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah, and the Books of Adam and Eve).[[40]](#footnote-40)

By the time of Jesus there is evidence from religious and secular texts such as *The Life of Appolonius* and the works of Josephus that belief in the activity of spirits for ill or for good was widespread in the Mediterranean world.[[41]](#footnote-41) But not all people believed in spirits, good or bad.[[42]](#footnote-42)

The writers of the synoptic Gospels give both general summaries of Jesus’ healing and driving out of demons (Mt 4: 24, 8:16; Mk 1:32, 34, 39, 3:11, 6:13; Lk 4:4, 6:18, 7:21), and also specific accounts of Jesus addressing evil spirits and delivering people from them with a few words. There are an agreed number of stories that demonstrate Jesus at work in driving out spirits; there is no complete agreement about which stories can be identified as exorcisms and which as acts of deliverance.[[43]](#footnote-43) Twelftree shows how Luke gives particular prominence to the actions of Jesus as an exorcist.[[44]](#footnote-44) The Gospel of John does not record any expulsions of demons by Jesus or even a summary description that includes these. For John, Jesus’ victory over evil is couched in terms of light and darkness: the death and resurrection of Jesus is the one event that frees all people from the rule of the Evil one (Jn 12:31, 17: 15, 16, 1 Jn 5:18-19).[[45]](#footnote-45)

The figure of ‘Satan’ or the Devil has its own place in the gospels. Satan is given many pejorative labels, [[46]](#footnote-46) and is most generally identified as the ruler of this world who is in opposition to the Kingdom of God (Jn 21:31; Acts 26:18; Eph 2:2; 1 Jn 5:19). Satan tempts Jesus and the disciples (Lk 4: 1-13; Mt ; Mk ; Lk 22:31). While the New Testament connects sin, illness and death with the Devil, no demonisation or possession is ever directly attributed to his particular presence in a person.[[47]](#footnote-47) He is considered to be the ‘chief’ of all evil spirits (Mt 12:24). In the gospels the theme of the struggle with Satan is everywhere – healings, exorcisms, summaries and the *logia* from Q. A number of scholars have argued for the historicity of the exorcisms without which the Gospels would lose their purpose.[[48]](#footnote-48) It has been argued that exorcisms play a more important part in the mission of Jesus than does the healing of bodily ills, because the essential liberation that he brings is freedom from sin and control of the Evil One. The victory of Jesus announces that Satan is retreating and his kingdom is collapsing.[[49]](#footnote-49)

Jesus commanded his disciples to continue with his ministry of healing and deliverance in his name which they did while he was alive and after his death and resurrection (Mk 6:13, 16:17; Lk 10:17-20; Mt 10:1, 8). Their ministry of this type is recorded in the Book of Acts (3:1-10; 5:16, 8:6-7, 10:12, 19:11-12).[[50]](#footnote-50) The Pauline literature of the early Church does not describe any specific accounts of personal demonisation or deliverance but it does reveal the mindset of Paul and the other contemporary writers who took seriously the presence and activity of demonic forces among the Christian and pagan communities.[[51]](#footnote-51) The Book of Revelation uses the imagery of battle to depict the struggle between God and the devil, the ‘beast’, to encourage those Christians living under the persecution of the Romans.[[52]](#footnote-52) Satan is presented as the instrument of God’s punishment in the end times for those who failed to repent.[[53]](#footnote-53)

While there are disagreements by Scripture scholars and theologians today about the sources of evil, the overall message of the evangelists, Paul and other apostolic writers is clear: much evil present in the world today has its source in the spiritual realm as well as the natural one.[[54]](#footnote-54) Satan, a personal purposeful agent, has control of this world and inflicts his malevolence on people through demons. Jesus, however, possesses the authority from God to free people from this bondage and God’s power was given to his disciples to continue that mission of preaching, healing and casting out demons.[[55]](#footnote-55) This is the foundation of the ministry of exorcism and deliverance today.

**iii) Arguments from Church Tradition**

In what ways has Christian community continued to develop a response to the problem of affliction and possession by evil spirits? From Scriptural sources and other apocryphal writings some early Christian Fathers, notably Justin and Origen, developed a larger story about the existence of evil spirits as angels who had rebelled against God before the world was created.[[56]](#footnote-56) Melito of Sards, Iraenaeus, Tertullian, Cyprian and John Cassian wrote about Satan and his demons as agents of temptation, suffering and unbelief.[[57]](#footnote-57) Augustine developed this Satanology in his account of Original Sin and placed it firmly in the centre of the Church’s teachings about sin and evil. In his ‘Two Cities’ the un-Christianised (‘pagan’) world was understood to be under the control of Satan, the ‘chief’ of the evil spirits while the heavenly city was ruled by God through his Church.[[58]](#footnote-58) The existence of the demonic was part and parcel of a Christian’s struggle against sin; if a Christian sought to be indwelt by the spirit of Christ, so may he or she also be influenced and indwelt by the Devil. The desert fathers are well known for their descriptions of their struggle against temptation and demons.[[59]](#footnote-59)

The sacrament of Baptism and the practice of exorcism developed as rituals that demarcated the new life of the man or woman in Christ from the world of sin and evil spirits. Christians were under constant temptation from these spirits to fall away from their new found faith: they were tested both to act immorally and to deny the existence of (a good) God under deliberate persecution or simply from the culture around them. The warding off of demons gradually became part of all seven sacraments and numerous sacramentals.[[60]](#footnote-60)

Many saints of the medieval period made their name by performing miracles of healing and exorcism, such as Bernard of Clairvaux and Hildegard of Bingen.[[61]](#footnote-61) The encyclopedic writings of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) included discussion of heavenly angels and fallen angels which afflict humans with temptation and trials.[[62]](#footnote-62) In the later Middle Ages with an emphasis on rigorous theology, scholastic theologians tried to define and specify with even more detail the demonic which lead to the excesses and panic of the early modern period witch hunts. In 1614 the variety of rites of exorcism used in the Catholic Church were brought together and systematised with the publication of *Rituale Romanum.* This text tried to curb the excesses of the practice by prescribing strict rules regarding the limited occasions when an exorcism could be performed. This text remained in place until the revision of the Rite in 1965.[[63]](#footnote-63)

The existence of Satan and evil spirits was questioned and criticized in the Western world following the development of Rationalist philosophy in the eighteenth century. The publication of ‘Diseases which lead to a loss of reason’ by Paracelsus (1520) marked the realisation that mental illness and possession by spirits were not the same thing.[[64]](#footnote-64) By the Age of Enlightenment the distinction between ritual deliverance and the treatment of the mentally ill by secular medical practitioners was complete. Philosophers and theologians began to think of possession and demonic affliction as products of mental illness and superstition. The texts of the Biblical Testaments relating to demons and exorcism were reinterpreted and demythologized.[[65]](#footnote-65) The practice of the rite of exorcism became a rare event.

Only three Church Councils have addressed the issue of demons and exorcism briefly in response to a misunderstanding or abuse within the ministry.[[66]](#footnote-66) In 1975 the Vatican issued a document on this topic that was in the nature of a review of what the Church has taught and practised and a reaffirmation of its teaching on the existence and activity of the devil and evil spirits in the world entitled ‘Christian Faith and Demonology’.[[67]](#footnote-67) The Second Vatican Council referred to Satan and the powers of darkness in some of its documents.[[68]](#footnote-68) Recent Popes have made public statements affirming the Church’s theology of Satan and evil spirits and their activity.[[69]](#footnote-69)

While the Revised Rite of Baptism (1969) and the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults have omitted some of the more explicit references to Satan in the current Rite, the deliverance or exorcistic dimension of this sacrament remains apparent.[[70]](#footnote-70)

In the twentieth century in the Western world while official Catholic Church teaching has remained relatively consistent,belief in Satan and evil spirits is the norm only among some groups of Christians, notably members of some fundamentalist Evangelical Churches, and of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Church movements. In the countries and cultures of Africa, Asia and the Pacific those converted to Christianity have readily adopted and retain the biblical and traditional Christian worldview on evil spirits and the practices of exorcism and deliverance.

While affliction by evil spirits has been questioned or doubted by theologians and philosophers of recent times, Scripture and Church Tradition give significant weight to the reality of evil spirits and their influence on men and women. The ministry of deliverance, whether limited to the Rite of Exorcism, or more broadly interpreted, has continued to be a ministry of the Church that offers freedom from the influence and harm caused by evil spirits.

**SECTION B**

**PASTORAL CONSIDERATIONS**

1. **Terms and definitions**[[71]](#footnote-71)

Because of the common use of such terms as ‘demon’ and ‘possession’ in popular parlance, it is well at this stage to make clear what my understandings are of the related terms in deliverance ministry. There are areas of ambiguity and contradiction in the writings on this topic.

For most scholars the words ‘demons’ and ‘evil (or ‘unclean’) spirits’ (Gk: daimonia) can be used interchangeably. They describe entities in the spiritual realm that are hostile to human well-being and to God.[[72]](#footnote-72) Many Christians accept the tradition that they are ‘fallen angels’, angels that do not serve God. ‘Unclean’ is a Biblical term that refers to the state of being unholy or separated from God by way of sin or ritual impurity.[[73]](#footnote-73) Angels, on the other hand, are good spiritual beings that act as messengers or servants of God. In the Ignatian tradition these constitute one source of what Ignatius calls ‘the movements of the spirits’ (another source is ‘bad’ or evil spirits).[[74]](#footnote-74) The good spirit can also be used to mean the Holy Spirit or the influence of God within a person.[[75]](#footnote-75)

Possession is when a person has lost part or all of the control of their actions and decisions to an evil spirit which is perceived to be working within that person’s body and mind. Many people use the term loosely, confusing it with the meaning of oppression or obsession.[[76]](#footnote-76) Most practitioners of deliverance and exorcism would agree that possession is very rare indeed.[[77]](#footnote-77) It is preferable to see exorcism as a rare ritual event for extreme cases (‘possession’), while deliverance is a ministry that can be offered more readily to Christians who seek help against milder forms of demonic affliction. Deliverance can be offered by lay people as well as priests.[[78]](#footnote-78)

Obsession and oppression are terms that signify the situation in which a person is afflicted to a lesser degree by an evil spirit.[[79]](#footnote-79) Symptoms of obsession or oppression include extreme and constant temptation,[[80]](#footnote-80) voices, physical ailments and accidents that cannot be attributed unambiguously to natural causes.[[81]](#footnote-81) These afflictions are perceived to come from outside the person’s body and mind. They can be so mild as to be almost unperceived by the person, or so strong that they will keep a person physically and mentally stressed for hours at a time. The person afflicted may be delivered of these spirits by prayers of deliverance.[[82]](#footnote-82)

Deliverance has both a general meaning and a specific one. In general it has the sense of freeing a person or group of people from some negative situation, so that we can say that Jesus’ mission was to bring deliverance to God’s people from their captivity to sin and death.[[83]](#footnote-83) More specifically, among the Church’s many ministries, deliverance is the work of freeing an individual from the influence or affliction of a particular evil, usually an evil spirit.[[84]](#footnote-84) This term is often confused or conflated with exorcism.[[85]](#footnote-85) Jesus practiced the ministry of deliverance by healing the sick and casting out demons. Deliverance and healing work together.[[86]](#footnote-86) “Deliverance ministry could be considered as any authentically Christian means by which people help others to overcome the devil’s influence in their lives.” [[87]](#footnote-87)

Major exorcism is a ritual of some Christian Churches derived from the ministry of Jesus and the apostles by which an evil spirit who possesses a person is cast out or expelled by a command.[[88]](#footnote-88) Its form has developed over the centuries so that it is now reserved for cases in which a person is seen to be controlled at times completely by an evil spirit. In the Roman Catholic Church the practice of the rite of exorcism is restricted to priests who have been appointed by the local bishop. [[89]](#footnote-89)

Having clarified the key terms of this area of research we may now move to a consideration of the contemporary cultural influences that may determine an Australian priests’s attitude towards demonic affliction and the ministry of deliverance.

1. **Discernment of premises upon which the request for deliverance may be made**
2. **Worldviews**

While it can be argued that the ministry of deliverance has a solid foundation in theology, Scripture and Church Tradition, resistance to its feasibility as a ministry today can be found in contemporary Western culture, from its scientific and skeptical worldview. The ministry of deliverance makes no sense unless it is placed in the context of a culture and worldview that includes a belief in the reality and activity of spirits (good and bad). For any person to determine that it is deliverance (or exorcism) that they need to be freed from undesirable and painful affliction by one or more evil spirits requires a worldview that sees these beings as real and that (some) humans have the gift or training to be able to deliver them from such evil.

A person’s ‘worldview’ has a significant influence upon his or her belief in Satan and evil spirits. The worldview on Satan and evil spirits in the West is heavily shaped by the scientific methodology of the Enlightenment and by the media, particularly by some popular films and TV series.[[90]](#footnote-90) There are many scholars in the West (or Majority world) who argue that the perception or experience of spirits is merely the result of a disorder in the brain, the consequence of a mental illness: others argue that one cannot dismiss the contribution of evil spirits to a person’s disturbed mental state for the symptoms of both sources of suffering are virtually the same. Some scholars in the area of the unconscious argue that the unconscious is in fact that part of the human being that is the channel to or window onto a spiritual dimension of the universe. These conflicting fields of scholarship form the context for a church’s practical response to a person claiming to be afflicted by evil spirits.

Cultures that espouse a materialist and atheist worldview have rejected belief in a world of conflict between personal spiritual forces of good and evil; in the Majority world (Africa, Asia, South America, the Pacific region) the presence and activity of evil spirits is almost taken for granted.[[91]](#footnote-91) In Britain, the USA and Australia, Church groups such as Charismatics, Pentecostals and Fundamentalists hold a minority position of belief in the activity of Satan and demons.[[92]](#footnote-92) In countries such as Australia, where these two different worldviews are both present, both the one who seeks deliverance and the one who is approached to give this deliverance are faced with conflict or confusion about which worldview the other is operating out of.

Charles Kraft defines a ‘worldview’ as a complex of “culturally structured assumptions, values and commitments underlying a people’s perception of Reality.” [[93]](#footnote-93) Kraft describes the Western worldview as naturalistic, materialistic and humanistic. All the events of life, both in nature and in the human world, are caused and shaped by physical or psychological forces. The world operates as a machine. Humans can understand and control this world through reason and technology. For those who believe in God, God’s place is ‘outside’ this universe – God made the world and has ‘saved’ us from our sin, and now there is no further activity on his part in the lives of men and women.[[94]](#footnote-94)

In contrast to this the non-Western worldview holds that there is a spiritual dimension to the universe and there is no boundary between the material and the spiritual dimensions of existence.[[95]](#footnote-95) Spirits, good and evil, are both active in human lives.[[96]](#footnote-96) People who live within this worldview believe that sickness, a failure of a crop or financial hardship are due to the influence of one or more evil spirits. They may have recourse to Western resources, such as doctors and medicines, but they will also appeal to specialists in their community who have the power to control and ward off such spirits. They will also invoke good spirits to protect them (some of these spirits may be identified as spirits of their ancestors, others may be of gods).[[97]](#footnote-97)

Robert Solomon has made a study of these two worldviews in the context of the cultures of Singapore.[[98]](#footnote-98) He shows how, under the influence of Aristotle, the West has separated ‘God space’ and ‘created space’ with the eventual result that modern science, up to now, has re-interpreted or rejected ‘non-scientific’ worldviews and has even ignored or marginalised any non-scientific discourse. The result of this is extremism on both sides – on the religious side this includes an extreme demonology that excludes almost all natural causes of evil, and on the scientific side extreme materialism in which humans may be merely depersonalised units subject to greater impersonal forces.[[99]](#footnote-99) In the latter part of the 20th century, however, Solomon does note that scientists are beginning to admit that the universe cannot be understood and described only in traditional Western scientific terms. He refers to the writings of scholars such as Mircea Eliade, Levy Bruhl and Stanley Tambiah who advocate a ‘two worlds’ worldview:

Two equally valid and important orientations to the world: a casual and instrumental mode represented by the technical, rational and scientific mindset; and a participatory and fusing mode represented by a religio-magical mindset.[[100]](#footnote-100)

Some theologians and philosophers, too, have moved into this balanced position.[[101]](#footnote-101)

Paul Hiebert has responded to the conflict of these seemingly mutually exclusive worldviews (scientific and religious) by positing a middle world, based on his experiences in Africa.[[102]](#footnote-102) Where the religious world situates God or gods in a transcendent realm, and the scientific world helps us to understand and gain control over purely natural forces, the ‘excluded middle’, as he calls it, is that dimension in life in which exist and operate spirits, ghosts, ancestors and demons. In this world magic, planetary influences, sorcery, witchcraft, curses, etc. also operate. Just as scientists know how to control empirical forces to achieve their goals, so the magician and astrologer control supernatural forces by means of chants, charms and rituals to carry out their purposes.

This middle world holds the answers to questions that cannot be answered by an appeal to the scientific world or even to the religious world (which deals more with the ultimate questions of the origin, purpose and destiny of humans and the universe). These questions arise from the seemingly incomprehensible and random acts of evil and suffering, such a sickness or sudden untimely death, loss of work, accidents and a sudden failure of business[[103]](#footnote-103). In this worldview people will seek answers and relief from one set of spiritual beings to counter the unwanted effects of other spiritual beings.[[104]](#footnote-104)

The danger here is that people of this worldview may tend to misdiagnose all problems and mishaps as having a demonic origin rather than also considering physical/natural causes. On the other hand, for those who have been brought up in a culture with a predominantly scientific and humanistic worldview, there is no place at all to consider the influence of localized spirits who afflict men and women, nor for any rituals or prayers of deliverance from such spirits.

1. **Popular Media in the West**

While the Western worldview dismisses the existence of evil spirits, nonetheless, it does not preclude a predilection for being entertained by fantasies about Satan and demons. Filmmakers and news writers in tabloid papers in the Western world sensationalise paranormal activity and exorcisms, usually with only a nominal reference to a religious framework. ‘The Exorcist’ (directed by William Friedkin and based on the 1971 book of the same name by William Blatty) is the highest grossing film of all time, according to Lucy Huskison.[[105]](#footnote-105) It presents the story of a girl believed to be possessed and the struggle of a Catholic priest to deliver her from the possessing spirit. This film came out at a time in Western society when the public was fascinated with all things supernatural and occult. Michael Cuneo reports that this film aroused the imagination and fear of the American (and other Western countries’) public to an obsessive degree.[[106]](#footnote-106) A consequence of this film and its spin-offs was that demonisation was now considered a possible, believable diagnosis alongside psychiatric ones and deliverance ministry and exorcism were no longer judged to be dubious fringe activities in the community. This film reinforced the worldview of a cosmic spiritual battle and fed into the belief of the ‘End Times’, when Satan would flood the world with evil and with false religion. The media were eager to report sensational stories of victims of these dark practices. [[107]](#footnote-107) Possession and exorcism were also trivialised and turned into subjects of comedy.[[108]](#footnote-108)

In the conclusion to his extensive investigation into the phenomenon of possession, exorcism and deliverance ministry in the United States in the late twentieth century, Cuneo writes:

Far more than the Catholic Church or any other religious institution, then, it is the popular entertainment industry in America that has been responsible over the past thirty years for promoting the mystique of exorcism. Thanks in large measure to bestselling authors … television shows … and the Hollywood movie mill, exorcism has been mythologised and commodified and turned into a kind of recurrent pop sensation. In this capacity, in fact, it isn’t much of an exaggeration to say that exorcism today is actually the invention of the popular entertainment industry.[[109]](#footnote-109)

As a result of this sensationalisation and trivialisation of demonic activity and deliverance in the media, along with their representation of a dubious theology, those who have no other source of knowledge about these topics judge them to be fictional or superstitious nonsense.

Finally, in our examination of the grounds upon which a person may come seeking deliverance, we need to take into account the psychotherapeutic culture of the United States in particular, as it does have a significant influence on the perceptions and thinking of other Western countries such as Australia.

In the 1980’s, after the heady political activism of the previous decades, middle class Americans began to focus their gaze inwards. Self-help and self-transformation books became the new best sellers, and using the expertise of psychotherapists to help a person achieve his or her full potential became the norm. Deliverance ministry was revalued as one of many therapies available to help one overcome one’s personal limitations.

Deliverance ministry promised new possibilities for the self, the possibility of an endlessly redeemed self, a self-renewed and improved at a single stroke. Despite being cloaked in the time-orphaned language of demons and supernatural evil, deliverance was surprisingly at home in the brightly lit, fulfillment on demand culture of post sixties America.[[110]](#footnote-110)

Some practitioners of deliverance, such as Hammond, believed there was a demon for almost every shortcoming and bad habit in any person, and offered a readymade quick solution to them.[[111]](#footnote-111)

To get back on track, to win liberation, the psychologically oppressed, the emotionally afflicted, the guilt-ridden innocents – and this includes potentially just about everyone – must submit to a therapeutic program … Evangelical deliverance (or at least a great deal of it) is such a technique; it’s a recovery program with a supernaturalist twist.[[112]](#footnote-112)

And Tennant remarks that having a demon not only identifies the cause of one’s problems, it also vindicates one of the responsibility for the problem, and being delivered of it, places one firmly on the side of God, healing and salvation.[[113]](#footnote-113) Today, Cuneo says, exorcism is more readily available in the United States than ever before as a vehicle for personal therapy.

For Australians of northern European origin who are less prone to sensationalism and slower to believe in the supernatural, these manifestations of the supernatural in the media and in psychotherapeutic field in the USA have increased the skepticism about evil spirits. Under the influence of this culture the practicability of the ministry of deliverance in Australia today is diminished.

1. **The Distinction between deliverance from evil and responses to mental illness**

Even if we grant the existence and activity of Satan and evil spirits in the lives of humans, there is an ambiguous overlap in the symptoms of oppression with those of some classified mental illnesses. In this part of this paper I will investigate the phenomenon of affliction by evil spirits from a depth-psychological and psychiatric perspective. I will present a contemporary understanding of the interaction between human consciousness and the unconscious, refer to the widespread and well reported phenomenon of spiritual experiences, report the symptoms that people attribute to the influence of evil spirits, and show the distinctions between the symptoms of possession and oppression. Many of those who write about exorcism and deliverance do make reference to the fact that it is not easy to distinguish between people who are suffering from a mental illness and those who are afflicted by demons.[[114]](#footnote-114) We will see that this matter is not a clear cut one.

To men and women today who insist that their physical or mental suffering is caused by evil spirits, materialist critics argue that such suffering has only natural causes, usually in the disordered psyche of the person.[[115]](#footnote-115) While some of the ancient philosophers were skeptical of demons and attributed mental illness to natural causes, it was only with Freud, in his investigation of women’s neuroses, that a modern scientific answer to what was often thought to be demonic oppression was first proposed.[[116]](#footnote-116) Kauffman, for example, summarises the ‘object relation’ theory of belief in God and the devil. “It becomes evident, accordingly, that the psychotherapist is the true successor to the exorcist. His business is not to pronounce forgiveness of sins, but to cast out devils." [[117]](#footnote-117) This is how Jesus worked exorcisms, by calling a person into a new allegiance with a good object.[[118]](#footnote-118)

Our knowledge of what is real is mediated to our consciousness through our body and through our mind. The fields of psychology and philosophy study the workings of the human mind as it processes stimuli to discover how we may distinguish between what has objective reality ‘out there’ and what is generated in the mind itself. These studies are relevant to this topic on the ministry of deliverance as they contribute to the discussion on people’s spiritual experiences. They shed some light on the question: is this person suffering from affliction from an evil spirit or is his or her experience the result of some disorder in the mind?

In a work on human spiritual growth, Gerald May identifies several forces at work that help humans to mature or that hinder this maturation.[[119]](#footnote-119) One of a number of forces that oppose a person’s movement towards spiritual maturity is his or her own fears and resistances. These resistances can occur in the form of classic psychological defense mechanisms.[[120]](#footnote-120) There is another force that functions in opposition to spiritual growth which May says can only be called evil. This force can arise out of the cultural environment of the person: social attitudes that encourage attachment to self-aggrandisement, or attachment to something other than God which is made into an ultimate concern; and it can also surface “in the form of real spiritual forces (spirits) that seek to divert and sabotage our journey towards … [God].” [[121]](#footnote-121) May points out what is a commonplace now that all our experiences and our judgements of these experiences are mediated by our physical brain’s electrochemical processes. He states that while this is the case, it is impossible to distinguish whether the subjective thought or feeling is the effect or the cause of electrochemical activity with our brain cells. He judges that both are true in different circumstances, and that “the brain mediates experience in ways so intimately bound to experience itself that the two cannot be separated.”[[122]](#footnote-122)

In another work May argues that evil can manifest in our consciousness in more than one way, including our own unconscious, where symbolic objects are manifest that represent some disorder of psychodynamic adjustment. And yet, again, he states that “there does seem to be something beyond our self-definition, something as least as real as earth and space and air that engages in a warfare between creation and destruction.” [[123]](#footnote-123)

The ‘unconscious’ is one dimension of reality that the human mind has some access to, at times, and it presents itself through images in the mind and involuntary behaviours that are symbolic, such as dreams, slips of the tongue and sudden inexplicable falls. Morton Kelsey writes, “To describe an experience as psychic is not to say that it is ephemeral or unreal. There is a realm of psychic reality which is not reducible to physical reality and which does have a profound effect on our bodies as well as our souls.”[[124]](#footnote-124) The collective unconscious is another “vast realm of being” which is not material but which is just as real –“no, perhaps more real and important” – than the material world.[[125]](#footnote-125)

Few psychologists are able to offer any complete explanation of the unconscious. White refers to Jung’s definition of unconscious complexes as “groups of psychic contents, isolated from consciousness, functioning arbitrarily and autonomously, leading thus a life of their own in the unconscious, whence they can, at any moment hinder or further conscious acts.” [[126]](#footnote-126) He then points out that this could be a description of angels or demons: though ‘devils’ and ‘complexes’ are not altogether synonymous and interchangeable terms, he claims that these two realities are not mutually exclusive. His familiarity with psychiatry leads him to suggest that “the names by which mental diseases are classified are purely descriptive, and in no sense at all cover etiological explanations…” [[127]](#footnote-127)

In an article entitled ‘Religion and the Psyche’ A. B. Ulanov explores the relationship between the unconscious and spiritual experience. He asks: are our religious symbols merely projections of our unconscious or the collective unconscious, or do they arise from elsewhere? He suggests that our inner depths and the world of spiritual reality interweave and overlap. “This compounds their ambiguity and ambivalence, leaving us [Christians] open to the charge that we are merely dressing up our psychic needs in religious clothing.” [[128]](#footnote-128) There is no other way for the divine (or the diabolic) to enter into our world other than through our minds with its capacity to receive what is immaterial through symbols and images.

Richard Bell has written a book exploring the nexus between this known world (‘phenomenal’) and the world of spiritual being (‘nomenal’) (God exists in a completely transcendent third world) developing the ‘transcendental idealism’ of Kant, Fichte and Schopenhauer [[129]](#footnote-129). Both humans in part and ‘spirits’ entirely have their existence in the noumenal dimension of existence. Jesus’ exorcisms reached into the noumenal dimension and brought about a real effect of healing in the phenomenal world. Bell argues that just as the blessings of the noumenal world come to us from the risen Jesus in the Eucharist and Baptism, so too can the evil of Satan affect us in the phenomenal world.

There have been two significant studies of experiences of a world that is immaterial but has a real impact on the human mind and person. William James conducted a survey of people’s experiences of the numinous in the late 19th century[[130]](#footnote-130); another similar survey has been conducted recently under the auspices of the University of Wales, the Alister Hardy Religious Experience Research Centre.[[131]](#footnote-131) Both take seriously the reports of men and women about their subjective experience of some spiritual reality, ones which are not verifiable by ordinary scientific methods, but which were as real to them as a car crash or a swim in a winter sea.

In her book, *Introduction to Religious and Spiritual Experience* Marianne Rankin introduces us to a range of spiritual experiences reported to the RERC. She explains that a religious or spiritual experience

gives an indication of a greater reality underlying the physical world of the senses. Reductionists explain away religion as a delusion and are convinced that in our experience of life ‘what you see is what you get’, that there is no more to life than meets the eye, or direct sense experience. Spiritual experience counters this, indicating another dimension which is different from ordinary reality or a deeper level of experience within that reality. [[132]](#footnote-132)

There are a great variety of such experiences that are induced, without the person’s conscious will, by some aspect of nature, art, or music, or even in the midst of some ordinary daily activity. These experiences can bring a new insight into life or self-identity or even the nature of some cosmic transcendent Being. They always evoke strong emotions.

Some may describe their feelings in terms of trust, awe, joy, or bliss; exceptionally they may reach the heights of ecstasy. Others may have sensory impressions, see lights, hear voices, or have feelings of being touched. . . However diverse the kind of experience, spiritual awareness appears to be universal to human kind . . . [[133]](#footnote-133)

While these experiences are common across the globe, few are willing to share them for fear of ridicule. These events are highly personal and precious. And not all of them are benign or comforting. Marete Jakobsen has written a paper based on the reports given to RERC about people’s negative experiences of the numinous. The men and women have been terrified and are even more unwilling to mention them to anyone. [[134]](#footnote-134)

In another recent collection of studies on spirituality and psychology, it is reported that while many adults admit to having an experience of a spiritual, other-worldly presence, children are more open to having these experiences, and the culture of the adult world precludes or diminishes the openness of adults to the numinous. [[135]](#footnote-135) In all the above reports it was noted that whether the person identified being religious or not did not affect the overall findings.

The works of Bell, May, Kelsey and Ulanov have brought into focus something of the multiple dimensions of human knowing and experiencing. The present research of the RERC has demonstrated that experiences of the spiritual dimension of reality, both good and evil, are not uncommon. From these studies it is hoped that that the reader has a better appreciation for the psychological context in which reports of affliction by evil spirits may be placed.

We will now proceed to examine more closely some of the symptoms a person may present that could be the result of demonic affliction or of mental illness, and investigate what experts in the field say about how they may distinguish between the two possible causes of a person’s manifest distress. I need to remind the reader at this point that this paper addresses itself to the study of people with specific symptoms that are not those of possession; for people who seek deliverance, not exorcism. There have been a number of studies on the similarities and difference between demonic possession and psychotic disorders, but these are not the central focus of this paper.[[136]](#footnote-136) The most that is needed to be stated here is that possession entails the complete loss of control or of awareness of the actions of a person during the time of possession by an evil spirit. As with those who are oppressed by evil spirits they do need psychiatric assessment before a diagnosis can be made as to the most appropriate treatment, spiritual and/or psychiatric.[[137]](#footnote-137) In cases of oppression the person retains their usual persona, they are aware at all times of their actions, they give evidence of a struggle with evil within themselves.[[138]](#footnote-138) Such a person is only likely to seek help from a professional when it becomes disruptive to their function at work or within the family or in their prayer.

Those who believe they are suffering from the influence of evil spirits (not ‘possessed’ but ‘oppressed’) will report a continuous struggle with the same temptation and sin patterns and issues year after year; uncontrollable thoughts of self-hatred, and self-rejection; internal accusations of worthlessness or meaninglessness; and be possessive about relationships (with a deceased or in sexual liaisons).[[139]](#footnote-139) They will suffer from a sense of being overwhelmed and completely helpless as a victim of their own wrongdoing; of being unworthy, deserving of punishment; they fear death and final condemnation.[[140]](#footnote-140)They will express the desire to pray and to repent of their sins, but be unable to do so; or they may be hostile to God (and the Church), and find the message of Christian salvation means nothing to them; they equivocate about the advice given by a Christian counsellor.[[141]](#footnote-141)They will suffer from bodily discomforts that medical attention will not alleviate.[[142]](#footnote-142) Virkler draws attention to the fact that the symptoms of disturbance exist in a continuum, from guilt as a consequence of wrong doing, though the situations of mild thoughts of temptation, to addictions and compulsions.[[143]](#footnote-143)

The stronger the affliction or oppression, the less effective the ‘ordinary’ means of spiritual help are. The torment experienced is not relieved by confession, or reception of the Eucharist, or prayer, nor by ordinary counseling, therapy or medication.[[144]](#footnote-144)

In their assessments of persons who claim affliction by evil spirits, psychiatrists (both Christian and atheist) will discover that some are suffering from a mental disorder.[[145]](#footnote-145) Among these disorders are schizophrenia, depressive psychosis, Dissociative Identity Disorder and hysterical personality disorder.[[146]](#footnote-146) Their patients present symptoms of a repression or projection of their personality or experiences that they find undesirable.[[147]](#footnote-147) This repression of ‘evil’ can be projected out onto other people – or onto ‘evil spirits’.[[148]](#footnote-148) There are accounts of those who feel afflicted by an evil presence being driven into a state of mental illness or depression: it is hard to determine which is the cause of the other.[[149]](#footnote-149) To make this matter even more confusing, some people adopt the symptoms of demonic affliction or possession in order to secure the attention they crave.[[150]](#footnote-150)

Dr Alfred Lechler (psychiatrist) describes in detail the differences he has observed between symptoms of mental illness and of the demonic.[[151]](#footnote-151) He adds that a person who does suffer from endogenous pathological emotional disturbance is just the type whom the devil attempts to lead into sin and to bind to himself; the two conditions are almost indistinguishable.[[152]](#footnote-152)

John and Mark Sandford have surveyed much of the literature on the similarities between mental illness and oppression and possession.[[153]](#footnote-153) They conclude that while it is difficult to distinguish the presence of an evil spirit in a person with mental illness by the symptoms alone, well known mental illnesses can be distinguished from demonic activity.

In this section we have seen how the presence and activity of evil spirits is not easily detectable; how the unconscious is a part of the human mind that is accessible to these spiritual beings; that many people have significant spiritual experiences in their lives (usually overwhelmingly uplifting or fearful); and some of the common symptoms of oppression by evil spirits in a person. This survey of various psychological studies in the area of spirituality reveals that the presence and activity of evil spirits in a person is not as unbelievable as is commonly thought. Such an experience may indeed be called irrational, for it has its origin in that perceptual part of the mind that is beyond consciousness and ego. It is not easy to determine if a person is suffering from demonic affliction or from mental illness: this area of overlap between psychological and spiritual analyses of a person claiming to need deliverance or exorcism continues to be a source of debate in academic and ministry circles.[[154]](#footnote-154) Those in the ministry of deliverance need to take great care in their assessment of the causes of affliction to make the most likely diagnosis in consultation with other mental health professionals.

**SECTION C.**

**THE PRACTICE OF THE MINISTRY OF DELIVERANCE**

1. **International accounts (USA, UK and Asia Pacific)**

In the last section we explored how cultures and mindsets influence the attitude a person may take towards demonic affliction and deliverance ministry. In this section we move from the feasibility of demonic affliction to the practice of deliverance ministry in Christian Churches today. It is a mistake to identify deliverance ministry only with the sensational exorcisms reported by the press with concern, and correctly, disapproval.[[155]](#footnote-155) Many small Christian groups offer deliverance ministry in an effective and low key way for those who report that they are afflicted by evil spirits. Here I will outline the emergence in Christian Churches of deliverance as a distinctive ministry, give an overview of some ministries of deliverance overseas, then review what is in place in Australia today.

We have already seen how exorcism was practiced in the early Church based on the example and command of Jesus (pages 20, 31). The ritual of exorcism was widely recognised as a sacramental in the Catholic Church, and even by some of the Reformers.[[156]](#footnote-156) It was not until the Enlightenment that this practice entered a decline. Deliverance did not emerge as a distinct form of exorcism until the early 20th century.[[157]](#footnote-157)

Recent studies of exorcism and deliverance ministries have identified their resurgence in the late 20th century with the resurgence of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements in the Christian Churches.[[158]](#footnote-158) In those countries where Christianity has been sidelined by the agnostic and atheist cultures of the late 20th century, some Christians have become more fundamental and entrenched in their worldview. Every evil or setback for a Christian community or individual is attributed to Satan and his evil spirits. ‘Spiritual warfare’ becomes the major agenda for these beleaguered communities, and with that increased speculation about the nature and activities of evil spirits.[[159]](#footnote-159)

James Collins has written extensively on this subject, tracing the origins and history of the charismatic movements of the Christian Churches together with the changing fortunes of exorcism and deliverance ministry. He describes the itinerate preachers of the 1950’s and 1960’s who entered into a virtual competition with each other to gain adherents by their preaching with ‘power’ – accompanied by miracles of healing and deliverance (William Banham, Oral Roberts, A.A. Allen among them). Derek Prince, Frank and Ida Hammond, John Wimber and others followed who taught that even Christians can be afflicted by demons. The demise of belief in Christianity and the rise of interest in the occult in the 1970’s was for them evidence of the nearness of the Parousia and the final ‘showdown’ between God and Satan. All Christians were exhorted to fight the devil and his agents with prayer and with the frequent practice of deliverance (which could be self-administered). Collins observes that

In theological terms, most [of these] practitioners of exorcism/deliverance ministry perceive demons as the prime mover in human evil rather than a more traditional model which would make the sinful nature the prime mover and the demonic, a contributory, exacerbating stimulus … the flesh is almost entirely subsumed and the human person functions merely as an arena for the cosmic battle between the Holy spirit and the satanic hordes. [[160]](#footnote-160)

The mainstream Catholic and Anglican Churches remained ambivalent about the demonic nature of occult and the psychic; they were more inclined to see the natural and human in some paranormal experiences rather than demons. The ministries of deliverance and exorcism in these Churches were downplayed until the 1970’s with the arrival of the Charismatic Renewal and the work and writings of Fr Francis McNutt. Members of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal were convinced that the Holy Spirit was renewing in the Church all the Spirit’s gifts, including the power to cast out demons. Since they were aware of the restrictions on exorcism they clarified the difference between possession which required (major) exorcism and deliverance (minor exorcism), devised a different nomenclature, and borrowed prayers and rites from other Christian denominations.[[161]](#footnote-161)

In 1983 Cardinal Suenens, the Prefect responsible for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement and concerned to prevent the abuses that had marked exorcism in previous centuries, published a book about deliverance ministry. While he affirmed the faith of the members of Catholic Charismatic Renewal to exercise their authority to cast out demons, Suenens was concerned about the potential abuses arising from too great an emphasis on the devil and from a lack of close oversight by the local bishops. He was aware that Catholics lacked a sufficient and clear teaching about Satan and how to deal with possession or oppression.[[162]](#footnote-162)

Drawing his history to a close, Collins observes that after the original explosion of deliverance and exorcism ministry approaches that were assertive and mutually exclusive, in the late 20th century these different streams have converged and become almost routinised in a dominant charismatic centre ground. The interest in the demonic now is less due to the publicity of deliverance ministry in the Churches and more due to the entertainment industry. Collins concludes by reiterating his thesis that “Exorcism and deliverance lie in the context of religious enthusiasm; deprived of this clement environment they cannot survive for long.” [[163]](#footnote-163) While I dispute his conclusion I do not deny that there is a close relationship between a sensitivity to the Holy Spirit and its gifts, and to the presence of evil spirits.

Before we look at what deliverance ministries are operating in Australia today, it will be helpful to survey how this ministry is operating overseas, particularly in the USA and UK, and in some Asian countries, such as Singapore and the Philippines, and in New Zealand. Australian society and the Christian Churches here are not immune to trends of beliefs and religious practices occurring in other countries, particularly where there is significant migration from them, or a significant exposure to ideas through the media. Examining the state of affairs of deliverance ministry overseas will also help us to gain a better perspective on what is happening here in that field. This examination is not comprehensive but is based on the studies available.

An article from ‘Christianity Today’ gives a report on interviews with a few contemporary practitioners of deliverance ministry in the Unites States.[[164]](#footnote-164) In it Michael Cuneo gives a figure of 600 deliverance ministry groups established in one year (2001). Officially appointed Roman Catholic priest exorcists have increased from 1 or 2 in 1995, to 15 or 20 six years later. One Church reports delivering around 30 people each week from spiritual affliction. Mention is made of the on-going healing ministries of Denis Linn and Francis McNutt that include deliverance where necessary. Some members of the Association of Christian Therapists are also reported as incorporating deliverance prayer in their treatment of patients.

In his book on exorcism in the United States, Cuneo writes about his experiences as a witness to some exorcisms in various Churches around the country. But it is not only Church pastors who offer deliverance: Cuneo reports some interviews he had with psychiatrists and physicians who use deliverance as part of their health service.[[165]](#footnote-165)

Neal and Janet Lozano lead a ministry of deliverance called ‘Heart of the Father’.[[166]](#footnote-166) Their mission is to help Christians grow in the freedom provided them by Christ, part of which often involves breaking the power of spiritual bondage in a person’s life. The model of deliverance devised by the Lozano’s is focused, they say, more on the individual human person than on the evil spirits in that person’s life. Neal Lozano had produced a manual for any Christian to use to help free other believers from demonic affliction, based on faith in the love and power of God in Jesus.[[167]](#footnote-167)

Elijah House Ministries is a course for the laity on the ministry of prayer for healing established by John and Paula Sandford who place this ministry in a Freudian/Jungian psychotherapeutic model of Christian discipleship and sanctification. [[168]](#footnote-168) They have produced several books and manuals on inner healing which refer to the existence and activity of evil spirits in human lives.[[169]](#footnote-169)

The Pope Leo XIII Institute is an organisation established in Chicago whose aim is the education and training of priests in the ministry of deliverance and exorcism. It is privately funded but works closely with some Catholic bishops. It holds an annual conference to which speakers with long experience of this ministry are invited to

teach. [[170]](#footnote-170)

Russell Ooms and Leonard Mitchell have researched the attitudes towards demonic affliction and training courses provided by two Churches, the Reformed Church in America and the Canadian Theological Seminary respectively.[[171]](#footnote-171) Asbury Theological Seminary, Florida and Kentucky, is another institution that offers a course on demons, spiritual warfare and deliverance.[[172]](#footnote-172)

According to Cuneo more middle class Americans are using deliverance as part of their desire to achieve wholeness through therapies than ever before (see above page 38). Evidence from the United States suggests that deliverance ministry there is almost a common occurrence, though still not fully acknowledged by the larger mainstream Churches.

The Anglican Church in the United Kingdom administers deliverance today through a carefully monitored system. In the 1970’s, responding to widespread sensational media reports on cults and the malpractice of exorcisms, a committee of Anglican bishops produced a report and recommendations for the practice of deliverance ministry in the Church (Exeter Report).[[173]](#footnote-173) Since this report the majority of Church of England Dioceses has appointed an exorcist and deliverance ministry teams. The Methodist Church in England has followed suit. [[174]](#footnote-174) A review of this ministry was conducted in 2000 (‘A Time to Heal’).[[175]](#footnote-175) Some members of the original committee for the Exeter Report have published books of their own on this field giving practical information for pastors about how to conduct this ministry.[[176]](#footnote-176)

Deliverance ministry is practiced widely in various Pacific/Asian countries by healers of many faith traditions including Christians, particularly in the Pentecostal Churches. These Pentecostal Churches are the fastest growing in Asia and the Pacific. Their missionary activity includes deliverance from a myriad of gods and demons in traditional popular Hinduism and Buddhism. They teach that the devil is the source of sin, sickness and poverty.[[177]](#footnote-177) Hwa Yong states that two thirds of all professing Christians in Asia are Pentecostal. While a small section has accepted the Western worldview on demons, the far larger proportion accepts the biblical worldview of spirits because it accords with their own indigenous pre-Christian cultural beliefs.[[178]](#footnote-178)

In Tonga it is estimated that there are 200 healers on the main island of 65,000 people. While not all Tongans today believe in spirits, a good many do and they continue to seek spiritual treatment for ills believed to be caused by (ancestor) spirits.[[179]](#footnote-179)

In Fiji there are parts of the nation in which the traditional relationship with ancestors continues despite the allegiance of the locals to the Catholic Church. The cosmology of the people remains unchanged since before the arrival of Christian missionaries. The Christian God is the supreme power and ancestors function under God’s power in the role of angels and demons. Occurrences of possession are viewed as the way in which the ancestor spirits communicate a warning, teaching or punishment to the earthly community.[[180]](#footnote-180)

Benigno Beltran has made a study of folk Christology in the Philippines. He describes the thaumaturgical thrust of folk Catholicism in these terms: “the people [desire] to experience the extraordinary effects of the supernatural in their lives, such a ‘faith healing’ … dream interpretation, spirit communication, good luck charms, exorcism.” [[181]](#footnote-181) The Charismatic Churches in the Philippines (such as El Shaddai and Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement) offer to these people deliverance from evil spirits and miracles of healing.[[182]](#footnote-182)

Robert Solomon has researched the practice of and beliefs about deliverance in Singapore, the world’s most religiously diverse nation.[[183]](#footnote-183) Despite the modernization of this city large numbers of Singaporeans still enter the 150 Chinese temples of the island each day to consult the resident medium. He found that it is a common practice to find altars to local spirits on building sites to appease their ‘anger’ at being disturbed, and that more than a third of psychiatric patients who seek faith healing attribute their problem to demon possession or magic charms.[[184]](#footnote-184) Solomon shows how it is a common practice among Evangelical pastors to deliver people of evil spirits.[[185]](#footnote-185)

While the people from these nations who believe in evil spirits may not immigrate to Australia and attend a Catholic Church service here, they are the product of a worldview and culture that permeate their country and this same worldview and culture inform all the other inhabitants of that country who do come to Australia and end up in a Catholic Church congregation. Marguerite Kraft reports on research done on Thai students who had converted to Christianity from Buddhism. Despite their new education and their profession of a new worldview, in fact, their concept of evil did not change significantly. “As many Christians as Buddhists indicated that spirits could be causes of such problems as road accidents and sickness. This shows that the spirits as just as much a part of the world for the Christian students as of the Buddhist students.”[[186]](#footnote-186) Catholics who arrive in Australia from countries dominated by a worldview that accepts the reality and activity of evil spirits do not leave their cultural inheritance at the border. While I have been unable to find specific statistics on the increase in number of Catholic immigrants from Asia and the Pacific who attend mass in Australia now, some related statistics support anecdotal evidence of this.[[187]](#footnote-187)

**b) Deliverance ministry in Australia**

I have been able to access little academic documentation on the ministry of deliverance in Australian Christian Churches.[[188]](#footnote-188) My sources have been limited mainly to press reports and websites. When the topic of exorcism is under investigation by the newspapers it is generally to the Catholic Church authorities that journalists turn. There was a story on exorcism by *The Australian* in 2010, and more recently again by *The Australian* this year (2015).[[189]](#footnote-189)

Peter Munro conducted an interview with Gerald James, an evangelical pastor of Hope Ministries whose mission is to set followers [of Jesus] free "from the evil powers and torment of the Devil or demons".[[190]](#footnote-190) He conducts up to as many as six exorcisms in a fortnight. The method witnessed by Munro was aggressive and noisy. Another pastor who offers deliverance ministry is Peter Hobson, a retired Anglican minster. The Full Salvation Fellowship meets weekly in Sydney to conduct deliverances. Hobson identifies a great many ailments and character flaws, and homosexuality and mental illness, as having demonic roots. Pastor Daniel Nalliah leads Catch the Fire Ministries situated in Melbourne's outer south-east whose deliverance practice can be dramatic.

Colin Warren is a Uniting Church minister in Brisbane whose work in deliverance ministry is conducted through the Charismatic Renewal Movement. He has written of his experiences in the Renewal Journal.[[191]](#footnote-191)

Ellel Ministry offers healing, discipleship and deliverance. The resources they offer include material by Peter Horrobin and Bill Subritzky, two evangelists well known for their own teachings on demons and deliverance. [[192]](#footnote-192)

Elijah House Ministries is another independent, inter-denominational Christian group that offers healing through prayer. While its members do not advertise deliverance or exorcism as part of their ministry their pastoral theology includes a belief in Satan and the influence of evil spirits over sinful humans.[[193]](#footnote-193)

Of the mainstream Christian Churches in Australia only one has produced an official document on deliverance. The Synod of the Uniting Church of Victoria Consultative Committee on Healing requested a discussion paper on this topic which was provided by Rev. Dr Barry Brown. He reported that “the ministry of deliverance/exorcism does takes place within the life of the Uniting Church in Victoria. It is practiced by some clergy and lay people” but without any official oversight.[[194]](#footnote-194) Brown informs the committee that there are a diversity of opinions and belief systems within the Uniting Church on demons, possession and deliverance.

In the interviews with a bishop or official exorcist the Catholic form of exorcism is described as is the care taken to diagnose correctly the person seeking deliverance. It is noted that there are very few official exorcists in the Catholic Church in Australia and some of these do not make their names public. There are two Catholic bishops in Australia who are prepared to talk publically about demonic affliction, possession and exorcism. Melbourne Bishop Peter Elliott says he does "consultancy work" in the field of exorcisms: assessing people complaining of spiritual affliction and, on occasion, referring them to an exorcist for "specialist" help.[[195]](#footnote-195)

Archbishop of Hobart, Julian Porteous, has conducted exorcisms and written a manual for priests and a prayer book for the laity justifying the practice of deliverance prayer.[[196]](#footnote-196) In an interview in 2010 he expressed his desire that more priests be trained in exorcism so as to normalize the practice.[[197]](#footnote-197)

When examining the practice of deliverance ministry in Australia in the Catholic Church we cannot omit what the authorities in Rome are doing as the cardinals there see themselves as setting examples for the other Catholic dioceses to follow. The Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments sponsored a course on exorcism and Satanism in Rome in April of 2011. This was not a training course: the participants were doctors, psychologists, priests and lay people already involved in prayer ministry.[[198]](#footnote-198) In 2014 the ninth annual conference on exorcism was held in Rome and Bologna drawing together prelates from 33 countries (including Australia).[[199]](#footnote-199) In June of the same year, the Vatican formally recognised the International Association of Exorcists, a group of 250 priests in 30 countries co-founded by Italian priest Gabriele Amorth.[[200]](#footnote-200)

In this section of the paper I have described some of the practices of deliverance ministry in different countries around the world with the purpose of placing what is happening in Australia in the larger perspective. Different Christian congregations and pastors/priests have responded to the perceived affliction of Satan in different ways. The mainstream Churches, for the most part, have shown a limited interest in this field, leaving it to small groups of Christians to offer deliverance with different models, founded by different teachers or pastors. In Australia, we have seen, two bishops acknowledge openly the reality and activity of evil spirits in human lives but exorcism is available in very limited circumstances. What stands out for its absence in Australia is a national Catholic program of deliverance prayer training and ministry.

**SECTION D**

**DEVELOPING A RESPONSE TO THE REQUEST FOR DELIVERANCE**

The purpose of this paper has been to present some evidence that will support the case for the practiability of an organised and formal deliverance ministry in Australia today in the Catholic Church. Up to this point in my exposition of deliverance ministry I have clarified what the terms evil spirit, affliction, deliverance and exorcism mean. I have presented some theological, biblical and psychological arguments that have allowed for the possibility of the existence and influence of evil spirits or demons on humans. I have pointed out the difficulties in distinguishing between the symptoms of oppression and mental illness. I have contrasted two broad worldviews, one that affirms the reality and influence of spirits, the other that denies these. I have demonstrated the widespread practice of deliverance ministry in the Asia Pacific region of the world.

In this final section of my paper I want to highlight the relationship between the person seeking relief from suffering and the minister of the Church whose vocation is to bring liberation to the oppressed. In the realm of the spiritual it is the Church and her ministers whom most Christian people turn to whether what they seek is academic knowledge or a healing experience of God. I will argue that a priest has a moral and religious obligation to respond to a person claiming affliction by evil spirits with understanding and empathy, and suggest a number of responses he can make to help free the person from their affliction.

**a) Catholic Church law**

While a Catholic priest may reach out empathically to a person suffering affliction from evils spirits, has the resources needed to assist that person, and may be willing to put into place a form of deliverance ministry, he will probably feel the need first to gain the approval of his bishop, and both he and the bishop will want to be clear on what canon law has to say on this subject of deliverance ministry. The Catholic Church has a duty of care towards its ministers and those who seek its services: Canon law is one expression of this responsibility.

A comprehensive summary of Church law and the parameters of the practice of minor exorcism, or deliverance ministry, is provided by Rev. Dr Gareth Leyshon.[[201]](#footnote-201) Canon law is explicit in its regulations about the Rite of (Major) Exorcism, but not so much for minor exorcism or deliverance ministry. **“**Throughout all the Vatican documents traced above, there are very few explicit recognitions that demons can influence human beings in ways which fall short of full possession.”[[202]](#footnote-202) We refer the reader back to the first section of this paper where distinctions between exorcism and deliverance, possession and oppression, were outlined. Major exorcism is reserved to a priest nominated by the local bishop and only with his explicit permission (1983 Code of Canon Law, 1172). [[203]](#footnote-203) Major exorcism (also labeled ‘solemn’ or ‘public’) is the rite applied specifically to those person who are believed to be possessed, that is, who at times are without control over their behaviour, particularly in response to Christian prayers, symbols and sacramentals.

Minor exorcism (also called ‘private’ or ‘simple’) can be performed by men and women, as well as ordained clergy, where demonic oppression (temporary mental or physical affliction by evil spirits) is recognised. Grob reminds us that in the early Church it was a common belief that every baptised Christian received the power to cast out demons. This power was restricted by ecclesial authorities, primarily in response to abuses, but never rescinded.[[204]](#footnote-204) One form of minor exorcism remains in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults where God is called upon to deliver and protect the catechumens from Satan. These prayers may be pronounced by a lay person as well as a priest or deacon.[[205]](#footnote-205)

Appendix Two of the 2004 edition of the Rite of Exorcism[[206]](#footnote-206) provides prayers of deliverance which may be used privately by the laity (these include invocations to God and the Saints, including the prayer to the Archangel Michael). There is no rule that prohibits the laity from using imperative formula, that is, commanding evil spirits to leave a person or place.[[207]](#footnote-207) Bishop Porteous provides texts and guidelines for deliverance by priests and laity for cases of oppression.[[208]](#footnote-208) What is clearly prohibited to all except an authorised exorcist is the practice of questioning demons and the use of the formulae of Rite of Exorcism.[[209]](#footnote-209) Present Church law focuses on the Rite of Exorcism; it does not make clear pronouncements on deliverance ministry.

1. **The moral and religious obligations of the Church and her priests**

A person who believes they are being afflicted by evil spirits is fearful of approaching anyone to talk about it or to seek help to find a remedy, whether religious or medical. Richards says “That priests are not called out more is, I am sure, not because the people are convinced that [the problem] is wholly physical or mental, but because they are afraid that their minister will not take it seriously and may be unable to help them.”[[210]](#footnote-210) Sue and Sue report that in the field of medicine, psychology and psychiatry in the United States health professionals are unwilling to address the needs of their clients in their own religious terms: “Often patients want to talk about the spiritual aspects of their illness and treatment, but doctors are either unprepared or disinclined to do so”.[[211]](#footnote-211) Kinsey points out some who seek counseling or therapy often seek out a religious therapist so that this aspect of their lives is explicitly included.[[212]](#footnote-212) For any successful healing therapy, it is essential that the client be able to bring into conversation aspects of the self and experience [that] will be accepted and explored, not ridiculed, rationalized or reduced.[[213]](#footnote-213)

In reference to those suffering from mental illness, Kinsey writes that the Church is for some people *the* place of healing:

The Church is one of the places people bring themselves for healing, and in this way it can be described as an alternative psychiatric out-patients department. Potentially much of the activity of a church can be understood as a sort of group psychotherapy, with the church acting as some sort of therapeutic community… a religious community can be very supportive … they have to take you in and accept you and this hospitality can protect many form hospitalization … [[214]](#footnote-214)

The same may be said for those who seek liberation from evil spirits: they too seek and need a community of acceptance and friendship and yet few demon afflicted people find churches that offer this to them.

While Catholic priests may be willing to discuss theology, liturgy or prayer, it would appear that few have the training to listen empathetically to stories relating to experiences of evil spirits. Among clergymen educated in the Western cultural worldview, “there is very little consciousness of the reality of a world of spirits and the spiritual warfare taking place today.” [[215]](#footnote-215)

For those ministers who wish to remain within the scientific methodology of knowledge, they need to acknowledge the limits of that approach to the world in all its dimensions. “The problem is that our science was developed to test propositions of ordinary reality. We cannot test for the presence of spirits.” [[216]](#footnote-216) This means that for some faith filled members of the church their local priest is just a helpless as they are. In the context of their affliction, the church’s rituals, teachings and pastoral practices lack relevance and power. Goodman points out that those who are afflicted need the right sort of help, yet “their diagnoses and treatment are determined not by what works [exorcism] but by the prevailing attitudes, the paradigm concerning the nature of reality”[[217]](#footnote-217) and that “Ruling paradigms have a way of creating blind spots.” [[218]](#footnote-218)

Philip Clayton outlines the possible responses of ministers of the Church to the conflict they may feel between reports of ‘supernatural’ healing in the lives of their parishioners, and the prevailing theology that denies or ignores such activity. This conflict can be found similarly with reference to the existence and activity of demons. One response is to dismiss all such talk as nonsense; another is to believe simply because the Christian Scriptures assert the reality of personal spiritual beings of evil; yet another is to “find some new, mediating position that seeks to do justice to as many of the insights from each world[view] as possible.”[[219]](#footnote-219) Such is the position argued for in this paper for the feasibility of deliverance ministry.

There have been many studies on the healing dimension of the relationship between the ‘client’ and the healing professional which applies equally to ministers of religion as to doctors and psychologists. Kinsey refers to some studies in this area which have researched the power of healing in the character and manner of the professional. He writes: “the person who is offering the gift of healing has power and a role in someone’s life that is extremely powerful and potentially life changing. If they are believed in, have a reputation for healing and are believed to have ‘the gift’…[they will be effective].”[[220]](#footnote-220) Contrariwise “an ‘ill-advised sentence, a mis-timed jocular remark, or a serious statement wrongly emphasised can damage the patients recovery process and result in a tragic outcome’”.[[221]](#footnote-221) Kinsey places these arguments in the context of a discussion of the ‘placebo effect’: a needy person’s well-being is seriously affected by the attitude of the healing professional. This ‘healing alliance’ is not just helpful to the recovering of health of the client, it is fundamental. “The main change agent in psychotherapy is the relationship between the therapist and client.”[[222]](#footnote-222)

While these arguments are put forward in the field of psychology they apply similarly to the relationship between a religious minster and a believer in his/her community. Sue and Sue give the example of a Vietnamese war veteran who lived in Chicago. Vang suffered from health problems that he believed arose from the activity of evil spirits so he approached a shaman known by reputation to share the same worldview and to treat her clients with compassion and understanding. She made him feel that his complaints and interpretation was intelligible and offered a ritual response within his terms that was ultimately curative.[[223]](#footnote-223) Perry likewise advises that the minister’s non-judgmental and empathic response is a large part of the pastoral healing. If the client is sent off immediately to some other ‘expert’ it encourages him or her to think of the matter as exceptional and that ‘ordinary’ remedies are of no help. It can make the client think that s/he is a passive player in a battle between good and evil.[[224]](#footnote-224)

Catholic priests in Australia, then, along with other Christian minsters, may feel themselves caught between the prevailing theology that is skeptical of the reality and activity of evil spirits, and the worldview of those who seek help from a priest against these spiritual beings. They have a responsibility to offer those in need what the Church has at its heart: love, a love that listens attentively, enters into the pain of the other and offers at the very least companionship, if not a way forward into healing and life.

People of faith, whether they are from Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu or Buddhist religious traditions, have a duty and a responsibility to care for those who are sick, weak, poor, or in some other way troubled or in need … when it comes to mental illness, however, there are many factors that prevent relationship persons from reaching out as they normally would to others.[[225]](#footnote-225)

A similar statement has been made in relation to those who complain of attack from evil spirits:

Wherever beliefs in evil spirits is found, one can encounter people who consider themselves to be under demonic attack. Regardless of how one assesses the validity of this perception, such individuals are genuinely is distress and need to be treated with understanding and compassion. To ignore their plight or to make light of it, would be unconscionable. It would not promote the well-being of those afflicted and might well drive them to seek help from undesirable sources.[[226]](#footnote-226)

Francis MacNutt, when practising as a priest, was drawn into the ministry of deliverance not because he already believed in evil spirits but because of the experiences he had with people who were afflicted. He was “confronted by an immediate, deep human need … and no one else was there to help.”[[227]](#footnote-227) He was unable to stand by and watch the person continue to suffer and move towards self-destruction.[[228]](#footnote-228) M.L. Daneel writes of the ministry of exorcism in a way that can be said equally of deliverance: it “appears to confront the existential needs and fears of a people in a ritually understandable and therefore psychologically and religiously satisfying manner.”[[229]](#footnote-229)

Catholic priests in Australia face the challenge of the needs of people who report being afflicted by evil spirits and who seek understanding and support from the Church, and a Christian companion to walk with them in their fears. The priest can do so much with an attentive loving response if he is properly prepared.

1. **Five possible ways of proceeding**

There are five broad optionsa priest in the Catholic Church in Australia has when he is approached by a person who claims to be afflicted by demons. He may respond with ignorance, a lack of sympathy and judgementalism, brushing the supplicant away. This unpleasant fact is recorded by many who anticipate such a response and do not even approach their pastor for that reason.[[230]](#footnote-230) Often those seeking help with evil spirits (or mental illness) will in such a case take themselves to a medium or psychic, a spiritualist, another Christian church, or to a guru or healer from another religious tradition.

More positively the priest may respond with sympathy and offer prayer and counseling, either personally or with a designated person in the parish. If the person is only mildly disturbed this may be sufficient but if something more powerful is operating within the person such non-specific prayer will effect little change. Thirdly the priest may believe the person to be mentally disturbed or deluded and recommend that s/he make an appointment with a psychologist. The difficulties here involve finding a good psychologist; being able to make a booking sooner rather than later; and the fees that may be unaffordable. Fourthly he may know that the diocese has an official exorcist and pass the person onto him. Finally he may be in contact with a deliverance ministry team and introduce the person to them. The priest may also put into action a combination of these options. Each of these responses may provide the afflicted person with some relief from their symptoms, and better still, put an end to them. The more a priest can ascertain what the person’s specific problem is, and the better he is acquainted with the various ‘remedies’, the more effective will be the chosen pastoral response.

Let us look at these five option in closer detail with the arguments as to their effectiveness.

When a person comes to a priest complaining of affliction by evil spirits, the first thing the caring priest would do is to hear his or her story, make note of the symptoms, and ask what remedies he or she has already sought.[[231]](#footnote-231) If the person has not yet had recourse to prayer, to the sacraments (Reconciliation in particular), and to other forms of devotion, the priest would guide the person into the practice of these spiritual remedies for these are considered the starting point of deliverance from evil, whatever its cause. [[232]](#footnote-232) Spiritual direction or spiritual counseling can work in parallel with the behavioural therapies by helping the person to enter into a relationship with God that is liberating and empowering.[[233]](#footnote-233)

If the priest discovers that these have been tried and proven ineffective, then he may consider that the problem lies deeper in the spirit or psyche of the person, that it is beyond the power of the will or the ordinary means of grace to overcome.[[234]](#footnote-234) Koch writes that where the ordinary means of spiritual healing have failed, “we may have to conclude that the person needs to be freed from the influence of an evil spirit.” [[235]](#footnote-235) If particular crippling feelings “seem fixed or locked in a person’s life, then it is likely that the authority of Jesus [in deliverance] is needed to deliver him or her from evil.”[[236]](#footnote-236)

On the other hand, Parker makes it clear from his experience that much suffering in a person’s life is rooted in psychological causes and not living in the right relationship with God:

Of the many times I have been asked to pray with someone for the release from evil spirits, only about a third actually needed to be set free from evil oppression. The others had equally genuine needs but they were not demonic in origin; they ranged from emotional hurts, through obsession with evil, longstanding guilt, and mental disturbance to plain disobedience to the Word of God.[[237]](#footnote-237)

He explains how a person suffering from intractable problems will often project the cause of them onto other people, and onto evil spirits. “In these cases, prayer for deliverance may temporarily help remove the anxiety, but it will not solve the problem.” [[238]](#footnote-238)

Many practitioners and scholars support the practice of getting a medical and psychological assessment of a person complaining of demonic oppression before proceeding with any ritual response [exorcism] both because mental illness and demonic affliction/possession present with the same symptoms and also because they believe that evil spirits can gain entry or exert influence over a person through their damaged minds or wounded emotions (an evil spirit may co-exist with a pathological state).[[239]](#footnote-239) Psychology and psychiatry offer well attested therapies for the healing of people whose distress has roots in their past experiences, their personality, and their relationships.[[240]](#footnote-240) These may be all that is needed for some people who discover that what they attributed to an evil spirit (perhaps because of their religious upbringing) in fact has its roots solely in themselves. Oftimes this way of healing is not an option because of the expense which may be beyond a person’s means. In cases where the troubled relationship is with God, or perceived to be with the devil or an evil spirit, some psychological and psychiatric techniques can be helpful for treatment but usually an additional spiritual response is necessary.[[241]](#footnote-241)

Exorcism is one of the options in the pastoral care of a person who behaves as if possessed or who believes they are. In the Catholic Church this ritual is preceded by a detailed investigation into the person’s history and medical condition, including psychological testing. Major Exorcism is reserved for those people who are judged to be possessed and these are very rare occurrences.[[242]](#footnote-242) However, this present study is not concerned with possession and exorcism, but with demonic oppression and with the ministry of deliverance that frees a person from this affliction. If a priest finds that psychotherapies, sacraments or personal prayer is ineffective for the person seeking deliverance, and he does not consider exorcism the appropriate treatment, the best remedy available in the Church is deliverance ministry.

What does a ‘typical’ session of deliverance look like?Different churches have their own rituals and prayers but one can give a general outline of the most common features of a deliverance session. Many deliverance sessions begin with a prayer of commitment to faith in Jesus. This prayer can be a moment of conversion for non-believers, or it could be a re-commitment to faith (sometimes expressed by the baptismal promises). The person repents of their sins, that is to say, they confess what they recognise as a failure to live as God calls them to live in the Christian tradition; they name specific failures, particularly those that may be related to their affliction by an evil spirit. The person is invited to forgive their enemies, especially those who may have had a part in their falling under the influence of an evil spirit. The person is also asked to renounce the specific areas of bondage, such as their practice of the occult, or their addiction to pornography, which means that they are separating themselves from that evil and declaring their desire to cease from that activity. The pastor can then command the evil spirits to leave the person, or the person him or herself can command them to leave, in the name and authority of Jesus (in which case, the other can ‘stand in agreement’ with them - echo their words). At the end of the session prayers of thanksgiving are offered; and a blessing given to the person.[[243]](#footnote-243)

There are several benefits to the option of deliverance ministry for the priest and for the afflicted person. Firstly the person seeking help is held in care by the parish and in the parish; they are not sent away as if they were ‘too hard’ to deal with. Secondly this method of caring for the spiritually afflicted draws out and involves the participation of several members of the parish whose gifts otherwise might not be utilized. Thirdly, this ministry has been found to be helpful and healing for the person seeking help whether full freedom from an evil spirit is achieved or not.

1. **Recommendations**

Many of those involved in the work of deliverance recognise that this ministry has its right and fruitful place in the context of the Church’s whole saving ministry. Deliverance is not a single act of removing the person from the influence of an evil spirit, but part of the movement of a person towards the right relationship with God and towards living a full Christian life of psychological, physical and social well-being.[[244]](#footnote-244) The healthy emphasis in deliverance ministry is upon the love and the power of God rather than on the evil intent and harmful influence of Satan, to focus on the one ‘curing’ than on the pain of the wound.

More research can be done in this area of study, particularly qualitative. It would be helpful in the discussion of an officially endorsed and effective ministry of deliverance in the Catholic Church in Australia to find out what experiences the Catholic clergy themselves have of evil spirits in some members of their congregations. Helpful questions would include: what has been your experience of evils spirits in your ministry? what is your worldview with regard to the supernatural? what is your knowledge of Scripture on Satan and evil spirits? how have you tried to minister to people who say they are afflicted by evil spirits? The responses to questions such as these would contribute to the content of a course of formation for priests.

The challenge for deliverance ministry in the Catholic Church in Australia today is that its priests are ignorant of this ministry and there is no provision for the education, training and guidance that are needed to provide this ministry to those in need of it. Many Catholics are working ‘in the dark’, both with those who feel abandoned by the Church because of their affliction and its present stigma, and with those who have found the means to confront the spiritual forces of evil to free the afflicted but who are presently sidelined. There are some resources available in the Catholic tradition that priests could readily use fruitfully for cases of minor demonic affliction: workshops could be developed to give the clergy more knowledge and some confidence to minister in this area.

**CONCLUSION**

My aim with this paper has been to argue for the practicability of the ministry of deliverance in the Australian Catholic Church today. While I have not intended to convince the reader that the devil and evil spirits exist, I hope I have been able to make it seem reasonable that a Christian would believe in Satan and demons, and that there is available an effective response to the needs of those who appeal to a Catholic priest for help to be delivered from their bondage to evil spirits.

During the course of this research and writing I have noted a lack of definition in terminology and theology across different Christian churches and even within them. There are very many different explanations for symptoms of what may be labeled demonic activity and many different approaches to deliverance ministry. Of all Christian churches the Catholic Church has made the fewest pronouncements and offered the least resources for this area of suffering. The result of this is that there is little guidance and few resources for those priests who are asked to intervene in cases where evils spirits are identified as the cause of some affliction other than full possession. One of the greatest challenges for ministers of deliverance is how to distinguish the symptoms of demonic affliction from those of mental illness. My study has revealed that while there are few obvious differences to distinguish one from the other, the two conditions are distinct and ought to be treated differently. Collaboration with mental health specialists would be essential in the training for this ministry.

Those who argue against the necessity of deliverance ministry use not only theological and philosophical arguments but also refer to the dangers that are apparent for those engaged in this ministry. This is not only a matter of the physical and psychological harm that can be and has been afflicted on people undergoing exorcism (though this is not really relevant to the area of deliverance ministry whose approach is much less dramatic and aggressive), but also of the distortion that can enter into a Christian’s thinking when engaged heavily in a ministry related directly to Satan and evil spirits. The danger here is to become spiritually paranoid, as Andrew Walker points out.[[245]](#footnote-245) To believe in the reality and activity of Satan and evil spirits is not to buy into a dualist theology. Jesus and the early disciples did not express a paranoid view of the world. We have seen how Hiebert (see page 34) and Bell (see page 43) propose that Western theology needs to incorporate a tripartite understanding of the universe that is held by non-Western Christians: these are the transcendent realm of God, the natural created world of human life, and the ‘supernatural’ world of spirits both good, bad and neutral.[[246]](#footnote-246) The Catholic Church has long held this position with regard to angels, demons and saints. An equally great danger for the individual seeking deliverance is to be ignored or sent away by their local Catholic priest. These hurting souls have little alternative but to find their way to groups that claim to offer deliverance ministry but whose methods are more damaging than healing.

It has to be admitted that there are close limits to the knowledge that we have about the devil and evil spirits. The witness of Scripture and of the personal experiences of men and women over the centuries is limited and not entirely conclusive. We are forced to speculate on the gaps in the data available. But we can do this rationally and within the boundaries of mainstream Christian theology. We can also take note of serious research being done on spirits, possession and exorcism in the disciplines of anthropology and psychology both in ‘primitive’ societies and in the modern Western world. Those of us with a Western worldview need to enter into a dialogue with those peoples for whom evil spirits are a normal part of daily life: for them affliction and deliverance are not an esoteric activities.

This paper is an attempt to open this area of pastoral ministry and theology for further discussion with a view to bringing deliverance ministry into practice in the Australian Catholic Church today.

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1. In an interview Pope Francis gave to *America* (30/9/13) he spoke of the church as a field hospital. He invited church ministers not to be afraid of the dark. “The ministers of the Gospel must be people who can warm the hearts of the people, who walk through the dark night with them, who know how to dialogue and descend themselves into their people’s night, into the darkness, but without getting lost.” Ministering to people who claim affliction by evil spirits is to walk into a darkness with them. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For examples see Michael Wilson, “Exorcism: A Clinical/Pastoral Practice Which Raises Serious Questions,” *The Expository Times* 86 (May 1974): 292–95; Keir Howard, “New Testament Exorcism and Its Significance Today,” *The Expository Times* 96, no. 4 (January 1985): 105–9; and John Macquarrie, *Principles of Christian Theology* (London: SCM press, 1972), 238. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Robert Petitpierre, *Exorcism: The Report of a Commission Convened by the Bishop of Exeter* (London: SPCK, 1972). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. For a discussion of this issue see Charles Kraft, *Christianity with Power: Your Worldview and Your Experience of the Supernatural* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 1989); Marguerite Kraft, *Understanding Spiritual Power* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995) and Graham Twelftree, “The Place of Exorcism in Contemporary Ministry,” *St Mark’s Review*, September 1986, 27–8. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. James Kelly, in ‘Religious Epistemology’, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy <http://www.iep.utm.edu/relig-ep/#H5> [accessed 12 October, 2014] explains how some philosophers argue that our grounds for belief in the existence of anything need not be based purely on reason or shared evidence; Reformed Epistemologists ground belief in God in subjective religious or spiritual experiences. In a blog Ken Schenck (Professor of New Testament and Christian Ministry at Indiana Wesleyan University) delineates the difference between the rationalist approach and the empiricist approach to reality reminding the reader that neither can achieve its goal without the other. <http://kenschenck.blogspot.com.au/2008/07/reason-versus-experience.html> [accessed 12 October 2008]. This is a point of discussion in a series of essays written regarding the context of Christian faith and indigenous beliefs in New Zealand: Elaine Wainwright, ed., *Spirit Possession, Theology, and Identity: A Pacific Exploration* (Auckland, New Zealand: ATF Press, 2010) 280-283. Amos Yong discusses the source of theology from ‘the ground up’ in Allan Anderson and Edmond Tang, eds., *Asian and Pentecostal*, Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies 3 (Oxford: Regnum, 2005), 94. MacNutt explains how he became involved in the ministry of deliverance ‘through experience, not theory’: Francis MacNutt, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits: A Practical Manual* (Michigan: Chosen Books, 1995), 15. See also Jacques Theron, “A Critical Overview of the Church’s Ministry of Deliverance from Evil Spirits,” *Pneuma* 18, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 82–83, note 13; Gordon Harvey, *Food, Sex and Strangers* (Durham, UK: Acumen, 2013), 2-8 and J.C. Yates, “Demons, Deliverance and Pastoral Practice,” *Interchange: Papers on Biblical and Current Questions* 46 (1989): 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. John Richards, *But Deliver Us from Evil: An Introduction to the Demonic Dimension in Pastoral Care* (New York: Seabury Press, 1974), 219. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Richards, *But Deliver Us*, 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. See William Kay and Robin Parry, eds., *Exorcism and Deliverance: Multi-Disciplinary Studies* (London: Paternoster, 2011), 7–8. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Kees Waaijman, *Spirituality: Forms, Foundations, Methods.* (Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2002) 775-825. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Waaijman, *Spirituality*, 808. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. See ‘Evil’ in the *Encyclopedia of Religion* ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: MacMillan, 1987); Radoslav Tsanoff, “Evil, the Problem of,” *Dictionary of the History of Ideas* (New York: Charles Schribner’s Sons, 1973), 162–163 and Robert Solomon, *Living in Two Worlds: Pastoral Responses to Possession in Singapore*, Studies in the Intercultural History of Christanity 73 (Frankfurt-am-Main: Peter Lang, 1994), 258. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Some religions offered an explanation of evil that viewed it as a natural part of the imperfection of the universe (e.g. Buddhism), others that evil is an inherent part of God (e.g. Sufism). See David Parkin, ed., *The Anthropology of Evil* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985), 8–21. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The following scholars have researched extensively about the understanding of the world of spirits in non-Western societies: Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Charles Kraft, *Christianity with Power: Your Worldview and Your Experience of the Supernatural* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 1989); Allan Anderson and Edmond Tang, eds., *Asian and Pentecostal*, Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies 3 (Oxford: Regnum, 2005); Wainwright, *Spirit Possession, Theology, and Identity: A Pacific Exploration*. Robert Solomon, *Living in Two Worlds: Pastoral Responses to Possession in Singapore*, Studies in the Intercultural History of Christianity 73 (Frankfurt-am-Main: Peter Lang, 1994). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Sin is a theological term with multiple meanings. In its simplest form it is an action or way of thinking that rejects and damages the intention of God for humans to live in love with God and with each other. See *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, par. 1849–1862 and Richard McBrien, *Catholicism* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981), 953–960. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. See McBrien, *Catholicism*, 328–331. Carolyn Eng Looi Tan, “Humanity’s Devil,” *Evangelical Review of Theology* 34, no. 2 (2010): 136–54.**;** P Nolan, “Free Will,” *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (Washington: Thomson Gale, 2003), 928–931.Hick discussesAlvin Platinga’s ideas (*Evil and the God of Love*) 275, 367. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. See Donald Taylor, “Theological Thoughts about Evil,” in *The Anthology of Evil* , ed. D. Parkin (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985), 26–41; he discusses the ancient Hebrew understanding of evil. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. The first is that all evil is part of God’s plan and intention to create good and holy humans over time (the Irenaean school); the second that all evil is a consequence or punishment for humans not being in the right relationship with God (the Augustinian school). Hick compares the differences between these two school of thought: “Instead of the doctrine that man was created finitely perfect and then incomprehensibly destroyed his own perfection and plunged into sin and misery, Irenaeus suggests that man was created as an imperfect, immature creature who was to undergo moral development and growth and finally be brought to the perfection intended for him by his Maker. Instead of the Fall of Adam being presented, as in the Augustinian tradition, as an utterly malignant and catastrophic event, completely disrupting God’s plan, Irenaeus pictures it as something that occurred in the childhood of the race, an understandable lapse due to weakness and immaturity rather than an adult crime full of malice and pregnant with perpetual guilt. And instead of Augustine’s view of life’s trials as divine punishment for Adam’s sin, Irenaeus sees our world of mingled good and evil as a divinely appointed environment for man’s development towards the perfection that represents the fulfillment of God’s good purpose for him.” John Hick, *Evil and the God of Love*, (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), 214–215. See also ‘Evil’ in the New Catholic Encyclopedia (New York: McGraw Hill, 1967). [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Yates, “Demons, Deliverance and Pastoral Practice,” 37–38; Graham Dow, “The Case for the Existence of Demons,” *Churchman* 94, no. 3 (1980): 199–208. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. More has been written about the influence of the devil on men and women from the experience of those affected and by practitioners of exorcism and deliverance than by theologians who are reticent to pronounce on these matters. Here are a few: *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, para. 395, 538, 2852. Leon-Joseph Suenens, *Renewal and the Powers of Darkness* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1983), 31–4. Neal Lozano, *Resisting the Devil: A Catholic Perspective on Deliverance* (Huntingdon, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 2009), 153–164. Henry Virkler and Mary Virkler, “Demonic Involvement in Human Life and Illness,” *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 5 (1977): 95–102. Darren Oldridge, *The Devil: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 51–6. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Joseph Kelly, *Responding to Evil* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003), 10–11 and Suenens, *Renewal and the Powers of Darkness*, 31–34. Virkler quotes J. W. Montgomery (*Demon Possession*, Minneapolis: Bethany, 1976) 22: “[such an attitude] is a demonic form of escapism to avoid confrontation with personal sin within”: Virkler and Virkler, “Demonic Involvement in Human Life and Illness,” 99. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Oldridge, *The Devil*, 51, 93 and Tan, “Humanity’s Devil,” 147. and Scott Peck has written about such cases in *People of the Lie* (London: Arrow, 1991) and *Glimpses of Evil* (New York: Free Press, 2009). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Homebush, NSW: St Paul’s, 1994), par. 385–409, 2851. “Christian Faith and Demonology” (Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, June 26, 1975), http://www.vatican.va/roman\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\_con\_cfaith\_doc\_19750626\_fede-cristiana-demonologia\_en.html. ‘Devil, The’ in *Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology* ed. Ian MacFarland et al, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. See Karl Rahner, “Devil,” *Sacramentum Mundi* vol 2 (London: Burns and Oates, 1968); Oldridge, *The Devil: A Very Short Introduction*, 31. The study of St Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century on spiritual beings (angels or demons) has not lost its relevance. While admitting the limits of knowledge accessible about spirits to humans, by the method of analogy he was able to offer a philosophical description of their nature. See Victor White, *God and the Unconscious* (London: Fontana Books, 1960), 193–199. For a fresh approach to the ontology of evil spirits, see Richard Bell, *Deliver Us From Evil: Interpreting the Redemption from the Power of Satan in New Testament Theology* (Tubingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 341–355. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Miguel De La Torre and Albert Hernandez, *The Quest for the Historical Satan* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011); Henry Ansgar Kelly, *Satan: A Biography* (Cambridge, UK: CUP, 2006); Philip Almond, *The Devil: A New Biography* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 204–219; Oldridge, *The Devil*, 67, and Wolfgang Behringer, “Devil, Satan, Demons and Demonic Powers,” *Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010) detail this change in theology over the centuries. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. See note 15 Cortes and Gatti, *The Case against Possessions and Exorcisms*, 245–246; Kelsey, *Discernment*, 57–59. Oldridge, *The Devil*, 40-45. Also Jonathan Israel, “The Death of the Devil,” in *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001). [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. See Stephen Hunt, “The Devil’s Advocates: The Function of Demonology in the World View of Fundamentalist Christianity,” in *Fundamentalism: Church and Society,* Martyn Percy and Ian Jones (eds) (London: SPCK, 2002), 66–91; also see the discussion of Rosemary Radford Reuther in Oldridge, *The Devil*, 99–100. This sociological point of view is the foundational principle for James Collins, *Exorcism and Deliverance Ministry in the Twentieth Century*, Studies in Evangelical History and Thought (Oregon: WIPF & Stock, 2009); see his conclusion 199-201. See also note 116. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Charles Taylor, with *A Secular Age* (Cambridge MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), has written a large tome on this spiritual transformation of the Western world. See also Oldridge, *The Devil: A Very Short Introduction*. and Robert Solomon, *Living in Two Worlds: Pastoral Responses to Possession in Singapore*, Studies in the Intercultural History of Christianity 73 (Frankfurt-am-Main: Peter Lang, 1994), 206. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. See Tan, “Humanity’s Devil.” And Oldridge, *The Devil*, 98-101 for an outline of these ‘new’ theologies. See entries for ‘Satan’ and ‘demonic’ in Alan Richardson, ed., *Dictionary of Christian Theology* (London: SCM press, 1961). Andrew Walker, “The Devil You Think You Know,” in *Charismatic Renewal* (London: SPCK, 1995) writes “Evil, I suggest, has no real being of its own, certainty no personal ontology, for God created only that which was good … demonised by his own desire, the former angel of light is extinguished by his own darkness and the evil that emerges has no intrinsic life of its own, for it is parasitic on the forces and the energies of God’s good creation…having cast himself off from [God’s] love, that angelic being we call the devil not only poses his relationship with God, but is also out of sorts with himself – his own God nature – he drifts inexorably towards non-personhood, whose only end is nothingness – that existence of non-being which is outside the life of God. As the devil has undergone his depersonalized metamorphosis- the carapace of evil hardening and usurping his good nature – he had become not more rational but irrational, not so much cunning as confused. He is diabolical but disordered, ferocious but fey, fearful but fickle, warlike but whimsical. In short, he has become all that God is not, and its instinct – for think more in terms of a mad beast than a personal agent – is to take as many of us with it as it can.” 101-102. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. The psychologist William Puka speaks of a struggle to achieve one’s purpose in life against internal and external distractions using religious metaphors: “Our aspiring saint within is dogged not only by demons without and within, but by the natural imperfection of time needed… Our development task takes on dual roles in this struggle. Building character requires clearing away the impediments to self-discipline and social righteousness. We must fight mental distractions, motivational lusts, prejudices, false ideologies, the myriad lures of false appearance and materialist obsession. With these temptations somewhat in hand, we must shine brightly forth from our natural core, “polishing our mirrors” so that unfolding capacities rise to their full level of flourishing.” (William Puka, “Moral Development,” *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2005, http://www.iep.utm.edu/moraldev/.) Michael Wilson, “Exorcism: A Clinical/Pastoral Practice Which Raises Serious Questions,” *The Expository Times* 86 (May 1974): 292–95 is an example of a scholar of the Church who attributes ‘demonic’ attributes in a person’s experience solely to the consequence of social and psychological influences. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. See Carrado Balducci, *The Devil: Alive and Active in Our World*, trans. J Aumann (Staten Island. N.Y.: Alba House, 1990), 62–72 who outlines the arguments against the existence of the devil by some theologians. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Nigel Wright outlines the positions of Karl Barth and Walter Wink on the non-ontological reality of Satan (Nigel Wright, “Deliverance and Exorcism in Theological Perspective 1: Is There Any Substance to Evil?,” in *Exorcism and Deliverance*, Studies in Pentecostal and Charismatic Issues (London: Paternoster, 2011), 203–21; see also Solomon, *Living in Two Worlds: Pastoral Responses to Possession in Singapore*, 258. Freud had a significant influence on the demythologizing of the devil: see Oldridge, *The Devil*, 61. Skeptical theologians include Haag, *Liquidation du Diable* and Kelly, *Satan: A Biography*. Even an official exorcist was a skeptic: MacNutt, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits: A Practical Manual*, 137. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Oldridge, The Devil, 92-3 refers to the works of Carl Braaten and Gordon Graham who defend the place of the devil in contemporary philosophy and theology. John White, “Problems and Procedures in Exorcism” (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany House, 1976), 282–4 examines the epistemological presuppositions in the scientific method as both minister of religion and psychiatrist. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Kenneth Leech, *Soul Friend* (London: Sheldon Press, 1977), 131.See also Tan, “Humanity’s Devil.” And Jules Toner, *A Commentary on St Ignatius’ Rules for the Discernment of Spirits* (Anand, India: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1982) Appendix 1 “The existence of Satan and Demons.” 260-270. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, par. 407–409. *Gaudium et Spes*, Walter Abbott, ed., *The Documents of Vatican II*, trans. Joseph Gallagher (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966) par 13 and 37. Scripture texts include: Dan 10:13, 21; Rom 8:38; Acts 26:18; 1 Cor 2:6-9; 2 Cor 12:7; Gal 4:5,8-9; Eph 6:11-17; Col 1:16, 2:8,15,18-23; 1 Pet 3:22; 2 Pet 2:4; 1 Jn 3:8; Jude 6, 7; Rev 12:7-9, 16:10. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. See Rahner, “Devil.” and Hick, *Evil and the God of Love*, 333,336. “Since [the devil] is inherently deceptive, and indeed, self-deceptive, it is consequently quite impossible to give a structured, meaningful account of it. It is the surd element in creation. It cannot be analysed or accounted for in structured discourse, for it is the very opposite, the enemy and denial of the Logos of God. It can only be referred to by image and myth.” from Tom Noble in Nigel Wright, “Deliverance and Exorcism in Theological Perspective 1: Is There Any Substance to Evil?,” 219. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Dennis Hamm, “The Ministry of Deliverance and the Biblical Data: A Preliminary Report,” in *Deliverance Prayer* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), 68. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, ed. E. Ferguson (2nd edition, 1977) ‘Demons’ and ‘Satan’. De La Torre and Hernandez, *The Quest for the Historical Satan*. Oldridge, *The Devil: A Very Short Introduction*. Kelly, *Satan: A Biography*. The exception may be found in 1 Sam 16:14-23. Dennis Kinlaw states that the Hebrew Scriptures actually ‘demythologised’ the figures in surrounding religions that opposed the supreme or human friendly gods reducing this opposition to a functionary of God: “The Demythologization of the Demonic in the Old Testament” (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany House, 1976), 29–35. See also Yates, “Demons, Deliverance and Pastoral Practice,” 40–41. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. This change in belief is seen in the difference between the same stories about David taking a census: in 2 Samuel 24:1 it is God’s suggestion; in 1 Chronicles 21:1 it is Satan’s suggestion. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Hamm, “The Ministry of Deliverance and the Biblical Data: A Preliminary Report.” Ida Frohlich and Erkki Koskenniemi, eds., *Evil and the Devil* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013). Josephine Ford, “Response to Thomas Finger and Willard Swartley,” in *Essays on Spiritual Bondage and Deliverance*, Occasional Papers 11 (Indiana: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1988), 39–45. Geza Vermes, Jesus The Jew (London: S.C.M., 1993) 61. White suggests another reasonable factor, that **"The priestly and prophetic emphasis on the transcendence of Jahweh, whose very name might not be uttered, the concentration of his official worship in the Temple at Jerusalem, perhaps made it inevitable that popular interest in would be more preoccupied with powers and spirits who were deemed to have more immediate concern with helping or hindering the daily lives or ordinary people." 192 (Victor White, *God and the Unconscious*, London: Fontana, 1960). For more on this subject see** Paul Hiebert, “The Flaw of the Excluded Middle,” *Missionology: An International Review* X, no. 1 (January 1982): 35–47. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. See Hamm, “The Ministry of Deliverance and the Biblical Data: A Preliminary Report,” 52–4 and Kabiro Wa Gatumu in Kay and Parry, *Exorcism and Deliverance: Multi-Disciplinary Studies*, 224–227. Ida Frohlich ‘Evil in Second Temple Texts’ in Frohlich and Koskenniemi, *Evil and the Devil*, 23–50 refers to Qumram texts about Satan and evil spirits. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Juan Cortes and Florence Gatti, *The Case against Possessions and Exorcisms* (New York: Vantage Pres, 1975), 109, 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. The Sadducees in Israel did not believe in demons or angels (Acts 23:8), and Graham Twelftree gives an example of the skepticism of an ancient atheist, Lucian of Samosata (120-180 CE): “The Place of Exorcism in Contemporary Ministry,” *St Mark’s Review*, September 1986, 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. There are at most 7 agreed stories of the expulsion of evil spirit(s) by Jesus: The man in the synagogue (Mk 1:21-8; Lk 4:31-7), the blind and mute man (Mt 12: 22-29; Mk 3: 22-7; Lk 11: 14-22), the Gerasene (Mt 8:28-34; Mk 5: 1-20; Lk 8: 26-39), the Syro-Phonecian woman’s daughter (Mt 15: 21-28; Mk 7:24-30), the epileptic boy (Matt 17: 14-21; Lk 9:37-43), the crippled woman (Lk 13:10-17) and the mute demoniac (Matt 9: 32-4; Mk 9: 25-6**).** See Vernon McCasland, *By the Finger of God* (New York: MacMillan, 1951), 19–21; Hamm, “The Ministry of Deliverance and the Biblical Data: A Preliminary Report,” 55–6; Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons*, 21; Finger and Swartley, “Bondage and Deliverance: Biblical and Theological Perspectives,” 27; and Cortes and Gatti, *The Case against Possessions*, 106-8, 120-1, distinguish between Jesus’ healings of people with external and visible illnesses, and his deliverance of people with internal and invisible illnesses. See also Neal Lozano, *Resisting the Devil* (Huntingdon, Indiana: Our Sunday Vistor, 2010), 70. Henry Virkler and Mary Virkler show those Gospel texts that distinguish between naturally causes illnesses and those of demonic origin: “Demonic Involvement in Human Life and Illness,” *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 5 (1977) 96, 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Graham Twelftree, *Jesus the Miracle Worker* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1999), 175–180. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Twelftree, *Jesus*, 222-223 (“to associate Jesus with the relatively common healing of the demonised performed by many other healers of the time would have appealed banal and unconvincing.” 223); Hamm, “The Ministry of Deliverance and the Biblical Data: A Preliminary Report,” 55; Thomas Finger and Willard Swartley, “Bondage and Deliverance: Biblical and Theological Perspectives,” in *Essays on Spiritual Bondage and Deliverance*, Occasional Papers 11 (Indiana: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1988), 21, 25-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Murderer and Father of all lies (Jn 8:44), the tempter (Mk 4:3), the enemy (tt 13:39), Beelzebub (Matt 12:27), a sinner from the beginning (1 Jn 3:8). [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Cortes and Gatti show the Scriptural links between illness, sin, death and Satan (136-7); as for the ‘possession’ of Judas by Satan (Lk 22:3; Jn 13:27), they state that no biblical scholar has stated that Judas was literally possessed by Satan. Cortes and Gatti, *The Case against Possessions and Exorcisms*, 103, 109, 136–7. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Latourelle has researched the historicity of the miracles of Jesus in the book cited in note 19. Also Ibid., 128–9. Victor White, *God and the Unconscious* (London: Fontana Books, 1960) writes**: "Not only the Gospels, but also the Epistles, and still more obviously the Apocalypse, are largely unintelligible except on the supposition of the reality and activity of Satan and other malevolent spirits." 193 See also** Peter Pimentel, “The ‘Unclean Spirits’ of St Mark’s Gospel,” *The Expository Times* 99 (September 1988): 173–75 **where the author argues that the exorcisms of Jesus were understood by Jesus to mark the beginning of the purification of the whole world into the kingdom of God.** [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Rene Latourelle, *The Miracles of Jesus and the Theology of Miracles*, trans. Matthew O’Connell (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), 167. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. See Hamm, “The Ministry of Deliverance and the Biblical Data: A Preliminary Report.” and Finger and Swartley, “Bondage and Deliverance: Biblical and Theological Perspectives.” [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. In these letters the authors make references to the work of Satan (Rom 16:20; 1 Cor 7:5; 2 Cor 2:11, 14, 2 Cor 12:7; 1 Th 2:18), of ‘principalities and powers’ (which can work through human rulers) (Rom 8:38; 1 Cor 2:6-9; Eph 6:12; Col 1:16, 2:15; 1 Pet 3:22), and of ‘elemental powers’ fond in astrology and the occult (stoicheia) (Gal 4:5,8-9; Col 1:16, 2:8,15,18-23). See Hamm, “The Ministry of Deliverance and the Biblical Data: A Preliminary Report.” and Finger and Swartley, “Bondage and Deliverance: Biblical and Theological Perspectives.” Some texts from the letters of the Christian Testament may refer to the devil or demons literally, but they may also be metaphorical with reference to persecution (1 Pet 5:8; Eph 6:10-17); two other verses seem to refer to the story of the rebellion and fall of angels but may equally well be an image pointing to God’s punishment for apostasy (2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6). See Hamm, “The Ministry of Deliverance and the Biblical Data: A Preliminary Report”; and Scanlan and Cirner, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits*, 15–17. While the absence of reference to the ministry of deliverance in Pauline literature could mean that the church was not practicing this, Swartley says if the early Christians were reading the texts of the gospels in Paul’s time the exorcisms would have appeared perplexing if they were unknown to the congregations (Finger and Swartley, “Bondage and Deliverance: Biblical and Theological Perspectives,” 27–8). Paul wrote that sacrifices offered to pagan gods were in fact given to demons (1 Cor 10:20-1). It has been noted that while Paul mentions the gift of healing more than once, he never refers to the gift of exorcism or driving out spirits. See Howard, “New Testament Exorcism and Its Significance Today,” 108. Paul did not identify sin with Satan (see “Christian Faith and Demonology.”) [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Persecution stirred up by Satan: See Hamm, “The Ministry of Deliverance and the Biblical Data: A Preliminary Report,” 65. Oldridge, *The Devil: A Very Short Introduction*, 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Oldridge, *The Devil: A Very Short Introduction*, 9–13. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. In the early twentieth century Biblical scholars themselves began to re-interpret (and un-de-mythologise) the context and the response of Jesus to those who were called ‘demonised’. e.g. Vernon McCasland, *By the Finger of God*, (New York: MacMillan, 1951) 1-3, 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. The question has been put, did Jesus believe in evil spirits himself or was he simply going along with the beliefs of his milieu even though he ‘knew better’? While opinion is divided, most scholars support the former position. See MacNutt, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits: A Practical Manual*, 40–2. Ford, “Response to Thomas Finger and Willard Swartley,” 42. Cortes and Gatti, *The Case against Possessions and Exorcisms*, 137. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. De La Torre and Hernandez, *The Quest for the Historical Satan*, 8–83. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. See for example a homily of Cyprian (On Morality): James Walsh and P.G. Walsh, eds., *Divine Providence and Human Suffering*, vol. 17, Message of the Fathers of the Church (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1985), 182. Also Scanlan and Cirner, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits*, 17–18, and Yates, “Demons, Deliverance and Pastoral Practice,” 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Lukken in Dennis Martin, “Resisting the Devil in the Patristic, Medieval and Reformation Church,” in *Essays on Spiritual Bondage and Deliverance*, Occasional Papers 11 (Indiana: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1988), 55–6. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. See John Cassian’s writings in Ibid., 58–9. Also Leech, *Soul Friend*, 128-9 and Susan Smith, “Spirit and Spirits,” in *Spirit Possession: Theology and Identity: A Pacific Exploration* (Hindmarsh, South Australia: ATF Press, 2010), 246–248. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Robert Sears, “A Catholic View of Exorcism and Deliverance,” in *Essays on Spiritual Bondage and Deliverance*, Occasional Papers 11 (Elkhart, Indiana: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1988), 103. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Martin, “Resisting the Devil in the Patristic, Medieval and Reformation Church,” 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Thomas Aquinas, from the Summa Theologica Ia, The First Part, Questions: 50-64 and Questions: 106-114 as presented in the book A Tour of the Summa, Paul Glenn, (London: Herder Book Co, 1960). See also John Newport, “Satan and Demons: A Theological Perspective,” in *Demon Possession* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany House, 1976), 336–337. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Martin, “Resisting the Devil in the Patristic, Medieval and Reformation Church,” 62. For a study on the changes made to the Rite of Exorcism see Jeffrey Grob, “A Major Revision of the Discipline on Exorcism: A Comparative Study on the Liturgical Laws in the 1614 and 1998 Rites of Exorcism.” (Ph.D., St Paul University, 2007). Smith, “Spirit and Spirits”, 249 – 250. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Ann Nolan, “Spirit Possession and Mental Health in the New Zealand Context,” in *Spirit Possession: Theology and Identity: A Pacific Exploration* (Hindmarsh, South Australia: ATF Press, 2010), 65-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. David Mitchell, “Deliverance Ministry Training: A Seminary Case Study” (D.Min., Canadian Theological Seminary, 1994), 31–2. Solomon, *Living in Two Worlds: Pastoral Responses to Possession in Singapore*, 248–253. Carolyn Eng Looi Tan, “Humanity’s Devil,” *Evangelical Review of Theology* 34, (2010): 136–54, provides an overview of some of these theologians: one example is Herbert Haag, *Liquidation du Diable*, trans. Jean Evrard, Meditations Theologiques 7 (Paris: Desclee de Brouwer, 1971). Bultmann is the ‘father of demythologisation’: Newport, “Demonology and Theology”, 338. For an example of a re-interpretation of Genesis 3 see Bruce Vawter, *On Genesis: A New Reading*, (London: Geoff Chapman, 1975) 77-78. Howard examines the gospel passages of supposed demon affliction and deliverance and suggests the mental illnesses that were the ‘real’ afflictions e.g. Multiple Personality Disorder and catatonic schizophrenia (106-7) “In each of the recorded cases it is suggested that the evidence points to the patient having suffered from some form of mental illness associated with bizarre behaviour patterns or form epilepsy… the disordered biochemical mechanisms which lie behind most forms of mental illness are gradually being elucidated and such conditions should be seen as essentially no different from other manifestations of deranged biochemistry such as diabetes mellitus or an over active thyroid gland.” 108 but he supports Jesus’ real healing of these conditions – these miracles “point to his authority to release men and women from the thralldom of evil in whatever form it may present itself.” 109. Howard, “New Testament Exorcism and Its Significance Today.” [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Council of Braga, 561 CE; Lateran Council IV, 1215 CE; Council of Trent ‘Decree on Original Sin’ 1546 CE. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Sacred Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith, “Christian Faith and Demonology.” [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. "For a monumental struggle against the powers of darkness pervades the whole history of man. The battle was joined from the very origins of the world and will continue until the last day …" (*Gaudium et Spes*, no. 37). "For He sent His Son, clothed in our flesh, in order that through this Son He might snatch men from the power of darkness and of Satan" (*Ad Gente*s, no. 3). "[Christ], by His death and resurrection, had freed us from the power of Satan" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 6). And "[Christ] was crucified and rose again to break the stranglehold of personified Evil" (*Gaudium et Spes*, no. 2) from Abbott, *The Documents of Vatican II*. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. In general see Grob, “A Major Revision of the Discipline on Exorcism: A Comparative Study on the Liturgical Laws in the 1614 and 1998 Rites of Exorcism.,” 119–123. More specifically see Pope Paul VI, “Liberaci dal male” (General Audience, Vatican City, November 15, 1972), http://www.vatican.va/holy\_father/paul\_vi/audiences/1972/documents/hf\_p-vi\_aud\_19721115\_it.html; Pope Francis, “Combattere il diavolo, anche nel XXI secolo.” (Centro Televiso Vaticano, April 11, 2014), http://www.ctv.va/content/ctv/it/news/articoli/messa-santa-marta-11-04-2014.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Linards Jansons, “Baptismal Exorcism: An Exercise in Liturgical Theology,” *Lutheran Theological Journal* 45, no. 3 (2006): 183–97. Grob, “A Major Revision of the Discipline on Exorcism: A Comparative Study on the Liturgical Laws in the 1614 and 1998 Rites of Exorcism.” 191. Balthasar Fischer, “Baptismal Exorcism in the Catholic Baptismal Rites after Vatican II,” *Studia Litugica* 10 (1974): 48–55. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. A discussion of key terms can be found in Linda Malia, “A Fresh Look at a Remarkable Document: Exorcism: The Report of a Commission Convened by the Bishop of Exeter.,” *Anglican Theological Review* 83, no. 1 (Winter 2001): 73. See also Gareth Leyshon, “Exorcism and Prayers for Deliverance: The Position of the Catholic Church.,” June 2014, 4–7, 21, www.garethleyshon.info/Deliverance-X.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Stafford Betty suggests a non-religious definition based on his clinical studies: beings “more or less intelligent than ourselves, insensible to us, with a will of their own who seem to bother and oppress us, or in rare cases, possess our bodies outright, and with whom we can relate in a variety of ways.” Nolan, “Spirit Possession and Mental Health in the New Zealand Context,” 70. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. See Xavier Leon-Dufour, “Evil Spirits,” trans. Joseph Cahill, *Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (New York: Desclee Company, 1967); for a cautious and philosophical description of demons: "Devil (demons)" in Karl Rahner, *Sacramentum Mundi* (London: Burns and Oates, 1968); also Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons*, 16. For a discussion of the term ‘unclean spirits’ in the Gospel of Mark see Pimentel, “The ‘Unclean Spirits’ of St Mark’s Gospel.” See also Morton Kelsey, *Discernment: A Study in Ecstasy and Evil* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 59–60. Some scholars and practitioners of deliverance or exorcism argue that these entities are not the same: for them evil spirits are fallen angels but demons are different order of creature: for example: Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons*, 91; Tom Brown, *Devils, Demons and Spiritual Warfare* (Pennsylvania: Whitaker house, 2008), 127–136; and Kelsey, *Discernment: A Study in Ecstasy and Evil*, 57–9. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. In *The Spiritual Exercises* St Ignatius describes the art of ‘discernment of spirits’, see David Fleming, *The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius. a Literal Translation and Contemporary Reading* (St Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1978) 202-219. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. See Juan Cortes and Florence Gatti, *The Case against Possessions and Exorcisms* (New York: Vantage Pres, 1975), 245–246; Kelsey, *Discernment*, 57–59. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Neal Lozano, *Resisting the Devil* (Huntingdon, Indiana: Our Sunday Vistor, 2010), 29–33; Francis MacNutt, *Healing* (Indiana: Ave Maria Press, 1974), 208, 215; Michael Scanlan and Randall Cirner, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits* (Cincinatti, Ohio: Servant Books, 1980), 104 and Basil Jackson, “Reflections on the Demonic: A Psychiatric Perspective,” in *Demon Possession* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany House, 1976), 340–1 explain the difference between possession and oppression. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Mike Driscoll, “How Catholic Exorcists Distinguish Between Demonic Possession and Mental Disorders” (Ph.D., Regent University, 2013), 73, 140, http://search.proquest.com.ezp.lib.unimelb.edu.au/docview/1372063990?accountid=12372; Cortes and Gatti, *The Case against Possessions and Exorcisms*, 64. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Lozano, *Resisting the Devil*, 16,19-20, 25-7. Leyshon, “Exorcism and Prayers”,18. For a discussion on the authority to exorcize, see Richards, *But Deliver Us from Evil: An Introduction to the Demonic Dimension in Pastoral Care*, 177–185. Deliverance can be self-administered in many cases: see Prince, *They Shall Expel*, 204-21; this is the thrust of Neal Lozano's book: *Unbound: A Practical Guide to Deliverance* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Chosen Books, 2010). Cardinal Suenens critiques unauthorized deliverance ministry: *Renewal and the Powers of Darkness* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1983), 71–74, 96-99. See also Russ Parker, *The Occult: Deliverance from Evil* (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 1989), 93–94. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. See Leyshon, “Exorcism and Prayers for Deliverance: The Position of the Catholic Church.,” 4, 6-10, 17-18, 21–2. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Temptation is a phenomenon of the human heart and mind in which a person experiences an attraction towards something against the standards of their own religious, social and personal beliefs. (“Temptation,” Psychology Dictionary, n.d., <http://psychologydictionary.org/temptation/#ixzz2ZrW1HfUn> [accesed 24/5/13])

While temptation is something that can be generated within a man or woman without the influence of any other person or being, Christian spirituality recognises that some temptations originate from an evil spirit. This generally occurs when a person is in a vulnerable state of mind or heart and is thus open to suggestions to act or speak in a certain way that goes against their normal standards. Temptations can be perceived as voices in the mind as well as impulses. Much of what has been written about the experience of temptation today is done so in the context of consumerism and moral psychology rather than theology, e.g. Roy Baumeister, “Yielding to Temptation: Self-Control Failure, Impulsive Purchasing and Consumer Behaviour.” *Journal of Consumer Research* 28, no. 4 (March 2002), http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/338209. See Cardinal Suenen’s discussion of the activity of Satan/evil spirits in *Renewal*, 31–36. See also Kees Waaijman, “Temptation” *Journal of Empirical Theology* 5, no. 2 (1992): 86–94 which gives a positive perspective of (the resistance to) temptation. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Suenens, *Renewal and the Powers of Darkness*, 35–6. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. MacNutt, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits: A Practical Manual*, 69–72. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Bell, *Deliver Us From Evil: Interpreting the Redemption from the Power of Satan in New Testament Theology*, 90, 233, 241, 320, 351, 357. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Neal Lozano says deliverance is the movement of every Christian away from the power of sin: *Resisting the Devil* (Huntingdon, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 2010) 41–49 and deliverance “is the effort – through prayer, counsel or spiritual direction – to help someone take the authority he has been given in Christ, defeat the enemy's lies, and break free of the oppression that afflicts him” 16. MacNutt, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits: A Practical Manual*, 69–72. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Mitchell, “Deliverance Ministry Training: A Seminary Case Study,” 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Leyshon, “Exorcism and Prayers for Deliverance: The Position of the Catholic Church,” 19. John Sandford and Mark Sandford, *Deliverance and Inner Healing* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Chosen Books, 2008), Suenens, *Renewal and the Powers of Darkness*, 22–3 and Richard McAlear, “Deliverance and Healing”, in <http://chicagorenewal.org/spiritual_growth/2011/11/deliverance-and-healing/> [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Lozano, *Resisting the Devil*, 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. The verb ‘exorcise’ in the Greek occurs only twice in the Christian Testament; the most common term used to name to action of Jesus in expelling demons is ‘ekballo’ (to cast out): Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons*, 17. Suenens, *Renewal and the Powers of Darkness*, 69. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Ian MacFarland, “Exorcism,” *Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). Lozano, *Resisting the Devil*, 15. R.K. Bufford, “Exorcism,” *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology and Counselling* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1999) 416. Suenens, *Renewal and the Powers of Darkness*, 97–99. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Russell Dean Ooms, “The Ministry of Deliverance in the Reformed Church in America” (M.Th., University of South Africa, 2007), 21, http://uir.unisa.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/3212/dissertation\_ooms\_r.pdf?sequence=1; Lucy Huskison, “Deliverance and Exorcism in Popular Culture,” in *Exorcism and Deliverance*, Studies in Pentecostal and Charismatic Issues (London: Paternoster, 2011), 181–202. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Felicitas Goodman, *How About Demons: Possession and Exorcism in the Modern World*, Folklore Today (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1988). A study (Bourguignon 1973) found that of 488 societies, 37 (90%) had one or more culturally instituted form of trance or possession recognised or performed. “‘We are indeed dealing with a matter of major importance, not merely a piece of anthropological esoteric. It is clear that we are dealing with a psycho-biological capacity available to all societies’” 5. Giving a general overview of an anthropologists perspective is A R Tippett, “Spirit Possession as It Relates to Culture and Religion,” in *Demon Possession* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany House, 1976), 143–74. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Though it is worth noting that in 2009 74% of those surveyed in the United States believe in the Devil (38% in Australia), and 59% in Hell (37% in Australia). <http://www.smh.com.au/national/faith-what-australians-believe-in-20091218-l5qy.html> [accessed 9-2-15] [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Kraft, *Christianity with Power: Your Worldview and Your Experience of the Supernatural*, 20. (Kraft nominates ‘Reality’ to represent objective reality, as God sees it; ‘reality’ is what we see in a limited way). [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Kraft, *Christianity*, 23, 88. For a critique of this worldview see Dow, “The Case for the Existence of Demons”; Yates, “Demons, Deliverance and Pastoral Practice,” 34–38. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Kraft, *Understanding Spiritual Power*, 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Kraft, *Understanding*: “The spiritual world is the centre of life. Humans are seen as weak and needing increased strength to survive in a world full of spirit activity.” 9 [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Kraft, *Christianity with Power: Your Worldview and Your Experience of the Supernatural*, 88. See also Kraft, *Understanding Spiritual Power*: In non-West societies, when needs for food, health, safety, etc “are not being met in the Christian experience, Christians are motivated to meet them in some other way. They often go to church on Sunday but to the diviner, medicine man, or spirit doctor when a spiritual need arises that the church does nothing about. Neither the traditional church nor scientific medicine has been able to do much with [perceived] spirit induced problems…” 18. See also Allan Anderson, “Deliverance and Exorcism in Majority World Pentecostalism,” in *Exorcism and Deliverance*, Studies in Pentecostal and Charismatic Issues (London: Paternoster, 2011), 101–19. and Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christianity: The Coming of Global Christianity* (New York: Oxford university Press, 2002): “the one single key area of faith that divides Northern and Southern Christians … is this matter of spiritual forces and their effects on the everyday human world.” 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. Solomon, *Living in Two Worlds: Pastoral Responses to Possession in Singapore*. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Solomon, *Living*, 260–283. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Solomon, *Living*, 253. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Solomon, *Living*, 254. See also Theron, “A Critical Overview of the Church’s Ministry of Deliverance from Evil Spirits.” Timoteo Gener, “The Catholic Imagination and Popular Religion in Lowland Philippines: Missiological Significance of David Tacey’s Theory of Religious Imaginations,” *Mission Studies* 22, no. 1 (2005): 38 refers to the slightly different but parallel categorisation of the two worldviews from Leonardo Mercado: “But some thought is expressed in life forms, life-expressions. They are expressed in ritual, in myth, in legend, in symbols. They are less verbal. They are not formulated in the sense of verbal formulas. They are expressed in the forms of gestures and language of the body. [This is] vital thought. The other [is called] reflective thought. Thought has entered into the level of formalism that distinguishes clear categories and is highly mathematical in format. When you think of cultures expressing themselves on these two different ways, they are different not in terms of total absence but in terms of degree.” [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Hiebert, “The Flaw of the Excluded Middle.” [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Frank Hoare, “A Pastoral Approach to Spirit Possession and Witchcraft Manifestations among Fijian People,” *South Pacific Journal of Mission Studies* 31 & 32 (December 2004): 11. I came across a story written by a missionary about a man who had been killed by a house collapsing. While he was asking ‘how did this happen?’, the locals were asking ‘why did this happen?’ – what forces placed that man in that house at the very time it collapsed? [source unknown]. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Hiebert, “The Flaw”, 44. See also Kraft, *Understanding Spiritual Power*, 79. Siosione Fanau Bloomfield, *Illness and Cure in Tonga: Traditional and Modern Medicine* (Tonga: Vava’u Press, 2002), 21–51, http:// books.google.com.au/books/about/Illness\_and\_Cure\_in\_Tonga.html?id=eLbfqDjfJjUC&redir\_esc=y [accessed 31/8/14]. Illness is a result of some negative relationship between persons and/or supernaturals; Tongans have recourse to both traditional healers and western trained doctors. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. This film has generated many other films like it, and television series, some trying to scare the audience, others making them laugh, e.g. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2003), *Repossessed* (1990), *Children of the Corn IV: the Gathering (1996)*, *Stigmata* (1990), *The Exorcism of Emily Rose* (1995). Huskison, “Deliverance and Exorcism in Popular Culture.” See also Agnieska Tennant, “In Need of Deliverance,” *Christianity Today*, September 3, 2001, 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Michael Cuneo, *American Exorcism: Expelling Demons in the Land of Plenty* (NY: Doubleday, 2001), 160–1. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. Collins, *Exorcism and Deliverance Ministry in the Twentieth Century*, 140–1. The story of the Barnsley exorcism that failed in Britain in 1975 subsequent to which the ‘delivered’ man murdered his wife went around the world (Theron, “A Critical Overview of the Church’s Ministry of Deliverance from Evil Spirits,” 90.) As did the McMartin PreSchool Case in 1984: Cuneo, *American Exorcism*, 74-5. This fascination reached its peak in the media with reports of Satanic Ritual Abuse victims that emerged in the 1970’s and 1980’s as a result of psychotherapy that brought to consciousness repressed memories of alleged gruesome abuse at the hands of devil worshippers. Police, lawyers, social workers and psychologists all became convinced of the existence of widespread SRA. In the end, however, these cases were discovered to have no basis in reality. See Collins, *Exorcism and Deliverance*, 148. See also Cuneo, *American Exorcism*, 249-253. This appeal to the sensational continues with TV programs as ‘Supernatural’ presented by Sid Roth for the purpose of evangelising unbelievers with stories of the ‘supernatural’. <http://sidroth.org/television/tv-archives/don-dickerman> [accessed 14/1/15] [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Huskison observes that when exorcism is portrayed in popular culture now it is usually as a means to glorify the demonic presence or to get a laugh. (“Deliverance”, 187, 190-193). It is especially popular music of the heavy metal and rap genre that glorifies Satan and his power of destruction. (188). In the early 21st century, however, she observes that Western society’s taste for stories of possession and exorcism has waned (197-8). [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Cuneo, *American Exorcism*, 96, also see 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Cuneo, *American Exorcism*, 160. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Cuneo, *American Exorcism*, 159, 259. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. Cuneo, *American Exorcism*, 260. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. Tennant, “In Need of Deliverance,” 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Such people include Kurt Koch, *Occult Bondage and Deliverance* (West Germany: Evangelisation Publishers, n.d.); Scott Peck, *People of the Lie* (London: Arrow, 1991); and Sydney Page, “The Role of Exorcism in Clinical Practice and Pastoral Care,” *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 17, no. 2 (1989): 121–31. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. William Kay and Robin Parry, eds., *Exorcism and Deliverance: Multi-Disciplinary Studies* (London: Paternoster, 2011) 15, 148-155. McCasland, *By the Finger of God*, 21–26. See also Solomon, *Living in Two Worlds: Pastoral Responses to Possession in Singapore*, 5–9. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. McCasland, *By the Finger of God*, 13, 69, et al. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. Gerald Kauffman, “Representations of God and the Devil: A Psychiatric Perspective from Object Relations Theory,” in *Essays on Spiritual Bondage and Deliverance*, Occasional Papers 11 (Elkhart, Indiana: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1988), 157. Graham Dow, “The Case for the Existence of Demons,” *Churchman* 94, no. 3 (1980): 199–208 criticizes this ‘naturalist’ point of view by reminding us that Christians believe in the spiritual and transcendent dimension of the human person. There is more to a person than his or her physical/organic self. Generations of philosophers have pondered the mystery of the human mind and its perceptions (Locke, Kant, Fichte, Schopenhauer, Lonergan). [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Oldridge refers his readers to anthropologists’ arguments that possession and exorcism as cultural sanctioned performances. *The Devil*. 63-5. See note 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Gerald May, *Care of Mind/Care of Spirit* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1982). [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. see a colourful description in Kelsey’s *Discernment: A Study in Ecstasy and Evil*, 115–121. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. May, *Care of Mind*, 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. May, *Care of Mind*, 23. See also Volney Gay, ed., *Neuroscience and Religion* (Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books, 2009) who can draw no conclusions about the brain’s electro- chemical influence being the source of any spiritual experiences. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Gerald May, *Will and Spirit* (San Francisco: Harper, 1982), 249. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Kelsey, *Discernment: A Study in Ecstasy and Evil*, 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. Kelsey, *Discernment*, 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. White, *God and the Unconscious*, 202. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. White, *God,* 201. White also writes: "Ach says 'the present day psychologist is compelled to postulate an unconscious psychic life whether he likes it or not. Apart from the reality of the unconscious, any explanation of the regular processes of conscious phenomena is simply impossible'" 59. "The unconscious is at best a postulate, known only by its phenomenal effects." 60. The **unconscious** is that which cannot be penetrated by our consciousness "yet often behaves as if endowed with consciousness, and often [with] intelligence and purposeful volition.” 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. Ann Belford Ulanov and Barry Ulanov, “Reaching to the Unknown: Religion and the Psyche,” in *Clinical Handbook of Pastoral Counselling Volume 2*, Studies in Pastoral Psychology, Theology and Spirituality (New York and Mahwah: Paulist Press, n.d.), 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. Richard Bell, *Deliver Us From Evil: Interpreting the Redemption from the Power of Satan in New Testament Theology* (Tubingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2007). For transcendental idealism see pp 115–181. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Collier Books, 1968). [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. *Alister Hardy Religious Experience Research Centre* (Lampeter, Ceredigion: University of Wales), accessed November 10, 2014, http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/alister-hardy-religious-experience-research-centre/. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. Marianne Rankin, *Introduction to Religious and Spiritual Experience* (London: Continuum International Publishing, 2009), 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. Rankin, *Introduction*, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. Rankin *Introduction*, 140-1. Marete Jakobsen, *Negative Spiritual Experiences: Encounters with Evil*, Third Series Occasional Papers 1 (Religious Experience Research Centre, May 1999) 6 and 8. “It must have been about 20 years ago when I was 34. I was in bed with my wife asleep in our rented flat in Leicester. Suddenly I became aware of a sense of uttermost evil – so much so that I became awake. I could feel this sense of evil enveloping me. I had the terrifying impression that his evil force or presence was bent upon taking possession of me. How does one describe evil? I only know I was enveloped by this revolting force – so vile and rotting – I could almost taste the evil. I was in terror – so much so I could not call out or move. A part of my mind told me I must act at all cost or I would be lost. I recall, upon this realisation, by a great effort that I managed to stretch out my right hand and with my index finger trace the shape of the Cross in the air. The movement was only small but it was in the shape of the cross. Immediately upon my doing this the evil enveloping me fell away completely at once and I felt a wonderful sense of peace and safety. Following this I fell into a relaxed and peaceful sleep.” 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. Raymond Paloutzian and Crystal Park, eds., *The Handbook of Religion and Spirituality*, second (New York: Guilford, 2013), 432. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. See the works of Mike Driscoll, “How Catholic Exorcists Distinguish Between Demonic Possession and Mental Disorders” (Ph.D., Regent University, 2013); Thomas Finger and Willard Swartley, “Bondage and Deliverance: Biblical and Theological Perspectives,” in *Essays on Spiritual Bondage and Deliverance*, Occasional Papers 11 (Elkhart, Indiana: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1988), 10–38; Kauffman, “Representations of God and the Devil: A Psychiatric Perspective from Object Relations Theory.”; Lechler in Koch, *Occult Bondage and Deliverance*; and John Richards, *But Deliver Us from Evil: An Introduction to the Demonic Dimension in Pastoral Care* (New York: Seabury Press, 1974). Millard Sall, ‘Demon Possession or Psychopathology? A clinical Differentiation’, in *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 4/4 (1976): 286-290. Jackson, “Reflections on the Demonic: A Psychiatric Perspective.” [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. They display strong negative reactions to Christian symbols or prayers and they are unable or unwilling to pray; they display unusual physical strength and knowledge of things hidden from the ordinary human consciousness *Finger and Swartley (30-31)* They often have the urge, or do, curse and blaspheme without a clear reason (Parker, Russell, *The Occult: Deliverance from Evil* (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 1989), 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. Virkler and Virkler, “Demonic Involvement in Human Life and Illness,” 98, 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. Lozano, *Resisting the Devil: A Catholic Perspective on Deliverance*, 62, 71, 105–110. Jose Syquia, *Exorcism: Encounters with the Paranormal and the Occult* (Quezon City, Philippines: Shepherd’s Voice Publications, 2006), 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. Finger and Swartley, “Bondage and Deliverance: Biblical and Theological Perspectives,” 30–31. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. Alfred Lechler in Koch, *Occult*, 140-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. Suenens, *Renewal*, 35-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. Virkler and Virkler, “Demonic Involvement in Human Life and Illness,” 97–8. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. Lozano, *Resisting*, 12. Driscoll reports that those with mental illness alone are more likely not to be interested in maintaining remedial spiritual practices (*How Catholic Exorcists Distinguish*, 95). [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. The DSM (APA 2000) states that a mental disorder is ‘a clinically significant behaviour, psychological syndrome or pattern that occurs in an individual and that is associated with present distress (e.g. a painful syndrome) or disability (i.e., impairment in one or more important areas of functioning) or with a significantly increased risk of suffering pain, death, disability, or an important loss of freedom. In addition this pattern or syndrome must not merely be an expectable and culturally sanctioned response to a particular event, for example, the death of a loved one.’ Thus mental disorders, by definition, involve a pattern or collection of syndromes. These may include a combination of thoughts, words, actions and emotions: cited in Driscoll, “How Catholic Exorcists Distinguish Between Demonic Possession and Mental Disorders,” 29–30. Such an imprecise definition can hardly assist a GP or a novice psychologist to identify anything like demonic oppression. Connolly presents a paper that argues that possession is a manifestation of the psychological process called ‘trance’: Peter Connolly, “A Psychology of Possession” (RERC, March 2000), http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/alister-hardy-religious-experience-research-centre/occasional-papers/ [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. For a discussion of these disorders see Driscoll, “How Catholic Exorcists", 45–52. [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. McCasland, *By the Finger of God*, 21–26. Parker, *The Occult: Deliverance from Evil*, 79. Perry explains this in the context of ‘possession syndrome’: Michael Perry, ed., *Deliverance* (London: SPCK, 1987), 71–7. See also R Kenneth McAll, “Taste and See,” in *Demon Possession* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany House, 1976), 274–5. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. Parker gives the example of a woman suffering oppression from 150 spirits – but it turned out she had a great fear of her mother (*The Occult*, 79); he writes: “more often the alleged entity … is not something the patient wants to be rid of, but is a convenient projection of a lower side of their nature**,** which gives them the perfect alibi to behave as they really wish, whilst at the same time abdication responsibility for such behaviour.” (*The Occult*, 107). Richards refers to the case of a girl who “in talking in terms of demons she gained the attention [of her parents] and became the focus of their love and concern” (*But Deliver Us*, 108). [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. Jakobsen, *Negative Spiritual Experiences: Encounters with Evil*, 25, 28-9. The final diagnosis of a person suffering from mental illness that might also be demonic, or vis versa, also depends upon the worldview of the pastor or doctor. Samuel and Donna Southard have conducted some seminars and studies that reveal this additional complexity: Samuel Southard and Donna Southard, “Demonizing and Mental Illness: The Problem of Identification Hong Kong,” *Pastoral Psychology* 33, no. 3 (Spring 1985): 173–88; Samuel Southard, “Demonizing and Mental Illness: II. The Problem of Assessment: Los Angeles,” *Pastoral Psychology* 34, no. 4 (1986): 264–87; Samuel Southard, “Demonizing and Mental Illness III: Explanations and Treatment, Seoul,” *Pastoral Psychology* 35, no. 2 (Winter 1986): 132–51. [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. See Richards, *But Deliver Us from Evil: An Introduction to the Demonic Dimension in Pastoral Care*, 109 and Parker, *The Occult*, 78-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. Lechler in Koch, *Occult Bondage and Deliverance* Part 2: The possessed person tends not to speak of his/her afflictions, while a mentally ill person does a lot 162.  A person really oppressed will fight and struggle against prayer and all other forms of Christian influence 162. Audio hallucination is mainly the result of mental illness, not possession. If the voices are demonic they usually degrade the person’s faith and lure them away from God. If a person expresses regret for their unsociable actions one can discard all thought of the demonic. If prayer and deliverance do make a difference to the behaviour the demonic is likely to be the cause, 186. Unfortunately Koch did not provide his readers with footnotes or bibliography. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. Koch, *Occult Bondage*, 160, 184, 186. He refers to a woman who thought she was oppressed but her experiences were judged to be schizophrenic; "with Christians schizophrenia almost always appears in a religious guise" 158. See also Parker, *The Occult*, 77 and Perry, *Deliverance*, 77. Peck, *People of the Lie*, 211–221. [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. Sandford and Sandford, *Deliverance and Inner Healing*, 157–184. See also Driscoll, “How Catholic Exorcists Distinguish”, 41–55, 82-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. Nolan, “Spirit Possession and Mental Health in the New Zealand Context,” 68–69. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. Some examples can been see in these news reports:<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3018864/Children-left-screaming-tears-priest-Polish-religious-camp-carries-mass-exorcism-bid-banish-devil.html>; <https://au.news.yahoo.com/world/a/20878674/exorcism-claimed-in-murders-of-two-maryland-toddlers/> ; <http://www.skynews.com.au/news/world/nthamerica/2015/04/15/us-woman-starves-boy-for-exorcism.html>; <http://firsttoknow.com/priest-arrested-for-exorcism-of-anorexic-girl/> ; <http://www.straitstimes.com/news/singapore/courts-crime/story/faith-healer-who-molested-teenager-loses-court-appeal-20150429> ; <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/priest-assaulted-woman-giving-exorcisms-cops-article-1.2105236>; <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/christian-gp-who-performed-exorcism-patient-instead-giving-medication-struck-off-1485844> ; [http://www.express.co.uk/news/ world/489229/Priest-killed-nun-crucifixion-botched-exorcism](http://www.express.co.uk/news/%20%20world/489229/Priest-killed-nun-crucifixion-botched-exorcism) [accessed 30/4/15] [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. Bell, *Deliver Us From Evil: Interpreting the Redemption from the Power of Satan in New Testament Theology*, 6–7.”The devil was fundamental for Martin Luther’s theology, and Calvin … chides those who try to dismiss him.” See also Russell Dean Ooms, “The Ministry of Deliverance in the Reformed Church in America” (M.Th., University of South Africa, 2007), 2, http://uir.unisa.ac.za/bitstream/handle/ 10500/3212/dissertation\_ooms\_r.pdf?sequence=1 [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. Curiously, few encyclopedia or Handbooks have articles under the heading ‘deliverance’, and equally few refer to deliverance under any articles for ‘Exorcism’. Evrrett Ferguson, “Demons,” *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* (New York: Garland, 1977); Leon-Dufour, “Evil Spirits”; MacFarland, “Exorcism”; Rahner, “Devil.” The one found exception is “Exorcism,” by R.K. Bufford**,** *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology and Counselling* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1999) p 416 which does refer to deliverance in distinction to exorcism. [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. The charismatic movement is thought to be the second largest distinct sub-movement (some 120 million members) within global Catholicism today (Barrett, David, "Christian World Communions: Five Overviews of Global Christianity, AD 1800–2025", *International bulletin of missionary research* 33 (1): 25–32.) Collins, *Exorcism and Deliverance Ministry in the Twentieth Century*; Hunt, “The Devil’s Advocates: The Function of Demonology in the World View of Fundamentalist Christianity”; Walker, “The Devil You Think You Know.” Amos Yong, “The Demonic in Pentecostal/charismatic Christianity and in the Religious Consciousness of Asia,” in *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*, Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies 3 (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2005), 94. [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. Oldridge, *The Devil*, 91. [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. Collins, *Exorcism and Deliverance Ministry in the Twentieth Century*, 199–200. For a description of a charismatic deliverance ministry in a specific congregation in the 1970’s and 1980’s, see Laurie Guy, who writes about his research into the Auckland (NZ) Assembly of God Church. “‘Spirit Possession’ and ‘Deliverance Ministry’ in the Auckland Assembly of God, 1970 - 1983” in *Spirit Possession: Theology and Identity: A Pacific Exploration* (Hindmarsh, South Australia: ATF Press, 2010), 209 – 240. [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. Grob, “A Major Revision of the Discipline on Exorcism: A Comparative Study on the Liturgical Laws in the 1614 and 1998 Rites of Exorcism.,” 146–7. [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. Suenens, *Renewal and the Powers of Darkness*, 74, 92. Cuneo*, American Exorcism*, 174-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
163. Collins, *Exorcism*, 170. He states that is it the feature of ‘enthusiasm’ that underlies the practice of deliverance. He defines ‘enthusiasm’ as “the tendency towards immanent spirituality, imminent eschatology and a parallel trend away from human reason… Enthusiasm is an environment conducive to the practice of exorcism/deliverance.” 2. This ministry came to prominence when the benefits and excitement of ‘Baptism in the Spirit’ diminished. 107. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. Tennant, “In Need of Deliverance.” Grob, *A Major Revision*, also offers a summative report on the state of demonic affliction and exorcism/deliverance in the USA, 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
165. Cuneo, *American Exorcism: Expelling Demons in the Land of Plenty*, 178–184. [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
166. [www.heartofthefather.com/heart-of-the-father-ministries/](http://www.heartofthefather.com/heart-of-the-father-ministries/) [accessed 15/1/15] [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
167. Lozano, *Unbound: A Practical Guide to Deliverance*. [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
168. Collins, *Exorcism and Deliverance Ministry in the Twentieth Century*, 95. [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
169. John Sandford, *Healing the Wounded Spirit* (New Jersey: Logos, 1985); Sandford and Sandford, *Deliverance and Inner Healing*. See also the website: [www.elijahhouse.org](http://www.elijahhouse.org) [accessed 15/1/15]. [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
170. www.healingministryarchmilw.com/healing-ministry/topics/ [accessed 21/8/14] [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
171. Ooms, “The Ministry of Deliverance in the Reformed Church in America”; Mitchell, “Deliverance Ministry Training: A Seminary Case Study.” Ooms refers to many other providers of deliverance ministry in the USA currently (see pages 23-6, 60). [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
172. Asburyseminary.edu [accessed 12/2/15]. See Pdf on subject ME 780 ‘Spiritual Warfare in Mission and Ministry’. [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
173. Petitpierre, *Exorcism: The Report of a Commission Convened by the Bishop of Exeter*. [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
174. Malia, “A Fresh Look at a Remarkable Document: Exorcism: The Report of a Commission Convened by the Bishop of Exeter.” [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
175. [www.Churchofengland.org/media/1230023/gsmisc 835.pdf](http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1230023/gsmisc%20835.pdf) [accessed 13/1/15] [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
176. John Richards, *Exorcism, Deliverance and Healing: Some Pastoral Guidelines*, Ministry and Worship 44 (Bramcote Notts: Grove Books, 1976); Parker, *The Occult: Deliverance from Evil*. [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
177. Anderson, “Deliverance and Exorcism in Majority World Pentecostalism.” Derald Sue and David Sue, *Counselling the Culturally Diverse* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2008), 214–216, 225–226. [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
178. Amos Yong, “The Demonic in Pentecostal/charismatic Christianity and in the Religious Consciousness of Asia,” in *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*, Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies 3 (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2005), 93–128. [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
179. Barbara McGrath, “Health and Healing in Contemporary Tonga,” *Pacific Health Dialog* 6, no. 2 (n.d.): 265–67. Bloomfield, *Illness and Cure in Tonga: Traditional and Modern Medicine*. [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
180. Hoare, “A Pastoral Approach to Spirit Possession and Witchcraft Manifestations among Fijian People.” [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
181. Gener, “The Catholic Imagination and Popular Religion in Lowland Philippines: Missiological Significance of David Tacey’s Theory of Religious Imaginations,” 29, note 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
182. Lode Wostyn, “Catholic Charismatics in the Philippines,” in *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia* (Oxford: Regnum, 2005). See also Syquia, *Exorcism: Encounters with the Paranormal and the Occult*, 21–30. [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
183. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_in_Singapore> [accessed 12/2/15] and Solomon, *Living in Two Worlds: Pastoral Responses to Possession in Singapore*, 28–36. [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
184. Solomon, *Living in Two Worlds*, 213–215. [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
185. Solomon, *Living in Two Worlds*, writes that the Anglican Bishop Tay developed a theological and pastoral course that included material on demonic possession (2). [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
186. Kraft, *Understanding Spiritual Power*, 10. Ennio Mantovani relates his experience of being caught between his indigenous culture that believes in ancestors and other spirits, and his adopted Catholic culture that has condemned and ridiculed these beings: “On Being a True Melanesian and a True Christian,” *South Pacific Journal of Mission Studies* 31 & 32 (December 2004): 15–21. [↑](#footnote-ref-186)
187. Nearly a quarter of Australia’s Catholics (23.6 per cent) were born overseas, and about three-quarters of those people (17.9 per cent of all Catholics) were born in non-English speaking countries.

By the time of the next Census in 2016, the Philippines will have displaced Italy as the overseas country contributing the highest number of Catholics to the Australian population writes Dr Bob Dixon, the Director of the Pastoral Research Office of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.2014 in <http://catholicschoolsguide.com.au/catholic-education-featured-articles/faith-and-spirituality/the-catholic-community-in-australia/> [accessed 5/6/15]. See also information sheets provided by the Australian government on immigration from Samoa (and also Fiji and Tonga). <https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/02_2014/samoa.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-187)
188. I have been able to find only these articles relevant to exorcism or deliverance ministry in Australia written within the last ten years: Colin Warren, “Deliverance and Freedom,” *Renewal Journal*, Healing, 4 (1994): 22–26; J.C. Yates, “Demons, Deliverance and Pastoral Practice,” *Interchange: Papers on Biblical and Current Questions* 46 (1989): 32–51; Wanda Skowronska, “Exorcism,” *Annals Australiasia* 122 (September 2011): 7; Gregory Bourke, “Blessing, Anointing and Exorcism,” *Summit* 33, no. 4 (December 2006): 11–14 [who does not refer to Satan or evil spirits]; Keith Warren, “Demon-Possession and Pastoral Care”, *Vox Reformata*, 59 (1994) 74-88.

New Zealand is a country like Australia in respect to immigration and a diversity of religious worldviews. Elaine Wainwright has recently put together a collection of studies on groups of people living in her country who believe in spirit possession, and how the national health care service needs to accommodate this belief in some way (Elaine Wainwright, ed., *Spirit Possession, Theology, and Identity: A Pacific Exploration*. Auckland, New Zealand: ATF Press, 2010). There is one essay on the history of an Assembly of God congregation in the 1970’s which embraced the teachings of Derek Prince, Neville Johnston and Bill Subritzky on demons in Christian life; the other essays focus on the cultures of the indigenous Maoris and the immigrants from Tonga and Samoa. While these studies do not investigate the phenomenon of possession and deliverance in Christian Churches in New Zealand today, it is noted that the number of Catholics in Auckland from non-European backgrounds has increased to 50%. (Susan Smith, “Spirit and Spirits,” in *Spirit Possession,* 258.) I am not aware of any New Zealand study done on the Catholic Church’s response to this change in their congregations. One of the more significant conclusions to these studies referred to the relationship between cultural beliefs about possession and deliverance and modern psychiatric services in New Zealand. “*Professional psychiatry … is open to trying to provide an appropriate treatment to members of those cultures who hold that ancestral spirits are able to have adverse effects on the physical, psychological, and spiritual well-being of people. Mental health practitioners … [are encouraged] to include the spiritual dimension of a person’s life in assessment and treatment.” Ann Nolan,* “Spirit Possession and Mental Health in the New Zealand Context”, in *Spirit Possession, 84.* Wainwright’s collection of essays not only describes the traditional non-Western religious beliefs of an increasing number of people in New Zealand, but also the responses by health care professionals that could be a model for a Church approach to spirit possession and deliverance ministry in Australia. Culbertson and Smith suggest that one of the major challenges of Christian theology today is to be able to enter into respectful dialogue with indigenous religious beliefs and allow each to be affirmed by the other. (Philip Culbertson and Susan Smith, “Conclusion: Opening Up Conversations,” in *Spirit* *Possession*, 271–93.) [↑](#footnote-ref-188)
189. Peter Munro, “Defeating the Devil: Why Exorcism Is on the Rise in Australia.” *The Australian Weekend*, February 7, 2015. Cameron Stewart, “Deliver us from Evil”, *The Australian Weekend*, December 8, 2010. [↑](#footnote-ref-189)
190. Peter Munro, “Defeating the Devil: Why Exorcism Is on the Rise in Australia.” *The Australian Weekend*, February 7, 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-190)
191. Warren, “Deliverance and Freedom.” [↑](#footnote-ref-191)
192. [www.ellel.org/au/](http://www.ellel.org/au/) [accessed 15/1/15] [↑](#footnote-ref-192)
193. [www.elijahhouse.com.au](http://www.elijahhouse.com.au) [accessed 15/1/15] See ‘Teachings 30: Captive Spirit’ for an example. They are an offshoot of the ministry of Elijah Ministries of the USA (see page 59). [↑](#footnote-ref-193)
194. Barry Brown, *The Uniting Church and the Ministry of Deliverance* (Melbourne: Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria, 1992), 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-194)
195. Munro, “Defeating the Devil.” [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
196. Julian Porteous, *Manual of Minor Exorcisms* (Vatican City: Catholic Truth Society, 2012); *Prayers for those in Spiritual Affliction* (Vatican City: Catholic Truth Society, 2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-196)
197. Cameron Stewart, “Deliver us”. [↑](#footnote-ref-197)
198. Carol Glatz, “Exorcist Boot Camp: Church Leaders Call for More Training against Evil,” *Catholic News Service*, April 1, 2011, http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/1101298.htm. [↑](#footnote-ref-198)
199. “Exorcism Conference Underway in Rome,” *ANSA*, May 7, 2014, http://www.ansa.it/english/news/vatican/2014/05/07/exorcism-conference-underway-in-rome\_208a097c-06fb-44fa-a50a-e56cbfc682ee.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-199)
200. Munro, “Defeating the Devil: Why Exorcism Is on the Rise in Australia.” [↑](#footnote-ref-200)
201. Gareth Leyshon, “Exorcism and Prayers for Deliverance: The Position of the Catholic Church. A Historical Review of Developments since the late 19th Century and a Summary of the Norms now Applicable ,” June 2014, www.garethleyshon.info/Deliverance-X.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-201)
202. Leyshon, “Exorcism”, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-202)
203. Leyshon, “Exorcism”, 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-203)
204. Grob, “A Major Revision of the Discipline on Exorcism: A Comparative Study on the Liturgical Laws in the 1614 and 1998 Rites of Exorcism,” 174. See also Suenens, *Renewal*, 99. [↑](#footnote-ref-204)
205. Leyshon, “Exorcism”, 9, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-205)
206. *De Exorcismis et Supplicationibus Quibusdam*, has not been officially translated into English. An English translation is provided by Leyshon “Exorcism” and Gob “A Major Revision”. [↑](#footnote-ref-206)
207. Lozano, *Resisting the Devil: A Catholic Perspective on Deliverance*, 147–149. Scalan (*Deliverance*) cites a number of authoritative sources that allow and even advocate the use of minor or private exorcism by both priests and laity as the need arises 66-8, see also Grob, “A Major Revision”, 174-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-207)
208. Porteous, *Manual of Minor Exorcisms*, 25–33, 46–66. [↑](#footnote-ref-208)
209. Cardinal Ratzinger’s Letter to Bishops, 1985 in Leyshon, “Exorcism”, 11. Leyshon discusses the appropriate location and occasion of a private rite of deliverance, or minor exorcism: the event should not be advertised to the general public as an open invitation; it should not be administered during a public liturgical service; but within a closed group, such as a confraternity, there may be an arrangement to use deliverance prayers. In the case that person manifests oppression by an evil spirt in a public setting (a church), he or she should be removed from the general assembly to be prayed over privately by members of the prayer team only (“Exorcism”, 19) [↑](#footnote-ref-209)
210. Richards, *But Deliver Us*, 142. See note 135. [↑](#footnote-ref-210)
211. Sue and Sue, *Counselling the Culturally Diverse*, 227. [↑](#footnote-ref-211)
212. Bruce Kinsey, “The Psychodynamics of Spiritual Healing,” in *Spiritual Healing* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 104. [↑](#footnote-ref-212)
213. Kinsey, “Psychodynamics”, 104. Singleton (“Spirits and Spiritual Direction”) writes: “By explicitly introducing the spirits into the context of spiritual direction the chances of obtaining satisfactory results were greatly increased” 193 He refers to Carl Rogers: “it is the counselors function to assume, as far as he is able, the internal frame of reference of the client, to perceive the world as the client sees it, to perceive the client himself as he is seen by himself, to lay aside all perceptions from the external frame of reference while doing so, and to communicate something of this empathic understanding to the client.” (Rogers 1951) 193. See also Grob, *A Major Revision*, 169. [↑](#footnote-ref-213)
214. Kinsey, “The Psychodynamics of Spiritual Healing,” 108. [↑](#footnote-ref-214)
215. Kraft, *Understanding Spiritual Power*, 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-215)
216. Felicitas Goodman, *How About Demons: Possession and Exorcism in the Modern World*, Folklore Today (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1988), 15. “In the end, what can we say about the reality of spiritual beings? We can at least point out that the experience of their presence during possession is accompanied by observable physical changes. We should remember that whether these changes are internally generated or created by external agencies is not discoverable. No one can either prove or disprove that the obvious changes of the brain map in possession or in a patient with multiple personality disorder, for that matter, are produced by psychological processes or by an invading alien being … we can also point out that in all religious communities around the world, of whatever cultural allegiance, people indicate by their behaviour that for them, spirit beings are part of a larger, all-encompassing reality…” Goodman, *How About Demons*, 126 [↑](#footnote-ref-216)
217. Goodman, *How About Demons,* 125. [↑](#footnote-ref-217)
218. Goodman, *How About Demons*, 126. [↑](#footnote-ref-218)
219. Philip Clayton, “The Theology of Spiritual Healing,” in *Spiritual Healing* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-219)
220. Kinsey, “The Psychodynamics”, 97. [↑](#footnote-ref-220)
221. Kinsey, “The Psychodynamics”, 96. [↑](#footnote-ref-221)
222. Kinsey, “The Psychodynamics”, 105 note 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-222)
223. Sue and Sue, *Counselling the Culturally Diverse*, 216. A Catholic priest in Tanzania, who deals on occasions with cases of possession, reports that if he does not refer to the spirits of his supplicant’s world in his response to their need, he is ignored, despite his status, even though he does not appear to believe in evil spirits: “In between dismissing the spirits as pure figments of the imagination and in believing in them as ethereal, personal being, there is a middle road. One can act as if the spirits were real not merely to humour the fantasies of a sick mind but because in a psycho-social sense the spirits are real…” Singleton, “Spirits and Spiritual Direction”, 192. Joshua Hook writes about the value of ‘cultural humility’ for therapists dealing with clients who hold a different worldview to their own in “Engaging Clients with Cultural Humility,” *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 33, no. 3 (2014):

277–80. [↑](#footnote-ref-223)
224. Michael Perry, “First Aid in Pastoral Care XII First Aid in Psychic Disturbances,” *The Expository Times* 96, no. 6 (March 1985): 165. [↑](#footnote-ref-224)
225. Harold Koenig, *Faith and Mental Health: Religious Resources for Healing* (Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation, 2005), 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-225)
226. Page, “The Role of Exorcism in Clinical Practice and Pastoral Care,” 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-226)
227. MacNutt, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits: A Practical Manual*, 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-227)
228. Kenneth McAll provides a sobering story of increasing suffering that came to a woman who was not taken seriously by her local church minister: “The Ministry of Deliverance,” *The Expository Times* 86 (May 1974): 298. Grob, “A Major Revision”, says the same with respect to major exorcism in the USA – people are suffering because not enough bishops are providing practitioners (165-6). [↑](#footnote-ref-228)
229. Quoted in Anderson, “Deliverance and Exorcism in Majority World Pentecostalism,” 113. Deliverance prayer, with exorcism, makes use of the language of Scripture and Church tradition that is rich with imagery and metaphor. It draws on a meta-narrative of the power of God overcoming all evil and suffering through the death and resurrection of Jesus which is appropriated by a believer through baptism and faith. The believer is shown his or her place in this cosmic drama and is empowered to be an active participant in the plan of God. S/he can stand up boldly against the powers of evil and claim victory with Christ. The invisible world is made visible; a faceless evil is personified; evil spirits can be faced and dealt with through imagination and ritual. Kelsey, *Discernment*, 92, 103; Bell, *Deliver Us*, 64, 173, 181, 333-340 and Parkin*, The Anthropology of Evil*, 18-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-229)
230. Jakobsen, *Negative Spiritual Experiences: Encounters with Evil*, 4, 6. Leech, *Soul Friend*, 120. Perry, “First Aid in Pastoral Care XII First Aid in Psychic Disturbances,” 165. [↑](#footnote-ref-230)
231. John Richards, *But Deliver Us from Evil*, 121–3; Julian Porteous, *Manual of Minor Exorcisms*, 33; John White, “Problems and Procedures in Exorcism” (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany House, 1976), 292-3, 295; Michael Perry, “First Aid in Pastoral Care XII First Aid in Psychic Disturbances,” *The Expository Times* 96, no. 6 (March 1985): 165–166; McAll, “Taste and See,” 296. [↑](#footnote-ref-231)
232. Richards, *But Deliver Us from Evil*, 9–12. Grob, “A Major Revision of the Discipline on Exorcism: A Comparative Study on the Liturgical Laws in the 1614 and 1998 Rites of Exorcism.,” 168. Leon-Joseph Suenens, *Renewal*, 17.Koch gives an example of a man/woman who failed to bring to the sacrament of Reconciliation a particular sin that resulted in him/her being exposed to the influence of an evil spirit causing him/her to be stuck in undesirable behaviour. Koch, *Occult*, 80. [↑](#footnote-ref-232)
233. John Horn sj, *Healing Prayer,* (Institute for Priestly Formation, Nebraska, 2013); Kenneth Leech discusses the areas of overlap between psychotherapy and spiritual direction in *Soul Friend*, London: Sheldon Press, 1977), 90-136. [↑](#footnote-ref-233)
234. Lozano, *Resisting the Devil,* 12–3; Michael Scanlan and Randall Cirner, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits*, 44–52, 96–102, 104–5. [↑](#footnote-ref-234)
235. Koch, *Occult*, 80. [↑](#footnote-ref-235)
236. Koch, Occult, 80. Common contributing causes of a person falling under the influence of evil spirits includes exposure to occult practices, childhood trauma, the use of psychotropic drugs, the repeated practice of a particular sin, being cursed, et al. Lozano, *Resisting*, 94-5; Richards, *But Deliver Us*, chs 2,3,4. [↑](#footnote-ref-236)
237. Parker, *The Occult*, 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-237)
238. Parker, *The Occult*, 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-238)
239. Perry, ed., *Deliverance*, 4-5; Parker, *The Occult,* 80-7, 101- 106; Matthew Linn and Dennis Linn, *Deliverance Prayer*, 234; Mike Driscoll, “How Catholic Exorcists Distinguish Between Demonic Possession and Mental Disorders” (Ph.D., Regent University, 2013), 176, 180-2; Lozano, *Unbound*, 192-8; Virkler, ‘Demonic Involvement in Human Life and Illness’, 100. Balducci, *The Devil*, 177; Richards, *But Deliver Us*, 124-7; McAll, “The Ministry of Deliverance,” 297. Also Scanlan note 230. Cortes presents the arguments of those who say that if we attribute and treat someone as being afflicted by an evil spirit when they are not puts the client in a worse position. Cortes and Gatti, *The Case*, 135–6; he cites Karl Rahner as one of those who support the application of both healing approaches as it is can be very difficult to distinguish the causes as spiritual or psychological, 134. [↑](#footnote-ref-239)
240. A survey of these practices can be found in a number of articles: H.A. Selvey, “Psychotherapist,” *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counselling* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990); M.R McMinn, “Spiritual and Religious Issues in Psychotherapy,” *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology and Counselling* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1999); H Clinebell, “Popular Therapeutic Movements and Psychologies,” and K Graham, “Healing,” *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counselling* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990). [↑](#footnote-ref-240)
241. This is as much endorsed by psychologists and psychiatrists as by priests and pastors. William Sneck, “Evil and the Psychological Dynamics of the Human Person,” in *Deliverance Prayer* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), 101 – 125; Harold Koenig, *Faith and Mental Health: Religious Resources for Healing* (Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation, 2005), 26–28. [↑](#footnote-ref-241)
242. Cortes, The Case Against Possessions, 64; Driscoll, “How Exorcists Distinguish”, 73, 140. [↑](#footnote-ref-242)
243. Lozano, *Unbound*, 198-208; Macnutt, *Deliverance*, 167-181, 212 - 220; Richards, *But Deliver Us*, 175-6, 180; Richards, *Exorcism*, 19-20; Koch, *Occult*, 98-112, 126-7; Parker, *The Occult*, 127-134; Suenens, *Renewal*, 70-72. Some practitioners include breaking of curses and destruction of occult/non-Christian artifacts (Prince, *They Shall Expel*, 209-210, Macnutt, *Deliverance*, 97-127). Other variations include Scripture readings; litany of saints; laying on of hands (Porteous, *Manuel*, 39-44; Richards, *Exorcism*, 19-20) Macnutt also includes prayers of ‘inner healing’ (*Healing*, 178-191; also Scanlan, *Deliverance*, 81; Sandford, *Deliverance*, 25.) When the session of deliverance prayer is over, the care by the pastor or Church does not cease. The afflicted person needs to persist in their new life of faith and freedom, avoiding the evil that trapped them previously. They may need further counseling to prevent them from returning to their former behaviours. They need to take up spiritual practices to bring the gifts of the Holy Spirit to life within them. They need to engage in personal prayer and communal worship. None of this can happen without the ongoing support of a loving Christian community especially for those “who may not feel very strong and who begin to wonder if they have been freed and will remain so.” Richards, *But Deliver Us*, 143. The pastor cannot provide all the support the once afflicted person needs on his own. Richards, *But Deliver Us*, 190-1; Koch, *Occult*, 113-114; Parker, *The Occult*, 143; Macnutt, *Deliverance*, 219. See also Jim Holbeck, “My Learning Curve on Healing,” *Renewal Journal*, Healing, 4 (1994); and John Warlow, “Christian Wholeness Counselling,” *Renewal Journal* 4 (November 1994): 27–32. For examples of actual deliverance see McAll, “Taste and See,” 268–271, 275–6; Scanlan and Cirner, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits*, 71–6; White, “Problems and Procedures in Exorcism,” 297–8. [↑](#footnote-ref-243)
244. With reference to John Wimber’s approach: Mark Cartledge, “Demonology and Deliverance: A Practical-Theological Case Study,” in *Exorcism and Deliverance*, Studies in Pentecostal and Charismatic Issues (London: Paternoster, 2011), 248; MacNutt, *Healing*, 161-7; James Wheeler, “Deliverance Within Church Ministry,” in *Deliverance Prayer* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), 181–2; Richards*, But Deliver Us*, 1-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-244)
245. The paranoid universe is strictly dualist: whatever is not strictly Christian or Biblical is under the control of the devil including non-Christian religions, feminism, unbiblical sex and fantasy literature (e.g. the Harry Potter stories). God and the devil are engaged in a cosmic battle which is resulting in eternal death for millions of humans. Walker, “The Devil You Think You Know,” 88–9. [↑](#footnote-ref-245)
246. Theron, “A Critical Overview of the Church’s Ministry of Deliverance from Evil Spirits,” 83. [↑](#footnote-ref-246)