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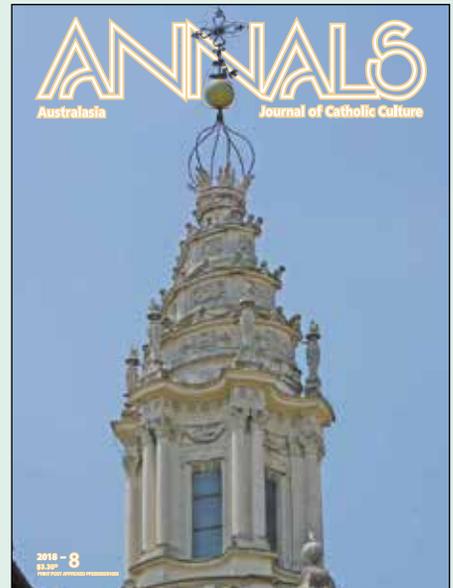
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[Sunday readings at Mass: Year B / Weekday readings at Mass: Year II]

Australia's Oldest Catholic Magazine

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Front Cover: Our cover photo is of the famous spiral lantern or tower above the dome of the chapel of St Ivo of Kirmartin in Brittany [also known as St Yves, patron saint of lawyers], in Rome. Designed and built 1642-1660 by Francesco Borromini, a master of Baroque architecture, the chapel formed part of the Sapienza University founded by Pope Boniface VIII in 1303, which was relocated to 110 acres near the Tiburtina Railway Station in Rome in 1935. With 140,000 students and 8,000 academic and other staff, Sapienza is the largest university in Italy. The old university buildings are now part of the State Archives of Rome. This Baroque church not to be missed is located at 40, Corso di Rinascimento, close to the Piazza Navona, and opposite the Sanctuary of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

Cover Photo: Paul Stenhouse

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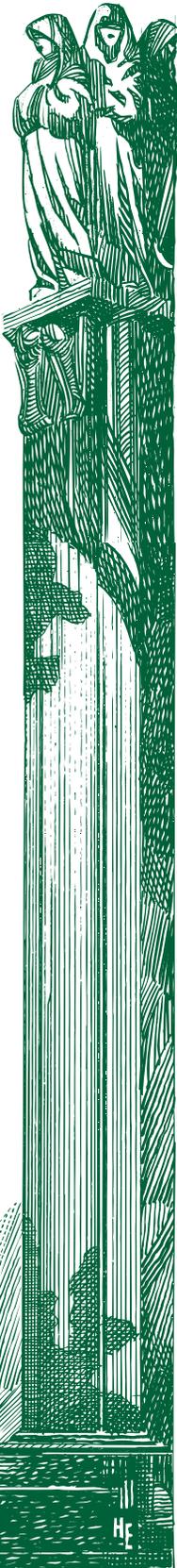
Let us not be Ldumb watch-dogs, or silent spectators; Let us be watchful shepherds, guarding the flock of Christ.

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



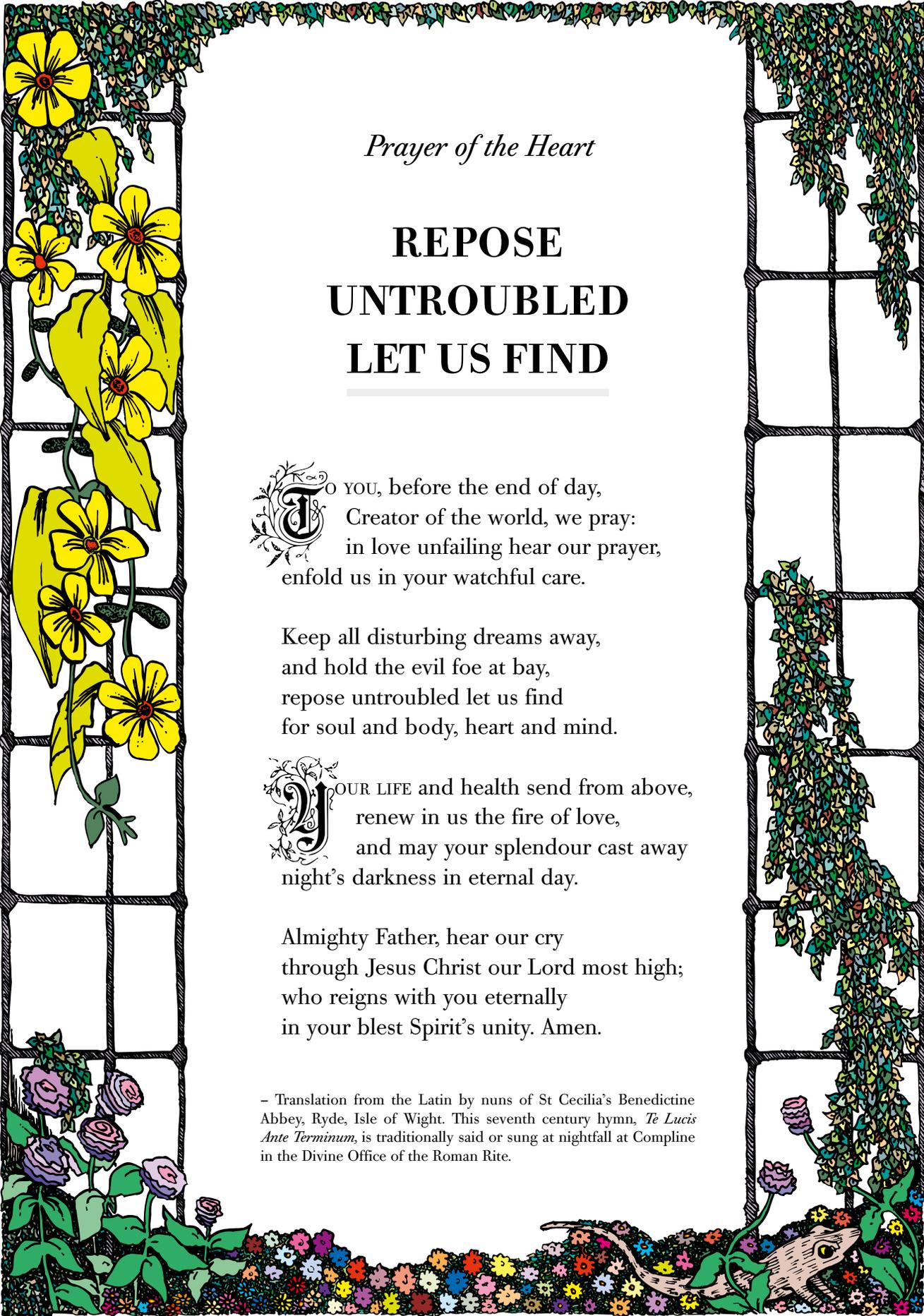
In the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and
of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

THE EVER-FAITHFUL LORD



MAY HE support us all the day long,
till the shades lengthen,
and the evening comes,
and the busy world is hushed,
and the fever of life is over,
and our work is done!
Then in His mercy may He give
us safe lodging,
and a holy rest,
and peace at the last!

— Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman, Sermon 20.



Prayer of the Heart

**REPOSE
UNTRoubLED
LET US FIND**

TO YOU, before the end of day,
Creator of the world, we pray:
in love unfailling hear our prayer,
enfold us in your watchful care.

Keep all disturbing dreams away,
and hold the evil foe at bay,
repose untroubled let us find
for soul and body, heart and mind.

YOUR LIFE and health send from above,
renew in us the fire of love,
and may your splendour cast away
night's darkness in eternal day.

Almighty Father, hear our cry
through Jesus Christ our Lord most high;
who reigns with you eternally
in your blest Spirit's unity. Amen.

– Translation from the Latin by nuns of St Cecilia's Benedictine Abbey, Ryde, Isle of Wight. This seventh century hymn, *Te Lucis Ante Terminum*, is traditionally said or sung at nightfall at Compline in the Divine Office of the Roman Rite.

Having set a precedent by allowing moral, cultural and religious issues to be decided by referenda and the will of the populace ... the Irish now have no way of knowing what further erosion of their ancient, formerly Catholic, culture they can expect at the hands of secular lawmakers.

ABORTION ON DEMAND, AND THE SEAL OF CONFESSION

By Paul Stenhouse



HERE WERE times, over the past two thousand years, when 'legal' and 'moral' had almost the same meaning.

How infrequent this synonymy is these days, came to mind recently, when 66.4% of the Irish who voted in the referendum on abortion on May 27 this year, voted to permit abortion, and to save the expense and time spent on a trip to the UK where abortion is a service widely available.

In 1980 and 1985 sales and importation of contraceptives became legal in Ireland, and three years ago Ireland became the first country to legalise same-sex marriage. Last year it elected a prime minister, Leo Varadkar, who hailed the abortion vote as one that showed the electorate's concern for 'the next generation'. 'The wrenching pain of decades of mistreatment of Irish women cannot be un-lived,' Mr Varadkar said, 'however today we have ensured that it does not have to be lived again.'

One can only hope that he has 'ensured that it does not have to be lived again,' though it is hard to see how he could have. The real loser in these important 'legal' changes to the culture of Ireland was not the pro-life Catholic Church – despite the slanted and predictable view of the outcome on the part of *The New Yorker*¹ and most media – but all the

people of Ireland, and especially the innocent children of 'the next generation' whose lives will be ended by abortion as a result of this 'democratic' vote.

To say nothing of the terrible trauma endured by mothers who have abortions. Their story is among many that major media outlets in Australia don't or won't tell.

The outcome of the May 27 referendum in Ireland made the hoary cliché 'not everything that interests the public or that the public wants, is in the public interest,' ring chillingly true.

Having set a precedent by allowing moral, cultural and

religious issues to be decided by referenda and the will of the populace – check Facebook or your favourite blogs – the Irish now have no way of knowing what further erosion of their ancient, formerly Catholic culture they can expect at the hands of secular lawmakers.

The Royal Commission

Nor do we Catholics here in Australia, in the wake of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Whatever the principal target of the Commission was meant to be *de iure*, the principal target of the Commission, *de facto*, was without doubt, the Catholic Church.

Gerard Henderson wrote in *The Weekend Australian*,

The adulation of the royal commission is evident in the ABC TV documentary *Undeniable* ... Presented by journalist-activist Paul Kennedy and produced by Ben Knight, *Undeniable* focused on historical child sexual abuse cases in the Catholic Church in Melbourne and Ballarat and the Anglican Church in Newcastle. Kennedy co-authored the book *Hell on the Way to Heaven* with Chrissie Foster, whose two daughters were abused by a Catholic priest between 1987 and 1993.

Kennedy and Knight forewent the opportunity to look objectively at the royal commission's failures as well as its successes. For example, McClellan

Who is to Blame?

WHO IS to blame for the untoward events in the Crimea? They are to blame, the ignorant, intemperate public, who clamour for an unwise war, and then when it turns out otherwise than they expected instead of acknowledging their fault, proceed to beat their zealous servants in the midst of the fight, for not doing impossibilities.

- Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman, *Discussions and Arguments on Various Subjects*, London, Longmans, Green and Co, 1891, page 362.

'Our Lord Mankind' – the Nation State

THE REJECTION of Christian teaching and, with it, of the concept of an afterlife also gave birth to a new politics. Until now, political life had been circumscribed by the struggle for power and resistance to oppression. Curing the evils in society was left to God. From the end of the seventeenth century onwards, a number of philosophers addressed ways of making the world a more equitable place politically. The perceived ideal was a polity in which a maximum of personal freedom could be guaranteed within a strong and stable state structure. But by the middle of the eighteenth century the notion of personal freedom began to undergo significant change. For Diderot and Rousseau, 'freedom' began to mean much more than not being captive or physically oppressed. It embraced notions of self-fulfilment and empowerment. It necessarily meant freedom from the oppressive Christian dogma of the afterlife. And since this dogma rested on the premiss that the search for happiness on earth is pointless, as true happiness can only be found in paradise, freedom must ultimately mean achieving happiness in this life. As they associated true happiness with a sentimentalized vision of prelapsarian innocence, the *philosophes* were naturally drawn into the exercise of constructing heaven on earth.

Thus political life was transformed into a struggle for self-expression and the quest for happiness - conceived in highly religious terms. Discussion of how the blessed state was to be achieved generated mountains of print over the next two centuries. Attempts to put the more 'scientific' of the theories into practice would result in human misery on an unprecedented scale and leave behind them mountains of corpses. But in the latter part of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth, the quest for salvation drove many to immolate themselves rather than others. Fired by the urge to redeem mankind and themselves, many young men struggled and died in a kind of crusade whose Jerusalem was an idealized projection of 'Our Lord Mankind,' the nation, death in the service of which brought martyrdom and life everlasting.

- *Holy Madness* by Adam Zamoyski, Weidenfeld & Nicholson, London, 1999, pp. 4, 5.

did not hold public findings into the institutional responses of Muslim organisations to child sexual assault. Likewise with government schools.

Also, the royal commission did not hold public hearings into the media. This despite the scandal involving Jimmy Savile's multiple child sexual assaults while at the BBC. In Australia there have been convictions for child sexual assault by media identities – namely, former Channel 7 star Robert Hughes and former ABC TV producer Jon Stephens. Both men were jailed for their offending, the latter pleading guilty.

In publicising his documentary, Kennedy called for the media to raise awareness of child sexual abuse. However, the ABC has failed to properly report

Stephens's crime and ABC managing director Michelle Guthrie was not able to inform the Senate two months ago as to whether the public broadcaster has adopted a duty of care to Stephens's victim or offered compensation.²

No Seal of the Confessional

Up to the time of writing, four Australian states – South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales and Tasmania – following the recommendations of the Royal Commission – are vying with one another in passing laws or debating whether to pass laws, that would oblige Catholic priests to be disloyal to their Faith as Catholics and as priests, by breaking the seal of confession.

While Catholics have for centuries had to endure all manner of extraordinary claims about their beliefs and practices, media talk about a 'seal of the confessional' – the place where the confession is made – wins the wooden spoon hands down.

It would have taken media of all sorts no more than one millisecond on Google to verify that there is no 'seal of the confessional,' nor is there any 'confessional secret' in the Catholic Church. There is a seal of *confession*. It is the confession of the penitent that is sealed. And the seal [sigillum] is inviolable.

If the proposed Australian laws were to be passed, and enforced, Catholic priests will be required, under pain of being held to be guilty of a criminal offence, to inform police under certain circumstances, not only *that* a confession was heard, identifying the penitent in the process, but also what was said by the penitent during the Sacramental confession.³

Those drafting such laws in Australia cannot be unaware that §§ 1 and 2 of Canon 983 in the Code of Canon Law forbid under penalty of grave sin Catholic priests, or even passers-by who may, by chance, have heard what was said in confession, to reveal what was said.

The Secret of Confession

The traditions and teachings of the Catholic Church in no way condone child abuse or sinful or criminal activity in any form. This must be evident to anyone genuinely interested in the truth, and familiar with Catholic teaching.

By the same token, neither the Holy See nor Catholics can condone attempts by any government to interfere in the administration of the Sacraments whose realm is supernatural, and whose goal is the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

When Catholics go to confession, they know that they are not confessing to the priest, but to God *through* the priest. If and when they are absolved, they know that the

absolution they receive is not from the priest, but from God, *through* the priest.

Secret confession has been part of the lives of Catholics from the first century, and is well-documented from the third and fourth centuries.

St Augustine⁴ [354-430], St Ambrose⁵ [340-397] and Pope St Leo the Great [c.400-461], to mention only a few of the Fathers of the Church, wrote about secret confession, and the seal or *sigillum* of confession.

Pope St Leo the Great declared that to reveal the ‘secret of confession’ is forbidden by the ‘Rule of the Apostles’.⁶

Salminius Hermias Sozomenus [400-450] who was born near Gaza in Palestine, studied Law in Beirut and practised it in Constantinople, was an historian of the Catholic Church writing almost 600 years before the split between the Church of Rome and the Church of Constantinople. According to Sozomenus, the secrecy of confession was held to be inviolable in the Church of Rome ‘from time immemorial’.⁷

What is absolutely forbidden is not just revealing what was said in confession, but making any use at all of the knowledge acquired in the confession. No authority on earth can dispense a priest from the law of the secret of confession. Not even the Church herself has the power.⁸

For this is not an obligation to maintain confidentiality analogous to the so-called *client legal privilege* between lawyer and client, or *patient legal privilege* between doctor and patient which are recognized in common law in many jurisdictions; or journalists and police and their ‘sources’ and ‘informants’; or certain government security organisations and their agents.

The secret of Confession is something quite other. For confession of sin is a *sine-qua-non* condition imposed on a sinner by God Himself if absolution is being sought for the sin; and the sinner is not free about going to a priest. Moreover, the obligation to guard

in the most absolute manner the secrecy of that confession which was made to God, not to the priest, is imposed on the priest by God.⁹

‘The sinner,’ said Pope Innocent III [1161-1216] on the occasion of the ordination of a priest, ‘confesses to a priest not as to a man, but as to God; and the priest must shun any word or sign that would indicate to anyone that he knew what had been confessed.’¹⁰

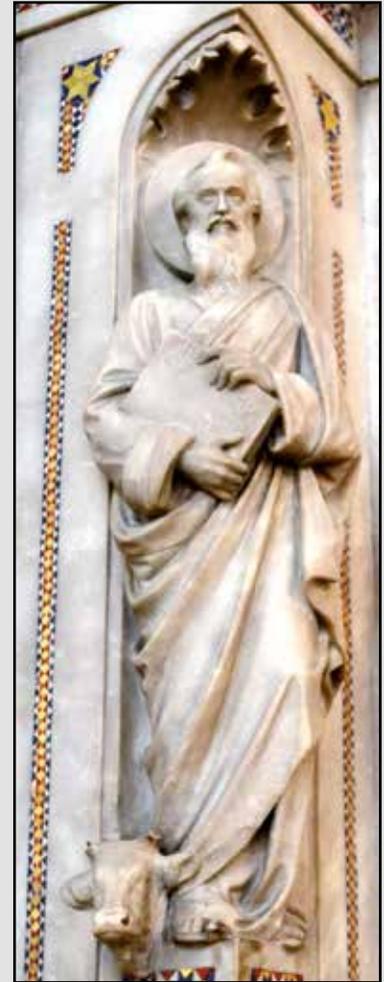
St Thomas Aquinas [1225-1274] says that the secret of Confession must be safeguarded, adding that silence on the part of the priest is of the essence of the Sacrament. ‘Even if the priest were to be ordered under pain of excommunication to say if he knows anything about a particular sin, he must remain silent.’¹¹

‘What is known from confession,’ says St Thomas, ‘must be regarded as never having been known.’¹²

The Fathers of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 did not mince their words, either: ‘He who presumes to reveal a sin that has been manifested to him in the tribunal of penance is not only to be deposed from the priestly office, but also to be consigned to a closed monastery for perpetual penance.’¹³

1. ‘Ireland’s vote on Abortion is a Referendum on the Nation’s Future,’ by Margaret Talbot, May 24, 2018.
2. Abuse Royal Commission: ‘Catholic Institutions Guilty, but so are Others,’ December 15, 20-17.
3. ABC, AM June 9, 2018; Canberra Times, June 7, 2018; CathNews New Zealand, Monday June 18, 2018; SBS News, June 20.
4. See: Sermo lxxxii, 9-11, Migne Patres Latini, tome xxxviii, col.510-511.
5. St Paulinus of Nola, Vita Ambrosii, c.xxxix, Migne Patres Latini, tome xx, col. 27-46.
6. Epistola ad episcopum Campaniae, c.ii, Migne, Patres Latini, tome liv, col.1211.
7. ‘Confession du 1^{er} au XIII^e Siècle, E. Vacandard, Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, Tome iii, première partie, Paris-VI Librairie Letouzey et Ané, 1938, col. 857. And while Sozomen gave no source for his assertion, we also have no documentary evidence denying it.
8. P. Galtier, sj, *Penitence*, ‘Le Secret de la Confession,’ Dictionnaire Apologetique de la Foi Catholique, tome 3, col. 1861.
9. Gabriel Beauchesne, ed. Paris 1926, tome iii, col. 1861, 119: *et passim*.
10. Ibid. cols.1784-1865.
11. *Migne, Patres Latini*, tome ccxvii, lxx, 2 CD.
12. *Supplementum*, Quaestio xi, *De sigillo Confessionis*, Art.1, ad 2^{um}. Unde si praecipiat sub poena excommunicationis ... quod dicat si aliquid scit de tali peccato, non debet dicere.’
13. Ibid. ad 1^{um}. Thus: *Illud autem quod sub confessione scitur, est quasi nescitum*.
14. Decree 21. See http://www.documentaatholicaomnia.eu/03d/1215-1215._Concilium_Lateranum_III._Documenta_Omnia_EN.pdf

SAINT LUKE



‘St Luke wrote for the Greeks’

— St Gregory of Nazianzus, 329-389 AD

‘In the centre, round the throne itself were four living creatures ...the third had a human face ...’ See St John’s *Apocalypse*, 4,6-7.

ST LUKE is represented with an ox because his is the Gospel of the priesthood of Jesus, and the ox or young calf was an emblem of sacrifice among the Hebrews. It is a universal symbol of suffering, submissiveness, self-sacrifice, patience and labour. The ox became a symbol of our Lord’s suffering and death on the Cross, and is winged to indicate that the message it bears comes from heaven.

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The manipulation of language has been a significant feature of the fifty-odd years of the abortion wars. Early on, the pro-abortionists frequently used the term 'blob of tissue' to dehumanize the unborn child and thereby try to put down the obvious moral objections and claims that there was a right to life.

LANGUAGE AS A POLITICAL TOOL

By Stephen M. Krason



ALWAYS RECALL the statement by the renowned international anti-euthanasia activist Rita Marker that 'verbal engineering precedes social engineering.'

Even a quick examination of current controversies in the socio-political arena provides abundant confirmation of this.

One obvious current example is how the defenders of virtually uninhibited immigration or open borders choose readily to ignore that massive numbers of people are in outright violation of the law by referring to them as 'undocumented immigrants' instead of 'illegal aliens'—even while it's not clear what 'undocumented' means. The aim, of course, is to make it seem like these people have done nothing against the law and to create a different picture in the public mind—as part of a political propaganda war—from what is the reality.

The manipulation of language has been a significant feature of the fifty-odd years of the abortion wars. Early on, the pro-abortionists frequently used the term 'blob of tissue' to dehumanize the unborn child and thereby try to put down the obvious moral objections and claims that there was a right to life. After science made the 'blob of tissue' claim increasingly difficult to

sustain, we haven't heard it so much as the justifying rhetoric shifted to 'choice' and 'freedom to choose.' 'Choice,' of course, generates an approving ring in a culture ever more fixated on rights and with a deepening individualistic ethos. Opposing choice immediately puts one on the defensive, putting the *onus* on him to justify himself.



While people seem hardly to have noticed, terminology helped at an early stage to legitimize the effort to mainstream homosexual behavior. The use of the term 'gay' to refer to male homosexuals entered the American lexicon in the

1970s and quickly became the new term to universally identify them and their sexual behavior. Most people previously had understood the term to mean spritely, lively, full of fun, and exuberant. While it's not clear that the usage of this term was deliberately intended by the early homosexualist movement to help advance their agenda, it

likely had that effect—and they certainly didn't discourage it.

In fact, some in that movement now claim that the term 'homosexual' is almost the equivalent of a racial slur. It's likely that a term that people associated with a joyful attitude was going to affect people's conception of homosexuality and their reaction to it. Even if not intended, 'gay' fitted well into the homosexualist movement's agenda and helped advance their cause. It also provided cover for the ugliness of homosexual behavior that had traditionally caused people to recoil from it, and also for its physical and psychological consequences, AIDS, and all the rest. Some groups deliberately highjacked other terms to try to legitimize homosexuality, as seen with the

name of the (supposedly) Catholic pro-homosexualist organization Dignity.

Speaking of dignity, we see its proponents of euthanasia routinely using verbal manipulation to reshape thinking. This obviously

The Post-Truth Era

TRADITIONAL PUBLISHERS can only look on in wonder and envy as audiences and revenues continue to dribble away to Silicon Valley upstarts. Millennials who in a previous era might have toiled away as obsequious newsroom interns are now captains of all they survey, whilst the media barons of old write off the value of their declining assets and calculate how to unload what's left.

It's a sorry picture and it's tempting to just throw in the towel and join forces with the devil – as indeed many media companies have done by signing on to share content on Facebook and other channels that offer large audiences but modest financial returns. Of course, Facebook and its contemporaries are only doing what print publishers themselves used to do so well – providing limited access to their audiences for a high price and with most of the value accruing to the audience owner rather than the business partner. But now the tables have turned and it's Facebook and its peers who have all the leverage whilst publishers chirp for scraps.

The one saving grace for traditional publishers may be the aftermath of the US presidential election and the dawning realisation that Facebook allowed itself to be totally gamed by bad actors seeking to flood users' news feeds with junk and falsehoods. Suddenly in 2016 we are appreciating that although connectivity is greater than ever, news literacy is perhaps lower than ever as many users seem unable to discern between absolute fabrication and real journalism.

- 'Publishing in the post-truth era,' Evan Rudowski, *Atlantic Leap*, December 1, 2016

explains why someone like Rita Marker is so attuned to it. At the forefront is the claim that what is sought is simply 'death with dignity' (cultural radicals seem to like to grab onto the term 'dignity').

The attempt obviously is to create sympathy in the mind of the hearer. Although no one is quite sure what 'death with dignity' means, it sounds right. After all, doesn't everyone want his dignity to be upheld, even more so when he is close to the point where his earthly existence will end? This, of course, obscures the fact that what's involved is someone deliberately killing an innocent person, or aiding the person to kill himself. The euphemism aims to make one forget that this is the very definition of murder.

Then, there's the question of simply redefining or delegitimizing basic terms—even *very* basic ones—as a way of changing, even radically, people's attitudes and to further an ideological agenda. Nowhere has this been seen more clearly for some decades than with the feminist movement. While even the crudest of four-letter words

have gone completely mainstream, the feminists have demonized the three-letter words 'man' and 'men.' Even though the first definition of 'man' in the dictionary—at least in the pre-political correctness era—was human being or *homo sapiens*, suddenly that didn't matter. The generic use of 'man' or 'men' was suddenly out, and we now all had to say 'person' or 'people.' Suddenly, one was left wondering if the signers of the Declaration of Independence were not hopelessly ignorant by saying that 'all men are created equal'—despite the fact that if they had not vigorously asserted the imperative of natural rights, women's rights would probably never have had a chance.

Even the Catholic liturgy fairly quickly had to catch up to the new feminist-induced linguistic *Weltanschauung*. The imprecision—not that it mattered to feminists—was striking: at law a 'person' can be a man, woman, child, corporation, unincorporated association, partnership, etc.

So, I used to quip that while I could identify what a man and a

woman were—at least in the era before we were told that gender was somehow fluid—I couldn't recognize a person. Indeed, it is likely that the feminist effort to obliterate gender distinctness—making us all amorphous 'persons'—helped pave the way for the transgender fanaticism of today, even though some feminists don't like it.

As far as feminism's contortion of the traditional meaning of language is concerned, we now see it applied in other ways to further an increasingly extreme socio-political agenda. So, as I have discussed in previous articles, the meaning of sexual harassment is open-ended, with feminists who claim it is endemic never bothering to define the term. There is now confusion even about what rape is.

The Obama Department of Justice, under feminist influence, called 'verbal threats' a form of 'sexual violence' and, in a report addressing the supposed 'rape crisis' on American campuses, included in the category of 'sexual victimization' of women 'general sexist remarks' made in front of them. The snarl word 'sexism' was essentially invented by the contemporary feminist movement and used mightily to advance its agenda by intimidating others, especially males. Again, though, what it means is never clearly defined and it's the movement itself that determines the meaning of sexism.

Probably no word in the U.S. nowadays is as toxic, and potentially damaging to those it's leveled at, as 'racism.' Anyone who reads the news should be able to see that it is now almost devoid of serious meaning. It is routinely used to embarrass people (usually Caucasians), after race-baiters stoke up a social media frenzy, following incidents that just happen to involve persons of different races even if there is no racial motive involved. Is it truly racism, for example, when certain businesses are concerned about being victims of crime by, say,

young male members of certain demographic groups when there is a disproportionate level of criminal activity among them? Or else the word 'racism' is used to help advance political agendas, such as with claims that requiring people to produce identification when going to vote so as to maintain the integrity of elections is inspired by racism.

For some people, it is even racist to use the term 'Negro' or 'American Negro.' I guess they had better tell that to the United Negro College Fund and the National Council of Negro Women and also be prepared to call Martin Luther King, Jr. a racist, since that was the term he always used. Not much can be done about the racial opportunists, but maybe those who are ignorant of the history of race relations in America, and so are ready to find racism in every little thing or word or phrase, should try to educate themselves about what genuine race prejudice and oppression was like in the Jim Crow South.

How much the term 'racism' has been convoluted can be seen in the claims that a concern about threats from elements within Muslim communities—despite our being in an era of Islamist terrorism—is 'racist.' The last time I checked, Islam was a religion, not a race. It helps leftist, secular propagandists in their efforts to support Islam as a way of obliterating what remains of Christian civilization to be able to tar anything critical of it as an example of that universally loathed thing called 'racism.'

Finally, we see the misuse of language—sometimes with a political or cultural revisionist motive in mind—in the way certain demographic groups are identified. So, American Indians are now routinely called 'Native Americans' (even though the term is not widely accepted even within this demographic group). This designation apparently had its origins among some cultural commentators in the second half of the twentieth century and then

some in the federal government jumped on the bandwagon.

The term is inaccurate because the anthropological evidence is that the first settlers came to the Western Hemisphere from Asia; there were no indigenous (i.e., native) peoples here. It also raises a question from the standpoint of Catholic doctrine, which holds that the entire human race came forth from one man and one woman and people did not spring up spontaneously in different places. One wonders if it was inspired, at least to some degree, by a desire to denigrate the European role in settling the New World and make it seem like they were somehow interlopers. It also perhaps suggests that everyone else outside of this demographic is 'less American' than they are. In that sense, it slightly rings of an earlier misuse of the term 'native' when Catholic ethnic groups were thought by nativists to not be true Americans.

What should people do who are concerned about this endemic problem of twisting and distorting language to promote untruth, reshape people's thinking in an undesirable way, and promote troublesome social, cultural, and political agendas? Simply don't go along with it even when it has become *de rigueur* and, more, speak up to tell others why they shouldn't and explain what's wrong with it—maybe even write letters to the editor about it.

In an age when we desperately need to restore sound culture, this is a way that the rank-and-file who want to work to get things back on the right track can have a small but, perhaps over time, decisive effect.

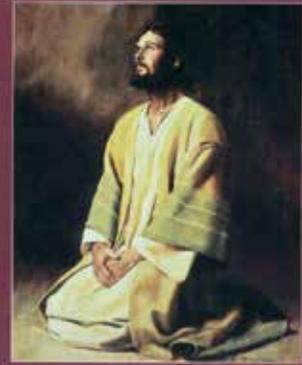
STEPHEN M. KRASON'S 'Neither Left nor Right, but Catholic' column appears monthly (sometimes bi-monthly) in *Crisis Magazine*. He is Professor of Political Science and Legal Studies and associate director of the Veritas Center for Ethics in Public Life at Franciscan University of Steubenville. He is also co-founder and president of the Society of Catholic Social Scientists. This article appeared first in *Crisis Magazine*, www.crisismagazine.com Reprinted with permission.

NEW BIBLE COMMENTARY

Michael Fallon, MSC
Missionary of the Sacred Heart

Praying the Psalms with Jesus

Michael Fallon, MSC



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

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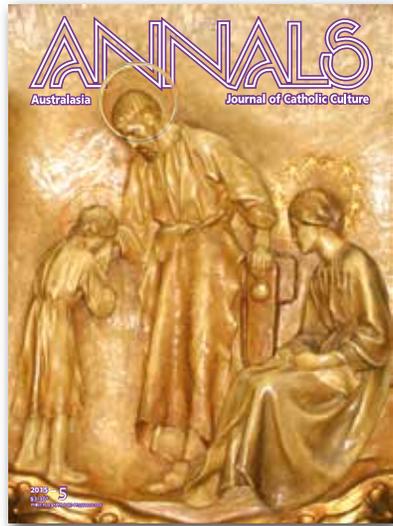
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[I]n large part Catholic schools and parishes responded to the Sexual Revolution, unleashed by the pill and modern entertainers, such as the Rolling Stones and the Beatles, with silence and sometimes with an embarrassed silence.

GOD IS GOOD

Reviewed by George Cardinal Pell



GOD HAS BEEN slipping steadily in Australia, at least since the invention of the pill in the early 1960s, although the slippage was obvious in other parts of the Western World from much earlier. The French Revolution of 1789 was explicitly anti-religious as was the Communist Revolution in Russia in 1917, but the Edmund Burke type of conservative adaptation in the English speaking world deflected the worst effects of these upheavals.

The English speaking elites, while heavily influenced by the Enlightenment, and whatever the order or disorder of their personal lives, did not dismantle the Christian foundations of public life.

Sheridan is quite clear that while our crisis is different, Christianity is in radical decline in Australia and the crisis is real and existential. The times are troubled for all Christians, and not merely because of the paedophilia crisis, which has blown up overseas in the USA (and in Chile) once again just as the Australian Royal commission has wound up its long investigations.

The book is primarily about the religious situation in Australia (and is therefore particularly useful) and decades ago Karl Schmude pointed out that the Australian temptation was to trivialize Christ rather than crucify him.

While a minority of the minority of Australians who are deeply anti-Christian probably have become

God is Good for You. A defence of Christianity in troubled times,
By Greg Sheridan. Allen and Unwin, 2018, 358pp. RRP: \$32.99 Available from your local bookseller

more bitter in the last five or ten years, Sheridan is still correct to point out that the most important challenge comes from sustained affluence, which promotes the alluring falsehood that people don't need God's mercy.

When affluence produces an explicit materialism two consequences follow; the number

of children is severely limited and once in a while, albeit rarely, completely eliminated, and the materialists find it difficult to climb the mountain of the Lord and see God, because their hearts are not pure, but hard and dry. Faith becomes foreign and difficult and sometimes seems impossible.

This long book which is packed with learning and insight, has two parts, on Christianity and on Christians. Atheism is described and distinguished from agnosticism, basic Christian teachings are outlined as are Christianity's three basic problems of evil, suffering and the sins of Christians.

One especially useful chapter explains how so many of the best and most appreciated features of modern life are the fruits of Christian theory.

This first section concludes with a stimulating request to read and study the Old Testament, the Jewish scriptures of Jesus' own people, who brought monotheism into the history of the world.

While Christian churches, schools, homes for older people and hospitals are visible everywhere in our suburbs and towns, Christian personalities, views and news are often ignored in the secular media, except when attacked.

Sheridan interviews a number of politicians and national leaders on their beliefs and sets out the works and personalities of some outstanding Christians.

He underestimates the potential of the new Catholic movements, despite his section on the Focolare



Secret Agreements, Co-operative Politicians

THE POWERS of financial capitalism had another far-reaching aim [after 1919], nothing less than to create a world financial system of control in private hands able to dominate the political system of each country and the economy of the world as a whole. This system was to be controlled in a feudalist fashion by the central banks of the world acting in concert by secret agreements arrived at in frequent private meetings and conferences. The apex of the system was to be the Bank for International Settlements in Basle, Switzerland, a private bank, owned and controlled by the world's central banks which were themselves private corporations. Each central bank, in the hands of men, like Montagu Norman of the Bank of England, Benjamin Strong of the New York Federal Reserve Bank, Charles Rist of the Bank of France and Hjalmar Schacht of the Reichsbank, sought to dominate its government by its ability to control Treasury loans, to manipulate foreign exchanges, to influence the level of economic activity in the country, and to influence cooperative politicians by subsequent economic rewards in the business world.

— Carroll Quigley, *Tragedy & Hope: History of the World in our Time*, 1998, GSG & Associates, San Pedro USA, p. 314.

and strangely does not mention Opus Dei or the Neocatechumenal Way. A short and moving chapter details Archbishop Fisher's response to his serious and frightening illness while the work concludes with some thoughts on the future.

Atheism

We are used to more unbelief, to hearing of non-practising grandchildren of devout Catholics and sometimes of explicit unbelief among young parents who will not allow their children to be baptised, except perhaps if a baptism certificate is needed for enrolment in the Catholic school.

A seminarian told me of his first visit to Grade Six in his parish, when an Anglo boy told him Hawking's 'Theory of Everything' proved God did not exist! In a recent group of young lawyers who were being admitted only one third swore on the Bible. Another friend, about my age, told me how her brother, who had been active in the St. Vincent de Paul Society, died without leaving funeral instructions in his will and was denied a Catholic burial by his religiously hostile children.

The first two chapters of Sheridan's book trace the stages which brought us to this situation, outline the varieties of unbelief and the relationship between reason on the one hand and believing

or non-believing, as well as the different consequences for human wellbeing of both options.

Sheridan only states the obvious when he explains that monotheism is rational, atheism is an odd type of religious faith, going far beyond the ambit of physical sciences and the new atheists are false prophets. But such basic truths are rarely stated in main-stream media, especially in the ABC and the ex-Fairfax block.

Those of us who are older and can remember the fifties or even the seventies and eighties ask how we came to our present situation. The question can be framed another way. The number of adherents to the great religious traditions, including Christianity and Islam, continues to grow and the number of unbelievers is a diminishing percentage across the globe; except in the Western World. Why is unbelief increasing only in the West?

We need to try and unpack this a bit. Sheridan correctly blames sustained affluence, but Christianity is spreading in China as society there becomes wealthy, admittedly from a small religious base. The good life with its comforts as well as modern architecture work against large families. But which is cause and which is effect?

Does a weakened faith explain partnerships rather than the commitment of marriage and result in fewer children or no children? Or does the decision to

have only one or two children (and no Western country is producing sufficient offspring to maintain population levels) damage and weaken the faith of the parents? Does the causality run in both directions or predominantly in one direction?

Does marriage breakdown help or hinder the religious development of the children and what are the effects when over-busy parents neglect their children?

More than ever schools are social welfare agencies, regularly doing a good job of student care in e.g. providing breakfast for their students. One of Australia's wealthy private schools now does this. Are there religious consequences from this human suffering?

The spread of explicit atheism, which has accelerated in this decade, now represents the major challenge for our catechists, schools and university chaplaincies. A limited number did good work explaining St. John-Paul's theology of the body, but in large part Catholic schools and parishes responded to the Sexual Revolution, unleashed by the pill and modern entertainers, such as the Rolling Stones and the Beatles, with silence and sometimes with an embarrassed silence.

Majority opinion in many of our secondary schools is now tolerant of, when not enthusiastic for, same sex marriage, a spectacular deterioration from twenty years ago. Attitudes on abortion and euthanasia are, or will be, similar unless the case is regularly made for the Christian positions.

And if the Church responds to the increasing atheism in its own communities with neglect and silence, as it did to the Sexual Revolution we shall find an increasing agnosticism, when it isn't hostility, especially among the 'Anglos', who now include those with Irish blood.

In Australia the 'blue eyes' are the most difficult constituency for the Catholic call to repentance and belief. The ethnic communities are

The Western [CATHOLIC] and Eastern [ORTHODOX] Churches

A POPULAR Russian legend tells how St. Nicolas and St. Cassian were upon a visit to the earth. On their journey they met a poor peasant who had got his wagon, with a load of hay upon it, stuck in the mud and was making fruitless efforts to get his horses on.

‘Let’s go and give the good fellow a hand,’ said St. Nicolas.

‘Not I; I’m keeping out of it,’ replied St. Cassian, ‘I don’t want to get my coat dirty.’

‘Well, wait for me,’ said St. Nicolas, ‘or go on without me if you like,’ and plunging without hesitation into the mud he vigorously assisted the peasant in dragging his wagon out of the rut.

When he had finished the job and caught his companion up, he was all covered in filth; his coat was torn and soiled and looked like a beggar’s rags. St. Peter was amazed to see him arrive at the gate of Paradise in this condition.

‘I say! Who ever got you into that state?’ he asked. St. Nicolas told his story.

‘And what about you?’ asked St. Peter, turning to St. Cassian. ‘Weren’t you with him in this encounter?’

‘Yes, but I don’t meddle in things that are no concern of mine,

and I was especially anxious not to get my beautiful clean coat dirty.’

‘Very well,’ said St. Peter, ‘you, St. Nicolas, because you were not afraid of getting dirty in helping your neighbor out of a difficulty, shall for the future have two feasts a year, and you shall be reckoned the greatest of saints after me by all the peasants of holy Russia. And you, St. Cassian, must be content with having a nice clean coat; you shall have your feastday in leap-year only, once every four years.’

We may well forgive St. Cassian for his dislike of manual labor and the mud of the highroad. But he would be quite wrong to condemn his companion for having a different idea of the duties of saints towards mankind. We may like St. Cassian’s clean and spotless clothes, but since our wagon is still deep in the mud, St. Nicolas is the one we really need, the stout-hearted saint who is always ready to get to work and help us.

The Western Church, faithful to the apostolic mission, has not been afraid to plunge into the mire of history. After having been for centuries the only element of moral order and intellectual culture among the barbarous

peoples of Europe, it undertook the task not only of the spiritual education of these peoples of independent spirit and uncivilized instincts but also of their material government.

In devoting itself to this arduous task, the Papacy, like St. Nicolas in the legend, thought not so much of the cleanliness of its own appearance as of the urgent needs of mankind. The Eastern Church, on the other hand, with its solitary asceticism and its contemplative mysticism, its withdrawal from political life and from all the social problems which concern mankind as a whole, thought chiefly, like St. Cassian, of reaching Paradise without a single stain on its clothing.

The Western Church aimed at employing all its powers, divine and human, for the attainment of a universal goal; the Eastern Church was only concerned with the preservation of its purity. There is the chief point of difference and the fundamental cause of the schism between the two Churches.

Russia and The Universal Church, Vladimir Soloviev [1853-1900] translated by Herbert Rees, London, The Centenary Press, first published 1948



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"Many brave men who fought in the Great War are dead. I was side-by-side with the Fifth Division of Anzacs and to the British soldier and the Anzac you today owe what you have, and have to thank them for what you are."

COURAGE UNDER FIRE

By Jim Lindsay



LAST MONTH marked the centenary of one of the more unusual events in the history of the Society of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC)

in Australia.

MSC priest, Captain Rev. Father Timothy Edward (Ted) McGrath, is possibly the first and only Catholic priest to be recommended for the Victoria Cross.

Serving with a British infantry regiment during the Great War, this Australian-born priest was nominated for Britain's highest military honour when he ventured into no-man's land to rescue a seriously wounded officer.

Only weeks earlier, he had won a Military Cross for a series of daring rescues during a raid on enemy lines. How the Australian priest came to be serving in the British Army is fascinating.

Just five years earlier, he had been serving as a parish priest at Coogee in Sydney's eastern suburbs.

In the course of his duties, he met a young woman, Eileen O'Connor, who was paralysed from a fall that broke her spine when aged three.

Eileen and Fr McGrath shared a deep devotion to Our Lady and the desire to establish a ministry of compassionate service to the sick poor in their own homes in her honour.

In 1913, a small community of Catholic women gathered by Eileen and Fr McGrath began their mission from rented premises in Dudley St, Coogee. By the end of the year, the house was purchased with the generous financial assistance of Ryde Parish Priest, Rev. Edward Gell, and his sister, Miss Frances Gell.



Eileen O'Connor Foundress of Our Lady's Nurses for the Poor

The new society faced unexpected problems from the onset, with ecclesiastical authorities putting obstacles in the way of Eileen, the nurses and its benefactors, as canonical permission had not yet been given for the establishment of the Society.

Fr McGrath was also facing opposition from his superiors and

being instructed to cease any involvement with the society under threat of being expelled from the Congregation.

He refused. Travelling to Rome, Fr McGrath appealed to the Holy See and successfully challenged his expulsion from the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart and was reinstated in the Congregation in 1915. However, he was effectively prevented from returning to Australia and decided to sign up as a military chaplain with the British Army.

Besides providing spiritual guidance to those who sought it, chaplains of all denominations played a critical role in maintaining morale among the men. They visited the makeshift hospitals, read or wrote letters on behalf of sick or wounded soldiers and generally cared for their needs. Catholic chaplains offered Mass and administered the Sacraments, and during battles they and other chaplains often positioned themselves near the casualty stations in order to administer the last rites to the dead and dying. More often than not, they 'hopped the bags' and followed their men into battle.

Many of the 3500 chaplains serving with British Forces during the Great War became casualties themselves. More than 170 were killed in action.

Fr McGrath was assigned to the 1st Cheshire Regiment, which was thrown into the counter-offensive against Germany's massive 'spring push' of 1918.

On the evening of 21 August 1918, several companies from the Cheshires set off from Bucquoy village to capture a section of the Paris to Amiens railway. By dawn, the lead companies were still 500 yards short of their target, in full view of the Germans' strong defensive lines and without artillery support.

The Cheshires soon found themselves under withering machine gun and artillery fire from three directions. Hundreds, including most of the officers, were cut down within minutes.

Realising the impossible task facing the stretcher-bearers, Fr McGrath ventured into no man's land and began carrying back the wounded. Standing well over six feet tall, he would have presented an easy target.

He repeatedly ventured back into the battlefield, carrying or dragging men back to the dressing station. Fr McGrath was awarded the Military Cross for his actions.

Five weeks later, the Cheshires were involved in another disastrous assault on a railway line near Gouzeaucourt.

On 28 September 1918, Fr McGrath went to the assistance of a young officer who had been shot in the stomach. He hoisted the seriously injured man over his shoulder and carried him 300 yards back to the British trenches, an incredible feat of both strength and bravery.

Three officers from the Cheshires and the Royal Army Medical Corps testified to Fr McGrath's conspicuous valour and recommended him for the Victoria Cross. However, the war ended only weeks later, and military administration quickly moved its focus towards the repatriation and demobilisation of millions of soldiers.

Had the recommendation been processed, Fr McGrath would have become the first and perhaps the only Catholic priest to have been awarded a Victoria Cross.

After the war, Fr McGrath spent almost 25 years serving as a priest in France, England and the USA, all



Father McGrath being introduced to Pope Paul VI by Cardinal Gilroy

the time under pressure from three successive MSC Superior Generals to resign.

He returned to Australia briefly in 1926, where he addressed a public meeting in his hometown of Devenish, Victoria. "I have received a war decoration but let me say to you that there are many returned men – and some in Devenish, too – who are more deserving than I of the decoration I have received," he said.

"Many brave men who fought in the Great War are dead. I was side-by-side with the Fifth Division of Anzacs and to the British soldier and the Anzac you today owe what you have, and have to thank them for what you are."

Upon being presented with a sizeable donation to assist with his travelling expenses back to the USA, Father McGrath assured his well-wishers the money would be used to assist the sick poor instead.

Fr McGrath eventually returned to Australia in 1941, basing himself with the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in East Melbourne. In the meantime, Our Lady's Nurses for the Poor prospered and was recognised as a religious order in

1953. The Sisters are affectionately known as 'The Brown Nurses'.

At one stage, the congregation boasted almost 40 religious sisters, novices and postulants, all trained or training as nurses, working within its ministries in Sydney, Brisbane, Newcastle and Wollongong. In 1969, Fr McGrath returned to Our Lady's Home at Coogee, where he spent the last years of his life.

The following year, His Eminence Norman Cardinal Gilroy presented Fr McGrath to His Holiness Pope Paul VI, during the papal visit to Australia. In a conversation conducted entirely in French, Pope Paul VI thanked Fr McGrath for his work for the Church.

Fr McGrath returned to Our Lady's Home, Coogee, and told the sisters he believed that Our Lady's Nurses for the Poor had finally received the full blessing of the Church.

He died on 17 May 1977, at the age of 96 years.

JIM LINDSAY is a marketing and communications consultant who is assisting Our Lady's Nurses for the Poor with various projects to mark the centenary of Eileen O'Connor's death in 2021 and her journey towards the Church's declaration of her sainthood.

GENUINE FORGERIES

By Alister Kershaw

THE PARIS ART world has been undergoing a positively freakish transformation just lately and it seems to me that it's my bounden duty to let you know about it. Rightly or wrongly, if you follow me, I see myself not as a purveyor of frivolous gossip but as rather a heroic figure, don't you know, standing between you and all the social blunders you would have made without my wise counsel.

Take the present case. Ten to one, if you didn't have the benefit of my advice, you'd be going on buying original Rembrandts, authenticated Picassos and guaranteed Modiglianis just the way you always had. Well, the thing is that this is now right out. I don't want to offend you, but the plain truth is that you'd make yourself a laughing stock in Paris if you were found laying out good money for original works by the masters.

It's not so long, of course, since the nobs in Paris were doing just what you're doing. Wherever you went in fashionable society you'd hear the gentry telling each other with a pitiful effort at casualness just how much they'd paid out for the Braque over the chimney or the Velasquez in the kitchen.

Not any more. Nowadays, anyone with an atom of social self-respect has hustled all his masterpieces into the garret, the finger of scorn is pointed at those who are suspected of having a Holbein or a Dali on their walls.

The explanation behind this upheaval in the artistic tastes of the upper classes is a simple one: it's all because of the number of forgeries that are floating around. Hardly a day goes by without some wretched duke or viscount discovering that the Watteau for which he paid millions and millions of francs was really painted by Pierre Dupont in the late summer of 1965. You can imagine the humiliation this causes: from being a discriminating art lover of unerring judgment, your hapless duke or viscount is abruptly transmogrified into a mug with too much money.

Things had reached such a pretty pass a while back that it looked as though the bottom was going to fall out of the market. Dealers were all but rushing into the street and begging passers-by for a crust of bread in exchange for Picasso sketches signed by the master and accompanied by his holograph letter of authentication. And finding no takers at that.

One hates to think of the dealers having such a rotten time and I'm happy to be able to report that things have now taken an upward swing. It is true that the market is still sluggish for masterpieces but it's fairly booming in regard to forgeries. The point is that it's one thing to buy a Pierre Dupont under the impression that it's a Watteau—but it's obviously quite incomparably smart to buy a Watteau because you've recognised it as a perfect example of Pierre Dupont.

This new situation may be a bit tough on the contemporary masters who practically can't find a buyer any more but it's pure jam as far as everyone else is concerned. The dealers are snatching up counterfeits as fast as they come off the easel and are selling them as authenticated and unmistakably genuine forgeries. The buyers are high-hatting each other as of old, each one claiming that his forgery is a better forgery than anyone else's forgery. And the forgers themselves, of course, have never had it so good.

So there it is: if you want to be in the swim, snap up some good forgeries before the price puts them out of your reach.

— ALISTER KERSHAW, poet, writer and broadcaster was born in Melbourne in 1921. He died in Sury-en-Vaux, France in 1995. He left Australia for France in 1947 and for some years was private secretary to the British writer Richard Aldington. The above piece was one of around one thousand written in the 1960s when Alister was the ABC's Paris Correspondent. See *A Word from Paris*, Angus and Robertson, 1991, pp. 40-42.

Towards the end of 1962 I had been received into the Catholic Church as a result of receiving the priceless gift of faith – an experience which in itself makes time and fashionable attitudes of all kinds appear increasingly irrelevant. The whole history of Europe and of Britain especially suddenly needed to be understood by me in an entirely different fashion

What we need is a **RENAISSANCE**

of Faith, Art and Culture

By Giles Auty



WHEN ASKED recently for some brief autobiographical notes for the back of a new book, I began almost automatically with the fact that I left home effectively at the age of ten when I won a scholarship to an English Anglican boarding school. Like it or not that was when my life as an independent being was truly obliged to begin.

In last month's *Annals* Wanda Skowronska wrote most movingly about her schooldays which took place at an Australian Catholic school in the years immediately following Vatican II. Her memories are so admirably clear and often funny that she evidently acknowledges the vital importance of her form of schooling to the shaping of her subsequent life and distinguished career.

But can I similarly recognize myself in embryonic form as a schoolboy? Physical resilience aside which is – or at least was – essential for mere survival at most English boarding schools of my day, I think I was also quick to develop a certain independence of mind. In other words I liked to test even widely acknowledged 'truths' fairly thoroughly for myself even back in those days.

Neither of my parents were church-goers – indeed my scholarly father was fairly fatally attracted to the highly questionable values of Bloomsbury for reasons which it took me years to unravel – while my mother's Westcountry forebears, on the other hand, were overwhelmingly of a low-church or 'chapel' persuasion.

Two of my mother's elder brothers were killed on active service during the First World War while a third was seriously

wounded and lost a lung. To add to her woes, the Royal Flying Corps pilot to whom she was then engaged was killed just days before the Armistice which finally brought the so-called Great War to an end. Unlike almost all young women of her day my mother then remained single and living at home until in her late twenties. At that stage she met my father. Both of my parents were thus – rather unusually – in their mid-thirties by the time that I was born.

My earliest memories of life were of always wanting to be a full-time painter when I grew up. Indeed I started drawing highly complicated scenes from a precocious age onwards. After seven years of boarding school and two years of compulsory military service – plus a couple of false starts – I finally began painting full-time at about the time of my twenty-fifth birthday when I joined the formerly famous international arts community which existed at that time in West Cornwall.

During the next twenty or so years modernism and then post-modernism exercised a generally malign effect on the making of art of all kinds but I was lucky enough already to have received a thoroughly sound, old-fashioned training at the hands of a professional artist during my

'RIGHT NOT TO BE BORN'

VATICAN CITY, July 16, 2001 – In its July 15 issue, *the Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican's official newspaper, expressed outrage at the 'shocking and aberrant principle' established by a French high court that a handicapped baby has a 'right not to be born.' On July 13, a French high court confirmed an earlier November ruling that parents of a disabled child or the child himself can sue a physician for not providing information on his handicap before birth and offer an abortion.

holidays from school. The artist had lost much of his right hand while serving in the First World War but had valiantly taught himself to paint left-handed. The large hole in his right hand became, in fact, simply a convenient repository for spare brushes.

During the winter of 1963 I spent some months wandering through Spain and it was after a long series of visits to the Prado in Madrid that my basic understanding of art changed both radically and for good. Modern art had relied very heavily on rhetoric rather than genuine achievement for its capture of the 'official' contemporary mind, characterizing itself automatically as an evident example of 'progress', 'advance', 'inevitable evolution' and so forth. All who opposed its follies and inadequate thinking were therefore characterized foreseeably as 'reactionaries' - if not something worse.

How many scores of times have we encountered exactly this kind of vacuous rhetorical argument since then - in umpteen different contexts? Yet happily - unlike other creative disciplines - visual art is still basically visual in nature. One may therefore directly compare the art of Mark Rothko and Jackson Pollock, say, who were much lauded internationally back in 1963 with the incomparable 17th century productions of Diego Velazquez or Francisco Goya whose similarly unique art was made a century or more later.

Truly great art of all kinds is, *by its very nature*, timeless. *What* the great masters made rather than *when* thus lies at the absolute heart of the matter.

Towards the end of 1962 I had been received into the Catholic church as a result of receiving the priceless gift of faith - an experience which in itself makes time and fashionable attitudes of all kinds appear increasingly irrelevant. The whole history of Europe and of Britain especially suddenly needed to be understood by me in an entirely different fashion.

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Two years had still to pass then before Vatican II but Latin never presented any great problem for me since I first began learning its complexities at the age of eight. The sung Latin Mass at the Catholic church in Farm Street in London's Mayfair still lives on as an incomparable experience in my mind. That church also plays a role in one of my favourite 20th century novels: Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*. Waugh, of course, was also a Catholic convert.

My radical disagreement with the fashionable artistic attitudes of the 1970s marked my first forays into published writing and criticism. Indeed it was a very favourable review of my first published work *The Art of Self Deception* (Libertarian Books 1977) which led subsequently to my writing weekly art criticism for *The Spectator* in London from 1984-1995.

How others continued to see the art of the day never had any influence on my views. Indeed,

I have just learned that a review I wrote almost exactly 30 years ago of exhibitions in London by German painter Lotte Laserstein first caused two Australian collectors to become avid fans of her work - and that of her main teacher Erich Wolfsfeld.

I have described Lotte's work elsewhere as being that of the foremost female artist of the 20th century whose work genuinely stands comparison with most of its very best men. Her training as one of the first women ever admitted to the Berlin Academy of Arts in the 1920s was by any standards superb. However for decades her excellence was largely forgotten because - as a result of Hitler's anti-Jewish policies - she was obliged to escape during the 1930s to a life of relative obscurity in Sweden.

Two infamous world wars largely explain why Germany has not always held its rightful place in Europe as a source of artistic excellence. Thus no less a figure than Edgar Degas thought his

approximate contemporary Adolf von Menzel to be the finest painter of the entire, star-studded 19th century – a view with which I to some extent concur.

But who in Australia knows anything at all about von Menzel or has ever seen a single example of his work even in the form of reproduction?

Intellectually and culturally we still remain tragically cut off in Australia – an ignorance which may nevertheless help paradoxically to boost our national self-esteem. As the recent controversies surrounding the efforts of the Ramsay Foundation show we have largely turned our back academically on the countless achievements of Western civilization. But what have we ever produced of even remotely comparable quality ourselves?

My slim new book *Post-Modernist Australia: How to Create an Unholy Mess* was written with Australia's students and other young people in mind – although it could equally serve as a précis for a much longer and more complete work. Its main thesis is that post-modernism wherever it is encountered – and in whatever form – basically represents Marxism or neo-Marxism in disguise. Post-modernism has thus probably become the most extensive confidence trick which has ever been played – with a great deal of success – on the human race.

Even the most enthusiastic students of Marx must know that when the theories contained in the *Communist Manifesto* were rightly resisted – initially at least – by most established Western democracies, the creed's most vehement followers conceived a plan to infiltrate the core values of such democracies *by stealth*. The process known as The Long March through the Institutions aimed to attack the soft underbelly of Western life as represented by the arts, education, the law, marriage and most specifically Christian family life.

It could be argued that Marxism is largely an economic theory but

that is not the case at all. Marxism sets out from a position of active hatred towards a Christian God and hence – by implication – everything that God ever decreed for our betterment. Catholicism and Christian morality in general were always seen by Marx as impediments to be overcome in a personal lust for worldwide influence and power.

In the whole of its disastrous history communism has never genuinely benefited anyone at all except its controlling elites – and then only in terms of often savage misuse of power.

Commune, communism, community... such words are clearly related but it is in terms of the last concept that Australia has failed most signally to develop in a manner older civilisations have largely been forced to do. As someone who has worked in a score of different countries few are, in my experience, less genuinely welcoming than present-day Australia – although we generally continue to pride ourselves especially on being a friendly and welcoming nation.

Our arts and culture by now have little importance here unless both are heavily politicized – or politically subsidized. The admirable communal spirit of early settlers here has also largely been lost in a widespread contemporary worship of material possessions.

There is also by now far too little communal ideology to be found in local, state or federal politics. Our politicians generally appeal now only to factions – generally in the cause of personal advancement. Gross cynicism has by now become our political norm.

* * * * *

Back in the days of my earliest schooling I learned lines like the following from the start of what is commonly known as *Gray's Elegy* written in 1751:

The curfew tolls the knell of
parting day,

The lowing herd winds slowly o'er
the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods
his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness
and to me.

Few probably ever learned the poem's entire, often endless-seeming screed yet the opening stanza still evokes the tenor of my early rural childhood in England more or less perfectly.

In spite of the perils and discomforts of a recently ended war, life in the depths of rural Kent held a magic and sense of ineffable beauty. Just part of this was due to reading and learning poetry but I was also studying every book I could discover on the paintings of greater and lesser masters.

Just one such was of the English painter Samuel Palmer (1805-1881) whose tiny early paintings from another area of rural Kent were suffused with mystery and an implied presence of God in the landscape. Strangely, a century later in Australia the magnificent draughtsman Lloyd Rees produced small works suffused by a similar intangible spirit. Why has no-one made an international exhibition featuring both? For as Palmer is almost totally unfamiliar to an Australian audience, so is Rees to a British one.

In the twenty odd years of my residence here, Australia has notably declined.

In my view, the falsehoods promoted by post-modernism are almost entirely to blame. The only factor which could genuinely redeem us is a renaissance of genuine faith, art and culture. Educationally we are, as a direct result of post-modernism, in a deep and very dark hole. A great many hands will be needed on the shovels but we can still – just about – dig ourselves out.

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*.

Men cannot do without being led any more than they can do without eating, drinking and sleeping. Leaders have to be able to stir the imagination and excite the latent faith of the many.'

DE GAULLE

By Jude P. Dougherty



JULIAN JACKSON ends Part One of this hefty volume with a quotation:

'Without the Peloponnesian War, Demosthenes would have been an obscure politician, without the Norman Invasion, Joan of Arc would have died peacefully at Domrémy, without the Revolution, Carnot and Napoleon would have finished their existence in low rank, without the present war, General Petain would have finished his career as the head of a brigade.'

The words are taken from a lecture by Charles de Gaulle. Then Jackson adds his own thought:

'Without the fall of France, de Gaulle would have become a leading general of the French Army, probably a minister of defence, perhaps even head of government, but he would not have become *de Gaulle*.'

Jackson then takes 700 pages to prove it.

Before examining the political and military issues confronting de Gaulle as the exiled leader of the Free French, we may look to the habits and character of the man himself.

Charles de Gaulle married Yvonne Vendroux, April 7, 1921. Both had inherited small sums from their deceased parents which enabled them to consider the purchase of a home. After searching for two years they found a property at La Boisserie. Colombey-les-deux-Eglises in the Champagne region. Its price was 45,000 French francs, about the equivalent of a lieutenant's salary of 51,000 francs.

Lacking an automobile of their own, they depended on a friend to move them to their new home.

Julian Jackson, *De Gaulle*.
Cambridge: Harvard University
Press, 2018, pp. xl + 887

The village itself had only one automobile. That belonged to the garagiste. The house was modest with minimal comforts; no running water for the first two years, no central heating, and electricity in only some of the rooms. The de Gaulles lived modestly throughout their married life even when occupying the stately structures that symbolized his authority.

De Gaulle was an avid reader. When assigned to a command post at Wangenbourg, Alsace, he ordered

two books by Ernest Psichari and other books by Guy de Pourtales on the lives of great composers, Wagner, Beethoven, Mozart and Schubert.

Even as president of France he read two or three books a week. He always read the winners of significant literary prizes. He admired Charles Peguy for his inclusive view of France and Emmanuel Mounier for his Christian personalism. He also wrote.

His first book, in English translation, was entitled, *The Edge of the Sword* (1932). It sold 1,500 copies the first year. Hitler read the book, annotating his copy. That was followed by *The Army of the Future* (1934), and *France and Her Army* (1938), a study of the way governments in different periods of history were able to forge an army 'worthy of the role that France was destined to play.'

From the moment of his exile in 1940, de Gaulle regarded himself as the true incarnation of France, 'faithful interpreter of the wishes and hopes of our people.' 'I am a free Frenchman,' he declared, 'I believe in God and the future of my homeland. The Free French must avoid political partnership. Whatever anyone's beliefs and origins they must be a brother for all the others from the moment they begin serving France.'

De Gaulle was forty-nine when he arrived in London on June 17, 1940. His family after some mishap arrived from Bordeaux on June 20th and found accommodations at Hotel Rubens near Buckingham Palace.



Financial Coups and Rewarding Risks

IT MUST not be felt that these heads of the world's chief central banks were themselves substantive powers in world finance. They were not. Rather, they were the technicians and agents of the dominant investment bankers of their own countries, who had raised them up and were perfectly capable of throwing them down. The substantive financial powers of the world were in the hands of these investment bankers (also called "international" or "merchant" bankers) who remained largely behind the scenes in their own unincorporated private banks. These formed a system of international cooperation and national dominance which was more private, more powerful, and more secret than that of their agents in the central banks. This dominance of investment bankers was based on their control over the flows of credit and investment funds in their own countries and throughout the world. They could dominate the financial and industrial systems of their own countries by their influence over the flow of current funds through bank loans, the discount rate, and the rediscounting of commercial debts; they could dominate governments by their control over current government loans and the play of the international exchanges. Almost all of this power was exercised by the personal influence and prestige of men who had demonstrated their ability in the past to bring off successful financial coups, to keep their word, to remain cool in a crisis, and to share their winning opportunities with their associates.

- Carroll Quigley, *Tragedy & Hope: History of the World in our Time*, 1998, GSG & Associates, San Pedro USA, pp. 326, 327.

His son, Philip, later remembered that it was the only time he had ever seen his parents kiss in public.

The correspondence between de Gaulle and Maritain is sparse, but worth noting. Both agreed that France was not only engaged in a military conflict but in a spiritual struggle as well. In January, 1941 de Gaulle wrote to Maritain,

'Like you, I believe that our people are suffering from a kind of moral collapse. I thought that to climb out of the abyss the first thing was to prevent people from resigning themselves to infamy and slavery. ... I think that we will have to profit from the national *reassemblement* around pride in ourselves and resistance to lead the nation toward a new democratic ideal.'

In November 1941, Maritain wrote to de Gaulle to the effect, given the fact that the bourgeoisie had betrayed France, the country needed a 'new regime reconciling Christianity and liberty, i.e. the tradition of St. Louis and the tradition of the *Rights of Man*.' De Gaulle wrote back, 'I am not worried for the future of democracy. Its enemies are only ciphers. I do not fear for the future of religion. The bishops have behaved badly

but there are good curés, simple priests, who are saving us. ... All that is healthiest in France is the people.'

De Gaulle was not enthusiastic about the reforms of Vatican II. He worried that Pope John XXIII had been unduly influenced by a Vatican group who wanted to revolutionize everything. 'I am not sure the Church was right to suppress processions and the Latin service. ... It is always wrong to give the impression of denying oneself and being ashamed of what one is. How can you expect others to believe in you if you do not believe in yourself?'

When President Mitterrand in 1965 proposed that the contraceptive pill be legalized, de Gaulle objected,

'One must not reduce women to machines for making love. This goes against all that is most precious in women: fecundity. A woman is made to have children. If one tolerates the pill nothing will hold sway anymore. Sex will invade everything.'

From Jackson's copious account, we learn much about Europe's political struggles during the interim war years and much more about the

years between September 1939, and June, 1945.

When de Gaulle arrived in London, Jacques Maritain, at that time living in New York, was the most famous French man in exile. Maritain advised de Gaulle to confine himself to a symbolic role rather than try to form a government in exile. De Gaulle begged to differ.

'Men cannot do without being led any more than they can do without eating, drinking and sleeping. Leaders have to be able to stir the imagination and excite the latent faith of the many.'

This he did in his nightly broadcasts from London.

De Gaulle regarded the Vichy government of General Petain as collaborationist and declared that he, de Gaulle, was the true leader of the Free French. The Vichy government responded in 1940 by depriving him of his citizenship and condemning him to death.

To rally the Free French in what remained of the Western Empire de Gaulle spent six weeks in Africa. Jackson describes it as an 'epithany,' for de Gaulle was lauded and cheered wherever he went. In Brazzaville and Gabon he discovered he was a living legend. As he recalled the experience: 'There was a person named de Gaulle who existed in other peoples' minds, a separate personality from myself.' He was emboldened by that public perception. While in Brazzaville, he issued a manifesto, setting up an Empire Defence Council and exercising powers in its name, in the name of France.

With the German defeat at Stalingrad in 1943, it was clear that the war had turned decisively in favor of the Allies and at some point a landing in France would be attempted.

To prevent France from falling into the hands of the communists, de Gaulle formed a provisional government which he would lead from 1944-46. He had come to the conclusion early in 1940 that the only way to save France was to leave France. With the aid of his lectures on BBC and the support

of Churchill, de Gaulle imposed himself as the only public voice to offer an alternative view to that of Petain.

On June 28, 1940 Churchill agreed officially to recognize de Gaul as the leader of the Free French. De Gaulle may not have been a natural orator, but the oddity of his delivery and diction gave an extra weight to his speeches.

With Liberation in 1945, de Gaulle became provisional president of the Fourth Republic. When the nation was forced to choose the kind of political system it would adopt, de Gaulle advocated a presidential rather than a parliamentary one.

The issue was put to a referendum. In resigning his provisional role he, expected that public support would bring him back to power with a mandate for his preferred mode of governance, but the National Assembly chose instead, Felix Gorin. The history of the Fourth Republic is one of inter-party feuding, inaction and chaos.

In 1958 de Gaulle came out of retirement at the request of the National Assembly to deal with the crisis brought on by the Algerian War. He was appointed prime minister by René Coty and charged by Coty to rewrite the Constitution of France, which became the foundation of the Fifth Republic.

He was elected president later that year and re-elected in 1965, a position he held until his retirement to Colombey in 1969.

When de Gaulle was elected President of the Fifth Republic in 1958, Jean Paul Sartre was violent in his anti-Gaullism. *Le Monde* had become the voice of the progressive left. The only significant 'intellectual' to support de Gaulle was Francois Mauriac.

As an early biographer of de Gaulle, Mauriac wrote: 'As a Christian I feel confirmed in my certainty that de Gaulle is not a man of destiny; he is a man of divine grace.' Mauriac's biography, it may be noted, was so effusive in its assessment of de Gaulle's achievements that even Mauriac's

admirers thought of it as a hagiography.

On November 2, 1970, All Saints Day, Charles and Yvonne went as they did annually to pay their respects at the graveside of their daughter Anne. On November 9th de Gaulle worked as usual, interrupting his day's work by two brief walks. He took tea with his wife and was writing some family letters when he shouted in pain and slumped on the table.

Yvonne called the doctor and the village priest. De Gaulle received the last rites before he died at 7:25p.m. Yvonne had the body laid out in the center of the room, dressed him in his uniform and covered the body with the tricolor. On the table at his bedside were two candles, a crucifix and a cruet of holy water, usually provided for the priest administering the last rites. She placed in his hands a rosary that had been given to him by Pope John XXIII. Yvonne maintained a silent vigil through the night and released the news of his death the next morning.

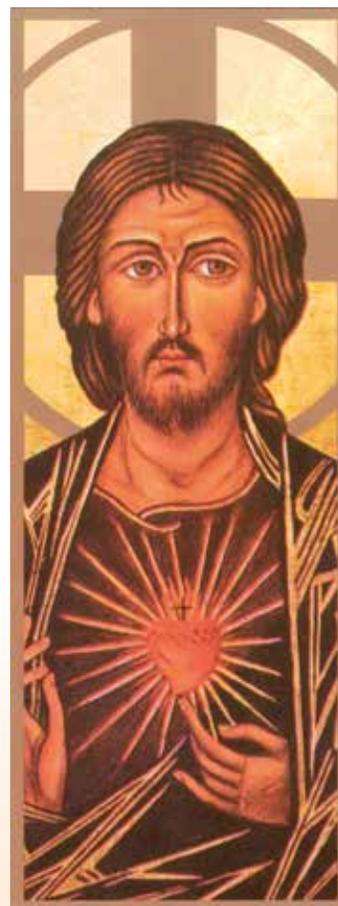
In 1940, Jacques Maritain may have been critical of de Gaulle's attempt to form a government in exile, but by 1942 his reservation had given way to the recognition that de Gaulle's refusal to accept defeat was 'a chivalric act that gave hope to the French.'

Julian Jackson recalls Maritain's words with approval: 'Now that the rancid arguments of the Vichy apologists are long past, there cannot be a French citizen who does not recognize the truth of Maritain's statement and who does not feel justifiably proud of their country as a result of what de Gaulle achieved between 1940 and 1944. He saved the honour of France.'

Jackson's magnificent account of this great man is equal to the man himself.

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

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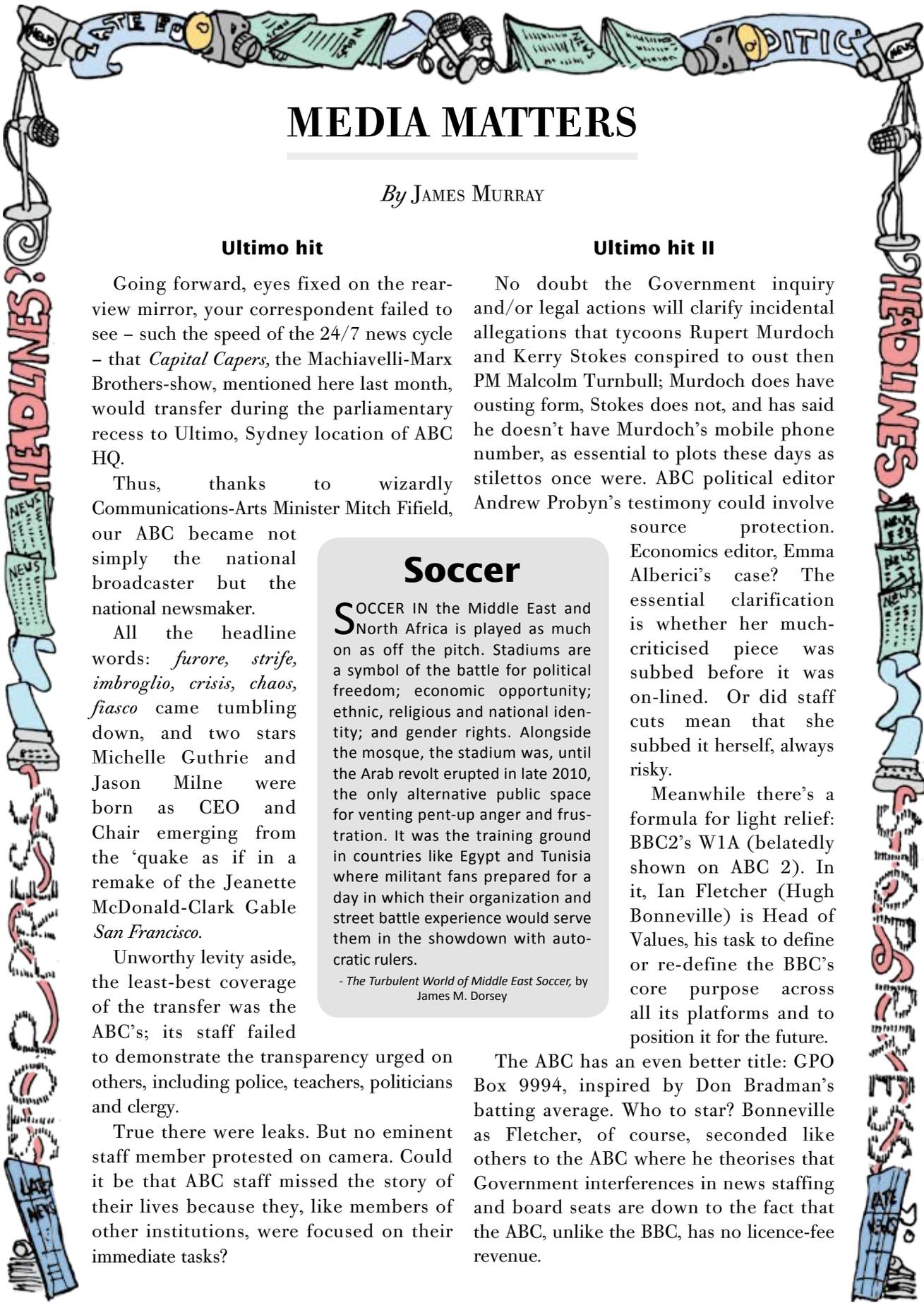
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MEDIA MATTERS

By JAMES MURRAY

Ultimo hit

Going forward, eyes fixed on the rear-view mirror, your correspondent failed to see – such the speed of the 24/7 news cycle – that *Capital Capers*, the Machiavelli-Marx Brothers-show, mentioned here last month, would transfer during the parliamentary recess to Ultimo, Sydney location of ABC HQ.

Thus, thanks to wizardly Communications-Arts Minister Mitch Fifield, our ABC became not simply the national broadcaster but the national newsmaker.

All the headline words: *furor*, *strife*, *imbroglio*, *crisis*, *chaos*, *fiasco* came tumbling down, and two stars Michelle Guthrie and Jason Milne were born as CEO and Chair emerging from the ‘quake as if in a remake of the Jeanette McDonald-Clark Gable *San Francisco*.

Unworthy levity aside, the least-best coverage of the transfer was the ABC’s; its staff failed to demonstrate the transparency urged on others, including police, teachers, politicians and clergy.

True there were leaks. But no eminent staff member protested on camera. Could it be that ABC staff missed the story of their lives because they, like members of other institutions, were focused on their immediate tasks?

Ultimo hit II

No doubt the Government inquiry and/or legal actions will clarify incidental allegations that tycoons Rupert Murdoch and Kerry Stokes conspired to oust then PM Malcolm Turnbull; Murdoch does have ousting form, Stokes does not, and has said he doesn’t have Murdoch’s mobile phone number, as essential to plots these days as stilettos once were. ABC political editor Andrew Probyn’s testimony could involve source protection. Economics editor, Emma Alberici’s case? The essential clarification is whether her much-criticised piece was subbed before it was on-lined. Or did staff cuts mean that she subbed it herself, always risky.

Meanwhile there’s a formula for light relief: BBC2’s W1A (belatedly shown on ABC 2). In it, Ian Fletcher (Hugh Bonneville) is Head of Values, his task to define or re-define the BBC’s core purpose across all its platforms and to position it for the future.

The ABC has an even better title: GPO Box 9994, inspired by Don Bradman’s batting average. Who to star? Bonneville as Fletcher, of course, seconded like others to the ABC where he theorises that Government interferences in news staffing and board seats are down to the fact that the ABC, unlike the BBC, has no licence-fee revenue.

Soccer

SOCCKER IN the Middle East and North Africa is played as much on as off the pitch. Stadiums are a symbol of the battle for political freedom; economic opportunity; ethnic, religious and national identity; and gender rights. Alongside the mosque, the stadium was, until the Arab revolt erupted in late 2010, the only alternative public space for venting pent-up anger and frustration. It was the training ground in countries like Egypt and Tunisia where militant fans prepared for a day in which their organization and street battle experience would serve them in the showdown with autocratic rulers.

- *The Turbulent World of Middle East Soccer*, by James M. Dorsey



Zippy doodah

In the era of PR and advertising, corporate modesty is rare, none rarer than the modesty of Egon Zehnder, head-hunters in waiting to the ABC.

Unlike their primitive predecessors, modern head-hunters do not shrink heads, they tend to expand them. When Michelle Guthrie was appointed to the surprise of many (not excluding herself), your correspondent suggested she brought with her a gift: an insight into the workings of the world's biggest firm of head-hunters Egon Zehnder .

It would now be an ideal subject for *Four Corners*, the executive producer of which, Sally Neighbour, applauded Guthrie's firing.

Some starter facts: Egon Zehnder, founded in 1956 by Harvard Business School graduate, Egon PS Zehnder, is the world's biggest private executive-search firm.

Its current chair is Jill Ader, its HQ is in Zurich, and such is its global prestige you wonder why the firm's successful clients do not add to their distinctions ZHH (Zehnder Head Hunted).

Doubling quids

None of the above is to suggest criticism of head-hunting in principle. After six months of journalism with News Exchange Ltd, Hampton Court, your correspondent was head-hunted by its rival, *The Surrey Herald*, Chertsey. Inducement? Pay doubled to 12 pounds a week. Since then, he has tried to calculate his pay had he doubled it every six months over the 65 years he has been hacking a living.

He gives up; he does not have enough fingers but fantasizes that his pay would be in the ballpark where Egon Zehnder started hunting.

Axis of nihil

The Tasmanian Government has created a Liberal axis with its South Australian counterpart. Objective: to break the seal of confession in Australia.

The proposed Tasmanian law reportedly bundles priests with teachers, nurses and public servants. There goes the need for an amendment – or the law could affect Canberra's ex-journalist staffers who are paid through public service channels. And if, staffers, how long before a knock-on effect to journalists, doctors and lawyers?

Under wider attack is the Catholic Church's magisterium. Arguably, it failed in its duty to apply its own Canon Law strictly: that is, to ascertain whether child sexual abuse allegations by a minority were true and, if so, to de-license offenders before handing them over to the civil authorities for condign punishment.

Civil rights lawyer Father Frank Brennan SJ has argued cogently that breaking the Seal of Confession would be affectless in the apprehension of offenders.

Archbishop Julian Porteous of Hobart leads Tasmanians opposed and he has a formidable adviser in his Vicar General, Michael Tate (lawyer, ex-Labor senator, ambassador (Netherlands and the Holy See).

The Anglican Church has already come to an accommodation on the new law – scarcely surprising: Anglicanism was founded on such an

accommodation.

Thousands of priests have stated that they will not keep such a law. Under its South Australian version, breaches entail a \$10,000 fine. What if priests refuse to pay the fine?

Surely not the Clink? There again, the original Clink in London's Southwark

was part of a Reformation network of jails for Catholic priests and laity, resulting in the

Mere Toleration of Religion

RELIGION cannot be regarded as just another aspect of culture, one among many human occupations, of indifferent importance along with science and art, history and philosophy. Religion is either the supreme human discipline, because it is God's discipline of man, and as such dominates our culture, or it has no place at all. The mere toleration of religion, which implies indifference to or denial of its claims, produces a secularized culture as much as militant atheism or Nazi nihilism.

- Mortimer Adler, 'God and the Professors,'
Conference on Science, Philosophy and
Religion (1941)





saying that it was easier to go to Confession and Mass in jail than in church.

For the Catholic Church to imitate its Anglican offshoot would be to weaken the magisterium vis-à-vis the State, and with it the Caesar-God rendering, keystone of true, universal liberty.

Gap closure

The Labor Party, working on an executive-worker pay gap need look no further for advice than Paul Simons, the ex-Merchant Navy CEO who turned Woolworths round.

On his watch he also defeated a take-over from US equity raiders KKR – Kohlberg Kravis Roberts – who are always over the horizon, licensed privateers waiting to board.

It may be, however, that Simons’ most significant legacy was an executive- pay system calculated on 30 times the annual wage of the lowest-paid, full-time male worker.

Given a datum of \$30,000 pa, the highest executive pay would be \$900,000 pa. By contrast, the US and the UK, executive multipliers are currently 300 and 183 respectively; Australia’s is 78.

In the light of these standards, Simons is a beggar outside Sydney Town Hall, across from Woolworths flagship store? Well, no. This year, Simons sold his Neutral Bay penthouse for \$9.5 million, a neat balance for the rural property, Glencoe, acquired in 2015 for \$6.5 million.

Some, who should know better, may dismiss the Labor move as the politics of envy; rather it derives from the papal social justice encyclical, *Rerum Novarum* (1891).

This helped to influence Mr Justice HB Bourne’s verdict in the Harvester Case (1907) where he set 42 shillings a week as the minimum wage for an unskilled labourer with a wife and three children.

What makes the executive-worker gap appear worse is Australia’s egalitarian reputation. In debating, MPs might consider their own pay; it is among the world’s highest, the Prime Minister earning more than the US President.

China plates

China’s hegemony offensive is difficult to counter. The reason? The Chinese Communist Party apparat has turned various Western precedents topsy-turvy.

In America’s Monroe Doctrine can be seen a precedent for China’s occupation of disputed islands in the South China Sea. The Confucius Institutes have their precedents in the Goethe Institutes, Alliance Francaise and the venerable British Council.

China moves in the Pacific islands are a variation on colonialism. What can Australia say of China’s proposed twin-use port in Papua New Guinea? It set a precedent when the Northern Territory, without reference to Canberra, leased the port of Darwin to China. How prudent the Territory representatives were: only a 99-year lease.

Acquisition of infrastructure, agriculture, dairy farms and cattle stations have their precedent (and possibly a smidgin of revenge) in the 19th Century Concessions, European Powers won from China without, be it said, paying a premium on market rates.

As to China’s replacing soft-diplomacy with debt-trap diplomacy, would it help PNG’s leaders to suggest that such diplomacy is a riskier kind of Cargo Cult?

Orwellian doublethink enables Chinese cadres to maintain that their initiatives are benignly civilian while they are based on the military philosopher Sun Tzu’s doctrine of occupying land without war.

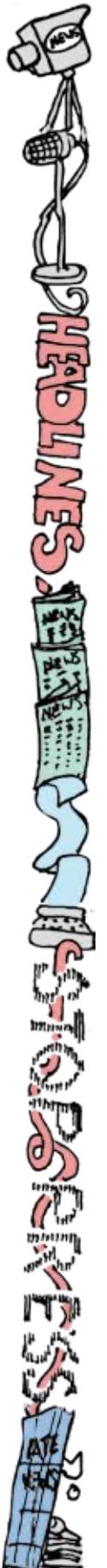
So where does that leave Vatican diplomats and their policy anent ‘the one,

Truth

THE READER is only able to perceive the truth through the words of the journalist. Try as we might to convince ourselves not to accept uncritically the accuracy of stories we read in the newspapers, we nevertheless rely on them for our understanding of the world.

Television can create greater problems. Not only can words mislead, but the power of the visual image can be such that the perception gained by the viewer can be wholly distorted.

- 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).





holy Catholic and apostolic Church vis-à-vis China's Patriotic Church?

Precedent again: the Vatican is in a position similar to where it was when Henry VIII (the Xi Jinping of his time) made himself Sovereign Head of the Church of England, a title still held by Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom (and of Australia).

There were martyrs then, pre-eminently Thomas More. Will there be martyrs again?

Disclosure: your correspondent distilled much of this item from the unpublished MS of his novel *Amen*, about the end of the world as we know it.

Don one

Abating his craziness, President Donald Trump, has again shown the intrepid side to his foxiness: he has got his candidate, Brett Michael Kavanaugh, into the United States Supreme Court (50-48, the lowest margin in more than a century).

The margin is the measure of the suasive ferocity Democrats evinced, fuelled – nitro to glycerine – by sexual misconduct allegations. True or false, presumption of male guilt was evident. What if an equal female candidate had been accused of misconduct?

Unlike old-time Puritans, the neo-Puritans of Correctism dismiss conversion to virtue as seen in John Bunyan's, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, which drew on earlier dogma of penitence and amendment.

The core of opposition to Kavanaugh was his putative attitude to *Roe v. Wade* (1973) and the Supreme Court ruling in favour of abortion's constitutionality. Since then, Republicans have found in the Constitution itself a pro-life argument.

The effect of the Kavanaugh appointment on the US mid-term elections may be less dire than some predict: anti-abortion crosses party lines.

As the US debates, so does Australia, raising the question: how do pro-abortion activists reconcile it with their support for increased immigration, effectively a replacement for native human resources destroyed?

Warning shot

The most significant word in the multi-volume interim report of the Dreadnought Hayne Royal Commission was 'greed', suggesting that the Commission, rather than take a pragmatic view is set on a moral course in line with the introduction to Tawney's, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* quoted here.

Research for another item (See below) turned up a relevant dictum by Lord Acton: 'The issue which has swept down the centuries and which will have to be fought sooner or later is the people versus the banks.'

Hayden AC (RC)

The news of former Labor leader, Foreign Minister and Governor General Bill Hayden's baptism was broken in *The Australian* by Troy Branson and enhanced by Geraldine Doogue's ABC TV coverage.

For your correspondent both recalled the rarely quoted 'Great men are almost always bad men' – an appendage to Lord Acton's remark, 'Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.'

Hayden is an exception, a great man who sought goodness, even as he appeared to fail. In this he resembled Acton, a failed politician barred as a Catholic from attending Cambridge University.

He disputed with Vatican authorities on the proposed doctrine of papal infallibility yet went with it when it was promulgated, his attitude summed up in his later saying: 'Communion with Rome is dearer than life.'

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Be Proud

IT is surely not unreasonable to think that this extraordinary immunity [to foreign invasions after the tenth century], of which we have shared the privilege with scarcely any people but the Japanese, was one of the fundamental factors of European civilization, in the deepest sense, in the exact sense of the word.

— Marc Bloch, 1886-1944, *The Historian's Craft: Reflections on the Nature and Uses of History and the Techniques and Methods of Those Who Write It*. Bloch, a Jewish/French historian, was executed by the Nazis on June 16, 1945, six days after D-Day.



King Harold II had tattoos of his various victories illustrated all over his body, but certainly not the Battle of Hastings. In 1862, as Prince of Wales, the future Edward VII received the first of several tattoos, a Jerusalem Cross, while in the Holy Land.

THE MORALITY OF TATTOOING

By George W. Rutler



HERE WAS A TIME, not in the hoary past, when tattoos were an indulgence of louché members of the *demi-monde*, as observed by Alexandre Dumas. They seem to have become respectable as our culture erases the borderline between the *demi-monde* and the *monde entier*. Priests have become somewhat accustomed to pious communicants with arms totally decorated like a Persian tapestry or Michelin roadmap, in what is idiomatically called a “sleeve.”

Even facial tattoos are appearing. Some are in the form of written slogans, which one supposes would appear to a narcissist backwards in a mirror. Other designs are more audacious, like a portrait of Anne Frank on the cheek of the “hip-hop” producer Arnold Gutierrez. One used to have to go to state fair sideshows to see tattooed men

like those who have become part of the vernacular on Main Street. Roughly over one fifth of all adults in the United States now sport more than one tattoo, up from about 14 percent in 2003, although these figures are, of course, estimates.

One practical problem with this fad—if it is just a fad—is that it

cannot be corrected in mature years like hairstyles or clothing. If these markings can be removed, it is only by a long and painful process, more so if the depiction is in a less accessible part of the body. But the bigger issue is whether a tattoo befits what is increasingly referred to with unqualified insouciance as “the dignity of the human person.”

If it is undignified to execute someone, whatever the crime may be, as some would now propose, is it unworthy to turn the human body into a human billboard? And if the body is a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19-20), are such

of Northumberland in England decreed in 787, the same year as the Second Council of Nicaea: “When an individual undergoes the ordeal of tattooing for the sake of God, he is greatly praised. But one who submits himself to be tattooed for superstitious reason in the manner of the heathens will derive no benefit thereof.”

A possible forgery paraded an outright prohibition of tattooing as a pontifical decree of Adrian I, but there was a logic to it. Pope Adrian had aligned himself with the Franks against the tattooed Lombards who were nibbling at papal territories, the final straw being the boldness of the Lombard king Desiderius in seizing the Duchy of Pentapolis.

The problem was solved soon enough, during the reigns of Cunincpert and Liutprand, when the Lombards became totally Catholicized. (In one of those curious circumstances that may



decorations embellishments or defacements?

An Old Testament prohibition of what was considered a pagan practice (Lev. 19:28) was for a particular time and circumstance, and not all Levitical prohibitions have universal application for the Christian. Yet the Council

be less significant than one might wish, the largest tattoo parlor in Portland, Oregon, in our own time is on Lombard Street.)

Before Adrian, in the fourth century, Saint Basil the Great had declared: “No man shall let his hair grow long or tattoo himself as do the heathen, those apostles of Satan

who make themselves despicable by indulging in lewd and lascivious thought. Do not associate with those who mark themselves with thorns and needles so that their blood flows to the earth.”

In 316, the practice of tattooing the faces of criminals was abolished as un-Christian by the emperor Constantine. In part this may have been because “followers of the Chrestus” had been so branded. In addition, the Romans had been perplexed, and admittedly terrified, by the Picts who painted themselves in dark indigo from head to toe. They were an enigmatic people who eventually intermarried with clans from the Inner Hebrides and contiguous parts.

Their society was partly matriarchal, and the women were even more “depicted” than their men. It is not certain if they really were tattooed, or just wore war paint like the American Indians, but it is certain that they used a dye from the “woad” plant, a form of mustard, which, even if injected beneath the skin, would last only a couple of weeks.

There is evidence that, before the Edict of Milan, many Christians deliberately tattooed themselves in bold defiance, rather like the unsubstantiated report of King Christian X wearing a yellow Star of David during the Nazi occupation of Denmark. Later, Christian tattoos proclaimed the Faith in the Holy Land and Anatolia, as recorded by Procopius of Gaza in the sixth century and a century later by Theophylact Simocatta. For some, tattoos replicated the wounds of Christ.

Crusaders customarily had themselves tattooed to identify their bodies as Christian for burial. During Ottoman rule in Bosnia, Christian Croats used tattoos to prevent conversions to Islam. Tattooing the right wrist with an image of the Cross is still common among Copts; the Gerges family ply their tattooing trade at the Church of Saint Simon the Tanner in the Mokattam hills.

Who's in Control?

OUR BRAINS seem to crave the virtual world, with repeated exposure producing changes that resemble drug addiction. According to Gary Small, a professor of psychiatry at the University of California, Los Angeles, the excitement of getting an e-mail alert causes a release of dopamine, a neurotransmitter that reinforces the behavior and thus drives us to crave more such stimulation. Before long, it becomes impossible for people to put down their iPhones and BlackBerries. Dopamine's effects were shaped by natural selection: It helped to focus our attention so that we wouldn't be eaten by tigers. These days, it is facilitating our consumption by e-mail and text messages. Many experts believe our Internet addiction is similar to that associated with gambling. In both cases, people find it difficult to function normally, have stable family lives, or be effective at work. ...We have to make a choice: We can design our lives so that we stay in control, or we can cede the control of our lives to our tools.

— From 'Our Tools are using Us,' by David Davidow. See *Overconnected: the Promise and Threat of the Internet*.

Tattoos go back even further: there are tattoos on the five-thousand-year-old body of the Ice Man (Oetzi) found frozen in the Alps. Their purposes are unknown, and at least in part were probably a kind of talisman. There is a greater frequency of tattooing among the mentally ill today, but many psychiatrists think that their use by relatively normal people is often a passive-aggressive way of compensating for low self-esteem especially among young adults. This is even more so the case in extreme forms of body piercing.

A Mayo Clinic report has drawn attention to the increased risk of infections such as Hepatitis B and C through the use of tattoo needles.

First Tattooed American

John Ledyard, a Dartmouth College undergraduate who matriculated in 1772, later became the first American tattooed in the Polynesian manner, and saw nothing inconsistent in this and his Christian zeal, influenced by the First Great Awakening. While proficient in Greek and Latin and skilled in classical drama, he was unable to pay his tuition, and left the college in a dugout canoe, rowing down the Connecticut River to New London. Robert Frost would call him “the patron saint of freshman dropouts.”

Then he sailed to England where he joined the crew of Captain Cook on his third journey aboard the HMS Resolution in search of the Northwest Passage. He served as a mariner, with the master being William Bligh, who was later to attain opprobrium as captain of the HMS Bounty. In Polynesia, Ledyard's arms and hands were tattooed with reddish brown dots in a geometric pattern.

It was Cook who adopted the Polynesian name “ta-tau.” This is not to be confused with the seventeenth century Dutch drum beat “doe den tap toe” signifying closing hour for drinking in barracks, from which we get the military tattoo, such as the Royal Edinburgh Tattoo.

The American naval historian Ira Dye debunked the belief that Captain Cook was the first to introduce a Polynesian style of tattooing to the West, having had his buttocks tattooed in Tahiti. Various explorers were already familiar with the practice, and in 1791 the remarkable hydrographer and explorer Charles Pierre Claret de Fleurieu, who barely escaped the guillotine, remarked a similarity with practices long-established in Europe.

After being the first United States citizen to see Alaska, Ledyard

returned briefly to Dartmouth and wrote a journal of Captain Cook's last expedition to the Sandwich Islands and beyond, including an account of his death at the hands of Hawaiians in Kealakekua Bay. This was the first book to receive a copyright in the new nation of the United States. Ledyard then embarked for Paris where he was befriended by John Paul Jones and Benjamin Franklin.

Thomas Jefferson, as Minister to the Court of Louis XVI, introduced him as the first tattooed American at Versailles, and secured him a passport from the empress Catherine the Great, hoping that Ledyard might cross Russia and secure a trade agreement with China. Agents of the empress arrested him in the Siberian town of Irkutsk as a possible spy and deported him to Poland. He eventually ended up in Egypt, seeking the source of the Niger River, and died in Cairo of accidental poisoning at the age of thirty-seven.

It cannot be said that tattooing became acceptable among Ledyard's fellow Connecticut Yankees, but eventually it attained a sort of esoteric caché among European aristocrats, and not without precedent. King Harold II had tattoos of his various victories illustrated all over his body, but certainly not the Battle of Hastings.

In 1862, as Prince of Wales, the future Edward VII received the first of several tattoos, a Jerusalem Cross, while in the Holy Land. His son George V, while Duke of York, was tattooed with a dragon on his arm in 1882 during his trip to Japan, and suit was followed by the rulers of Spain, Denmark, and Germany. Winston's mother, Lady Randolph Churchill had a snake tattooed on her wrist, and her son copied her with an anchor like Popeye's on his arm.

Maoris Culture Down Under

Nowhere is tattooing so artistically developed as among the Maoris of New Zealand, probably



through Samoan influences. But the Maori method is unique and different from generic tattooing. "Ta moko" involves incising the skin, leaving a grooved surface. While this came to be considered barbaric among some Pacific populations, being totally abolished in late nineteenth century Japan, "ta moko" lasted for a while as a Maori status symbol, although Catholic missionaries discouraged it.

In order to combat smallpox with modern medicine, the "Tohunga Suppression Act of 1907" restricted the incantatory rites of tattooed Tohunga medicine men, a stricture made absolute by the "Quackery Prevention Act of 1908" during the reign of the admittedly tattooed King Edward VII.

No one is more symbolic of the modern Maori identity and cultural pride than Whina Cooper (1895-1994). The granddaughter of an American whaler and daughter of a Catholic catechist, Heremia Te Wake, was born in northern Hokianga where unsung heroic missionaries had arrived in 1838, bringing the Gospel to the Nagapuhi region despite many obstacles and dangers. In her long life, from simple beginnings, she championed Maori property rights, leading the famous Maori Land March of 1975 from Te Hapua to Wellington. In her marriage, which contravened tribal customs, she was protected and mentored by a priest, Father Charles Kreyborg.

In 1981, Queen Elizabeth II, as "Te Whaea Nui"—the Great Mother, honored Cooper as a Dame of the Order of the British Empire. By

her life's end, she was popularly called "Mother of the Nation" and a million people watched her funeral on television. In recent times, Nanaia Mahuta became the first member of the New Zealand parliament to wear a "moko kauae," reviving the traditional chin tattoo worn by distinguished women, but Dame Whina, not particularly opinionated about the matter, had managed to do more than any other Maori woman without it.

There has been something of a resurgence of "ta moko" as a cultural statement. The Maoris have a traditional welcoming ceremony for strangers, and I had the honor of participating in one in Auckland. They affect a ferocity completely out of character with their kindly character, for it is sheer theatre. Tattooed warriors wear abbreviated clothing suitable for tropical heat, and perform a ritual dance, the "haka," meant to intimidate the visitor with its menacing sounds, grimacing faces and threatening gestures. If one does not blink, one is welcome. I passed the test easily since I travel frequently on the New York City subway system.

Amputating the Expressive Possibilities

To bring this into the current Western cultural sphere, a committee report of the Pontifical Council for Culture in Rome on January 29, 2015, addressed the question of cosmetic alteration of the human body, and disapproved of procedures such as "facelifts" and "tummy tucks," pronouncing that elective plastic surgery can "amputate the expressive possibilities of the human face which are so connected to empathetic abilities" and "can be aggressive toward the feminine identity, showing a refusal of the body." Something may have been lost in the received text as rendered by Vatican translators under the innocent impression that they have a capacity for English, but one infers that the commission would not approve of tattoos.

However, in Rome's Palazzo Colonna in February, 2018, at a "sneak preview" of the Metropolitan Museum's controversial "Heavenly Bodies" exhibition, which opened in New York the following May, Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi, President of the Pontifical Council for Culture, was photographed smiling next to the fashion designer Donatella Versace who could not smile because surgical procedures had limited her expressive possibilities. Ravasi was the same prelate who keened in 2016 at news of the death of David Bowie, the singer whose left calf was tattooed with an image of a man on a bicycle holding a frog.

At a gathering of three hundred young adults in Rome on May 19, 2018, a seminarian from Ukraine, where a tattoo festival is held annually in Kyiv, asked Pope Francis for a pontifical opinion on tattooing. In a development of the imputed anti-tattoo doctrine of Pope Adrian I, while supposedly not contradicting it, His Holiness said, "Don't be afraid of tattoos" and cited the example of Eritrean Christians tattooed with crosses. He added: "Of course, there can be exaggerations," but a tattoo "is a sign of belonging" and talking about it can begin "a dialogue about priorities."

Perhaps in a less spontaneous encounter, the Holy Father might have added that the Holy Catholic Church provides three sacraments whose character is more indelible than any self-mutilation. Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders cannot be repeated, and confer a seal by which one belongs to Christ and is disposed to actual graces. This is the message that missionaries spread throughout the world, and which needs to be heard again in the homelands of those missionaries.

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– Editor, *Annals*

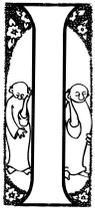
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Speaking of Christianity, my wife and I confess to being of the very worst kind – Catholics. We know that the scent of our faith pervades the air so who can blame society for turning their noses up at us.

VICTIMS OF POLITICAL CORRECTNESS SPEAK OUT

By Peter Fisher



I'M AFRAID that I feel the need to speak plainly. I hope and pray that my worldly friends and acquaintances will understand and not be too critical of me, as I attempt to identify myself in this progressive world, marching inexorably, as it is, to the drumbeat of modernism - to who knows where?

I'm hesitant to confess that I am a male, and a white, heterosexual one at that. Perhaps I can be excused because I was born of white, heterosexual parents and obviously have known no better. I also have a like extended family and am ashamed to relate that not one in that relatively large group professes to any alternative identity.

Approaching octogenarianism I am reluctant to say that I have never had a partner. Mind you, as her husband in marriage, I have had a wife for more than fifty years but for some unknown reason such titles apparently offend people, and, we are told, must be avoided.

From the above it will be obvious to a diminishing number that I am married to a woman, who incidentally, boldly likes to identify herself as such. She is very feminine but paradoxically is reluctant to proclaim herself a feminist. I suspect it would take too much time and effort to coax her into this ever-developing conformism and may have to leave her to remain totally comfortable in her obstinacy.

I apologise sincerely for the use of archaic titles and personal pronouns in thus describing our relationship but until our worthy progressive academics can reach consensus on suitable and comprehensible substitutes, the old ones will just have to suffice.

I confess to a little confusion also that when attempting to substitute the plural pronoun for the gender specific singular, the grammar and comprehension often falter.

Our union (I hope the alternative term suitably conforms) of course has produced children and grandchildren of like identity and disposition and I am wondering where it all went wrong. It is too late for us but I hope modern

society will not be too judgmental on them for they also did not know better.

I suspect the problem is that we were raised in traditional families imbued with the apparent bias, bigotry and ignorance of the culture of western civilisation arising as it did from the wellspring of Christianity. It is hard to imagine a more inappropriate inheritance to equip us for our transition into the progressive dictates being prepared for us.

Should it be a matter of regret that we all were not subject to the now enlightened influence of our progressive elites who with their superior knowledge and disdain for our current outdated values and *mores*, are leading us into a brave new world where virtue has a totally secular new meaning?

Speaking of marriage, it is paradoxical that those eligible and retreating at pace from that traditional institution, were recently almost knocked over by those previously thought to be ineligible, rushing towards it. Thank God that stampede has abated.

And speaking of Christianity my wife and I confess to being of the very worst kind – Catholics. We know that the scent of our faith pervades the air so who can blame society for turning their noses up at us.

We also know that we are one of the few remaining stumbling blocks to the smooth transition of

The Silver Swanne

THE SILVER Swanne, who living
had no Note,
When death approacht unlockt
her silent throat,
Leaning her breast against the
reedie shore,
Thus sung her first and last, and
sung no more,
Farewell all joyes,
O death come close mine eyes,
More Geese than Swannes now
live, more fooles than wise.

- Orlando Gibbons, 1583-1625, *First Set of Madrigals or Motets of 5 Parts*, 1612

society into full utopian secularism and probably deserve the scorn and derision heaped upon us. That we carry on with our faith despite all of this is a total mystery to them and obviously confirms our stubborn foolishness.

What is worse as we muddle along cowering from the daily censure that bombards our kind, our ignorance is on further display as we are never certain what the rules actually are as they rapidly evolve. We are left wondering actually who and where are the rule makers and what are their credentials. Surely, lecturing us with such authority, force and self-virtue they have been empowered by a very high authority. Could they be in an ivory tower perhaps?

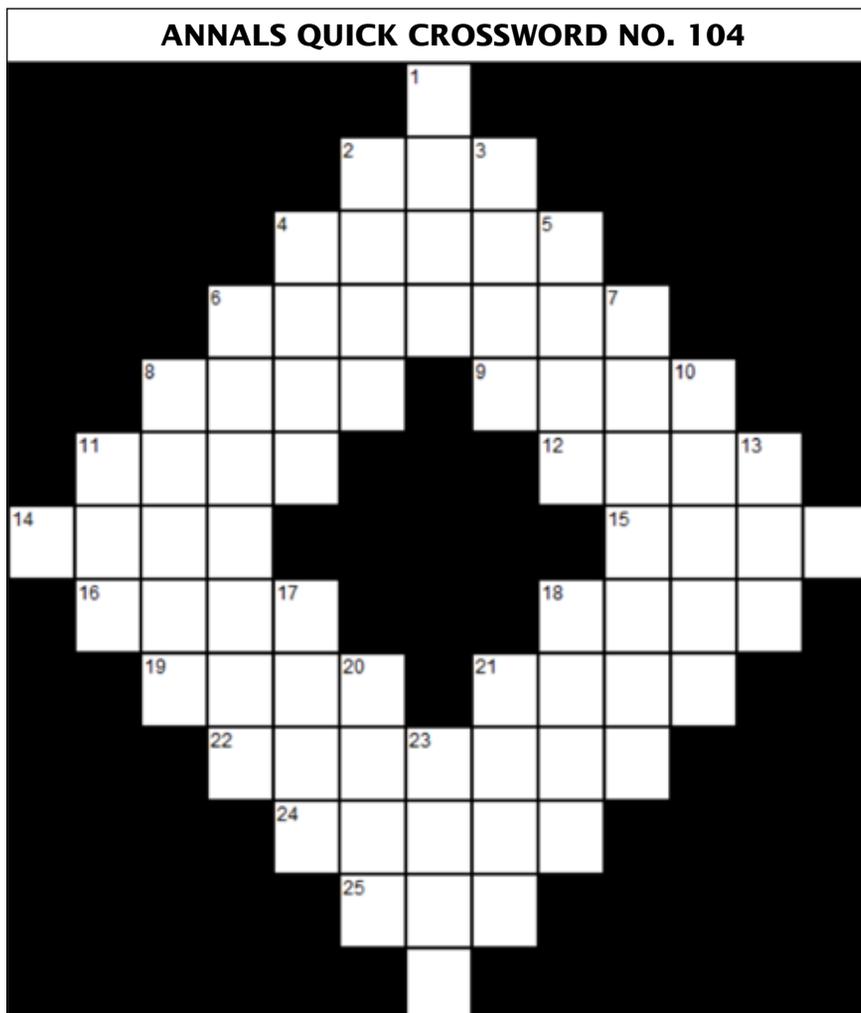
Such is my bewilderment that I am wondering if the systems of democracy and societal order have suddenly changed as if awakening from a coma. Our social and cultural conservatism seemed to be perfectly acceptable only what seems like yesterday.

What is more mysterious is that despite the clouded origin and dubious rationality of these new rules, the real or alleged transgressions of them by the likes of us are strongly censured in large sections of the media. Apparently, they have had the training, understanding and expertise in them that has been sadly withheld from our ilk. Perhaps this is because the rules are evolving so rapidly that we less enlightened would never catch up. Can ignorance truly can be bliss?

We are of a cohort in society that has not yet diminished into a minority but I suspect the writing is on the wall. I am sure that our demise will precede that milestone but the irony is that such a foreseeable minority is unlikely to be the recipient of such soul searching, hand wringing and virtue signalling within the new secular majority as is afforded to many noisy minorities today.

As we draw our last breath under the suffocation of political

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| <p>Across clues</p> <p>2 Young boy</p> <p>4 Impersonate</p> <p>6 Ancient Italian city</p> <p>8 Timbre</p> <p>9 Piquancy</p> <p>11 Chat</p> <p>12 Cruel giant</p> <p>14 Cupola</p> <p>15 Breach</p> <p>16 Domesticated</p> <p>18 Premier</p> <p>19 Purges</p> <p>21 Clenched hand</p> <p>22 Laughs shrilly</p> <p>24 Large country house</p> <p>25 Type of small deer</p> | <p>Down clues</p> <p>1 Lantern</p> <p>2 Citrus fruit</p> <p>3 Selection of food</p> <p>4 Male member of a religious order</p> <p>5 Bye! (Italian)</p> <p>6 Strong argument against</p> <p>7 The right to enter</p> <p>8 Absalom's daughter (2 Sam 14:27)</p> <p>10 Ground grain</p> <p>11 Small drink of spirits</p> <p>13 Newt</p> <p>17 Type of Dutch cheese</p> <p>18 Stand for a coffin</p> <p>20 Cicatrix</p> <p>21 Sheet of floating ice</p> <p>23 Scottish theologian (1513-1572)</p> |
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correctness the temptation is to roll over and let it all happen. But in our hearts we know that there is something not right about this new moral order that is being foisted upon us. Having finally spoken out, the urge is coming upon us to make

a last-ditch effort to stand up and break the shackles. Would anyone like to join us?

PETER FISHER is a retired professional forester with over forty years' experience in all facets of forest management. He is a former Assistant Commissioner of the Forestry Commission of NSW.

Jesus himself gave new direction and depth to the meaning of marriage, divorce, and chastity.¹ His concept of celibacy for those who renounced marriage for the sake of the kingdom² was countercultural. Marriage was so very important, but the final union of man with God was the ultimate objective.

NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING AND CONTRACEPTION

By Joseph Turner



ATHOLICS and non-Catholics alike tend to understand the Catholic Church's position on family planning and contraception in terms of prohibition only. This is the common and superficial view.

On the other hand, a deeper understanding of sexuality reveals the opportunity, design and right of couples to draw closer to God sacramentally in every act of marriage or witness of chastity.

"Family planning" has evolved from an Old Testament understanding to a more complete awareness of the role of the family in raising children responsibly, and the interpersonal dimension for the couple.

In post-Biblical times, "natural family planning" (NFP) is described as being aimed towards a couple's own sanctification and perfection, with the ultimate goal of perfect love of God.

Drawing on Old and New Testament texts, this goal may be accomplished through living out the concepts of self-giving and chastity within marriage, and participating fully in marriage with its unitive, procreative and sacramental dimensions.

Christ Jesus sacrificed himself for his Church, and in the New Testament we have the sacrament of marriage being compared to this incredible love.³ Each party

within marriage is self-giving and subject to the other: husbands are to love their wives in imitation of the self-sacrifice of Christ for the Church, and wives are to submit to their husbands in service and in receiving service from them.

Nowhere is this more clearly lived out as it is in the marital union: the man offers his body as a gift for the woman, who accepts it as her offering to the man, and the two participate in the unitive

and procreative dimensions of their marriage act.

We can also relate marriage to our personal relationship with God. St Paul encourages us to offer our bodies as a sacrifice to Him⁴ and draws a parallel with the joining of two bodies in the marital embrace with the joining of our spirit with that of God.⁵ From this spiritual union come the fruits of the spirit, including abstinence and chastity, and avoiding sinful behaviours including lust and self-indulgence.⁶

Jesus himself gave new direction and depth to the meaning of marriage, divorce, and chastity.⁷ His concept of celibacy for those who renounced marriage for the sake of the kingdom⁸ was countercultural. Marriage was so very important, but the final union of man with God was the ultimate objective.

First Millenium

Early Church Fathers maintained that contraception was sinful.⁹ Perhaps the most notable explanation of the divine nature of marriage was given by St Augustine in his description of the goods of marriage (and of marital acts) as:

1. *Fides*: the faithfulness, intimacy and companionship shared by the married couple,
2. *Proles*: the fruit of children and family, and
3. *Sacramentum*: the sacramental/covenant nature, its transcendent aspect, and indissolubility in the eyes of men and God.¹⁰

Religion and Culture

SPIRITUAL ALIENATION of its own greatest minds is the price that every civilization has to pay when it loses its religious foundations, and is contented with a purely material success. We are only just beginning to understand how intimately and profoundly the vitality of a society is bound up with its religion. It is the religious impulse which supplies the cohesive force which unifies a society and a culture. The great civilizations of the world do not produce the great religions as a kind of cultural by-product; in a very real sense the great religions are the foundations on which the great civilizations rest. A society which has lost its religion becomes sooner or later a society which has lost its culture.

— Christopher Dawson, *Progress and Religion*, Sheed and Ward, 1938, pp.244-245

St Augustine described removal of one of these elements as disordered and sinful, and that intentional obstruction of the fertile nature of intercourse by contraceptive means opposed both the sacramental and fruitful aspects of marriage. Even that long ago, he also noted the anti-life mentality of contraception, and the progression of a contraceptive mentality towards abortion.¹¹

Second Millennium

In the next stage of development, arguments about contraception expanded to consider issues of marriage being about family and community as well as being about love between the couple.

Pleasingly, St Thomas Aquinas wrote that marital friendship was delightful, useful and virtuous.¹² He wrote that marriage is in accord with Natural Law, and that it is meritorious if undertaken to give worship to God, including celebrating God's gift of fertility.¹³

He emphasised the importance of the virtues of charity (love in marriage), justice (including respect for human life in its origins) and temperance-chastity: where intercourse is rightly ordered to the vocation of the person and/or their family, and not necessarily always aimed at procreation.

Somewhat later, Pope Leo XIII again affirmed that marriage was intended to be fruitful for both the couple and the community, and that this was linked to the benefit/happiness of husband and wife.¹⁴ He emphasised that there was a divine aspect attached, since marriage was ordained by God in the beginning, and that the natural and original purpose and meaning could not be altered by human law.¹⁵

Divergence of teaching

The stance against contraception was held definitively by all Christian churches after the Reformation, although not without challenge. In response to the

Poison of the Month !

[Inquirer:] Is not the Index of Prohibited Books an effort to suppress the truth?

[Fr Rumble:] No. It is an effort to suppress error, which can poison the mind every bit as much as arsenic can poison the body.

[Inquirer:] It proves that your Church depends upon credulity rather than upon reason for its support.

[Fr Rumb1e:] You miss the point, The Church is out for healthy reason, and forbids books which foster the credulity of her enemies. You might as well accuse a chemist of desiring the ill-health of his customers and not their health, when he labels a bottle "Poison".

– Fr Rumble, Volume 1 of Radio Replies (1938)

growing practice of contraception amongst Anglicans, the Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops in 1908 "earnestly [called] upon all Christian people to discountenance the use of all artificial means of restriction as demoralising to character and hostile to national welfare."¹⁶

Yet 22 years later at the 1930 Lambeth Conference, provision was made for the use of contraception in cases "where there is a clearly felt moral obligation to limit or avoid parenthood."

Nevertheless the conference maintained the Catholic position of "recording its strong condemnation of the use of any methods of conception control from motives of selfishness, luxury or mere convenience."¹⁷ From this pronouncement the permission of contraception for arguably "right" reasons progressed in Protestant denominations to that of liberal availability of contraception without couples necessarily needing to refer to moral motives.

Papal teachings in the 20th Century

The 1930 Lambeth Conference brought about an unambiguous response from Pope Pius XI who discussed both the sacramentality of marriage and its inextricable link to the laws of nature. The primary aim for a husband and wife to make a "determined effort to perfect one another" is reflected in the natural outcome of the marital act which is to beget children in conformity with God's design (*teleos*).¹⁸

He reasoned that "frustrating the marriage act" was intrinsically against nature and that "no reason, however grave, may ... [make this] conformable to nature and become morally good."¹⁹ He emphasised that "There is no possible circumstance in which husband and wife cannot, strengthened by the grace of God, fulfil faithfully their duties and preserve in wedlock their chastity unspotted."²⁰

Some 20 years later, Pope Pius XII reiterated that contracepted intercourse, including by means of sterilisation, could not be justified as being lawful since this precept "is not a simple human whim, but the expression of a natural and divine law."²¹

In his *Address to the Midwives* he affirmed and encouraged the morally appropriate use of the "periods of natural sterility" in a woman's cycle for couples to consummate their marriage. He showed considerable insight by exhorting midwives to be responsible for attaining and maintaining objective medical knowledge about early fertility-awareness based methods of family planning, and to take responsibility from the priests for teaching couples about this developing field. Couples were reminded that such family planning was not a contraceptive means, but one in context of being open to life throughout the marriage.

Papal Commission and *Humane vitae*

Development of the oral hormonal contraceptive "pill" in

the 1960s prompted establishment of the Papal Commission for the Study of Problems of the Family, Population, and Birth Rate. At the Second Vatican Council Pope Paul VI deferred pronouncements on teachings around family planning until the Commission had delivered its report.

The Commission presented its findings in 1966, commonly referred to as the “*Majority report*,” taking the view that regulation of fertility was permissible within the bounds of “an ordered relationship to responsible fruitfulness and which has a concern for education and all the essential, human and Christian values.”²² In opposition to this, several of the Commission submitted a “*Minority Report*” to Pope Paul VI which upheld the explicit constancy of Church teaching against contraception.

Portions of both *Majority* and *Minority* reports were leaked to the media in 1967, raising the expectation that the Church would change its stance on contraception. Despite this, Pope Paul VI released *Humanae vitae* in 1968 which reaffirmed Church teaching on the inseparability of the procreative and unitive aspects of marriage.²³ He linked the marital union as being a direct witness of God’s love, and also restored the sacramental concept of marriage “inasmuch as it represents the union of Christ and of the Church.”²⁴

He pointed out that in a marriage the husband and wife share everything in an ongoing act of sacrifice, including in which chastity both becomes and provides the gift. Central to this discussion are the four “characteristic features and exigencies of married love” which are:

1. fully human (senses and spirit),
2. total (gift of self),
3. faithful and exclusive, and
4. fruitful (toward begetting and educating of children).²⁵

There was also a shift of thought from simply considering responsible parenthood to that of requiring couples to discern such

responsibility in the context the moral order: God’s will, then self, family and society.²⁶ Provided this moral order is followed and that “there are well-grounded reasons for spacing births ... married people may then take advantage of the natural cycles immanent in the reproductive system and engage in marital intercourse only during those times that are infertile.”²⁷

This is the basis for modern Fertility Awareness Based Methods (FABMs) of family planning which have demonstrated reliability in achieving or avoiding pregnancy.²⁸ *Humanae vitae* upheld that contraception for any reason is intrinsically wrong and cannot be justified by accepting a lesser evil, nor can the totality of an otherwise morally good married life justify isolated (even considered) acts of contracepted intercourse.²⁹

In summary

Much of early Church teaching emphasised the sinful nature of the marital union when undertaken without the elements of *fides, proles* and *sacramentum*, ‘Faithfulness,’ ‘Fruitfulness’ and ‘Sacrament.’

Now there is a greater recognition of the essential *fully, total, faithful* and *fruitful* characteristics of marriage. In either case, the positive interpretation of this may be expressed thus: that every act of intercourse is an opportunity for renewing the covenant we have with God represented by marriage, and by striving for perfection in that renewal. The circle completes itself with a deepening of faithfulness and intimacy of the couple either within a sacramental union or in the gift of chastity during times of abstinence.

Undertaking uncontracepted marital intercourse in the form of NFP demonstrates the couple’s desire to raise a family responsibly within their means while also being open to the will of God in their lives.

NFP thus practised is a choice freely given by God to imitate

his perfect Trinitarian love, the relationship of Christ with the Church, and to bring couples into closer communion with God and with each other.

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1. Mt 5:17
2. Mt 19:12
3. Eph 5:29,32
4. Rom 12:1
5. 1 Cor 6: 17-16
6. Gal 5:19-23
7. Mt 5:17
8. Mt 19:12
9. Ambrose, *Hexameron*, 5, 18. https://archive.org/stream/fathersofthechur027571mbp/fathersofthechur027571mbp_djvu.txt (accessed June 7, 2018)
10. Augustine, *On the Goods of Marriage*. <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1309.htm> (accessed June 7, 2018)
11. Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, I, 15. <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/15071.htm> (accessed June 7, 2018)
12. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica Supplement*, 49, 1-3. <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/5049.htm> (accessed June 7, 2018)
13. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica Supplement*, 41, 1. <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/5041.htm> (accessed June 7, 2018)
14. Leo XIII, *Arcanum – On Christian Marriage*, 1880, 26. http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_10021880_arcantum.html (accessed June 7, 2018)
15. Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, 1891, 12. http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum.html (accessed June 7, 2018)
16. Lambeth Conference, 1908 Resolution 41. <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/127728/1908.pdf> (accessed June 7, 2018)
17. Lambeth Conference, 1930, Resolution 15: The Life and Witness of the Christian Community - Marriage and Sex. <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/127734/1930.pdf> (accessed June 7, 2018)
18. Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, 1930, 24. https://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19301231_casti-connubii.html (accessed June 7, 2018)
19. *Ibid*, 54.
20. *Ibid*, 61.
21. Pius XII, Address to Midwives – Nature of their Profession, October 29, 1951. <https://www.ewtn.com/library/PAPALDOC/P511029.HTM> (accessed June 7, 2018)
22. Majority Report of the Papal Commission for the Study of Problems of the Family, Population, and Birth Rate, 1966, I, III. http://ldysinger.stjohnsem.edu/@magist/1963_paul6/068_hum_vitae/majority%20report.pdf (accessed June 7, 2018)
23. Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*, 1968, 12. http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae.html (accessed June 7, 2018)
24. *Ibid*, 8.
25. *Ibid*, 9.
26. *Ibid*, 10.
27. *Ibid*, 16.
28. Australasian Institute for Restorative Reproductive Medicine (AIRRM). <http://airrm.org.au/> (accessed June 7, 2018)
29. *Ibid*, 14.

“Post-modernism has simply become the wrecking-ball of history.” The author captures these changes by comparing his own schooling in Britain with the patterns of education that are now increasingly common, which tend to foster uniformity of opinion rather than unity of belief, and are not calculated to transmit any sense of historical kinship which, as the Catholic historian Christopher Dawson maintained, is vital to the existence of a civilisation

RESTORING THE CULTURE

By Karl Schmude



GILES AUTY is a frequent contributor to the pages of *Annals* and a recognised author in his own right.

His latest book is a trenchant attack on the rise – and seeming triumph – of post-modernism in Australia. It probes the intellectual sources of this movement, which the author finds are essentially Marxist, and looks in turn at the manifestations of post-modernism in contemporary Western culture – in moral codes, education, the law, the media, the arts, and relations between men and women.

The author recognises the decisive shift in Marxist thought and action that has taken place in the past century – from its original focus on economic revolution to the more recent cultural insurgency. He highlights the disturbing progress of ‘the long march through the institutions’ – the phrase, and strategy, attributed to the Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci – and how remarkably it has succeeded, eroding the very structures of moral and social life in the West, such as the integrity of marriage and the family and the cohesion of communities founded on a common set of beliefs. He cites a pithily menacing quote from Herbert Marcuse, the philosopher

Giles Auty, *Post-Modernist Australia: How To Create an Unholy Mess*, Brisbane, Connor Court Publishing, 2018. Available from the publisher : 0497-900-685, or www.connorcourtpublishing.com.au

often regarded as the “father of the New Left”: the long march, said Marcuse, means “working against the established institutions while working within them”.



This pervasive process, in Giles Auty’s words, is “revolution by stealth”. It does not employ – at least at the beginning – the traditional revolutionary measures of physical coercion and military suppression. Instead it relies on a radical undermining of the cultural institutions of the society, in particular schools, universities, and the communications media. “Post-modernism,” he writes, “has simply become the wrecking-ball of history.”

The author captures these changes by comparing his own schooling in Britain with the patterns of education that are now increasingly common, which tend to foster uniformity of opinion rather than unity of belief, and are not calculated to transmit any sense of historical kinship which, as the Catholic historian Christopher Dawson maintained, is vital to the existence of a civilisation – ‘a society of peoples’, in Dawson’s words, with a shared heritage of religious traditions and moral ideals underpinning a sense of spiritual community.

Giles Auty recalls his secondary school experience as one in which “we tended to learn verifiable facts plus an ability to reason rather than mere political propaganda and ideology”. These, he argues, “are taught so regularly today in Australian secondary schools – a

habit that is generally fatal for the futures of the young.” He pinpoints the powerful pressure of conformity in determining social attitudes by quoting Jonathan Swift:

It is useless to attempt to reason a man out of a thing he never reasoned into.

A special gift that the author brings to a consideration of education and culture is his knowledge and experience as a professional painter and art critic. He affirms the crucial importance of objective judgments of artistic works, undistracted by factors that currently energise identity politics, such as gender or race or considerations of novelty. As he notes:

If one looks at the four most obvious examples of European artistic heritage, 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 17th century ‘bourgeois’ Netherlands produce, among other excellent artists, such incomparable figures as Rembrandt and Vermeer?

A further insight of interest is his highlighting the value of close observation in training the eye – and the mind – to understand reality. He recalls that, from an

early age, he made drawings based on observation, “a habit which regularly alerts me visually to matters others may easily miss.” As he points out:

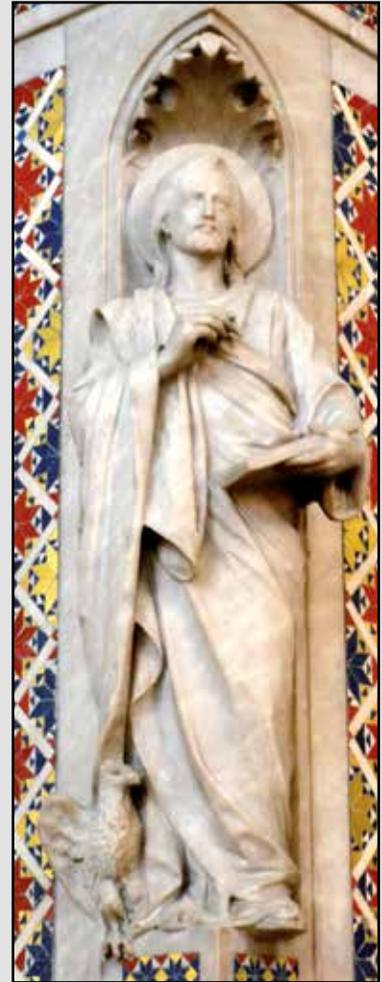
Learning to use one’s eyes properly makes for better and more visually aware citizens who may later oppose the ruination of their towns and countryside and also live much richer lives themselves through understanding art and architecture more fully.

Giles Auty has lived in Australia for the past two decades, interspersed with periods overseas, including his homeland of England. He is now an Australian citizen, but is patriotic rather than nationalistic; inspired by love, not pride, and stirred to indignation at the ways in which Australia is rapidly squandering its Christian spiritual and intellectual heritage.

This book is not a lengthy and dispassionate analysis of post-modernism. It is a tract – barely more than 70 pages in length. It is concerned with the power of *ideas* to shape – and misshape – human societies. But it is, undisguisedly, a “call to arms” – a passionate and, at times, polemical work, designed to raise the alarm at the disastrous path on which Australia is currently embarked.

Karl Schmude is a Founding Fellow of Campion College in Sydney and formerly University Librarian at the University of New England in Armidale NSW. He has been a frequent contributor to *Annals* since the 1970s.

SAINT JOHN



‘St John wrote for all’

— St Gregory of Nazianzus, 329-389 AD

‘In the centre, round the throne itself were four living creatures ...the fourth was like an eagle in flight ...’ See St John’s *Apocalypse*, 4,6-7.

ST JOHN, the teacher of all the world, Jew, Gentile, slave or free, is represented with the royal eagle which can gaze unblinkingly at the sun. It was his privilege to look upon the face of God, and live. He understood and loved the Word made flesh and his Gospel appeals most directly to the heart as well as to the intellect. The eagle is the symbol of the Ascension of our Lord.

True Literature

LITERATURE is the right use of language irrespective of the subject or reason of the utterance. A political speech may be, and sometimes is, literature; a sonnet to the moon may be, and often is, trash. Style is what distinguishes literature from trash. Nevertheless in certain quarters the appellation “stylist” bears a pejorative sense. Logan Pearsall Smith, that splendid American, is dismissed fretfully while D. H. Lawrence, who wrote squalidly, is accepted as an artist because his themes were of wider and deeper interest.

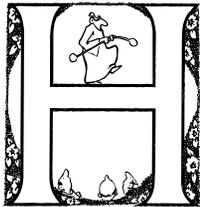
— Evelyn Waugh (1903 – 1966), ‘Literary Style in England and America,’ *Books on Trial*, October 1955. Logan Pearsall Smith (1865-1946), born in New Jersey, moved to Britain, graduated from Oxford, and achieved brief but substantial fame as aphorist, lexicographer, and specialist in seventeenth-century English religious literature. His brothers-in-law were Bertrand Russell and the art critic Bernard Berenson.

They drove to the nearest charity shop, Dr Bee directing. Henry parked and opened the boot, fossicked around in the cardboard boxes there, took out a couple, no, back for another, took out three pristine remaindered copies of three different titles of his oeuvre that he kept there, on hand to give to likely, interested, welcoming discerning people, movie stars and television producers he might bump into in the course of the day, one day, some day.

HOW TO GET YOUR BOOKS MOVING

A Moral Tale for would-be authors

By Michael Wilding



HENRY'S ATTEMPTS at maintaining a regular literary lunch were in trouble. Now that no one was drinking, or not more than the one glass, lunch was over quickly, basically just Henry and Dr Bee, Pawley having withdrawn to his country retreat. The long conversations through the waning afternoon could no longer be sustained. Not on mineral water and English breakfast tea. Coffee having been ruled out, too. And they could no longer sit there for long, not on those restaurant chairs they had sat on for so many years, not any longer, not in any comfort.

Dr Bee suggested visiting a charity shop instead of scuttling off home. Make an event of it. Lunch and scavenge.

'I don't like the idea of second-hand clothes,' Henry said.

'Up to you. How about books?'

'Books?'

'Those things you write and people throw out,' Dr Bee explained.

'Who throws them out?'

'Pretty well everyone,' Dr Bee assured him. 'People who've read them or couldn't face reading them. Librarians on principle.'

'What principle?'

'Out with the old,' Dr Bee said. 'Your books included. The more you write, the older your old ones become.'

'Thank you.'

'You're welcome.' There had been no need to say it. But it gave a satisfaction, discomfoting Henry.

'Charity shops, op shops, they're the last hope.'

'Of what?'

'Of the survival of books. Libraries throw them out, bookshops are closing down and those that survive only stock the current.'

'And you want the old?'

'Quality,' Dr Bee said. 'Literature. They don't have to be old. Just books that you might want to read.'

'And the Salvos, Vinnies, Lifeline are the only place to find quality?'

'Pretty much,' Dr Bee agreed. 'That and church fêtes.'

'I don't know,' Henry said. 'Old clothes, old books.'

Pawley would have said the vibes but he wasn't there and Henry wasn't going to say it. But it was what he felt.

'You might even find some of your own,' Dr Bee said.

Henry was unsure whether that was meant as an incentive and encouragement, or just the usual cut and thrust of collegial humiliation. But it gave him an idea.

They drove to the nearest charity shop, Dr Bee directing. Henry parked and opened the boot, fossicked around in the cardboard boxes there, took out a couple, no, back for another, took out three pristine remaindered copies of three different titles of his oeuvre that he kept there, on hand to give to likely, interested, welcoming discerning people, movie stars and television producers he might bump into in the course of the day, one day, some day.

Disagreement

THE PERSON who, at any stage of a conversation, disagrees, should at least hope to reach agreement in the end. He should be as much prepared to have his own mind changed as seek to change the mind of another ... No one who looks upon disagreement as an occasion for teaching another should forget that it is also an occasion for being taught.

— Mortimer J. Adler, *How to Read a Book: The Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading*

No doubt about it, the charity shop had a great display of books, in good condition, too. And a great range and selection of titles, too, not just the routine and tawdry, but quality. Classics even. True value. Literature. All those things you could no longer be sure of finding in a library. Occasionally Henry's eye would light on some distasteful production by one of his contemporaries, someone he'd known in the past, which cause the usual wrench in the stomach; but then, he told himself, these were obviously titles that had been thrown out, that no one had wanted to keep, they were rejects, discarded, one step away from landfill. It cheered him up considerably.

It was while he was trying to peel off a price sticker from one of the books there in order to stick it onto one of his own that he got caught.

'I say!

He looked round.

A fierce looking female person confronted him.

'You can't do that.'

'Do what?'

'You're stealing books.'

'No I'm not.'

'Look at you. What's that in your pocket, then?'

'They're my books.'

'You've stolen them.'

'No I haven't.'

It wasn't clear to Henry whether she was one of the staff or what was politely called a concerned private individual. The sort who photographed your illegally parked car and sent the details to the council parking police. Volunteers of the surveillance society.

'And that one. What are you ripping off that price sticker for?'

'There were two stickers. I'm putting it on one of my own.'

'What are you doing that for?'

'I'm donating it.'

'You're what? Donating? What do you mean donating? You can't just come in here and dump any old rubbish.'

'It's not any old rubbish, it's one of my books.'

'I can see it's books. But they don't just take any old rubbish you can't get rid of here. There's a due process. Procedures.'

'I'm donating copies of these books I've written.'

'It's not allowed. You have to submit them. And you can't just peel off stickers like that. That's theft.'

'For heaven's sake!'

'And don't start blaspheming.'

Dr Bee peered across in silent wonderment, standing by amidst the women's clothing, not part of this altercation. But now someone else came up, emerged from the depths of the shop.

'He's trying to dump stuff.'

'Is he? Dumping stuff? You can't do that. Dumping what?'

'They are just some spare copies of books I've written.'

'You can't go and put them on the shelves like that.'

'I was trying to save trouble. I was donating my own work.'

'It doesn't matter whose work it is, you can't just dump it like that. There's notices up about dumping.'

She pointed towards the entrance.

'I don't see any.'

'You should've looked.'

'No, I shouldn't. I wasn't

dumping so I had no need to look.'

'You can't just dump any old books here. We're very careful what sort of books we accept. We've got our customers to consider.'

'I am a customer.'

'Oh yeah? You were trying to steal stuff, peeling off the stickers.'

'I am an established author.'

'Cuts no ice with me.'

'With an international reputation.'

'I don't doubt it. For shoplifting and rubbish dumping.'

'These are my own books. They are not rubbish.'

She looked one over.

'Looks pretty rubbishy to me. Scribbled on, too,' she said, noticing Henry's signature on the title page.

'They're signed,' Henry said indignantly.

'They're short stories,' she said, turning the pages. She looked at the second one. 'And this is, too. We can't sell short stories. No one wants short stories. You should know that if you reckon you're an author. You can't just dump them here. Everybody knows short stories don't sell. Publishers always say that. Can't see why they publish them when they know that. Just to flatter the vanity of their authors I expect, wouldn't you say?'

They were thrown out. Henry was, anyway. Told to leave. Not physically, forcibly ejected.

'And take your books with you.'

Henry clutched them to him. His own. Despised, rejected, expelled, evicted. But still in pretty good condition. Good clean signed copies. Dr Bee followed at a discreet distance.

'Excuse me,' a voice called out as Henry headed for the door. More menacing than asking to be excused. 'You have to pay for those.'

Henry looked round.

'Yes, you,' the man at the cash register said.

'They're mine,' Henry said. 'I wrote them.'

'That's as may be. You've still got to pay for them.'

Henry walked over to the cash register and deposited the books on the bench. He pointed to his name

Not just knowledgeable

A GOOD BOOK can teach you about the world and about yourself. You learn more than how to read better; you also learn more about life. You become wiser. Not just more knowledgeable - books that provide nothing but information can produce that result. But wiser, in the sense that you are more deeply aware of the great and enduring truths of human life.

— Mortimer J. Adler, *How to Read a Book: The Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading*

on the spine. The man at the cash register nodded.

‘Twelve dollars,’ he said.

‘What?’

‘Three at four dollars each.’

Henry tried another ‘what?’ but his breath failed him. He could stand there arguing. Or he could just pay and get out. Pay for his own books. Not only had he failed to donate them, now he had to pay to get out. He paid.

‘Pride,’ said Dr Bee. ‘You should have stuck the two dollar stickers on them instead of the four dollar ones, they’d have sold quicker.’

‘They never got a chance to be sold.’

‘Yes, they did. You just bought them. Which on reflection was pretty quick. Probably set a record for turnover.’

Henry made one of those noises difficult for fiction writers to transcribe.

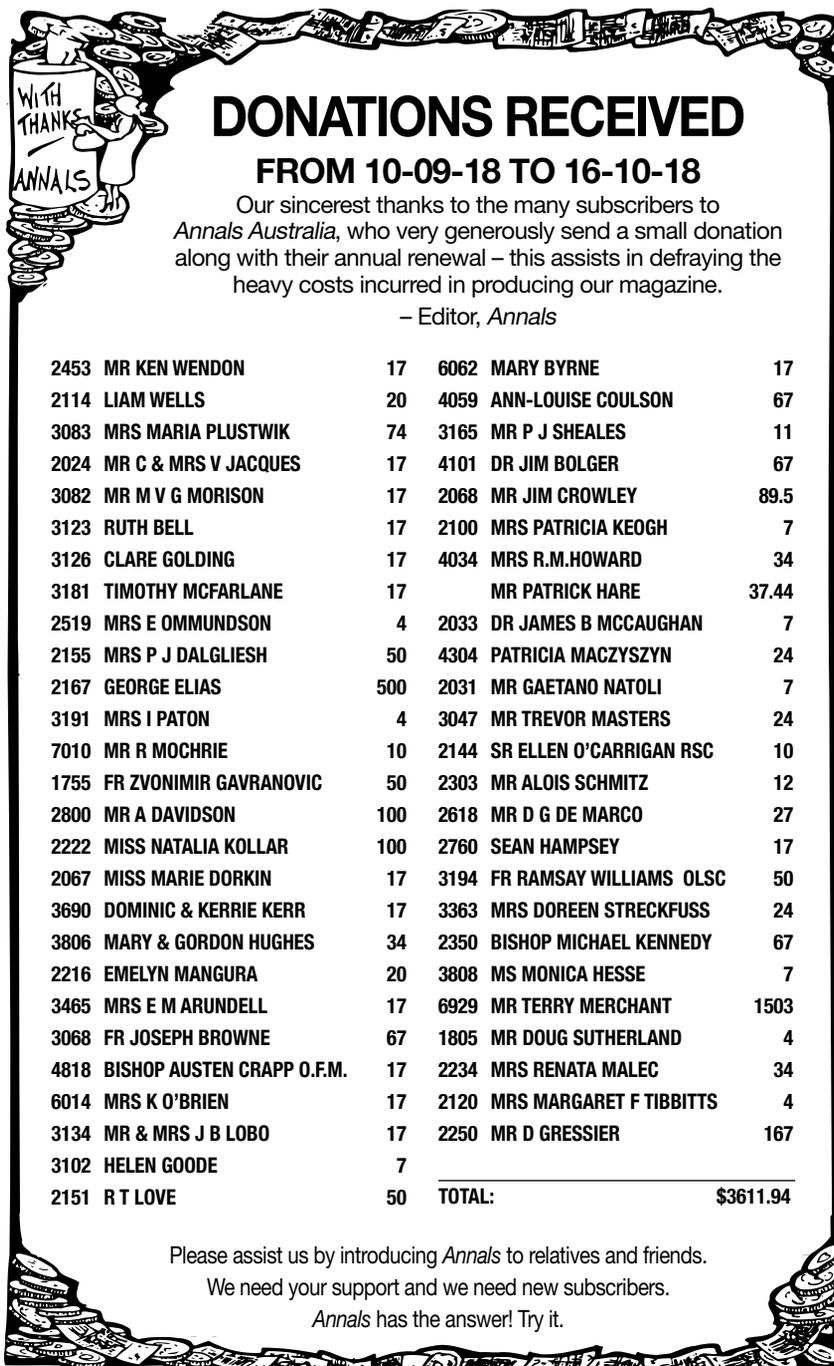
‘Can’t even give them away,’ Pawley said, when Henry phoned him. ‘Not even to charity.’ It might have been sympathetic. Saddened at the fate of short stories. Possibly.

‘You should have made a stand. Insisted they call the police. Phoned the local paper. It would have been a great story. It would have got you some publicity. Sell a lot of books. You should write it up. Why don’t you write stories like that, Henry?’

‘Like what?’

‘Like you live them. You know what? Next time I’m in town we should go back in. Do it again with a camera this time. Show them throwing you out and hurling your books after you. Get it on the six o’clock news. How about that for publicity, Henry?’ ‘Writer gaoled for donating short stories to charity.’ That should get your books moving again, don’t you think?’

Michael Wilding is author of the prizewinning *Wild Bleak Bohemia: Marcus Clarke, Adam Lindsay Gordon and Henry Kendall* (Australian Scholarly Publishing) and co-editor of *Cyril Hopkins’ Marcus Clarke* (Australian Scholarly). His latest novel is *The Travel Writer* (Arcadia). He is emeritus professor at the University of Sydney. Henry, Dr Bee and Pawley originally featured in his *Academia Nuts and Superfluous Men* (Arcadia).



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– Editor, *Annals*

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Not a bed to be made and re-made

I WAS ASKED tonight why I refuse to have truck with intellectuals after business hours. But of course I won’t. 1. I am not an intellectual. Two minutes’ talk with Aldous Huxley, William Glock [*BBC music director*], or any of the New Statesman crowd would expose me utterly. 2. I am too tired after my day’s work to man the intellectual palisade. 3. When my work is finished I want to eat, drink, smoke, and relax. 4. I don’t know very much, but what I do know I know better than anybody ... My mind is not a bed to be made and re-made.

– James Agate (1877-1947), London drama critic and diarist, in *Ego* (1943)[125]



FATHER TIMOTHY McGRATH, MSC

Co-founder of Our Lady's Nurses for the Poor

TIMOTHY EDWARD McGRATH was born on 11 April 1881 at Bungeet West, near Devenish in northern Victoria. He endured a difficult childhood by any measure. Three of his siblings died in infancy. His Irish-born father, a goldminer, farmer, sly-grog shop proprietor and publican, died when Ted was just three years old. His mother was forced into bankruptcy and died in a fall from a buggy four years later.

Ted was shuttled between his extended family, living in 19 different homes until he came under the care of his eldest sister, Catherine, and attended primary school at St James near Devenish. At the age of 16, he found work with Victorian Railways as a porter and then as a clerk. Throughout his long life, Father McGrath never forgot the shame and humiliation of poverty.

Believing he had a vocation, Ted began receiving Latin lessons from a friendly priest but his lack of schooling or the financial means to support himself through a seminary, presented a seemingly insurmountable obstacle.

In 1901, Ted McGrath – now 20 years old – arrived at the recently-opened seminary of the Society of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart at Kensington, NSW, which was welcoming late vocations.

Despite his incomplete schooling, Ted proved to be a capable student who, in time, became fluent in both Latin and French. He was ordained a priest of the Society of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart at St Mary's Cathedral by His Eminence Patrick Cardinal Moran on 30 November 1909. It is the start of a long, fruitful and at times, lonely, apostolate.

Following his ordination, Father McGrath is appointed to Ngahere, a West Coast village within the Diocese of Christchurch, New Zealand. He was recalled to Randwick in early 1911 and was appointed priest-in-charge of the Coogee Parish, where he met the O'Connor family. [For more about Father McGrath, see 'Courage Under Fire,' pp.15-16 this issue of *Annals*].



Jirga

Writer/director Benjamin Gilmour opens with a greenish, night-vision sequence: an Australian patrol attacking an Afgani village house. But that's as far as he goes into the clichés of modern warfare.

He cuts forward to an ex-member of the patrol, Mike Wheeler, returned to Afghanistan intent on a quest to make honorable amends to the family of a villager he killed.

Playing Wheeler, Sam Smith shows a weary stoicism which contrasts with the mood of his guide (Sher Alam Miskeen Ustad) and is epitomized in a scene where they paddle a pink fibre-glass swan on a peaceful mountain lake, presage of the quest's end.

If ever a film should have had a documentary about its making, it's this one: Sam Smith's stoicism, for example, owed less to his *Home and Away* role than to the risks – death or ransom hostage – he actually faced from the Taliban, ISIS and their brigand mimics while filming.

Gilmour's original plan was to locate the film in Pakistan's north-west frontier region but he was warned off and lost financial backing.

Undeterred, he led his team, such as it was, into even more hazardous Afghanistan. There, he filmed secretly using his self-taught camera skills aided by sympathetic locals recruited by Australian artist in residence, George Gittoes.

In filming, Benjamin Gilmour, an alumnus of Sydney Church of England Grammar School (Shore), displays the intrepid spirit of his *Son of a Lion* (2007) and *Paramedics* (2012).

His compassion? As a teenage traveller, avoiding the parental wish that he get a 'proper job', he did a stint with Mother Teresa's sisters in Calcutta.

M★★★★NFFV.

In Like Flynn

Shore again: this time the link is the school's old boy Errol Flynn who went on to become a Hollywood star. To add lustre, director Russell Mulcahy (Wollongong High School) cast yet another Shore old boy Tom Cocquerel.

MOVIES

By James Murray

Mulcahy, with writers Steve M Albert, Corey Large and Marc Furmie, compresses various Flynn memoirs including *Beams End*.

The outcome is an aptly vintage B-movie complete with jungle savages, bar-room brawlers, and Chinese villains as Flynn and his mates sail aboard the yacht *Sirocco* from Sydney to Papua New Guinea and catastrophe.

Flynn was not a great actor. Again aptly, the cast do not exhibit their full talent – except for David Wenham; he plays Christian Travers, a villain with a moustache like a couple of tamed caterpillars.

Mulcahy does let us glimpse Flynn in Hollywood, buckling swashes. Having spent so much footage on Wenham's moustache, however, he achieves this finale only by cutting reference to Charles Chauvel's, *In the Wake of the Bounty* where Flynn played Fletcher Christian.

End-credit notes state that the movie's title derives from Flynn's Lothario activities. Questionable: more credibly it derives from the truly heroic Presbyterian minister

John Flynn (1880-1951) founder-superintendent of the Australian Inland Mission among whose achievements was the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

M★★NFFV.

Alpha

Cross Robert Flaherty's documentary *Nanook of the North* with Jack London's *White Fang* and what do you get? A movie as thrilling as Albert Hughes has directed from his own fiction, scripted by Daniele Sebastian Wiedenhaup.

The movie takes us back 20,000 years to the European Ice Age when clans hunted bison to ensure supplies of winter food.

Johannes Haukur Joahannesson plays clan chieftain Tau with the hirsute ferocity of a man who keeps his flints for hunting not shaving. His son Keda, as played by Kodi Smit-McPhee, is seemingly made of less tough stuff, the son of his mother Rho (Natassia Malthe) rather than his father.

The movie, shot magnificently in Canadian and Icelandic locations by Martin Gschlacht, is essentially about Keda's passage to manhood after he is left for dead and must make his way home alone, his only companion, Alpha, a wounded wolf he has cured.

Their trek includes marauding wolves, ice age hyenas and arctic winds.

It may say something for the movie's authenticity that the American Humane Society denied it No Animals were Harmed certification. Running Time 96 minutes, and a box of hot popcorn.

M★★★★SFFV.

Westwood: Punk. Icon. Activist.

Director Lorna Tucker's documentary comes heavily criticised – by its subject, Vivienne Westwood (born Swire, a Lancashire Catholic name), now a Dame, and not the pantomime sort, though some of her clothes look like panto costumes.

Aside from whether the damehood exemplifies the British Establishment's power to turn madcaps into tea-cosies, is Dame

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

Vivienne's criticism justified since she introduces the documentary and gets more footage than anyone else?

And there's no lack of it: a crucifixion, catwalk parades, colliding egos, finance and frivolities, obscenities, scenes with Malcolm McLaren and other worthies of the Swinging (Silly?) Sixties which linger on.

Perhaps Westwood's criticism is reverse spin, perpetrated on the basis that her early celebrity was down to the fact that blame can inspire more success than praise.

M★★★NFFV.

Harmony

With his first feature, *Message Man*, last year, writer/director Corey Pearson begot a reputation for instant cinematic violence – 43 punches in every scene; his new movie *Harmony* does not diminish it.

Set in an underworld which may be post-catastrophic or future apocalyptic, its key denizen is a Super-Empath, named, Harmony.

She is able to absorb fear from anyone she contacts, the process manifesting itself as black liquid which can be washed off. Admirably, Pearson resisted a lucrative detergent product placement.

What sustains attention is not the violence but the talented acting of Jessica Falkholt as Harmony, Jerome Meyer as her fearless ally Mason and Eamon Farren as her fear-stricken nemesis, Jimmy.

The casting of Jacqueline McKenzie as the relatively sane Beth Miller provides a remembrance of Geoffrey Wright's *Romper Stomper* (1992) so potent you expect Russell Crowe to contribute a cameo role.

It also raises the question of whether multi-talented filmmakers like Corey Pearson are over-inclined to work from film genres rather than life.

Enough already? Well, no. *Harmony* is being promoted as the first part of *The Five Features* saga about the balance between the emotions of fear and love.

M★★★NFFV.

Beautiful Boy

The title comes from David Sheff's, *Beautiful Boy: A Father's*

Journey Through His Son's Addiction. This, with the son Nik Sheff's, *Tweak: Growing Up on Methamphetamines*, forms the basis of Belgian director Felix Van Groeningen's English feature debut.

It cannot be said that Van Groeningen and his co-writer Luke Davies simplify the wealth (plethora?) of raw material. It all happens in idyllic surroundings, close to San Francisco with side trips to Haight-Ashbury where flower-power is still the order of the day for Nik (Timothee Chalamet).

As David Sheff, the doting father, Steve Carell turns in another of his highly-strung comic-as Hamlet performances.

But in the haze of pot smoke no one seems to remember Sam Johnson's remark that a second marriage is the triumph of hope over experience.

The 112-minute running time could have been shortened by omitting Nik's early days (enacted by Kue Lawrence, Zachary Rifkin, and Jack Dylan Grazer).

Cutting scenes detailing drug preparation and injection would also have helped. Otto Preminger started the practice in *The Man with the Golden Arm* (1955). Arguably the effect is to romanticise drug-taking not inhibit it as the ABC should realize when it uses archival footage in drug-reports.

The over-detailing means that Van Groeningen-Davies have to use end-notes to reveal that the Sheff family have made it back to a kind of sanity.

R18+★★★NFFV.

A Star is Born

Of the re-making of this movie, there is no end. Bradley Cooper directed the latest, and not the least. He also co-produced, co-wrote and co-starred with Lady Gaga (christened Stefani Joanne, Angelina Germanotta).

He plays Jackson Maine, a whiskey, whiskyfied guitarist, she Aly, a naive singer, told that her nose is too big for stardom.

This was not an aspect that troubled Barbara Streisand who sang with Kris Kristofferson in the 1974 version nor Judy Garland-James Mason in the 1954 version.

The original 1937, non-musical version co-starred Janet Gaynor as Esther Hoffman and Frederic March as Norman Maine.

Among its Oscar-nominated writers was Dorothy Parker who said: 'I can only give you this message – anyone who isn't living in Hollywood is living a good life.'

R18+★★★NFFV.

Johnny English Strikes Again

In the third take of the comedy-thriller franchise, Rowan Atkinson returns in the name part, and demonstrates that he has joined the pantheon of great drolls, up there with Chaplin, Buster Keaton, Fernandel, Barry Humphries, Bert Newton and Jerry Lewis.

As Lewis had Dean Martin, Atkinson has a second banana Ben Miller who plays his sidekick Jeremy Bough to assist and disrupt his heroics.

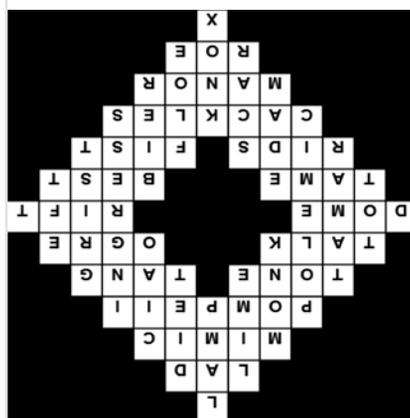
Emma Thompson enters as an irate Prime Minister clutching glasses of cold tea which may well be a substitute for Maggie Thatcher's favourite dram, Teachers.

The villain of the piece is a cyber genius Jason Volta played by Jake Lacy. Olga Kurylenko is a Russian spy Ophelia. Will she be English's femme fatale?

Director David Kerr and writer William Davies begin with a cyber attack that blows the cover of all current MI7 agents. Result: veterans are recalled from retirement.

The last veteran standing is Johnny English. Kerr and Davies mix Fleming with a dash of Le Carré;

SOLUTION TO QUICK CROSSWORD NO. 104



Atkinson adds Mr Bean, teaching geography at a public school (and espionage covertly).

This is a movie that spins on a chain reaction of surprises. To say too much would break the chain.

One sequence involving 3D gadgetry is classic. The ending features a misty Loch Ness.

PG★★★SFFV

Custody

Xavier Legrand opens his melodrama (and directorial debut) with a magistrate like Sergeant Buzfuz on acid berating a divorced couple about the custody of their son.

The opening precludes your reviewer from joining the laurel-waving chorus of applause for the work. That, plus the casting of Denis Ménochet as Antoine, the father.

Ménochet is a fine actor but he is built like a front-row forward; thus he is stereotyped for menace by contrast with the physical frailty of his wife Miriam (Léa Drucker) and the angelic fairness of their son Julien (Thomas Gioria) of whom Antoine wins joint custody.

Exacerbating the situation: the other child of the marriage, the teenage Josephine (Mathilde Auneveux) is allowed to make her own arrangements.

Bullet to breach, Miriam is living at what Antoine considers to be an unsuitable address (with another man).

Perhaps because of Thomas Gioria's resemblance to Justin Henry some have compared *Custody* to *Kramer V Kramer* but that Dustin Hoffmann-Meryl Streep vehicle had smidgins of schmaltz.

Not this one. Not even a touch of *douceur de vivre*. There again it may be Xavier Legrand is saying a plague on the French family law system as any Australian director might say of the local system.

M★★NFFV.

The Nun

In promotional material the title is spelt with the second 'n' reversed. That's the clue to the approach of director Corin Hardy and his co-writers Gary Dauberman and James Wan.

Empty of Significance

AS SOREN KIERKEGAARD may have said (I believe the original quotation is longer and more complex): 'A passionate tumultuous age will overthrow everything, pull everything down; but a revolutionary age which is, at the same time, reflective and passionless, leaves everything standing but cunningly empties it of significance'.

— Peter Hitchens, 'Top Hats and Kierkegaard - Some Thoughts on a Buckingham Palace Garden Party,' *Daily Mail*, May 14, 2015.

They are not concerned with Milton's, 'pensive nun, sober steadfast and demure' nor Fred Zinnemann's *The Nun's Story*. Their main location is an ancient convent in Romania – Dracula country of so many Hollywood-Hammer horror movies.

Despatched by Vatican officials, Father Burke arrives at the convent accompanied by Sister Irene. The role of the priest played by Demien Bichir brings a robust contrast to the nun (Taissa Farmiga).

The rest unfortunately is not silence but all the shocks of the aforesaid Hollywood-Hammer movies, amplified by Abel Korzeniowski's music and Maxime Alexandre's cinematography.

As always the power of such pseudo-religious movies is parasitic; it derives from the truth to which it adheres, a truth explored in *The Devils of Loudun* (1952) by Aldous Huxley who did serious time as a Hollywood scriptwriter but had no part in *The Devils* (1971) written-directed by Ken Russell, revert to Catholicism.

MA15+★★NFFV.

Venom

The title refers to an alien life-form which manifests itself as what appears to be tar, sump-oil, licorice or a mixture of all three.

Merged with humans, Venom transforms them into humungous creatures with piranha teeth and a resemblance to *The Creature from the Black Lagoon* (1954).

Director Ruben Fleischer's take does epitomise the element which, since the *Superman* revival (1978), has transmuted comic-book, B-movie trash to flash box-office cash: casting superlative players.

In *Venom*, they are Michelle Williams as district attorney Anne Weying, Tom Hardy as her boyfriend, investigative reporter, Eddie Brock and Riz Ahmed as Carlton Drake, genius boss of the Life Foundation, who aims to market the process.

All three double as symbiotic creatures in a plot so convoluted it suggests writers Jeff Pinkner, Scott Rosenberg and Kelly Marcel were raised on a diet of raw comics.

So far the movie has recovered just over a 20th of its \$100 million budget, give or take popcorn sales.

M★★NFFV.

Suspiria

Into 1977 Berlin, where Bader-Meinhof Group members are imprisoned and hostages have been taken, comes Susie Bannion (Dakota Johnson), a dancer intent on auditioning for the Markos Academy, headed by Madame Blanc (Tilda Swinton).

So a peaceful story in contrast to the Bader-Meinhof activities? If only...

Director Luca Guadagnino's remake (he prefers *homage*) of Dario Argento's 1977 movie distils a ghastliness appropriate to its origins: the opium-addict Thomas De Quincey's essay, *Suspiria de Profundis* (*Sighs from the Depths*).

Compared to its surfeit of horrors, including a coven of witches in the academy's cellars and gory dance sequences, *Venom* is a nice cup of tea.

Tilda Swinton, it must be added, may win an Oscar for doubling her Madame Blanc role with that of a psychoanalyst, Jozef Klemperer (played under the pseudonym Lutz Ebersdorf).

Running time 152 minutes – even two minutes off would have been a relief.

R18+★★NFFV.

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