

# ANNALS

Australasia

Journal of Catholic Culture



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# ANNALS AUSTRALASIA

*Journal of Catholic Culture*

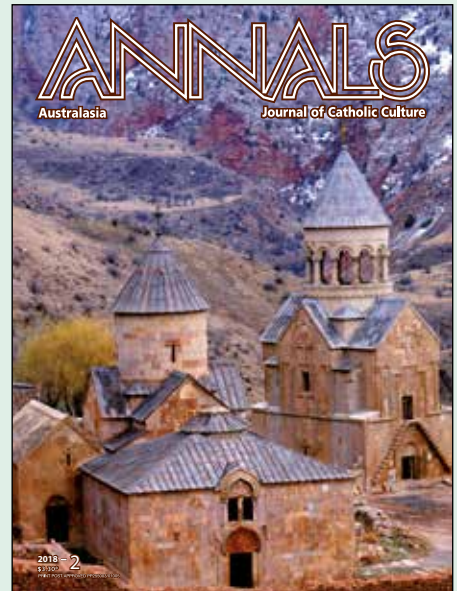
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[Sunday readings at Mass: Year B / Weekday readings at Mass: Year II]

*Australia's Oldest Catholic Magazine*

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*Front Cover:* Our cover pic is of a 13th century monastery known as Noravank, consisting of three churches built in the beautiful and secluded Amaghu valley, in the Vayots Dzor province of Armenia. When the Mongols invaded in the 13th century, they sacked many churches, but Noravank was spared. The fine stonework of the churches was principally the work of Momik, a noted sculptor of Khachkars, or stone crosses, who is buried on the site in a simple grave. The remains of 9th and 10th century churches are also to be found in this complex.

*Back Cover:* *Annals Australasia* turns 129 this year. Help support Australia's oldest and most popular Catholic journal by encouraging your friends and relatives to subscribe. See pages 9, 17 and 30.

Cover Photo: Jacob Majarian

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Let us not be dumb watchdogs, 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.

## VISIT OUR LORD NOW

---



**S**AY THAT we should visit Christ while there is opportunity, take care of him and feed him. We should clothe Christ and welcome him. We should, honour him, not only at our table, like some; not only with ointments, like Mary; not only with a sepulchre, like Joseph of Arimathea nor with things which have to do with his burial like Nicodemus, who loved Christ only by half; nor finally, with gold, incense and myrrh, like the Magi, who came before all those whom we have mentioned. But as the Lord of all desires mercy and not sacrifice, and as compassion is better than tens of thousands of fat rams, let us offer him this mercy through the needy and those who are at present cast down on the ground. Let us do this so that, when we depart hence they may welcome us into the eternal habitations, in the same Christ our Lord, to whom be glory. forever. Amen

– A Reading from the *Orations* of St Gregory Nazianzen [329-390 AD] *Or* 14,38,40.  
See the Roman Breviary : second reading for Saturday in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of Lent.



# LOVE UNFAILING

**D**AY IS DONE, but love unailing  
Dwells ever here;  
Shadows fall, but hope, prevailing  
Calms every fear.  
Loving Father, none forsaking,  
Take our hearts, of Love's own making,  
Watch our sleeping, guard our waking,  
Be always near.

Dark descends, but light unending  
Shines through our night;  
You are with us, ever lending  
New Strength to sight:  
One in love, your truth confessing,  
One in hope of heaven's blessing,  
May we see in love's possessing,  
Love's endless light.

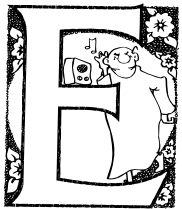
Eyes will close, but you unsleeping  
Watch by our side;  
Death may come, in love's safekeeping  
Still we abide  
God of love, all evil quelling,  
Sin forgiving, fear dispelling,  
Stay with us, our hearts indwelling,  
This eventide.

- JAMES J. QUINN SJ, 1919 - 2010, was a Scottish Jesuit priest, theologian who has been described as one of the finest hymn writers of the present day.

*Iceland brags—yes, that is the proper verb—that no babies with Down are born there because of prenatal testing and subsequent termination. Denmark has been accused of establishing a zero Down syndrome birthrate as a national public policy goal, though this is denied by its government; but what can't be denied is that only four such babies were born there in 2016.*

## **WHY THE 2018 'GERBER BABY' CHOICE IS SO IMPORTANT**

*By Wesley J. Smith*



EVERY YEAR, Gerber, the baby food manufacturer, holds a “cute baby” photo contest, the winner of which receives a \$50,000 cash prize and may appear as a “spokesbaby” to advertise the company’s products. Media coverage of the contest is usually limited to sweet human-interest pieces. Not this year. The contest made huge news when Lucas Warren, a child with Down syndrome, was named the Gerber Baby of 2018.

Notably, the news about Lucas was received with virtually unanimous praise. With a few exceptions—such as the Special Olympics and Tim Tebow’s “Night to Shine” prom dance celebrating people with developmental disabilities—positive depictions of people with Down are all too rare. Those with Down syndrome are more often the victims of what can fairly be described as a “cleansing”—a concerted international effort to see them wiped off the face of the earth through eugenic abortion.

If that seems harsh, consider these facts. Iceland brags—yes, that is the proper verb—that no babies with Down are born there because of prenatal testing and subsequent termination. Denmark has been accused of establishing a zero Down syndrome birthrate as a national public policy goal, though this is denied by its government; but what can't be denied is that only four such babies were born there in 2016.



Here in the United States, about 90 percent of fetuses diagnosed with Down are aborted. Parents of these unborn babies have reported that genetic counselors often push the abortion option. The problem was so pronounced that back in 2008, politically opposed senators Ted Kennedy (D-MA) and Sam Brownback (R-KS, now the State Department’s ambassador for

religious freedom) joined together to push a law through Congress requiring neutrality in genetic counseling.

The idea that abortion is the best option for Down babies is furthered by media depictions that focus on the difficulties of parenting special-needs children. For example, in 2008, Newsweek warned about “an epidemic of special-needs kids,” focusing wholly on the negative aspects of rearing them:

“For most parents, it’s the day-to-day stuff that consumes them: the hours of therapy, the doctor visits, the financial pressures, and the grinding anxiety that comes with it all. It is a rough, often isolating road. And one that promises to become even more challenging as our society enters a new, more complicated era of caregiving. That

era is coming in part because many of the medical and social advances that have improved the lives of special-needs individuals have also increased the burden of caring for them. For instance, people with Down syndrome were once lucky to survive to age 30; today, the average lifespan is 55.”

They live longer? Gee, what a shame!

Abortion advocacy isn't the end of it. Some of the world's most prominent bioethicists have published books and articles pushing the moral propriety of killing Down babies after birth. Princeton's Peter Singer, who holds one of the world's most prestigious chairs in bioethics, infamously wrote in his book *Rethinking Life and Death*:

'To have a child with Down syndrome is to have a very different experience from having a normal child. . . . [W]e may not want a child to start on life's uncertain voyage if the prospects are clouded. When this can be known at a very early stage of the voyage we may be able to make a fresh start. . . . Instead of going forward and putting all our efforts into making the best of the situation, we can still say no, and start again from the beginning.'

In other words, kill the baby.

In a similar vein, a notorious article published in the Oxford University-based *Journal of Medical Ethics* argued with specific reference to babies with Down—who, the authors admit, are often happy—that to bring up such children might be an unbearable burden on the family and on society as a whole, when the state economically provides for their care. On these grounds, the fact that a fetus has the potential to become a person who will have an (at least) acceptable life is no reason for prohibiting abortion.

'Therefore, we argue that, when circumstances occur after birth such that they would have justified abortion, what we call after-birth abortion should be permissible.'

If such an argument were made about race, it would rightly be branded bigotry.

Lucas's Gerber Baby victory opens the door for a more balanced and positive story to be presented. *Vogue* published a sweet commentary by the mother of a Down baby:

'There is a stereotype that people with Down Syndrome are always happy, and it's one that, for me, is hard to dispute. In fact, people always ask me if I only take pictures of her when

## What Happened to the Guilds?

THE GUILDS did not die, as is generally supposed. They were stolen from us, as part of the process whereby church property was seized, common land enclosed, and the medieval knight transformed into the rich landowner. The rich peasantry of the Middle Ages could support guilds of craftsmen who supplied much the same to the Lord in his castle and to the poor man in his hovel; economically there was not a huge gap between them. When the peasantry were reduced to landless labourers, while the aristocracy gained huge riches and almost total political power, there was no longer any need for crafts. The new rulers wanted 'artists' to glorify them in paint and stone, just as prostitutes hide their shame with rich fabrics or drug dealers reassure themselves with gold chains. As royal power withered from the reign of Elizabeth to that of Charles I, the Crown was increasingly forced to grant monopolies in such things as spices or salt to rich men. Thus political forces directly attacked the guilds, a process continued in the late seventeenth century by the advent of the joint-stock company, and in the late eighteenth by the Industrial Revolution.

— Russell Sparkes, 'The Recovery of the Guilds,' *Tracts for Our Time*, February 2011.

she's smiling, but the truth is, no, she's actually just always smiling. My dad, whose brother had Down Syndrome, believes that once there is more research done around the disorder, scientists will find that it negates whatever gene causes judgment. There is no science behind it, but, anecdotally, it's absolutely true: Tenley loves everyone.'

That is a message many don't want to hear—or, perhaps, even allow to be communicated. France recently prohibited the airing of a pro-life television commercial that presented positive depictions of being the parent of a child with Down syndrome.

From the *Wall Street Journal* story: France's High Audiovisual Council removed the commercial from air earlier this year, and in November the Council of State, the country's highest administrative court, upheld the ban, since the clip could "disturb the conscience" of French women who had aborted DS fetuses.

What's worse: hurt feelings or more aborted babies? We now know what the French government believes.

Perhaps the worst example of anti-Down syndrome cruelty came out of the Netherlands recently, in a video in which a financial expert coldly tells a young man with the

condition that "Downers" cost society 48,000 Euros per year—"ten times" more than "normal persons." People with Down syndrome may be developmentally disabled, but they are not stupid. Surely the ubiquitous message that they are not fully welcomed and embraced by the rest of society is not lost on them.

Underscoring that point: Frank Stephens, a man with Down, when testifying recently before a congressional committee in support of increased research funding, felt the need to justify his own existence. "Whatever you learn today, please remember this: I am a man with Down syndrome and my life is worth living," Stephens said, emphasizing the last three words. At the end of his presentation, he lamented: "Is there really no place for us in the world?"

Shame on us. We have a lot to learn from our brothers and sisters with Down syndrome. Perhaps the 2018 Gerber Baby will help us step off our current course and embrace these gentle people with the same unconditional love they offer us.

WESLEY J. SMITH is a senior fellow at the Discovery Institute's Center on Human Exceptionalism and a consultant to the Patients Rights Council. Reprinted with permission from *First Things* February 16, 2018. <https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2018/02/why-the-2018-gerber-baby-choice-is-so-important>

# FICKLE POPULISM AND PASSING GLORY

*By* Paul Stenhouse

**I**N 799 a Roman mob almost killed Pope Leo III [795-816], attempting to blind him and cut out his tongue after they attacked him while he was riding in procession to St Peter's from the Church of San Lorenzo in the Piazza del Popolo by the Flaminian Gate. The reasons for the attack are far from clear. Some speculate that it was inspired by envy on the part of Roman families offended because the Pope had invited the French king Charles the Great (Charlemagne) to defend the papacy and Rome against, amongst others, Irene the Empress of Constantinople.

The Pope's predecessor, Pope Hadrian I [772-795] had threatened to anathematise the Empress of Constantinople if she did not respect the jurisdiction of Rome over Illyricum [comprising Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia Herzegovina]. The poor orphan girl from Athens whose beauty so entranced the Emperor Leo IV that he married her in 769, was a formidable opponent: she had had her own son, Constantine VI, and her husband's five brothers, blinded and imprisoned after she seized power in 797.

Less than two years later another Roman mob was praising the Pope and yelling out 'Life and Victory to Charles the emperor' when Leo III (his scars still visible from the beating about the head that he received) crowned Charlemagne as Holy Roman Emperor in St Peter's Basilica on Christmas day 800.

\*

A thousand years later, when Napoleon Bonaparte crowned himself Emperor of the French in Notre Dame in Paris, in the reluctant presence of Leo III's successor Pope Pius VII on December 2 1804, the former Corsican artillery lieutenant is said to have worn the sword that Charlemagne had worn when he rode into Rome in 800 for his coronation in St Peter's by Pope Leo III.

This pride of Napoleon in being associated with Charlemagne contrasts with the ignoble treatment given to Charlemagne's bones by the Jacobin zealots who scattered the Holy Roman Emperor's ashes to the wind at Aachen [Aix-la-Chapelle] during the Reign of Terror.

\*

In 1179 king Louis VII of France visited the shrine to St Thomas a Becket, the Archbishop of Canterbury assassinated by knights of king Henry II on December 29 1170 in Canterbury Cathedral before the altar of St benedict. Amongst gifts he left in honour of the saint [canonised in 1172 by Pope Alexander III] the French king left a diamond known as the 'Regal of France'.

In 1538 Henry VIII declared St Thomas a 'traitor'. The shrine to the martyred Archbishop at Canterbury, regarded as the most beautiful shrine in all Christendom, was destroyed at Henry's command, and the remains of the saint were burnt and the ashes scattered. The gold, silver and precious stones and gilded vestments stolen from the shrine by the king filled 26 carts. Henry had the diamond donated by Louis VII to the saint's shrine mounted in a ring, and wore it on his thumb.

After Henry's death, in the time of Edward VI, the stone was mounted on 'a collar of golde'. A contemporary account describes this collar as 'set with sixteen fair diamonds whereof the Regal of France is one, and fourteen knots of pearles, in every knot four pearls'.<sup>1</sup>

Does any reader know what has happened to the pious gift of the French king to the English saint so ignobly treated by his countrymen?

<sup>1</sup> British Museum Harl. MS 611.22. See the introduction by Nichols lxxxvi.

*These 'me generation' kids, estimated to be about 10 to 15 percent of America's college population in the sixties, were alienated from the mainstream because they were different; they were special, superior and enlightened. Hence the old rules of civility and patience did not apply to them; they had to be gratified now.*

# THE 'ME' GENERATION

By George J. Marlin



THE POST-WAR GI Bill of Rights permitted millions of veterans to advance far beyond their forebears' achievements. By acquiring a college degree or the skills to enter a trade and to obtain a federal housing loan, they were on their way to entering the ranks of the nation's middle-class. And to achieve that American dream they were committed to family, church, discipline, sacrifice, loyalty and hard work.

Because these Americans, who became the parents of the seventy-six million baby boomers born between 1946 and 1964, survived the horrors of war and the Great Depression, they wanted their children to be brought up in an environment of plenty. Baby boomer parents worked hard so their children could grow up in fine homes in the suburbs, not coldwater flats in the inner city. Their children were to be dressed in the latest fashions, not hand me downs. They were to have the newest toys and they were to receive the best education. Their children were to have all the material goods and advantages they were denied in their youth.

Many of these parents, however, overindulged their children. They showered them with material goods but failed to instil in them the work

ethic they practised, that every right has a corresponding responsibility, and they failed to teach them the greatness of America and its institutions.

These children came to believe that success meant having plenty of objects -big homes, expensive cars, the latest gadgets. It did not mean earning respect by achieving worthy goals through dedication



and hard work. Material benefits, comforts, and security were viewed as entitlements, not privileges.

They never learned tolerance or patience - they expected special consideration and instant grat-

ification and were petulant and self-righteous. They gave rise, social-philosopher Christopher Lasch wrote, 'to the narcissistic culture of our time which... translated the predatory individualism of the American Adam into a therapeutic jargon that celebrates not so much individualism as solipsism, justifying self-absorption as 'authenticity' and 'awareness.'

In the 1960s, the impatient members of this generation hit the college campuses. When World War II commenced, there were 1.3 million students enrolled in colleges and universities; by 1968 that number had swelled to 6.9 million. And unlike their parents who matured before entering the ranks of academia, by leading battalions into battle or commanding flying squadrons, and were trying to make up for lost time, these twenty-something pampered kids, observed cultural historian Klaus Fischer, had the leisure 'to break the generational ties that usually safeguard historical continuity.'

They were to become members of the 'me' generation aka *narcissists* who had grandiose views of their talents, excessive interest in themselves, a craving for attention and admiration and a consciousness of superiority. This type of narcissist, according to Lasch, 'depends on others to validate his self-esteem He



cannot live without an admiring audience. ... For the narcissist, the world is a mirror, whereas the rugged individual saw it as an empty wilderness to be shaped to his own design.' Success for these narcissists 'consists of nothing more substantial than a wish to be vastly admired; not for one's accomplishments, but simply for oneself, uncritically and without reservation.'

These 'me generation' kids, estimated to be about 10 to 15 percent of America's college population in the sixties, were alienated from the mainstream because they were different; they were special, superior and enlightened. Hence the old rules of civility and patience did not apply to them; they had to be gratified now. Self-fulfilment had to be immediate. The problems that perplexed man through the ages had to be solved immediately.

The Little Red Book, authored by one of history's most ruthless mass murderers, China's Mao Tse-tung, was a best seller on campuses because its fortune-cookie like bromides solved the need for instant answers that did not require reflection. Harvard professor Daniel Patrick Moynihan, reacting to the shallowness of the students of that time, wrote they were 'persons who had apparently scarcely had an adult conversation in their full four years.'

The most radical became student activists - members of 'the movement' or the 'New Left.' Starting with the 1964 campus free speech movement through the student anti-war riots at the 1968 Chicago Democratic Convention and culminating in the campus shutdowns opposing Nixon's Vietnam policies, this student revolution was driven by emotions and slogans, not reasoning or scholarship.

These self-righteous student radicals, who had draft-exemptions and continued to accept living allowances and tuition from their much despised middle-

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class parents, claimed they were the champions of the 'powerless,' labourers and the poor - groups they never encountered during their sheltered, suburban and gated-community youth. They condemned the American system, as immoral, oppressive, evil and they were convinced they were the anointed ones destined to restore peace and beauty to the United States.

They were similar to the early twentieth century European youth movement which the legendary Austrian economist Ludwig von Mises described as 'turbulent gangs of untidy boys and girls' declaring that 'all preceding generations ... were simply idiotic [and] henceforth the brilliant youths will rule. They will destroy everything that is old and useless, they will reject all that was dear to their parents, they will substitute new real and substantial values and ideologies for the antiquated and false ones of capitalist and bourgeois civilization, and they will

build a new society of giants and supermen.'

Social critic Roger Kimball described them more succinctly as: 'of the privileged, by the privileged, for the privileged.'

Students who marched on campus administration buildings did not seek meaningful dialogue, but instead shouted obscenities and made ridiculous non-negotiable demands. And when these rebels did not get their way, they reacted emotionally and many turned to violence.

Organized chaos was the order of the day: Deans were locked in their offices, professors were harassed, classes were boycotted, research centres were vandalized, and buildings were torched. Breaking the law was permissible because it was free of self-interest and in the name of 'conscience' (which was not properly formed) but used merely as an excuse for license - the right to do what is irresponsible.

The radicals behind this upheaval, concluded liberal columnist Chris Hedges, were 'infected with the lust for violence, quest for ideological purity, crippling paranoia, self-exaltation, and internal repression of the state system they defied.'

At the 1968 Democratic Convention, these same student protestors turned to the streets in the name of liberty and just after the duly-elected delegates voted down the anti-Vietnam War plank. Because the police were viewed as barriers, it was permissible to taunt and attack the PIGS. Journalist Theodore H. White, observing the 'bloody climax,' saw 'the black flags of the anarchists; Viet Cong flags; red and blue banners; Omega banners; no American flags' as the kids wreaked violence and looted.

The student anti-war movement continued into the first Nixon term with marches on Washington and campus shutdowns (often during final exam week). These narcissists continued to discredit the existing order, had dripping contempt for those who disagreed, sneered at people who were patriotic and supported the men dying in faraway battlefields, and believed they, not the establishment, were really in the know.

In November 1969, for instance, when polls showed that 68 percent of Americans supported Nixon's speech on Vietnam, the spokesman for the Harvard Moratorium rejected the possibility saying, 'What Nixon has tried to show is that there is a silent majority behind him. We know better.'

But narcissists have short-attention spans. They get bored and move on to the next fad or cause célèbre. And so it was with the student peace movement, particularly after the draft was ended in 1973; some decided to drop out of society and lead hedonistic, purposeless lives. They embraced the teachings of Dr. Timothy Leary: 'Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out.' This meant pursuing free love and illicit drugs which

## Christianity and History

THE SPIRITUAL reaction at the beginning of the nineteenth century proved one of the most positive effects of the French Revolution. The spiritual revival to which it gave rise conferred tremendous importance on this period, but an importance that did not consist with the revolutionary purpose. The same might even be said of the great central key event of universal history, of that Christianity which inaugurated an era and

provided immediate thrills. Others, however, pursued careers attractive to elitists: journalism, academics, publishing, the law, community organizing; and they begat a new generation of narcissist elites.

As the narcissists of the sixties generation grew older, they tossed their granny glasses, cut their hair and joined the ranks of the professional and managerial elites who defined themselves by their intelligence. They might still hate 'the system' but rationalized that they were using it in order to obtain the power and wealth necessary to promote and finance their radical causes - feminism, environmentalism, one-world government, etc.

These narcissists isolated themselves with like-minded people in the fashionable intellectual neighborhoods in America's metropolitan regions. Whether it was in Manhattan's West Side, Brooklyn Heights or Chicago's Hyde Park, this emerging class glorified experts ridiculed the working class and vilified the electoral process because their rigid ideologies were often rejected at the ballot box.

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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 is reprinted with permission from *Narcissist Nation*, St Augustine's Press, South Bend Indiana, 2010.

determined the course of all that was to follow. For Christianity also was a complete and utter failure.

The enemies of Christianity ... repudiate Christianity because it did not succeed on earth This is a criticism capable of quite a different import and interpretation. It is true that Christianity shared the collapse of every other historical process.

Two thousand years have not sufficed to realize the ideals of Christian faith and consciousness.

They will never be realized within the framework of human time and history. They can only be realized by a victory over time, by the transition from time to eternity, by the triumphant passage from the historical to the super historical process But the failure of Christianity can no more be used as an argument against its higher truth than the failure of history can be taken to imply the aimlessness and emptiness of history. The failure of history does not mean that history is devoid of necessity or relevance

Similarly the failure of Christianity does not mean that Christianity is not the highest truth Historical success and achievement do not constitute a valid criterion of the true The nature of history and all that it contains is such that nothing perfect can be realized in time The profound significance of historical destiny and experience does not depend on any realization It exists beyond the limits of history.

The failure, so painfully clear within the framework of historical time and terrestrial reality, does not imply limitation and failure outside that framework. It rather goes to prove that the destiny of man reserves a higher realization for his potentialities than any to be achieved in his purely historical experience.

- Nicholas Berdyaev, 'The Historical Meaning of Christianity,' in *The Modern Tradition*, ed. Richard Ellmann and Charles Feidelson, New York, OUP, 1965, pp. 526-527.

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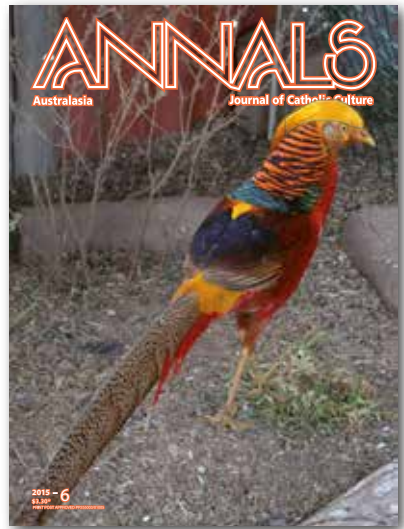
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## LONG LIVE CHRIST THE KING

*Some witnesses who were working in a field nearby saw the bus stop and how at first they took out four, bound two by two, and pushed them towards a slope. They heard arguing and then shots and they saw how the four bodies leaned forward at the same time. Next they brought out the other three and put them in front of those who had fallen. They suffered the same fate.*

# MARTYRS FOR THE FAITH

## Beatification of seven Missionaries of the Sacred Heart

*By Salvador Murillo, MSC*



THE MISSIONARIES of the Sacred Heart, and all the religious congregations sharing the spirit of our founder, Father

Jules Chevalier, are celebrating the beatification of seven of our members.

On July 8, 2016, our Holy Father Pope Francis signed the document prepared by the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, in which

Fr Antonio Arribas Hortigüela MSC, aged 28,

Fr Abundio Martín Rodríguez MSC, aged 28,

Fr José Vergara Echevarría MSC, aged 28,

Fr José-Oriol Issern Massó MSC, aged 27;

Br Gumersindo Gómez MSC, aged 24,

Br Jesús Moreno Ruíz MSC, age not known;

Br José del Amo MSC, aged 20

were declared blessed. The celebration of the beatification took place in the cathedral of Girona – about 100 km north of Barcelona – on May 6, 2017. They are the first

members of our Congregation to be declared blessed.

These religious men lived and worked in the Pequeña Obra (minor seminary) at Canet de Mar, Barcelona, preparing some 65 young people for religious life and priesthood. Their superiors

were fully conscious of the very critical moment that Spain was experiencing and they were preparing the community for what might happen, including martyrdom.

The days that followed July 18, 1936, were ones of anguish and

desolation and saw the beginning of a religious persecution. A few days later, on the 21<sup>st</sup>, the parish church of Canet de Mar was burned down. On that same day, about 4:00 in the afternoon, a group of armed people knocked violently on the door of the house and demanded that the entire community of the seminary abandon the premises by order of the People's Committee. They were led to a near-by park beside the Shrine of Mercy. This park became a concentration camp in which, for two weeks, the religious and the students of the minor seminary were kept under surveillance.



See page 27 for a prayer for the canonization of the seven martyrs

On August 3, about 5:00 in the afternoon, a member of the Committee came and asked for the director. He told him: 'You people are in imminent danger. The Committee has decided to shoot you this very night. Leave and do not get me involved. Don't worry about the children; nothing will happen to them. And we consider the elderly priest to be like the children.'

Much to their regret, the religious had to abandon the seminarians. They formed two groups for their escape: one group of four and another of seven, four priests and three brothers. This second group was the one chosen to give God glory by their martyrdom.

Thus on August 3, fleeing those who wanted to kill them that night, they began a long journey of two months towards the French border. They passed through places they did not know, hiding all the time, barely able to sleep or eat, in adverse weather conditions. They did, however, receive help from a number of farms. What is truly remarkable is that they were able to stay together as a group all this time.

On September 28 they arrived at a farm house called Mont-Ros, as night began to fall. One of the religious went to the house to ask for directions. They did not want to stay to eat; they only wanted information about the road to the border. They followed the instructions they had been given and after travelling a little more than a kilometer, a group of

## Martyred for their Faith

**T**HESE YOUNG religious - the four priests and three Brothers - were killed in cold blood on September 29, 1936, at Pont de Ser. A girl, who did not know them, testified that she was horrified when she saw their disfigured faces. They had been shot with a great number of bullets in all parts of their bodies. The militiamen forced the religious to turn their backs but one of them refused, saying: 'Cowards die with their backs turned and we are neither cowards nor criminals. You are killing us because we are religious and because we love God and our country. "Long live Christ the King".' He did not complete the sentence before they shot him and his brothers. The massacre continued with more shots aimed at the profaned, helpless bodies. The witnesses say that one of the martyrs had his head completely destroyed and that another was holding a crucifix in his hand. One of the murderers, on returning from the slaughter, said smugly: 'I'm back from the shooting. If you only knew how much I enjoyed seeing them drop!' No repentance, no mercy, no humanity. Brothers and sisters, we stand before the tragic mystery of evil. But we also stand before the extraordinary spiritual force of the just, those in whom the light of goodness shines, the light that always overcomes evil. United to the love of Christ, these brave heroes can say with the apostle and martyr St. Paul: 'Who can separate us from the love of Christ?'

– Cardinal Angelo Amato, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, from his homily preached on May 6, 2017 at the Solemn Mass of Beatification for the seven Missionaries of the Sacred Heart martyred in Spain by the Communists on 29 September, 1936.

Committee members was waiting for them. They had been betrayed! They were immediately seized and led to Committee headquarters.

This is how, exhausted by the fatigue and the sufferings of almost two months of flight over mountains and down ravines, innocent and without guile, they came to follow the footsteps of the Master. At about 10:00 p.m. they were handed over to the Committee of Begudà now known as Sant Joan les Fonts, Girona. From that point on, things happened very quickly. They were taken to the school house where the Committee had

its seat. They spent the night in that hall. A neighbor, a woman, from the terrace of her house, saw them pacing in the hall praying the rosary.

The next day, September 29, between 3:00 and 4:00 in the afternoon, a crowd assembled at the door of the school house. All could see how the religious were taken out, bound two by two. The one who walked alone had his hands tied behind his back. They were silent; almost all of them were peaceful. One of the youngest was crying... The crowd was impressed and kept silent. One of the Committee members showed off like a thug by attacking the Pope, the Church and the clergy with the vilest of intentions: 'Not one of your kind will remain!'

The prisoners were put on a bus. The bus came to a stop before crossing the bridge on the River Ter. There was a derelict house there, near a small slope. It was the perfect place! The moment had arrived! Some witnesses who were working in a field nearby saw the

## Food as Weapons

**A**LTHOUGH our civilization has been built on humanistic ideals in this new age of free markets, everything – science, commerce, agriculture and even seeds – have become weapons in the hands of a few global corporation barons and their political fellow travellers. To achieve world domination, they no longer rely on bayonet-wielding soldiers. All they need is to control food production.

– Dr. Arpad Pusztai, biochemist, formerly of the Rowett Research Institute Scotland, quoted [www.engdahl.oilgeopolitics.net](http://www.engdahl.oilgeopolitics.net)

bus stop and how at first they took out four, bound two by two, and pushed them towards a slope. They heard arguing and then shots and they saw how the four bodies leaned forward at the same time. Next they brought out the other three and put them in front of those who had fallen. They suffered the same death.

It took but a few minutes to carry out the massacre and the witness of faith.

What was the attitude of our brothers in that decisive and sublime moment? The Calvary suffered by those seven young religious and the circumstances surrounding their death make it possible for us to see in them an unquestionable witness to fidelity to their commitment as Christians and to the practice of the Evangelical Counsels which they had professed.

That same afternoon the Committee forced some men from the town of Serinyà, known as good Christians, to carry the bodies to the town cemetery. They were buried in tombs dug in the ground, four bodies in one and three in the other. This was their resting place until March 30, 1940, when their bodies were exhumed and transferred to the cemetery of Canet de Mar, near the MSC community.

The solemn celebration of their beatification took place on May 6, 2017, in the cathedral of Girona. Cardinal Angelo Amato, prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, presided over the ceremony in the name of Pope Francis. From that day on, the remains of the martyrs were placed in one of the chapels of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, calle Rosellón 175, Barcelona, to be venerated by all the faithful.

These seven Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, by their life and by their death as martyrs, give the fullest meaning to the motto of our Congregations:

**May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be everywhere loved!**



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– Editor, *Annals*

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# TONY EVANS

6 July, 1931– 3 January, 2018

**T** HIS BAPTISMAL names were Anthony George, but as he wrote forty-eight articles that appeared under the name of Tony Evans in *Annals* over twenty years, and as all our readers knew him as Tony, so ‘Tony’ he shall be.

When, in 2014, he and his wife Claire moved back to the U.K. from Fremantle Western Australia – first to London and then to Burwash in East Sussex – they little suspected that they would have only four years with their two daughters, Emily and Alice, their son-in-law and their two grandchildren. But they were happy years, and the move proved to be a wise one.

Tony’s unexpected death on January 3 this year came as a great shock to the family, and to all who knew him. *Annals* lost a popular writer, and your editor a close and very dear friend.

In his early 20s, Tony became General Secretary of *The Catholic Film Institute of London* which was an offshoot of *L’Organisation Catholique Internationale du Cinéma et de l’Audiovisuel*, founded in 1928 in the Netherlands, and with its headquarters in Brussels. It is now known as SIGNIS. In 1956 he met Claire Kelly who was working at the then Institute. At the time he was promoting a Spanish film ‘The Miracle of Marcelino,’ which turned out



to be one of the best-known and most successful Spanish films ever made, and one of the first Spanish films to be successful in the United States.

In the years that followed, Tony worked on a number of films with British film Director Ken Russell. One such was the 1958 production of ‘Amelia and the Angel,’ made partly to celebrate Russell’s conversion to Catholicism, and regarded as Russell’s first film. Tony is credited as co-writer, producer and assistant director of the film.

After his marriage to Claire in 1960 Tony came to Australia in 1961, and made his home in Western Australia working in the ABC first as a radio announcer, and becoming involved with TV Current Affairs. When what was to become *This Day Tonight* appeared first in W.A. as *Today Tonight*, Tony was one of the show’s first presenters. Among TV documentaries that he produced were *The Stones Cry Out*, featuring the architecture of Monsignor John Cyril Hawes, also known as the hermit of Cat

Island; and *Hands of Gold*, a drama based on the 1926 murder of policemen in the Western Australian goldfields.

Tony then returned to ABC Radio working closely with Richard Connolly, well-known for his musical settings for hymns composed by well-known Australian Catholic poet James McAuley. Richard, head of Radio Drama and Features at this time, told me recently that Robert Peach of AM fame, who had himself been an actor and producer of radio plays and serials in the golden years of radio, described a radio play that Tony had produced as ‘the best he’d ever heard’.

His first published book was *The Conscious Stone* (1984) a biography of the architect-hermit of Cat Island, Monsignor Hawes. It won the WA Premier’s Literary Award for non-fiction. He wrote *Fanatic Heart, A life of John Boyle O’Reilly 1844-1890* (1997) the Irish poet, journalist and member of the Fenians who had been transported to Western Australia. It was short-listed for the National Biography Prize. His best seller was *C. Y. O’Connor, His Life and Legacy*, (2001).

His last book *William Wardell – Building With Conviction* (2010) portrayed the English-born architect and friend of Pugin, whose crowning works were two Catholic cathedrals, St Mary’s in

Sydney – the most beautiful neo-Gothic cathedral in the southern hemisphere; and St Patrick’s in Melbourne – the tallest and largest church building in Australia; and St John’s College within the University of Sydney.

Tony’s long-held wish was for plaques to be erected in both Cathedrals commemorating Wardell’s architectural genius, and acknowledging his role in so enhancing and beautifying the celebration of Catholic Liturgy in Australia.

Tony’s love and admiration for G.K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc need no stressing. He founded the *Australian Chesterton Society* in 1993. He was the founding editor of the journal of the Society, *The Defendant*, a position he held until his retirement in 2013.

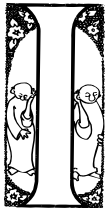
He died peacefully with his family at his side. May his dear soul rest in peace.

– Paul Stenhouse MSC

*Feminism, like the retrospective judgment of history by the supposed standards of today, is generally and often unnecessarily divisive. Men and women are meant biologically to get along rather well and with even a modicum of intelligence and goodwill should still surely remain able to do so.*

## THROUGH A GLASS CEILING DARKLY

By Giles Auty



IN WHAT HAS become the familiar parlance of present-day Australia and the Western world in general, any limit placed on soaring female ambition is described now as ‘the glass ceiling’. Indeed very few people exist now to whom the expression is totally unfamiliar and fewer still probably continue to draw breath who can remember a time when it simply didn’t exist.

Thus the smashing of the so-called ‘glass ceiling’ was proposed by many in 2016 as a perfectly valid reason for making Hillary Clinton President of the United States. It was thus also widely perceived as ‘unfair’ that no American woman had so far scaled that particular height.

I should perhaps admit here that I can think of an almost limitless range of reasons why I would never voluntarily vote for Hillary Clinton of which the so-called ‘glass ceiling’ is possibly the least.

Feminism as an international issue probably first reared its head in England in about 1970 but within 10 years the apparent historic injustices inflicted on women artists, say, had become a painfully familiar part of the everyday discussion of art. Vast

international exhibitions of ‘women’s art,’ including such items as rows of used tampons, became almost everyday events. Indeed it was at just such an event that I inadvertently put my arms round a noted feminist artist from behind under the mistaken impression that she was her identical twin sister who was married at the time to a

on their clothes or hair without realizing that this constitutes another highly unwelcome form of supposed sexual harassment.

Clearly I have failed to keep up with unavoidable human ‘progress’.

In 1987 however I first set eyes on the paintings of German 20<sup>th</sup> century artist Lotte Laserstein at simultaneous showings of her work

at two galleries in London and instantly recognized her utterly outstanding qualities. Very probably you have never heard of her in which case you share something with highly respected American academic Whitney Chadwick who did not include her in *Women, Art and Society* (Thames & Hudson 1990)



good friend of mine. However, rather sadly, my unintended mistake possibly helped reinforce the widely stated feminist belief of the time that ‘all men are potential rapists’.

It had hitherto been my naïve but apparently erroneous belief that for a great many millennia men and women had got along rather well even in the absence of any novel form of post-modernist ‘ism’. Even worse I still to this day often compliment female colleagues

which purported to be a definitive list of the very best 500 female artists from the past 500 years.

Lotte Laserstein, was one of the first women ever to be admitted to the Berlin Academy of Arts where she also became their ‘star pupil’ and won a highly prestigious gold medal in 1925. As a ‘mere’ man I would place her without hesitation among the very best artists of either gender for the whole of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We later became



good friends in spite of language difficulties and she was even keen for me to write her biography – which owing to mutual work commitments regrettably never occurred.

In the visual arts at least, feminism pursued a generally ungracious path which has also become replicated in other art forms.

The pressing problems of our world do not necessarily – let alone inevitably – depend upon factors such as gender or skin colour. Much deeper and more genuine divisions begin to occur in fact over issues such as religious belief. Feminism, like the retrospective judgment of history by the supposed standards of today, is generally and often unnecessarily divisive. Men and women are meant biologically to get along rather well and with even a modicum of intelligence and goodwill should still surely remain able to do so.

Post-modernist ideology is very widely divisive, in fact, and probably aims thereby to get us looking in entirely the wrong places for answers to our world's problems. Indeed, more or less any foolish pretext can trigger such a process.

During my twenty-odd years of living in Australia, I have spent roughly a quarter of the time living overseas and Britain, for example, is also by no means without its share of insoluble-seeming problems. Just one of these was until latterly membership of a now very Left-leaning European Union where much of the post-modernist ideology which currently afflicts Australia is hardly less evident.

For a long time Britain remained on the 'outer' so far as Europe was concerned and it was not until the death in 1970 of French president Charles de Gaulle, who was resolutely opposed to Britain's entry, that the door to such entry swung open again. It is easy to forget now that the two most influential members of what

was originally called the European Economic Community were led by Charles de Gaulle and Konrad Adenauer who were united not just by their Catholic beliefs but also by the vital importance they attached to the family. Adenauer saw the family – as opposed to the political party or some form of ideological program – as the basic building block of post-war German reconstruction and also as an essential bulwark against the ever-present threat of re-emergent totalitarian systems.

How right he was.

For Adenauer at least Christian ethics were seen as the vital future basis of German communal life. However moral imperatives pursued by the EU in recent times have so often been in direct conflict with basic Christian notions of morality that a complete change in ethical emphases has clearly taken place at some stage in Europe's corridors of power. Indeed, this closely echoes what has happened also in Australia. Indeed for many young people such changes embrace just about all that they have ever known and which therefore cannot reasonably be disputed: political correctness, gender fluidity, global warming, multiculturalism, feminism, abortion on demand and all such other changes, in fact, brought about basically by the cultural revolutions of the Sixties.

The long-established academic, artistic and religious traditions which underwrote Europe's formidable civilization will probably never be surpassed – but equally are extremely unlikely now ever to be seen again. Post-modernism has simply become the wrecking-ball of history which is precisely what Karl Marx had hoped for all along.

When I was in my thirties especially I read the popular revolutionary theories of the time and occasionally at least still dip into the works of authors who were former international celebrities. Purely by chance I recently picked up a tiny book published by Penguin in 1995 as part of a series

which could be read easily on a relatively short flight; such books added virtually no weight to one's luggage. The cover blurb reads that the author became "America's first internationally recognized public thinker since the 1960s". Do we all remember former Professor of Humanities Camille Paglia who purported, among other matters, to explain human sexuality fully – possibly for the first time?

Opening the book entirely at random the first sentence I read was the following: "The pagan dialectic of Apollonian and Dionysian (sic!) was sweepingly comprehensive and accurate about mind and nature. Christian love is so lacking its emotional polarity that the Devil had to be invented to focus natural human hatred and hostility". I have nothing in particular against Paglia who at least sometimes writes readily approachable sense but what do you personally make of the foregoing?

As I have remarked already feminism is by nature divisive in more or less exactly the same manner as other proposed post-modernist oppositions: gays versus straights, blacks versus whites, men versus women, communists versus capitalists and so forth more or less *ad infinitum*. Good versus evil thus rather conveniently becomes an overlooked and almost forgotten idea.

Just one of the major problems of post-modernism is the one faced by other would-be re-inventors of the wheel: *in short, the traditional wheel does actually continue to work rather well.*

Novelty, in other words, is not and has never been an automatic virtue *per se*. For instance, if one looks at the four most obvious historical examples of European artistic patronage our 'new' wisdom would probably declare that state patronage – which is the most 'modern' – is automatically superior to that of the church, nobility and the so-called bourgeoisie. However, if you pit the singular vision of

Lorenzo di Medici, say, against that of the present-day Australia Council a totally different historical perspective soon starts to emerge. And did not an emergent 17<sup>th</sup> century ‘bourgeois’ Netherlands produce, among other excellent artists, such incomparable figures as Rembrandt and Vermeer?

Inventing an entirely new moral, political and social system based on the dubious ponderings of an extremely angry mid 19<sup>th</sup> century figure remains utterly ludicrous in my view. Communism, in fact, was numerically by far the greatest disaster of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in terms of innocent people killed. Post-modernism, like the communism from which it basically springs, does not and has never worked properly so that even its apparently milder aspects – such as political correctness – have to be virtually enforced now by bodies such as the Australian Human Rights Commission.

It is in such a context, in fact, that conservatism, which implies building upon and where necessary expanding time-proven answers needs to re-assert its time-honoured virtues more actively.

At the very conclusion of this book I have asserted that the Catholic Church remains a most vital element in the ongoing battle with the influence and doctrines of post-modernism. Indeed, I had barely written such words when one of a trio of superb articles in *The Spectator Australia* (January 20, 2018) by someone I have never met asserted exactly the same thing. Christopher Akehurst implores the Catholic Church in Australia to move on from endless apologies for the sins of the few to being at the forefront again in the ongoing battle for Australia’s soul.

---

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*. This article is taken from a chapter of a forthcoming book by Giles to be published by Connor Court.



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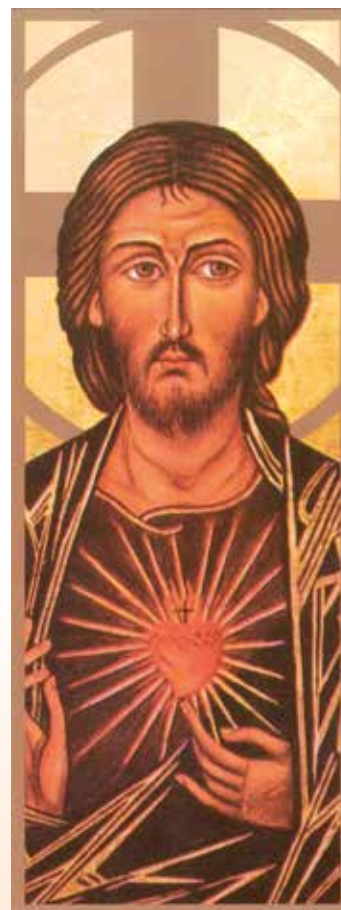
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## Memory and Suggestion

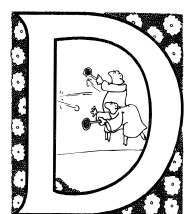
**T**HE MOST troubling aspect of memory – be it a child's memory or an adult's – may be its vulnerability to suggestion. This is powerfully illustrated by a study carried out in the 1930s. While a class was in progress, a man dressed in overalls entered the room, made some comments and tinkered with a radiator for a minute or two. Two weeks later he came back with 5 men of similar appearance, and the students were also asked to identify him. Another group of students who had not in fact seen the man but who were told that they had, were asked to identify him. Twenty-nine per cent of those students identified one of the six men.<sup>70</sup>

– Hon Justice Peter McClellan, 'Who is telling the truth? Psychology, common sense and the law,' from an edited version of a speech presented at the Local Courts of New South Wales Annual Conference 2006 (2-4 August 2006). Footnote has been omitted.

*Theodulf was a Visigoth, a refugee from Spain which in 711 was invaded by Umayyad Muslims fleeing Abbasid assassins, and Berber Muslims from Morocco. In 798 he was sent by Charlemagne as a royal emissary [missus Dominicus] ... to ensure that judges who acted in the name of the king were fulfilling their duties, and to correct abuses.*

## ANCIENT BRIBES, PUBLIC FIGURES AND NEGLECTED POETS

*By Paul Stenhouse*



DOROTHY COLLINS, G. K. Chesterton's literary executrix, once noted that Chesterton, who had been listening as some friends

discussed what books they would take with them if they knew that they were going to be shipwrecked on a desert island, remarked: 'I think I should take Thomas's *Guide to practical Shipbuilding*'. You can hear the angels clapping still, if you listen carefully.

I hesitate to say that this witty and very sensible response *leapt* to mind, but it certainly *came to mind* as I pondered the detailed and practical advice to judges offered by Theodulf (AD 750-821) the bishop of Orléans from AD 798-818 in the time of Charlemagne (died 814), crowned Holy Roman Emperor by Pope Leo III in St Peter's in 800 AD.

Theodulf was a Visigoth, a refugee from Spain which in 711 was invaded by Umayyad Muslims fleeing Abbasid assassins, and Berber

MANY *Annals* readers may still recall the Latin they learned at school. The following story which reflects life and Catholic belief and practice in Charlemagne's empire in AD 798 may revive some happy memories. Those who have forgotten or never knew Latin may be encouraged to discover for themselves some of the treasures to which it is the key. Happy reading to all!

Muslims from Morocco. In 798 he was sent by Charlemagne as a royal emissary (*missus Dominicus*) up and down the Frankish kingdom to ensure that judges who acted in the name of the king were fulfilling their duties, and to correct abuses.

Well-known as a poet, Theodulf wrote a long poem – 1,022 lines – in Latin elegiac couplets, in which he offered the fruits of his investigations to judges and would-be judges, and to those who were going to appear before the judges. Among other useful advice, he cautioned judges about accepting 'favours,' not eating or drinking too much before hearing cases, being wary of lying witnesses, and of the temptation to favour the rich and powerful and to deny justice to the poor.

It occurred to me that Theodulf's poem, called *Paraenesis ad Iudices*,<sup>1</sup> or 'Admonition or Exhortation to Judges,' would be a fine poem if judges or lawyers had to choose something to take to help pass the time during an extended stay on a desert island. The poem is called *Adversus Iudices* or 'Against the Judges,' by some MSS.



The Chapel at Germigny-des-Prés, in the Loire Valley, Orléans, France. It was part of a complex built by Bishop Theodulf of Orleans in 806. Within less than a century the Vikings destroyed everything except the Chapel.

Theodulf starts by setting the scene: ‘Impartial judges – you should follow the well-trodden path of Justice. Let your feet avoid unsavoury byways. The first leads heavenward; the second entice (their victims) into the shadows. A devout life will take the first path; death, gaping wide, stalks the second. Beware of approaching the rivers of the underworld, the place of the Styx, and the Cocytus the Wailing River of madness. The mansions of Heaven, on the other hand, have no peer for beauty and grace; no evil resides there; all good things are there to be found.’

He holds up Moses and Samuel as models for judges, and then king David – someone ‘who devoted all his thoughts to pleasing God’ (*qui tota studuit mente placere deo*).

‘In song (the psalms) and deeds and with all his strength David warned them against evil, and taught them to cling to the principles of law.’ (*Cantibus et gestis et totis nisibus / iste probra cavenda monet, jura tenenda docet*).

Theodulf admits that ‘often he notices judges who abandon the laws to those who offer bribes, and with might and main seek riches’ (*Saepe ego pollicitis censors linquere cerno / Jura, aurumque avido guttere et ore sequi*).

He finds himself suspected of the same thing. Nevertheless, whatever his faults, he declares himself to be ‘innocent of taking bribes’ (*hac lue liber ero*).

While he never took bribes, small gifts by poor country people – ‘like fruit and vegetables, eggs, wine, bread, some hay for the horses,’ and little birds that might provide some food – were accepted gratefully. With no strings attached.

(*Scilicet arboreos fructus, hortique virentis, / ova, merum, panes, cornipedumque cibos*).

Theodulf names all the rivers he crossed and the major towns he visited throughout the Frankish empire. He recalls a warm welcome he received at Narbonne from ‘remnants of the Visigoths and Spaniards who were delighted to

## Dancing Bears while you Eat

**D**ON’T ASK me why but the cute thing in Paris these days is to frequent restaurants where the owner does conjuring tricks. As I live and breathe, there are no fewer than three such establishments operating at the moment and people are fairly fighting to get in. Time was when serious eaters in France, finding themselves in a place that did anything other than serve food in a properly reverential manner, would fight to get out: they wouldn’t even tolerate a small orchestra in the background. Nowadays, Escoffier himself wouldn’t be able to persuade the average Parisian to eat a meal free unless he could offer a dancing bear or a Thai wrestling match by way of accompaniment. Encouraged no doubt by the success of the conjuring restaurateurs, another enemy of the human race has announced his intention of opening a place where the customers will be able to watch a full-length film while mechanically thrusting food down their gullets. This means, I take it, that the premises in which the loathsome saturnalia takes place will be plunged into darkness. Mercifully, no doubt, when one thinks of the sort of food served in such sinister dens.

– Alister Kershaw, poet, writer and broadcaster was born in Melbourne in 1921. He died in Sury-en-Vaux, France in 1995. See *A Word from Paris*, Angus and Robertson, 1991, p.107.

see one of their own blood in a position of authority’: (*Reliquiae getici populi simul Hespera turba / Me consanguineo fit duce laeta sibi*).

He was accompanied by a colleague, Leidrad, the future Archbishop of Lyon. They were met by crowds of all ages and backgrounds whom he lists: ‘children, very old men, youths, fathers, unmarried girls, widowers, people of rank, young adult men, old women, jesters, husbands, small children’.

The bribes are described by Theodulf in great detail; and the proposal of one of the gift-givers is blunt: ‘we will give (this), if you grant my request’ (*dabimus, quae rogo si dederis*).

Among some of the many ‘gifts’ on offer to judges were woven coverlets dyed red with various other colours; a vase, famous for its antique workmanship; a crystal with gems from Spain – if the petitioner can have possession of another’s lands; rugs for couches, and beautifully embroidered works; and a well-watered field with vines and olives, plentiful grass and gardens; furs, white and red; linen gifts; woollen gifts. The list goes on: a sword, a helmet, shields, a deceased

father’s estate, mules, horses, and coverings for heads, feet and hands.

When the gift-givers realise that Theodulf isn’t about to accept their offer, they pick up their gifts, and await their day in court.

Addressing both judges and petitioners, Theodulf reminds them that ‘a day in court should begin with prayer to God in the church’: (*Principio loca sancta libens adeunda require / quae pete, dumque petis fer pia vota Deo*).

‘I’ve seen judges’ he writes, ‘who are slow in performing their judicial duties, but fast, I must say, in taking bribes. They (usually) come to court at the fifth hour (9.30 a.m.) and are gone by the ninth (2.30 p.m.) If they begin at the third hour (7 a.m.) they are gone by the sixth (11 a.m.) If they’ve something to give, they arrive at the ninth hour (2.30 p.m.) If they are receiving something, they can arrive at the first hour (4.30 a.m.) and ‘He is early,’ the bishop adds, with heavy irony, ‘who a little while ago was late.’ (*estque citus qui modo serus erat*).

*Annals* readers born before Harry Potter hit the bookshelves and the cinema screens may recall an episode in the popular British TV series of the 80s *Yes Minister*

which involved the Minister's wife's innocently taking home a very expensive gift from a foreign government, having been told that it was of little value. The consequences would have been dire had not Sir Humphrey's command of double talk, and the Minister's own duplicitously quick thinking, saved the day.

Theodulf describes a judge who after a heavy meal and bouts of drinking, 'couldn't stay awake, was sluggish and distracted,' (*marcidus et segnus et sine mente sedet*), and describes another as 'lazy, inebriated, belching, drunken, listless, languid, loathing his job, choking and spluttering, and sluggish,' (*piger, madidus, ructans, tumultuosus, anelus, / oscitat et marcet, nauseat, angit, hebet*).

After pleading with the judges for mercy in judgement, to encourage diligence in justice in which tainted 'gifts' will have no place, Theodulf reminded the judges that this was ordinary Catholic teaching: 'what the Gospel trumpet proclaimed at the World's cross-roads; with this the apostolic preaching resounded.' (*Hoc evangelicus lituus per compita mundi / Mugit, apostolicus hoc quoque sermo tonat*).

In the interest of fairness and justice for the judges, Theodulf adds: 'I don't claim that all are guilty because some commit crimes. Let each one be judged on his merit, when it is a question of honour or shame.' (*Non ego quorundam diffundo crimen in omnes / Cuique sit ex merito lausve pudor suo*)

If some poor man is trying to make his voice heard above the din of the crowd of petitioners with their gifts, Theodulf urges the judge to send a servant to bring the poor man forward and 'having sat down, thoroughly discuss his case first, and then let other cases come in their proper order.' (*Et residens eius primum bene discute causam / Ordine post currant singular quaeque suo*)

And he adds: 'If you want to know when the court should sit, 'take my advice: get up at the crack of dawn' / (*Accipe consilium, mane venito, meum*).

## Messianic Prophecy

**R**ABBI Hiyya b. Abba said in Rabbi Johanan's name: "All the prophets prophesied only about the Messianic Era".

- *The Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 99a, Berakoth 34b*

Theodulf insisted that judges investigate the cases of everybody thoroughly. taking the words of Job as an example: "I was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame; a father to those in distress". Judges should not be in a hurry to finish a case, nor to drag it out too long lest weariness cloud their judgement if they dragged the process out; and error cloud their judgement if they hurried.

'People of importance tend to drag out and complicate their cases, while a poor person can't get a proper hearing. Should this occur,' advises Theodulf, 'ask the better-off people to delay their trials, and to act as your associates in dealing with the cases of the poor.'

The bishop of Orléans was especially concerned for the rights of orphans and widows, of the weak, the disabled, the sick and the elderly.

'If one petitioner is slow-witted,' he advised judges, 'guide him; if another is very bright, curb his precocity. This may help the former not to lose his property; and the latter to have second thoughts about taking the property of another.' (*Instrue si stolidus, si callidus attrahe frena / Hic sua ne perdat; hic ne aliena petat*).

Judges should remember says Theodulf, that some people can never do justice to the truth by speaking, and often, in fact, prejudice their own case. A judge is supposed to be a 'watchful oarsman for their words; to stop them stumbling; and if they stumble, to help them up.' (*Huius Remigium*

*verbis tu praebe salubre / Ne ruat hunc retine, si ruat ipse leva*).

These judges or magistrates were generally Counts in the Frankish empire. Often they had no legal background, and gift-giving and receiving was endemic. The cruel and unequal penalties handed down by the judges appalled Theodulf. We've looked only at a very tiny sampling of his *Paraenesis ad Iudices*, based on what he saw and heard while a *royal emissary* of Charlemagne.

The poem concludes with his exhorting the judges not to be violent to the poor, but to be kind to them 'for perhaps their prayers are better than yours'. (*Vota quibus forsan sunt meliora tuis*).

However different their lives may have been because of their privileged background, in their birth and death they were alike. 'You had the same holy baptismal water bless you, you have been anointed with the same holy oil, and you and they have been fed with the flesh and blood of the Lamb.' (*Fons sacer hos tecum beat, inlinit unguen avitum, / Atque Agni satiat hos caro sive cruor*).

'The author of life died for you,' he wrote 'and for them, and calls each one to receive his reward, according to each one's merits.' (*Ut pro te vitae est, pro his quoque mortuus auctor, / Quemque et pro meritis ad sua dona vocat*).

After Charlemagne's death in 814 his son, Louis the Pious, succeeded him. Theodulf was accused of treason for allegedly supporting Louis's nephew Bernard, king of the Lombards, who wanted to secede from the Frankish empire. Theodulf was exiled to a monastery in Angers in 818 where he remained for two years. He died on 18 January, AD 821 while travelling to Orléans to reclaim his bishopric.

1. Latin text: Theodulfi, Aurelianensis Episcopi, Opera Omnia, Migne PL vol. cv, 1851, Paris pp.283-300. Translation: Paul Stenhouse. A translation of the whole poem is included in Alexandrenko, Nikolai A. 1970. The poetry of Theodulf of Orleans: a translation and critical study. D. diss., Tulane University. Theoretically, this dissertation may be obtained from the following link <https://dissexpress.proquest.com/dxweb/results.html?QryTxt=&By=Alexandrenko%2C+Nikolai+A&Title=&pubnum=7108032>. For some reason this link seems not to work in Australia.

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*As for 'Oi', first person singular, it was endlessly prohibited, our expression of individual identity denied. It had to be the wide-mouthed, gleaming-toothed, southern bourgeois 'I', not the rounded, round lipped 'Oi'.*

# 'CHARMING' BIRDS, BUZZES, AND BEAVERS FOR LUNCH

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*By* Michael Wilding



IN *ANNALS* last March Giles Auty had a fascinating essay on 'Dialect and Brogues.' Though my own experiences have been a bit more fraught than his, often involving stern correction of my idioms and pronunciation. Once in a while the Director of the Writers' Centre questions the way I speak. Some formulations she finds quaint, others she complains are grammatically incorrect. The way I say, in perhaps a somewhat peremptory manner, 'Give it me.' Instead of her preferred 'Give it to me.'

But phrases like these are the last remnants of the idiom of my childhood. Growing up in the English Midlands, we had our local accent, like everywhere else in Britain. There were subtle differences between the city and the country, the rural accent was perhaps more rounded, more countrified, but the two were close. This was the way we had always spoken, and unselfconsciously. This was the norm. When an Australian visited my mother in hospital the nurses remarked with fascination, in the broadest Worcestershire, 'Ooh, don't she 'ave a strong accent!'

And it was not only a matter of accent. There were some specifics of dialect surviving, too. Some of the formulations, some of the words, reached straight back to the Anglo-Saxon. 'What a charm those birds

are making,' Dad would say when the sparrows or the finches were in some loud dispute or merry-making. Later I found the word in *Paradise Lost*: 'the charm of earliest birds.' It was from *cearm*, Anglo-Saxon for 'noise' or 'song,' and that no doubt from Latin *carmen*. It was just part of the vocabulary, like the way Dad would naturally say 'Hark' when he heard some sound he wanted us to listen to. 'Boughten cake' was another of his terms - for cake bought from a shop as opposed to cake my mother baked.

Outside of the region these idioms would sound archaic. Like the 'Whoa' and 'Giddy-up' the local farmer called out to his horses in the fields. And 'mawkin' - the regional name for a scarecrow. Probably 'scarecrow' has become equally obscure now that the birds are driven off by explosive detonations.

The city had some of these survivals. The street leading into the Cornmarket was called Melcheapen street, which I was to find out, when learning Anglo-Saxon at university, meant just that, mel, meal, corn, and ceapen, to sell, market. At the time it was a word about which we had no curiosity, just the name of a street. Another was Barbourne Road which crossed over Barbourne brook, the route King Charles took when he escaped after the battle of Worcester and went on to hide in an oak tree.

We all knew about King Charles' escape. But no one told us that

Barbourne was a contraction of Beaverbourne, beaver brook, alluding like Bever green, near where we lived, to the days when beavers swam in the River Severn; until they were allegedly hunted out of existence by the monks who ate them on a Friday, arguing with a certain deviousness that they counted as a fish.

One of my first ventures into print for the local paper was on 'Beavers, Bevere and Barbourne Brook.'

Bevere rhymed with every, but people who didn't know would pronounce it to rhyme with De Vere, that archetype of English upper class pretension and affectation. But it didn't. Nor did my home town of Worcester have three syllables, as reading it you might expect. Its first syllable rhymed with puss, like P. G. Wodehouse's Bertie Wooster, who is often made to rhyme with booster, but he doesn't, he is named after the city.

And, since we're on the topic, the first syllable of Wodehouse rhymes with wood, not the Anglo-Saxon blue dye, wode. Typical English traps, pronunciation a treacherous minefield, language endlessly catching you out on class and region and ignorance, and any other available embarrassments.

That the street behind the High Street where all the butchers' shops were was called The Shambles was just the name of the street, and its historic identification with



butchering unknown to us. Then there was The Butts, where archery had been practised beside the old city wall; Friar Street where Greyfriars house was, a medieval friary, not a fish and chip shop; the Foregate where one of the city gates had been, now long vanished; the Upper and Lower Tythings, redolent of the cathedral's financial demands on the city; an entire history encapsulated in street names that have a magic for me now, but then were simply street names, whose significance was lost, or if anyone knew their significance they did not tell us. And even these were the words of the Anglo-Saxon invaders; the Ancient Britons had left no trace.

The history embedded in those words was a forgotten silent history, known only to a handful of local antiquarians. It was not respected, neither history nor words. The whole project of the grammar school I went to was to deny us our natural language. Suppressions of class and race and history.

At morning assembly we were regularly harangued in the Perrins Hall, named after our benefactor, the manufacturer of Lea and Perrins' Worcestershire Sauce. Harangued rather than lectured, usually by the second master, he of the hammy theatrical tones. We were told not to say buzz for public transport, but bus, with a sibilant 's', not the regional, rural buzzing 'z', not the closed vowel, but the received standard open vowel.

I was amazed recently to see one of the buses in Brisbane proclaiming itself as BUZZ. Buzz was the word we always used; it shared its consonantal sound with the first syllable of goosegogs. And goosegogs were always goosegogs, never gooseberries.

As for 'Oi', first person singular, it was endlessly prohibited, our expression of individual identity denied. It had to be the wide-mouthed, gleaming-toothed, southern bourgeois 'I,' not the rounded, round lipped 'Oi'. At the girls' grammar school they had

## Israel Beyond the Dreams

THE FINAL withdrawal from Sinai was completed in April 1982 and Israel invaded Lebanon (violating a year-long truce with the PLO) in June 1982. Contrary to what I was convinced would happen, the Egyptian army stood down. The invasion of Lebanon itself was framed by propaganda. When I was called up to my tank unit, we were given maps that pointed to the fact that the objective of the war was to control most of Lebanon -- a major war and not the mythical limited operation that Defense Minister Ariel Sharon reported about to the Knesset and the nation. The withdrawal, the invasion, the incompetent and criminal way the war and its aftermath were handled all shook me to my core. I was released from the army and from yeshiva at the same time -- in August 1982 -- and had the luxury of a university library and the openness provided by the grief and shock of many dead friends to begin the process of coming to grips with the Israel that existed in reality, beyond the dream, beyond the illusions. The Israel of the occupation and petty cruelties. The Israel of power politics and Palestinian oppression. An exhibition of photographs at the Israel Museum (pre-first intifada) of the Israeli border guard doing its violent work in the "territories" made me physically ill. Participation in Netivot Shalom, the first effective religious Zionist Peace group gave me a conceptual vocabulary to think about peace. Less than five years after the afternoon when I'd been commissioned a tank commander in the IDF, I, along with most of my reserve unit, refused our battle ribbons for the Lebanon war.

— Rabbi Aryeh Cohen, 'How I Became a 'Post-Zionist': Liberal Zionists Speak Out,' *Huffington Post*, April 24, 2012.

formal elocution lessons, though the teachers could never get the girls to speak like the pupils at the fee-paying schools. Maybe they were not intended to speak too like them, anyway. And even though we did not have elocution lessons, the process was still a determined one. Endlessly the local idioms were denied. 'I ain't' and 'I aren't' were prohibited in favour of the 'I'm not' that was so unnatural to us. I as subject, me as object, was rigorously enforced. 'T'ain't me' was prohibited. Yet who would ever say, 'It is not I'?




'Oh, Gawd, Mike, don't say you've picked up an Orstralian accent,' one of my Oxford contemporaries remarked when I went back after my first three years in Sydney. It was just my regional accent, modified somewhat, but what would Oxford know about the obscure provinces? Except that it was different from the way they all spoke, that Oxford accent that D. H. Lawrence wrote his splendid poem about.

I had tried to blend in, both in Oxford and in Sydney. And perhaps almost succeeded. But one night in the old Newcastle hotel a drunken Scotsman attacked me for being one of those pretentious Australians who'd gone to England and tried to pick up an English accent. And clearly, from his perspective, hadn't quite managed.

MICHAEL WILDING'S latest novel is *Little Demon* (Arcadia, \$29.95). He is emeritus professor of English and Australian Literature at the University of Sydney.

# FRANK MUIR REFLECTS ON CHESTERTON

NE EVENING some years ago I arrived from London tired and tetchy as usual in time to see the nine o'clock news. The lead story was Prince Charles's maiden speech in the House of Lords. The newsreader said, 'Prince Charles began his speech with the quotation, 'As Oscar Wilde said, "If a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing badly!"' (much respectful laughter)?

A good modest introduction to a speech, but unfortunately the line was not written by Oscar Wilde but by G. K. Chesterton.

Ascribing it to Wilde suggested it was nothing more than a witty *bon mot*, one of those amusing Wildean inversions such as 'Work is the curse of the drinking classes.' But coming from G. K. Chesterton meant it was a more thoughtful observation. In Chesterton's work his humour arose from a serious thought, as an oyster was prompted into action by a gritty grain of sand.

What Chesterton was saying (in a piece about playing croquet) was that playing a game simply because you enjoyed playing it, perhaps hoping to get better at it in time, is a worthy enough reason for playing it however badly.

In my tetchy mood I lost my cool for a moment, telephoned *The Times* newspaper and left a message for the editor of *The Diary* column explaining how important I felt it was that the quotation was given its proper author.

Next morning *The Times* made the Prince's speech its front story. It began, 'Last night the Prince of Wales began his maiden speech to the House of Lords by saying "As Oscar Wilde said, 'If a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing badly!"' (laughter).

Then came an asterisk, and at the bottom of the page was its twin asterisk and, in nasty black type, 'Mr Frank Muir pointed out last night that the Prince had opened his speech with a misquotation. The line was not written by Oscar Wilde but by G. K. Chesterton.'

And then other newspapers began telephoning for follow-up stories...

Worse happened. A year or so later I found myself in the Crystal Room of London's 'exclusive' Grosvenor House Hotel having pre-dinner drinkies with the formidable committee who were mounting the evening's ball, which was an early exercise in prising money out of the rich and good for the World Wildlife Fund.

I was there to give my after-dinner speech. Also speaking was the Duke of Edinburgh. I found myself beside the Duke in a quiet corner of the noisy room. He was looking a bit bored, so I felt it incumbent upon me to put him at his ease.

'Oh sir,' I said, 'I feel I must apologize for correcting the Prince of Wales on the misquotation in his maiden speech to the Lords. But sir, I felt rather strongly about it. You see, sir, it wasn't a joke, but a philosophy which I happen to agree with. It is the opposite view to the American cult of winner take all. If your child does not come top of the class does that mean that it is a useless human being? No, of course not...?'

As I warmed to my theme the Duke closed his eyes several times, presumably in order to concentrate on what I was saying, but as I talked on I remembered that both he and Prince Charles had been to stern Gordonstoun school where, it was rumoured, those pupils who did not come among the top three in exams were shot (only a slight wound in a fleshy part of the thigh, I understood, but still. . .).

After something like a quarter of an hour I brought my little apology to a close by saying, laughingly, 'anyway sir, I would have thought the blithering idiot who gave Prince Charles the quotation would had the *nous* to check it first!'

The Duke looked at me levelly. 'I gave him the quotation, he said.'

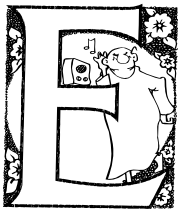
- From Frank Muir's autobiography, *A Kentish Lad* (1997). Frank Muir [1920-1998] was an English comedy writer, radio and television personality, and raconteur. His writing and performing partnership with Denis Norden endured for most of their careers. Together they wrote BBC Radio's *Take It From Here* for over 10 years, and then appeared on BBC radio quizzes *My Word!* I am indebted to Karl Schmude, editor of *The Defendant*, for drawing my attention to this excerpt. It appeared in *The Defendant*, Summer edition, 2018.

*The 75th anniversary of the death of a woman whom St. John Paul II called “a martyr to truth,” Edith Stein, a brilliant philosopher, a Jewish convert to Catholicism, who got caught up in the Nazi persecutions of Jews and the Church, and died at Auschwitz.*

## EDITH STEIN

Sister Benedicta of the Holy Cross

By Robert Royal



EVERY generation thinks it is living in unusual times. Ours really is. We are witnessing the passing of our civilization and

— like someone having brain surgery while wide-awake — are conscious of what’s happening. Or at least a few of us are. We’re suffering — among other things — massive amnesia. Juvenile rebellion, too, by people of all ages, against what’s taken to be “our civilization.” But the greater problem, by far, is that for most people our basic traditions have just dropped below the horizon. They don’t see that anything else than what they’re familiar with ever existed. And we have fewer and fewer witnesses to the truth.

Today is the 75th anniversary of the death of a woman whom St. John Paul II called “a martyr to truth,” Edith Stein, a brilliant philosopher, a Jewish convert to Catholicism, who got caught up in the Nazi persecutions of Jews and the Church, and died at Auschwitz.

It’s just one reflection of the malice of those days that she and her sister Rosa were picked up by the Gestapo at their Carmelite convent in Holland, where they’d

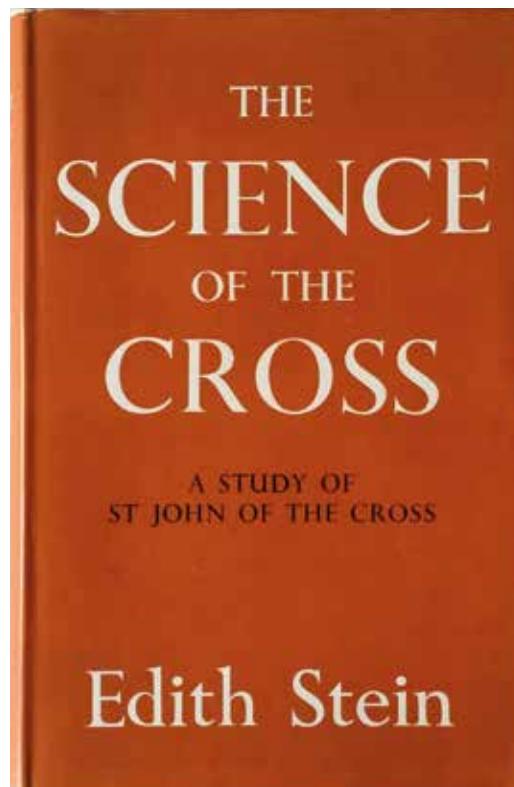
fled for safety, because the Dutch bishops had twelve days earlier issued a pastoral letter denouncing Nazi “racism.” In retaliation, Nazi authorities arrested Jewish converts to Catholicism and shipped them to the gas chambers.

argued, but because she was Jewish. It also seemed to some critics that JP II was trying to appropriate the Holocaust partly for Catholics.

In Poland, where the Nazis killed several million non-Jews, this is still a sore controversy. But the official Vatican explanation — one typical of what JP II called the “new martyrs” — was that several factors intermingled to make “martyr” the right term for Edith.

Besides the Dutch bishops’ statement of Catholic teaching about “race,” there were at least three features of Stein’s life that could be read as a willingness to accept martyrdom:

- She refused to go into hiding, since the Dutch were themselves often heroic in resisting Nazism. (A Catholic woman, Miep Gies, for instance, famously helped hide Anne Frank and her family when such help, if discovered, meant death).
- The Carmel that had taken in Edith (by then Sister Benedicta of the Cross) would have been subject to reprisals if she went into hiding.
- And most significantly: she knew, as an assimilated German Jew, that Catholics in Germany were often accused of lying, and she wished to remain fully loyal to the truth of who she was — and what she believed.



I first got interested in Stein when I wrote *The Catholic Martyrs of the Twentieth Century*. She was canonized in 1998; controversy erupted over whether she should even be called a martyr since she was killed not *in odium fidei*, some

Pope John Paul II was right, then, when he declared at her canonization: “*A young woman in search of the truth* has become a saint and martyr through the silent workings of divine grace. . . . Now, alongside Teresa of Avila and Thérèse of Lisieux, another Teresa takes her place among the host of saints who do honor to the Carmelite Order.”

She wanted, as JP II reminded the world, the truth.

But there’s another side of St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross that deserves to be remembered. I never knew much about it myself until I read into her work for my *A Deeper Vision: The Catholic Intellectual Tradition in the 20th Century*.

To say that she was a gifted philosopher is a gross understatement. An unusually bright child, she went to the university to study psychology, thinking it would lead to insight into human beings. But she was disappointed by the reductively “scientific” approach of academic psychology.

She wanted, as JP II reminded the world, the truth. And that led to study with Edmund Husserl, the father of phenomenology, a twentieth-century movement that captivated the young Karol Wojtyla as well. She became Husserl’s assistant and organized his scattered papers into significant books. Martin Heidegger – probably the greatest German philosopher in the 20th century – succeeded her in that job.

Phenomenology is a mouthful, sounds off-putting, and can be. But its main contribution was to return human things to the world of thought. After Descartes’ *Cogito ergo sum*, philosophers often seemed stuck on how the “outside” world can enter our minds. For phenomenology, the problem doesn’t arise. As the great American phenomenologist, Fr. Robert Sokolowski points out, phenomenology says that things in the world have the capacity of “disclosing” themselves, and

our minds are the “datives of disclosure,” receivers by their nature of such disclosing.

This may sound like the usual Teutonic abstraction – far distant from the lives we live. In fact, it means that all the things in the daily life world that we take as making up a *human* existence thus become respectable matter for philosophy again. Religion is one of those things and Husserl once joked that so many of his students were becoming Christians that he should be declared a Church Father. He ended a Christian himself.

Edith Stein’s youthful work in this field is breathtaking. She writes, interestingly, of “empathy,” for example, something that, she points out, we find only in human beings but had almost never been noticed in philosophy. She also launched some serious early critiques of Heidegger’s highly influential *Being and Time*, remarking that, for all its brilliant analysis, it operates as if we are beings without bodies.

But after all that philosophical preparation, she was staying with a friend one evening and found in the house a copy of Teresa of Avila’s *Autobiography*. She took it to bed and read the whole thing through by morning, famously saying, “That is the truth.”

She took instruction – a formality, because the priest that baptized her said she already knew everything necessary. Carmelite spirituality and a life living it beckoned and in 1933 she entered a convent in Cologne. Within less than ten years, Nazism put an end to that vocation.

A living witness, then, to faith and reason who stayed true to the very end, and warrants remembering today.

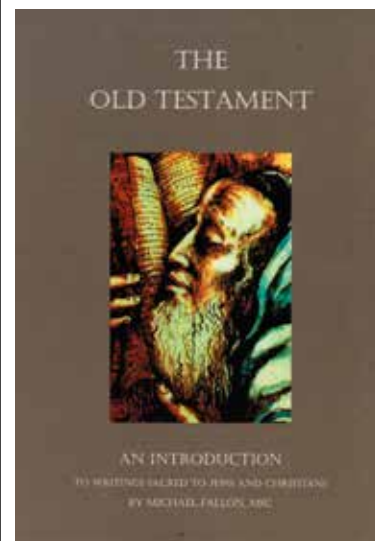
ROBERT ROYAL, “Witness to Truth at 75,” *The Catholic Thing* (August 9, 2017), is editor-in-chief of *The Catholic Thing*, and president of the Faith & Reason Institute in Washington, D.C. He is on the advisory board of the Catholic Education Resource Center. Copyright © 2017 *The Catholic Thing*. Reprinted with permission.

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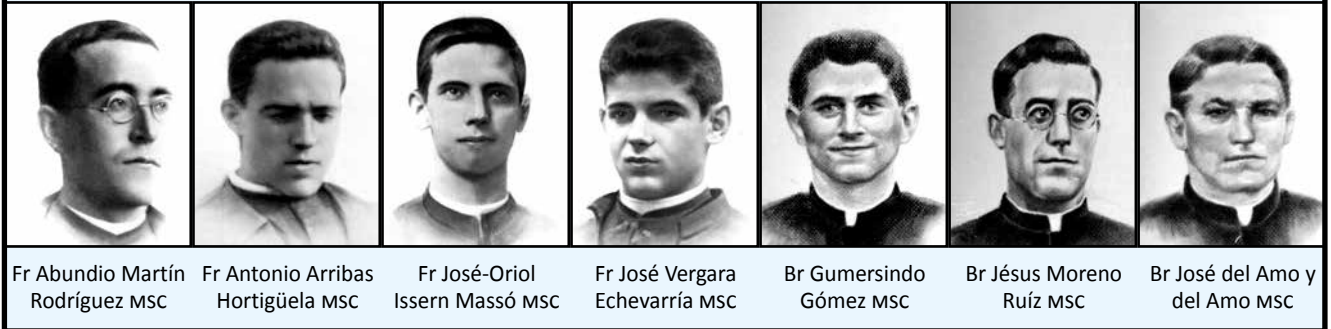
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## Prayer for the Canonization of the Seven MSC Martyrs

**O** GOD OUR FATHER, who have reserved a special place for those who confess your Name in the sight of men, be pleased to grant the prayers that we offer today. With their 'Your Will be done' the young martyrs had the courage to lose their lives in order to find them, and knew how to keep fresh and young their love for God. In imitation of Your Son they endured death and forgave those who snatched their young lives away. Grant that we, following the example of Jesus, may have the courage to live our faith with the freshness of the life-giving water that flows from the Gospel, and to see Your Holy Name glorified by raising your martyrs to the Altar. Putting our trust in our Lady of the Sacred Heart, in whom they so trusted, we make our prayer through Christ our Lord. AMEN.



## Values trump 'Things'

**T**ODAY, as a result of scientific achievements, our values—the values of both secularists and believers—are subject to challenges that would have been unimaginable yesterday. Genetic engineering, genetic manipulation, cloning, and various kinds of biological reproduction raise new problems for which we are so unprepared that sometimes we settle too quickly on solutions, because of philosophical or ethical hubris, petty interests, improvised conventions, or premature action.

One example of such improvisation or prevarication is when one person says that an embryo or a 'pre-embryo' is not a person before a given date, as if the predicate 'person' were empirical, and could be applied on the basis of its having certain cells, rather than on the basis of what it actually is, namely, a moral and religious concept that cannot be defined in terms of experimental science alone. A similar improvisation is observed in discussions of human cloning. Here I will use the wise, expert words of Italy's Minister of Health, Girolamo Sirchia, in an interview he gave to the newspaper *Libero* on August 14, 2004: 'To trivialize the ethical question, the explanation has been offered that, since in cloning they do not use spermatozoa but rather replace the nucleus of a human cell with the nucleus of a somatic cell, then the product on which they are working is not an embryo, and so they can toy with it without moral qualms.'

Unlike my secularist brothers and sisters, who thereby sidestep the issue, I have always been of a different persuasion. Since there is no significant gap or qualitative difference between the pre-embryo and the embryo. Since the concept of pre-embryo is a conventional one that refers only to the degree of cellular complexity. Since 'personhood' is not an empirical concept (unlike, for example, the concepts of psyche, consciousness, or intelligence), but rather an axiologically loaded one. I have never believed in allowing philosophical questions to be dictated by the contingencies or conveniences of practical decisions, such as experimenting with, correcting, and manipulating embryos. This is why I believe that from a philosophical and moral point of view, we must take the position that an embryo is a person from the moment of conception.

My belief is also grounded in practical considerations. A person is not a thing. Therefore if we recognize the personhood of the embryo from its first moment, we would all become more responsible.

Scientists would become more responsible when they face genetic and biological questions, since they would no longer believe that they were dealing only with questions of fact rather than also with questions of value, or claim that their discoveries in themselves represent progress, as if *bonum et verum et factum convertuntur*—the good, the true, and the 'made' are convertible—always and everywhere.

— Marcella Pera, 'Letter to Cardinal Ratzinger,' in *Without Roots*, Basic Books, New York, 2007, pp. 100-102.

*Western civilization has been the product of a unique rapprochement between faith and reason, one that faces twin challenges: from those within Christianity who (beginning with the Reformation) sought the 'de-Hellenization' of the faith, and those within the secular world who sought to 'liberate' philosophy and science from the tutelage (and protection) of Christian dogma.*

## SCIENCE, RELIGION, TECHNOLOGY AND THE SECULAR STATE

By Robert C. Koons



HERE IS much to recommend in *The Disunity of American Culture*. John Caiazza's book is a clear and admirably competent

survey of the conflict between religion and scientism in the Western world in recent decades and of the cultural consequences of that conflict. The book's greatest strength lies in Caiazza's ability to convey to a wide readership, with clarity and accuracy, the rise and fall of scientific positivism within the highly specialized world of academic philosophy. Nevertheless, the book's subject matter is so wide-ranging and diverse that the author has difficulty fitting it within a fully coherent argument, and I should be hard-pressed to identify its overall thesis.

The book comprises five parts: I, on American religion; II, on the history and philosophy of science; III, on three attempts at unified scientific reductionism; IV, on cultural decline; and V, on the irresolvable conflict between religion and science.

Caiazza opens his book with three chapters devoted to American religion (Part I), and three to recent developments in the philosophy of science (Part II). The chapters on religion are a bit of a hodgepodge. He begins by describing the variety

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*The Disunity of American Culture: Science, Religion, Technology and the Secular State* by John Caiazza, Transaction Publisher, New Brunswick NJ, 2013.

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of religions that originated in America, from the Southern Baptist Church to Scientology. He then turns to the well-known pattern of American colleges and universities abandoning their religious and confessional roots, a story



documented by the work of George Marsden.

Somewhat oddly, Caiazza chooses Tufts University as his example, a university that has distanced itself from its Unitarian origins. From Unitarianism to modern secularism is not a great distance to fall, in my opinion. Marsden's examples of staunchly Calvinist or enthusiastically Evangelical colleges that have undergone such transformations provide more interesting and poignant cases. In the part's third chapter, Caiazza gives brief and useful reviews of books on American religion by Alan Wolfe (a secular liberal) and John Richard Neuhaus (a neoconservative Catholic).

Part II, on the Philosophy of Science, is one of the most useful sections of the book. Caiazza begins by criticizing the 'Whig' theory of the history of science, which depicts the progress of science as synonymous with the early modern pioneers' breaking the stranglehold of Christian dogma on human thought.

Historians of science now know (as even Stephen Jay Gould admitted) that modern science had its origins in the Middle Ages, with Platonic, Aristotelian, and specifically Christian ideas providing fuel and not a damper for effective speculation about nature. Caiazza effectively refutes Gould's two-track

theory (two ‘non-overlapping magisteria’), in which religion is allowed to survive free of molestation at the cost of conceding the entire domain of ‘fact’ to the authority of science. Caiazza points out that Gould’s idea is nothing more than the resurrection of Siger of Brabant’s theory of ‘double truth.’ Both ideas threaten to split human thought into irreconcilable fragments.

Finally, in the crucial chapter 7, ‘The Counterrevolution in the Philosophy of Science,’ Caiazza informs the reader about the fascinating trajectory of the philosophy of science in the English-speaking world in the course of the twentieth century.

Philosophy of Science began with the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle in the early 1900s, which led to the ‘Unity of Science’ movement, in which all human knowledge was to be regimented according to a single, rigorous method, with mathematical physics at its base. Led by Thomas Kuhn, historians of science demonstrated that the unity of scientific method was an unsustainable myth. This turn to historicism has influenced American philosophy beyond the philosophy of science, with Alasdair MacIntyre’s critique of rationalistic ethics, *After Virtue*, as a prime example.

The heart of the book lies in Part III, in which Caiazza examines the ideas and arguments of three champions of scientism (or reductive materialism), one in each of three crucial fields: physics (Stephen Weinberg), biology (E. O. Wilson), and social science (Stanley Milgram).

The examples are well chosen, since each exemplar combines preeminence in his field with considerable philosophical sophistication. Caiazza deftly exposes the unfulfilled promises and unexamined assumptions of each of the three reductionist programs.

In the case of Weinberg’s attempt to reduce all human knowledge to particle physics, Caiazza points out that the weird and mysterious



character of modern quantum mechanics (in contrast to the simple and deterministic world of classical mechanics) undermines Weinberg’s project. Caiazza carefully introduces the reader to this fascinating new quantum world, with its indeterminacy and unbounded entanglements, a world that is likely to remain forever beyond the reach of the would-be reductionist. Caiazza might also have pointed to the internal inconsistencies within Weinberg’s philosophy of science, which combines a naive reductionist

materialism with a strangely Neoplatonic theory of scientific insight. Weinberg admits (in *Dreams of Final Theory*) that we are able to discern true theories by virtue of their inherent beauty, an idea that sits awkwardly with his ‘atoms and the void’ ideology.

Caiazza then turns to the second great reductionist project of modern times, the dream of a kind of cosmic Darwinism that would explain all the world’s phenomena, including human thought and intuition, by means of natural selection, with its combination of brute, mindless processes and the tautologous logic of the survival of the fittest. E. O. Wilson, the evolutionary entomologist and founder of sociobiology (now known more often as ‘evolutionary psychology’), serves as the appropriate *bête noire* for this chapter. Caiazza highlights the fundamental incoherency of the Darwinist project, since it is impossible to identify precisely the ‘unity of selection’: is it the gene, the phenotype of the individual organism, or the whole species? The

## Subordinating Life to Economic Ends

TO THE present age this conception of civilization as the social expression of Divine Law appears no more than a fantastic dream. Nevertheless a similar conception lies at the base of all the great historic civilizations of the world; and without it no civilization has ever maintained its stability and permanence. It was the ideal of Sumer and Egypt, of Confucian China and Vedic India and Zoroastrian Persia, of Greece and of Israel. But above all it found expression in the traditional culture of Christendom which more than any other civilization seemed capable of realizing the ideal which Plato had adumbrated in *The Laws*. The fundamental primacy of the soul, the subordination of the State and the whole temporal order to spiritual ends, and the conception of humanity as, in the words of St. Thomas, a great community or republic under the rule of God were formerly accepted as the unquestioned principles of the European social order. After the Reformation, however, this was no longer the case. Not only was Christendom divided, but its energies were so absorbed in religious controversy that it was powerless to check the progressive secularization of culture. The sectarianizing of the Church led to the secularizing of the State and to the increasing subordination of human life to economic ends. By the eighteenth century the most active minds had turned away in disgust from orthodox Christianity to the new philosophy of liberal humanitarianism which seemed to offer a rational alternative to the religious faith on which Western civilization had been founded.

– Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State*, Sheed and Ward, London, 1935, p.122

attempts by Wilson, Dennett and others to 'explain' such phenomena as morality or religion are nothing more than fantastic 'Just So' stories, without empirical foundation or theoretical discipline.

The fuzziness of the theory becomes even more problematic when Wilson and Dawkins try to extend the Darwinian metaphor into so-called cultural evolution, with supposed selection of 'memes,' indefinable units of cultural transmission. I wish that at this point Caiazza had closed his case by pointing out (as Alvin Plantinga has recently done, following the trail blazed by G. K. Chesterton and C. S. Lewis) that Wilson's Darwinian reductionism is self-defeating, since theorizing about evolution would be just one more piece of material phenomena to be reduced to the instrumentality of mere survival. According to Darwinists, the Darwinian 'meme' has been selected for its propensity for self-replication, a selection that is by definition indifferent to truth or rationality.

In chapter 10 (the third chapter of Part III), Caiazza uses Stanley Milgram's famous experiments about the power of authority as a paradigm of modern social science. He captures well the irony of Milgram's project, which exploited the unique authority of science at midcentury to try to demonstrate that authority itself is the root of all evils. Like all postmodernists, Milgram saw 'authority' as something exercised by other people, never by academics, scholars, or scientists like himself. It is precisely this blind spot that has unleashed so much social dislocation in the latter half of the twentieth century, as the reductionists of modern social science have destroyed the necessary structures of liberty in the name of liberation.

As Caiazza persuasively argues, empirical social science's failures lie primarily at the theoretical level, since it lacks the resources for navigating the potentially infinite variety of human relationships.

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Since all human action contains, at least potentially, an element of reason, no merely mechanical model can ever be adequate. Again, if the operations could be reduced to a mechanism, the result would be to undermine rationality itself. Moreover, Gödel's incomplete results demonstrate the irreducibility of rational thought to any computable algorithm.

Part IV consists of a somewhat miscellaneous collection of three chapters. Caiazza notes the precipitous decline in the prestige of

science within literary and popular culture in the twentieth century in chapter 11, citing both dystopian science fiction and philosophical deconstructionism.

In chapter 12, Caiazza presents a disjointed triptych of three important contemporary figures: Elaine Pagels, the scholar of Gnosticism; Richard Dawkins, the apostle of atheism; and Pope Benedict, with a focus on his important Regensburg address on the interdependency of Christianity and philosophical reason. Caiazza



provides a plausible explanation of the appeal of ancient Gnosticism to many Americans, fitting as it does with a somewhat narcissistic turn to the self and with an increasingly casual attitude to the demands of morality. Caiazza brings to light the philosophical vacuity of Dawkins's arguments (or, more precisely, the lack thereof) in his *The God Delusion*.

Finally, Caiazza provides a useful summary of Benedict's most important lecture, one that was widely misunderstood and that provoked an international spasm of violent protests on the part of some Muslims (ironically providing evidence for one of Benedict's claims, namely, the unique bond between Christian spirituality and philosophical discussion). Benedict argues that the Christian conception of God is of one who is supremely rational, with human rationality a manifestation of our sharing in the divine 'image'.

Western civilization has been the product of a unique rapprochement between faith and reason, one that faces twin challenges: from those within Christianity who (beginning with the Reformation) sought the 'de-Hellenization' of the faith, and those within the secular world who sought to 'liberate' philosophy and science from the tutelage (and protection) of Christian dogma.

As Benedict points out, science is itself a synthesis of empiricism with a Platonic and Aristotelian element of theoretical insight, a synthesis that is also under attack by those who would reduce science to a simple, mechanical algorithm. This reduction is a particular danger to our understanding of uniquely human phenomena, including religion.

Caiazza describes the rise and fall of the American pragmatist school of philosophy in chapter 13. Many readers will be pleased to learn about the work of C. S. Peirce, the true genius behind the pragmatist movement. Peirce was a pioneer in the study of mathematical logic and scientific thought who eschewed the simplistic reductionism, scepticism,

## The Antechamber of Islamic Fundamentalism

EVERY AUTUMN, over a million almost identically dressed, bearded Muslim men from around the world descend on the small Pakistani town of Raiwind for a three-day celebration of faith. Similar gatherings take place annually outside of Dhaka, Bangladesh, and Bhopal, India. These pilgrims are no ordinary Muslims, though; they belong to a movement called Tablighi Jamaat ('Proselytizing Group'). They are trained missionaries who have dedicated much of their lives to spreading Islam across the globe. The largest group of religious proselytizers of any faith, they are part of the reason for the explosive growth of Islamic religious fervor and conversion.

Despite its size, worldwide presence, and tremendous importance, Tablighi Jamaat remains largely unknown outside the Muslim community, even to many scholars of Islam. This is no coincidence. Tablighi Jamaat officials work to remain outside of both media and governmental notice. Tablighi Jamaat neither has formal organizational structure nor does it publish details about the scope of its activities, its membership, or its finances. By eschewing open discussion of politics and portraying itself only as a pietistic movement, Tablighi Jamaat works to project a non-threatening image.

The prominent Deobandi cleric and scholar Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Kandhalawi (1885-1944) launched Tablighi Jamaat in 1927 in Mewat, India, not far from Delhi. From its inception, the extremist attitudes that characterize Deobandism permeated Tablighi philosophy. Ilyas's followers were intolerant of other Muslims and especially Shi'ites, let alone adherents of other faiths. Indeed, part of Ilyas's impetus for founding Tablighi Jamaat was to counter the inroads being made by Hindu missionaries. They rejected modernity as antithetical to Islam, excluded women, and preached that Islam must subsume all other religions. The creed grew in importance after Pakistani military dictator Zia ul-Haq encouraged Deobandis to Islamize Pakistan.

The West's misreading of Tablighi Jamaat actions and motives has serious implications for the war on terrorism. Tablighi Jamaat has always adopted an extreme interpretation of Sunni Islam, but in the past two decades, it has radicalized to the point where it is now a driving force of Islamic extremism and a major recruiting agency for terrorist causes worldwide. For a majority of young Muslim extremists, joining Tablighi Jamaat is the first step on the road to extremism. Perhaps 80 percent of the Islamist extremists in France come from Tablighi ranks, prompting French intelligence officers to call Tablighi Jamaat the 'antechamber of fundamentalism.'

— Alex Alexiev, 'Tablighi Jamaat: Jihad's Stealthy Legions,' *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2005.

and relativism that would become characteristic of later pragmatic thinkers. Peirce was a realist who drew heavily from the work of the Scholastic philosopher John Duns Scotus. The subsequent history of pragmatism is one of tragic decline, from the stylish radical empiricism of William James to the turgid nihilism of John Dewey and Richard Rorty.

In Part V, Caiazza examines the political and cultural implications of the issues that he has examined in the book's earlier parts. In chapter 14, he describes the 'magical quality' of technology in modern society. Modern people tend to worship

science as an occult force, much as the Pacific Islanders created 'cargo cults' in response to the arrival of the products of modern industry. Caiazza examines the troubling ethical implications of such worship, with the controversy over the use of embryonic stem cells as his example.

In chapter 15, Caiazza notes the demographical disaster that threatens the West with a catastrophic collapse, owing to the technological separation of sexuality from reproduction. He argues in chapter 16 that the survival of Western monotheism is crucial if we are to avoid a displacement of religious zeal into the political

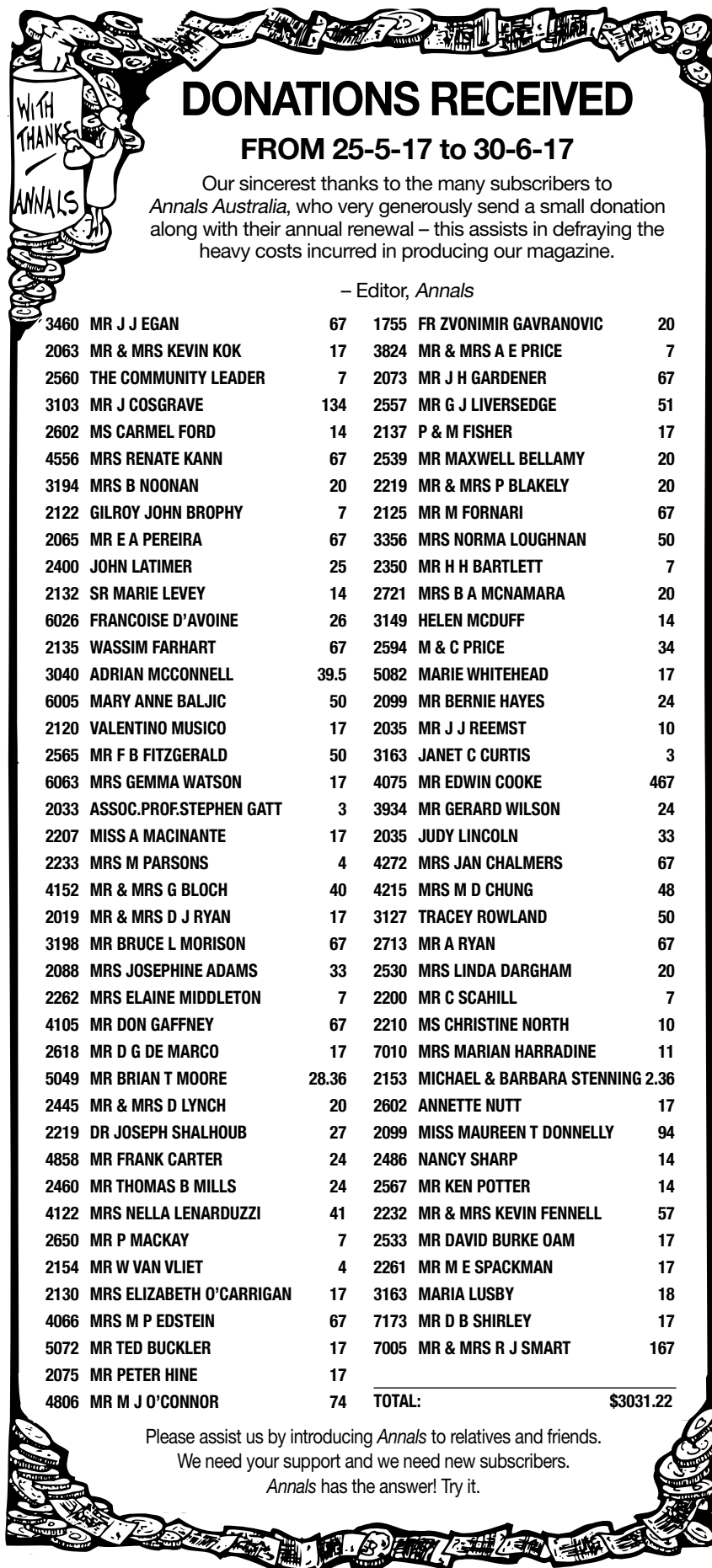
realm (as typified by Nazism and Communism).

Traditional religion protects human dignity by supporting an ethics of 'bright lines'—of absolute prohibitions. In the final chapter, Caiazza argues that the 'new secular state' is doomed to failure since it cannot find adequate intellectual foundations either in religion or in science itself. The new state increasingly relies on the false consciousness of 'tolerance,' which is really a mask for a new and ever more insidious intolerance.

I find fault with the book in two respects. First, Caiazza tries to cover so much ground that the book lacks a sharp focus. Second, the book is heavy on the critique of reductive scientism but much lighter on the development of positive alternatives. You cannot defeat something with nothing. The only discussion of a positive alternative comes in the relatively short section in which Caiazza discusses Pope Benedict's thoughtful Regensburg address. The section is fine, but I would have liked to have seen more. For example, Caiazza might have discussed the renaissance of Aristotelian and Thomistic philosophy that has unexpectedly burgeoned in academic philosophy in recent decades. I would recommend an investigation into the distinct but related expansion of Christian theism in American philosophy departments. Further discussion of contemporary alternatives to Darwinism and materialist theories of mind would also be most welcome.

Despite these faults, *The Disunity of American Culture* makes an important contribution. I recommend the book to anyone seeking to understand the intellectual roots of the deep cultural and political divisions in America today.

ROBERT C. KOONS is professor of philosophy at the University of Texas at Austin. He is author of two books: *Paradoxes of Belief and Realism*, and *Realism Regained*. He is the co-editor of *The Waning of Materialism*. This review appeared first in *Modern Age* (Fall, 2014). Reprinted with permission.



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# MEDIA MATTERS

By JAMES MURRAY

## Anchors aweigh

The Hayne Royal Commission is now well and truly launched on a sea of banking troubles. Whether by exposing it can end the slings and arrows of outrageous fortunes remains to be seen.

What can be said without further clunky paraphrase of Shakespeare's mixed metaphor is that Mr Justice Kenneth Hayne has not entered like Hamlet; rather he is like the skipper of a dreadnought intent on blowing pretensions to kingdom come.

He is aided by his Counsel Assisting, Rowena Orr, a QC of awesome qualifications, the most ominous of which may be her Cambridge Ph.D in criminology.

Watching early ABC TV coverage, your correspondent noticed her effect on bankers; perish the thought of Shylock before Portia, it was more akin to your correspondent's own reaction when confronted by one of his primary school teachers Miss Murray (no relation) Miss Thornton or Miss Price whose gentility did not preclude a whack or three with the strap for misbehaviour.

Doubtless commission researcher will have noted that Pope Francis has continued papal strictures on usury. By what measure? There's always his fellow Catholic Shakespeare's obituary for a neighbour with whom he had land dealings:

Ten in the hundred lies here in the grave  
'Tis a hundred to ten his soul is not saved  
If any man asks who be in the tomb  
O, ho, quoth the devil, 'tis my John-a-Combe.

In other words 10 per cent was considered excessive. What does that make various financial ploys including annualised bank credit card interest? No need to think of the grandeur of banking halls. Recall Mrs C, a money-lender in your correspondent's tenement birth street; she charged two-shillings in the pound per

week yet was not awarded a damehood for services to the economy.

Submission 1: de-couple executive packages from the profit metric. Impossible? Judges at all levels are well paid to deal with matters more important than those bankers deal with. Nonetheless they don't get bonus every time they send a miscreants down.

Submission 2: any financial sanctions should be diverted to the National Disability Compensation Scheme or to funding housing for the poor living in the street while members of the Sydney Cricket Ground Trust (not an elected but a political patronage body) set in train the multimillion demolition and redevelopment of not one but two sports stadia.

## Hot vanilla

There it was atop *The Australian* front page (Mar 8): a scoop-de-whoop by-lined Ben Butler with an eight column headline: *'PM's son: I was sidelined for blowing whistle on bank scandal.'*

That's Alex Turnbull, employee of the Singapore branch of Goldman Sachs. Yes, the American investment bank, the local branch of which Malcolm Turnbull once bossed.

The gravamen of the matter was bond dealings within a context of scandal so high that Turnbull junior left to establish his own equity fund.

If nothing else, and it is plenty, the exclusive revealed the potential ramifications of the Royal Commission. Its terms of reference may be local but the Big Four pillars of Australian banking do not stand alone; they are part a global industry and were hitherto envied for their government support/ This could have a ricochet effect on political careers.

## En Marche! Where?

Sad to read that Notre Dame Cathedral needs major repairs; even sadder to read that the President of France, Emmanuel Macron (educated Catholic before attending Ecole nationale d'administration) is reluctant to authorise funds, lest they be seen to support religion.

Macron is not alone in his attitude. The government-subsidised French film industry displays a similar hesitancy yet a decade ago Gerard Depardieu packed Notre Dame to read and discourse on *The Confessions of St Augustine*, a key influence in his conversion or, more exactly, reversion, to his Catholic faith.

Depardieu met Pope John Paul II in 2000. From this came the suggestion of a film about St Augustine (still to be made) that turned Depardieu onto *The Confessions*; excerpts of these he insisted on reading at the funeral of the film director Maurice Pialat who cast him as a priest in *Sous le Soleil de Satan* (*Under Satan's Sun*) winner of the Palme d'Or at Cannes in 1987.

It is fair to ask whether the hesitancy is subconsciously down to fear that Catholicism makes France a target for extremists akin to the brace of ISIS jihadist who at Rouen in 2016 assassinated Father Jacques Hamel, 84, while he was saying Mass.

The hesitancy is vain. President Macron should remember St Augustine's remark, 'Renouncement: the heroism of mediocrity.'

Inspired, he should then funnel restoration funds through Andorra of which he is *ex officio* co-prince with the Catholic bishop of Urgell, Joan Enric Vives i Scilia.

## Reserve seats

Discussion as to the form indigenous representation should take within the Federal Parliamentary system continue, and more heatedly as time passes without agreement.

Suggestions here of an equivalent to the 'university seats', once integral to the British Parliament, scarcely set Twitterdom ablaze.

Labor, however, has set a more recent precedent: when a Senate casual vacancy occurred in Western Australia, Patrick Dodd was appointed to the position.

This precedent Labor should have reinforced when another casual vacancy

occurred in NSW. Warren Mundine should have been appointed. Okay, he'd blotted the party playbook with autobiographical remarks about being duded in Senate matters.

As it was, the seat went to the very plain Christina Keneally (oops, plain-speaking); she secured the prize in a convoluted deal as a quid pro quo for failure to win House of Representatives seat of Bennelong.

Ironically it is named after the indigenous leader, taken by Governor Arthur Phillip's forces in the context of royal orders to form relationships with the indigenous people – an act that at least implied a need for representation.

Was the Keneally deal unconstitutional? Certainly, it smacked of NSW politicking but is hard to see it getting up in the Congress-Senate context of her native country.

Obviously for the precedent to work in the best interests of all concerned. The Liberal Party should appoint Alice Springs Councillor Jacinta Nampijinpa Price to the next casual vacancy. The Greens? They should have led the way given their environmental concerns.

It may be argued that indigenous candidates do not have the necessary life experience. So? The Australian Parliamentary system already boasts a surfeit of members whose adult life experience has been confined to Canberra, a privileged out-station compared to the rest of the continent.

## Taste of Hastings

'Journalism is a self-indulgent trade, on the margin of great affairs...Journalists are privileged spectators of the divine comedy, I mistrust writers and editors who wish to perceive themselves as players, rather than recorders and critics.'

Says who? Says Max Hastings author of *Editor* which covers his career in Fleet Street and reached its apogee in the 1980s on *The Daily Telegraph* under Conrad Black.

The Hasting dictum does have continuing relevance vis-a-vis the plethora of ex-journalists in Canberra. The impression is of a kind of high-powered secretarial pool from which staffers circulate to ministerial offices. The process may be undefined in regulations but it is has enabled staffers



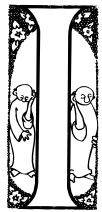


*The west-European revolutionaries of 1968, the so-called *soixante-huiters*, or sixty-eighters, could not wait to tear down the legacies of Judeo-Christian thought, especially the notion that this particular religion might benefit a person's psychological well-being.*

# FAITH AND WELL-BEING

## Psychologists Change their Minds

*By* Wanda Skowronska



IS RELIGION good for your psychological well-being? A century ago Freud would have said no. In *The Future of an Illusion* (1927) he stated that religions were obsessional neuroses and 'are all illusions'. His contemporary, the founder of behavioural psychology, John Watson, dismissed spiritual thought, let alone well-being, as irrelevant to questions of psychology.

It is true Jung devised some religious terminology and encouraged others to invent their own beliefs but he only thought these aided well-being if they were not Christian. Humanistic psychologist Carl Rogers, echoed this anti-religious animus in 1967 in stating confidently that, 'in almost every country ... the values associated with various religions have lost much of their influence'. Along with him, the west-European revolutionaries of 1968, the so-called *soixante-huiters*, or sixty-eighters, could not wait to tear down the legacies of Judeo-Christian thought, and the notion that any particular religion

might benefit a person's psychological well-being.

And yet spiritual questions about life and religions have persisted during the century of war, totalitarianism and the hostile encroachments of secular liberalism. According to the 2016, Census, Christianity remains the worldview of most Australians, even if public confession of such belief has declined.



Though the level of adherence to 'no religion' has grown to nearly 30%, it is a fact that almost 70% of Australians still hold some form of religious belief – Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism and Islam,

among others. Interestingly it is Hinduism which has grown the most. And in America over 80% of people admit to holding a religious belief – about 70% of those being Christian.

Whatever the depths of those beliefs attested to, the numbers reflect what Saint John Paul II said in *Veritatis Splendor* – that there are 'compelling questions' which never leave us. Who am I? Where am I going? What is the meaning of my life? What is the meaning of my suffering?

Could Freud and his psychological confreres have been wrong in ignoring the role of religious faith in the universal search for psychological well-being?

In a strange irony, psychologists have increasingly recognised the connection between faith and psychological well-being. This is due in part to the secular and Christian critique of Freud and the humanists which arose mid

last century – in response to their areligious bent, ignoring the deep-seated spiritual dimension in the human person.

Remarkable among these critiques were those of the

American Catholic/Christian psychologists such as Paul Vitz, William Kilpatrick, William Coulson, Don Browning and Mary Van Leeuwen – to mention just a few outstanding names.

Even more telling has been the shift within psychology to focusing on *well-being* rather than pathology. The American psychologist Martin Seligman came up with a new approach calling it positive psychology, after decades of research on learned helplessness.

He focused his attention on how to prevent such a state and he concluded it was by fostering a measurable, definite group of psychological strengths – called the PERMA qualities. They included positive emotion, engagement with work and community, positive relations and a sense of moving forward in life – but, significantly, he came up with the robust finding of having a sense of meaning often entailing a religious outlook, as being core to psychological well-being.

So here was a secular psychologist with no ‘religious axe to grind’ as critics might say – saying the opposite to what Freud had said – namely that religion, seeking answers to spiritual questions, is important to psychological well-being after all.

A National survey conducted by Schuster et al. (2001) found that after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, 90% of Americans reported that they turned to prayer, religion or some form of spiritual activity with loved ones in an effort to cope with the prevailing disaster. And during Hurricane Katrina which devastated New Orleans, the *Washington Post* noted:

Religious faith has sustained the respondents through their worst days in New Orleans and now during their time in Houston. Eight in 10 said their faith was very important during the past two weeks. Remarkably, 81 percent said the ordeal has strengthened their belief, while only 4 percent said it weakened

## A Costly Mis-judgement

THE PREVAILING Whitehall wisdom was expressed by David Hogarth, the chief of the Arab Bureau, in a London lecture titled “Wahhabism and British Interests,” delivered in January 1925 before a select audience. Yes, of course, Hogarth allowed, Ibn Saud’s military successes were noteworthy. And Arabia was indeed important as a strategic highway to India. but he asked, “What are our interests in Arabia?” and offered this answer: “It is best perhaps to say first what they are not. Unlike those that we claim in most other parts of the world. they do not arise, to any extent worth mentioning, from our need of products of the country or from concern about trade. Arabia neither sells nor buys nearly enough to weight the political scales. Nor, with all deference to certain enterprising firms and individuals who have gone on concession hunting since the War, do I foresee a day when this will cease to be true. (Tellingly. in the transcribed discussion that followed, none of the eminent authorities present, including Sirs Percy Cox and Arnold Wilson, offered a contrary view.)

– Karl E. Meyer and Shareen Blair Brysac, *Kingmakers*, W.W.Norton & Co., 20087, pp. 247-248.

it. They said their faith in God was not shaken but their trust in political leaders was.

Lest anyone consider Seligman’s findings unique or unusual, they are replicated in other studies. A substantial study conducted by the British Office for National Statistics which questioned more than 300,000 people from 2012 to 2015, asked respondents to rate how happy and anxious they had felt the previous day, their level of general life satisfaction and how worthwhile they thought life was – stating their religious and ethnic background.

One clear result emerged – that people from all different faiths are happier than those who have no religion. Christians, Sikhs, Hindus and Buddhists were in the top group while Muslims, also in this group, reported the lowest happiness levels out of all of the religious groups. Reporting on this study, *The Week* announced in 2016, ‘Middle-aged atheists [are] the ‘unhappiest people’ in Britain’.

Similarly in an study done for the Yale Centre for Faith and Culture, Adam B. Cohen and Kathryn A. Johnson found that religious people report being happier and more satisfied with their lives – happiness being seen generally in terms of the markers of well-being and an absence of depression and anxiety.

Moreover, Cohen and Johnson find this pattern to be robust across cultures.

The interesting question is *why?*

The Yale Centre study offered the following explanations. First, the teachings of many religions regarding fellowship, cooperation, and pro-social behaviour, can make some religious groups the mainstays of social support in times of trouble. Religious rituals, moral codes, and communities enable the growth of psychological well-being and the sense of connectedness to others. It is the sense of connection which is of primary importance and this extends beyond the social ecology. The sense of connectedness is not only with friends on earth, but with God, especially in times of intense suffering, and is a unique psychological and spiritual buffer which helps us endure the storms of destruction in our lives. Our spiritual ecology is more important than the physical one!

A second reason for why religious people have more well-being is that religious (particularly Christian) groups may deal with death in different ways and face death with equanimity, rather than anxiety. Belief in life after death buffers death anxiety and promotes well-being and this casts a different light on everyday life.

Third, religious coping with unavoidable suffering is also an important consideration in psychological well-being. Christianity in particular explains suffering in a unique way. Rather than a person being viewed as a plaything of the gods as in pagan worldviews, or as someone irretrievably influenced by the past as in Freudian psychology, or as needing to escape from harsh reality through new age practices, Christianity tells us that we, and particularly our sufferings, are of inestimable importance in the eyes of God.

Each person is a protagonist in a 'vale of tears', following Christ's example, trying to alleviate injustices, offering our suffering to God to help others and draw closer to the heavenly realities. We are a kind of spiritual Indiana Jones, facing many types of deserved and undeserved sufferings in our journeys of life, and enduring and offering our suffering has a point, it helps others. Our sufferings have meaning! The end of our story is not extinction but unending life and joy with God.

In the most recent papal work totally devoted to this subject, Saint John Paul II's Encyclical *Salvifici Doloris* (1984 SD) explains the Judeo-Christian understanding of suffering with a twentieth century perspective. He speaks of us all as participating in a Gospel of Suffering which is being written during our lives – a precious, eternally meaningful testament.

John Paul II, having lost his entire family by age 21 and having endured the greatest tyrannies of the twentieth century, did not lose his psychological well-being – nor did Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI who also experienced (albeit differently) the horrors of the second world war and the disintegration of loyalty within sectors of the western church. Despite their sufferings, their faith was the source of psychological and spiritual well-being, an anchor in their darkest days, as it has

## Lawrence of Arabia

IF INSTEAD of counter propaganda ... the money had been put into buying a few venial [sic!] men always to be found in a big movement, then they [the Turks] would have crippled us'.

– Letter 210, to Colonel A. P. Wavell, May 21, 1923.

been for countless believers in God throughout the ages. This is certainly a different answer from the secular humanist version of reality.

A fourth reason for why religious beliefs may relate to well-being arises from the fact that self-control often accompanies religious commitment. Religious people do at least exercise a certain level of self-control in getting themselves to attend religious services. This is part of developing good habits, which as St Thomas Aquinas and cognitive behaviourist psychologists tell us, help us realise our true potential as human beings. Lest anyone deride this fact, a Harvard study spanning 20 years concluded that regular church attendance can improve overall physical and psychological health and help people live longer.

Professor Tyler J. VanderWeele and colleagues at Harvard found in this study that attending religious services brings better physical and mental health. Adults who go to church once a week have a significantly lower risk of dying in the 10 and a half years after they begin regular attendance, the study found.

The research does not endorse one faith over another, but suggests that there are lower suicide rates among followers of Christianity and Judaism. They attribute this to the hopeful message adherents hear during their services. *Religious participation was also associated with fewer suicides, suicide attempts, and suicidal thoughts.*

The study went on to conclude that religion affects individual behaviour, shifts cognition and emotions, can shape communities and public discourse. This echoes what historian Christopher Dawson observed in his analyses of culture – that faith, in particular, Christianity, introduces spiritual freedom into human life which 'may have a creative and transforming influence' on inner personal experience and which ultimately affects our 'social culture and historical destiny'.

Thus the religious core of a culture is not only psychologically 'good for us' as individuals. It also has a profound influence on a much wider scale and influences the well-being of entire nations and civilisations.

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## Human Flow

Glimpses of this documentary's subject matter can be caught in TV grabs. But through a 140-minute mosaic of shots, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei seeks to show the trans-global travels and travails of an estimated 65 million people classified as refugees.

Editing of the footage by multiple camera teams is credited to Niels Pagh Andersen. The overall imagery, however, owes something to Ai Weiwei's artistic vision. He and writers Chi-chin Yap, Tim Finch and Boris Cheshirkov incorporate poetry in captions. This is mainly Middle Eastern poetry. Yet it is European mainly Christian countries that the refugees are trying to reach.

Saudi Arabia does not rate a mention; by comparison Jordan has the highest per capita intake. Inevitably the Iraq war and oil resources are covered but without reference to the Pope John Paul's opposition nor to the war's falsely spun premise of Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction.

Nor does Ai Weiwei hint that the refugee flow into Europe from Africa could be controlled (and made safer) by Libya and other countries on the North African littoral.

Australia? Russia? China? None is covered. And by comparison with the tide of World War II displaced persons, refugees display a sense of entitlement rather than gratitude.

M★★★NFFV.

## Mary Magdalene

The intensity of Rooney Mara's performance in the title role is the magnetic core of director Garth (*The Lion*) Davis's take on the life and death of Jesus Christ.

As Christ, Joaquin Phoenix powerfully complements Mara's performance by being laconic. In the role of Judas, Tahar Rahim evinces not so much a traitor as man whose eye is on the main chance of this world. Chiwetel Ejiofor's Peter is at once bold yet uncertain.

The part of Mary, Christ's mother is underwritten yet Sarah-Sofie Boussnina enhances it with eloquent silence.

Some including *Variety* have viewed the film as feminist, and

## MOVIES

By James Murray

therefore a modern update. But the scriptwriters Helen Edmundson and Philippa Goslett's basic material is from the New Testament.

There, Mary Magdalene is given her due status, a status that Pope Francis has recently commended.

The Davis take does not have the magisterial authority of Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* (2004) nor the asceticism of Pier Paolo Pasolini's *The Gospel According to St Matthew* (1964). With them, however, it does make a great triptych for Lenten and Easter meditation.

Apropos. The running times are: *Mary Magdalene*, 120 minutes, *The Passion of the Christ*, 127 minutes and *The Gospel According to St Matthew*, 137 minutes.

All three can be seen in the spirit of that gospel where Christ speaks of the kingdom of heaven being like a householder bringing forth out of his treasure things old and new.

M★★★SFFV.

## Chappaquiddick

The one-word title recalls the incident in 1969 that wrecked Senator Ted Kennedy's campaign to replace his dead brothers, President John F Kennedy, and presidential candidate, Robert Kennedy.

The incident? Senator Kennedy, drink taken, drove his car off a sea-bridge, escaped but failed to rescue his companion, Mary Jo Kopechne (Kate Mara), a campaign worker.

Australian Jason Clarke plays Ted Kennedy as if born to do so, one minute ruthless, the next forlorn yet always privileged.

Bruce Dern confirms his status as a superlative character-star playing the patriarch Joseph P Kennedy, cut-down by a stroke, bereft of ambition.

Ed Helms is outstanding as Joe Gargan who initially aided Kennedy in his deception but could not abet his attempts to continue.

Director John Curran with writers Taylor Allen and Andrew Logan keep the running time down to 107

minutes. Cinematographer Maryse Alberti's opening-closing shot of the wooden bridge linger like a relic.

A post-title note makes it clear Senator Kennedy salvaged enough of his career to become a formidable member of Congress until his death from brain cancer in 2009.

M★★★NFFV.

## The Death of Stalin

Blacker than the ace of spades, writer/director Armando Iannucci's satire (the Marx Brothers are resting) deals in a troupe of serious actors to play jokers: Stalin (Adrian McLoughlin), Malenkov (Jeffrey Tambor), Khrushchev (Steve Buscemi), Beria (Simon Russell Beale), Molotov (Michael Palin), Bulganin (Paul Chahidi) Mikoyan (Paul Whitehouse), Kaganovich (Dermot Crowley) and Marshal Zhukov (Jason Isaacs).

Add Rupert Friend as Stalin's son Vasily, Andrea Riseborough as his daughter Svetlana and Olga Kurylenko as Maria Yudina, the pianist whose note to Stalin triggered the stroke that killed him (and the doctors who tried to save him).

Some, notably Jason Isaacs, adopt accents that make them sound as if they are gargling borscht soup; Michael Palin comes on as if he'd fallen off one of his BBC travelogue trains. Steve Buscemi makes Khrushchev sound as if he were raised in the Bronx.

Not a second of the 107-minute running time drags; Iannucci with his co-writers and technical crew maintains the pace of, well, Glasgow Celtic, his native city's swiftest team. Too much to suggest that his film reflects the subtlety of his Jesuit school teachers.

No matter how formidable an ensemble, there's always a picture-stealer; here it is Paddy Considine, playing Comrade Andreyev, a radio technician who must deliver a recording to Stalin at helter-skelter notice.

Reservation: The film itself makes no explicit reference to President Donald Trump; commentary (not rebutted by the filmmakers) does. Whatever his failings, revealed and yet to be revealed. Trump is no Stalin.

Trump was democratically elected; Stalin was tyrant responsible for the deaths of more people than Hitler though fewer than Mao Tse Tung.

MA15+★★★NFFV.

### Last Flag Flying

Larry 'Doc' Shepherd (Steve Carell) is a Vietnam veteran who enlists the aid of fellow US Marine veterans Sal Neelon (Bryan Cranston) and Richard Mueller (Laurence Fishburne) in the funeral of Larry junior, a casualty of the war in Afghanistan.

Director Richard Linklater co-wrote the script with Darryl Ponicsan, author of the original novel which tells why 'Doc' rejects the privilege of his son's burial at Arlington National Cemetery, Washington for burial in Boston.

On their journey, Neelon, a saloon-keeper, argues with Mueller ('The Mauler') because he has become a sober pastor.

There are flashbacks and detours along the way. But the trio reach their destination where due ceremony prevails.

Fred Schepisi directed a similar movie, *Last Orders*. And Les Murray's narrative poem, *The Boys who Stole the Funeral*, awaits film treatment.

M★★★NFFV.

### 12 Strong

The tag, 'based on a true story' is over-used. But in this case it is apt to a story until now kept secret. Director Nicolai Fuglsig with writers Ted Tally and Peter Craig worked from Doug Stanton's history of the first US Special Forces unit deployed to destroy Taliban-Al Qaida bases in Afghanistan after 9/11/2001.

The unit was led by Captain Mitch Nelson (Chris Hemsworth) who found a comrade in General Abdul Rashid (Navid Negahban) of the Northern Alliance.

Stanton called his history *Horse Soldiers*, a title redolent of a John Ford western. And it must be said that Ford would have admired the rip-snorting charges the unit carried out.

Think Harry Chauvel's Australian Light Horse at Bersheeba Wells or Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders at San Juan Hill during the Spanish-

American war. But that raises the question: can mounted infantry fire and re-load automatic weaponry while charging towards their objective?

Towards: the task of destroying bases went to United States Air Force bombers guided by the unit's controllers.

The Ford redolence is enhanced by the unit song, *I Won't Back Down*.

In further confirmation that truth can be stranger than even the most romantic fiction, Captain Nelson brought all his unit safely home and General Rashid became vice-president of Afghanistan.

MA15+★★★NFFV.

### The Mercy

In 1968, *The Sunday Times*, London offered a trophy plus £5,000 for the first person to complete its Golden Globe Race.

Among the nine entrants was Donald Crowhurst, an electronics engineer who built a trimaran Teignmouth Electron named after his home in Devon.

Colin Firth, directed by James Marsh, catches the optimism and sadness of Crowhurst, a sailor fated to live Shakespeare's line about the tide which taken at the flood leads onto fortune but omitted leads to miseries.

Crowhurst's miseries were profound; he faked his radio positions and rather than opt out like others committed suicide, leaving his boat adrift in the Atlantic.

Rachel Weisz personifies loyalty as Crowhurst's wife, Clare who with their children waits and hopes for his return. Ken Stott is the local caravan king Stanley Best who backed Crowhurst, believing that his electronic navigation aids would make millions. David Thewlis endows Rodney Hallworth, publicity agent, with a degree from the University of Higher Gormlessness.

Scriptwriter Scott Z Burns gives Rachel Weisz her moment as Clare: a speech in which she lambasts media pressure for her husband's death. Not fair enough: the Golden Globe Race was not Fleet Street's finest stunt but entry was voluntary.

The eventual winner of the race, Robin Knox-Johnston, donated the prize money to a Crowhurst benefit fund.

Mercy - the word scrawled on a chart? Its nature is hinted in two Catholic nuns leaving Crowhurst's home after the news of his death broke.

M★★★NFFV.

### Winchester

Haunted houses have long been a staple of movies. But the Winchester Mystery House tops them all. It is an acclaimed American tourist resort. Accordingly the Spierig brothers, Michael and Peter, deserve congratulations for getting permission to make it the star of their movie.

Helen Mirren co-stars as Sarah Winchester, widow of William Winchester, inventor of the lever-action rifle that made his fortune, and haunted her with remorse for all those killed with the weapon.

Jason Clarke enters as Eric Price, a psychic detective who keeps his spirits up with laudanum. He needs to; the hauntings are spectacular, thanks to the Spierigs, co-writer Tom Vaughan, cinematographer Ben Nott and editor Matt Villa.

Sarah Snook also appears, looking vaguely dissatisfied. Well, she might; her role as Marian Marriott, mother of a child disturbed by the

#### Official Classifications key

G: for general exhibition;  
PG: parental guidance  
recommended for  
persons under 15 years;  
M 15+: recommended for  
mature audiences 15 years and  
over; MA 15+: restrictions apply  
to persons under the age of 15;  
R 18+: Restricted to adults,  
18 years and over.

#### Annals supplementary advice

SFFV: Suitable For Family Viewing;  
NFFV: Not For Family Viewing.  
TBA: classification to be  
announced

hauntings, is a dim comedown from her radiant turn in the Spierig's, *Predestination*.

Unlike the Winchester rifle, this one will not bear repeating. Against that weigh the fact that the movie's budget was \$3.5 million, the box-office return so far has been \$33.7 million.

M★★★NFFV.

### Finding Your Feet

Imelda (Mary Philomena Bernadette) Staunton has all the authority of a Girl Guide leader. She needs it to tackle Celia (Diana Savile) Imrie. Theirs is a duel of siblings, Sandra and Bif Abbott, one a snob in downward flight from a straying husband, the other a spinster bohemian.

Veteran director Richard Loncraine (with writers Nick Moorecroft and Meg Leonard) brings the siblings together at a local dancing club. There Sandra pairs off with (Timothy Spall), an antique furniture restorer (joke?). He has cashed in his assets caring for his demented wife while retaining a Regent's Canal long boat as his floating address.

Others in the club are played by Joanna Lumley and David Hayman, cast against his Scots hard-nut type as a sensitive soul with a wig. The club goes on to win 15 minutes of fame at a London street festival. Make that 15 minutes multiplied by two. They are also invited to an overseas festival

Does Sandra return to her penitent husband? Loncraine leaves the question unresolved to the very end. Staunton enacts the resolution with a spectacular leap of faith.

This is one of the many costume dramas and romantic comedies which Britain, once the source of ships to sealing wax, now exports - over-proof nostalgia from such little dream factories as Twickenham Studios.

M★★★NFFV.

### The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society

Best-sellers need a beguiling star to fulfil reader-cinemagoer expectations. The Mary Ann Shaffer-Annie Barrows best-seller has her in

Lily James; she plays Juliet Ashton, a writer who voyages to Guernsey to follow up the story of the titular society, formed after Nazi forces took over the island.

The society's members include Eben Ramsey (Tom Courtney in vintage form), Isola Pribby (Katharine Parkinson) and Elizabeth McKenna (Jessica Brown-Finlay).

Director Mike Newell with writers Don Roos, Thomas Bezucha and cinematographer Zac Nicholson extracts the full potential of the original material.

Among its highlights: Juliet's rejection of a forceful American publisher Mark Reynolds (Glen Powell), a will-she-won't-she romance with a society member, the widower Dawsey Adams (Michiel Huisman) and evacuation of the island children (your reviewer missed the remembered evacuee kit of gasmask and tin-mug).

Reconciliation is the motif, captured in Alexandra Harwood's music.

PG★★★★SFFV.

### Early Man

In his masterly *Everlasting Man*, GK Chesterton pointed out that our pre-historic ancestors were not brutes but folk who painted images on their caves. Director Nick Park with co-writers Mark Burton and James Higginson takes this further, making it vividly clear that pre-historic people were artists of football.

Eddie Redmayne leads as the voice of Dug who in a post-catastrophic world opts for football to settle hegemonic differences with

## LENT

**I**N pre-reformation Catholic England, the six Fridays of Lent were dedicated to recalling the various instruments of the passion and death of Jesus: **1st** Friday: the spear and the nails **2nd** Friday: the shroud in which Jesus's body was laid **3rd** Friday: the five wounds **4th** Friday: the Precious Blood **5th** Friday: the seven sorrows of the Blessed Virgin **6th** Friday: is **Good** Friday.

Lord Nooth (Tom Hiddleston) of Bronze Age City. Also involved are Timothy Spall as tribal chieftain Bobnar and Maisie Williams as coach Goona.

The medium is the stop-motion claymation of Aardman Animation, kept down to a blessed and hilarious 98.3 minutes.

The parallels with current politics are too obvious to warrant emphasis. If only world leaders could play football. Or even ping-pong.

G★★★★SFFV.

### The Shape of Water

Poetic title for the fable with which Guillermo del Toro won this year's Best Director Oscar as well as Best Picture Oscar. Could the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences be wrong? Well, your reviewer found the movie to be ludicrous when it wasn't murky and vice versa. Indeed there are moments when you think del Toro missed his destiny: membership of *Monty Python's Flying Circus*.

This despite the deeply talented cast led by Sally Hawkins as a mute cleaner Elisa Esposito at a secret facility in Baltimore, Maryland.

There Colonel Richard Strickland (Michael Shannon) for nefarious purposes connected with the Cold War space race, keeps an amphibious creature (Doug Jones) captured in a South American river yet with more than a whiff of *The Creature from the Black Lagoon*.

His underwater courtship of Elisa is conducted to the schmaltzy ditty, *You'll never know how much I love you*.

Which brings in a posse of Russian spies, straight from *Get Smart* who try to kidnap the amphibian, presumably to find water on Mars.

The movie's box-office success may owe something to America's current self-hatred projected through President Donald Trump.

Undoubtedly a skilful director del Toro (with co-writers Vanessa Taylor and Cinematographer Dan Lausten) might be better occupied illuminating his native Mexico's past rather than satirising his host country, the United States.

Suggestion: a movie based on Graham Greene's *Lawless Roads*

from which, via *The Power and the Glory*, came John Ford's *The Fugitive* (1947), a movie that gave Mexican actors and technicians an early place on Sunset Boulevard.

MA15+★★NFFV.

### Red Sparrow

Director Francis Lawrence's spy thriller is no turkey but it is obese. He relies on Jennifer Lawrence's star power to make it fly. This she does with her innate grace as prima ballerina Dominika Egorova, maliciously injured and persuaded to attend the Sparrow School for seductresses.

The persuader is her uncle Ivan, played by Matthias Schoenaerts with a nice touch of Vladimir Putin's dapper swank.

In the school scenes, director Lawrence with scriptwriters Eric Singer and Justin Haythe leans on the novel by Jason Matthews. He, like Ian Fleming and John Le Carré before him, is an ex-spy (CIA). While he appears to share Fleming's penchant for depicting sadism, he lacks Le Carré's subtlety.

To benefit pace, the school scenes might well have been cut. As it is Lawrence stretches them to egregious point, compounding the offence by having Charlotte Rampling, once emblematic of the Swinging Sixties, play Matron, the glacial chief instructrix.

She is one of a distinguished cast in lesser roles: Mary Louise Parker, Joely Richardson and Jeremy (*Wild Duck*) Irons whose character General Kornoff keys the main plot twist.

As CIA agent Nate Nash, assigned to turn Egorova, Joel Edgerton does not appear totally happy. Is he recalling the taut, local thrillers he has written, directed and starred in?

Not that Francis Lawrence loses the original plot, he gets lost in it. So did your reviewer who wished he'd left a popcorn trail to find his way home.

Running time: 140 minutes, confirming your reviewer's theory that current movies are made overlong for cinema release so that they can be edited to create maximum TV commercial space.

Warning: a sequel is on the cards.

MA15+★★NFFV.

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– Editor, *Annals*

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# Iraq: It's now or never - please help Iraqi Christians return home

**FOR displaced Iraqi Christians forced from their homes and living in displacement camps, the moment they have been longing for has finally come.**

After three years of occupation, the terrorist group Islamic State (IS) has been driven out of the area. Now, thousands upon thousands of people have the chance to go back to their villages in the Nineveh Plains – their families' homeland since before the time of Christ.

But the task of repair and renovation is huge and the Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) – the largest contributor of emergency help since their escape from the Nineveh Plains – is determined to continue to stand with them.

**It is now or never. Their future is in your hands.**

With your help, we can fulfil two key objectives. The first is to assist the work of the Christian Churches to roll out plans to restore thousands of homes devastated by IS, a vital step to enable the families to go back. The other is to continue providing emergency and pastoral aid for Christian families awaiting resettlement.

**Displaced communities in Erbil and elsewhere in Kurdish northern Iraq have been totally dependent on their fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to survive.** Bishops and faithful alike are encouraged by the recent successes against IS in Mosul.

Thanking Aid to the Church in Need, Syriac Catholic Archbishop Petros Mouche of Mosul, whose flock make up 60 percent of the displaced community, said: "I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all those who can assist this work. **With your help, we will be able to rebuild our houses. It is a great mercy to know that we can count on your support.**"

**A beautiful olive wood Comfort Cross made in Bethlehem, will be sent to all those who assist this cause with a donation of \$20.00 or more and tick the box in the response coupon below.**



Archbishop Mouche of Mosul, holding a broken statue of Our Lady desecrated by IS, outside the ransacked church of Saint George Syriac-Catholic Church in Bartella on the Nineveh Plains in Iraq



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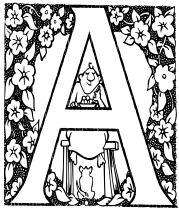
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*The country's founding was unique, and the U.S. has played an extraordinary role in international affairs, but that does not sanctify policies that have often been brutal, selfish, incompetent, perverse, and immoral*

## **NIKKI HALEY: THE BOLD SCOLD OF THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION**

*By* Doug Bandow



S GOVERNOR of South Carolina, Nikki Haley didn't have much need to worry about foreign policy. Yet for reasons unknown (other than perhaps her Indian heritage), Donald Trump tapped her to be the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. There, she has performed to perfection, offering a model of the hubris and lack of awareness that consistently characterize U.S. foreign policy.

What makes America different from other nations when it comes to foreign policy is the certainty that it is the right—indeed, the duty—of Americans to run the world. That means telling everyone everywhere what they should do, not just internationally, but in their own nations, too.

U.S. officials believe they know how other societies should organize their governments, who foreign peoples should elect, what economic policies other nations should implement, and what social practices foreigners should encourage and suppress.

There is precedent for Washington as all-seeing and all-knowing. A sparrow cannot “fall to the ground apart from the will of God,” Jesus explained. So, too, it appears, is such an event impossible in America's view apart from U.S. approval.

Washington officials rarely are so blunt, but their rhetoric is routinely suffused with arrogance. The concept of American exceptionalism is one example. The country's founding was unique and the U.S. has played an extraordinary role in international affairs, but that does not sanctify policies that have often been brutal, selfish, incompetent, perverse, and immoral. Sometimes America's actions share all of those characteristics simultaneously—such as aiding the royal Saudi dictatorship as it slaughters civilians in Yemen in an attempt to restore a puppet regime there.

In recent history, Madeleine Albright, both as UN ambassador and secretary of state under Bill Clinton, perhaps came closest to personifying the clueless American diplomat. As Washington made

a hash of the Balkans and Middle East, she explained that “we stand tall. We see further than other countries in the future.” The U.S., of course, was “the indispensable nation.” Which presumably is why she felt entitled to announce that “we think the price is worth it” when asked about the reported deaths of a half million Iraqi children as a result of sanctions against Baghdad.

And, of course, there was her extraordinary exchange with Colin Powell, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, when she asked, “What's the point of having this superb military you're always talking about if we can't use it?” Presumably she had no family members at risk as she planned to wage global crusades with other people's lives.

Albright has large shoes to fill but Haley appears to be well on her way. In a position that theoretically emphasizes diplomacy, the former South Carolina governor has been cheerleading for war with North Korea. Never mind that a nuke or two landing on Seoul or Tokyo would wipe out millions of people. No doubt she will cheerfully put a positive spin on disaster if the administration decides it's time for Armageddon in Northeast Asia.

Haley has also brilliantly played the sycophantic spokeswoman for the Saudi royals. Riyadh's intervention in the unending Yemeni civil war has killed

### **Endangered Majority**

MILD constitutionalists... often discuss the possibility of a method of protecting the minority. If they will find any possible method of protecting the majority they will have found something practically unknown in the modern world.

— G.K. Chesterton, *The New Jerusalem*, Thomas Nelson and Sons, London, [undated] p.117

thousands of civilians, imposed a starvation blockade, and led famine and cholera to sweep through what was already one of the poorest nations on earth. All of this has been done with U.S. support: supplying munitions, refueling aircraft, and aiding with targeting.

But when the Yemenis returned fire with a missile, Haley summoned her best sanctimonious demeanor and denounced Iran for allegedly making this outrageous, shocking attack possible. Apparently the Saudi sense of entitlement goes so far as to believe that Saudi Arabia's victims aren't even supposed to shoot back.

Yet Haley's finest hubristic moment may have come after the president's decision to move America's embassy to Jerusalem. Israel treats that city as its capital, of course. But Jerusalem is the holiest land for Jews and Christians, third holiest for Muslims, and the most emotional point of dispute between Israelis and Palestinians. Indeed, since conquering East Jerusalem in the 1967 war, the Israeli government has been working assiduously to squeeze Palestinians out of the city.

Congress's approval in 1995 of legislation mandating that the State Department move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem was politics at its most cynical. Members in the Republican-controlled Congress postured as great friends of Israel while adding a waiver that they expected presidents to always employ. Everyone did so until Donald Trump. At least his decision ostentatiously puts the lie to the claim that Washington can play honest broker in promoting a Middle East peace. No sentient Palestinian could have believed so, but the president finally made it official.

That Haley kept a straight face while explaining how Washington could upset the status quo, outrage Palestinians, undercut Arab allies, and anger Muslims, yet still bring peace, harmony, and calm to the Middle East was to be expected.

## Muhammad and War

ALREADY BEFORE the conquest of Mecca Mohammed had sent out expeditions raiding caravans and attacking Bedouins, and in 628 he had defeated the Jews and expelled them from the oasis of Khaibar north of Medina. This latter expedition, however, had not created a precedent; rather is it ruled in the Koran that from those Possessors of the Scriptures who surrender, only a tribute (*jizya*) may be levied (Sura 9:29). 'Those who give partners' (the polytheists), however, must embrace Islam. As to the spoils of battle, according to ancient custom the head of the tribe was entitled to one fifth part. The Koran expresses this in the following manner: 'Know ye that a fifth of your spoils is due to Allah, and to the Messenger and to his relatives, to the orphans, the poor and the followers of the way' (Sara 8:42). Shortly after the fall of Mecca Mohammed even sent a small expedition to the region east of the river Jordan. This was, as tradition has it, in order to punish the Ghassanid king residing there for having violated a messenger sent to the king of Bosra. The expedition was a complete failure, but it was a symptom of the aggressive power then already inherent in the new movement. Shortly afterwards an unsuccessful attempt to capture the city of Ta'if led to serious clashes with the Bedouin tribes in the neighbourhood of Mecca. In 630 the Prophet still undertook, though with a reluctant following, a campaign in Northern Arabia, and shortly before his death he seems to have planned a second and larger expedition to those regions. In the meantime, from everywhere in Arabia tribal delegations came to pay homage to him as their leader.

Thus, Mohammed had undoubtedly become a commander whose aim it was to capture not only the hearts of men but also their territories. Not much of this transpires in the Koran, but according to the earliest tradition Allah's Messenger is seen first and foremost as a conqueror; his biography is called the 'Maghazi,' i.e. the 'Campaigns of Conquest'.

- J. H. Kramers, 'In the Shadow of Allah,' in *Analecta Orientalia*  
of J. H. Kramers, Brill, Leiden, 1956, p.229.

"We can see the peace process really come together," she declared without a hint of irony.

But her finest moment—almost Churchillian in significance—was when she responded to criticism of the president's decision, including by *the other 14 members of the UN Security Council*. On Fox News (where else?) she declared: "We have the right to do whatever we want in terms of where we put our embassies." As for foreign criticism: "We don't need other countries telling us what's right and wrong."

Of course.

What could be more obvious? Other governments have no right to make decisions about their own countries, and need to be told what's right and wrong by Washington on any and every subject, day or night, in sunshine, rain, or snow. But another element of American

exceptionalism is the fact that the U.S. is exempt from the rules it applies to other nations. Washington gets to lecture, but no one gets to tell Americans what they should do.

The sad irony is that the U.S. would have greater credibility if it better practised what it preached, and didn't attempt social engineering abroad that's routinely failed at home. Especially nice would be a bit more humility and self-awareness by Washington's representatives. But Nikki Haley seems determined to continue as a disciple of the Madeleine Albright school of all-knowing, all-seeing, all-saying diplomacy. As such, she's unlikely to fool anyone other than herself.

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DOUG BANDOW is a senior fellow at the Cato Institute and a former special assistant to President Ronald Reagan. He is the author of *Foreign Follies: America's New Global Empire*. This article is reprinted with permission from *The American Conservative*, December 27, 2017.

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