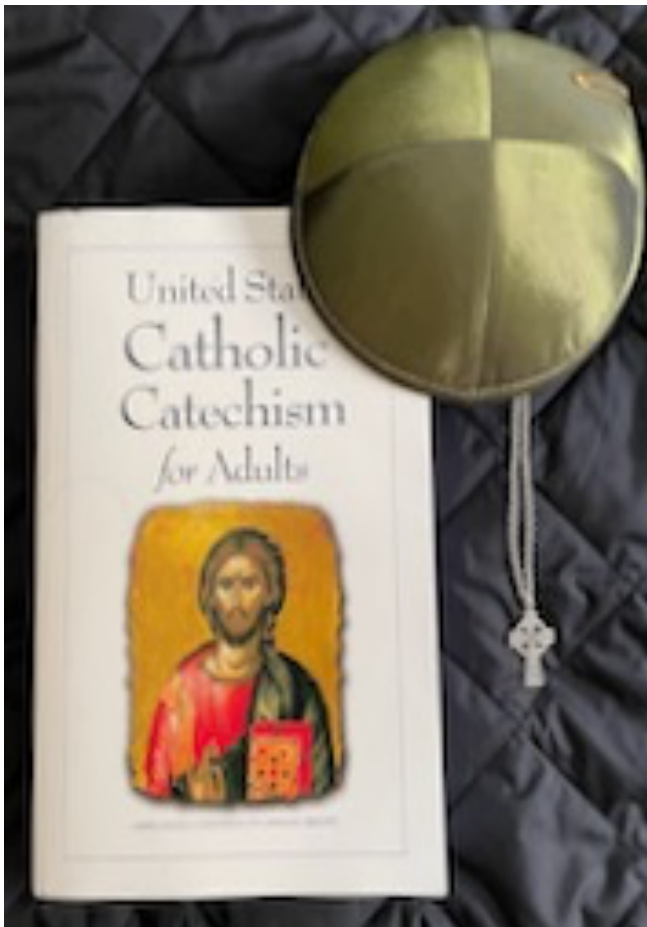


Identity



When undergoing evaluation, whether it is by a therapist, or part of a career appraisal, or simply self-examination you get asked the question, “Who are you?”

I finally figured out who I am. I am a Jewish Irish Catholic.

Beginning with the middle part, which defines my temporal existence, or the temple housing my soul, my DNA make up is dominated by two ancestries. One is Lithuanian which accounts for forty-four percent of my DNA. Forty-four percent is Celtic, dominated by eighty percent from the Republic of Ireland. My maternal grandfather was a Lithuanian immigrant, whose parents fled the Bolshevik revolution. My maternal grandmother’s ancestry is heavily Irish. Our oldest family record is a

Bible, a family Bible, brought from Ireland by my great great grandfather Meehan, born 1825 in Meehan Ireland, county Westmeath, on the southern shore of Lough Ree. If you look at a map of Ireland and were to pick almost the dead center north-south, east-west, you’d find Meehan, Ireland. I call it the heart of Ireland.

It is these two ancestries that dominate my ‘thread’ in the great tapestry of life. Both countries historically are heavily Catholic. The Irish survived eight hundred years of British persecution (Note: Of all the mass murderers the likes of Hitler, Stalin, Genghis Kahn; it was Oliver Cromwell from England who on a per capita basis murdered more people – Irish Catholics - than anyone.) The Lithuanians, still heavily Catholic, resisted Soviet occupation as much as anyone. They were the first to declare independence from the USSR. The thread of my forbearers runs strong in me. I believe this ancestry is a significant contributor to my persistence in optimism and managing successfully to date a debilitating neurological disorder, by the Grace of Him Who is All.

My spiritual ancestry is Jewish. I call the Master my Jewish Boss. It is He, born a Jew, raised a Jew, died a Jew, and resurrected a Jew, Who tells me what to do by following His commandments. I remember daily He Himself stated, “Not a single letter of the law will pass away...” referring to Jewish Law, fulfilled by His commandments. He made them simple by commanding us to love Him, in all His Triune-ness first with the second being no less important. That commandment tells us to love one another, unconditionally. This means every other human being created in His Image and

likeness. If you think about it, the first three commandments Moses brought down the mountain from the Creator all revolve around loving Him. The rest of the ten details loving one another, the first being 'Honor thy Mother and Father'.

One of the great honors of my life was being chosen to be part of a Jewish wedding. I was chosen to be one of seven English translators of the seven blessings given in the ceremony of the ultimate union between a dear woman and her beloved. Perhaps the greatest honor of my life other than the life given me with my beloved.

Mine was...

שמח את השותפים האהובים כפי שאתה שמח לך
יצורים בשמחה של עדן. ברוך אתה אדוני, שמשמח
את הזוג הזה. Which means...

Gladden the beloved partners as You gladden
Your creatures in the garden of Eden.
Blessed are you Adonai, Who gladdens this
couple.

The spirituality I live is Catholic, which means
the church universal. I wholeheartedly
embrace the two commandments He left us
fueled by the power of His Spirit, THE Holy
Spirit.

That is my identity. I am the thread,
combining threads from Judaism, Irish and
Catholic, to be a lover, of Him and everyone
else, enemies included.

Clement



All my articles are now available at
clementcharles.substack.com. You can
subscribe for free. If you choose a paid
subscription, all net proceeds are being
turned over to St. Wenceslaus parish who've
supported my writing for almost three
decades.