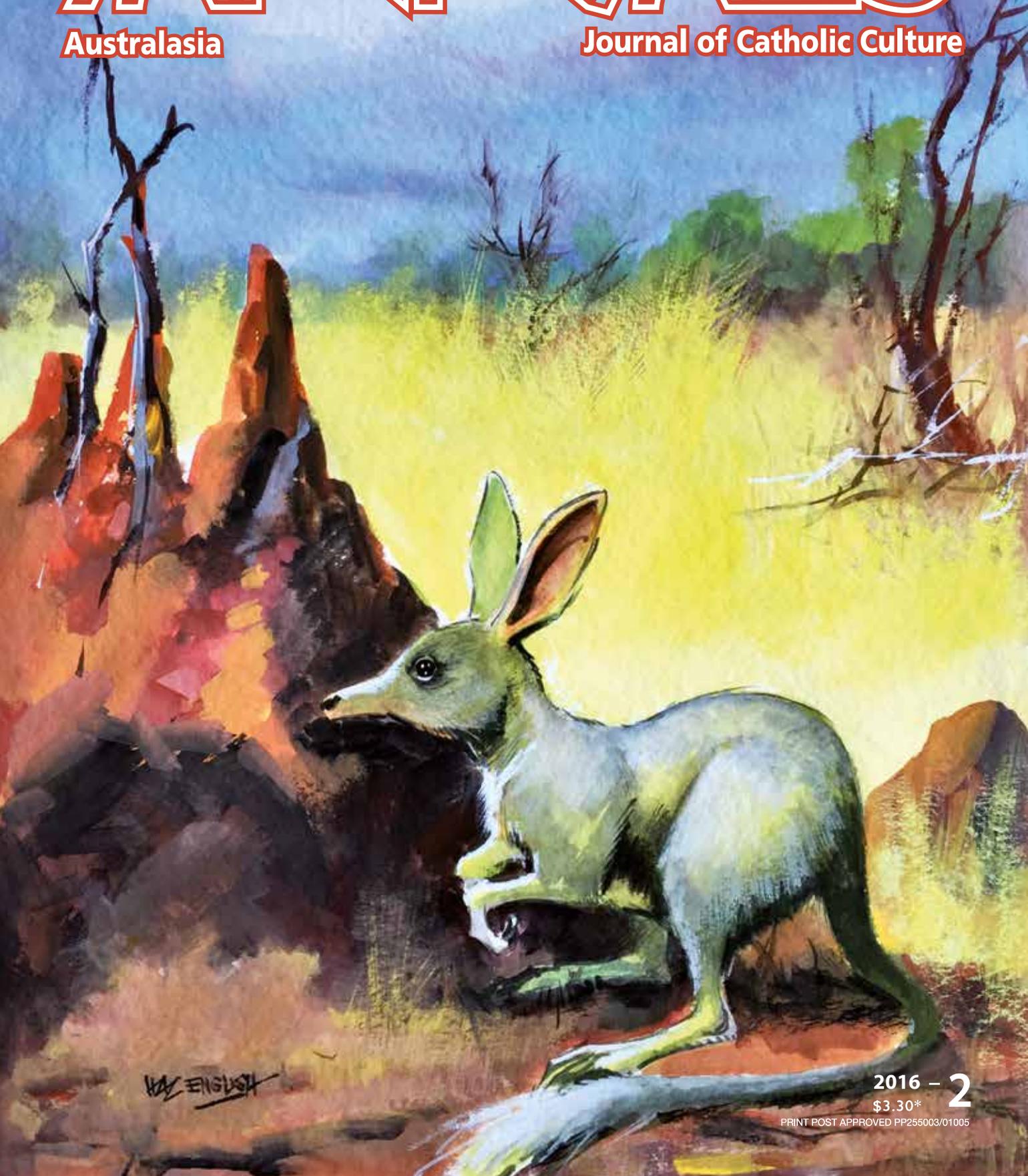


ANNALS

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Journal of Catholic Culture



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ANNALS AUSTRALASIA

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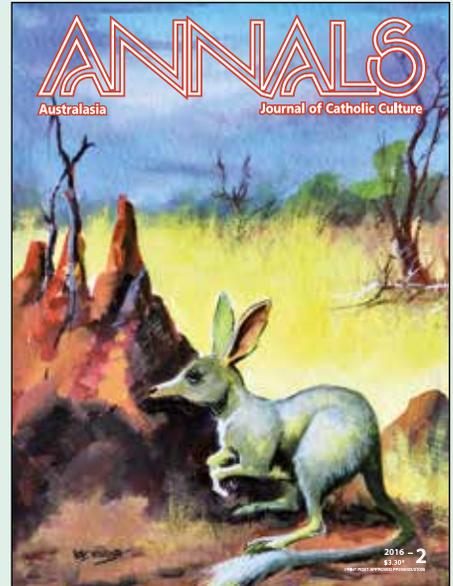
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[Sunday readings at Mass: Year C / Weekday readings at Mass: Year II]

Australia's Oldest Catholic Magazine

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Front Cover: Our cover this month depicts a bilby, an Australian nocturnal marsupial also called a rabbit-bandicoot. The name bilby is from the Yuwaalaraay aboriginal language of northern New South Wales, and means 'long-nosed rat'. The bilby is easily recognized not only by its long nose, but also by its long ears and long tail. Like the koala, it doesn't drink water; it gets its moisture from food. It makes extensive tunnel systems, and lives in burrows up to 2 metres deep. The female's pouch faces backwards so that it doesn't get filled with dirt when she digs. The bilby's gestation period is from 12-14 days, the shortest of all mammals. The bilby is endangered. Our cover was painted by Hal English, one of Australia's best known figure artists. For six years, until he died unexpectedly in 1986, Hal produced all the artwork for Annals Australasia. Self taught, he was a master of pen and ink, line and wash, water colour and oils. May he rest in peace.

Cover : Hal English [1913-1986]

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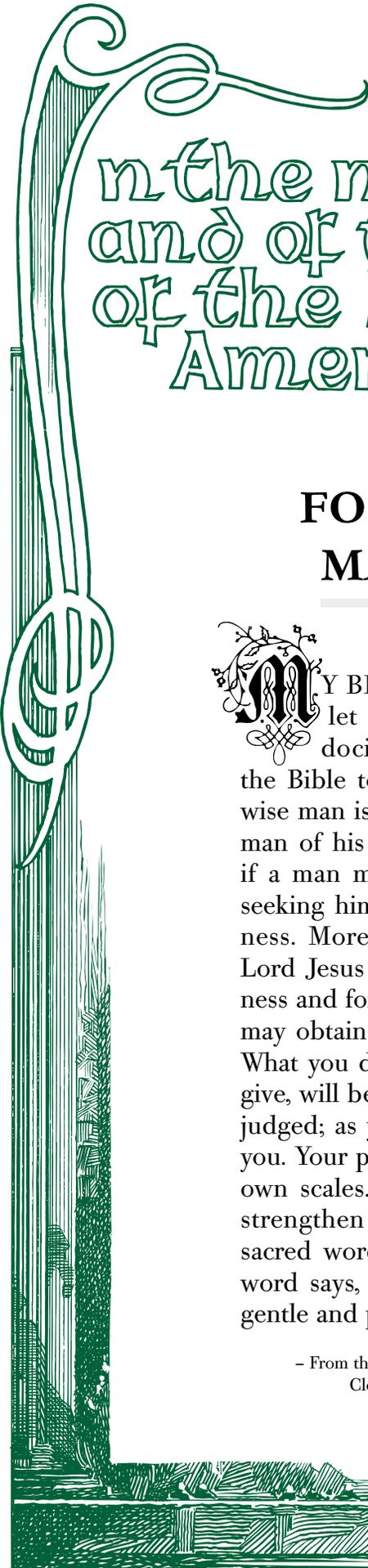
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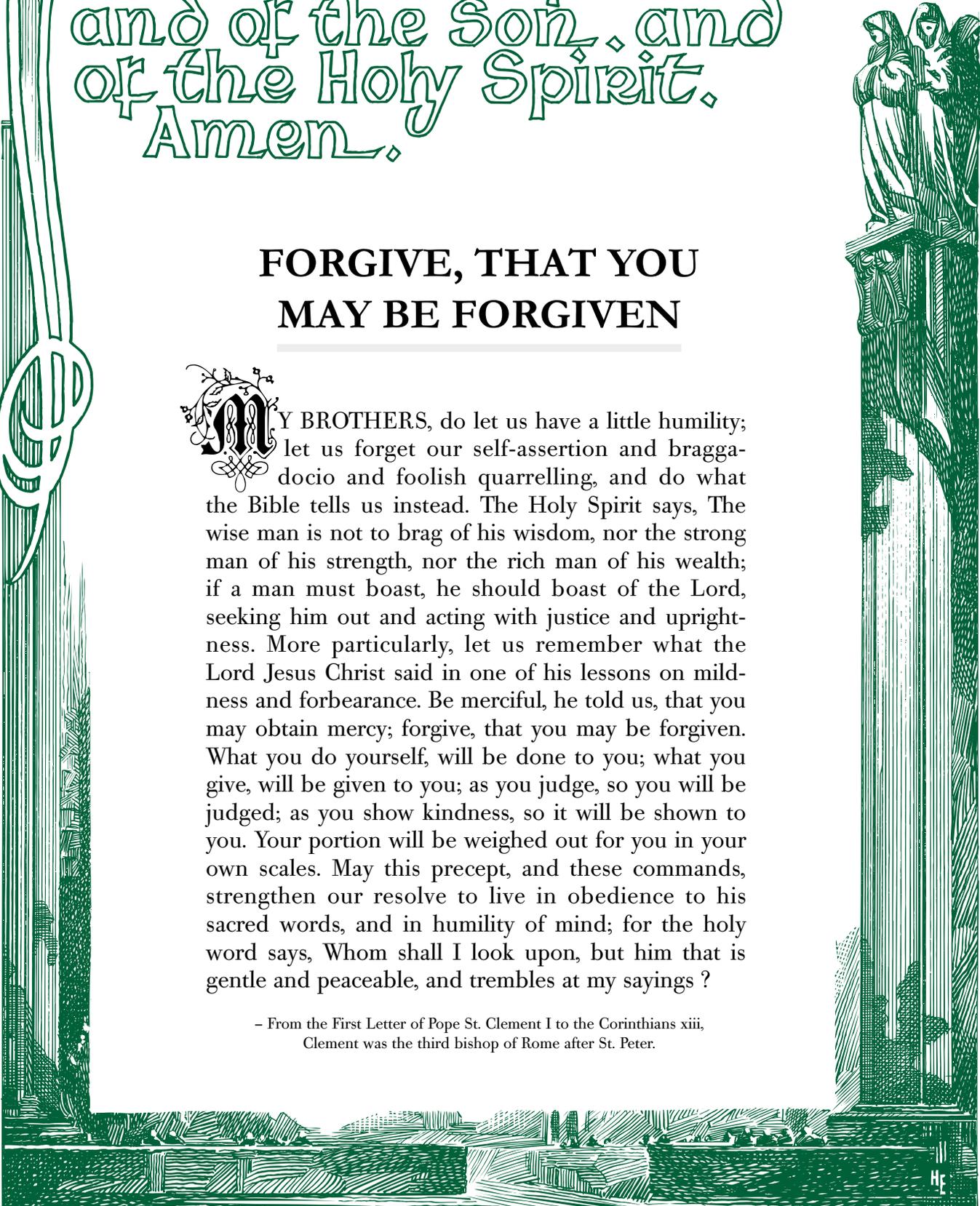
BY this
love you
have for one
another,
everyone will
know that
you are my
disciples.

– Jesus, from the Gospel
of St John, 13, 35.



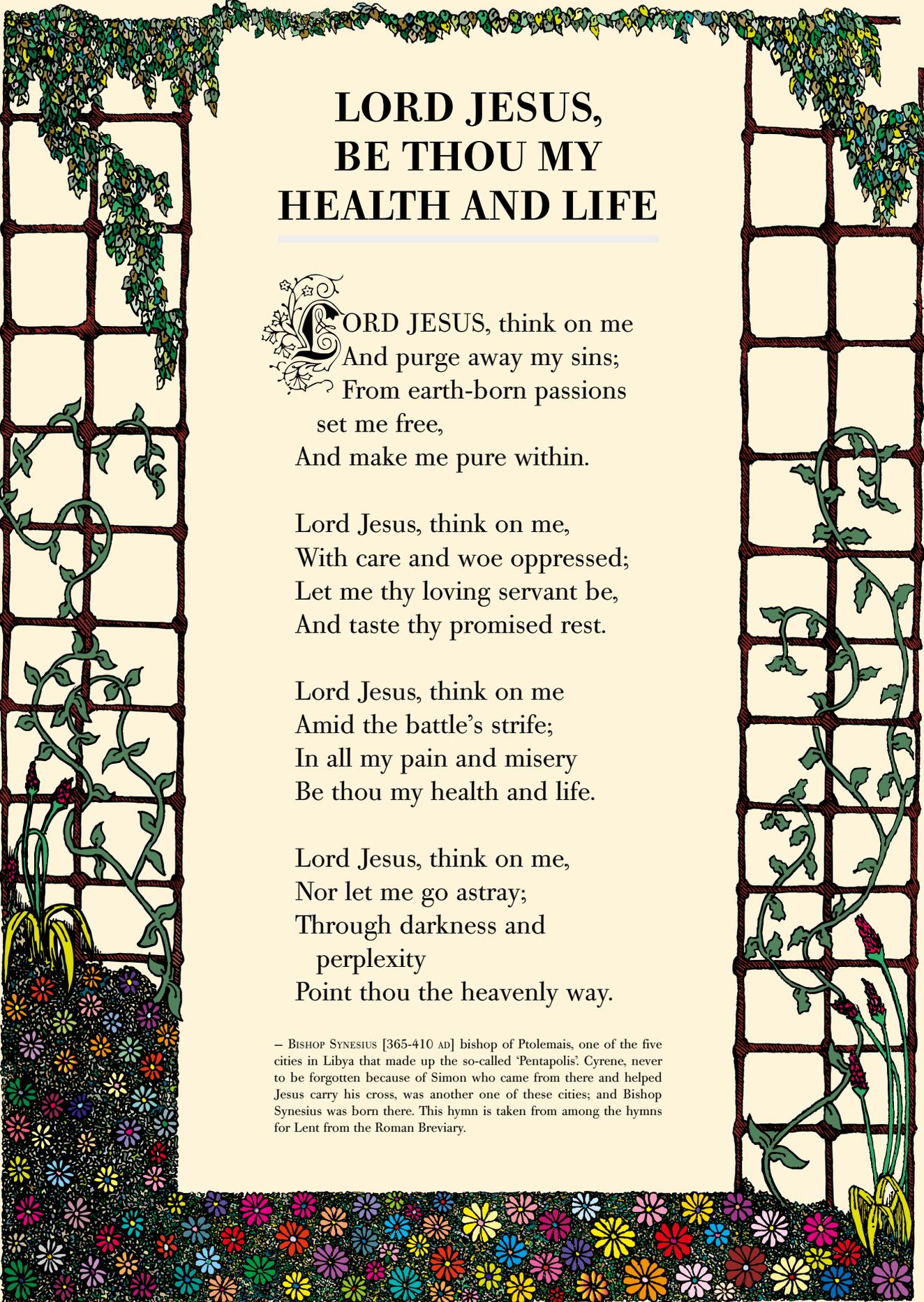
In the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and
of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

FORGIVE, THAT YOU MAY BE FORGIVEN



MY BROTHERS, do let us have a little humility; let us forget our self-assertion and braggadocio and foolish quarrelling, and do what the Bible tells us instead. The Holy Spirit says, The wise man is not to brag of his wisdom, nor the strong man of his strength, nor the rich man of his wealth; if a man must boast, he should boast of the Lord, seeking him out and acting with justice and uprightness. More particularly, let us remember what the Lord Jesus Christ said in one of his lessons on mildness and forbearance. Be merciful, he told us, that you may obtain mercy; forgive, that you may be forgiven. What you do yourself, will be done to you; what you give, will be given to you; as you judge, so you will be judged; as you show kindness, so it will be shown to you. Your portion will be weighed out for you in your own scales. May this precept, and these commands, strengthen our resolve to live in obedience to his sacred words, and in humility of mind; for the holy word says, Whom shall I look upon, but him that is gentle and peaceable, and trembles at my sayings ?

- From the First Letter of Pope St. Clement I to the Corinthians xiii,
Clement was the third bishop of Rome after St. Peter.



LORD JESUS, BE THOU MY HEALTH AND LIFE

LORD JESUS, think on me
And purge away my sins;
From earth-born passions
set me free,
And make me pure within.

Lord Jesus, think on me,
With care and woe oppressed;
Let me thy loving servant be,
And taste thy promised rest.

Lord Jesus, think on me
Amid the battle's strife;
In all my pain and misery
Be thou my health and life.

Lord Jesus, think on me,
Nor let me go astray;
Through darkness and
perplexity
Point thou the heavenly way.

— BISHOP SYNESIUS [365-410 AD] bishop of Ptolemais, one of the five cities in Libya that made up the so-called 'Pentapolis'. Cyrene, never to be forgotten because of Simon who came from there and helped Jesus carry his cross, was another one of these cities; and Bishop Synesius was born there. This hymn is taken from among the hymns for Lent from the Roman Breviary.

The Catholic Church has clear and challenging teachings on chastity, birth control, abortion, marriage, paedophilia and homosexuality. ... Despite the present climate of bitterness and criticism, the Church, and that means especially the bishops, must hold the line as far as her teachings are concerned.

REFLECTIONS ON THE ROYAL COMMISSION

Whatever happened to Presumption of Innocence?

By Paul Stenhouse



lost?

This axiom has come up frequently during the long-running case against the Catholic Church being waged by the Royal Commission into Institutional Response to child abuse.

The Commission's parameters extend very widely, to 'public and private institutions including child-care, cultural, educational, religious, sporting and other institutions [that] provide important services and support for children and their families'.¹

That abuse has occurred is undeniable and deplorable. That its victims deserve every sympathy and help is unquestioned. But that its causes are to be found in the Catholic Church's doctrinal and disciplinary structures is a gross over-simplification of a complex issue.

While rightly demanding justice from the Catholic Church, her critics allow her none. If she pays compensation to alleged victims she is accused

of giving 'hush money'. If she challenges the case in the courts, she is accused of forcing alleged victims to relive their ordeal in the full-glare of court proceedings.

The Catholic Church has clear and challenging teachings on chastity, birth control, abortion, marriage, paedophilia and homosexuality. Many people, including 'liberal' Catholics, disagree with some of these teachings.

Despite the present climate of bitterness and criticism, the Church, and that means especially the bishops, must hold the line as far as her teachings are concerned.

'Scrutiny' or 'Grilling'

The perception of many Australians is that the Catholic Church – in the person of Cardinal George Pell, former Archbishop of Melbourne and Sydney – is being especially targeted by the Commission.

John Lyons, writing recently in *The Australian* apparently appointed himself an adjunct Commissioner of the Royal commission and handed down his decision in an article headed as unambiguously as possible: 'George Pell a dead duck now, if not before'.²

He was referring to the Cardinal's testimony given recently over four days in Rome.

As those four days of relentless cross-examination of Cardinal Pell by the Royal commission into child abuse concluded, I admit to having been overwhelmed by a sense of frustration.

Despite strident sceptics, that the Cardinal's health was genuinely poor may be gauged by what he stood to



Picture: Catholic Communications, Sydney

lose by not returning to Australia. He would have known that having to appear by video link, instead of returning and appearing in person, would work to his disadvantage.

TV has never treated him kindly – or, if I may put that another way, it has never been used to treat him kindly.

Had he been well-enough to return, he would undoubtedly have received the same treatment from his interrogators, or from the media, but he may well have had an opportunity to be seen and heard by the Australian public in a less prejudicial fashion.

For prejudicial it was. Over those nineteen hours, or was it twenty, anyone stalwart enough to watch the grilling of the Cardinal on video over the four days – and I confess to not having watched it all – would have seen mainly his image. For hours, and hours.

At times he struggled to reach the mike, and the strain on his face spoke of the inner struggles that he had to deal with – having been cast as the defendant in what could best be described as a grotesque quasi-courtroom version of so-called ‘Reality’ TV.

Knowing him, and I am proud to admit to being his friend, he always thinks well of others – no matter what. He would probably have expected to be treated justly or at least fairly, by the Commission; and, despite the plethora of occasions when they never bothered to hide their bile, even by the media.

This hardly ever happened. The four days were, at least for this observer, more like a session of the English *Star Chamber* in late Tudor times – itself the beneficiary of cover ups by some historians – than what we have come to expect from a modern Royal Commission.

An editorial in *The Australian* resorted to euphemisms – calling the interrogation ‘scrutiny,’ and describing the manner in which it was conducted as ‘rigorous.’³

Along with others, may I say, I found the interrogation more like ‘grilling’ and ‘hammering’; and the

The wrong place

A MAN ... has to find some guidance in the past if he is to get any good in the future. What he positively knows in any case, is the complete collapse of the present. Now that is the exact truth about the thing so often rebuked as a romantic and unreal return of modern men to mediaeval things. They suppose they have taken a wrong turning because they know they are in the wrong place. To know that, it is necessary not to idealise the mediaeval world, but merely to realise the modern world. It is not so much that they suppose the mediaeval world was above the average as that they feel sure the modern world is below the average.

– G. K. Chesterton, *The New Jerusalem*, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, London [undated] p.201

manner in which it was conducted, ‘relentless’ and ‘draining’.

The Cardinal did not appear to be being cross-examined as a non-hostile witness; he seemed to be treated like an accused.

Is this unprecedented? I suspect not. If the cross-examination reflects normal custom in Royal Commissions, then one wonders about the objectivity of their findings, and their value.

My impression of those four days was that they were a sad reflection on what Australia has become.

Yet, while the media generally maintained their poor record of undisguised bias and hypocritical denunciation of a victim whom they ‘reduced to the crudest caricature,’⁴ there were some distinguished exceptions. Among these were Miranda Devine, Gerard Henderson, Chris Kenny, Tess Livingstone, Andrew Bolt and Alan Jones.

Australia’s Higher Standards

The editorial to which I referred above, noted that in dealing with child abuse ‘today’s standards

thankfully are far higher than those of decades ago’. But are they?

In terms of the Catholic Church’s protocols first set in place in 1996 by Cardinal Pell as Archbishop of Melbourne, they are a genuine advance.

But in terms of our secular Australian society, its political, cultural and educational structures and the media, and how those institutions deal with child abuse, the situation worsens daily.

None of us should be indifferent to the myriad ways in which harm is done to our children, to all vulnerable people and ultimately to the whole of society.

For instance, the headline in *The Sunday Telegraph* ‘Lessons in cross-dressing and sex for toddlers at kindergarten,’ should alert readers that Australian children are being manipulated. Yet we are told that infants ‘will be taught about sex, sexuality and cross-dressing’ in a national programme to be rolled out in child-care centres next month.⁵

Abortion is an attack on the human person of the most immutable kind. In 2005 the Department of Health and Ageing estimated that there are approximately 83,000 abortions in Australia each year. This number equates to almost one abortion for every 2.8 births. However, the exact numbers of abortions are extremely difficult to obtain.⁶

Pornography – readily available online and accessible by children – is yet another threat to childhood innocence. Liz Walker was only six years old when an older girl from up the street squashed in next to her on the school bus and excitedly whispered ‘Hey do you want to see something?’ It was a magazine she found under her brother’s bed and full of graphic pornography. ... She started looking at porn every afternoon after school, and trying out the scenarios she saw on other children. Her early sexualisation saw her lose her virginity at 12 and have multiple sexual partners during her teens.⁷

I do not say that we should not judge the Past, or learn from past errors; but we should not think ourselves superior, or that we are better able to conduct our affairs than people were able to do in their time.

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

By Tony Evans



HERE CAN be few of us who have not wished at one time or another to be given second sight and see into the future. Thus we might be able to avoid our own mistaken actions, or warn others to avoid great mistakes in human affairs.

And yet such second sight is rarely comfortable for those few gifted in this way. History is littered with examples of how those privileged few who are gifted with seeing into the future, but are not believed, in some cases are even punished for doing so.

Remember the Trojans who taunted the Seer, Laocoön, for warning them about the gift of the horse and how it was not to be trusted. The Trojans paid an awful price for not listening to that advice, but so also did Laocoon. He was, in a sense, right at the wrong time. Greek wisdom seems to be warning us about the dangers of being right at the wrong time.

Similarly in more recent history, Churchill was derided and vilified when he doggedly warned about the Nazi threat, and begged the House of Commons to sanction rearming Britain in 1938-39. Luckily for us all, he was believed just in time, but he made enemies as a result.

And yet again, Belloc clearly warned in 1950 of what he saw as

has never been recognised by the Academy as a serious historian. And yet he is so often proved right in many of his historical assertions. The lesson seems to be that it's not enough to be right, you are ignored by public opinion even if you are right, but right at the wrong time. Seeing into the future therefore is not to be recommended for the faint-hearted.

You might think that seeing into the Past is lot easier and a more accurate occupation. But this, too, is fraught with dangers and inaccuracies as a glance at the battles raged by respectable historians – and even would-be historians – will clearly show.

Can we really understand the Past – I mean, *really understand* the thinking and the way people felt in the Past? We all think we do, but I for one feel sure we do not. It was the much celebrated English writer, L. P. Hartley in one of his stories who gave us the most famous line: “The Past is a foreign country; they do things differently there.”¹

But Belloc again put his most accurate finger on the problem of depicting the Past: “The standing error which warps nearly all effort at



Pic: David Jennings

Goldsmiths shall beat you/A great golden ring,/Peacocks shall bow to you,
Little boys sing./ Oh, and sweet girls will/Festoon you with may;/
Time, you old gipsy, Why hasten away?

the greatest threat to peace in the future being the rise of militant Islam. For his pains, poor Belloc

historical vision is the error of reading our own times unto the Past.”²

It is almost impossible to avoid reading our own times into the Past, to clear our minds of modern experiences and modern technologies and modern thought, when attempting to write any account of long past events and peoples. We forget that people of any age lived in the present – *their present*. They had only their own experiences and limited knowledge to guide them. How can words portray accurately a concept of the old consciousness, the soul, the sense, the horizon, the vision of individuals in whose minds more than half the things that make up the modern world, were, at the time we are writing about, then non-existent?

I do not say that we should not judge the Past, or learn from past errors; but we should not think ourselves superior, or that we are better able to conduct our affairs than people were able to do in their time.

Our knowledge, like theirs, is limited too. We are people related to the dead, a mere speck in the continuum of time. Chesterton wrote about The Democracy of the Dead – by which he meant the debt we owe our ancestors. We are living in the present just as the dead lived in *their* present, and one day we will be written about and judged accordingly. What will future historians write of us when we are dead and described as living in *their* Past? Let us hope they will not be too dismissive of our efforts to understand the world.

Paradoxically, the Present can be as confusing in many respects as both the Past and the Future. While we may know the Past by reading history – even if somewhat imperfectly – and we can speculate on the future from present facts carefully observed, we have only a hazy grasp of the Present because it moves so quickly away from us.

Often speculation about the Future can be accurate but the

Naturally

THE NEXT two travellers were naturally classed together; merely because they were both English lecturers returning from an American tour. One of them was described as Leonard Smyth, apparently a minor poet, but something of a major journalist; long-headed, light-haired, perfectly dressed, and perfectly capable of looking after himself. The other was a rather comic contrast, being short and broad, with a black, walrus moustache, and as taciturn as the other was talkative. But as he had been both charged with robbing and praised for rescuing a Roumanian Princess threatened by a jaguar in his travelling menagerie, and had thus figured in a fashionable case, it was naturally felt that his views on God, progress, his own early life, and the future of Anglo-American relations would be of great interest and value to the inhabitants of Minneapolis and Omaha.

— G.K. Chesterton, *The Complete 'Father Brown,'* 'The Curse of the Golden Cross.'

Present is so fleeting we can hardly know it before it is gone. Today's Present is already the Past tomorrow; every moment lived too soon becomes the Past. Ralph Hodgson's poem visualises TIME as a gypsy caravan hurtling down the ages and in spite of our entreaties, it will not stop "even for one day".

The New Baal

OUR hypnotic enslavement to the numerical aspects of reality has dulled our perception of non-quantitative moral values; the resultant end-justifies-the-means ethics may be a major factor in our undoing. Conversely, the example of Plato's obsession with perfect spheres, of Aristotle's arrow propelled by the surrounding air, the forty-eight epicycles of Canon Koppernigk and his moral cowardice, Tycho's mania of grandeur, Kepler's sun-spokes, Galileo's confidence tricks, and Descartes' pituitary soul, may have some sobering effect on the worshippers of the new Baal, lordling it over the moral vacuum with his electronic brain.

— Arthur Koestler, *The Sleepwalkers: A History of Man's Changing Vision of the Universe*, Hutchinson of London, 1961, pp.541-2.

TIME, you old gipsy man,
Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
Just for one day?
All things I'll give you
Will you be my guest,
Bells for your jennet
Of silver the best,
Goldsmiths shall beat you
A great golden ring,
Peacocks shall bow to you,
Little boys sing.
Oh, and sweet girls will
Festoon you with may;
Time, you old gipsy,
Why hasten away?³

Past, Present and Future are mysterious concepts, the first haunting yet influential; the second so fleeting we cannot catch its tail and the third, too dangerous to know accurately.

May God guide all three in our lives!

TONY EVANS was a producer with the ABC for many years and is now a freelance writer living in the U.K. He has published four historical biographies, the latest being a biography of William Wardell. The beautiful St John's College within the University of Sydney, founded in 1858, is the oldest Catholic University College in Australia, and first Catholic University College to be built in the English speaking world since the reformation; it is also one of the cultural treasures bequeathed to Australian Catholics by William Wardell its architect. Other treasures, designed and built by Wardell, include the Catholic Cathedrals of St Patrick in Melbourne, and St Mary, in Sydney.

1. L.P Hartly, *The Go-between*. Opening sentence
2. H. Belloc, *Milton*, p.5.
3. 'Time, You Old Gipsy Man,' *Ralph Hodgson, Poems*, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1924. Ralph Hodgson [1871-1962]. His poem 'The Bells of Heaven' was ranked 85 in Classic FM's One Hundred Poems.

THE 'STATION CHURCHES' OF ROME

Fasting helps us to strengthen our spiritual lives by weakening the attractiveness of physical pleasure. It can strengthen our self-control and sharpen our perception. Even the mildest hunger pains can create an extra space for God and turn us gently, if slightly, away from our self-centredness.

THE LENTEN FAST

By George Cardinal Pell



EVERY YEAR at Cathedral House the Archbishop of Sydney would hold a multi-faith dinner on one evening to break the Ramadan

fast of the Muslims.

The Sunni mufti would regularly sit on the archbishop's left, while the senior Shiite was on his right alongside the Jewish leaders, Buddhists and Hindus. The Eastern Catholic churches were always represented, with the Orthodox churches and all the Protestants, except the evangelical Anglicans, who did not then participate in interfaith dialogue.

On one occasion the guest speaker did not arrive and we were obliged to talk to one another for the length of the meal. It was a pleasant evening. Somehow we began to discuss the different ways we fasted in the different communities. You will probably not be surprised to hear that the only group which fasted less than the Catholics was the liberal Protestants.

My Irish-Australian great-grandmother fasted on black tea with bread and dripping as her only food on the Fridays of Lent, but I know no one who does this today.

Reflecting the priorities of our Western society many more people diet for health reasons, than those who fast because fasting with prayer and almsgiving make up the essential Lenten trio of activities,

FOR FIFTY-FOUR days, from Ash Wednesday until the second Sunday of Easter, ancient basilicas and churches of Rome were, and still are, designated as *Station Churches* ['Statio' in Latin means a place for stopping, referring to the ancient custom of Catholics going in procession on 'Station Days,' or 'Fasting Days' and 'stopping' at the tomb of a martyr and attending Mass at the 'statio' for the saint]. Every year the faithful are invited to attend Mass at a different church in Rome each day in Lent and in the Easter Octave. This homily was preached by Cardinal Pell in the Basilica of St Mary Major on the Esquiline Hill – the Station Church for the Wednesday in the first week of Lent – on February 17 this year.

which help us convert i.e. turn towards God, by repenting of our sins and selfishness.

In the first reading we hear how ancient Nineveh was threatened with destruction because of their sins, but turned to God on Jonah's call and proclaimed a fast, in which all of them great and small were involved. Because of their repentance God repented and forgave them. The city was spared.

In today's Gospel from Luke, Jesus is not as successful as Jonah

in converting his listeners, because they were looking in the wrong direction, seeking a sign, something miraculous, to remove the need for faith and penance. Despite the fact that there was something greater than Solomon with them, they did not repent.

What do we make of the practice of fasting? Is it a useful or even essential part of our Lenten striving for conversion, for coming closer to the good God through Christ, of our journey towards Easter? Or is it a practice from the past to be quietly set aside, because it is not life enhancing but a self-imposed diminishment?

This is an important question for each of us individually and for us as a collectivity. Jesus fasted, not perhaps as much as John the Baptist's disciples, but he fasted as Elijah and Moses had before him.

Patterns of fasting have changed for Christians over the centuries. Originally the Lenten fast was for only two days, when no food at all was consumed during the day and only later did the official period extend to forty days.

We probably need to fast, more than our immediate predecessors, because their lives were harder and shorter and we are often too interested in, and too dependent on, our creature-comforts.

Fasting helps us to strengthen our spiritual lives by weakening the attractiveness of physical pleasure. It can strengthen our self-control and sharpen our perception. Even



Painting by Giovanni Paolo Pannini, 1691-1765, of the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, originally built in AD 431 by Pope Sixtus III.

the mildest hunger pains can create an extra space for God and turn us gently, if slightly, away from our self-centredness.

The reestablishment of a widespread practice of Lenten fasting in our communities would also be a powerful, if low-key sign that Catholicism is about godliness and has an attractive and beautiful spiritual tradition of its own.

I commend you for your participation in the ancient tradition of daily Lenten Mass in a station Church as a preparation for Easter, a practice which predates even this fifth-century basilica, the first ever dedicated to our Lady, after the Council of Ephesus defined Mary as God-bearer.

We all know about the snow marking out the dimensions of the new church on this Esquiline Hill, which was then the most exclusive area in ancient Imperial Rome.

So Pope St. Sixtus III in 431 designed and built a church to outshine all its pagan rivals and especially the nearby temple of Juno. Legend also has it that the ceilings were decorated with the first gold from the new world of the Americas.

By any standards St. Mary Major is a beautiful building, joyful and life giving, a worthy place of worship for all those preparing to celebrate the death and resurrection of the Lord through prayer, almsgiving and fasting. It is no coincidence that all those who paint religious icons in the Eastern tradition are encouraged to fast while they paint. Goodness, beauty and asceticism are all facets of the Christian diamond.

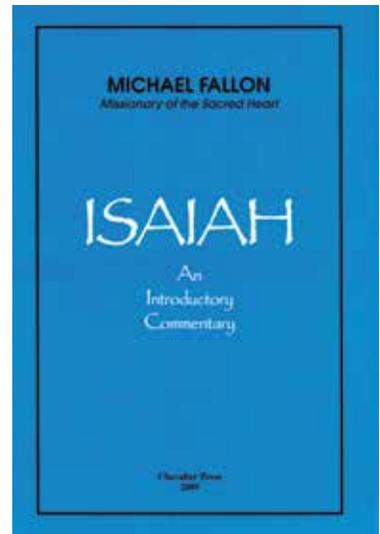
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shall be brought to you. ...
They shall bring gold and frankincense
and shall proclaim the praise of YHWH.'
— Isaiah 49, 18, 22.



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If physical cash does indeed become abolished 'cracking down on crime and tax avoidance' will be the most likely economic excuse yet consider the degree of control that would be placed on the lives of all of us by such a morally inexcusable action

OUR EVER SHRINKING PLANET

by Giles Auty



EARLY I am speaking metaphorically here, for presumably our long-suffering planet will continue to remain much the same size for the foreseeable future.

What I am referring to, in fact, is simply the proportion of our planet which may be reasonably safe – as well as remotely agreeable – even to visit in the future let alone to settle in permanently.

About a quarter of a century ago I first began – in the company of close friends – to look at our world both on a local and an international basis, as consisting of an ever-shrinking number of metaphorical 'islands'.

Such islands represented the diminishing areas where it might be both possible and even pleasant for people such as ourselves to live, both at that moment and for at least a number of years to come.

Quite often in the evenings my wife and I hold broadly similar discussions.

During our most recent debate – the little matter of weather apart – the Republic of Ireland rose, at least temporarily, to the top of our 'theoretical' international list on the grounds of still being very largely a Catholic country which, in spite of its small population, is also the

possessor of an unusually lengthy, heroic and arts-orientated history.

In the past the government there has even shown itself willing to attract writers and artists to its shores through favourable tax concessions. In the general context of the present day world that seems a very rare kind of initiative indeed.

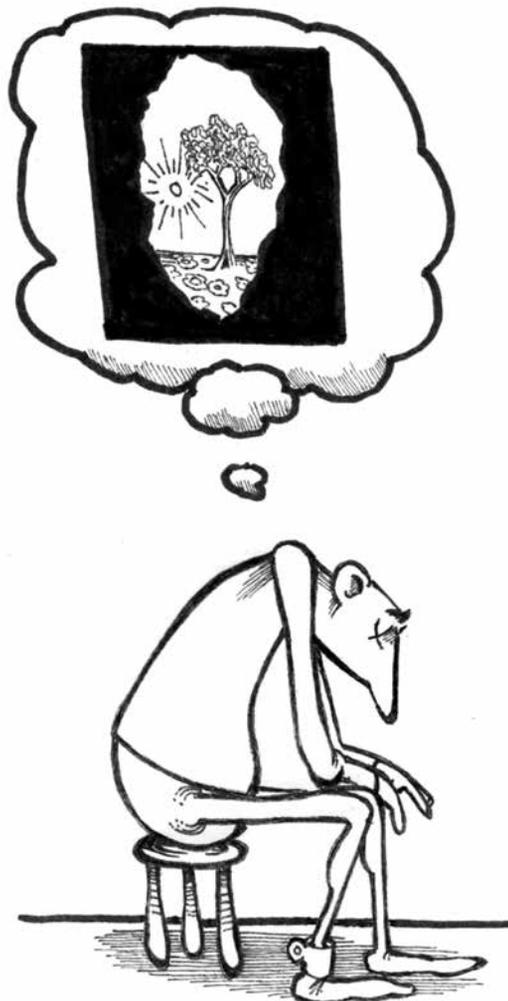
Rather closer to home, both Tasmania and New Zealand also offer some form of genuine appeal, I admit, not least in terms of offering rather less habitually rainy weather than Southern Ireland. Indeed the climate of Hobart is very similar to the weather where we currently live in the Upper Blue

Mountains of New South Wales. The current attraction of New Zealand for many Australians, on the other hand, possibly lies largely in some chance that they may not be taxed out of all existence there. Recently over 25,000 Australians have relocated permanently to the land of the long white cloud, drawn perhaps by an absence of stamp duty there, or of capital gains tax on property.

By lucky chance both my wife and I hold European passports which still permit residence in at least some of the mainland countries of Europe.

But where – if you do not happen to be a refugee or immigrant from North Africa or the Middle East – would you particularly wish to live in Europe today in the light of so many of the unpleasant events which have taken place there recently?

For fairly obvious reasons such refugees and immigrants find anywhere in Europe appealing and I am not entirely unsympathetic to their plight.



In search of a true Ecology

OUR TIMES are living a paradox. How can society – committed to preserving an Ecology of Nature – deliberately ignore the struggle that is going on to preserve the Human Ecology? It is true that ‘emancipated’ reason when it becomes destructive first attacks Nature, before attacking Man. Baby seals are protected while human babies are abandoned. Clean air is everywhere promoted, while no one feels free to combat the images and the texts of media which promote violence, or reduce human beings to the level of slaves. Peace is sung about all around the world while war reaches even to a mother’s womb through abortion. There is much talk about brotherhood among nations, while at the same time refusing to a child its inalienable right to know its biological parents, and to grow up with them. What response can we give to all the little ones, and the vulnerable, when they stand as our accusers? How long must we wait, how many people must die before the world embraces a true Ecology, understood as a quest for the good of ALL?

— Excerpt from the homily preached by Rev Fr Dom Jean Pateau OSB, Abbot of Notre Dame de Fontgombault, Feast of the Assumption, August 15, 2015. Translated by Paul Stenhouse, MSC.

First and foremost, of course, they have no desire at all to be killed, nor to starve in the lands where they have recently been living.

They may not understand anything whatsoever about the history of European civilisation nor how it came about nor the particularly vital role Christianity once played in that process – a role which can still be seen in the formation of a great many of Europe’s villages, towns and cities. Christianity similarly supplied the impetus behind many of Europe’s previous laws and charters which helped, in turn, to underwrite the continent’s very long history of commercial, social and cultural success.

Such refugees may similarly know little about the kind of progress and inventiveness which even relative social stability can encourage. Many have also, of course, been taught to hate Christians and Christianity more or less since birth. To many of them, of course, ours is simply not the ‘true’ faith although long ago it inspired the building of the six hundred great Gothic cathedrals and churches which adorn so many European towns and cities to this day.

Thus, when recent immigrants fired their guns at the roof of Cologne cathedral I fear most such had not even the slightest clue about what the great cathedrals of Cologne, Chartres and Canterbury, say, represent – nor about the customs, both religious and civil, which protect women in our societies and give them our automatic respect and protection.

Europe, in short, is as alien and unfamiliar to them as Manchuria, say, might very well be to me.

Luckily for me, however, I know much of Europe at least reasonably well.

Fifteen or twenty years ago I could have provided a very long list of places to which I would have been delighted to retire – and in all or most of which I would also, once, have felt thoroughly at home.

But then at one time I would also have felt reasonably confident about putting such money as I have or earn into the banks of most of those countries.

Indeed, having banks on which one could more or less rely was once a pre-requisite of living more or less anywhere.

In other words it is not just our available world which seems to have shrunk but also many of the expectations which once seemed

to make normal life some kind of possibility.

Money may indeed once have made our world go round yet now seems dangerously capable of bringing it to a halt.

Massive national as well as personal debt is now a prominent feature of much of ‘our’ post-GFC world. Indeed, the extremely low bank interest rates which most Australian television commentators thoughtlessly applaud are, of course, effectively paid for by more elderly citizens whose savings have often been effectively ravaged by the lowest bank deposit interest rates since the Second World War.

An American economist recently asked the following pertinent question: “If your boss poked his head round your office door and asked if you would mind awfully taking a 75% pay cut, how precisely might you feel? With bank interest rates falling by three quarters that is exactly the fate of many millions of people worldwide who had saved carefully and wisely over long periods for their retirements”.

The worlds of all such people will also, probably, have shrunk immeasurably now also in terms of recreational travel.

Yet, perhaps, while confined largely by now to their homes, they can catch up more easily than usual with a few items of instructive reading.

How about *Too Big to Fail* by Andrew Ross Sorkin for instance which gives a very accurate day by day account of the unfolding of the relatively recent Global Financial Crisis itself? As the blurb on the cover explains: “They were masters of the financial universe. They thought they were too big to fail. Yet they would bring the world to its knees, and be forced to fight to save the system – and themselves”.

And if the weather turns really ugly and makes even walking outside difficult for days on end, how about another tome: Steven G.Mandis’s *What Happened to Goldman Sachs*, a solid hardback which tells how and why that

particularly famous firm “changed from an ethical standard to a legal one”?

Dare one ask whether flight from any continuing notions of morality may also have been a contributory factor?

Former employees of that and other investment banks – who probably enjoy more influence on the fate of nations today than many elected governments – have no need to read such accounts, of course, for they already know the whys and wherefores of what went wrong, perfectly well.

At one time my professional experience as a writer was confined largely to cultural commentary where my views often deviated from the kind of fashionable orthodoxies which have proved fatal not just to the future of art but even to most continuing public interest in the subject.

For me art has frequently been looked on in much too narrow a way and the recent history of economic theory often seems to me now to be following the same unfortunate course. Too often it seems to get bogged down in the pettiness of party political disputes yet might it not possibly be that a moral dimension rather than merely a political one attaches itself – whether we like it or not – to virtually all transactions which involve money?

If theft and fraud are acknowledged crimes, why not

The Light of Truth is Dim

THE WHOLE course of Christianity from the first ... is but one series of troubles and disorders. Every century is like every other, and to those who live in it seems worse than all times before it. The Church is ever ailing ... Religion seems ever expiring, schisms dominant, the light of Truth dim, its adherents scattered. The cause of Christ is ever in its last agony ...

- Blessed John Henry Newman, *Via Media*
quoted Ian Ker, *John Henry Newman: a biography* [OUP, 1988] p. 144.

the virtual hijacking of the world's wealth on an absolutely epic scale?

It would be very sad indeed to see investment banks bring our world to its knees once again through fancy inventions such as debt-laden derivatives, negative interest rates or even the recently threatened abolition of physical money itself.

Our whole world is too interesting and basically too worthy a place to suffer such an undeserved indignity yet the total abolition of money as such may be much closer than you currently imagine.

If physical cash does indeed become abolished, ‘cracking down

on crime and tax avoidance’ will be the most likely economic excuse, yet consider the degree of control that would be placed on the lives of all of us by such a morally inexcusable action. *Digitalised serfdom* is possibly the best description I have heard so far of its likely consequence.

Fifty years ago the movement we know now as post-modernism began its assault on virtually every established Western tradition and principle all of which its promoters suggested had suddenly become irrelevant, wrong or simply out of date. Their brave new world would henceforward supersede the one we thought we knew in virtually every respect.

Post-colonialism, multiculturalism, gender issues, deconstruction, post-structuralism, political correctness, feminism, conceptual art, racism, relativism, Eurocentrism...do you want me to go on?

How about a little quote from Chesterton instead?

“The man who cannot believe his senses and the man who cannot believe anything else are both insane but their insanity is proved not by any error in their argument but by the manifest mistake of their whole lives”.

GILES AUTY was born in the UK and trained privately as a painter. He worked professionally as an artist for 20 years. Publication of his *The Art of Self Deception* swung his career towards criticism. He was art critic for *The Spectator* from 1984 to 1995. He continues to devote himself to his original love – painting. He is a regular contributor to *Annals*.



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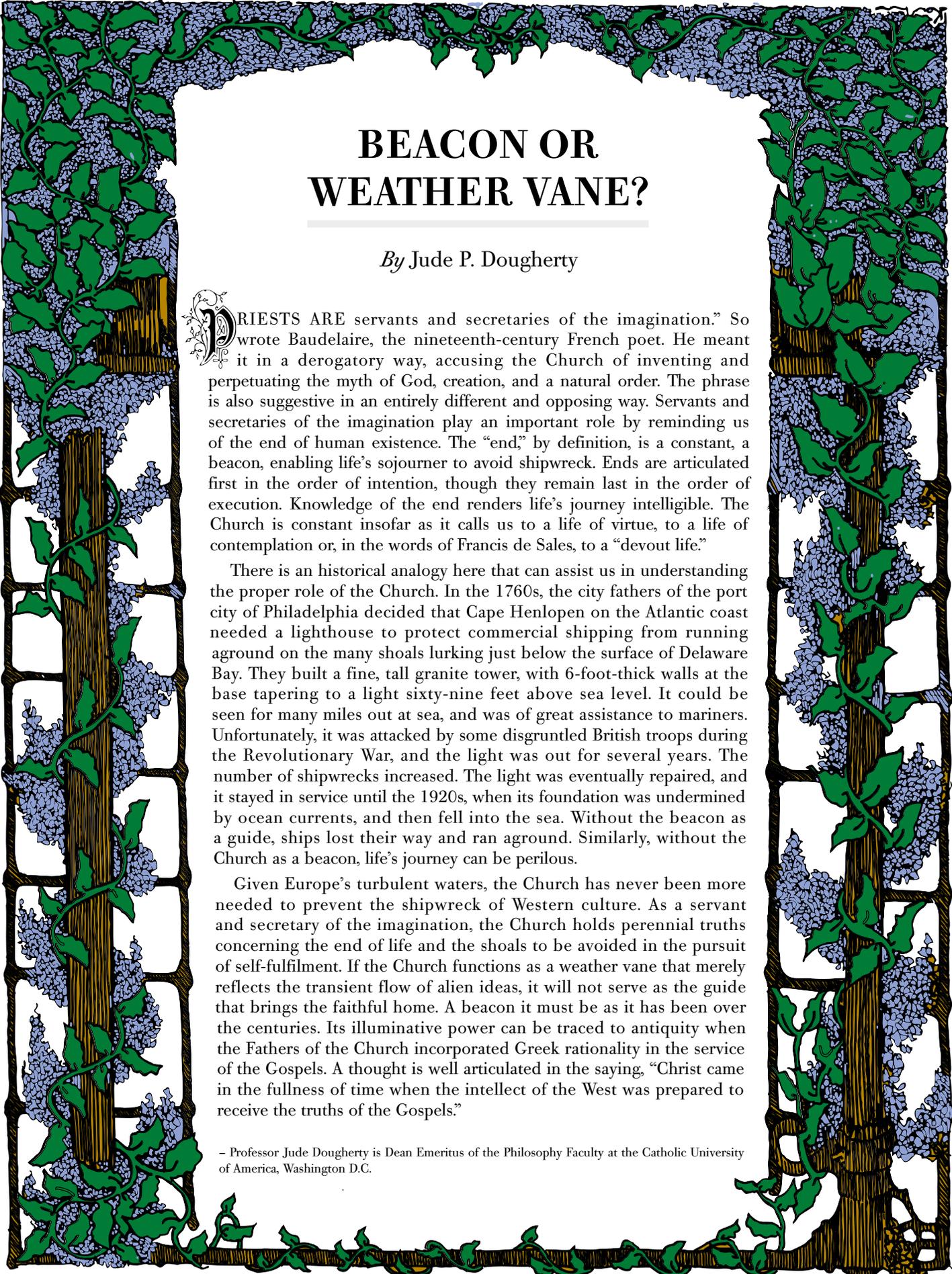
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BEACON OR WEATHER VANE?

By Jude P. Dougherty

PRIESTS ARE servants and secretaries of the imagination.” So wrote Baudelaire, the nineteenth-century French poet. He meant it in a derogatory way, accusing the Church of inventing and perpetuating the myth of God, creation, and a natural order. The phrase is also suggestive in an entirely different and opposing way. Servants and secretaries of the imagination play an important role by reminding us of the end of human existence. The “end,” by definition, is a constant, a beacon, enabling life’s sojourner to avoid shipwreck. Ends are articulated first in the order of intention, though they remain last in the order of execution. Knowledge of the end renders life’s journey intelligible. The Church is constant insofar as it calls us to a life of virtue, to a life of contemplation or, in the words of Francis de Sales, to a “devout life.”

There is an historical analogy here that can assist us in understanding the proper role of the Church. In the 1760s, the city fathers of the port city of Philadelphia decided that Cape Henlopen on the Atlantic coast needed a lighthouse to protect commercial shipping from running aground on the many shoals lurking just below the surface of Delaware Bay. They built a fine, tall granite tower, with 6-foot-thick walls at the base tapering to a light sixty-nine feet above sea level. It could be seen for many miles out at sea, and was of great assistance to mariners. Unfortunately, it was attacked by some disgruntled British troops during the Revolutionary War, and the light was out for several years. The number of shipwrecks increased. The light was eventually repaired, and it stayed in service until the 1920s, when its foundation was undermined by ocean currents, and then fell into the sea. Without the beacon as a guide, ships lost their way and ran aground. Similarly, without the Church as a beacon, life’s journey can be perilous.

Given Europe’s turbulent waters, the Church has never been more needed to prevent the shipwreck of Western culture. As a servant and secretary of the imagination, the Church holds perennial truths concerning the end of life and the shoals to be avoided in the pursuit of self-fulfilment. If the Church functions as a weather vane that merely reflects the transient flow of alien ideas, it will not serve as the guide that brings the faithful home. A beacon it must be as it has been over the centuries. Its illuminative power can be traced to antiquity when the Fathers of the Church incorporated Greek rationality in the service of the Gospels. A thought is well articulated in the saying, “Christ came in the fullness of time when the intellect of the West was prepared to receive the truths of the Gospels.”

— Professor Jude Dougherty is Dean Emeritus of the Philosophy Faculty at the Catholic University of America, Washington D.C.

The royal commission has hundreds of staff and many millions of dollars to spend on research. Yet Furness put a proposition to Pell without checking the contemporary editions of The Official Directory of the Catholic Church or even googling a map of Victoria.

PELL'S 'IMPLAUSIBLE' TESTIMONY NOT MET BY FACTS TO THE CONTRARY

By Gerard Henderson



THE EVIDENCE suggests that Justice Peter McClellan QC, AM, chairman of the Royal

Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, has undergone a legal conversion sometime during the past quarter of a century.

In 1991, Peter McClellan QC barrister at law (as he then was) wrote an article titled 'ICAC: A Barrister's Perspective,' in the journal *Current Issues in Criminal Justice*. This was a critique of the operation of the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption in particular. However, the barrister extended his comments to cover royal commissions in general.

McClellan wrote: 'In recent years there has been an increasing trend in government to invoke royal commissions of inquiry to investigate particular problems.

'The frequency of such inquiries and the sensational reporting which they have attracted has tended to create a belief in some people that this is an appropriate method of handling any matter of public controversy. This is a view expressed by the press.'

While recognising that 'royal commissions may affect great community good', McClellan argued that they might 'cause considerable harm to persons unfairly trapped by the blaze of sensationalist

publicity which can be created'. He concluded by maintaining that commissions of inquiry should accept 'that persons should only be convicted after due process in the relevant court'.

That was 1991. Last week McClellan presided over Cardinal George Pell's evidence to the royal commission's case studies into the Catholic diocese of Ballarat and archdiocese of Melbourne.

Remodelling Society

THE SECULARIZATION of European culture was accompanied by a kind of social apocalypticism which gave rise to a new type of social unrest. Political disturbances are as old as human nature. In every age misgovernment and oppression has been met by violence and disorder, but it is a new thing, and perhaps a phenomenon peculiar to our modern Western civilization, that men should work and think and agitate for the complete remodelling of society according to some ideal of social perfection. ... and it took very few years to transform the Rousseauian idealism of revolutionary France ... into Napoleonic and even Machiavellian realism.

— Christopher Dawson, *Progress and Religion*, Sheed and Ward, 1938, pp.240-242.

What turned out to be almost 20 hours of testimony across four days, via video link from Rome, was Pell's third appearance before McClellan and his commissioners. Pell also made a personal appearance at the 2013 Victorian parliamentary inquiry in Melbourne.

Gail Furness SC, counsel assisting the royal commission, acknowledged that the Prefect of Secretariat for the Economy for the Holy See did not have to give evidence since he lives in Rome. Pell volunteered to do so from Rome on two occasions over many, many hours.

Even so, the cardinal was cross-examined with seeming hostility by Furness, especially on the second day of the hearing. Moreover, McClellan made no effort to temper his counsel assisting's tone. On brief occasions, he even channelled Furness when addressing questions or statements to Pell.

From the start of the Rome hearings, it seemed that Furness was intent on blaming Pell for covering up any crime committed by any priest or brother if he happened to be anywhere near the vicinity of the offending.

Take the case of pedophile Mildura-based priest John Day, which is documented in the book *Unholy Trinity* by Denis Ryan and Peter Hoysted. The authors document how Day got away with child sexual abuse because of a cover-up by the Catholic bishops of Ballarat (initially James O'Collins

Implausible?

OLD LIGHT has been shed on the suggestion put to Cardinal George Pell during his deposition on 2 March by counsel assisting the Royal Commission into child sexual abuse, Gail Furness, that it was ‘implausible’ that the Catholic Education Office in Melbourne had not told him of complaints regarding the disturbing behaviour of Fr Peter Searson.

Archdiocesan commentary site *Catholic Talk* pointed to evidence tendered to the commission late last year by the former director of the Catholic Education Office of Melbourne, Monsignor Tom Doyle, in which Monsignor Doyle denied having told Cardinal Pell of concerns about Searson.

Commissioner Peter McClellan, on 26 November, asked Monsignor Doyle if he had gone to Cardinal Pell – then an auxiliary bishop of Melbourne – for help in dealing with complaints against Searson.

‘You’ve got reports of extraordinary behaviour, an archbishop is not responding and you’re not sure whether you went to the regional bishop?’ asked Commissioner McClellan.

Monsignor Doyle: ‘I would have thought it of no use to go to the regional bishop.’

Peter McClellan: ‘Why not?’

Monsignor Doyle: ‘Well if I couldn’t convince the archbishop, I don’t think the regional bishop could have either.’

Peter McClellan: ‘So you didn’t go to the regional bishop? Didn’t even try?’

Monsignor Doyle: ‘Not that I remember, your honour.’

– Robert Hiini, ‘A remembrance of things past, e.g. evidence,’ *Catholic Weekly*, March 13, 2016

and later Ronald Mulkearns) and the corruption at the time of Victorian police.

Yet Furness’s line of questioning seemed to be an attempt to establish that Pell, who in 1972 was a junior priest at Swan Hill, knew all about the older man Day’s crimes since the Catholic parishes of Mildura and Swan Hill ‘adjoin each other’. Pell doubted this, stating that he thought ‘there’s at least Robinvale parish in between’. Correct. The Swan Hill parish is separated from Mildura by the parishes of Robinvale and Red Cliffs.

Now, the royal commission has hundreds of staff and many millions of dollars to spend on research. Yet Furness put a proposition to Pell without checking the contemporary editions of *The Official Directory of the Catholic Church* or even googling a map of Victoria.

Then there is the case of pedophile priest Gerald Ridsdale, with whom Pell shared parish accommodation for a year in Ballarat East four decades ago. About the

same time, journalist Paul Bongiorno shared parish accommodation with Ridsdale in Warrnambool. Neither man noticed Ridsdale’s criminal activity. This should come as no surprise, since pedophiles are highly secretive and deceptive.

Furness suggested that Pell should have been aware of Ridsdale’s criminal activity when Ridsdale was attached to the Catholic parishes of Mortlake, Inglewood and Apollo Bay. Yet these towns are respectively 125km, 140km and 170km away from Ballarat.

What’s more, communications in the 1970s and 80s were monumentally slower than they are today.

In the event, Furness put it to Pell on a number of occasions that his evidence that he did not know of Ridsdale’s pedophilia was ‘implausible’.

She repeated this claim with respect to Melbourne-based pedophile priest Peter Searson.

Both allegations created widescale media attention. In legal hearings,

the allegation that a witness has given ‘implausible’ evidence invariably is followed by production of an incontrovertible fact.

This did not happen in this case. Furness was not able to produce any evidence that Pell knew of the sexual crimes of Ridsdale and Searson before they became widescale knowledge.

So Furness’s assertion that Pell’s evidence was ‘implausible’ is simply the expression of an opinion. No more, no less. Yet McClellan, who when a judge on the NSW Court of Appeal invariably demanded the highest standards of proof, seemed to accept his counsel assisting’s point of view, which was not based on incontrovertible evidence.

Pell has admitted some mistakes and errors of judgment in his clerical career over half a century. Yet none of Pell’s critics – who are so prevalent at the ABC, Sky News and Fairfax Media – has come up with the name of anyone responsible for clerical, secular or government institutions who acted earlier than Pell did to deal with pedophilia.

The evidence indicates that the royal commission does not understand how the Catholic Church operates.

It is the archbishop/bishop and his vicar general whose will prevails. Pell was never a vicar general and did not get control of a diocese or archdiocese until 1996. He set up the Melbourne Response, in consultation with Victoria Police, within three months of being appointed archbishop of Melbourne by Pope John Paul II.

In view of Pell’s treatment before the royal commission, it is possible that McClellan and his colleagues will make findings against the cardinal. But to do so in 2016, McClellan will have to walk away from his 1991 warning that royal commissions should refrain from ‘ruminating in public’.

GERARD HENDERSON is executive director of the Sydney Institute. His Media Watch Dog blog can be found at theaustralian.com.au. This article appeared first in *The Australian*, March 14, 2016.

THE MICKITY-MULGA QUARTER-BACK

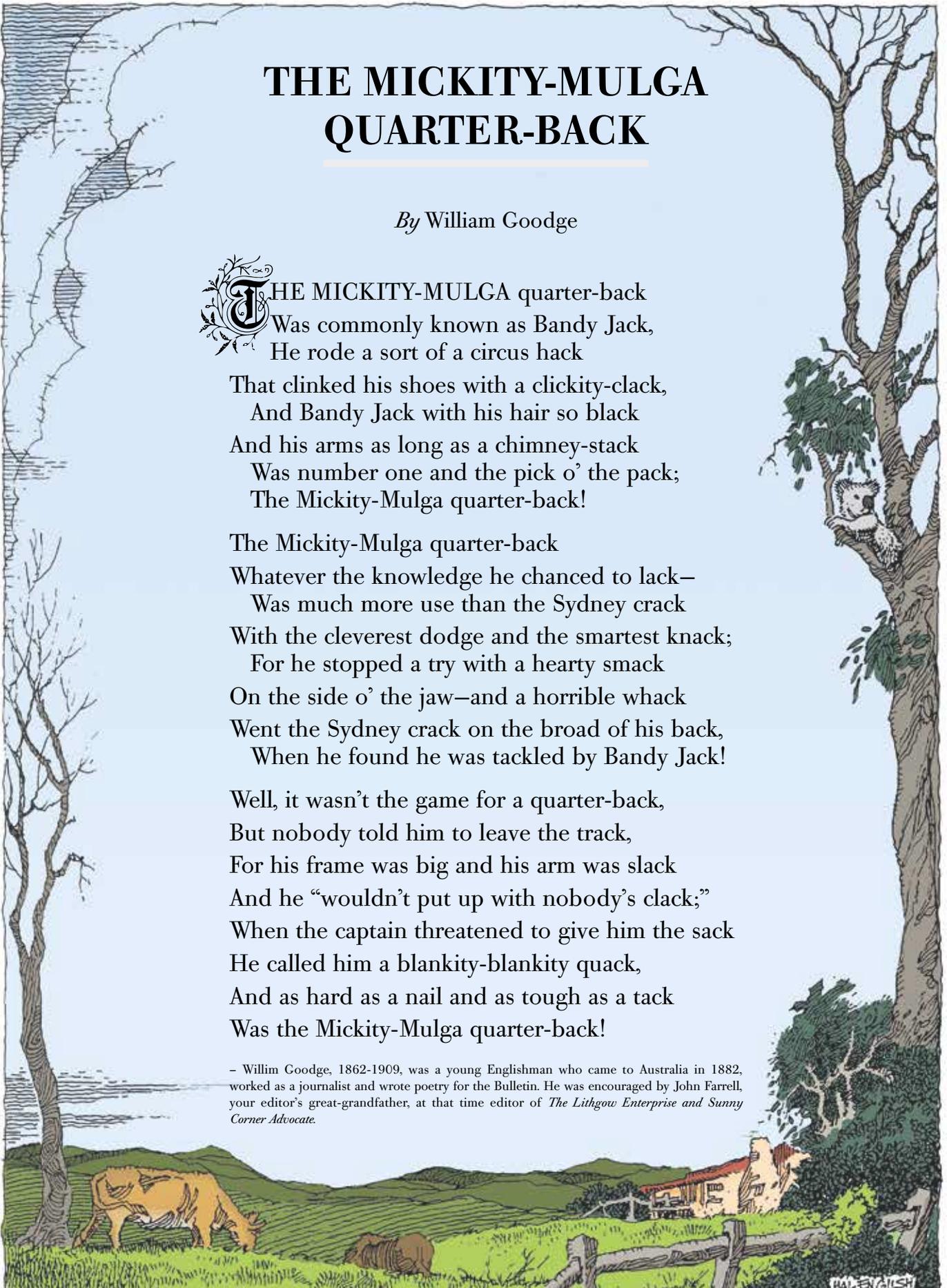
By William Goodge

THE MICKITY-MULGA quarter-back
Was commonly known as Bandy Jack,
He rode a sort of a circus hack
That clinked his shoes with a clickity-clack,
And Bandy Jack with his hair so black
And his arms as long as a chimney-stack
Was number one and the pick o' the pack;
The Mickity-Mulga quarter-back!

The Mickity-Mulga quarter-back
Whatever the knowledge he chanced to lack—
Was much more use than the Sydney crack
With the cleverest dodge and the smartest knack;
For he stopped a try with a hearty smack
On the side o' the jaw—and a horrible whack
Went the Sydney crack on the broad of his back,
When he found he was tackled by Bandy Jack!

Well, it wasn't the game for a quarter-back,
But nobody told him to leave the track,
For his frame was big and his arm was slack
And he "wouldn't put up with nobody's clack;"
When the captain threatened to give him the sack
He called him a blankity-blankity quack,
And as hard as a nail and as tough as a tack
Was the Mickity-Mulga quarter-back!

— Willim Goodge, 1862-1909, was a young Englishman who came to Australia in 1882, worked as a journalist and wrote poetry for the *Bulletin*. He was encouraged by John Farrell, your editor's great-grandfather, at that time editor of *The Lithgow Enterprise and Sunny Corner Advocate*.

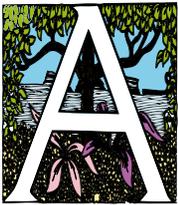


RANDOM THOUGHTS ON THE TRAIN

Every day more than one million passengers travel on 2365 daily services over the 2080 kms of railway tracks around New South Wales. Among the one million passengers was Joe Meagher.

THE SON OF THE EIGHT-O-FIVER

By Max Barrett



AN EARLY MIDDLE-AGE stepped into the pulpit, looked at his notes, gave a kind of hopeless shrug, crumpled his prepared draft into his pocket and began to speak.

“My name is Brendan, and I am the elder son of Joseph Aloysius Meagher. My siblings have entrusted to me the honour of paying a tribute to our Dad at this, his liturgical farewell into eternal life, his Requiem Mass. It *is* an honour and I thank you, Mary, Amanda and John.

“I do want to thank our parish priest for saying that Joe Meagher was the stuff of which vibrant parishes are made. Dad was seldom on committees and what he called ‘up-front jazz’; but he was in everything, he was above parish politics, he was utterly loyal and his enthusiasm was infectious.

“All you people here this morning knew Joe Meagher and what you saw is what you got and what you got was

FATHER MAX BARRETT is a Redemptorist priest now resident in Sydney. This piece was the final in a popular series that we ran in *Annals* in 2002, following the career of Joe Meagher over quite a few train rides. A number of readers have asked us to re-run the series. *Annals* is happy to do so and we hope that our new readers will enjoy Joe Meagher as much as we did when first we ran it.

24-carat gold. There are a few things about Dad you may not know, and we are happy to share them.

“Joe Meagher did not have a great deal of formal education.

The classroom was a frustrating situation for him. That was largely due to a childhood infection which rendered him partially deaf. That’s why Dad’s normal tone had as many decibels as an auctioneer in full flight. But, while short on education, he was not short on intelligence. He read voraciously. He remembered *everything!* He was a natural philosopher. It’s a pity there wasn’t a Rodin about to sculpture Dad as *The Thinker*. No furrowed brow, no look of heavy concentration but, under that thick wilderness of hair, a man with untroubled eyes and a smile because he was on such good terms with God.

“I’d like to share with you something of the person Joe Meagher was as a father. My sisters and John and I searched for words to describe this great gift he had for parenting and what we came up with was: Dad was just a bit ... scared of us! He was in awe at the wonder of life ... and we were *his* life ... His and Mum’s and God’s.

“We behaved like little monsters at times, but this father was incapable of handing out physical punishment. In the short term we occasionally got away



with murder. In the long term, I hope, we absorbed something of the one who fathered us.

“There was one department in which Dad allowed no liberties, simply no leeway at all, and that was in the way we related to our mother. Any cheek, any hint of disobedience, any whingeing about Mum’s arrangement, and the smile faded for the time. Usually a look from him was enough. But if Dad had to say, ‘Brendan, go to your room,’ *that was the worst punishment*. The words were invariably spoken quietly – but bring on the rod, rope, rack, *anything*, rather than hear the disappointment in our father’s voice.

Mum would sometimes say, ‘Joe, he didn’t mean anything,’ but the point had been made. Dad was incapable of tolerating *any* slight directed at his Christine. I have mentioned the sculptor Rodin. One of his famous creations was *The Lovers*. A pity Rodin did not have Joseph and Christine Meagher to model for him; his end-product would have been incomparably more beautiful.

“If Dad had something of an awed approach to his children, his attitude to Mum was completely reverential. As kids we sometimes teased Dad, asking how he ever worked up courage to propose to Mum. Dad would just smile and look at Christine the way he looked at no one else. Mum would sometimes come in with: ‘Perhaps I did the proposing.’ And, each time, Dad could not help disclaiming: ‘Not at all.’

“Five years ago, our mother died.” Brendan paused, took a deep breath and regained composure. He forced a smile. “The tipsters were wrong when they said Dad wouldn’t last six months without Christine. He lived five years. A Christine-less house would have been beyond endurance. So he caught an early train into the city, early enough for him to take in the 9.30 Mass at the Cathedral.

“Then he would stroll through the Botanical gardens, occasionally taking in that beautiful walk from

Walking the Way of Light

GIVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR a share of all you have, and do not call anything your own. If you and he participate together in things immortal, how much more so in things that are mortal? Never be in a hurry to speak, for the tongue is a fatal snare. For your soul’s sake, be as pure as you can. Do not be one of those who stretch out their hands to take, but draw back when the time comes for giving. Cherish as the apple of your eye anyone who expounds the word of the Lord to you.

Day and night keep the day of judgment in mind. Seek the company of God’s people every day; either labouring by word of mouth – that is to say, by going among them for purposes of exhortation, and striving to save souls by the power of speech – or else working with your hands, to earn a ransom for your own sins.

Never hesitate to give; and when you are giving, do it without grumbling; you will soon find out who can be generous with his rewards. Keep the traditions you have received, without making any additions or deductions of your own. Never cease to detest evil. Make your decisions fairly and uprightly. Do nothing to encourage dissensions. Bring the disputants together and compose their quarrel. And make confession of your own faults; you are not to come to prayer with a bad conscience. That is the Way of Light.

— A reading from the letter attributed to St Barnabas Chapter 19.

the Quay to Mrs. Macquarie’s Chair. He would strike up a conversation with anyone careless enough to come within coo-ee. He was always back at Cronulla in time to collect a fortunate grandchild from kinder or convent school.”

Again, Brendan smiled. “In these latter years, Dad developed some oddities. Reports of his ‘sessions’ on the 8.05 train out of Cronulla started to filter back to us. One morning my sister Amanda decided to check. She took elaborate care not to be seen by Dad. Sure enough, the *Pater’s* voice was soon heard riding above the rattle of carriages and the muffle of the occasional tunnel. Amanda shrank down, praying that nobody would associate her with the Oracle. She could not figure whether her Dad was coming across as a poultice or a pleasure until he made some particular observation – and a soft laugh filtered through the carriage. Amanda relaxed.

“Within twenty-four hours of Dad’s going to God, our phone rang yet again, and it was my sister Mary who picked up the receiver.

“Somehow, Dad’s train companions already knew. Somewhat diffidently, the caller offered the most sincere condolences, then said: ‘I hope this is not out of order, but a small group of us would like to attend the funeral service. Would it be all right if we were to squeeze ourselves in somewhere?’ ‘No,’ Mary was inspired to say. ‘Come to the church and wait outside. When we arrive, we would like you to come in to the reserved places with us as part of the family.’

“We, the Meaghers, picked today’s gospel because of one sentence: ‘Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.’ The single, most beautiful thing about Joe Meagher was his innocence. All his life he retained the soul of a child. He knew the world and its taint – but he never took on board any part of that taint. We believe those great blue eyes of his are now full of God ... the one he called the gentle Christ ... and of Christine, his God-given Christine.”

YEMEN

Four nuns and twelve workers murdered

THE CATHOLIC church on the Arabian Peninsula deplores the indifference that the people of the world have shown in response to the nuns murdered in Yemen. In Aden in early March, four nuns of the order founded by Blessed Mother Teresa, whose work involved the care of the elderly and disabled, along with twelve employees, were murdered by suspected Islamic extremists. A monk, native to India, has been missing since then.

In an interview with the Catholic charity *Aid to the Church in Need* (ACN), Bishop Camillo Ballin, who is responsible for the northern part of the region, commented that neither the media nor politics has expressed any interest in the incidents. 'No one has lifted a finger. It doesn't interest anyone when it is Christianity that is under attack. The same thing happened to Jesus. They all abandoned him. And this is what is now happening to the church.'

The Italian bishop emphasised that the four nuns of Mother Teresa were slain out of hatred for the Christian faith.'

Bishop Ballin then said that the nuns have now joined three other nuns of the order who were murdered in Yemen in 1998. 'The congregation of Mother Teresa has seven nuns in Yemen, who, I believe, can quite unequivocally be called martyrs.'

Bishop Ballin feels that the martyrdom of the nuns reflects the vitality of the Order of the Missionaries of Charity founded by Mother Teresa. 'The martyrdom of these nuns is a confirmation to us that her congregation continues to be close to Jesus. Because anyone who draws near to Jesus is always bound to His suffering and His death, which was followed by resurrection.' In this sense, the Christians in this region are called upon to bear witness to Jesus by suffering violence, he continued.

'These nuns gave bread to the elderly and disabled Muslims living in their facility. In return, they received gunfire. But God is not absent. He sees everything and knows what He is doing. These fanatics, who have perpetrated this heinous crime, have basically declared to the entire world that these nuns were very close to Jesus. So close that they shared in His end and were also killed themselves.' However, the death of these nuns was not the end, just as the death of Jesus was not His end. 'It was followed by resurrection,' the bishop declared.

'The same can be said for these nuns. Their sacrifice was not only made for their personal resurrection, but also for their congregation and for those whom they served, for Yemen and for their murderers.'

The bishop believes that God alone will be able to enter into the hearts of these inhuman fanatics. 'I am convinced that the sacrifice these nuns made will also prove itself valuable to these hearts of stone that continue to spread hate and malice.'

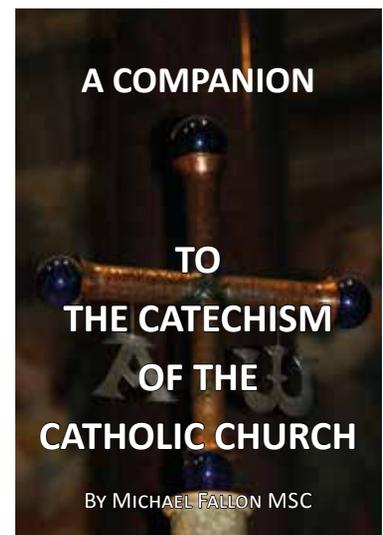
Yemen is currently the scene of a bloody conflict in which both religious and tribal rivalries play a role. According to information provided by the United Nations, the fighting has led to the internal displacement of more than 2.4 million people. Since March 2015, neighbouring Saudi Arabia has been intervening on behalf of the government, which is beleaguered by Huthi rebels who are Shi'a. Jihadist groups are also active, primarily in the southern parts of the country. In December, jihadists blew up a Catholic church.

— Oliver Maksan. For more information or to make a donation to help the work of Aid to the Church in Need, please contact the Australian office of ACN on (02) 9679-1929. e-mail: info@aidtochurch.org or write to Aid to the Church in Need PO Box 7246 Baulkham Hills NSW 2153. On Line donations can be made at www.aidtochurch.org

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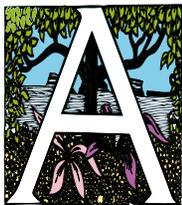
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MARRIAGE

And Post-modern Magical Thinking

By Wanda Skowronska



ARCHBISHOP Julian Porteous asked recently 'WHO WOULD have thought things we took for granted would be under attack?' referring to his public defence of marriage between a man and a woman. 'I'm not in prison yet', he added with a smile, as he addressed the Family Life International conference in Albury (Jan 22-24, 2016).

What was the reason for such grim thoughts? In 2015, as Archbishop of Hobart, Porteous distributed the Pastoral Letter from the Catholic Bishops of Australia, entitled 'Don't Mess with Marriage,' to all parishes in his diocese and to parents of the 15.5 thousand children attending its Catholic schools.

The Letter stated that marriage is a 'heterosexual union between a man and a woman' and that changing the law would endanger a child's upbringing. While the Archbishop knew that some

might object to it, he said he was unprepared for the 'depth of vitriol' that was hurled against him and the Catholic Church in the wake of its publication.

It is not as if he had called for nuclear bombing war on New Zealand or denied climate change. Indeed, who would have thought that saying marriage is between a man and a woman would be a revolutionary statement?

In our post-modern, Marxist-relativist times, however, magical

complaint. And so it happened, that transgender activist and Federal Greens candidate Martine Delaney, feeling deeply offended at the very idea that marriage was between a man and a woman, lodged a complaint to the Tasmanian Anti-Discrimination Board in September 2015.

Delaney insisted that such things are not 'absolute'. Moreover she 'wanted the Catholic Church in Tasmania to implement a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex awareness program for all staff and students within the Catholic education system'.¹

In the wake of this, the bishop's house was sprayed with graffiti and some students walked out when the Bishop attended a Catholic school speaking of the complementarity of man and woman.

Faced with this, Bishop Porteous said that it was timely to remind ourselves of the fact that the union of man and woman predates the Catholic Church and has always been the basic unit of all societies. While



thinking is always lurking near the surface, whenever self-evident truths are uttered. It is often expressed through the channel of perceived offence – such perception being the ground for a

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– Editor, *Annals*

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spouses can die or be separated and marriages may fail, children fare best in a family with a natural father and mother.

Where there is separation from the biological parents, for whatever reason, there is usually a lifelong desire to know them. One needs only to look at the popularity of genealogy programs in the media and the extraordinary lengths people take to search for and explore their 'true' family trees.

As a school counsellor, this resonates with me, as I have counselled many children who for one reason or another, dream about and seek their natural parents.

In one situation, a 10 year old boy born through IVF to a drug addicted mother, now adopted, told me he wanted to meet his biological mother despite loving his adopted parents. 'I won't bother her,' he said, 'I just want to see her.' Perhaps he will one day.

Increasing numbers of 'surrogate children' are also seeking their biological parents. Since January 1, 2010, the NSW Department of Health has required that information be given out concerning surrogates of every child born as a result of Artificial Reproductive Technology (ART).²

As time goes on more films and books will be made on the theme of such meetings with 'real', 'biological' parents - SBS has already produced a heart-wrenching documentary on the subject. Similarly children raised in gay households who express their yearning to meet missing parents as Katy Faust (raised in such a household) observed:

Now we are normalizing a family structure where a child will always be deprived daily of one gender influence and the relationship with at least one natural parent. Our cultural narrative becomes one that, in essence, tells children that they have no right to the natural family structure or their biological parents, but that children simply exist for the satisfaction of adult desires.³

It is the children of the transgender/surrogate/gay unions who are the victims of the rearrangement of society as the LGBTQI Brigades envisage it. To add to this, a new innocuously entitled 'Safe Schools' program, advocating the positive aspects of the fluid gender lifestyles is now being presented in some state high schools, with a view in making it mandatory in all state schools unless parents object.

One wonders if parents of children from Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish and Catholic backgrounds, who support traditional ideas of marriage, know what is going on in this 'Safe School' program? If these diverse communities lodged complaints, would the Department of Education and Training acknowledge their deep hurt and offence?

Meantime, 'same sex marriage' itself might end up as *passé and even discriminatory too*. Why can't there be kinds of transgender unions too, between all the 54 or so identified genders? Why can't we be whatever gender we feel like on the day? At least there is the element of surprise. As Kate Bornstein, who was once a man, says of gender fluidity:

...gender fluidity is the ability to freely and knowingly become one or many of a limitless number of genders for any length of time....gender fluidity recognizes no borders or rules of gender.⁴

Come to think of it, why be any gender at all? Imagine the plight of Norrie, a Sydney resident who was born male, but became a 'female' through gender reassignment surgery and then decided he/she was not any gender at all.

On April 3, 2014, in a landmark ruling, the High Court agreed with Norrie who said, 'I squealed a squeal of delight...It's very thrilling, very exciting;' when finally recognised legally as a non-specific sex.⁵ However, Norrie, hit a snag when trying to get married to a person who seemed like a man at

Peter Has Spoken

IN THE MIDST of our difficulties I have one ground of hope, just one stay, but, as I think, a sufficient one, which serves me in the stead of all other argument whatever, which hardens me against criticism, which supports me if I begin to despond, and to which I ever come round, when the question of the possible and the expedient is brought into discussion. It is the decision of the Holy See; St. Peter has spoken, it is he who has enjoined that which seems to us so unpromising. He has spoken, and has a claim on us to trust him. He is no recluse, no solitary student, no dreamer about the past, no doter upon the dead and gone, no projector of the visionary. He for eighteen hundred years has lived in the world; he has seen all fortunes, he has encountered all adversaries, he has shaped himself for all emergencies. If ever there was a power on earth who had an eye for the times, who has confined himself to the practicable, and has been happy in his anticipations, whose words have been facts, and whose commands prophecies, such is he in the history of ages, who sit, from generation to generation in the Chair of the Apostles, as the Vicar of Christ, and the Doctor of His Church. All who take part with the Apostle, are on the winning side. He has long since given warrants for the confidence which he claims.

— Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman, 'Discourse I,' *The Idea of a University*, Gateway Editions, Regnery Publishing, 1999, p. 13.

the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

Refusing to acknowledge any gender when asked to do so, the Registry declined Norrie's application to get married - but this will not deter Norrie from fighting for non-gender equity in the future.

It is one thing for the gender-bender chattering classes of western society to consider that marriage is for anyone and everyone, and another thing altogether to hear the true thoughts of children forced to live in such households.

It is one thing for the progressive latte-sipping *urbanistas* to insist on tolerance for 'gay marriage,' and then to show intolerance for religious groups that hold that marriage is between a man and a woman.

Archbishop Porteous has shown us the way to speak the truth with love in the face of the confused gender agenda, echoing the words of Pope Francis, who often refers to the social engineering underlying this assault on marriage and family⁶

We know that today marriage and the family are in crisis. We now live in a culture of the temporary ... This revolution in manners and morals has often flown the flag of freedom, but in fact it has brought spiritual and material devastation to countless human beings, especially the poorest and most vulnerable.⁶

WANDA SKOWRONSKA is a registered psychologist who works as a counsellor in inner city schools in Sydney. She has recently been awarded a PhD in Psychology/Theology at Melbourne's John-Paul II Institute. She has done voluntary work for the Catholic pro life organisation Family Life International, and is a regular contributor to *Annals*.

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5. ABC News item, 3/4/2014/ <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-04-02/high-court-recognises-gender-neutral/5361362> (Accessed 4/4/2015)/.
6. Pope Francis, Opening Address to the Colloquium on the Complementarity of Man and Woman, 'Pope Francis Says Children Have a Right to a Mother and Father', *Zenit*, Nov 17, 2014.

Right and Wrong

THE FIRST TO GO

A DIRECT consequence of this [fatalist] philosophy, though again it is a consequence furiously denied by its victims, is the elimination of right and wrong. Our actions do not depend upon our own wills; those who think that they proceed from an act of the will suffer an illusion; human action, from what used to be called the noblest self-sacrifice to the basest commercial swindling, is the inevitable result of forces over which the perpetrator has no control – or, as Dean Swift has admirably put it in that great masterpiece, *The Tale of a Tub*, 'It was ordained some three days before the Creation that my nose should come against this lamp post.'

It is true that the professors of this creed are illogical; for no one gives louder vent to moral indignation than themselves, especially when they are denouncing the cruelties or ineptitudes of believers in moral responsibility, but then, as the denial of the human reason is also part of their creed, or, at any rate, the denial of its value as the instrument for the discovery of truth, they will not be seriously disturbed by the incongruity of their outbursts; for what is incongruous or illogical is not to them blameworthy or ridiculous----rather in their mouths does the word 'logical' connote something absurd and empty.

The New Paganism is in process of building up a society of its own, wherein will be apparent two features novel in what used to be Christendom. Those two features have already appeared and will spread each in its own sphere, the one in the sphere of law----that is, of coercive enactment---the other in the sphere of status, that is, in the organization of society.

In the first sphere, that of positive law, the New Paganism has already begun to produce and cannot but produce more and more a mass of restrictive legislation.] It is a paradox, of course, that such restrictive legislation should be bred from a

mood which proceeded originally from rebellion against restriction, but the fact is undoubted----it is before all our eyes. With the denial of the will there necessarily appears the questioning of any content to the word 'freedom.' In a Christian society you were free to do a number of acts, for some of which you could be punished under Christian laws, for others of which no state or other authority could punish you, but which were opposed to the social atmosphere in which you lived. But the New Paganism will tend, not to punish, but to restrain with fetters; to prevent action, to impose coercive bonds. It will be at issue more and more with

human dignity. It has already, in certain provinces [the Calvinist canton of Vaud in Switzerland is an example], enacted what is called 'the sterilization of the unfit' as a positive law. It has not yet enacted, though it has already proposed and will certainly in time enact, legislation for the restriction of births. Not only in these, but in many other departments of life, one after another, will this mechanical network spread and bind those subject to it under a compulsion which cannot be escaped.

– Hilaire Belloc: 'The New Paganism,' in *Essays of a Catholic Layman in England*, London, Sheed & Ward, 1933, pp 17-19



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THE WEST – CAN IT REDISCOVER ITS CORE?

By Paul Stenhouse MSC



MUCH IS made of the potential for global economic and social unrest from the millions of desperate refugees flowing into Europe from war-ravaged Syria, Iraq, the Horn of Africa, Central Africa and Afghanistan.

This is the same Europe of which Pope John-Paul II wrote in 2003:

‘European culture gives the impression of “silent apostasy,” on the part of people who have all that they need, and who live as if God does not exist’.¹

Many if not most of the refugees are Muslim, and the countries they are fleeing – along with much of the Islamic and Arab world – are infested with Islamic radicals, fundamentalists and extremists who have declared a holy war on the West.

This is not a figment of our imagination. This is a message Islamic fanatics have proclaimed, written, communicated verbally on radio and TV, on video and facebook, and written in black and white and the blood of countless Christian martyrs, and many of their fellow-Muslims. It may be politically correct to ignore it, but it isn’t wise.²

Genuine refugees deserve all the sympathy and help that more fortunate countries can give. Economic migrants jumping the queue and terrorists, posing as victims, on the other hand, are a potentially serious problem for the host countries – especially those who appear to have to

THIS IS THE FIRST of two articles promised last month that will complete this series. They will attempt to tackle a problem that troubles most thinking people today: Can a halt be made to the preaching of hatred and the acts of violence and inhumanity by fanatical Islamists in the name of Allah against non-Muslims, and other Muslims regarded as ‘unfaithful’ to Islam? This article asks whether the West is capable of learning from past mistakes, and of rediscovering what once made it resolute. Or will political correctness and relativism pursue their baneful pathological course until the West’s Christian and democratic immune systems are so eroded as to render it defenceless?

cut themselves off from their ancient Christian roots.

In 2002, Cardinal Josef Ratzinger, the future Pope Benedict XVI, wrote:

‘the question of the peaceableness of cultures, of peace in matters of religion, has ... moved up to become a political theme of the first rank.’

Cardinal Ratzinger was Prefect of *The Sacred Congregation for the Faith* when it published, in 2000, its groundbreaking *Declaration* on the truth of Catholicism, *Dominus Iesus*, which spoke of the unique and universal salvation brought by Jesus Christ and the Church. Reflecting in 2002 on reaction to the publication, Cardinal Ratzinger described how ‘a cry of outrage arose from modern society,’

and also ‘from great non-Christian cultures’. *Dominus Iesus* was said ‘to be a document of intolerance and religious arrogance that should have no place in the world today’.

The Catholic, Cardinal Ratzinger wrote, could only respond to this reaction by putting to such critics the question that Martin Buber put to an atheist: “But what if it is true?”

The real problem, wrote the future Pope, ‘lies in the question of truth ... what meaning does belief have, what positive meaning does religion have, if it cannot be connected with truth?’³

Dialogue is the reasonable and wise person’s preferred way of resolving disputes. But Marcello Pera, former President of the Italian Senate – putting his finger on the crux of the problem – pointed out how relativism and political correctness eliminate dialogue as an option:

‘dialogue will be a waste of time if one of the two interlocutors states beforehand that one idea is as good as another.’⁴

Muddying the Water

A recent statement by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry is symptomatic of the malaise of political correctness and double-talk that infects the West, and hinders it from finding solutions to the complex human dilemmas facing it.

During a visit to Saudi Arabia on January 23, only a month away from the Iranian elections in which hopes were pinned on the moderates and reformists headed by President Rouhani, Mr Kerry launched a verbal attack on Iran which has been making

friendly overtures to the U.S. and the West.

It should be noted that the U.S. has not had normalized diplomatic relations with Iran for thirty-six years – since 1980 – in the aftermath of the student occupation of the US Embassy in Teheran in November 1979 and the ensuing hostage crisis.⁵

Kerry stated that the U.S. ‘remains concerned’ about ‘some of the activities that Iran is engaged in in other countries,’ referring, one assumes, to Iranian support for Shi‘a in Syria. He then, reportedly, criticised ‘Iran’s support for terrorist groups like Hizbollah, its human rights record, and its development of ballistic missiles’.⁶

In the light of the triumph of the Iranian moderates – led by President Rouhani – in the elections held in late February, it remains to be seen if Kerry’s dalliance with the Saudis harms the fragile U.S./Iran rapprochement that followed the implementation of the Iran nuclear deal and the lifting of Western sanctions.

All this emerged during a media conference in Saudi Arabia whose anti-Shi‘a paranoia lies behind much of the turmoil in the region.⁷

The Saudis are building an almost one thousand kilometre long razor-wire fence on their border with Iraq.⁸ This seems to indicate that they know that they are in more danger from Sunni ISIS, than from Shi‘a Iran.

Kerry’s *sub-text* also suggests that the U.S. remains un-concerned about Saudi activities in other countries [including, apparently, Wahhabi infiltration of U.S. mosques]; and un-concerned about Saudi Arabia’s human rights record; and

un-concerned about Saudi Arabia’s ballistic missiles and any threat these might pose to neighbouring states.

To cap this public display of diplomatic double-talk, the Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir added the usual Wahhabi *mantra*: ‘Iran remains the world’s chief sponsor of terrorism’.⁹

The Elephant in the Room

Speaking of double-talk: who or what pressed the lever that set in motion the destabilizing of the Middle East, which has led to the potential destabilizing of Europe by millions of frightened refugees and

[Standard Oil California] signed an agreement with the treasurer of the new kingdom of Arabia, Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman, acting on behalf of new King Ibn Saud – formerly the leader of a band of Islamist bigots terrorizing the Arabian peninsula – awarding exclusive rights for six decades to SOCAL to extract oil from eastern Saudi Arabia including offshore waters and islands, for £35,000 down, payable in gold, and an additional £20,000 to follow in eighteen months.¹⁰

What the U.S. State Department subsequently called ‘the greatest commercial prize in the history of the planet’¹¹ was predictably a poisoned chalice. It has locked the U.S. [and, willy nilly, the rest of us] in a frenzied *danse macabre* with the Wahhabis, insanely swirling and twirling our way to ... 9/11, and its predictably gruesome aftermath.

By 2011 the West had good reason to doubt the wisdom of what U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice had called, in 2005, a policy of ‘creative chaos’ for the Middle East; and even better reason to doubt the appropriateness of what, in 2006, she announced as the ‘birth pangs’ of ‘a New Middle East’.

The birth pangs to which Condoleezza Rice referred were the hundreds of Lebanese dead, and the more than half a million Lebanese refugees left in the wake of the Israeli war against Hizbollah under Prime Minister Ehud Olmert – which Hizbollah won decisively.¹²

By 2011, Libya was in chaos and Gaddafi had been killed; Yemen was – as it still is – in turmoil; Bahrain had shown its more brutal face; and the ‘New Middle East’ seemed like a



The twenty-one martyrs of Libya were twenty Coptic Christians from Egypt beheaded by ISIS murderers in early February 2015. The twenty-first martyr was Mathew Ayairga and he was from Chad. He was not a Christian, but when he saw the immense faith of the others, and when the ISIS killers asked him if he rejected Jesus, he reportedly said, ‘Their God is my God,’ knowing that he would be killed.

other displaced persons inundating EU countries?

This is the ‘elephant in the room’ and it appears to remain shrouded in mystery. Or does it?

Hovering like ghastly spectres over the digital images of hapless refugees fleeing destroyed homes and businesses, murder and rape, are the misbegotten Western and U.S. foreign policy decisions [for ‘foreign’ read ‘commercial’] perpetrated on the world since, to take but one example, May 29, 1933.

That was the day when U.S. lawyer Lloyd Hamilton on behalf of SOCAL

sick joke. And, ominously, Syria had been nominated as the next domino to fall during the Arab Spring by the nameless string-pullers who were dissatisfied with the degree of 'creative chaos' achieved up till then.

TIME described Condoleezza Rice's comment about 'creative chaos' as 'Diplomatic Disneyland'.¹³ 'Nightmare on Elm Street' would have been closer to the truth. At least for the religious and ethnic minorities living in these regions.

It is worth recalling in this U.S. election year that in 2011 then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton expressed confidence that the Arab Spring would allow Washington to advance 'security, stability, peace, and democracy' in the Middle East.¹⁴ Her confidence could not have been more misplaced. At the moment she is showing signs of being the Democratic front runner in the Presidential stakes. Would she, or Donald Trump, the Republican front runner, be any better able to assess the situation in 2016, and call the dogs of war to heel?

We have consistently maintained the unwisdom of further destabilising the Middle East and Central Asia by invading Afghanistan in 2002, and by the twin invasions of Iraq in 1990 and 2003; to say nothing of supporting al-Qaeda in the so-called 'liberation' of Libya in 2011; and supporting Mohamed Morsi and the Muslim Brothers during the impeachment of Hosni Mubarak; and the horrendous ongoing holocaust in Syria.

Al-'Arabiya – the newsservice owned by Qatar, and propaganda twin of Qatar's *al-Jazeera* – would have us believe that the Syrian bloodbath began when 'protests erupted in Syria against the embattled leader's rule, but turned into civil war'.¹⁵

This smacks of a teenager's excuse: 'the car crashed' when, in reality, *he crashed it*. The protests did not *turn* into civil war – they *were turned* into civil war; and the U.S., the U.K. and the West, along with the Saudis and the usual suspects, were complicit in what has followed.

No one should be surprised that U.S. ties with Saudi Arabia, and U.S. and Western support for Hafez

What Oil can Buy

WITH THE money it receives from oil, the Saudi government purchases vast amounts of weaponry from the United States. In 2010, the US government announced it has concluded a deal to sell \$60 billion of military aircraft to Saudi Arabia—the largest US arms sale deal in history. One use of US tanks was seen in Bahrain, where the Saudis intervened to crush a democratic uprising against the Bahraini monarchy. There's now Congressional legislation being introduced to declassify a 28-page section of the 9/11 Senate report which allegedly exposes the direct role of the Saudi government in the Twin Tower attacks on 9/11. After all, Saudi Arabia supplied 15 out of the 19 9/11 hijackers and was the home of Osama bin Laden. Saudi Arabia exports the radical version of Islam, Wahhabism, that fuels extremism throughout the Middle East. Saudi Arabia treats its women as second-class citizens. Saudi Arabia is the capital of beheadings, with the government carrying out 87 public beheadings in 2013 and nine already this year. Being the world's top oil provider does not give a country the right to dehumanize its own people. The US is certainly no model for respecting freedom of expression – as we saw in the streets of Ferguson where peaceful protesters were teargassed and beaten – but it shouldn't overlook the human rights abuses carried out by a country that imprisons, tortures and executes its citizens simply for speaking their minds.

— Medea Benjamin is the author of *Drone Warfare: Killing by Remote Control*.

al-Assad – Bashar al-Assad's ruthless father – in his close dealings with the so-called civil war in Lebanon from 1975 to 1990, and subsequent occupation of Lebanon by Syria from 1990 until 2005 – could lead to the point at which we have arrived in early March 2016.

But it still needs to be stressed – as the late Syrian Orthodox Patriarch pointed out to me in October 2012 in Lebanon – that Bashar al-Assad is not his father; and that Syria in 2012 was not Syria from 1975-2005.

Turkey in the EU

Turning to the EU, we find Mr David Cameron, just returned from Brussels, and confident that he has come laden with benefits – unique to Britain – that will enable his Conservative government to 'keep' its EU cake, and somehow manage to 'eat' it.

On his return he was featured on TV talking up the special benefits accruing to Britain from the proposal, seemingly oblivious of the resentment such a deal – were it to be approved by the British Parliament – might create among some other EU members, and many of his fellow

Britons, including his bemused constituents.

This is the same European Union that – if reports of German Chancellor Angela Merkel's visit to Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Erdoğan on October 19, 2015 are to be believed – is willing to speed-up the process by which Turks can travel to most EU countries without visas, and even to fast-track Turkey's admission as a member of the EU

This is the same Turkey whose army is the second largest in NATO. How can NATO sit comfortably with a fellow NATO member's being one of the major 'interested parties' that have laid hold of Syria, and actively contributed to the horror and hopelessness engulfing it and its citizens?

This is the same Turkey whose president Recep Erdoğan, and prime minister Davutoğlu, have been complicit in the bloody chaos that has led to the refugee crisis now facing many European countries, especially Germany.

Angela Merkel's offer referred to above, is in return for Turkey's agreeing to police its borders with EU countries more effectively, improving



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conditions for Syrian refugees on their own soil, and imposing restrictions on some nationals entering Turkey so freely.

If Turkey were well-disposed towards Europe, wouldn't she have taken these neighbourly steps voluntarily, without needing to be bribed by a humiliated German Chancellor coming cap in hand asking for favours?

Turkey has an estimated population of seventy-five million, with an unemployment rate of more than ten per cent. If Turkey were to be admitted as a member of the EU, Europe's population would grow instantly by seventy-five million, ninety-eight percent of whom would be Muslim: forty-five million Sunni, twenty-five million Alevi – a Sufi-like sect of the Shi'a – and three million Shi'a.

If Turkey were to be admitted as a member of the EU, 'Europe' would have a common border with Georgia and Armenia which may well benefit all concerned; but is Europe prepared

to have a common border with Iraq, Iran and Syria?

The tainted fruit of Political Correctness

The EU, like the West in general, would need to be better prepared than it is, if it is to protect itself from the inevitable and profound social, economic, political and cultural changes that usually follow mass migrations of people.

George Weigel depicts the dilemma facing the EU thus:

'What is happening when an entire continent, healthier, wealthier, and more secure than ever before, fails to create the human future in the most elemental sense—by creating future generations? There are obvious sociological and economic factors affecting Europe's demographic decline; might there be spiritual factors at play, too? Could Europe's disinclination to create the future have something to do with an apostasy toward the past—toward the spiritual roots of European civilization? And could that apostasy eventually threaten

Europe's commitments to human rights, to equality before the law, to tolerance and civility among peoples of diverse convictions? Is it possible to sustain public commitments to those public goods on purely utilitarian grounds because civility and tolerance 'work better'? How can we speak of, and defend, 'universal human rights' in a cultural climate in which the very idea of 'truth' is under sustained assault?¹⁶

Yes – and how well prepared are host countries that don't insist that new arrivals master the language of their new homeland, and accept the democratic nature of their new country and its institutions; when refugees or migrants are free to choose not to integrate into the new society, and to set up their own ghetto-like communities within the host country?

How well prepared is the EU when politicians, police and media of host countries are frightened and bullied, and unsure of their own identity or core culture?

How well prepared are the host countries when what they principally have in common with new arrivals on their shores is digital technology – electronic gadgets, computers and computerised information systems, mobile phones and ... weapons skills?

When this stage is reached, the need for being *better-prepared* becomes more acute.

If one goes back into the past – about 450 years – a familiar picture emerges. The ambassador of the Habsburg king Ferdinand I – future Holy Roman Emperor – to the *Sublime Porte* of the Ottoman Sultan in Istanbul, was Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq. Writing to a fellow diplomat, Busbecq says that the only thing saving Europe from conquest by the Ottomans was the threat to the Ottomans from Persia:

'On [the Turkish] side,' the ambassador wrote in his report, 'are the resources of a mighty empire, strength unimpaired, habituation to victory, endurance of toil, unity, discipline, frugality, and watchfulness. On our side is public poverty, private luxury, impaired strength, broken spirit, lack of endurance and training;

the soldiers are insubordinate, the officers avaricious; there is contempt for discipline; licence, recklessness, drunkenness, and debauchery are rife; and worst of all, the enemy is accustomed to victory, and we to defeat. Can we doubt what the result will be? Persia alone interposes in our favour ... but Persia is only delaying our fate; it cannot save us.¹⁷

As it happened, Europe's political future proved to be less grim than Busbecq predicted. His fears, however, were not unfounded, and Europe's Catholic and genuinely humanistic roots have been seriously eroded as the reformation, enlightenment and successive revolutions ran their course.

Power and booty, rather than converting Christians or Jews to Islam, was the Ottoman motivation. And the Ottomans – provided the Christians, Jews and other minorities kept a low profile and paid their taxes promptly – would undoubtedly have employed their much feared Janissaries to defend the *dhimmis*

Think Again

POLITICIANS and scholars in the West have taken up the chant that Islamic extremism is caused by the Arab-Israeli conflict. This analysis cannot convince any rational person that the Islamist murder of over 150,000 innocent people in Algeria--which happened in the last few decades--or their slaying of hundreds of Buddhists in Thailand, or the brutal violence between Sunni and Shia in Iraq could have anything to do with the Arab-Israeli conflict.

— Tawfik Hamid, *The Wall Street Journal*, Tuesday, April 3, 2007. A onetime member of *Jemaah Islamiya*, an Islamist terrorist group led by al Qaeda's second in command, Ayman al-Zawahiri, Dr Hamid is a medical doctor. [112]

– the 'tolerated' peoples – from the violence of the mob, in their planned European provinces, just as they did in the Ottoman Empire itself.¹⁸

Listing some of the Fruits of PC

In a book published in 2006, former President of the Italian Senate, Marcello Pera – an atheist – brought the focus 450 years into the present.

He described the fibre of the West as permeated 'by a mixture of timidity, prudence, convenience, reluctance and fear.'

He went on to deplore in the West what he called 'the form of self-censorship and self-repression that goes by the name of political correctness.'

Political correctness, Pera explained, 'is the newspeak that the West uses nowadays to imply, allude to, or insinuate – rather than to affirm or maintain.'

'The world is filled with concern, but also with hypocrisy on the part of people who see no evil and speak no evil to avoid becoming involved; who see no evil and speak no evil to avoid appearing rude; who proclaim half-truths and imply the rest, to avoid assuming responsibility. These are the paralysing consequences of political correctness.

'Whenever a culture lacks or flatly rejects our institutions we are not allowed to say that our own culture is better or simply preferable. The only thing that politeness allows us to say is that cultures and civilizations are different.'¹⁹

In a later book, published in 2011, Pera comments:

'The main flaw of liberalism today is that it has retreated into a solely political and procedural dimension and has forgotten that it is also a tradition with a rich, specific ethical content rooted in European and American history — a history of which Christianity is an essential part. Modernity has resisted and waged war against the Church, while feeding abundantly on its Christian heritage. Its very exaltation of the individual pays secular homage to the Christian message that man was created by God in order to discover the truth about himself and the world.'²⁰

Two Models of Western Societies

IN THE LATIN nations the secular model has prevailed. A sharp distinction is made between the state and the religious bodies, deeming the latter to fall under the private sphere. The state denies that it has a religious foundation and affirms that it is based on reason and rational knowledge. Since reason is inherently fragile, however, these secular systems have proved to be weak, becoming easy targets for dictatorships. They survive only because elements of the old moral conscience have persevered, even without the earlier foundations, enabling the existence of a basic moral consensus.

In the Germanic world, the liberal Protestant model of church and state has prevailed. An enlightened and essentially moral Christian religion has some forms of worship that are supported by the state: This relationship guarantees a moral consensus and a broad religious foundation to which individual non-state religions must adapt. This model has long guaranteed state and social cohesion in Great Britain, the Scandinavian states, and once upon a time also in Prussian-dominated Germany. In Germany, however, the collapse of Prussian State Christianity left a vacuum that would later provide fertile soil for a dictatorship. Today state churches throughout the world are characterized by their fatigue. Moral force—the foundation on which to build—does not emanate from either the religious bodies subservient to the state nor from the state itself.

— Joseph Ratzinger, 'The Spiritual Roots of Europe: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow,' in *Without Roots*, Basic Books, New York, 2007, pp. 69-70.

Jeopardising One's Birthright

Nature, we are told by the Greek philosopher Parmenides [born c.515 BC], or by Aristotle [384-322 BC], depending on which authority you accept, abhors a vacuum.

Our Lord told the apostles a parable that reinforces this adage. St Luke records the story in his Gospel. A man had been possessed by an evil spirit. After the evil spirit was driven out it wandered around looking for somewhere to make its home. If the man from whom the spirit had been driven had not, in the meantime, embraced the Good, the True and the Beautiful, then the evil spirit would assuredly return – this time with seven other spirits worse than itself – and possess that man. His last state would be worse than his first.²¹

Who doesn't know that creating a political vacuum invites more strongly motivated and less politically correct protagonists, to enter the fray?

The rise of an Islamic State under Muhammad from AD 622 onwards was only possible because the Byzantine and Persian empires exhausted

themselves fighting each other for almost 100 years. They proved to be no match for what a modern Iranian commentator on the period describes as 'quite small forces of ill-armed and untrained Arabs.'²²

Religion and Self-knowledge

The final element of the European identity is religion. I do not wish to enter into the complex discussion of recent years, but to highlight one issue that is fundamental to all cultures: respect for that which another group holds sacred, especially respect for the sacred in the highest sense, for God, which one can reasonably expect to find even among those who are not willing to believe in God. When this respect is violated in a society, something essential is lost. In our contemporary society, thank goodness, anyone who dishonors the faith of Israel, its image of God, or its great figures must pay a fine. The same holds true for anyone who dishonors the Koran and the convictions of Islam. But when it comes to Jesus Christ and that which is sacred to Christians, instead, freedom of speech becomes the supreme good. The argument has been made that restricting freedom of speech would jeopardize or even abolish tolerance and freedom overall. There is one major restriction on freedom of speech, however: it cannot destroy the honor and the dignity of another person. Lying or denying human rights is not freedom.

This case illustrates a peculiar Western self-hatred that is nothing short of pathological. It is commendable that the West is trying to be more open, to be more understanding of the values of outsiders, but it has lost all capacity for self-love. All that it sees in its own history is the despicable and the destructive; it is no longer able to perceive what is great and pure. What Europe needs is a new self-acceptance, a self-acceptance that is critical and humble, if it truly wishes to survive.

— Joseph Ratzinger, 'The Spiritual Roots of Europe: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow,' in *Without Roots*, Basic Books, New York, 2007, pp. 78-79.

Message from the Taliban

Join Muslim Asia or Perish

AN OFFICIAL TALIBAN publication warns Australia that it *will* have to assimilate into a dominant Asia or face the prospect of being overpowered and forced to take population overspill from Asia. The choice is spelled out in the latest issue of the online Taliban monthly magazine, *Al Sumud*, whose lead article offers a sweeping view of a post-war order in which a Taliban-ruled Afghanistan becomes a moral pivot for a pan-Asian renaissance that will coincide with the decline of Western power.

'The end of European leadership in the world will place the white settler diaspora in Australia before two choices,' writes the author, Mustafa Hamid, a former senior Al-Qaeda member, who in 2001 married Australian Rabiah Hutchinson, a Sydney mother with links to Islamic extremists.

'It can either return to its motherland in Europe or reconcile with its Asian surroundings and assimilate into it as a wealthy and active member.' Otherwise, he warns, a lengthy conflict will ensue in which Australia will be overpowered 'by Asian waves that are better armed and more numerous.'

The Taliban article does not call for jihad although it hints at the possibility of 'peaceful Islamic expansion.'

— Abraham Rabinovich, *The Australian*, November 6, 2009, quoted - Raymond Ibrahim, 'How Taqqiyya alters Islam's rules of War, *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2010 p.13.

The political vacuum was begging to be filled.

While the U.S. and the West have ostensibly been trying to export democracy to the Middle East, they have, in the process, in Winston Churchill's words, squandered vast military resources, 'and poured armies and treasure into thankless deserts.'²³

The consequences of their ill-thought-out schemes have provided the world's democracies with their greatest challenge so far: how to preserve their own democratic societies – ostensibly 'free' but riddled with relativism and political correctness – while welcoming the Tsunami of desperate human beings genuinely seeking to make a new home in the EU and elsewhere in the West.

These have been driven from their homelands by bloody civil wars and foreign invasions whose perpetrators managed to convince the gullible West that Islamist terror was a 'reaction' to despotism and injustice, and part of an Arab Spring, when it was much more: an 'act of aggression' inspired by Qur'anic verses, and well organized by a Fifth Column of Islamist extremists.



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– Editor, *Annals*

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This should not pose an insuperable problem for a Christian and democratic West that is willing and prepared to welcome genuine refugees, and is also prepared to defend its Faith and democratic values.²⁴

1. Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Europa*, 2003.
2. 'Relativism, Christianity and the West,' *Without Roots* by Joseph Ratzinger and Marcello Pera, Basic Books, New York, 2006, p.44. *Mutatis mutandis*, I have made my own the words of Marcello Pera.
3. *Truth and Tolerance*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 2004, Preface.
4. *Without roots*, ed.cit. p.45.
5. After World War II the U.S. recognized West Germany after four years, and restored diplomatic relations after ten years, in 1955. Diplomatic relations were restored with Tokyo after seven years, in 1952.
6. 'Kerry reassures Gulf allies in talks on Iran, Syria,' by Elise Labott, CNN, January 23, 2016.
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23. Christopher Catherwood, *Churchill's Folly: How Winston Churchill Created Modern Iraq*, Carrol & Graf, New York, 2004, p.87.
24. See Marcello Pera, *Without Roots*, p.42.



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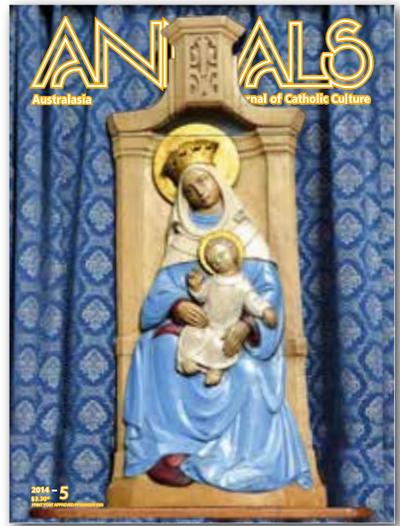
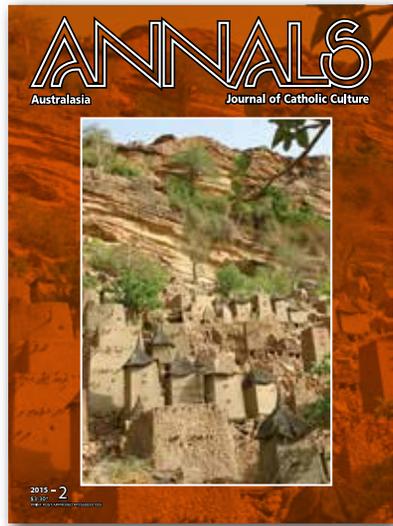
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MEDIA MATTERS

By JAMES MURRAY

Time trial

Four days, and on each day four hours of cross-examination: 16 hours, give or take a break, constituted Cardinal George Pell's ex-Rome videolink appearances before the McClellan Royal Commission into Institutional Response to Child Sexual Abuse.

Add Cardinal Pell's two previous commission appearances and the one before a Victorian Parliamentary enquiry. Add synchronised, derogatory leaks about him from Victorian police sources, perhaps to divert attention from their falsified statistics on child sex-abuse suicides. Add a climactic cross-examination by 10 lawyers for abuse survivors.

This may or may not be a septuagenarian record. Nonetheless, together with extensive media coverage, not least the ABC's, it brought your correspondent to a sense of witnessing the modern equivalent of a trial by ordeal, once part of the legal system until, ironically, incremental changes involving Catholic clerics eliminated it.

Not totally, however; any reporter of English Common Law trials has seen vestigial traces. Indeed the very word 'trial' may be a relic of the process, as is trial by combat, both innate to Common Law's adversarial nature with its focus on Guilty or Not Guilty, rather than Truth.

Trial by combat was evident as Cardinal Pell engaged on his record, including setting up Australia's first religious child-protection unit when Archbishop of Melbourne.

Counsel Assisting, Gail Furness, and Chief Royal Commissioner, Justice Peter McClellan, armed with church archival documents, and hindsight going back beyond what used to be the 25-year statute of limitations, appeared to go into tag-team mode, her voice a mix of sharp Portia and lulling Scheherazade, his meticulously quizzical.

Certainly on the second day, Cardinal Pell, responding to questions from Justice McClellan about the most notorious abuser Gerald Ridsdale, said: 'It's a sad story and it wasn't of much interest to me.'

Edited down to, 'not of much interest to me', this became *The Grab* – seen by the pack as tainting all Cardinal Pell's sworn testimony. Your correspondent's non-pack view is that Cardinal Pell, who apologised, displayed a measure of the detachment that clerics need to cultivate if they are not to break under the strain of the evil and misery they have to confront.

Exceptional? Doctors, nurses, police, firemen and lawyers also need such detachment. Oh, and journalists. Ask the all-media star, Andrew Bolt, who joined the pack in running with *The Grab*, and next day bravely retracted.

In so doing, he avoided the pack's rush to judgement and cry for Cardinal Pell's resignation that pre-empted whatever findings Justice McClellan may make within his terms of reference wisely framed by then PM Julia Gillard.

A Grip on Reality

WHEN Dr. Newman was ordained in 1824, he has told us, he did not look on ordination as a sacramental rite, nor did he ascribe to baptism any supernatural virtue. ... It is always pleasant to rediscover the meaning of words and forms which have been dulled by long usage. This is why etymology is so fascinating. By the natural bent of our minds we are lovers of whatever things are true and real. We hanker after facts. To get a grip of reality.

– Augustine Birrell, *Collected Essays and Addresses*, vol. II, London, J.M. Dent & Sons, 'Cardinal Newman,' p.148.



be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea' – a text learnt in a safe school.

Shy ministers

Among politicians of all parties and none, the fight for print space, sound bites and TV grabs is fierce yet in a further mutation of the Westminster system to the Ozminster system, politicians cede opportunities to public servants.

It was the Australian Tax Commissioner Chris Jordan who told a Senate Committee about US corporations continuing to play tax-dodging games.

Seated with Jordan was Finance Minister Mathias Cormann. From TV, your correspondent was unable to detect whether Cormann's lips moved. Perhaps, like Edgar Bergin, he has perfected the ventriloquial art and Jordan is his Charlie McCarthy.

Out of date? Okay, politicians mime while public servants sing, and display a range higher than that of their masters. Figaro comes to mind, and Jeeves.

In any case the floor of the Parliament is the stage for singing, the more so since the Ozminster system gives the Prime Minister a quasi-presidential role; it is for Malcolm Turnbull, the authority of his office enhanced by his experience as a lawyer, merchant banker and Goldman Sachs chieftain, to sing.

Even the Opposition might applaud an aria about corporations enjoined to pay their fair share of taxes from local revenue.

More diplomatically Turnbull could brief his Washington ambassador Joe Hockey (tough on corporate tax-dodging) to ask one question. How would the US react if the Northern Territory set itself up as a tax-switch point to enable US corporations to avoid their HQ country's taxes – an initiative in line with the NT's strategic port

lease to a military-linked Chinese company?

Send in the US Marines? No need, they're already there.

Incidentally when UK tax bods got a considerable sum from Google, the PM David Cameron broke the news. Exercise in vote gleaning? Turnbull also needs votes; he has usurper's syndrome, its symptoms, instant election mode and paralysis on policies needed to win.

Senate switcheroo.

Greens made it into Parliament on Mini-Minor votes, as did Nick Xenophon. So it was intriguing to see them supporting the Coalition's bill to tidy mini-vote senators preparatory to the whenever election.

Labor opposes. Quite right. It was once a party that could shelter under a tree, and all the better for it.

Mini-vote Senator Bob Day is an admirable representative of the Family First Party. Senator Jacqui Lambie is the kind of maverick every Parliament needs. And who could fail to be impressed by the mighty Senator Glenn Lazarus, bursting through with his quip about 'stick insect' portions at The Lodge and, too polite to do an Oliver Twist, swerving to Macca's.

Hospitality at The Lodge, it may be, is under budgetary constraint. Your correspondent has not dined there, nor at

chez Turnbull, though he does know the buses to catch. He checked on the home provender (with a source once close to the kitchen) and was told portions were generous.

More. Even though they had a cook, the Turnbulls did on occasions make a meal for guests, something the Downton Abbey Granthams have yet to do, though the Buck House Windsors have barbecued at Balmoral.

There's the solution: BYO meat and plonk. Had the PM entertained his New

Civilization
IF BARBARISM had an antonym for [Dr] Johnson, it was the polite (though sometimes also downright rude) urban life he enjoyed so much in London. A civilization, as the etymology of the word suggests, revolves around its cities. But a city's laws (civil or otherwise) are as important as its walls; its constitution and customs - its inhabitants' manners (civil or otherwise) - as important as its palaces.
- Niall Ferguson, *Civilization: The West and the Rest*, Allen Lane, 2011, pp.2,3.



Zealand counterpart John Key at The Lodge, instead of his Point Piper B&B, he would have benefitted from NZ meat and wine – the finest.

That said, mini-vote senators can be a democratic plus; roll on the Knitters Party, the Trad Catholic Party, and the Original Land-Holders Party, the latter coalescing round the grit of new Senator Mick Dodd.

Savvy Savva

So plenteous has coverage of Niki Savva's *The Road to Ruin* been, it has dulled the need to read the book as too many canapés dull the main-course appetite.

Indeed the book's sub-title, *How Tony Abbott and Peta Credlin Destroyed Their Own Government* is itself a substantial plate of horse's doovers.

The enduring talking point: Savva's decision to refrain from putting to Abbott and Credlin a rumour of a less than strict working relationship amid the perfervid complexities of Canberra's six-ring circus (House of Reps, Senate, Public Service, Gallery, Lobbyists, Journo-Staffers).

Savva, talking to fellow ex-Journo-Staffer Barry Cassidy on the ABC *Insiders*, defended her decision; she continued to defend it, her most striking point being that had she submitted a draft, Abbott and Credlin would have organised retractions.

Submitting drafts *is* risky. But the rumour should have been put verbally, if only to provide reaction copy.

Not discussed on *Insiders* was whether Savva broke the Journo-Staffer silence convention. Discussion might also have clarified the cost-benefits of simplifying

the six-ring circus by eliminating Journo-Staffers, relatively new performers, and replacing them with Public Servants who used to do the job under the silence convention, and are less inclined to headline-think and leak to hack mates.

Perhaps another line was in play: too good to check, attributed to the late Murray Sayle when working with the intrepid Duncan Webb on *The People*, an experience that inspired *Crooked Sixpence*, Sayle's only novel.

In Savva's motives there may be another novel. Had PM John Howard not lingered, Peter Costello, Treasurer and PM-in-waiting, would have been PM and Savva his Chief of Staff. Instead she found herself writing on politics at *The Australian*, a situation akin to a tennis ace like Margaret Smith commenting on a lesser player, say, Maria Sharapova.

Novel's title: *Great Disappointments*

There again, *The People* was not keen on *Crooked Sixpence*, nor was *The Manchester Guardian* on Malcolm Muggeridge's *Picture Palace*, examples of how newspapers can be as sensitive to fictional criticism as those they name are to more or less factual variety.

Up there, Jeffrey

Good to see the new editor-in-chief of *The Australian*, Paul Whittaker, give the nod to James

Jeffrey for *The Sketch* coverage of Federal Parliament.

Yet Jeffrey, a brilliant writer (and piper) still has to file a personal column plus do his turn on *Strewh*.

Whittaker could make the gig easier and create a peerless circulation builder by getting his chief proprietor, Rupert Murdoch, to contribute his tweets (no need to change *Strewh* – most apt for RM in twitter mode).

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The End of the Age

WE MAY expect not merely the passing of the Liberal-capitalist order of the nineteenth century, but the End of the Age; a turning-point in world history which will alter the whole character of civilization by a change in its fundamental direction: a turning of the human mind from the circumference to the centre, from the emptiness of modern civilization and progress to the vision of spiritual reality which stands all the time looking down on our ephemeral activities like the snow mountains above the jazz and gigolos of a jerry-built hotel.

- Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State*, Sheed and Ward, London, 1935, p.153

It must really hurt to fall off the gravy train after eight lucrative years! Clearly, the losers of the elections in Poland are determined to fight their way back to power, if not through the democratic process, in which they failed, then through manufacturing a crisis.

SOUR GRAPES OVER POLAND

by Anna Chodakiewicz Wellisz



POLAND HAS been showered with what seems like excessive and surprisingly negative media attention of late. True, the Poles elected a new president in the summer, and a new parliament in the fall, but time has passed, and power changed hands without invasions, riots, or revolutions; both the winners and the losers are members of mainstream political parties, and the new, democratically elected conservative government was formed relatively quickly.

That should all be good news for Poland and Europe—indeed, for the entire free world—though one could never tell judging by the shrill headlines that continue to claim prominent spots on news networks, magazine covers, editorial pages, and Twitter feeds on both sides of the Atlantic.

The media's reaction to the Polish voters' decision to bring to power the country's anti-Communist opposition has been relentless in volume and surprisingly hysterical in tone.

Just to pick a few examples: Even before the new government was formed, the *Financial Times* reported that Poland returned the "most rightwing parliament in Europe"; *The Economist* fretted on its cover about the "perils of Polish populism"

and offered a tendentious leader on "Europe's new headache." CNN aired its own "Poland swings to the right," and *The Washington Post* weighed in on "Poland's disturbing tilt to the right"; the reliably biased *New York Times* explained "Why Poland Is Turning Away From the West," while the Daily Beast cut to the chase with a crude "WTF Is Wrong With Poland." Even *The Wall*



Street Journal finally joined the pack, adding "Poland's Bad Turn" to the mix.

The articles continue to appear unabated, almost as though they were writing themselves. Goebbels must be having a good day in hell: A lie becomes the truth just because it is being repeated often enough.

Given the "truth" so established, it is almost no wonder that Standard & Poor's responded to the political siren's call and announced its cut in Poland's sovereign debt rating without warning. Unlike Fitch or Moody's, which kept their ratings unchanged, S&P seemed to be making a purely political decision and openly taking sides in recent Polish elections. Given the country's positive economic outlook and Poland's GDP growth that's the envy of stagnant Europe, the move seems designed to punish the winning conservative Law and Justice (PiS) party for its presumed politics with a rating cut. S&P's downgrade is a victory for the well-connected, ideologically fashionable coalition of the losing party politicians and their friends in NGOs and the media, who have been whipping up a remarkably prolific and effective disinformation campaign against the new Polish government.

"Before accepting the claims about the new government's undemocratic behavior, a fact-check is in order."

It helps the losers' cause, of course, that the defeated Civic Platform (PO) party's founder and former head of government, Donald Tusk, is now conveniently ensconced in Brussels as the president of the European Council; that the former president of Poland, Bronisław Komorowski, who valued

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deployed by the coalition just booted out of power, claiming that “Poland’s new government has initiated various legislative measures that we consider weaken the independence and effectiveness of key institutions.”

Before accepting the claims about the new government’s undemocratic behavior, a fact-check is in order.

First of all, few outside of Poland understand that the dividing line in Polish politics is not left and right, but the commitment to the country’s independence—be it from invaders or meddling neighbors.

To most Polish voters, Russian-empire nostalgia and perceived German willingness to accommodate it are not abstract global issues but local existential threats. It is at least partly in this context that the Polish voters unseated an incumbent in the presidential elections and chose Andrzej Duda, a former EU parliamentarian strongly committed to Poland’s sovereignty.

Soon after, the voters handed an unprecedented landslide victory to the center-right Law and Justice party, giving it a parliamentary supermajority. With that election, for the first time since the fall of Communism in Poland, one party was given the mandate to form the government alone.

Even more remarkably, PiS’s victory marks the coming to power of the same staunchly anti-Communist, straight-talking political class that toppled the Soviet-sponsored regime 26 years earlier and inspired other Warsaw Pact countries to stand up, bring down the Iron Curtain, and send the occupying Soviet troops back to Moscow.

How exactly would their win be a “disturbing” outcome? And why, in S&P’s eyes, would that “weaken the independence and effectiveness of key institutions”? How is that a “bad turn,” except, of course, for the Civic Platform, its Peasant Party coalition partners, and the former Communists, now known by their

good relationships with Western journalists and flattered them with prizes, now reaps the harvest of their loyalty; or that the wife of Radosław Sikorski, a prominent member of the deposed coalition, is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and a purported expert on East-Central Europe with editorial ties to *The Washington Post* and *The Economist*, both of which—without disclaimers—were among the first to warn the world about the demise of democracy in Poland. It must really

hurt to fall off the gravy train after eight lucrative years!

Clearly, the losers of the elections in Poland are determined to fight their way back to power, if not through the democratic process, in which they failed, then through manufacturing a crisis. S&P’s unexpected action shows that the campaign to discredit the new government is working. To explain the sovereign debt rating cut, S&P does not cite facts or numbers, but simply echoes the vague rhetoric

Orwellian moniker Democratic Left Alliance, all of whom, for the first time since the fall of the Soviet Union, find themselves nowhere near the trough of political spoils and are starting to panic?

And there is much to panic about. After all, it's not just the Polish taxpayer largesse that was at stake in the elections they lost, but access to EU and NATO appointments, the crony capitalists' government contracts granted outside the procurement process, the sinecures, the lucrative seats on state-owned companies' management boards with stratospheric compensations that even well-paid Poles could only dream of. In other words, there are real losses for the defeated politicians to grieve.

It is strange that the critics of the new government, who fret about the supposed irregularities surrounding the Constitutional Tribunal and the fate of the state-owned media, never noticed the profoundly illiberal—and unpopular—policies of the outgoing administration and its sole preoccupation with solidifying its own grip on power.

Neither the now-vocal EU Commissioners nor the Western media complained about the anti-democratic agenda when the former ruling coalition and its post-Communist allies, fearing election-day losses, subverted the constitution by packing the Constitutional Tribunal with their own nominees, expressly to block the winning party's future legislative agenda and stop Law and Justice from appointing its own judges to the highest court.

S&P did not mind those particular “legislative measures that...weaken the independence and effectiveness of key institutions” either, even though the illegal maneuver increased the number of constitutional judges and, if unchecked, would have left the outgoing administration in control of the entire 15-member Tribunal.

It is ironic that the Civic Platform and its supporters in Brussels and beyond cry foul now, just because

Heaven on Earth?

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

— Adam Zamoyski, *Holy Madness, Romantics, Patriots and Revolutionaries 1776-1871*, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London, 199, p.4

the newly elected president and the new parliament foiled their scheme, leaving the sore losers in the opposition with “only” 10, rather than all 15, judges.

The often-repeated claim that Law and Justice is threatening the integrity of the state-owned media is similarly preposterous. The political purges of journalists under Civic Platform's rule and predawn police raids to seize the computers of independent news organizations in order to suppress credible reports of government corruption and gross abuses of power curiously did not earn the PO prime minister Donald Tusk international opprobrium—or a sovereign debt rating cut.

Instead, he was appointed president of the European Council, a job for which he was endorsed by Angela Merkel herself. Given the German media's penchant for self-censorship and the now-infamous handling of the New Year's Eve sexual violence, perhaps the German EU officials share the former Polish prime minister's apparent belief in the merits of subjecting the state-owned media to their own, correct political orthodoxy.

That the hysterical voices of the Polish government's critics are now being heard, loud and clear, on TV, on the radio, and in major newspapers in Poland and beyond puts the previous ruling coalition's suppression of its opponents to shame—unlike its Civic Platform predecessors, the new Law and Justice government does not harass its critics in the press.

And those who were defeated and now disingenuously criticize the new administration for appointing its own people to state posts, including in state-run media, as all ruling coalitions have done before them, should consider accepting the fact that they lost.

Elections have consequences, which is precisely the hope of all those who exercise their right to vote, especially in a country where three generations fought against two of the 20th century's most vicious totalitarian regimes to enshrine that right and the freedoms it represents—into law.

“This article originally appeared on www.takimag.com http://takimag.com/article/sour_grapes_over_poland_chodakiewicz_wellisz/print#ixzz3yVKaEoNZ

Risen

The Easter film; its director Kevin Reynolds and his co-writer Paul Aiello concentrate on post-crucifixion events rather than the crucifixion; Pontius Pilate (Peter Firth) orders veteran Roman officer Clavius (Joseph Fiennes) to find the body of Yeshua (Cliff Curtis) to disprove the legend that he has risen from the dead.

Firth, Fiennes and Curtis rise to the challenge of this highly distinctive take which matches the superlative economy of the gospel sources: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Reynolds and Aiello with cinematographer Lorenzo Senatore have made a film fit to form a triptych with Pier Pasolini's *The Gospel According to St Matthew* and Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*.
TBA★★★★SFFV.

Son of Saul

Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List* (based on Tom Keneally's powerful documentary novel *Schindler's Arc*) is outstanding among films that have attempted to replicate horrific archival footage on the Nazi death camps.

In his first feature, co-written with Clara Royer, director Laszlo Nemes matches and even surpasses archival horror paradoxically by not showing it; with cinematographer Matyas Erdélyi he keeps close-focus on Saul Auslander, obsessed with finding a rabbi in Auschwitz-Birkenau to provide Jewish burial rites for a young prisoner who may or may not be his son.

Geza Rohrig, a non-professional, plays Saul with the manic intensity of someone trying to light a candle of virtue against the evil dark. The film's overall power and climax makes you wish you were not there.

M★★★★NFFV.

Hail, Caesar

The Coen Brothers, Joel and Ethan, have scripted and directed a serio-comic epic about studio Hollywood that is as unbalanced as it is zany.

At the centre of their epic, they place Eddie Mannix, a name inseparable from Louis B Mayer as the lion is from MGM, the studio that

MOVIES

By James Murray

the Judeo-Catholic duumvirate ran so successfully for so long.

Yet while Josh Brolin is cast to play Mannix with high-octane force, no comparable star plays Mayer who is simply cut from the story line. As a result, the Coens can open with a crucifixion shot inter-cut with a shot of Mannix at confession. No equivalent shot of Mayer at prayer in the synagogue is on view.

Not that the movie lacks stars, it's a fan's banquet of them. Tilda Swinton, playing the twin Thacker Sisters (read Louella Parsons and Hedda Hopper) vies with Scarlett Johansson, playing, an Esther Williams type mermaid.

Channing Tatum does a Gene Kelly-style dance routine, while George Clooney double bluffs as the womanising Baird Whitlock playing Antoninus in Hail Caesar, a DeMillesque biblical epic.

As cowboy star Hobie Doyle Aiden Ehrenreich steals the show. Well, not totally. Frances McDormand, playing non-star film-editor CC Calhoun, takes a bigger share.

Taking zaniness to extremes the Coens have a cell of dissident Communist writers kidnap Whitlock and hold him to ransom. Towards the end, the Coens cannot resist showing their skills; Whitlock/Antoninus, rescued by Mannix, plays a Golgatha scene and by deft shooting and editing the Coens make it work.

This not the first Coen Brothers movie to create healthy scepticism of the illusionary medium that butters their crust and adds jam.

PG★★★★NFFV.

13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi

Director Michael Bay's title tells it as it is: even in the context of the 24/7 news cycle events slip between the spokes. His event involved a squad of six mercenaries under contract to protect CIA agents at a surveillance compound in Benghazi, Libya.

When the US Embassy was attacked by a mob which killed the Ambassador Christopher Stevens and three others, the squad flouted orders and fought for 13 hours to defend and rescue 36 other American besieged in the compound.

The date was September 11, 2012 on the watch of then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton now running for President. As Jack Silva, the squad leader John Krasinski transforms himself from light comedian to heavy-duty warrior.

MA15+★★★★NFFV.

Triple 9

Time was when cops were cops and robbers were robbers. Now director John Hillcoat demonstrates you can scarcely tell one from t'other. He puts a pack of rogue cops, led by Chiwetel Ejiofor, into the heist of a safety deposit box facility. Their motive is not profit but to obtain evidence that will free a jailed Russian mafya chieftain.

Kate Winslet, embodying the chieftain's wife with ice-pick elegance and enough fake hair for one thousand Barbie dolls, orders the rogues to go in again to get more evidence.

Woody Harrelson plays goodish cop trying to protect his rogue cop brother played by Casey Affleck. Harrelson does his wild-eyed bit. Affleck gives an Oscar-worthy display of virtuoso gum chewing, pausing only to kiss his wife (Teresa Palmer).

Hillcoat does provide a diverting mafya headquarters: a kosher meat factory in Atlanta, Georgia. Violence and bullets abound – how unlike the London deposit heist by the quiet bunch who got away with millions and are in jail with most of the loot untraced.

MA15+★★★★NFFV.

10 Cloverfield Lane

The sound-track of director Dan Trachtenberg's thriller is so menacing it creates the impression he will be unable to match it. But he does with the aid of JJ Abrams who produced in the intervals of putting together *Star Wars* sequels.

Great character actor John Goodman, cast against amiable type, plays a grim survivalist Howard

Stambler who holds Michelle (Mary Elizabeth Winstead) and Emmet (John Gallagher jnr) in his well-stocked bunker.

To what purpose: their safety or death? The final twist will make you hurry to the exit.

M★★★NFFV

The Lady in the Van

In fact there are two vans, painted yellow. And Maggie Smith turns both into star vehicles, displaying her talent for tragi-comedy, aided by the underplaying of Alex Jennings in the double role of the active and passive Alan Bennett.

The movie is based on the stage version of Bennett's slim memoir telling the story of down, but not out, Mary Shepherd who in 1970 got his permission to park in the front garden of his Camden Town house and stayed for 15 years.

Great though Smith is, she can't quite get rid of the impression that she is really the Dowager Countess of Grantham dressed in rags on her way to a masquerade ball.

Unfortunately the ending of the movie, directed by Nicholas Hytner who also directed the stage version, is a sequence painted lurid that mocks Mary Shepherd's faith.

The mockery suggests that Bennett, a professional Yorkshireman is totally unaware of the essence of the Catholic faith, a faith that inspired northerners to rise in what was known as the Pilgrimage of Grace in defence of that national faith.

M★★★NFFV.

Marguerite

The marvellous Catherine Frot enters in the title role of a woman rich enough to give private recitals where spongers applaud her as an operatic diva. Her husband (André Marcon) and butler (Denis Mpunga) conceal the truth: she sings like a crow on a hacksaw diet.

But as a result of a fake review, she faces a public debut. Will she or won't she? Enough to say that her finale is sadly funny.

Marguerite's surname is Dumont, a reference hinting that filmmaker Xavier Giannoli's tendency is Marxist, Groucho, that is, the latter being

celebrated for his approaches to the statuesque Margaret Dumont.

M★★★SFFV.

Eye in the Sky

In this thriller (take your choice between nail-biting and edge of seat), Helen Mirren plays Colonel Katherine Powell, who from London commands a drone warfare unit. As Mirren plays her, Powell is so tough she brings to mind Gerard Depardieu's quip about his compatriot, Catherine Deneuve: 'She is the man I would like to be.'

Powell's unit includes drone pilots in the USA who maintain surveillance of an Islamist cell operating from a walled compound in Nairobi.

Director Gavin Hood makes every moment of the 102 minute running time count to the last split-second as the operation goes from surveillance to kill. But the possibility of collateral damage brings in a political-military committee, headed by Alan Rickman in his last role (and wearing a uniform that appears to mix US Marine fabric with British red-tabs).

Saying more would spoil a climax which mixes whizbangery with tears. Leaving the preview theatre your reviewer's thought was, Goodbye, James Bond. Daft thought; on his next outing Bond (whoever he or she maybe) will no doubt be equipped

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with an armed drone rather than a silenced pistol. His other thought was armed drones are the equivalent of the 'Greek Fire' that helped to halt the advance of Islamists of the past.

M★★★NFFV.

Concussion

Director Peter Landesman puts grip into the story of Dr Bennet Omalu, a neuropathologist who came across evidence of the brain trauma caused, despite helmets, by contact in grid-iron football.

Supported by his wife Prema (Gugu M'batha-Raw) Omalu, continued his research, despite initial opposition from his boss (Albert Brooks, in edgy mode) and football administrator (Alec Baldwin, a ball of fire).

Will Smith, his Nigerian accent convincing, plays Omalu as a fine amalgam of cheek, charm, force of character and Catholic faith. He made his case, compensation is sought, and has been paid, for brain trauma not only in America but wherever players go head-to-head.

M★★★SFFV.

Microbe and Gasoline

In the realm of adolescent adventure, director Michel Gondry's comedy drama is up there with *Ferris Buller's Day Off*. Impossible? Okay think Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer with a full, free and frank French education and you have the spirit that drives Microbe (Ange Dargent) and Gasoline (Theophile Baquet) when they decide to spend their school holidays on the road in a self-built vehicle.

More comment would spoil the fun which includes Audrey Tautou as Microbe's new-age Mama.

M★★★SFFV.

The Daughter

Writer/director Simon Stone, following his stage version, updates and transposes Henrik Ibsen's *The Wild Duck* from Sweden to the mist-wreathed Tumut, NSW.

Into a town where the local timber mill is closing (no Greenies in sight) comes Christian (Paul Schneider), home to attend the second wedding of the mill owner, his father Henry (Geoffrey Rush) to Anna (Anna Torv).

As the wedding preparations proceed, Christian re-connects with his friend Oliver (Ewen Leslie), his wife Charlotte (Miranda Otto) and their daughter Hedwig (Odessa Young) while the patriarch Walter (Sam Neill) looks on, wary of the secret that binds them.

The duck? It doesn't fly away with the picture, dominated by Odessa Young who hits a superlative high C of grief towards the movie's end.

Your reviewer admits that memories of producer Phillip Emmanuel's period movie version of *The Wild Duck* (starring Liv Ullmann and Jeremy Irons) affected his reaction.

M★★★NFFV.

How to be Single

Alice (Dakota Johnson) leaves her boyfriend to find out who she really is and falls in with Robin (Rebel Wilson) a wild chick in search of wilder times in the bars and clubs of New York from which Alice takes refuge with her obstetrician sister Meg (Leslie Mann).

Director Christian Ditter ties his romantic comedy with a tinsel, happy-ending bow. Inadvertently, however, his movie plays as a promotion for what are called lock-out laws but are in fact safety rules against self-harm and the harm of others. Your reviewer's field research has been extensive but he refrains from citing it because it is out of date in its non-mixing of stimulant pills, fruit-pop alcohol, and ready-mixed drinks including (yuck) whisky-cola.

M★★NFFV.

Zoolander 2

Proves one thing. Don't do a cult-movie sequel unless you're prepared to try too hard. Which is what director Ben Stiller does abetted by Owen Wilson. Multiplying his difficulties, Stiller casts Will Ferrell as the comedy's big baddie.

Unwise. Ferrell doesn't steal scenes. He smashes and grabs the whole movie and takes off into the hills of farce where the Three Stooges live.

To see the editor of *Vanity Fair*, Anna Wintour, taking a spot that could have earned a crowd extra a



OOOOOPS !! No, not a typo but a slumbering editor. Footnote⁴ on page 20 of our last issue referred to an article in *Annals* on the Crusades and omitted the reference. Your editor apologizes. The article in question appeared in *Annals* 8/2007. The other two articles referred to in the same footnote will, it is hoped, appear this year.

crust, is to realise that even celebrity makers hunger for celebrity.

PG★★SFFV.

Trumbo

In the title role Bryan Cranston gives a diamond-edged performance as the Hollywood writer who did a year in jail after refusing to co-operate with the 1940s HUAC (House of Un-American Activities).

Cranston's performance is enhanced through star turns by Diane Lane as his loyal wife Cleo, and Helen Mirren as his nemesis, the gossip columnist Hedda Hopper.

Others in the constellation include John Goodman as a producer who hired Trumbo to write scripts at much less than his accustomed rate, a ploy that enabled him to script the Oscar winners *Roman Holiday* and *The Brave One* under the alias Robert Rich.

Even Cranston, however, couldn't quite cope with the stick-on moustache for his final big speech. It showed a tendency to take off spinning.

Apt. The movie, written by John McNamara, directed by Jay Roach is a sustained attempt to spin HUSAC as an unparalleled attack on freedom of speech.

Result: no intercutting of Stalin's Soviet show trials. And no mention of a writer greater than Trumbo. Compare and contrast the heroic

Alexander (*The Gulag Archipelago*) Solzhenitzyn, and as you do, compare and contrast the on-going liberties of the states in which they were created.

M★★★NFFV.

45 Years

Kate (Charlotte Rampling) and Geoff (Tom Courtenay) live in a country house, nothing magnificently pillaged like Downton Abbey, but comfortable with a dog to walk and an Aga stove to keep them warm under the cloudy skies of the Broads, East Anglia.

The expectation of a party to celebrate their 45th wedding anniversary is broken when Geoff gets a letter telling him that the body of an early girlfriend has been discovered in a Swiss glacier.

The effect of this drives filmmaker Andrew Haigh's drama which, like the Aga, is quietly efficient. Rampling and Courtney's performances are those of superlative mummies in their vintage years.

Haigh gives his work an ambiguous, boomers, end – not with a bang but a smoochy shuffle of uncertainty to the song *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*. Presumably rights to the Beatles anthem *All You need is Love* were beyond budget.

M★★★NFFV.

Gods of Egypt

Tosh in 3D. But director Alex Proyas gives it a strong Vegemite flavour by casting Bryan Brown and Geoffrey Rush as Egyptian deities. He mixes in Brenton Thwaites as Bek, a thief of Cairo, out to rescue his sweetheart Zaya (Courtney Eaton) and – say it ain't so – Robyn Nevin as a crone who looks as if she has lost her way to rehearsals of the witches cauldron scene in *Macbeth*.

Gerard Butler and Nicolaj Coster-Waldau appear as the contending gods Set and Horus. Alex Proyas and his crew provide special effects so silly that the only way the actors seem to be able to keep from laughing is by thinking of their serious cheques.

Proyas fails to give Butler a chance to exercise his finest gift – his voice. A rousing verse or two from *The Desert Song* would not have been out of place.

M★★NFFV.

Building a defence policy upon such a commitment with no analysis of its adequacy is ludicrous – and intellectually nonsensical. Worse, it assumes that such a level of funding will be achieved and sustained when there is no legislation to underpin it.

PROMISES, PROMISES

By Michael O'Connor



THE NEW defence white paper just released is, by my count, the seventh since 1976. Not one of its predecessors has been implemented as promised. Which ever party is in office starts, therefore, with a credibility gap in defence policy. Typically a white paper program is supposed to last for about 20 years, or seven parliamentary terms. This latest document has a ten year program but it has no legislative standing and is therefore a particularly plastic document subject to a wide range of political pressures. There are no financial commitments; these must depend on annual budget allocations in competition with more politically attractive programs.

This white paper has had a long gestation. First promised when the Abbott government achieved office in 2013 after failures by previous governments to deliver a defence policy, its development began with a community consultation conducted by an expert panel. The panel received some 260 written submissions and met with more than 500 individuals or groups

around the country, a mass of verbiage whose impact on the final document is not apparent. Certainly a number of submissions from the anti-war community were clearly unhelpful.

The final document published on 16th February 2016 is notably bland in its presentation, marked for its use of bureaucratic jargon designed, one assumes, to confuse people outside the civilian and military club. Essentially, the document asserts everything is under control, that the present leadership, political, military and bureaucratic, has

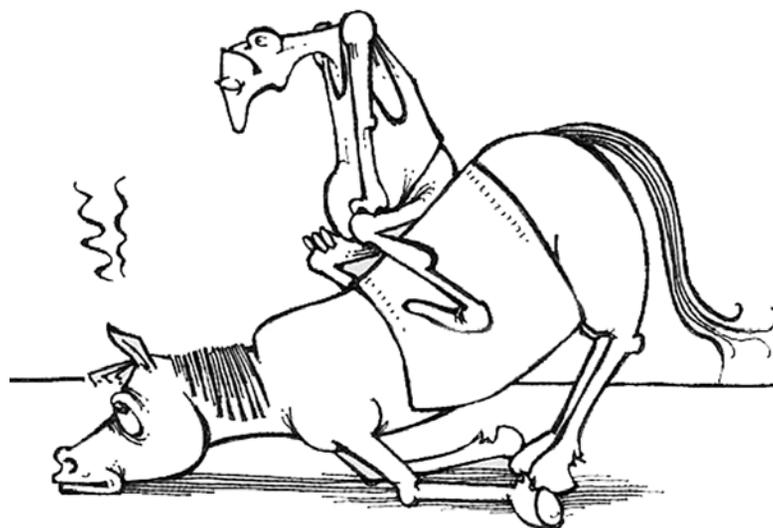
as sustaining the largely worthless operations in the Middle East and Afghanistan.

The policy attempts to define Australia's security interests but is generally idealistic rather than specific. The policy notes that the growth of China's national power will have "a major impact on the stability of the Indo-Pacific to 3035" and, no doubt, further. By contrast, the United States will remain the pre-eminent global military power for the next 20 years, thus laying the basis for an Australian policy of continuing dependence upon the US. At least, the strategic policy has for now buried the nonsense that Australia should downgrade its defence relationship with the United States in favour of a closer defence association with China.

The policy asserts that Australia's security and prosperity relies on a stable, rules-based global order. Of course it does but the purpose of

a defence policy is to contribute to that global order and to deal with its breakdowns. This segment of the policy is notable for its new but essentially axiomatic jargon that raises the question "so what?"

The policy asserts that the growth of terrorism represents



'It is highly questionable whether the navy be able to crew its proposed 12 submarines, given that it is unable to crew more than 4 at present.'

learned from its mistakes and we can be assured that Australia is in safe hands.

The strategic outlook section that is intended to set the scene for the policy is represents a useful essay on general strategic policy with a few more specific commitments such

a threat to Australia's security although this is truly a matter for domestic law enforcement. The topic is raised essentially to justify a continuing Australian military involvement in Afghanistan and the Middle East, asserting that that conflict damages a stable international order and that Australia needs to support the development of regional national resilience. But that fact can excuse almost any military commitment at the behest of the united States.

The policy further emphasises the growing threat of cyber warfare, attacks on the computer systems that underpin our national life. This is not just a defence problem; consider for example the effect on ordinary Australians of 'crashing' Centrelink's computer system.

A defence policy should necessarily be designed not merely to defend Australia's territory but to be adaptable to whatever circumstances, often unpredictable and unpredicted, that impact upon Australia's overall security. The White Paper sets out a program for the development of our military capacity over a period of ten years.

In general, the proposals relate to the replacement of obsolete or elderly equipments such as the P-3C Orion anti-submarine aircraft and a number of important new operational capabilities such as the acquisition of long-range drone aircraft for surveillance and attacks on hostile shipping. The shopping list is long and it gets ever longer as decisions are deferred or altered. This upgrading is a never-ending task for any defence force and the program calls for the spending of \$195 billion on new equipment.

Figures like that sound impressive but less so when it is realised that they include provisions for spares and the colossal overheads imposed by Defence's inordinately ponderous administration. This resulted over four years to 2013-14 in \$18.8 billion of allocated funds being returned to the government because it could not be spent.

'How did you know?' 'I Just Did.'

AMOTHER, sitting with a small son on top of a bus from Swiss Cottage to Baker Street, saw walking along the opposite side of Wellington Road a woman with whom she had worked early in the war, a year or two before the boy's birth. She said, 'Goodness, there's someone I used to know quite well. I wish I could talk to her again.' 'Quick, wind the window down and shout.' 'It's no good, darling, it wouldn't be manners, she'd never hear, and anyway I've forgotten her name. . . . It may be Betty, but I can't be quite sure.' No more was said. The bus lumbered past St John's Wood cemetery and round the green triangle dominated by the statue of St George and the Dragon. As it came to the bridge over the Regent's Canal, the small boy remarked meditatively, 'You're quite right, her name isn't Betty. It's Peggy.' 'Yes, of course, that's it, Peggy. Peggy Samuel,' his mother replied, and then, realizing the oddity of what was going on, 'but how did you know? I haven't seen or heard or thought of her since before you were born.' 'I just did.'

This continuity of experience between mother-and other family figures-and child gradually disintegrates as the process of schooling begins, and also as the child becomes dimly aware of the possibility of choosing to retreat from the suffering to which (as well as to joy) its former openness to feeling exposed it, to shut out immediate awareness of other people's anxiety, boredom, pain, unhappiness. This ability develops in step with the ability to read, since to read means that one has learned in some degree how to control and to direct thought.

— *The Hidden Springs*, by Renee Haynes, London Hollis & Carter, 1961, p.119.

The largest single cost to the defence budget is in wages and allowances for defence personnel, both civilian and military. Military numbers are expected to increase by around 7.5 per cent while civilian numbers are supposed to be cut by almost 20 per cent, itself a test of credibility. Yet it is highly questionable whether the navy will be able to crew its proposed 12 submarines given that it is unable to crew more than four at present. In fact, the figure of 12 submarines does not seem to me to be based upon any sound analysis. It is simply double the current force and very likely eight would provide a significant growth in operational readiness.

Of course, it may be that the government will set out seriously to compete in the labour market for its military personnel, something that no government has done in our history.

The White Paper then is a statement of hope from the defence organisation. Its program is driven by a commitment from the present government to raise defence spending to two per cent of Gross Domestic Product, a figure that has not been achieved since the Vietnam War and then only because of the impact of conscription.

Building a defence policy upon such a commitment with no analysis of its adequacy is ludicrous – and intellectually nonsensical. Worse, it assumes that such a level of funding will be achieved and sustained when there is no legislation to underpin it. The funding commitment has little more validity than a political thought bubble.

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