

# ANNALS

Australasia

Journal of Catholic Culture



2018 - 6

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# ANNALS AUSTRALASIA

*Journal of Catholic Culture*

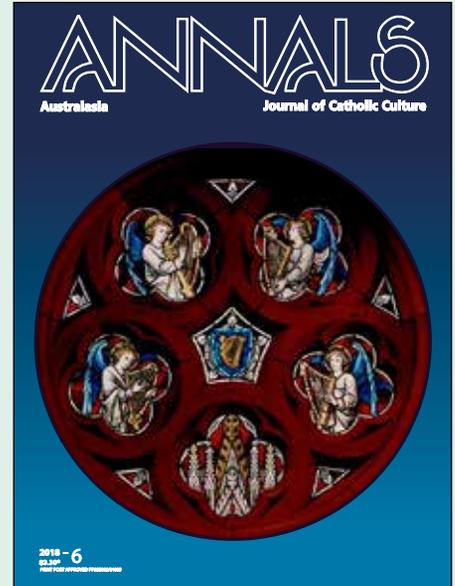
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[Sunday readings at Mass: Year B / Weekday readings at Mass: Year II]

*Australia's Oldest Catholic Magazine*

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*Front Cover:* Our cover this month is of a segment of the exquisite stained glass in the window at the back of the main altar of St Mary's Cathedral Sydney. The glass was made by John Hardman and Co., of Staffordshire, England. In the 1830s Augustus Welby Pugin, a recent convert to Catholicism, made contact with the Hardmans during the construction of St Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham – the first Catholic Cathedral built in England since the reformation. In 1845 John Hardman began making stained glass. His nephew John Hardman Powell, married Pugin's daughter Anne in 1850, and became his pupil. Pugin supplied the first designs for Hardman, and later came to rely upon his son-in-law to provide the designs for stained glass. William Wardell, architect of St Mary's, was a pupil and friend of Pugin. John Hardman Powell's glass recreated the refinement and elegance of mediaeval glass in the Gothic manner. Hardman also supplied the windows for St Andrew's Cathedral in Sydney.

**Cover Photo: Steve Turner. Photo supplied by Saint Mary's Cathedral**

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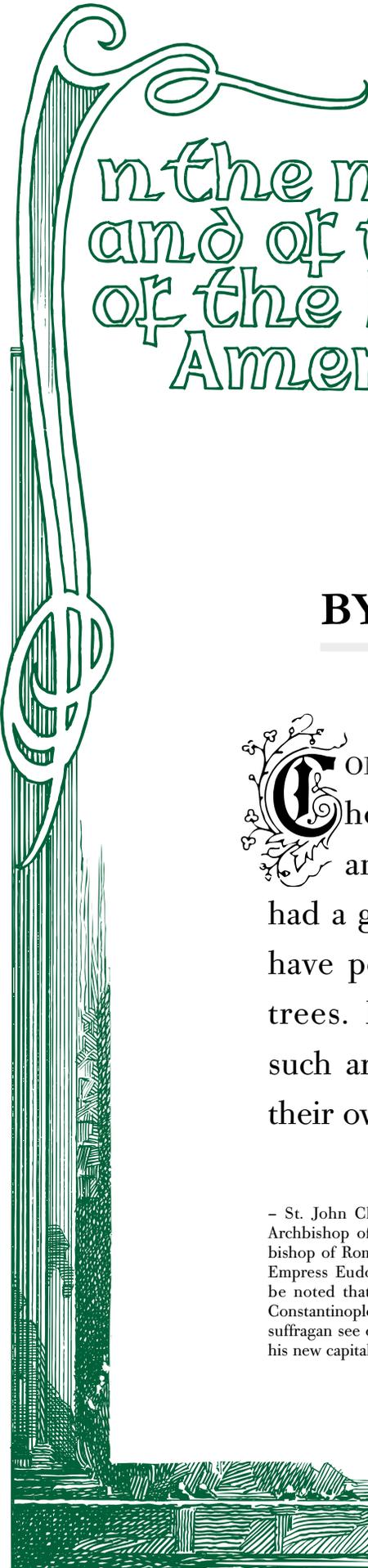
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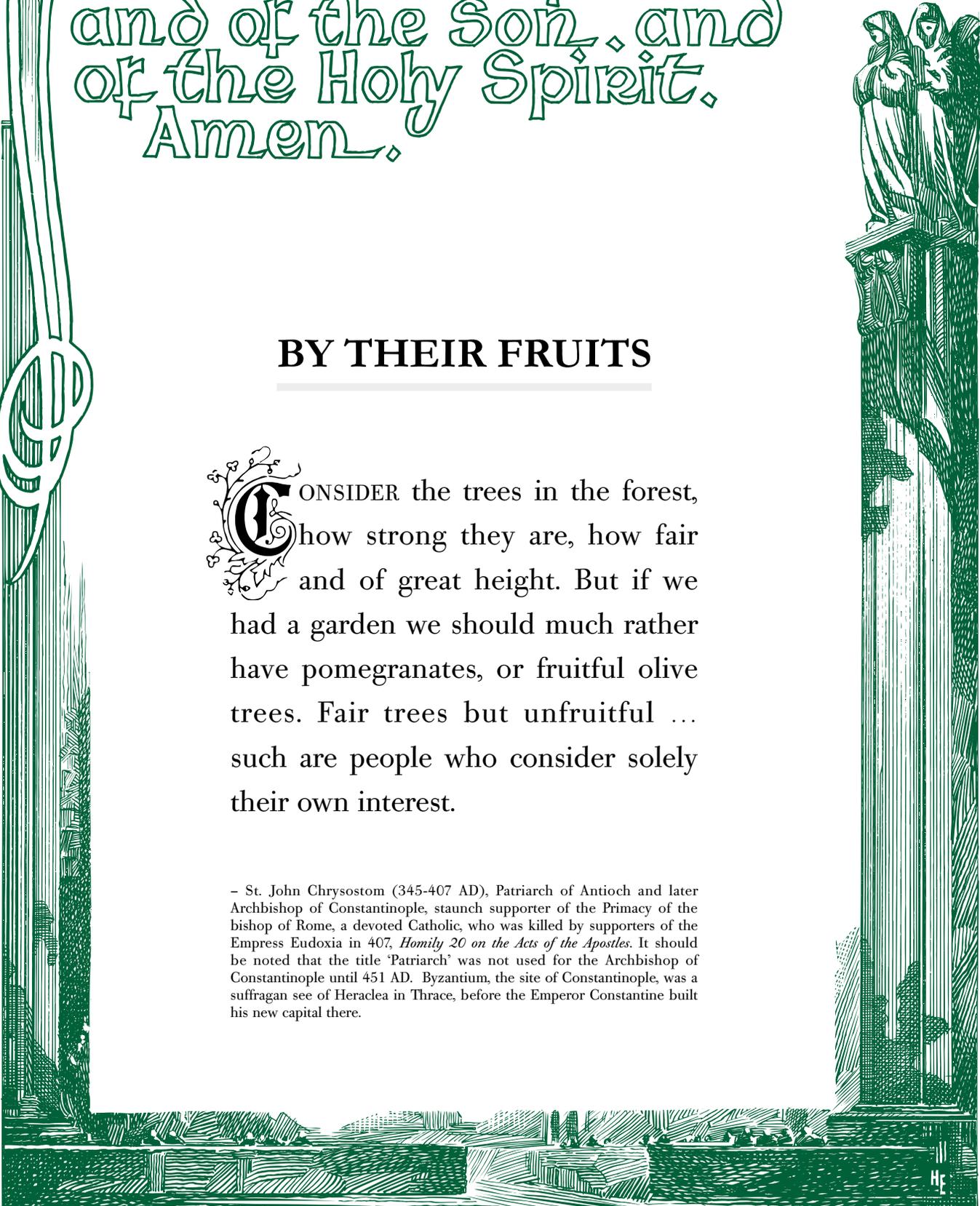
Let us not be  
Ldumb watch-  
dogs, or silent  
spectators; Let  
us be watchful  
shepherds,  
guarding the  
flock of Christ.

- St Boniface, 672-754  
Apostle to the German  
peoples, Letters, 78.



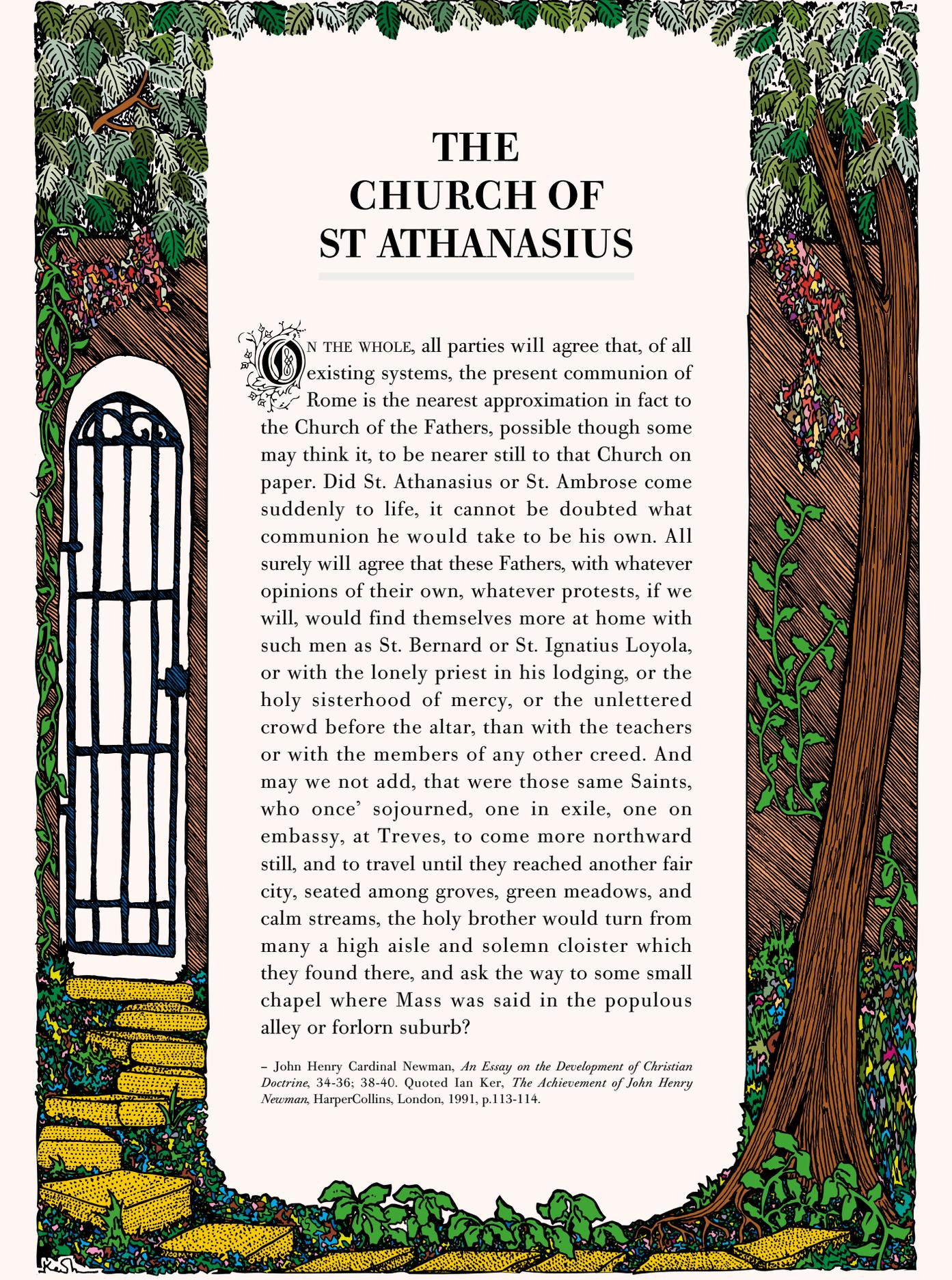
n the name of the Father,  
and of the Son, and  
of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

## BY THEIR FRUITS



**C**ONSIDER the trees in the forest,  
how strong they are, how fair  
and of great height. But if we  
had a garden we should much rather  
have pomegranates, or fruitful olive  
trees. Fair trees but unfruitful ...  
such are people who consider solely  
their own interest.

- St. John Chrysostom (345-407 AD), Patriarch of Antioch and later Archbishop of Constantinople, staunch supporter of the Primacy of the bishop of Rome, a devoted Catholic, who was killed by supporters of the Empress Eudoxia in 407, *Homily 20 on the Acts of the Apostles*. It should be noted that the title 'Patriarch' was not used for the Archbishop of Constantinople until 451 AD. Byzantium, the site of Constantinople, was a suffragan see of Heraclea in Thrace, before the Emperor Constantine built his new capital there.



# THE CHURCH OF ST ATHANASIUS

**I**N THE WHOLE, all parties will agree that, of all existing systems, the present communion of Rome is the nearest approximation in fact to the Church of the Fathers, possible though some may think it, to be nearer still to that Church on paper. Did St. Athanasius or St. Ambrose come suddenly to life, it cannot be doubted what communion he would take to be his own. All surely will agree that these Fathers, with whatever opinions of their own, whatever protests, if we will, would find themselves more at home with such men as St. Bernard or St. Ignatius Loyola, or with the lonely priest in his lodging, or the holy sisterhood of mercy, or the unlettered crowd before the altar, than with the teachers or with the members of any other creed. And may we not add, that were those same Saints, who once' sojourned, one in exile, one on embassy, at Treves, to come more northward still, and to travel until they reached another fair city, seated among groves, green meadows, and calm streams, the holy brother would turn from many a high aisle and solemn cloister which they found there, and ask the way to some small chapel where Mass was said in the populous alley or forlorn suburb?

- John Henry Cardinal Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, 34-36; 38-40. Quoted Ian Ker, *The Achievement of John Henry Newman*, HarperCollins, London, 1991, p.113-114.

*[Pope] Paul VI's teaching was truly prophetic. It was not about popularity, but about people. It was not about self-righteousness, but about right living. It was not about being holier-than-thou, but a call to godliness.*

# THAT MOST PROPHETIC LETTER

By Archbishop Anthony Fisher



SINCE SOON-TO-BE-SAINT Paul VI published his encyclical *Humanae vitae* fifty years ago, it has often been called a ‘prophetic’ document and the author himself a ‘prophet’. But like the words ‘mission’ and ‘iconic’, the word ‘prophetic’ has been overused, even misused. In what sense was *Humanae vitae* prophetic?

### Who were the prophets?

In the Old Testament, the prophets were often confronting. They dressed down to draw attention to themselves: Jeremiah buried his underwear, dug it up and put it on again (Jer 13:1-11); John the Baptist let his hair grow, while Ezekiel shaved his head (Ezek 5:1); and John wore camel skins while Isaiah wandered around naked and barefoot for three years (Isa ch. 20; Mt 3:4).

Their eating habits also left something to be desired: Ezekiel ate books or bread cooked on a fire fuelled with human waste (Ezek 3:3; 4:12), Elijah was fed by ravens (1 Kings 17:1-5), Daniel eschewed all rich food (Dan ch. 1) and John was into paleo (Mt 3:4). Their activities were also unpredictable: Jeremiah smashed pottery

and pretended to be a dumb animal wearing a cattle yoke (Jer chs 19, 27 and 28); he remained celibate (Jer ch. 16), while Hosea married a notorious prostitute (Hos 1:2); and Ezekiel lay on his side for more than a year, went into trances, and talked to mountains or dead bones (Ezek 3:24; 4:4-6; 6:2; 8:1-3; chs 35-37).

So these guys were not afraid to be counter-cultural! They wandered about speaking for

God and telling people off. ‘Woe’, ‘return’ and ‘repair’ were their most common words. No wonder they were so unpopular. In due course, however, they were proven right and their wisdom appreciated, even heeded. But in the meantime they were vilified for speaking their inconvenient truths...

To say Paul VI was prophetic, for teaching what he did about birth control back in 1968, is to say that he was doing something on behalf of God that was confronting, counter-cultural, unlikely to be received gratefully, at least at the time.

### A word about the future

*Humanae vitae* is the only papal document many Catholics can name. That’s because it was so personal and so controversial. Its publication caused a furore. After all, the sexual revolution of the 1960s said ‘All you need is love’ – which often meant sex. More sex, without the risk of children, was said to draw married couples more closely together. For unmarried people, now presumed to be sexually active, birth control was judged essential. More sex all round promised an end to isolation, infidelity, sexism, even war (‘Make love not war’).



Pope Paul VI, 1963 – 1978

But when Paul VI offered his difficult teaching against contraception and abortion, he suggested (like the prophets of old) that to break with God's plan and the natural order of things in this matter would do more harm than good, even from a secular point of view. Paul predicted that the sexual / contraceptive revolution would lead to more marital infidelity than stability, to lower moral standards rather than greater virtue, to a hyper-sexualised culture with all its attendant challenges especially for the young, and to the exploitation of women rather than equality (HV 17). There would also be ill-effects on demography, culture and politics. Governments and international agencies would interfere with their population policies – as more recently with gender ideology and 'reproductive rights'.

'Woe' said Paul VI. Half a century later and things are, if anything, worse than he ever feared. We have a copulation explosion and a population implosion. Divorce rates have escalated. The sacred cow of 'Reproductive Health' is now beyond public critique – at least within 150 metres of the clinics. Many children grow up without knowing the love of a Mum and Dad committed to each other and to them over the long haul. When there are natural or human disasters, U.N. agencies often drop condoms before offering food or other relief. Coercive or more subtle population programmes have been common around the world and had terrible demographic effects.

This generation is more confused about relationships, sex and fertility, and less able to sustain marriages and families, than any in recorded history. Contraception is not the only reason for all this, but it proved a powerful driver in a revolution of behaviour – and misbehaviour. It has certainly not been the boon for women, families or the broader community that was promised, as many feminists and

other social commentators have pointed out. The Prophet Paul VI was right.

### A word about the past

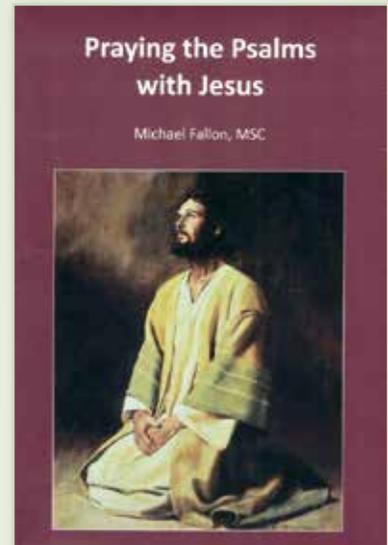
The prophets of old made predictions about the future, but they were always calling people back: back to God, back to his revealed plan for humanity, back to the law written on our hearts. And so Paul VI called us back to profound truths we already knew deep down, about the total gift of man and woman to each other in marriage, about the earthly and supernatural vocation of spouses, and about the inseparable connection willed by God between love-making and life-making (HV 8-13). Married love must be free, permanent, exclusive and open to life. 'Husband and wife, through that mutual gift of themselves, which is specific and exclusive to them alone, develop that union of two persons in which they perfect one another, cooperating with God in the generation and rearing of new lives.' (HV 8)

'Return' said Paul VI. Not to some imagined golden age or retrograde way of thinking. But to God, to the Gospel, to our own best natures. Recover your sense that sex says marital love, that marital love says marriage, that marriage says family. Half a century later, we might say 'bravo'. Yet as Pope Paul himself recognized, in saying such things, the Church is 'no less than her divine Founder, destined to be a sign of contradiction'.

It's not that the Church is looking to make enemies. No pastor wants to say from the pulpit things his hearers find hurtful or that might drive them away. But the Church calls people to return because of 'the duty imposed on her of proclaiming humbly but firmly the entire moral law, both natural and evangelical'. And since the Church did not make God's laws, 'she can only be their guardian and interpreter, never their arbiter or reviser. It could never be right for her to declare lawful what is in

## NEW BIBLE COMMENTARY

Michael Fallon, MSC  
Missionary of the Sacred Heart



IN 2005 I published *The Psalms: an introductory commentary*. My aim was to discover and share the meaning that the psalms had for those who composed them and for those who prayed them in Ancient Israel, whether in the temple cult or in their own personal and family prayer. My aim here is different. I want to explore how Jesus would have prayed the psalms, based on what we know of his mind and heart from the New Testament. Necessarily this will involve an editing of the psalms, for there are sentiments in some of them that contradict what Jesus knew of God and of the kind of communion with God that we are invited to enjoy. After presenting a translation of a psalm that I hope Christians, in communion with Jesus, can pray today, I indicate any verses that I have omitted, and then go on to meditate on the psalm, praying it with Jesus.

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fact unlawful, since that, by its very nature, is always opposed to the true good of man.' (HV 18) The Prophet Paul VI was right.

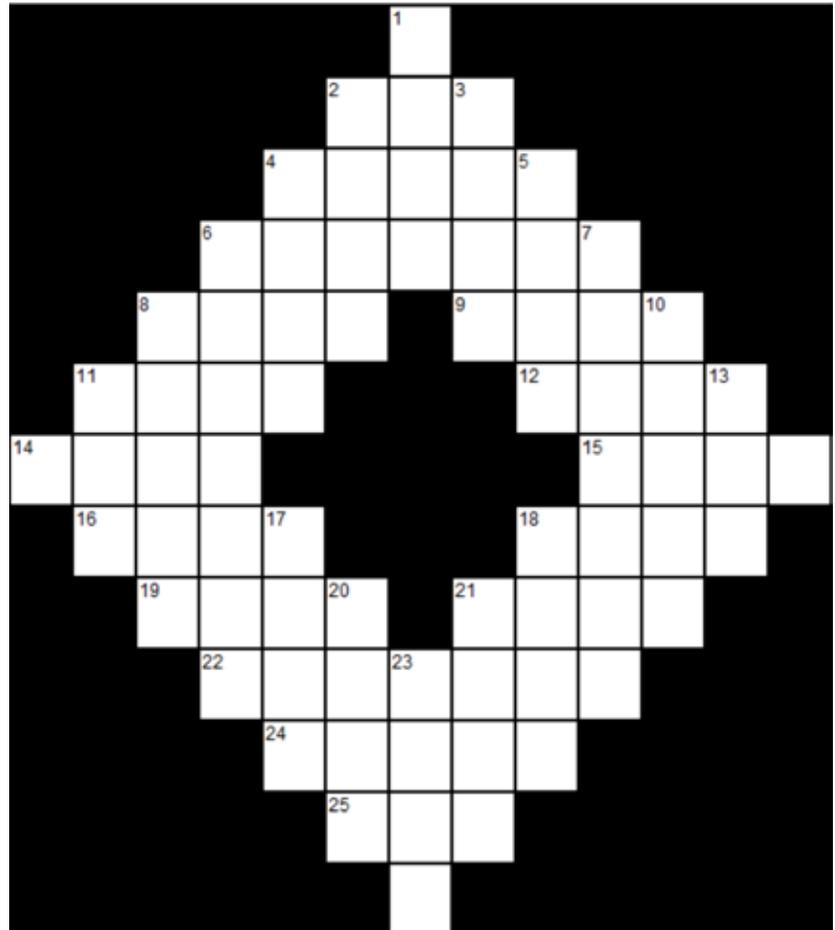
### A word about the present

That the unitive and procreative dimensions of the marital act are inseparable and must not be deliberately broken is something many did not want to hear in 1968 and still do not want to hear in 2018. This presents a real challenge to the Church today to present its wisdom about such matters more clearly and persuasively, and so inform people's consciences well. Instead of just saying No, we must be beside people, showing them a better way. 'Theology of the Body', 'Natural Family Planning', 'Chastity education' (HV 21-22) – all these have helped in this area but have so far touched only a small proportion of people.

Living the teaching of *Humanae vitae*, like so much other Church teaching, is both hard and easy. Hard, because it requires self-discipline when our culture is saying 'do whatever feels good to you'. Hard, because it appeals to our higher nature against the instinct of our baser passions. Hard, because it requires constant effort, and getting up when we fall, returning to God with contrite hearts.

'Repair' said Paul VI. He knew, with a loving pastor's heart, that this teaching would be hard. Yet Christ's yoke is easy. He never asks anything of us without first giving us the wherewithal – both nature and grace (cf. HV 25). Many people have found that living the wisdom of *Humanae vitae* has improved their self-understanding, self-mastery and self-gift. Many couples have found it improved their communication, mutuality and love. But the Church is there for all who struggle and fall on that path, to accompany them and bring them home (cf. HV 28-29). It offers us a vision of the good life that enriches marriage – bringing serenity from struggle, virtue out of vice, holiness after repair. The Prophet Paul VI was right.

## ANNALS CROSSWORD NO. 103



### Across clues

- 2 Large expanse of water
- 4 Scottish river
- 6 Abrasive
- 8 Dead heat
- 9 Incline
- 11 Former name of Thailand
- 12 First wife of Jacob (Genesis 29)
- 14 Part of eye
- 15 Glean
- 16 Short term worker
- 18 Dry roast
- 19 Single combat
- 21 Male descendants
- 22 Fragment
- 24 To slander or smudge
- 25 Equip with a weapon

### Down clues

- 1 Means of releasing locks
- 2 Unhurried
- 3 Entrance to mine
- 4 Fill to overflowing
- 5 Wicked
- 6 Dutch theologian (1466-1536)
- 7 Stylish
- 8 Banqueted
- 10 Converses
- 11 Scenery and props in a play
- 13 Gardening implement
- 17 Enclosures for sheep
- 18 A descendant of the Dutch in South Africa
- 20 Capital of Peru
- 21 Unsolicited emails
- 23 Fairy in Persian mythology

© Brian O'Neill December 2017

### Conclusion

To say 'Woe', 'Return' and 'Repair' is to speak an inconvenient truth in our culture. But Paul VI's teaching was truly prophetic. It was not about popularity, but about people. It was not about self-righteousness, but about right living. It was not about being holier-than-thou, but a call to godliness. 'In preserving intact the whole moral law of marriage, the

Church is convinced that she is contributing to the creation of a truly human civilization. She urges people not to betray their personal responsibilities by putting all their faith in technical expedients. In this way she defends the dignity of husband and wife... [and is] loyal to the example and teaching of the divine Saviour.' (HV 18)

ARCHBISHOP ANTHONY COLIN FISHER, OP is ninth Catholic Archbishop of Sydney.

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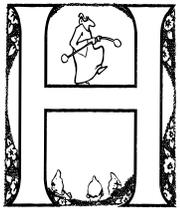
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*Kevorkian also called for the creation of boards that would certify obitiatrists trained in medicide. He would establish zones within a given state for obitiatry headquarters and death clinics – plans eerily reminiscent of the Nazis’ Charitable Foundations for Institutional Care.*

## DR. DEATH AND HOLLYWOOD

By George J. Marlin



HOLLYWOOD’S sophisticated humanitarians were at it again - this time with ‘You Don’t Know Jack,’ a movie that celebrates M.D. and assisted-suicide convict, Jack Kevorkian.

Starring Al Pacino, the HBO production portrayed Kevorkian, who boasted 125 notches on his assisted-suicide syringe, as a compassionate man persecuted by a lunatic fringe that dares to hold human life sacred no matter how diminished its quality.

Kevorkian took a polar opposite view to the Church’s constant teaching that ‘God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one can under any circumstances claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being.’

He claimed the right to end life and admitted in April 2010 to CNN’s Anderson Cooper, ‘Anytime you interfere with a natural process you are playing God.’ He also mocked Christianity saying

‘Had Christ died in my [assisted suicide] van with people around him who loved him [it] would have been far more dignified.’

Here are a few facts about Kevorkian that the movie fails to mention:

Labelled by his medical school classmates as ‘Dr. Death’ (because his hobby was to photograph

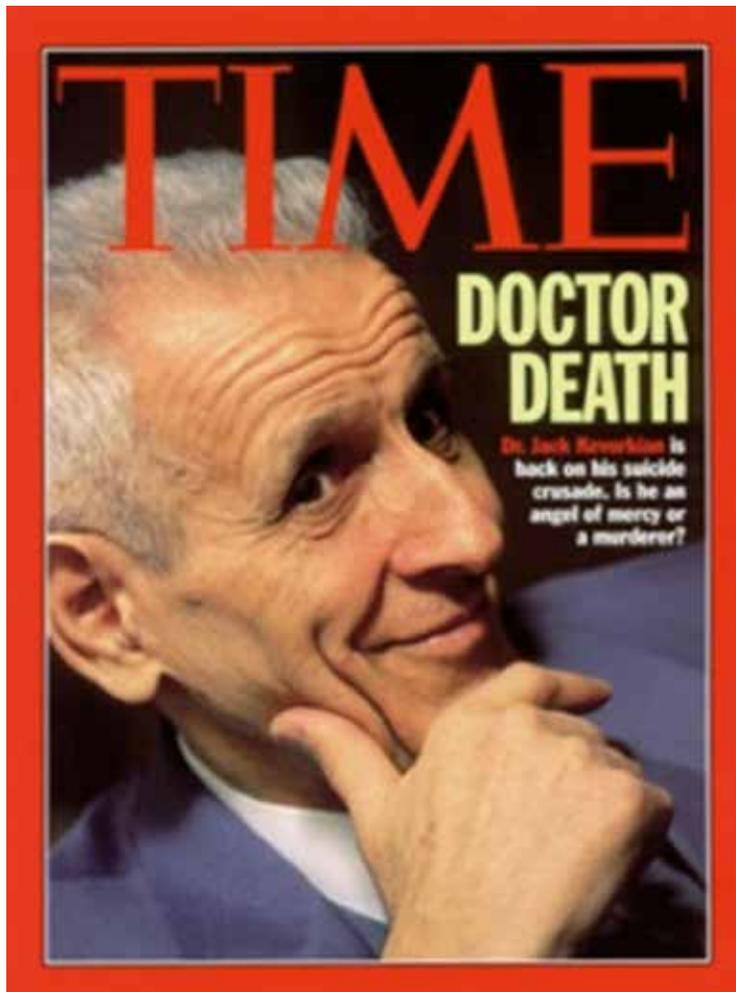
patients’ retina blood vessels at the moment of death), Kevorkian urged that criminals waiting on death row be ‘used as human guinea pigs.’ Experiments on criminals, he claimed, would save the lives of innocent animals killed in the name of science.

In a 1991 work entitled *Prescription Medicide: The Goodness*

*of a Planned Death*, Kevorkian introduces the term ‘obitiatry’ the practice of experimentation on living humans while they are under anesthesia and prior to medicide.

Dr. Death stated that his ultimate aim ‘is not simply to help suffering or doomed persons kill themselves - that is merely the first step.... [What] I find most satisfying is the performance of invaluable experiments or other beneficial medical acts under conditions that this first unpleasant step can help establish - in a word, obitiatry.’

Kevorkian also called for the creation of boards that would certify



obitriatrists trained in medicide. He would establish zones within a given state for obitriatry headquarters and death clinics, plans eerily reminiscent of the Nazis' Charitable Foundations for Institutional Care.

Kevorkian made his public debut in 1990, when, after a brief meeting with Janet Adkins (who was diagnosed to be in the early states of Alzheimer's disease), he agreed to aid her in committing suicide. Although reprimanded, he was not prosecuted because Michigan, unlike thirty-five other states, did not have a statue forbidding assisted suicide.

Since the reprimand did not stop him, the Michigan state legislature passed a restrictive law to curtail Kevorkian's activities. Indicted three times, he was not convicted because the prosecution failed to prove that he actually intended to help people kill themselves, and because Kevorkian successfully convinced the jury that his goal was 'to relieve intolerable pain and suffering. . . to remedy their [i.e., the patients'] anguish, their torture.'

Dr. Death's killing spree continued. Autopsies of his victims, however, have revealed that most were not terminally ill. Consider the following examples:

Suicide #3, Marjorie Wantz: she had a history of suicide attempts and complained of pelvic pain, but the autopsy did not indicate the presence of a terminal disease.

Suicide #29, Ruth Neuman: the coroner's office stated, 'whatever they claim, she was not terminally ill.'

Suicide #35, Judith Curren: 'she was overweight, tired, depressed and her family had a history of domestic violence, but she did not have a terminal illness.'

Dr. D.J. Dragovic, Oakland County Michigan's medical examiner, who performed autopsies on twenty-seven of Kevorkian's cases, said that 'at least half had serious questions about being terminal,' and only four or

five, he said, 'had just weeks to live. ... There were a lot of people physically incapacitated who could have lived for many months to many years.'

The law finally caught up with Kevorkian in 1999 when a Michigan jury declared him guilty of second-degree homicide. The prosecutor proved that Thomas York, who was not physically capable of killing himself, was murdered by Kevorkian who administered the lethal injection. Kevorkian was sentenced to ten to twenty-five years in prison. The presiding judge said, 'You were on bond to another judge when you committed this offense, you were not licensed to practise medicine when you committed this offense ... And you had the audacity to go on national television, show the world what you did and dare the legal system to stop you. Well, sir, consider yourself stopped.'

Kevorkian was paroled in 2007 after serving eight years in prison. Since his release, he had been on the lecture circuit addressing adoring crowds at colleges throughout the nation. At the April 19, 2010 preview of 'You Don't Know Jack' in New York's Ziegfeld Theatre, he walked down the red carpet alongside Al Pacino to a standing ovation.

Dr. Kevorkian and his groupies looked forward to the day when legislation would become law that would abrogate the rights of patients in favour of decisions by the doctor or the state. Obamacare, which included medical rationing to reduce Medicare's projected \$50 trillion unfunded liability among other dubious benefits, took the first step toward realizing that goal.

GEORGE J. MARLIN is Chairman of the Board of *Aid to the Church in Need USA*, an editor of *The Quotable Fulton Sheen* and the author of *The American Catholic Voter*, and *Narcissist Nation: Reflections of a Blue-State Conservative*. His most recent book is *Christian Persecutions in the Middle East: A 21st Century Tragedy*. This article, slightly modified to take into account that 'Dr. Death' died in June, 2011, is reprinted with permission from *Narcissist Nation*, St Augustine's Press, South Bend Indiana, 2010, pp.173-175.

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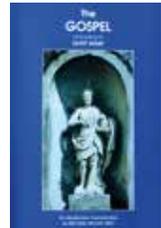
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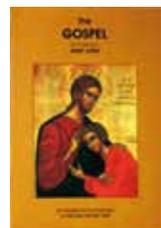
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## ARCHBISHOP PHILIP WILSON

# ‘SINGLED OUT FOR ONEROUS TREATMENT’

ONE OF THE advantages of growing old is that you can compare current affairs with equivalent events of years ago and sometimes actually learn something. I was thinking of this during the strident demands that Philip Wilson, the Archbishop of Adelaide, should resign, even before his appeal had been heard. He refused to resign immediately on being convicted of concealing child sex offences committed by a priest; he wants to appeal and then consider resignation or not. But this was not good enough for those who know better, from the PM down, who wanted him to resign immediately or have the Pope sack him. The latter has now taken place, couched in the language of the Pope ‘accepting’ his resignation. It seems to me that the Archbishop has been singled out for onerous treatment not meted out to others. But of course, as we have often pointed out, opinions on contentious issues depend on who is involved. For example, in July 1985, I was Shadow Attorney-General when Lionel Murphy, a serving High Court Judge and formerly a major figure in the Whitlam government, was convicted (by a jury) of attempting to pervert the course of justice, a similar offence to Wilson. I declared that he should resign forthwith; you could not have a High Court Judge remaining in office with that sort of finding hanging over his head. I was told by what seemed like the entire population that it was outrageous to demand Murphy’s resignation before his appeal was heard and a complete denial of his human rights. But of course Murphy was a darling of the Left, so he could stay on. Today, however, it is apparently not outrageous to demand the resignation of an Archbishop convicted (by a magistrate) of concealment, although he has filed an appeal. Moreover, Murphy’s appeal succeeded and on his retrial he was acquitted, so he remained a judge throughout. Wilson has been forced to resign, but if his appeal is successful, will he be reinstated? Don’t put your money on it.

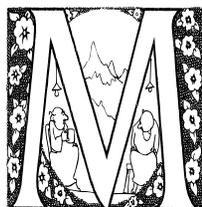
– Neil Brown, excerpt from ‘Brown Study,’ *The Spectator*, August 4, 2018. Neil Brown served as deputy leader of the Liberal Party from 1985-1987, and was a minister in the Fraser government from 1981-1983.

*Within the limits of this region [of the Tiber] the ancient Brotherhood of St John Beheaded have had their church and meeting place for centuries. It was their chief function to help and comfort condemned criminals from the midnight preceding their death until the end.*

## MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI

### AND THE CONFRATERNITY OF MERCY

*By Paul Stenhouse*



MOST PILGRIMS and tourists who visit Rome have seen the strange marble mask in the portico of Santa Maria in Cosmedin, built on the site of the Temple of Hercules, which was also the site of the Imperial Corn Exchange [Statio Annonae] – a food distribution centre in ancient Rome.

Called the *Bocca di Verità* [or Mouth of Truth] the stone mask gives its name to the piazza nearby. The yarn that the tourists that the tourists are spun is that if they have ever told a lie, and put their hand in the mouth in the marble face, it will bite their fingers. The guide never hesitates to put a hand in. Needless to say, the story is itself a whopping fib.

#### The Mouth of Truth

Some scholars think that the marble disc - five feet in diameter

– is the cover and inlet of a surface drain from the floor of the Temple of Hercules. Like the Pantheon it had an *oculus* or round open space in the ceiling and roof which admitted some rain and the marble mask, ornamented with the face of the river god, drained water from the Temple floor.



The Bocca di Verità, or Mouth of Truth in the portico of the church of Santa Maria in Cosmedin

Others think that it is the cover of the well sacred to Mercury to which Ovid the poet refers<sup>1</sup>. This well was close to the *Porta Capena*, or the Gate which opened upon the beginning of the Appian Way which until 272 AD [before Marcus

Aurelius built his wall that still stands, at least in part, in 2018 AD] was situated near the Church of Pope St Gregory, not far from the Temple of Hercules.

Whatever be the case, on the opposite side of the street, adjacent to the Tiber, are two beautiful little temples, remarkably well-preserved because they were used

as churches in early mediaeval times: the rectangular one with the ionic columns, was a Temple to Fortune built by Servius Tullius [died 534 BC], and is the most perfect pre-Augustan temple remaining in Rome. The smaller round temple with its girdle of white fluted Corinthian columns was dedicated to the Dea Matuta, the goddess of Dawn, who watched over child-birth and therefore cared for women.

#### The Street of Mercy

Running off the Piazza della Bocca di Verità and quite close to the fifth century Church of St George in Velabro is a little street –

Via San Giovanni Decollato [Street of St John who was beheaded, the John in question being St John the Baptist who was beheaded by Herod at the request of Salome] – that contains a remarkable if hidden treasure. To see it you have to knock at the door of Number 22 and hope that your knock will be heard. I've tried several times, unsuccessfully. It is officially open only once a year, every June 24, the feast of St John the Baptist from 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

Part of this complex of buildings that, I understand, still belongs to the *Confraternità della Misericordia di San Giovanni Decollato* [The Confraternity of Mercy of St John Beheaded] includes an Oratory or Chapel that has been described as *The Sistine Chapel of Mannerism*. 'Mannerism' is the name given to the style of late renaissance painters and sculptors who copied the work of the great masters like Raffaele, Bramante and Michelangelo, and sometimes distorted it.

The Confraternity, founded in Tuscany in 1488, was devoted to the care of criminals condemned to death. Members would visit them in prison, accompany them to execution, receive their bodies, and bury them on their property, and have Masses offered for the repose of their souls in their little Oratory.

The Confraternity was brought to Rome in 1490 at the request of Pope Innocent VIII, and in 1540 Pope Paul III granted it the privilege of requesting and obtaining pardon each year for one person condemned to death.

Michelangelo Buonarroti [1475-1564] joined the Confraternity, and participated in its apostolate among the condemned criminals of Rome. Many famous artists adorned its Oratory with their work.

### First-hand account of the Brotherhood

The following account of the Confraternity, written in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, will throw much needed light on a little-known charitable work carried on from early Renaissance times until now, by dedicated laypeople.<sup>2</sup>

'Within the limits of this region [of the Tiber] the ancient *Brotherhood of St John Beheaded* have had their church and meeting place for centuries. It was their chief function to help and comfort condemned criminals from the midnight preceding their death until the end.

'To this Confraternity belonged Michelangelo among other famous

in gloomy prisons from midnight to dawn beside pale-faced men who were not to see the sun go down again.

'In the morning he must have stood upon the scaffold with the others and seen the bright axe smite out the poor life. But neither he nor others of the brethren spoke of these things except amongst themselves and they alone knew who had been of the band when they bore the dead man to his rest at last ... they wrote down in their journal the day, the hour, the name, the death: no more than that. And they went back to their daily life in silence.

### Interceding for the Condemned

'For their good deeds they obtained the right of saving one man from death each year, conceded them by Paul III while Michelangelo was painting the Last Judgement - a right perhaps asked

by him as one of the brothers, and granted for his sake.

'Baracconi<sup>3</sup> has discovered an account of the ceremony : At the first meeting in August the governor of the Confraternity appointed three brethren to visit all the prisons of Rome and note the names of the prisoners condemned to death, drawing up a precise account of each case but

ascertaining especially which ones had obtained the forgiveness of those whom they had injured. At the second meeting in August the reports were read and the brethren chose the fortunate man by ballot.

'Then the whole dark company



The interior of the Chapel of the Confraternity of the Mercy of St John who was beheaded

men whose names stand on the rolls to this day. Doubtless the great master, hooded in black and unrecognizable among the rest, and chanting the Penitential Psalms in the voice that could speak so sharply, must have spent dark hours



The two little temples opposite the church of Santa Maria in Cosmedin, that were used as churches in early mediaeval times.

went in procession to the prison. The beadle of the Order marched first, bearing his black wand in one hand and in the other a robe of scarlet silk and a torch for the pardoned man; two brothers followed with staves, others with lanterns, more with lighted torches and after them was borne the crucifix, the sacred figure's arms hanging down perhaps supposed to be in the act of receiving the pardoned man, and a crown of silvered olive hung at its feet - then more brothers and last of all the governor and the chaplain.

The prison doors were draped with tapestries, box and myrtle strewn the ground and the governor received the condemned person and signed a receipt for his body. The happy man prostrated himself before the crucifix, was crowned with the olive garland, the *Te Deum* was intoned and he was led away to the Brotherhood's church where he heard High Mass

in the sight of all the people. Last and not least, if he was a pauper the brethren provided him with a little money and obtained him some occupation; if a stranger, they paid his journey home'.

The beauty of the frescoes by Francesco Salviati, Jacopino del Conte, Jacopo Zucchi and others of like talent in the Oratory of the Confraternity are testimony to the faith and hope of the brothers. These prayed that those whose lives they saved, or those who were executed and whose remains they buried in the seven round covers set in the pavement of the cloister leading to the Oratory, might attain everlasting life through the merits of our crucified Lord, and by their good example. There is good reason to think they did.

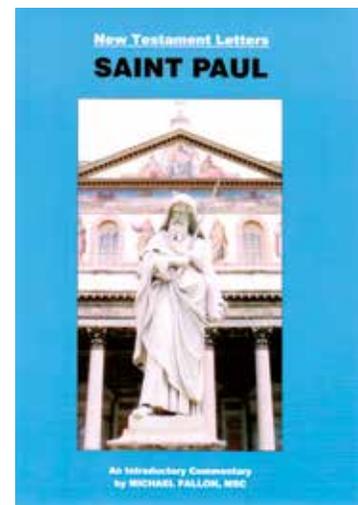
1. *Fasti*, v, May 15, The Ides, 1673.
2. Francis Marion Crawford, *Ave Roma Immortalis*, vol.ii, 1899 ed. p.129-130.
3. G. Baracconi, *Rioni di Roma*, 'Districts of Rome,' Turin, 1905, two volumes ed.

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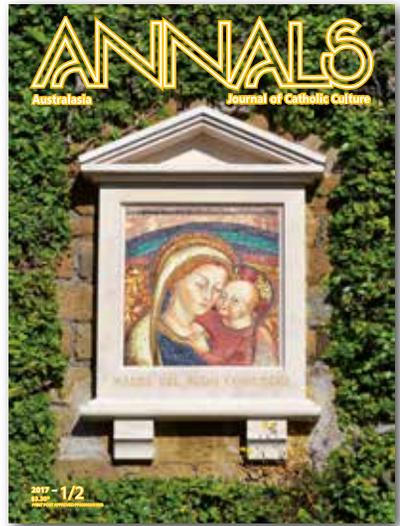
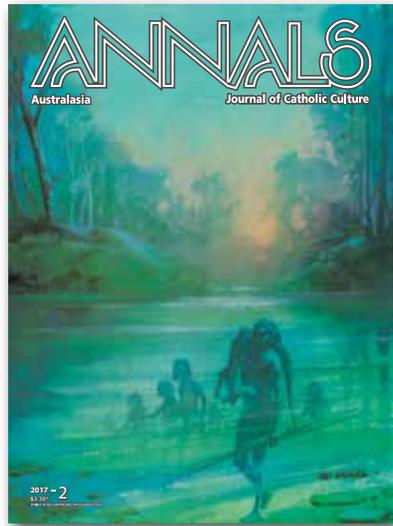
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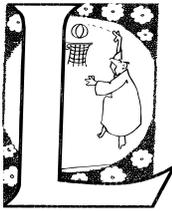
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*The modern liberal mind has liberated itself from the obligations of the past. Its most odious assumption is that the purpose of man's existence is to change the world, whose proponents, Legutko says, 'arm this assumption with arrogance, self-indulgence and irresponsibility.'*

## THE DEMON IN DEMOCRACY

By Jude P. Dougherty



LEGUTKO RUSZARD is a professor of philosophy at the Jagellonian University, Krakow. Specializing in ancient philosophy

and political theory, his most recent book is entitled simply, *Socrates*. He is known widely in Europe as a statesman who has served as Poland's Minister of Education and as Secretary of State. He is currently a member of the European Parliament. *The Demon in Democracy* is about the similarities between communism and liberal democracy. Legutko speaks with what he calls the authority of common sense, that is, from the perspective of Aristotle, Plutarch and Cicero.

In Legutko's judgment, liberal democracy has become an all composing ideology that, behind a veil of tolerance brooks little or no disagreement. In fact it resembles the totalitarian state of Lenin, Stalin, and Mao Zedong. Both communism and liberal democracy compel their subjects with respect to 'what to think,' 'what to do,' 'what language to use,' and 'how to evaluate events.' Both systems are grounded in a philosophical materialism that determines one's view of nature and human nature, with consequences in the practical order.

Speaking of its consequences in the United States, Legutko can cite *Roe v. Wade* (1973) which established a woman's constitutional right to abortion;

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Legutko, Ryszard, *The Demon in Democracy: Totalitarian Temptation in Free Societies*. New York: Encounter Books, 2018. Pp. vii +182. Available from Angus & Robertson.

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*Engle v. Vitale* (1962) which determined that voluntary prayer in public schools violated the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution which prohibits the establishment of religion, in effect banning school prayer; the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which promoted racial preference, and *Oberfeld v. Hodges* (2015) which, 'against

the immemorial common sense of civilized peoples,' established gay marriage as a protected right.

Call this legislation 'progressive jurisprudence,' if you will; in fact it is the liberal's tactic of using the courts to achieve goals that cannot be attained through the legislative process. Under such jurisprudence, the court becomes a political institution.

'Modern liberalism,' as Legutko uses the term, is to be distinguished from that of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century liberalism which was essentially majoritarian democracy resting on constitutional liberal guarantees of free speech, free association, free media and other liberties needed to ensure that debate is real and elections fair. Within that context, the people rule, both as voters and as citizens, making free choices, determined by electoral majorities in accountable bodies.

The modern liberal mind has liberated itself from the obligations of the past. Its most odious assumption is that the purpose of man's existence is to change the world, whose proponents, Legutko says, 'arm this assumption with arrogance, self-indulgence and irresponsibility.' In spite of the collapse of the Soviet Union, both communists and liberal democrats hold the view that history is on their side. Perceived from within their ranks there is no alternative.

Legutko points to an internal contradiction, 'The very idea of liberal democracy presupposes



freedom of action, which means that every man, every group, or party is to be given a free choice of what they want to pursue.' Yet the process of building a liberal democratic society necessitates the withdrawal of freedom from those whose actions and interests are hostile to what the liberal democrats conceive as the source of freedom.

We have observed over the last few decades the emergence of what may be called a 'liberal democratic will,' an omnipresent outlook, independent of the wills of individuals. Promoted by the media, the visual arts and a common educational curriculum, legislatures and judges make laws in its light. The 'liberal democratic will' reaches areas that Rousseau never dreamt of – language, gestures and thoughts.

Viewed from Legutko's historical perspective, one finds that liberal democracy results in a gradual sliding down from the high to the low, from the refined to the coarse. Legutko acknowledges that sometimes a step down has been welcomed as refreshing, natural and healthy, but too often it has brought vulgarity to language, behavior, education, and moral rules, a sense of decorum and hierarchy.

'Common' has ceased to be a word of disapproval. The idea that human beings are created equal with inalienable rights, including dignity, is counter intuitive and difficult to justify. Dignity is not something one is born with. It is something to be earned, deserved, and confirmed by acts in accordance with higher standards imposed by community or religion. Within liberal discourse, dignity is no longer about obligation, but is

a term used to justify claims and entitlements.

Unfortunately the Christian faith does not make one immune to the communist temptation. There has been a century-long trend within Christianity toward communism and socialism, stemming in part from anti-capitalist and moral sentiments. 'Both Protestants and Catholics, and even the greatest theologians [of the twentieth century] fell prey to this illusion. Karl Barth, Paul Tillich and Jacques Maritain, and many others had such episodes...Some like Emmanuel Mounier became openly pro-communist.'



Hostility to Christianity by modern liberal democracies leads to the question of how religion should manifest itself in public life. The Church, given her evangelical mission is bound to be in permanent conflict with liberal democracy not only in matters of morality but in matters of culture as well. This leads Legutko to an interesting discussion of civil religion as promoted by Locke and Rousseau and Tocqueville.

In summing up the affinities between communism and liberal democracy, Legutko is forced to 'the sad conclusion that the modern Western world never understood the communist experience correctly, and never understood the lessons that followed from it.' Solzhenitsyn made the same point in his 1978 Harvard University Commencement Address when he spoke of the West's spiritual exhaustion and the tragic enfeeblement of Europe.

Legutko shows that at their birth the two systems were hailed and sincerely believed to be the greatest hopes for mankind. Such was the vision embraced by early modern thinkers who wrote mostly in opposition to classical and Christian views of nature and human nature. They created a *homo novus*, who deprived of intellectual understanding of the sources of Christendom, must be described as 'uneducated, vulgar, primitive, having nothing but contempt for tradition, for history, for culture and anything subtle, genteel, elegant, beautiful or spiritual.'

What does the future portend? Legutko believes that in the long run, because of its internal contradictions and truncated understanding of human nature, liberal democracy will collapse. But in the meantime, the prognosis is not so good. Calling attention to the failings of liberal democracy,

Legutko joined twelve other distinguished European scholars, including Robert Spaemann, Remi Brague and Pierre Manent, in signing what is known as *The Paris Statement: A Europe We Can Believe In*.

PROFESSOR JUDE P. DOUCHERTY is Dean Emeritus of the Philosophy Faculty, Catholic University of America. Formerly Editor, *The Review of Metaphysics*, and General Editor, *Series Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, Washington, D.C. he is a regular contributor to *Annals*.

# THE OFFICE OF JUDGE

**H**E WHO TAKES the office of a Judge as it now exists in this country takes in his hands, a splendid gem, good and glorious, perfect and pure. Shall he give it up mutilated, shall he mar it, shall he darken it, shall it emit no light, shall it be valued at no price, shall it excite no wonder? Shall he find it a diamond, shall he leave it a stone?

What shall we say to the man who would wilfully destroy with fire the magnificent temple of God, in which I am now preaching? Far worse is he who ruins the moral edifices of the world, which time and toil, and many prayers to God, and many sufferings of men have reared; who puts out the light of the times in which he lives, and leaves us to wander amid the darkness of corruption and the desolation of sin.

There may be, there probably is, in this church, some young man who may hereafter fill the office of an English Judge, when the greater part of those who hear me are dead, and mingled with the dust of the grave.

Let him remember my words, and let them form and fashion his spirit; he cannot tell in what dangerous and

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awful times he may be placed; but as a mariner looks to his compass in the calm, and looks to his compass in the storm, and never keeps his eyes off his compass, so in every vicissitude of a judicial life, deciding for the people, deciding against the people, protecting the just rights of kings, or restraining their unlawful ambition, let him ever cling to that pure,

exalted, and Christian independence, which towers over the little motives of life; which no hope of favour can influence, which no effort of power can control.

– Sydney Smith, *The Wit and Wisdom of Sydney Smith, New York & London, G.P. Putnam's Sons, [undated] pp.212-213.* Sydney Smith [1771-1845] was an Anglican clergyman, essayist, wit, and founder of *The Edinburgh Review*. No friend of Catholicism, he was nevertheless a very fair man.



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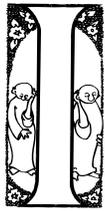
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*Once again, after a long interval, a few storm clouds have gathered and religious liberties might be threatened. The Protestants are now our allies and the tradition of free speech is stronger than in O'Connell's time, but the totalitarian impulse is abroad. Once again it will have to be defeated by politics and in the parliament.*

# FREEDOM FOR THE CATHOLICS

*By* George Cardinal Pell



IN 2001, when I was about to leave Melbourne to come to Sydney as Archbishop we had a farewell dinner with the Melbourne seminarians at "Scala," then the Archbishop's house in Kew. The group contained a number of pianists and we concluded a happy evening with songs around the piano. I noticed that we did not sing one Irish song.

As I had grown up singing (predominantly) Irish tunes around the piano at home in Ballarat, their absence was a reminder to me of the changing Catholic world in Australia, of the providential contribution of the more recent migrant communities and of the fact that today, the "blue eyes," the Anglo-Irish families, thoroughly Australianised, are the most difficult constituency for those preaching the gospel.

The past is a different country and increasingly it is unknown, especially the Catholic past. Very few of our young adults know that the public celebration of Mass was prohibited for most of the first thirty years of Australian history in the penal colony of New South Wales, and I am not sure how many more know of the fierce anti-Catholic sentiments and active persecution including imprisonment and execution in England and Ireland from the time of Henry VIII in the sixteenth century until the Catholic Emancipation Act of

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Antonia Fraser, *The King and the Catholics. The Fight for Rights 1829*. Weiderfeld and Nicolson London 2018

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## The Plight of the Catholics in Ireland

THE REVENUE of the Irish Catholic Church is made up of half-pence, potatoes, rags, bones and the fragments of old clothes; and those, Irish old clothes. They worship often in hovels, or in the open air, from the want of any place of worship. Their religion is the religion of three-fourths of the population ! Not far off, in a well-windowed and well-roofed house, is a well-paid Protestant clergyman, preaching to stools and hassocks, and crying in the wilderness; near him is the clerk, near him the sexton, near him the sexton's wife – furious against the errors of Popery and willing to lay down their lives for the great truths established at the Diet of Augsburg.

- Sydney Smith, Letters on Irish clergy, in *The Wit and Wisdom of Sydney Smith*, New York and London, G.P. Putnam's Sons, [undated] p.168. The Diet of Augsburg in 1530, called by Emperor Charles V, was presented with twenty-eight Articles summarising the basic tenets of Protestantism, known as the Confession of Augsburg.

1829 was passed in the British parliament.

Antonia Fraser's *The King and the Catholics* is more of a story about Daniel O'Connell, the Liberator, the Irish politician and orator and the British Prime Minister of the time, the Duke of Wellington, the victor over Napoleon, who eventually supported the Catholic cause, than it is about Kings George III and George IV, who were both determined opponents of Catholic civil liberties, believing that their coronation oath to uphold the Protestant religion prevented them from taking a more conciliatory position.

Antonia Fraser is a convert to Catholicism and a successful author of fifteen other volumes on Catholic history since the Reformation. She is reliable and accurate, and knows how to spin a yarn. I thoroughly enjoyed the read.

Antonia's parents Lord and Lady Longford were also converts to Catholicism, from an Irish family who feature in the volume as Protestant opponents. One Englishman told me of the story that Longford fell off his horse, when he was at Oxford and hit his head. He then becoming, the story goes, a Catholic and a Socialist.

An unusual man, he was eventually a minister in Parliament doing fine work on e.g. prison reform and against pornography. He also wrote a small book on humility, which I found useful, before proceeding to write three volumes

of autobiography. Antonia Fraser, his daughter, is a very worthy successor.

England and Ireland were different from us and from one another in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century. England had just defeated Napoleon, already had the most powerful navy in the world and was rich, the first country to pass through the Industrial Revolution, although the poor, especially in the cities, led wretched lives. Ireland was poor and agricultural, ruled by a Protestant minority, with widespread illiteracy and misery in a predominantly rural society. Unlike the English, most of the Irish were Catholics.

The Parliaments were often dominated by aristocrats, the union of England and Ireland was in effect and the royal assent of the King was not an inevitable formality. The King's sons were sometimes active speakers in the House of Lords and one of them, the Duke of Cumberland led the opposition to the Catholics.

George the Third, a decent family man, had lost the Americas and suffered from bouts of madness which he believed were provoked by the agitations for Catholic civil rights. George the Fourth was of a different type, a "bon viveur," who took a succession of partners, usually plumper women. He actually married the Catholic widow Mrs Maria Fitzherbert in 1785, although such a marriage for an heir to the throne was invalid in English law. He had a good turn of phrase describing the Duke of Wellington's brother Richard, a big man who was Viceroy in Ireland in the 1820s, after serving a similar role in India, as a "Spanish grandee grafted on an Irish potato". The Viceroy's private life was a tad undisciplined as he had five children with his mistress, a French actress of Irish descent. Both Kings believed their coronation oath to uphold the Protestant religion required them to oppose the Catholic cause and they did so enthusiastically.



The English Catholic aristocrats continued to live quietly enjoying an increasing freedom which provoked the Gordon Riots in 1780. Their leader and champion was Lord Robert Petre, who had welcomed George III to his home Thorndon Hall in 1778, where he had an inconspicuous Catholic chapel. He had actually become Grand Master of the Masonic Order in 1772.

These Catholics did not want papal interference in England, believed in lay leadership of the Church (their own) and kept their distance from the Irish Catholics.

Catholic Emancipation, freedom of religion, which the Bishop of Oxford denounced as "The Abominable Catholic Quest," was only achieved after decades of political struggle. The Catholics were feared as Roman opponents of freedom, who had excommunicated Elizabeth I, slaughtered French Protestants in the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre in 1572 and even Christopher Wren's plaque in London wrongly blamed them for the Great Fire there in 1666. For most Englishmen Catholics

were the enemy, subject to bitter hostility. The Penal Laws before the Relief Act of 1778 prevented Catholics from buying or inheriting land and denied legality to Catholic marriages. A Catholic who declared himself Protestant could displace a Catholic heir!

The ruling classes had been frightened by the violence of the French Revolution in 1789, which executed the King, by the successful war of independence in the USA, by the liberations in South America from Spanish rule by Simon Bolivar and the 1798 uprising in Ireland. Some Protestants and unbelievers like the poet P. B. Shelley supported Irish independence and religious freedom and the Irish Protestants also helped with Henry Grattan's 1813 Bill for Emancipation rejected despite having the support of Canning and Castlereagh.

The key to eventual success by the Catholics was undoubtedly "King Dan", the Liberator, Daniel O'Connell. Born in County Kerry in 1775 he was educated abroad at Douai and then at Lincoln's Inn in London where he became a barrister. He went to the Dublin Bar in 1796.

A big burly man, he was a dramatic orator, able to lend "an eloquent voice to the sentiments, the passions and even to the prejudices of six million" Irish. He was a showman, larger than life, always with "a green cravat, or green watch ribbon, and a slashing shining green hat band". He was bitterly opposed during his lifetime and at his death, with some of

## Pope Leo I's Letter to Caesar

IT IS OUR WISH that the city of Constantinople may have its glory; and that, protected by God's right hand, it may daily experience your merciful rule. But matters of the world are not the same as matters Divine. No Christian structure built upon anything other than the Rock that the Lord put in place as the foundation of the Church, will stand secure.

— From a letter that Pope Leo the Great wrote to the Byzantine emperor Flavius Marcianus Augustus on May 22, 452 AD rejecting the infamous canon 28 of the Council of Chalcedon. The canon claimed that the Bishop of Constantinople had primacy over the Pope of Rome because Constantinople was the seat of the Emperor. Translation: Paul Stenhouse.

this notoriety captured by the fact that he fought three duels, killing one opponent John D'Esterre in 1815.

In the fierce winter of 1822, when the Irish peasants were starving and rebellious and Habeas Corpus was suspended, O'Connell founded the Catholic Association, intent on co-opting the Irish peasantry through their parishes and with the help of their priests.

The Association rejected violence and was open to all willing to pay a small subscription; eventually there were half a million associates paying a penny a month. While rejecting illegality their leaders set out to kindle "the smouldering passions of an infuriated and oppressed people".

Unexpectedly the Duke of Wellington offered the Board of Trade to the member for County Clare, Vesey Fitzgerald who had to offer himself for re-election. The preferred candidate of the Association, the Protestant William Macnamara chose not to stand and O'Connell was drafted with "deafening cries".

While he was eligible as a Catholic to enter the Parliament he refused to take the parliamentary oath denouncing the sacrifice of the Mass and the Blessed Virgin Mary as "impious and idolatrous". The Catholic Association decided to abstain from whisky during the campaign (wine and cider were allowed), order was maintained and O'Connell gave one of his greatest speeches to a huge public meeting. He was voted in as member for Clare by 22,027 votes to 982.

O'Connell had predicted rightly that the oath would be abolished with his election. The Duke of Wellington, a believer in the Protestant Ascendancy, had realised that the Emancipation Bill was in the community's interests and even Robert Peel, a long term opponent, came reluctantly to the same conclusion. Some adversaries spoke of "the conversion of St. Peel".



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On March 4, 1829 a dramatic six-hour confrontation took place between Prime Minister Wellington, Peel and Lyndhurst on the one hand and an hysterical George IV, who was refusing approval. It was only when the three parliamentary leaders threatened to resign that the King capitulated.

When the results of the vote were known, he lamented that now “the Duke of Wellington is the King of England, O’Connell is King of Ireland and I suppose I am only considered Dean of Windsor”.

It was a dramatic conclusion to a struggle which had gone on for hundreds of years, momentous in its importance and we still enjoy its benefits.

Melbourne has an unusual link with O’Connell because his bronze statue was offered to the city of Melbourne, but the City Council refused. Archbishop Carr stepped in and accepted it on behalf of the city placing it in 1891 on the right hand of the entrance to the Cathedral. There it stood until 1998, when it was replaced by a splendid statue of Archbishop Mannix and translated into the northwest rose garden.

Because O’Connell’s memory had faded I feared that many would suspect he was wealthy Irish bookmaker, so a plaque was added and unveiled by Mary McAleese, President of Ireland. It reads as follows and reads well:

The leading Irish statesman and Catholic parliamentarian of his day, O’Connell was the founder of the Catholic Association, a mass movement which promoted universal human rights and social justice, exclusively by political means and non-violent action.

He led the struggle to pass the Emancipation Act of 1829 by which the British parliament finally repealed the remnants of the terrible penal laws against Catholics and re-established the basis for their civil and religious rights throughout the British Empire.

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While Catholic Emancipation in the British Empire is almost forgotten in Australia, even by Catholics unfortunately, it was an unprecedented and spectacular democratic achievement. Hundreds of thousands supported the cause financially and there were huge peaceful demonstrations, which preceded the election and the passage of the bill. It was also a triumph of the Westminster system and a tribute to the good sense and concern for the well-being of the nation on the part of the Duke of Wellington’s government.

Once again, after a long interval, a few storm clouds have gathered and religious liberties might be threatened. The Protestants are now our allies and the tradition of free speech is stronger than in O’Connell’s time, but the totalitarian impulse is abroad. Once again it will have to be defeated by politics and in the parliament.

---

HIS EMINENCE GEORGE CARDINAL PELL is Prefect of the Secretariat for the Economy of the Holy See. He is affectionately remembered by the Catholics of Melbourne and Sydney as their former Archbishop.

*Dear exhausted, discouraged parents*

## A LETTER TO PARENTS

*who keep bringing their disruptive children to Mass, week after week*

*By Anna O'Neil*

O YOUR KIDS are just terrible in Mass. Chaotic, disobedient, and disruptive, week after week. It's like a big old spotlight is shining on you the whole time, you and your apparently sub-par parenting.

I'm right there with you. I've started to dread Sundays. I mean, we've tried everything. Going to the early Mass, going to the evening Mass, Mass books, whispered explanations, whispered threats, sitting in the front, sitting in the back, marching straight to the cry room ... and maybe a few of the tricks have helped, but the bottom line is that we're not getting out of that building without somebody screaming, making a mad dash for the altar, or God knows what.

But in spite of it all, every week, I and my loud, chaotic family are going to be there (in the back!) wiggling around and distracting everyone, and subjecting ourselves to the judgment of a large number of people who might not understand how hard it actually is to teach a toddler to sit quietly for 45 minutes. It looks insane. Still, we button up our wrinkled Sunday clothes anyway, and get our bodies under that roof, just like Mother Church asks us to.

I want you to know that if this is you too, that's okay. It's better than okay. Christ had something pretty important to say about people like us:

When [Jesus] looked up he saw some wealthy people putting their offerings into the treasury and he noticed a poor widow putting in two small coins. He said, "I tell you truly, this poor widow put in more than all the rest; for those others have all made offerings from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has offered her whole livelihood." (Luke 21:1-4)

Isn't this exactly what we are doing? We are giving it literally all we've got, in obeying the Church's request to make it to Sunday Mass. (Sheer embarrassment, unfortunately, isn't a good enough reason to stay home.) To the outside world, it looks like we've done the bare minimum. We've gotten into the building, sure, but are we concentrating? Are we having a spiritual experience? Did we even hear a word of the Gospel, for heaven's sake? It doesn't look like much. We are the only ones who know how much we are really giving. But Christ knows, too.

Just like the woman's two small coins into the collection box look like nothing in comparison with the rich man's gigantic bag of gold, our contribution looks so small a person might wonder why we even bother. Why even come to Mass, if you're just going to spend the whole time doing toddler damage control? But Christ is there to remind us that he doesn't see what the rest of the world sees.

Pretty often, I leave Mass feeling like the whole thing was a bust. I didn't even manage to follow along, and I left so fast I forgot to genuflect. What kind of a Catholic am I? If that's how you feel too, don't forget – having little kids, or kids with special needs, or whatever situation you're in that makes it impossible to kneel quietly and listen carefully, this is a unique kind of poverty. And we, in our poverty, really do give all we have, just by doing our best. Even if our best is just showing up.

So don't stop. And please don't worry too much about how your family looks. Even if it never gets easier, keep doing what you are doing, and know that even when the world doesn't, God sees how valuable your sacrifice is.

See *Aleteia*, July 21, 2018. *Aleteia* is an online Catholic news and information website founded in 2011/2012 by the Foundation for Evangelization through the Media. It is based in France and operates in six languages worldwide. Website: <https://aleteia.org>

*Thankfully I never attended any Australian educational institution where the idea that Christianity is ... some form of now irrelevant superstition is regularly promoted – along with a great deal of other historical rubbish.*

## FAREWELL FAIRFAX AND OTHER ISSUES

*By* Giles Auty



ON JULY 27 *The Australian* carried an outsized and rather funereal headline THE DAY FAIRFAX DIED which was probably greeted variously with despair, relief, elation or some mixture of the three not just by Australian journalists in general but by Australia's citizens at large.

Let your mind hover for a moment over the Sydney Morning Herald which regularly displayed a venomous hatred of the Catholic church in its pages.

I must admit to never having any great wish to have worked for Fairfax in Australia. Indeed on the sole occasion that I had lunch with a then *Sydney Morning Herald* News editor a strike was apparently threatened by senior journalists there if he showed any inclination to employ me.

No-one can accuse the Australian media of fair-mindedness of course, yet ironically I had already worked for the late James Fairfax in Britain when he bought what was then already a truly ancient but entirely British publication: *The Spectator*.

Is it really more than 23 years now since I came to this country to take up a post offered me all those years ago by *The Australian*? As a newcomer to this

country I had then never even heard of the Fairfax publication *The Age*, yet, naturally, that did not prevent said newspaper from running a half page of unalloyed hostility to my presence here just days after I arrived. How, therefore did they manage to

anyone they could find in Britain known to be hostile to my views. The foregoing did not, of course, include my last editor at *The Spectator* Dominic Lawson who, by contrast, expressed considerable regret that I was leaving that magazine.

Foreseeably, perhaps, ABC Television shortly followed the hostile example set by *The Age* by presenting a very dishonestly edited 45minute program which was also supposed to be 'about' me – if somewhat unrecognizably so. Moving to a new country to work is not necessarily the most rewarding of experiences yet I, on the other hand, have always been drawn irresistibly to travelling.

Thus during that now extremely distant 9 month period which passed between my leaving school and being called up for compulsory military service I worked briefly in London's formerly notorious East End including a spell spent on the docks. London docks were always a haunt of screaming seagulls and, for my youthful self, utterly intriguing ships which bore the names of fascinating far-off places emblazoned on their hulls. Would I ever actually set eyes on Freemantle or Hobart, let alone Vladivostock or Valparaiso? Although I had travelled to other substantial portions of our globe I never actually set foot in Australia until 1994.

As one of the least politically



inform themselves about my host of apparent shortcomings? Their supposedly smart move was somehow to interview *in advance*

correct journalists on our planet my relationship with *The Australian* was possibly never an entirely easy one. Indeed, on the last occasion that I had any direct dealings with that paper I was informed that the whole body of my previous writing about art was without legitimate purpose since it failed to be based on 'Marxist analysis'.

So how then does one subject the extraordinary pencil drawings of Sydney made by the late Lloyd Rees in the mid 1930s, say, to such an irrelevant and basically valueless procedure? Or likewise William Robinson's incomparable series of vast Creation Series paintings made during the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century? The answer is that one should attempt no such thing for it has no legitimate *artistic* purpose in a democracy.

The politicization of visual art under Post-Modernism is one of the attempted justifications made regularly for the aforesaid procedure. For a country of such size, Australia has always been and will probably forever remain now culturally second-rate. Who would you personally choose as our finest musical composer, painter and writer thus far in our history? Percy Grainger, Sidney Nolan and Patrick White perhaps?

No wonder our major universities reject proposed courses based on European civilization since when making comparisons with the latter trio we inevitably identify ourselves as culturally undeveloped. How much better for our self-esteem might it be never even to try to understand the incomparable levels of inspiration in J.S. Bach, say, and Beethoven, Velazquez and Rembrandt and Dante and Shakespeare. By whom or what were such geniuses inspired?

Even in more modern media we do not necessarily cover ourselves with glory. For scores of 20<sup>th</sup> century writers ranging from T.S. Eliot to Christopher Koch, the outstanding novel of that century was F.Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great*

## If Turks had landed

OUR CONDUCT to Ireland, during the whole of this war, has been that of a man who subscribes to hospitals, weeps at charity sermons, carries out broth and blankets to beggars, and then comes home and beats his wife and children. ... If Turks had landed, Turks would have received an order from the Treasury for coffee, opium, korans and seraglios. [Yet] we continue to treat the unhappy Catholics of Ireland as if their tongues were mute, their heels cloven, their nature brutal and designedly subjected by Providence to their Orange masters.

- Sydney Smith, *The Peter Plymley Letters*, 'Letter iv,' quoted in *The Selected Writings of Sydney Smith*, ed. W.H. Auden, Faber and Faber [undated] p.26.  
Sydney Smith [1771-1845] was an Anglican clergyman, essayist, wit, and founder of *The Edinburgh Review*. He was one of the most brilliant writers of his time.

*Gatsby*. What then about attempted filmic versions of that book? The first such, in black and white, featured the late Alan Ladd in the lead role, the second in colour did the same for Robert Redford and the most recent starred Leonardo di Caprio in a version by Australian director Baz Luhrmann which - sadly - was comfortably the worst of the three, displaying little or no understanding of the novel's subtleties. Small wonder Hollywood's leading men wanted to play one of the great roles of fiction.

Here, by complete contrast, are some of the truly lyrical and inspiring words, the late Christopher Koch, formerly a fellow editorial board member at *Annals*, wrote about *Gatsby*: "Like all true legends, Fitzgerald's has a mystery at its heart: that of achieved perfection, which people recognize instinctively in literature, even if they can't define it. Fitzgerald was reaching for it in all of his novels - and in one of them, *The Great Gatsby*, he gave us one of the most perfect and beautiful things in all fiction. It is the beauty of perfection, I believe, that accounts for the unusual affection in which *Gatsby* is held by so many people; and to some extent it explains the endless interest in Fitzgerald himself. This, and the fact that more than most writers, he exemplifies in his life perfection's paradox: that the perfection came

out of heartbreak, folly and mess utterly at odds with the serenity of his art." (The foregoing is an extract from *Crossing the Gap* by Christopher Koch, Random House, Australia 2000).

In the next week or so a compact book by me hits the Australian bookstalls. Three chapters from it have appeared already in *Annals*. In spite of its short length the book makes rather a large claim: that the whole of Post-Modernism simply represents Marxism by stealth. The various tenets of post-modernism have already made a very good job of destroying education and the arts in Australia through arbitrarily politicizing them.

Marx was permanently at war with Christianity which he perceived rightly as the greatest obstacle to the achievement of his aims. *Thus atheism is an absolute precondition of Marxism*. All the various aspects of Post-Modernism attempt to present themselves as 'progress' of course: ranging from Same-Sex Marriage to Safe Schools Programs - both of which are culled directly from the standard Marxist playbook. In the case of Australia we are waking up far too late from a long and very insidiously damaging dream.

Obviously I do not claim to be the first to have noticed the way Western life is being destroyed systematically from within. What I can claim however is a now

increasingly rare and very clear memory of life as an adult *from before Post-Modernism even began*. Life had a cleanliness and sense of purpose about it then which we have never subsequently seen. Thus no-one serving currently as a politician in Australia now shares my memories of what sensible Western life was once about. By contrast, the limited options confronting us now seem to get – and actually are – more awful by the day.

Post-modernism enjoys its choke-hold on Australia through our culpable lack of cultural vigilance. The year before Post-Modernism officially announced its presence among us via one of its earliest manifestations - political correctness in 1964 – I had recently spent more than two months wandering through Spain which I had then never visited previously.

Before going there I had read Hugh Thomas's extremely lengthy *The Spanish Civil War* from cover to cover and was thus fully familiar with the terrible events which had tortured a very fine nation of people. Velazquez and Goya, who straddle the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, remain among visual art's finest practitioners of all time. Have you ever seen a painting by either at first-hand? Jackson Pollock's *Blue Poles* which you can see in our National Gallery in Canberra is almost exactly the same size as *The Surrender of Breda* by Velazquez which was painted more than 400 years earlier.

One is about highly novel but largely meaningless mark-making by an habitual drunk, the other records a tragic historical event with compelling skill and majesty. Why then are we led to think that the first represents 'progress' over the second which was created by probably the most skilled painter who has thus far ever lived. Both Picasso and Manet were obsessed by the supernatural-seeming skills of Velazquez who was trained - as all the best painters once were - by apprenticeship at a tender age to an acknowledged master of his craft.

In the past year or so I have made favourable mention of the Ramsay Centre for Western Civilisation a number of times but have not so far expressed a view about the travails it has experienced when trying to deal with major Australian universities e.g. the ANU in Canberra and the University of Sydney which have rejected the various forms of co-operative venture proposed. To me at least the fundamental – and basically insuperable – reason for the stand-off is entirely obvious.

For decades past, a high percentage of Australian schoolchildren and university students have been brainwashed about the supposed wonders of Marxism and as I have remarked already *atheism is an absolute precondition of such veneration*. Thankfully I never attended any Australian educational institution where the idea that Christianity is, by contrast, some form of now irrelevant superstition is regularly promoted – along with a great deal of other historical rubbish.

In short, it is impossible even to begin to understand the absolute wonders of Western civilization without comprehending the cardinal role that Christianity played both culturally and politically. So how would brainwashed Australian undergraduates even begin to cope with such a contradiction of almost everything they have been taught from primary school onwards?

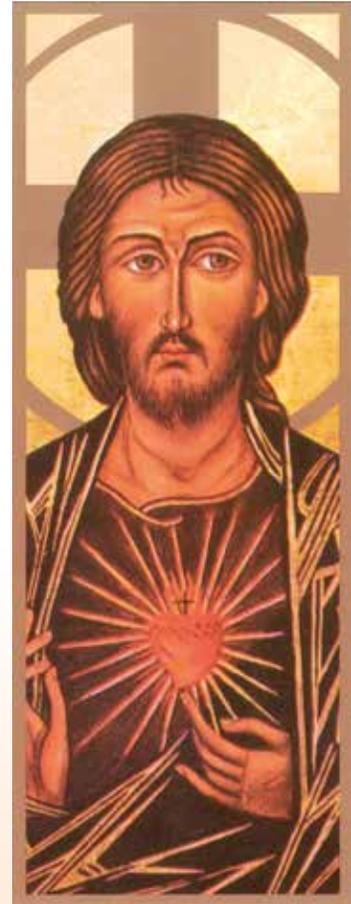
Marxism in Australia as in much of the rest of the Western world has chewed away in termite mode at democracy by disguising itself for at least half a century as perfectly 'respectable' post-modernism.

From now on, however, post-modernism's brilliantly concocted cover is about to be permanently blown.

---

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*.

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same love; the gentleness and  
compassion, the patience and  
the mercy of the heart of Jesus!**

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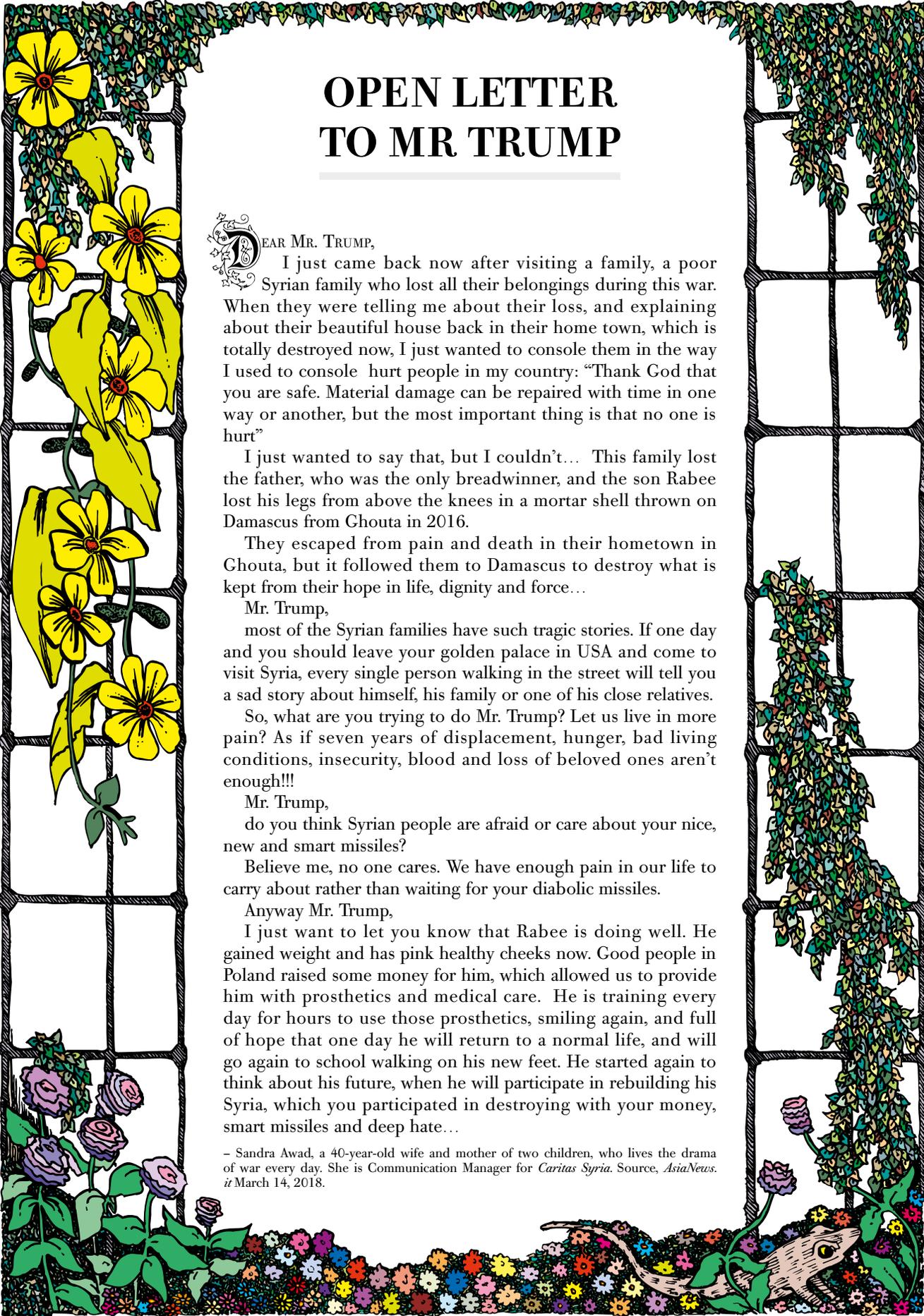
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# OPEN LETTER TO MR TRUMP

DEAR MR. TRUMP,

I just came back now after visiting a family, a poor Syrian family who lost all their belongings during this war. When they were telling me about their loss, and explaining about their beautiful house back in their home town, which is totally destroyed now, I just wanted to console them in the way I used to console hurt people in my country: "Thank God that you are safe. Material damage can be repaired with time in one way or another, but the most important thing is that no one is hurt"

I just wanted to say that, but I couldn't... This family lost the father, who was the only breadwinner, and the son Rabee lost his legs from above the knees in a mortar shell thrown on Damascus from Ghouta in 2016.

They escaped from pain and death in their hometown in Ghouta, but it followed them to Damascus to destroy what is kept from their hope in life, dignity and force...

Mr. Trump,

most of the Syrian families have such tragic stories. If one day and you should leave your golden palace in USA and come to visit Syria, every single person walking in the street will tell you a sad story about himself, his family or one of his close relatives.

So, what are you trying to do Mr. Trump? Let us live in more pain? As if seven years of displacement, hunger, bad living conditions, insecurity, blood and loss of beloved ones aren't enough!!!

Mr. Trump,

do you think Syrian people are afraid or care about your nice, new and smart missiles?

Believe me, no one cares. We have enough pain in our life to carry about rather than waiting for your diabolic missiles.

Anyway Mr. Trump,

I just want to let you know that Rabee is doing well. He gained weight and has pink healthy cheeks now. Good people in Poland raised some money for him, which allowed us to provide him with prosthetics and medical care. He is training every day for hours to use those prosthetics, smiling again, and full of hope that one day he will return to a normal life, and will go again to school walking on his new feet. He started again to think about his future, when he will participate in rebuilding his Syria, which you participated in destroying with your money, smart missiles and deep hate...

- Sandra Awad, a 40-year-old wife and mother of two children, who lives the drama of war every day. She is Communication Manager for *Caritas Syria*. Source, *AsiaNews*. 14 March 2018.

*The most famous moment in the struggle, not depicted in the film, was the martyrdom of Padre Miguel Pro, ordered shot by firing squad by Calles in 1927, with the heart-wrenching final moments (Pro kneeling in prayer, then standing, his arms extended in the sign of the cross as bullets shatter him, and Pro shot point blank when the fusillade didn't kill him).*

# FOR GREATER GLORY

By Brent Bozell



WHEN I FIRST HEARD that *For Greater Glory* (originally titled *Cristiada*, which I prefer) was being shot, I was stunned – and sceptical. It could never be produced by Hollywood. In fact, it wouldn't be a theatrical release, maybe a short documentary, certainly with a small budget. On the former I was correct: it was made in Mexico. On the latter I was wrong. It's a full-fledged, major motion picture, with grade-A talent. And it's wonderful.

The cast includes Andy Garcia, Eva Longoria, Peter O'Toole (in a cameo role as a murdered priest, the octogenarian is splendid), Ruben Blades and Mexican star Eduardo Verastegui. This is serious stuff.

The movie depicts the Mexican *Cristero* uprising against the military dictatorship of President Plutarco Calles between 1926 and 1929. Calles was an ardent anti-Catholic in a nation dominated by Catholics. At his command Catholic churches were ordered shuttered, the Mass outlawed and many priests murdered.

The most famous moment in the struggle, not depicted in the film, was the martyrdom of Padre Miguel Pro, ordered shot by firing squad by Calles in 1927, with the heart-wrenching final moments (Pro kneeling in prayer, then standing, his arms extended

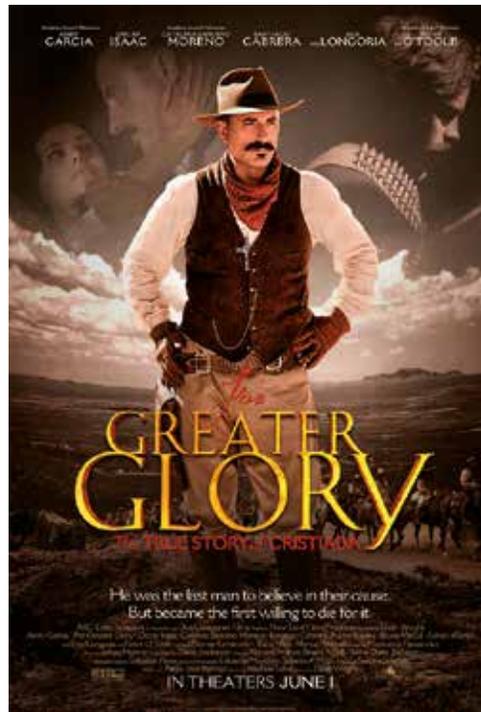
ANNALS HAS carried film reviews since the late 60s. Father Peter Malone, msc, reviewed movies for us from 1968 until 1999 when James Murray took over as our film reviewer and media analyst. 2019 will be James's twentieth year with Annals. We have also carried guest reviews by various authors including Bill Collins and Roger Ebert. The past fifty years superb movie-making has produced many films that were thoroughly Catholic but often didn't make it to major cinema screens because residual anti-Catholicism is alive and well, lurking in board rooms and studios in the much vaunted 'Free World'. *For Greater Glory* was such a film.

in the sign of the cross as bullets shatter him, and Pro shot point blank when the fusillade didn't kill him) photographed by order of the President. Padre Pro was beatified by Pope John Paul II the Great in 1988.

I was shown the early trailers because of the family connection. My grandfather Will Buckley Sr. was a strong supporter of the *Cristeros*. A devout Catholic with business interests in Mexico and an ardent love of that country, so much so that he planned to move his family there, Buckley provided material aid to the impoverished peasants.

Some things we know to be true. He was targeted for assassination; his oil leases were expropriated by the government; he was expelled. Others are in question: that there was actual attempt to kill him (another version has it that the assassins turned and offered him assistance should he want someone capped); that a train he hired to smuggle in arms from El Paso (maybe) became lost, wandered about at night, ultimately found its way back to El Paso and the weapons were confiscated; and that his heirs were also banished but don't tell my cousin who has been practising law there for decades.

You know nothing of this uprising? Not to worry, virtually no one does. That included the primary actors. Garcia tells the *Huffington Post* he knew nothing,



but understands it, given that the same catastrophe befell native Cuba, where it “was not only the taking away of religious rights, they curtailed and took away all rights.” Even Verastegui, a fervent Catholic, admits he was ignorant of this struggle because of the Mexican public school system. That has changed now thanks to the soft-spoken and elegant Mexican real estate developer-turned-producer Pablo Jose Barroso.

Much is being written about the timing of the movie’s release in the wake of the Obama administration’s anti-religious mandate and on the eve of the bishops’ planned “Fortnight for Freedom” June 21 through July 4. The timing is extraordinary but fortuitous. The movie was planned before President Obama’s assault against the Catholic Church.

But just the idea of the connection brings out the worst in the secularist press. *Slant magazine* pans it as a film “that gives the screen epic a bad name.” It attacks the “solemn speechifying,” the “overstuffed cast of characters,” the “half-baked material,” and given that “this religion is specifically Catholic... [the movie] ...makes the material a tough sell.” When Garcia’s character ultimately converts to Christianity, “we’re back to embracing a worldview where the implied mandate to practise Catholicism feels near as onerous as the inability to do so.”

But how historically accurate is this “implied mandate to practise Catholicism”? Here’s a hint. *Slant* dismisses “a whole host of bathetic subplots” claiming “its martyrdom fetish reaches its grotesque nadir when a young boy dies rather than make the most token anti-Catholic gesture.”

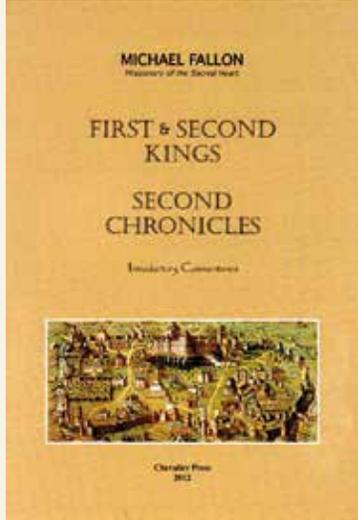
As for the alleged mushy effusiveness and the martyrdom fetish, there are some historical facts.

Over 90,000 died. Dozens have since been canonized by the Church, including 25 by John Paul II alone.

The young boy was Jose Luis Sanchez del Rio, who was tortured with his heels slashed before being

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made to walk to his execution. “He cried and moaned with pain,” stated an eyewitness. And then he was shot dead.

The “most token anti-Catholic gesture” which would have saved his life was his refusal to shout “Death to Christ the King,” instead of proclaiming “Viva Cristo Rey!” “Live Christ the King!”

Jose was 14. He was beatified by Benedict XVI in 2005.

It is still illegal to celebrate Mass

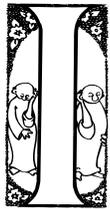
outdoors in Mexico. And it is still almost impossible in first world liberal democracies for the story of the *Cristero* uprising to break through anti-Catholic prejudice that mirrors the anti-Catholicism of President Plutarcho Calles and his military dictatorship. “Viva Cristo Rey!”

BRENT BOZELL is founder and president of the Media Research Center and publisher of *NewsBusters*. Reprinted with permission *For Greater Glory* was released in 2012.

*'I as a lad worshipped him,' Henry Lawson recalled of Farrell, 'even more than I did Gordon.' Farrell encouraged Lawson's writing and loaned him money. J. F. Archibald, the founder of The Bulletin, recalled, 'Few men on the press of Australia at any period in our literary history have been so powerful for good as John Farrell.'*

## JOHN FARRELL

*By Michael Wilding*

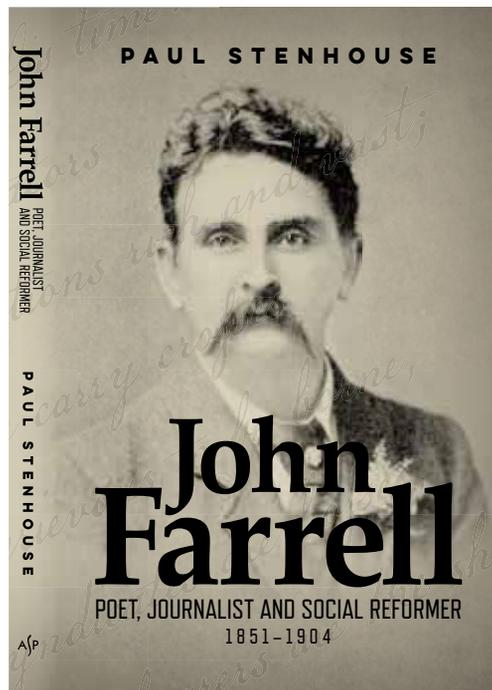


IN THIS SPLENDID, pioneering study, *John Farrell, Poet, Journalist and Social Reformer 1851-1904*, Father Paul Stenhouse makes the case for John Farrell as an integral figure in the radical literary and political ferment of the 1880s and 1890s in Australia. Henry Lawson, 'Banjo' Paterson, Barbara Baynton are all remembered, but Farrell has been forgotten. He was one of the only ten writers featured amongst the 80 illustrations to A.W. Jose's *History of Australasia*, first published in 1899 and in its sixth edition by 1917. Yet you will be hard put to it to find his work reprinted or discussed in any anthology or history of Australian literature today.

'I as a lad worshipped him,' Henry Lawson recalled of Farrell, 'even more than I did Gordon.' Farrell encouraged Lawson's writing and loaned him money. J.F. Archibald, the founder of *The Bulletin*, recalled, 'Few men on the press of Australia at any period in our literary history have been so powerful for good as John Farrell.'

Farrell's early career was that of a brewer in Queanbeyan. One New Year's Eve a number of the lively spirits of the town called at Farrell's house and asked for drinks. 'There is nothing here,' he told them 'but I'll give you the keys of the brewery and you can go there

and take what you want.' Which they did. As his fellow poet Bertram Stevens observed 'Naturally a man who ran a business on such lines was not likely to make a fortune ... Farrell was quite unfitted for business management. He was far more deeply concerned in poetry and politics than in his own beer – which, by the way, he seldom drank.'



He began writing for a couple of regional papers, *The Hampden Guardian* and *The Albury Banner* from 1875 onwards. Through the 1880s he was a prolific contributor to the newly established *Bulletin*, and editor of a number of papers, amongst them the *Lithgow*

*Enterprise* and *The Australian Standard*. And from February till October 1890 he was editor of the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, continuing as a member of the leader-writing staff until June 1903, resigning when the paper became increasingly anti-labour in its policies.

*The Bulletin* was central to Farrell's writing. He wrote the first short story to appear in its pages. But it was the poems he contributed that established his reputation and popularity. 'Jenny – an Australian Story' ran for six months in 1882-3. Farrell recalled 'I wrote the opening instalment of 'Jenny' ... and sent it to the *Bulletin*. I had only intended it as a specimen but Traill was in America, and in his absence Haynes shoved it in and I was bound in honour to go on supplying the copy from week to week.' With its descriptions of everyday bush life and its attendant poverty and hardships, with its sympathetic portrayal of a woman's struggles, it proved immediately popular.

At the height of the Shearers' strike William Lane published Henry Lawson's first contribution to *The Worker*, May 16, 1891, the poem 'Freedom on the Wallaby'. Two weeks later the *Bulletin* published Farrell's no less radical poem 'The Weakness of Mr King – a Ballad of Coreena' commemorating a confrontation between strikers and strike breakers, in which the military arrested five trade unionist strikers

and took them back in handcuffs to Brisbane. Henry Lawson's radical verse of the 1890s is still remembered, but Farrell's has been forgotten until now.

Farrell's verse often had a strong satiric and comic note. 'My Sundowner' is a classic tall story bush yarn. It tells of a tree at Murrumbidgee which compels those who see it to hang themselves to death from its branches. The tree becomes a tourist attraction, Ned the sundowner charges people £10 a time for the privilege of hanging themselves, and having raised £30,000, goes 'home' to England, enters Parliament, and after blowing all his money on 'sprees' ends up back at Murrumbidgee.

As well as a writer and editor, Farrell was a radical activist, writing and campaigning in the cause of the land nationalization and single tax movement associated with the American social theorist Henry George. The movement was given massive impetus in 1890 when George visited Australia. Farrell accompanied George at every stage of his New South Wales tour, and wrote about it for the *New York Standard*.

Henry Lawson recalled in 'Pursuing Literature in Australia' in the *Bulletin*, 21 January 1891, how as a youth 'I watched old fossickers and farmers reading *Progress and Poverty* earnestly and arguing over it Sunday afternoons.' George's *Progress and Poverty*, published in the USA in 1879, was serialized in a Sydney paper in the same year and his ideas were widely disseminated. Lawson's 'A Day on a Selection' (*Bulletin*, 28 May 1892) ends with the hilarious – or tragicomic – episode in which the selector and his neighbour attempt to discuss the political ideas of Henry George, Ignatius Donnelly and Edward Bellamy over dinner, while interruptions from children and chooks prevent anything substantial from being said, let alone done.

'Land nationalization,' William Lane wrote, 'would do more in a single day than protection will do

in a century towards adjusting and keeping perpetually adjusted that distribution of wealth, the present mismanagement of which is the cause of all poverty, nearly all crime, and most vice.' George's *Social Problems* was discussed by Lane in his 'Books Well Worth Reading' series in the *Worker, Progress and Poverty* was available from *The Worker Book Fund*, and George's ideas are raised in Lane's novel, *The Workingman's Paradise*. Lane and Farrell became friends, and their two families used to meet when the Lanes were living in Sydney, along with Mary Cameron (later Mary Gilmore), waiting to sail to Paraguay to establish the New Australia settlement in 1893.

Lane, like most of the radical movement, ultimately abandoned George's theories. But Farrell and others, including Catherine Spence and Rose Scott, continued to espouse them. As late as 1934 in Christina Stead's *Seven Poor Men of Sydney*, the character Baruch Mendelssohn – 'my first study of my husband to be,' she said in an interview – quotes from George on how the current capitalist system crowds 'human being into noisome cellars, and squalid tenement houses, fills prison and brothels, goads men with want and consumes them with greed, robs women of the grace of perfect womanhood, takes from little children the joy and innocence of life's morning.'

The Single Tax movement was one of a number of organizations circulating radical ideas in Australia that influenced the program of the early years of the Australian Labor Party. The stress was on a single tax only – on unimproved land values – and a refusal of any tax on commodities, since commodity taxes impoverished the poor and privileged the wealthy. The conservative Disraeli had made the same point about the injustice of excise duties, which fell most heavily on the poor, in *Sybil* (1845).

Farrell's advocacy of the single tax movement was serious journalism. It also consistently

alienated advertisers from the papers Farrell edited, and frequently led to their closure. But it kept Farrell in continual contact with the emergent labour and union movement.

Stenhouse records: 'Among the early single taxers who owed their start in politics to Farrell, and upon whom his influence rested long after his death were Joseph Cook, Frank Cotton, William Morris Hughes, William Arthur Holman, George S. Beeby, Walter E. Johnson, George Black, John Haynes, R. Hollis, and William Affleck.' His friendships in the political world were as equally extensive as his literary associations.

The neglect of John Farrell in the years since his death, though unjustified, regrettable and scandalous, is neither unique nor surprising. As Stenhouse succinctly remarks, 'part of the reason for this lies in his uncompromising commitment to social and economic reform.' The waning influence of the Single Tax and Land Nationalization movement further contributed to his exclusion from the literary and political record. Although Single Taxers were in the forefront of the early Labor Party in NSW, and for a while controlled the party executive, their influence waned. Of the various components of radical thought in the 1880s and 1890s, the Single Tax movement was one that was abandoned and forgotten. Forgotten to such an extent that it was a federal Labor treasurer who first proposed introducing the Goods and Services tax in 1985. What would Farrell have written about that?

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MICHAEL WILDING is author of *Wild Bleak Bohemia: Marcus Clarke, Adam Lindsay Gordon and Henry Kendall* (Australian Scholarly Publishing), a critical monograph *Marcus Clarke* (Oxford U. P.), editor of a selection *Marcus Clarke* (University of Queensland U. P.) and co-editor of *Cybil Hopkins' Marcus Clarke* (Australian Scholarly). He is emeritus professor of English and Australian Literature at the University of Sydney. Excerpted from Michael Wilding's introduction to *John Farrell, Poet, Journalist and Social Reformer 1851- 1904* by Paul Stenhouse, Australian Scholarly Publishing, Melbourne, July 2018, xxiii+344 pp. RRP \$44. Copies: 03 9329 -6963.

*'We were encouraged to "think for ourselves" and our thoughts in most cases turned to negations.' Consequently many students filled the space with the secular doctrines that their masters and chaplains simply wouldn't match. Waugh's own research filled the space, I read Pope's Essay on Man; the notes led me to Leibnitz and I began an unguided and half-comprehended study of metaphysics. I advanced far enough to be thoroughly muddled about the nature of cognition.'*

## STAYING RELEVANT

# THE HACKNEYED TRADITION

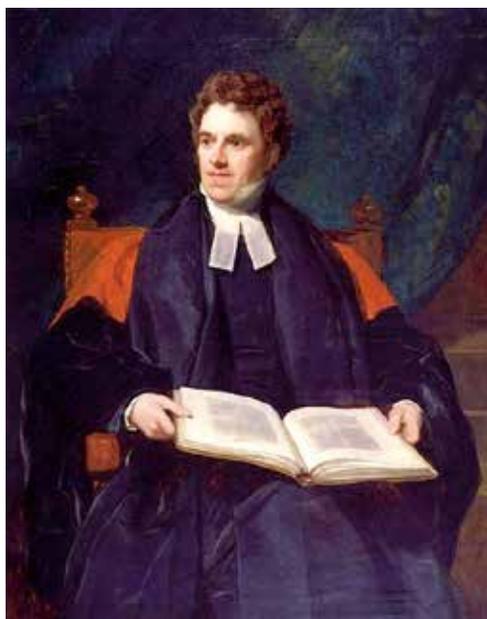
*By Paul G. Chigwidden*



FEW YEARS ago a student joined my Year Twelve class. In one of her first lessons she asked me what I meant by the term Incarnation. A product of five years' education in a Protestant school, she had taken weekly Christian Studies classes for the entirety of that period. In response to my questions, she told me that classes involved debating ethical problems, role playing ethical scenarios using the online game *Minecraft*, and making posters to advertise hypothetical events like a completely ethical Winter Olympics. Apparently class didn't stretch to include the claim that Jesus Christ was in fact the Son of God. She was a polite and intelligent student but she corrected me with just a touch of asperity, pointing out that Jesus' father was in point of fact Joseph.

Living in a small town, I happen to know a couple of her teachers. They are committed men of faith. However, they are also firm believers in the dictum that teenagers don't want to hear about doctrine. This belief is not limited to Protestant schools. Most Catholic high schools have been

quick to adopt the same preference for whatever seems immediately relevant to the lives of the students. This preference ensures that the class is protected from the fact that



Thomas Arnold [1795-1842] was an English educator and historian. He was headmaster of Rugby School from 1828 to 1841 where he introduced a number of reforms.

God became man, thus freeing up more time to explore the threat of steroids despoiling snow sports.

The irony of such hip wisdom is how old fashioned it actually is. The tradition of making religious education more accessible by removing, or at least downplaying,

its doctrinal claims, has its origins in the work of the 19<sup>th</sup> century muscular Christian<sup>1</sup> movement, ably promoted by reformers such as Thomas Arnold. It was often purely concerned with virtue and suspicious of dogma of any kind.<sup>2</sup> In an education symposium written in 1919, Sydney Olivier, a civil servant, and later a cabinet minister, described the religion found in England's best public schools as 'a healthy secularism.'

He summarised the accepted wisdom thus: 'boys of the public school age are for the most part, and quite healthily so, incapable of religion...' Consequently they were given religion, as defined by Matthew Arnold,<sup>3</sup> 'morality touched with emotion.'<sup>4</sup> By the interwar period such thinking had become axiomatic. Cyril Norwood, a leading educationalist of the day would advise teachers: 'for creeds and forms let senseless bigots fight: he can't be wrong whose life is in the right.'<sup>5</sup> The only change almost a century later is that personal morality has given way to a penchant for social justice. In all else, Olivier's definition of religious education still holds.

Like so many student-centred educational theories, there was almost no interest in the opinion

of the students. The memoirs and recollections of those educated during the interwar period were full of criticism of the way in which they were educated in the faith at some of England's most prestigious schools.

The poet W. H. Auden, at that stage an atheist, complained in 1934 of the unconvincing nature of public school religion: 'Whether for good or ill dogmatic religion...has broken down among schoolmasters, and religion without dogma soon becomes, as it was at Holt, nothing but vague uplift, as flat as an old bottle of soda water.'<sup>6</sup>

Noel Annan, the academic, described his religious education as consisting of purely moral lessons 'with doctrine only occurring in the hymns.'<sup>7</sup>

Graham Greene, the Catholic novelist, echoed these sentiments, claiming that when he left school, 'religion went no deeper than the sentimental hymns in the school chapel.'<sup>8</sup> Few of those who wrote memoirs of this period seemed inclined to celebrate the increased relevance of their education.

Novelist Nicholas Monsarrat recalled instead the sort of sermons in which 'a preacher, intent on 'getting through to the boys set religion back at least a decade.'<sup>9</sup> The particular sermon that he mentions was one given by a colonial bishop who used the relevant and accessible analogy of a cricket match to describe the life of the soul, "You are the batsman! You are alone at the wicket! The wicket is purity! But *ah*-they are trying to take your wicket! *Sin* is the bowler! The *devil* is the wicket-keeper... the blessed *Church* is the umpire! But *ah* - who is the scorer? *Ah*..." (The scorer was God.) We were all very embarrassed.'<sup>10</sup>

Monsarrat revealed the tragedy of his education when he added: 'I could not help wanting it all to be real, because of a phrase here and there, a glimpse of majesty, a promise of Divine Love which really would keep the world from breaking down my door.'<sup>11</sup> Then,

## Call for Patience

**S**AUDI Professor Nasser bin Suleiman al-Omar declared on al-Majid TV last month, 'Tens of thousands of Muslims have joined the American army and Islam is the second largest religion in America. America will be destroyed. But we must be patient.'

- Anthony Browne, 'The Triumph of the East,' *The Spectator*, July 24, 2004.

as now, students resented being protected from the supernatural because, then, as now, students felt cheated by the poverty of their religious education. However dimly, they sensed the truth of Aquinas' claim that every intellect naturally desires the vision of the divine substance.<sup>12</sup>

The Catholic novelist Evelyn Waugh argued that the doctrinal poverty of schoolboy religion seemed designed to undermine faith; the doubts of adolescence remaining totally unchallenged. He described his own Protestant religious education thus: 'all the humdrum doubts were raised and left unanswered. We were encouraged to 'think for ourselves' and our thoughts in most cases turned to negations.'<sup>13</sup> Consequently many students filled the space with the secular doctrines that their masters and chaplains simply wouldn't match. Waugh's own research filled the space, 'I read Pope's *Essay on Man*; the notes led me to Leibnitz and I began an unguided and half-comprehended study of metaphysics. I advanced far enough to be thoroughly muddled about the nature of cognition. It seemed simplest to abandon the quest and assume that man was incapable of knowing anything.'<sup>14</sup> In his truncated autobiography, *A Little Order*, Waugh added, 'Mine was not a unique case. I think at least half the Upper Sixth in my time were avowed agnostics or atheists. And no antidote was ever offered us.'<sup>15</sup>

Two books written in 1919 by students still at school reveal that Waugh's desire for a robust defence of Church teaching was by no means idiosyncratic. Martine Browne defied the universal dictum that boys were not interested in 'any but the simplest doctrinal teaching' and called for Divinity Schools to be run 'in the form of religious debates in which the presiding master explains and answers any questions.'<sup>16</sup>

Jack Hood went even further and noted that doubts were being turned to cynicism by the obsession with morality over doctrine: '... many boys are doubting. Many people, they think, including no less personages than university Professors of Science and great writers, do not believe either in the Bible or in Christianity. The boy begins to wonder: Is it all a great hoax to keep me straight?'<sup>17</sup> Hood argued that none of the doctrine was being explained and advised the teachers to 'deal with boys as you would with atheists or agnostics' before it was too late, and went on to warn that:

'Atheists and followers of psychic cults are doing their best to prevent us, while our own religious teachers merely tell us to believe, and do not explain why Christianity is true. If a boy of fifteen had two days, say, with some very learned theosophists,<sup>18</sup> do you not suppose he could be convinced?'<sup>19</sup>

In modern times, the theosophists have been replaced by the new atheists hawking their glib, ahistorical syllogisms but their popularity among my students suggests that at least they will take on topics approaching the ultimate concerns of their audiences. Students seem to prefer a robust denial of transcendent reality over its exile to the status of metaphor.

One student of Cyril Norwood's was the poet John Betjeman. As a schoolboy, the future Poet Laureate was a classic example of the student who seemed to be searching for answers to the religious questions that were not being answered in

the ‘meaningless jingle of words’ emanating from his religious instruction.<sup>20</sup> In his poetic memoir, *Summoned by Bells*, Betjeman discussed his hobby of visiting churches, while a schoolboy at Marlborough.

‘St Aloysius of the Church of Rome/ Its incense, reliquaries, brass and lights/make all seem plain and trivial back at school.’<sup>21</sup> Ironically this hobby had emerged in tandem with a short-lived bout of adolescent atheism during which he had refused to be confirmed.<sup>22</sup>

Betjeman argued that his visiting churches and his nascent love of liturgy was not initially a ‘conscious search for God’ so much as ‘a longing for the past, / with a slight sense of something unfulfilled.’<sup>23</sup> Clearly dissatisfied by his materialist beliefs, he described himself as ‘in quest of mystical experiences’<sup>24</sup> Betjeman contrasts schoolboy religion, ‘singing hymns/ and feeling warm and comfortable inside’, with the timeless liturgy he began to discover in Catholicism:

There were laughs  
At public schools, at chapel  
services,  
At masters who were still ‘big  
boys at heart’ –  
While all the time the author’s  
hero knew  
A Secret Glory in the hills of  
Wales:  
Caverns of light revealed the Holy  
Grail  
Exhaling gold upon the mountain-  
tops;  
At “Holy! Holy! Holy!” in the  
Mass...  
And past and present were  
enwrapped in one.<sup>25</sup>

While critics always notice the Celtic mysticism that Betjeman discovered in the Welsh Hills, few discuss the poignant Eucharistic imagery of the Holy Grail and the sense of eternal time that he associates with Catholic liturgy. Betjeman particularly notes its absence in the school chapel. In a powerful scene Betjeman responds to the sermon of a thundering bishop by echoing the claims of Thomas Aquinas:

“Be pure,” he cried,  
And, for a moment, stilled the sea  
of coughs.  
“Do nothing that would make your  
mother blush  
If she could see you. When the  
Tempter comes  
Spurn him and God will lift you  
from the mire.”  
Oh, who is God? O tell me, who is  
God?  
Perhaps he hides behind the  
reredos .....  
Give me a God whom I can touch  
and see.<sup>26</sup>

One critic, Kevin Gardner, rightly describes Betjeman’s lamentation as ‘a sensation of God’s absence.’<sup>27</sup> Betjeman’s dissatisfied search for a God he ‘can touch and see’ seems to be echoed by countless students I’ve encountered; students who find a purely metaphorical God risible. Betjeman would describe himself satisfied only by the discovery of the Anglo-Catholic Mass at Oxford’s Pusey house where he ‘learnt the Catholic Faith.’

The steps to truth were made  
by sculptured stone,  
Stained glass and vestments, holy  
water stoups,  
Incense and crossings of myself . .  
. the things  
That hearty middle stumpers most  
despise  
As, ‘all the inessentials of the  
Faith’.<sup>28</sup>

For a long time now students who have wanted more than biblically flavoured ethical lessons have been taught by teachers convinced that no student is ready for more. What was once a Protestant phenomenon in a handful of elite schools has become the norm across schools of all denominational stripe. Catholic schools were perhaps slower to adopt the doctrine-free approach to religious education. Now they are often only distinct from their Protestant brothers and sisters by virtue of having more sacraments to obfuscate. Modern students would rarely encounter anything so anachronistic as Monsarrat’s Bishop giving a sermon. Instead they would be subjected to a YouTube video featuring a cheerful layperson invoking a more relevant but equally jejune analogy.

The great paradox of religious schools in general, and religious education in particular, was enunciated best by the British historian Callum G. Brown who noted that while religious education represented the slowest area of advance by the secular state, religious education has ironically shown a deep inability to prevent the excision of conventional religious observance....<sup>29</sup> For a long time it has been assumed that students are only interested in the very latest. Perhaps it’s time to try introducing them to something timeless.

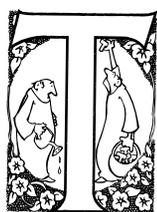
PAUL CHICWIDDEN, a graduate of Charles Sturt University, is a high school teacher living in Wagga Wagga. He is married with four children. He has taught in Protestant and Catholic High Schools for ten years.

1. Muscular Christianity or Christian manliness scorned the seemingly pernickety disputes of theologians for a life of action and honour that had no room for doubt.
2. Mangan, J. A. & Walvin, J. (Eds.), (1987). *Middle Class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
3. Thomas Arnold’s son.
4. Whitehouse, J. H. (1919). *The English Public School: A Symposium*. London: Grant Richards. pp.52,54.
5. Norwood, C. (1929). *The English Tradition of Education*. London: John Murray. p.49.
6. ‘Honour’ in Greene, G. (Ed.). (1984). *The Old School: Essays by Divers Hands*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p.11.
7. Annan, N. (1990). *Our Age: Portrait of a Generation*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson. p. 39.
8. Greene, G. (1971). *A Sort of Life*. New York: Simon and Schuster. p.164.
9. Monsarrat, N. (1966). *Life is a 4 Letter Word* (Vol. 1 Breaking in). London: Cassell. p.256.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.* p.257.
12. *Summa contra Gentiles*, III, 57, 4.
13. Waugh, Evelyn. (1964). *A Little Learning*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. p.142.
14. Waugh, Evelyn. (1983). ‘Come Inside’ The Essays, Articles and Reviews of Evelyn Waugh. (D. Gallagher, Ed.) London: Methuen. p.367.
15. Waugh, Evelyn. (1964). *A Little Learning*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. p.142.
16. Browne, M. (1919). *A Dream of Youth: An Etonian’s Reply to The Loom of Youth*. London: Longman Green and Co. pp.93-94.
17. Hood, J. (1919). *The Heart of a Schoolboy*. London: Longmans Green & Co. p.80.
18. An gnostic movement dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> century which combined esoteric elements of eastern mysticism with elements from a range of more traditional religions.
19. *Ibid.* pp. 82, 85.
20. Mais, S. P. (Ed.). (1918). *A Schoolmaster’s Diary: being extracts from the Journal of Patrick Traherne, M.A., sometime assistant master at Radchester and Marlton*. London: Grant Richards. p.25.
21. Betjeman, J. (1960). *Summoned by Bells*. London: John Murray. p.47.
22. Gardner, K. J. (2006). Faith and Doubt of John Betjeman: An Anthology of His Religious Verse. London: Continuum. p. xvii.
23. Betjeman, *Summoned by Bells*, p.60.
24. *Ibid.* p.87.
25. *Ibid.* pp. 86-87.
26. *Ibid.* p. 67.
27. Gardner, 2006, p.xvi.
28. Betjeman, *Summoned by Bells*, p.95.
29. Brown, Callum G. “Secularization, the growth of militancy and the spiritual revolution: religious change and gender power in Britain, 1901-2001.” *Historical Research* 80, no. 209 (August 2007): 393-418.

*Described as ‘a militant Roman Catholic priest,’ an anti-communist crusader, and skilled ‘propagandist,’ I understood little of his work except the fact that he debated leading Communists, one notable being Stalinist Edgar Ross, in front of a capacity crowd of 30,000 at Sydney’s Rushcutters’ Bay Stadium.*

## DR PATRICK (PADDY) RYAN

### Missionary of the Sacred Heart



THE POLDING CENTRE in Liverpool Street, Sydney, currently houses all the Agencies of the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney. In the early 1950's a less opulent building called CUSA HOUSE on Elizabeth Street, facing Hyde Park, was its counterpart. It was there that Bob Santamaria's<sup>1</sup> Movement, sometimes called *The Show* had its Sydney Office. It was there that as the Junior Secretary of *The Show* I first met Dr Patrick (Paddy) Ryan MSC, sometimes referred to as simply, *The Doc*. Another Agency on our floor, and more open to the Public, was that of the *Catholic Youth Organization* (CYO) headed by Monsignor John Leonard.

After all these years it is difficult for me to give exact dates of my time at CUSA HOUSE but the fact that I made my way into the Congregation of the *Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart* in 1953 means that it would have been in the very early 1950's. How I came to be employed there is another story as this was not my first place of employment. Having completed a Secretarial Course with the Sisters of Mercy at St Patrick's, Church Hill, with Mother Philomena Ryman RSM, Principal, all

the young women with whom I had spent the year were found employment. It seems that Mother Philomena, a cousin of Dr Ryan, may have been contacted when a second secretary for *The Show* was required and I was selected for the position having resigned from my original workplace.

I can still visualize Dr Ryan in his office which, overlooking Hyde Park, was quite large, as was

his desk. I always remember him as being quietly spoken, gentle in relating with the Staff and appreciative of any secretarial work he required of the two Secretaries. Tall in stature, he walked with a slight limp which was noticeable.

One special memory I have of him is that when I went into his office to deliver a message he would stand and raise his hands over my head. I realized that he was giving me a blessing. For me, this says a great deal about the man and a memory I cherish after all these years.

Described as ‘a militant Roman Catholic priest,’ an anti-communist crusader, and skilled ‘propagandist,’<sup>2</sup> I understood little of his work except the fact that he debated leading Communists, one notable being Stalinist Edgar Ross, in front of a capacity crowd of 30,000 at Sydney's Rushcutters' Bay Stadium.<sup>3</sup>

Having spent 65 years at a Sister of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart a special memory I have of Dr Ryan is connected with my entering this Congregation and endorses what I have said about my relationship with him. When I presented myself at the door of St Joseph's Convent in Mount Street, North Sydney asking about entering the Order I had expected to have been welcomed with open arms!



Dr Patrick Ryan MSC, 1904 – 1969

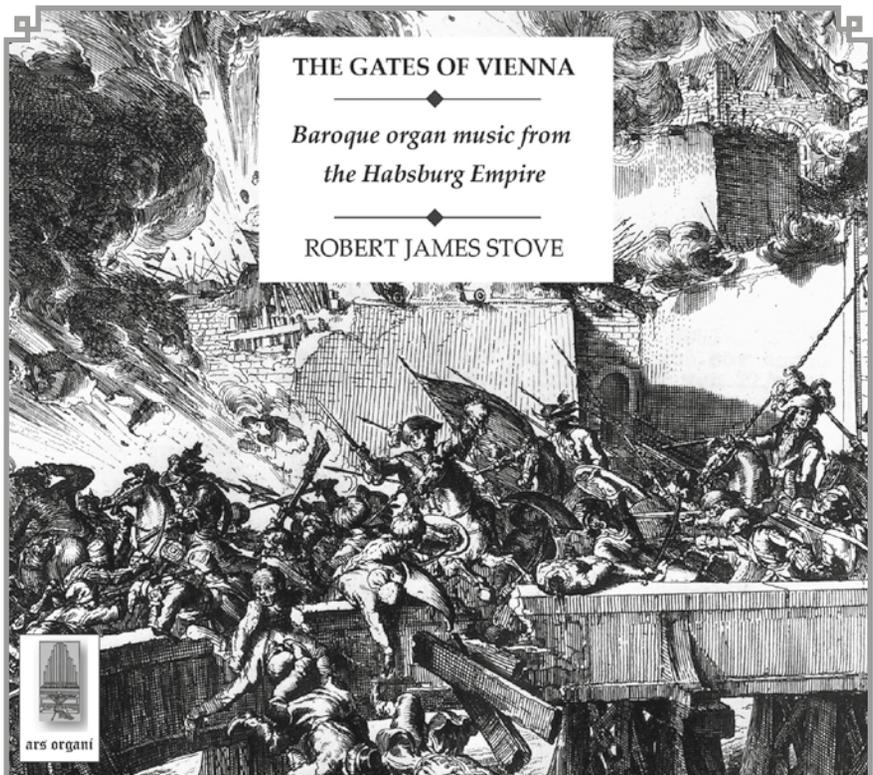
When this did not happen, as I was asked questions such as: *Why do you want to come here?* I was taken aback and needed a friend to whom I could turn. It was to Dr Paddy Ryan I went.

As I had grown up in the Western Suburbs of Sydney I knew nothing of the Kensington area. I found my way out, via tram, to the Sacred Heart Monastery, rang the door bell and, unannounced, asked to see Dr Ryan. He welcomed me, of course, treated me to a cup of tea and when we had settled I said: 'I want to enter the Convent and they don't want me!' His reply was: 'Don't take any notice of them. That's a game they play!' This was all I needed. The memory always brings tears to my eyes.

During the years of my Novitiate at Mount Street, North Sydney, on occasion, Dr Ryan came to celebrate Sunday Mass in the Chapel. Following Mass I would be summoned to the Breakfast Room in the Mother House to present myself before our Mother General, Mother Leone Ryan, and her cousin, Dr Paddy Ryan. While I always appreciated these experiences I remember being quite overwhelmed in the company!

Names of those, mainly men, who were around Cusa House during those years were: Kevin Davis, Roy Boylan, Terry Ludeke and Jim Macken. Towards the end of the year 1953 B.A. Santamaria appeared in the CUSA House Office. I remember walking around on tip toes wondering what had brought him up from Melbourne. It was not long before I found out! It was then that Dr Paddy Ryan was unceremoniously dismissed from his role as Chaplain to the Sydney Movement.

Not long after, during Christmas Week, Moya O'Keefe and I, the Senior Secretary and Junior Secretary, were called, individually, into Santamaria's office and dismissed from our roles. We went, together, to see Cardinal Gilroy to complain about these dismissals but nothing eventuated from this visit.



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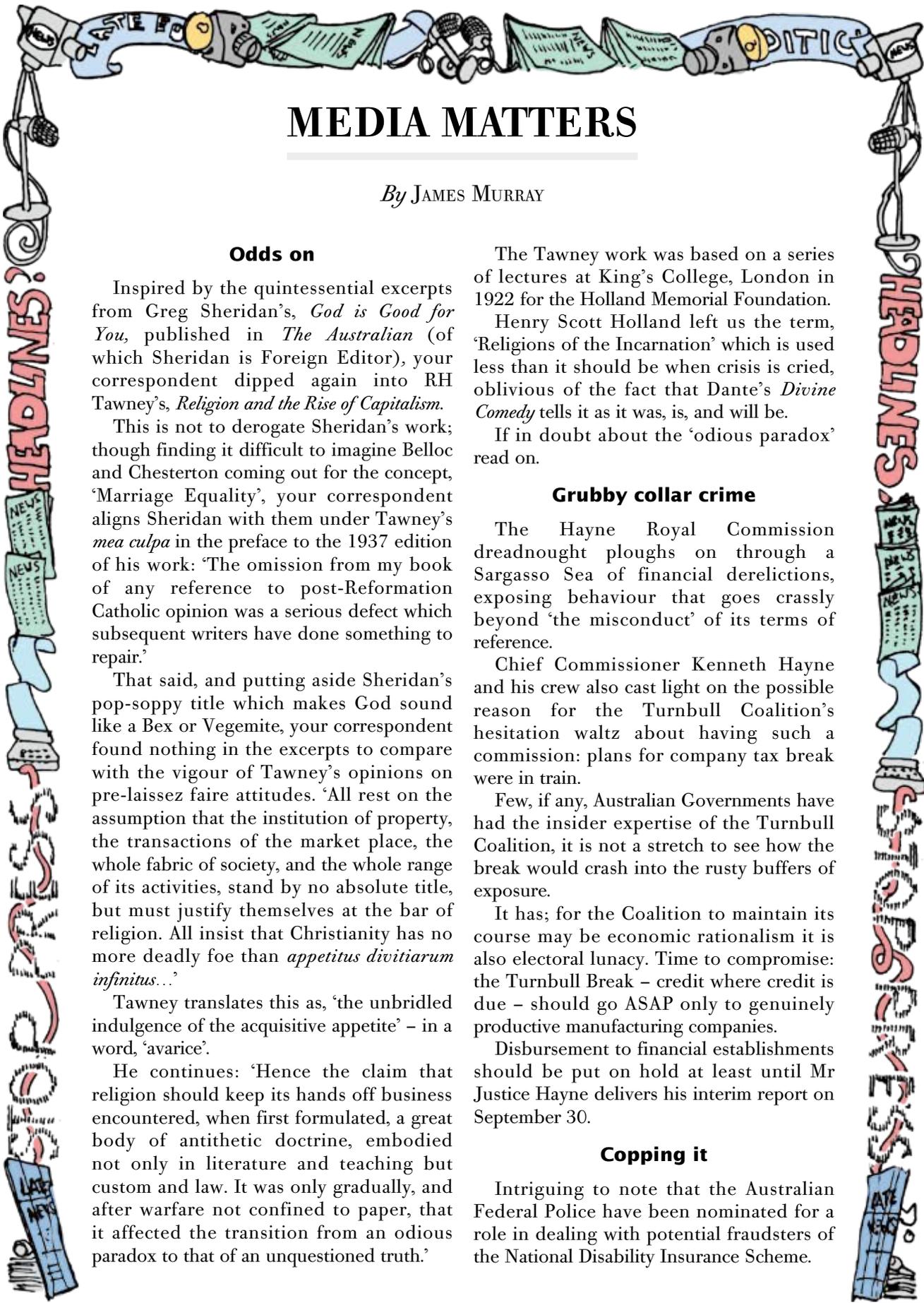
When Dr Paddy Ryan died on 18<sup>th</sup> January 1969 I was a young Sister teaching large primary classes at St Mel's, Campsie, NSW. In those days a young Sister knew her place in the Convent! I did not mention that I had known Dr Ryan nor did I make the request to attend his Requiem. I still remember the sadness of this time as I grieved his passing, alone.

It has been a privilege for me to have written this Memoir which I hope reflects my personal relationship with a wonderful member of the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. I

hope, too, that it brings to life, for others, especially his confreres, the story of one of their great men of earlier times.

PAULINE FERCUSSON is a Sister of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, a congregation founded by Saint Mary MacKillop and Father Julian Tenison Woods. She is retired and lives in Sydney.

1. In 1941, Mr Bob Santamaria founded the Catholic Social Studies Movement, generally known simply as 'the Movement', which recruited Catholic activists to oppose the spread of Communism, particularly in the trade unions. The movement gained control of the Industrial Groups in the unions, fighting the Communists and gaining control of many unions.
2. *The Show*, Mark Aarons with John Grenville, Scribe, 2017.
3. *Ibid.*



# MEDIA MATTERS

By JAMES MURRAY

## Odds on

Inspired by the quintessential excerpts from Greg Sheridan's, *God is Good for You*, published in *The Australian* (of which Sheridan is Foreign Editor), your correspondent dipped again into RH Tawney's, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*.

This is not to derogate Sheridan's work; though finding it difficult to imagine Belloc and Chesterton coming out for the concept, 'Marriage Equality', your correspondent aligns Sheridan with them under Tawney's *mea culpa* in the preface to the 1937 edition of his work: 'The omission from my book of any reference to post-Reformation Catholic opinion was a serious defect which subsequent writers have done something to repair.'

That said, and putting aside Sheridan's pop-soppy title which makes God sound like a Bex or Vegemite, your correspondent found nothing in the excerpts to compare with the vigour of Tawney's opinions on pre-laissez faire attitudes. 'All rest on the assumption that the institution of property, the transactions of the market place, the whole fabric of society, and the whole range of its activities, stand by no absolute title, but must justify themselves at the bar of religion. All insist that Christianity has no more deadly foe than *appetitus divitiarum infinitus*...'

Tawney translates this as, 'the unbridled indulgence of the acquisitive appetite' – in a word, 'avarice'.

He continues: 'Hence the claim that religion should keep its hands off business encountered, when first formulated, a great body of antithetic doctrine, embodied not only in literature and teaching but custom and law. It was only gradually, and after warfare not confined to paper, that it affected the transition from an odious paradox to that of an unquestioned truth.'

The Tawney work was based on a series of lectures at King's College, London in 1922 for the Holland Memorial Foundation.

Henry Scott Holland left us the term, 'Religions of the Incarnation' which is used less than it should be when crisis is cried, oblivious of the fact that Dante's *Divine Comedy* tells it as it was, is, and will be.

If in doubt about the 'odious paradox' read on.

## Grubby collar crime

The Hayne Royal Commission dreadnought ploughs on through a Sargasso Sea of financial derelictions, exposing behaviour that goes crassly beyond 'the misconduct' of its terms of reference.

Chief Commissioner Kenneth Hayne and his crew also cast light on the possible reason for the Turnbull Coalition's hesitation waltz about having such a commission: plans for company tax break were in train.

Few, if any, Australian Governments have had the insider expertise of the Turnbull Coalition, it is not a stretch to see how the break would crash into the rusty buffers of exposure.

It has; for the Coalition to maintain its course may be economic rationalism it is also electoral lunacy. Time to compromise: the Turnbull Break – credit where credit is due – should go ASAP only to genuinely productive manufacturing companies.

Disbursement to financial establishments should be put on hold at least until Mr Justice Hayne delivers his interim report on September 30.

## Copping it

Intriguing to note that the Australian Federal Police have been nominated for a role in dealing with potential fraudsters of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.



Admirable foresight. Is it too late in hindsight to create a similar AFP watchdog role re Superannuation Schemes – ex-Treasurer-PM Paul Keating’s bold initiative with un-intended consequences.

It left supervision to the Australian Securities & Investment Commission which apparently tended to recruited from within the financial system. No doubt this was on the traditional basis that poachers make the best gamekeepers.

Reports suggest, however, that this has not always been the case; some recruits looked on irregularities with a degree of empathy, if not complicity.

So, too, did others on the virtuoso fiddling of the banks. Which raises another point: you can take a person out of banking but can you take banking out of the person?

The measure of the crisis is the shocked reaction of Alan Fels, straight-arrow head of the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (1995-2003).

Your correspondent’s shock had a different source: Macquarie Bank (‘The Millionaires Factory’) now advertises on Sydney’s glassy bus-shelters. Has any Macquarie executive ever waited in one? Or tried to sleep off a champagne hangover in one?

Possible supervisory solution? More specialist reporters may come on the market as a result of the Nine Entertainment-Fairfax hook-up; the AFP should recruit them.

The Headline Squad, lead by Detective Chief Superintendent Kate McClymont would be formidably effective.

### Pressure cooked

The Big Four banks are doing what they can to shore up their tumbledown image. Whoever imagined Westpac’s TV advertising campaign, in which footage of heroic actions feature.

These are obviously intended to associate the bank with the community action admirably symbolised in a shot of its rescue helicopter.

But in the glare of Royal Commission revelations, the tag line, *We help* does suggest subliminal addition of the word ‘ourselves’.

### Death wish

The dangers of the euthanasia proposed in Senator David Leyonhjelm private members bill are in its full title: *Restoring Territory Rights (Assisted Suicide) Bill*.

If assisted suicide, why not solo suicide particularly of the young, already an increasing problem.

Australia is described as an ageing society; some may take comfort from the notion that immigrants are keeping the country young. This is to forget that since the advent of the Birth Pill ageing populations are a global phenomenon. By importing its young Australia exacerbates the problem of other nations.

Speakers to the Leyonhjelm motion have reportedly relied on personal experience. But as noted here hard cases make bad law. Victoria’s euthanasia measure was inspired by two such cases.

To bring the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory into line with Victoria and combine assisted suicide with assisted abortion is to create an atmosphere in which national unity can scarcely survive.

### Sterling cloud

Currently silver linings are difficult to find yet from the Super Saturday cumulonimbus of bye-election posters, leaflets and party rosettes one has emerged like the fabulous Lasseter’s Reef from the dust-storms of the Outback.

Voters largely ignored the Section 41 dual citizenship factor that triggered the bye-elections. In doing so, they sided with New Zealanders who treat the factor as inconsequential.

From now on, High Court judges would save their valuable time by treating Section 41 actions as vexatious or, if they can bring themselves to think of it, as a flea in a barrister’s wig.

### BBC of ABC

It would be surprising if the library of the Queen Elizabeth, on which One Nation founder-leader Senator Pauline Hanson took a break, did not contain copies of *The New Yorker*.

Just in case, Senator Hanson should acquire the July 29 issue it contains material about the BBC that would reinforce her



campaign for disclosure of ABC salary packages.

The author Lauren Collins makes a nice distinction between equal pay for equal work and the rainbow of gender pay differences.

Her close focus is on Carrie Gracie, 51, divorced mother of two, and cancer surgery survivor; she has resigned following the revelation that as China editor on 135,000 pounds a year, she was on about 50 per cent less than male colleagues doing similar work.

According to Lauren Collins, negotiations have reached a stage where Carrie Gracie, who appeared before a Westminster parliamentary committee earlier this year, has been offered more than 100,000 pounds in back pay and has refused to settle.

She told Lauren Collins: ‘...What I really want to say about this equal pay problem at the BBC is what it forces the BBC to do, which is retrofit defences, justification of the indefensible.

They are trying to throw money at me to resolve the problem. This will not solve my problem. My problem will be resolved by acknowledgment that my work was of equal value to the men who I served alongside as an international editor.’

Impressive stuff. Did your correspondent miss a detailed ABC report from London? No matter. What the Carrie Gracie story makes clear is that the BBC was compelled to the transparency it urges on other institutions, as does the ABC.

Over to Senator Hanson. Her cruise incidentally was mocked by some who forgot how Napoleon Bonaparte arranged a lunch break during the Battle of Marengo (1800) and went on to win, sustained by the chicken dish now named after the battle.

The cruise was in Irish waters. It is to be hoped Senator Hanson had a chance to disembark and kiss the Blarney Stone.

### Ave atque vale

The funeral of the quintuple Walkley Award winner, Evan Whitton was private; his farewell at UTS Haberfield Rowing Club, Sydney, was attended by a strong roll up, and his widow Noela and their children.

Ex-ABC anchor Quentin Dempster MC'd the proceedings. Among the speakers was

Richard Ackland who gave Whitton space in his legal magazine *Justinian* when, for reasons still opaque, other outlets would not.

Which raises the question: where did Evan Whitton's last printed copy appear. Your correspondent lays a claim for *Annals Australasia* (issue March 2015).

The Whitton piece (just over 900 words) was headlined, THE LAW'S FIRST XI – FOR GOOD OR ILL.

The break-out quote, chosen by the editor Fr Paul Stenhouse, gives the bootleg flavour of Whitton's work: *Lord Herschell (1837-99, Chancellor 1886/1892-95) He was one of 12 corrupt Chancellors who kept a will case going for 117 years while lawyers emptied a huge estate. In 1894, he invented a rule which conceals evidence of a pattern of criminal behavior. For 120 years, his rule has enabled countless repeat offenders- serial rapists, organized criminals and their ilk – to escape justice.*

The intro was equivalently incisive: *Pope Innocent III devised a truth-seeking (Inquisitorial) legal system in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. In this, the 21<sup>st</sup> century Pope Francis, has called for a moral face to human activity.*

A footnote stated that Evan Whitton had a contract with Fangshen Press for a Chinese translation and publication of his work, *Our Corrupt Legal System*.

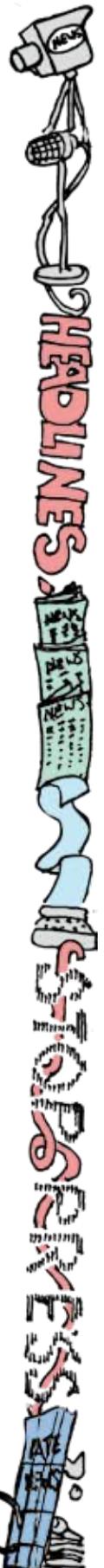
Subsequently when your correspondent asked had he received any royalties, his laugh, it's fair to say, was hollow.

Possibly the matter has been rectified. If not, surely it would be possible to bring it to the attention of the relevant Chinese authorities. Bob Carr, ex-ABC, ex- *The Bulletin*, ex-NSW Premier, ex-Foreign Minister and currently chairman of the Australia-China Relations Institute comes to mind.

The aim: recovery of any royalties that may have accrued for the benefit of Evan Whitton's widow Noela for so many years his active partner.

This, particularly in the Rupert Max Stuart exoneration in which the Rupert (Murdoch) played a part, as did Father Tom Dixon, a Missionary of the Sacred Heart confrere of Father Paul Stenhouse who attended the farewell.

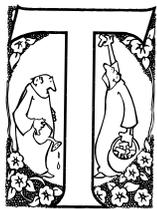
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*'The world will never starve for want of wonders: but only for want of wonder.'*  
- G.K. Chesterton, *'Tremendous Trifles,'* in *Tremendous Trifles*, 1909.

## PARADISE LOST

By John O'Carrigan



THIS IS A STORY that reaches backwards to Adam and Eve and looks onwards to a period of disaster, perhaps within only a few more hundred years, if we continue to push on with immense energy to develop the country we call home, without careful short and long term planning for the benefit of all of our citizens.

My inspiration for this article was the 2017 'Environment' Sunday when we were asked to reflect on the great gift God has given us in the extraordinary world of nature, and the encyclical *Laudato Si'* – 'Praise be to you O Lord' of Pope Francis, which exhorts us to care for our common home.

If you feel encouraged to study this encyclical you may be amazed at its scope, including the depth of the natural and spiritual connections in the wonder of our environment. It covers a range of topics that are applicable worldwide, many ecologically massive and others homely and achievable within our local environment. The encyclical should be seen as essential reading for people who live in a vast, ancient country that is still very young in its development and therefore capable of making ecological and social mistakes.

I am speaking of Australia: not the vast, ageless red centre that has many protections against the industrial ravaging by man, but the coast, hinterland and ranges that are subject to various economic exploitations that can ultimately cause more harm than good in the name of development.

Here we might look at the biblical story of Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve, as Genesis recounts, originally walked in an

destined for everlasting happiness in the original grandiose setting of the Garden of Eden.

But then, in spite of their contented and richly endowed existence, they became involved in a drama that was to change their lives and all human life forever. We see them hoodwinked by a smooth talking Satan disguised as a glamorous and genial serpent. Surrounded by the most luscious and appetising of fruits, they reach out for the one forbidden to them (they would become like God so they were told) and motivated by an appetite for greed and power, they destroyed their dream world.

Theirs was a sin of disobedience rooted in Pride, that disposition that can create a great chasm between ourselves and God and neighbour. At the beginning, God had brought order out of chaos. Now, there was a worse chaos in the hearts of men, 'a twisting of the self out of the right relationship with God.' (F.J. Sheed: *Genesis Regained*)

Adam and Eve were ushered out of the Garden and now destined to toil for their livelihood in a fractured and disturbed environment, no longer an environment that provided harmony and security as well as all of their needs, freely and in abundance.



aura of golden delights within the boundaries of the Garden. They had the warmest and closest relationship with the natural world, animal, vegetable and mineral and moved about freely in their exciting domain aglow with wonder at what they saw. They were a couple

That story of Adam and Eve is the story of a world a long time ago. Within the framework of economic development in Australia, we are looking at only two hundred years. This can be narrowed to the period after WWII, seventy odd years, and already vast areas of timbered country have been laid bare for agriculture (some of which is never used economically or even not at all), hills are gouged out to provide road foundations, hundreds of miles of scenic coastal forests ripped out to provide a hot, wide ribbon of highway to honour a god of speed. Never mind that every cluster of our tall, graceful gum trees dozed to the ground may continue to add to a harsher, more worrying climate.

And in spite of the billions spent on the super highways, few tunnels of insignificant cost have been created to provide crossings for our native fauna, few traditional hunting tracks and trails have been saved and enriched. In two hundred more years where will these monstrous technological developments have taken us, and at what cost to the environment?

On the fringes of our rare and therefore precious wetlands we find Real Estate advertisements for land sales. Where once they were home to extraordinary birdlife, their food array in the waters and grasses and branches, the playground of singing frogs, the hunting ground of teams of crustaceans, where much of nature's life, vigour, beauty and immense variety thrive and survive, we can now expect to find row upon row of dull grey houses lined up in treeless boring streets and with similar configurations.

And into this urban environment come factories and transport congestion that create polluting fumes dangerous to human health, while insecticides, fungicides, fertilizers contribute to the acidification of soil and water.

Wetlands are often seen as mere swamps peppered with miserably thin paper-bark trees, swamp that could be better used for agriculture

## Is it True?

**R**ICHARD OF ST VICTOR was a Scottish monk at the Abbey of St Victor in Paris, who died in 1173 – and one of many famous poets, mystics and theologians who belonged to this mediaeval French centre of learning. Unaware of the oblivion to which the Fathers of the Church and Catholic Tradition were to be consigned by Royal Decree in 16<sup>th</sup> century Protestant England, Richard asks readers of his Commentary on the vision of Ezekiel: 'Do you wish to honour and defend the authority of the Fathers? We cannot honour these lovers of truth more than by seeking, finding, teaching, defending and loving the truth.'<sup>1</sup> He adds: 'Do not ask whether what I say is new; but whether it is true.'<sup>2</sup>

1. *In visionem Ezechielis*, Migne, Patres Latini, vol. cxcvi, col. 562.

2. 'Attende ergo non utrum dicam aliquid novum, sed verum'. Then he adds: 'I am not afraid to differ from them, but I say nothing objectionable. However, I must return to my commentary on the literal meaning of the text. I am more interested in what the text wishes to say, than in what others may say about me.'

or built up into thriving residential and industrial areas. To ask why they are there, one can only say that nature and the whole ecosystem have developed them to serve a range of very important functions.

Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'* uses a quotation of Patriarch Bartholomew which summarises clearly the harm that man so often engineers in nature:

'to destroy the biological diversity of nature, to degrade the integrity of the earth by causing changes in its climate, by stripping the earth of its natural forests or destroying its wetlands; for human beings to contaminate the earth's waters, its land, its air and its life- these are crimes against the natural world.'

They are sins against ourselves and against God. The long-term tragedy is that once damage is done to the environment, it won't be restored, it will be gone forever. Technology is seen as the way to solve these problems but it is "incapable of seeing the mysterious network of relations between things and so sometimes solves one problem only to create others." (*Laudato Si'*.) Let me recall an incident while travelling in a car along one of our rural roads. Ahead of us in the middle of the road was a galah, pink chest catching a gentle light from the evening sunset. Brave bird was quite heavy with a tummy full of grain

and was slow to take off. The driver without any hesitation ran over him commenting that 'he shouldn't have been on the road.'

As an incident it could be considered distressing though minor and not an environmental disaster. It is the attitude of so many people that is the worry, the cold-blooded, authoritative assumption that it is harmless to destroy one of God's innocent creatures. I offer you Pope Francis's thought for consideration: 'If someone has not learned to stop and admire something beautiful, we should not be surprised if he or she treats everything as an object to be used and abused without scruple.'

It all becomes an environmental catastrophe when similar things occur a thousand times a day on our roads, when birds, wombats, wallabies, echidnas, koalas, lizards and bandicoots, not to mention people, are blasted out of existence by traffic.

It becomes a pollution catastrophe when our seas and rivers become the choking, dumping ground of abandoned fishing nets and lines, paper wastes, miles upon miles of plastic bags; when our roads, footpaths, parklands, stations and trains are littered with plastics, bottles and tins and become galleries for graffiti madness; when tons of useable food are dumped by our wasteful society on mountains of

garbage, when trucks are able to pick up loads of rubbish dropped uncaringly by individuals in our suburban streets or hurled out of cars onto our highways and into bushland. It is not surprising that 'the earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth.' (*Laudato Si*)

Quoted in *Laudato Si*' the words of Pope Benedict XVI throw back our thoughts to Adam and Eve in the Garden and set out a path of behaviour for ourselves. Creation is harmed

'where we ourselves have the final word, when everything is simply our property and we use it for ourselves alone. The misuse of creation begins when we no longer recognise any higher instance than ourselves, when we see nothing else but ourselves.'

Adam and Eve, in their ideal circumstances, lost sight of God, the Creator and giver of all things and as a result of their sin were moved out beyond the periphery of the beautiful garden. One gets the sense that today's society is losing a consciousness of God and with it an openness to awe and wonder at the beauty and diversity of creation which, in many ways, is a reflection of the infinite majesty and beauty of God. Recycling, conservation, ozone layers, littering are all words with a powerful meaning in society today.

Our attitude towards natural resources must change drastically otherwise there is a danger we will perish upon the earth. We must hasten to recapture the love and respect for 'all things great and small' that Jesus revealed to us when he strode upon the earth.

Today, as never before, we must heighten our awareness of the precious gift we have in the natural world. Otherwise we might find ourselves standing like Adam and Eve forlorn and bereft outside what was once our beautiful garden.

JOHN O' CARRIGAN lives in Sawtell, NSW and is a member of *Mary Help of Christians* Catholic Parish. He wrote this in between moving the cows along the long paddock looking for feed.

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– Editor, *Annals*

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*The Archbishop of Milan and Pope Pius XI speak out*

## AGAINST ANTI-JEWISH RACISM



ON NOVEMBER 4, 1988, the Jews of Bologna rightly thought to commemorate publicly the 50th anniversary of the infamous and shameful anti-Semitic laws of 1938. With all my heart and with full conviction, I wanted to manifest my complete adherence on that occasion in the name of the entire Church of the city, pledging my personal attendance at the commemorative rite in the synagogue, where I was welcomed with warm hospitality and took part in the prayer.

Under the circumstances, I was reminded of the events of that long-ago 1938, which had struck me in a singular way at the time, although I was not even eleven years old.

In those days, anti-Jewish measures – preceded by various publications on ‘race’ of a pseudoscientific nature, approved if not directly commissioned by the regime – rained down repeatedly on the dumbfounded Italian nation. To cite only the ones about which I have some information, on September 1, a decree of the council of ministers began to prohibit foreigners of Jewish origin from permanent residence in our territory. On September 2, another decree removed from all the schools of the realm, of every order and degree, the teachers and students of Jewish race. On November 10, another decree excluded Jews from all jobs in the public administration, in quasi-governmental agencies, and in state-run businesses. And that was only the beginning of the harassment, which became ever more pervasive and devastating.

Our people, caught by surprise, were disoriented and dismayed, when suddenly a voice was heard from Milan – it was the first, and remained the only one – of someone with the courage to distance himself openly from all of the madness. On November 13, from the pulpit of the cathedral of Milan, Cardinal Schuster, for the beginning of the Ambrosian Advent, gave a homily that from its very first words, instead of referring to the liturgical context, immediately addressed the subject that most concerned him:

‘A kind of heresy has emerged abroad and is infiltrating more or less everywhere, which not only attacks the supernatural foundations of the Catholic Church, but in materializing in human blood the spiritual concepts of individual, nation, and country, denies humanity any other spiritual value, and thus constitutes an international danger no less serious than that of Bolshevism itself. It is what is called racism.’

It is difficult today to realize the impression made by these words of criticism against the thought and actions of a government that, for decades, had not tolerated the slightest expression of dissent. They did not remain confined within the solemn atmosphere of a crowded cathedral: they were printed in the ‘*Rivista Diocesana Milanese*,’ and, two days after they had been pronounced, they were published in ‘*L’Italia*,’ the Catholic daily that was brought into our homes. In Rome, the fascist circles began to call for a retraction, or at least for a clear change of direction by the newspaper, with the threat (in case of refusal) of suppression without appeal.

The cardinal, however, was not left alone. From the pope arrived a message signed by his secretary, Monsignor Carlo Confalonieri: ‘The Holy Father exhorts the Cardinal of Milan to uphold Catholic doctrine courageously, because this point cannot be ceded, nor can the newspaper ‘*L’Italia*’ change direction. ‘*Aut sit ut est, aut non sit*’ [Either this way, or not at all]. Which, if it should be forced to cease publication, should give the names of its subscribers to ‘*L’Osservatore Romano*.’

The last sentence reminds us that Pius XI never gave up his ‘Milanese concreteness,’ not even in the most decisive and dramatic moments of his pontifical action. I was only a boy; but from that event I understood what a ‘secular’ and rational fortune is, when the hour of general timidity and submissive conformism comes, the presence in our country of the Church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of truth (cf. 1 Timothy 3:15).

There has been recently, however, someone in Italy (from the perch of one of the highest state offices) who in a completely unmotivated public statement has spoken of a deplorable silence of the Church in that circumstance. Of course, being of the year 1952, he has the extenuating circumstance of not yet having been born at the time; but he has the aggravating circumstance of having wanted, in spite of this, to speak on the subject, revealing at the same time his gratuitous preconceptions and his singular lack of knowledge.

– Cardinal Giacomo Biffi, Archbishop of Bologna : *Giacomo Biffi, Memorie e Digressioni di un Italiano Cardinale*, 2010 ed., pp.360-362. English translation by Matthew Sherry.

By James Murray

The supreme merit of writer/director Carla Simon's memoir is that it does not allow its lyricism to be overshadowed by step-sibling rivalry but only hints at it. The film belongs to Laia Artigas who plays Frida orphaned in Barcelona when her parents die and adopted by her aunt (Bruna Cusi) and uncle (David Verdaguier) who live in a forested area of Catalonia.

Her younger cousin Anna (Paula Robles) provides the balance point of her life, accepting her admiringly and without rancour as her new and trusted sister.

With cinematographer Santiago Racaj, Carla Simon keeps the memoir down to 98 minutes. She does, however, find time for a dinner table Catalan folksong, Frida's grandma Maria (Isabel Rocatti) teaching her the *Lord's Prayer* and Frida praying before a woodland shrine to Our Lady.

*Summer 1993* is Carla Simon's debut movie; she will find it hard to match.

PG★★★SFFV.

### Funny Cow

Director Adrian Shergold and writer Tony Pitts lay the misery on as thick as beef dripping on cold toast; it's as if they are trying to provide a Lancashire variation on the Monty Python Yorkshire *Looxury* sketch.

The nadir of the 'bits' (into which the movie is divided) involves Alun (*New Tricks*) Armstrong playing Lenny a failed comedian; he commits suicide using not his fine car but the chains in the empty loos of a Working Men's Club.

Add to this cold pot that Funny Cow (Maxine Peake) is born into an abusive family and has alter egos Funny Calf (Macy Shackleton) and Young Funny Cow (Hebe Beardsall).

From her abusive husband Bob (Tony Pitts), she escapes to Angus (Paddy Considine) owner of a splendid bookshop. Neither this nor French movies such as *The Red Balloon* are enough. On her way to stardom as a female stand-up comic on the Seventies-Eighties club circuit, she returns to Bob for a death-bed reconciliation.

What is undeniable is the appeal of Maxine Peake in an appalling role, a bravura performance equivalent to Laurence Olivier in *The Entertainer* - or the fabled jewel in the head of a toad.

Throughout Peake's tone is reminiscent of another Lancashire lass, the singer Gracie Fields whose, *The Biggest Aspidistra in the World* (1938) was a stand-up comedy routine set to music as were *Walter, Walter; (Lead me to the Altar)*.

Not that there's any sign of an altar. This not the Lancashire of Wakes Week with processions recalling the Catholic faith that for so long had to be hidden and for which some say the song phrase, *Sally in our Alley*, was a coded signal of a hidden Mass.

Tony Slater Ling's cinematography captures the gritty back-to-back townscape and Tania Reddin's film editing creates a sequence of rare beauty in the passing of red balloon from Funny Cow to Funny Calf.

No credit for a script editor which this film needed if only to suggest Christian names for the cow and the calf.

Trivia question: Could the Gracie Fields number have been influenced by George Orwell's, *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* (1936)?

MA15+★★NFFV.

### The Seagull

One of the most exhilarating theatre or cinema experiences is to watch an assured star being challenged by a rising star. Director Michael Mayer delivers such an experience with Annette Bening as Irena Arkadina and Saoirse Ronan as Nina Zarechanya in Stephen Karam's adaptation of Anton Chekhov's play.

In support, Mayer casts Corey Stoll as Boris Trigorin, novelist-lover of Irena with whom Nina becomes infatuated to the despair of Konstantin (Billy Howle) Irena's son as they gather in the country house of Irena's brother Pjotr Sorin (Brian Dennehy).

Soap operatic? Maybe. But the soap is caustic - and fatal, steeped in the regret to which the term Chekhovian is applied as the term Shakespearean, Tolstoyan, Dickensian and Brontean is applied to other works of high distinction.

The film's drawback is its setting. The establishing shot for the Sorin residence shows what appears to be an English Palladian mansion plonked onto a pine plantation of the Scottish Highlands, not the kind of spacious *dacha* shown in Nikita Mikalkov's *Burnt by the Sun* (1994).

TBA★★★★NFFV.

### The Meg

Multiply *Jaws* by ten to get an idea of the size of the monster fish or Megadon director Jon Turteltaub unleashes on the crew of an ocean research facility, Mana One.

Its members include rescue diver Jonas Taylor, played by Jason (*The Driver*) Statham who shifts through his normal gears of menace to his charm gear on meeting Suyin (Li Bingbing) daughter of the facility's boss Dr Minway Zhang (Winston Chao) and a prodigy child Meiyang (Shuya Sophia Cai).

The turbo-drive of the plot is the need to rescue the survivors of a wrecked submersible before The Mega crunches them like sardines in a tin.

The final scene of The Mega at a holiday resort is some kind of ultimate in maritime mayhem. Script credit to Dean Georganis who co-wrote with Jon and Erich Hoerber.

TBA★★★★SFFV.

### Knock

No need to ask, 'Who's there?' It's Omar Sy in writer-director Lorraine Lévy's remake of the 1920s Jules Romains satire, filmed most eminently in 1951 with Louis Jouvet in the title role.

Omar Sy brings his own massive charm to the crook who as a fake ship's doctor escapes retribution and legitimises his status at a medical school. Suitably qualified, he descends on a rural practice where he combines his crooked and medical skills in persuading the healthy and wealthy rustics they are suffering from ailments for which

he (and the local chemist) have expensive cures.

The only sceptic is the local curé, Lupus (Alex Lutz) who is loaded with breaking the seal of confession. Knock's past is revealed at the funeral the orphan Adele (Ana Girardot) for whose treatment he has paid out of love for her. The locals side with him against the curé who is left in the wreckage of his pulpit.

Romains subtitled his work: *Ou le Triomphe de la Médecine*, its ambivalence may indicate that he did not totally favour 1920s anti-clericalism. And it may also be that in post-modern France, where jihadists killed a priest while he was saying Mass, the mood has shifted from such anti-clericalism; the box office return on *Knock* has been \$4.4 million against a budget of \$14.8 million from seven production entities including France 2 & 3 Cinema.

PG★★NFFV.

### The Wife

As befits a melodrama about winning the dynamic Nobel Prize for Literature, director Bjorn Runge sets a tone of grand solemnity. The author, Joe Castleman, as played by Jonathan Pryce may have a cadaverous look but he does not live in an attic; he and his wife Joan jump for joy on a sumptuous bed in Connecticut when the news of his win hits.

In the Joan role, Glenn (Glenda Veronica) Close turns in a paradox of a performance by turns icy and warm, while a sly would-be biographer Nathaniel Bone (Christian Slater) hones his angle: Joe owes his success to Joan, a talented writer with an editorial golden touch.

The background to this comes by way of flashbacks in which Annie Starke (Close's daughter) plays the student Joan to Harry Lloyd's professor Joe, who seduces her while dumping his wife.

Meg Wolitzer's novel may have a touch of daydream. Certainly Jane Anderson's script is dreamy: the Castlemans fly to Norway aboard a Concord for a right royal reception and climactic presentation in Oslo.

Someone should have taken Occam's Razor to a subplot about

Joe's attitude to the writing of his son David (Max Irons).

As it is, the plot recalls Elizabeth Jane Howard, a superior writer to one of her husbands, Kingsley Amis, and stepmother to his son Martin, also a writer of note.

Your reviewer has not read all the works of Nobel Laureates. The finest, he has read is Sigrid Undset's trilogy *Kristen Lavransdatter* (1920) set in mediaeval Catholic Norway, though the word 'Catholic' was not used in her 1928 Nobel citation. She reverted from Lutheranism to Catholicism in 1924. As a lay Dominican, she donated her Nobel prize to the Finnish war effort against the Soviet Union. (Liv Ullmann directed the film *Kristen Lavransdatter* released in 1995).

M★★★NFFV.

### Mama Mia!

The sub-title is, *Here we go again* which director Oliver ('Ol') Parker amply fulfills with a perpetual motion reprise, mixing the stars of his original version with a fresh constellation playing their younger selves.

Trans-generational casting is always difficult; here Lily James takes on the task of playing the younger Donna Sheridan to Meryl Streep's ghostly version. No contest? Who

could hope to out-play cinema's *prima donna assoluta*.

Lily James does so exuberantly that she steals the picture despite a late smash-'n'-grab by Cher as the naughty grandma.

Jeremy Irvine is less successful as young Sam Carmichael to Piers Brosnan's older version. Josh Dylan does bring off young Bill to Stellan Skarsgard's version (And the redoubtable Skarsgard gets insurance by way of a funny cameo). Colin Firth's banker Harry was never the kind of silly ass Bertie Wooster of which Hugh Skinner is a master.

Parker and his co-writers Richard Curtis and Catherine Johnson open with a St John's, Oxford graduation and close with a christening. Johnson, who wrote the original book, could have strengthened this aspect had she worked into her names the prefix Fitz with which the Catholic Norman-Irish accepted illegitimacy. Primitive? Beats abortion by a lifetime.

PG★★★SFFV.

### Don't Worry, He Won't Get Far on Foot

Arriving about three minutes late in a dark theatre, your reviewer was greeted with a tirade of foul language so powerfully delivered, he was tempted to cry out, 'Sorry! Sorry! I missed a connection.'

But by the end of the 113-minute running time, he felt he needed an apology; for most of that time Joaquin Phoenix, playing electric-wheelchair bound cartoonist John Callahan, is in unrelenting mode before he settles for a kind of reconciliation.

Although there are references to a St Vincent's and a hospital mural depicting a nun, the reconciliation appears to be mainly achieved through the 12-step AA program. Donny (Jonah Hill) a rich guru and Rooney Mara as Annu, a Swedish therapist, who comes into Callahan's life like a midnight sun.

Writer/director Gus Van Sant based his script on parts of Callahan's memoir of the same title and is no circumspect Fred Zinnemann who made *The Men*, with Marlon Brando and Teresa Wright (1950).

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announced

Indeed Van Sant shoots scenes that make you glad, you're not a specialist in the treatment of quadriplegics.

M★★★★NFFV.

## Equaliser 2

Director Antoine Fuqua's second slice of the life and lethal times of the bookish, blunt instrument Robert McCall is more gory than the 2014 first. Again Denzel Washington plays McCall who covers his work as vigilante of last resort with work as a Lyft driver in Boston. But Richard Wenk's whirligig script goes beyond baked beans to the espionage sprouts of Brussels where McCall finds himself contending with comrades of his old unit gone rogue.

In McCall's aid to Holocaust survivor Sam Rubenstein (Orson Bean) and his peaceful straightening of Miles Whittaker (Ashton Sanders), there are redemptive messages.

However Fuqua and his co-producer-star Washington appear to believe that a tipper-truck of violence helps the message go down and demonstrate this with a hurricane-hit gunfight.

*Equaliser 3?* There's a shot of McCall's current reading, *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu*, possibly also an in-joke when coupled with a shot McCall's US Army tunic.

Marcel Proust, author of *A La Recherche*, was also a soldier.

Despite chronic ill health, he did a year's military service at Coligny Caserne, Orléans (1889-90), and the best English translation of Proust is by CK Scott Moncrieff who won a Military Cross in action with the King's Own Scottish Borderers during World War I.

MA15+★★★★NFFV.

## Wayne

The titular Wayne is not America's John Wayne (né Marion Morrison) but Wayne Gardner who began his high-speed career as the 'larrikin kid from Wollongong', and came, saw and Honda'd circuits to become the World Motorcycle Grand Prix Champion in 1987.

Director Jeremy Sims with co-writers Tim Woodhouse and Matthew Metcalfe keep the running time down to 93 minutes and make

ingenious use of cartoon sequences to link episodes in the young Gardner's life.

Archival footage of Gary McDonald/Norman Gunston in word play about the name Wollongong only raise the question why no word play on that other small place, Monaco?

But Gardner's own comments and those of his parents are matched in freshness by the tributes of peers such as Mick Doohan, Eddie Lawson, Wayne Rainey and Kevin Schwantz.

The comments of Gardner's sweetheart inspiration (and ex-wife) Donna Forbes, have a high-octane quality which Sims refrains from igniting.

TBA★★★★NFFV.

## Whitney

Kevin Macdonald's films – *One Day in September*, *Touching the Void* and *The Last King of Scotland* – demonstrate that he is filmmaker with a laser-like power to cut to the bone of a subject's life.

Here it is the singer Whitney Houston's whose achievement of seven No1 singles remains unmatched. Macdonald makes due reference to Houston's graduation from Mount Saint Dominic Academy in the 1980s; he tells her story in her own words and too briefly, those of Kevin Costner who co-starred with her in *The Bodyguard* (1992).

Perhaps there is an over-reliance on family members. This, however, does create the sense of a wake with Baptist gospel singing in which her music executive father John Russell Houston and her mother Cissy Houston participate.

Her voice brought a sense of joy to millions but Whitney Houston's own life was full of sorrow, much of it self-inflicted by way of a bad marriage, traditional booze and more recently invented drugs.

The bone of her life? Celebrity is like the moon, it always has a dark side

Trivia note: Kevin McDonald is the grandson of Michael Powell who directed, *They're a Weird Mob* scripted by Emeric Pressburger from the book by Nino Culotta (John O'Grady).

M★★★★NFFV.

## Beirut

Director Don Anderson opens in 1972 with a party at the home of diplomat Mason Skiles (John Hamm) and his wife Nadia (Leila Bekhti).

Pleasure turns to panic when CIA agent Cal Riley (Mark Pellegrino) tells them that their teenage house-guest, Karim (Yoav Sadian Rosenberg) is the brother of Abu Rajal (Hicham Ouraqa), on an Israeli hit-list for his part in the 1972 Munich Olympics terrorist action.

Anderson, working from Tony Gilroy's script, spins from this situation a web of hostage and counter-hostage taking in a decade long time-frame. Hamm does a powerful; turn from smooth diplomat to a consultant whose stubble makes him look as if he drinks his after-shave lotion.

The surprise of the piece is Rosamond Pike; she enters as if in rehearsal to play Jemima Bond, the much young sister of James who has reached pensionable age.

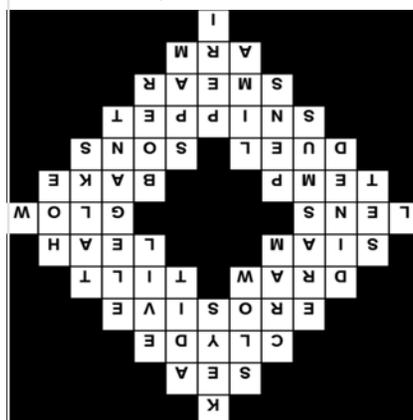
MA15+★★★★NFFV.

## The Insult

Director Ziad Doueiri's take on Beirut could not be more different from Don Anderson's, the latter is into the smoke and mirrors of espionage; the former is into the daily life of the great city's people.

He and cinematographer Tommaso Fiorilli may open with a wide shot of a banner waving rally but their close focus is on a petty exchange of insults over the balcony drain of Tony 'Mr Tony' Hanna (Adel Karam) a mechanic and a foreman builder Yasser Abdallah Salameh (Kamel El Basha).

SOLUTION TO QUICK CROSSWORD NO. 103



Here it must be said both actors are superlative in evoking Lebanese Christian and Palestinian Muslim machismo offset by the tenderness of their respective wives Shirine (Rita Hayek) who is pregnant and Manal (Christine Choueri) who is Christian.

The spark between 'Mr Tony' and Yasser strikes the tinder of community antagonisms and flares to presidential level and a politically inspired court case in which Wajdi Wehbe (Camille Salameh) and his daughter Nadine (Diamand Bou Abboud) contend for 'Mr Tony' and for Yasser.

One name haunts 'Mr Tony': Namour, location of an outrage exacerbated by being the result of Lebanon's civil war of the 1970s.

No specific mention is made of Palestinian Christians and how they, with their pre-Islamic link to Judaism, fit into the equation.

But Ziad Doueiri (with co-writer Joelle Touma) has created a masterpiece that shows, come politics, come legal verdicts, reconciliation begins in individual hearts. Running time: 118 minutes.

R18+★★★NFFV.

### The Spy Who Dumped Me

Violence, riptides of it, characterizes director Susanna Fogel's spoof thriller co-written with David Iserson.

Result: the riptides overwhelm Mila Kunis and Kate McKinnon as a pair of 30-something friends, Audrey and Morgan while they seek to sort out goodies from baddies personified by Sebastian Henshaw (Sam Heughan) and Drew Thayer (Justin Theroux) with Gillian Armstrong playing Wendy an enigmatic referee.

Arguably the spoof's wittiest element is the word play on, *The Spy Who loved Me*, the only thriller Ian Fleming wrote from a woman's point of view. To his credit Sam Heughan adds to the wit; he resembles Roger Moore and uses the mannerism he used in *The Spy Who Loved Me* (1997).

Running time: 117 minutes. Budget: \$40 million. Box office to date: \$19.6 million.

MA15★★NFFV.



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