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Front Cover: The Primatial Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta [St Mary Assumed into Heaven] in Pisa, with a view of the leaning tower behind it. Construction of the Cathedral began in 1064, and it was erected outside the city's mediaeval walls to show that the maritime Republic of Pisa had no fear of attack. It was consecrated in 1118 by Pope Gelasius II. The large mosaic in the apse, of Christ enthroned between the Virgin Mary and St John, was the last work painted by Cimabue, in 1302. The Cathedral, like the tower is gradually sinking into the ground.

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

Cover Photo: Paul Stenhouse

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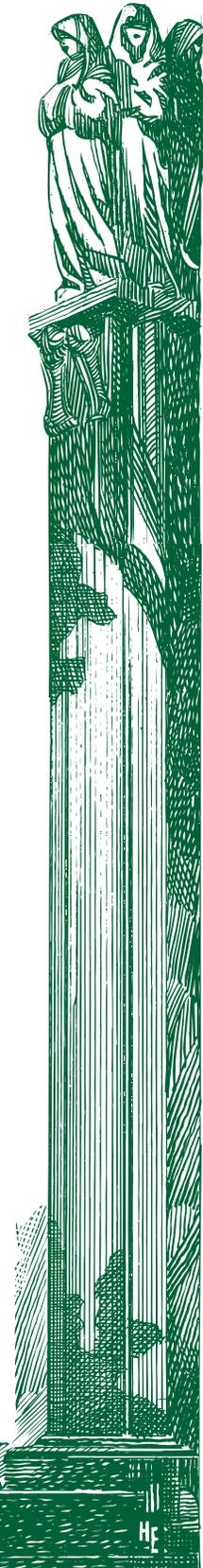
Let us not be dumb watchdogs, or silent spectators; Let us be watchful shepherds, guarding the flock of Christ.

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



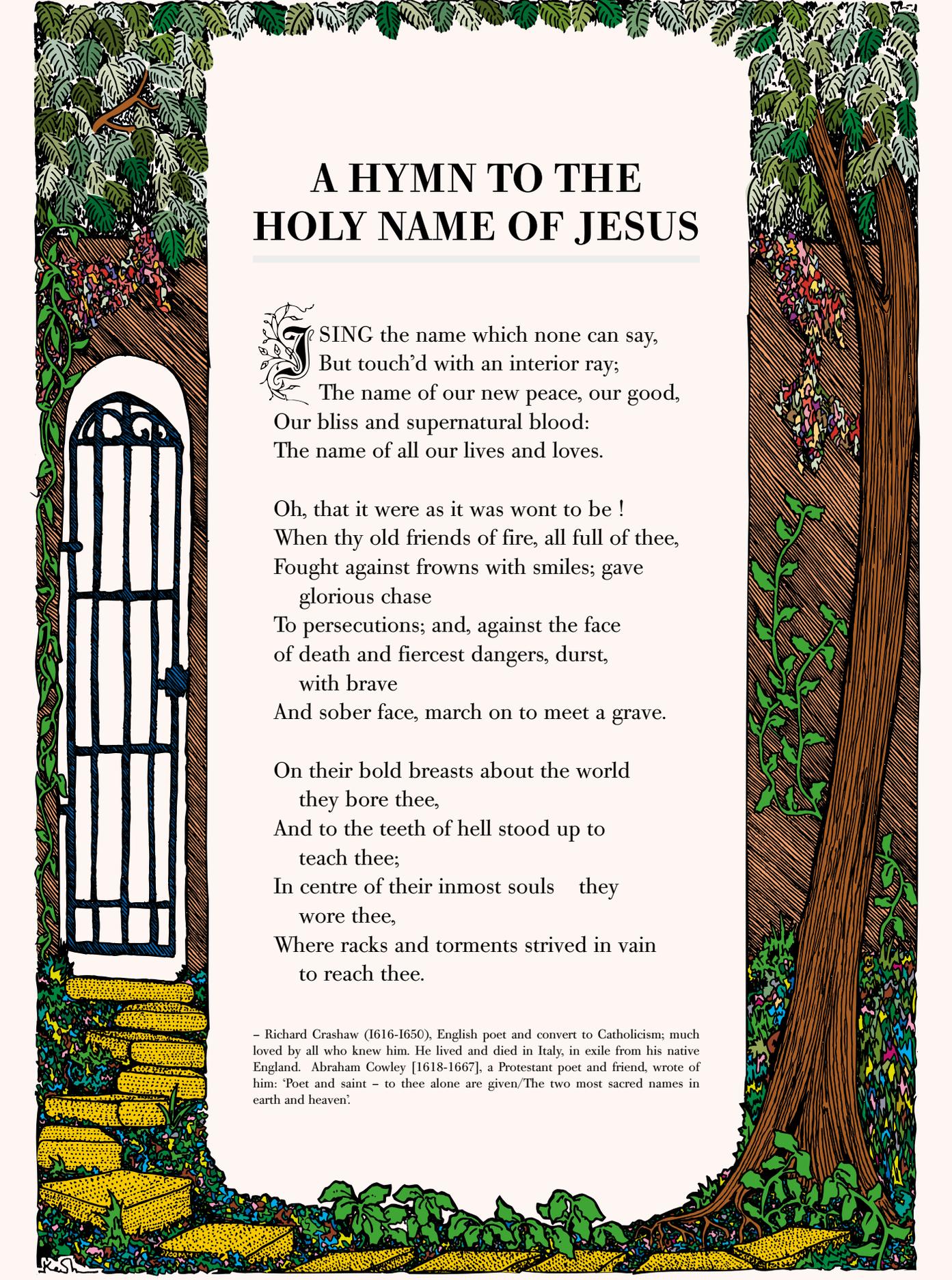
n the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and
of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

DISCOVER THE FACE OF GOD



THERE ARE many who speak of God; some even preach hatred and perpetrate violence in God's Name. So it is important to discover the true face of God. The Magi from the East found it when they knelt down before the Child of Bethlehem. 'Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father,' said Jesus to Philip (Jn 14: 9). In Jesus Christ, who allowed his heart to be pierced for us, the true face of God is seen. Let us follow him together with the great multitude of those who went before us. Then we will be travelling along the right path.

– Pope Benedict XVI, Homily for the Vigil of the 20th World Youth Day, August 16 – 21, Cologne, Germany.



A HYMN TO THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS

SING the name which none can say,
But touch'd with an interior ray;
The name of our new peace, our good,
Our bliss and supernatural blood:
The name of all our lives and loves.

Oh, that it were as it was wont to be !
When thy old friends of fire, all full of thee,
Fought against frowns with smiles; gave
glorious chase
To persecutions; and, against the face
of death and fiercest dangers, durst,
with brave
And sober face, march on to meet a grave.

On their bold breasts about the world
they bore thee,
And to the teeth of hell stood up to
teach thee;
In centre of their inmost souls they
wore thee,
Where racks and torments strived in vain
to reach thee.

– Richard Crashaw (1616-1650), English poet and convert to Catholicism; much loved by all who knew him. He lived and died in Italy, in exile from his native England. Abraham Cowley [1618-1667], a Protestant poet and friend, wrote of him: 'Poet and saint – to thee alone are given/The two most sacred names in earth and heaven.'

I had by this time begun to have some reputation as a composer of film and TV soundtrack music for both ABC and BBC, as well as commercial outfits. But none of that music ever came so effortlessly. The reason, I think, was the perfection of McAuley's words.

COMPOSING HYMNS WITH JAMES MCAULEY

By Richard Connolly

IN A SPEECH I made at my 80th birthday party, looking back over things I had made and done, including ABC features of which I was very proud, I concluded with these words:

'Best of all, the day in 1955 that Father Ted Kennedy introduced me to James McAuley and the years of friendship that followed. The twenty or so hymns that Jim and I made are the best, the finest thing I have made or done in any field, except for my family. That is plain to me, and there is little to add to it.'

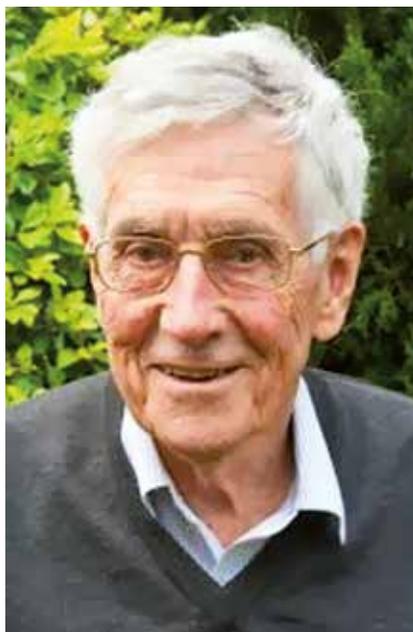
Ted had shown me some words of the recent convert to Catholicism, James McAuley, and asked that I put them to music. The result was 'Help of Christians, Guard This Land'. It was included, together with an Offertory Hymn also by McAuley, in a collection called 'We Offer the Mass'. The publisher – under the aegis of a group of liturgically aware priests led by Roger Pryke – was called *The Living Parish Series*.

The 'Living Parish' priests were men of imagination, and on the evidence of these two hymns they commissioned McAuley and me to compose hymns for the feasts and seasons of the Liturgical Year; and that was when our collaboration really got under way.

Twelve hymns were made in the years 1960-1962, and published in 1963 as 'Hymns for the Year of Grace'.

OCTOBER 2017 marked the centenary of the birth of the Australian poet James McAuley. While there is no known reference to Chesterton in McAuley's writings, it is reasonable to suppose that he would have read Chesterton's epic poems, *Lepanto* and *The Ballad of the White Horse*, and that Chesterton would have appreciated McAuley's narrative poem on the Portuguese explorer, Captain Quiros. A memorable part of McAuley's outstanding corpus is the hymns which he wrote in conjunction with his close friend, Richard Connolly. In this tribute, written especially for *The Defiant*, Richard Connolly recalls how he came to compose the music for which McAuley wrote the words.

– Karl Schmude



Richard Connolly

By now, Jim and I had become close friends, and each of us possessed a sympathetic understanding of the other's craft. Jim was a classy jazz pianist and an organist as well, and I was a senior producer of poetry for a then very different ABC.

So although Jim moved to the University of Tasmania in 1960, just as we were getting started, we found the separation no great handicap. He would post me the words of a new hymn; I would make a tune with accompaniment (normally within a few days) and await his comments and the next set of words, which might come soon, or after an interval of weeks or even months.

No fuss, and never any disagreement. Once or twice I asked his approval for some minor change like the splitting of a long line into two short ones, and he readily agreed.

In his poem *Invocation*, James McAuley asks his Muse to

Teach me at last to speak aloud
In words that are no longer mine;
For at your touch, discreet,
profound,
Ten thousand years softly resound.

It seemed to me that most of the tunes I made in that collection were strangely not mine – so nearly did the words seem to clothe themselves in music. One felt oneself to be only half agent, and the other half sounding board... perhaps a sort of channel.

Not that there was any question of a 'heightened' state of mind; the operation was practical and pragmatic. It was just that the tunes

seemed to come straight out of the words with no real effort on my part more than a kind of submitting my musical mind, or, better, making my musical self available to the words.

I have tried to set hymn texts by others, but never so successfully. The same magic doesn't happen.

I had by this time begun to have some reputation as a composer of film and TV soundtrack music for both ABC and BBC, as well as commercial outfits. But none of that music ever came so effortlessly. The reason, I think, was the perfection of McAuley's words. The language is theologically perfect and to the point. It uses beautifully the simplest of words, which nonetheless manage to embody infinite meaning and mystery.

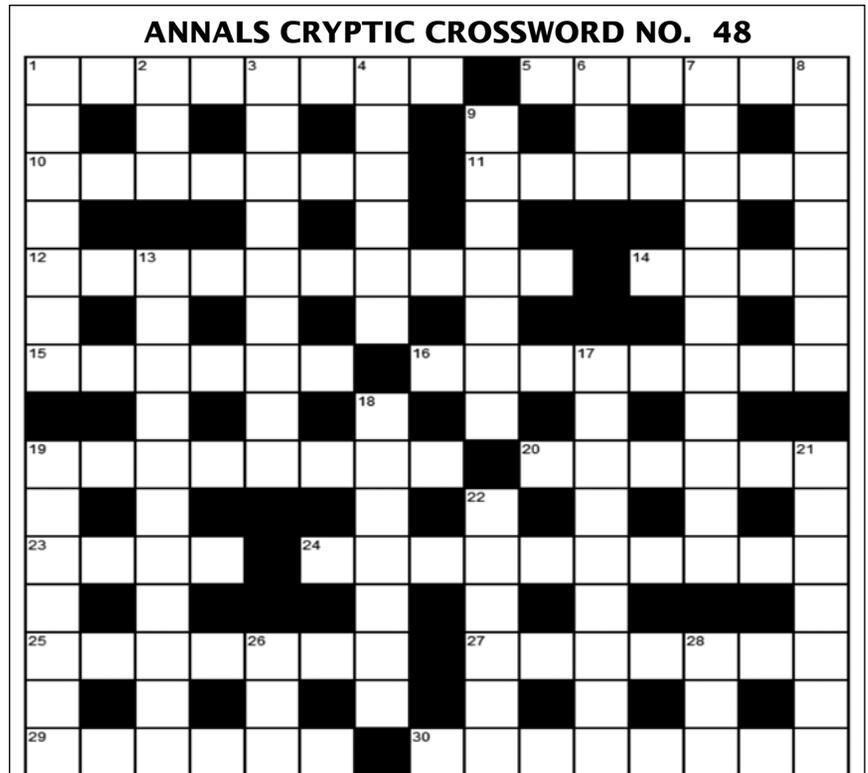
No one could encapsulate the essential, eternal meanings and resonances as Jim did, steeped as he was in the Word, especially the Gospels and St Paul. I wrote somewhere that the merit of the hymns is 'ninety percent McAuley,' and I think that is right. It was not false modesty.

When I speak of the hymns I was 'privileged' to make with James McAuley, I am not demeaning my contribution. I think it a worthy one, and I am proud of it.

RICHARD CONNOLLY, former Head of Radio Drama and Features at the ABC, composed the music for twenty or so hymns with the poet James McAuley in the 1950s and 60s. As a young man he studied theology and liturgical music in Rome. This article first appeared in the Spring 2017 newsletter, *The Defiant*, published quarterly by the Australian Chesterton Society (<http://chestertonaustralia.com/>)

Evil is habit-forming

THE FIRST TIME it was such a shock, I felt so sick, that I simply took to my heels. ... The second occasion I felt it was my duty to see just what was going on, so I stopped just for a minute. I felt as sick as ever, and did so the third time I tried to watch. On the fourth I stood in that jeering crowd for quite



Across clues

- 1 Notice leaders of Japan's Under-Twenties take on Emmet, an officer's offsider (8)
- 5 Proust is knocked into a state of mental dullness (6)
- 10 A low stool produced from the traditional Mount of the Transfiguration and capitals of Egypt and Turkey (7)
- 11 North American Indians hock the innards of geese (7)
- 12 Poor Ms. Amin, having grown old, did not run very well (10)
- 14 Use a plough for Peter? (4)
- 15 Digitally record sound of member during sale (6)
- 16 U-boat's name or caption? (8)
- 19 Ancient Greek author of 'The Bad-Tempered Man' to wander around top of Norway (8)
- 20 A Rear Admiral and sailor coming back to ancient craft's resting place (6)
- 23 Notorious fiddler seen in a corner of orchestra (4)
- 24 Flittermouse returns Queen to roughly clean Hosts resting place (10)
- 25 Guevara follows when I leave train with portion of debt (7)
- 27 Surprise attackers place additional stipulations around American leader (7)
- 29 Outcome of Ulster riot (6)
- 30 Blind vet Annie is lost (8)

Down clues

- 1 A mitre's damaged by Diana's Greek counterpart (7)
- 2 David's army commander was left without a task (3)
- 3 Waterproof cover for "Apostle to the Gentiles" in train wreck (9)
- 4 An Old Testament prophet (a grandmother) swallows funny hat (6)
- 6 Some thief got away with marble (3)
- 7 Choir priest conducted a long time before the "Flood" (11)
- 8 Determine to repair shoes around about five (7)
- 9 Naked nephew with uranium aboard ship, in home of 1 down's temple (7)
- 13 Section of semitrailer ran over Fleming's students (11)
- 17 Nasty, nasty Erin to use oppressive power (9)
- 18 Talked about club indeed (7)
- 19 Gold digger hugs saint in cathedral (7)
- 21 The first motive for disloyalty? (7)
- 22 Level of heat in a seaside greenhouse? (6)
- 26 Pass tailless pony (3)
- 28 Every second leave éclair for long time judge of Israel (3)

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a while. It seemed awful, but not quite so awful as before, almost as if it were a play. ... I was in serious danger of becoming acclimatised, to feel all this was a part of life the way things happened. And then I took to

my heels for the second time, and I went back to England as soon as I could get my bags packed.

— Pamela Hansford Johnson (1912-1981), *On Iniquity*. (1967). Quoting an Englishman who, visiting Nuremberg early in the Third Reich, saw groups of thugs terrorising Jews.

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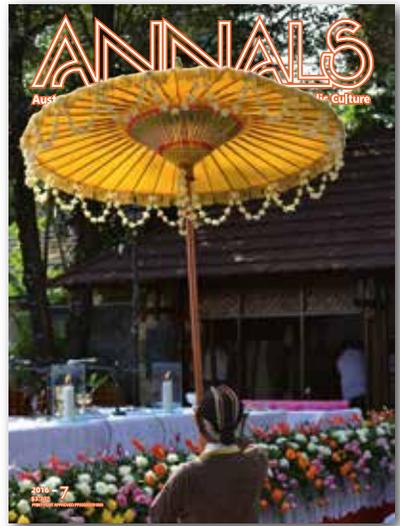
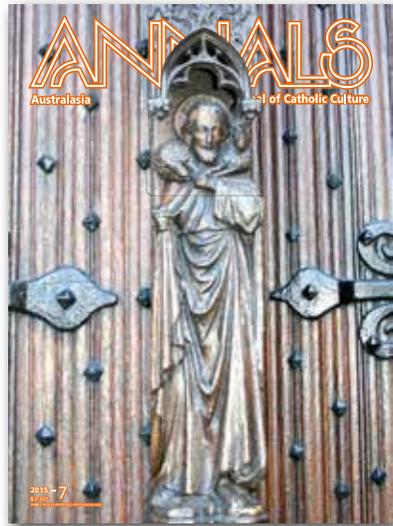
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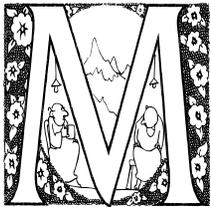


It was in fact from reading Newman that the young Joseph Ratzinger learnt that without Church authority conscience can easily be slave to personal passion and social fashion. This is what he famously dubbed 'the dictatorship of relativism.'

BLESSED JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

A 'PERSON CONVERTING'

By Archbishop Anthony Fisher, OP



ANY OF YOU will have seen James Cameron's 1997 film *Titanic* – at the very least, you'll know the story.

But one part of the events that night is often left out: the ship hit an iceberg just as a service on board was finishing with the hymn:

Lead, kindly Light, amid
th' encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am
far from home.
Lead Thou me on!
Keep Thou my feet; I do
not ask to see
The distant scene; one step
enough for me.

These sadly apt words, sung just moments before one of the greatest naval disasters of the last century, were penned in 1833 by the Englishman John Henry Newman who is patron of this dinner tonight.

Newman's life (1801-90) spanned pretty-well the entire nineteenth century and included a period as an Anglican divine, known for his involvement in the Oxford Movement, and then, after his famous conversion in 1845, as a Catholic priest and man of letters.

He was a prolific writer, including famous academic works on *The Development of Doctrine*, *The Idea of a University* and *The Grammar of Assent*, many volumes of sermons, as well as an

Though he suffered many humiliations after becoming Catholic – including being required to submit to conditional rebaptism, having his Catholic faith doubted by some till the end, being defamed, and never being named a bishop, he was eventually named a Cardinal in 1879 and beatified by Pope Benedict XVI in 2010.

Newman's influence continued long after his death. Throughout the Anglosphere, Catholic university groups were named Newman Societies or Newman Centres. Many years ago, when I was a student here at the University of Sydney, some friends and I fought off a move to rename the Catholic student group "Newpersons Society" because some people, in their ignorance of history, thought Newman was a sexist word!

Cardinal Newman was also a major influence on the fathers of the Second Vatican Council, in their teaching on the dignity of conscience and its need

for formation, their teaching on the integral or organic development of doctrine, and in other matters. He is quoted in the *Catechism of the*



Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman, 1801-1890.

'His commitment to following truth, wherever it led him, made Newman a saint; and his stature as the leading English theologian of the 19th century attracts Pope [Emeritus] Benedict, one of the leading theologians of the past century.' – Christopher Howse.

autobiography (*The Apologia pro vita sua*), poems (e.g. *The Dream of Gerontius*) and hymns (e.g. *Firmly I Believe and Truly*).

Catholic Church where conscience is described as ‘the aboriginal Vicar of Christ’ (§1778).

Because of his importance in articulating the Catholic conception of conscience, Newman has been used by some as a champion of ‘anything goes’, as long as people are sincere and tolerant. Talk of supremacy of conscience today seems to amount to a theological ‘get-out-of-gaol-free’ card, so that no matter how wrong you are objectively speaking, or how little trouble you’ve taken to work out what the right thing to do is, as long as you are following “your own lights” you’re fine.

The disastrous effects of conscience-as-sincerity-and-tolerance upon our culture, including its deep relativism, subjectivism and individualism, and its declining respect for the freedoms of conscience, thought and religion, are amongst the factors we might dub ‘th’ encircling gloom’ of today – a gloom that has led to moral and spiritual shipwreck for many.

And before we point any fingers outward at the Titanics of our society, we should realize this dangerous murkiness is alive and well on board the Barque of Peter, in parts of the Church here in Australia today, indeed within the hearts and minds of each one here.

In his famous *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk* Newman warned that that the idea of conscience was, already in 1875, degenerating into “an Englishman’s prerogative to be his own master in all things”. Without divine revelation, tradition, community, and reason itself, conscience easily goes off the rails.

Morality becomes a mere power game and people write their own tickets. What we need is a reliable moral compass, that is, a well-formed practical intellect. On the day he was made a Cardinal, Newman observed: “Liberalism in religion is the doctrine that there is no positive truth in religion, but that one creed is as good as another.” This view, he observed,

was increasingly commonplace and had the very real advantage of encouraging tolerance. But “it is inconsistent with any recognition of any religion, as true.” It reduces all religion to mere sentiment and taste, “the right of each individual to make it say just what strikes his fancy.” And if we accept that faith is so personal and private, it will necessarily be ignored in public life.

It was in fact from reading Newman that the young Joseph Ratzinger learnt that without Church authority conscience can easily be slave to personal passion and social fashion. This is what he famously dubbed ‘the dictatorship of relativism’.

On the centenary of Newman’s death, the then-Cardinal Ratzinger paid tribute to Newman’s ‘liberating and essential’ truth that the ‘we’ of the Church develops from and guarantees the ‘me’ of personal conscience. Catholic teaching never contradicts freedom of conscience: by forming and informing conscience it frees it rather than caging it.

A person converting

Of course, we must be wary of going to an opposite extreme that empties conscience of any real role. When Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore, who shared Newman’s doubts about the need to define papal infallibility, was asked whether the Pope was infallible in all things, the American Cardinal replied: “In my last visit with him he called me Jibbons.”

Some think Catholic assent to doctrine and obedience to the commandments means ‘This is how it is, like it or lump it. It’s the Church’s way or the highway’ – by which they mean, ‘my reading of the Church’s way or nothing’. It’s exactly what the Pharisees tried to do to Jesus. But Jesus demonstrated enormous respect for and patience with His disciples as free and rational beings made in God’s image with the moral law written on their hearts; He made space for their growth in faith and morals,

gradually tutoring their speculative and practical intellects.

Yes, there was a perennial truth He revealed about God and the human person – revealed most fully in Himself – but that truth must be received by each individual and applied to their unique situations, rediscovered afresh by every generation and re-presented in its languages and thought patterns.

Christians are not moral robots following an App written in 33AD. Though Christ who is the Truth is unchanging, we are not. And so the same Newman who taught the immutable truths of Catholic faith also wrote about the development of doctrine down the ages; and the same Newman who taught the importance of conscience also wrote about its limitations.

While those who wanted to rid Catholic societies of the name ‘Newman’ for fear of sexism were muddled, they were right to think there was more to the name than just an historic figure. For to say we must all be New-men, is to grasp that Catholic life is one of continual evangelisation, catechesis, formation, change. We must be forever becoming new men and women, as we deepen our understanding of the mysteries of God, the universe and ourselves, and seek to live those renewed understandings faithfully in our lives.

As an Anglican, Newman realized that truth in matters of faith or morals can never be established by current opinion or committee resolution or private ‘spiritual’ feeling, which he thought was all too often the Protestant temptation.

No, if we are to *assent* to some truth of faith or morals, to have *certainty* about that truth and conform ourselves to it, it must have a reality beyond ourselves and our tastes or the spirit of our age.

As a Catholic, however, Newman also realized that truth in matters of faith and morals can never be established once for ever as a closed system, a ‘done and dusted’ orthodoxy, as is all too often the

Catholic temptation. No, if we are to be true to what we have received we must not only be careful to pass it on unpolluted but also be ready to explore the mystery more and more deeply and ready to be astonished by new and greater understandings. "If we insist on being as sure as is conceivable," Newman wrote, "we must be content to creep along the ground, and never soar."

Thus Newman observed – both with respect to himself and the Church – that "to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often." Pope Benedict once observed that "Throughout his entire life, Newman was a person converting, a person being transformed, and thus he always remained and became ever more himself." And in this there is a model for us all, for our own lives as Catholic university students and ultimately graduates, professionals and scholars, and spouses and parents, and politicians and journalists, and priests and religious, and the rest.

Are you the same person at 20 that you were at 10 and would you want to be the same person at 50 and at 80? To which I would say both YES and NO. It's the same you developing over that time, and many of the essentials must be continuous; but it is also a maturing person whose mind and relationships and waistline and much else expands, deepens, hopefully grows in wisdom and holiness. To the extent that we are sinners and limited in understanding we must hope for, work for, welcome that conversion to which God is constantly calling us.

A life of conversion

'Convert' is not a word we hear so often these days; it used to mean someone who had become a Catholic and would on average be more intentional or missionary about it than the genetic Catholics. Its root is in the Latin word *convertere*, meaning to

'change,' 'turn,' 'refresh'. Our word 'conversion' comes from the related Latin word *conversari*, meaning 'to dwell with, keep company with'; the same Latin word is the root of our word 'conversation'.

Thus *conversion* is not about brow-beating, or trying to force others to 'see the light', so to speak; rather, it is intimately connected with *conversation*, with friendship, and so with the passing of time together, and the change that follows. And as Newman said, "Growth is the only evidence of life". This has consequences for us in three areas of our lives: our relationship with God, our relationship with ourselves, and our relationship with others.

First, our relationship with God. Though I imagine all of you here tonight are believers, your faith journey is by no means complete. Friendships are built and strengthened over time, and it's no different with our friendship with God. And part of any real friendship is the openness to allowing that friendship to change us. As the American Catholic writer Flannery O'Connor wrote in a letter to a friend, "A faith that just accepts is a child's faith and alright for children, but eventually you have to grow up religiously as in every other way."¹

It took Newman 44 years to reach the stage of being ready formally to convert to Catholicism; nor did he stay in one place with respect to his faith thereafter. In our own autobiography, like Newman's *Apologia pro vita sua*, God must loom as the benevolent ever-directing force, the reliable friend, the Creator-Saviour-Inspirer.

So, we have to grow in our relationship with God, allowing Him to teach us, convert us, renew us, return us towards Himself every moment of every day. In the process of getting to know and relate better to God, we hope there will be change in us for the better, growth in faith, hope and love, in the theological or God-knowing-and-relating virtues.

And this is closely connected to the second conversion in our lives: the conversion of our relationship to ourselves. Christ tells us to love God first, and then our neighbours as ourselves. So we have to respect and esteem, reverence and love ourselves, as God's image, but with humility without self-hatred, with patience without lethargy, with temperance without insensibility, and so on.

As we grow in self-knowledge and respect, we hope to grow in prudence, temperance and courage, in the moral or self-knowing-and-relating virtues. In writing our *Apologia pro vita sua*, the character must be constantly evolving, hopefully into a richer, more interesting, and nobler character – a saint.

"Without self-knowledge," Newman wrote, "you have no root in yourselves personally; you may endure for a time, but under affliction or persecution your faith will not last. This is why many in this age (and in every age) become infidels, heretics, schismatics, disloyal despisers of the Church. They cast off the form of truth, because it never has been to them more than a form. They endure not, because they never have tasted that the Lord is gracious; and they never have had experience of His power and love, because they have never known their own weakness and need."²

Finally, conversion of our relationship with others. Friendship with our fellows is hugely important for us; its absence, as lethal as light and oxygen deprivation for a plant or animal. So we have to grow in friendships of various kinds, with our romantic interests and ultimate spouse, our confidants, children, work colleagues, and others. As we get to know and love them more deeply, we grow in justice and compassion, in the social or other-knowing-and-relating virtues.

Our autobiography or *Apologia pro vita sua* is populated with others with whom we agree and disagree, engage in common projects and

uncommon rivalries, influence and are influenced, give support and are supported.

Naturally, we want our non-Christian friends to convert, to be led by the 'kindly Light'. But that's unlikely to happen unless they see in us someone who relates well to God, ourselves and others, someone who is enriched and finds joy in that knowing and relating.

So our friends must never be mere targets for conversion in some religious numbers game; they must never be projects first, but always and first our friends in their own right. As we get to know and love them, and they us, we both may change. And if we have our relationships with God and ourselves right, we need not fear they will influence us in the wrong direction.

It may be a little cheeky of me to say, but I think there are really only two religious groups in our world worth worrying about: the Catholics, who should know they still have a long way to go until they are saints; and everyone else, the Yet2B-Catholics who don't yet know that.

Both groups are converts: Catholics are Christians becoming more so, Yet2B-Catholics are hopefully on the way.

In short, we are not human *beings* so much as human *becomings*; our lives are change. We try to improve ourselves and our world, knowing that we won't always get it right. But as Newman said, "Nothing would be done at all if one waited until one could do it so well that no one could find fault with it" and "If we are intended for great ends, we are called to great hazards".

With the morn those angel faces smile

Whether Newman will eventually be one of the select group of *Doctors of the Church* is yet to be seen. I expect he will. Pope Benedict clearly thought so also when he said: "The characteristic of the great Doctor of the Church, it seems to me, is that he teaches

Is it True?

RICHARD OF St Victor was a Scottish monk at the Abbey of St Victor in Paris, who died in 1173. Unaware of the oblivion to which the Fathers of the Church and Catholic Tradition were to be consigned by Royal Decree in 16th century Protestant England, Richard asks readers of his Commentary on the vision of Ezekiel: 'Do you wish to honour and defend the authority of the Fathers? We cannot honour these lovers of truth more than by seeking, finding, teaching, defending and loving the truth.' Then he adds: 'Do not ask whether what I say is new; but whether it is true.' 'Attende ergo non utrum dicam aliquid novum, sed verum'.

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

not only through his thought and speech but also by his life, because within him, thought and life are interpenetrated and defined. If this is so, then Newman belongs to the great teachers of the Church, because he both touches our hearts and enlightens our thinking."

Tonight I have suggested that amidst the causes for gloom in our world and even in some corners of our Church at the moment, there is every cause for hope, as long as we open ourselves to the graces of conversion, in our relationships with God, with each other, with ourselves.

We might consider events like the Australian Catholic Youth Festival with nearly 20,000 young participants only three months ago, which so starkly challenges the popular wisdom that the world is moving uniformly in the secularising direction of marginalising and abandoning faith.

Or think of an organisation like "Catholic Voices" that was inspired by Newman and has spread from Britain to places like America and Australia, giving smart, articulate young Catholics "a crash course in media literacy and the hot-button issues about the Church, such as women's rights, gay marriage, and abortion and contraception, and then makes them available for print and broadcast interviews."³ And ACSA tries to make you both: witnesses to our world that more is possible for youth and articulate spokesmen and women for our faith.

Though the hymn *Lead, Kindly Light* was the theme-song for the tragedy of the sinking of the Titanic, less than twelve hours later it had been converted into a harbinger of hope. As the *Carpathia* picked up survivors from the *Titanic* the next morning, they found one boat singing loudly familiar words:

So long Thy power hath blest me,
sure it still
Will lead me on.
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and
torrent, till
The night is gone,
And with the morn those angel
faces smile,
Which I have loved long since,
and lost awhile!

After darkness comes the light; after the Cross the Resurrection; out of sin comes conversion. So let's all be converts, not just once off but for all our lives, as Newman was; not just in word, but in all our actions, relationships. Let us live for that worthy epitaph: "Throughout his entire life, [this] Newman [or woman] was a person converting, a person being transformed, and thus he always remained and became ever more himself."

This is the text of an address entitled 'A Person Converting,' delivered by the Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, Anthony Fisher OP, at the Australian Catholic Students Association Newman dinner, St John's College, University of Sydney, 10 March 2018.

-
1. Flannery O'Connor, "A Letter to Louse Abbott, 1959", in Sally Fitzgerald (ed.), *The Habit of Being: Letters of Flannery O'Connor* (Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1979), pp. 353-354
 2. John Henry Newman, *Parochial and Plain Sermons*
 3. "John Allen on Catholic Voices: John Henry Newman in Action", *Catholic Voices* <http://www.catholicvoices.org.uk/monitor-blog/2016/01/john-allen-catholic-voices-john-henry-newman-action>

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THINK BEFORE YOU ACT

Imagine what it is like to be someone else, with different beliefs and wishes. It's not the end of the world if you admit your ideological opponents may have a point here and there. When someone states an alleged fact confidently, ask 'Are they in a position to know that?' Be aware of the temptations of moral vanity. When you're proved wrong, change your mind.

MAKING WISE DECISIONS EFFECTIVE

By James Franklin

JESUS and the early Christians were not, it is true, very 'community-minded' in the modern sense of being involved in the widest

issues of their political community. That was understandable. Pontius Pilate's rule was not known for its sensitivity to community concerns, while the apostles in Acts were stretched with organising charitable works for their own distressed followers on top of their work in evangelising.

With the Last Days delayed and after two thousand years of Christian influence on the political world, things have changed. We do not yet live in a godly Commonwealth of the kind sought by Cromwell and the Puritans – perhaps just as well – but some Christian values have over time become accepted as foundational principles of how (most) modern polities behave, or at least aim or pretend to behave. In particular the equality of persons – the belief that all are created equal by God – has translated

into equality before the law and into democratic government, which when it works means that governments have a degree of genuine accountability to the public. Sometimes we complain

and others of goodwill have a duty to think about how they can move things in the right direction. Voting is compulsory, voting has an effect, so it is an ethical requirement to put some effort into working out which vote is right. Many Christians also have a more powerful position in society than the common citizen, in such roles as financiers, lawyers, regulators and policymakers. More power brings more responsibility, as in Jesus's parable of the talents.

Policy needs to be not merely well-intentioned but effective. The record of Christians in getting public policy right is very mixed. There have been some clear successes such as the Christian role in abolishing slavery. An Australian example is Arthur Calwell's postwar

immigration policy, which saw this country play a major role in resettling a million destitute Eastern European refugees from the Red Army. But in the present day it is much harder to say if Christian perspectives are proving helpful with political or economic policies,

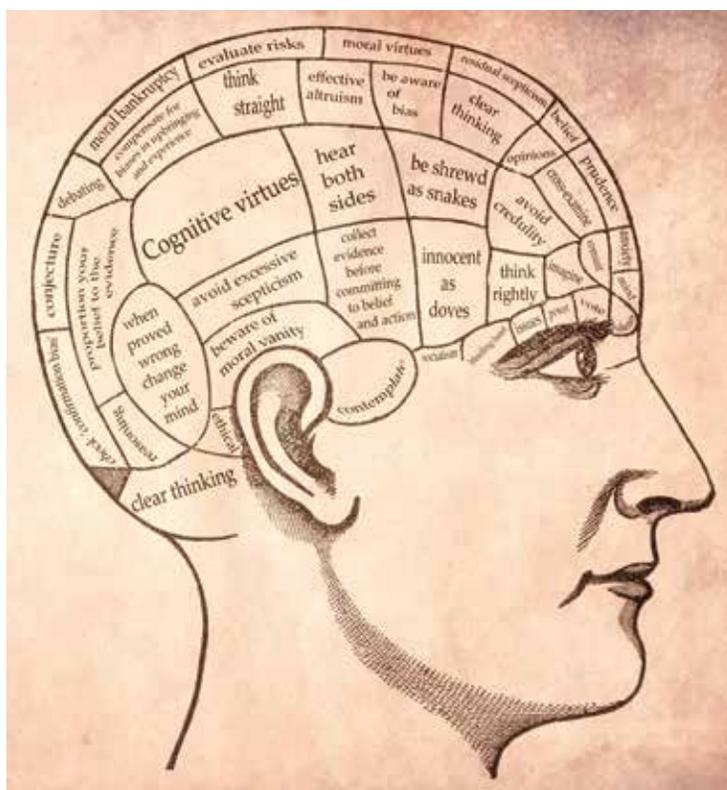


Image: Brooke Shelley, St James' Church, King Street Sydney

that governments take decisions that are merely popular, but it is a reminder that public opinion does have an influence on political decisions.

Given that our views have an effect on what happens, Christians

Pylades and Augustus

PYLADES A mime and a dancer, is said to have rejoined very cleverly, when the emperor Augustus [27 BC to 14 AD] rebuked him for having quarrelled publicly with Bathyllus, a fellow-artist, and a favourite of Maecenas [who was, himself, a friend of Augustus]: 'It is to your advantage, Caesar, that the people should devote their spare time to us.' The meaning was clear to Augustus who took the rejoinder in good part: it was better for the Emperor, the Senate and the Roman State if the *profanum vulgus* or the 'common rabble' paid more attention to the theatre and gossiped about rivalry between famous pantomimes, instead of focusing too much on what the Emperor was up to. 21st century spin doctors would agree.

– See: Lucius Cassius Dio Cocceianus, 155-235 AD. Book liv, 17,5. He wrote in Greek a history of Rome in 80 volumes, of which many have survived intact or as fragments.

or even with personal philanthropy. The problem is that policymaking requires 'cognitive virtues' as well as moral goodwill.

Tony Abbott once complained that 'On examination, what's called social justice usually turns out to be socialism masquerading as justice.' That is no doubt true sometimes and not true other times. In any case it is a reminder of the painful spectacle of bleeding-heart churchmen pronouncing on difficult policy issues with great goodwill but poor understanding of how economic and political causes work.

On the other hand, 'tough-minded' libertarian views that more freedom from regulation is always better, are equally ill-informed. If capitalism were free of moral constraints, we would be able to buy slaves, judicial decisions, harvested organs and the liquidation of business rivals. Social justice is a desirable aim; we just need to keep our wits about us and think hard to understand what will work.

We need, in short, cognitive virtues as well as moral ones – 'be shrewd as snakes and innocent as doves,' as Jesus put it when sending out his disciples (Matt 10:16). In the traditional list of virtues, all such skills of clear thinking were lumped together under prudence.

Today we can unpack that and list some of the more particular cognitive virtues needed to think and act rightly. They include: 'Hear

both sides.' 'Collect enough evidence before committing to belief and action.' 'Proportion your belief to the evidence.' 'Work on being aware of and compensating for biases in upbringing and experience.' 'Allow for biases towards believing what you want to believe.' 'Keep a check on "confirmation bias": looking for evidence that supports your present beliefs instead of evidence that might refute them.' 'Avoid both credulity and excessive scepticism: on the one hand, keep open the possibility you may be wrong as long as feasible, but on the other, when the evidence has become clear, don't let a residual scepticism sap the will to act.' 'When action is contemplated, evaluate the risks (of consequences) as well as the probabilities (of beliefs) – as Montaigne said of the witch-burning craze, "After all, it is putting a very high price on one's conjectures to have a man roasted alive because of them?"

Imagine what it is like to be someone else, with different beliefs and wishes. It's not the end of the world if you admit your ideological opponents may have a point here and there. When someone states an alleged fact confidently, ask 'Are they in a position to know that?' Be aware of the temptations of moral vanity. When you're proved wrong, change your mind.

Imagine if public life were conducted with a higher level of cognitive virtue. Politicians would

not have to pretend to know everything. People debating politics would not assume their opponents were stupid as well as morally bankrupt. 'Debate' on social media would not take place via a series of internet pile-ons – Bill Leak abused and threatened by the left one month, Yassmin Abdel-Magied abused and threatened by the right the next. Panellists on Q&A would have time to give reasons for their opinions.

There would be a Royal Commission into everything. Well, maybe not everything, but the ability of well-resourced Royal Commissions to compel witnesses and documents and to cross-examine on oath has proved very effective in shining light into dark corners and getting at the truth. The law has long experience in how to evaluate evidence, and if those skills are focussed in the way possible in a Royal Commission, the truth will out.

For those not much involved in public life but with some spare disposable income, cognitive virtue will come into play elsewhere, perhaps in the choice of employer and the choice of charity to give money to.

Is it ethical to work in banking and finance, for example? That is not an easy question. It is possible to point to useful, indeed necessary, services provided by the financial industry. People's savings are preserved so they are relieved of anxiety about the future; investment funding is directed to productive ventures that have wide benefits. That is not the same as saying that individual jobs in the industry are all or mostly productive and worth doing.

Even if one has not behaved as badly as some of the witnesses currently entertaining the public in the Banking Royal Commission, putting one's heart and soul into a zero-sum marketing game among banks is not a very useful exercise. By and large, a working life devoted just to making another million for a bank, if not exactly unethical, may not be an ideal use of one's only

time on the planet, given the other possible uses for one's skills. There is no general answer, since roles and talents are so varied. Everyone needs to examine their job and its outcomes for themselves – with the cognitive virtues in mind, especially the one about allowing for biases towards believing what you want to believe.

Many contemporary jobs produce plenty of income, especially late in life. The time comes for philanthropy. That requires cognitive skills too, to distinguish feelgood money sinks from charities that are really getting something useful done. 'Effective altruism,' to use a recently popular phrase, is not an easy cognitive task. At the simplest level, some charities have high administrative costs which undermine the effectiveness of the dollars going into them. But the problem is deeper than that. Spending money on 'good' causes has the potential for perverse outcomes. The way that untied and unaccountable intergovernmental aid has sometimes fed the growth of third-world kleptocracies is well-known, and the phenomenon can easily be repeated on smaller scales.

Dependence on charity can displace real economic activity, in the way that giving money to beggars creates an economy of begging. Again, there are no general answers. Donors to charities have to keep their eyes and ears open and evaluate, honestly and with enough evidence, the accountability and effectiveness of any charity they plan to support.

Thinking straight is not easy, especially when factual and moral issues interact. But it is not the higher differential calculus either. It involves no more than the skills expected of an ordinary jury, and persistence.

JAMES FRANKLIN is Professor of Mathematics at UNSW and author of *Corrupting the Youth: A History of Philosophy in Australia*. He is editor of the *Journal of the Australian Catholic Historical Society*. This article appeared first in *Parish Connections*, St James' Church Sydney, August/September 2018 under the title 'To serve the community: think straight with the cognitive virtues.'

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– Editor, *Annals*

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The purpose of this ideology was not that people should believe it. On the contrary, the purpose was to make belief irrelevant, to rid the world of rational discussion in all areas where the Party had staked a claim.

DROWNING THE 'STILL SMALL VOICES'

By Giles Auty



WHY DOES BEING even mildly 'red' these days so often imply being 'unread' in a variety of vital contexts? The foregoing sentence has a certain verbal nicety about it yet at the same time contains a telling and extremely worrying truth. Indeed the recent farewell speech of former PM Malcolm Turnbull when leaving office could hardly have been more relevant in such a regard. Thus when Mr. Turnbull spoke nostalgically about the so-called 'progressive' nature of his recently ended 3 year reign he presented the implementation of 'marriage equality' as being a prime example of its success.

With due respect to Mr. Turnbull he must once have studied long hours and read very extensively for his law degree yet I cannot help wondering about what kind of range his subsequent reading has encompassed? For example even a brief perusal of Paul Kengor's *Takedown: from communists to progressives how the Left has sabotaged the family and marriage* (WND Books 2015) would, within just a morning's reading, have disabused him forever of any delusion that 'marriage equality' was or is anything other than part of a long-established and potentially destructive Marxist political plot.

Many of Paul Kengor's recent books rightly achieve vast sales back home in America so I am fairly sure a handy bookshop selling such would not lie too far from our former PM's New York apartment. 'Marriage Equality' constitutes what could be described politely as 'Marxism by stealth' yet can I be absolutely sure that I could find a copy, say, of *The Black Book of Communism* (Harvard University

unbelievable volume of historic crimes, terrors and repressions committed by communists worldwide in exhaustive detail. You may wonder yourself about where precisely the gulags were situated formerly in obscure-seeming Bulgaria, say. No fewer than 19 pages of the book cover communism's woeful history in Bulgaria yet you may also well wonder at this moment why such obscure-seeming facts need necessarily concern you?

One answer is that you are quite unlikely to be a member of government or a senior political advisor. But if you do happen to be either a ready grasp of recent international affairs would seem to me to be absolutely essential to any proper fulfillment of your role. In the meantime, however, it is also the duty of all of us to remain thoroughly aware of what is happening 'out there' as well as at the bottom of our gardens.

I grew up in a household full to overflowing with all manner of books collected by my late scholarly father and was later lucky enough to attend an English boarding school noted for its excellent library. In spite of the miracles of modern communication I personally prefer still to rely largely on books. Before coming to Australia my house near London boasted a specially enlarged letterbox so that the crash to the floor of massive art catalogues and other bulky books regularly



Press 1999) anywhere at all on Mr. Turnbull's bookshelves even when he is back home in Sydney? The truly horrifying findings of the latter book are fairly far from subtle.

In essence the latter 800-odd page, exhaustively researched book, which was first published in French in 1997, records the almost

What's Wrong?

WE HAVE A Conservative Party which is not in any respect conservative, a Labour Party which is not socialist, a Liberal Party which is not liberal and a national Church which can only with much charity be described as Christian. We have armed forces which can no longer be used in defence of their own country, only deployed in 'multilateral' utopian enterprises. We have laws which are not enforced and police who do not enforce them, juries which are not independent and do not have to be unanimous, marriage ceremonies which are meaningless, prisons whose inmates are disgorged almost as soon as they enter them, elections which are not choices, schools which do not teach, qualifications which do not qualify, borders which are not enforced, liberties which are not maintained, and money which is based upon fantasy.

– Peter Hitchens, 'Top Hats and Kierkegaard Some Thoughts on a Buckingham Palace Garden Party,' May 14, 2015. 174

woke me and heralded the start of a new day. A high percentage of current Australians strike me as tragically uninformed not just through our continent's physical isolation but also now through an equally damaging absence on their part of wide and sustained reading. Thus how many even of our current politicians have read Roger Scruton's incomparable *Fools, Frauds and Firebrands: Thinkers of the New Left* (Bloomsbury 2015) for instance, which could certainly educate every one of them on what has occurred fatally in recent times to our entire political planet?

Or what about Douglas Murray's *The Strange Death of Europe* (Bloomsbury 2017) - an equally enlightening book? Mr. Murray was very recently in Australia. For a relatively modest cost a completely new take on our current world could be yours. For decades past most Australian schools and universities have effectively brainwashed their students in culpable and possibly irreversible leftist - as well as vehemently anti-Christian ways. The 4 fine books I have mentioned thus far cost me less than \$150 to import.

Australia has become increasingly rudderless because it now very largely lacks any kind of beneficial, let alone widely-agreed, moral code. A friend who has recently returned from a long holiday in Eastern

Europe was saddened profoundly also by the lack of purpose and widespread drunkenness he witnessed even in such an utterly inspiring environment as Prague. 'Losing it' is now clearly a widespread international phenomenon especially among our young. They can probably sense a fatal lack of certainty also among their seniors and lose confidence themselves as a result.

Recently I re-read for the first time in years an introductory essay I wrote not long after coming to Australia for an award-winning book of photographs of Sydney Harbour Bridge by photographer Robert Billington. What strong hope and admiration I felt then for many aspects of Australian life yet regret I could not truthfully even begin to write such an essay today. What unlooked-for changes have happened and what utterly inadequate thinking are we allowing to gain traction in our public debates?

Recently for another publication I quoted Winston Churchill's Second World War speeches as being an important factor in the winning of that war by the allied cause. The inhabitants of Britain and much of the Western world were also very much more widely Christian in those wartime days as well as infinitely more concerned for the welfare of their co-inhabitants.

Communism has never provided any genuine answer to anything - yet sadly today capitalism and democracy are often hardly covering themselves with glory either. Since time immemorial the human race has urgently needed some kind of 'ethical' umbrella as a shelter from widely-roaming and opportunistic strains of evil. At one time the former was very sensibly provided in part by our major Western laws and institutions as well as by our once much more widely-held beliefs.

Mainstream communism collapsed nearly 30 years ago and I can readily recall the euphoria of that moment in London. Indeed a close friend even threw a vast party there to celebrate the event. Real joy and euphoria were in the air yet the shadowy and hard to pinpoint Marxist nightmare did not take very long at all to re-appear. That was largely because of the widespread capture of 'our' Western culture by people fortunate enough never to have known anything else at first hand.

Unlike them both my wife and I travelled widely in communist countries before their collapse and thus have no illusions whatsoever about their nature - which was infinitely more depressing even than that of a current deeply puzzled and divided Australia. The almost total loss of our culture here to Left-wing political interests was just the start of a national cultural collapse.

Some of our better politicians at least were well aware of this problem and ready to act on it yet were generally brushed aside during our nation's recent fatal political lurch to the left. Old-fashioned socialism under the strict rules of democracy often dealt in humane virtues of a kind which are too rarely encountered today. For over 50 years now, however, the generally hard-to-define phenomenon we know as 'post-modernism' has waged a steady war against more or less all of the bedrock ideas and virtues of our own - and Western society as a whole.

Taken separately all the individual aspects of post-modernism may at first sight seem relatively harmless or even laughable: politically-correct phraseology was merely the first phase of the onslaught and many of us can recall extremely foolish-seeming examples – in my own case when first seeing a ‘ploughperson’s lunch’ advertised outside a London pub. But then in rapid order came feminism, gender issues, multiculturalism and racism followed before long by major enforced inroads into our free speech. This entire package was, of course, sold as ‘progress’ just as even the least resistance to it was characterized as ‘reactionary’, ‘head-in-the-sand’, ‘extreme right’ or even ‘fascist’.

I was a small child often to be seen hurtling down the nearest air-raid shelter during the Second World War so perhaps the last description is not altogether appropriate in my case. As I point out in my recent book *Post-modernist Australia: How to Create an Unholy Mess* (Connor Court 2018) post-modernism in all its aspects *was and is simply Marxism in disguise*. Having found the front door of Western democracy locked and bolted, our wily antagonist has simply climbed the back wall and sought surreptitious entrance via the largely undefended rear of our residence.

As English philosopher Roger Scruton has so sagely remarked: “In order to drown the still small voice of disagreement communist parties have had recourse to ideology – a set of doctrines, for the most part doctrines of staggering imbecility, designed to close the avenues of intellectual enquiry. The purpose of this ideology was not that people should believe it. On the contrary, the purpose was to make belief irrelevant, to rid the world of rational discussion in all areas where the Party had staked a claim.

“The idea of a ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’ was not supposed to describe a reality, it was supposed to bring enquiry to an end, so that reality could not be perceived”.

Staggering imbecility? Could he perhaps have had our ‘safe schools’ program in mind?

I am, as always deeply indebted to Roger – now Sir Roger – Scruton. Here is yet another gem: “Why is it that after a century of socialist disasters, and an intellectual legacy that has been time and again exploded, the left-wing position remains, as it were, the default position to which thinking people automatically gravitate when called upon for a comprehensive philosophy? Why are ‘right-wingers’ marginalized in the education system, denounced in the media and regarded by our political class as untouchables, fit only to clear up after the orgies of luxurious nonsense indulged in by their moral superiors?”

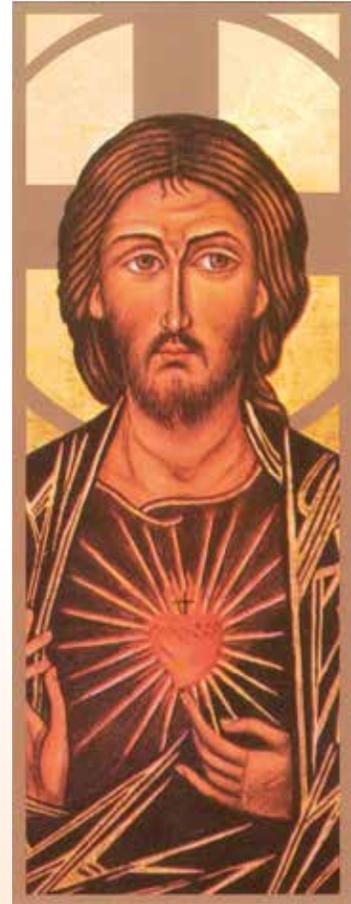
I have come in time - perhaps unnecessarily slowly - to the conclusion that post-modernism (which is simply communism by stealth) is the biggest and most successful confidence trick which has ever been played on the human race - and believe also that history will bear me out in this matter.

Why am I humbly announcing such a thesis in *Annals* rather than over a microphone to millions of fellow Western citizens? One answer is that *Annals* has been very good to me and I thus feel comfortable in these pages. Truths also often become apparent in the end, more or less simultaneously, to many inquiring minds. The Australian media at large has never shown any great wish to publish me and such disdain has by now become largely mutual.

As ever *Annals* remains a vibrant vehicle in any search any of us may undertake to find recognisable truths.

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*. His most recent book *Post-modernist Australia: How to Create an Unholy Mess*, Connor Court 2018, \$19.95, is available from the publisher: 0497 900 685.

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'An image of the eternal youth of the Church.'

VENERABLE EDEL QUINN



ONE DAY in 1937 a Dutch priest was driving an Irish girl to a Legion of Mary meeting some miles from his mission in Africa. They came to a river in such flood that the bridge across it could not even be seen. He was about to turn back when the girl cried out, 'Oh Father, please go on, I'm sure Our Lady will protect us'. He was aghast but found he couldn't resist such faith. Some men standing by formed a human chain to see if the bridge was still there.

It was, so he drove on blindly. The water flooded the engine and plugs but the impetus carried the car across and up an incline at the far side. He dried the plugs and tried the starter. The car got going and they were in time for the meeting. The girl was Edel Quinn and the incident typical of her story.

In 1936 she had been sent from Dublin to establish the Legion in East and Central Africa. The difficulties were enormous but she met every challenge with unwavering faith and courage.

When others faltered her invariable response was, 'Why can't we trust Our Lady?' or 'Our Lady will see after things'. For nearly eight years, her health steadily declining, she worked over the vast territories committed to her. Hundreds of Legion *Praesidia* and many higher councils were set up on an enduring basis. As a result, thousands of Africans are engaged in the Church's work of evangelization.

At the source of all Edel's activity was her deep union with God, sustained by constant prayer. The Eucharist was the centre of her life: 'What a desolation life would be without the Eucharist', she wrote. Her devotion to Mary was marked by childlike trust and utter generosity. She said she could never refuse Our Lady anything she thought she wanted. Mary's rosary seemed to be always in her hand.

Edel died in Nairobi on May 12, 1944. In 1957 the Archbishop of Nairobi initiated the process for her Beatification and many witnesses were examined, mainly in Africa and Ireland. Their evidence, published by the Holy See, points not only to outstanding holiness but to holiness in its most attractive form.

The words love, joy, peace appear in almost every testimony. The Vicar General of Mauritius was speaking for many when he said 'I want to lay special emphasis on her constant joy; she was always smiling; she never complained; she was always at people's disposal, never stinting her time'.

It is for the Holy See to pass judgement on her heroic sanctity. In the meantime, hundreds of Bishops have written to the Holy Father in support of the Cause, most of them, it is understood, stressing its special relevance for the young people of our time. Edel, in the words of a Spanish Cardinal, was 'an image of the eternal youth of the Church'.

On December 15, 1994 Pope John Paul II declared Edel Quinn 'Venerable'. One miracle attributed to her intercession is still required for her Beatification.

Prayers for the Beatification of Venerable Edel Quinn

Eternal Father, I thank you for the grace you gave to your servant, Edel Quinn, of striving to live always in the joy of your presence, for the radiant charity infused into her heart by your Holy Spirit and for the strength she drew from the Bread of Life to labour until death for the glory of Your name in loving dependence on Mary, Mother of the Church.

Confident, O Merciful Father, that her life was pleasing to you, I beg you to grant me, through her intercession, the special favour I now implore, and to make known by miracles the glory she enjoys in Heaven, so that she may be glorified also by your Church on earth, through Christ Our Lord, Amen. (With ecclesiastical approval)

NOT A BLACKSMITH, A 'GOLDSMITH'

Doors to a past undreamed of swung open at the mere touch of his chalk – like a magician's wand on the blackboard. The gamut of human knowledge and experience found synthesis and meaning, and worlds of mathematics, physics, biology, botany, astronomy, logic and metaphysics spun around the Sun that was Philosophy.

A PRIEST WHO LOOKED BOTH WAYS

By Paul Stenhouse, MSC



RNOLD HENRY MOORE LUNN, skier, mountaineer and Catholic apologist, wrote in 1936 that he seemed often on the point of being run over by motorists in busy London. 'My wife never allows me to leave the house without a final exhortation: "Look both ways". The traditional formula was not omitted when I left for Oxford [on July 13, 1933] to be received by Father Ronald Knox into the Catholic Church. It was precisely because I had looked both ways that I found the right road at last.'

Father John Savage MSC, also 'looked both ways'; and he taught those of us privileged to be his students, to do likewise.

John may not have been the first person of faith whom I, as a young person, met, who looked both ways before crossing the religious or philosophical divide, but he was the most articulate and certainly the most influential.

He would chat with unfailing courtesy, and offer full attention to all wayfarers, judging none, supporting and encouraging all. Like Pope John-Paul II, his faith and charity shone, glowed, in his very face, and put to shame the timidity and false modesty of many of his interlocuters.

He loved G.K. Chesterton and was one with him in insisting that all mysteries – natural and supernatural – are to be respected,

FATHER JOHN SAVAGE, MSC died, much lamented, in 2002. As print, radio, tv and 'social' media continue their relentless attacks on the Catholic priesthood may I share some memories of this truly upright priestly teacher. While his life was spent mainly in seminaries, he, as a priest, was typical of the vast majority of Catholic priests who have devoted their lives – sometimes at incredible cost – to serving God and His Church, and defending the truth. His life rebuts the unworthy inuendos and unproven assumptions that taint what passes for much news and comment these days.



stood in awe of, and loved; not explained away. For someone who was so much at home with the physical sciences – the telescope which he loved to use that was built by Father Bernard Power, sat abandoned for years in the stairwell of the west wing of Kensington Monastery – he had a breathtaking openness to the unseen and to the realms of Faith.

Joshua, the grandson of Sirach, translating his book into Greek for the Jews of the diaspora, especially in Egypt, sums up [Ecclesiasticus 44,1-7] the joy he felt at the achievements of his ancestors, and the degree of indebtedness that later generations should feel for them.

'Sage counsellors,' who 'out of their wisdom gave instruction,' along with 'composers of music or writers of poetry,' are mentioned in the list of 'famous men' – ahead of 'others endowed with wealth and strength.'

Do we need to be reminded that the priorities of Jesus ben Sirach are not those of most of the movers and shakers of our generation?

They were the unspoken priorities of John Savage who built his priestly and teaching apostolate on them. Unlike Jesus ben Sirach, however, I find it hard to express in words my degree of indebtedness to him. His classes were a joy and revelation. Like some spiritual conjurer, he opened up unknown worlds to us brash and ignorant youngsters thirsting for knowledge.

Disbelief in God – a Choice

INATTENTION [to God] or distraction [from belief in God] is indeed a kind of sleep, from which we can each of us awake at any time. The inattentive man may be awakened just by meeting somebody who radiates genuine faith - which, like a light, transfigures the creature in whom it dwells. I am one of those who attach an inestimable value to encounters. They are a spiritual fact of the highest importance, though unrecognised by traditional philosophy, for reasons which are perfectly clear but irrelevant to our present discussion. The virtue of such encounters is to rouse the inattentive to a reflection or return upon themselves, to make them say 'Am I really sure that I don't believe?' This is enough: if the soul really asks herself this question in all sincerity, rejecting all angry prejudices and parrot imaginings, she will be brought to recognise, not indeed that she already believes, but that she is in no case to say that she does not believe. Or perhaps it would be truer to say that the assertion of unbelief, made just then, would almost inevitably be tainted with pride, and that completely honest and careful introspection could not fail to unmask this pride. 'I do not believe' ceases to look like 'I cannot believe' in its own eyes, and tends to turn into 'I will not believe'.

- Gabriel Marcel, *Being and Having*, Collins, The Fontana Library, 1965, p.227. Marcel, born in Paris in 1889, was raised without any faith by an agnostic father. A leading existentialist philosopher he thought himself into the Catholic Church and was received formally in 1929. He was one of the most influential thinkers of the 20th century. He died in 1975.

Doors to a past undreamed of swung open at the mere touch of his chalk - like a magician's wand - on the blackboard at Croydon Monastery in Victoria: the whole gamut of human knowledge and experience found synthesis and meaning, and worlds of mathematics, physics, biology, botany, astronomy, logic and metaphysics spun around the Sun that was Philosophy.

It was only many years later that I learnt how privileged we had been. Not all my friends who had studied in other Australian seminaries after the late sixties had been so well exposed as we, in those years prior to Vatican II, to the mysteries of Thomistic and Aristotelian thought, or shown a way past and through the currents and eddies, whirlpools and black holes that is Modern Philosophy.

Existentialism meant more than Martin Heidegger or Karl Jaspers, Jean-Paul Sartre or Albert Camus for those of us introduced in our youth to the metaphysical writings of intellectual giants like Gabriel Marcel who thought [and fought] his way out of atheism into the Catholic fold, or the writings of

Henri Bergson who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1927 and died in 1941 without becoming a Catholic, though he expressed the wish to do so.

My four years studying Philosophy while breathing chalk dust thrown up by Father Savage, saw the completion of Father Frederick Copleston SJ's *magnum opus*: 'A History of Philosophy,' in eight books. Seven of them were in two parts - in all, 15 volumes. The last eight of those volumes dealt with modern philosophy's major thinkers, from René Descartes to Gottfried Leibnitz, followed by Thomas Hobbes, Bishop George Berkeley, David Hume, Immanuel Kant, Johann Fichte, Georg Hegel, Arthur Schopenhauer, Friedrich Nietzsche, Jeremy Bentham and Bertrand Russell - among what seemed like myriad others.



In all my years as a priest I have found few people who complain of having theological difficulties with the Catholic Faith, or simply with belief in God, whose problems were not, in reality, philosophical and psychological.

Philosophy remains the most under-valued handmaid of theology. If anything caused grief to John Savage it was the downgrading of Thomistic philosophy, and the underestimating of the influence of modern philosophy that occurred in his and our day. With predictably dire consequences for the quality of all things human, natural, ecological, planetary - and theological.

John was born in Prospect, South Australia, to Helen Murphy and Hubert Joseph Savage, the fifth of a family of six: five boys and one girl.

In his Novitiate year with the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart at Douglas Park, in 1939, when he was aged 17, his mother died. He went to Croydon Monastery, in Victoria, in 1940, and for the next 19 years was to remain there - as a student until 1946, and then as a lecturer in Philosophy until the budding philosophers went to Canberra Monastery, in 1960.

He taught in our Canberra Seminary for seven years and in 1968 came to Kensington Monastery, NSW, to teach Philosophy to the Mature Age students for the priesthood at the newly erected St Paul's Seminary.

He spent a year in Rome in 1976 where he stayed with the Fathers of the Holy Cross at the 7th century church of San Giorgio in Velabro, on the fringes of the Roman Forum. Blessed John Henry Newman was Cardinal Protector of this church from 1879-1890.

Velabrum properly means an 'awning' like those that covered parts of the roofs of Roman amphitheatres as protection from sun or rain. The term came to be used to describe the low-lying marsh formed by pools of fetid water, long since dried up, that

covered the little low valley that ran between the end of the Circus Maximus, the river Tiber and the Palatine Cliff.

Little wonder, as he wrote, that he found Rome 'fascinating'.

In this wonderful place where he felt at one with the early Catholic community, John studied St John of the Cross, St Teresa of Avila, Dom Cuthbert Butler's Western Mysticism, and did a course on the Ministerial Priesthood, and The Spirituality of Hope.

He went to the Holy Land and Greece, and managed to fit in visits to Lourdes, Barcelona, Paray-le-Monial, and Issoudun. 'If all this,' he wrote, 'helps me to be less of a "blacksmith," to use John of the Cross's colourful expression, it will have been very much worthwhile.'

The 'blacksmith' tag seems to have attracted him. He definitely under-estimated both his knowledge and his influence. Of course, when we were students he could have been forgiven for thinking, with some exceptions, that he was being asked to turn low-grade iron into passable horse-shoes. If it were ever true, it can't have been long, however, before this 'smithy' stopped working with iron and turned out some fine work in silver and gold.

Bishop Desmond Moore, not long back from the diocese of Alotau in Papua New Guinea, made a point of thanking John for taking such trouble with us, and giving us the benefit of his knowledge and his faith. John was predictably modest, but to no avail: too many people in this country and elsewhere, were touched by his loving gentleness and depth of knowledge.

John went to the Northern Territory in 1981 for two years, and then, for three years, was novice master at Douglas Park. In 1985 he said that as he was 65 years old he wouldn't ask to be re-appointed to the Territory, but would happily go 'if those who knew the territory well' thought he could contribute something 'worthwhile'. Those who

knew *him* well didn't hesitate, and he returned to the Territory in 1986, to the Daly River. From 1987 until 1990 he was Superior of the MSC community in Darwin

Before he went to the Territory, John told the then-Provincial, Father Frank Quirk, that he was especially interested in some kind of 'spirituality' apostolate to the laity, both aboriginal and white, and with religious and priests. He added, 'I think I could make a contribution, if I were available, to help our own sisters' meaning the Daughters of our Lady of the Sacred Heart whose Provincialate, Convent and School for girls are on the hill contiguous to Kensington Monastery.

That contribution continued, as many will testify, until his death. From 1991-1992 he was at Douglas Park on the Retreat team, and from 1993 until his death he was at Kensington. How difficult those latter years were because of the lung problems caused by TB in his youth only God really knows: he was uncomplaining and bore stoically the difficulty with breathing that made every step he took an effort.

In a brief letter written in 1940 John assured the then Provincial that were he to develop 'consumption' before the expiry of his temporary vows he would not seek final vows. He was, of course, conforming to Canon Law, but he did so with a graciousness, patience and acceptance of God's will that was typical of him.

As it turned out, by foregoing his own preferences, and by filling the role of professor of Philosophy in three Australian seminaries for thirty-three years - certainly for the most productive part of his life - and of spiritual director for the whole of it, John Savage proved St Thomas More right in the advice he gave to Richard Rich when the latter was anxious to better himself by becoming Attorney General of Wales: 'Richard, be a teacher; you'd be a fine teacher!'

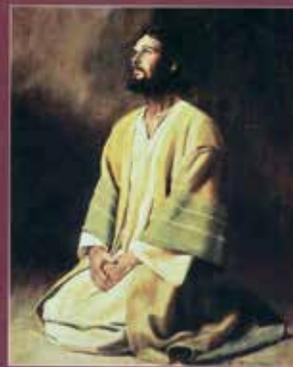
ANNALS AUSTRALASIA 21 SEPTEMBER 2018

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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CHRISTIANITY IS A HISTORY

NOW I WISH to state all this as matter of fact, to be judged by the candid testimony of any persons whatever. Why we are so constituted that Faith, not Knowledge or Argument, is our principle of action, is a question with which I have nothing to do; but I think it is a fact, and if it be such, we must resign ourselves to it as best we may, unless we take refuge in the intolerable paradox, that the mass of men are created for nothing, and are meant to leave life as they entered it.

So well has this practically been understood in all ages of the world, that no Religion has yet been a Religion of physics or of philosophy. It has ever been synonymous with Revelation. It never has been a deduction from what we know: it has ever been an assertion of what we are to believe. It has never lived in a conclusion; it has ever been a message, or a history, or a vision. No legislator or priest ever dreamed of educating our moral nature by science or by argument.

There is no difference here between true Religions and pretended. Moses was instructed, not to reason from the creation, but to work miracles. Christianity is a history supernatural, and almost scenic: it tells us what its Author is, by telling us what He has done. I have no wish at all to speak otherwise than respectfully of

conscientious Dissenters, but I have heard it said by those who were not their enemies, and who had known much of their preaching, that they had often heard narrow-minded and bigoted clergymen, and often Dissenting ministers of a far more intellectual cast; but that Dissenting teaching came to nothing—that it was dissipated in thoughts which had no point, and inquiries which converged

to no centre, that it ended as it began, and sent away its hearers as it found them;—whereas the instruction in the Church, with all its defects and mistakes, comes to some end, for it started from some beginning. Such is the difference between the dogmatism of faith and the speculations of logic

Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman, *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent*, Longmans Green & Co, 1892, pp. 96 ff.

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Gordon ... was deeply in debt. His claim on a Scottish baronetcy and estate, in pursuing which he had accumulated substantial legal bills, proved invalid. He had suffered another serious fall in a horse race in March 1870, writing to John Riddoch: 'I don't think I shall get over this fall easily, and you know, old fellow, I'm not likely to complain more than need be; but I am hurt inside somewhere, I think.'

ADAM LINDSAY GORDON, FATHER JULIAN TENISON WOODS

By Michael Wilding

FATHER JULIAN Tenison Woods is most often remembered today for his association with St Mary Mackillop and the establishment of the Institute of St Joseph. In those same years Woods became a close friend of the poet Adam Lindsay Gordon. His 'Personal Reminiscence of Adam Lindsay Gordon' in the *Melbourne Review* in 1884, is one of the major records of Gordon's life. 'I think I may say that for five years I was the only intimate friend he had in the bush,' Woods recalled.

Julian Tenison Woods was born to Irish parents in London in 1832. In 1850 he entered the Passionist order at Broadway in Worcestershire, then went to France where he joined a Marist novitiate, and later taught at a naval college in Toulon. In 1855 he came to Australia. After working as a subeditor on the *Adelaide Times*, Woods studied with the Jesuits at Sevenhills, and in January 1857 was ordained as a priest. For the next ten years he ministered to

the diocese of Penola. It was here that he met Gordon and Mary MacKillop.

Gordon was born in the Azores in 1833 into a British military family. His father wrote 'My father, grandfather, brothers, six uncles and all their sons, twenty of us, have all been brought up for the Army, and half of these have been killed or died in foreign countries or on foreign service.' While at the

he served in the South Australian Mounted Police for two years, based in Penola. In 1855 he set up on his own, buying, selling and breaking in horses, travelling from bush station to station.

Woods recalled: 'I became acquainted with poor Gordon in 1857. I had then charge of a large district called the new country. It was comprised between the coast line of South Australia and boundary line of the Victorian colony, enclosed on the north by the River Murray. This tract included about 22,000 square miles of country, more than half of which was desert. The remaining portion being taken up as sheep and cattle runs. Gordon was occupied as a horse-breaker and dealer, and at the races in the various bush townships he used to ride as a jockey, but only in steeplechases and hurdle races.

'My introduction to him was at a cattle station, Lake Hawdon, near Guichen Bay. He was breaking in a few horses for Mr Stockdale, the proprietor. I arrived at the station in the evening, and he was at work, I remember, in the stockyard, sitting a young colt which was making surprising efforts to throw him. I



Gordon breaking in 'Outlaw' [or 'Outlaw' breaking in Gordon, as he was thrown off] at Lake Hawdon Station near Guichen Bay, South Australia. Drawn by Harry Stockdale, 1863.

Royal Grammar School in Worcester Gordon entered a steeplechase. The horse had been impounded for debt, so Gordon broke into the stables and liberated it. His exasperated father packed him off to Australia, where

watched the struggle for some minutes, and it ended by the girths breaking, and Gordon landed on his feet.

‘We met that evening at supper, for in those days master and man, stranger and guest, all sat at the same table and shared the same fare. I remember little about Gordon that evening except that he was painfully near-sighted. He scarcely spoke. After supper he came to me upon the verandah and chatted for an hour; and I was surprised to find that his conversation was not about the usual station topics, but about poetry and poets. I was much interested and inquired who he was ...’

Harry Stockdale, the nephew of the station proprietor, recalled in *The Argus*, 17 May 1919: ‘I was present on the now historic night when the Rev. J. Tenison Woods came to Old Lake Hawdon station and sat talking with Gordon till past midnight. They talked of their favourite authors – of home associations and schoolboy days – Gordon regretting that he had not gone into the army, where he would have had an aim in life congenial to his inclination. Tenison Woods said ... that the whole tenor of his life was changed through coming in touch with the famous Newman. Prior to this I understood him to say he belonged to the English Church.

‘They also talked of the antiquity of man and either soon after or just before, Tenison Woods delivered a lecture at Robe on the same subject. Gordon that night said “Look here Father, what does it matter? Old or young it all comes to eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow you die.”’

‘Next morning he overtook me as I rode on my journey,’ Woods recalled. ‘As soon as we could talk, he plunged into poetry again. To

my astonishment, he began to recite long passages from Virgil, Ovid and Homer. His pronunciation of the Greek was so peculiar that I could not understand him ... He questioned me about French authors, and then recited long passages from Racine’s *Athalie* and Corneille’s *Cid*.

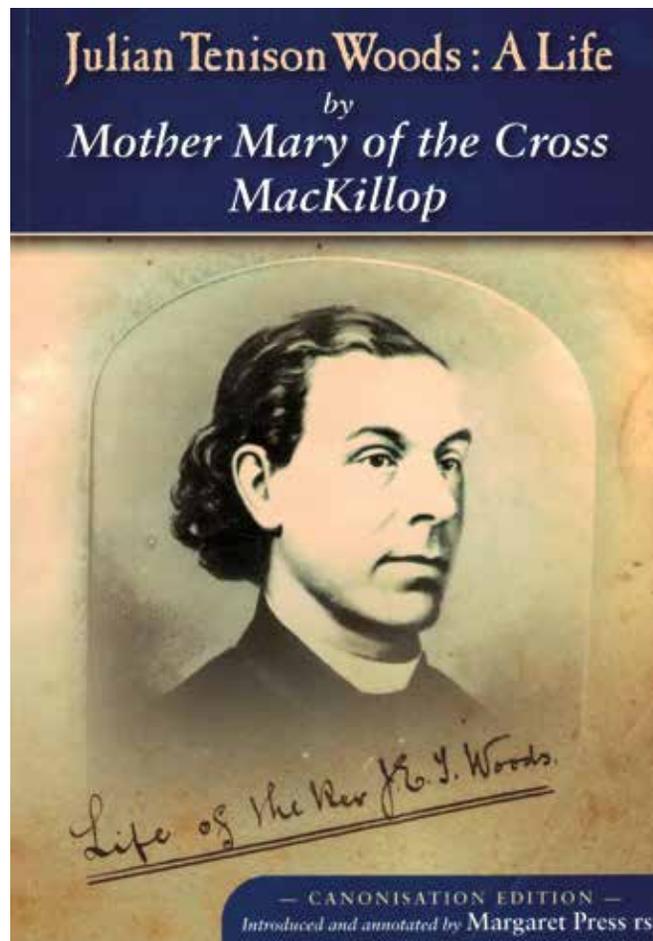
‘After that day we often met,’ Woods wrote. ‘My duties consisted in going from station to station, often long distances apart, and separated by little known and desert country. It was always a great advantage to have a companion, if it were only because the

good many of the odes, and recited them for me as we rode along ... He used always to carry a book with him in his pocket, and generally it was a Latin classic. It will be easily understood how soon the volume became knocked to pieces in this way. Whatever books I lent him were generally returned in a most dilapidated condition, yet I could not complain when I saw how well used they had been.’

Meeting Woods crucially stimulated Gordon’s poetic development. ‘This friendship revived in Gordon the love for classical literature which pervades his verses,’ A. W. Jose wrote in his *History of Australasia*. Gordon’s biographers agree. ‘Meeting Tenison Woods made a profound change in Gordon’s life. He was the first really intellectual man the poet had met since he left England,’ Douglas Sladen wrote, and Geoffrey Hutton concurred: ‘The chance meeting was a stimulus both to his reading and his writing... His friendship reopened a door which had been closed.’

Gordon’s contemporaries remarked on his amazing memory. Woods recalled an example: ‘We were overtaken by a severe storm and lost our way. Night came on, and the rain poured down in torrents. As my sight at night was nearly as defective as Gordon’s we gave up looking for the track, and sat crouched under a tree waiting for the rising of the moon. We were both

miserably cold and hungry, and it was most ludicrous to hear my companion reciting long passages from various authors on the subject of storms. We could not light a fire, and I only had to shiver while he gave me the tempest scene in *King Lear*, which he knew by heart. He was much amused when I asked him whether he would like a nice drink of cold spring water after his exertions. We got to a station



horses travelled better, and two heads are better than one in crossing difficult country. But to meet with a companion like Gordon was quite a treat. He was so remarkably shy and retiring that he scarcely ever came to see me at my house, that is when I had a house ...

‘I remember his telling me that he knew very little of Horace, and so I gave him a small pocket edition. When next I met him he had learnt a

about midnight and had to share the same room; but Gordon would not go to bed. The warm tea we had had at supper had revived him, and he kept walking up and down the supper room reciting *Childe Harold* till near morning.'

Woods shows no amazement at Gordon's memory, having inherited and developed a similar memory himself, George O'Neill records in *Life of the Reverend Julian Edmund Tenison Woods*.

Woods recalled: 'He was remarked as being unsociable in his habits. He would prefer riding by himself, unless he would meet with a congenial companion, and when alone used to saunter along slowly, very seldom putting his horse out of a walk. I believe now that it was at these times that he was composing his poetry. He hinted this to me, but I never could get him to show me any of his compositions.'

The friendship of Woods and Gordon was important to both of them, often isolated in the bush, yearning for literary companionship. The *Australian Monthly Magazine*, May 1867, recorded: 'The literary proclivities of the Rev. Mr Woods are evidently hereditary; many of his near relatives having been occupied, and are still occupying, proud positions on the English press. His father, a barrister of the Middle Temple, has been connected for over thirty years with the *London Times*; his eldest brother was long engaged upon the same journal and subsequently upon *The Argus*; whilst a second brother, Mr N. A. Woods, will be readily remembered as the colleague of Dr Russell in the Crimea, and afterwards as special correspondent of *The Times*, on the occasion of the visit of HRH the Prince of Wales to the American continent.'

Woods had begun appearing in print in 1857, writing about Australian flora and geology in the *Transactions of the Philosophical Institute of Victoria*. In 1862 his *Geological Observations in South Australia* was published in London. His *History of the Discovery and Exploration of Australia* appeared in 1865. In 1864 Gordon launched

Evaluate what you read, hear, see

A GOOD BOOK deserves an active reading. The activity of reading does not stop with the work of understanding what a book says. It must be completed by the work of criticism, the work of judging. The undemanding reader fails to satisfy this requirement, probably even more than he fails to analyze and interpret. Worse than faintly praising it, he damns it by giving it no critical consideration whatever.

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

into print with his ballad *The Feud* and in 1866 he published three poems in *Bell's Life*, and two in the Melbourne weekly *The Australasian* which now became a regular publication venue for both Gordon and Woods.

Meanwhile in 1860, eighteen-year-old Mary MacKillop had come to work as a governess for her uncle and aunt at Penola. In *An Extraordinary Australian: Mary MacKillop*, Paul Gardiner quotes her account of meeting Woods: 'I heard the pastor from the altar speak of the neglected state of children of his parish – and I had to go and offer myself to aid him as far as the nature of my other duties would permit.' In her *Julian Tenison Woods: A Life*, completed by 1903 but not published until 1997, she quotes from their ensuing correspondence.

Woods outlined his scheme to educate the children of the poor, and a school was established in Penola in 1861. 'By a singular dispensation, I am appointed Director General of Catholic Education, Chairman of the Board, and Inspector of Schools throughout the diocese,' he wrote to her in 1866. That year the teaching order, the Sisters of St Joseph, was founded.

In 1862 Gordon married Margaret Park. Woods recalled: 'Nothing ever surprised me so much. Of all my acquaintance, he was least like a marrying man... He smiled in his usual quiet way, as I told him of my surprise, and said that there was no romance about his love-making. He had met his wife at a place where he stayed frequently... He said that he noticed that she was a very respectable and industrious girl, who would make him a good, thrifty housekeeper.'

'A few days before he married, he said one morning, as he was leaving, "Well, girl, I like your ways. You seem industrious and sensible. If you like, I will take a cottage at Robe, and we will get married next week, and you shall keep home for me." This was the whole history of the matter, he said. The girl consented, and they were married a few days after.'

'I was just eighteen years when we were married,' she told *The Advertiser*, 23 March 1912. Woods felt she looked even younger: 'When I called upon him some time afterwards, I was introduced to a small, slim, rather good-looking lassie, in appearance about fifteen years of age. Gordon had a strange habit of addressing her as "girl," which sounded a little odd before visitors, though it was appropriate in one sense.'

Then, in 1865, Woods had a bright idea: 'I persuaded Gordon to allow himself to be nominated for the electorate... The electors were searching on every side for a local representative, but this was difficult to find, where every squatter was too busy for anything but his station work... Gordon was the only man who had the time and money for the work, and he was unanimously fixed upon ... but he declined to stand... He consulted me on the subject, and I prevailed upon him to accept the position. I must say that my advice was mainly for his own sake. I thought it would give him occupation, which he evidently needed, and might open to him a successful, if not a brilliant career. I must own, too, that he had shown a tendency to a morbid melancholy about which I was not without apprehensions. He used to

Not a Patent Medicine

THERE IS no longer any danger of Christians attempting to force their beliefs on others at the point of the sword or of their trying to make men religious by act of Parliament. The danger to-day is rather that well-meaning people are apt to reduce Christianity to the level of secular idealism by identifying it with whatever social or political course is most popular at the moment, whether it be National Socialism in Germany or humanitarian socialism in England. In a sense it is quite true to say that all our troubles are due to the neglect of Christian teaching and that Christianity is the remedy for our social as well as our individual evils. But it is not like a patent medicine that is warranted to cure all diseases. It offers no short cuts to economic prosperity or social stability.

– Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State*, Sheed and Ward, London, 1935, p.121

complain a good deal that he was not in any useful career. That his life was being wasted, and so forth, and he indulged more and more his solitary habits, walking and riding alone, or sitting for hours by the seaside.'

After eighteen months Gordon resigned. His fellow parliamentarian John Riddoch recalled in *The Advertiser*, 19 August 1895: 'My colleague was a very ready speaker, but he was not an orator. He was immensely popular everywhere he went.

'He had a remarkable memory, and after listening to a speech could repeat it all off almost word for word. He used to amuse himself a lot when the House was sitting in writing verses and making sketches, but he did not find the political atmosphere particularly congenial.' His wife told *The Advertiser*: 'He soon became weary of public life. He was too quiet and reserved for that kind of existence, and the necessity of attending regularly at sittings of the assembly was very irksome.'

Woods recalled: 'He spoke of trying to get literary employment on a newspaper, and had made up his mind to resign his seat in Parliament and go to Melbourne to reside. He had at this time published some more verses which had gained for him quite a name. He was very proud of those efforts, and I noticed more self-assertion, and, if I may use the expression, more personal vanity

about his talents than ever I observed before. He said, amongst other things, that he was sure he would rise to the top of the tree in poetry, and that the world should talk about him before he died. He made great use of the Parliamentary library. All his spare time was taken up in reading classics and the best English and French poets.'

The last time they met, Woods recalled, 'the conversation turned upon novel writing, at which he was going to try his hand.' After he left South Australia, Woods recalled: 'I heard from him repeatedly.'

In 1867 Gordon published two volumes of poetry, *Ashtaroth* and *Sea Spray and Smoke Drift*. He became partner in a livery stables at Craig's Hotel in Ballarat. But the business was badly managed, Gordon suffered a severe fall and was bedridden, during which time his infant daughter died. In 1868 he sold up and moved to Melbourne. He continued to ride competitively and that year he achieved the legendary feat of winning three races on the same day at the Melbourne Hunt Club meet.

By 1870 both Woods and Gordon were heavily in debt and struggling with their demons. *The Southern Cross*, the magazine Woods had been running, ceased publication in 1870, leaving him responsible for its debts. Other debts had been incurred for the Sisters of St Joseph and for housing for the community

of men he had founded. Woods had insisted the sisters should own no property; but someone had to provide accommodation for them.

Margaret Press writes in *Julian Tenison Woods: 'Father Founder'*: 'He had borrowed from the banks for these building projects at a high rate of interest; even when he paid in over £800 which he had received from his publishers, the amount owing on mortgage and interest had crept beyond £3500.'

Sister Mary MacKillop was now in Brisbane. George O'Neill in his *Life of the Reverend Julian Edmund Tenison Woods* quotes a letter Woods wrote to her, 20 June 1870: 'The other night ... three beings entered my room in the dark, and without my being able to resist or cry out, carried and placed me in some conveyance there was outside – a very common and rough cart – and hurried me away at a great rate down past the gaol to the banks of the Torrens below North Adelaide. Here the ground seemed to open and I was taken to an awful place, the horror of which I cannot describe ... I was paralysed with fear. I felt that I was in the hands of the devil and had done with this world. It was surely death in life. I was then taken to this awful place, and one of the beings seized me and said that I had died suddenly and that my body and soul were now to be cast into hell for all eternity for having worshipped a creature; and at this moment a fearful serpent twined itself round my waist and said that I was his for ever. I still feel the awful, stifling pressure of that serpent.'

He continued: 'They dragged me towards the fire and tormented me in many ways for three hours; but the name of Mary, though it seemed to redouble their fury, weakened their efforts ... My guardian angel brought me back and healed my wounds and bruises.'

He conceded that he had 'ever since been troubled lest it might be an illusion' but nonetheless, he told Mary MacKillop, 'I say to you that I solemnly assert in the names of Jesus and Mary that all I tell you is literally true.'

21 June he wrote again: ‘My dear Sister Mary, if I have tried your credulity by what I wrote yesterday, I shall try it very much more by what I shall write today ...’

Having fallen asleep ‘I was very rudely awoken by a devil – the one which usually assaults me and whom I believe to be a fallen spirit of a very high order. He was like a hideous dog but walking erect with like human limbs. He had a drawn sword of a very wide blade in his hand – a kind of sharp, heavy scimitar ... He gave me a blow on the left leg above the foot and nearly severed it. I began to bleed, as you may imagine, and soon I was in a pool of blood... he stood mocking me and gibing for a quarter of an hour, and then suddenly seemed to get into a fury and struck me across the stomach, burying the sword in my body and laying open the intestines. I felt that my hour was come ...’

But then Mary herself intervened and healed him completely. She told him that after his death ‘the scars of these wounds would be plainly visible upon my body. My guardian angel removed everything from the bed that was stained with blood, and placed other things perfectly similar there. Even the boards of the floor were removed and others like them placed there. I am sure these blood-stained things will be found again some day. Our gentle Mother then told me to be of good courage and said that in a few days a great sum or money would be placed in my hands to meet all my wants ...’

At the very same time Gordon was in similarly dire straits. He was deeply in debt. His claim on a Scottish baronetcy and estate, in pursuing which he had accumulated substantial legal bills, proved invalid. He had suffered another serious fall in a horse race in March 1870, writing to John Riddoch: ‘I don’t think I shall get over this fall easily, and you know, old fellow, I’m not likely to complain more than need be; but I am hurt inside somewhere, I think.’

23 June, Gordon called in at his printer’s. A. H. Massina recalled, *Herald* (Melbourne), 2 March 1909:

‘He expected some money on the day his last book, *Bush Ballads and Galloping Rhymes*, was published.

‘He owed me about £75, and said to me, “I suppose you want some money.”

‘And I replied, “Printers generally do.”

‘Gordon said, “Well, I’ll be up in the morning with a cheque.”

But the cheque never came. 25 June, *The Argus* reported ‘that Mr A. L. Gordon, the well-known poet and gentleman steeplechase rider, had committed suicide by shooting himself in the scrub near the Brighton beach.’

Woods wrote: ‘the dreadful news reached me of the manner in which he put an end to his career. I must say, however, that it did not surprise me. In my intercourse with him of late years I had noticed a morbid melancholy growing more upon him. My own opinion was that he had kept up appearances until pecuniary and legal embarrassments came upon him, and then gave up to despondency. His difficulties could not have been great; but he could not bear to apply to friends, or that anyone should know his real position. Those who did not know Gordon attributed his suicide to drink, but I repeat he was most temperate, and disliked the company of drinking men.’

Woods’ own troubles continued. They were many, and they are enumerated in the biographies by Mary Mackillop, George O’Neill and Margaret Press. Amidst them all, despite indifferent health, he continued his religious work and his scientific work, and from 1883-6 he was surveying and reporting on the botany and geology of Malaysia, the Philippines and Japan. As he told Mary Mackillop, ‘Well or ill, I am always able to write.’ He died in Sydney in 1889 and is buried in Waverley cemetery.

MICHAEL WILDING is emeritus professor of English and Australian Literature at the University of Sydney and author of *Wild Bleak Bohemia: Marcus Clarke, Adam Lindsay Gordon and Henry Kendall: A Documentary* (Australian Scholarly Publishing). His most recent novel is *The Travel Writer*, also at www.scholarly.info

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.

CHESTERTON AND THE CHILD: Fostering the Family Today

A Conference of the Australian Chesterton Society
at Campion College Australia, Sydney
Saturday, October 20, 2018, 8.45am - 5.00pm



Chesterton had a special love of children, and he and his wife Frances, while they were not able to have a family of their own, gave much of their time and affection to the children of others in the English town of Beaconsfield where they lived.

Chesterton's love of children came from the joy of his own childhood. He cherished a lifelong appreciation of playful entertainment and fairy tales, and recognised the value of these childhood experiences in sustaining a sense of wonder in adult life. Children formed a continuing theme of his writings, and shaped his understanding of the centrality of the family in a civilised society.

The 2018 Conference will focus on children and the family. A keynote speaker will be the American author, Nancy Brown, who will give two papers – one on Frances Chesterton (of whom she has written a definitive biography), the other on the Father Brown stories (which she has adapted for young readers) and other works appealing to the imagination of children.

Speakers will include:

- Nancy Brown, *The Woman Who Was Chesterton and Father Brown and Other Imaginative Books for Young People*
- Karl Schmude, *The Innocence of Father Chesterton*
- Gary Furnell, *Chesterton's Toy Theatre*
- Sophie York and David van Gend, *Children and the Family in Australia Today*



Nancy Brown

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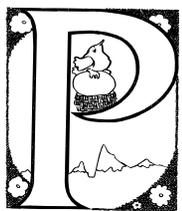
COST:
\$65 - includes lunch
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Contact Karl Schmude
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Another value, that is actually a disvalue, is meritocracy, which today is so praised ... Through meritocracy, new capitalism gives a moral dress to inequality by interpreting people's talents not as a gift but as a merit, determining therefore a system of cumulative advantages and disadvantages.

POPE FRANCIS AND STEEL WORKERS IN GENOA

By Michael Sean Winters



POPE FRANCIS made a one-day trip to Genoa on May 27 last year, and he began his journey at a meeting with workers. They submitted questions to the Holy Father in advance because he said he wanted time to think through the answers because the subject of work is such a priority in our day.

I would like to highlight three of the things the pope said, although the entire text is rich with insight and solidarity. First, the pope said:

One of the illnesses of the economy is the progressive transformation of entrepreneurs into speculators. Entrepreneurs must never be confused

with speculators, they are two different types. The speculator is a figure similar to what Jesus in the Gospel calls a mercenary, in opposition to the good shepherd.

They see companies and workers only as means to profit, they use companies and workers to make profit; they do not love them. They don't consider laying-off, shutting down, relocating the company a problem, because speculators use, exploit, eat people and means for their own profit.



Pope Francis and the Steel workers of Genoa

When good entrepreneurs inhabit the economy, then businesses are friendly to the people. When the economy is in the hands of speculators, everything is ruined. It becomes a

faceless, abstract economy. Behind the decisions of speculators, there are not people, so they don't see people when they are laying off. When the economy loses contact with the faces of the people, it becomes faceless and therefore ruthless.

I especially like the way Pope Francis explicitly brings in the biblical imagery of the good shepherd. But I want to register a slight disagreement with the way Pope Francis frames this. It is not a matter of good people versus bad people so much as it is an economic system that encourages anti-Christian attitudes, values and behaviour.

Champions of the free market tend to argue that if people bring the correct values to the marketplace, all will be well. For them, ethics is always an add-on, it is never intrinsic. But the system demands a different

kind of behaviour and a different set of attitudes from those we see in the Gospel. Today's capitalism does turn "entrepreneurs into speculators" as Pope Francis said.

The system coerces people into acting in a cut-throat way even if they would like not to do so. In response to another question, the Holy Father said, in part:

Dialogue in workplaces is no less important than that in parishes or in solemn conventions. The places of the Church are the places of life. Someone may say: why is this priest coming here to tell us these things, why doesn't he do it in the parish! No, we are all the people of God... The world of work and humankind go hand in hand. Through work, men and women are anointed with dignity. The whole social pact is built around the world of work. When there is little or no work, or it is poorly performed, then democracy starts falling into decline, the whole social pact starts falling into decline.

It is always odd to me that some of our conservative friends believe the church belongs in the bedroom dispensing advice but should be silent in the board room. Also odd that the left welcomes the introduction of ethics into the world of business but thinks sexual relations are "personal" and beyond the reach of the church's concern. No, human dignity is implicated in the decisions made in both rooms, and for the Christian, human dignity is always rooted in what has been revealed to us in Christ Jesus, in whom we discern our true vocation as children of God. The vocation is prior, ontologically, to whatever professional vocation we adopt. You can tell if the Christian vocation is being lived by attending to the way a person exhibits human dignity and enhances the dignity of others. And, as the Christian vocation calls us to be concerned about the common good, the pope reminds us that when workers are attacked, democracy will suffer. Bishops should remember that, if the GOP legislatures in their states mount an attack on unions.

The final passage I should like to emphasize is this. The pope said:

The emphasis on competition is not only an anthropological mistake, but also an economic

Immutable Truths

THE CATHOLIC Church has consistently and continually rejected subjectivism and relativism in morality. In one of her recent official documents, the Church stated: 'Now in fact the Church throughout her history has always considered a certain number of precepts of the natural law as having an absolute and immutable value, and in their transgression she has seen a contradiction of the teaching and spirit of the Gospel' (*Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics*, 4, December 29, 1975). Similar official statements of the *Magisterium* have been a regular part of Catholic teaching for centuries.

– Kenneth Baker, S.J. "True Morality is Based on Objective Principles." In *Fundamentals of Catholicism*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1983, Vol. 1, Part II, Chapter 6, pp. 135-138.

mistake because it forgets that an enterprise entails mutual cooperation. When competition between workers is systematic, perhaps there will be some advantage in the short term, but it will end up undermining the fabric that is the soul of every organization. Therefore, when the crisis strikes, the company breaks apart and implodes, because there is no rope that holds it together. This competitive culture is a mistake; it is a vision that needs to be changed if we want the enterprise, the workers and the economy's best. Another value, that is actually a disvalue, is meritocracy, which today is so praised and fascinates a lot. Beyond the good faith of many who invoke it, meritocracy is becoming an ethical legitimacy of inequality. Through meritocracy, new capitalism gives a moral dress to inequality by interpreting people's talents not as a gift but as a merit, determining therefore a system of cumulative advantages and disadvantages. The poor [are]

considered undeserving, and therefore guilty. And if poverty is the poor's own fault, then the rich are exonerated from doing something about it. This is the old logic used by Job's friends who wanted to convince him that he was to blame for his misfortune, but this is not the logic of the Gospel and of life. Meritocracy in the Gospel is found in the figure of the older brother of the prodigal son who despises his younger brother and thinks he must remain a failure. The father, however, thinks that no son deserves the acorns of the pigs.

This is very, very important. I do not think I have seen anyone challenge meritocracy so directly. The forgetting of cooperation in the rush of competition puts me in mind of something that David Schindler wrote in his book, *Heart of the World, Center of the Church*, "a self that first (ontologically, not temporally) serves the other, and thereby finds itself, is not identical with a self that first seeks itself, and thereby serves the other. A selfishness become mutual is not yet mutual generosity." A bishop friend tells me he frequently wrestles with how we can better link the church's social doctrine with a theology of grace. Here is the core, in an understanding of the Incarnation, and theologians smarter than I am, need to explicate this further.

One wag who read the pope's talk asked if I was ghost writing for the pontiff. I am not. But I will say this. A few years back, I debated Fr. Robert Sirico founder of the Acton Institute. Reading the pope's words in Genoa, I could not help but feeling affirmed in my arguments against the libertarian economics Sirico celebrates – and not just Sirico, but an increasing number of prominent Catholics associated with the Napa Institute or the Acton Institute or various business schools or most chapters of Legatus. I leave it to the reader to judge if I am right in thinking the Holy Father's views and my own cohere more than either of our thinking

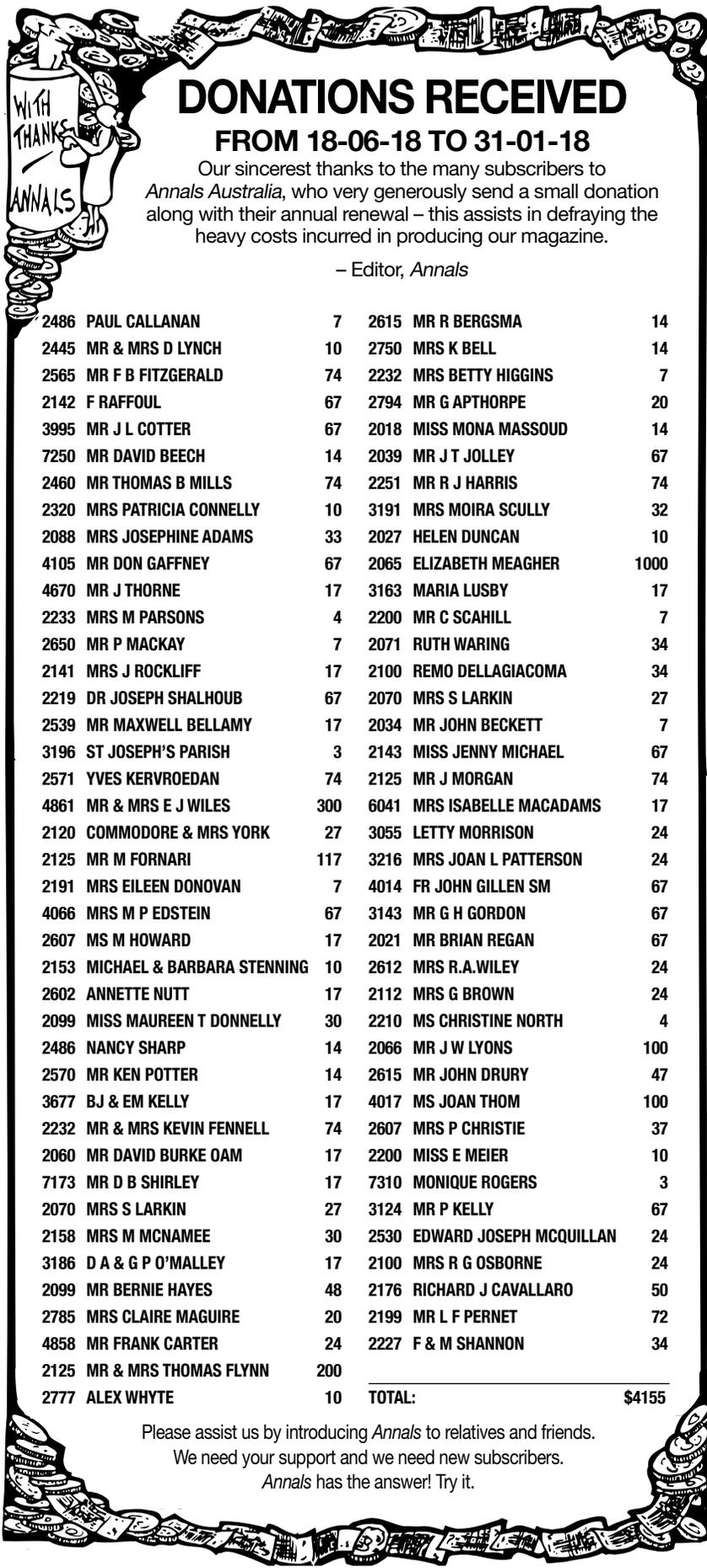
does with that of these libertarian economists.

I said at that time:

Let us look at the behaviour the market requires. What values does it celebrate? Who are its heroes? The market celebrates the self-made man, not the man who evidences solidarity. The market, drenched in Calvinistic roots, celebrates frugality and thrift, not gratuitousness and generosity. The market requires self-assertiveness, not self-surrender. The market is all about activity and not at all about contemplation. The market evidences competition not cooperation... Let us state it very clearly: There is nothing protean, nothing self-made, nothing frugal or thrifty, nothing self-assertive, nothing competitive, nothing greedy or self-interested in the lives of Jesus and his Mother. The personal characteristics the market demands and champions are not discernible in the life of him who is most obviously characterized by his radical submission to the will of his Father, nor in the life of his Mother. This is deeper than ethics. It gets to the very stance a human person takes towards reality. If you get this wrong, you tend to get everything wrong, which is why Pope Pius XI famously referred to libertarian economics as a "poisoned spring." Libertarian economists get self-interest wrong, as mentioned, by trying to wiggle it into a virtue. They get ideas about the common good wrong, about the universal destination of goods, about our obligations to the environment, about the need to change established Western lifestyles.

Those who continue to claim there is some way to baptize the free market as it is experienced today are dissenters, pure and simple. This text the Holy Father delivered to the workers in Genoa puts the lie to their capitalist agenda.

MICHAEL SEAN WINTERS covers the nexus of religion and politics for The National Catholic Reporter [NCR]. Reprinted from NCR for May 30, 2017, with permission of National Catholic Reporter Publishing Company, Kansas City, MO, USA. <https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/distinctly-catholic/pope-francis-and-workers-genoa>



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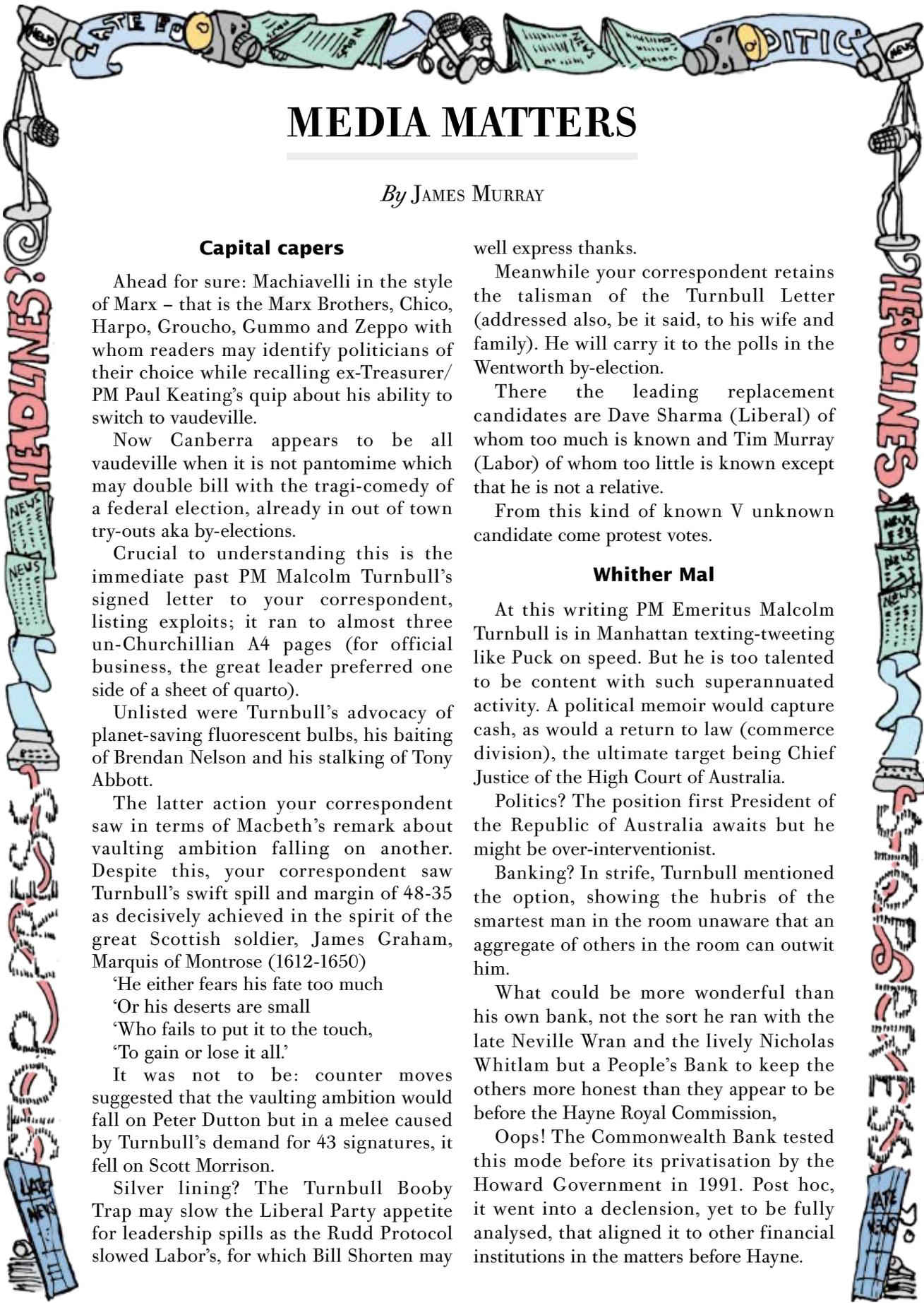
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– Editor, *Annals*

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MEDIA MATTERS

By JAMES MURRAY

Capital capers

Ahead for sure: Machiavelli in the style of Marx – that is the Marx Brothers, Chico, Harpo, Groucho, Gummo and Zeppo with whom readers may identify politicians of their choice while recalling ex-Treasurer/PM Paul Keating’s quip about his ability to switch to vaudeville.

Now Canberra appears to be all vaudeville when it is not pantomime which may double bill with the tragi-comedy of a federal election, already in out of town try-outs aka by-elections.

Crucial to understanding this is the immediate past PM Malcolm Turnbull’s signed letter to your correspondent, listing exploits; it ran to almost three un-Churchillian A4 pages (for official business, the great leader preferred one side of a sheet of quarto).

Unlisted were Turnbull’s advocacy of planet-saving fluorescent bulbs, his baiting of Brendan Nelson and his stalking of Tony Abbott.

The latter action your correspondent saw in terms of Macbeth’s remark about vaulting ambition falling on another. Despite this, your correspondent saw Turnbull’s swift spill and margin of 48-35 as decisively achieved in the spirit of the great Scottish soldier, James Graham, Marquis of Montrose (1612-1650)

‘He either fears his fate too much
‘Or his deserts are small
‘Who fails to put it to the touch,
‘To gain or lose it all.’

It was not to be: counter moves suggested that the vaulting ambition would fall on Peter Dutton but in a melee caused by Turnbull’s demand for 43 signatures, it fell on Scott Morrison.

Silver lining? The Turnbull Booby Trap may slow the Liberal Party appetite for leadership spills as the Rudd Protocol slowed Labor’s, for which Bill Shorten may

well express thanks.

Meanwhile your correspondent retains the talisman of the Turnbull Letter (addressed also, be it said, to his wife and family). He will carry it to the polls in the Wentworth by-election.

There the leading replacement candidates are Dave Sharma (Liberal) of whom too much is known and Tim Murray (Labor) of whom too little is known except that he is not a relative.

From this kind of known V unknown candidate come protest votes.

Whither Mal

At this writing PM Emeritus Malcolm Turnbull is in Manhattan texting-tweeting like Puck on speed. But he is too talented to be content with such superannuated activity. A political memoir would capture cash, as would a return to law (commerce division), the ultimate target being Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia.

Politics? The position first President of the Republic of Australia awaits but he might be over-interventionist.

Banking? In strife, Turnbull mentioned the option, showing the hubris of the smartest man in the room unaware that an aggregate of others in the room can outwit him.

What could be more wonderful than his own bank, not the sort he ran with the late Neville Wran and the lively Nicholas Whitlam but a People’s Bank to keep the others more honest than they appear to be before the Hayne Royal Commission,

Oops! The Commonwealth Bank tested this mode before its privatisation by the Howard Government in 1991. Post hoc, it went into a declension, yet to be fully analysed, that aligned it to other financial institutions in the matters before Hayne.



Legal surfeit

The calling of a Royal Commission into Aged Care while the Commission into financial institutions is still sitting strengthens the view that judges may be the Guardians in a neo-Platonic polity.

It also raises the question: will there be enough judges to go round? Will there be cross-over matters since financial institutions, including family-trusts, are involved in aged care?

Above all should there be a Royal Commission into the long term efficacy of Royal Commissions as against their tendency to become lawyers feasts?

Far out

Inspiring to hear that journalists of historic vintage are being inducted into the Media Hall of Fame. One such should be John Farrell, Henry Lawson and Banjo Paterson's peer.

His biography, *John Farrell: Poet, Journalist and Social Reformer (1851-1905)* is out and it is free-ranging yet incisive. (Australian Scholarly Publishing, \$44).

Come to think of it, the biographer, Farrell's great-grandson, Paul Stenhouse, should be a Media Hall of Fame inductee as editor of *Annals Australasia*; since *The Bulletin* demise, *Annals* has a valid claim to being the region's longest published journal.

Cornered Bannon

Belated congratulations to the ABC's Sarah Ferguson. On *Four Corners*, her Steve (Kevin) Bannon take differed from that of her Washington-based colleagues who like all foreign correspondents run the risk of being captured (enraptured?) by local views.

Her take inspired a thought: Bannon, once principal advisor to President Donald Trump (aka Chief Crazy like a Fox) did not leave his side in anger, he left believing he could do more to aid the chief outside than inside the White House tent.

As impeachment smoke signals rise again, Bannon will need all the skills he acquired in the US Navy, Harvard Business School and as a Breitbart News superhack.

Incidentally, Bannon would surely endorse Bob Woodward's account in, *Fear: Trump in the White House* of Malcolm Turnbull's skilful holding of the president to his word. Indeed Bannon may have leaked the account.

Either way, it was another exacerbating might-have-been for Turnbull along with Mathias Cormann's late switch which, given his Belgian background, he should have avoided on the basis that the status quo entails continuity.

Orate Scomo

The PM Scott Morrison has displayed an admirably positive attitude to prayer. He may appreciate the following:

Let them bestow on every airth a limb,
Then open all my veins, that I may swim
To thee, my Maker, in that crimson lake,
Then place my par boiled head upon a stake;
Scatter my ashes, strow them in the air.
Lord, since thou knowest where all these atoms
are, I'm hopeful thou'lt recover once my dust,
And confident thou'lt raise me with the just.

Its author was the above-mentioned Montrose. Even fanatic believers in unbelief may leave it uncriticised: Montrose wrote it on the eve of his execution which was not metaphorical but as defined in his poem.

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Real Issues
I THINK KIDS these days are so much more aware of real issues like the environment, climate change, inequality etc. Advertising is seen as the pointy end of capitalism and its associated consumption / growth fixation. Think plastic etc. I recall an ad I'd worked on coming on TV & one of my kids, at about 7 years old (now 22), said 'you don't have a very worthwhile job'. I agreed. She's studying to be a teacher.
- 'Mike,' comment from a blog on advertising, June 28, 2018.



*Ridiculing Catholic belief in the real
presence of our Lord in the Eucharist*

SLIPS OF THE TONGUE?

By Paul Stenhouse

ACCORDING TO THE TALE, there was once a medieval monk in Pre-Reformation England who persistently said a phrase in the Canon of the Latin Mass wrongly, either because he was illiterate and had learned it that way or because it had been transcribed incorrectly in his copy of the Missal or Mass-book.

Instead of ‘quod ore sumpsimus,’ a prayer still to be found in the Roman Missal, he would say ‘quod ore mumpsimus.’ Now ‘sumpsimus’ is Latin for ‘we have taken’ (the full phrase means ‘what we have taken by mouth’ i.e. ‘quod ore sumpsimus’). But ‘mumpsimus’ is just nonsense.

What made this particular mistake memorable is what the monk was supposed to have said when he was corrected. According to the version of the incident told in 1517 by Richard Pace, later the Protestant Dean of St Paul’s Cathedral in London, the monk replied that he had said it that way for forty years and ‘I will not change my old ‘mumpsimus’ for your new ‘sumpsimus’”.

Sumpsimus was the ancient and the only correct form: it was not new, except to the monk. As a result, the word came to be applied to someone who sticks obstinately to their old ways, in spite of the clearest evidence that they are wrong. The word can also have the related meaning of some custom or notion that is adhered to, even though it has been shown to be incorrect.

The word is first recorded in 1530 in a book by the arch Protestant William Tyndale, called *The Practice of Prelates*. He wrote: ‘The chancellors of England ... which be all lawyers and mumpsimusses of divinity.’ In 1699, William Penn the Quaker, in his *No Cross, no Crown* deplores the Mass as ‘a by-rote *Mumpsimus*, a dull and insipid formality made up of corporal bowings and cringings, garments and furnitures, perfumes, voices, and music.’

The story, and the use of the term ‘mumpsimus’ generally while originally meant to ridicule Catholic belief in the real presence of our Lord in the Eucharist, eventually came to signify someone who was stupidly conservative, like the remnant of Catholics in the kingdom. The prayer is still said [I am writing in July 2018] as the priest purifies the chalice after Holy Communion.

The tale about the monk and his alleged practice has, not surprisingly, stayed in the language of post-Catholic England for 500 years, and is still to be stumbled over from time to time.

The prayer in question reads in Latin: *Quod ore sumpsimus Domine, pura mente capiamus: et de munere temporali fiat nobis remedium sempiternum.*

That is: ‘What has passed our lips as food O lord, may we receive in purity of heart; that what has been given to us in time, may be our healing for eternity.’

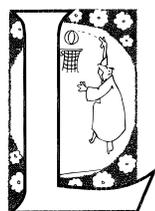
The monk, if he existed, was ignorant. Many who repeat this tall tale today, intend it as yet another hoary insult to the Mass and to the beliefs of Catholics. It may, however, encourage Catholics and others to read and recite the beautiful prayer of the Mass of which it is a caricature; and far from taking offence we will find our minds and hearts uplifted by the mystery that the caricature mocks.

I did not know what Semi-Pelagian meant but I soon saw peers naively drawn into movements of political salvation, with leftist/Marxist views, seeing sin as 'social/political' and no longer 'personal'. This post-Conciliar focus on earthly justice alone was the mask of Marxist notions, disguised as evangelical zeal.

AT THE EDGE OF A NEW ERA

Reflections on Attending School during the Vatican II years.

By Wanda Skowronska



LET ME SAY at the outset that I am aware that people's recollections of Catholic high schools vary – but the following are some of the memories I have of the 1960s years and my reflections may resonate with some readers.

I attended Brigidine Convent school in Randwick in Sydney, Australia, in the eastern suburbs which was sometimes as 'Catholic Australia' with as Irish a flavour, as many parochial schools exuded in America and Australia. The day/boarding school had Irish origins, for the Brigidine order of nuns, founded by Bishop Daniel Delany in Ireland in 1807 was the post Reformation re-establishment of an earlier order of nuns led by the Irish Saint Brigid in the fifth century – and its aim was the education of girls.

By the time the first Brigidine nuns sailed for Australia in 1883, there was an illustrious history of teaching and helping the poor in Ireland. I was told the story that the Irish

emigrants were so sad on the ship coming out, that the nuns started playing piano and singing songs on the ship to prevent them falling into the depths of depression. Once in the Antipodes the sisters established schools in Australia and New Zealand and educated many generations of Catholic girls.

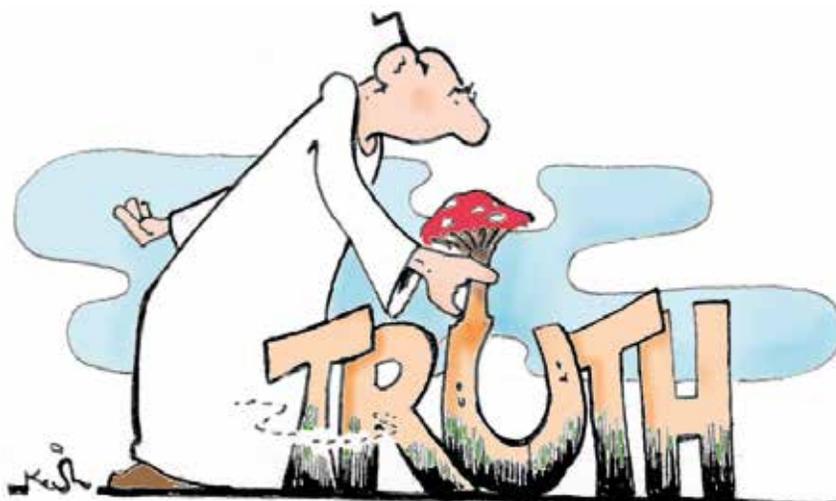
When I walked through the school doors, as a child of East-European refugees in 1964 - I had no idea I would be one of the inheritors of a precious western legacy also transmitted by religious orders such as the Josephites, Mercy nuns, Jesuits, Marists, De la Salle brothers and Good Samaritans. I had no idea I was living through 'history' in attending school during the council years. And strange to say, during the first four years of high school, we students had no idea what Vatican

II was, or that French barricades and *Humanae Vitae* were looming.

We lived in a kind of time warp. Vatican II may as well have not have occurred, as the high school existed in a spiritual ambience where the following were taken for granted: God exists; there is a spiritual war going on; we are involved; we have been redeemed by Jesus; Communism is godless and evil.

While there were many subjects, there was a strong emphasis on music, languages and a commercial school within the larger school. Baby boomer era classes had 40 students in them - I recall a class of 45 one year. We started each lesson with a prayer, wore uniforms, helped nuns and thought the whole world was like this.

At General Assemblies in the courtyard, we looked up at the nun/principal standing on a raised balcony, as if to God's messenger who had descended to give a report of earthly doings and what Heaven wanted done henceforth. It was an era without *iphones*, an era where entire days were spent listening, talking and reading.



We attended Mass in Latin, sang hymns in Latin and studied Latin. Our quietly spoken, yet determined teacher Mother Conleth, managed to convey to us that conjugating verbs in Latin and translation, was essential to any kind of semi-decent life on earth. She would begin each class with ‘*Salvete puellae*’ (Hello girls’) and then get down to business. Not to do one’s Latin homework was simply human perfidy and would produce abject horror on her face. I am amazed my school retained large Latin classes despite anti-Latin forces but Mother Conleth, of blessed memory, was a supernatural *tour de force*.

Our English teacher, Mother Loyola, led us to believe that life without literature was not worth living either. We memorised poetry and Shakespearean passages and pondered Hamlet’s problems as if they were our own. Strangely, there was no critique of the French revolution as we sang the *Marseillaise*, to practise our French.

The inimitable lay teacher, Mrs Mollie Watts, inducted me into the world of music, the verities of Celtic thought, of Tara’s Halls and Erin’s Isle and so I acquired an Irish musical layer to my reffo roots.

This was the era of confident banners at feast day marches, the Children of Mary and their Aspirants, Sodalties and St Vincent de Paul. We also sang the school song to St Brigid, ‘Far away enthroned in glory, sweetest saint of Erin’s Isle’ and of course to St Patrick. We sang ‘Soul of My Saviour’, ‘Hail Queen of Heaven’, the *Pange Lingua* and the triumphalist Catholic hymn which would make feminists blanche - ‘Faith of Our Fathers Living Still’ with its words: *Our fathers chained in prisons dark, Were still in heart and conscience free, How Sweet would be their children’s fate, if they like them could die for Thee.*

It was totally fitting for a child with family in the gulags, to sing this rousing hymn to defeat the forces arraigned against Catholicism. But at the time we sang it, Vatican II

The Fate of Ibn Sunayna

THE APOSTLE [Muhammad] said, ‘Kill any Jew that falls into your power.’ Thereupon Muhayyisa bin Mas’ud leapt upon Ibn Sunayna, a Jewish merchant with whom they had social and business relations, and killed him. Huwayyisa was not a Muslim at the time though he was the elder brother. When Muhayyisa killed Ibn Sunayna, Huwayyisa began to beat him, saying, ‘You enemy of God, why did you kill him when much of the fat on your belly comes from his wealth?’ Muhayyisa answered, ‘Had the one who ordered me to kill him ordered me to kill you I would have cut your head off.’ Huwayyisa replied, ‘By God, if Muhammad had ordered you to kill me would you have killed me?’ He said, ‘Yes, by God, had he ordered me to cut off your head I would have done so.’ Huwayyisa exclaimed, ‘By God, a religion which can bring you to this is fantastic!’ and he became a Muslim.

- Ibn Ishaq, in the translation of A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, OUP Karachi, 1955, p.369. For the Arabic text, see *as-Sirat al-Nabawi*, Dar Ehia al-Tourath al-Arabi, Beirut, vol.3, p.65.

was proceeding with its various aims and we knew nothing of it. We were too young to understand notions of social and moral decay, to understand the notion of insidious attacks *within* as well as beyond the church.

Meantime, what threaded the days of lessons, exams, sport and assemblies was the notion that there was order in the universe. On leaving Brigidine Convent, whether married, as nuns or single, we were all to help St Vincent de Paul as that is what responsible adults did. We were to shun the false allures of ‘fame, power, wealth and beauty’ which would never bring happiness. Last but not least, we were to further the Kingdom of God by helping the missions overseas.

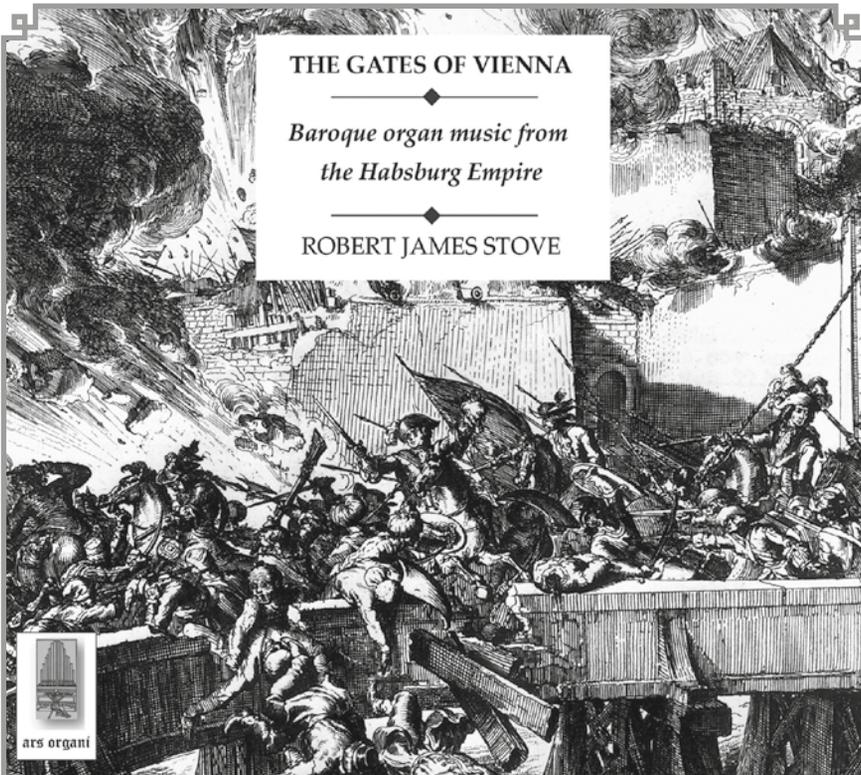
My toffee making efforts for the Papuan Hohola Mission school were doomed to failure as I burned several pots and put holes in the lino floor. But local residents dutifully bought and ate them and the school duly sent money to our sister school in Port Moresby.

It was only in senior years that a general sense of something strange, new, even ‘revolutionary’ began wafting through the corridors. We suddenly were asked to sing new hymns such as ‘Spirit of God in the Clear Running Water’ in the local church as this is ‘what the Bishops want now’. Mother Conleth, however, loathed such changes and showed it clearly in her ‘non verbals’.

It seemed that we were living in unique times, the heady years of ‘the first man on the moon’ era which opened doors of boundless confidence in social progress. Students asked questions about what ‘contraception’ and ‘abortion’ were and we were told they were unambiguous evils. As senior students, we now knew there was an event called ‘Vatican II’ but had no idea of what Father Aidan Nichols called the over-optimistic cultural expectations of many Council attendees:

*...a sense of optimism that world culture and the values cherished by the Church were on an increasingly convergent course.*¹

I did not know what Semi-Pelagian meant but I soon saw peers naively drawn into movements of political salvation, with leftist/Marxist views, seeing sin as ‘social/political’ and no longer ‘personal’. This post-Conciliar focus on earthly justice alone was the mask of Marxist notions, disguised as evangelical zeal in the west, without doubt astutely manipulated by Soviet purse strings. The liberation of the Proletariat was translated into liberation of the laity and invasion of the sanctuary by the downtrodden Catholic citizens in the pews. We did not understand at that stage, as Tracey Rowland explains, the ‘theological significance of culture’, and that secularism’s seemingly neutral but



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Why we need the Pope

IF (AS S. JEROME SAYS) in the time of the Apostles, 'one is chosen from amongst all, in order that, a head being established, occasion of schism may be taken away,' how much more now, for the same reason, must there be a chief in the Church? The fold of our Lord is to last till the consummation of the world in visible unity; the unity, then, of external government must remain in it, and nobody has authority to change the form of administration, save our Lord, Who established it.

— St Francis de Sales, quoted Luke Rivington, *A Plain Reason for Joining the Church of Rome*, London, 1890, pp.3-4.

spiritually toxic values could be twisted into 'virtues' of 'marriage equality' and 'choice'.²

We had no idea that people within the church in the west could be swept into the secularist view without knowing how they were being ideologically manipulated - for they had lived in security for a long time and did not understand how manipulation works.

Without critical analyses of the times we had no practice in what many in oppressive cultures knew by then, guerrilla resistance to anti-spiritual forces. And how could we translate the notion of cultural/spiritual war to happy, trusting believers, who thought everything was fine, when the weapons used were invisible?

In decades to come, we had to confront the post-modern 'virtue' of 'tolerance' (of abortion, gay marriage, euthanasia) and learn, through extraordinary encyclicals of post-Conciliar popes, to re-articulate what human dignity, religious freedom and divine Mercy are for a 'progressive', anti-Christian, wounded age.

At Brigidine, however, in those halcyon days in 1969, little did we know that we were nearing the end of an era, that the social order was being rent asunder by anti-authoritarianism and moral relativism, whose fruits would be evident within a few short years.

In that last filament of twilight, as we stood on the border of a new era, the Catholic vision had nonetheless seeped through, with its deep sense of transcendent realities, distrust of worldly allures and spiritual resilience for the confusing, turbulent times ahead.

WANDA SKOWRONSKA is a registered psychologist who works as a counsellor in inner city schools in Sydney. She has a PhD in Psychology/Theology from Melbourne's John-Paul II Institute. This article is a preview of her book entitled 'Angels, Incense and Revolution,' to be published shortly. To order, contact Connor Court Publishers - 0497-900-685.

1. Aidan Nichols, OP, *The Council in Question: A Dialogue with Catholic Traditionalism* (UK, Gracewing, 2011), 52
2. Tracey Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition* (London: Routledge, 2003), 35.

Concern that Uyghur militants exiting Syria and Iraq will again target Xinjiang is one likely reason why Chinese officials suggested that despite their adherence to the principle of non-interference in the affairs of others, China might join the Syrian army in taking on militants in the northern Syrian province of Idlib.

UIGHUR ACTIVISM IN CHINA

By James M. Dorsey



SEEMINGLY obsessive fear of Uighur nationalist and religious sentiment has prompted Chinese leaders to contemplate military involvement in Syria and Afghanistan and risk international condemnation for its massive repression in its north-western province of Xinjiang, involving the most frontal assault on Islam as a faith in recent history.

Chinese fears of Uighur activism threaten to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Its policies are likely to prompt jihadists, including Uighur foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq, some of whom are exploring new pastures in Central Asia closer to China's borders, to put the People's Republic further up their target list.

Up to 5,000 Uyghurs are believed to have joined jihadist groups in Syria and Iraq in recent years, including the Islamic State, whose leader, Abu Bakr Al Baghdadi, listed Xinjiang in 2014 at the top of his list of countries that violate Muslim rights.

Uighur fighters speaking in videos distributed by the Islamic State have vowed to return

home to 'plant their flag in China'. One fighter, addressing evil Chinese Communist 'infidel lackeys,' threatened that 'in retaliation for the tears that flow from the eyes of the oppressed, we will make your blood flow in rivers, by the will of God.'

Maps circulating on Twitter purporting to highlight the Islamic State's expansion plans included

substantial parts of Xinjiang. Al Qaeda echoed the Islamic State's statements by condemning Chinese policy towards Xinjiang as 'occupied Muslim land' to be 'recovered (into) the shade of the Islamic Caliphate.'

China's concerns of a jihadist backlash go beyond fears of political violence. They are driven to a large extent by the fact that

Xinjiang is home to 15 percent of China's proven oil reserves, 22 per cent of its gas reserves, and 115 of the 147 raw materials found in the People's Republic as well as part of its nuclear arsenal.

Yasheng Sidike, the mayor of the Xinjiang capital of Urumqi and city's deputy Communist Party chief, in a signal of what re-education means in camps in which, according to the United Nations, up to one million Uyghurs, a Turkic minority, and other Muslims have been detained, recently argued that Uyghurs were 'members of the Chinese family, not descendants of the Turks.'

Uighurs in Western China

CHINA BLAMED VIOLENCE in Xinjiang – strategically located on the borders of Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Central Asia – on Islamic separatists who want to establish an independent state of 'East Turkestan'. Some Chinese officials have blamed attacks on Muslim militants trained in Pakistan.

But many rights groups say China overstates the threat to justify its tight grip on the region.

Dilxat Raxit, spokesman for the exiled World Uighur Congress, said the government had politicised the case and used terrorism as an excuse to punish Uighurs who don't agree with the system.

'The aim is to terrorise Uighurs into abandoning their rights,' he said in an emailed statement.

Beijing has shown no sign of relaxing its control in Xinjiang, a vast swathe of territory accounting for one-sixth of China's land mass which holds rich oil, gas and coal deposits.

In July 2009, regional capital Urumqi was rocked by violence between majority Han Chinese and minority Uighurs that killed nearly 200 people.

Since the unrest, China has turned its attention to boosting development in Xinjiang and providing greater job opportunities, especially for Uighurs, to try to address some of the root causes of the violence.

– Reuters, August 02, 2012

Mr. Sidike went on to say that ‘the three evil forces, using the name of ethnics and religion, have been creating hatred between ethnic groups and the mania to conduct terrorist activities, which greatly damage the shared interests of Xinjiang people.’ Mr. Sidike was referring to China’s portrayal of terrorism, separatism and religious extremism as three evils.

The Communist Party’s Global Times asserted earlier that the security situation in Xinjiang had been ‘turned around and terror threats spreading from there to other provinces of China are also being eliminated. Peaceful and stable life has been witnessed again in all of Xinjiang... Xinjiang has been salvaged from the verge of massive turmoil. It has avoided the fate of becoming “China’s Syria” or “China’s Libya”,’ the paper said.

Witness statements by former detainees of the re-education camps reported that they constituted an attempt to brainwash inmates into accepting loyalty to the Communist Party and China’s leadership above their religious beliefs.

The Chinese embassy in Islamabad warned in December of possible attacks targeting ‘Chinese-invested organizations and Chinese citizens’ in Pakistan. China’s ambassador, Yao Jing, advised the Pakistani interior ministry two months earlier that Abdul Wali, an alleged Uighur jihadist assassin, had entered the country and was likely to attack Chinese targets.

Five Chinese mining engineers were recently wounded in a suicide attack in the troubled Pakistan province of Balochistan, a key node in the US\$ 50 billion plus China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) intended to link the strategic port of Gwadar with Xinjiang and fuel economic development in the Chinese region. The attack was claimed by the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) rather than Uyghurs.

At least one Uighur was involved in a 2016 suicide bombing of the Chinese embassy in the Kyrgyz

capital of Bishkek while a Uighur gunman killed 39 people in an attack on an Istanbul nightclub in January of last year.

Chinese fears of renewed jihadist attacks on Chinese targets in China and beyond are heightened by anti-Chinese sentiment in Central and South Asia fuelled by groups affected by the crackdown in Xinjiang as well as broader unease with the fallout of Chinese-funded projects related to China’s infrastructure-driven Belt and Road initiative.

Major political parties and business organizations in the Pakistani province of Gilgit-Baltistan threatened earlier this year to shut down the Pakistan-China border if Beijing did not release some 50 Uighur women married to Pakistani men from the region, who have been detained in Xinjiang.

The province’s legislative assembly unanimously called on the government in Islamabad to take up the issue. The women, many of whom are practising Muslims and don religious attire, are believed to have been detained in re-education camps.

Concern in Tajikistan is mounting that the country may not be able to service its increasing Belt and Road-related debt. Tajikistan was forced in April to hand over a gold mine to China as remuneration for \$300 million in funding to build a power plant. Impoverished Turkmenistan may have no choice but to do the same with gas fields.

The emerging stories of Kazakhs released from re-education camps and the granting of asylum in Kazakhstan to a Chinese national of Kazakh descent spotlighted the government’s difficulty in balancing its need to be seen to be standing up for its people and accommodating Chinese ambitions in Central Asia.

In a sign of the times, Russian commentator Yaroslav Razumov noted that Kazakh youth recently thwarted the marriage of a Kazakh

national to a Chinese woman by denouncing it on social media as unpatriotic.

Concern that Uighur militants exiting Syria and Iraq will again target Xinjiang is one likely reason why Chinese officials suggested that despite their adherence to the principle of non-interference in the affairs of others China might join the Syrian army in taking on militants in the northern Syrian province of Idlib.

Syrian forces have bombarded Idlib, a dumping ground for militants evacuated from other parts of the country captured by the Syrian military and the country’s last major rebel stronghold, in advance of an expected offensive.

Chinese participation in what likely would be a brutal and messy campaign in Idlib would be China’s first major engagement in foreign battle in decades.

China has similarly sought to mediate a reduction of tension between Pakistan and Afghanistan in an effort to get them to cooperate in the fight against militants and ensure that Uighur jihadists are denied the ability to operate on China’s borders. It has also sought to facilitate peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban.

Chinese officials told a recent gathering in Beijing of the Afghan-Pakistan-China Trilateral Counter-Terrorism dialogue that militant cross-border mobility represented a major threat that needed to be countered by an integrated regional approach.

Meanwhile, China has reportedly started building a training camp for Afghan troops in a narrow corridor that connects the two countries that would be home to some 500 Chinese troops.

China agreed two years ago to fund and build 11 military outposts and a training facility to beef up Tajikistan’s defense capabilities along its border with Afghanistan that hosts a large part of the main highway connecting Tajikistan’s most populous regions to China.

China has since stepped up the sharing of intelligence with Tajikistan on issues related to political violence, religious extremism and drug trafficking.

The Chinese defence ministry, moreover, announced in April that China, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Tajikistan would perform joint counterterrorism and training and exercises that focus on real combat experiences.

China and Afghanistan also agreed last year to lay a cross-border fibre-optic cable that, as in the case of Pakistan, could pave the way to export China's model of a surveillance state to Afghanistan.

Chinese counterterrorism cooperation with various Muslim nations could be put in jeopardy by an increasing number of media reports spotlighting the crackdown in Xinjiang. Muslim governments, who have remained conspicuously silent, are likely to be further embarrassed if Western criticism of the crackdown snowballs.

A bipartisan group of US members of Congress recently called on the Trump administration to sanction Chinese officials and companies involved in the crackdown and mass detentions. The administration may have less compunction about confronting China as its trade war with the People's Republic escalates.

'We believe that targeted sanctions will have an impact. At a time when the Chinese government is seeking to expand its influence through the Belt and Road Initiative, the last thing China's leaders want is international condemnation of their poor and abusive treatment of ethnic and religious minorities,' the members of Congress said.

Dr. James M. Dorsey is a senior fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, co-director of the University of Würzburg's Institute for Fan Culture, and co-host of the New Books in Middle Eastern Studies podcast. James is the author of The Turbulent World of Middle East Soccer blog, Comparative Political Transitions between Southeast Asia and the Middle East and North Africa, and just published China and the Middle East: Venturing into the Maelstrom

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The Catholic Faith

SPEAKING from personal experience, however, [Maurice Baring] once advised Hilaire Belloc to 'never, never, never talk theology or discuss the Church with those outside it. People simply do not understand what you are talking about and they merely (a) get angry and (b) come to the conclusion that one doesn't believe in the thing oneself and that one is simply doing it to annoy'.

– Piers Paul Read, 'What became of Maurice Baring?' *The Spectator*, October 10, 2007.
Baring, formerly an agnostic, became a Catholic in 1909: 'the only action in my life which I am quite certain I have never regretted.' See *The Puppet Show of Memory*, 1922, pp. 395-396.

Ladies in Black

Director Bruce Beresford, working with cinematographer Peter James, is a master of mood-creating scenes – a talent shown in an opening sequence using the exterior of Foy's of Sydney, once a department store magnificent enough to challenge Harrods of London, now even busier dispensing justice as the Downing Centre.

It may well have been Foy's, creation of Mark Foy, that inspired DH Lawrence (with *Kangaroo* on his mind) to remark that Australia's aristocrats were the owners of big stores.

By locating further scenes at the Sydney Tramway Museum, Beresford with Peter James contrives similar visual magic to set the mood of Sydney 1959.

Initially, this appears to be a bubble bath of sunny nostalgia. But it is more; Beresford and his co-writer/producer Sue Milliken have long vintaged Madeleine St. John's first novel, originally entitled *Women in Black* (Abacus 1993).

Time has brought them the marvellous Angourie Rice to play Leslie Miles (alias Lisa), daughter of Mr and Mrs Miles (Shane Jacobson and Susie Porter), she eager to support her child's ambition to go to university and become a writer, he dismissive of it.

While awaiting the results of her decisive exam, Lisa gets a job at Goode's department store. There she meets the titular ladies, the dinkums, Fay Baines (Rachael Taylor) and Patty Williams (Alison McGirr).

Supremely she encounters the Slovenian Magda Szombatheli (Julia Ormond) married to the Hungarian Stefan (Vincent Perez) whose mutual friend is Rudi (Ryan Corr).

Utterly beguiling? Not quite. Your reviewer did not take to Ryan Corr's Rudi nor Shane Jacobson's Mr Miles: they set suave caricature against uncouth stereotype, the latter not typical of Miles's job as printer (inevitable pun).

MOVIES

By James Murray

Rudi's suavity in his courtship of Fay is in contrast to the gaucherie of Patty's husband Frank (Luke Pegler), intrinsic to the way the.

Australian characters move in a mist of condescension, the central Europeans in an aura of sophistication.

Your reviewer does not recall this perception from reading the later Text classic edition (acquired from the country's finest circulating library run by the St Vincent de Paul Society).

It may be that the Beresford-Milliken realisation has brought into relief the fact of the author's rejection of her fellow Australians, a rejection exacerbated by her bitter relationship with her father, the distinguished barrister-politician Edward St. John who she blamed for the death of her Franco-Jewish mother Sylvette (née Cargher).

One further nitpick: Nicholas Hammond makes splendid entrances and exits as the floorwalker Mr Ryder. But it is impossible to believe that a fellow so elegant would not adjust the back collar of his coat - or have it adjusted by his colleague, Miss Cartwright (Noni Hazlehurst).

This Beresford-Milliken work is likely to be the subject of film studies like their other productions; it may be worth suggesting inspiration from another visual medium.

Madeleine St John, born 1941 in Castlcrag Sydney, had been living in London since 1968, her novel, entitled *Women in Black* was first published there in 1993. During that long interval, did she ever watch the television series, *Are You Being Served?*

Memorably this was set in a fictitious department store, Grace Brothers, the name of a real store in Sydney. Is it possible that the series triggered memories of Madeleine

St John's time working at David Jones, Sydney and begot Goode's, the fictitious department store of *Women in Black*.

In other words, Madeleine St John used the combination to break the block caused by her destruction of the manuscript of her biography of Madame Blavatsky, founder of Theosophy.

The block broken, she went on to write, a trio, one, *The Essence of the Thing*, shortlisted for the Booker Prize.

These are more substantial works, inspired by Madeleine St John's inherited Anglican faith; her father being the son of an Anglican canon and descended from Ambrose St John who like his friend, John Henry Newman, reverted to Catholicism.

Essentially *Ladies/Women in Black* is merely a retelling of the Cinderella story. In the novel and film, there's a Prince Charming. In reality, the Prince Charming is Bruce Beresford; he kept faith with the work of a Cinderella, Madeleine St. John, for 25 years inspired by the memory of her as a fellow student, at the University of Sydney half a century ago.

In the life. faith and work of Madeleine St John lies that most difficult of movie genres: the author biopic. Beresford does have the advantage of being named as the executor of her literary estate.

PG★★★★SFFV.

Christopher Robin

As De Beers works its diamond mines, so does Disney its franchises, including AA Milne's tales of Winnie-the Pooh and his friends, Tigger, Piglet, Eeyore, Kanga, Roo, Owl and Rabbit.

Following a number of cartoon versions came the release last year of a live action computer-fantasy version, *Goodbye Christopher Robin*, starring Domhnall Gleeson and Margot Robbie.

Now comes, *Christopher Robin* with Ewan McGregor in the title role interacting with Winnie and friends, assisted by Hayley Atwell

as his wife Evelyn and Bronte Carmichael as their daughter Madeline.

Director Marc Forster includes non-specific scenes of Christopher Robin's war service (which surely owe something to Christopher Milne's service with the Royal Engineers in Italy during World War II)

Writers Alex Ross Perry, Tom McCarthy, Alison Schroeder, Greg Brooker and Mark Steven Johnson stir a plot which is, by no means, honeyed: Christopher Robin, now an efficiency expert at Winslow Luggage, is ordered to find a solution to its lack of profit.

The task re-connects him with his childhood friends Winnie and company, and accelerates the plot in a succession of hilarious will-he-won't-he-win-scenes.

Considering its closeness to *Goodbye Christopher Robin*, some have questioned the *Christopher Robin* box-office appeal. In fact it has earned more than its predecessor: \$144.9 million, proof that Disney, like diamonds, is forever on the basis of that old Hollywood staple: the family movie.

G★★★★SFFV.

Mile 22

Director Peter Berg opens with a classic sequence: a team of CIA paramilitaries – all sniper sights, whisper radios and flac-jackets – deployed to raid a Russian safe-house in the woodlands of the United States.

The raid, lead by James Silva (Mark Wahlberg), though gory fails in its objective: to seize a batch of toxic caesium before it can be used to kill thousands.

But CIA mastermind James Bishop, codename Mother, (John Malkovich), has a Plan B; indeed he has plans that run from C to Z.

These cover the entry of a fresh element, the Indonesian State Intelligence Agency and a rogue agent Li Noor (Iko Uwais) prepared to barter the secret of the caesium's whereabouts for a new identity.

Hence the cryptic title: it relates to the number of miles, Silva and

his team, under constant attack, must escort Li Noor before he can be airlifted to a new life, and probably a key role in a sequel which could well be named *Operation Chaos II*.

Peter Berg, his co-producer/star Wahlberg with writers Lea Carpenter and Graham Roland face the challenge of fiction thrillers: how do you top the reality of post-modern espionage.

For example, a brace of Russian spies carry out an elimination mission in Salisbury, epicentre of the British defence system; identified they claim they were there to view the mediaeval cathedral but were prevented when they got snow on their boots...

MA15+★★★★NFFV.

The Flip Side

The premise of this romantic comedy drama is promising: film-caterer Ronnie has a brief affaire with a British film star Henry who loves her and leaves her only to return years later to promote another of his movies.

As said a promising premise. And there's a twist: Ronnie, now a chef – restaurateur, is linked to Jeff (Luke McKenzie), who has written

Official Classifications key

G: for general exhibition;
PG: parental guidance
r e c o m m e n d e d f o r
p e r s o n s u n d e r 15 y e a r s ;
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mature audiences 15 years and
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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

a novel, *Bite*. Henry's companion is Sophie (Vanessa Guide), who is French, trailing the seductive clichés that entails.

Will the quadrille reform as its members traverse the locations: Adelaide, the beautiful, and its surrounding seascapes and vineyards?

The movie's difficulty is that director Marion Pilowsky and co-writer LA Sellars do not get enough star-power from Eddy Izzard as Henry and Emily Taheny as Ronnie. In addition, a sub-plot involving the nursing home travails of Ronnie's mother Iris (Tina Bursill) slows the pace.

Locations apart, the movie has a limp, air despite generous quaffing of arguably Australia's finest wines and undoubtedly its greatest ale: Cooper's.

Pilowsky does spare us Hollywood-style sexual scenes, perhaps because Henry's getting there provides a climactic gleeful point: famous British actor gains the heights of Beverley Hills. What other famous British actor hasn't?

M★★★★NFFV.

BlackKlansman

Initial proof of writer/director Spike Lee's crazy-bravery is in the spelling of his title; further proof is that he elects to use slices from the century-old classic *Birth of a Nation* and recent newsreel footage of a riot where President Donald Trump's comments were petrol on fiery waters.

Between these slices, Spike Lee sandwiches a smart comedy about an African-American cop who goes undercover to infiltrate the Ku Klux Klan with the aid of a Jewish-American colleague.

Fanciful stuff but not totally; it is based on the memoir of Detective Ron Stallworth who in 1972 became the first black officer in the Colorado Springs Police Force.

John David Washington plays Stallworth in a style that shows there may be a gene for acting given that his father is Denzel Washington.

Adam Driver comes on strongly as the Jewish offsider, Detective Flip Zimmerman to ensure that justice (with mockery) is meted out to the Klan.

The infiltration includes a sequence where under death threats he must reveal whether he is Jewish. In another sequence, Klansmen are shown sprinkling water during a ritual – a cue for emphasis that the Ku Klux Klan was also anti-Catholic which Spike Lee does not follow.

The fiery cross? Your reviewer believes this derived from the Highland novels of Sir Walter Scott who enjoyed wide popularity in the United States.

MA15+★★★NFFV.

Leave No Trace

War veteran Will lives in the backwoods of Oregon with his daughter Tom. They survive through skills he learned during his service days which included Iraq.

On this simple storyline, writer/director Debra Granik and her co-writer Anne Rosellini string compelling episodes showing how a minority of solitaries get by in wilderness America while welfare officials try to shepherd them into towns.

Ben Foster plays Tom with the edginess of the flint he uses to make fire. In casting Thomasin McKenzie as his daughter – torn between life with him and life in community – Debra Granik has created a star, a repeat of her feat when she cast Jennifer Lawrence in *Winter's Bone* (2010).

G★★★SFFV.

Searching

A new movie sub-genre? Impossible? Not to writer/director Aneesh Chaganty and writer/producer Sev Ohanian. They have invented such a sub-genre. Call it the Social Media Thriller: action, exposition and solution are delivered by way of laptops and smartphones, tweets and texts, CDs and Skype.

And it works compellingly on the big screen as John Cho (David Kim) and his wife Pamela (Sara Sohn) seek to find their missing teenage daughter Margot (Michelle La), played in video flashbacks to her sub-teen years by Kye Dawn Lau, Megan Liu and Alex Jane Go.

In their search the Kims are aided by Detective Rosemary Vick, played by Debra Messing with a surprising toughness that conceals the fact that she may have a different agenda involving her son Robert (Steven Michael Eich).

The solution when it comes may not be as shocking as an Australian energy bill but it does have a Hitchcockian twist as clever as its IT.

MA15+★★★NFFV

The House with a Clock in its Walls

Fantasy is not Cate Blanchett's forte – except for those who can recall her shimmering Tim Tam commercial last century. Yet here she is playing the good witch Florence Zimmerman to Jack Black's warlock, Jonathan Barnavelt.

Their task? To protect the latter's nephew Lewis (Owen Vaccaro) from the traps built into the titular house by the sorcerer Isaac Izard (Kyle MacLachlan in ghastly make-up).

Among the traps are evil pumpkins which explode sickeningly at the flourish of Florence's wand.

SOLUTION TO CRYPTIC CROSSWORD NO. 48

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Disclosure: your reviewer's take was influenced by his belief that Scottish chocolate Penguins provided the basis for Tim Tams – a belief reinforced by brief spell helping to make Penguins: 34,000 per nightshift.

PG★★★SFFV.

Lean on Pete

Director Andrew Haigh's horse opera is rougher shod than *My Friend Flicka*, *National Velvet* or even *Sea Biscuit* as the rating below indicates.

Working from co-writer Willy Vlautin's novel, Haigh elicits a stand-out performance from Charlie Plummer as Charley, a 15-year-old who takes a job at the local racetrack in Portland Oregon to help his terminally alcoholic father (Travis Fimmel).

Charley's boss Del, played by Steve Buscemi, is a mix of flint and vinegar in his training of his horse Pete and his treatment of its jockey Bonnie (Chloe Sevigny, in tough but tender mode).

When his father dies, Charley takes off with Pete, heading into the loneliness of the back trails and trailer camps of America where liquor and violence are part of the hard tack diet.

The ending when it comes has surprise and redemptive power.

R18+ ★★★NFFV.

A Simple Favor

Promoted as post-modern, director Paul Feig's thriller does have an up-to-the minute setting; its protagonist Stephanie Smothers does have a goody-goody cookery blog but the movie retains main elements of the gothic novel – murder, envy, incest, adultery and sibling rivalry.

What lifts the film is the duel of divas between Anna Kendrick as Smothers and Blake Lively as Emily Nelson, a friend made through their respective sons, who is as enigmatic as she is elegant and vanishes suddenly.

Detailing the whys and wherefores would destroy such tension as the thriller possesses; it

is not high given that Paul Feig and writer Jessica Sharzer choose to defuse it with a farcical ending.

M★★★NFFV.

American Animals

In 2004, a quintet of students attempted a heist of rare books from the University of Transylvania Library in Lexington, Kentucky.

To reinforce the fact he is telling a true story, writer/director Bart Layton cleverly intercuts interviews with the perpetrators: Spencer Reinhard, Warren Lipka, Chas Allen, Eric Borsuk and Betty Jean Gooch with the actors who play them: Barry Keoghan, Evan Peters, Blake Jenner, Jared Abrahamson and Ann Dowd.

As the perpetrators after rehearsals and imagined perfection actually carry out the heist, it turns silly-side up with serious jail time leaving them wiser but no richer.

Intriguingly the cast are reminiscent of the cohort who acted with Kevin Bacon, adding the sense that the real perpetrators were influenced by movies (a thought reinforced by a brief shot of John Huston's classic heist movie, *The Asphalt Jungle*).

After a more than a century of the cinema moving image plus close to a century of television, Americans, and to a lesser extent, other nations have allowed these images to influence their reality: hence Donald Trump.

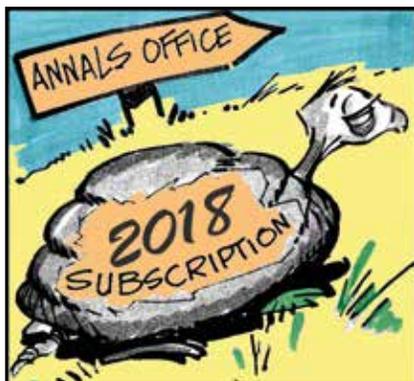
TBA★★★NFFV.

You Were Never Really Here

The cryptic title belongs to the Jonathan Ames novella on which writer/director Lynne Ramsay based her new film. It must be said she has not decrypted it.

On the contrary, with cinematographer Thomas Townend and editor Joe Bini, she has contrived to make it as black and gritty as coal-dust porridge. Hyperbole? Make it black pudding using blood and iron filings.

Its suicidal anti-hero Joe, played by the Puerto Rican-born Joaquin



Phoenix at the top of his form, is a freelance assassin who has turned to rescuing abducted children in the intervals of caring for his mother (Judith Roberts) like him the victim of abuse.

Ramsay does pile on improbabilities: Joe, despite US Marine and FBI service, uses a metal-worker's ball-peen hammer to take down villains armed with automatic weapons as he invades New York brothels in search of a senator's daughter, Nina Votto.

She, as played by Ekaterina Samsonov, brings to the darkness a quality of redemptive light. Add underwater scenes that may well be symbolic of baptism.

Lynne Ramsay's previous films, *Morvern Callar* and *We Need to Talk About Kevin* have made her something of a cult. This one should enhance that status. Running time: 90 minutes.

MA15+★★NFFV.

The Predator

No number given, but this appears to be the sixth in the series involving the creature that began its rampages aboard the Ridley Scott spaceship *Nostromo* in *Alien* (1979).

Now, genetically updated, it leads a pack, hunting humans in the backwoods of Georgia, summoned accidentally from deep space around Hallow-e'en by Rory (Jacob Tremblay) nerdy son of ex-US Ranger, Quinn McKenna (Boyd Holbrook), scorned when he discovers the predators have landed.

On his way to treatment, McKenna falls in with other military patients, some resembling members of *The Dirty Dozen* (1967).

The fiercest of his warriors is Casey Bracket, played by Olivia Munn with an élan that makes Sigourney Weaver's Ellen Ripley seem shy and retiring. By contrast, Yvonne Strahovski's part as Emily, Quinn McKenna's, wife is underwritten or over-edited.

Directed by Shane Black, our heroes do battle with the predators in sequences that resemble a traffic cop's nightmare but are the product of Black and his co-writer Fred Dekker's fertile imagination.

The end of the Fox franchise? The likelihood of this is akin to Domino giving up on pizzas.

MA15+★★NFFV.

Truth and 'Invention' Nothing Changes

RHETORICAL INVECTIVE is full of assertions about the immorality, sexual and sumptuary, of prominent individuals [in ancient Rome]. R.G.M. Nisbet, in his commentary on Cicero's *In Pisonem*, points out that many of the vices of which the ex-consul Piso is accused are elsewhere attributed to Cicero himself. In Cicero's case we are happy to dismiss these rude allegations of adultery, gluttony, luxury and avarice as false or exaggerated. We should be equally suspicious of what Cicero himself alleges about Piso, argues Nisbet. Neither should we assume that those who listen to the speeches of Cicero and other Roman orators were persuaded of the literal truth of the claims they made about their opponents' behaviour. Such claims function as vivid and highly entertaining assertions about the general character of their victims. They also served to display the orator's mastery of the traditional vocabulary of invective. Rhetorical treatises emphasise the importance of *inventio*, 'elaboration,' in all branches of the orator's art.

– *The Politics of Immorality in Ancient Rome*, Catherine Edwards, Cambridge University Press, 1993, Introduction p.10. Footnotes have been omitted.

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