

# ANNALS

Australasia

Catholic Culture



2019 - 1

\$3.30\*

PRINT POST APPROVED PP255003/01005

# ANNALS AUSTRALASIA

*Journal of Catholic Culture*

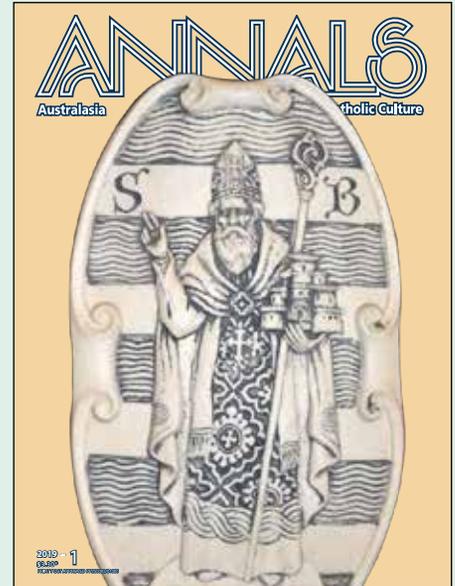
Volume 130, Number 1, Jan-Feb 2019

[Sunday readings at Mass: Year C / Weekday readings at Mass: Year I]

*Australia's Oldest Catholic Magazine*

Published by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC) since 1889.

- 4 **The Catholic Response to Islam**  
And Vatican II document *Nostra Aetate*  
STEPHEN M. KRASON
- 7 **Anti-Catholicism**  
PAUL STENHOUSE
- 11 **Ghostly Sightings**  
MICHAEL WILDING
- 14 **Visual Art**  
And the History of Western Civilisation  
GILES AUTY
- 21 **Flawed Science and Uncontrollable Bushfires**  
PETER FISHER
- 25 **The Mother of Jesus and Japanese Children**  
PAUL GLYNN
- 29 **Seances, Spiritism and Mediums**  
LESLIE RUMBLE
- 37 **St Robert Southwell, SJ**  
GRAHAM HATTON
- 40 **Hope is not Lost**  
REVIEW BY JAMES FRANKLIN



*Front Cover:* Our cover this month is of an image of St Blaise [Sveti Vlaho], patron saint of Dubrovnik on the Dalmatian coast of Croatia. St Blaise is holding a model of the island-city in his left hand, while his right hand blesses vessels approaching the harbour. The bars of wavy lines represent the water – the sea and the rain – the life blood of this ancient island's people. St Blaise, born in Sebaste in what was then Armenia [now Sivas, Turkey] died a martyr in 316 AD. He was a bishop and a physician, and is much loved and invoked against illnesses of the throat. His feast Day, February 3, brings vast crowds to Dubrovnik to receive his blessing, using candles blessed on the Feast of the Presentation of our Lord, February 2, Candlemas Day.

Cover Photo: Paul Stenhouse

**Executive Editor** *Chevalier Press*: Editor *Annals Australasia*: Paul Stenhouse, MSC Ph.D; **Layout and Design**: Paul Stenhouse MSC. **Administration**: Peter Macinante. **Subscription**: Visa/Master Cards accepted. Please make cheques, money orders payable to The Manager, *Annals Australasia*, 1 Roma Avenue (P.O. Box 13), Kensington, NSW Australia 2033. **Correspondence**: The Editor, P.O. Box 13, Kensington NSW Australia 2033. **Phones**: (02) 9662 7894/9662 7188 ext. 252. **Fax**: (02) 9662 1910, **Email**: [Annals editorial] editorannals@gmail.com; [Annals subscriptions] annalsaustralasia@gmail.com; [Chevalier Press]chevalierpress@gmail.com. **Unsolicited material**: We regret that unsolicited material cannot be returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

## Editorial Board

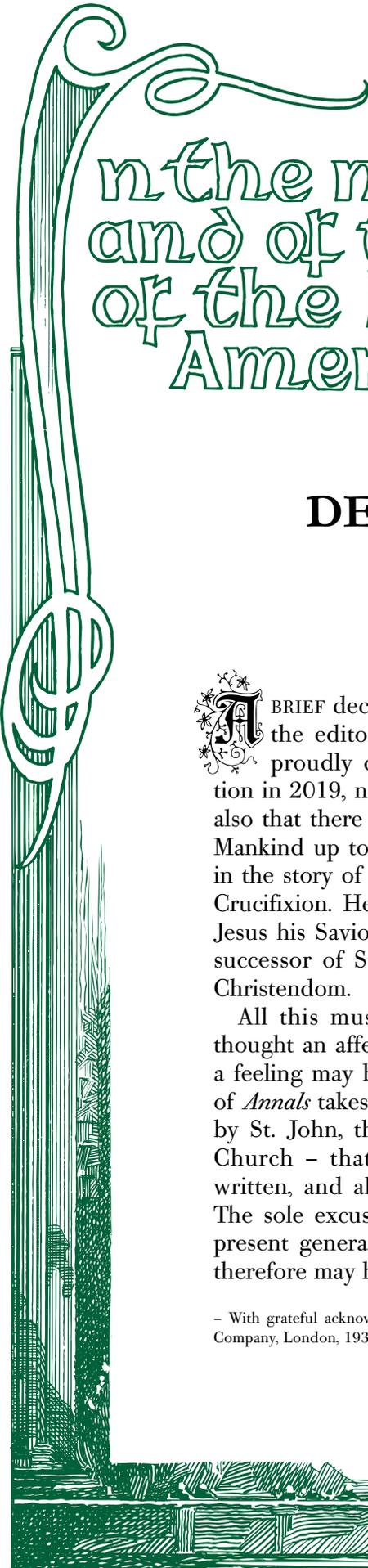
Peter Coleman  
[Chairman]  
Giles Auty  
Garry Boyd  
Peter Fisher

	STANDARD	PENSIONER	AIRMAIL
Australia	<input type="checkbox"/> \$33.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$26.00	India, Japan <input type="checkbox"/> \$50.00
Overseas	<i>AIRMAIL</i>		Philippines <input type="checkbox"/> \$50.00
PNG, NZ	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50.00		Canada <input type="checkbox"/> \$65.00
Indonesia	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50.00		USA, Israel <input type="checkbox"/> \$65.00
Singapore	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50.00		Latin America <input type="checkbox"/> \$65.00
Malaysia	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50.00		Europe, UK <input type="checkbox"/> \$65.00

We regret that overseas surface mail is no longer provided. All Australian rates include GST.

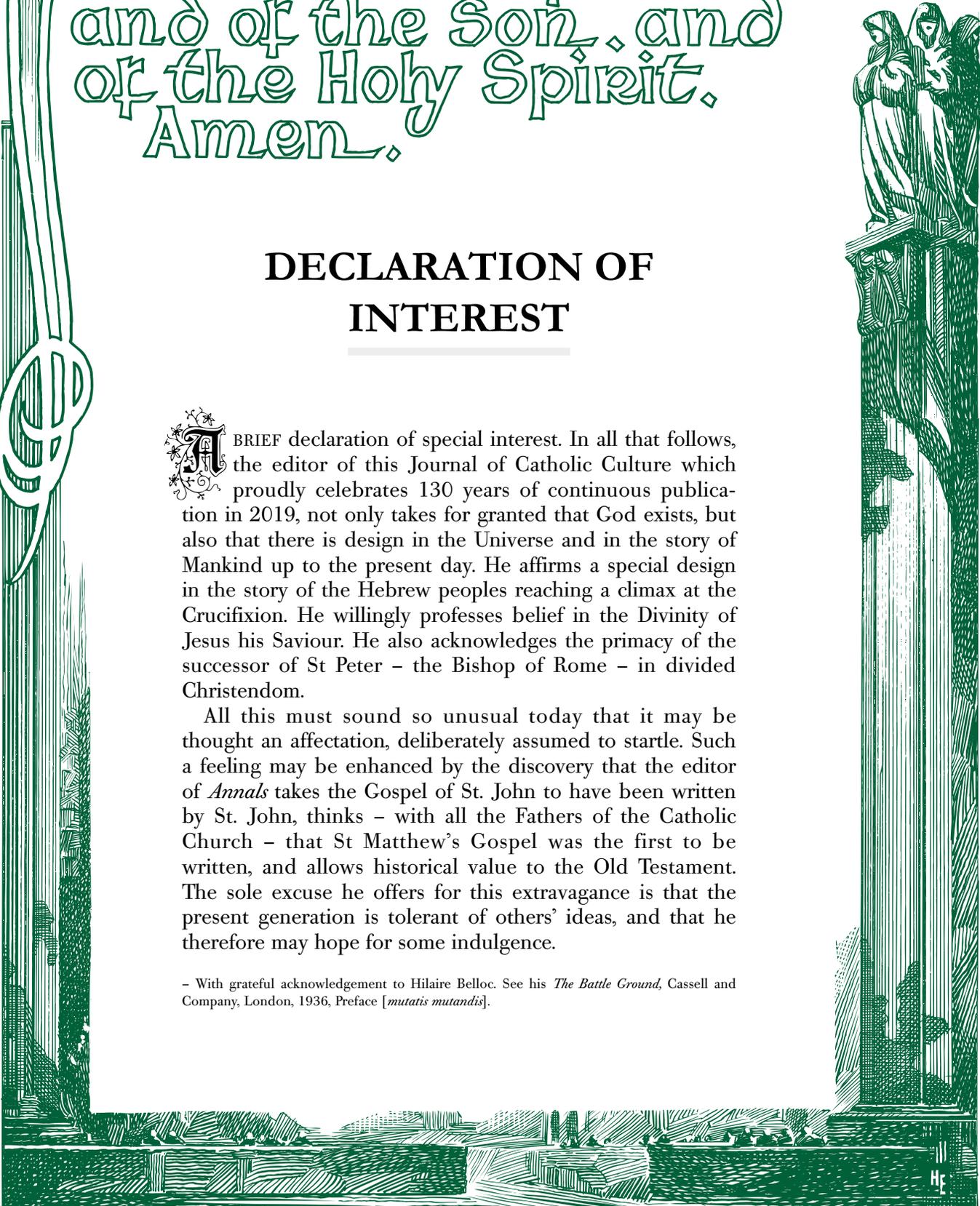
Let us not be dumb watch-dogs, or silent spectators; Let us be watchful shepherds, guarding the flock of Christ.

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



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

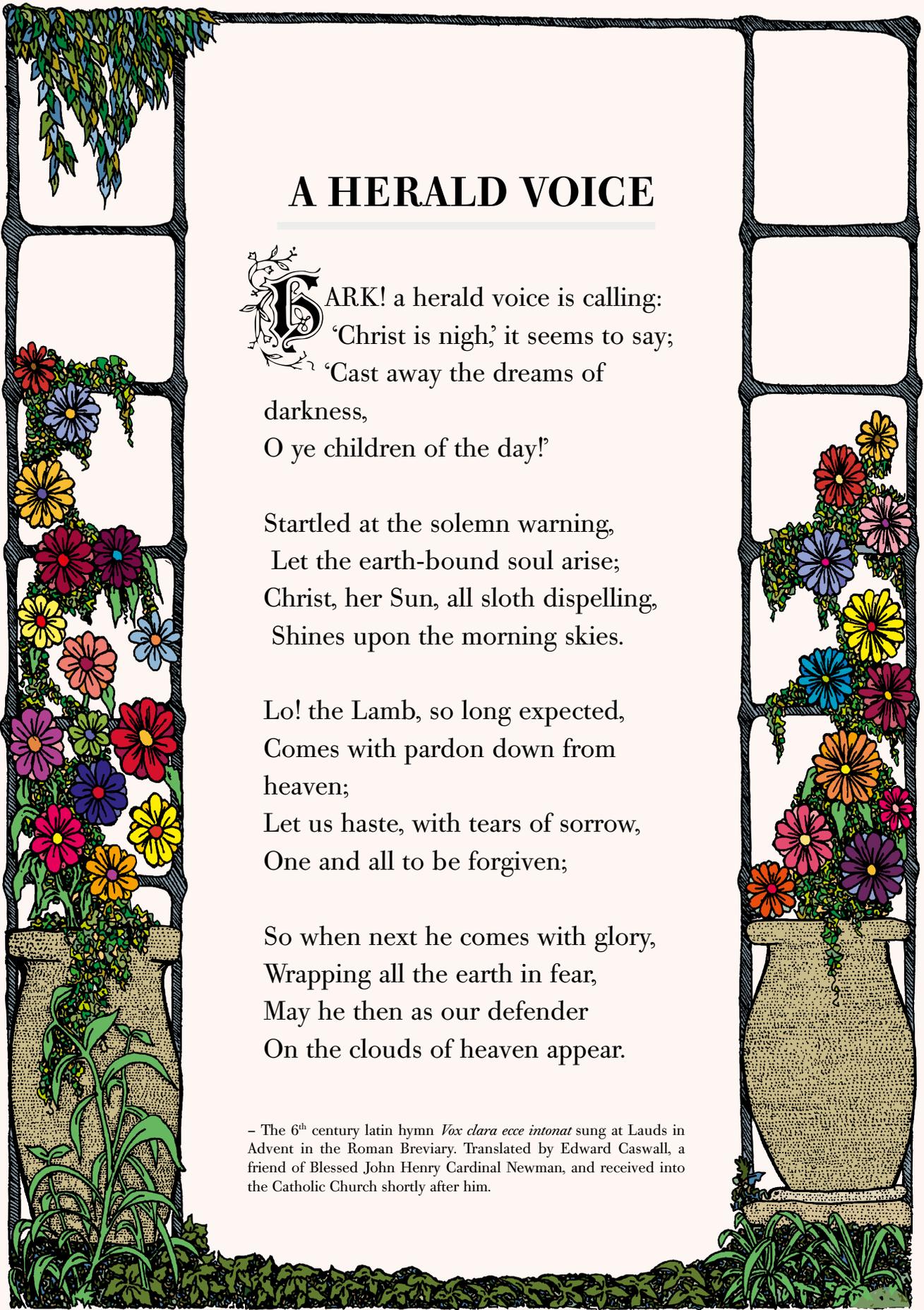
## DECLARATION OF INTEREST



**A** BRIEF declaration of special interest. In all that follows, the editor of this Journal of Catholic Culture which proudly celebrates 130 years of continuous publication in 2019, not only takes for granted that God exists, but also that there is design in the Universe and in the story of Mankind up to the present day. He affirms a special design in the story of the Hebrew peoples reaching a climax at the Crucifixion. He willingly professes belief in the Divinity of Jesus his Saviour. He also acknowledges the primacy of the successor of St Peter – the Bishop of Rome – in divided Christendom.

All this must sound so unusual today that it may be thought an affectation, deliberately assumed to startle. Such a feeling may be enhanced by the discovery that the editor of *Annals* takes the Gospel of St. John to have been written by St. John, thinks – with all the Fathers of the Catholic Church – that St Matthew's Gospel was the first to be written, and allows historical value to the Old Testament. The sole excuse he offers for this extravagance is that the present generation is tolerant of others' ideas, and that he therefore may hope for some indulgence.

– With grateful acknowledgement to Hilaire Belloc. See his *The Battle Ground*, Cassell and Company, London, 1936, Preface [*mutatis mutandis*].



## A HERALD VOICE

**H**ARK! a herald voice is calling:  
'Christ is nigh,' it seems to say;  
'Cast away the dreams of  
darkness,  
O ye children of the day!'

Startled at the solemn warning,  
Let the earth-bound soul arise;  
Christ, her Sun, all sloth dispelling,  
Shines upon the morning skies.

Lo! the Lamb, so long expected,  
Comes with pardon down from  
heaven;  
Let us haste, with tears of sorrow,  
One and all to be forgiven;

So when next he comes with glory,  
Wrapping all the earth in fear,  
May he then as our defender  
On the clouds of heaven appear.

- The 6<sup>th</sup> century latin hymn *Vox clara ecce intonat* sung at Lauds in Advent in the Roman Breviary. Translated by Edward Caswall, a friend of Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman, and received into the Catholic Church shortly after him.

*Wonder is dead, you say! / Wonder can never die.  
Not while within a shining pool / A man can see the sky'*

– Dame Mary Gilmore, 'By the Roadside,' *Annals*, December 1926

## ANNALS AUSTRALASIA

1889-2019

**A**NNALS was first published in November 1889 as an *Octavo* or A5-sized monthly of 24 pages, costing 2/- annually at 2d an issue. She will be 130-years-old in November 2019, a *quarto* or A4-sized journal of 48 pages, costing \$33 annually, or \$3 an issue.

In 1889, her centenary year, *Annals*, *The Bulletin* and *The Messenger of the Sacred Heart* were among the few publications founded in the 1880s known to have survived. *The Messenger* and *The Bulletin* have since ceased publication, in 1990 and 2008 respectively, joining all but a few of their myriad contemporaries that have returned to the pulp, lead, ink and dust out of which they were produced.

The first editor of *The Annals of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart* was Mary Agnes Finn, a member of an old-established Randwick Catholic family. She was assisted by Father Emil Merg, the nominal editor, an MSC priest from what was then Alsace-Lorraine, whose English was poor. Her role as editor was never publicised, and apart from the regular pieces carrying her by-line she worked in relative obscurity. Yet her role was crucial.

On numerous occasions over the past 130 years, there have been those who thought that *Annals* had had her day. This was the case in 1966 when I became editor. TV and radio were allegedly dealing death-blows to the print media and even the mighty Cinema was closing down in suburb after suburb, and printing and postage costs were on the increase.

In 1967 the 'old lady,' by then 78 years old, looking none the worse for wear (although a little piqued by reports that some readers to the north of Australia enjoyed *Annals* because the paper was excellent for rolling cigarettes!) shook her skirts and strode into the 70s.

The first issue of *Annals* for 1968 carried a new name: *Annals* '68. The former name 'Annals of our Lady of the Sacred Heart' had not been dropped from any lack of regard for Our Lady whose magazine it remained, but from a sensitivity to the kind of language that young people were using in those days. The circulation climbed steadily from 25,000 in 1966 to over 58,000 in 1972.

1981 was another pivotal moment. *Annals* was still useful and appreciated, but no longer, we were told, indispensable; and voices were again raised suggesting that the now 92-year-old lady should be pensioned off. Circulation had dropped dramatically, and a rethinking of the role (if any) that a Catholic magazine could play in Australia of the 80s seemed called for.

With what I believe to have been correct insight, *Annals* appeared for the first time in November-December 1981 as *Annals Australasia: A Journal of Catholic Culture*, affirming with St Pacianus of Barcelona, who died in 391AD : *Christianus mihi nomen est, Catholicus vero cognomen*, 'CHRISTIAN is my first name; but my surname is CATHOLIC.'<sup>1</sup>

Past, present and future forms of Catholicism are inextricably bound together. Not to know and appreciate one's Catholic past is to distort the present, and vitiate the future for those who come after us.

40 years on, *Annals* has survived at least two savage global financial downturns, and her take on the Catholic dimension of the news continues to be appreciated and respected by thousands of Australians – Catholic and non-Catholic.

As on previous occasions when change and increasing costs are in the wind, Job's comforters are out in force. But if I'm not wrong in thinking that this much loved 130-year-old grand lady of Catholic media still has 'a puff or two in the bellows,'<sup>2</sup> and if it's true, as many today think, that immersion in the digital world will soon be a requirement for living and surviving in society, then by way of testing the electronic water, *Annals* – in her 130th year – may appear sometime this year in a digital as well as a print version. Readers will be kept in the loop.

The print version's costs nevertheless remain a problem. I thank our generous and ever-faithful subscribers and readers for their unfailing support, and encourage them to continue doing what they can to introduce *Annals* to new subscribers and to find generous donors for us who can help us meet increasing costs. The heartfelt gratitude of all Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus goes out to the countless thousands of readers who over 130 years have encouraged and supported *Annals*.

Making Dame Mary Gilmore's words my own, it is as a shining pool reflecting the wonders of God and his creation that *Annals* has always seen herself. Age can only enhance the sharpness of the images that she reflects.

– Paul Stenhouse, MSC

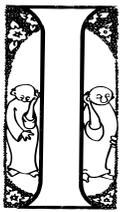
1. First letter to Sympronianus Novatianus, *De Catholico nomine*, Migne, Patres Latini, tome xiii, 1054ff.
2. Expression used by a defeated Arab 'prophet,' in reply to a sarcastic jibe by Omar the second Caliph. See *The History of al-Tabari*, State University of New York Press, 1988, xxxix vols; vol. x, p.74. There were four other 'prophets' besides Muhammad, in Arabia in Muhammad's lifetime.

*Nostra Aetate does not call for an uncritical or 'hands-off' attitude toward Islam or any other world religion. Neither the laity nor those in the institutional Church should view it otherwise and should certainly not unquestioningly buy into the prevailing 'politically correct' viewpoint about Islam that now so permeates the Western world and has helped give the radicals their opening.*

# THE CATHOLIC RESPONSE TO ISLAM

And Vatican II document *Nostra Aetate*

By Stephen M. Krason



HAVE encountered serious Catholics who have invoked the Vatican II document *Nostra Aetate* (Declaration on the Relation of the Church with Non-Christian Religions) as seemingly discouraging or even reproving any kind of searching public examination and criticism of Islam.

What exactly does this short statement of the Vatican II Fathers have to say about the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions and to Islam specifically?

It says, first, to be sure, that the Church seeks to promote fellowship among all men (#1).

Secondly, it speaks about how all historic religions that have grown up in the context of well-developed cultures have attempted to provide answers to the most central questions that confront man, such as who he is, what the meaning of his life is, and what kind of moral life he is to lead.

Thirdly, it makes clear that there are elements of truth in all of these

religious traditions, and so the Church 'rejects nothing that is true and holy in' them (#2).

Finally, it 'exhorts' Catholics to 'dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions' so they can recognize 'the good things' found among them (#2).

## Slavery under Islam

THE JIHAD slave system included contingents of both sexes delivered annually in conformity with the treaties of submission by sovereigns who were tributaries of the caliph. When [the Caliph] Amr conquered Tripoli (Libya) in 643, he forced the Jewish and Christian Berbers to give their wives and children as slaves to the Arab army as part of their *jizya* [tax on non-Muslims]. From 652 until its conquest in 1276, Nubia was forced to send an annual contingent of slaves to Cairo. Treaties concluded with the towns of Transoxiana, Sijistan, Armenia, and Fezzan (Maghreb) under the Umayyads and Abbasids stipulated an annual dispatch of slaves from both sexes. However, the main sources for the supply of slaves remained the regular raids on villages within the *dar-al-harb* [House of War, i.e., non-Islamic regions] and the military expeditions which swept more deeply into the infidel lands, emptying towns and provinces of their inhabitants.

- Bat Ye'or, *The Decline of Eastern Christianity Under Islam: From Jihad to Dhimmitude*, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1996, p. 108.

The document also makes clear the following. While the 'precepts and teachings' of these other

religions differ in many respects from the Church's, they 'often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men' (#2)—that is, they obscurely express Christ in some way.

It also stresses that the dialogue and cooperation with them must be 'carried out with prudence and love' (#2).

In other words, while acting in charity Catholics must always bring discernment to their dealings with adherents of non-Christian religions. The church—and by extension, the faithful—'ever must proclaim Christ "the way, the truth, and the life,"' (#2) and "'the cross of Christ as the sign of God's all-embracing love and as the fountain from which every grace flows'" (04).

What this means is that they can never back away from holding—always charitably, to be sure—that she alone teaches the fullness of the truth.

As far as Moslems are concerned, *Nostra Aetate* regards them 'with esteem,'

because as a fellow Abrahamic faith they submit to the one true God, revere Jesus as a prophet

even if they don't recognize Him as God, have devotion to the Blessed Mother, and like Christianity 'value the moral life and worship God especially through prayer, almsgiving and fasting,' and also await the resurrection of the body on Judgment Day (43).

The document also affirms that Catholics cannot refuse to treat any person 'in a brotherly way,' since all are created in the image of God, and that there is no basis 'for any theory or practice that leads to discrimination between man and man or people and people, so far as their human dignity and the rights flowing from it are concerned' (#5).

A key point here is that Catholics cannot let themselves slip into a kind of religious syncretism when viewing other religions or in their dealings with their adherents. Charity is exhorted, but so is prudence. When the document says that dialogue and cooperation must be carried out with these things in mind, it is essentially cautioning Catholics not to slip into a mindset of moral or religious equivalency.

When it says that these other religions have elements of the truth—which unwittingly, for them, reflect the truth of Christ—it is making clear that, as stated, the Church alone embraces and teaches the fulness of truth and the complete path to human salvation.

She, in effect, is reminding the faithful that they cannot forget this or cease to make it a central element motivating their dialogue. Indeed, it has been just such a neglect that has abundantly characterized ecumenical relations since Vatican II and has helped retard the Church's efforts at evangelization.

Where Catholics have not succumbed to a functional religious syncretism, many have failed to understand that a charitable attitude can make it possible to stand solidly for principles and even speak the truth and still get along with people.

If anything, these points from *Nostra Aetate* invite, rather than

discourage, a careful and honest examination and evaluation of the beliefs of non-Christian religions and a clarity in pointing out—especially to fellow Catholics, in the interest of their increased understanding—the realities about their origins, problems in their teaching, and ways in which they conflict with Catholic truth.

It goes without saying that this is always supposed to be done charitably and respectfully, but getting to the point and laying out the realities is not the same thing as engaging in polemics.

I have somehow perceived that those Catholics who have invoked this document to discourage blunt, even if well argued, criticisms of Islam, have confused this.

Some of the things that would seem to be fair game in a careful examination of Islam are whether some of its basic teachings may encourage violence as a way to spread the faith, the historical background and character of Mohammed, whether an arbitrariness and radical voluntarism took deep root in Islam way back in the Middle Ages when it turned its back on philosophy (as Robert Reilly brilliantly discusses in *The Closing of the Muslim Mind*), how much Islamic teaching really permits coexistence with and equal treatment of other religions once it gains political power, whether its basic teachings give rise to the Islamic radicalism we witness today or if this is a divergence and corruption, and whether for it religious dominance also means political domination.



In light of what we have witnessed historically and in the present crisis caused by Islamism, these are hardly red herrings or an unjustified sounding of alarms.

Let's remember that the Church never asks the faithful to surrender reasonableness or good judgment in considering things. *Nostra Aetate* does not ask us to do that in our evaluation of Islam.

Another thing should be pointed out. The Church encourages dialogue and cooperation with adherents of non-Christian religions. It is not so clear that many Moslems have responded in kind—whether it's been with the closed communities that Islamic immigrants tend to form, or how the major U.S. Islamic groups can't seem to bring themselves to criticize the radicals, or how the bishops from the Islamic world have long complained how their attempts at inter-religious dialogue are typically spurned, or how even the attempts of missionaries to Islamic elements in different countries so often simply fall flat.

As my wife's late uncle who was a missionary for forty years after World War II in Mindanao in the Philippines discovered, evangelizing the Moros went nowhere. Now, after decades of the Church's institutions aiding them there in health care, education, and other human needs, Catholics have been met with resistance and even violence as some elements of the Moro population have become radicalized.

*Nostra Aetate* does not call for an uncritical or "bands-off" attitude toward Islam or any other world religion. Neither the laity nor those in the institutional Church should view it otherwise and should certainly not unquestioningly buy into the prevailing 'politically correct' viewpoint about Islam that now so permeates the Western world and has helped give the radicals their opening.

STEPHEN M. KRASON is President of The Society of Catholic Social Scientists in the U.S. This was one of his 'Neither Left nor Right, but Catholic' columns, that appear monthly in *Crisis* and *The Wanderer*. Reprinted with permission.

## WHY HISTORY MATTERS

IN THOSE [pre-Reformation] days Christians considered all good works as pleasing to God—as performed ‘through God’—that is, in obedience to the command of God to do good works, such as the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, the building and ornamenting of churches, and whatever is conducive to bringing men’s thoughts to piety. All these works should be performed for ‘God’s glory and in order to obtain happiness in the other world.’

The natural result of the general belief in the doctrine of the efficacy of good works was that neither State nor city had to be taxed for the current expenses of schools, hospitals, churches, or the support of the poor, as all these objects were amply provided for by voluntary contributions. To this cause also innumerable works of art—monuments of religious and patriotic ardour—owe their origin.

The little town of Calcar, on the Lower Rhine, in whose church are still extant a number of exquisite paintings and specimens of sculpture, is a good example of this.

In Calcar were several brotherhoods, among which those of Our Lady and of St. Anne appear to have distinguished themselves by generous orders for works of art.

In 1492 the latter society gave a commission to Master Derick Bongert for the very beautiful carved altar to the Holy Family which is still in existence. In the accounts of the ‘Society of Our Lady’ are charges for a ‘Burial of Christ’ executed by a Master Arnt, and for a carved altar by Master Ewert in 1492.

In 1498 the same ‘Brotherhood’ decided to erect an altar in honour of the Passion of our Lord. The president, accompanied by the pastor, Johann Houdaen (doctor and formerly professor of theology), went to Utrecht in order to examine altars there.

An artist whom they took with them made drawings, assisted by Master Amt. The best wood was procured from Amsterdam, Nymwegen, and the Reichswald, and immediately on their return a carpenter from Calcar was employed to construct the framework of the altar; the rest of the work was then divided among different sculptors and carvers of Calcar according to their particular qualifications.

Thus the groups of Christ’s entry into Jerusalem, the feast of the Paschal Lamb, and the washing of the disciples’ feet, which adorn the base, were assigned to Jan van Haldern.

The fluting and ornamentation were done by Derick Jeger, and the upper portion, representing the sufferings of Christ, was the work of Master Lodewich, the renowned carver.

This marvellously beautiful work of art was completed in 1500, and the president of the society handed Master Lodewich the sum of one hundred and seventy-eight gold florins in payment.

This same society assigned the execution of the exquisite altar in honour of the Mother of Sorrows to another citizen of Calcar, Master Heinrich Douwermann.

Between 1505 and 1508 the beautiful choir stalls, which rank among the best specimens of art in the Rhenish Provinces, were built and carved by Heinrich Bernts. For this work the church gave him two hundred gold florins, two quarters of rye, four casks of beer, and, as a compliment to his wife, a mantle and five yards of silk from Ypres, in Flanders. The candelabrum in the Virgin’s chapel, which measured thirteen feet in height and seven in width, and is a marvel of its kind, was also begun by Heinrich Bernts, but, as he died before its completion, it was finished in 1510 by Master Kerstken, of Ringenbergh, a citizen of Calcar.

Besides the sixteen carvers whose names became famous in Calcar, there were at the same time a number of painters at work in the little town. The names of thirteen of them are still known, and among these Jan Joest, commonly known as Master Jan von Calcar, who died in 1519, is the most important. In 1505 the Society of Our Lady entrusted him with the work of executing the four panels of the high altar, the designs for which were made by the superior of the neighbouring Ursuline convent.

We have records also of two glass-workers of the years 1485-1515, and eight silk embroiderers, by whom the church vestments, flags, and other articles of church decoration, all richly embroidered with devices in pearls and precious stones, were executed. Among these embroiderers we may mention a certain Brother Egbert probably a Dominican friar.

Several organs were also constructed in Calcar, but we know nothing of these beyond what is set down in the account-books kept between 1482 and 1519.

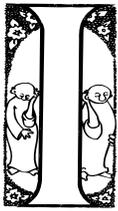
In the art remains of Calcar we find the same close connection between sculpture and painting which existed in the earliest times, particularly in Greece. Sculpture in stone, wood, and ivory was coloured, and we find bas-relief work introduced into paintings.

– Johannes Janssen, *History of the German People at the close of the Middle Ages*, Vol. 1. See [www.RareBooksClub.com](http://www.RareBooksClub.com)

*No one hates Catholics now. One may just – despise them,’ was how Laura Fountain, the heroine of Mary Ward’s Helbeck of Bannisdale, a popular piece of anti-Catholic fiction published not in 1598 but in 1898, summed up the precarious position of Catholics in England in the late 19th century*

## ANTI-CATHOLICISM

By Paul Stenhouse



IF YOU THOUGHT, dear reader, that confrontation between the Catholic Church and the legal arm of our secular State over the Sacrament and secret of confession, in the wake of the Royal Commission on Institutional Responses to Child Abuse, has an ominously *déjà vu* feel to it – you’d be right.

That generic prejudice and bias is alive and well and, in fact, thriving, in the politically correct atmosphere of 21st century Australia, is self-evident.

It was self-evident in England in the 1920s when Michael Mont, a young British MP who, in John Galsworthy’s novel *The Silver Spoon*,<sup>1</sup> had been publicly accused by another MP of conflict of interest in the matter of promotion of a book, exclaimed to his father ‘But you don’t suppose that people would believe a thing like that?’

His father, Sir Lawrence Mont, replied, ‘They will believe anything, my dear, that suggests corruption in public life. It’s one of the strongest traits in human nature. Anxiety about the integrity of public men would be admirable, if it wasn’t usually felt by those who have so little integrity themselves that they can’t give others credit for it.’

It was self-evident in the 1790s when Edmund Burke, no friend of Catholicism,<sup>2</sup> noted that French revolutionaries depicted French Catholic bishops and priests as

when profit is looked for in their punishment. An enemy is a bad witness; a robber is worse,<sup>4</sup> wrote Burke as the revolutionaries prepared for mass confiscation of

Catholic Church property and lands reminiscent of the plundering of the Catholic Church in England and elsewhere during the ‘Reformation’ which as Burke notes in another context, ‘is nearly connected with innovation.’<sup>5</sup>

Anti-Catholicism arrived with the First Fleet in 1788 and its baleful presence remains a feature of modern Australian life. Most practising Catholics have learned simply to ignore it; too many Catholics have caved in, and like Esau have sold their precious birthright for ‘a mess of pottage.’<sup>6</sup>

Anti-Catholicism has gained momentum from the tsunami of negative publicity given by all branches of the media to child abuse perpetrated by a tiny minority of priests, teachers and other Catholics some, if not most, of whom

appear to have had undiagnosed dissociative and narcissistic personality disorders, and all of whom seem to have suffered from some kind of arrested psycho-sexual development.

In other words, many of the perpetrators were sick as well as evil. Mysteriously, this aspect of the

### Closed world of Assumptions

‘[P]etty-minded falsification of history is less disturbing than the indoctrination-minded ‘educators’ who are twisting reality to fit their vision. Those who cannot tell the difference between education and brainwashing do not belong in our schools.

‘History is what happened, not what we wish had happened or what a theory says should have happened. One of the reasons for the great value of history is that it allows us to check our current beliefs against hard facts from around the world and across the centuries. But history cannot be a reality-check for today’s fashionable visions when history is itself shaped by those visions. When that happens, we are sealing ourselves up in a closed world of assumptions.’

- Thomas Sowell, ‘The Wright Stuff,’  
Townhall, 10 December 2003

‘a sort of monsters; a horrible composition of superstition, sloth, avarice and tyranny.’ ‘But is this true?’ he asks.<sup>3</sup>

‘It is not with much credulity I listen to any when they speak evil of those whom they are going to plunder. I rather suspect that vices are feigned or exaggerated

abuse phenomenon seems to have been ignored in media coverage.

Fr Benedict Groeschel, the noted American psychologist/priest comments:

Thirty years ago no one knew much about pedophilia. In my ten years of training as a psychologist I never heard pedophilia mentioned once. When the cases emerged, therapists believed without sufficient evidence that pedophilia could be cured. Dedicated and believing clergy worked with them using spiritual remedies from the sacraments to thirty-day retreats. Time has proven that like most addictions this pathology can only be arrested and not cured. Sad experience has proven that while you may take a chance on a recovering alcoholic, one ought not take a chance on a pedophile because of the danger to children.<sup>7</sup>

The unprecedented nature of the media coverage is, itself, revealing. This is especially the case with the prurient and shameless exposure in great detail of alleged offences; the relentless naming of the accused and their immediate identification as Catholics even before any trial begins; and the bizarre understanding of *due process* as presumption of guilt, that characterises much if not most of the reporting.

All the above reflect long-term – centuries old – pre-existing prejudice and bias against Catholics that came to this country in the baggage of the first British settlers.

19th and early 20th century writings in English-speaking countries, in books and newspapers, were brimful of products of the 15th century Gutenberg revolution in printing, and of the 16th century Protestant/Puritan imagination which was ‘well versed in stories of priestly corruption.’<sup>8</sup>

In British and American anti-Catholic fiction, Jesuits were sometimes depicted as ‘thugs’ of Christendom [i.e. comparing the to robbers and assassins in India who worshipped the goddess Kali

and waylaid and strangled their victims]<sup>9</sup>

They were also represented as paradigms of the ‘confidence man,’ and Catholics were ‘walking corpses’ and ‘zombies.’<sup>10</sup> The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius Loyola were depicted as training in ‘self-murder’<sup>11</sup>; the Pope was the ‘Whore of Babylon’<sup>12</sup>; the Confessional was where serving girls allegedly revealed their masters’ secrets to the priest; and priests – according to Nathaniel Hawthorne – were ‘pampered, sensual, with red and bloated cheeks, and carnal eyes.’<sup>13</sup> Edmund Burke, usually fair-minded, deplored what he called ‘the advice of Jesuits and other wicked persons.’<sup>14</sup>

Older readers will recall businesses in Australia where it was known that Catholics seeking work ‘need not apply,’ and professions where simply being Catholic was a bar to appointment, and if one were to be appointed, a bar to promotion.

One of the best-known and popular anti-Catholic novels of the middle of the 19th century was *Villette*, by Charlotte Brontë the authoress of *Jane Eyre*. The subject of much psycho-analysing by modern critics, *Villette* depicts Catholic girls

as having no conscience. Catholic culture tolerates – even cultivates – duplicity. As a teacher, Lucy [the heroine] experiences the pervasiveness of Catholic ignorance and mental laziness. Brontë represents priests wielding the power of the confessional to prey upon the weak and vulnerable. She insists throughout *Villette* that Catholicism is, in both essence and detail un-English – indeed, anti-English.<sup>15</sup>

Like Charlotte Brontë, Charles Kingsley, an Anglican clergyman and author of *The Water Babies* and *Westward Ho!* vehemently denounced Catholics as ‘foreign’. Espionage and fear of ‘infiltration’ by Catholics perceived as foreign spies run through much of the anti-Catholic literature up to the present time.

Like Edward Gibbon, Kingsley went from being attracted to Catholicism to slandering it. And not just Catholicism, but Catholics. In 1860, two years before he began writing *The Water Babies*, Kingsley travelled to Ireland and wrote to his wife describing the Irish whom he saw:

I am haunted by the human chimpanzees I saw along that hundred miles of horrible country. If they were black, one would not feel it so much, but their skins, except where tanned by exposure, are as white as ours.<sup>16</sup>

The Irish are described in ‘The Water Babies’ as ‘good-natured,’ but ‘untrustable’ and ‘wild.’ ‘Untrustable’ might well, indeed, describe many of Kingsley’s own judgements about Catholics.

At one time Kingsley was chaplain to Queen Victoria, Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, and private tutor to the Prince of Wales.

He is perhaps best remembered for his attacks on the then-Father John Henry Newman in 1864, in a review of a book of English history for *Macmillan’s Magazine*. He wrote

Truth, for its own sake, had never been a virtue with the Roman clergy. Father Newman informs us that it need not, and on the whole ought not to be; that cunning is the weapon which Heaven has given to the saints wherewith to withstand the brute male force of the wicked world which marries and is given in marriage.

Kingsley’s unsubstantiated and slanderous attack on Newman’s integrity led to Newman’s writing and publishing his famous *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, his defence of Catholicism and of the genuineness of his belief in it.

*The Apologia* may have discredited the slander, and restored the honour of the object of it, but the slanderer’s novel *Westward Ho!* written ten years before, and set in Elizabethan times with swashbuckling Protestant corsairs and evil Spanish Catholics,

Jesuits and the dreaded Inquisition, continued to prove very popular in an England fearful of infiltration by Catholics at the behest of an 'evil,' 'foreign' pope.

In April 1925 *Westward Ho!* was the first novel to be adapted for radio by the BBC. These days the book's offensive racism is more likely to be deplored than its virulent anti-Catholicism.

'No one hates Catholics now. One may just – despise them,' was how Laura Fountain, the heroine of Mary Ward's *Helbeck of Bannisdale*, a popular piece of anti-Catholic fiction published not in 1598 but in 1898, summed up the precarious position of Catholics in England in the late 19th century.<sup>17</sup>

For late 19th century England, read 21st century Australia.

*Helbeck of Bannisdale* was still being reprinted by Penguin in 1983, and *Westward Ho!* is still in print as I write.

In 2010, one hundred and twelve years after *Helbeck of Bannisdale* was first printed, when Pope Benedict XVI was on a state visit to Britain and scheduled to beatify Cardinal John Henry Newman in Birmingham, a hideous caricature of the German Pope appeared in the streets carrying a swastika instead of a crucifix. The caricature was removed after many of the protestors complained to police. Nobody seems to have complained, however, when Richard Dawkins denounced Benedict XVI as 'an enemy of humanity' to the receptive mob estimated to be 10,000 strong.<sup>18</sup>

'Catholicism seems fair game' was how *The Guardian* reported this 21st century version of the 1780 Gordon Riots in London – a massive and violent anti-Catholic protest against what was called the 'Papists Act of 1778' which was meant to reduce *official discrimination* against British Catholics.<sup>19</sup>

An earlier notorious example of titillating anti-Catholic fiction that confirmed the favourite

religious and social nightmares of many of America's non-Catholic readers, was Maria Monk's *Awful Disclosures of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal*, 1836.

It sold 20,000 copies in its first weeks, and over 300,000 by 1860,<sup>20</sup> even though it was well-known that the story was a hoax, that Maria wasn't a Catholic, and that she had never entered the convent. It confirmed what its self-righteous readers wanted to believe about Catholics.

Maria Monk was a sad vagrant, whose life and mind were seriously disturbed. This book – ghost-written by two Protestant ministers John Jay Slocum and George Bourne who claimed that it was dictated by Monk – was reprinted by Arno publishers, New York, as recently as 1977.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, better-known as author of *The Scarlet Letter* – one of the first mass-produced books in America – pulled out all the stops in following the conventions of anti-Catholic fiction in *The Marble Faun*, 1860.

The predictable story-line centred on the murder of a monk – corrupt of course – by Count Donatello who loved Miriam, a woman who was the monk's associate in some unexplained crime. The heroine, Hilda, would, naturally, never have been kidnapped and held captive in the convent of the Dames du Sacré Coeur at *Trinità dei Monti* above the Spanish steps in Rome – wait for it – if she had not gone to a priest to confess that she had witnessed the murder of the monk.

Catholicism, Hawthorne makes clear, is 'perverted Christianity'; the Papal States which ceased to exist in 1870, are 'despotic' and Miriam's 'every movement' was spied upon by 'the priestly rulers'.

Am I wrong in thinking that Anthony Trollope<sup>21</sup> damned *The Marble Faun* with faint praise when he wrote: '[It] Describ[es] Rome and Italian scenes as few others have'? Whatever the reason, it

became a favourite guide book to Rome for Victorian tourists. It was reprinted by Penguin Classics in 1990, and was included in Oxford World's Classics in 2009.

All the above books are still available on the internet for the curious, the prurient and the bigoted. They and myriad others of their ilk continue to be reprinted because the 'market' is assured. They can be relied upon to fan the flames of *No Popery!* and Anti-Catholicism.

Proponents of this familiar anti-Catholic rubbish peddle their 21st century version of these wares through all the usual media outlets, and in seriously fundamentalist self-styled 'Christian' book stores in Australia.

In an age when cover-ups are quite rightly deplored, one may well ask how and why instances of rabid and rampant anti-Catholicism can remain covered up and even flourish, in allegedly respectable professional, political and media circles in Australia in the first decades of the 21st century.

1. See Chapter Two, 'Results,' quoted *No Popery, Chapters on anti-Papal Prejudice*, Herbert Thurston, SJ, London, Sheed & Ward, 1930, frontispiece.
2. Reflections on the French Revolution, J.M. Dent & Sons, London 1910. See page 27 for disparaging remarks about the Papacy and the Pope.
3. *ibid.*, p.140.
4. *ibid.*, p.136.
5. *ibid.*, p.304. 'Nearly connected,' i.e. 'closely connected.'
6. i.e. a meal of lentil stew. See Genesis 25, 29-34.
7. He has dealt with pedophiles for over 30 years. See 'Wages of Relativism,' *National Review*, February 28, 2002.
8. *Anti-Catholicism and nineteenth-century fiction*, Susan M. Griffin, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p.29. A valuable source drawn upon what follows.
9. Beatrice, by Catherine Sinclair, New York, Garland, 1975, 3, 81.
10. See Frances Trollope: *Father Eustace, a Tale of the Jesuits*, 3 volumes, 1847. Reprinted Garland, 1975.
11. *Ibid.*
12. See Martin Luther's Bible, 1545 with the Whore of Babylon wearing the Papal Tiara, or Luther's 1520 pamphlet: 'The Babylonian Captivity of the Church.'
13. Quoted 'Catholic Sensuality,' in *Innocent Ecstasy*, by Peter Gardella, New York, OUP, 2016
14. Reflections on the French Revolution, *op.cit.* p.25.
15. *Anti-Catholicism and nineteenth-century fiction*, *op.cit.*, pp.150-151.
16. Wes Davis, When English Eyes are Smiling, *The New York Times*, 11 March, 2007.
17. Laura, in *Helbeck of Bannisdale*, by Mary Ward, 1898, p.102.
18. *The Guardian*, September 9, 2010.
19. '400 years on from Guy Fawkes, Britain's Catholics still face prejudice,' by Catherine Pepinster, *The Guardian*, November 2, 2017.
20. *Anti-Catholicism and nineteenth-century fiction* *op.cit.*, p.195.
21. Of *Barssetshire Chronicles* [sic!] fame; the first two of the six novels of this name were adapted for TV by the BBC and screening commenced in 1982 as *The Barchester Chronicles*, Highly recommended by *Annals*.

# ANNALS AUSTRALASIA

Australia's favourite Catholic magazine since 1889

*Give yourself and your family a treat  
Subscribe to Annals Australasia  
The best gift you can give yourself*

## RATE WITHIN AUSTRALIA

\$33 for one year [10 issues – incl. GST]

\$60.50 for two years [20 issues – incl. GST]

## ORDER FORM

To: *Annals Australasia* P.O. Box 13, Kensington NSW 2033

Please mail us *Annals Australasia* for  1 year  2 years

Name .....

Address .....

..... Postcode.....

Phone: ( ) .....

Payment [Please tick appropriate box]

Cheque made payable to *Annals Australasia*

Please accept \$..... as a donation to *Annals Australasia*

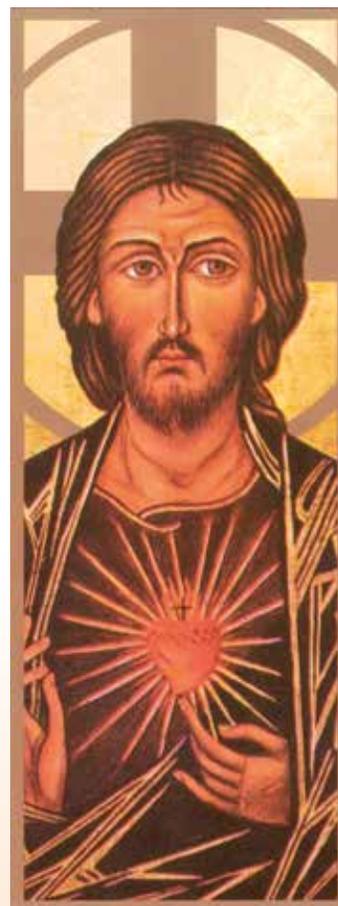
Please debit my Visa/Master A/c with \$.....

\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Signature ..... Card expiry Date.....

Name [block letters] .....

## THE VOCATION OF AN MSC PRIEST OR BROTHER



**What's life for?**

**Why was I born?**

**What is the greater purpose and meaning of my life?**

**How am I meant to be of service?**

We follow Christ who 'loves with a human heart' It is this love in which we have learned to believe.

**Will you make known this same love; the gentleness and compassion, the patience and the mercy of the heart of Jesus!**

**Will you do this?**

Are you being asked 'to be on earth the heart of God,' to be a Missionary of the Sacred Heart of Jesus [MSC] Priest or Brother?

CONTACT US.

(FR) F. DINEEN, MSC

fjdineen@misacor.org.au

Tel: 02 9665 8999

PO Box 252 Coogee NSW 2034

www.misacor.org.au

## Morality and Politics

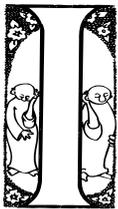
POPE JOHN PAUL II summarized the relationship between religion and politics when he stated, 'Man cannot be separated from God, nor politics from morality.' The Catholic Church recognizes the distinction between the political community and the Church. There is a rightful autonomy of the political sphere from that of the religious sphere and vice versa. Each possesses its own dimension, spiritual or temporal, and yet morality is the seam that overlaps them both. The legitimate separation of church and state does not mean that one can separate morality from politics. Religion provides the foundation from which moral judgments can be made, and these judgments should be applied to the exercise of political power.

- Andrew Essig, 'Faithful Citizenship,' *Catholic Social Science Review*, 15[2010] p.238.

*Tradition had it that an underground tunnel had led from the nunnery to Worcester Cathedral, and that a nun had been trapped in the tunnel and died. The boarders claimed that her ghost still haunted the school.*

# GHOSTLY SIGHTINGS

*By* Michael Wilding



I HAVE NEVER seen a ghost. But one of the first stories I wrote was about a ghost. It was the first story I ever had published – in the school magazine, it was that long ago. Over the years it has recurred again and again, one way and another. Hauntingly, it might be said.

The school I went to in England was primarily a day school, but it had a boarding house called Whiteladies, which had been built on the site of a medieval nunnery. An old Gothic arch still stood in the headmaster's garden. Tradition had it that an underground tunnel had led from the nunnery to Worcester Cathedral, and that a nun had been trapped in the tunnel and died. The boarders claimed that her ghost still haunted the school. It provided the basis for this early story I wrote.

'She trailed along behind the others as they returned along the underground corridor... But she had sat there crying for too long. The door at the end of the passage would be closed, barred, bolted. She ran. She ran through the blackness of the corridor, on, on.'

A decade later in the 1970s I was experimenting

with new modes of fiction, post-modernism before we had a name for it. We just called it the new writing. I wrote a story called 'The West Midland Underground' which consisted of a series of separate episodes and images, all offering versions of the concept of the 'underground'. These were the years of the counter-culture, the alternative media, the underground press and I was playing on those concepts, and their unlikely presence in the conservative West Midlands I had grown up in.

I incorporated a couple of paragraphs about the ghost and the underground tunnel from my school magazine story into this piece, collage being one of the old modernist tricks we were experimenting with. And, self-referentialism being another new post-modern device, I referred to my having used the ghost and tunnel in another story written in the mid seventies: 'In 1959 I was writing about the nun's tunnel in the school magazine. In 1972 I add her into a story about cats in London. Why do I return to the nun's tunnel? The door was bolted. She died in the tunnel between the cathedral and the nunnery and her ghost still walks.'

'The West Midland Underground' became the title story of a collection I published in 1975. It was reprinted in four selections of my stories published in the 1990s in Australia, England, the USA, and India (in Punjabi translation), and in a couple of anthologies.

I thought no more of it for years. Then, browsing through a second-hand bookshop not so long ago I came across a novel, *The White Ladies of Worcester: a Romance of the Twelfth Century*, by Florence L. Barclay. First published in 1917 it had gone into a second edition in 1924. The copy I bought was in

## Eleventh Century Health Advice from Salerno

### Salerno's Medical School wrote to the English King

[Actually they wrote to William the Conqueror's eldest son, Robert of Normandy]

'If you wish to be safe, as sound as a bell  
Take setbacks calmly, all anger pray quell,  
Go easy on wine, from big meals take a spell,  
A good walk after lunch, noontide sleep repel,  
Void bladder often, bowel empty as well.'

### Regimen Sanitatis Salernitanum

Anglorum Regi scripsit Schola tota Salerni  
'Si vis incolumem, si vis te reddere sanum,  
Curas tolle graves, irasci crede profanum,  
parce mero, caenato parum, non sit tibi vanum,  
surgere post epulas, somnum fuge meridianum,  
non mictum retine, nec comprime fortiter anum.'

– *The Nooks and By-Ways of Italy, Wanderings in search of its ancient remains and modern superstitions*, by Crauford Tait Ramage, Liverpool, Edward Howell, 1868, p.5. Translation, Paul Stenhouse.

its twelfth printing. The novel is still available in digitized editions on-line.

The first chapter was called 'The Subterranean Way'. It related how 'Sister Agatha, weakened by prolonged fasting, and chancing to walk last in the procession, fainted and falling silently, remained behind, unnoticed, in the solitude and darkness... They found her frail body lying prone against the door..'

Florence Barclay (1862-1921) was an English historical novelist. Her best-selling novel *The Rosary* (1909) was made into five movie versions, a three-act French play, and translated into eight languages. She was one of three daughters of an Anglican clergyman and her sister, Maud Ballington Booth, became leader of the Salvation Army in the USA. In 1881 Florence married the Rev Charles Barclay. They honeymooned in the Holy Land and in Shechem - near Nablus on the West Bank - they are said to have discovered Jacob's Well, where Jesus met the woman of Samaria.

Was *The White Ladies of Worcester* a work entirely fictional or was it based on an historical legend? Were the accounts of the ghost still walking the corridors of the boarding school true, or was it a tall story derived not from a seven century old event but from an early twentieth-century historical romance? I did not know.

There the story might have ended, but ghosts have a habit of reappearing. Last year the university of Sydney belatedly forwarded me a batch of letters that had been sitting awaiting collection. Having retired, I had not been in to collect any mail for a while. One of the letters, posted three or four years earlier, was from the west coast of Ireland from someone who had read my early collection of stories. A West Midlander himself originally, he had bought the book because of its title. The reason he was writing to me was because of the episode about the ghost of the nun in the title story.

### ANNALS CROSSWORD NO. 106

**Across clues**

2 Semite  
 4 Brimless cap  
 6 One on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:18)  
 8 Liquid food  
 9 One of the gaits of a horse  
 11 To cut the outer layer  
 12 Eldest son of Shem (Genesis 10:22)  
 14 The "clerical" tribe of Israel  
 15 Affording free passage  
 16 Female swans  
 18 "So be it"  
 19 Stop the flow  
 21 One of the minor prophets of the Old Testament  
 22 Sharp bend in a road  
 24 Sedate and steady in character  
 25 Seventh letter of the Greek alphabet

**Down clues**

1 Nought  
 2 Small military vehicle  
 3 How Jesus reacted to the death of Lazarus (John 11:35)  
 4 Primary colour  
 5 Troublesome weed  
 6 Greek city, home of Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:1-2)  
 7 David's successor as King of Israel  
 8 Delivers from sin  
 10 Records speech or music  
 11 High spirits  
 13 Adult males  
 17 Large areas of water  
 18 Amongst  
 20 Very small sum of money  
 21 Capital of Western Samoa  
 23 Rebuke harshly

© Brian O'Neill May 2018

As a young teenager, he wrote, he had been at evensong in Worcester Cathedral one time, when a ghostly figure in medieval nun's

habit had walked down the aisle. His parents had not seen it. No one else seemed to have seen it. But the vivid memory of it had stayed with him for years. And then, reading my story, he had encountered the ghost again.



MICHAEL WILDING is emeritus professor at the University of Sydney. His latest novels are *Little Demon* and *The Travel Writer* (Arcadia).

# Give a gift that will last a lifetime

**YES !** Please send *ten issues* of **Annals Australasia** for twelve months commencing now to the person listed below for \$33 [normal rate] or \$26 [pensioner]

**SEND GIFT TO**

[Please print]

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**DONOR**

[[Please print]]

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

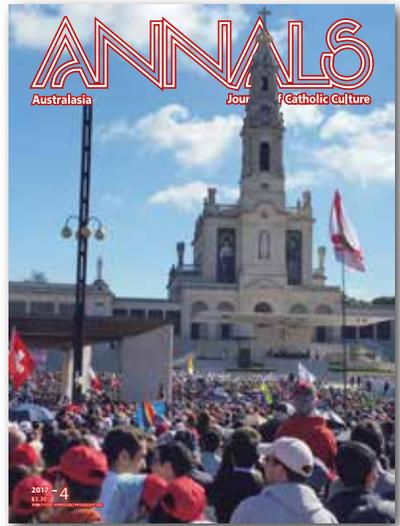
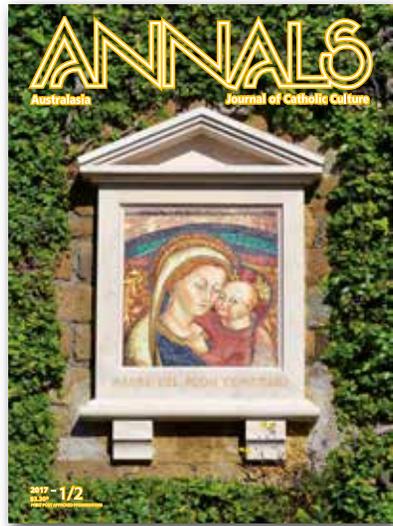
Cheque/M.O. enclosed   
  Please debit my   
  Visa Card   
  Master Card

Subscription Amount:    \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Donation:    \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**TOTAL:**    \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry Date: ...../.....    Signature .....

**Contact us: Annals Australasia: PO Box 13, Kensington, NSW 2033.**  
**Phone: 02-9662-7894; Fax: 02-9662-1910. Email: annalsaustralasia@gmail.com**



*Are we now truly better and more socially responsible than our grandparents, or than other everyday figures from a century ago? It would be a very arrogant conceit indeed to assume so. At the very least, study of the past can help us belatedly view ourselves and our supposed contemporary culture, as we truly are.*

## VISUAL ART

### AND THE HISTORY OF WESTERN CIVILISATION

*By* Giles Auty



GLANCING at a new yearly calendar the other day I realized that I began my career as a professional journalist almost

exactly 35 years ago when I started writing art criticism each week for *The Spectator* in London. Indeed, a wooden chest still exists which contains all 500 articles I wrote for that venerable magazine over the course of the next 11 years.

Since almost everything connected with the visual arts has appeared in recent times to be subject to endless fashionable-seeming fluctuation and change, I thought it appropriate to wonder to what extent my own views have changed now in the course of more than a third of a century.

The answer, broadly speaking, is hardly at all. In short, I believe that what I thought and wrote about art in 1984 – and also in a book I began some 10 years before that – remains essentially true. Certainly one may modify views slightly about art of which

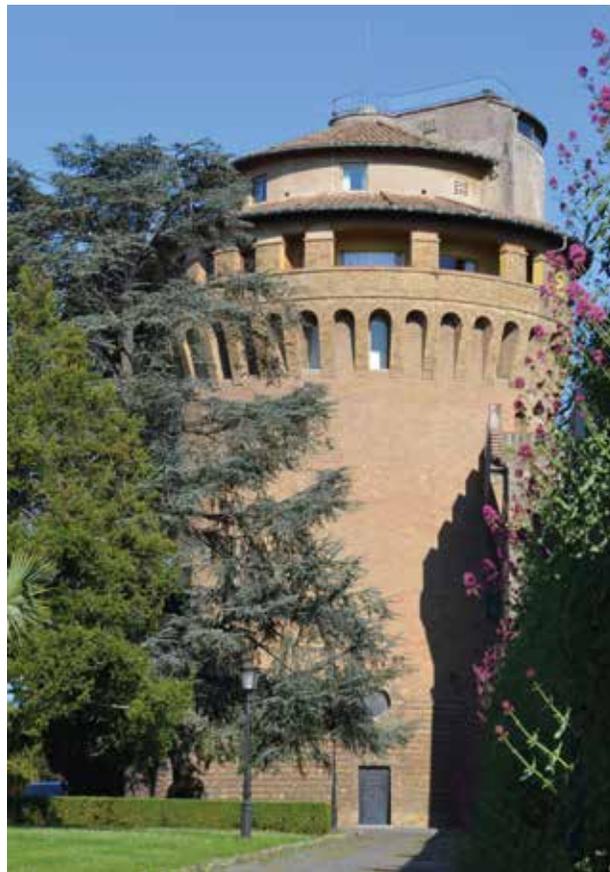
one had previously seen too little to form any definitive judgment – but that, I believe, remains a legitimate reservation.

On the other hand I recall being asked when I first came to Australia to work, how familiar I was with

the writing of the well-known Australian left-wing academic Bernard Smith such as *Australian Painting 1788-1990*? Since I admitted my exposure to his views was then quite limited I was next asked how I could possibly form any worthwhile judgment at all about Australian art without much more extensive knowledge of his writing? There, indeed, was a supposedly significant question which probably said rather more about the questioner than about the question itself. Possibly it said something significant, too, about the isolation and often related provincialism of much recent and historic Australian visual art.

What I suggest here is that international art critics sensibly form their own judgments about national or provincial art in the light of their own rather than someone else's experiences. Before coming to Australia I had viewed art in some 30 international locations and had recorded my impressions directly from about 20 of those.

It would be very rare for any home-based Australian critic or theorist to have enjoyed such widespread



One of the towers, still in use, built by Pope St Leo IV by 852 AD into the wall around St Peter's and the Vatican Hill. He built the immense wall and the towers after the sacking of the two basilicas of St Peter and St Paul outside the walls, by 11,000 Saracens who arrived at Ostia from Sicily in 73 ships on Monday, 23 August 846.

international exposure but what ultimately caused me to cease writing art criticism in Australia was the objection raised by a major arts editor here that I failed to base my criticism on 'Marxist analysis'. She was absolutely correct in her conjecture, of course, but then my basic interest in art has always been aesthetic rather than political. Indeed, all true Marxists have generally decreed that 'aesthetics' is a 'bourgeois' delusion. As in every other single aspect of Marxism, they could not possibly be further from the truth.

Indeed, the gross intrusion of left-wing politics into visual art in many other post-modernist Western societies than merely our own has generally been as fatal for art as it has been also for literature and almost any other significant art form. Yet much of the home-grown art I saw in the former USSR and its satellites in the years before communism's apparent collapse in 1989 was – very interestingly – often excellently produced by artists who had enjoyed what amounted to a lengthy and rigorous academic training where subjects such as anatomy and the carving of marble were still excellently taught e.g. at the art school at Zagreb in formerly communist Yugoslavia.

Art has also suffered greatly in recent times from the intrusion of rhetoric into nearly all of its arguments – what an old academic friend of mine used to call "art in the age of spilled science". In short, fashionable visual art has tried consistently to associate itself – rhetorically at least – with any kind of progress which may genuinely be taking place in technology and science.

We might also perhaps note here that the 20<sup>th</sup> century alone produced about 40 acknowledged international art movements – at least as many if not more, in fact, than in the previous seven or eight centuries. The 20<sup>th</sup> century put a very obvious premium on novelty and you would be absolutely justified in wondering

now exactly what movements such as Rayonism, say, or Orphism constituted? Both movements began in 1912 but unlike Fauvism, say, which began about 8 years earlier, have largely been consigned to the dustbin of history now for all except specialist academics.

Let us now contrast such evanescent 20<sup>th</sup> century movements and contributions, for a moment, with the immeasurable subsequent influence on art of Florentine painter and architect Giotto di Bondone (c.1267-1337) from about six centuries earlier. Giotto is credited rightly with founding *the entire central tradition of European painting* which broke away from the stylizations of Byzantine art and introduced the joint ideals of naturalism and convincing pictorial space. These endured, in fact, in a wide variety of forms for about six centuries and culminated around the time of Gauguin's death in 1903.

Importantly, almost all of the greatest and most memorable European visual art was created during that 600 year period which more or less came to an end with the widely debated birth of Modernism which, thereafter, almost totally rejected any form of naturalism as an ideal. Largely for convenience, I personally tend to associate such birth with the major exhibitions of Fauve art – which rejected naturalistic colour completely – and which came to an end in 1906. Thereafter the major 'fauves' all pursued much more distinctively individualistic careers e.g. painters such as Matisse and Dufy.

Although I have no say, of course, in such matters, I cannot imagine that any academic course examining the utterly wonderful story of Western civilization can possibly exclude the vast role the visual arts played in such a uniquely productive culture.

Indeed, has any six century period ever been more prolific in the production of every form of art? The period most obviously

begins with what are generally known as the proto-Renaissance, the Renaissance itself and the High Renaissance. But what was it precisely that was – as the word 'renaissance' implies – being re-born? In terms of sculpture and buildings notable past examples continued to exist from way back in classical times but the same was not necessarily true of paintings which were and are infinitely more fragile. In terms of sculpture we should look first especially perhaps at Donatello, the greatest sculptor of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, who was also one of a remarkable group of Florentine artists generally thought responsible for Renaissance 'style' – the others being Alberti, Brunelleschi and Masaccio.

One of my favourite sculptors of all time, Verrocchio – a witty nickname meaning 'true eye' – worked in the studio of Donatello. His most famous equestrian sculpture, the Colleoni Monument, is still to be seen in Venice but a cast of this I first saw in Moscow in 1986 at the Pushkin Museum once probably raised my spirits as much as anything I have ever seen.

In short, what was such an heroic, swaggering and utterly magnificent mounted figure doing in a land which had effectively crushed more or less all worthwhile forms of art and culture by then for almost 70 years? Marxist analysis indeed! As a creed, communism has produced infinitely more utter misery and soulless, coercive conformity than anything even approaching great art.

Indeed, how many followers of the principles of so-called 'Marxist analysis' in Australia have ever even read *The Humanism of Art* by famous 20<sup>th</sup> century Russian art critic Vladislav Zimenko? I read one of the first copies published in English which the author signed for me many years later in Moscow's arts club. We found much to discuss very amicably and constructively for Zimenko's book, like my own *The Art of Self Deception* (Libertarian Books 1977), the late Tom Wolfe's

*The Painted Word* and Helene Parmelin's *Art, Anti-Art, Anartism Explored* all faced up to the many ways in which Late Modernism and the first stirrings of Post-Modernism had basically betrayed the sacred causes of visual art.

I wrote my own book, in fact, from notes I made after working in a studio all day when I was still a full-time painter and had no real thought at the time of ever being anything else; I believe that famous French composer Hector Berlioz became a music critic in much the same 'accidental' fashion. While Late Modernism's bombastic scale, as exemplified by the enormous size and the frequent human emptiness of Abstract Expressionist works was rightly linked with American hunger for international power in every field including culture,

Post-Modernist art – such as so-called Conceptualism – stemmed basically from neo-Marxist initiatives. In short, if major art dealers could be deprived of tangible objects with which to trade then that would hasten the 'desired' demise of capitalism. Indeed that, to many people's subsequent profound surprise, was the basic thinking behind 'conceptualism'. Hard to believe isn't it?

For all of us unfortunate enough to have followed the debates about attempts initiated by the Ramsay Foundation here to sponsor a degree in Western Civilisation in conjunction with a number of Australian universities, much of what has emerged has been the hostility shown by many contemporary academics to this worthy and necessary idea.

At last, the University of Wollongong has 'relented'. Perhaps Western civilization may be worth knowing about after all – if only perhaps on Australia's Eastern seaboard.

In terms of the major artefacts of Western visual art dating from about 1300 to 1900 I am possibly unusually privileged – in Australia at least – in that I have seen

HOW DO I respond when I see that in some Islamic countries there is vitriolic hatred for America? I'll tell you how I respond: I'm amazed. I'm amazed that there is such misunderstanding of what our country is about, that people would hate us. I am like most Americans: I just can't believe it because I know how good we are.

– George W. Bush, *Boston Globe*, October 12, 2001.

definitive exhibitions of the work of the greatest practitioners with very few exceptions and am thus in no doubt that the fame attending a vast list of names is entirely justified. Some but by no means all of such names were justly rewarded during their lifetimes while for many others the striving was unconnected with pecuniary benefits – a concept hardly ever encountered in art today.

One of the earliest manifestations of Giotto's art paid tribute to St. Francis of Assisi: an enormously popular saint from an unbelievably beautiful town. For those who have never been there Assisi is indeed probably hard to imagine. Yet Giotto, St. Francis and the dome of the cathedral in Florence, designed by Brunelleschi and begun nearly 700 years ago all really either still exist or very definitely existed at one time.

Possibly, Australia needs to know in depth about the wonders of Western civilization as much as any country on earth, for ours in many of its recent physical manifestations as well as in current thought, grows increasingly ugly by the day. So what have all the major arts produced thus far in Australia?

If I suggest that this country's most famous composer to date was probably Percy Grainger – who taught my late mother-in-law to play the piano – I am

not being provocative yet it is still possibly just as well to hold names such as Handel, Bach, Mozart and Beethoven at least temporarily in your mind. From Giotto onwards, Italian visual art on its own threw up such names as Giovanni Bellini, Mantegna, Botticelli, Leonardo, Michelangelo, Titian and Caravaggio who existed for the most part more than half a millennium ago now.

Then the first three quarters of the 17<sup>th</sup> century gave our world Velazquez, Rembrandt and Vermeer from another two once sparsely populated countries. Next came further masters such as Goya, Turner and Constable to say nothing of van Gogh and all of the so-called Impressionists. But is it really worth studying such figures in depth in a country which already has Streeton, Nolan and Boyd to its name – or, as I prefer, Lambert, Rees and William Robinson?

The apparent lack of respect in contemporary Australia for the timeless achievements of Western art and culture would be hard to understand even in a country with a long catalogue of related achievements of its own. Shakespeare, as we have recently learned here is deemed racist now so perhaps should be deleted entirely from our literary canon? Of course our whole world has changed but in far too many respects not necessarily for the better.

Are we now truly better and more socially responsible than our grandparents, or than other everyday figures from a century ago? It would be a very arrogant conceit indeed to assume so. At the very least, study of the past can help us belatedly view ourselves and our supposed contemporary culture, as we truly are.

---

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*.

# HONOUR THE CHURCH, THE BODY OF CHRIST

**T**HE LORD says: ‘My name is blasphemed among the Gentiles but woe to him through whom my name is blasphemed.’ Why is it blasphemed? Because we do not practise what we preach. The pagans hear us proclaiming the words of God and they marvel at their beauty and nobility, but when they realize that we Christians do not live up to our principles, they begin to blaspheme and say that our religion is an old wives’ tale.

For instance they hear us telling them that God says ‘It is no thanks to you if you love those who love you but it is thanks to you if you love your enemies and those who hate you.’ They are amazed by the goodness and sublimity of what they hear, but when they watch us not only not loving our enemies but hating our friends into the bargain, they deride us and blaspheme God’s name.

My dear brethren, if we do the will of God our Father, we shall belong to the first Church, the spiritual Church, founded before the sun and the moon. But if we refuse to do his will, we shall exemplify in ourselves that saying of the scriptures, ‘My house has become a house of thieves.’ And so let us resolve to belong to the living Church of life that we may find salvation.

You know very well, I am sure, that the living Church is the body of Christ. For the scripture says: ‘God made man male and female.’ Now Christ is the male, the Church is the female. We have the authority of the bible and the apostles for saying that the Church is not founded only at the present time but was from the beginning. It belonged to the spiritual sphere, as Jesus did, and it was revealed in the last days for our salvation.

But spiritual as it is, the Church was revealed to us in the flesh of Christ, thus proving to us that anyone who keeps its presence alive in his flesh and does not banish it from there, will receive it in the Holy Spirit. This flesh is a type of the spirit and no one who destroys the type can expect to receive the original reality. So then, keep guard over the flesh, if you wish to receive a share of the spirit.

And if we can say that the flesh is the Church and Christ is the spirit, whoever violates the flesh, violates the Church also. Such a man will have no share in the spirit, that is in Christ. From this it will be clear what an infinite capacity the flesh has for sharing the life of the Holy Spirit, nor can anyone predict what blessings the Lord has prepared for his elect.

– THE NAME OF THE AUTHOR of this excerpt [xiii,2-xiv,5] from the homily usually referred to as *Second Clement to the Corinthians*, has been lost to us. Traditionally it has always been linked with the famous Letter of Pope Clement of Rome written around AD 96 to resolve dissensions that had broken out among the Christians of Corinth, and calling for the reinstatement of some priests. There are good reasons for thinking that this homily was written by one such priest, and that it was written before AD 96 and thus antedates the letter of Pope Clement with which it is always associated. From *The Roman Breviary*, Second Reading at Matins for Saturday in Week 32 of the Year.

*For [Charles] Kingsley to deny truth in [Newman's] life was to "poison the wells". There was no point simply stating this: he had to write the history of his own mind. The result was the Apologia, one of the great autobiographies in the English language, and a turning point for Newman.*

# CARDINAL NEWMAN

*By* Christopher Howse



TO US in Britain, Newman is most widely known as the author of the hymn *Praise to the Holiest in the Height*, part of his dramatic poem *Gerontius*, later set to music by Elgar. But in his lifetime Newman was a star, like Gladstone, say. Both were repeatedly talking-points in an age of intense newspaper-reading. Newman (1801-90) and Gladstone (1809-98) spanned every decade of the 19th century. Of the two, though, Newman has more living influence today.

His great campaign began in 1833 after closely escaping death from typhoid. He felt "God has still work for me to do" – which turned out to be no less than changing the face of the Church of England. Oxford then being to England what Qom is to the ayatollahs, the theological warfare declared by Newman there became known as the Oxford Movement. With the brilliant scholar E.B. Pusey, he used pamphlets as weapons in order, in Pusey's words, to bring "to the vivid consciousness of members of the Church of England, Catholic truths, taught of old within her".

They achieved more than they meant, for Newman was propelled by the logic of his

arguments into the Catholic Church. He set up a community very like an Oxford college, the Oratory, not in his beloved Oxford but, as circumstances dictated, Birmingham. Nothing else he attempted in his first 20 years as a Catholic came to anything. A new university in Dublin, editing a



His attraction lay in 'his deep appeal to the notion of the call to holiness'

journal, even a translation of the Bible, all shrivelled when other people let him down.

By 1863 he was depressed. "This morning, when I woke, the feeling that I was cumbering the ground

came on so strongly, that I could not get myself to my shower-bath," he noted in his journal. "What is the good of living for nothing?"

Suddenly an attack came from Charles Kingsley, the author of that weird tale *The Water-Babies*, then at his peak as Regius Professor of History at Cambridge. In a magazine he wrote: "Truth for its own sake has never been a virtue of the Roman clergy. Father Newman informs us that it need not, and on the whole ought not, to be."

This was the shock that galvanised Newman, the "call". Truth was the whole reason he was stuck in this obscure Birmingham corner and could hardly get himself into the shower. For Kingsley to deny truth in his life was to "poison the wells". There was no point simply stating this: he had to write the history of his own mind.

The result was the *Apologia*, one of the great autobiographies in the English language, and a turning point for Newman. It came out in eight instalments, written on the hoof – literally, since Newman generally stood at a desk.

The effort almost broke him. After publishing five parts, he noted that he had written, on one day, "for 22 hours running". He was "constantly in tears, and constantly crying out in distress" at

his incisions into his memories and feelings.

Newman's view of life as a soap opera featuring God and himself guaranteed narrative impetus, as he bounced back from constant reverses. His style, loved by the Victorians, is not the convolution of a Gibbon, but a clear, compelling language nearer to that of Robert Louis Stevenson.

It was a bestseller, and favourable reviews included those by members the Church of England establishment. By 1864, it was clear, and not universally welcome, that Newman and his confederates in the Oxford Movement a generation earlier had changed English religion. If there are candles on an altar in an Anglican church, and a cross there too, it is because of the Oxford Movement.

This was no question of pretty trimmings, but of what a church was for. In the 18th century, most saw it as a preaching-house. Holy Communion was said once every three months. Newman and his friends wanted life imbued by the sacraments.

In this he resembled John Wesley a century earlier, for whom frequent Communion was essential to "Methodism", as outsiders called it. Precisely like Wesley, too, one element gave magnetism to Newman's sermons at the University Church of St Mary in Oxford. It was not Newman's oratory, for he read his text quietly. It was his deep appeal to the notion of the call to holiness.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit, he assured his audience, was a contemporary reality. The Holy Spirit was "a real presence in the soul". The consequence was a disturbingly simple challenge. "We dwell in the full light of the Gospel, and the full grace of the Sacraments. We ought to have the holiness of the Apostles."

Somehow, umbrellas, gaslight, silk dresses, railways, cigars, policemen, coke boilers, Guinness, postmen, trousers, guns and all the other conveniences of modern

life had seemed to make apostolic holiness obsolete until Newman whispered it in the ear of a thousand university men.

In his letters, 32 volumes of which have been published, Newman's friendship and spiritual rapport with women is also clear. But Oxford was a man's world, a single-sex society, though that did not make it homosexual. Indeed the word had not been invented in Newman's lifetime. His choice to be buried in the same grave as his friend at the Birmingham Oratory, Ambrose St John, has encouraged campaigners to claim Newman as a crypto gay. He wouldn't have understood. Newman was an exponent of friendship, but being friends didn't mean going to bed together.

The avalanche that Newman set off in 1830s Oxford swept him into the Catholic Church in 1845. And then, one might have imagined, he would have turned against the errors of his past. But he didn't. In the 1860s he republished the eight – extremely popular – volumes of his Anglican sermons, almost unchanged. He showed in practice that it was possible to be English and a Catholic. That did not mean importing Italian vocabulary or second-guessing the eccentric opinions of Pius IX.

Newman was 78, only five years younger than Pope Benedict now, when, to his surprise, he was made a cardinal, putting an end to all the suspicions that his English habits of mind had provoked among Catholic prelates of a foreign outlook. Pope Benedict is no son of the Tiber, and nor is he the attack-dog that enemies caricatured him as. He is an academic, like Newman. Like Newman he puts holiness before popularity, which is why he has come to Birmingham to declare him a *beatus*, a blessed man.

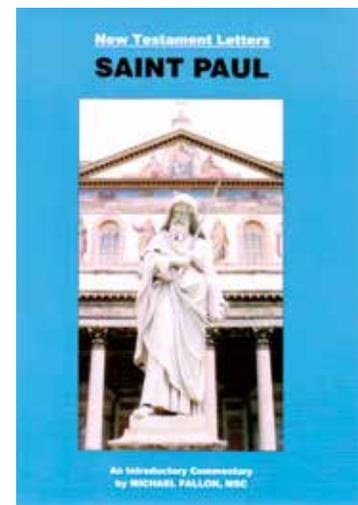
<sup>c</sup>Cardinal Newman: The Victorian Celebrity Intellectual who brought Benedict to England; London, *The Telegraph*, 11 September, 2010.

Available Now

NEW TESTAMENT LETTERS

## St Paul

THE AUTHOR WRITES: In some ways this commentary has been my life's work. I was first impressed by the breadth of St Paul's thought during my seminary studies in the 50s. I was especially moved by the obvious love of the man and by the courage with which he carried out his mission of taking the best of the faith of Abraham and Moses – the faith as lived by Jesus – to the gentile world.



IT IS MY hope and prayer that you, the reader, through Paul's words, will come to a more profound understanding of what, or rather who it was that inspired his extraordinary life. Only a truly 'Catholic' vision can help heal our marvellous but deeply divided, world. Only such a vision can help us, in the words of Teilhard de Chardin, 'harness for God the energies of love'.

Price **\$50**

Postage extra

Available now from

CHEVALIER PRESS PO Box 13,  
Kensington NSW 2033

Ph: (02) 9662 7894, Fax: (02) 9662 1910

Email : [chevalierpress@gmail.com](mailto:chevalierpress@gmail.com)

ASK FOR A LIST OF OUR OTHER  
CATHOLIC PUBLICATIONS

**TO HELP PAY**

---

**CARDINAL PELL'S LEGAL FEES**

---

Funds can be deposited at:

**Account Name: Ferdinand Zito  
as trustee for Cardinal George Pell**

**BSB: 633-000**

**Account No: 1632-41078**

**Ref code: LFGP**

People seeking acknowledgement of receipt of  
their funds can request this by emailing –

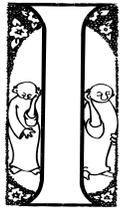
**fzLFGP@fzlegal.com.au.**

Postal address: P.O. Box 2216,  
Ivanhoe East VIC 3079 (03) 9497 1800

*The Wilderness Society is a radical environmental activist group that advocates the complete exclusion of human activity in large tracts of Australia's forests, a policy which has been adopted in part by various state governments with disastrous results*

## FLAWED SCIENCE AND UNCONTROLLABLE BUSHFIRES

By Peter Fisher



IN SEVERAL PREVIOUS contributions to *Annals* I have attempted to bring to readers' attention the reprehensible actions of many ecological scientists dressing up their environmental activism in published papers of dubious substance and merit. Much of this work, with the aid of the environmentalist movement and the media, particularly the former Fairfax press and the ABC, has received widespread publicity and has strongly influenced policy makers concerning forest management decisions.

Perhaps the strongest evidence of the above to date was referred to in my review of Forest Ecologist Vic Jurskis' book *Firestick Ecology* (*Annals* Jan/Feb 2016) in which many substantiated cases of this kind of miscreance are detailed.

Lest all of this be regarded as the continued rantings of a disaffected retired old professional forester, I now call attention a startling new development arising out of a paper recently published in the respected journal, *Australian Forestry* (Volume 81 No 4). The paper is by forest scientists M. Poynter and M. Ryan and is controversially titled *Leadbeater's Possum and Victoria's*

*Central Highlands' Forests: Flawed Science and Environmental Activism as Drivers of Forest Management Change.*

This is highly significant for two important reasons. Firstly, the paper, in a long-running respected journal

itself an overarching peer review highlighting among other factors the inadequacy of previous peer reviews in relation to the research in question. The paper has challenged in addition to scientific method, the integrity, ethical practice, adherence to protocols and underlying motives. It falls short of charges of scientific fraud but comes very close to it.

Secondly, it provides undeniable evidence of 'omissions of critically important impact, reliance on flawed or wrong assumptions and errant citation practices.'

The paper concludes 'that there is evidence of a disturbing synergy between some peer-reviewed science and environmental activism in fashioning and promoting a questionable case for forest management change' that is, the elimination of timber harvesting and prescribed burning.

This confirms what Jurskis convincingly states and what many practising forest managers have suspected for a long time arising from their practical experience.

The gloves are well and truly off and there ought to be serious repercussions within the scientific community in order to uphold its integrity in this field.

Poynter and Ryan's paper comes

### Human – or a tool of Technology

IT OCCURS to me that I'm a living fossil - a rare sapient hominid without a cellphone, a Facemask account or a Twitter handle. For thousands of years we have gotten along nicely without instantaneous long-distance communication devices conjoined with a camera and portals to entertainment and data. As a species, we have excelled at fashioning objects into tools that serve a meaningful purpose - improving the general quality of our survival. However, the smart phone has transformed us into tools of these devices. We have become slaves to technology and the concept that "technology makes things easier." Perhaps many human activities were not intended to be easy - maybe the complexities of actual human interaction are richer, more valid when taken along with the attendant messy difficulties.

- "Lament from Epirus: An Odyssey into Europe's Oldest Surviving Folk Music," by Christopher King.

that has published thousands of peer reviewed papers by forest scientists, is not an opinion piece but is a careful study of flawed published research. It is in effect

## Win! Win!

**W**E WILL GIVE the men and women of America's armed services the resources you need to keep us safe. We will have the finest equipment in the world -- planes, ships and everything else. We are going to have, very soon, the finest equipment in the world. (Applause.) We will give our military the tools you need to prevent war and, if required, to fight war and only do one thing -- you know what that is? Win! Win! (Applause.) We're going to start winning again. Our carriers are the centerpiece of American military might overseas. We are standing today on 4.5 acres of combat power and sovereign U.S. territory, the likes of which there is nothing to compete. There is no competition to this ship. It is a monument to American might that will provide the strength necessary to ensure peace. This ship will carry 4,500 personnel and 70 aircraft, and will be a vital component of our defence. This carrier and the new ships in the Ford class will expand the ability of our nation to carry out vital missions on the oceans to project American power in distant lands. Hopefully, it's power we don't have to use, but if we do, they're in big, big trouble. (Applause.)

— 'Remarks by President Trump Aboard the USS Gerald R. Ford,' Office of the Press Secretary, The White House March 2, 2017

to its conclusion principally out of examination of published studies into Leadbeater's Possum within the Central Highland Forests of Victoria. These forests provide the natural habitat of Leadbeater's Possum, which currently is listed as an endangered species. This classification is currently under review as more intensive surveys disclose increasing findings of colonies of the species, including those in forests managed for timber production.

It is of considerable significance to note that much of this research has been undertaken by the Australian National University's *Fenner School of Environment and Society*. In the early 2000s the Fenner School joined in a partnership with the Wilderness Society to form a policy and research hub to promote the principles of the Society's *WildCountry Vision*. The Society has directly funded work arising out of the hub thus inevitably compromising the latter's credibility.

The Wilderness Society is a radical environmental activist

group that advocates the complete exclusion of human activity in large tracts of Australia's forests, a policy which has been adopted in part by various state governments with disastrous effects concerning, among other things, the outbreak of uncontrollable bushfires.

Many of the Society's members hold the extreme view that human existence in itself is a blight on the planet and must be subservient to the requirements of the 'natural environment'. It has mounted fanatical opposition to timber production in Australia's native forests often with the assistance of the media (principally the ABC) using the sort of flawed studies referred to above.

In respect of the communication of research findings to the public there are protocols within the scientific community advocating that they should not be publicly announced prior to peer review. Poynter and Ryan's paper points to several instances where this protocol has been breached obviously for environmental activism. In addition, such actions

do not meet the ANU's own policies regarding standards of scientific honesty, objectivity and impartiality.

Poynter and Ryan's paper homes in on the inadequacy of much of the peer review process which fails to detect and correct erroneous citations, factual errors and misrepresentations. It contends 'that peer review can be readily biased by the choice of reviewers and their professional, personal or political agendas and the extent to which they actually know the research topic and its wider context?'

My long-held opinion is that this is a particular problem in forest ecology circles where many researchers are drawn to the discipline by strong environmentalist leanings and an anti-forest disturbance (preservationist) agenda. In this situation there is often the tendency to lose objectivity and impartiality and to manipulate data to favour a biased outcome.

Although Poynter and Ryan's paper concerns questionable research into Victoria's Central Highland forests there are aspects of this research which have broader implications and which have received wider publicity regarding the role of Australia's forests generally in climate change.

One such unpublished and unreviewed paper from the ANU Fenner School, was submitted to the Garnaut Climate Change Review (2008) by the Wilderness Society. Unfortunately, Garnaut's report contained a citation from that paper which claimed that the eucalypt forests of south-east Australia could remove several million tonnes of carbon per annum from the atmosphere by the cessation of logging and prescribed burning.

Obviously, such a statement appearing in that important (though arguably flawed) review, in the absence of any opportunity to question it, was certain to have an influence on Government decision making and indeed attracted much media attention, particularly from the usual suspects.

Since then there has been a series of papers from the Fenner School on the same theme, exhibiting inadequate peer review. Important flaws in these papers are the failure to discount, among other things, the need to import replacement hardwoods from developing countries with questionable harvesting and regeneration practices; and substantially higher emissions arising from the production of substitute products like concrete, plastics, aluminium and steel.

Other environmentalist scientists continue to argue along the same lines, ignoring or understating in addition to the above, factors such as the storage of carbon in wood and paper products, and that in regenerating forests after harvesting.

In a similar vein, reports (2016/17) from the Fenner School attempted to minimise the economic importance of the timber industry in the Victorian Central Highland Forests, arguing that the cessation of harvesting would have little social and economic effect.

The initial report was heavily critiqued by the Institute of Foresters of Australia (IFA) which detailed a long list of errors, omissions and misrepresentations and concluded 'that the estimates of so many of the values are so imprecise or biased as to be unusable for policy decisions.' Unfortunately, the final report ignored the IFA's concerns but was heavily promoted on ABC's news and current affairs, still replete with errors of fact, omission and misrepresentation.

That a so-called scientific school under the aegis of the ANU is found culpable in its flawed research and blatant environmental activism is nothing short of an academic disgrace. It was high time that it and its environmentalist fellow travellers around Australia, have been called out by their peers.

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



## DONATIONS RECEIVED

### FROM 16-10-18 TO 13-11-18

Our sincerest thanks to the many subscribers to *Annals Australia*, who very generously send a small donation along with their annual renewal – this assists in defraying the heavy costs incurred in producing our magazine.

– Editor, *Annals*

1805	MR DOUG SUTHERLAND	4	2101	J A GEDDES	84
2234	MRS RENATA MALEC	34	3444	MISS C HEENAN	67
2120	MRS MARGARET F TIBBITTS	4	3189	MR F J HUTCHINSON	20
2250	MR D GRESSIER	167	2087	MR F GATEGOOD	20
6105	S MAHADY	10	2444	MR B PANIZZINO	39.5
3149	MS CHRISTINA WARREN	107	2034	MR KEN MURRAY	17
2614	MRS M O'SULLIVAN	17	2131	MR J O'HALLORAN	67
	FR RICHARD O'ROURKE MSC	300	4069	HILARY IRWIN	49
2035	MR J J REEMST	24	2101	KEITH & DIANNE NORRIS	7
6050	MR GERARD LEAHY	100	2099	SHEILA MCDARRA	40
3175	MR TERRY FLYNN	17	2615	MRS J A SJOSTEDT	10
2766	FR ALAN LAYT	17	4124	JL & JP SHANKS	67
2602	MR KEITH P VERRILLS	45	2790	OLIVER O'TOOLE	7
4311	VERONICA RICE	100	2170	MR & MRS M HARKIN	4
2068	CECILIA O'CONNELL	17	2066	DR E H RYAN	17
2260	C F FRANCKIN	34	2077	MR ROBERT J MURDOCK	52
2324	MRS C EVANS	7	1585	MRS L CUMMINS	17
3168	MR GERALD GILL	7	6024	JOHN C MASSAM	36
2196	MR ROBERT BATES	68	2533	MR BARRY MAHONEY	100
2067	R F NATOLI	14	2107	MR H F WHITE	10
3629	PAT NOBLE	4	4127	MRS MARY CARRUTHERS	28
2605	DR E STACK	10	2300	MR J C DONNELLY	3
3052	MR PAT O'CONNELL	17	6023	MR & MRS P W SKERRITT	134
4157	ANTHONY F CONNOR	17	6450	MRS S VERMEERSCH	48
2440	JERRY VAN DER VEER	24	2484	MR & MRS D G GUINEA	7
3088	FRANS ZYLSTRA	7	4551	MR JOHN HILLIS	7
2175	MR R GRIMA	17	4225	L DOWLING	17
2716	PAUL & JUDY RYAN	44	2191	NEIL BROOKS	7
2216	TERESE MACKENZIE	5	2546	TIM SHORT	67
2456	PATRICK CONNORS	17	4868	JARVIS MULLEN	14
2528	MR ALAN CLUFF	24	2578	FR JOHN NESTOR	17
2036	MR CHARLES GEORGE	4	2190	DARLING ROSE	67
2145	MR F W HILL	10	2319	BARRY GREENE	8
2154	MRS J NICE	24	2280	MR J L DORAN	4
	FR FRANK ROACH	20	2170	MRS M FINDLEY	7
2262	MR J MATTHEWS	34	2028	MR T H ODILLO MAHER	100
4814	JOHN & GERALDINE O'BRIEN	7	2031	MISS J C GATES	4
6280	MRS M SMITFOORT	7	2035	MRS J LONG	10
2066	MR JAMES FRANKLIN	17	2029	MRS M T STAFF	6
2133	MRS M DRAKE	34			
2036	MR MICHAEL SPIES	67	<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>\$2788.50</b>

Please assist us by introducing *Annals* to relatives and friends.  
We need your support and we need new subscribers.  
*Annals* has the answer! Try it.

## THE GREATER MIRACLE OF DOMINIC

THOSE WHO know anything about St. Dominic know that he was a missionary and not a militant persecutor; that his contribution to religion was the Rosary and not the Rack; that his whole career is meaningless, unless we understand that his famous victories were victories of persuasion and not persecution. He did believe in the justification of persecution; in the sense that the secular arm could repress religious disorders. So did everybody else believe in persecution; and none more than the elegant blasphemer Frederick II who believed in nothing else. Some say he was the first to burn heretics; but anyhow, he thought it was one of his imperial privileges and duties to persecute heretics. But to talk as if Dominic did nothing but persecute heretics, is like blaming Father Matthew, who persuaded millions of drunkards to take a temperance pledge, because the accepted law sometimes allowed a drunkard to be arrested by a policeman. It is to miss the whole point; which is that this particular man had a genius for conversion, quite apart from compulsion. The real difference between Francis and Dominic, which is no discredit to either of them, is that Dominic did happen to be confronted with a huge campaign for the conversion of

# Coogee Real Estate

First National Real Estate Coogee was established in 1968. We have been in Coogee for 42 years and are the longest running agency in the Coogee District.

*Annals readers who need the service of an Award Winning Real Estate Agency should contact: James Giltinan, son of the founder Robert Giltinan. James, along with his staff provide expertise in service and management that focuses on your needs and requirements. First national Real Estate Coogee has been the proud recipient of the Randwick City Business Excellence Awards in 2005 & 2009.*

[james@coogeefn.com.au](mailto:james@coogeefn.com.au)



206 Coogee Bay Rd  
COOGEE

[coogerealestate.com.au](http://coogerealestate.com.au)

9665 3341

heretics, while Francis had only the more subtle task of the conversion of human beings. It is an old story that, while we may need somebody like Dominic to convert the heathen to Christianity, we are in even greater need of somebody like Francis, to convert the Christians to Christianity. Still, we must not lose sight of St. Dominic's special problem, which was that of dealing with a whole population, kingdoms and cities and countrysides, that had drifted from

the Faith and solidified into strange and abnormal new religions. That he did win back masses of men so deceived, merely by talking and preaching, remains an enormous triumph worthy of a colossal trophy. St. Francis is called humane because he tried to convert Saracens and failed; St. Dominic is called bigoted and besotted because he tried to convert Albigensians and succeeded.

C.K. Chesterton, *St Thomas Aquinas*, Chapter One, 'On Two Friars.'



Preferred supplier to Churches and Schools since 1975

### AUDIO • VISION • LIGHTING

- Sound Reinforcement
- Auditorium PA & Intercom Systems
- Paging & Outdoor PA Systems
- Audio Visual Systems
- Hearing Aid Loop Systems
- Data Projectors, Video Walls, LED/LCD/Motorised or Touch Screens
- Digital Bell Systems
- Digital Signage/Information Displays
- Automated Camera Systems
- Microphones for All Applications
- Ducted Vacuum Systems
- Upgrade & Modification of Existing Systems
- Interior & Exterior Architectural Lighting

Please visit our new website  
[www.clarecom.com.au](http://www.clarecom.com.au)

T: 02 9698 3600

F: 02 9698 5400

E: [sales@clarecom.com.au](mailto:sales@clarecom.com.au)

*In Catholic kindergartens in Japan you see, prominently displayed, a serene and motherly statue or painting of Mary, Mother of the Lord. Children are taught to pray with simple prayers and trusting hymns to Mary as their spiritual Mother. I've never heard of non-Christian mothers becoming put out, jealous or complaining of this.*

## THE MOTHER OF JESUS AND JAPANESE CHILDREN

By Paul Glynn



WHY WOULD a missionary priest, pastor of a struggling pioneer parish in Japan, go to a great deal of time and trouble to raise the hefty sum of money needed to build a ferro concrete kindergarten in his parish...even though almost all the kindergarten children will be non-Christian.

In 1960 my parish was in Takada City, in the southern end of the Diocese of Kyoto, then in the capable hands of Japanese Bishop Furuya. He was very keen that I build and run a kindergarten. Eventually the Marists would leave the parish and the church and kindergarten would become the responsibility of a Japanese diocesan priest appointed by the bishop.

Christians are few in Japan, just 1% of the population, about half being Protestant and half Catholic. The diocesan pastor would have to be supported financially by a very small flock.

Running a parish costs money. Beside the pastor's normal expenses, he would probably have

a cook some days and a part-time secretary. He would need to buy spiritual reading books, also books for updating his Biblical knowledge, and a Catholic magazine or two to keep up with Japanese Catholic life. There would be printing costs for evangelizing, for example leaflets to drop into townspeople's letter

would be responsible for all his diocesan priests, spiritually and financially, had more important reasons for wanting kindergartens in his parish churches. It's a known fact that many Japanese who as adults seek baptism had attended a Christian kindergarten as children. There the first good seeds had



Father Tony Glynn, accompanying teachers and children from his parish kindergarten in Japan, on an outing. Father Glynn, a Marist Priest, spent 42 years in parishes in Japan.

boxes, advertising Bible classes and talks on spirituality for interested non -Christians etc. Money would be needed for his health and dental costs, and to help the poor. A well-run kindergarten would certainly earn money to help cover these and other parish expenses.

Bishop Furuya, who of course

been sown. A well-run kindergarten draws the interest of parents looking for a good, solid foundation for their children, who will soon be struggling hard to get into top schools and universities in highly education-conscious Japan.

With a good proportion of practising Catholics among the parish kindergarten teachers, prayer soon becomes a natural part of the daily program, and it is not resented by parents. Japanese are a religious people. Over 80 million pray at a Shinto shrine every New Year Eve and Day. Most Japanese ask a Buddhist priest to conduct

the religious funeral when a family member dies. Shinto priests celebrate weddings and give blessings

In a Catholic kindergarten simple prayers begin the day, are said before and after lunch and as the children stand up ready to go home. Special prayers are said in

## The Madonna of Mt. Berico

ON 1 AUGUST 1428 the Virgin Mary appeared in the north of Italy, close to the city of Vicenza, to an old lady, Vincenza Pasini. Vicenza had been almost decimated by a plague. Our Lady promised that the plague would cease if a church were to be built on Mount Berico nearby. The old lady went down to the town, and explained what she had seen and heard, and she was believed. The town council decided to build a church as quickly as possible. The virgin had spoken to Vincenza of a spring of water appearing out of living rock where the church was going to be built. As the work progressed water, as from a spring, flowed out of the rock.

Also as the Virgin Mary promised, funds poured in for the construction of the church. The plague ended, the church was built within three months, the province was saved from a calamity.

The much visited Sanctuary on Mount Berico is one of the most important Marian shrines in Europe. There are many thousands of confessions heard on the first Sunday of every month, according to the Servites of Mary who have looked after this beautiful shrine, in its magnificent setting, since 1435.

sad times, such as when a child's much-loved grandparent, or one of the children falls dangerously ill. If a death occurs, prayers are offered by the children and a teacher attends the Buddhist funeral service. Most Japanese are Buddhists and are very attuned to prayers for the dead.

August 15 is the National Day for the Dead, a holiday when many families invite a Buddhist to come to their home and pray before the ancestral altar set up for deceased family members and ancestors. August 15 sees many Japanese at the family plot in the cemetery, placing expensive flowers there, and bowing reverently in prayer. The yearly autumn solstice days are called *Higan*, meaning The Other Shore beyond this present life. Prayers will be said for the dear departed, and in Catholic kindergartens teachers will tell the children, gently, that good, generous and loving people will enjoy great happiness in Heaven after death.

Prayer from the heart creates an ambience of love and trust to the kindergarten children and in my experience is welcomed by their non-Christian parents and

grandparents. The grandparents usually don't work and many attend kindergarten talks, bazaars and concerts. They notice with gratitude that God has become real for the little ones. Nativity plays in Advent are very important in Christian kindergartens and are loved by the children and most parents. Grandparents always attend and clap the children actors proudly and very enthusiastically. Sometimes you see adult tears falling at the beauty of the Christmas story.

In Catholic kindergartens in Japan you see inculturation. Imaginative Catholic teachers, accepting what is good in Japanese culture and nation-wide folk stories, will draw wholesome Gospel lessons from them. There is Childrens Day for instance, a national holiday on May 5. This month was traditionally the time to appeal to sons to become strong, ready to endure hardship to attain maturity.

Parents encouraged boys by reciting an old folkloric story from ancient China. On one special night in the year went the parable, tiny carp fish living miserable lives in the muddy estuary of the mighty Hwang Ho River were given an

opportunity for greatness. If they plucked enough courage to swim against the river's strong downward flow, bravely ascending the rivers three cragged waterfalls that will tear their flesh, and continue the exhausting swim right up to the Hwang Ho's mountain source. Lo! The carp will turn into mighty dragons. No, not the evil dragons of Western folklore, but good dragons, noblest of all the zodiac animals in Chinese ancient lore. These dragons fly through the skies bringing rain-clouds that pour down life-giving waters onto the young rice plants in May. The Chinese Emperor used to sit on "the Dragon Throne."

If you visit Japan in the month of May, especially travelling through country towns, you can still see carp fish made of very colourful cloth and attached to tall poles, at first glance looking like three dimensional kites, 'swimming' gracefully through late spring's bracing winds. The Japanese call them *Koi Nobori*, which means 'Ascending Carp,' reminders of the old encouraging fable teaching a moral message. Like the tiny carp they must struggle for greatness. That means listening well at school, working hard on homework, playing fairly and giving their best on fields of sport and doing what their parents, grandparents and teacher say, so that they are striving honestly for the highest goals.

There is also *Hina Matsuri* for young Japanese girls on March 3. They lovingly arrange classical dolls portraying the Imperial Family at Court, surrounded by doll courtiers. One day a commoner lass could become a court Lady, or even Empress, if she will work well and honestly to achieve goodness, sincerity, *yasashisa* (genuine gentleness) dependability, and all the feminine graces.

Of course the present much loved *Koogoo Heika*, the present Empress, was once the commoner *Michiko Shoda* until the Crown Prince fell in love with her, and she with him on the tennis courts of *Karuizawa*. That is a much-

loved true story in Japan about the greatly admired and loved Imperial couple. They both are beautiful examples of honesty, faithfulness and dedication, and paragons of an all-important Japanese virtue, *yasashisa*, gentleness.

Every year tens of thousands of Japanese citizens and foreign tourists visit the symbolic Rock Garden at Kyoto's Zen Buddhist Temple called *Ryoanji*, which means "The Peace of the Dragon." The last time I went to Ryoanji I saw inside the temple building a vigorous brush painting of a dragon. It calls Zen Buddhist novices to struggle faithfully through long meditation, early morning and late-night, seeking *Satori*, Zen Enlightenment. The ideograph for Enlightenment is itself instructive, formed by adding the ideograph for 'heart,' note not 'head,' to the ideograph for 'oneself.' You discover your truest self in your heart, in the right-brain organ for love, compassion, wisdom, openness to God and other people. The left-brain is the place for logic, physics, mathematical planning etc. Some brilliant left-brain logicians, with information about almost everything, can be sadly lacking in wisdom. The head is a good place for prayer to begin but a very poor place for prayer to end up, as Anthony de Mello put it. Truest prayer resides in a heart that loves the Almighty deeply, and loves others with a practical love. It is the same with Marriage, Dag Hammarskjöld and his friend, St. John of the Cross have told us.

In Catholic kindergartens in Japan you see, prominently displayed, a serene and motherly statue or painting of Mary, Mother of the Lord. Children are taught to pray with simple prayers and trusting hymns to Mary as their spiritual Mother. I've never heard of non-Christian mothers becoming put out, jealous or complaining of this. Some anthropologists describe Japan as a Mother Culture, because the mother has the deepest influence of all on most Japanese.

## Common Sense and God's Existence

JUST AS, THEREFORE, it would be the height of folly for a simple person to assert that what a philosopher proposes is false on the ground that he himself cannot understand it [*propter hoc quod ea capere non potest*], so (and even more so) is it the acme of foolishness [*maximae amentiae esset idiota qui ...*] for someone to suspect to be false what is divinely revealed through the ministry of the angels, simply because it cannot be investigated by reason. The same thing, moreover, appears quite clearly from the defect that we experience every day in our knowledge of things. We do not know a great many of the properties of sensible things, and in most cases we are not able to discover fully the natures of those properties that we apprehend by the senses. Much more is it the case, therefore, that human reason is not equal to the task of investigating all the intelligible characteristics of (God) that Supereminent Reality [*illius excellentissimae substantiae*]. Sacred Scripture also gives testimony to this truth. We read in Job: 'Can you fathom the mystery of God; can you fathom the perfection of the Almighty?' [11,7] or again: 'God is so great, that he exceeds our knowledge'. [36,26]. And St Paul 'For our knowledge is imperfect'. [1 Cor 13,9].

– St Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor, 1225-1274, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Liber I, cap.3. Translated Paul Stenhouse.

I found moving evidence of this in histories I've read of Pacific War, 1941-45, written by Japanese. They give examples noting that the last battlefield moments of dying, Japanese soldiers will often end with a hoarse cry, *Kaa-san*, or *Kaa-chan*, both are words that Japanese children use meaning Mummy.

Jesus was the first recorded Jewish believer who called God *Abba*, correctly translated 'Daddy.' Maybe atheists find that mawkish, but there is no doubt Jesus led the way for his followers in this. In his huge struggle in Gethsemane, 'Jesus threw himself on the ground and cried *Abba*. (Mark,14:36.) It is noteworthy that Luke, who was a medical doctor, says the Gethsemane struggle was so fierce that Jesus sweated blood. (Lk. 22: 44.) Many Christians find great comfort in calling God, *Abba*.

In one kind of likeness to those dying Japanese soldiers, Jesus thought of his Mother in his final moments. He asked 'the beloved disciple' John, to look after her. Christians saw that as a touching example of the Lord's filial piety. But gradually they had experiences of help from Mary. The importance of this two-fold entrusting of Mary as a

mother to John who represented us, began to strike them.

This double entrusting by Jesus is very important, because John's very next words are most graphic: 'After this, Jesus knew that everything had now been completed'. Christians came to read this literally. Jesus is also telling Mary to look after John, with John representing all Christians. Explain it how you like but it is an historical fact that Christians began praying to Mary for help from that time, and they experienced spiritual, and also material help, such as bodily healing. They began to see this double entrusting as an essential part of the Gospel. If you don't feel convinced read the above verse 19, 28 from John's Gospel again.

The 'Development of Doctrine' about Mary's role is clearly seen in the New Testament writings. Mark, who wrote his Gospel in approximately 70 AD, gives Mary one tiny mention, Mark 6:3. "Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary?" Paul's writings were also written early. The Second letter to Timothy, his last piece of writing, was written no later than 67 AD. Mary does not feature as important anywhere in Paul.

Then come the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, and Acts, all written between 80 to 90 AD, and already a big change has occurred, inspired by the Holy Spirit. Suddenly Mary has a very important place in the Jesus story. Her prophecy, 'All ages to come shall call me blessed,' Luke 1: 48b, becomes part of the Word of God. The Gospel of John, written around 100 AD adds very significantly to Mary's importance. Her influence on Jesus has Jesus change his miracle time plan at Cana, John 2:4b. John has Jesus call her *Woman*, which is a symbol in John. Jesus uses it also from the Cross. Also, the great Red dragon trying to kill the Woman and her Child in Apocalypse chapter 12 is seen as the final struggle that began with the Woman who is Eve.

St. Justin was born of non-Christian Greek parents c100 AD. He avidly studied the Greek philosophers, his first love being the Stoics. Then he became totally captivated by the great thinker Plato, close associate of Socrates and the teacher of Aristotle. This trio were surely the greatest philosophers of the ancient West. Around AD 133 Justin discovered Christ and was baptized at Ephesus and became the first of the post-Apostles 'Fathers' the Church. Justin wrote that Christ the Logos fulfilled the beautiful aspirations of Plato.

While John Henry Newman was still an Anglican priest, he was stunned to read Justin's testimony that 'Eve, conceiving the word that was from the serpent, brought forth disobedience and death ; but the Virgin Mary, taking faith and joy ... answered, 'Be it done unto me.' Newman also noted that Justin's theme of Mary as the new Eve, was taken up and greatly enriched spiritually and came very early into the prayer life of monks, bishops, priests and laity, by the second century. The theologians Newman quotes were the greats, whose writings led to the Nicene council and Creed. Newman quotes a long passage from St. Irenaeus (c130-200) in the saint's treatise

## Liberated?

In politics, love is a stranger, and when it intrudes upon it nothing is being achieved except hypocrisy. All the characteristics you stress in the Negro people, their beauty, their capacity for joy, their warmth, and their humanity, are well-known characteristics of all oppressed people. They grow out of suffering and they are the proudest possession of all pariahs. Unfortunately, they have never survived the hour of liberation by even five minutes.

— Hannah Arendt(1906-1975)-in a 1962 letter to James Baldwin,(1924-1987) novelist and social critic.

*Against Heresies*, which reads: 'Eve becoming disobedient, became the cause of death both to herself and to the whole human race .... Mary ... being obedient became, both to herself and to the whole human race, the cause of salvation.' Among other Greek-language theologians who wrote of the Eve/New Eve drama quoted by Newman are St. Athanasius, c296-373, St. Ephraem, c306-378, St. Cyril of Jerusalem c315-386, St. Epiphanius, c315-403, Gregory of Nyssa, c331-395, and St. John Chrysostom c347-407.

Among early Western theologians who took up the chiaroscuro story of unfaithful Eve/ Mary the faithful New Eve are St. Hippolytus, c170-235, Tertullian, c120-220, St. Ambrose, c339-397, and St. Augustine, c354-430. Latin theologians also took Genesis 2:18 'a helper like unto himself' about Eve the failed helper, and re-applied it to Mary, the Sinless One who proved the Saviour's true helper in the work of Jesus the Redeemer.

The Greek-speaking theologians gave Mary the title of *Theotokos*, literally "God Bearer." The West called her *Mater Dei*, 'Mother of God'. By early in the Third Century that title was used by theologians and laity, in prayer.

When Nestorius, Patriarch of prestigious Constantinople

from AD 428 began damning the title *Theotokos* as heretical, Pope Celestine moved decisively, convoking a Council of Western bishops in Rome. In ad 430 that Council decreed that Nestorius was in heresy. Pope Celestine commissioned St. Cyril of Alexandria to convoke the Council of Ephesus for the Greek-rite Catholic Church. That Council condemned Nestorius in 431 and deposed him. The lay Christians in Ephesus, very perturbed by Patriarch Nestorius' new doctrine against *Theotokos* were overjoyed and went in a torchlight procession to thank the Council Fathers chanting 'Praise be the Theotokos.'

The John Rylands Library in Manchester, England has a precious torn piece of papyrus. The writing in Greek is a part of a prayer used in the Byzantine liturgy about 'the most blessed Virgin Mary.' The prayer is *Sub Tuum Praesidium* in Latin and was put to music by Mozart. This prayer to Mary is still said and sung to Mary in English in the West as well as in Greek, Latin, Coptic, Armenian, Slavic etc. by many people around the world. Papyrus specialist E. Lobel, backed by G. Gamberadini, specialist historian of early Egyptian Christianity, dates the writing to between 250 and 300. As an 11 year old brat I was taught to say and love this prayer by Marist Brothers in Lismore, NSW. The word 'patronage' as the prayer begins: 'We fly to your patronage O most holy Mother of God,' has other translations because the word 'patronage' – in Latin *praesidium* – is hard to translate. Literally, the word means 'fresh and strong troops coming to help battling Roman soldiers.' An admirable word, because the prayer is directed to Mary, the Valiant Woman, the New Eve. Very simple forms of this prayer to Mary are taught in Japanese Catholic kindergartens.

FATHER PAUL GLYNN, SM has spent 20 years as a missionary in Japan. Author of *A Song for Nagasaki*, and *Healing Fire From Frozen Earth*, Father Glynn is stationed at Villa Maria, Hunters Hill, NSW.

*Puzzling happenings in a world allegedly governed  
only by material and physical laws*

## **SEANCES, SPIRITISM AND MEDIUMS**

*By Leslie Rumble, MSC*



GREEK MYTHOLOGY tells the story of 'Pandora's Box'. Pandora - the name means 'all-gifted' - was a woman endowed by the gods with all that which fascinates men: beauty, a charming voice, cunning and the art of flattery.

But Zeus, the king of the gods, determined to throw a spanner in the works. He gave her a box which she was to present to the man who married her. It had been thoughtfully filled with all kinds of misery and evil, as Pandora found to her cost when, prompted by curiosity to see what was in it she opened it. At once, all types of the vexations that afflict mankind flew out of it, before she could close it again.

The story illustrates the common human experience of disillusionment with so many things that at first seemed promising but which in reality have proved to be anything but a blessing.

And among these must be included Spiritism.

Spiritism has a very ancient history, having been rife among all primitive peoples. Through ignorance, many natural occurrences were attributed to the spirits of ancestors. Moreover, an irrational and superstitious belief in the magical powers of medicine men, wizards and necromancers

prevailed. These were supposed to be able to communicate at will with the souls of the dead.

The classical example in the Old Testament is that of Saul's recourse to the heathen witch of Endor, demanding that she call up the spirit of Samuel - which Saul himself did not see - only to receive

manifestation of divine power; others attributed it to demoniac influence; yet others to the woman's trickery. In this last case, the woman, acting as a medium, pretended to see a ghost which she described in such a way that the credulous Saul felt sure it was Samuel himself.



Occult paintings on cave walls in Sydney

the dismal news of his own almost immediate end (I Kings, 18, 7-20).

Various of the early Church Fathers explained this incident in different ways. Some saw it as a

An interesting point is that the Greek Septuagint translation of the Old Testament dating from about two centuries B.C. suggests that her dupes only heard a voice which by 'ventriloquism' seemed to come out of the ground - an explanation which has quite a modern ring to it.

The organised spiritism of our own times dates from 1848. In that year, at their home, Hydesville, New York State, U.S.A., two young girls, Margaret Fox, aged 12 and her sister Kate, aged 9, heard strange noises coming from the walls of their room. Thinking these might come from a spirit, they arranged a code of signals by numbered knockings to spell out answers to questions. As a result they claimed to identify the spirit as that of a man who had years ago been murdered in the house.

The story gained wide publicity. Neighbours called in, to hear the rappings for themselves. Wealthy people gave large sums to make possible public displays by the two girls of their occult powers. The fascinating

thought arose that means had been found for systematically communicating with the dead: An epidemic of similar experiments spread through the United States.

Margaret and Kate were not only in great demand but even travelled to England, acting as Mediums.

Curiosity about life after death, a desire to get in touch with departed relatives and friends, or just the thrill and mystery of it all, made their seances or sittings a resounding success, and the practice of such seances together with the number of professional mediums, multiplied rapidly both in America and Europe.

Forty years later, in 1888, both Margaret and Kate Fox admitted publicly in a New York lecture that they had faked the whole thing, deceiving their own parents as well as everyone else. Later, both repudiated that admission. Probably, being in need of money, they were bribed on both occasions, in the first place by enemies of spiritism and in the second by spiritists themselves among whom mediumship had become big business.

What does seem likely is that there was a foundation in fact for their story to which they added exaggerations and embellishments as they went along.

The initial experience of Margaret and Kate Fox seem best explained as 'Poltergeist Phenomena'. These have plagued and intrigued the world for centuries, long before the arrival of spiritism in the modern sense of the word.

A poltergeist (which means simply 'noisy ghost'), unlike an ordinary ghost, has never been seen. But the results of the mischief-making have undoubtedly been seen, heard and thoroughly reported. Psychic researchers have been trying to unravel the mystery of poltergeists with the help of radar-detectors and infra-red cameras, but the 'creatures' have eluded all efforts so far at scientific identification.

Meantime, rappings and other mysterious disturbances continue frequently to occur. Objects take off, apparently spontaneously and fly through the air, always seeming to be under the control of somebody. They travel sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly; twist and turn and go round corners, but never seem to injure anybody.

If they hit somebody their movement is suddenly checked and giving no more than a gentle tap they fall spent to the floor. The poltergeists responsible for all this seem to be mischievous spirits, bent only on having a nuisance value. And their activities are nearly always associated with the presence of children.

There are over 600 fully authenticated cases of poltergeist operations, the centre of such 'hauntings' in each instance being a young boy or girl, the phenomena ceasing invariably in homes where children have been sent elsewhere.

Take this case: In 1958 a 73 year old, Mr Wilding, a Derbyshire coalminer in England and his 65 year old wife, endured a month of terror when their twelve year old granddaughter, Carol, came to stay with them. She was a quiet and well-behaved girl, but a poltergeist objected to her presence.

From the moment she arrived, the cottage went crazy. There were prolonged hammering noises throughout the first night; and in the days that followed, doors opened and shut without human aid, drawers shot out as if pulled by invisible hands and spilled their contents on the floor, a box of dominoes fell from a table and the scattered pieces played around Carol's feet like live animals.

Each time she passed by the radio it switched itself on. A rocking chair began to rock as soon as she entered the room. If she went into the kitchen, crockery jumped from shelves and shattered on the floor.

The Wildings, their nerves badly affected by all this, were preparing to leave the cottage when the village constable came to look into things.

He was an Irishman named John Flannagan, and he had a different idea. He had read about Poltergeists and knew how to deal with them. 'Send little Carol home,' he said, 'and the haunting will stop at once.' So the Wildings took their young granddaughter back to her parents and quiet came once more, the mysterious disturbances ceasing as abruptly as they had begun.

Attempting an explanation of such cases, the University of London's Council for Psychical Investigation said that 'a poltergeist is an invisible, malicious entity able by laws as yet unknown to physical science to extract energy from living persons, often young and to use it for their own purposes.' But who or what is this mysterious entity, able to shift things about and send them flying through rooms? Nobody knows.

Father Thurston, S.J., an expert in such matters, while granting the possibility of diabolical influence, said he thought that unlikely, owing to the absence of any sign of intelligence or purpose in producing such manifestations; and he was inclined to attribute them to unknown natural factors. [More will be said about poltergeists in a subsequent *Annals* article. Ed]

Here we come back to Margaret and Kate Fox, aged 12 and 9 respectively. It seems certain that their original experience of rappings on the wall was of the poltergeist variety. They themselves, in their imagination, interpreted the sounds as the efforts of a disembodied spirit of a supposedly murdered man trying to get in touch with them. Their story gained credence, and spiritism was on the way.

Experience soon showed that success at a seance depended very much on the presence of a suitable medium to act as an intermediary between the 'spirit-world' and the 'sitters', those seeking information from the beyond.

Spiritists have a subtle theory that every human being has not only a body and soul but also

an intermediate 'perispirit', a kind of ethereal or astral body. The 'perispirit' of the departed soul can they claim, communicate directly with the 'perispirit' of a sufficiently sensitive medium. According to them only certain types of people have the necessary gifts to be a medium; and as contact takes place in the subconscious areas of one's personality, those with the necessary gifts can train themselves into greater powers of receptivity by various methods of mental dissociation. They must practise lapsing into a trance-like state in which their subconscious mind is completely dissociated from surface-attention to the world around them and from all conscious activities and distractions. Mediums with the reputation of being physically attuned by having highly developed peri-spirits were in great demand, and the phenomena they could produce was very astonishing indeed.

They not only gave 'sitters' messages supposed to be transmitted through them while in their trance-like state from the spirit-world, but also manifested extraordinary powers of clairvoyance. They provided information about living persons, declared where things hidden or lost could be found, and described events occurring in distant places. There was physical phenomena also; sounds of table-rapping, of music and of voices, the moving of various objects with no force applied by physical contact; and - generally in a darkened room - materialisations in mid-air of human hands or heads, or even whole bodies said to be corporeal apparitions of departed souls. Such materialisations, spiritists declared, were formed of 'ectoplasm,' a material substance issuing from the medium, which the spirit of the departed moulded to resemble the limbs and bodies they had in this life. After the materialisation, the 'ectoplasm' had to be reabsorbed by the body of the medium from which it has been drawn.

Despite these exciting attractions, however, spiritism soon fell into disrepute. Its seances seemed to provide ideal conditions for profitable fraud. Critical investigation revealed innumerable cases of trickery and false pretences on the part of many so-called mediums. Messages convincing to bereaved, credulous or sentimental people, were proved to be fabrications based on previously obtained information about dead persons or about the sitters themselves. Ghostly apparitions were exposed as the work of a medium's accomplice parading in fancy costumes. One enterprising investigator went along to a seance and as a 'materialised apparition' came near him, cut off a piece of the medium's ectoplasm. On returning home he found it was a piece of cheesecloth daubed with luminous paint!

It has been estimated that almost 90% of the phenomena at spiritistic seances are fraudulent. Yet scientific observers admit that not all happenings there are due to deception and illusion. Some are genuine and they hold that it would be a mistake to dismiss unexplored a field of study which could throw a great deal of light on human personality and endowments.

Where these scientists differ from spiritists, however, is in holding that, granted much stricter tests to exclude fraud than at present, such phenomena as are genuine will find their explanation in the natural psychical powers of the medium rather than in the influence of any 'spirits,' whether human or non-human. They maintain that successful mediums are people with highly developed powers of extrasensory perception, powers reaching out beyond the limits of the senses; and along such lines they hope to bring the explanation out of the realm of the occult into that of science.

This way of thinking gave rise in 1882 to the founding of the London Society for Psychical

Research. Because it concerned itself with alleged preternatural occurrences at spiritistic dabbings in occultism and magic, the Society only gradually won its way to respectability. But its objectivity and determination not to accept the spirit-hypothesis wherever a natural explanation was possible, were beyond dispute.

The Society began with the assumption that human faculties were not so limited as was once thought and that the mind of one living person can act on the mind of another living person independently of ordinary means of sense communication. An immense amount of evidence was accumulated concerning occurrences at spiritistic seances and many of these, though not all, were duplicated by direct experiments in hypnotism and telepathy.

Then, in the early 1930s came para-psychology, the serious and scientific study of E.S.P. (Extrasensory perception) or 'Psi' phenomena - a term officially adopted by Duke University, U.S.A. in 1934 for its department of Para-psychology.

The term 'Para-psychology' originated in Germany to designate the study of all cases of awareness or influence apart from sense-knowledge and physical contact and which seemed due to human powers not yet fully understood and beyond the range of ordinary psychology.

The programme included the investigation by experiment without recourse to spirit-influences, of telepathy or thought-transference; clairvoyance, or awareness of absent external objects or events; recognition, or knowledge of future happenings; and psychokinesis (P.K.) the ability to move physical objects simply by willing it.

All these powers, however explained, seemed to function at subconscious levels, and the problem is to get factual evidence of them, formulate the laws regulating them, and reduce them

to the whole system of organised scientific knowledge.

Sufficient progress has been made to suggest at least the possibility that all occurrences at spiritistic seances may be produced by the natural latent powers of the living persons present. It is likely that mediums themselves misunderstand the real facts about their 'powers' when in their dissociated state of trance. By extra-sensory perception they may be drawing upon layers of recollections in 'sitters' and unwittingly be mimicking voices, idioms and even gestures of a supposed 'spirit-sender' as remembered by interested parties in the audience. As for materialisations, these when not fraudulent are probably forms of 'wishful seeing'. The ectoplasmic explanation is very doubtful, for such materialisations never occur under the stringent precautionary conditions demanded by scientific investigation.

Were the scientists right, all would be reduced to communications between living persons, and the dead would not come into it at all. Yet extreme care is needed here. There is still room for the possibility of influences from spirit-world intelligences. If so, however, such influences would be from non-human intelligences, not from those of departed souls; and if from angelic agencies, not from good ones, but from evil ones, bent on our harm, not our welfare.

It is Catholic teaching that good angels and the souls of the departed can occasionally communicate with us but only dependent on God's will; and it would certainly not be His will that this should occur only and through a medium deprived of her senses and in a self-induced trance.

It is well to note here that it is folly to think spiritism can provide, as some have imagined, incontestable proof of the immortality of the human soul. Such 'proof' would depend entirely on the validity of the hypothesis that communications were in fact being received from disembodied souls. If

such communications were due to telepathy or came from evil spirits they would be valueless as evidence for human survival.

Philosophical reasons and faith in the revealed truth that man has an immortal soul made in the image and likeness of God, provide grounds enough for our conviction, without recourse to a dubious spiritism.

It would be difficult to excuse from sheer superstition those who place any reliance upon the claims of spiritism. Even if messages are received from the spirit-world, it is not possible to identify the senders of them as departed human souls rather than non-human-evil spirits. These last would be quite capable of diabolical impersonation, pretending to be the departed souls of those whom the 'sitters' wanted them to be.

As a matter of fact, upon continued interrogation, those supposed to be speaking from 'the other side' have shown again and again almost complete ignorance of the actual lives of the persons they claim to have been in this life. The more likely explanation is that the medium's own limited knowledge and conjectural powers have simply been unable to cope with the more searching questions.

But, apart from yielding to superstition; people who frequent spiritistic seances expose themselves to great mental and moral danger. Mentally, 'sitters' are expected to condition themselves by entering into a state of passive receptivity. They are warned that if they are sceptical or have their minds set for resistance they can't expect good results. They must be thoroughly 'in' the proceedings, with the result that their own mental balance is

impaired and power of self-control weakened. In already unbalanced people the door is thrown open to hallucinations and other worse aberrations.

Morally, not only is there the risk of co-operating in fraudulent practices - only too often proved - but should evil spirits be at work - and that has not been disproved - their influence could undermine the very basis of moral responsibility by the invasion of one's own personality.

Religiously, things are still worse. Supposed messages at seances have been opposed to revealed truth about both God and man. Agnosticism has been encouraged, the divinity of Christ and the need for Redemption denied - re-incarnation asserted, and crudely materialistic descriptions of the next world promulgated.

The 'spirit' of the deceased Raymond Lodge, killed in World War I in 1915, son of Sir Oliver Lodge a respected scientist, is supposed to have told his father during a seance, that he was quite happy, that he was welcomed to the other side with 'a whisky and soda', that he 'lived in a house built of bricks' and that where he was one had 'only to desire a thing and it was at once created.'

It is not surprising that 'Spiritualistic Churches' which have tried to blend spiritism with religion, regard Christ as no more than a superb medium, highly endowed with clairvoyant powers; and that they look forward to receiving from dis-incarnate spirits a new and clearer revelation, explaining even better still the nature of the future life and the means of evolving to higher levels of existence and happiness.



DR LESLIE RUMBLE, MSC, was in his day one of the most widely-known priests in the English-speaking world. His two-volume *Radio Replies* sold many millions of copies world-wide, as did his numerous pamphlets on aspects of Catholic faith and doctrine and on various non-Catholic Churches and sects. He died in 1975. To celebrate the 130th birthday of *Annals* this year, we print the first of his fifteen articles on psychic phenomena which appeared first in *Annals* in 1958. The remaining articles will appear in subsequent issues. *Next Month*: The case of the Dead Boy's Return.



# MEDIA MATTERS

By JAMES MURRAY

## New consensus

The main BBQ topic at next year's Australia Day will be the same as this year's: should the day be celebrated on January 26, anniversary of the advent of the First Fleet in 1788?

In the indigenous time-frame of more than 60,000 years, it may seem pettifogging to quibble over dates while children live and die in the kind of dire poverty that makes the Australian refugee internment camps on Manus and Nauru look like Club Med, and not, emphatically, like Nazi death camps as hyperbole mongers allege.

Within the time-frame, one set of dates illuminates its scale and how some can see the First Fleet as an invasion force.

In 54-55BC Julius Caesar's Legions came to Britannia, their landings being observed and opposed by the native Celts. But by 410AD, when Constantine III ordered the Legions home, Celtic and Roman culture had merged, the binding force being Christianity, promulgated by Constantine the Great (son of an emperor-elect, Constantius, and his Celtic wife Helena).

Irrelevant? Only to millennials whose idea of historical perspective is the tweet before last, Constantine, under God, was effectively the founder of what has become known as Western Civilisation with its emphasis on representative government,

free speech and equality before the law.

Thus the most appropriate Australia Day alternative is January 1, the date in 1901 when Queen Victoria assented to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia before assenting to die.

It was under this Constitution's referendum provisions that indigenous people campaigned for, and won, citizenship status, the franchise and with it the right to stand for Territory, State and Federal parliaments.

That they have not generally done so is less the result of any constitutional inadequacy than the epithet 'racist' being used to gaff-tape debate. The Constitution did not prevent Labor using EMILY's Law to ensure more female representation. Nor did it prevent the Liberals from using a Postal Plebiscite to ensure 'Marriage Equality'.

The main of objection to a January 1 Australia Day is the clash with New Year's Day. But need it be a clash? Cultural appropriation of the event from

its country of origin, Scotland where as Hogmanay or Ne'er Day it was set to displace Christmas, perceived as Popish by Presbyterians, has led to its being more fireworks than fun.

Consequently the ABC coverage has become a caricature, an inevitable decline given that its host Charlie Pickering is a brilliantly mordant satirist.

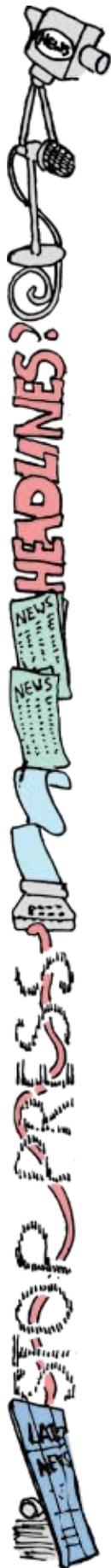
## Democracy

DEMOCRACY never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts, and murders itself. There never was a democracy yet that did not commit suicide. It is in vain to say that democracy is less vain, less proud, less selfish, less ambitious, or less avaricious than aristocracy or monarchy. It is not true, in fact, and nowhere appears in history. Those passions are the same in all men, under all forms of simple government, and when unchecked, produce the same effects of fraud, violence, and cruelty.

-John Adams, Second President of the U.S., in a letter to John Taylor in 1814.

STOP PRESS HEADLINES?

HEADLINES STOP PRESS



The second objection to the First Fleet Australia Day is that it is Sydney-centric. The nation's other capitals had their own first encounter days. Apart from that – Dutch, Portuguese, Spanish, French – were on these shores before the British.

January 1 would take the event to the national capital Canberra and combine it with Australian of the Year ceremonies.

Wherever held, the event needs the revival of the office: Public Orator. Step up Noel Pearson: you may not always agree with what he says but you enjoy the eloquence unlike the boiler plate – rusty boiler plate – delivered by the usual dignitaries.

### Indy wave

The former ALP president Warren Mundine's breakaway to the Liberal seat of Gilmore (with PM Scott Morrison's backing) is bold, and may succeed. He would have been bolder had he caught the wave of independents and stood for the House of Representatives or the Senate under the badge of the IRU – Indigenous Representation Union.

This should also include Jacinta Nampijinpa Price, the Alice Springs councillor who identifies as Celtic-Indigenous and Stan Grant who doesn't – yet.

Social Darwinism aggravated the situation of Australia's indigenes: to some they remain precious relics of the noble savage and the most enduring of cultures.

Which may be why Greens, Brown and Red, support their primitive culture, it goes with the party's faux primitivism, lived mainly in suburbias inner and outer.

### Vogue blagh

In 1965 your correspondent was working in Fleet Street when he saw pix of the model Jean Shrimpton at the Melbourne Cup, wearing a white mini-dress that reportedly affronted some – a surprising reaction since earlier in the decade he covered cup festivities for *The Sun News-Pictorial* and even then they were not totally demure, though by no means the bacchanal they have become.

This year he saw pix of Anna Wintour - Dame of the British Empire and Editor-in-Chief of *Vogue* – in Melbourne venting her ire on the Prime Minister Scott Morrison.

But there was more. Wintour doubled down to aver that the name Margaret Court Arena should be changed because of the great player's views on 'Marriage Equality'.

Wintour was here as the guest of Tennis Australia. Why it should persist in the cringe practice of inviting overseas celebrities to enhance proceedings is a minor mystery.

Not minor was Wintour's attempt to prevent Margaret Court enjoying the freedom of expression which in 1909 enabled Condé Montrose Nast to establish the publishing house that bears his name.

Surely it cannot be that the fragrant pages of Condé Nast *Vogue* are redolent of toxic censorship of free speech?

### Fair go

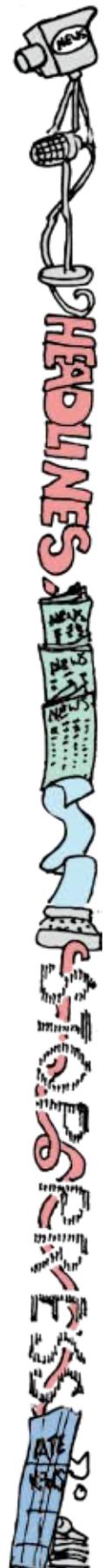
It has to be said that *Vogue* is the least consequential of Condé Nast magazines. Its siblings *Vanity Fair* and *The New Yorker* continue to provide valuable copy. Late last year the former carried a report by James Reginato on L'Academie Francaise, founded by Cardinal Richelieu in 1634.

Reginato's report contained a gem from

## The Savour of Death

SURELY, THERE IS at this day a confederacy of evil, marshalling its hosts from all parts of the world, organizing itself, taking its measures, enclosing the Church of Christ as in a net, and preparing the way for a general apostasy from it. ... this apostasy, and all its tokens, and instruments, are of the Evil One and savour of death. ... Satan is sure to hide his poison! ... He takes your hand, and gets his fingers between yours, and grasps them, and then you are his.

– Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman,  
*Tract 83*, June 29, 1838.



## Bulldog's Brexit

Time, as it shortens *pace* Einstein, runs faster and faster. Proof? The UK/EU deadline; it began like the Much Binding in the Marsh slow, stopping train and is now approaching like a TGV – *Train a Grande Vitesse*.

The buffers await – and pun warning – among them is that marvellous old buffer Winston Churchill who after the victory of Second Alamein in 1942 said: ‘Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But perhaps it is the end of the beginning.’

Delphic with a tincture, not of *retsina*, but of Churchill's favourite tipples: Johnny Walker Red Label whisky, Hine brandy and Pol Roger champagne; it offers an inadvertent prophecy of harsh UK/EU prospects not least in All Ireland, north and south of its temporary, gerrymandered border, drawn nearly a century ago.

Implicit in Churchill's remark were fresh measures; these were duly mounted and resulted in VE – Victory Europe – Day.

### Brekky religion

One of the more valuable segments on ABC *News Breakfast* is the showing of Australian metropolitan front pages. For some reason, these include the online

*Guardian*.

Your correspondent does have an old sentimental attachment to *The Guardian* when it still had Manchester in its title and Rowntrees as its bar. But he is bound to say that its local digital version is by definition not a metropolitan newspaper like *The Advertiser*, *Adelaide*, *The Courier Mail Brisbane*, *The Hobart Mercury*, *The Northern Territory News et al*.

Missing from the coverage are religious newspapers – Jewish, Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, Islamic. They have thousands of readers who also watch ABC TV.

And both the ABC's *Media Watch* and *Insiders* should consider religious newspapers.

academy philologist Barbara Cassini: ‘Is the French language sexist? Yes! But it's not a pertinent question to ask if a language is sexist or not – everything is sexist. If you try to make a language not sexist, I don't know if, in the end, it will be a language.’

This year *The New Yorker* continues to x-ray President Donald Trump's background as he passes the halfway mark in his term of office: constitutionally this may not be the point of no impeachment, but it indicates that Frank Capra's *Mr Deeds Goes to Washington* has become *Chief Crazy like a Fox Gets Re-elected*.

Ridiculous? Guitarist Bruce Springsteen believes Trump can win a second term; Springsteen shares Trump's working-class constituency who still respect him from keeping his promise to bring their children home from foreign wars.

### Wall eyed

The Roman emperor Hadrian did it: between AD 122-128 he built a wall across Britannia. The Chinese Emperor Ming (1355-1644) built a much longer wall. Both emperors had a common purpose: defence of their realms,

More recently with a similar purpose, Israel, possibly following Maggie Thatcher's example in Belfast, did it.

So why is President Donald Trump being castigated for building a wall between the United States and Mexico? Partly it's because he is a compulsive tweeter with little sense of context.

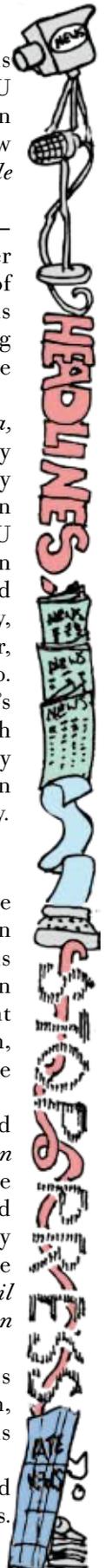
Result: he has not cited the Roman example though the US is strong on Roman architectural precedents.

The Great Trump Wall involves a multi-million dollar cost. By comparison the costs of the Roman and Chinese walls were minimal. Local materials were used. Had Trump used *adobe* and contracted Mexican workers, he would have lowered his costs and created a revenue-earning tourist attraction equivalent to Hadrian's and Ming's.

## Truly Prophetic

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

– Anthony Fisher OP, Archbishop of Sydney.  
See 'That Most Prophetic Letter,' *Annals* 6, 2018, p.5.





No space? Get rid of the interminable promos; they make you think you've seen a show when you haven't.

### **Viral feathers**

Time to remember Tuchman's Law promulgated by the great historian Barbara Tuchman and previously cited here; it holds that coverage of events makes them appear worse than they are.

What must be added is that the advent of social media into the 24/7 news cycle has destroyed the time delay, doubling and redoubling the effect of the law.

Example: the Covington Catholics, schoolboys from Kentucky, who attended an anti-abortion march in Washington. On returning to their bus, they found themselves caught between contending dissidents.

Consequence: they copped the viral blame on social media. Subsequently there were apologies for the rush to judgement, notably from the actress Jamie Lee Curtis.

The matter recalls the story of the saintly confessor Philip Neri giving a slanderer the penance of scattering the feathers of a goose throughout Rome. The penitent did, and returned to Neri. 'Now,' he said, 'Go and gather the feathers.'

### **Super blooper.**

Revelations of misdoings within the \$2 trillion-plus national superannuation scheme continue. Sympathy is in order for its architect ex Treasurer, ex-PM Paul Keating, not the first or last politician to conceive a measure in altruism and see it cannibalised by avarice.

Another ex-Treasurer Peter Costello takes a more upbeat view, reportedly he sees the Future Fund he chairs as a reservoir for super.

Eh? Wasn't that the rationale when he founded it with surplus GST revenue to supplement short falls in public service super?

Is there conflict, not of interest, but of policy setting that Costello is both chairman of the Future Fund and chairman of whatever Nine Entertainment is calling itself to cover its take-over of Fairfax newspapers,

bearing in mind that convergence also means a narrowing of voices and the range of opinion?

Further question if Costello returns to lead the Liberal Party after its predicted Waterloo will he announce it exclusively on Nine or the ABC or both simultaneously?

### **Oceans elevation**

Were the oceans rising as fast as Climate Change lies, damned lies and statistics (multiplied by computer projections), the nation's most celebrated building would now have Sydney Opera House oysters growing on it.

Reassuring to read geologist Ian Plimer's puncturing of the main statistic that most scientists believe in climate change; he simply pointed out the small sample involved.

Incidentally Ian Plimer's publisher Connor Court and its founder Anthony Cappello (with a little help from the Ramsay Centre) could become the Australian Catholic University Press.

Is your correspondent a veteran climatologist? No, but he recalls shaping toy canoes from the tar that bubbled hot from between the cobblestones of his native territory, Govan, Glasgow SW1, and realising the difference between spring, summer autumn, winter.

### **Dreadnought docks**

Commendably, Mr Justice Hayne kept to the deadline for the royal commission that carries his name. Less commendably, the Liberal Coalition, originally opposed to the commission, delayed its release.

Your correspondent also works to deadline; as the aftershocks ensue – resignations, fines, compensation – he offers the suggestion that guilty persons be warned off financial deals *sine die* as guilty persons are warned off racetracks for trickery that is relatively simple compared to the malpractices of financial institutions.

© Austral-Media 2019.

## THE QUEEN'S GOOD SERVANT, BUT GOD'S FIRST

*The brutal torture, which he suffered ten times at Topcliffe's hands over forty hours, was such that at one point Southwell came close to death and had to be unbound and revived. Despite this he refused to betray his fellow Catholics and held firm even after the Queen sent members of her Council to take part in the examinations.*

# ST ROBERT SOUTHWELL

By Graham Hutton



ENGLAND had already produced a large number of martyrs for the Faith under Henry VIII, but it was Elizabeth I's *Treason Act of 1585* which led to the systematic execution of all Englishmen who, having been ordained abroad since the start of her reign 'by any authority ... from the See of Rome,' set foot in England to minister the sacraments and the teachings of the Church to their co-religionists.

Of the many brave priests who suffered the supreme penalty in these times few exhibited more heroic virtue than St Robert Southwell and the outpouring of poetry and prose which came from his pen before his arrest constitutes a unique testimony to the fervent faith and ardent love for Christ which impelled so many of those missionary priests.

Robert Southwell was born in 1561 and brought up at Horsham St Faith in Norfolk. The house had been built by his grandfather in the ruins of the Benedictine monastery given to him by Henry VIII, partly as a reward for his work as a visitor for the suppression of the monasteries. It is often difficult

to discern religious allegiances in these early days of the Elizabethan reformation, but it seems that Robert was probably brought up in the old faith by a Catholic mother and a sympathetic, though compromising, father.

At the age of fifteen he was sent to the continent to complete his

and we see the first signs of the emotion which was to be a hallmark of his later writings when, having at first been refused entry, he lamented that he must live 'in anguish and agony that find myself disjoined from that company, severed from that Society, disunited from that body wherein lieth all my life, my love, my whole heart and affection?'

Fortunately for the cause of Catholicism in England his persistence was rewarded with admission to the Order later in the year. By the time he completed his studies in 1584 he was convinced that his calling was to join the Jesuit mission to England which would give him 'the highest hope of martyrdom.'

On May 8, 1586, he left Rome with his fellow priest, Henry Garnet, and in July they landed at Folkstone in Kent before travelling to London separately to reduce the risk of detection. For most of his mission Southwell was assigned to the London area where he seems to have been able to live in relative safety in the house of Anne, Countess of Arundel. From there he was able to

write words of consolation and encouragement to her husband, St Philip Howard, who had been imprisoned in the Tower since 1585 and under sentence of death for alleged treason from 1589.

### Widen Your Hearts

TRUE LIFE himself taught us to pray – not in many words, as though our prayers receive readier hearing the more loquacious we are; for we are praying to him who knows, as the Lord himself says, what is needful for us before we ask it of him. Why does the Lord advise us to pray when he knows what is needful for us before we ask it of him? This can puzzle us, if we do not understand that our Lord and God does not want our wishes to be made known to him, since he cannot be ignorant of them; but he wants our desire to be exercised in prayer, thus enabling us to grasp what he is preparing to give. That is something very great indeed; but we are small and limited vessels for the receiving of it. So we are told, 'Widen your hearts.'

– St Augustine of Hippo, 'Letter to Proba,' *Epistle 130*.  
Quoted in *The Roman Breviary*, Second Reading at  
Matins for Sunday of the 29th week of the year.

Catholic education at the Jesuit school, Anchin College, whilst living at the English College at Douai. In 1578 he went to Rome hoping to join the Jesuit order

Soon after arriving in England Robert began what one of his biographers, Pierre Janelle, has called his 'apostolate of letters,' writing an extensive body of fervent poetry on the main themes of the Catholic faith: love for the Sacraments and for Christ, the ugliness of sin and the need for repentance, the glory of Our Lady and the saints. Throughout his works he takes the language and conventions of love poetry and transforms them into a hymn of love for Christ. The poems, as much as his letters, were clearly intended as tools of conversion for sinners and consolation for his suffering fellow Catholics.

One of the delightful marks of his poetry is his unfolding of the Christian mystery through paradox. In his *Sequence on the Virgin Mary* he describes her conception in these terms:

Our second Eve puts on her mortal shroud,

Earth breeds a heaven, for God's new dwelling place.

And again,

Behold the father, is his daughter's son:

The bird that built the nest, is hatched therein:

The old of years, an hour hath not run

Eternal life to live doth now begin.

Repeatedly he emphasises the Christian mystery of strength in weakness, nowhere better seen than in the helpless babe of Bethlehem.

This little babe so few days old,

Is come to rifle Satan's fold;

All hell doth at his presence quake,

Though he himself for cold do shake.

The poetry is suffused with a passionate love for Christ whose own love for mankind is manifested as a cleansing fire. In the extraordinary poem 'The burning babe' the child of Bethlehem and the crucified Lord are shown as one and the same. The appearance of the babe to the poet in the cold winter's night 'made my heart to

glow' and when the child sheds tears of suffering caused by the excessive heat of the flames in which He burns we are told that 'Love is the fire' which will work for the good of 'men's defiled souls'. It is the same divine love which causes the Baptist to leap in his mother's womb after Mary's breast has 'Shot out such piercing beams of burning love' and which brings St Peter to repentance in *Saint Peter's Complaint* when Our Lord fixes him with his glance:

These blazing comets, lightning flames of love,

Made me their warming influence to know:

My frozen heart their sacred force did prove,

Which at their looks did yield like melting snow.

The sense of the dreadful consequences of man's sin and the call to repentance is a constant theme of the poetry. In *Sin's Heavy Load* we have a startling image of the weight of sin again expressed in paradox when the poet addresses Christ as one who can hold up the entire universe with His little finger

But now thou hast a load so heavy found,

That makes thee bow, yea fall flat to the ground.

And the reader is admonished,

Alas, if God himself sink under sin,

What will become of man who dies therein?

Yet we should not despair, for God provides the remedy for sin through grace. In *The prodigal child's soul wrack*, after a harrowing description of the symptoms of sin the sinner finds redemption:

When chained in sin I lay in thrall,

Next to the dungeon of despair,

Till mercy raised me from my fall,

And grace my ruins did repair.

Above all, as we would expect from one who daily risked his life to feed the faithful with the Bread of Life, it is for Southwell the Mass, 'fountain of our good,' which is God's chief remedy for man's fallen plight. In *The Blessed Sacrament*

of the Altar the eucharist provides satisfaction of all mankind's deepest needs:

To ravish eyes here heavenly beauties are,

To win the ear sweet music's sweetest sound,

To lure the taste the Angels' heavenly fare,

To sooth the scent divine perfumes abound,

To please the touch he in our hearts doth bed,

Whose touch doth cure the deaf, the dumb, the dead.

The poem sets out the Catholic doctrine of the real presence in all its majesty again using the conceit of paradox to unfold the mystery. At the Last Supper:

Twelve did he feed, twelve did their feeder eat,

He made, he dressed, he gave, he was their meat.

And in turn:

They saw, they heard, they felt him sitting near,

Unseen, unfelt, unheard, they him received.

In this, his most catechetical poem, he tells his readers that it is the whole Christ, God and man, who is contained entirely within every single host so that if 10,000 are fed each and every one receives the whole Christ just as 'One face at once in many mirrors shines'.

Many of the poems meditate upon death. He had written to St Philip Howard on the death of his half-sister, Margaret, punning on her Christian name that Our Lord had taken her as 'the Jeweller that came into this world to seek good pearls,' and who 'thought it now time to take her into his bargain, finding her grown to a Margarite's full perfection,' and death in his poetry too is always the culmination and fulfilment of life itself.

In *Decease Release* he compares death to the crushing of a spice which is necessary for its flavour to be released, adding that 'Some things more perfect are in their decay'. Here again we are confronted with the paradox of the Christian mystery.

As his martyred queen, Mary Queen of Scots, testifies:

My scaffold was the bed where  
ease I found,

The block a pillow of eternal  
rest.

It was the same sentiment that he had expressed in his own longing for martyrdom during his formation in Rome and in the letter to St Philip Howard in which he urged him not to weaken in his resolve since ‘The cause is that of God; the struggle is brief; the reward is eternal’.

Inevitably his willingness to accept martyrdom was before long to be put to the test. In contrast to the relative safety of the Countess of Arundel’s house, the recusant country houses which he often visited were fraught with danger. On at least two occasions he was almost apprehended whilst ministering in the countryside.

Once, in 1586, he had to sleep for four nights in ‘a very straight, uncomfortable place’ while the priest hunters searched the house. On another occasion at the house of the Vaux ladies in Warwickshire, four priest hunters arrived just as he was about to begin Mass and, having stripped the altar and hidden the vessels and vestments, he hid underground for four hours standing all the time in water.

In 1592, as what Professor John Morrill has called the ‘Elizabethan Terror’ intensified, after six years of faithful ministry, St Robert Southwell was betrayed, and arrested at Uxenden by the fanatical priest hunter Richard Topcliffe.

In a chilling and sinister letter written to the Queen the morning after he had made the arrest, Topcliffe boasted to her that he ‘never did take so weighty a man’ and sought her approval for the particular tortures which he proposed ‘if your Highness’ pleasure be to know anything in his heart’.

The brutal torture which he suffered ten times at Topcliffe’s hands over forty hours was such that at one point Southwell came close to death and had to be

## Troves of Personal Data

THE BIG Silicon Valley technology companies have long been viewed by much of the American public as astonishingly successful capitalist enterprises operated by maverick geniuses. The largest among them—Microsoft, Apple, Facebook, Amazon, and Google (the so-called Big Five)—were founded by youthful and charismatic male visionaries with signature casual wardrobes: the open-necked blue shirt, the black polo-neck, the marled gray T-shirt and hoodie. These founders have won immense public trust in their emergent technologies, from home computing to social media to the new frontier, artificial intelligence. Their companies have seemed to grow organically within the flourishing ecology of the open Internet.

Within the US government, the same Silicon Valley companies have been considered an essential national security asset. Government investment and policy over the last few decades have reflected an unequivocal confidence in them. In return, they have at times cooperated with intelligence agencies and the military. During these years there has been a constant, quiet hum of public debate about the need to maintain a balance between security and privacy in this alliance, but even after the Snowden leaks it didn’t become a great commotion.

The Big Five have at their disposal immense troves of personal data on their users, the most sophisticated tools of persuasion humans have ever devised, and few mechanisms for establishing the credibility of the information they distribute. The domestic use of their resources for political influence has received much attention from journalists but raised few concerns among policymakers and campaign officials. Both the Republicans and the Democrats have, in the last few election cycles, employed increasingly intricate data analytics to target voters.

— Tamsin Shaw, ‘Beware the Big Five’ Review of *The Darkening Web: The War for Cyberspace*, by Alexander Klimburg, *The New York Review of Books* April 5, 2018

unbound and revived. Despite this he refused to betray his fellow Catholics and held firm even after the Queen sent members of her Council to take part in the examinations.

After this initial torture Southwell was imprisoned for a time in conditions so bad that his clothes became infested with lice. Later he was moved to slightly better conditions but kept in solitary confinement in the Tower for two and a half years.

Finally, in November 1595 he was moved from the Tower to a windowless subterranean prison cell in Newgate ominously known as Limbo and brought to trial at which time his fellow Jesuit, Henry Garnet, wrote that he could not even stand ‘as a result of his bitter tortures’.

Yet, having been found guilty

and condemned to the customary punishment of hanging, drawing and quartering, he continued to pray, mediate and bless people as he was dragged on a hurdle through the streets of London to his execution at Tyburn and to the crown of martyrdom which he had long ago prayed might be his reward.

Each of the martyrs of the Elizabethan regime did incalculable service to the English Church, but perhaps none left so rich a devotional legacy as did St Robert Southwell.

---

GRAHAM HUTTON is the founding partner of the private equity firm Hutton Collins. He studied History at Cambridge and Theology at Oxford as an Anglican before converting to Catholicism in 1982. He serves on a number of charity boards, including the *Christian Heritage Centre* as well as *Aid to the Church in Need*, UK, of which he is chairman.

*The Internet, for all its tendencies to vacuity and pointlessness, does make available and easily accessible a range of intellectual resources unimaginable in the past. Young brains are not as damaged by malnutrition, blows to the head, measles and arsenic in the wallpaper as were earlier generations. A proportion of young intellects will grasp the truth.*

## HOPE IS NOT LOST

Review by James Franklin



AUSTRALIAN READERS of Jude Dougherty's latest collection of essays on the Western intellectual heritage may be

most interested in his account of philosophy in American Catholic universities. The determinedly secular tradition of Australian universities has prevented anything like it here (except in a very small way in the last decade or two). That is a significant loss to our intellectual life, as the contrast with the American case shows.

The United States had by 1875 seventy-four Catholic institutions of higher learning. But none was a university "in the European sense of the term," as Dougherty delicately puts it. Encouraged in part by Leo XIII's encyclical *Aeterni Patris* advocating the study of St Thomas Aquinas, a movement arose to fill the gap.

The Catholic University of America was founded as a postgraduate school. Opening as a Divinity school, it soon expanded to include philosophy, science, the social sciences and other disciplines. To date 406 PhD dissertations have been accepted by the faculty of philosophy, the journal *New Scholasticism* (now *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*) was founded and continues vigorously, and members of the philosophy faculty have included many distinguished

---

Dougherty, Jude P. (edited by Elizabeth Stone) *Interpretations: Reading the Present in the Light of the Past*. Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2018. Pp. xii + 156.

---

names (to the general public, Fulton Sheen is the best known). Other Catholic universities such as Notre Dame upgraded to full research status.

The *Review of Metaphysics* (of which Dougherty was editor for many years) has published research

of the highest quality. The result has been a vigorous Catholic intellectual life in the United States, with the thought of Aquinas at its core. It is the envy of other countries.

Dougherty does regret some of the directions taken in the last fifty years, especially a fragmentation of philosophy into specialisations often hermetically sealed off from one another, and an attenuation of Thomist and more generally realist influences. Those complaints are justified. Nevertheless when I visited the most recent annual conference of the American Catholic Philosophical Association (San Diego, November 2018), I found a large and impressive body of thinkers, with plenty of the debate still in the Thomist tradition to one degree or another. If only we had an Australian Catholic Philosophical Association to do that here ...

Dougherty sees a pattern of decline much more widely than in philosophy. He edited a collection of essays called *The Impact of Vatican II* in 1966, in which he "questioned the direction the Council seemed to be taking." So he was in on the ground floor with unease about the "Spirit of Vatican II". Fifty years' further experience has only confirmed his initial suspicions. He quotes the liberal Cardinal Daniélou's summary at the time of where the philosophical wind was blowing: "Theological enquiry can no longer restrict itself to Scholasticism, which is immobile



and doesn't take into account the two principles of modern thought: historicity and subjectivity." Just so. It may be that Scholasticism did sometimes neglect matters of historical context and the inner life. But "historicity and subjectivity" immediately became codewords for – or perhaps more accurately, excuses for – the relativism that swept all before it in the Sixties.

Soon enough – or sooner – it was wall-to-wall anti-dogmatism and "tolerance" of any opinions and any "values", for "who are we to say?" As the Australian philosopher David Stove described the products of a modern high school, "Their intellectual temper is (as everyone remarks) the reverse of dogmatic, in fact pleasingly modest. They are quick to acknowledge that their own opinion, on any matter whatsoever, is only their opinion; and they will candidly tell you, too, the reason why it *is* only their opinion. This reason is, that it is *their* opinion." Anything goes; nothing holds together intellectually.

A section of Dougherty's book – a full five chapters – is devoted to the thought of the most academic of recent popes, and scourge of "the dictatorship of relativism", Benedict XVI. One essay, "The jurisprudence of Benedict XVI", describes his (traditional) view that laws may be made by majority vote in many circumstances, but are constrained by absolute moral principles which the law is not permitted to transgress.

That will remind Australian readers of the High Court's 1992 Mabo decision on native title. The Court, notably the Catholic judges Gerard Brennan and William Deane, held that the doctrine of *terra nullius*, which denied native title to land at the time of white invasion, conflicted with the basic legal-moral principle of the equality of persons and hence was legally invalid. That position scandalised both conservative "black-letter" lawyers committed to the overriding legal power of precedent, and "progressive" activist legal theorists

## The Corsican Fire-fly

**N**APOLÉON, originally an artilleryman from Corsica, had crowned himself Emperor of France and would-be Ruler of Europe in the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris, in the presence of Pope Pius VII whom he had brought as a prisoner from Rome, on Sunday December 2, 1804. A few years later, a feast was given in Napoleon's honour by the city of Paris. Above the throne on which the emperor sat were the words, in golden letters: Ego sum qui sum: 'I am Who I am,' the reply given by God to Moses who wanted to know God's name. Madame de Rémusat who attended the feast, noted that nobody took offence at the blasphemy. Eleven years later, Napoleon was defeated and exiled to the island of St Helena in the Atlantic Ocean. He died there on May 5, 1821. He was reconciled with the Catholic Church before his death, and received the last rites from Father Ange Vignali. He was 51 years of age.

– Memoirs de Mme. de Rémusat, ii, 80.

keen to subordinate law to political agendas. The objectivity of basic moral principles has, however, in these issues, and others such as human rights law, become part of the legal fabric. Whether it can survive the decay of belief in the objectivity of ethics remains to be seen.

In another of the chapters, 'Benedict XVI: An intellectual profile', Dougherty returns to the impact of Vatican II. The then 35-year-old Father Ratzinger was a leading and approximately "progressive" theological expert at the Council but, like many (such as John Paul II and Cardinal Pell), had second thoughts on seeing the effects that followed. Dougherty writes:

"To explain what went wrong is no easy matter. Since the end of World War II, the West has experienced a cultural revolution. The ascendancy of liberal-radical theology, marked by an individualistic, rationalistic, and hedonistic orientation, has had its effect not only on the culture but also on the Church. That acknowledged, Ratzinger goes on to say it is time for the Church to find again the courage of nonconformism, a capacity to oppose the trends of contemporary culture."

That is true, but then again contemporary culture has many trends, often incompatible with one

another. In one remarkable passage, Dougherty recalls an earlier thinker who lamented that the gods have departed from the earth, faith and temperance have been abandoned, oaths are no longer reliable, and if the only remaining divinity, Hope, were to depart, civilization would collapse. "The parallels to our present are obvious," Dougherty comments. The thinker he refers to is Theognis of Megara in the sixth century BC. That is a long time ago. If virtue and piety were declining catastrophically as much in Theognis's day as in ours, it follows (from the mathematical theory of functions) that they must have recovered substantially somewhere in between. If that was possible once, it is possible again.

Hope is not lost, because the resources of civilization are still available. Each new generation faces its own choice of what among the smorgasbord of traditions to accept and what to abandon. The Internet, for all its tendencies to vacuity and pointlessness, does make available and easily accessible a range of intellectual resources unimaginable in the past. Young brains are not as damaged by malnutrition, blows to the head, measles and arsenic in the wallpaper as were earlier generations. A proportion of young intellects will grasp the truth.

JAMES FRANKLIN is the author of *Corrupting the Youth: A History of Philosophy in Australia* and *Catholic Values and Australian Realities*.

## Mary Queen of Scots

In a sequence of tremendous emotional power, director Josie Rourke opens with the imminent execution of her film's subject, played *con amore* by Saoirse Ronan.

That Rourke fails to sustain this power is down to Beau Willimon's script based on John Guy's book, *Queen of Scots: The True Life of Mary Stuart*.

Omissions can be more significant than commissions. Thus Rourke gives us the queen's red petticoat but omits the Presbyterian minister who sought to persuade her to recant her Catholic faith, an element that would have validated her choice of martyr's red.

Margot Robbie plays Elizabeth of England in a style that justifies the royal nickname Gloriana. Much has been made of the film's fiction that Mary and Elizabeth, cousins, met face to face, a convention established in 1800 by Friedrich Schiller and later taken up by Donizetti in his opera *Maria Stuarda*.

Rourke and cinematographer John Mathieson locate the meeting among gauzy curtains in what appears to be a laundry. How much more vivid it would have been had Elizabeth joined Mary and her maids of honour while they were embroidering priestly robes – works of art – still treasured and used at Mass.

Among what we might anachronistically call a seething mob of toxic masculinity, David Tennant (né McDonald, son of the manse) plays John Knox with rampant conviction despite the weight of a wig-beard with enough hair in it to stuff sixty sofas.

His rants have all the dire force of his *First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, written against the Catholic rulers Mary of Guise, regent of Scotland and Queen Mary of England.

Queen Elizabeth of England, although non-Catholic, took the *First Blast* as a derogation of her rule.

This, despite Knox's time in England and the Westminster Confession of Faith, foundation document of Presbyterianism. Or his stint at the oars of a French galley from which he was freed on the plea of England.

## MOVIES

By James Murray

In the seething mob, Martin Compston stands out as the Earl of Bothwell; he in a bout of rough – very rough – wooing took Mary from her husband Lord Darnley (Jack Lowden), depicted as homosexual with Mary's close companion David Rizzio (Ismael Cruz Cordova).

Guy Pearce is cast as Elizabeth's adviser-spy-master, Lord Cecil. Pearce is a player of consummate skill. He was also a body-building champion. Elizabeth's nickname for Cecil was 'Spirit'.

Basically Josie Rourke set herself an impossible task: even at 125 minutes running time she could not encompass the eventful lives of Mary and Elizabeth.

A Netflix series might have served better and allowed space for the embroidered words of Mary Queen of Scots: *En ma Fin git mon Commencement* – In my end is my beginning.

MA15+★★★★NFFV.

### Capharnaum

Writer-director Nadine Labaki called her debut film, *Where Do We Go Now?* *Capharnaum* is the answer – a film centred on a court-case

### Official Classifications key

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

### Annals supplementary advice

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

where 12-year-old-boy Zain (Zain Al Rafeea) sues his parents for giving him life.

Labaki casts herself as Zain's lawyer in contention with his mother Souad (Kawthar Al Haddad) and father Selim (Fadi Kamel Youssef).

But the court case is the eye of the storm Zain encounters when he fails to save his younger sister from a forced marriage (the bride price, a brace of chickens and a rent free period) takes to the streets and in exchange for shelter looks after Yonas (Boluwatife Treasure Bankole), child of Rahil (Yordanos Shiferaw).

In following Zain's life, Labaki and cinematographer Christopher Aoun capture images reminiscent of Vittorio De Sica's *The Bicycle Thieves* (1949) but more horrific.

Some have seen the film as pro-abortion. But Nadine Labaki walks a more positive yet subtle, high-risk line. Zain's life, his care for his sister and for the child illustrate the value of ever life.

And in the her opening where a doctor examines refugees, a woman calls out that she is seven months pregnant. The response is: 'Caritas, will see you' – not the response of an abortion broker but a signal that Caritas Internationalis, composed of 165 Catholic relief organisations, is on hand to help those in extreme need.

TBA★★★★NFFV.

### Storm Boy

Director Shawn Seet's adaptation of Colin Thiele's novella, published in 1964, may lack the aura of Henri Safran's version, filmed in 1976; it does retain Mr Percival, the alpha pelican, who thanks to scriptwriter Justin Monjo carries in his beak a fresh twist: environmental concerns.

These are brought forth in Geoffrey Rush's performance as Mike Kingley (alias Storm Boy) grown to be a tycoon recalling his childhood in flashbacks where he is played by Finn Little.

Intercut with the flashbacks is a development plan being pushed by a zealous executive Malcolm Downer (Erik Thomson) and opposed by Kingley's granddaughter Madeline (Morgana Davies).

Jai Courtney takes on the role of Finn's father, Hideaway Tom. Trevor Jamieson is Fingerbone, his playing reinforced with an appearance by the original Fingerbone, the awesome David Gulpilil.

Cinematographer Bruce Young captures the wild magnificence of South Australia's Coorong and the editing by Denise Haratzis is worthy of note.

Scenes of Madeline pleading with Kingley may seem far-fetched – until you remember Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser's daughter Phoebe helped to persuade him to close down the whaling industry station at Albany WA in 1979.

PG★★★★SFFV.

### On the Basis of Sex

English Common Law, wherever practised, is renowned for prolonging cases. Accordingly it is unsurprising that director Mimi Leder's melodrama based on a famous case of lawyer Ruth Bader Ginsburg's runs to 120 minutes.

Most of this is spent setting up the case in which Ginsberg broke discrimination on the basis of sex against those who cared for others at home.

Felicity Jones, cast against type, turns in an almost faultless performance. Almost? At a dinner, she uses her knife and fork English-style not American. And scriptwriter Daniel Stiepleman burdens her with lines about the lack of women's loos when she attended Harvard Law School, irony on the rocks: unisex loos are now de rigueur for strict feminists.

Armie Hammer, though much taller than Jones, is less impressive as Ginsburg's husband Martin, compelled by ill-health to stay at home and child mind.

Reduced to its core element, this is a high-falutin' take on a New York legal couple who desired a tax break but felt it would be *infra dig* to seek one themselves.

Eureka! They discover the hapless Charles Moritz (Chris Mulkey) who had to hire a nurse to look after his mother but was refused a tax break because he was male not female.

Hurrah! An appeal on Moritz's behalf could be the key to a tax

break for Martin. The distinguished cast is headed by Sam Waterston, who has been playing lawyers forever, and supplies enough gravitas to supply the US Supreme Court for decades.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg, now a member of that court, makes an unprecedented appearance at the movie's end: a New York *grande dame* whose outfit has more than an elegant touch of tax break.

Compensation: such is the power of the Felicity Jones courtroom performance it should set her up to play Portia in *The Merchant of Venice*, a follow-up to her turn as Miranda in *The Tempest* opposite Helen Mirren's Prospera.

M★★★★NFFV.

### The Mule

Director/star Clint Eastwood's thriller is based on the true-ish story of Leo Sharp, a horticulturist as told in Sam Dolnick's, *The Sinaloa Cartel's 90-year-old Drug Mule*.

Scriptwriter Nick Schenk's take re-names 'Sharp' Earl Stone and in must be accounted a saving that Eastwood, born 1930, does not need a skerrick of latex makeup to play the role.

There are moments, however, when Eastwood looks as if he could do with a walking stick if not a crutch as he transports batches of cocaine with metronomic regularity across the prairies.

For cartel boss Laton (Andy Garcia), the runs are about lethal profit mixed with R & R orgies: for Stone his participation is about saving his home and business and about making up with his estranged

wife Mary (Dianne Weist), daughter Iris (Alison Eastwood) and his granddaughter Ginny (Taissa Farmiga).

Will he succeed? Well, there's a Drug Enforcement Administration team on his case - and no throwaway line: 'You guys forced me into it.'

This is serious: Bradley Cooper plays the heaviest agent, Colin Bates. Can a rising star lose out to one who's as old as Saturn.

To complicate matters further there's such a surfeit of tattooed, hirsute characters that Eastwood as co-producer might have distributed white hats and black hats.

Any resemblance between Eastwood's *The Mule* and Robert Redford's *The Old Man and the Gun* is purely to do with box-office demographics.

M★★★★NFFV.

### Cold Pursuit

Nelson 'Nels' Coxman is a snow plough driver working at the airport of a ski-resort, possibly Aspen, Colorado. When his son Brock (William Forsythe) dies in nefarious circumstances, Nels on his snow plough hits the vengeance trail and begins killing the perpetrators.

That Nels does so with uncanny speed owes something to the fact he is played by Liam Neeson who has made himself Grand Prix ace of Formula One gore races.

The sense of parody may derive from Hans Petter Moland having directed from a script by Frank Baldwin based on Kim Fupz Aakeson's, *In Order of Disappearance* (2014) which Moland also directed.

Among the posse of baddies is David O'Hara who contrives to get more out of the character Sly than is in the script.

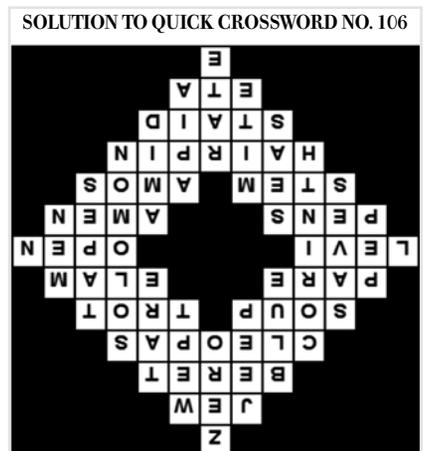
Tom Bateman is the leader, Viking, costumed as if he has discovered where Roger Moore disposed of his James Bond suits

Not to be missed. Oops. Correction: to be seen only if you wish to witness the reduction to absurdity of the genre, thriller.

MA15+★★NFFV.

### Instant Family

House renovators Pete Wagner (Mark Wahlberg) and his wife Ellie



(Rose Byrne) prosper; unable to have children of their own, they decide to explore the possibilities of fostering.

Director Sean Anders and his co-writer John Morris see this as a process for the good but not the faint hearted. It abounds in meetings with foster children; from these Pete and Ellie emerge with not one but three siblings, Lizzie (Isabela Moner), Juan (Gustavo Quiroz) and Lita (Julianna Gamiz), each with a different problem.

Not to worry: social workers Karen (Octavia Spencer) and Sharon (Tig Notaro) are on hand with support groups and members of Pete and Ellie's extended family.

These ingredients do not rise to laughter, however, until the advent of a grandmother figure Sandy Wagner, played with yeasty ebullience by Margo Martindale.

The laughter is interrupted by the re-entry of the children's biological mother Carla (Joselin Reyes) who takes legal action to recover them.

The result is not exactly *The Brady Bunch* that took off in the 1960s and made it into 2002 and the White House. But with Mark Wahlberg as a producer there may be a sequel.

PG★★★SFFV.

### Ben Is Back

There are moments in writer/director Peter Hedges melodrama when you wish Ben had stayed away – a wish intensified by the fact that Ben is played by the Hedges scion Lucas who does a brilliant turn in druggie pitiability and amiability.

Julia Roberts plays his mother Holly, initially eager to help but worn down by the inevitability lurking in the title: Ben is not only back home, he is back on drugs.

M★★NFFV.

### Vice

The title, referring to former US Vice-President Dick Cheney, is loaded with irony; writer-director Adam McKay lets it froth and bubble as he did when he was chief writer on *Saturday Night Live*.

This is not to detract from Christian Bale's performance as Cheney; he made it to Vice President from obscurity as a hard-

## Don't blame Ignorance

THERE ARE genuine mysteries in the world that mark the limits of human knowing and thinking. Wisdom is fortified, not destroyed, by understanding its limitations. Ignorance does not make a fool as surely as self-deception.

— Mortimer J. Adler, *How to Read a Book*.

drinking telephone linesman, a Washington internship, and CEO of oil-fields supplier Halliburton which linked him with the military-industrial-complex that certainly has not diminished since the soldier-president Dwight Eisenhower defined it.

The latter phases of the Bale performance, it must be added, are an epic of forcefulness over what looks like half-a-hundredweight of latex make-up.

No latex for Amy Adams only multi-faceted talent as Mary Cheney. She got her husband onto the yellow brick road that leads to the everlasting bonfire of the vanities (to fashion a Big Mac of metaphors).

Without look-like makeup Sam Rockwell etches a portrait of President George W. Bush, grateful for the guidance of a more dynamic politician.

As Cheney's mentor, Donald Rumsfeld, Steve Carell does not convince, giving the impression that he is preparing for a bio-pic of the goggle-eyed comedian Eddy Cantor.

In some ways the line-up of producers is the film's key element; it includes not only McKay but Brad Pitt and Will Ferrell, showbiz Democrats all, who may be aiming for a ricochet effect on the Trump presidency.

M★★★NFFV.

### The Favourite

History as a hoot goes back to Aristophanes and *The Clouds* (420BC). Director Yorgos (*The*

*Lobster*) Lanthimos, aided by writer Deborah Davis and Tony McNamara, perpetuates its outrageous spirit in his take on the court of Anne, Queen of Great Britain.

In the royal role, Olivia Colman does an unforgettable turn. But it is not peerless: Rachel Weisz attends as Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough and Emma Stone enters as Abigail Hill, intent on rising.

Rabbits, surrogates for the queen's many miscarried children, proliferate with the sub-plots which include Lesbian affairs (putative) involving her majesty, Sarah and Abigail. The women's behavior is complemented by the peacockery of the men such as m'lord Robert Harley (Nicholas Hoult).

The movie evaporates on its excess, trailing the question: how does this square with reports of actresses being persuaded to enact the fantasies of powerful male directors?

And what of the poet and pardoned priest-killer Francois Villon's remark: 'Brothers in humanity who live after us, let not your hearts be hardened against us, for, if you take pity on us poor ones, God, will be more likely to have mercy on you. But pray God that he may be willing to absolve us all.'

MA15+★★★NFFV.

### Sometimes Always Never

Clever's the word for director Carl Hunter's melancholy comedy – clever enough to have been conjured by Harry Houdini – the only problem: you need to have a Mensa-level I.Q. to follow the feints of Frank Cottrell Boyce's script.

In default, there's always Bill Nighy, playing Alan, a tailor and Scrabble addict, searching for a long-lost son while oblivious to the needs of his other son Peter (Sam Riley).

Nighy appears to give only absent-minded attention to his character, possibly because he is preoccupied as executive producer.

Jenny Agutter and Tim McInerney enter as Margaret and Arthur, other Scrabble addicts. Alice Lowe is Peter's wife, Sue, Louis Healy his son Jack (to whom Alan

teaches the courtship value of a well-cut suit).

Impossible to refrain from praising Alexis Sayle, playing a pal who yells – to waken us up.

Is there a sequel in it? Perhaps not. But there could be a variation involving Tiddleywinks rather than Scrabble which would ensure more action.

Running time 87 minutes (although it does seem longer, result of the Sam Beckett dialogue pauses).  
PG★★★SFFV.

### Can You Ever Forgive Me?

The title is from a memoir by Lee Israel, author of a biography of Estée Lauder which did not sell like the subject's hand cream. Result: while trying to negotiate an advance for another biography, Lee Israel is reduced to pilfering and selling a personal letter from Katherine Hepburn.

In time, Israel supplements this with forgeries, sold with the aid of Jack Hock. Here director Marielle Heller, by casting Melissa McCarthy as Lee Israel and Richard E Grant as Hock, creates one of the great comedy partnerships, McCarthy wiping away all traces of her madcap persona, Grant retaining more than a squalid whiff of Withnail from his star-crossed debut with Paul McGann in *Withnail and I* (1987).

Marvellously, cinematographer Brandon Trost evokes the bookshops of New York which specialise in rare literary works and letters.

The scriptwriters Nicole Holofcener and Jeff Whitty should resist any offers to do a sequel. Like *Withnail and I*, *Can You Ever Forgive Me?* is a one-off satire on that chronic condition *cacoethes scribendi* – the itch to write.

M★★★NFFV.

### Mary Poppins Returns

The author PL Travers objected to the intrusion of cartoon penguins in the Walt Disney version starring Julie Andrews (1966). Director Rob Marshall directs the current version, starring Emily Blunt.

With co-writers David Magee and John DeLuca, not only does the musical lack hit songs, it is over-cartooned to the point of a Royal

Doulton Circus, possibly the longest product placement in film history, if we exclude Charlie Chaplin's plug for the poultry industry in *The Gold Rush*.

Instead of Dick Van Dyke chimney sweep, we get the nimble Lin-Manuel, lamp lighter, possibly a reference to RL Stevenson's Learie the Lamplighter.

But Dick Van Dyke does dance in to save the day when the plots threaten to overwhelm the new-generation Banks family, headed by Ben Whishaw.

That said, the Marshall version does work for the millennial generation which is the Disney Company pan-franchise objective.

In a further remake, your reviewer's pick for Mary Poppins would be Sarah Snook, who could combine the mix of traditional nanny with that of the outback governess Travers would have met before she took off for England, home and best-sellerdom.

G★★★SFFV.

### Cold War (Zimna wojna)

Cold indeed. So cold that director Pawel Pawlikowsky and cinematographer Lukasz Zal might have shot it through lenses made of ice.

Pawlikowski's story line, co-written with Janusz Glowacki and Piotr Borkowski, concerns a pianist Wiktor (Tomasz Kot) assigned to select singers for a choir to enhance the folk traditions of Communist Poland.

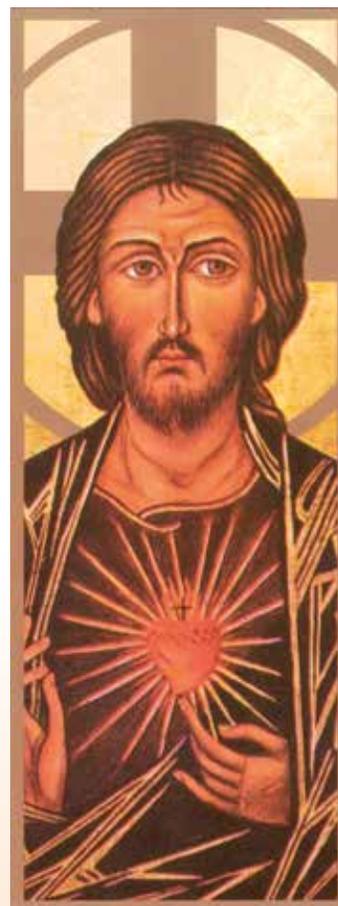
His principal choice is Zula, played with incandescent charm by Joanna Kulig. Their love affair amid party constraints and corruption separates and re-unites them in Warsaw, Paris and Berlin.

Yet for all its skill, the film, like a great fir, has a hollow core; night clubs symbolise anti-Communism as the cabarets of Berlin were deemed symbolic of anti-Naziism; in fact, it was movements like the White Rose which in true faith resisted Naziism.

Consequence: an ending in a ruined church which goes against the faith that carried the Poles to freedom.

M★★★NFFV.

## THE VOCATION OF AN MSC PRIEST OR BROTHER



**What's life for?**

**Why was I born?**

**What is the greater purpose  
and meaning of my life?**

**How am I meant to be of service?**

We follow Christ who 'loves with a human heart' It is this love in which we have learned to believe.

**Will you make known this  
same love; the gentleness and  
compassion, the patience and  
the mercy of the heart of Jesus!**

**Will you do this?**

Are you being asked 'to be on earth the heart of God,' to be a Missionary of the Sacred Heart of Jesus [MSC] Priest or Brother?

CONTACT US.

(FR) F. DINEEN, MSC

fjdineen@misacor.org.au

Tel: 02 9665 8999

PO Box 252 Coogee NSW 2034

www.misacor.org.au

2019

*This year, Australia's  
oldest Catholic Magazine*

# ANNALS

Australasia

*Celebrates its 130<sup>th</sup> Birthday*

### Some of our popular features:

- \* Catholic Culture
- \* Catholic History
- \* Catholic Life
- \* Moral Issues
- \* The Media
- \* Social Comment
- \* Church and State
- \* Politics and Religion
- \* Australian History
- \* Other Religions
- \* Book and Movie Reviews



**Subscribe  
Today**

Telephone: +61-2-9662-7894

Mail: The Manager, Annals Australasia

P.O. Box 13, Kensington NSW 2033

**Standard \$33.00  
Pensioner \$26.00**

Visa/Mastercards accepted. Please make cheques payable to:

The Manager, *Annals* Australasia

See inside *Annals* for Order Form