

# ANNUALS

Australasia

Journal of Catholic Culture



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# ANNALS AUSTRALASIA

Journal of Catholic Culture

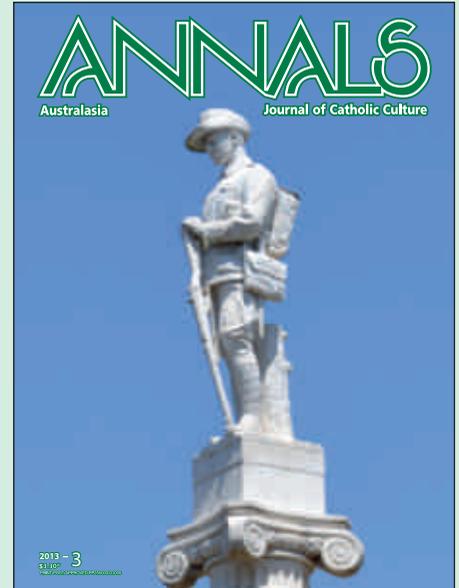
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[Sunday Readings at Mass: Year C/weekday readings: Year I]

Australia's Oldest Catholic Magazine

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*Front Cover:* 59,639 Australian and 16,711 New Zealand soldiers – mainly young men – were killed in action, died of wounds, or died as prisoners of war, or were missing in action during World War I. Almost every town and hamlet throughout Australia and New Zealand has its memorial to the local men and boys who died or were wounded in that war to end all wars. Our Cover photo is of the war memorial in Bundaberg, Queensland, erected in memory of the young men who never returned from the killing fields of France and Belgium, or who came home gassed or limbless or shattered in mind and heart. What lessons have been learned from the succession of wars that marred the 20th century, and threaten to mar the 21st? See Michael O'Connor's 'Playing Games with Australia's Defence' this issue, p.5.

*Back Cover:* Annals Australasia turns 124 this year. Help support Australia's oldest and most popular Catholic journal by encouraging your friends and relatives to subscribe. Or send them a gift subscription for Christmas or the New Year, for birthdays or simply as a worthwhile gift. See page 26 of this issue for a subscription form.

Cover Photo: Paul Stenhouse

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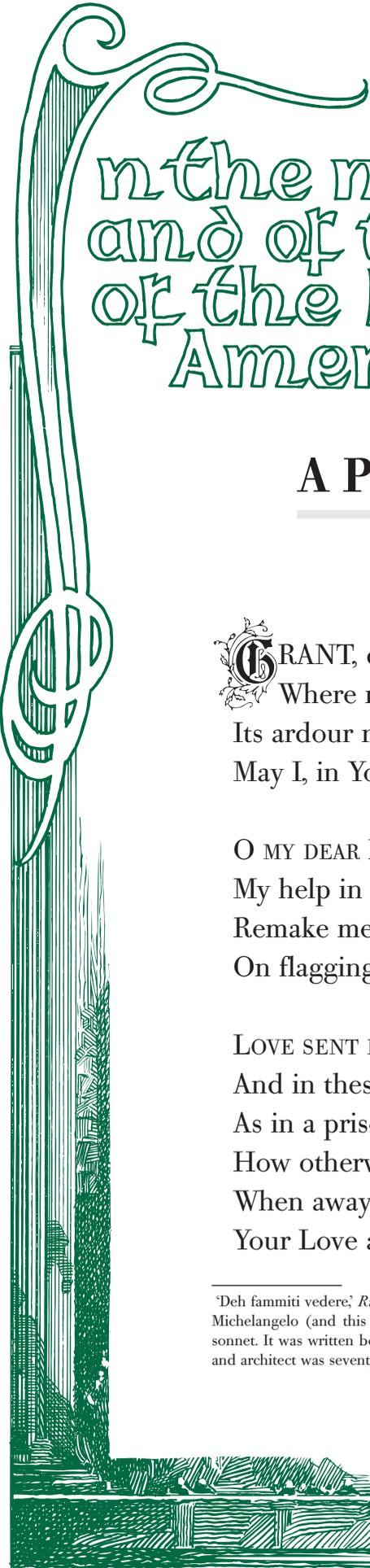
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## JESUS SAID:

This Is My Body;  
This Is My Blood.  
We Believe In Him;  
Let Us Also Believe  
His Words.

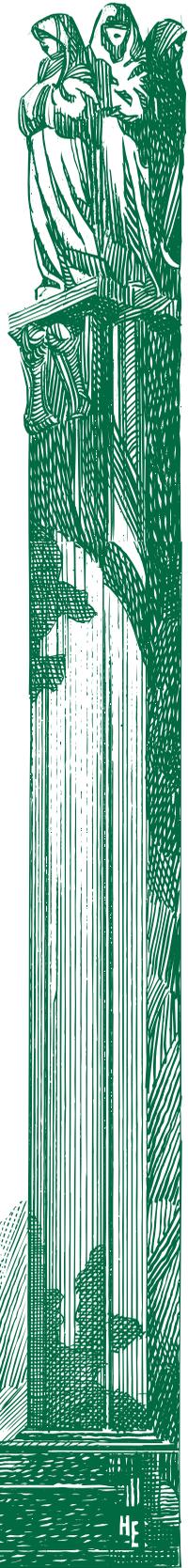
- St Caudentius of Brescia,  
died c.410 AD, Treatise 2,  
Roman Breviary, Reading  
for Thursday of Week 5 in  
Easteride.



n the name of the Father,  
and of the Son, and  
of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

## A PRAYER TO JESUS

By Michelangelo Buonarroti



**G**RANT, dear Lord, that I may ever see Your face  
Where mortal beauty tries to take your place;  
Its ardour may Your Love's consuming fires erase.  
May I, in You as my beginning, end my race.

O MY DEAR LORD on you I call; You I embrace –  
My help in fighting torment blind and base.  
Remake me, Lord, within, without: your Grace  
On flagging virtue, mind and will, its image trace.

LOVE SENT MY SOUL, immortal, out in Time  
And in these tattered clothes did it enshrine.  
As in a prison, under sentence, my steps I pace.  
How otherwise eke out my days but pine,  
When away from you, all beauty is but grime?  
Your Love alone can misery with joy replace.

'Deh fammiti vedere,' *Rime*, Editori Laterza, Bari, 1967 No. 274. translated by Paul Stenhouse, MSC. Michelangelo (and this translation) employs a rhyming scheme different from his usual, for this sonnet. It was written between spring and summer, 1547, when the poet, painter, sculptor, engineer and architect was seventy-two years old.

*Two religions have marked the cultural space  
known as European: Judaism and Christianity*

## WISDOM OF THE CHURCH

By Jude P. Dougherty



WHEN DID you last hear a reference made to the 'wisdom of the Church?' More likely you have been irritated with references to episcopal failure, reported on an almost daily basis by the mainstream media. Nevertheless, in defence of the concept, one can admit that prudential wisdom may elude this or that prelate and yet recognize that the concept, 'wisdom of the Church,' is not diminished by the failure of individual judgment.

The term as employed here refers to speculative wisdom, to the doctrine, to the learning retained by the Church in its many vaults. Its referent is primarily the wisdom accorded by Sacred Scripture, by the teaching of the fathers, by that of the councils, papal encyclicals,

and numerous other sources of official teaching. Those are the wellsprings of its expression in Augustine's *City of God*, in Boethius's *De Trinitate*, in Dante's *Divina Commedia*, and in the *summae* of numerous medieval theologians.

One also finds it in Chaucer, in Shakespeare's tragedies, in the poems of Paul Claudel and T.S. Eliot, in the fiction of Evelyn Waugh and Graham Greene, in the apologetics of Belloc, Chesterton, and Christopher Dawson, and in the systematic treatises of twentieth-century philosophers such as Etienne Gilson, Jacques Maritain, and Yves Simon. The list can be expanded at will to include a multitude of French, Italian, German, and Spanish authors. The vehicles that carry the wisdom of the Church, like those of grace, are many.

What is identified here is 'Catholic literature,' broadly construed. Much of it serves to reinforce the faith or is illustrative of Catholic thought as it influences judgment or determines action. One steeped in the teachings of the Church is never without a sense of purpose, bereft of a moral compass, or lacking in that sense of hierarchy which enables one to recognize instinctively that some goods are of greater value than others.

Whether Benedict, Francis, Dominic, or Ignatius be taken as a spiritual guide, A.G. Sertillanges shows the merits of an intellectual life in a marvellous little book, *La Vie Intellectuelle*, written nearly a century ago but available in translation<sup>1</sup>.

Acknowledging that baptism does not guarantee a Catholic mind, Sertillanges maintains that such must be cultivated, even over a lifetime. In a memorable line, he tells us that the desire 'To know, to seek to know more, is to start afresh to seek more' though the quest need not be all consuming or shallow. The Catholic mind is one that is both historically cognizant and doctrinally informed. There is no one place to start, and there are obviously degrees of mastery.

On October 20, during the Synod of Bishops, the Holy Father presented Rémi Brague and Father Brian Edward Daly, S.J., with the Ratzinger Prize for Theology, an award that has been called the Vatican equivalent of a Nobel Prize. The award itself, reports the news site, *Chiesa*, is sponsored by the Joseph Ratzinger Vatican Foundation.

Francisco Ladaria Ferre, the Spanish Jesuit, secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, explains that the prize was instituted by the foundation 'to stimulate theological reflection above all in the fields most

### Fruit of the Enlightenment

THOSE SEEKING the elixir of life, the secret of the alchemists, the kabbalistic key or some such panacea were drawn into alchemy, hermeticism, necromancy, cosmosophy, chiromancy and a whole gamut of sorcery. There was much juggling with magic numbers, deciphering of the Bible with the use of equations, substituting of values and numbers for musical notes or colours, developing theories from the alleged 'moral planes' in the structure of the Pyramids and like nonsense. Occultism rubbed shoulders with pseudo-science, dressed up in the fashion of the day - be it Gothic, Hellenic or Oriental. This was a rich hunting-ground for charlatans such as the Sicilian Giuseppe Balsamo, alias Count Cagliostro, who ranged across Europe making and losing fortunes, bedding the most desirable and befuddling the most respected, flogging love-philtres and elixirs of eternal youth. Barely more reputable was the Austrian doctor Friedrich Anton Mesmer, whose theory of 'animal magnetism' and claims of healing powers thrallered fashionable Paris. People as self-regarding as Lafayette sat for hours in bubbling vats filled with dubious chemicals, holding hands in a dimmed interior with plenty of mirrors and soft music, while Mesmer drifted about dressed as a children's-party magician, waving a wand over his victims.

— Adam Zamoyski, *Holy Madness, Romantics, Patriots and Revolutionaries 1776-1871*, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London, 199, p.53

cultivated by Joseph Ratzinger as theologian, cardinal and now pope?

Rémi Brague is a professor of philosophy at the Université Paris I Pantheon-Sorbonne and at the University of Munich. He is the author of at least ten books, including *The Wisdom of the World*, *Law of God*, *The Legend of the Middle Ages*, *Philosophical Exploration of Medieval Christianity*, *Judaism and Islam*, and *Eccentric Culture*:



*A Theory of Western Civilization*. Papal honours apart, it may be said that Brague's work is obligatory for those who have the means.

In his own words, 'Faith is, so to speak, the appropriate organ for perceiving the divine, just as the eye registers colours, the mind registers concepts.'

In the face of what is perceived by many as the cultural disintegration of Europe and its inability to thwart a militant Islam, perhaps no one has done more to identify the meaning of the concept 'Western culture,' distinguishing Western from other cultures, than Rémi Brague. Brad S. Gregory, in his study of the lasting effects of the Protestant reformation, rightly speaks of Western Christianity as 'the tangled product of rejections, retentions and transformations.'<sup>2</sup>

Brague will admit that and at the same time will say, 'Two religions have marked the cultural space known as European: Judaism and Christianity.' Brague, writing at the time that the 'Preamble' to the European Constitution was contested, says, 'Anyone is free to want to see Europe drift away from Christianity, but deliberately ignoring the past [as was done in the drafting] simply

demonstrates an observance to the logic of ideology.'

Following Paul Valéry, Brague identifies three sources that must be acknowledged for an understanding of Europe: Rome, Greece and Christianity, and adds what Valéry called the 'sub-basement' of Europe, the Old Testament.<sup>3</sup>

To read Rémi Brague, historian, philosopher, and theologian, is 'to seek to know more,' to gain access to an important vault that holds the key to and understanding of Western culture

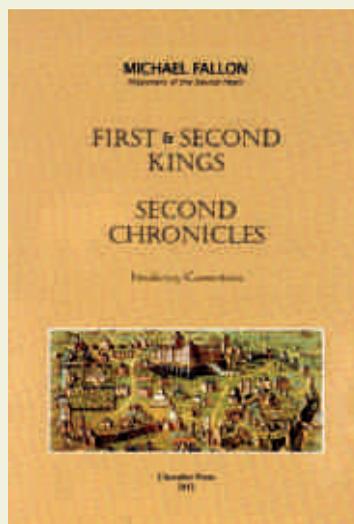
as well as the perennial wisdom of the Church.

PROFESSOR JUDE DOUGHERTY is Dean Emeritus of the Philosophy Faculty, Catholic University of America, Editor, *The Review of Metaphysics*, and General Editor, *Series Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, Washington, D.C.

1. *The Intellectual Life*, translated from the French by Mary Ryan (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1987).
2. Brad S. Gregory, *The Unintended Reformation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), p. 369.
3. *Eccentric Culture: A Theory of Western Culture* (South Bend, St. Augustine Press, 2002), p. 27.

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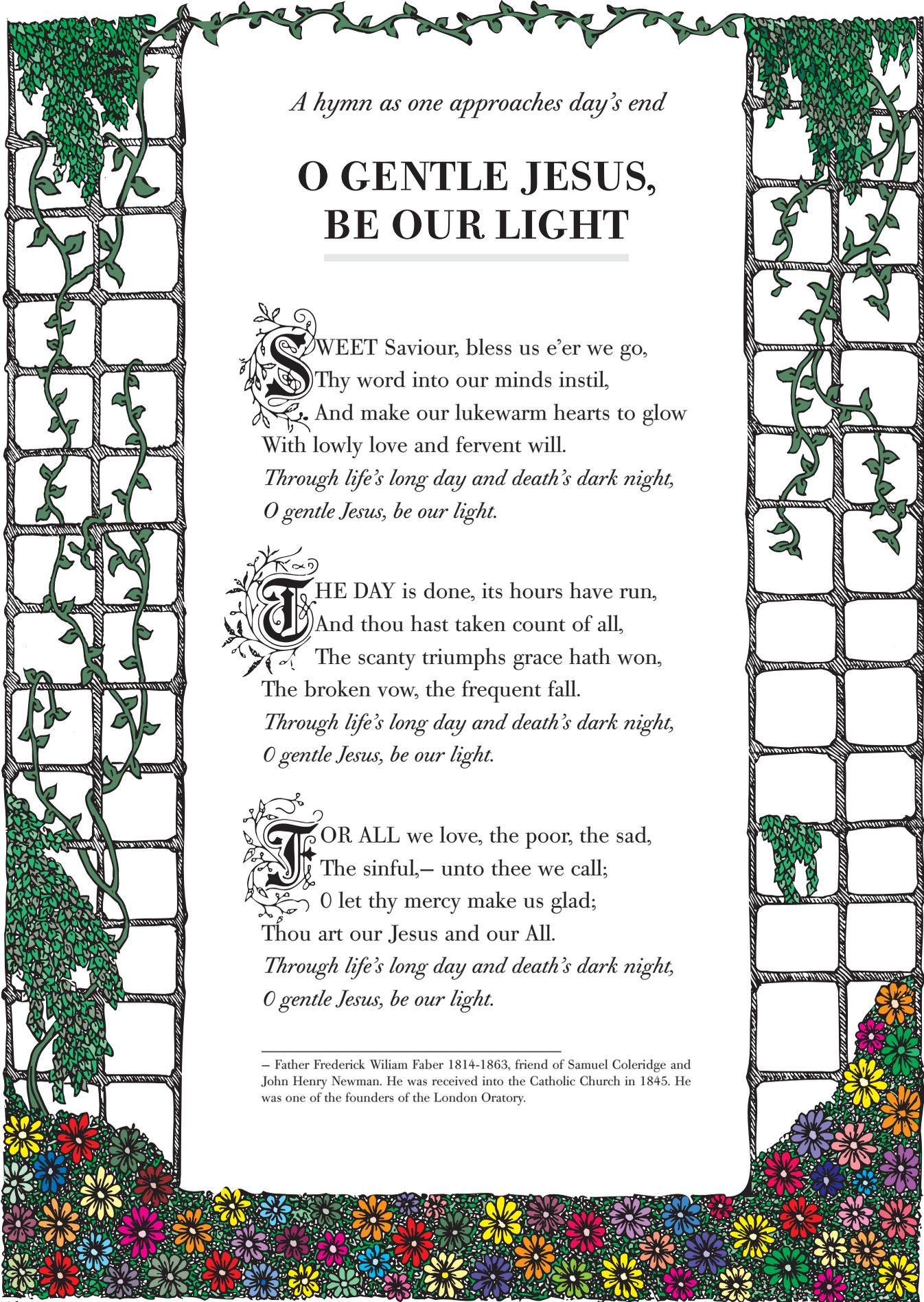
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*A hymn as one approaches day's end*

## O GENTLE JESUS, BE OUR LIGHT

**S**WEET Saviour, bless us e'er we go,  
Thy word into our minds instil,  
And make our lukewarm hearts to glow  
With lowly love and fervent will.  
*Through life's long day and death's dark night,  
O gentle Jesus, be our light.*

**T**HE DAY is done, its hours have run,  
And thou hast taken count of all,  
The scanty triumphs grace hath won,  
The broken vow, the frequent fall.  
*Through life's long day and death's dark night,  
O gentle Jesus, be our light.*

**F**OR ALL we love, the poor, the sad,  
The sinful,— unto thee we call;  
O let thy mercy make us glad;  
Thou art our Jesus and our All.  
*Through life's long day and death's dark night,  
O gentle Jesus, be our light.*

---

— Father Frederick William Faber 1814-1863, friend of Samuel Coleridge and John Henry Newman. He was received into the Catholic Church in 1845. He was one of the founders of the London Oratory.

*Without political parties that accept a responsibility for what governments repeatedly call their first responsibility, the prospects - given our history - are dim indeed.*

## PLAYING GAMES WITH AUSTRALIA'S DEFENCE

by Michael O'Connor



**I**VEN THE enthusiasm with which politicians and journalists at least are anticipating the next Federal election coupled with North Korea's missile-rattling, one might think that the issue of defence would attract serious attention. After all, defence is one of the primary responsibilities of any national government and is one of the few governmental functions reserved for the Commonwealth under our constitution. Dismiss the thought; apart from a few headline announcements by the government of new and limited equipment purchases and muffled muttering from the opposition, defence will be buried as an issue.

There are three simple cultural realities about providing for Australia's defence: most rank-and-file politicians of all political parties are not interested; the defence administration is featherbedded to a fare-thee-well; and there are always more politically attractive and vote-catching programs on which to spend our money. The end result is that Australia does not have a credible defence force – and has never had one in peace time or, it should be said, in the first three years of any conflict to which we have been committed.

A fundamental question to be asked is why we should have a defence capability; only then can we decide what sort. The answer to this question must invariably run the gamut of the unanswerable rejoinder – who threatens us? It's unanswerable because we don't know until it's too late to prepare. The average warning time of conflicts that demand an Australian contribution can

be measured in months if not weeks. As I have written in these pages before, a defence capability is a form of insurance and none of us would put our faith in an insurance company that did not have a substantial reserve fund from which to pay claims. Of course, in the Australian context we have, at least since 1952, put our faith in the reserve fund provided by the United States despite the reality that in some cases we have known that the Americans would not come to our party.

The basic challenges are twofold. If we are to have the necessary insurance as far as possible from our own

resources, how are we to calculate the premium and how to provide for it? The premium, of course, is based primarily upon our servicemen and women of the Australian Defence Force and the equipment they use. Calculating the premium is difficult, but ought to be based initially upon a calculation of our fundamental national interests. Generally speaking, that calculation, if it is made at all, does not enter into the national conversation except at the most superficial level. Thus it is that, for most Australians, the essential question becomes one of who may invade this

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country. The obvious answer is no one – except, perhaps, once upon a time, the United States.

Australia has other crucial interests, the most important being the security of the overseas trade upon which our national prosperity, our jobs, our income and our homes depend. Australia has depended upon overseas trade since 1788 and will continue to do so probably for ever. That is one reason why we deploy warships to the Middle East to protect merchant shipping from pirates. Less immediately, we should be concerned about China's muscle-flexing in the South China Sea through which passes an immense flood of ship-borne wealth including much that we depend upon.

For similar reasons, Australia has an interest in the prevention of international conflict by the deterrence that underpins diplomacy. Such an interest should and does support our occasional commitments to international



*Spin doctors at work*

efforts such as our dying involvement in Afghanistan. Whether we should intervene in any particular conflict (and I have made no secret of my personal belief that we should not be involved in Afghanistan) is a matter for the

Commonwealth government to decide. But its decision will be constrained by its capability, and the capability in turn will be constrained by defence decisions that not only the current government but also its predecessors over at least thirty years have made.

Leaving aside the human and essentially unavoidable cost in casualties, defence is costly in money. For the financial year 2012-13, the government committed some \$24 billion to defence somewhat less than 6.5 per cent of all Commonwealth spending of \$376 billion. although, given its financial difficulties, it has cut even that allocation by almost one billion dollars. This is an historically low figure and by some measures represents the smallest commitment of the national wealth since 1937.

Such figures tend to become the playthings of interminable and futile political arguments. The basic questions to be asked are: what do we need; how much will it cost; and how do we afford it?

A further, and quite important, complication is that providing adequately for defence is an ongoing process with cyclical variations that can be measured in decades. On the other hand, a parliament lasts for three years and even the most popular governments for not more than four parliaments. One consequence is that, although providing for defence is nominally based upon official documents such as the defence White Papers, these are invariably modified usually by reducing the funds committed. That has certainly been the experience of every defence plan since 1976.

Within any defence allocation, there are limits upon how the money can be spent. Troops must be paid, housed and clothed. The cost of personnel, even when, as is usual, wage levels are held down, will be not less than 40 per cent of the total. So there goes almost \$10 billion of the defence budget. Then the troops have to be trained and exercised to be available for operations at short notice, another not insignificant cost to the budget. Broadly speaking, that leaves about \$8 billion to be spent upon new equipment and maintenance. This is where defence loses the \$1 billion allocated for 2012-13 – and a further \$4.5 billion over the next three years.

## Secularising Religion

THE PERMEATION of European civilization by Christianity was never complete, and in proportion as the Church became embodied in the social order it tended itself to become secularized and to be absorbed by the world. Consequently, when the State became once more conscious of its power, and attempted to vindicate its sovereignty over the whole of social life, it was supported not only by the politician and the business man, but by the religious reformer who wished to restore the spiritual liberty of the Church and to free it from secular influences.

Religion gradually retreated into man's inner life, and left social and economic life to the State and to a civilization which grew steadily more secularized. A man's debt to religion was paid by an hour or two in church on Sundays, and the rest of the week was devoted to the real business of life—above all, the making of money.

Such a division of life into two compartments—and very unequal ones at that—was not the Christian solution, nor could it be permanently successful. If religion loses its hold on social life, it eventually loses its hold on life altogether. And this is what has happened in the case of modern Europe. The new secularized civilization is not content to dominate the outer world and to leave man's inner life to religion; it claims the whole man. Once more Christianity is faced, as it was at the beginning, with the challenge of a world which will accept no appeal from its judgment, and which recognizes no higher power than its own will. Indeed it would almost seem as though the prospect today was even darker than it was at the beginning.

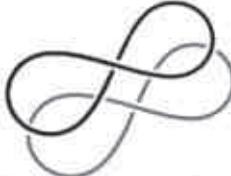
— Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State*, London, Sheed and Ward, 1935, p. xx.

That reduction can be crippling in the medium term. Necessary maintenance is delayed so that availability declines. This has especially affected the navy, which has never worked harder in so-called peacetime with too many ageing vessels. Worse, commitments to new equipment to replace the old may have to be cancelled or deferred. As one example, the air force is supposed to be re-equipped with up to 100 F-35 Lightning multi-role aircraft with the first deliveries in 2017. Given the current and inevitable funding constraints that will apply to whichever party governs after the September election, delivery of even half the required number could be delayed for one or two decades as the air force slips down the manufacturer's delivery schedule because we can't pay for them. In the meantime, the current F/A-18 fighters that came into service three decades ago will not only get older but also even more obsolescent. The government is now faced with a need to acquire an interim aircraft, the Super-Hornet, to replace the long scrapped F-111s and possibly to provide a barely adequate supplement to the Hornet force. That in turn diverts funding that has been promised for the F-35 program and perhaps other programs as well.

I commented above that Australia did not have a credible defence force. What we have is a navy comprising 12 frigates, six submarines and 14 small patrol boats, all lightly armed and increasingly elderly, for operations in our huge maritime zone. The support force of tankers and amphibious ships includes vessels that are between three and forty years old.

The air force has a mere three fighter squadrons for the air defence of the continent and one squadron of Super Hornets that has a limited attack capability. Fortunately the supporting elements of transport, tankers and command and control aircraft are relatively new and modern.

The army of some 30,000 regulars and 16,000 reserves is limited to about 15,000 deployable troops with, for various reasons, a very limited ability to mobilise and train its reserves. Given these numbers, the army could not commit more than a single brigade for sustained operations.



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In all, the defence force has a total human strength of around 58,000 excluding the reserves that governments are ever reluctant to pay for or to mobilise. Recruitment is difficult for several reasons including low unemployment, military wage rates that never keep pace with civilian standards and an inordinately ponderous recruiting system.

Despite all the publicity directed to recruiting women to boost the numbers and in accordance with social engineering principles, women account for less than 14 per cent of the total. A further anomaly is that, partly as a result of the excessive bureaucratisation of government in Australia, one in four of our troops is an officer with, too, a steady increase in the number of senior officers as they try to keep pace with their public service counterparts in ponderous and stultifying administration.

As with the Howard government when it achieved office in 1996, the

post-September Australian government will be faced with a growing bow wave of defence problems, many of them critical, and an almost total lack of politically uncommitted money with which to deal with them. There will be little or no public pressure to give priority to defence so that, absent some international crisis, Australia is likely to continue as before in its happy lotusland.

The challenge for Australia's system of democratic parliamentary government is to find a means by which defence funding can be committed over an extended rolling program and not be subject to passing political whims. Without political parties that accept a responsibility for what governments repeatedly call their first responsibility, the prospects – given our history – are dim indeed.

---

MICHAEL O'CONNOR is a former patrol officer in Papua New Guinea. He also served in the Royal Australian Navy as an intelligence officer.

*We seem to live now in an age of calamitous decisions foisted on us by authorities who should know better. Ideology is generally the key to their madness – as in the case of the Euro – plus an overwhelming, totalitarian desire to tell the rest of us what to do.*

# NEVER TOO LATE TO LEARN

*By* Giles Auty



OME YEARS ago an advertisement for an insurance company – if I remember correctly – ran the following witty if somewhat ominous-seeming headline: **THREE SCORE YEARS AND THEN?**

For those of us who have managed to creep, at least, past the formerly prescribed milestone of ‘three score years and ten’ a temptation exists, understandably enough, to imagine – in the words of a popular expression – that we have ‘seen it all’.

In terms of delightful, encouraging and engaging events the latter might indeed be a fairly accurate summary of my sentiments. In terms of negative experiences, however, I realise increasingly now that I am a mere novice.

For instance, fifteen months after returning to the country which I regarded for much of my life as ‘home’ I find myself awaiting each day’s new newspaper headlines with trepidation rather than any expectation of pleasure.

Try this headline, for example, culled from the 16 March edition of *The Daily Telegraph*, Britain’s most sober and reasonable newspaper: **MANIPULATING DEATH RATES TO BE MADE ILLEGAL.**

The first two paragraphs of the story ran as follows: ‘A new criminal offence to stop NHS (National Health Service) hospitals “fiddling” official figures is to be introduced by ministers in the wake of the Mid-Staffordshire scandal. Jeremy Hunt, the Health Secretary, is to announce that senior NHS managers and hospital trusts will be made criminally liable if they manipulate figures on waiting times and death rates.’

Let me explain this sombre little tale a bit further.

In recent weeks it has emerged in Britain that up to 1,200 patients died quite unnecessarily in Mid-Staffordshire hospitals in recent times as a direct result of ‘poor care’ and that similarly depressing figures seem to exist elsewhere also now in our NHS hospitals.

## Harmony and Unity

**S**T. IGNATIUS, the Martyr Bishop of Antioch, in the first century of the Church, speaking of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, compared the union of the sacred orders with the Bishop, likened it to a harp which is in perfect tune. He says in his Epistle to the Ephesians, ‘It becomes you to concur in the mind of your Bishop, as indeed you do. For your estimable body of clergy, worthy of God, is in exact harmony with your Bishop, as the strings to the harp. Hence it is that in your unanimity and concordant charity Jesus Christ is sung. And one by one you take your parts in the choir, so as to sing with one voice through Jesus Christ to the Father that He may hear your petitions’ (ad Eph. 4). If at all times this simple unity, this perfect understanding of the members with the Head, is necessary for the healthy action of the Church, especially is it necessary in these perilous times.

— Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman, Sermon 9, *The Infidelity of the Future*, delivered on the occasion of the opening of St. Bernard’s Seminary, 2nd October 1873

In many other Western countries, including Australia, the number of people classified as elderly as a percentage of the total population has increased steadily – as in Britain. Indeed pensions for the elderly here account now for roughly half of this nation’s already overstretched welfare budget.

While I therefore agree that the fact that senior health managers have tried to conceal large numbers of ‘unnecessary’ deaths is deeply shocking what is more alarming still to me is a strong suspicion that keeping large numbers of frail and elderly people alive ‘unnecessarily’ may now be frowned upon secretly somewhere else in our ‘official circles’. Finding the correct people to blame for ‘unnecessary’ deaths thus strikes me as only part of the problem.

What, if anything at all, does the expression ‘the Liverpool pathway’ mean to you?

My guess is probably nothing.

Indeed, until returning to Britain late in 2011 I, too, had never heard of ‘the Liverpool pathway’ but now know it to be a procedure borrowed apparently from thoroughly reputable hospices for allowing the terminally ill to die with dignity through the withdrawal of essential life-sustaining services.

Supposedly this procedure can take place only with the full consent of patients themselves and of their nearest and dearest but regrettably that has not turned out to be by any means invariably the case. One cannot help wondering here also who precisely decides whether or not patients are ‘terminally ill’ in the first place?

Most worryingly of all, however attractive incentives apparently exist or existed for NHS hospitals to include the

so-called 'Liverpool pathway' in their procedures.

Might this be an effective beginning, in fact, of a form of euthanasia 'by the back door'?

In Britain the existence of a punitive inheritance tax might also seem to many a disincentive in any national struggle to prolong the lives of the elderly by all means possible. Top-level care here is very expensive indeed.

As I have suggested already there now seems rather a lot to learn here whatever one's age.

In the past few years, for example, we have become obliged to learn that our banks are not automatic models of probity or good sense but were co-conspirators instead in the marketing of toxic, derivative bonds which have contributed at least their fair share to the creation of the Western world's current economic crisis.

In Britain, many also believe that former Chancellor and Prime Minister Gordon Brown effectively 'booby-trapped' our economy after years of profligate spending so that an incoming government would face a Herculean if not impossible task. Did he not have any feelings at all for the effect of this on ordinary people?

As an artist and writer brought up in the unspoilt English countryside which once existed, the outstanding beauty of much of rural England has always seemed to me a most vital part of our national heritage.

However, because of an agreement made by a previous government Britain is obliged now to cut 'carbon emissions' by four-fifths in less than forty years.

Already parts of the English countryside with which I have long been familiar are becoming immersed by acres of solar panels which conceal what was once fertile farmland.

During the past fifteen months, however, the sun has scarcely appeared at all in Britain so that such panels seem even less likely to contribute to our future power needs than the gigantic wind turbines that threaten to blight even the most famous areas of our landscape. A future Thomas Hardy might thus be obliged now to write rural novels such as *Far from the Madding Solar Panels* or a contemporary John Constable to create *The Hay Wain with Local Wind*

## Stages to complete Secularism

**B**OTH COMMUNISM and Capitalism agree in putting economic things first: and in ordering society to an economic end, and consequently they are both far more opposed to Catholicism than they are to one another.

Moreover, they help one another by their very opposition, for it is difficult to revolt against Capitalism without becoming an ally of Communism; or to revolt against Communism — without becoming the ally of Capitalism. The fact is that European civilization has been on the wrong road for so long that it is impossible to set it right by any obvious kind of political or economic reform. Protestantism, Liberalism and Communism are the three successive stages by which our civilization has passed from Catholicism to complete secularism. The first eliminated the Church, the second eliminated Christianity, and the third eliminates the human soul. We cannot have a Christian society or a Christian economic life until our civilization has recovered its moral conscience, its faith in God and its membership of the Church. That may well be as slow and painful a process as the conversion of the Roman Empire. Indeed, it may never come at all, for the more secular a society becomes the lower becomes its vitality, and a civilization that has completely lost its soul is dead and damned. Nevertheless, we cannot acquiesce in such a gloomy prospect ... Patriotism is also a Christian virtue and an English Catholic ought not to believe that Our Lady's Dowry is destined to be the portion of Antichrist. Patriotism must not blind us to the fact that all the nations of Western Europe are in the same boat. They may be Catholic or Protestant by tradition, but when it comes to the realities of practical life we find that they all more or less share the same modern secular culture which is the culture of the modern world.

— Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State*, Sheed and Ward, London, 1935, pp.147-148

Turbine, 2021 – some 200 years, in fact, after the original event.

Nobody knows now where the next outcrop of such excrescences will appear so that all hopes of some future rural idyll are by now effectively placed on hold. Even thirty years ago no-one would have believed that such a scenario was even remotely possible but we seem to live now in an age of collective madness wherein no act of future folly can be discounted entirely.

Based simply on the empirical evidence of the past 15 months the onset of a minor ice age certainly seems no less likely to me at present than significant global warming. On the third day of spring here our entire country is being swept by blizzards in a manner which has not occurred here for the past 50 years.

As regular readers of *Annals* will probably realise I have been a 'climate change sceptic' for years not least because of the decades of

experience I have had in identifying the unmistakable timbre of spurious arguments whether these concern art, literature, education or so-called 'global warming'.

If you read no other part of his long and convincingly argued book at least read chapter 8, the concluding chapter of Ian Plimer's *Heaven & Earth* (Connor Court 2009) and take to heart what it says.

In this erudite, 500 page book Professor Plimer, one of Australia's more eminent scientists, argues that no legitimate scientific link has been established between man-made carbon dioxide emissions and so-called climate change. He does this calmly and convincingly and without any of the now customary hysteria which attends this subject.

Here is the first paragraph of his chapter 8: 'We are facing the greatest global threat in my three score and two years. It is not from global warming.

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– Editor, *Annals*

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It is the threat from policy responses to perceived global warming and the demonising of dissent. These policies also threaten freedoms and the nature of science and religion. Policy changes have the ability to reduce base load energy supplies of electricity that underpin employment and the standard of living.

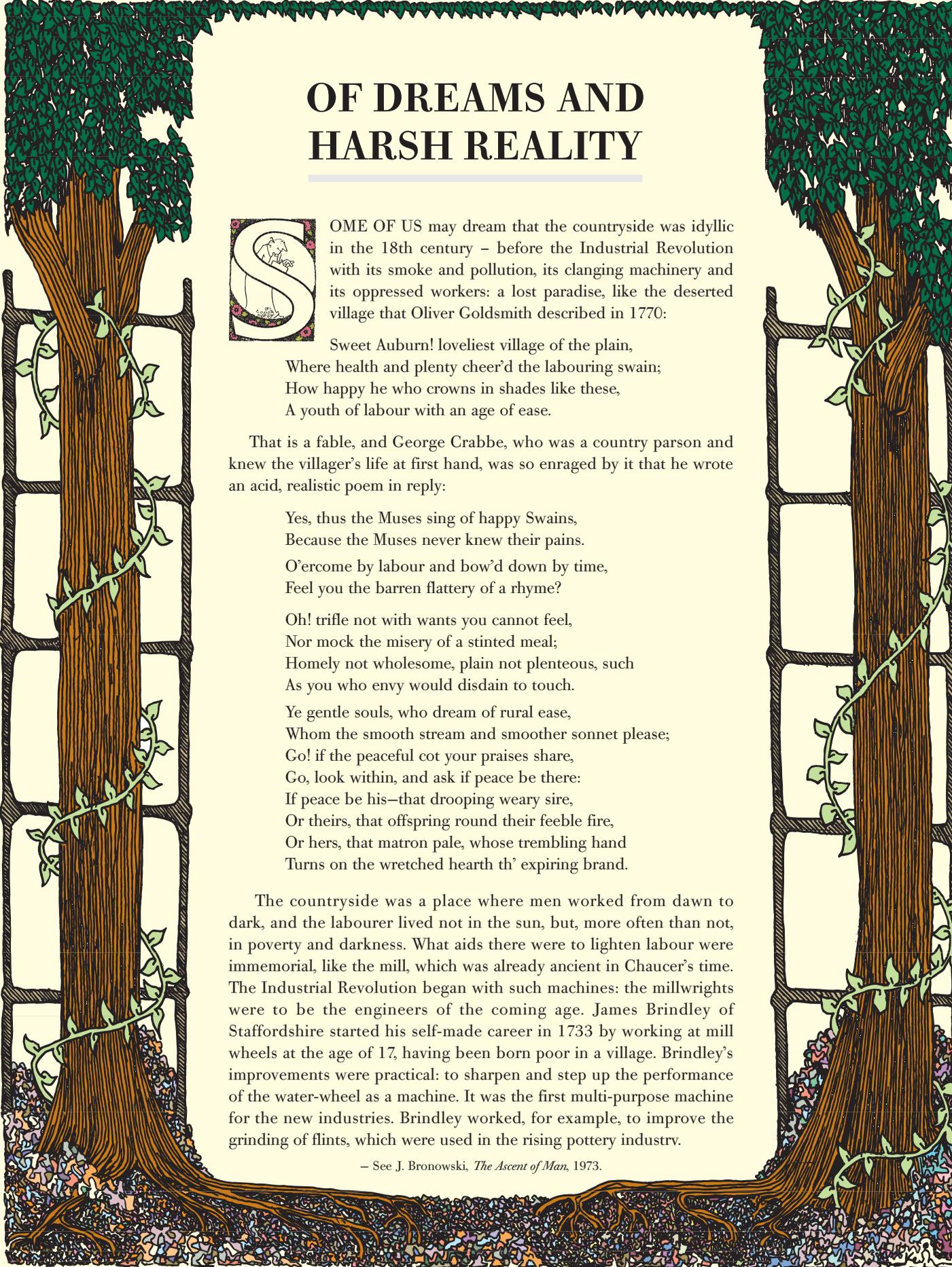
Unfortunately we seem to live now in an age of calamitous decisions foisted on us by authorities who should know better. Ideology is generally the key to their madness – as in the case of the Euro – plus an overwhelming, totalitarian desire to tell the rest of us what to do.

Back in 1990-91, I spent eighteen months serving on one of the working groups for the National Curriculum for English and Welsh schools and was regularly astonished by the effects that ideology seemed to have on some of my colleagues, one of whom proposed teaching a hard-line Marxist version of art history to six-year-olds.

Perhaps the brightest light of the past depressing week has been cast by an article by former colleague Harry Mount (*The Daily Telegraph*, 21 March) who patiently explained to 100 of modern Britain's academics why children can't think if they don't learn facts.

I reproduce the first paragraph of his article solely so that I can end this piece on a high note: 'When future generations come to study the causes of Britain's global decline, Exhibit A will be a letter in yesterday's *Daily Telegraph* signed by 100 academics from across the country. In it, various professors attacked Michael Gove's national curriculum for consisting of "endless lists of spellings, facts and rules". My God, the madness! Sometimes the Education Secretary must wake up in the morning and wonder whether it's all worth the struggle. His opponents are of such a deep strain of perverse idiocy that it is impossible to argue with them – ideology has defeated reason.'

GILES AUTY was born in the UK and trained privately as a painter. He worked professionally as an artist for 20 years. Publication of his *The Art of Self Deception* swung his career towards criticism. He was art critic for *The Spectator* from 1984 to 1995. He continues to devote himself to his original love – painting. He is a regular contributor to *Annals*.



## OF DREAMS AND HARSH REALITY



SOME OF US may dream that the countryside was idyllic in the 18th century – before the Industrial Revolution with its smoke and pollution, its clanging machinery and its oppressed workers: a lost paradise, like the deserted village that Oliver Goldsmith described in 1770:

Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain,  
Where health and plenty cheer'd the labouring swain;  
How happy he who crowns in shades like these,  
A youth of labour with an age of ease.

That is a fable, and George Crabbe, who was a country parson and knew the villager's life at first hand, was so enraged by it that he wrote an acid, realistic poem in reply:

Yes, thus the Muses sing of happy Swains,  
Because the Muses never knew their pains.  
O'ercome by labour and bow'd down by time,  
Feel you the barren flattery of a rhyme?

Oh! trifle not with wants you cannot feel,  
Nor mock the misery of a stinted meal;  
Homely not wholesome, plain not plenteous, such  
As you who envy would disdain to touch.

Ye gentle souls, who dream of rural ease,  
Whom the smooth stream and smoother sonnet please;  
Go! if the peaceful cot your praises share,  
Go, look within, and ask if peace be there:  
If peace be his—that drooping weary sire,  
Or theirs, that offspring round their feeble fire,  
Or hers, that matron pale, whose trembling hand  
Turns on the wretched hearth th' expiring brand.

The countryside was a place where men worked from dawn to dark, and the labourer lived not in the sun, but, more often than not, in poverty and darkness. What aids there were to lighten labour were immemorial, like the mill, which was already ancient in Chaucer's time. The Industrial Revolution began with such machines: the millwrights were to be the engineers of the coming age. James Brindley of Staffordshire started his self-made career in 1733 by working at mill wheels at the age of 17, having been born poor in a village. Brindley's improvements were practical: to sharpen and step up the performance of the water-wheel as a machine. It was the first multi-purpose machine for the new industries. Brindley worked, for example, to improve the grinding of flints, which were used in the rising pottery industry.

— See J. Bronowski, *The Ascent of Man*, 1973.

*A healthy challenge to the vocationalism, commercial utilitarianism and political progressivism that since the 1850s have supplanted the cultivation of wisdom as the University's purpose.*

# THE CHALLENGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

By Peter Coleman



THE THEME of this splendid book, *On the Purpose of a University Education*, is summed up on its cover. It is a beautiful sketch from the 12<sup>th</sup> century *Hortus Deliciarum* (*Garden of Delights*) by the Abbess Herrad of Landsberg. The original was destroyed in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. But faithful copies had been made, one of which is in Mannix College, Melbourne, and is reproduced on the cover.

The Abbess of Landsberg illustrates perfectly the great medieval understanding of the University. The Queen of Wisdom – Philosophy – sits in the centre of the circle. Sitting underneath and sustaining her are a young Plato and an older Socrates engaged in the Socratic dialogues. She holds a streamer proclaiming: 'All wisdom comes from God.' Around her in a circle are the liberal arts – logic, grammar, rhetoric, mathematics, astronomy, music. (They are all represented by women. Feminism was alive and well in the 12<sup>th</sup> century!)

Down below and outside the garden of delights are four false prophets or magicians (all men). They are the professors of, let us say, atheism, relativism, anarchism and modernist poetry. Perched on their shoulders, whispering into their ears, are four black birds. You may well think that the history of University education since the 12<sup>th</sup> century is the story of the gradual triumph of these false prophets over the Queen of Wisdom. I wish we could blow the whole sketch up into a poster.

The ultimate triumph of the four false prophets was imperceptible at first. This was a great age of faith. But the movement quickened in later centuries

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*On the Purpose of a University Education*, ed. Luciano Boschiero, Scholarly Publishing, Kew Victoria. rrp paperback \$39.95 post free.  
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and culminated in our time. Take the University of Sydney as an example. When the leaders of public life in New South Wales in the 1830's first debated the idea of a University for Sydney, many took it for granted that it would be a Christian institution of some kind.

But they did not prevail. The legislative founder of the University, the illustrious W. C. Wentworth whose statue stands so prominently in the Great Hall of the University, won the argument with his ringing proclamation

that the University 'should be open to all, whether they are disciples of Moses, of Jesus, of Mahomed, of Vishnu, or of Buddha' or of nobody.

In his inaugural oration in October 1852 the first Principal of the University, the Reverend Dr John Woolley, accepted Wentworth's secularism wholeheartedly (although he kept open the option of Christian residential colleges.) You may well think that there was no alternative in the 1850's. That may indeed be true. But it carried a high price, one we are paying today – the gradual abandonment of the liberal arts and the closing of the Australian mind. This is the message of *On the Purpose of a University Education*.

The calamitous consequences of the secular settlement in Sydney were not immediately apparent. The debate between the secularist and the religious, between the 'enlightened' and the spiritual, simmered away for generations. The religious established bastions against the dominant secularism ranging from the Thomist Aquinas Academy for Catholic laity to Moore Theological College for Anglican clergy. But they were always in retreat. There were inevitably occasional explosions.

Let me mention one of the most famous. It was in the morning of July 6, 1961, in St. Andrew's Cathedral. It was a grand occasion – a service for the distinguished lawyers assembled from around the common law world for the Australian Law Convention. The Governor of New South Wales, Lieutenant General Sir Eric Woodward, was there. So were the Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales (Baron Parker of Waddington), the Chief Justice of the United States (Earl Warren), the Chief Justice of Australia



(Sir Owen Dixon) and the Chief Justice of New South Wales (Dr H.V.Evatt). The Primate, Archbishop H. R. Gough, took as the theme of his sermon the consequences of the loss of belief in God.

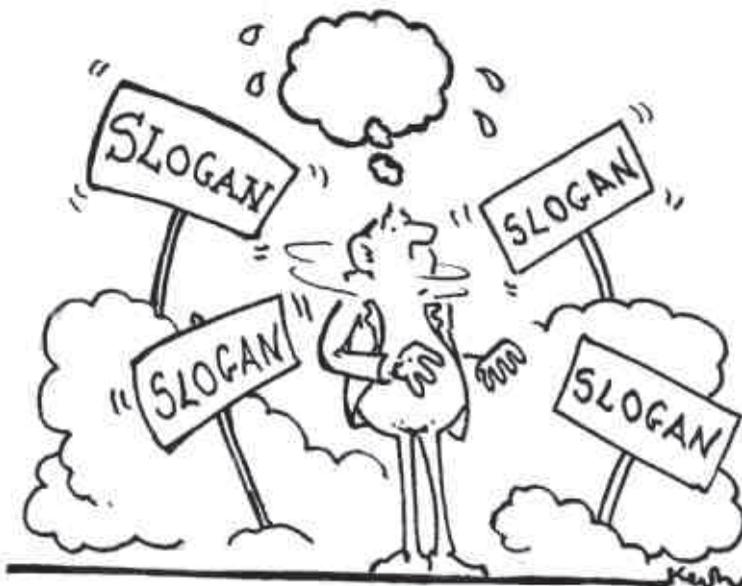
His principal illustration was the recent trial in Israel of Adolf Eichmann who had administered the Holocaust in the Third Reich, uninhibited by the voice of conscience. Communism today, the Primate went on, has the same searing effect on conscience as Nazism then.

Turning closer to home, he warned the assembled lawyers that soul-destroying materialist doctrines, which are the source of totalitarian atheism, were being taught in Sydney University. Philosophers in the University – he meant the philosophy school of Professor John Anderson – are not Communists but they are teaching ideas ‘which are breaking down the restraints of conscience, decrying the institution of marriage, urging our students to premarital sexual experience, advocating free love and the right of self-expression.’ He asked: ‘If it is true that empires and nations have fallen because of moral corruption, *is it not the duty of governments* to take note of the decline in morals and to *take action*’ – against the rot in universities?

The sermon inevitably provoked great controversy. Several churchmen and academics deplored the Primate’s ‘insulting’ analysis and his ‘frightening’ call for state action against the University. (One polemicist had called on the Vice Squad to raid the philosophy department. He also urged the Queen to withdraw the University’s Royal Charter.)

The *Sydney Morning Herald* opened its pages to uninhibited debate. But once again, after a few weeks, the contestants withdrew to their corners or bastions and the issue simmered down. The general public was once more content to settle for the same live-and-let-live tolerance that has sustained the University since it was established in the 1840s and 1850s.

The secularists continued year by year to consolidate their triumphs. The liberal arts continued to decline. Vocationalism, commercial utilitarianism and political progressivism continued to supplant the cultivation of wisdom as



the University’s purpose. Nothing really changed.

Or did it? Or were there stirrings of the old liberal and Christian ideal that the purpose of a University is the cultivation of wisdom? There was for example some movement in Brisbane where, a few years after Archbishop Gough’s dramatic call to action, Karl Schmude among others took the first steps towards the creation of an Institute of Christian Culture – steps which culminated in Campion College in Old Toongabbie – a liberal arts college at once part of the Australian university system but in secession from that system’s vocationalism, progressivism and secularism. It only has about 100 students. There are about one million university students in Australia and over 200,000 in Sydney alone.

But Campion is a leaven in the lump – and a portentous if belated protest against the secularism so confidently and cheerfully broadcast long ago by W.C. Wentworth. It remains the only University college in Australia entirely devoted to the liberal arts.

Now Campion has produced this splendid book *On the Purpose of a University Education*. I say ‘produced’; I mean that it is mainly the papers delivered at a conference at Campion College a couple of years ago which had been called to discuss these issues. Australian Scholarly Publishing in Melbourne has put out the book.

The symposiasts are not without hope, but they do not underestimate the historic challenge they face. The

book begins with Luciano Boschiero’s confident appeal to the ideals of John Henry Newman and calls for a return to those liberal and medieval ideals. It ends with Gregory Melleuish’s cry from the wilderness: ‘We are standing in the ruins.’ In between are major papers on the medieval ideal of a university (by Constant J. Mews), on the integration of disciplines (by Stephen McInerney), on the history of liberal education in Australia (by Geoffrey Sherington and Hannah Forsyth) and its decline (by Arran Gare).

The symposiasts do not purport to solve the problems they discuss. But they have opened a conversation on first and last things. It is the most promising conversation since the debate aroused by Archbishop Gough over fifty years ago. The book calls for the restoration of philosophy and the liberal arts and it places the Christian revelation at the centre of University education. Unless that revelation is confronted there will be no progress in this debate.

So I gladly launch this symposium and strongly recommend it to anyone alarmed by the present condition and the future prospects of our secular universities. If you can, please print off and blow up the cover illustration as a poster for your study wall.

PETER COLEMAN is a former editor of *The Bulletin* and *Quadrant*. He spent some years in the State and Federal Parliaments. Among his other books are an autobiographical volume entitled *Memoirs of a Slow Learner*; and *The Struggle for the Mind of Postwar Europe*. He delivered this address at the launch of *On the Purpose of a University Education* at Gleebooks, Glebe, NSW on April 11, 2013.

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*Pride in Elgar as a great composer was slow to develop. For a long period he languished unrecognized, and his music went unpublished and unperformed. The problem seemed to be that he was a Catholic.*

## THE CATHOLIC MASTERPIECE THAT NEARLY WASN'T

By Tony Evans



THE OLD ENGLISH Cathedral town of Worcester, 48km south west of Birmingham and bisected by the River Severn in its higher reaches, is justly proud of many things: for example, the much photographed chocolate-box view across the river towards the 12th century Cathedral; the prized and collectable Royal Worcester Pottery (no longer made there), and Lea and Perrin's celebrated Worcestershire Sauce, which continues to be made there and can be found in nearly every kitchen cabinet across the world.

But above all, Worcester is proud of its association with one of England's greatest composers, Sir Edward Elgar. What Bonn is to Beethoven, Worcester is to Elgar. And to prove it there is a bronze statue of him in the High Street marking the place where the Elgars' music shop used to be, and a fine stained glass memorial window in the Cathedral, dedicated to him in 1935 within a year of his death. And his music is performed regularly in the city, and in the Cathedral during the famous *Three Choirs Festival*.

But this civic pride in Elgar as a great composer was slow to develop. For a long period he languished unrecognized, and his music went unpublished and unperformed.

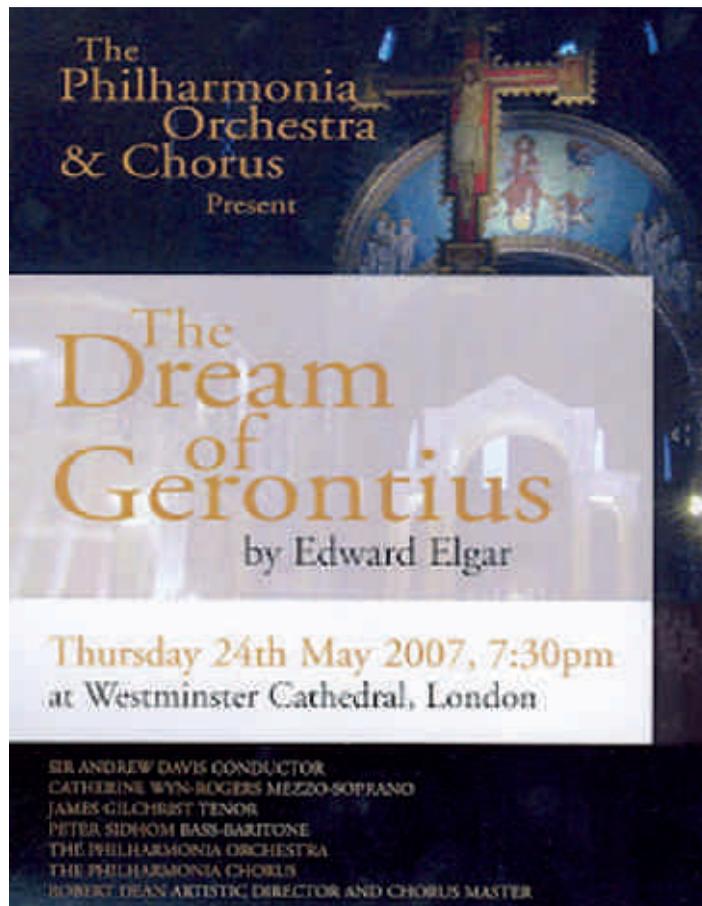
The problem seemed to be that he was a Catholic, and he himself wrote with some bitterness that his failure to

biographers, but what is certainly true is that his first major, sacred choral work, *The Dream of Gerontius*, based on the poem by Cardinal Newman, was judged too Catholic in its sympathies by the organizers of the Birmingham Triennial Music Festival who had commissioned it.

Birmingham then being part of the Worcester Diocese the Anglican Bishop, Dr Charles Gore, himself an Anglican theologian of note, required that certain specifically 'Romanist' points of theology be expunged before it could be performed in Anglican venues – including Worcester Cathedral. The same was true of Gloucester. Somewhat ironical you may think, when years later the Memorial Window in the Worcester Cathedral was unveiled to reveal scenes from the full, unexpurgated version of *The Dream of Gerontius*.

The story of 'The Dream,' its history and its first performance, are well known to those who know their Elgar. By 1900 the composer's long struggle for recognition was bearing fruit; he was suddenly becoming England's foremost composer. Two years before, his *Enigma Variations* was phenomenally

popular – as it remains so today. His music was being discovered, played by the main orchestras, and he was receiving commissions.



get his works performed and published, was because of his membership of the Catholic Church. To what extent this was true has been much debated by his

Elgar knew John Henry (later Cardinal) Newman's poem well, having received a copy as a wedding present, and had often toyed with the idea of setting it to music. The Birmingham commission in 1899 set him to work feverishly and he corresponded – often daily – with his friend, and adviser, August Jaeger, who was also publishing editor at Novello's the famous English music publishers.

The poem tells of Gerontius, an old man on his death bed passing into Eternal Life, aided by his priest and his friends praying for him, 'Jesu, Maria – I am near to death, and Thou art calling me', Gerontius sings. The priest then prays for him, singing 'Go forth, Christian Soul'.

In part two, the soul of Gerontius awakes, to find himself making a journey guided by the Angel of the Agony towards the Judgement seat, and there to be confronted for an instant by God Himself.

At this point in the composition the correspondence between Elgar and Jaeger (who at the time was receiving Elgar's manuscript pages as they were completed), shows how the editor deeply influenced and even guided the work. Elgar was adamant that he could not depict in music – either orchestral or voice – the actual instant of Gerontius coming face to face with God. It was too impossible even to imagine. As Elgar argued, in Newman's poem the Soul says 'I go before God'. As composer therefore, he too believed he should be cautious at this dramatic moment, and decided that listeners to the music should, at that point, stand aside and leave the description to the narrator.

Fortunately Jaeger, ('Nimrod' in the Enigma Variations), argued strongly that Elgar's caution was misplaced, and that the composer must confront the difficulty of conveying such a dramatic moment. As it stands, wrote Jaeger, your compromise (we would say in modern jargon, 'your cop-out') "is the weakest part of the work". Happily Elgar was swayed by these arguments and agreed to try again.

As a result 'The Dream,' when completed at the point where Gerontius goes to be 'consumed yet quickened by the glance of God', is one of the most dramatic and fearful moments in all orchestral music. Elgar creates

## Newman the Poet

ONE OF his most famous poems, 'The Pillar of Cloud,' popularly known as 'Lead Kindly Light,' was recited at the deathbed of the woman for whom the Victorian Age is named, even though she never received the man who had forsaken the Anglican Establishment. If there is anything to regret in Ian Ker's fine work, it is the absence of some of Newman's poetry. Most of it was not among his chief arts, but certainly 'The Dream of Gerontius' would stand the test even without its musical setting by Elgar. ... General Gordon's annotated copy of 'Gerontius' was found with him when he was beheaded by the Mahdi's hordes in his defence of Khartoum in 1884. This deeply moved Newman, who had been following the course of the Egyptian campaign and kept a news clipping about Gordon on the wall of his room.

— Father George W. Rutler. Extract from "Stones cry out." *The New Criterion* (February, 2013).

a shattering, discordant crescendo with full orchestra, organ, and four percussionists; the impression is like a blinding flash of light. Immediately afterwards the Soul of Gerontius cries out in ecstatic pain, 'Take me away' and begs the Angel to allow him to spend time in a place of rest and healing before being admitted into the Presence of God again – in other words, spend some time in Purgatory. (This last would certainly not have pleased the Bishop, Dr. Charles Gore).

*The Dream of Gerontius* is a deeply emotional work, a work of spiritual power, and generally considered to be Elgar's finest choral composition. He chose to quote John Ruskin's words on the final page of the manuscript which we may take to be exactly Elgar's belief: "This is the best of me; for the rest, I ate, and drank, and slept, loved and hated, like another. My life was as vapour and is not; but this I saw and I knew; this, if anything of mine, is worth

your memory." Words better known as Elgar's than Ruskin's.

To Elgar's bitter disappointment the first performance of the work in Birmingham Town Hall on 3rd October 1900, was a failure. The chorus master had died during rehearsals; the singers were ill-prepared, and the orchestral members and conductor were unfamiliar with much of the new and difficult music.

It was left to the Germans to discover the greatness of the work at a performance in Düsseldorf in December 1901, and it was hailed as a masterpiece. The rest of the world took notice; Elgar's music became an international success. Australia had its first performance of *The Dream* in Sydney in 1903, and in the same year the New York Times critic praised the performance in Carnegie Hall, 'Its musical setting needs exceptional qualities on the part of the composer, among which may be reckoned a complete intellectual and emotional sympathy with the tendency of the poem ... this, Dr. Elgar has in virtue of his standing as a devout Romanist; and the fact is everywhere evident in the music.'

Performances with the slightly amended text to comply with Anglican sensibilities continued throughout the first ten years of its life, but gradually the original words were re-introduced without offence, and this is the version we hear today. All was forgiven and forgotten by the time of the unveiling of the Worcester Memorial Window in which we note the demons vying for the soul of Gerontius, protected by the angels, and conducted into the presence of God. May you now rest in peace and forgiveness, Dr. Gore!

Yes, Worcester is now very proud of England's – arguably – greatest and most honoured composer, Sir Edward Elgar O.M. (1854-1934).

*Your choral masterpiece, Sir, is safe and regularly performed, admired and celebrated, unaltered in the standard repertoire edition.*

Thanks too, in no small part, to 'Nimrod'.

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TONY EVANS was a producer with the ABC for many years and is now a freelance writer living in Western Australia. He has published four historical biographies, the latest being the popular biography of William Wardell who designed St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney and St Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne and St John's College within the University of Sydney.

# MALTA'S KNIGHTS CELEBRATE 900 YEARS OF FAITH ON THE FRONTLINE



ON SATURDAY, February 9, visitors to the Vatican had the rare treat of seeing the Catholic Church's oldest Sovereign Military Order of Knights in full regalia, march in a solemn procession to the tomb of St Peter.

Four thousand strong, the nine-hundred-year-old Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta, filled the Vatican basilica to celebrate the jubilee anniversary of the Papal Bull that set them apart from other monastic military orders of the time.

It was February 15, 1113, when Pope Paschal II issued 'Piae postulatio voluntatis'. This Bull placed the Order under the protection of the Holy See, formalizing its spiritual and institutional identity.

'This is a very special anniversary and over 4,000 of the Order's members and volunteers are expected to arrive from all corners of the world' explained Albrecht Boeselager, the Order's Grand Hospitaller or 'Minister of Health and International Cooperation'.

They met Pope Benedict XVI at the end of the Mass celebrated by the Cardinal Secretary of State, Tarcisio Bertone, in St. Peter's Basilica.

Listen to Emer McCarthy's full interview with Albrecht Boeselager:

The activities of the Knights of Malta offer medical, social and humanitarian support in 120 countries worldwide, thanks to 13,500 members, 80,000 volunteers and over 25,000 doctors, nurses and paramedics.

The order is a sovereign and independent reality. It does not depend on any State or on the Holy See, it has its own diplomatic corps accredited to the various governments. 'Wherever we operate, we are builders of peace' in a kind of 'singular humanitarian diplomacy' says Jean-Pierre Mazery, Head of the Executive and Minister

of Foreign Affairs of the Sovereign Order of Malta. 'We do not depend on anyone, we do not defend territories, we do not take part in conflicts, we act only to help people, regardless of nationality, race or religion'.

The religious Chivalric Order was originally founded in the 12th century to assist poor pilgrims in need of care in the Holy Land, and still today the Order is involved in many initiatives in the Middle East.

The Knights of Malta run the Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem, located in the territories subjected to the

Palestinian Authority and it is the only safeguard for the maternity department of the region equipped with a neonatal intensive care unit. Since 1990, at the hospital in Bethlehem, more than 57,000 children were born. While the mobile clinic of the hospital provides the essential maternal and pediatric care to women and infants in the remotest corners of the surrounding villages in the desert of Judea.

Syria is also a priority concern for the Order. Grand Hospitaller Albrecht Boeselager says the Order has in fact intensified its actions to help those affected by the conflict, and in particular over a million and a half refugees. The 'Malteser

International' (the Order's relief agency for humanitarian aid) operates in the areas of Damascus, Aleppo, Hama and Homs, distributing thousands of survival and hygiene kits. The intervention strategy in favor of Syrian refugees also involves neighbouring countries. In particular, the social and medical center in Khaldieh, Lebanon, is exclusively dedicated to providing free medical care to the Syrian refugees. In the winter months, the relief efforts related to the Knights of Malta provide emergency aid to 10,000 more people in Syria, Turkey and Lebanon, particularly women with children.



View of St Peter's Basilica from the garden of the Priory of the Knights of Malta on the Aventine Hill, Rome

Source: Vatican Radio 2013-02-09

*When Pope Benedict XVI resigned in February and a conclave was called to elect his successor, the world's media took a keen interest in the events in Rome. About the same time a challenge arose in Canberra to the Prime Minister's leadership and there was yet another local media frenzy.*

# THE CONCLAVE AND THE MEDIA

*By* Kevin Hilferty



LEADERSHIP change whether in a universal church or an Australian political party always touches off media interest and speculation about candidates and their chances. Their careers are dissected, likely supporters named and betting boards appear with bookies quoting the odds.

So it was in Rome, with lengthy

reports naming this or that Cardinal as being assured of the See of Peter. The cardinals had divided into two camps, we were told: if Cardinal A were elected he would drastically reform the Curia and the Vatican Bank while Cardinal B would leave things as they were; the conclave would last for five days. No one seemed to mention the Cardinal of Buenos Aires Jorge Mario Bergoglio who swiftly emerged on the balcony overlooking St Peter's Square as Pope Francis.

The Canberra media reaction to the supposed challenge (which never eventuated) was even more excitable than that in Rome. Many print, radio and TV commentators reported gossip as fact, barracked for their choice and assured us that there would be a new Prime Minister that day. An online bookie agency quoted odds. But it didn't happen and the media's already low credibility sank another notch.

There hadn't been a papal resignation for 600 years and the news of Pope Benedict's decision took the world and the media by surprise, especially Australian papers as their production deadlines approached.

At such times the reaction of journalists is to go to the files and dig out some material they can slot into their pages. So it was with the *Sydney Morning Herald* of February 12 which ran two such articles. One (from the London *Daily Telegraph*) by Peter Stanford, a former editor of the *Catholic Herald*, was well balanced and informative; the other was by Christopher Hitchens, a long-time bitter critic of the Church and Pope Benedict and written in 2010 (Hitchens died in 2011).

Hitchens' final paragraph shows the flavour of his invective: "The Roman Catholic Church is now headed by a mediocre Bavarian bureaucrat once tasked with the concealment of the foulest iniquity, whose ineptitude in the job now shows him as a man personally and professionally responsible for enabling a filthy wave of crime."

Some 5,000 media people from around the world sent to report on the conclave joined the resident Rome correspondents. The Vatican is not an easy place for reporters; it has a long

## Pope Francis and the World Press

POPE FRANCIS overcame his timid and meek demeanour on Sunday at a special meeting with the world's press still in Vatican City since the former archbishop of Buenos Aires was elevated to the throne of St Peter on Wednesday to lead the world's 1.2 billion Catholics. ...His message was succinct and soft-spoken, as Vatican watchers are coming to recognize as the style of the 76-year-old prelate who overcame losing much of his lung when he was still a young man. "A special thanks for your valuable service in recent days," he said before moving on to the theme of "the Church walking towards Christ," similar to his homily inside the Sistine Chapel with the College of Cardinals the day after he was named pontiff. "Jesus Christ is at the centre. Without him, St Peter and his successors have no reason to exist". To the surprise of some, his message was exclusively in Italian, apart from a closing greeting in his native Spanish. The Vatican says he also speaks English, French and German. Several times throughout his address, the pontiff was interrupted by rounds of applause. Some journalists yelled in Italian "viva Francesco" or "long live Francis". Others held up national flags, so that even their small children could get a glimpse. ... After blessing the audience, Francis personally greeted a number of veteran Vatican correspondents ... Francis even patted — and perhaps blessed — a seeing-eye dog — unavoidable given his namesake, the patron saint of animals. It was a media *tour de force* for a man who knows he has to get off on the right foot with an international press still starved for answers to a number of pressing Church issues, ranging from the Vatican leaks scandal, to priest sex abuse and the troubled Vatican bank. "I wish the best to you and your families, to each of your families," said Francis. "I cordially impart to all of you a blessing".

— Source: ANSA. See *Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno*.it April 12, 2013

tradition of secrecy and, unlike a caucus in Canberra, there are few leaks.

So reporters fell back on writing or talking about the colourful rituals and liturgies before the conclave began, plus press conferences given by individual cardinals and scenes of pilgrims gathering in St Peter's Square, despite the prevailing cold and rain.

Australian media people were few in number. The *Australian Financial Review* published two well-informed articles by Desmond O'Grady, an Australian journalist and writer who has lived in Rome for 50 years. His regular reports also appeared in *Crikey*, an on-line publication. He was the Fairfax correspondent for many years until he was dislodged by London-based European correspondents, the last of whom took redundancy along with many of her colleagues.

Many local publications used stories sourced from news agencies or overseas papers. *The Australian* had several thoughtful pieces by its Foreign Editor, Greg Sheridan, and Tess Livingstone as well as stories from other News Ltd papers such as the *Times* and *Wall Street Journal*. The News Ltd Australian tabloids, as far as I could see, used agency copy.

The only Australian print journalist sent to Rome for the conclave was Barney Zwartz, Religion Editor of *The Age*, who represented Fairfax Media

## The Pope Francis Effect

**V**ATICAN INSIDER says that Italian priests are reporting more people coming to Confession since the election of Pope Francis—including many people who have been away from the sacrament for a long time. American priests have told me the same thing, and it seems to me the lines have been a bit longer. Has that been your experience, too? The excitement that a new Pontiff brings to the Church can show itself in unexpected ways, and the very simple, direct, pastoral style of Francis seems to encourage people to practise their faith in simple, direct ways. For another indicator of the 'Pope Francis effect,' just watch the *Catholic World News* headlines. Last week we agreed that, as a matter of editorial policy, we shouldn't carry a news story on every homily the Holy Father delivers as he celebrates daily Mass in the Domus Sanctae Marthae. It only qualifies as news if the Pope says something really striking, we agreed. Yesterday we carried a story about a papal weekday homily. Today we carry another. Our editorial policy is still in place, but he keeps saying things that are striking! We'll stop if he does.

— Phil Lawler, *Catholic Culture.org*

(*The Age* and *Sydney Morning Herald*). I found his early reports pedestrian but on March 11 Fairfax Media published a shocker.

The heading was 'Pell has no chance of top job' and claimed the Cardinal was "tainted by sex abuse scandals" and said his critics were publicising these and other outrageous allegations among the cardinals. Mr Zwartz's story appeared to be based on an interview with author and commentator (and former MSC priest) Dr Paul Collins. Both men should have known that these matters were rejected and the Cardinal fully cleared in 2002 after an investigation by retired

Victorian Supreme Court Judge A J Southwell.

On March 31 both papers published sincere apologies to Cardinal Pell and noted that *The Age* had published the Judge's findings in 2002 and described them as "as just result" and the *Herald* had agreed with this in an article published on June 14, 2010.

Dr Collins also apologised to Cardinal Pell in these terms: "A number of media outlets have carried a report quoting comments that I made in an interview with Fairfax journalist Mr Barney Zwartz about Cardinal Pell. I acknowledge that my words as quoted were false and grossly unfair. These remarks should never have been made and I therefore apologise unreservedly to Cardinal Pell for the hurt that my comments have caused."

The Cardinal accepted Dr Collins' apology.

This report was not the first by Mr Zwartz to cause indignation among *The Age's* Catholic readers. In August last year he reported on attending a service (I won't refer to it as a Mass) conducted by a former priest in a Melbourne suburb before a congregation he claimed numbered about 60 and included a man with his German shepherd dog. The headline was "Dissidents preach a new breed of Catholicism" and the story noted that the dog owner had passed a piece of the host to his dog – an act of desecration.

Archbishop Denis Hart of Melbourne promptly sent a letter of complaint to *The Age* which refused to publish it so the Archbishop posted it on his website.

## Breakfast with the Pope

**A**BISHOP FROM the earthquake-stricken province of Modena in central Italy said he was surprised to find himself having an informal chat at breakfast recently with Pope Francis. Francesco Cavina, a bishop from the town of Carpi near Modena, says he was staying at the Vatican's St Martha's House, a guesthouse outside St Peter's, when Francis strolled up and introduced himself over breakfast. "I was sitting quietly when the Pope approached with great naturalness," said Cavina, adding he felt "very, very excited" to meet Francis, elected pontiff less than one month ago. Apparently the Pope, seeing a bishop he hadn't before met, asked around and learned Cavina came from the Emilia Romagna region of Italy, which was devastated last spring by an earthquake that killed 24 people. The June 2012 earthquakes also left thousands homeless and brought the region's economy to its knees, with the damage estimated at around five billion euros. Cavina said the Pope wanted to hear about reconstruction projects in the region and asked him to give his blessings to the people living there. Francis continues to reside in the guesthouse, which is open to bishops and priests passing through Rome as well as those working in the Vatican. He has lived there since cardinals from around the world descended on the Vatican in March to elect a successor to Benedict XVI, and there are no immediate plans for him to move into the papal apartments.

— Source: ANSA. See *Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno.it* April 2, 2013.

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– Editor, *Annals*

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I thought the best Australian coverage of the conclave came from ABC TV and radio. The ABC sent to Rome Phillip Williams from its London bureau and European correspondent Mary Gearin and Lisa Millar joined them from Washington. Also there for the ABC was Geraldine Doogue.

Before she left for Rome and the conclave, Ms Doogue hosted a Compass TV program on what Australian Catholics expect from their new Pope. Discussion ranged over a range of viewpoints, the traditional being well expressed by the Australian's Greg Sheridan.

I found Ms Doogue's chats from Rome each morning with Fran Kelly on ABC National very informative as were her interviews including one prior to the conclave with Father Richard Leonard SJ, director of the Catholic Film Office who is currently spending a year at the Gregorian University in Rome. He actually named Cardinal Bergoglio as a compromise candidate 'you should not believe everything you read in the papers.' for the Papacy. ABC Radio's Religion Report lived up to its high standards with good interviews with people like Bishop Comensoli of Sydney and George Weigel.

The TV coverage, provided to the world by the Vatican, was superb.

A friend in the Vatican press corps emailed me to say that much of the English language media coverage seemed to be based on reports which had appeared in the excitable Italian newspapers.

He noted one story about Pope Francis rejecting a red and gold cape to cover his shoulders before appearing on the Vatican balcony saying it appeared to be the sort of thing to wear at a carnival. No journalists had been present at this time and there were various versions of what had been said so the English-language papers had picked up the most appealing (to its readers). Yet such a remark would have been hurtful to the man offering the cape and to Francis's predecessors.

It serves as a reminder that you should not believe everything you read in the papers.

A regular contributor to *Annals Australia*, KEVIN HILFERTY is a widely experienced journalist who has reported in Australia and around the world and was once a credentialed member of the Vatican press corps.



## GIVING CREDIT WHERE ...



FOR INVETERATE imbecility in the field of credits one must still turn to theatre programmes. Here commerce clings to the coat-tails of art; here art lowers itself by cadging cigarettes, not to mention cigarette-lighters, from anyone who will offer them.

The compilers of theatre programmes think it reasonable to charge the public a fee to learn who supplied the leading lady's porecleanser. If it is a costume show, there may be a credit for the manufacturers of the washing-machine in which the costumes are cleaned, and another credit for the manufacturers of the washing powder used in it. I recall a production of *The Rivals* in which an irrelevant dog was walked across the stage.

There was a credit, not only for the suppliers of the dog, but for the makers of the canine shampoo which kept it free from fleas. If the set requires a row of books, it is likely that these will be provided by the Greatest Bookshop in the World, since none of those mounting the show have any books themselves.

The GPO gets a credit for supplying telephones, which is akin to thanking the Metropolitan Water Board for the water which goes in the whiskies. I suspect that the great rapidity with which an actor gets his number on a stage telephone has something to do with the fact that the phone is provided free: if the script required him to get wrong numbers, might not a postal engineer whip the instrument away?

The programme of *Sleuth* used to have an acknowledgment to a kindly supplier of caviar, but now, in the play's fourth year, this line no longer appears. Possibly the supplier had not counted on such a long run and found the bargain unsatisfactory as the years passed: in which case he must have congratulated himself on not having undertaken, in perpetuity, to supply his precious commodity to *The Mousetrap*.

In the programme of Crown *Matrimonial*, the action of which takes place in Queen Mary's Marlborough House, the suppliers of jewellery and china have secured large-type credits, enclosed in a border, to lift them above the firm which merely provided Mr Andrew Ray's briar pipe.

We shall never know what imperious correspondence took place before the proofs were passed.

— E.S.Turner, *The Listener*, June 28, 1970

*A campaign of intimidation by Islamists left most Christians in this southern Egyptian province too afraid to participate in last year's referendum on an Islamist-drafted constitution. Around a week before the vote, some 50,000 Islamists marched through the provincial capital, Assiut, chanting that Egypt will be "Islamic, Islamic, despite the Christians".<sup>1</sup>*

## MINORITIES LIVING UNDER ISLAM

*By* Paul Stenhouse, MSC PhD



AS WE GO to press there is still no news of the fate of the two Orthodox bishops kidnapped by unidentified gunmen on the outskirts of Aleppo. Their driver, a deacon, was killed. Itar-Tass quoted Orthodox Metropolitan Hilarion as saying that 'in those places where the authorities are replaced by the rebel groups, Christianity is being exterminated to the last man.' He recalled that 'Syria has taken more than two million Iraqi refugees, thousands of whom are Christians.' The Metropolitan added, 'thousands of militant extremists under the guise of opposition forces unleashed a civil war in this country. Extremist groups armed and trained by means of foreign powers are deliberately killing Christians.'<sup>2</sup>

And not only Christians. The chaos that has engulfed Syria since armed foreign Islamist Jihadists infiltrated Syrian demonstrators calling for Constitutional reform in early 2011, has put in jeopardy the fate of millions of Christian, Jewish, Druse, Alawite and other non-Sunni and non-Arab minorities living in a country that was once, for all its dominance by the Baath party and the Assad family, the most tolerant and stable of all Muslim States in the region.

Last year across much of the Muslim world Christians endured weeks of violent backlash as mobs took to the streets after suspected Libyan terrorists – in the aftermath of the showing of a video criticising Muhammad – attacked the US Consulate in Benghazi causing the death of Ambassador Chris Stevens and three other Americans. Six Christian men playing cards, in the Nigerian city of Bauchi, were shot dead seemingly

by the Islamist group Boko Haram. Christian websites were hacked in the Persian Gulf, and across the Muslim world churches were burned down and Christian homes attacked.<sup>3</sup>

The *Daily Times* of Islamabad carried a story warning that textbooks in Pakistan's schools are 'rife with factual errors, bias and hate' towards minorities in the Sunni Muslim majority country. According to the report this situation is helping fuel the increasing levels of intolerance and extremism being witnessed by Pakistani society today.<sup>4</sup>

On March 12 last year, according to several Arabic news sources, Sheikh Abdul Aziz bin Abdullah, the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, called for the destruction of all the churches in the region.<sup>5</sup>

Late last year reports emerged of continuing government intimidation and violence against displaced Shia refugees in East Java Province of Indonesia. Local authorities have cut off food and water to around 190 displaced Shia villagers from Madura Island – urging them to convert to Sunni Islam if they want to return to their homes.<sup>6</sup> They were driven from their homes in August when around 500 Sunni Muslims attacked them, killing two and injuring six and burning at least 39 homes. In late December 2011, 500 Shia were forced to flee their homes in Nangkemang.<sup>7</sup>

Since May 2012 at least 20 house churches or prayer chapels have been closed down by Singkil regency officials in Aceh. Among these, ten belonged to the Pakpak Dairi Christian Protestant Church and four were Catholic. The leaders of the United Alliance of North Sumatra say that the attacks are of "growing concern," given that there is no "protection or recognition" for all religious groups, above all minorities. The situation in Singkil in particular is

getting worse, with gross violations of religious freedom which is "recognized officially by our Constitution." Christian leaders also point the finger at the central government in Jakarta, which does not intervene in cases where individual local governments violate the rights and freedoms of citizens, particularly non-Muslims.<sup>8</sup>

Intolerance and extremism are not peculiar to Nigeria, Pakistan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia or Indonesia. Of the 49 countries with a Muslim majority (including Kosovo) analysed in its recent Worldwide Religious Freedom Report 2012, published by *Aid to the Church in Need*, 17 have Islam as the State religion with consequences that range from the exclusion of all non-Muslim religious practice – as in Saudi Arabia – to cases in which other faiths are strictly controlled in their activities, or intimidated into converting to, usually, Sunni Islam.

In the light of the above, it is worrying to note the judgement expressed in October 2008 by the then Director General of the Australian Office of National Assessments – a euphemism for a security organization accountable to the Australian Prime Minister and Cabinet – that terrorism was 'a good news story that is getting better, with the violent Islamist threat receding.'<sup>9</sup>

Coming closer to our own region, during 1997 and 1998 more than 500 Catholic and Protestant churches were burnt down throughout Indonesia. The figure is conservative, as, according to some estimates, more than 350 churches were burned down in the first months of 1998 alone. The Christians were weaponless and politically powerless. They were, like the Shia, a minority in a Sunni Muslim country. They made no effective response.

This church-burning had been mainly restricted to Java and Sumatra including Aceh. Since 1968 more than 1,000 Indonesian churches had been burned down or demolished. The problem had not yet touched the Moluccas – mainly because Christians comprised 50% of the population and relations between Muslims and their Christian neighbours were good.

By January 1999 all this had changed. When Christians in Kupang – the capital of West Timor – finally retaliated by burning down two mosques this act was regarded by Muslims as an affront by the ‘Christian dogs,’ – the ‘infidels’ – and in January 1999 several people were killed in Dobu, in the Aru Islands.

Not long afterwards, on January 19, 1999, the killing started in Ambon, capital of the Moluccas.

A Christian driver of a minibus refused to give into extortion when a young Muslim demanded money; a fight started and people took sides and it quickly spread to the whole of the island. Muslims came from Hitulama and butchered many people – about twenty in the village of Benteng Kareng including one or more pregnant women – because they had heard that the mosque in Ambon was surrounded. The Christians then heard that the Silo Protestant Church had been burnt and destroyed. Tensions mounted.

The Catholics in Ambon were mainly immigrants from nearby islands and from other parts of Indonesia. The Ambonese were Protestants from Dutch colonial times, and Muslims. So the Catholics tended to stay out of the conflict – not regarding it as ‘their fight’. This all changed when the Laskar Jihad arrived in May 2000. The *Mujahidun* in their distinctive white robes and caps, and brandishing machetes and guns, did not distinguish between Catholics and Protestants.

The Catholics and the Chinese subsequently suffered terrible material losses, but fewer of them were killed than the Protestant Ambonese because they fled back to their islands since they had no weapons with which to defend themselves, and they had fewer family estates to defend than their Protestant neighbours.

These latter on the other hand had weapons, and because they were locals, had nowhere to go. Ambon was their

## Christians refugees in their own countries

**P**atriarch Sako, elected earlier this year to lead the Chaldean Catholic Church, recently noted that in the past, “There were three hundred churches in Iraq, and now there are only fifty-seven left. Even those that remain are targets.” The savage massacre inside Baghdad’s Our Lady of Salvation Church in October 2010, in which scores of worshippers were killed and the rest of the congregation injured, was seen as a turning point—the moment when many remaining Christians decided they had no future in their own nation. Iraq’s Christians, whose roots in their country predate Islam by centuries and go back nearly two thousand years, now face complete eradication as a religious minority. Syria’s Christians, numbering as many as two million, also find themselves unwelcome as Islamists dominate the rebellion and take control. Many thousands have already fled to Lebanon, Turkey and points further west. Meanwhile, Egypt’s eight to ten million Coptic Orthodox, by far the largest surviving Church in the Middle East and heir to an extraordinary cultural and religious history, face a growing wave of violence against their churches and villages, and the frequent kidnapping, rape, and forced conversion of Coptic women and young girls. This pattern of hatred is not new. Anti-Christian violence in Egypt, often ignored by news media in the West, has been happening for decades. Now it’s worse. As a result, Copts too have begun to exit, spurred by the election of a Muslim Brotherhood president and the adoption of an Islamist constitution. Iraq, Syria, and Egypt: These three countries, along with Lebanon, are home to the only sizeable Christian minorities left in the Middle East. Over the past century, the Middle East’s Christian population has dropped from as high as 30 per cent to barely 3 per cent, with religious persecution and intimidation largely to blame. If these remaining communities are destroyed, an indigenous Christian presence will disappear from the region where Jesus Christ first established his Church two thousand years ago. The annihilation of this Christian culture, the cradle of much of the West’s moral heritage, will have profound implications, not only for Catholics and other Christians, but for a world in urgent need of the ability to peacefully coexist.

— ‘Pope Francis and the Christians of the Middle East’ by Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, *First Things*, March 22, 2013.

home, and they had been there longer than many of the Muslims who had taken part in early large-scale migration from Bugis, Buton and Makassar, or had arrived only after 1949 in this part of the Moluccas under government sponsored transmigration from Java. This partly explains the reaction of the Protestants to the violence of the Laskar Jihad and the local Muslims.

The Muslims looted and burnt the shops and homes of the Catholics and Protestants. Local Muslims also suffered damage to their homes and shops, but the military were ordered not to fire against the Muslims. Sometimes they did so. *Mujahidun* snipers controlled certain areas, and particularly bridges that Christians had to use, but the police never caught them.

*Agence France Press* [AFP] reported that east of the capital, Ambon, Muslims

massacred 93 Christians on Kasui, a small island in Indonesia’s Moluccas chain, for refusing to convert to Islam.

*Annals* wasn’t able to confirm this number. But reliable sources confirmed that all attacks by the *Mujahidun* on this occasion [November 23-26, 2000] took place at about 6.00 a.m. and that an estimated 3,000 Muslim fighters were involved.

The village of Utta was attacked on November 23, resulting in the burning of a church and 4 houses. Karlomin was attacked on November 24, resulting in several residents being killed, others wounded, and a number of houses burned. On November 25, it was the turn of Wunin to be attacked. The Catholic church, a school and 100 houses were burned. The village of Tanasoa became target of an attack on November 26: several Christians were

# Terrorism in the Philippines

**A**MONG THE transnational Islamic non-state players operating in the Philippines, the terrorist Jemaah Islamiyah [JI] network poses the greatest threat to the security of the Philippines and the larger Southeast Asian region. Founded in Indonesia, the Jemaah Islamiyah has established complex transnational networks in Malaysia, Singapore, the southern Philippines, southern Thailand and even Australia. The JI has networks in South Asia, particularly in Afghanistan and Pakistan where its core Islamist fighters received military trainings. The JI is also part of al Qaeda's global network of mujahideen. ... the JI is extremist as it endorses political violence and has masterminded several bombings in Southeast Asia. The JI established its presence in the Philippines in 1994 by building ties initially with the MILF and eventually with the ASG. These ties originated in the late 1980s in Afghanistan where Moro and Indonesian Muslim fighters received joint training in a camp commanded by Ustadz Abdul Rasul Sayyaf. Around 600 Moro mujahideen were sent to Afghanistan by pretending to be either pilgrims on the way to Mecca, or in search of employment in Pakistan. The JI's transnational Islamic operations in the Philippines were revealed by the arrest of Fathur Rahman Al-Ghozi in 2002. Al-Ghozi was suspected to be the mastermind of the "Rizal Day" bombing in 2000. The JI's presence in the Philippines to propagate Islamic extremism was further confirmed by Mohammed Nasir bin Abbas who confessed to have led the JI's mantiqi three, based in Camp Hodeiba in the southern Philippines.

— Rommel C. Banlaoi, *Transnational Islam in the Philippines*, The National Bureau of Asian Research, April 2009, pp. 179-180.

killed, a church, a school and a number of houses were burned.

270 people from these villages managed to escape to the neighbouring island of Teor. More than 700 Catholics and Protestants subsequently agreed to convert to Islam in fear of their lives.

The victims were among an estimated 3,000 refugees who fled into the jungle when Islamic *mujahidun* attacked four [other] villages on November 28, according to AFP.

*Associated Press* [AP] reported similar attacks earlier in the week [referred to above] that destroyed two Christian churches and left 54 villagers dead. The soldiers reportedly pursued the villagers and forced captives to choose between Islam and death.

Some Muslims sought to protect their Christian friends and neighbours, a Catholic priest told AP. 'There are good Muslims who want to protect, while there are bad people who want to slaughter,' he said. The government was slow to respond to the emergency, said a witness who claimed that only one boat came to evacuate the refugees. Government officials said about 500 people were rescued and several infantry companies have been sent to the island to prevent more violence, according to AP.

In a statement to the then U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the Catholic bishop of the Moluccas – Petrus Canisius Mandagi MSC – testified,

"Only recently, reports have reached us about large-scale and ruthless Islamisation of Christians, both by brutal force and leaving them no choice. This happened in many places, including the islands of Buru and East Ceram, and most recently on the small islands of Kasui and Teor. On Kasui of the 692 Catholics, at least 473 are still alive and they have been Islamised; nothing is known about the fate of the other 219 Catholics. On Teor, with 841 Catholics, 142 have been Islamised, about 300 succeeded in fleeing to Kei Kecil island, while the remaining 400 are still on Teor. So of the 1,533 Catholics on the islands of Kasui and Teor, 615 have been forced to become Muslims, or have chosen to become Muslims rather than lose their lives. On these islands there are hundreds of Protestant Christians who have been converted to Islam in the same way. All these people urgently need to be freed and evacuated from Kasui and Teor."<sup>10</sup>

The silence of official Islamic leaders and spokesmen in Indonesia and Australia at the inhuman treatment of the

Christians – old and young, men, women, even pregnant women, and children – in the Moluccas forcibly 'converted' to Islam, and circumcised with old Gillette blades and at the hands of so-called 'female priests' [see *Annals* 8, 2012 'Christina's Story' p.45], was revealing.

It gave the lie to claims constantly being repeated on TV and throughout the electronic media that Islam is a tolerant and peaceful religion.

Muslims and others point to Sura 2<sup>256</sup> in the Qur'an as proof that Islam condemns the use of violence in 'converting' to Islam any non-Muslims who fall into their power.

Popularly the verse is translated by Islamic apologists, and quoted by non-Islamic media [especially on talk-back radio] and by political pundits, as 'There is no compulsion in Islam'. But that isn't what the verse says. What it says is: 'There is no coercion in religion.'<sup>11</sup> It is warning Muslims against dallying with 'unbelief,' and 'idols' and implies that belief in religion [i.e. in Islam] is *easy*. This is what the reference to 'no force' or 'no coercion' seems to suggest.

It should be noted – and this is never usually stated when the verse is used as a proof of the peacefulness and tolerance of Islam – that Sura 2<sup>256</sup> is addressed to *Muslims*, not to non-Muslims. The verse is certainly not meant to reassure non-Muslims that Islam tolerates their religious beliefs, or is indifferent to them.

The contrary is the case. The following verse – Sura 2<sup>257</sup> – which is usually never quoted, is nevertheless the one that deserves attention. It makes the meaning of 2<sup>256</sup> crystal clear. It does refer to non-Muslims. It describes in unambiguous language the dire consequences of not embracing Islam: 'they are the inmates of hell, and shall dwell there'.

There is spiritual and psychological intimidation and coercion in Sura 2<sup>257</sup> and fanatical believers could be forgiven for concluding that if the Qur'an threatens unbelievers with hell fire if they don't become Muslims, then *a fortiori* Muslims may use physical force to make unbelievers embrace Islam.

But there is an even more cogent argument against the 'tolerance,' and 'lack of coercion' allegedly preached by Sura 2<sup>256</sup>: namely, the example of Muhammad himself. His first biographer

Ibn Ishaq, quoted by Ibn Hisham, records that

“Then the Apostle [Muhammad] sent Khalid bin al-Walid ... to the [Christian] tribe of Beni Haritha bin Ka'b in Najran and ordered him to wait three days before attacking them, after inviting them to embrace Islam ... If they agreed then he was to accept their submission from them; and if they refused he was to fight them. So Khalid set out and came to them and sent out riders in all directions inviting the people to Islam saying “If you accept Islam you will save your life.” They embraced Islam because of the threat. .... When they came to the Apostle [Muhammad] and he saw them he asked “Who are these people who look like people from India?” and they replied, “These people are the Beni al-Haritha bin Ka'b. ... The Apostle [Muhammad] said to them: “Had Khalid not written to me that you had accepted Islam and not resisted, I would have tossed your heads beneath your feet?”<sup>12</sup>

Despite denial by modern-day Islamists, according to Ibn Hisham, his biographer, Muhammad approved the use of force in religion. And Islamic Law, especially the Qur'an, endorses the use of such force.

Some Muslim scholars may grudgingly admit this privately when pushed, but publicly attest the opposite, claiming against all evidence to the contrary that the Qur'an opposes the use of force in spreading Islam.

When Muhammad died, according to his biographers, the Arabs wanted to abandon Islam. Ibn Hisham reports that he was told by Abū 'Ubaida

... and other people “who knew,” that when Muhammad died ‘most of the people of Mecca intended to abandon Islam. Then Suhail bin 'Amru got up, gave thanks to Allah, and recalled the death of the prophet of Allah [Muhammad] and said: “this will only strengthen the power of Islam. If anyone gives us trouble, we will cut off his head”. At that the people changed their minds about what they were planning to do, and 'Attāb [the governor of Mecca who had fled and hidden himself out of fear] reappeared.<sup>13</sup>

Sura 2<sup>256</sup> is a trap for unwary Muslims and non-Muslims alike. It cannot be taken at face value. The final blow to its credibility comes from the fact that whatever it may originally have meant, it is now considered to have been abrogated.

## The Suicide of the West

HERE IS the novelty: Our new enemies are not political enemies in any traditional sense, belligerent in the service of certain interests of their own. Their belligerence is focused rather on the very existence of an alternative to their vision of beatitude, namely on Western democracy and its commitment to individual freedom and economic prosperity. I return to Hussein Massawi: “We are not fighting so that you will offer us something. We are fighting to eliminate you.” In fact, the situation is even grimmer than Mr. Massawi suggests. For our new enemies are not simply bent on our destruction: they are pleased to compass their own destruction as a collateral benefit. This is one of those things that makes Islamofascism a particularly toxic form of totalitarianism. At least most Communists had some rudimentary attachment to the principle of self-preservation. In the face of such death-embracing fanaticism our only option is unremitting combat. The large issue here is one that has bedeviled liberal societies ever since there were liberal societies: namely, that in attempting to create the maximally tolerant society, we also give scope to those who would prefer to create the maximally intolerant society. In these pages last June, I wrote about the philosopher Leszek Kolakowski. Let me conclude by returning to what I said there. In an essay called “The Self-Poisoning of the Open Society,” Kolakowski dilates on this basic antinomy of liberalism. Liberalism implies openness to other points of view, even (it would seem) those points of view whose success would destroy liberalism. But tolerance to those points of view is a prescription for suicide. Intolerance betrays the fundamental premise of liberalism, i.e., openness. As Robert Frost once put it, a liberal is someone who refuses to take his own part in an argument.

— Roger Kimball, ‘After the suicide of the West,’ from *Threats to Democracy: then and now*, a symposium, quote in *The New Criterion*, 24[2006].

The abrogating verse is Sura 9<sup>73</sup>: ‘O Prophet, fight [lit. ‘wage *jihad*] against the unbelievers and hypocrites, and be thou harsh with them. Their abode is hell and evil the destination.’

When confronted with the indisputable fact of the abrogation, Islamic apologists then try another spin by claiming that the abrogation only applies to pagans, not to Christians and Jews. If this be the case, then Muslims should be appalled when their fanatical and violent co-religionists act as if it still applied to Christians and Jews.

But what about the pagans? The alleged non-abrogation for Christians and Jews is little comfort to the world's pagans who do not deserve the murderous assaults of fanatical *mujahidun* unleashed upon them after Friday Prayers in some local mosque.

Whatever be the real meaning and status of Sura 2<sup>256</sup> the incontrovertible fact is that Muslim extremists consider that Christians, Jews and Pagans can be obliged under pain of death to embrace Islam; and use Qur'anic texts to justify their actions.

The history of Islam, and the actions of Muslims in Kasui and elsewhere in

Indonesia and throughout the Islamic world leave all thinking non-Muslims in no doubt that the abrogation of Sura 2<sup>256</sup> and the continuing validity of Sura 2<sup>257</sup> empowers fanatics who don't hesitate to use cruel force to make non-Muslims embrace Islam.

1. Hamza Hendawi, for Associated Press, December 18, 2012.
2. RT News. See also <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/04/24/world/meast/syria-civil-war/>
3. See [among myriad other sites] [TheReligionofPeace.com](http://TheReligionofPeace.com). ‘Islamic Terror attacks on Christians since 9/11.’
4. *Daily Times*, Thursday October 25, 2012. ‘Reforming curricula: hate content in Pakistani textbooks,’ staff report.
5. Raymond Ibrahim, ‘Saudi Grand Mufti calls for ‘destruction of all Churches in region,’ *Jihad Watch*, March 14, 2012.
6. UCAN Catholic News Service, 27/11/2012.
7. PressTV Asia Pacific, August 27, 2012.
8. *AsiaNews*, July 23, 2012 ‘Aceh, Christians protest over burned church and authorities’ inertia’.
9. [https://www.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08CANBERRA1159\\_a.html](https://www.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08CANBERRA1159_a.html)
10. *The New Martyrdom: A Special Report. From the Caribbean to Oceania, Anti-Christian persecution heats up*. See ZENIT.org (13.01.2001) /HRWF International Secretariat (16.01.2001).
11. في الدين
12. As-*Sira* by Ibn Ishaq Muhammad's first biographer, quoted Ibn Hishām, *Biography of Muhammad*. [Arabic version, Dar Ehia al-Tourath al-Arabi, Rue Dakkache, Beirut Lebanon Part 4, pages 249-250]. Trans. Paul Stenhouse. Also, see ‘The Wolf Pack, What it means to live by Muhammad's words and deeds,’ by Bruce Thornton, *Private Papers: A review of Robert Spencer's The Truth about Muhammad*, (Regnery Publishing, 2006).
13. op.cit. Arabic text, Part 4, p.333. Translation: Paul Stenhouse.

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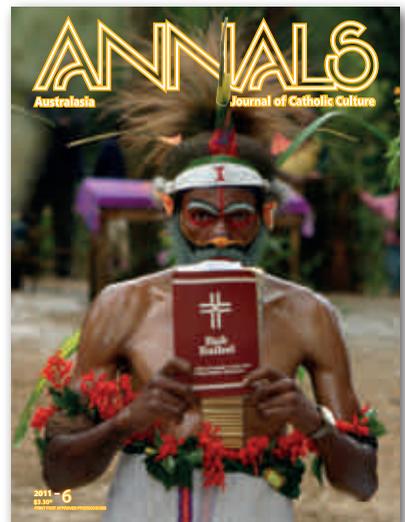
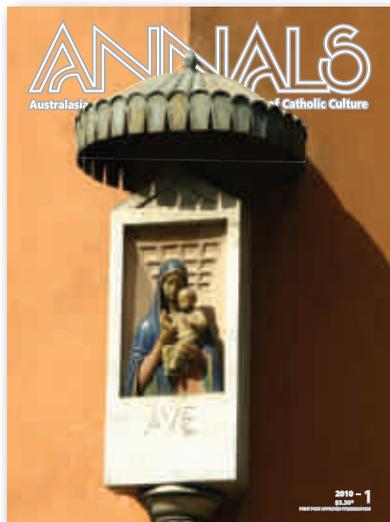
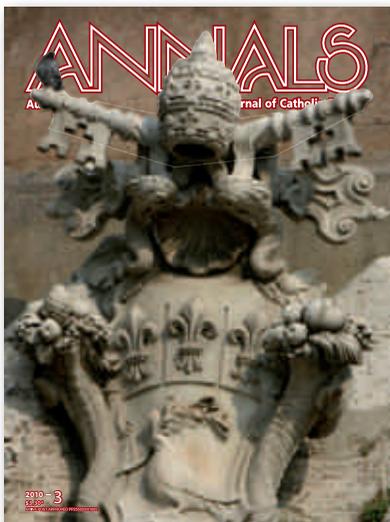
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*It is not as well-known as it might be that libel law has been unfairly rigged in favour of rogues in high places since 1275.*

## THE 'PRINCE OF DENMARK' DEFENCE

By Evan Whitton



THE HON. Ian Callinan QC's eighth novel, *Dislocation*, concerns the 1946-48 War Crimes Tribunal held in Tokyo. The court had the whiff of a Stalinist show trial; an appropriate response would have been politely to decline to take part. Sir William Webb, Chief Justice of Queensland, accepted General Douglas MacArthur's invitation to be President.

In *Dislocation*, Sir William Webb is Sir Michael Bailey. They both believed that Emperor Hirohito should have been in the dock, but MacArthur, the ventriloquist, needed Hirohito as his dummy.

Shifting the goalposts is a basic lawyer's ploy, but the tactic can be highly dubious, e.g. 'some other dude did it' (the SODDIT defence). On the other hand, the 'Prince of Denmark' (POD) defence can achieve a measure of fairness. (Hamlet was Prince of Denmark; if a major figure is absent, it is said to be like staging *Hamlet* without the Prince of Denmark.)

The Prince of Denmark defence was open to the seven Class A criminals accused, chief among them general and prime minister Hideki Tojo:

\* Where was Hirohito?

\* Where was Harry Truman? He had 75,000 civilians killed at Hiroshima in a single day.

\* Where was Tom Blamey? Blamey mounted a military campaign against Japanese soldiers left behind in New Guinea when the decisive campaigns had been won by the allies and an Armistice was looming.

An Indian member of the court, Justice Radhabinod Pal, said some accused had committed atrocities, but the tribunal was not legitimate, and hence that all should be found not guilty.

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*Dislocation*, By Ian Callinan, Arcadia, rrp pb \$24.95. For copies, ring (03) 9329 6963 or fax (03)9329 5452.

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Webb agreed that the accused should be hanged, but partly redeemed himself in 1957, when five High Court judges agreed with Barwick, then a tax lawyer, that 'absolutely' in the Tax Act does not mean 'absolutely': there could be exceptions. This opened the door to tax evasion which has cost pay-as-you-earn taxpayers billions. Webb alone dissented as, I trust, Callinan would have.

As a novelist, the more Callinan writes, the better he seems to get, his talent underpinned by his gift for all manner of surprising things: useful fast bowler, art collector, man of affairs, the man with the mop (legal adviser to the government), hermit.



But I must say I would have preferred a non-fiction piece with the eminent jurist giving us the benefit of his expert analysis of the tribunal.

To such an analysis Callinan, 75, would have brought his experience as a leading silk who did not specialise but was a brilliant all-rounder: he did commercial work, industrial relations, appeals, prosecution, libel whatever came up.

On libel, it is not as well-known as it might be that libel law has been unfairly rigged in favour of rogues in high places since 1275; or indeed that organised crime can be defined simply as: systematic criminal activity for money or power.

Callinan thus had a problem when he appeared for Channel 9 in a libel case brought by developer Sir Les Thiess. The sting of the libel was that Thiess frequently bribed Sir Johannes Bjelke-Petersen, to procure government contracts. However, Bjelke-Petersen prudently refused to go in the box and be cross-examined, and Callinan deployed the Prince of Denmark defence with devastating effect.

Callinan prosecuted Justice Lionel Murphy, of the High Court. Murphy decently did not use the POD defence: 'where are Garfield Barwick and Harry Gibbs?' (In eight years, they systematically enabled tax evaders to liberate some \$10 billion at today's rates from the Treasury.) Murphy was found guilty.

Covering up crimes is a crime in itself, perversion of the course of justice. Justice Harry Gibbs made an inauspicious start when he ran an inquiry into police corruption in 1963 and 1964. His finding that no Queensland police were corrupt encouraged bent cops to go on extorting bribes for another 23 years.

As the man with the mop, Callinan was acutely aware of the failure of the Gibbs inquiry, and was central to the success of the Fitzgerald Inquiry into top-down corruption during the Bjelkist Regime.

He persuaded Police Minister Bill Gunn to hold a proper inquiry, and persuaded Premier Mick Ahern (formerly a student at the MSC's Downlands College, Toowoomba) to appoint a Special Prosecutor. The team led by the Hon. (as he now is) Douglas Drummond QC prosecuted 238 and discouraged corruption with convictions against 148, a rate of 62% - about twice the adversary system's usual rate.

**A** GREAT civilization is not conquered from without until it has destroyed itself within.

- Caesar and Christ, Will Durant, Simon and Schuster, New York 1944, p.665.

Certain persons would be hugely relieved that the Gillard government signally failed to accept my recommendation that a Special Prosecutor work with the Royal Commission into sex crimes against children. That inquiry is expected to cost \$400 million. By contrast, the Fitzgerald inquiry cost \$20 million, and the Special Prosecutor cost \$19 million.

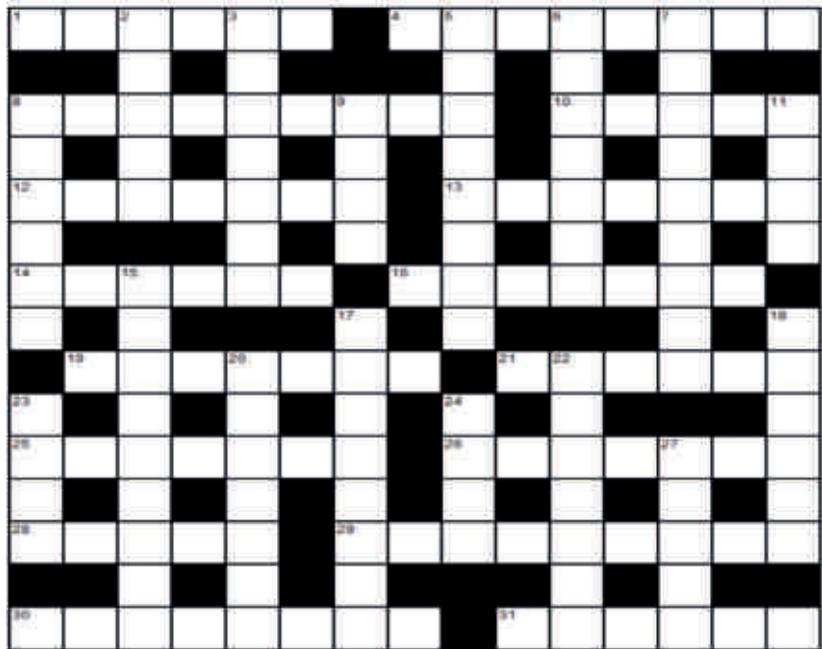
Callinan took a job on the High Court in 1998 and hence became a hermit. How does one pass the long watches of the night in the monstrous cavern erected by Barwick? Callinan had written a play in 1994; he now took to writing novels.

It would be churlish to say it is natural for a judge to prefer fiction to non-fiction, so I make no such suggestion.

Callinan said in 2000: 'I know that books have helped to preserve my sanity in many tedious and stressful situations.' In the same he armoured himself against any criticism by quoting Channing Pollock: '... a critic is a legless man who teaches running.'

EVAN WHITTON is a legal historian, a species pretty much extinct, like the pig-footed bandicoot. In the public interest, his fourth book on the law, *Our Corrupt Legal System*, (short title) can be downloaded free from [netk.net.au/whitton/ocls.pdf](http://netk.net.au/whitton/ocls.pdf). Disclosure: Ian Callinan launched Whitton's book, *The Cartel*, in 1998.

## ANNALS CRYPTIC CROSSWORD NO. 34



### Across Clues

- 1 Hungry Hugh eats pavlova with Samuel's mum (6)
- 4 Main ruler can be caught in net (8)
- 8 Reserve gospel's computer addresses (9)
- 10 Annoys when I'm returning very loud son (6)
- 12 Greek letter, strangely moronic..... (7)
- 13 .....to later change singer Lynn (7)
- 14 Chief lady loses heart, for the most part (6)
- 16 Unwashed family member with a leading nationalist (7)
- 19 Curiously silky as canvas over royal aboard ship (7)
- 21 General Peron in Swiss city (6)
- 25 Treasurer Joan's upset with these Dardanians (7)
- 26 Thus beef is trimmed, on Wednesday perhaps? (7)
- 28 Weed Kim cultivated on Wednesday perhaps? (7)
- 28 Put half of elms back and relax (3, 2)
- 29 Terror drops tenor on the house, and that's no mistake (5-4)
- 30 Fish follows topless fries with wine (8)
- 31 Isaac the recently made heavyweight? (6)

### Down Clues

- 1 Omani gets upset with the wife of Elimelech (5)
- 2 Butterfly for the fleet commander (7)
- 5 Disrespectful five left bankrupt (8)
- 6 Gamble foolishly about start of race on the roof (7)

7 Possibly fat auntie is to fill with shallow passion (9)

- 9 Oriental princess contributing to Lutheranism (4)
- 11 Washout for G.B.? (4)
- 15 Starts off to sink vessel containing writing fluid (3,6)
- 17 Mathematical physicist takes saint away from beer jug, then another (8)
- 18 Fishing gear bringing up deer and tom (6)
- 20 Remove top of head with the Spanish knife (7)
- 22 Sign cheque for silly don in Gaelic (7)
- 23 Turn up late with alien, Capone and others (2,2)
- 24 Islamic ruler seen in the mirror (4)
- 27 Informally greet bird (5)
- 27 Bird, for example, half ferret (5)

### SOLUTION TO CRYPTIC CROSSWORD NO. 33



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# MEDIA MATTERS

By JAMES MURRAY

## Thatcher right?

The newsprint winding sheet for Margaret Hilda Thatcher, the UK's first woman Prime Minister, was of imperial dimensions. To its eternal credit the Church of England tried to make the St Paul's funeral service a requiem for a departed soul.

But Britain's first PR PM David Cameron had other ideas; he gave the Thatcher funeral military trappings, seeking to spin her divisive term into something gloriously Conservative. For this reason, the spin included emphasis that Thatcher's state funeral was the first for a Prime Minister since Winston Churchill's, the subtext being that as Churchill turned the military disaster of Dunkirk into triumph, Thatcher had turned economic disaster. In top PR obituary mode, Cameron told the House of Commons: 'She made Britain great again.'

Well, yes if he means she made Greater London and its financial nexus more important than Great Britain. Hyperbole to suggest that Thatcher brought back the polity defined by her 19<sup>th</sup> century predecessor Benjamin Disraeli in his novel, *Sybil*: 'Two nations between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy; who are as ignorant of each other's thoughts and feelings as if they were dwellers in different zones, or inhabitants of different planets; who are formed from different breeding, and fed by different food...'

Thatcher's policies did, however, increase the gap between rich and poor, an increase that continues. Aptly, long years after she was ousted by her own party (not Churchill's fate), she died

in Greater London's posh Belgravia (her home reportedly tax-sheltered), not in a Lincolnshire poacher's cottage, near her native Grantham, nor in the kind of municipal house she freed for sitting tenants to buy.

Ben McIntyre's piece (*The Australian*, April 10, syndicated from *The Times* London as a pendant to Graeme Leach's magisterial obituary) was

outstanding. He gave the Church of England a cue to what might have been said in St Paul's by quoting Thatcher's entry line as PM: 'Where there is discord, let us bring harmony.'

The usually scholarly McIntyre omitted to mention (or footnote) that the line echoed the great prayer attributed to St Francis of Assisi which ends:

'For it is in giving that we receive;

'It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;

'It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.'

## Gillard's rule

Excellent to hear the lady who's not for turning out, the PM Julia Gillard, stress that the royal

commission on child sexual abuse concerned not only the Catholic Church but institutional abuse generally.

That she was responding to ABC radio's monofocused Marius Benson only added weight to her point. Perhaps ABC TV producers will heed it by including other than Catholic imagery in footage covering voice-overs.

'Institutional' and its variants are wide-ranging terms. But as remarked here before, they do not cover the most blatant form of child sexual abuse: pornographic abuse, a multi-million dollar industry.

## Don't blame the Alarm

THE CALL of the conscience is very unpleasant indeed, but then again, so is the strident noise of the fire alarm, and we don't normally complain about it when it saves our lives. So do we really value our spiritual lives the same way?

— Anonymous blogger, quoted by Father Charles Forget, Parish priest of St Leo the Great Catholic Parish, Brooklin, Canada. Father Charles had been criticised by some parents after he sent a letter home to parents of children in Catholic schools calling them back to the practice of the faith, and the sacrament of confession enclosing a traditional examination of conscience — a document outlining various common sins, to assist in reflection.



HEADLINES



Did the drafters of the commission's terms of reference decide that as an industry, pornography falls within the remit of the Productivity Commission? A question for the ABC's *Four Corners* which now surpasses its matrix, the BBC's *Panorama*.

### Charter hackery

If as part of her Jubilee Celebrations, Queen Elizabeth, had announced a Royal Charter for Gentlemen (sorry, Gentlefolk) of the Press, the announcement would have been applauded. Royal charters have been part of European life since the high Middle Ages. Such charters were granted to schools, guilds, hospitals, university colleges, and were echoed in the 19<sup>th</sup> People's Charter which, among other things, advocated vote by ballot and payment for MPs. American charter schools are a modern echo.

Accountants have charter status as have engineers, surveyors and doctors. So why the outrage, there and here, when the British Government offered journalists charter status?

Partly, charter status was seen as a spoonful of sugar to help the Leveson medicine go down. Partly, some remain convinced that press freedom justifies all means to the end of scrutinising those they deem rich and powerful or, in the case of celebrities, those they think they have created.

Not to be forgotten, Rupert Murdoch/News Corporation swallowed a nasty spoonful without sugar when it shut down *The News of the World*, and he/it continues taking its medicine through compensation for malfeasances while senior executives face their day in the criminal courts.

What of Finkelstein's local mimicry of Leveson? This was ill-timed from the moment the PM Julia Gillard announced that there were questions to be

answered (without defining the questions). The minister responsible, Stephen Conroy, completed the ill-timing by trying to crash loco reforms through parliamentary buffers, this while dragging the fibreglass and copper entanglements of his National Broadband Network, another ill-timed venture.

Arguably foot-in-scandal reporters do less harm than the increasing prevalence of those who mutate to political spin-doctors, speechwriters and lobbyists and (if they don't win parliamentary pre-selection) re-mutate as supposedly independent commentators.

Press council boss Michael Sexton could do worse than start a reform movement involving charter status for journalists whose aim is public interest journalism not ideological ventriloquism of their former masters.

Classic example of public interest journalism: the exclusive by Linton Besser and Nicky Phillips on CSIRO quackery in dealings with the Swiss-based multinational pharmaceutical company Novartis. (Fairfax Media. April 11).

### Listing to starboard

Lists come, lists go: a staple of editors with a need to lighten up. The 50 Most Powerful People List (*The Australian*, Mar 23-24) was notable for its lack of deference: the newspaper's chief proprietor Rupert Murdoch came in at only No 3, and that jointly with Robert Thomson, a five-star journalist: \*Christian Brothers education, \**Herald and Weekly Times* cadet, \**Financial Times* foreign correspondent, \**Times* editor, \**Wall Street Journal* editor-in-chief, currently in line to oversee the Murdochdom print satrapy.

A new crown prince? Not possible; crown princes must be of dynastic blood. One such Lachlan Murdoch, Network Ten chairman and media investor, came in at No 25, some way behind Mark Scott, ABC managing director;

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James Packer, Crown chairman, and David Gyngell, Nine Entertainment chief executive, at No 16, No 17 and No 19 respectively.

Others on the list included: No 1, Julia Gillard (but not jointly with her partner Tim Mathieson), No 2, Tony Abbott.

No mention of any major or minor poet, novelist, soldier or religious leader, although Gotye, a musician came in at No 20 and David Walsh, founder of the Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart came in at No 5 behind Communications Minister Stephen Conroy.

John McTernan, the PM's communications adviser made No 27. The list's *reduction ad absurdum* was Colin Barnett, West Australian Premier at No 50 with Bob Carr foreign minister at No 48 and Peta Credlin, Tony Abbott's chief of staff at No 49.

Perhaps the poets, novelists, soldiers and religious leaders should all try harder to get their names into News Limited files where list researchers can more easily find them.

On a slow news day, Chris Mitchell, *The Australian* editor-in-chief who made only No 43, might care to commission a sequel: The 50 Least Powerful List.

### Doyen's dart

Not on The 50 Most Powerful List and unlikely to be on The 50 Least Powerful List, Gerard Henderson is the doyen of commentators and currently Fairfax Media's starred, must-read columnist. His take on Communications Minister Stephen Conroy's media policy was as usual thought provoking.

In backing his statement that 'quite a few members of the left do not much like the media and oppose a free press', Henderson cited Arthur Calwell, appointed the information minister of John Curtin's Labor government in September

1943, adding that Calwell was a life-long, left-wing media hater. 'He was wont to rail against what he termed "the harlots of the press".'

Fair enough. It would have been even fairer had Henderson reminded younger readers that the harlot phrase was an echo of Rudyard Kipling's line about Max (*Daily Express*) Beaverbrook: 'Power without responsibility, the prerogative of the harlot throughout the ages.' Kipling's cousin, British PM Stanley Baldwin, got permission to use the line more generally.

Another citation was available: Keith Murdoch. The Menzies government, which preceded the Curtin government, appointed Murdoch Director General of Information. What then happened, Desmond Zwar describes in his sympathetic yet incisive biography, *In Search of Keith Murdoch*.

'Murdoch grew worried about what he would do if a newspaper deliberately published a news item that was false and harmful to Australia's war effort...'

During a conference he told editors and newspaper controllers that he wished to have their approval to *compel* (Zwar's emphasis) a newspaper to correct a mis-statement. Despite protests, the measure was approved.

Zwar sums up: 'It was gazetted and thus was promulgated a blanket power to one man which made him the effectual controller of the press, radio and all other media of publicity in Australia. It was a *gaffe*, the greatest in Keith Murdoch's professional life; it was a thunderbolt that made him a failure as Director General of Information; it was a negation of all the things upon

which he had built his life as a newspaperman.'

Indeed. And ironically not least of the things was Murdoch's breach of censorship rules in writing the Gallipoli Letter that made his name.

### Up and at 'em

The culture wars have been re-declared. At issue the precedence of the history behind the acronyms ANZAC (Australian New Zealand Army

## Making a difference

A MAN WALKING along a deserted beach at sunset noticed a young child in the distance. He watched as the child picked up small objects from the sand threw them back into the sea. As he drew near to the child he asked what he was doing. 'I'm throwing these starfish back into the ocean. It's low tide now and they have been washed ashore. If I don't throw them back into the water they will die.' Somewhat amused the man pointed out that there were countless thousands of starfish stranded on the beach: 'You can't possibly get to all of them. What you're doing won't make the slightest difference.' The young boy smiled as he bent down and picked up yet another starfish and threw it back into the sea; he replied 'Well, I made a difference to that one.'



*A 'baffling multiplication of categories of sexuality' now can claim 'rights' – including transsexualism, transvestism, bi-genderism, genderqueerism, and pansexuality to name a few.*

# FLEXIBLE GENDERS AND FANCIFUL SELVES

By Wanda Skowronska



WHILE THERE has been much recent focus on 'same sex marriage' in the media, there is another dark horse emerging from the politically correct *apologencia*. Recently in the United States, a ruling by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission made what is known as 'transgender' – a protected status under the 1964 Civil Rights Act. This means that not only are transgenders recognised but also, as Catholic moral theology professor Christian Brugger states, a 'baffling multiplication of categories of sexuality' now can claim 'rights' – including transsexualism, transvestism, bi-genderism, genderqueerism, pansexuality to name a few.<sup>1</sup>

As Brugger – who is a Senior Fellow of Ethics at the Culture of Life Foundation and holds the J. Francis Cardinal Stafford Chair of Moral Theology at St. John Vianney Seminary in Denver, Colorado further explains – 'transgender' is the catchall term referring to all persons who do not identify with their sex.

Within this umbrella term 'bi-genders' are those who alternate between feminine and masculine gender typed behaviours in different situations, 'transvestites' find satisfaction in dressing in clothes of the opposite sex and 'genderqueers' refer to persons who do not identify themselves as either male or female – some feeling they are both male and female, some neither male nor female and some believing they are 'third gender'.

Any identification is acceptable and it can change over time into any desired permutation.<sup>2</sup>

What would Martin Luther King think of transgender 'rights' being included under 'civil rights'? And what is all this about?

The transgender issue has not suddenly emerged; it has been on the boil for many years. The first calls for recognition of transgenderism came from a German physician called Magnus Hirschfeld (1868-1935) who observed and categorised 64 possible types of sexual intermediary ranging from masculine heterosexual male to feminine homosexual male.

His advocacy of 'rights' for all genders found a voice in John Money who was born in New Zealand to a Plymouth Brethren family and who later completed his studies at Harvard.

He became professor of paediatrics and medical psychology at Johns Hopkins University and furthered the notion of the social construction of gender from the 1950s onwards and wrote *Man & Woman, Boy & Girl* (1972) which was used as a college level textbook.

Money coined the term 'gender role' in 1955 proposing that the term gender role signifies all those things that a person says or does to disclose himself or herself as having the status of boy or man, girl or woman, respectively. That is, having a gender is a socially constructed role and is not limited to the fact that one is a 'male' or 'female' at birth.

After homosexuality was removed from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) in 1973, the challenge remained to remove any negative reference to transgenderism or gender identity disorder from the manual.

This transgender advocacy has been fuelled by various 'rights' groups and with stories such as the one involving the children on the devoutly Christian Caribbean island who are born female but because of a genetic abnormality, become male at puberty. In this case, their lack of the male hormone dihydrotestosterone at birth continues until puberty when it is suddenly activated and these female children become male.<sup>3</sup>

However, if one thinks about it, the case of these children could point to an entirely different conclusion – to the fact that they could *not* 'construct' their identity, it was indeed biologically 'given' and furthermore accepted by the children involved. None of the

## No Alteration in Faith

DEVELOPMENT [of Catholic Doctrine] implies that each point of doctrine is expanded within itself; while *alteration* [on the contrary] suggests that a thing has been changed from what it was into something different.

— St Vincent of Lerins, [died before 450 AD] First Notebook, chapter 23, quoted in the *Roman Breviary* for the second reading at Matins for Friday in the 27th week of the year.

## There was, like, nothing to say

IS VAGUENESS simply an unexplainable descent into nonsense? Did Vagueness begin as an antidote to the demands of political correctness in the classroom, a way of sidestepping the danger of speaking forbidden ideas? Does Vagueness offer an undereducated generation a technique for camouflaging a lack of knowledge? In 1991, I visited the small town of Bridgton, Maine, on the evening that the residents of Cumberland County gathered to welcome their local National Guard unit home from the Gulf War. It was a stirring moment. Escorted by the lights and sirens of two dozen fire engines from surrounding towns, the soldiers marched down Main Street. I was standing near the end of the parade and looked around expectantly for a platform, podium, or microphone. But there were to be no brief remarks of commendation by a mayor or commanding officer. There was to be no pastoral prayer of thanks for the safe return of the troops. Instead, the soldiers quickly dispersed. The fire engines rumbled away. The crowd went home. A few minutes later, Main Street stood empty. Apparently there was, like, nothing to say.

- 'The decline and fall of American English, and stuff.' See Clark Whelton, "What Happens in Vagueness Stays in Vagueness," *City Journal*, vol 21. no. 1 (Winter, 2011).

children when female wanted to be male and once they were male none wanted to be female – their biological changes were more significant than social 'gender construction,' or their 'choice'.

While no one disputes the fact that some men and women have experienced gender identity disorder throughout history, societies have traditionally accepted that a person was male or female and that experiences outside of this were anomalies and 'difficulties' requiring sympathetic care.

In 1965 psychiatrists and plastic surgeons at Johns Hopkins university introduced a 'sex change' program which became a 'cause celebre' in the media.

One of their first 'projects' was the Canadian boy David Reimer who was one of twin boys born in Manitoba Canada in 1966. Reimer was born a healthy male but due to damaged sex organs was 'reassigned' as a female from infancy onwards by John Money mentioned above.

David was dressed in female clothes and attended sessions with Money to further the process. He was given the name Brenda and various operations were performed on him. Despite the frilly dresses, 'Brenda' did not feel he was a girl and was not accepted by other female peers. The reassignment also involved his twin brother in various

sexual behaviours with his 'female' brother.

From the age of 11 onward Reimer began to question his 'female' identity and then decided to live as a male from the age of 14, no longer attending 'sessions' with Money, sessions which he found traumatic rather than therapeutic.

He had further surgery to reassign him as a male, or recover what was left of his maleness. After his childhood experience, Reimer urged others not to engage in gender change. Sadly, he suffered from severe depression from the age of 13 onwards and he committed suicide in 2004. His twin brother who had mental health problems had committed suicide in 2002. No comment on the 'failure' of this 'project' was issued by John Money, who saw media criticism of it due to 'right wing' bias and 'antifeminism'.<sup>4</sup> However, the sex reassignment project, which had been used on thousands of infants, was discontinued in 1979.

The advocacy for 'transgender right' has nonetheless continued and has involved some Christian churches.

The US Episcopalian Convention has approved new anti-discrimination language for transgender church members and is on the way to allow transgenders (remember all the varieties quoted above?) to become clergy.

Perhaps they should listen to the words of Walt Heyer, who in his book

*Paper Gender*, states that it is damaging and destructive to engage in sex change.<sup>5</sup> He should know – he lived through the experience himself as 'Laura Jensen' before finding his way to Christ's healing power after years of confusion.

He was horrified at the suppression of unpleasant facts about transgenders, saying that their suicide rate is as high as 30-40%.<sup>6</sup> Heyer submitted testimony against the Massachusetts Transgender Rights and Hate Crimes Bill H502 saying that there is 'Nothing normal about wanting to become a different gender. There's something desperately wrong with them ... the advocates are trying to remove any required psychological treatment.'<sup>7</sup>

Heyer runs a website with stories of those who have regretted their 'sex change' attempts.<sup>8</sup> He says that psychological treatment is needed for transgenders – but of a helpful kind, giving some outline of what is happening within the person, not the 'experiments' of John Money and his associates.

He adds there is a 'darker side' to the transgender story which has left a fraudulent and destructive trail of vulnerable souls who have been harmed by the 'ideas' of Money and his followers. He raises a poignant plea to all who have ears to hear what he is saying asking all, especially Christians, to point out the other side of the transgender agenda wherever possible to young people who are most at risk.

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WANDA SKOWRONSKA is a registered psychologist who works as a counsellor in inner city schools in Sydney. She has recently been awarded a PhD in Psychology/Theology at Melbourne's John-Paul II Institute. She has done voluntary work for the Catholic pro life organisation *Family Life International*, and is a regular contributor to *Annals*.

1. E. Christian Brugger 'The New Pangenderism: Transgenders, Polysexuals and Sex Reassignment Surgery', 25/4/2012, Zenit. <http://www.zenit.org/article-34663?l=english>
2. Ibid.
3. More on this phenomenon can be found on the following site: [http://majorityrights.com/weblog/comments/human\\_protandry\\_showing\\_that\\_sex\\_roles\\_are\\_not\\_socially\\_constructed](http://majorityrights.com/weblog/comments/human_protandry_showing_that_sex_roles_are_not_socially_constructed)
4. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Money](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Money)
5. Walt Heyer *Paper Genders: Pulling the Mask Off the Transgender Phenomenon* (USA: Make Waves publishing, 2011). Heyer's statement can be found on the following site: "This surgery is absolutely destructive" -- sad message from former transgender to warn others'. [http://www.massresistance.org/docs/govt11/tranny\\_bill/testimony/walt\\_heyer.html](http://www.massresistance.org/docs/govt11/tranny_bill/testimony/walt_heyer.html)
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Heyer's website is: <http://www.sexchangereget.com/>

*Controversy was something Mannix lived and breathed – from the time of his arrival in Melbourne exactly a hundred years ago until the end of his long life – he died in 1963.*

## DR. MANNIX

*By Barry Oakley*

**B**ACK IN what now seems an innocent and pristine time – mid 20th century Melbourne – the inhabitants of the then slum suburb of Collingwood were treated every weekday to the spectacle of a tall, elderly gentleman on his morning walk. It was Daniel Mannix, Archbishop of Melbourne, top hat on head, stick in hand, proceeding from Raheen, his grand Kew residence, to St Patrick's Cathedral.

This daily walk was emblematic of the man-a man captured in all his contrareity by James Griffin in this fine biography. There have been an unbelievable eight biographies already, ranging from the hagiographical to the respectful, but none like this one : comprehensive, penetrating and stylish, illuminated by a mischievous wit that mirrors that of its subject.

Unlike his unassuming predecessor, Archbishop Carr, who had lived in the cathedral presbytery with his priests, Mannix lived alone in Raheen, the mansion given him by the dubious figure of John Wren, whose influence extended from gambling and racing to politics. His acceptance of this generous but not wholly altruistic gesture provoked much controversy.

Controversy was something Mannix lived and breathed – from the time of his arrival in Melbourne exactly a hundred years ago until the end of his long life (he died in 1963 ). It was as if he trained for it: daily walks, spartan meals, a three-bar radiator to get him through Melbourne's winters, and to bed at 10 o'clock after a cup of Ovaltine.

Disputation seemed to invigorate him, and Griffin's navigation through their complexities is masterly. He did not accept, Mannix said in his first speech in

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Daniel Mannix – Beyond the Myths,  
by James Griffin. Garratt Publishing.  
397pp. RRP \$44.95

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Australia, the idea that bishops should retire to the sacristy and keep their thoughts to themselves. He meant to speak out – and he did.

He came out fighting first on State Aid. 'The one great stain on the statute book' – the government's failure to provide financial assistance to Catholic schools. Remarks like these were far more inflammatory than they seem now, when state aid is taken for granted. Sectarian divisions ran deep, and such comments, made by a Catholic dignitary new to the country, only made things worse. The Melbourne Argus's response was typical: Mannix had yet to realise 'the hopelessness of the campaign – the injustice is all on the Catholic side'.

But this was only a skirmish compared to what was soon to follow. Mannix

had brought with him a lifelong (and understandable) animosity towards the British, who had ruled Ireland for hundreds of years. The great majority of Australians were Empire loyalists, alert to the slightest suggestion of lack of patriotism during the Great War.

The situation was flammable and became more so at the time of the conscription referenda of 1916 and 1917, for which William Morris Hughes, the Prime Minister at the time, was a virulent apologist. Mannix's opposition was equally forthright. On January 1917, Foundation Day, he made his most notorious remark : Australia was engaged in in 'an ordinary sordid trade war'.

As Griffin points out, such competitive demagoguery entrench sectarianism for a generations. And there was more divisive to come – he gave his blessing to someone who almost became his surrogate son: B A Santamaria, who created an organisation to combat what he saw as the threat of Communism in the unions after World War Two. It was given the superbly anodyne title of The Movement, and it won the battle in the unions but lost the war – splitting the Labour Party, and rendering it powerless for years.

Much of this has been covered by earlier biographers – but Griffin approaches them from a different angle. He sees a man who became a victim of his own self-regard – a man who seemed to accept adulation as his due; a self-dramatiser whose finest theatrical moment was his arrest in 1920 by the British Navy off the coast of Ireland to prevent him causing trouble there.

Such was Mannix's mix of popularity and notoriety that hardly a Catholic home, in Victoria at least, was without a bust, medallion or photograph.



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BARRY OAKLEY is a novelist and playwright. His most recent book is *Mug Shots*, a memoir.

## RANDOM THOUGHTS ON THE TRAIN

*Every day more than one million passengers travel on 2365 daily services over the 2080 kms of railway tracks around New South Wales.*

*Among the one million passengers was Joe Meagher.*

# THE EIGHT-O-FIVE NEWS

*By* Max Barrett

**I**N EARLY DAYS of Joe's attachment to the 8.05, one morning a naïve commuter thought of a way to silence the prophet. Very urbanely he leant over from the seat behind and dropped the morning newspaper on Joe's lap, saying – in a tone between pleasant and patronising – “You might like to catch up on the latest.”

Joe Meagher looked over his shoulder, then turned a full 180 degrees. He bestowed on the would-be donor an expression of such gratitude as might have stemmed from an offer of paradise.

“Look, that is exceptionally kind of you. Your gesture makes up for the day a brusque gentleman offered me lozenges which, he assured me, brought on instant laryngitis. However, I must pass up your kind offer. This stuff (Joe indicated the tabloid) is corrosive. It rots the mind. Look,” Joe said, moving back into the spare seat beside the Distributor of Good Reading, “I'll show you what I mean.”

Joe proceeded to smooth out the paper, the while quoting a couple of lines from William Cowper:

Thou god of our idolatry, the press...

Thou ever-bubbling spring of endless lies ...

**F**ATHER MAX BARRETT is a Redemptorist priest now resident in Sydney. This piece was the second in a popular series that we ran in *Annals* in 2002, following the career of Joe Meagher over quite a few train rides. A number of readers have asked us to re-run the series. *Annals* is happy to do so and we hope that our new readers will enjoy Joe Meagher as much as we did when first we ran it.

“Now. Here we are. I wonder how many trees had to be cut down to keep us ignorant today? Headline: Blatant Violation Of Human Rights. Well, no one can quarrel with that sort of emphasis. Where are we directing our moral

indignation today? Ah, Indonesia. Last week it was Zimbabwe. Some time back, South Africa. Until recently we made concerted efforts to keep Tiananmen Square in the public mind, but a subsequent good trade balance with China has shown up the impropriety of that particular focus.

“Have you noticed,” Joe stroked the air gracefully, and commuters in seeing positions followed his finger as though it were the baton of a conductor, “have you ever noticed that our press is a mite selective as regards recipients of our censure? Freedom of religion in a country like Saudi Arabia is stifled to zilch, zero. But I doubt whether there have been editorials decrying the deprivation of this particular human right for the migrant workers in that particular country. When we find a

substitute for oil it might change, but at present ... I am simply echoing a point Lord Northcliffe made a hundred years ago when he said the power of the Press is very great – but not so great as its power to suppress.” Joe ran his eye over the next page's offerings.

“Ah! Civil liberties ... Exhilarating, isn't it, this good sensation that comes over us when we can sink the boot into some other nation. We march on parliament house or some country's embassy. We end up feeling flustered and good – like a hen with a warm vent after laying an egg.”



At this, some passengers registered a shocked intake of breath, of disapproval. From others – especially from those who supposedly had not been listening – muffled guffaws.

“Actually, we have to take a more honest look at our own record on human liberties. Our Aboriginal brothers and sisters would have some reservations as regards our track record.

“What other pearls are the media casting before is this undeserving day? Da-dum, da-dum, ... Hmmm. Mainly politically-correct statements. Gay Couple Claim Right To Adopt Aboriginal Child. And – aha! – here’s a well-chewed chestnut: Leading Theologian Defies The Pope. You notice the theologian is not named. And it’s always a leading theologian! I’ve always found it absorbing that all dissenting theologians are invariably ‘leading’ theologians.

“Over the page ... Yes! Of course: the regulatory offering of a well-endowed lady who has thrown on a negligee which has very nearly missed.” Almost imperceptibly, Joe Meagher’s tone of voice changed. There was suppressed fire as he went on. “Why don’t the militant feminists rage against this cheap exploitation of their sex? And wouldn’t you think that this sort of exposure was over-exposed by now?”

The train slid smoothly into Hurstville Station. “What’s that?” Joe looked at his reading companion with some consternation. “You get off here? Disappointing. However, if you buy another paper – though I advise against it – we still have 61 pages to work through.”

With his old-world charm, Joseph Meagher stood, stepped aside, and watched the receding figure of his literary friend as the latter walked stiffly down the aisle. On resuming his seat Joe was silent a while, then nodded to himself: Yes, King Alfred was right: we meet a violent enemy with courage; but we meet a slinky or a sophisticated enemy with criminal forbearance. As Chesterton said, in the *Ballad of the White Horse*,

I have a vision, and I know  
The heathen shall return.  
They shall not come with warships,  
They shall not waste with brands,  
But books be all their eating,  
And ink be on their hands

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– Editor, *Annals*

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Yea, this shall be the sign of them,  
The sign of the dying fire;  
And Man made like a half-wit,  
That knows not of his sire  
Joe gave a sigh that carried from

Sydenham to Sutherland, and said:  
“From daily-dosed dim-wittedness,  
deliver us, dear Lord.”

Next month: Courtesy

## Therese Desqueyroux

Director Claude Miller's film, based on Francois Mauriac's novel, and co-scripted with Natalie Carter, is his adieu and requiem. Audrey Tautou divests herself of gamine charm to play the title role of a woman who, in pursuit of bookish liberation in 1920s Paris, commits a family crime which is kept in the family until she is safe from state prosecution.

Gilles Lellouche nails the character of her dourly protective yet eventually forgiving husband Bernard; Anne Anais Demoustier is her teenage friend and Stanley Weber is Jean Azevedo, the lover with whom she voyages under red sails but not into the sunset.

The locations are the lakes, wild woods and pine plantations of Les Landes to the south of Bordeaux which Mauriac made his literary region as much as Walter Scott made the Trossachs, William Faulkner, Yoknapawtopha County or Thomas Hardy, Wessex.

If Miller does not completely capture the Catholic tensions of Mauriac's work - profound, redemptive, transcendent - he does remind us of Mauriac's influence on other writers, not least Graham Greene, who failed to win the Nobel Prize for Literature while Mauriac did (1952).

M★★★★NFFV.

### Drift

To escape from an abusive husband, Kat Kelly (Robyn Malcolm) drives across Australia with her sons Andy (Myles Pollard) and Jimmy (Xavier Samuel) to a remote township where they battle, until Andy quits his job and with Jimmy launches Kelly Brothers Surf Gear.

But not tout suite. They ally themselves to a Kombi-van hippy and surf photographer JB (Sam Worthington, cast against type and surprisingly funny) who hits town with his Hawaiian friend Lani (Lesley-Ann Brandt).

Into their beach party idyll roars a bikie gang; drugs hard and soft complicate matters to a point where their only hope is the prize money from a surf contest.

The script by Morgan O'Neil, who co-directed with Ben Nott, is based on the reality of the establishment almost

## MOVIES

### By James Murray

half-a-century ago of what is now a multi-million dollar industry.

The acting may not be as well-crafted or as polished as the surfboards but the movie is a bold effort; and the Margaret River footage, shot by surf cinematographers Rick Rifici and Rick Jakovich, and edited by Marcus D'Arcy, is superlative.

M★★★★NFFV.

### Song for Marion

Writer/director Paul Andrew Williams casts Sixties scene-makers Vanessa Redgrave and Terence Stamp in line with their current age as Marion and Arthur, a married couple living on a London council estate without a church spire in sight.

Arthur's love for Marion extends to pushing her wheelchair to the local community hall where she sings in a choir while he grumps around, at odds with his son James (Christopher Ecclestone) but not the latter's daughter Jennifer (Orla Hill)

Marion's solo number, *True Colours*, is her swan song. Her death leaves her family and the choir bereft. They rally under the influence of the choir leader Elizabeth (Gemma Arterton) who enters them in a competition.

Do they win? Does Arthur sing? Well, he does know the words of *How do You Speak to an Angel*.

The ensemble acting is high calibre with Arterton the sparkler. But the characters are cut-outs, okay, not paper, stout, re-cycled cardboard. It's as if they were born clutching a pension card not a christening cup.

Williams compounds the drabness by drawing his comedy from the incongruity of old people singing rock, jazz and soul songs, inspired, he says by his grandparents (not his parents).

In other words, he has imposed on his baby-boomer choir the characteristics of the tougher more taciturn pre-war and wartime generation.

Getting the pensionable baby-boomer Mick Jagger to do a cameo might have been beyond budget. But surely Ringo Starr could've been hired to bang the drums?

PG★★★★SFFV.

### Performance

Director Yaron Zilberman and co-writer Seth Grossman present Fugue, a quartet whose cellist leader Peter (Christopher Walken) announces that he has early onset Parkinson's disease and must find a substitute.

The shock of the other members – violinists Daniel (Mark Ivanir), and Robert (Philip Seymour Hoffman) and violist Juliette (Catherine Keener) – is multiplied by the 25 years they have made classical music together.

Their ensemble acting is as fine as the music they play. But their shock induces an interlude of adultery by Robert (married to Juliette) which shows that Hoffman can do inertness. The other interlude involves Daniel with his violinist pupil, Alexandra (Robert and Juliette's daughter), played with carefree if temporary abandon by Imogen Poots.

The quartet's climactic challenge is Beethoven's String Quartet No 14 in C-sharp Minor, Opus 131. Zilberman uses this to create an astringent ending which undercuts potential schmaltz. His is another movie aimed not at the over-indulged 18-35 box-office cohort but

## Not so long ago...

HE [J.R.R. Tolkien] thought hatred of Catholics was common in Britain. His mother, to whom he was most deeply devoted, was a martyr because of her loyalty to the Catholic Faith, and his wife Edith was turned out of her guardian's house when she was received into the Church. In 1963 he wrote in a letter:

And it still goes on. I have a friend who walked in procession in the Eucharistic Congress in Edinburgh and who reached the end with a face drenched with spittle of the populace which lined the road and were only restrained by mounted police from tearing the garments and the faces of the Catholics.

— George Sayer, 'Recollections of J.R.R. Tolkien,' in *Tolkien: A Celebration*, ed. Joseph Pearce, Harper Collins, London, 1999; quoted *The Chesterton Review*, vol. xxviii, Feb/May 2002 p.198.

at its 40-100 counterpart who should not confuse it with the 1970 psychodrama in which Mick Jagger starred and Stanley Meadows created the cinema prototype for weird Cockney gang leaders.

M★★★NFFV

### Goddess

Director Mark Lamprell's romantic comedy turns on a jewel of an idea: housebound on a Tasmanian farm with two impish sons, Elspeth Dickens is given Skype equipment by her Antarctica-based scientist husband James to alleviate her loneliness.

She uses Skype to put on private shows for him which go viral on the internet and make her the target for an advertising queen bee.

Laura Michelle Kelly (of the Isle of Wight Kellys) plays Elspeth with an enthralling charm, undercut with a self-deprecating humour. Magda Zsubanski's queen bee is a witty and welcome departure from her sad sack appearances in the dismal Kath and Kim comedies.

As James, Ronan Keating gets to sing a closing duet with Kelly to which the recorded love song of a whale is added.

PG ★★★★★SFFV.

### The Company You Keep

Director/star Robert Redford spent a decade putting this thriller together; this shows in its lack of pace. He works from a script by Lem Dobbs based on Neil Gordon's novel about Sixties members of the Weather Underground, an offshoot of Students for a Democratic Society, whose violence focused on the Vietnam War.

Redford plays Jim Grant, a lawyer, who declines to defend a member, Sharon Solarz (Susan Sarandon), arrested by the FBI on her way to give herself up.

Ben Shepard (Shia LaBeouf) is the eager-beaver reporter who uncovers Grant's past as a Weatherman, real name Nick Sloan. Sloan must leave his motherless daughter Isabel (Jackie Evancho) and go on the run to find Mimi Lurie (Julie Christie). She is the only person able to clear him of a charge of murder (shown in a flashback that looks like the Symbionese Liberation Army bank robbery involving media heiress Patti Hearst under duress).

## Mobs

**A** MOB MAY cry out many things, right and wrong. But a mob cries "No Popery," it does not cry out "Not so much Popery," still less "Only a moderate admixture of Popery". It shouts "Three cheers for Mr Gladstone". It does not shout out "A gradual and revolutionary social tendency towards some ideal similar to that of Gladstone". ... The mob of Jerusalem [in the time of Jesus] is no exception to the rule, but rather an extreme example of it.

— G.K.Chesterton, *The New Jerusalem*, pp.115-116

Redford as director allows himself as star too many linking shots where he tugs his cap down and looks hunted.

Star cameos by Sam Elliott, Brendan Gleeson, Terrence Howard, Anna Kendrick, Richard Jenkins, Nick Nolte and Stanley Tucci do a lot to enliven interest but not quicken the pace.

Will Mimi come through to save Grant, once her lover, and the father of a child given up for adoption? Or will she sail off to continue her lucrative and insouciant trade as a pot smuggler?

The answer is written at the end of the movie in which Redford as producer should've ordered cuts: it is two hours long.

### Official Classifications key

G: for general exhibition;  
PG: parental guidance  
recommended for  
persons under 15 years;  
M 15+: recommended for  
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to persons under the age of 15;  
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NFFV: Not For Family Viewing.

Intriguingly, Redford as director has Redford as star say that the basic betrayal of the terrorists was not of the state but of their children. Overall the film is an exercise in nostalgia not hindsight. The difference? Nostalgia sees past events glowingly; hindsight attempts to analyse them, such analysis might have asked whether violence in the USA set the example for violence in less democratic societies which continues.

Trivia note: your reviewer recalls the movement as the Weathermen not the Weather Underground (current political correctness?). In any case, the faction got its name from the Bob Dylan line: 'You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows.'

M★★★NFFV.

### A Place for Me

William Borgens is a novelist blocked since his wife Erica left him. One of the difficulties of scripting acclaimed writers is creating quotable examples of their prose and poetry. Writer/director Josh Boone neatly avoids the problem; he has Borgens (Greg Kinnear, at his most quizzical) quote not his own work but short-story writer Raymond Carver's.

Computers have deprived directors of a standard scene about writers, blocked and unblocked: ripping the paper from the typewriter roller. Boone substitutes brisk adultery between Borgens and his neighbour's wife, Tricia (Kristen Bell) while he awaits the return of Erica (Jennifer Connolly, at her most captivating).

In addition Borgens is steering his children Samantha (Lily Collins) and Rusty (Nat Wolff), both writers, through their fraught teenage relationships.

Oddly, at a time when filmmakers are under pressure not to show characters smoking tobacco, there is no equivalent pressure on preventing them showing young characters smoke pot and sniff coke.

MA15+★★★NFFV.

### NO

Director Pablo Larrain presents a chilli-hot South American take on the role of spin in modern politics. He locates his movie in Chile during 1988 when President Augusto Pinochet declared a plebiscite to decide, Yes or

No, on whether his presidency should be extended.

Anti-Pinochet forces contact advertising agency whiz Rene Saavedra (Gael Garcia Bernal, in nimble mode) to mount an ad-campaign. Despite the opposition of his boss (Alfredo Castro), Saavedra signs up.

His campaign is, however, soft-sell rather than hard-sell on the excesses of Pinochet regime, and draws initial criticism not only from Pinochet adherents, but from those who hired him.

Proof that Saavedra's campaign is working comes when the Pinochet adherents hire his boss to mimic his approach.

The result: Pinochet's ouster, Larrain's movie, shot on vintage tape to get a match with archival footage, is satirically akin to such American and British takes such as *Tail of the Dog* and *Out of the Loop*.

As his ending hints (Saavedra and his boss together again pushing consumer goods), ad-spin cynicism tends to turn political party ideals to brands, a declension which arguably began with the 1972 Whitlam *It's time*, campaign.

And not even premium brands, the own-brand kind, subject to profit-first adulteration.

M★★★NFFV.

### Cheerful Weather for the Wedding

The title is an ironic synopsis: bride in waiting Dolly (Felicity Jones) day dreams of a romantic summer gone with Joseph (Luke Treadaway), a process stimulated with enough rum to intoxicate a dreadnought crew while the groom Owen (James Norton) wanders and wonders.

Her mother Hetty Thatcham (Elizabeth McGovern) tries to co-ordinate the arrival of various relatives all as daffy or dodderly as she is scatty.

If nothing else director Donald Rice's comedy-drama set in 1932 scripted by Mary Henely-Magill and based on a Julia Strachey novel suggests that class nostalgia is as strong as class warfare. The tension, such as it is, turns on the question of whether Joseph will Lochinvar Dolly away.

Despite the presence of McGovern (the countess in *Downton Abbey*) some

## Danger of becoming like the enemy

**I**N HIS FAMOUS 'Long Telegram from Moscow. in February 1946, in which he set official Washington afire with the assessment that the Soviet Union was 'committed fanatically to the belief that with the U.S. there can be no permanent *modus vivendi*,' [George F.] Kennan had also issued another powerful warning, though it got little attention. 'We must have courage and self-confidence to cling to our own methods and conceptions of human society,' he wrote. 'After all, the greatest danger that can befall us in coping with this problem of Soviet Communism is that we shall allow ourselves to become like those with whom we are coping.' Whether the enemy at hand be Stalinist Russia or al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, those cautionary words are equally applicable. But such moral clarity has not been much in evidence.

— Todd S. Purdam, 'One Nation under Arms,' *Vanity Fair*, January 2012. Kennan was a career diplomat and historian. He died in 2005 at the age of 101.

may spot furnishing indicators that the Thatchams are closer to downstairs than upstairs, in a word middle class even (horror) upper lower middleclass or possibly fake: the façade of their country house does not match the suburban studio interiors.

PG★★★SFFV.

### Hyde Park on Hudson

Confusing title for Sydneyites and Londoners. The history is also dubious, but that has not deterred English director Roger Michell from presenting an intimately romantic version of the relationship between President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (Bill Murray) and his distant cousin-close assistant, Daisy Suckley (Laura Linney).

Cast against type Murray does well and uses his props, cigarette holder, glasses and leg callipers to great effect.

Linney, as she does in ambivalent roles, builds her distaste into her characterisation as diffidence. She plays the part knowing that Roosevelt's extra-marital romance was with his wife Eleanor's social secretary Lucy Mercer, a romance that prompted Eleanor to offer him a divorce. (Perhaps the American scriptwriter Richard Nelson should have consulted Michael Sexton, chairman of the Australian Press Council, who made the Mercer reference (*SMH*, Mar 27).

Central to the story is the 1939 visit of King George VI (Samuel West) and his wife Elizabeth (Olivia Colman) to Hyde Park, the country estate belonging to Roosevelt's mother. The king defeats

his stutter sufficiently to remark after eating one hotdog, 'I think I shall have another.'

*The Hotdog Entente* might have been a catchier title.

Your reviewer concludes that the king's stutter resulted from his father bullying him in German when he was a boy, bullying which left him confused when he had to speak English.

M★★★SFFV

### Olympus Has Fallen

In a melodrama contest, director Antoine Fuqua attempts to outdo premier *Die Hard* director, John McTiernan; Fuqua's melodrama concerns the siege and sacking of the White House, but manages only a stupendous pratfall. This despite the try-hard efforts of Gerard Butler playing FBI agent Mike Banning as a surrogate of *Die Hard* detective John McLane.

Bruce Willis has made that role his own through a mix of hard-case violence and wry humour that dilutes the gore.

Despite Butler's co-producer status, Fuqua gives him no such mix (though it is common in Glasgow, Butler's birthplace). The result is violence that becomes so ludicrous that it evokes laughter.

Aaron Eckhart plays Benjamin Asher with the outraged angst of a president who is the captive of terrorists not opinion polls. As Banning's wife Leah, a physician, Radha Mitchell does what she can with an underwritten part. Morgan Freeman and Angela Bassett get

to do startled as reserve president and secret service chief. Finley Jacobsen as the president's son, Conor, is Banning's prime rescue.

Obviously the State Department was not consulted. The culprits are North Koreans led by the sadistic Kang (Rick Yune). In an attempt at balance, a rogue, anti-capitalist FBI agent (Dylan McDermott) is thrown into the pot-boiler.

The coincidence of previewing this thriller, and later seeing real-time footage from the Boston Marathon explosions raises two questions: first, are film-makers editing their fiction on the template of reality? Second, does the film industry create scenarios of violence which terrorists mimic?

Historical note. Some hold that the White House was so named because it had to be painted white as a result of British forces torching it during the War of 1812.

MA15+★★NFFV.

### Return to Nim's Island

Bindi Irwin makes her movie debut in this sequel about a Barrier Reef Island where Nim's friends are the island's animals. Irwin, teenage daughter of Steve Irwin, has one advantage over Abigail Breslin who created the role: like her late father, Bindi is such a natural that the message must have gone out to animals, 'Don't try to out-act this kid.'

Director Brendan Maher works from Cathy Randall's script based on Wendy Orr's book. While Nim's father Jack (Matthew Lillard) is in Brisbane fighting off developers who want to turn the island into, not into a casino but a pirate-themed resort (close enough), Nim has to deal with an immediate threat: father and sons poachers played by John Waters, Sebastian Gregory and Jack Pearson.

Nim's allies are the animals including a seal; her father's assistant, Felix (Nathan Derrick) and a visitor Edmund (Toby Wallace) reinforce them. Disappointingly they do not defeat the villains on their own. In the nick of time, Nim's father returns to deliver the necessary swift uppercut.

G★★★SFFV.

### Snitch

When Jason (Jon Bernthal) gets a mandatory, 10-year jail sentence for

drug trafficking, his father, haulage contractor John Mathews (Dwayne Johnson), persuades attorney Joanne Keeghan (Susan Sarandon) to let him go undercover and catch the Mexican Cartel kingpins, using his smashing supply of rigs as he hunts the cartel and is hunted by them.

Director Ric Roman Waugh's main difficulty is not keeping the crashes in frame but Johnson, an actor so big he makes Arnold Schwarzenegger look as if he needs to eat cornflakes and go to the gym.

Admirably Waugh evades the rattletrap cliché of a romance between Mathews and Keeghan; into his second marriage, Mathews has an unusual plot duty: getting the son of his first marriage out of jail while protecting the daughter of his second marriage, this while comforting his first wife and consoling his second.

Or vice versa.

Give that actor an Oscar moulded from popcorn.

M★★★NFFV.

### Sleepwalk with Me

Compared to the million-dollar whale *Seinfeld* that was Jerry Seinfeld's take on his work as a stand-up comic, Mike Birbiglia take is not even a goldfish. But if less smart than *Seinfeld* it has more heart.

Based on Birbiglia's misadventures as a hyper-active sleepwalker on the comedy circuit, it is co-directed by Seth Barrish and produced by Ira Glass who promoted it on his TV show, *This American Life*, and sought viewer feedback while the film was being shot.

As Abby, Birbiglia's girlfriend, Lauren Ambrose keeps him safely awake. Unexploited a possible sequence of what might happen in the unlikely event of Birbiglia dozing off during a showing of this quirky comedy.

M★★★NFFV.

### Silence of the House of God: Mea Maxima Culpa

This Alex Gibney documentary focuses on events at the St John's school for the Deaf in Milwaukee, Wisconsin where in the 1950s-60s, Father Lawrence Murphy was a key figure, promoted to director even after another priest, Father David Walsh, had reported allegations of abuse to church authorities.

What makes the allegations even more deeply shocking is that the plaintiffs' testimony is given direct to camera in sign-language with sub-titles which make it clear that Lawrence Murphy was a serial child abuser. The testimony is almost unbearable to watch but should be seen.

One caveat. This is less a documentary than a prosecutorial brief. The sign-language testimony of the plaintiffs as noted could not be more powerfully eloquent or convincing. There is an abundance of archival footage of recreation and fund-raisers to carry voice-over.

Why then use dramatic reconstruction involving darkened dormitories and a shadowy predator, a fictional technique to reinforce a factual account? In addition, Gibney recalls speaking to a senior cleric who described Murphy as 'childlike.'

Could this be a possible lead to Murphy's abusive behaviour? Was he himself subjected to childhood abuse? Gibney did not follow up the lead.

Murphy, removed from his position, retired to a home in another diocese and died in 1998.

M★★★NFFV.

### Great Expectations

Director Mike Newell defeats the prejudice of those who consider David Lean's version of the Charles Dickens novel as the classic treatment of a classic. Not for Newell the kind of over-blown redaction and theatrical framing that spoiled Joe Wright's recent remake of Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*.

Newell, and his scriptwriter David Nicholls, respect the Dickens work in letter and spirit. And he has assembled a splendid cast to assist: the brothers Toby and Jeremy Irvine play Pip as boy and man, Helena Bonham Carter is unleashed from the belfry as the batty Miss Havisham, her adopted daughter the heartless Estella is played by Holliday Grainger, Robbie Coltrane is their lawyer Mr Jaggers, Sally Hawkins is Pip's shrewish sister and Ralph Fiennes is cast as Magwitch, malefactor and benefactor who bestows on Pip a share of his Australian fortune.

The casting of Fiennes, Lord Voldemort in the Harry Potter saga inspires the notion that the Newell *Great Expectations* could be used to

wean young readers from pottering to Dickens.

M★★★★NFFV.

### Trance

Whatever it is, director Danny (Olympics) Boyle's new work is not a heist-movie as exemplified by classics such as *The Asphalt Jungle* (John Huston 1950), *Rififi* (Jules Dassin 1954) *The Killing* (Stanley Kubrick 1956).

Working from a John Hodges script, Boyle opens with a jokey sequence from which his thriller does not recover. He exacerbates matters with time-shifts and flashbacks which may or may not be memories, recovered under hypnosis, about the theft of a 25 million Goya from an art-auction house.

The memories are those of Simon (James McAvoy), a security expert working for the house. His hypnotherapist is Dr Elizabeth Lamb (Rosario Dawson) and the leader of the art-thieves is Franck (Vincent Cassel).

If McAvoy appears concussed, it's partly because he takes a hit during the robbery and partly because Dawson is stunning. And Cassel is still the best baddie in the business.

One sign of a director not sure his movie is working is the use of an intrusive sound-track; Boyle uses more drums than an Orange Walk. Yes, there's a trick ending but his story line is so complicated that even his retro-exposition doesn't clarify matters.

Boyle is a Liverpooldian. What he has created is filmic scouse, that is, an all-in stew of puzzlement.

MA15+★★★★NFFV

### Jack the Giant Slayer

The star of this adventure is not Jack (Nicholas Hoult) but the beanstalk. Director Bryan Singer uses it to enormous 3D effect as it writhes its way into the sky. There Jack must save the obligatory Princess (Eleanor Tomlinson) from cannibal giants (the two-headed one voiced by Bill Nighy).

Will he save the Princess from being cooked in pastry? Stanley Tucci plays the villain out to thwart him, Ewan McGregor, the madcap knight who aims to help and Ian McShane, the king who must decided the winner.

M★★★★SFFV

### Adventures in Zambezia

Computer animated 3D movie in which the 3D technical beauty is not quite matched by the story line: Kai, a young falcon hears of the fabulous bird city Zambezia.

Against the wishes of his father, Tendai, he flies from his remote country home. When his father is captured by a giant lizard, Kai must complete two tasks: rescue his father and save Zambezia from the lizard.

Wayne Thornley directs. Voice actors include Abigail Breslin, Samuel L Jackson, Leonard Nimoy and Jeff Gouldblum.

Budgies, cockatoos and parrots not admitted but suitable for children and grandchildren.

G★★★★SFFV

### The Incredible Burt Wonderstone

Wonderstone is a conjuror and Steve Carrell plays him as a charmless womaniser; Steve Buscemi pops out of the hat as his offsider, Anton. Together they rise from schoolboy aspiration to be the headline act at the Las Vegas Aztec Casino, its boss Doug Munny is James Gandolfini who despite a show of joviality brings to the part an appropriate gangster aura.

Jim Carrey at his most manic enters as a reality TV street conjuror Steve Gray whose act out-bloods Burt and Anton's.

Their revival lies with their boyhood hero-conjuror played with relentless drive by the great Alan Arkin. Don Scardino survived directing this quartet.

M★★★★SFFV.

### Identity Theft

Neat opening: curvy Diana (Melissa McCarthy) phone-cons straight executive (Jason Bateman) into surrendering his credit-card details. Nice ending: the executive reunited with his wife (Amanda Peet) and their cute daughters visiting Melissa in a correctional facility.

The problem is that director Seth Gordon, like a hamburger cook gone potty, fills the space between start and finish with a concoction of rancid motel scenes and swampy dialogue before adding a ketchup of violence.

MA15+★★★★NFFV.

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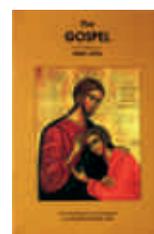
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## **THE POPE, THE MEDIA, AND THE ENDLESS NONSENSE**

*By Jeffrey Tucker*

**I**T TOOK the election of Pope Francis to remind me of how utterly idiotic press coverage of the papacy can be, especially in the early days. Unless you have read absolutely nothing about the new Pope — which would not be a bad idea in the balance — you already know the score. Pope Francis is compassionate, simple, humble, and humane, and this stands in contrast to... wait for it...a certain predecessor whose name shall not be mentioned.

I'm thinking in particular about a BBC short on Francis's visit to a juvenile prison in Rome. The BBC reported this as some sort of astonishing first. It added that the Pope's homily the previous day urged priests to focus on compassion to the less fortunate and not get caught up in trappings and vestments, at which point the camera threw in an image of the certain predecessor who, again, shall not be named wearing full regalia. Never mind that Benedict himself made a visit to the same prison in 2007 and the videos of that extraordinary and moving visit are all over the web.

This has been the unrelenting theme of the press: Pope Francis vs. Benedict XVI. They are covering this in an identical fashion to the way they cover presidential politics. Francis is Obama and Benedict is Bush. Us vs. Them. Liberals vs. Conservatives. Progressives vs. Reactionaries.

It's the only model they know and they cram all existing reality into that model, mainly as an effort to sell their newsprint. I have no doubt that Pope Francis would be astonished to discover that this is being done, and even more surprised that people are going along with it.

I've had many flashbacks to the election of Benedict XVI. Here is a man whose writings I had devoured for years. I had my own mental dossier on him. I knew from his writings that he was an old-fashioned liberal in the great 19th century tradition of that term, like Cardinal Newman and Lord Acton. I knew that he had been steeped in the German theological tradition of that period. I knew that he was utterly and completely dedicated to the proposition of religious liberty as the foundation of how the Church interacts with the world. I knew Benedict would not be about laws and impositions but rather inspiration and liberality. Specifically, I knew for certain, based on his writings, that he would seek to liberate tradition from the chains that the so-called progressives had put around it. I knew that he had a compassionate heart and a broad mind and would fearlessly

engage anyone on crucial topics. I knew that he was more about conversation than excommunication.

So, I was absolutely astonished to see the way the press treated his election. The rap sheet on Ratzinger read: reactionary, pit bull, crack-down man, and even proto-Nazi. Think Torquemada and you have the archetype. It was so unjust and so vicious. And malicious. Everything Benedict did during his papacy was interpreted in that light.

He pursued fantastic ecumenical activities that promoted peace and understanding and yet he was derided as a man who set back Catholic-Muslim relations. He was showing compassion to those estranged from the mainline of the Church but his efforts were fobbed off as giving approval to people who denied the Holocaust. It was as though he couldn't escape the label of that worst of all possible things: conservative.

Then of course there were the scandals, and many journalists even took the ghastly step of implicating Benedict himself because he had somehow approved of someone who approved of someone who approved of someone who had been accused in the scandals. They would stop at nothing to confirm their biases and harm this great man.

And so, fast forward to the election of Pope Francis. Nearly all the coverage from morning until night has been about how he is the anti-Benedict. This coverage has been enormously harmful not only to the faith but also to Francis himself. For all we knew, Francis might be more temperamentally severe on issues of doctrine and morality than Benedict, but it doesn't matter because this doesn't fit the hyper-politicized

### **Protect each person**

**A**T THE START of his installation Mass this week, Pope Francis prayed at the tomb of St Peter. The small group Francis asked to join him in the crypt under the main altar of St. Peter's Basilica included Iraq's Patriarch Louis Sako and other heads of the Eastern Catholic Churches. The Pope's homily took the theme of his—and our—duty “to protect the whole of creation, to protect each person.”

— 'Pope Francis and the Christians of the Middle East' by Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, *First Things*, March 22, 2013.

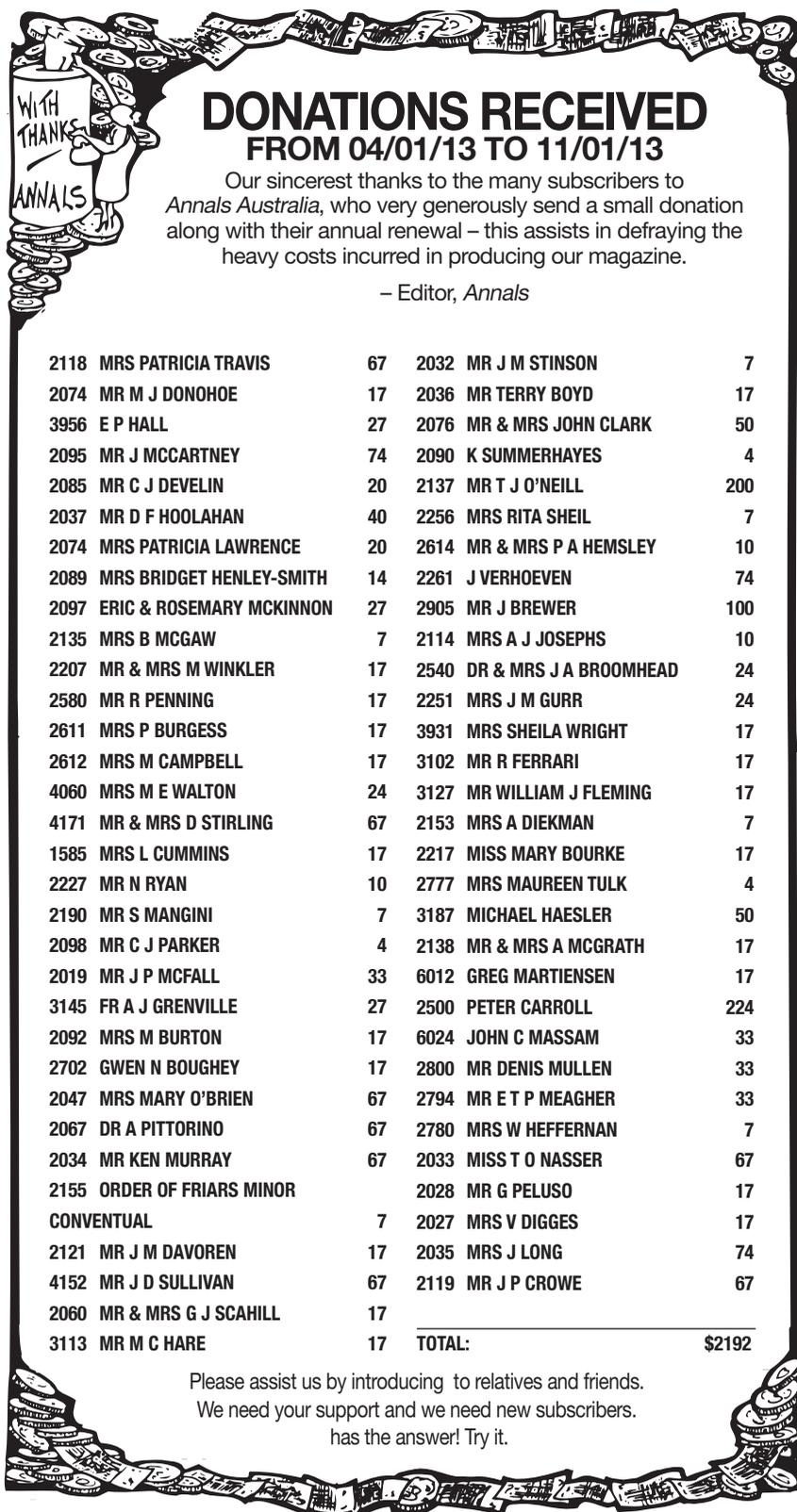
prototypes that pre-exist in the files of writers at the *BBC*, *The New York Times*, *CNN*, and all the rest.

So you really must ask yourself: has your understanding of this new Pope been compromised by taking these press reports too seriously? I'm pretty sure that I had been overly influenced by them in the early days. I had been observing patterns of behaviour of this new Pope, mixing them with hopped-up news coverage, feeling a terrible sense of sadness about the resignation of Benedict my hero, and coming to conclusions that were wildly unjustified. So far the papacy of Francis has been an added value to Benedict's own and not a displacement.

Also and regrettably, Pope Francis has given the press plenty of fodder to fuel these archetypes. His personal style throughout his priesthood has been to embrace the lifestyle of the people he served. He rode on buses in Argentina. He wore plain and severe clothing. He mixed it up with everyone and encouraged the priests to do the same. This is a country where the faith is under severe strain, and his commitment to evangelism made it imperative that the Church not seem like a branch of the state, isolated and protected and privileged. He is dedicated to this, just as Benedict was and is.

He has brought that sensibility with him to the papacy. It could end up being a great gift to the cause of evangelism. And there is a sense in which I do not even slightly regret the hugely positive coverage that his papacy has so far elicited. We really do need this right now. There is no question that this Pope has certain gifts that can help in many ways. Benedict had great gifts too as a theologian, liturgist, and as a teacher in every way. There is no reason to set one against the other.

I'll offer one final example concerning the chasm between press coverage and reality. The blogs were filling up with announcements that the new Pope had already enacted a "liturgical revolution." Startling, right? Well, I watched the Palm Sunday services at the Vatican. All the chants of the *Graduale Romanum* were there, including the real *Graduale* as a replacement for the Responsorial Psalm. In the scheme of history, this is an amazing restoration, already a precedent in Vatican liturgy.



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– Editor, *Annals*

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You might say: oh that was already planned. Maybe. But what matters here is whether the Pope has the incentive or the desire to change the precedent. I see no evidence that he does. What I do see is a serious and dedicated servant of the faith who hopes to bring his unique gifts to the institution in a time of great need.

To be sure, we might face some harrowing days ahead. It is crucial that observers keep an eye on the reality, not the spin.

Jeffrey Tucker is managing editor of *Sacred Music* journal, and polyphony director for the St. Cecilia Schola.

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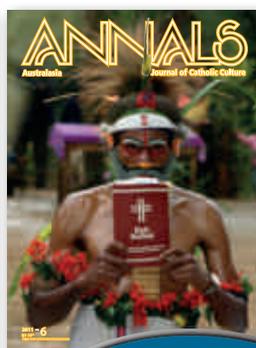
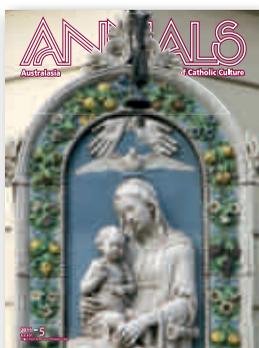
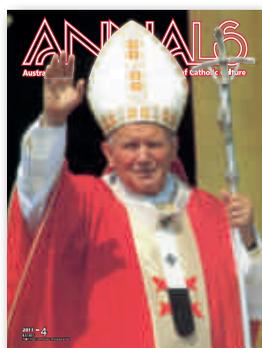
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