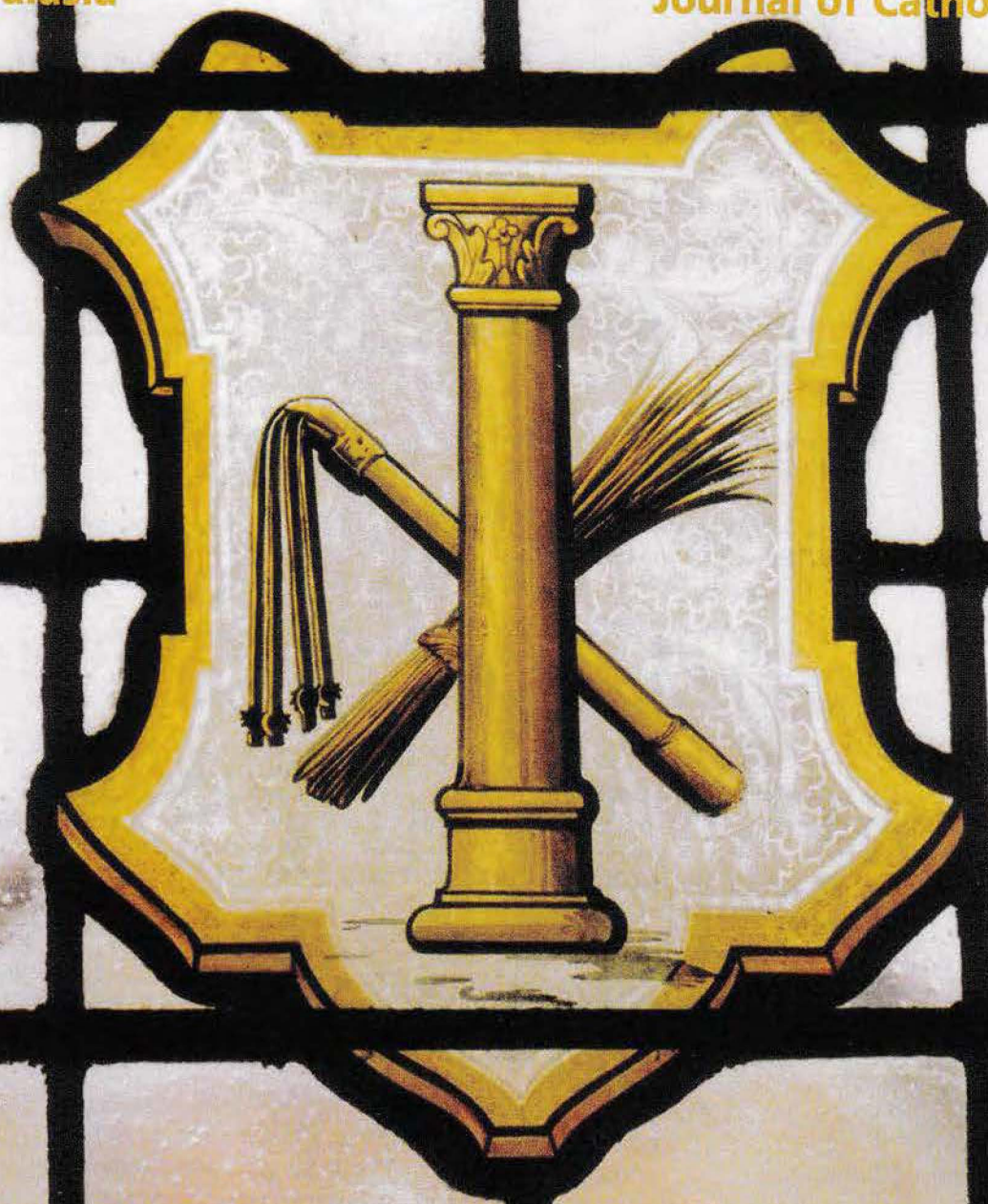


ANNALS

Australasia

Journal of Catholic Culture



2004 —
\$3.30*

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PRINT POST APPROVED PP255003/01005

ANNALS AUSTRALASIA

Journal of Catholic Culture

Volume 115, Number 2 March 2004

[Sunday Year C/weekdays Year II]

Australia's Oldest Catholic Magazine

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

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Front and Back Covers: Detail of the stained-glass window in the main stairwell of the Sacred Heart Monastery, Kensington NSW. Depicted are some of the instruments of our Lord's passion – much discussed in the media since the release of Mel Gibson's movie *The Passion of the Christ* – [on the front cover] the pillar to which our Lord was tied by the Roman soldiers when he was flogged, and the different kinds of whips that were used, and [on the back cover] the crown of thorns and the nails. The window was erected in 1896.

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

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Colour Separation Digital Graphic Communications Pty Ltd, Suite 5, Level 2, 51-53 Bourke Rd, Alexandria 2015, Phone: (02) 9669 6144.

ABN 40 938 805 168 Dewey Number: 248-88 AT ISSN 0812-9355. Recommended Retail Price only.

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



In Defence of Images

POSSIBLY, an argumentative unbeliever may maintain that we who honour images in our churches are guilty of praying to lifeless idols. Far be it from us to do this.

We do not rest contented with mere appearances. With the material image before our eyes, we see the invisible God through the visible representation, and glorify God as if present, not as some unreal god, but as God who is the very essence of Being. Nor are the saints whom we honour, fictitious. They exist, and are living with God. Their spirits, being holy, help by the power of God all those who deserve and need their assistance.

- Simeon of Mount Thaumastus, *Images*, quoted by St John Damascene, *On Images*.





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 was another one of these cities, and Synesius was born there. This hymn is taken from the *Roman Breviary*.

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

By FRANK DEVINE



IT'S gratifying to learn that Mel Gibson has got \$US146 million (\$194 million) back in a week from his \$US40 million personal financing of *The Passion of the Christ*. The opening burst is from North America only. The picture hasn't yet been released in most parts of the world.

One reason for my interest in the money-spinning side of Gibson's risky venture – when others are more high-mindedly concerned with its religious and cultural aspects – is simple mean-spiritedness. It's one in the eye for *The New York Times*.

After a year of breaking it back and its principles, first to prevent the movie getting a showing, and then to condemn it as encouraging anti-Semitism and being faithless to the scriptural record, the Times published a spiteful little story last week under the headline, "New movie may harm Gibson's career".

It quoted two Hollywood studio chiefs saying, in effect, that Mel would never eat lunch in this town again. They would, themselves, never do business with him.

Hollywood being Hollywood and shareholders being shareholders, it's hard to credit studio heads black-balling a maker of (conceivably) a billion-dollar movie. According to *The Los Angeles Times*, Gibson avoided the Oscar ceremonies this week, having been invited to attend as a presenter, because he was afraid of being booted.

If this was really the reason for his absence, Mel should probably have taken his chances. Hollywood being Hollywood, a take of \$US125 million in the first week would have caused an awful lot of boos to catch in the throat. It may well be in my nature to linger over the coarsely materialistic aspects of Gibson's success against the odds, but there is no question that there are other, far more powerful benefits in *Passion's* securing a large audience.

Consider that the nine other movies in the present top 10 US box office winners are: *50 First Dates*, *Twisted* (of the serial killer genre), *Confessions of a Teenage*

Drama Queen, *Dirty Dancing: Havana Nights*, *Miracle* (about the victory of the 1980 American Olympic ice hockey team over the Russians), *Eurotrip* (teenage sex comedy), *Welcome to Mooseport* (political farce), *Barbershop 2* and *Broken Lizard's Club Dread* (yet another slasher horror flick spoof).

Since I have seen none of them, it would be impetuous to dismiss them as gunk, though I don't believe the danger of error is high. However, every one of these pictures – with their plot synopses a pretty reliable guide – is the work of a collective of marketers, money changers, publicists, opinion pollsters and studio chiefs steeped in cynicism.

Gibson's picture, by contrast, is a work of personal inspiration. Its success at the box office may erode the hegemony of the depraved collective, especially as it provides far less leeway for rip-off imitation than other successful movies of originality and individuality.

Then there is the matter of accusations against *The Passion of the Christ* fostering anti-Semitism. Writing with transparent honesty (unlike some of his colleagues) in *The New York Times*, William Safire asserts that Gibson searches in the movie for someone to blame for Jesus's tortures, and settles on the Jews.

I am entirely unable to share this perception. The high priest Caiphas is depicted as villainous, a cruel, power-seeking political schemer.

But a considerable number of dissenters in the Jewish leadership are shown being brutally silenced by Caiphas's claque.

As others have pointed out, all the good people in the picture are Jews. In a telling scene, a Roman soldier uses "Jew!" as an insult against the noble Simon of Cyrene, who helps Jesus carry his cross and tries to protect him from the clubs and whips of the soldiers.

A large audience, I think, ensures a greater plurality against the evil foolishness of attributing Caiphas's wickedness to others. Finally, I need to turn to the personal to make the most important point about Gibson's movie.

It's always been my feeling that religious belief belongs to one's inner life, nurtured and strengthened during a lifetime of experience, observation and contemplation. Externalities just provide the scaffolding. On the other hand, religion has inspired all forms of art through all the generations, and religious art stirs the emotions.

Sometimes it brings tears, not for Jesus, because his suffering and death are awesome, but for the frail human beings in his company. For poor Judas. For Peter, bravely following Jesus to his place of trial, and then devoting the rest of his life to expiating his failure of nerve under direct threat. For the women who followed Jesus to Calvary.

Until now, the new mediums – moving pictures with sound, electronically transmitted – have for the most part resisted depiction of transcendent concepts.

Gibson may have drawn the first sketchy explorer's map. *The Passion of the Christ* is a true work of art, and enters the inner life.



Jewish reviewers

AN orthodox Jew who is one of America's best-known film reviewers says Mel Gibson's film about the death of Christ is the best adaptation of the Bible in Hollywood history. Michael Medved went on television to speak glowingly of Gibson's self-financed \$A39.93 million film, *The Passion*. Jewish writer David Horowitz called the film 'an awesome artefact and an overpowering work'. [Source, CathNews.com]

FRANK DEVINE is a columnist for *The Australian* which once he edited, and for *Quadrant Magazine*. A New Zealand-born journalist, Frank has a distinguished service record on various literary fronts in this country and overseas. This article first appeared in *The Australian*, March 5, 2004.

Faith amid Fads and Fashions in our Upsidedown world

UNQUIET HEARTS

By PAUL STENHOUSE MSC



RELIGION is the noblest instinct in man: like the fish that swim up river to reach their spawning ground, or the migratory birds that fly half-way around the world to reach their hatcheries; or the pigeons that fanciers here in Sydney take to the Blue Mountains or the Cold Coast and release, only to have them reach their roosts before

their masters, human-kind has a homing instinct.

Once upon a time ... all Christians recognized within them an instinct, a drive, far superior to the homing and breeding instinct in birds or insects. They celebrated this reality by giving primacy of place in their personal calendar of events to be celebrated not to their birthday [the date of their physical birth] but to their baptismal day [the date of their spiritual re-birth]. This was before Santa

Claus [formerly *Saint Nicholas*] was listed on Wall Street, before Valentine [formerly *St Valentine*] joined the ranks of Hollywood extras, and commerce and greed seized on his deathday celebrations, as they seize on everything intended for the glory of God, to exploit them in the name of their Master, Mammon.

St Augustine, in his Confessions, [Bk 1, c.1] put this longing for heaven and God – our atavistic homeland and true birth place and our Creator – into words that once were on the lips of most Christians:

‘Thou has made us for thyself,
and our hearts are restless
until they rest in Thee’.

The latin is exquisitely unambiguous and insightful:

*Fecisti nos ad te,
et inquietum est cor nostrum,
donec requiescat in te’.*

Thou has created us *ad te*: like an arrow that flies true towards its target, like a stone obeying the rules of gravity, we search for our natural resting place. And our hearts are *unquiet* until they rest *in te*: like a child in its mother’s arms, like a living creature that cannot live without it, resting happily and at peace in the spiritual atmosphere that is oxygen for our restless love-starved hearts.

The Sacred Scriptures describe it, and warn us; children’s fairy tales speak of it; all ancient literatures are replete with examples of it; the myths of our ancestors try to articulate and explain it; the media feed off it, like birds of prey; crime and all suffering results from it; yet still we refuse to see it: the fact of evil, the antithesis of good, the spiritual virus that re-programmes our natural direction finders, that re-sets the coor-

Science and Religion

THE lures of hedonism aside, the intellectual prestige of science was high because of its increasing ability to predict and explain much that had previously been mysterious, and also continually to improve the material conditions of life. Science is assumed to be hostile to supernatural theories. Most people would say that religious belief requires an act of faith while a belief that science can compass all reality does not. A belief that science will ultimately explain everything, however, also requires a leap of faith. Faith in science requires the unproven assump-

tion that all reality is material, that there is nothing beyond or outside the material universe. Perhaps that is right, though it seems counter-

intuitive, but it cannot be proven and therefore rests on an untested and untestable assumption. That being the case, there is no logical reason why science should be hostile to or displace religion. There are, in fact, arguments that materialism as a philosophy is now dead, but I need go no further than to assert that the belief that science has demonstrated the falsity or improbability of religious beliefs is itself false.



– Judge Robert H. Bork. *Slouching towards Gomorrah* Regan Books, 1996

dinates of our goal, and turns us back on ourselves, and offers us the tempting idea that it is we who are God, and that all things seek us and flow towards us.

"The serpent said, "of course you will not die. God knows that as soon as you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing both good and evil." [Genesis iii,4]

The irony and deceit was lost on poor Adam and Eve: they would die, and while it was true that their eyes were to be opened, the sight of evil would blind them to the beauty of good, and suffering and death would follow. This saga repeats itself every second of our lives, and we find ourselves dealing with serpents that would con us at every turn.

Our Lord came to re-set our coordinates, to re-open the eyes of Faith, to re-adjust our direction finders so that we could once again fly true towards our heavenly goal.

The remarkable collection of 12th century poems, short stories and plays found in the Benedictine Abbey of Beuern about 100 kms from Munich in 1803 contains many treasures, among which is a poem about an upsidedown world not unlike our own:

*Florbat olim studium
Nunc vertitur in taedium.*

**[Study once loved
becomes now a bore]**

Iam scire diu viguit

Sed ludere praevaluit;

**[Once a love of learning
now a love for idle play]**

Iam pueris astutia

Contingit ante tempora,

**[now boyish wit is credited
with wisdom it doesn't possess]**

Qui per malevolentiam

Excludunt sapientiam.

**[A love of laziness
bodes ill for wisdom]**

Sed retro actis seculis

Vix licuit discipulis

Tandem nonagenarium

Quiescere post studium.

**[Years ago even 90 year-olds
would not dare to say they had**



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— Editor, *Annals*

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studied enough to be able to take
their rest]

*At nunc decennes pueri
decusso iugo liberi
se nunc magistros tactitant.*

[Now children of ten
thrust off the yoke of study
and think that they know as much
as their teachers]

Daniel Arnault [late 12th century], whom Ernst Curtius describes as the 'great and distant master of Dante' writing of this upsidedown world in his day, says that love and joy has restored his balance 'when he hunted the hare with the ox'.¹ This love and joy, derived from Faith, is still the antidote to the topsy-turvydom that lays claim to normality in our lovable and seductive yet mad, mad world.

In our own time we find people like Jim Muller, a cardiologist who helped launch an effort by American and US physicians to oppose nuclear warfare and whose movement resulted in a Nobel Prize now spearheading a lay initiative called the Voice of the Faith. Its motto is: 'Keep the Faith, change the Church'. What concerns me is not Muller's demand for more democracy in the Church – and emphasis on what he sees as the major cause of the Church's problems: centralised power – but his statement 'I must either attempt to correct these deep structural defects or leave the Catholic Church'.

This is not the place to argue the point about democracy versus monarchy – the 'traditionalists' amongst us have succumbed to that temptation too readily, and its divisiveness is too apparent.

Just what is unintelligible?

THOUGH the poet may give expression to what Wordsworth has called 'the heavy and the weary weight of all this unintelligible world,' we, the much enduring public who have to read his poems, are entitled to demand that the unintelligibility of which we are made to feel the weight, should be all of it the world's, and none of it merely the poet's.

– Augustine Birrell, *Mr Browning's Poetry*, in *Collected Essays*, Vol 1

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The Church is neither for nor against either of these systems. Its own structure was given to it by our Lord. But the destructive effects of de-centralisation as it is called, or more correctly, de-Catholicising the Church, have been tried since the Church was established by our Lord, and notably in 1054 [when the Greeks separated themselves from Rome] and 1534 [when the English followed Germany and Switzerland into Protestantism].

The pernicious effects of these ruptures are still with us – and like Herod, most of the engineers of these attempts at changing the structure of the Church were motivated more by personal pique or vanity than by a love for the Church or a desire to extend its influence.

Photius, Luther, Henry VIII, Calvin and Knox are good examples of human beings playing at God and bringing His house down about our ears.

The history of the Church is not the homogeneous, monochrome reality it is sometimes presented as. The Faith [which is preserved in its purity, like a treasure, in Rome, the See of Peter who was entrusted with confirming his brethren] acts as a leaven – but not all the grains are of the same texture, or of the same family: some are harley, some are spelt or other forms of wheat or maize, rice, millet, oats, rye or even carob beans.

We humans are even more diversified than the grains that form our 'staff of life'. So the leaven acts in each of us differently. But we would be unwise to claim that its manifestation in us is its totality. We are not, we cannot be, nor can we encompass adequately, the totality of Faith in Jesus Christ. That is why our Lord founded the Church. Take the Church from us, give us little churches each thinking that it is the true Church, and you will destroy the Faith, and replace it with faith in ourselves.

'A Body is not a single organ, but many. Suppose the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body" – if the body were all eye, how could it hear?' [1 Cor xii, 12ff] These days we are seeing a different phenomenon: the eye says to the ear, I am the whole body; you do not belong to it. The foot in turn says to the hand, I am the whole body: you do not belong to it. Only the Body is in a position to judge. Exclude the Body of Christ, the Church, from the equation, and you have imbalance, distortion and error that leads to even graver errors.



¹ *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, Harves, 1963, p.97

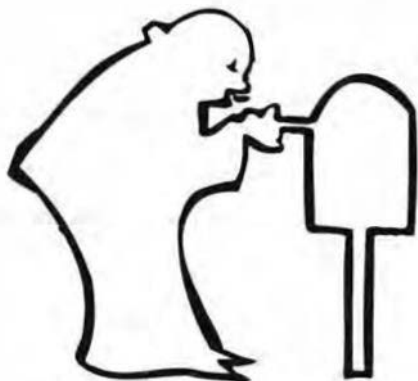
THOUGHT FROM THE LITURGY OF THE DAY

By FATHER MICHAEL FALLON, MSC



APRIL

- 1** Thur Lent Week 5 Ps 105:8
The Lord remembers his covenant for ever, his promises for a thousand generations.
- 2** Friday Lent Week 5 Ps 18:7
In my anguish I called to the Lord and he heard my voice.
- 3** Sat Lent Week 5 Jer 31:10
The Lord will stand guard over us as a shepherd guards his flock.
- 4** Palm Sunday Phil 2:7
Being as we all are, he accepted death - even death on a cross.
- 5** Mon Holy Week Isaiah 42:7
You are to open the eyes of the blind and to free those who are in prison.
- 6** Tues Holy Week Isaiah 49:3
I was thinking: 'I have exhausted myself for nothing'. But all the while my cause was with the Lord.
- 7** Wed Holy Week Isaiah 50:5
Each morning the Lord wakes me to listen like a disciple.
- 8** Holy Thursday 1Cor 11:26
Each time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are proclaiming his death.
- 9** Good Friday Psalm 31:12
I am like someone who is dead and forgotten in people's hearts, like a thing thrown away.
- 10** Holy Saturday Psalm 104:30
Send forth your Spirit, O Lord, and renew the face of the earth.
- 11** Easter Sunday Psalm 118:16
The Lord's right hand raised me up. I shall live and recount his deeds.
- 12** Easter Monday Psalm 16:11
You show me the path of life, the fullness of joy in your presence.
- 13** Easter Tuesday Psalm 33:5
The Lord loves justice and right, and fills the earth with his love.
- 14** Easter Wednesday Psalm 105:4
Think of the Lord and his strength: continually seek his face.
- 15** Easter Thursday Psalm 8:2
What is a human being that you should keep us in mind? Why am I that you should remember me?
- 16** Easter Friday Psalm 118:1
Give thanks to the Lord for he is good. His love has no end.
- 17** Easter Saturday Acts 4:20
We cannot stop proclaiming what we have seen and heard.
- 18** Sunday Easter 2 John 20:23
Receive the Holy Spirit. Those whose sins you forgive are forgiven.
- 19** Monday Easter 2 Acts 4:31
As they prayed they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.
- 20** Tuesday Easter 2 Acts 4:32
The whole group of believers was united heart and soul; no one claimed anything for his or her own use, as everything they owned was held in common.
- 21** Wed Easter 2 John 3:16
God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son.
- 22** Thursday Easter 2 John 3:36
If you believe in the Son you have eternal life.
- 23** Friday Easter 2 Psalm 27:4
There is one thing I ask of the Lord, for this I long: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life and to savour his sweetness.
- 24** Sat Easter 2 John 6:20
It is I. Do not be afraid.
- 25** Sunday Easter 3 Psalm 30:5
At night there are tears, but joy comes with the dawn.
- 26** Mon St. Mark 1 Peter 5:5
You must all clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another.
- 27** Tues Easter 3 Psalm 31:16
Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your love.
- 28** Wed Easter 3 John 6:37
If you come to me, I will not turn you away.
- 29** Thurs Easter 3 John 6:51
The bread that I shall give is my flesh for the life of the world.
- 30** Friday Easter 3 John 6:56
If you eat my flesh and drink my blood, you live in me and I in you.



Controversial or faithful?

In the face of constant attacks on the Catholic Church and Pope John Paul II in particular in the media over the years, you have redressed the balance through many editorials and articles – at least for those interested in the truth. More recently, you have countered the mindless criticism of Pope Pius XII for his alleged failure to prevent the Holocaust. One feels that were a Nazi criminal who had been actively involved in these crimes exposed and brought to trial, these same detractors would scamper to organise covens of Q.C.s for his defence, while persisting in their cowardly assaults on the late Pope.

Your latest editorial celebrates our immense good fortune in having Cardinal Pell as Sydney's Archbishop, again in the face of general apathy and snide criticism from the media, some of the most vehement coming from within the Church. Dr Pell has been frequently described not only as conservative, but also as controversial. This is a puzzling word to define a Catholic leader who stands steadfastly by Catholic dogma! Doesn't the label *controversial* apply to the many dissident bishops and priests in Australia, who are the darlings of the A.B.C. and the popular press, where they portrayed as progressive and modernist, in touch with the real world? In spite of Church teachings, they have no problems with, variously, artificial birth control, abortion, female priesthood, routine use of the Third Rite of Reconciliation, and support for homosexuality – even in the priesthood. These views are justified on the basis that this is what the people want, and are necessary if we wish to attract numbers back to the fold. It is akin to saying that if the people want the oceans and the sky to exchange places, then it will happen.

Woodberry NSW 2522

NEVILLE SMITH

Christmas Crib

The main excuse given by the politically correct for placing bans on Christmas celebrations and images is that they 'don't wish to offend', which is exactly what they are quite prepared to do with the majority of Christians.

Australia usually follows America, so it's worth noting developments in this regard in the USA.

Despite an unrelenting attack on Christianity by the so-called American Civil Liberties Union, a scientific survey taken throughout America on whether nativity scenes should be allowed public places, 87% said yes, 9% said no and as Fox News commentator, Bill O'Reilly somewhat facetiously remarked '4% weren't sure what country they were living in'.

Petrie Qld 4502

FRANK BELLEF



If we must be pagans

BUT of one thing at least I am certain: it is better to treat nature and natural forces as if they were personal than to treat human beings as if they were impersonal. If we must be pagans it is better to be polytheistic pagans than to be, like the moderns, atheistic. For if human beings are to be treated as things, as material for what Marxists call 'social engineering', there is no reason why they should not be cut down as ruthlessly as groves of trees, or as ruthlessly as the Jews were cut down by Hitler. Man made in the image of God may survive. Man made in the image of a machine will perish – destroyed by imaginary 'forces' which have no existence save in men's own darkened minds.

– A.H. McGreen Annytage, quoted in *Taking Stock, Collected Writings of A.H.N. Green – Annytage*, ed. Janet Kovessy Watt, Perth 2001.

[Available from I Kou Tce, Claremont WA 6010. \$28 includes postage anywhere in Australia]

Ancestral Memories

I am a bit puzzled as to the reasoning behind the comments of James Murray in *Media Matters*, issue 9/10 of 2003, titled 'Selective Memory'.

What is Mr Murray trying to imply when he asks about the battles that Mr Howard's father and grandfather fought? Does Mr Murray know the answer? If he knows the answer why not publish it, instead of leaving it unanswered? Would Mr Murray like Mr Howard to cite every battle so as to please everybody?

I am worried at the anti Mr Howard trend that Mr Murray portrays in his column each month. I see Mr Howard as a good Christian and he would probably agree with most of *Annals'* editorials.

What would Mr Murray prefer, an agnostic or an atheist at the helm? That is the alternative.

[James Murray writes: Your correspondent has picked up on the heading, not the content of this short comment. Mr Howard is a formidable politician, never more so, as has been mentioned in *Media Matters*, than when he initiates the action of his ANZAC forebears.]

Blackburn NSW 2148

JAMES WOOD

More Shakespeare

Thank you for issue 9/10 of 2003. The initial impression conveyed (by the cover) was a favourable one. Next came the dirge from *Cymbeline* (page 1), truly a golden piece of Shakespeare. I can not forget its recital by the late Shakespearean great Sir John Gielgud in his 'seven ages of man' recording. That heavenly voice has gone now to heaven.

Could we have some more of Shakespeare in *Annals*? After all, it is widely believed now that he was indeed a Catholic. Could there be a place for him on occasion, then, in a 'Journal of Catholic Culture'? We need men of his stature in our ranks. (C.S. Lewis does not qualify).

Secondly, I must record my appreciation for Dr Susan Moore's article on the sanctity of work. Her inclusion of the leech gatherer on the lonely moors (from the poem 'Resolution and Independence', (1802, Wordsworth) was as it were, a touch of genius and made her article (including allusion to Ciszek's classic 'He Leadeth Me' which I have just completed) strike a chord with all readers with a literary bent. It certainly did with me. An 'A' grade, again, for Dr Moore!

The article on Harold Blair by Lance Hoban, that on Clemens August von Galen by Joanna Bogle and also that by Brian Pollard on Euthanasia were all fine. My interest was held for hours by this issue.

LYNCH

What happened to the Apostles?

Thank you for yet another year of *Annals Australia*. Again it supplied me with informative Catholic reading.

I know that your hours and energy are limited but I take the liberty to recall that last year I suggested a series of articles on the Apostles along the lines of the previous 'Whatever happened to' articles.

On another tack, this year my wife and I became eucharistic ministers. The joy and peace we receive each time we attend to this ministry is incredible – what an honour and a privilege for us.

Glamire NSW 2795

GEORGE JACKSON

[Our correspondent's suggestion has been followed up, and a new series 'What happened to the Apostle...?' will commence this issue. Ed. *Annals*]

Fine presentation

Wonderful magazine! Congratulations on fine presentation. Good to have an editor like Fr Stenhouse.

Fingal Tas 7214

JOEL MILLER

Fr Tom Dunlea

It warmed the cockles of my heart – to bend to the banal – to read Anastasia Cuddy's recollections of Fr Tom Dunlea, the founder of Sydney's Boys' Town.

Let's face it: he was not the flavour of the clergy with some bishops and fellow priests. I know that, for during my over 52 years of Catholic journalism I was told things that were not broadcast. On the other hand he was sainted by other clerics and especially the inhabitants of 'Happy Valley' during the dark and dreadful days of the Great Depression.

I will always remember his adaptation of the old catechism description of purgatory: 'Burrarorang (where he once served) is a place or state of punishment in this archdiocese where some priests suffer for a time before they get a parish.'

Our family got to know Fr Tom rather well. Dad was somewhat an expert on greyhound dogs and as Father

Annals Australasia 1889 – 2004

From the editor

THIS year, 2004, *Annals* will celebrate its 115th year of continuous publication. *Annals* is, as best we can ascertain, the oldest continuously published Catholic magazine in the Southern Hemisphere, and after *The Bulletin*, one of the oldest magazines of any sort in Australia.

We hope to celebrate in some fitting way the contribution that *Annals* has made to the vitality of Catholic Life in this country and in every place throughout the world where it is read.

We thank our loyal readers for their support and encouragement. We should like to find the reader who has had the longest association with us. So, please write and tell us how long you [or others] have been receiving or reading *Annals*, as we should like to publish the names of the ten readers who have been with us the longest time.

Elsewhere in this issue we give details of our plans for celebrating our 115th birthday.

– Paul Stenhouse, MSC

usually had a few galloping beside him as he rode for Mass at Lugarno (where my godmother-aunt lived), he was a regular visitor to our home. With the same humility which saw him obediently accept chaplaincy to Matthew Talbot Hostel – 'some bishops would give you one chance, Cardinal Gilroy is like the Lord: he forgives you seven times' – before again becoming a PP, he sat where we kids settled around him for stories and boasted that we were abreast of the times from the newspapers he stuffed in the holes in the soles of his shoes.

One of his housekeepers – a good friend of mine in the early days of the Legion of Mary – told me how she heard the squeals of 'ouch, ouch' coming from the path to the presbytery. That path happened to be laid with blue metal gravel and Fr Tom was walking home barefooted as he had given his socks and shoes to a man who had gone looking for a job. Poverty was not just something to be compassionated with Fr

Tom; it was something to be practised in those hard times of wide unemployment.

Mrs Cuddy mentions the delightful Pere Ryan, with whom I worked for several years. Yet it should be mentioned, I think, that he got himself off the bottle. Fr Tom was associated with other Catholics and 2GB radio personality Frank Sturge Harty in establishing Alcoholics Anonymous in Sydney. There were non-alcoholics Fr Richard Murphy SJ, psychiatric nurse Archie McKinnon and ex-alcoholic psychiatrist Dr Sylvester Minogue (whose charity far exceeded his medical skills which were great). McKinnon's book 'Castle of Shadows' is an enlightening read.

Bensville NSW 2251

Rabbi Zolli

The book 'Why I Became a Catholic' (previously titled 'Before the Dawn') by Eugenia Zolli tells about Pope Pius XII during World War II.

Israel Zolli, formerly chief Rabbi of Rome, even changed his name because of his great love for Pius XII.

Israel Zolli became a Catholic, not to please his friend Pius XII, but because he came to believe Christ was the Messiah after 12 years of serious thinking and study. He was appointed a member of the faculty of the Pontifical Biblical Institute of Pius XII after his conversion – A really great Jew.

Bondi Junction NSW 2022

THERESE GRAHAM

'Catholic' reading

I love 'Annals' and look forward to its arrival each month. It is not easy to find really 'Catholic' reading now. I enjoy reading about our Holy Father, such a brave and holy man. And I think all Australian Catholics should be thankful that we have someone of the stature and integrity of Cardinal Pell.

Aspley Qld 4054

MAIO HUTCHINSON

All I want for Christmas

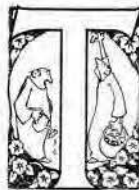
Annals is a wonderful magazine ('all I want for Christmas is the *Annals*') and Holy Mass goes without saying.

God Bless you all, and your wonderful work. May He continue to be with you through 2004.

Woodville Park SA 5001

JOSE SCRIVEN

FOR OUR SINS HE WAS CRUCIFIED



HERE once was a man named George Thomas, pastor in a small New England town. One Easter Sunday morning he came to the Church carrying a rusty, bent, old bird cage, and set it by the pulpit. Eyebrows were raised and, as if in response, Pastor Thomas began to speak...

I was walking through town yesterday when I saw a young boy coming toward me swinging this bird cage. On the bottom of the cage were three little wild birds, shivering with cold and fright. I stopped the lad and asked, 'What you got there, son?'

'Just some old birds,' came the reply.

'What are you gonna do with them?' I asked.

'Take 'em home and have fun with 'em,' he answered. 'I'm gonna tease 'em and pull out their feathers to make 'em fight. I'm gonna have a real good time.'

'But you'll get tired of those birds sooner or later. What will you do?'

'Oh, I got some cats,' said the little boy. 'They like birds. I'll take 'em to them.'

The pastor was silent for a moment. 'How much do you want for those birds, son?'. 'Huh??!! Why, you don't want them birds, mister. They're just plain old field birds. They don't sing. They ain't even pretty!' 'How much?' the pastor asked again. The boy sized up the pastor as if he were crazy and said, '\$10?'. The pastor reached in his pocket and took out a ten dollar bill. He forced it in the boy's hand. In a flash, the boy was gone. The pastor picked up the cage and gently carried it to the end of the alley where there was a tree and a grassy spot. Setting the cage down, he opened the door, and by softly tapping the bars persuaded the birds out, setting them free. Well, that explained the empty bird cage on the pulpit, and then the pastor began to tell this story. One day Satan and Jesus were having a conversation. Satan had just come from the Garden of Eden, and he was gloating and boasting. 'Yes, sir, I just caught the world full of people down there. Set me a trap, used bait I knew they couldn't resist. Got 'em all!' 'What are you going to do with them?' Jesus asked. Satan replied, 'Oh, I'm gonna have fun! I'm gonna teach them how to marry and divorce each other, how to hate and abuse each other, how to drink and smoke and curse. I'm gonna teach them how to invent guns and bombs and kill each other. I'm really gonna have fun!' 'And what will you do when you get done with them?' Jesus asked. 'Oh, I'll kill 'em,' Satan glared proudly. 'How much do you want for them?' Jesus asked. 'Oh, you don't want those people. They ain't no good. Why, you'll take them and they'll just hate you. They'll spit on you, curse you and kill you. You don't want those people!'. 'How much?' He asked again. Satan looked at Jesus and sneered, 'All your blood, tears and your life.' Jesus said: 'DONE!'. Then He paid the price. The pastor picked up the cage, he opened the door and he walked from the pulpit.



THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

By JAMES MURRAY



TECHNICALLY, Mel Gibson has made a movie using all the resources of cinema, including a quasi-documentary approach. But intrinsically it is a devotion – a definition that does diminish it. All great works of religious art are devotions – from the anonymous mediaeval cathedrals to the renaissance paintings of Raphael and Michelangelo, from anonymous Plain Chant to John Henry Newman and Edward Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*, from El Greco's *The Burial of Count Orgaz* to Salvador Dali's *Christ of St John of the Cross*.

The latter is the most significant reference. Salvador Dali was the playboy of surrealism until he focused his talent on the spiritual reality of his life: Jesus Christ and his redemptive power. He saw this by way of the mystic, known as St John of the Cross, who moved through a dark night of the soul before attaining the vision Dali caught in his great canvas, showing the crucified Christ suspended between earth and heaven.

Similarly, Mel Gibson was a playboy in the surreal world of Hollywood, dream factory and money laundry, where egos are split to make millions and stars are kitted out with reach-me-down, gossip-mag images (his was 'Sexiest Man Alive').

Yet he, too, had his dark night of the soul from which he emerged to put his money – \$40 million – where his vision was. *The Passion of the Christ* is the result: a masterpiece, flawed maybe, but not with vanity.

In the role of a lifetime, Jim Caviezel plays Christ with a conviction a heart-beat from the heroic. Yes, the movie is blood-boltered in the ferocity of the scourgings and the crucifixion. Mediaeval some have called these tortures, reaching for the all-purpose pejorative of hacks whose vocabulary is inadequate to their deadline task.

Rather than mediaeval, the tortures are modern. They can be seen on television screens in victims stripped of their clothes by bomb blasts, their backs lacerated with grenade fragments or shards of glass; their faces masks of pain and shock.

Gibson then is not being gratuitously violent, he is making a creative link between the pain we inflict on each other with the redemptive pain endured by Christ. Gibson's violence is metaphoric of the 20th century, the cruellest of human history, in which millions suffered so much pain and death under regimes that were national or supernatural, and ideological rather than religious, in their inspiration.

DRAMATICALLY, familiar Gospel characters are briefly developed which helps the narrative: Peter, Judas, Pilate, Pilate's wife, Simon of Cyrene, Herod, the two thieves crucified with Jesus. Veronica is introduced as she watches Jesus pass and wipes his face with her cloth - but Gibson shows restraint by letting us see her holding the cloth and, if we look closely, suggestions of the outline of Jesus' face can be glimpsed. The Roman soldiers are also vividly dramatised: the brutes at the scourging with their sadistic commander, the drunken soldiery mocking and brutalising Jesus along the way and on Calvary, the more sympathetic centurion. The key figure who has powerful dramatic impact in every Jesus' film is Judas. The taunting of the tormented Judas and the children pursuing him to his death is dramatically effective.

The Passion of Christ offers a credible, naturalistic Jesus whose sufferings of body and spirit are real. What impact it will have on those who are not believers is very difficult to predict. For those who believe, there is the challenge of seeing pain and torture which are easier to read about than to see, but there is also the satisfaction of experiencing familiar Gospel stories in a different way.

- Father Peter Malone, MSC, President SIGNIS, The World Catholic Association for Communication.

But as the ferocity of the tortures increases, leaving Caviezel's face a portait in blood, another thought occurs: Gibson's inspiration, conscious or unconscious, is not only the modern, or the gospel writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

An older voice is in play as an inspiration for his cinema art, the voice of the great Jewish prophet Isaiah (chp 53, v 2): 'He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him there is no beauty that we should desire him.

'He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

'Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.'

So far from being anti-semitic, Gibson's work is a classic of Judeo-Christian creative tension, as further witness the opening of Isaiah verse 5: 'But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed ...'

We hid as it were our faces ... Hence the incomprehension verging on consternation of some critics, erudite in filmography but not the Bible, when confronted with this extraordinary work by a director as totally devoted to his material as a veteran to his duty.

With his stripes we are healed ... There lies the justification for the ferocity Gibson brings to the torture scenes. It is an ferocity matched by skilful direction which ensures that Mary Magdalene and Mary the Mother of Jesus (Monica Belucci and Maia Morgenstern) make an art form of agonised silence.

In the case of the latter, however, Gibson and his co-writer Benedict Fitzgerald hit a false note when they have her say to Jesus: '... flesh of my flesh, heart of my heart.' After the eloquence

of her silence, this verges on the banal, and is not in the gospel record.

Nor is Gibson's conflation of Mary Magdalene with the woman taken in adultery. He does this through a flashback of Christ's hand drawing in the sand, stones being dropped, men retreating, and then the Magdalene coming into frame. The scene, no question, is dramatically powerful as are the haunting appearances of a Satan figure (Rosalinda Celentano) and the way Judas (Luca Liononella) comes upon the halter with which he hangs himself. And who can fail to see modern greed and disillusionment in his selling out of his friend Christ - and himself?

As who can fail to see in the emphatically Jewish Simon (Jareth J Merz), who helped Christ to carry his cross, those who sacrifice themselves for others on modern frontlines of hunger, disease and death?

Elsewhere Gibson shows exemplary restraint. When the woman known as Veronica (Sabrina Impacciator), clearly Jewish, braves the Roman soldiers to wipe the face of Christ with a napkin, Gibson could through computerised editing have easily called up the image of Christ's face which by revered tradition was left on the napkin. He does not.

Other flashbacks are done with equivalent gospel economy and exactitude. So far is Gibson from anti-semitism, he does not include a flashback to the episode most open to anti-semitic spin: Jesus clearing the money-changers from the Temple precincts.

On the general question of anti-semitism, some critics appear to have reviewed Gibson's father's opinions rather than the movie. Gibson senior has a bee in his bonnet about the exact number of Jews who died in the Nazi death camps, a logistical but daft bee which seems to mistake arithmetic for morality by implying that lowering the number of Jewish deaths would somehow mitigate the Nazi offence.

At this writing, the movie had yet to open in African and Asian countries, most of which have no history of cultural anti-semitism. In those countries, it will be intriguing to see the extent to which anti-semitism is perceived in the movie itself rather than read into it from external sources.

The key to understanding the film

Mary

MARY, the mother of Jesus, is splendid. It is her sorrow that made me weep. She reminded me of my wife, watching over our sons. She reminded me of all mothers, who see their sons falling out of their hands into the hands of the world, the hands of men. Her face is iconic, almost expressionless. Her face is the most expressive I have ever seen. She stares into the camera, into our own eyes, and her sorrow for her son fills us with sorrow. But there is something else. She is... not serene, serenity would be too strong a word. She is... not accepting, no not exactly accepting, she is not "accepting" her son's brutal beating and crucifixion. She is partaking... sharing... "co-bearing." Perhaps that's the best word: she is bearing together with Jesus, her son, every blow, every humiliation. It is extraordinary to see, perhaps the most extraordinary thing in the movie.

- Robert Moynihan, *Inside The Vatican*, February 16, 2004

is Hristo Naumov Shopov's virtuoso performance as Pontius Pilate, once resolute (you didn't make pro-consul, that is, military governor, in a rebellious Roman province without guts). He is called to be resolute again. He fails, and not simply because he is caught in the political-religious nexus represented by the High Priest Caiaphas (Mattia Sbragia) whose rigour is not unanimously supported by his fellow priests of the Sanhedrin.

Pilate's is a failure of moral rather than physical courage, a failure to protect innocence. Marvellously Shopov, as directed by Gibson, suggests it is our failure, too - a suggestion going back not only to the 20th century Vatican II but to the 16th century Council of Trent which stated that all sinners share responsibility for the Passion.

The casting of Shopov, a gifted actor yet relatively unknown like most of the

cast, is part of Gibson's way of creating resonance and a deeper perspective on an old, an everlasting story. So, too, is the way that Gibson, himself a throwback star, directs his cast so that they subdue their personalities to their roles.

His use of Aramaic and Latin with English subtitles further deepens the perspective. (Even if it also provides an implicit argument against Gibson's own exclusive adherence to the Latin Mass. Surely Aramaic, Christ's native language provides the most authentic words for the Mass? But his instruction to teach all nations implies the use of their languages, starting with Latin).

That is by the way, one of the sparks thrown off from the forge of faith in which Mel Gibson has wrought a sword of the spirit. His work is Catholic in both senses: in its doctrine and in its universal potential.

In his ending, Gibson again shows a classic restraint. We see Christ's shroud collapsing on itself but no facile computerised image of his tortured body on it, like the image held in Turin, as the risen Christ looks to the new future he has created, and to eternity.

All more or less immediate reviews these days are subject to a proviso: the DVD versions can contain out-takes as fascinating as any that appear on screen. The Passion is not likely to be an exception.

To sum up, the term *auteur* is over-used to enhance the creative status of directors. Here it is marvellously clear Gibson is the *auteur*. His talented crew is headed by Caleb Deschanel, the light and shade of whose cinematography recalls that other playboy artist Caravaggio (his works include *Doubting Thomas*, the startlingly dramatic painting of the apostle Thomas examining the spear wound in the risen Christ's side).

In its force of its penitence, in its conviction, in its sense of one-artist's creative perception, Mel Gibson's work stamps a new hallmark for all seeking to portray the person in whom the divine and the human melded for the transformation of history: Jesus Christ.

Still with us, and greater than any flawed depiction in his flawless power to sustain those in need, and to bridge the gap between life and eternity.



Thanks

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- Editor, *Annals Australasia*.

John Ford: The director who made John Wayne cry

WANTED: BULL FEENEY ALIVE AND DEAD

Reviewed by IAN MACDONALD



WESTERNS may be out of the current Hollywood production cycle. But paradoxically their political influence has grown

with their fall from box-office favour. US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger who saw himself as the heir to the great European statesman Metternich revealed in an interview that he also saw himself as the lone sheriff riding into town. More recently, and closer to home, Prime Minister John Howard allowed himself to be portrayed as deputy sheriff to US President George Bush.

Howard subsequently deprecated the title. But it is unlikely that Bush, Easterner turned Texas Westerner, would object to the description 'sheriff'.

All this is by way of emphasising the assiduity with which McBride evokes the power of the Western legend and its greatest bard John Martin Aloysius Feeney, ancestral land Connaught, born Portland, Maine 1894. He was nicknamed Bull and better known as John Ford. His career encompassed the silent era, the talkies and television plus active service as a director/photographer in World War II, Korea and Vietnam. His Stock Company included John Wayne, Henry Fonda, Victor McLaglen, Ward Bond, Harry Cary Junior, Hank Worden, Woody Strode, Jane Darwell, Anna Lee and Maureen O'Hara.

Ford's westerns such as *Rio Bravo*, *Fort Apache* and *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* gave the genre classic status as *The Searchers* pre-eminently demonstrated its scope for transmuted the past so as to give it modern relevance. Yet Ford, the most potent creator of the legend, was also its most astringent critic in *The Man Who Shot Liberty Bells* with its resonating dictum:

Searching for John Ford: A Life
By Joseph McBride, Faber and Faber
(through Penguin) rrp \$49.95

'When fact becomes the legend, print the legend.'

It is a constriction of his creativity, however, to focus only on his westerns. His *Battle of Midway* is one of the most intense of documentaries. *The Grapes of Wrath* is an eloquent indictment of social injustice, *How Green was My Valley* the quintessence of lyric nostalgia. In *The Informer*, he directed a bleak picture of the internecine Troubles in Ireland. *The Quiet Man* created an idyllic Ireland which years later influenced the TV success *Ballykissangel*.

Uniform quality and brilliance rarely co-exist. Ford had his failures though he was reluctant to admit to them. *The Fugitive*, based on Graham Greene's novel *The Power and the Glory* is one such failure according to McBride. He cites Ford's too obvious Catholic symbolism as a factor. He also mentions that Ford was not completely in sympathy with Greene because of the latter's notorious libel of Shirley Temple as sexually precocious in *Wee Willy Winkie* which Ford also directed.

Ford was no saint. He loved to film happy families. But he strayed mari-

tally and was not the best of fathers to his son Pat and his daughter Barbara. A hard man on the bottle, he was even harder on his players, reducing the young John Wayne to tears. If his career faltered towards the end, it was only partly because of debility. He retained his talent and ideas. Hollywood was no longer up to them.

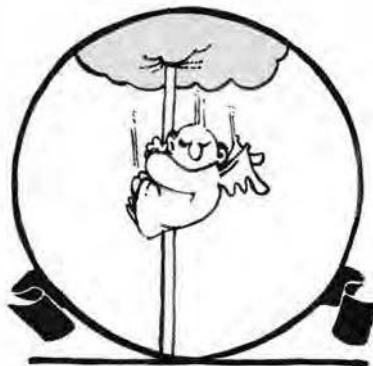
McBride's work was 30 years in the writing. It could have done with a 30-hour edit. Not because of its content which is always fascinating but because of its wordy style - a minor criticism. McBride's anecdotes make the work seem like a bound volume of *Photoplay* magazines, written by and for insiders.

Some samples: Ford attended the funeral service of Columbia Pictures boss Harry Cohen, a shrewd he respected because his handshake was more binding than a multi-page contract. During the service Danny Kaye stepped to the lectern unannounced and spoke well. 'Who's the intelligent young rabbi?' Ford whispered.

He made a lesser Western *Two Rode Together*, starring James Stewart and Richard Widmark. By this time, both were growing less hair and more deaf; they wore hairpieces but not hearing aids. In directing them, Ford progressively lowered his voice. Stewart and Widmark were too embarrassed to ask him to speak up. Eventually Ford signalled his camera crew together and said: 'Here I am, fifty years in the business and I end up with two deaf hairpieces.'

McBride gives various versions of Ford's deathbed words in 1973. In one, members of his family including his wife Mary were reciting the rosary and he came out of his coma to say, '... Holy Mary Mother of God.'

In another the presiding priest, his nephew Father Feeney, who had been a chaplain in Vietnam, seemed to be taking a long time with the Last Rites. Ford muttered: 'Cut.'



Wages 4-times the cost of living; short working week

COMMERCIAL LIFE IN MEDIEVAL EUROPE

By GARRICK SMALL, PH.D

THE Medieval period gets rather poor press these days. Few people even know when it was, while most jumble the Medieval, Middle and Dark Ages into one bleak period lasting from the fall of Rome till civilisation supposedly returned about the year 1500. Part of the reason has to do with a peculiar approach to history adopted by Protestants that has spilt over into Catholic circles. This obscures the achievements of the times, especially with respect to the centuries that followed.

The Dark Ages began as Rome retreated as a civilising influence in the west, but lasted no more than three centuries till order returned under Charlemagne, about the year 800AD. The Middle Ages was a period of social and technological reconstruction. In Charlemagne's time a farmer could harvest less than twice the seed he had sown, but by the beginning of the High Middle Ages, about 1100, his excess had increased between three and five times. By 1300 it had doubled again to a level that would not be surpassed for another four centuries. The material abundance of the Middle Ages supported other cultural developments. In many respects the High Middle Ages, or Medieval era, was at its greatest in the thirteenth century. That century began with St. Francis of Assisi, contained Saints Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas and concluded with average wage levels at least five times greater than at 1100. Wages continued to rise, though at a lesser rate until Modernity began with Machiavelli in about 1500.

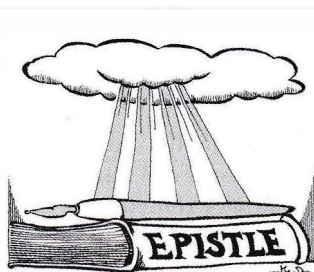
The prosperity of the Medieval period did not continue into modernity for the average person. When Thorold Rogers reviewed English wage levels from 1300 to 1900, he concluded that the highest wage levels

over that period were in the final years of the fifteenth century, extending no further than a quarter century into modernity. At that time wages were fully four times the cost of living and the working week was shorter than the centuries that followed. Modernity brought with it a new morality and a new approach to work and commerce. The working week was lengthened and wages fell so rapidly that the seventeenth century began with England being forced to enact the first of the Poor Laws to provide unemployment relief, the first since the circuses of

Rome. English wages had fallen in less than one hundred years from an historical high to bleak insufficiency. There had been no great pestilence, only the rule of Henry VIII and his daughter. Europe fared similarly.

The Middle and Medieval Ages achieved their prosperity without the aid of economic science or elaborate legislation. Economics would have to wait for another four centuries to be initiated by Adam Smith. Law tended to be the opinion of rulers who were guided more by their notion of fair play than by masses of statute and precedent. When St. Thomas Aquinas or St. Bonaventure wrote on economic issues they were exploring the moral foundations of normal day-to-day practice. Their purpose was to highlight the abnormal and discourage it within the context of the salvation of souls. They were writing for an audience who were very aware of the reality of God and the fate of those who did not serve Him. St. Anselm had shown that God was not capricious and so His ordinances could be understood using reason. St. John the Evangelist said that the mark of the Christian was his love for his fellow. When applied to commercial dealings, this meant treating one's customers, employers and employees with the care reserved for family. It also meant that commercial dealings contained elements that had knowable objective moral content. Part of the Medieval intellectual enterprise was scientifically exploring these using reason.

Three major interrelated principles can be identified as distinctive to Medieval commerce, these are just price, usury and property. Just price is the notion that overcharging is a betrayal of trust and a form of theft. Usury is any charge that is not justified and has been historically tied to interest on money loans. It has traditionally been included also as a form



Scripture & Tradition

IN a letter to the Corinthians upon this very sacrament [of the Eucharist] Paul wrote: "I have delivered to you that which I have received from the Lord." Is this delivery made in the form by which he received it - unwritten? Truly, until the writing of the letter, he had used no other form of transmission. He had written neither the Corinthians, nor the Roman, nor any other people. If Paul had chosen the permissible form of direct verbal communication on those occasions when he did write, you would now be doubting those articles of faith based on the Pauline Epistles. Many Epistles by all of the authors are lost, and those extant are subject to bilingual ambiguity and interminable strife over interpretation and meaning.

- Letter to a Doubter; Anon.

of theft. Finally, all commerce relies on ownership and hence on a notion of property. In Medieval Europe there was no conscious nexus between the principle of property and the institution of property, but there was a surprising coincidental parallel between them that was not considered systematically till centuries later.

The just price principle gave rise to the related concept of the just wage, the almost biblical belief that a fair day's work deserves a fair day's pay. Together they provided the foundations for commonly misunderstood institution, the Medieval guild. The guilds were more like our contemporary professional associations than our trade unions, but they had elements of both. In particular, the guilds created a quasi-family amongst persons pursuing a particular craft and this quasi-family accepted duties to the community that are largely opaque to modern economic thought.

Usury is today perhaps the most misunderstood moral concept in Catholic culture. It is usually thought to be interest on a money loan, but it is more accurately any unjustified income from a transaction. The Medievals recognised that it was most evident in money loans, though today it has been vaguely dismissed as excessive bank interest. While there is some truth in this belief, its vague subjectivity loses the core concept entirely.

St. Thomas Aquinas devoted a section of his *Summa Theologica* to the question of property and concluded that private property was licit only if use remained common. It is the principle of property that the Church has maintained to the present day, especially in the last century's social encyclicals. This dual approach to property is embodied in feudal land tenure. Under this system a lord could call land his, but it carried the obligation that he use it largely for the good of the people. This meant giving ordinary people rights of access and using land rents for public purposes, especially security.

The guilds, feudalism and the other Medieval commercial institutions all relied on the goodwill of those controlling economic power to freely will the good of their neighbours. The fact that they were successful is part of the historical record, but the fact of abuse



Let me write it, or else...

A LETTER arrives from a young woman who says she has a contract to write your biography; she will shortly be with you and looks forward to your co-operation. It is evident from the letter's tone, which is that of a happy chipmunk that has just found a stash of hallucinogenic mushrooms, that it has not crossed her mind her victim might not welcome spending what is bound to be weeks if not months in the company of someone she has never met and certainly would not have chosen, sharing intimate details of her past and deep thoughts about life in general. *Of course* everyone must be delighted at such news, I wrote refusing, saying that I believe biographies should be written after the favoured one's death. At once followed indignation and letters that verged on the threatening. My friends, invited by her to talk, asked me what to do and I said, 'Ignore her.' So they too refused, but some got back letters: 'It would be in your interest to co-operate.' To no one did she say that I and my friends were not involved.

- Doris Lessing, *The Spectator*, April 13, 2000

by a greedy minority is also evident. At first there was a moral stigma attached to taking too much, but as it became more widespread it became a call for a new commercial morality. Luther and

Calvin supplied that new morality, but its dissemination required blackening the old order. Despite this the modern discipline of economics, the *dismal science* of Adam Smith, has never quite worked and today many are aware of its failures. Our technology has given us affluence, but equity is another matter and our failures suggest that it may be time to review the thought of that most successful earlier era.



Further reading:
Kurtz, G. (1943/87) *The Workingmen's Guilds of the Middle Ages*, Omni.
Julien Simon, 1995, *The State of Humanity*.
James Thorold Rogers, 1884, *Six Centuries of Work and Wages*.

DR GARRICK SMALL is a senior lecturer at Sydney's University of Technology.

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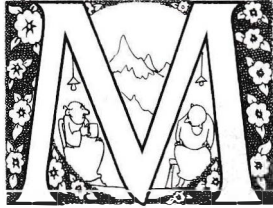
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'PASSION' FOLLOWS THE SCRIPTURE

By DAVID KLINGHOFFER



EL Gibson's forthcoming movie about the death of Jesus, *The Passion*, has created an angry standoff between the filmmaker and Jewish critics who charge him with anti-Semitism. It's a controversy that will continue to affect relations between Christians and Jews unless some way to cool it can be found. One possible cooling agent is an honest look at how ancient Jewish sources portrayed the Crucifixion.

According to those who have seen a rough cut, Gibson's film depicts the death of Christ as occurring at the hands of the Romans but at the instigation of Jewish leaders, the priests of the Jerusalem Temple. The Anti-Defamation League charges that this recklessly stirs anti-Jewish hatred and demands that the film be edited to eliminate any suggestion of Jewish deicide.

But like the Christian Gospels that form the basis of Gibson's screenplay, Jewish tradition acknowledges that our leaders in 1st century Palestine played a role in Jesus' execution. If Gibson is an anti-Semite, so is the Talmud and so is the greatest Jewish sage of the past 1,000 years, Maimonides.

We will never know for certain what happened in Roman Palestine around the year 30, but we do know what Jews who lived soon afterward said about Jesus' execution.

The Talmud was compiled in about the year 500, drawing on rabbinic material that had been transmitted orally for centuries. From the 16th century on, the text was censored and passages about Jesus and his execution were erased to evade Christian wrath. But the full text was preserved in older manuscripts, and today the

censored parts may be found in minuscule type, as an appendix at the back of some Talmud editions.

A relevant example comes from the Talmudic division known as Sanhedrin, which deals with procedures of the Jewish high court: 'On the eve of Passover they hung Jesus of Nazareth. And the herald went out before him for 40 days [saying, 'Jesus] goes forth to be stoned, because he has practiced magic, enticed and led astray Israel. Anyone who knows anything in his favor, let him come and declare concerning him.' And they found nothing in his favor.'

The passage indicates that Jesus' fate was entirely in the hands of the Jewish court. The last two of the three items on Jesus' rap sheet, that he 'enticed and led astray' fellow Jews, are terms from Jewish biblical law for an individual who influenced others to serve false gods, a crime punishable by being stoned, then hung on a wooden gallows. In the Mishnah, the rabbinic work on which the Talmud is based, compiled about the year 200, Rabbi Eliezer explains that anyone who was stoned to death would then be hung by his hands from two pieces of wood shaped like a capital letter T - in other words, a cross (Sanhedrin 6:4).

These texts convey religious beliefs, not necessarily historical facts. The Talmud elsewhere agrees with the Gospel of John that Jews at the time of the Crucifixion did not have the power to carry out the death penalty. Also, other Talmudic passages place Jesus 100 years before or after his actual lifetime. Some Jewish apologists argue that these must therefore deal with a different Jesus of Nazareth. But this is not how the most authoritative rabbinic interpreters, medieval sages like Nachmanides, Rashi and the Tosaphists, saw the matter.

Maimonides, writing in 12th century Egypt, made clear that the Talmud's Jesus is the one who founded Christianity. In his great summation of Jewish law and belief, the Mishneh Torah, he wrote of 'Jesus of Nazareth, who imagined that he was the Messiah, but was put to death by the court.' In his 'Epistle to Yemen,' Maimonides states that 'Jesus of Nazareth ... interpreted the Torah and its precepts in such a fashion as to lead to their total annulment. The sages, of blessed memory, having become aware of his plans before his reputation spread among our people, meted out fitting punishment to him.'

It's unfair of Jewish critics to defame Gibson for saying what the Talmud and Maimonides say, and what many historians say. Oddly, one of the scholars who has most vigorously denounced Gibson - Paula Fredriksen, a professor of religious studies at Boston University - is the author of a meticulously researched book, 'Jesus of Nazareth,' that suggests it was the high priests who informed on Jesus to the Roman authorities.

Would it have been better if Gibson never undertook to make this movie in exactly the way he did? Maybe, but trying to intimidate him into fundamentally reworking it was never a realistic or worthy goal. The best option now is to acknowledge that other sources besides the Gospels confirm the involvement of Jewish leaders in Jesus' death and clear the anger from the air. Considering that Gibson's portrayal coincides closely with traditional Jewish belief, it seems that leaving him alone is the decent as well as the Jewish thing to do.



DAVID KLINGHOFFER is a columnist for the *Jewish Forward* and author of *The Discovery of God: Abraham and the Birth of Monotheism* (Doubleday, 2003) and the upcoming *Why the Jews Rejected Christ: In Search of the Turning Point in Western History*.

In training for the Heavenly Olympics

JOE MEAGHER VS THE CHAMPION OF RELIGIOUS SENSITIVITY

Every day more than 1 million passengers travel in 1458 carriages over the 2,060 kms of railway tracks around New South Wales. This is the thirteenth in our series of articles by FATHER MAX BARRETT CSSR on commuter extraordinaire Joseph Meagher.



It was a different Joe Meagher who rode the 8.05 this particular morning. He was vocal as usual; even vociferous. But different.

His *agent provocateur* gave the impression of one who had been doing university courses for fifteen years. The 20-year-old lass beside him was a regular on the 8.05: a delightfully bright girl with sunny disposition, a predictable smile and then – just as predictably – into the next-in-line of her endless uni assignments. She changed her expression to a frown as the campus guru gave tongue.

‘The Third Millennium ushers in our second childhood. We are hobbled, positively hobbled, by an incredible accumulation of religious ... junk.’ He rid himself of the last word with something between acute pain and disbelieving regret. Impressed with the sound of his own diction, he gurgled on.

‘They used to say that peasants needed religion to explain thunder and lightning. Now we *know* what causes these phenomena – at least, some of us do – yet the religious baggage

goes unchallenged. We cling to this Christmas and Easter stuff ...’

His frowning companion interrupted. In controlled tones she said: ‘I love Christmas, and I base my life on what you call the Easter stuff, and I have an assignment to work on, so would you please ...’

That is where the morning started to go wrong for the guru. He had made a point this particular morning of joining the 8.05 out of Cronulla because he entertained thoughts of impressing the lowly second-year undergrad. Her reaction was not as he had scripted the scene.

‘Well, ho, ho, ho. Little Miss Middle Ages! How touching. And how correct.’

When the definitive history of the Cronulla 8.05 is compiled, it will be noted that *this* was the point at which the young man going on forty should have cut his losses and shut up. But there is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, sometimes results in a painful dumper. His unfortunate come-back was charged with quivering tones of righteousness.

‘It doesn’t seem to have occurred to you, my dear, that Australia is now a multi-cultural nation. Our current population includes approximately 300,000 practitioners of Islamic faith – I think you will find my figures are accurate – and they have to be considered. How do you think *they* feel about Christmas and Easter? What right do we have to marginalise them? Your convent education may not have included this type of sensitivity.’ (in his lofty moments he sounded as if he had adenoid trouble) ‘and you might as well know: there is a movement afoot to excise, drop, banish these ... these archaic Christmas and Easter celebrations from our calendar. There is a movement ...’

Enter the different Joseph A. Meagher. The explosion which erupted that moment must have carried all the way from Como to Kogarah:

‘O, infidel! Know you have trod on the toe of Ivan Skavinski Skivar!’

Joe Meagher stood and walked steadily to the place occupied by the mogul of Moslem migrants. With his old-world courtesy he smiled to the flustered girl: ‘I’ve just vacated a place up there. You may find it more



congenial? This gentleman and I have matters to discuss.'

The girl gratefully made her escape. Not that there was any chance of concentrating now; but distance from her patronising mentor had no uncertain charm about it.

The said mentor affected a contemptuous look and made to push past Joe. But, for all his seventy plus years, the man who stood over six feet tall had about him an unmistakable command. His adversary feigned nonchalance as he flopped back into his seat. At least consistent in not knowing when enough was enough, he attempted to retain the guru role.

'It may interest you, sir, to know that I am not an infidel, as you so crudely put it. I have an open mind and ...'

Joe began.

'You are an infidel, make no mistake. And some people with open minds need to have them shut for repairs.'

The regulars in Joe's compartment folded their papers and leant back. This gave promise of being vintage Meagher.

'You favour the abolition of the great Christian feasts.

'It surprises me that, with your breadth of reading, you don't appear to know a great deal about the founder of the Islamic religion.

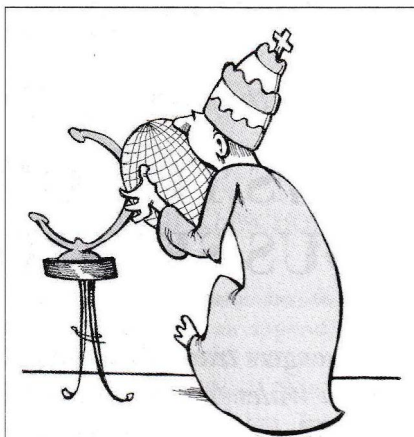
'Mohammed had deep admiration for Jesus. He regarded him as the greatest of the prophets (next to himself, that is). I can't imagine he would likely be signatory to any petition for the abolition of Christmas and Easter.

'You spoke almost passionately about respect for Moslems. You echo my sentiments exactly.'

The younger man looked sharply at Joe. Was this odd-ball setting him up? Joe was serious - and not a little sad.

'The Moslems who want to make Australia their home have a right to feel at home in Australia. They have a right to practise their religion. This is part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (That was adopted in 1948. I think you'll find my statistic is correct.) Even more basically, it is part of the natural law. Follow conscience; allow the same privilege to others.'

The heaviness in Joe began to come through even more strongly.



A global view

THE first millennium was seen in by Sylvester II, the 'Magician pope', who reinstated the belief that the earth was round. The Jews had their Maimonides, the Arabs their Alkhazen, Christendom the Venerable Bede, before St Thomas Aquinas and Albert the Great revived the study of nature.

- Arthur Koestler, *The Act of Creation*, London, Pan Books, 1964.

'But the same thing is supposed to happen in reverse. In Moslem countries, Christians should be afforded freedom of religion. It doesn't always happen.

'My son John spent two years of his working life in Saudi Arabia. He describes them as the two most unpleasant years in his life. His own description was 'religious persecution.'

The savant with the sneer interjected. 'What of persecution of Moslems in this country? Broken windows? Tearing at the hijab clothing of Moslem women?'

Joe breathed heavily before replying. 'In your rich array of tertiary studies, you never took a course in logic? No? Broken windows and targeting of people in distinctive dress are examples of unpardonable conduct; but they are not law. They are not the law of our country.

'I am talking about LAW.' (Joe held the word till it had a Pavarotti-like resonance.) 'The law of Saudi Arabia proscribes the practice of religion other than Islam. If that law is not observed, the "offender" is put in jail and deported from the country by the first available flight out of Saudi Arabia. In

the case of a foreigner on a work visa, his or her emoluments are not infrequently withheld.

'Coming back to your support for doing away with Christmas and Easter: do you know, I can't bring myself to believe that our Moslem people have initiated any such proposal.

'I believe the push comes from so-called Christians. Retired Christians. Nominal Christians who have lost the Christian plot completely and who want to pass on such 'benefits?'

Joe reflected for a moment.

'You know, an interesting thing about Mohammed: he never really knew Christianity. He was raised in paganism. The only Christians he knew were heretics ... Monophysites ... The sadness was that, from a moral point of view, these people lived as though they *disbelieved* in Jesus. They were lustful ... usurers ... they practised slavery. Had they lived as *true* Christians, who knows? Possibly there would never have been a thing called Mohammedanism ... Perhaps Mohammed would have become a great saint, proclaiming: "There is but one God, and Jesus is his name" ...'

Inside the lead carriage of the 8.05 there was quiet. At least subconsciously the regular passengers were aware that they were listening to a different Joe Meagher that morning. No wild burst of song; no light sprinkling of appropriate verse, other than a deeply sighed:

Of all sad words of song and verse, the saddest are these:

And at least three or four fellow-travellers quietly joined in:

It might have been.

Joe had not quite finished. He turned ninety degrees and focused once more on his companion. His manner was not hostile, but there was tiredness in his voice.

'You are not an infidel? No. Probably you were baptised. But you walked away from your birthright and now are quite prepared to rubbish your birthplace. My friend, you are an infidel ...'

'... and a distraction. I've gone past my stop.'

The train was pulling into Bondi Junction. A handful of 8.05 regulars who had likewise gone beyond their stop looked sheepishly at one another, crossed to the other side of the platform ... and remained thinking.



Assimilating each new outrage

THE hostility to traditional culture was manifest in the arts long before the Sixties. 'Anyone who thinks that fatuousness, nonsense and obscenity in the arts are wholly recent affairs,' Roger Kimball, managing editor of *The New Criterion*, writes, 'should look back for a moment at some of the numerous avant-garde movements that captured headlines in Europe from the turn of the century through the 1920s.' Reviewing a book that praised the Dadaist movement for subverting the values of bourgeois society, Kimball remarks: 'Consistent with its attack on "bourgeois values" (e.g. order, reason, honesty, propriety) is its fascination with violence, the scatological, and the obscene. This it shares with its close cousin surrealism.' While this is undoubtedly true – Gardner says that art began to direct its anger at the bourgeois state in the last quarter of the eighteenth century – it does appear that the proportion of art that assaults bourgeois values is far higher today than in the days of Dadaism and surrealism. When the object is to attack bourgeois culture by delivering shocks to its standards, and when that culture keeps revising its standards by assimilating each new outrage, it is necessary to keep upping the ante by being ever more shocking. It seems clear, however, that large sections of the bourgeoisie like drug-resistant bacteria, are approaching a state of being unshockable.

– Judge Robert H. Bork, *Slouching towards Gomorrah*, Regan Books, 1996.

Innocent until proven guilty Canon Law asserts age-old principle

IN canonical criminal proceedings it is necessary to balance the demands of the common good with the dignity and rights of the accused, said participants at a symposium held recently in Rome.

The symposium on 'Criminal Prosecution and the Protection of Rights in Canonical Legislation' gathered experts from the Holy See, Europe and North America. The School of Canon Law of the University of the Holy Cross organized the event.

Monsignor Joaquin Llobell, instructor of procedural law at the University of the Holy Cross, referred to the norms adopted by U.S. bishops in the wake of the clerical sex-abuse scandals.

He pointed to 'the need to harmonize the protection of the common good with the dignity and rights of the accused,' as well as the need 'to be profoundly consistent in respect of the needs that natural and civil law consider as indispensable for the apportioning of punishments, in particular, the most serious.'

Kenneth Pennington, a professor from Catholic University of America, spoke on the duty to recognize the innocence of a person 'until proven otherwise.'

'No one, absolutely no one, can be denied a trial, in any circumstance,' Pennington said. 'And all, absolutely all, have the right to a solid and profound defense. It is a principle that we must not forget or abandon.'

Monsignor Velasio De Paolis, secretary of the Apostolic Signature, the Church's supreme court, reminded participants that 'criminal law has its own configuration and a specific dimension in the life of the Church, complementary to other instruments with which the Church carries out its mission in time.'

Its importance cannot be debated, he added, as one runs the risk that 'the faithful will lose the sense of justice. It would be something serious, as without a sense of justice one loses the sense of equity, mercy and charity.'

The meeting ended with a round-table discussion on the application of Church sanctions, including those recently applied in the United States [Source: ZENIT]

THE GENESIANS

'AWAY'

FOLLOWING its great success with a season of Oscar Wilde's 'A Woman of No Importance' the Genesian Theatre is presenting a fine production of the modern Australian classic 'AWAY' by Michael Gow.

Set in the Australian summer of 1967/68 'AWAY' is a rewarding play brimming with humour, pathos and an array of very human and interesting characters we instantly recognize.

The Australian consciousness at this time was about to change. After a decade of affluence, stability, conservatism and a strange insulation towards world events, a movement towards new ideals was beginning to emerge, with the hippie movement and protests against the Vietnam War.

Against this backdrop 'AWAY' explores the lives of three very different families as they prepare for the big annual event, the summer beach holiday. The holiday becomes an emotional journey for each family as they face major change in their own lives. Gow explores a myriad of themes in the play with great subtlety using the characters to reflect the attitudes and values of the time.

It is a play of great warmth finely balancing comedy and drama. The large cast is uniformly strong and impressive in making this a funny and moving evening of theatre.

The production is beautifully enhanced by Michael Scheil's very effective lighting, Susan Carver's excellent costumes and a practical stage design by Clare Singline. The production is directed by Timothy Bennett.

Lawrence Bayliss, MSC

At the Genesian Theatre, 420 Kent Street, Sydney to
Saturday 24th April, playing Friday and Saturdays at 8.00pm and
Sundays at 4.30pm. There are no performances over the Easter weekend.
Bookings: MCA Ticketing (02) 9645 1611 www.mca-tix.com

Whatever happened to the Apostles?

THE TWELVE APOSTLES

This is the introduction to a series of fourteen articles by PAUL STENHOUSE MSC discussing Catholic tradition concerning the twelve Apostles, their background, mission and manner of death. The thirteenth will be devoted to Judas Iscariot and the final article will treat of St Paul, the 'Apostle to the Gentiles'.



ST LUKE, in his Gospel, describes how Jesus went one day 'into the hills to pray and spent the night in prayer to God. When day broke he called his disciples to him, and from among them he chose twelve and named them Apostles: Simon, to whom he gave the name Peter, and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot, Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot who turned traitor'.

Other lists of the Apostles are to be found in Matthew [10,2-5], Mark [3,16-19] and Acts [1,13]. In all of them St Peter is always placed first. St Peter is named 195 times in the New testament. The rest of the

Apostles names occur in descending order as follows: St James the Greater, the brother of St John, 19; St Philip, 15; St James the less, 14; St Andrew, Peter's brother, 12; St Thomas 11; St Bartholomew, 10; St Jude, 8; St Simon Boanerges, 7; St Matthew, 5.

In the ancient Roman Canon of the Mass, the Apostles are honoured immediately after mention of 'Mary, the ever Virgin Mother of Jesus Christ our Lord and God' and of 'St Joseph her husband'. Peter and Paul, the twin pillars upon which the Church of Rome is founded, are mentioned first, and then 'Andrew, James, Thomas, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon and Jude'. Only Judas Iscariot, the traitor, is omitted. Then follow, in the Roman Canon, the names of the first four successors of St Peter as bishops of Rome: Linus, Cletus, Clement,

Sixtus. These are followed by eight of the best-loved of myriad martyrs for the faith: Cornelius, Cyprian, Lawrence, Chrysogonus, John and Paul, Cosmas and Damian.

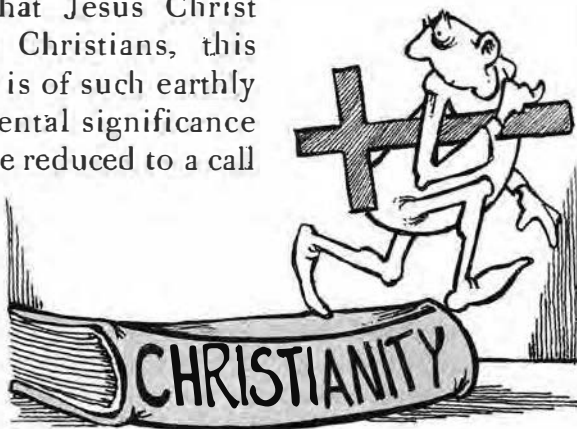
In the ancient Roman Basilica of St Mary in Trastevere erected by Saint Callistus in 223 AD, rebuilt by Pope Julius I in 340, restored by Pope John VII in 705-707, and enlarged in its present form by Pope Innocent II in 1140, there is a mosaic depicting Jesus as the Lamb of God, in the midst of twelve sheep – representing the twelve apostles – six of whom are represented as coming from Jerusalem, and six others as coming from Bethlehem.

Other ancient basilicas – St Praxedes [built well before 490, rebuilt by Pope Paschal I in 822], St Clement [paternal home of Pope Clement I, third successor of Peter], St Caecilia [built, at her request, first in 230 on the site of her home, when St Caecilia was martyred] – employ the same imagery. In the Basilica of St Clement we find the twelve apostles represented as 12 doves upon the great crucifix in the apse of that Basilica.

Quite a few ancient sarcophagi represent the twelve Apostles as venerable men, holding a scroll or tablet in their hand, and with their names inscribed above or beside them. Inscribed on the tablets or scrolls, usually, are the articles of the 'Apostles Creed'. Ancient Catholic Tradition has it that before the Apostles went off to proclaim the Good News to the world after the Ascension of our Lord, they composed the Creed that has taken its name from them, each of them contributing one of the articles.

TO claim, however, that healing nature and protecting the biosphere is the central task of Christians in the modern world is a highly suspect contention. The central task of Christians remains the same as it was in the beginning: to proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord. For Christians, this announcement is of such earthly and transcendental significance that it cannot be reduced to a call for poverty alleviation and nature preservation.

– Samuel Gregg, *Beyond Romanticism*, Centre for Independent Studies, Sydney, 2000



The order they followed was:
 St Peter: *I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth;*
 St Andrew [his brother]: *And in Jesus Christ His Only Son, our Lord;*
 St James the Greater [brother of St John]: *Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary;*
 St John [James's brother]: *Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried;*

St Philip: *Descended to hell, and on the third day rose from the dead;*

St James the Lesser [son of Alphaeus]: *ascended to heaven, sits on the right hand of God the Almighty Father;*

St Thomas: *Thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead;*

St Batholomew: *I believe in the Holy Spirit;*

St Matthew: *The Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints;*

St Simon: *the remission of sins;*

St Matthias: *the resurrection of the body;*

St Thaddaeus: *and life everlasting.*

In most ancient mosaics and frescoes there are attempts to distinguish the twelve Apostles one from the other by facial characteristics: St Peter, with a broad forehead, short white hair [sometimes bald] and a straggly white beard; St Paul usually with short or sometimes receding hair, a narrow face and a short well-kept beard; St Andrew, with flowing white hair and beard; Sts James the Greater, and James the Lesser: short brown hair and beard; Sts John, Thomas and Philip are usually young and beardless; Sts Matthew, Jude, Simon and Matthias are represented as aged, with white hair.

As time passed, it became the custom to depict the apostles with some characteristic of their lives or death, thus:

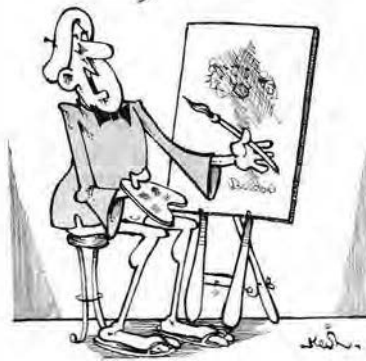
St Peter almost always carries the keys of the kingdom of heaven, or a fish;

St Paul usually is depicted with a sword, the instrument of his martyrdom;

St Andrew carries the transverse cross [i.e., 'crux decussata,' shaped like a Roman ten or 'x'] on which he was hanged. St Peter Chrysologus says that he was hanged from a tree;

St James the Greater, the pilgrim's

THAT'S THE GENUINE...
I'M THE FAKE



AN art dealer (this story is authentic) bought a canvas signed Picasso and travelled all the way to Cannes to discover whether it was genuine. Picasso was working in his studio. He cast a single look at the canvas and said: 'It's a fake'.

A few months later the dealer bought another canvas signed Picasso. Again he travelled to Cannes and again Picasso, after a single glance, grunted: 'It's a fake'.

'But cher maître,' expostulated the dealer, 'it so happens that I saw you with my own eyes, working on this very picture several years ago.'

Picasso shrugged: 'I often paint fakes.'

Arthur Koestler, *The Act of Creation*. London, Pan Books, 1964

staff, because he was the first to set out to spread the gospel, going to Spain;

St John, a chalice with a serpent, recalling the legend that someone

poisoned the wine for the Mass, and neither John nor those who received communion were harmed; the eagle represents him as an evangelist;

St Thomas, a builder's rule, because he used treasure that was set aside for a palace for king Condoforus in India, to feed the poor and the needy. The king died, and his brother had the apostle imprisoned and tortured. The dead king appeared to his brother and told him to release St Thomas because he had found the most beautiful palace prepared for him in heaven;

St James the lesser: a club with which he was beaten to death;

St Philip a staff surmounted by a cross [crozier] representing his manner of death, and also perhaps his mission as a preacher of the cross of salvation;

St Bartholomew a large knife, because he was flayed alive before being crucified;

St Matthew, a purse – he was a tax collector;

St Simon, a saw, sometimes a sword – because he was sawn in two in Persia [today's Iraq, Iran];

St Jude Thaddaeus, a lance – he was killed with a lance or club;

St Matthias, a lance, sometimes an



Truth and Taste

THE word 'truth' is often used without any understanding of the difference between descriptive and prescriptive truth, and without clear differentiation between matters of truth and matters of taste.

Mortimer J. Adler, *Adler's Philosophical Dictionary*. Simon & Schuster, 1996

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— Editor, *Annals*

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axe — because he was killed by either one or other weapon.

St Peter is connected with the cities of Rome, Antioch and Alexandria; St Andrew with Scythia, Cappadocia, Bithynia [roughly modern-day Turkey and some of the Asiatic republics of the old USSR]; St John, Asia Minor; St James the Greater, Spain; St Thomas, India; St Bartholomew, India, Armenia and Media; St Matthew Parthia [in modern-day Turkey] and Ethiopia; St Philip, Galatia [in modern-day Turkey] Gaul, Phrygia, Northern Asia; St James the Lesser, Jerusalem, Palestine; St Jude, Persia [Iraq, Iran]; St Matthias, Judaea, Eastern Ethiopia; St Paul, Greece, Turkey, Rome; St Barnabas, Cyprus, Northern Italy.

Early Christian artists loved to depict scenes from the Gospels that concerned all the Apostles, or some of them. Favourite subjects were the handing over of the Keys of Heaven to St Peter;² the mission to go and preach the Gospel and to cure the sick;³ the washing of the apostles' feet by Jesus;⁴ the agony of Jesus in the garden;⁵ the Last Supper; the Institution of the Eucharist;⁶ the appearance of Jesus to the eleven as they were eating breakfast;⁷ the Ascension,⁸ the Descent of the Holy Spirit.⁹

The beautiful fresco by Pietro Vanucci [Perugino] 1446-1523, in the Sistine Chapel in Rome, has our Lord and St Peter in the centre, with the latter on his knees, receiving the keys, while the rest of the apostles and some spectators stand around.

That Peter was always, and still remains, chief among the Apostles will emerge from the articles to follow. These will trace the careers of the Apostles through the eyes of Catholic faith and tradition, starting with the Scriptures, and examining all extant documentary evidence concerning the twelve disciples chosen by Jesus to be his first Apostles.

Next month: St Peter, fisherman and prince of all the Apostles.

1. Mt 12-16
2. Mt 16.30-20
3. Mk 16.14-18
4. Jn 13.2-17
5. Jn 18.1-11
6. Lk 22.1-19
7. Jn 21.9-13
8. Acts 1.9, 11
9. Acts 2. 1-13

ANNALS AUSTRALASIA

115th Birthday

To celebrate our 115th birthday this October *Annals* is pleased to announce that Father Paul Stenhouse MSC will offer a

Mass of Thanksgiving

in the Church of our Lady
of the Sacred Heart Randwick, NSW
on Saturday October 16, 2004.

All our subscribers, benefactors, contributors and friends
who can do so are invited to join us for this
Birthday Mass at 12 noon.

To help provide some much needed
support for moving into our next 100 years,
Annals also plans to hold a

Fund-raising Dinner

in Sydney on October 20 this year at a venue to be decided. Cost of the dinner: \$75 per person. Naturally we need to know well in advance what numbers we can expect. Please indicate your desire to attend this dinner by filling in the form below, and ticking the appropriate box. Thank you for helping us to make this occasion a success.

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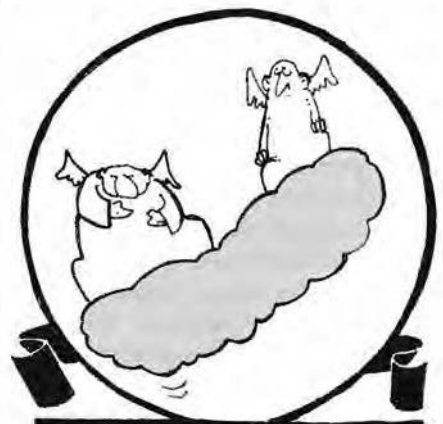
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Protection from Religious 'developers'?

RESIDENTS of harbour-side suburbs in Sydney object strenuously to what they complain is 'market-driven development of harbour-side suburbs'. They complain, 'the developers don't care about the place. Often they don't live here, and even if they do, the social and natural environment that we love, and that is the reason for our being here, is at risk'. They demand Environmental Impact Statements as checks on gross and unwarranted interference with their environment and lives.

Why is it that individuals feel entitled to complain about pollution or destruction or even radical changes to their natural environment, yet feel powerless before attacks on their spiritual environment? Catholics, especially, who find decisions being made about how they should live their faith, by religious 'experts' few if any of whom live in the Church, care about the Church or love it, should complain in their turn about 'market-driven,' and especially 'media-driven' interference in their faith. Our spiritual heritage is more valuable and equally as irreplaceable as mere buildings for which local or world heritage bodies demand protection. - Ed.



How a Catholic and cultural treasure survived against the odds

THE LINDISFARNE GOSPELS

With their breathtaking artwork, the Lindisfarne Gospels are a symbol of faith and one of the great examples of Catholic culture. Created 1300 years ago on a bleak island off the north-east coast of England, they were the centrepiece of a stunning exhibition, Painted Labyrinth – the World of the Lindisfarne Gospels, in the British Library, London, last summer. Sydney journalist KEVIN HILFERTY was privileged to see it.



IN the scriptorium (writing room) of the monastery of Lindisfarne (Holy Island) off the coast of Northumberland between the years 710 and 720 Eadfrith, Bishop of Lindisfarne, created one of the world's most important religious and cultural artefacts – the Lindisfarne Gospels.

The Lindisfarne Gospels book has survived wars, Viking raids and the ravages of time for over one thousand years in almost perfect condition. The freshness, intricacy and beauty of its decoration are wonderful to behold. Within its pages it draws together all the varied influences which shaped Christian art of the time in Northumbria, blending styles of writing and decoration from Italian, Celtic and Anglo-Saxon sources.

As intriguing as the story of its survival is the way that Eadfrith was able to work in his remote North Sea island while drawing on these examples. These influences could be seen in the wide range of sculptures, manuscripts and carvings from the North East of England, Ireland, Scotland, elsewhere in England, the Orient, Asia, North Africa and the Middle East displayed in the British Library during the Painted Labyrinth exhibition.

Opposite the beginnings of each of the four Gospels, Eadfrith placed pages of ornamented design. These are known as carpet pages because they resemble oriental rugs or mats with an ornamental cross as the centre of the design. Similar designs can be found in early Coptic



St Mark pictured with his lion.

(Egyptian Christian) manuscripts as well as in Eastern Christian and Islamic art. Prayer mats, like those in mosques today, were used by the monks of Northumbria in the 8th century.

We tend to think of the centuries after the collapse of the Roman Empire and the subsequent barbarian invasions as the dark ages. Yet the work of Eadfrith and the monks and nuns of his time tell us that Britain

and Ireland were then part of a multi-cultural flow of ideas, artefacts and people across the known world.

Northumbria and the monasteries

After the Roman legions left Britain, the invading Angles and Saxons from Northern Europe created new kingdoms. The merging of two of these led to a kingdom which stretched from Hull to Edinburgh and was named Northumbria - meaning the land north of the River Humber.

King Oswald of Northumbria had been a student at the monastery on the island of Iona while he was in exile. When he regained his throne he invited the Iona monks to establish a Priory and spread the Christian message in a land still largely pagan. The site they chose was Lindisfarne, an island 1.6 km off the coast, 15 km southeast of the border town of Berwick. It is about 4.8 km long and 1.3 km wide. At low tide it is joined to the mainland.

The Iona monks came to Lindisfarne in 635 under the leadership of an Irish monk, Aidan, who became the first of the island's 17 bishops. In time, the Priory became one of the most important seats of Christian learning and missionary activity in Western Europe.

Further south were two great monasteries founded by a Northumbrian nobleman, Benedict Biscop. These were St Peter's by the River Wear at Wearmouth (now Monkwearmouth, a district of Sunderland) in 674 and St Paul's near the River Tyne at Jarrow in 681. Benedict Biscop journeyed three times to Rome before beginning to build St Peter's and undertook a further three journeys to bring back books, statues and icons, religious paintings and fine textiles for his monasteries.

He had experienced monastic life in England, France and Italy, including two years at the monastery of St Honorat, at Lérins, near Cannes, in the south of France. For his foundation, he put together a rule based on the best examples he

had seen at 17 monasteries.

Benedict Biscop brought John, the Papal Arch-Cantor of St Peter's, to teach his monks to sing the chant as it was sung in Rome. He built in the Roman style, bringing stonemasons and glaziers from Gaul to construct stone buildings with plain and coloured window-glass when the Anglo-Saxons built in timber.

When both sites were excavated in the 1960s and 70s, among the finds were finely carved stone and large quantities of coloured window glass. These survivals testify to the richness of the art and architecture employed by Benedict Biscop to glorify God.

The most famous monk of the twin monasteries was the Venerable Bede. He entered St Peter's in 680 at the age of seven and remained in the twin monasteries until his death in 735. His *Lives of the Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow* offers a unique insight into life in the monasteries in the late 7th and early 8th centuries. In *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People* Bede told of the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons and their conversion to Christianity.

Lindisfarne owes much of its glory to St. Cuthbert (634-687) whose incorrupt body was venerated there for centuries. He was a shepherd in Northumbria before

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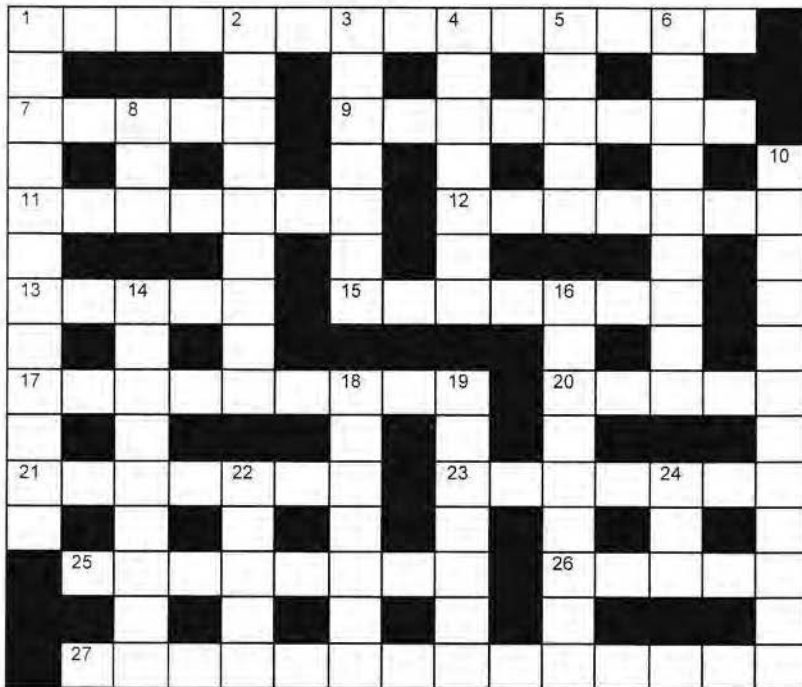
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ANNALS CROSSWORD No. 21



ACROSS CLUES

1. Paternoster (3,5,6)
7. Turned to wine by Jesus in Cana (5)
9. To purify by means of religious rituals or ceremonies (8)
11. One of the archangels (7)
12. An exclamation of praise to God (7)
13. Pilfer (5)
15. The outer chamber of a Jewish sanctuary; a place of pilgrimage (4,5)
17. Pseudepigrapha (9)
20. Open to view (5)
21. Ornamental shoulder piece (7)
23. Intimidate; cow (7)
25. Obstinate (8)
26. A rectangular piece of linen worn by a priest around the neck and shoulders (5)
27. Patron saint of journalists, Feast Day Jan 24 (7,2,5)

DOWN CLUES

1. Tall structure built in Babylonia, Genesis 11:1-4 (5,2,5)
2. Opening words of 1 across (3,6)
3. Betrayer of Samson (7)
4. Of or relating to The Passover or Easter (7)
5. A wall hanging, especially of tapestry (5)

6. Mitigate (9)
8. A gratuity (3)
10. One of the apostles; Feast Day May 3 (5,3,4)
14. To take care of (4,5)
16. Stopover for Paul between Tyre and Caesarea on his third journey, Acts 21:7-8 (9)
18. Port of call on Paul's journey to Rome, Acts 28:13 (7)
19. Bedecked (7)
22. Uncle of Jacob and Esau, Genesis 28:5 (5)
24. Son-in-law of Mohammed (3)

SOLUTION TO NO. 20



becoming a monk in the Abbey of Old Melrose, living the Gospel message and undertaking mission journeys throughout the border country. He arrived in Lindisfarne in 664, extended his work further south and diplomatically resolved tensions between the Roman and Celtic wings of the church. A man of great devotion and charity, he was revered by the people of Northumbria. Bede, who had been his pupil, referred to

him as a "child of God." Cuthbert was Bishop of Lindisfarne for the last two years of his life; sensing the approach of death, he withdrew to his own retreat on the island of Farne.

The Lindisfarne Gospels were created at the island monastery to honour Cuthbert. The book was probably written some time between St Cuthbert's death in 687 and the death in 721 of Eadfrith. A

recent study has suggested a date of around 710-720 and that one artist-scribe undertook the script and illustrations. The work formed a personal *opus dei*, or task done for God and the community.

At the time the Lindisfarne Gospels were being produced, Bede was at the height of his scholarly career, occupied in describing the life of St Cuthbert in both prose and verse, as well as collecting material for his other great works.

The Gospels book was created to be seen and used on the altar during the liturgy. The monks would have had access to it and the faithful would have been able to see it from a suitable distance. It would have been an important contribution to the cult of St Cuthbert, which turned Lindisfarne into a place of pilgrimage in the late 7th and 8th centuries.

The writing and decorating of the Lindisfarne Gospels would have taken at least five years. Eadfrith would have had other duties and was subject to all the other daily demands of monastic life while working on the Gospels. It is known that the harsh Northumbrian winters sometimes stopped scribes from working.

Creating the Lindisfarne Gospels

The Lindisfarne Gospels were written and painted on vellum made from skins of yearling calves, which had been soaked, stretched, and scraped clean.

Before writing began, four large sheets of vellum were stacked and folded in half to form a gathering of eight leaves, 16 pages. To make the book, gatherings of four sheets of vellum were sewn onto leather cords, the ends of which were threaded into thick wooden boards and secured with wooden dowels. Then the boards and spine were covered with damp leather.

Each skin provided a double sided double-page spread and 150 skins would have been needed to make the book, which has 259 written and decorated leaves of thick vellum, 34.2 cm by 22.5 cm.

Eadfrith would have copied the Four Gospels in the Latin of St. Jerome's Version from a book brought from Italy by Benedict Biscop to Wearmouth-Jarrow and then lent to Lindisfarne. Italian features of the Gospels include the way the text is laid out in two columns, the mention of the Neapolitan St. Januarius in an introductory page plus a table of festivals with special lessons.

The book opens with a carpet page that introduces St. Jerome's prefaces. Then follows St. Jerome's letter to Pope Damasus I (born 304, died 384) explaining his translation work. This is followed by another letter from St. Jerome, the *Pluries Fuisse*, about the Evangelists and the *Eusebius Carpiano*, explaining the Canon Tables.

Then come the Canon Tables, a concordance system devised during the fourth century by Eusebius of Caesarea, the Court Bishop to the Emperor Constantine, showing which passages are shared in which Gospels.

Ethelwald, who succeeded Eadfrith as Bishop, made the original binding, which was of leather decorated with an impressed design. In the 8th century Billfrith the Anchorite richly decorated it with jewels and precious metals.

Before writing the text, fine lines were ruled onto the pages with a metal point between prick marks at either end of the lines. Eadfrith had remarkable skills as a chemist; he would have prepared the ink and paints himself. He wrote the text in ink made from oak galls and iron salts.

In the painted pages, Eadfrith made use of a variety of colours. For yellow, he used orpiment (trisulphide of arsenic), red or orange was toasted lead, green was verdigris which he made by suspending copper over vinegar or by a mix of blue and yellow. His white was chalk or crushed shells or eggshells and black was carbon. He mixed his pigments with adhesive beaten egg white. For some fine details he used a tiny amount of gold leaf or powdered gold ink. Using local plant extracts, he



Not just the pagans

'If they had truly known the Catholic faith, I am convinced that in the end they will have embraced it'.

'Si fidum Catholicam plene cognovissent credo quod finetinus huic adhaesissent'

- Hugh of Trimberg (1230-1313) writing of pagan authors

obtained a range of blues, purples and crimsons manipulated through the use of acids, alkalis and even urine.

Most of the pages are devoted to the text of the Gospels, with sparse patches of ornamentation. Throughout the decorated pages there are depicted a rich variety of creatures of all sorts, woven into the Celtic motifs.

For his text Eadfrith used a type of script known as Insular majuscule, which was developed in British and Irish centres of Celtic Christianity. This was a form of the rounded Roman uncial script. In some places, however, Eadfrith wrote text headings in a lettering style influenced by Anglo-Saxon runes (symbols).

The saints illustrated in the Gospels are shown wearing Roman/Creek dress of the late 4th or 5th century. Eadfrith probably based them on images in the large

collection of books and panel paintings from Italy in the library of Wearmouth-Jarrow. These are the only figures in the Lindisfarne Gospels apart from a tiny profile head on the major initial page of St John's Gospel.

The Gospels book is unusual for its large quantity of bird illustrations and their naturalistic detail. Although they are arranged decoratively, they show observation of real birds such as shags and herons, which would have been plentiful around Lindisfarne.

The eagle, the traditional symbol of St John, is so naturalistic that Eadfrith may well have drawn it from life. He also included very distinctively drawn cats, one of which stretches up the major initial page of St Luke's Gospel, with its elongated body filled with birds.

The designs of the large decorated pages are complex. Eadfrith probably worked out his design first on wax tablets or scraps of vellum.

Then he drew the design lightly onto the back of the page using compasses and dividers and a hard metal point and pricked through the main lines.

However on the major initial pages Eadfrith must have done much of his drawing freehand, as the shapes are so varied and complicated.

The text is adorned with intricate patterns, consisting of interlaced ribbons, spiral lines, and geometrical knots, terminating sometimes in beads of birds and beasts. The intervening spaces are filled with red dots in various designs.

Eadfrith's pens were cut from feathers, probably goose feathers, which were easily available around Lindisfarne. He used brushes to apply the paint colours and tiny hairs from the brush have been found in the paint.

Small decorated initials appear in the introductory text before each Gospel. Few other Anglo-Saxon texts have such elaborate minor decorated initials.

Eadfrith deserves to be remembered not only as a technical innovator, a great artist and calligrapher, but also as a founder

MEDIA MATTERS

By JAMES MURRAY

Clearsighted Abbott

HEALTH Minister Tony Abbott's clear view on abortion is Burkean: Edmund Burke, that is, who in 1774 forever defined what parliamentarians owe to their conscience and their constituency: 'Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgement; and he betrays it, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion.'

Abbott's view was not refuted by facile cries from his student audience: 'Keep your morals off our bodies.' He could easily have asked them to keep their amorality off the bodies of viable human beings, particularly in late-term abortions. But he persisted with his main theme: the problem for a politician in a plural democracy of reconciling conscience views and pragmatic politics.

As reported, he was possibly too laddish in his emphasis on the misbehaviour of women. As Edmund Burke did not say but Abbott knows: 'It takes two to tango and two to make a baby (science nuts, so to speak, apart).'

Magoo Costello

COMPARED to Abbott, his colleague the Treasurer Peter Costello came on as something of an abortion trimmer. Okay, temporary, acting Mr Magoo. This despite his earlier dictum: 'Demography is destiny'.

In those terms a nation like Australia with a falling conception rate cannot tolerate the destruction of potential human resources at the rate of 75,000 units a year. If foetuses were seedlings or chickens, the outrage of greenies and animal liberationists at their destruction would be enormous.

Costello's dictum may not quite have the ring of the late Arthur Calwell's 'Populate or Perish'. Nonetheless both are based on the same harsh reality: desirable living space has never been made sacrosanct by a national label.

Calwell, however, was in a position to do something practical about the problem. He implemented one of the largest, and mutually beneficial, immigration programmes in world history. For Costello the problem is more complicated. Europeans who formed the majority of the Calwell immigrants no longer see Australia as a land of golden opportunity. Europe itself is that land - as demonstrated by the thousands of Australians who move there - and to the United States - in search of a better life.

Moreover for Costello the problem is not simply a matter of immigrant numbers from Asia or Africa, it concerns an imbalance between a younger generation and their potential to provide future welfare for an older and more numerous generation.

The irony of the Costello dictum is that it was Liberal Party co-founder and Prime Minister Bob Menzies whose government introduced the factor even more critical to demographic imbalance than demand-side abortion: the contraceptive pill.

But abortion remains the blunt instrument of imbalance. It began as abortion of necessity and inevitably became abortion of choice. Not that the problem is Australia's only. In an ironic coincidence, it is also China's where selective abortion of females has led to an imbalance which could lead to increases in kidnapping and forced sexual enslavement.



THE greatest triumphs of propaganda have been accomplished not by doing something but by refraining from doing. Great is truth but still greater, from a practical point of view, is silence about truth.'

- Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*



It was religious moralists who warned of the dangers. Scientists, who know the risks of all experimentation, still work on the basis that their mistakes are somehow selfcorrecting.

Tell that to the victims of Chernobyl. Or mad-cow disease.

Skools In and Out

EDUCATED in Scotland where, despite sectarianism, government funding for everything from slate pencils to textbooks was given equally to both Catholic and Protestant schools, your correspondent has always been nonplussed by disagreements over state funding here.

He is even more nonplussed by the current row over multi-million dollar government allocations to private and/or ecclesiastical schools as distinct from state schools, many of the latter attended by children whose Catholic parents cannot afford to send them to Catholic schools.

But he is totally discombobulated by another under-reported fact. The Government allocates millions to faith-based schools yet examination questions in the premier state, New South Wales, are drafted from a post-modernist, Marxist perspective, scarcely designed to enhance anyone's faith in any truth.

Neither nonplussed nor discombobulation can describe reaction to some Catholic parents who now send their children to the kind of Catholic primary schools they themselves attended. Yet when it comes to their children moving to secondary school, the parents opt not for the kind of Catholic school that enabled them to climb the ladder of success but for so-called non-denominational schools.

Why? Your correspondent believes such schools are high rather than non-denominational: that is, high-denominational in their fees and as such more socially prestigious in networking poten-

tial, not schools for saints and sinners: schools for yuppies.

And in moving their children from a specifically religious environment to a non-denominational one, these parents do not appear to take account of potential disruption, a disruption of which their own parents were aware, as they were aware of what the phrase 'keeping the Faith' entails.

Low Mark for Latham

IN interviews, most reporters seek headline-inspiring quotes. And under journalistic conventions, they ask leading questions to obtain them.

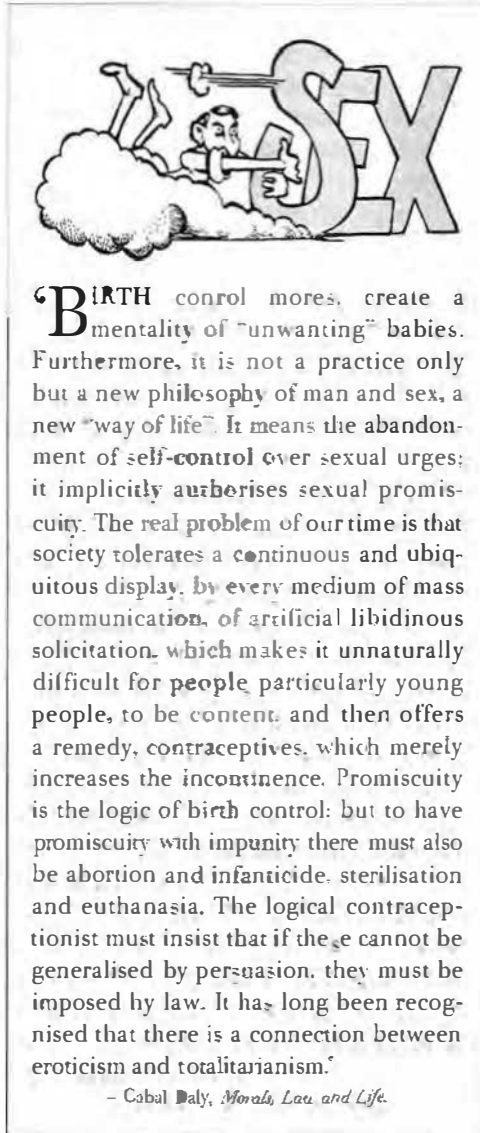
This is a truth of which opposition leader Mark Latham should be aware, and one his minders ought to have warned him about.

Latham now carries the handicap of 'home by Christmas' absent Australian forces deployed in and around Iraq. But he himself did not use the tag. As radio reporter, Mike Carlton with admirable directness made clear in his newspaper column (*SAT*, March 27-28), it was he who first used the tag. He did so aware of its historical futility; 'home by Christmas' was used about the Boer War, the First World War and the Second World War.

Latham did not seem to have a similar awareness. He went along with Carlton's leading question instead of saying: 'Give me a break, Mike' or possibly 'Give me a bloody break, you dill.' He then compounded his mistake by defending the tag as if it were his own, thus making policy

on the run with his colleague, and foreign policy expert, Kevin Rudd puffing, not to say huffing, to keep up.

There was also a hint of megalomania in the Latham defence. He compared himself with John Curtin ordering troops home from the Middle East for the defence of Australia. Curtin brought back a division, say 10,000 soldiers, during World War II.



BIRTH control mores, create a mentality of "unwanting" babies. Furthermore, it is not a practice only but a new philosophy of man and sex, a new "way of life". It means the abandonment of self-control over sexual urges; it implicitly authorises sexual promiscuity. The real problem of our time is that society tolerates a continuous and ubiquitous display, by every medium of mass communication, of artificial libidinous solicitation, which makes it unnaturally difficult for people, particularly young people, to be content, and then offers a remedy, contraceptives, which merely increases the incontinence. Promiscuity is the logic of birth control: but to have promiscuity with impunity there must also be abortion and infanticide, sterilisation and euthanasia. The logical contraceptionist must insist that if the one cannot be generalised by persuasion, they must be imposed by law. It has long been recognised that there is a connection between eroticism and totalitarianism.

- Cabal Daily, *Morals, Law, and Life*.





Latham was talking about 600 personnel in a situation not (yet) comparable to that war.

The Prime Minister John Howard did not make a similar mistake when Fred Breuchley tagged him with the description 'deputy sheriff' and it appeared in *The Bulletin*. No strutting in a cowboy hat for Howard. He stuck with his suburban grazier, pork-pine number.

The difference maybe the key to the coming federal election. Does Australia need the sudden excitement of a one-man band? Or the continuity represented by Howard and his colleagues who, whatever their differences on ambition, are at one on foreign policy?

Wallacing Bradders

THE redoubtable Christine Wallace, who fought world-ranking feminist Germaine Greer to a draw by writing a biography which Greer opposed, took on a tougher task in *The Weekend Australian Magazine* (Feb 28-29).

Wallace copy tasted 115 letters written by cricketer Don Bradman to journalist Rohan Rivett, and held in the National Library in Canberra. Having done so, she said the letters revealed the inner Bradman, 'no whiff of the anti-Catholicism which has been an under-current of criticism about him'.

Wallace had one slight problem: backgrounding Rivett's journalistic career. She did so by saying he came to the editorship of *The News*, Adelaide in 1951 via Wesley College, Melbourne University, Oxford and the AIF - including three years as a POW on the Burma-Thailand railway - and *The Herald*, Melbourne.

So far, so good, except that back then Thailand was called Siam. But no mention of Rivett's abrupt departure from *The News* in 1960, a departure ordered in a letter from Sydney by proprietor Rupert Murdoch who thus made Rohan Rivett the first, and still the greatest, of the long line entitled to wear the Most Noble Order of Ex-Editors of the Murdoch Empire.

Did Don Bradman comment on the way Rivett was dismissed with the equivalent of an under-arm ball? (To be continued).

ABC of Omar

THE ABC's Evan Williams is one of its most intrepid reporters with a dangerous patch to cover: the Middle East. So why did he behave as if he'd overdozed on Fantaes when he interviewed Omar Sharif for *Foreign Correspondent* about a new movie? (Feb 24, Shrove Tuesday).

Eventually, Williams did get round to saying to Sharif: 'You were born a Catholic and converted to Islam ...' Sharif agreed. But neither Sharif nor Williams mentioned that he was born a Copt (and baptised a Catholic). As a Copt, Sharif is descended from the brave remnant of those who resisted Islamisation and with it the Arabisation of Egypt (Copt being derived from *gupt*, Arabic for Egyptian through the Greek *gypt* - *Agyptos*).

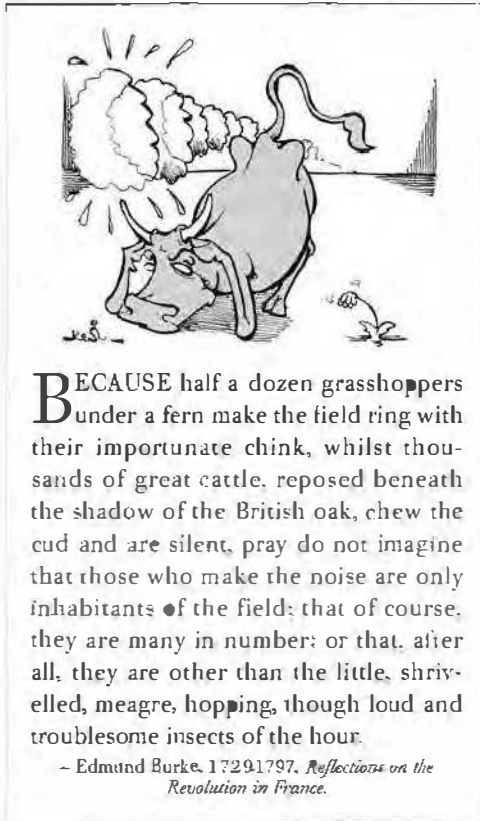
Without that background, Williams could scarcely ask the obvious and crucial question: how does someone convert to a religion that continues to inspire persecution of his family religion. Maybe next movie ...

First of the Many

HE rated only a nine-line brief (*Reuters*, *SMH*, Feb 27). But his death reminds us all of how much the free world owed to the Poles it abandoned for so long to Soviet hegemony until they rose in the trade union movement Solidarity and with the help of one of their native sons, Pope John Paul II, demonstrated that spiritual battalions can be more powerful than armoured battalions.

He was Stanislaw Ryniak, 88, a member of the Polish resistance who in 1940 became the first registered prisoner at the most infamous of World War II concentration camps, Auschwitz. (RIP).

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BECAUSE half a dozen grasshoppers under a fern make the field ring with their importunate chink, whilst thousands of great cattle, reposed beneath the shadow of the British oak, chew the cud and are silent, pray do not imagine that those who make the noise are only inhabitants of the field; that of course, they are many in number: or that, after all, they are other than the little, shrivelled, meagre, hopping, though loud and troublesome insects of the hour.

- Edmund Burke, 1729-1797, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.



THE DAY ST ANTHONY LET ME DOWN

(or maybe a fantasy)

By KEN SCULLY



WHEN I read, the other day, that a woman who had survived two divorces and other catastrophies had never lost her faith in St Anthony of Padua, I decided that I'd tell of the time when I nearly gave him away, of the hour when he let me down.

Not that I did. It was only a temptation, an unwanted pip in trust's clock, a slight hesitation since the year when Sister Marie (a Josephite postulant) told us St Anthony was piously held to be the one to trust to find lost things.

I can still see Sister Marie in my mind's eye: black dress, white collar, old-fashioned lace-trimmed box hat like the bonnet my grandmother wore, when young, in her photograph.

Sister prepared us for our First Communion all those 75 years ago at our West Tamworth church-school. We had the then customary breakfast in the convent. (The parish church there, built by Father Dave Carroll and later blessed by his uncle, Bishop O'Connor of Armidale, was then under construction and must be now nearing its diamond jubilee).

Sister Marie made her instructions interesting to seven-year-olds. She strayed a bit from strict preparation and, among other scraps of information that have endured the years, hinted that St Anthony was the patron and power to turn to when you needed to find things. And a hint to a child is taken as fact.

We used to sing hymns in class, mostly to Our Lady and I chorused 'save us from Herod and from woe'. What Herod had to do with us had me wondering – although 'woe' was pretty clear in those tough times – and years later I was surprised to find

that I should have been singing 'save us from peril and from woe'.

The year 1928 was plonk in the era of the Great Depression – and food in our house, not to mention pocket money, was under strict control. Mum saw to that.

We lived on Goonoo Goonoo Road, right next door to Mr and Mrs Parsons. These 'small shop' owners loom large in my memory for two reasons. First – and most important – was that they let

mum have 'tick' even if in those hard days credit-giving wasn't popular with shopkeepers.

Dad was away fencing a section of Goonoo Goonoo station, on a contract that he afterwards said let everybody make a pound or two except him. Anyway the Parsons' shop was a godsend to mum and us kids. She always held them in high regard for the rest of her short life as 'good and kind people'.

The second reason I remember particularly Mr Parsons was that he had been a Cobb & Co driver whose coach (so he told us) had been held up by Ben Bridges the hushranger – who was caught but never hanged. That coach in all its glory stood in his backyard and he – great privilege – let us sit in it.

In that yard he also grew the most sparkling, fresh, pungent and succulent spring onions, which he let us pick. Beyond these we snacked on, my brother Bill and I used to take some of these onions out to Dad and his crew.

For we left school at 12 noon on Fridays, harnessed the draught horse into the tip dray, loaded the flour and barbed wire at Tabeau's (I hope that is the spelling) and went to Dewhurst the butcher for the corn meat. We left for Goonoo Goonoo on Friday, stayed overnight and returned home on Saturday afternoon, for Sunday Mass was not to be missed.

Mum was very strict on that. She treasured Mass as her father had never spoken to her since she became a Catholic and married on her 21st birthday.

Now Dewhurst (for whom my uncle managed his farm where the butcher fattened his stock before slaughter) is to play a part in this story.

Sister Marie may not have intended it but somehow an impression must have drummed itself into us pretty



CAN I trust my conscience? The Christian answer is Yes – and No. I must follow my conscience, and if I follow it sincerely – testingly – I can be confident that it will lead me to a growing knowledge of the truth. But the Christian concept of conscience is at the same time impregnated with the idea that conscience is a fallible guide. It may go wrong. It may take the wrong road, and take me with it. Therefore I need constantly to test the principles operating in my conscience, lest false principles – pride or prejudice, for instance – begin to dominate it and to lead me astray.

– Cormac Burke, *Conscience and Freedom*,
Sinag-Tala, Manila, 1992.

well that the story of St Anthony and his capacity to help you find lost articles must have stuck.

Not on this particular day had I really lost anything (I wouldn't have anything to lose anyway). But the sight of Mr Dewhurst's saveloys – gleaming in the window, glowing with goodness, fat and long, red with relishing appeal, herbed and tasty – was in my mind.

On the way down past the public school (where we got literally stoned every day to the chant of 'Catholics, Catholics jump like frogs, don't eat meat on Fridays) I longed with almost a lust for one of those saveloys. What to do? The only problem was that I hadn't a penny – what child had then? – for the price of such a treat. So I prayed hard as we went. I stormed St Anthony as we survived the stones. (This was something my brother and I couldn't understand because, before we returned to our birth town from Chermiside in Brisbane, then a village with a two-teacher public school, we'd never met the Protestant-Catholic divide; we'd been at the school when its Catholics were taken by Catholic Mr 'Splinter' Woods while the Anglican minister took the rest of the pupils for Scripture. A whole morning was taken up walking to and from Kedron for Sunday Mass).

I digress. On the way to Tabeau's, past the Dewhurst shop, where those great saveloys sat in the window, I was still filled with the burning desire for the eating of one while I ceaselessly mouthed a prayer to St Anthony.

The problem of praying to the saint to let me find a penny was stretching his helpfulness as I had not lost one. Still I reckoned it was worth a go to see if he could make up that minor deficiency. Such was the faith and aspirations of small boys then, with trust in what they thought the nuns taught them.

With my head down looking at the footpath and still praying to St Anthony as we neared Tabeau's – the store with its great glass bowls of yellow honey 'yellow as yellow wine' was on the corner across from Kilbride's dairy. Our aunt, who married our uncle who was a member of parliament away in Sydney, was a Kilbride daughter and we were

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allowed to turn the separator to get the cream and later churn that cream to make the butter.

Then it happened. My brother, who wasn't even looking at the footpath shouted, 'There's a penny' – and sure enough it was lying, glistening in the pebbles on the path.

'It's mine,' I said. 'I've been praying to St Anthony to find one.' But Bill

Wisdom from the Past

INTENSIVE education should begin at the age of six.

A primary school teacher should not have more than twenty-five pupils.

– Babylonian Talmud, Tractate, *Baba Bathra*.

was practical; he would have none of that. 'Finders keepers,' he retorted and kept the penny.

He won, of course, for he was older and bigger than I. Yet I felt that St Anthony had done me wrong; he had let me down – for I was the one who prayed to him.

Just to prove you don't give up the faith (as some do and write about it mainly to convince themselves that they have . . . why?) when the going's hard, I've kept my trust in the Church and St Anthony as so many of my generation have. I'm still thankful for the lessons Sister Marie gave us in my first town where two parks are named for relatives.

And to be truthful there's been many a time when St Anthony hasn't let me down.

Indeed he passed his favour, after my prayers, only last Christmas when my wife and I went to Mass. Home and relaxing, Norma said she couldn't find her glasses. As she had them in her pocket at the open-air Mass they could have fallen out, been anywhere in the expanse of grass.

St Anthony was called into action – and this time there would be no fretting that he'd helped another.

Let the scoffers scoff, the doubters laugh, call it baloney, a young nun's tale, pure superstition – to wind the story up, after a long and frantic search the spectacles were eventually found, under the car seat where, no doubt, they had slipped on the way home.

Wasn't it logical to look there, to find them there? Of ye of simple faith give thanks to St Anthony for reminding us to seek. To him the praise be given.

That reward seemed to make up for the day I thought St Anthony let me down – and I'm very grateful to him.

By the way, my brother Bill bought a saveloy from Dewhurst the butcher – and gave me half. He was a good and kind brother who, I hope, has now met St Anthony where life is immortal.

Even if selfish, I didn't deserve it, St Anthony looked after me after all.

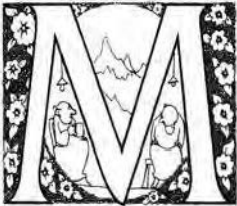


KEN SCULLY is a distinguished Catholic journalist, now retired, who contributes regularly to *Annals*. In 1991 the Holy Father made him a Knight of St Sylvester.

The Winchelsea girl who rode a horse into opera history

MARJORIE LAWRENCE

By LANCE HOBAN



MARJORIE Lawrence, a dramatic soprano of world acclaim, was born at Winchelsea,

Victoria, in 1909. She was the fifth child of William and his wife Elizabeth, who died when Marjorie was two years old. She was educated at the local high school, and from the age of 10 was involved in the school's choral activities as a regular soloist. Her vocal talents were also refined by the local Anglican Vicar who, aware of her potential, loaned her gramophone recordings of Dame Nellie Melba and Dame Clara Butt to improve her repertoire.

When she was 18, local residents provided her with funds to proceed to Melbourne to receive tuition from a noted singing teacher, Ivor Boustead, but lack of funds subsequently forced her to return home.

In 1928 her fortunes changed when she won the Sun Aria Competition, and she was advised by the adjudicator, the celebrated baritone John Brownlee, to go to Paris for tuition under Mme Cecile Gilly, a vocal authority of international standing. With funds now available, Lawrence proceeded to Paris where, for the following three years, she studied under Mme Gilly, who extended the range of her voice and advanced her vocal technique. Auditioning for the Paris Opera, she wisely chose excerpts from Wagnerian Operas, realising that there would be few other aspirants capable of surmounting those demanding vocal intervals.

Readily accepted, she made her Paris operatic debut in Wagner's *Lohengrin*, the range of this opera presenting no difficulties or prob-

lems for her dramatic soprano voice. Paris audiences took her to their hearts, and her performance was acclaimed and rapturously received.

For the following four seasons, with the leading French tenor

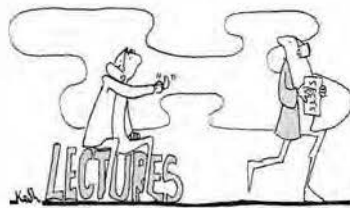
Georges Thill as her co-star, Lawrence became the toast of the Paris Opera. Her versatility was quite remarkable. She appeared in *Tosca*, *Carmen* and *Rachael*, in addition to the French operas *La Jeune* and *Thais* all sung in French. In the role of *Salome*, Miss Lawrence performed with all seven veils discarded, subsequently relearning the role in German for her performance with the Berlin State Opera, having previously performed the opera in French, the language in which Oscar Wilde wrote the play.

From the time of her initial debut as Elisabeth in *Tannhauser* at Monte Carlo in January 1932, Miss Lawrence was recognised as one of the finest Wagnerian interpreters of the times.

Marjorie Lawrence made her initial appearance at the Metropolitan Opera House in December 1935 as Brunnhilde in Wagner's *Die Walkure*, where her performance was received with wild enthusiasm and acclaim.

Her triumph in New York was the beginning of six seasons with this celebrated home of fine opera. There was also little doubt that the most startling event of that season was her dashing exit on horseback in the final scene of *Götterdämmerung*. For many past seasons, prima-donnas had led docile horses across the stage by bridle or in charge of a stable groom; but on the evening of January 12, 1936, Miss Lawrence mounted her horse and rode boldly in the direction of the funeral pyre, becoming the only diva in history to carry out Wagner's specific stage direction to actually mount a charger and ride into the Immolation scene.

At the time, Lawrence was painfully aware that if the audacious



Anybody interested?

JEFFERSON did indeed extend to all 'theological sects an invitation to establish schools near the University and to attend its lectures.' But what ethical lectures meant, one may deduce from the course of reading which he drew up in 1814 for his grandson, George Wythe Randolph. 'Under ethics come Locke, Stewart, Condorcet, Cicero, Seneca, Hutcheson, etc. under religion sectarian, the Bible, Sterne's Sermons and Priestley's Corruptions of Christianity; under natural law, Vattel.' In fact, people holding religious opinions were invited to come and be told why they were not true - and Jefferson was pained that the invitation was not accepted. All the Professors but one, he pleaded, were Episcopalians. But Episcopalian covers a multitude of opinions and one of them admitted that 'there was no one, except Mr. Lomax, the Professor of Law, who was a communicant.' Poor Mr. Lomax! The theological sects were, I fancy, wiser than he.

- Christopher Hollis, *The American Heresy*.

innovation had concluded sadly, it would no doubt have spelt the end of her Metropolitan career. Earlier soprano stars of that period had all promptly declined this manoeuvre – Kirsten Flagstad, Lotte Lehmann and Elizabeth Rethberg all reacting in horror at any such proposal with their involvement.

Australia Revisited

In 1939, Marjorie Lawrence returned to Australia, keeping an earlier promise to perform initially at Winchelsea, her birthplace, and where, upon arrival, she was greeted and honoured by a cavalcade of 100 horsemen. Despite her fame as a singer of renown, Marjorie Lawrence always espoused the common touch, disdaining the tempestuous *hauteur* of other celebrated prima-donnas and meeting admirers and old associates alike with charm and unaffected warmth.

A sudden attack of poliomyelitis in 1941 left her almost completely paralysed in both legs. Despite this debilitating illness she continued stage appearances, performing from a chair. She also entertained troops during world War II, both in Europe and Australia.

Upon her retirement in 1952, Miss Lawrence turned to the promotion of master classes for aspiring young singers at Tulane, South Illinois and Arkansas Universities, and the establishment of opera workshops in other cultural centres.

Marjorie Lawrence died of heart failure in 1979. In recognition of her contribution to Opera in Paris in 1946 she received the Legion Croix de Honneur. In 1976 she was honoured with a C.B.E. by Her Majesty the Queen.

At the time of her death, the noted commentator, Neville Cardus, wrote of the 'unselfish poetry of her memorable performances and the superb range of her powerful voice, rich in artistry and vocal splendour.' She was 70.

*Marjorie Lawrence – a vocal gift from Heaven,
designed to caress, refine and captivate
the silver chords of melody.*





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— Editor, *Annals*

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Mega-Mission, Easter 2004

DURING Holy Week tens of thousands of volunteers and priests will descend on communities in the Americas and Europe as part of a 'mega-mission' that is marking its 10th anniversary.

Some 65,000 members of Missionary Youth and Missionary Family will take the Gospel message to 10,000 communities in Mexico, the United States, El Salvador, Cuba, Brazil, Ireland and Italy, among other countries.

Both institutions arose within the Regnum Christi movement, founded by Father Marcial Maciel. Over the years, the mega-missions have involved some 200,000 young people and 20,000 families from more than 30 countries.

These missions bring together teams of young people, families and priests for an intensive, cross-disciplinary and organizational effort in re-evangelization.

The missionaries make house-to-house calls in remote locations, catechizing children, visiting

the sick and elderly, and encouraging people to receive the sacraments. Their endeavors are under the direction of local parish priests.

The missionaries also invite people to attend activities of Catholic formation, organized in the afternoons by the missionaries themselves, and Holy Week services. The Legionaries of Christ, the priests who accompany the missionaries, work throughout the day administering baptisms, regularizing marriages, hearing confessions and celebrating Masses.

At the end of the week, the missionaries return to their base-city to attend Easter Sunday Mass.

Medical missions have emerged along with the evangelizing missions. Doctors from various countries offer free medical care to people, many of whom have never seen a physician. In Mexico alone, three mobile hospitals, telemedicine units and outpatient surgeries are being installed. [Source: ZENIT]



Plight of Catholics under James I

AN old Catholic barrister named Floyd was imprisoned in the Fleet because he had been so foolish as to rejoice at the news of the Battle of Prague. Floyd denied the charge, but the House of Commons, anxious to make an example of this man, seriously debated in the House what his punishment should be.

Phelips proposed that he should ride with his face to a horse's tail, from Westminster to the Tower, with a paper inscription on his hat, 'A popish wretch that hath maliciously scandalised his Majesty's children', and that he should be imprisoned in the dungeon known as Little Ease, 'with as much pain as he shall be able to endure without loss of his life'.

Sir George More suggested that he should be whipped and then left for the Lords to deal with.

Seymour moved that he should have a lash for every bead. Darcy went further, he wanted him twice pilloried and twice whipped. Each member seemed more savage than the last.

One wanted his tongue cut out, another wished him to be branded, a third suggested that his ears and nose should be cut off, and yet another that he should be made to swallow his beads. Walter would have all his lands and goods confiscated and then have him whipped till he shed tears.

The final sentence after a long discussion by the members of one of the most important Parliaments in the world, was that this poor old man who, even if he had committed any offence, had certainly not been guilty of any particularly heinous crime, was to be pilloried three times, to ride on a bare-backed horse, facing the tail, with a paper on his hat explaining his crime, and to pay a fine of 1,000 pounds.

This deplorable exhibition shows the state of feeling as regards punishments held, not by a mob of unthinking men, but by a grave deliberative assembly in the reign of James I.

— L. A. Parry, *The History of Torture in England*

THE GOOD SERVANT PLUNKETT

By PETER M. ROACH

IF John Hubert Plunkett had lived as an Englishman in Tudor times and there devoted his professional legal skills to the service of his Sovereign, then too it might have been said of him, as it was of St. Thomas More, Lord Chancellor of England, that he was 'the King's good servant – but God's first'. But he was not an Englishman; he was not in Tudor times; and he was not in England. He was to render service to his Sovereign during the nineteenth century in a remote and fledgling settlement: New South Wales. It was a colony he was to serve with distinction for thirty-seven years, ending only with his death in 1869 at the age of 67 years.

As a young Irish lawyer Plunkett came to New South Wales in 1832 to take office as Solicitor-General in the service of Governor Richard Bourke. He proved to be a trusted and effective adviser to the Governor and in 1837 was called on to assume the additional responsibilities of being Attorney-General without being relieved of his other responsibilities or rewarded for the demands of his extra duties. He proved to be a much appreciated friend and companion of the Governor.

The colony which was to be his home for life was still very much a convict establishment when he arrived and it was controlled by the Executive Government headed by the Governor and appointed officials. It was also very much an English, Protestant establishment. Although Irish convicts, for the most part Catholic, had been a significant minority group in the colony from its early days, the first officially approved priests had only entered the colony in 1820. When Plunkett arrived the Catholic community, along with their fellows, was still working to throw off its convict shackles.

In this society Plunkett was some-

thing of an enigma. Although Irish and Catholic, he had been educated in Trinity College Dublin and he admired the 'rule of law' as provided for by the English legal system – which marked him apart from most of the Irish community. At the same time being Irish and Catholic he stood apart from the English and Protestant community which dominated the government in which he served. It was a mark of

his integrity and personal qualities that he came to enjoy the respect of nearly all. Although Trinity College has been described as 'a hotbed of bigoted hate' towards Catholics, Plunkett was grateful to his alma mater. His education in a mixed-denominational institution brought him a breadth of understanding of his fellows lacking in many persons of narrower background. I suspect that if anything the testing of his beliefs in a non-Catholic and even anti-Catholic atmosphere strengthened his commitment to his Faith.

During his years of service to the community he influenced the future of Australia in many aspects, particularly through his efforts in promoting religious freedom; education; progression towards democratic institutions and elected government; and in the administration of justice.

What Plunkett claimed to be his greatest achievement was the laying of a foundation for religious liberty throughout Australia. From the time Governor Arthur Phillip read his commissions in Port Jackson in 1788, Australia was marked out as a protestant Anglican community. By one of the proclamations he made, Phillip declared 'That there is not any Transubstantiation of the Lord's Supper, or in the elements of bread and wine, at or after the consecration thereof by any Person whatsoever'. Given that start it is hardly surprising that the arrival of Frs. Conolly and Therry did not take place for over thirty years. Yet by 1836 Plunkett, in full collaboration with the Governor, had brought into law the Church Act of 1836: legislation which provided financial support for all churches and thereby thwarted any proposals for an Established Church: a privilege which the Church of England had known in England. Financial support for religion provided for by the Church Act would disappear in time – but the principles of



Intellectual

I think it is correct to say that the term 'intellectual' became part of a vernacular conversation only during the Dreyfus Affair. Characteristic of the modernists at the beginning of the twentieth century was a ready assumption that their ecclesiastical superiors could not be intelligent. Raw material in support of this theory gave them excuse for generalizing. In recent times, their frustration has sought release in a notion of a 'second magisterium' paralleling the teaching office of the bishops. It is no more legitimate than the heretical notion of a second personality for Christ.

– George William Rutler, Introduction, *Escape from Scepticism*, by Christopher Derrick, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 1977

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— Editor, *Annals*

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freedom of worship which it established would not.

Education was another cause of intense interest to Plunkett. Having been educated in a Protestant institution, Trinity College Dublin, he lacked the ghetto mentality which led many Catholics to believe that Catholic children could only come to Catholic maturity if they were educated in Catholic schools. So it was that he was a keen advocate for the adoption in New South Wales of a single educational system for all children. But in that he had to compromise with the result that his recommendation for the adoption of two school boards was adopted of which one would be denominational. In 1848 he became first Chairman of the other, the National Education Board. Nor was his interest in education limited to the education of children. He was instrumental in bringing about the foundation of the University of Sydney and was a Fellow of St. John's College. In later years he was honoured by the University of Melbourne.

Another field of endeavour was in the life of the Church, but it was not always an easy relationship with some clergy. That he was a friend to clergy and religious was well attested by the experience of Archdeacon McEnroe. When in his earlier days McEnroe was suffering from alcoholism, it was his friend Plunkett to whom he turned for support. McEnroe went on to become one of the outstanding early priests of Australia.

From his early days in Sydney he was one of those planning for the erection of a church on the site of St. Mary's Cathedral. In 1838 he had been one of the benefactors whose efforts led, somewhat against the wishes of Archbishop Polding, to the establishment of St. Vincent's Hospital in Sydney. He and his wife befriended Sr. de Lacy and when controversy came they found themselves supportive of her and of the decision of the hospital to appoint a non-Catholic as principal surgeon, notwithstanding to criticisms from the Archbishop. To make matters worse a Catholic chaplain visiting the hospital insisted on the removal of non-Catholic translations of the Scriptures provided for the use of non-Catholic patients. True to his principles of religious liberty for all Plunkett stood to his ground.



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Pope leaves instructions before travelling

ACCORDING to an Italian newspaper report, when Pope John Paul II left Rome on February 24 for his trip to Egypt, he left behind instructions to be followed in case he is involved in an accident.

The daily *Il Corriere della Sera* reports that the Pontiff left his instructions with the dean of the College of Cardinals. The instructions involved Episcopal nominations and other unresolved business, the paper claims.

The short report in *Il Corriere della Sera* is unsigned and unconfirmed. However, the paper reports that it is 'habitual' for the Pope to leave such instructions before embarking on any foreign travel.

tation of convicts. Yet perhaps his most striking achievement in the law was his success in being the first person to prosecute white men to conviction for the massacre of aborigines: a prosecution which according to the standards of the day led to the execution of those convicted.

Truly, John Hubert Plunkett was a good and faithful servant: to his God, his Church and his Sovereign.



PETER ROACH is a Barrister, with special interest in justice issues. He has a special rapport with the MSC priests and brothers because he was a member of the first class to matriculate from Chevalier College Bowral in 1950. He resides in Hobart.

Non-Catholics as well as Catholics had funded the hospital as a Catholic hospital open to all and non-Catholics should not be denied the freedom available to Catholics. Polding resented Plunkett's stance and complained that his conduct was 'one of the most convincing instances of the folly of lay persons, however good, mixing in Church matters'. Such was the status of Plunkett in the community that Polding even appealed to another bishop for help in 'making things right between Plunkett and the Church'. But Plunkett's loyalty to the Church should never have been questioned. What Polding sought was that Plunkett should unquestioningly agree with Polding. In later years those concerns passed and in 1869 Plunkett served as lay secretary to the First Provincial Council of the Church.

But Plunkett was not only a loyal

and faith-filled churchman, he was also a good servant to his Sovereign. As a counsellor he served successive governors so well that I suspect that the reason he was not appointed to the Supreme Court was that he was too much needed in that advisory role. He was responsible for developing many of the proposals which advanced the colony towards democratic self-government. For many years he served as President of the Legislative Council, both as an appointed and an elected Chamber. He fought for religious freedom for Jews as well as Christians. Alone in the Legislative Council he supported the reformer Maconochie in his endeavours to improve the conditions for convicts on Norfolk Island. He struggled successfully to overcome the worst features of the assignment system which led to the unjust exploi

ANNALS MOVIES

By JAMES MURRAY

Elephant

Writer/director Gus Van Sant's long takes conjure an atmosphere of meandering peace. They put us in one of those American high schools, location for so many high-spirited or goofy movies. But the takes also conjure the inevitability of a disaster waiting to happen, the American dream turning to slow nightmare as two friends Alex (Alex Frost) and Eric (Eric Deulen) plan and execute a massacre of their schoolmates with mail-order ordnance.

Van Sant lays no direct blame. He does imply a lack of parental responsibility in the relationship of John McFarland (John Robinson) and his father (Timothy Bottoms); the son has to take care of the father, not vice versa.

And Van Sant, with rare judgement and equivalent restraint, avoids the obvious temptation to make his fictionalised account more bloody and prolonged than the reality of the shooting at Columbine High School and similar random atrocities.

MA 15+ NFFV ★★★★★

Facing Window (La Finestra Di Fronte)

Writer/director Ferzan Ozpetek was born in Istanbul. Clearly his studies at Rome's La Sapienza University and work in the local film industry have inspired a love of things Italian, including the poetic realism of post-World War II Italian cinema.

His movie is a time-shifting meditation on love, marital and non-marital, in which Giovanna (Giovanna Mezzogiorno) and her husband Filippo (Filippo Nigro) encounter an amnesiac old man Simone (Massimo Girotti) whose broken memories change the present difficulties of their lives, and aid them to a more positive future.

Mezzogiorno and Nigro shine in their roles. But their light is a reflection of Massimo Girotti's magisterial performance, legacy and memorial of a mighty actor.

M 15+ NFFV ★★★★★

The Barbarian Invasions

Writer/director Denys Arcand develops the theme announced in his movie *The Decline of the American Empire* (1987). He does so from the extraordinary perspective of a French Canadian,

someone living in the remnant of a French Empire, set in the remnant of a British Empire, as the neighbouring American empire is hit by the hijacked Boeings of 9/11.

This is a big, truly adult film with a splendid ensemble cast led by Remy Girard as a Falstaffian socialist (also called Remy) whose wife and son, friends and mistresses gather to his cancer deathbed in Montreal.

In the end, however, Arcand betrays the scope of his imagination by substituting a bitter, albeit witty, sentimentality for history. True he recalls the monks who preserved manuscripts during earlier barbarian ages. But he leaves the current task of preserving learning, symbolised by Remy's books, to a recovering drug addict Nathalie (Marie-Josée Croze, brilliantly convincing but not that convincing).

The Church? There's a stalwart nun Sister Constance (Johanne Marie Tremblay). But Remy is ambiguous when she urges him to embrace the mystery of divine forgiveness. Arcand himself appears to dismiss the Church's enduring power to inspire with a silly scene involving an elegantly forlorn cleric trying to flog off unused chalices and ciboria as well as old statuary. And Remy's viaticum is not the Eucharist of his childhood but a deliberately administered heroin overdose.

It may be that Denys Arcand has missed a crucial point: the early barbarians were drawn to Rome not only by the prospect of plunder but because they revered its rule of law. The 9/11 barbarians believe they have a more enlightened law; they aim to impose it on a society they perceive as decadent, one symptom of that decadence being the sweet cynicism by which the lapsed seek self-exculpation like the characters so ably played by Arcand's cast.

MA 15+ NFFV ★★★★★

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind

Charlie Kaufman scripted movie with quirks on its convolutions as directed by Michel Gondry (also director of Kaufman's *Adaptation*). Joel (Jim

Carrey) and Clementine (Kate Winslet) fall in love. But when and where? For we are in Kaufman country where a loony quack Dr Howard Mierzwiak (Tom Wilkinson) has perfected a technology for erasing memory and Joel and Clementine are among his not quite serene cures.

Carrey is a comedian who has difficulty bringing off his ambition to play Hamlet. Winslet is too classical a beauty to play a kook in ugg boots. Kirsten Dunst and Mark Ruffalo are funnier as the doctor's assistants.

The title is taken from the work of Alexander Pope. Perhaps Kaufman should remember Pope's line from *The Dunciad*: 'Gentle Dullness ever loves a joke.'

M 15+ NFFV ★★★★★

Girl with a Pearl Earring

Director Peter Webber's debut feature, based on Tracy Chevalier's novel, is a beautifully framed window on the past, specifically the Delft (and Catholic) household of painter Johannes Vermeer (Colin Firth) in 1665.

As the servant girl Griet, supposed subject of a Vermeer portrait, Scarlett Johansson gives a performance that is both amazing and amazed, as if startled to find herself on the wider, more crowded canvas of the household with the monosyllabic Vermeer, his jealous wife Catarina (Essie Davis), their mischievous daughter Comelia (Joanna Scanlan) and lusty patron Van Ruijven (Tom Wilkinson).

Frith smoulders. Davis grieves. Johansson glows. But the presence that lingers is that of Vermeer's mother (Judy Parfitt) who epitomises enduring patriarchy.

PG SFFV ★★★★★

Agent Cody Banks 2: Destination London

Teenage CI Agent Cody (Frankie Muniz) seeks a mind-control device stolen from the United States Government. No, it's not codenamed Spinmeister. But Cody, with a little help from British agent Emily (Hannah Spearitt) and CIA bumbler Derek (Anthony Anderson) does retrieve it while on a travelogue through London.

Writer Don Rhymer and director Kevin Allen give Anderson a funny

prop: he totes a comfort blanket rather than a gun. The pursuit taxicab used by Cody is so well equipped that James Bond would swap his Aston Martin for it. Which raises the trivial question: are the plots of James Bond movies becoming sillier or those of Cody Banks more adult?

PG SFFV ★★☆☆☆

Scooby Doo 2

Beyond criticism. Or at least beyond adult criticism in view of the enthusiastic verdict of the jury of child critics who saw it with this reviewer. Scooby, the special effects pooch, out-acts the human cast, led by Freddy Prinze Junior, but not the hilarious monsters who include one made of candy floss. Next up: the Popcorn Pterodactyl?

PG SFFV ★★☆☆☆

Hidalgo

Rip-snorter. And that's only the mustang of the title who joins the line of great equine stars, including the Lone Ranger's Silver, Roy Rogers's Trigger and Smoky Dawson's Flash. Appropriately the movie's star Viggo Mortensen also has a horsey look. He plays Frank Hopkins, a renowned cowboy, competing in a race across the Arabian desert at the invitation of a noble sheik (Omar Sharif) whose wealth is measured in thoroughbred horses.

Director Joe Johnston gives Hopkins a notable background. It includes the massacre of Indians at Wounded Knee and the Buffalo Bill Cody Show that did so much to establish the myth of the Wild (yet Noble) West, not least by featuring Indian survivors.

Beneath the ripping yarn, there's a sub-text of current relevance. Hopkins represents the generous courage of the United States. This the noble sheik comes to recognise despite the plotting of more fiendish Arabs, aided by an aristocratic Englishwoman and a squad of corrupt British soldiers.

Okay. The sub-text ain't fair. But political correctness demanded that the Arab baddies must be balanced by non-Arab baddies. And everyone knows the British are sophisticated enough to be cast as baddies without complaint.

The race finishes with Hopkins riding Hidalgo along a shore line. He carries an improvised banner. On it is

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painted an Indian device: a cross within a circle, surely a tribute to the ending of *El Cid* in which Charlton Heston as the great Spanish paladin rode in death to encourage his followers in the 11th century campaign against the invading Moors, a campaign against which Osama bin Laden still has a fundamentalist response.

M 15+ SFFV ★★★★★

The Big Bounce

Since it is based on a novel by Elmore Leonard, this thriller set in Hawaii does not totally lack edge or wit. But with Owen Wilson as its anti-hero it does lack weight. Enough of the original remains, however, to keep the movie rollicking along and gives it a final Leonardian twist.

M 15+ NFFV ★★☆☆☆

The Hebrew Hammer

Oddball, or perhaps matso ball, comedy with Adam Goldberg in the title role as a yiddish variant on the Gentile, but not genteel, detective Mike Hammer. Goldberg and Judy Greer as his sidekick make an amiable pair. But writer/director Jonathan Kesselman crams in so much Santa Claus folklore plus antique jokes and sight gags that you'd swear he got them wholesale from some vaudeville bargain basement.

M 15+ NFFV ★★☆☆☆

Shattered Glass

Is Stephen Glass (Hayden Christensen) a writer on Washington's *New Republic* which in the late 1990s could boast it was the in-house maga-

zine of Air Force One, that is read by the US president and his entourage.

Unfortunately, Glass was not quite as transparent as his bi-focals. He concocted stories so skilfully that he circumvented the magazine's fact-checking process, run on a mutual-trust basis.

Director Billy Ray draws from Christensen a fine performance as a nerd with charm. Opposite him is his belated nemesis and editor Chuck (Peter Sarsgaard) who has to deal with the fall-out. Australian cinematographer Mandy Walker adds an apt quasi-documentary cold-eyed look to the movie.

Not that Glass's actions were unique. Even the most rigorous of systems can be deceived. Both those pillars of secular rectitude, *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*, have endured concoction episodes. Modern journalistic practices, such as pseudonyms or nicknames to protect sources or spare blushes, are aids to such deceivers.

But Glass was not really shattered. Fired, he went on to publish a novel called *The Fabulist*, about an ambitious journalist who made up stories to further his career.

M 15+ SFFV ★★☆☆☆

The Dreamers

Impudent. That is, both shameless and cheeky. Director Bernardo Bertolucci brings together in Paris three students: Matthew (Michael Pitt), an American, and the French sister and brother Isabelle (Eva Green) and Theo (Louis Garrel).

The trio are film buffs. They meet through attendance at the Cinematheque Nationale before beginning to play more risky sex games. As they do, the city heats up to the spoils-brat events of 1968, sometimes referred to as the student revolution, but more a groupie demo for Mao Tse Tung, Communist emperor, sexual predator and one of history's most ruthless mass-murderers.

Here Bertolucci is closer to his notorious *Last Tango in Paris* (1972) than to *The Last Emperor* (1987) which won nine Oscars. More than 30 years have passed since the events. Now all Bertolucci, born 1940, can manage by way of perspective is to end his movie, not with the *Internationale* (which GB Shaw likened to 'the funeral march of

a fried eel'), but by appropriating Edith Piaf's, *Je ne regrette rien*. Enough said.

MA 15+ NFFV ★☆☆☆☆

The Mona Lisa Smile

A feminist version of *Dead Poets Society* (1989)? This is to forget the latter was a male version of *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (1969), based on Muriel Spark's novel in which the incomparable Maggie (Smith, not Thatcher) won an Oscar.

Julia Roberts plays a kind of Yankee Brodie, an art teacher at a posh college who inspires a bevy of rich young things played by a talented cast led by Julia Stiles. Roberts as always is beguiling. If only she hadn't introduced a painting which looks like a sawn-off version of Jackson Pollack's *Blue Poles* to demonstrate the boldness of art rather than the ascendancy of the modern art racket.

M 15+ NFFV ★☆☆☆☆

Etre Et Avoir (To Be & To Have)

There are still, according to film maker Nicholas Philibert, thousands of single-teacher schools in France. This is the story of one of them, Georges Lopez, and his pupils. It is a classic of the day-to-day and the wonder of primary education.

Indeed if education ministers here, there and everywhere, want to enhance their credentials and their systems, they will ensure that it is seen by every teacher. Parents should take their children.

C SFFV ★★★★★

The Missing

Director Ron Howard's tribute to John Ford's classic, *The Searchers*, scores nine out of ten on the master's scale. Howard's theme is also about the search for a girl. But this one is being trafficked across the Mexican border by a band of whites and Indians.

Tommy Lee Jones does a nice, grizzled turn as the girl's grandfather, returned from living and learning with Indians, but without losing his old Harvard accent.

He joins his daughter, played by Kate Blanchett, in the search. Blanchett extends her talent to play a frontierswoman. From time to time, her face does blur when she is riding. Blanchett

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M 15 + NFFV ★★★★★

The Perfect Score

Has the merit of being a new variant of the heist genre, the object of the heist being neither gold nor diamonds but the priceless answers to America's SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test), crucial in determining university scholarships.

Built into the heist is a satire on the SAT which has engendered a \$250 million business in preparatory aids. Six students of varying talent, played by Erika Christensen, Chris Evans, Bryan Greenberg, Scarlett Johansson, Darius Miles and Leonardo Nam, set out to beat the system.

Nam, as a computer *idiot savant*, is

outrageously funny. And director Brian Robbins ensures the plot twists eventually bring about the right result. Progress, it should be added, has already overtaken the quick satire. A revised SAT version is to be introduced in March 2005 and will include grammar questions as well as a written essay.

M 15+ SFFV ★★★★★

Thirteen

Said to be based on reality, stars Rachel Wood and Nikki Reed as the kind of teenagers who inspire parental nightmares. Holly Hunter is the divorced mother trying to cope. As directed by Catherine Hardwick, and co-written by Nikki Wood, the movie is unsparing. It does not, however, quite solve the problem of focusing on a problem without being voyeuristic.

Hunter gives the role her all. But did she have a hand double? Her oily broken fingernails in close-up to symbolise her hard-scrabble life seem odd for a hairdresser.

MA 15 + NFFV ★★★★★

Monster

Aileen Wuornos had two documentaries made about her dismal life and killing times while she waited 12 years on Florida's death row before her execution in 2002. Writer-director Patty Jenkins claims she was initially reluctant to make a feature film about her. Not only did she go ahead, she cast the glam star Charlize Theron against type.

The result: a deserved Oscar for Theron (and her make-up). Christina Ricci, with less cosmetics, gives a more subtle performance as Selby Wall, the *femme fatale* in Wuornos's life. And finally Patty Jenkins does evoke the terror and the pity in the life of a woman who made made the worst of her few chances.

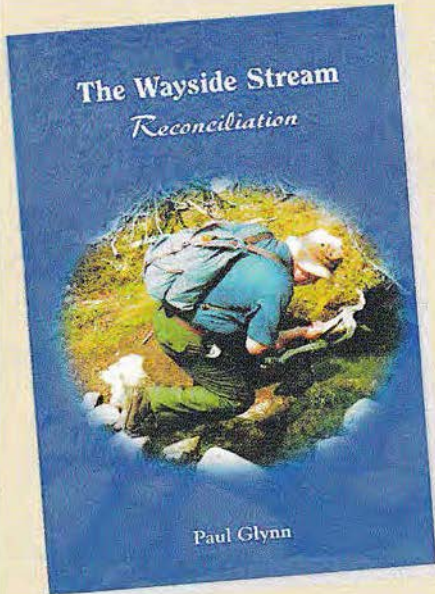
MA 15+ NFFV ★★★★★

Apology: In the review of the marvellous surf movie, *Step into Liquid*, there was a reference to Christopher Keith and Daniel Malloy who bring together children from both sides of the Northern Ireland divide in the surf of Donegal. They were described as Australian. Not so. They are Americans from California.

New Book release by Marist Father Paul Glynn

“The Wayside Stream - Reconciliation”

All proceeds to help the suffering Church in Sudan



Forgiveness is the theme that runs through the latest book, *The Wayside Stream* by the prolific author Fr Paul Glynn.

The book is a collection of stories about people who experienced reconciliation. Some of them had been deeply hurt and thought they could never forgive, or come to peaceful terms with the wounds, with the injustice of it all.

They tell how they approached the problem, were helped to overcome it, and speak of the great peace and new freedom they experienced.

Fr Paul - the author of the best seller "A Song for Nagasaki" - tells about the terrorist who said sorry, the padre who hated, the Kamikaze, previously unpublished facts on the atom bomb that wiped out Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the horror jailing of the Archbishop of Saigon, the New Guinea execution of a Japanese Christian involving a soldier-ambulanceman from Bonalbo and much more.

Even the cynics who read the book will recognise themselves in it and find enlightenment in the knowledge that there is a way to lift the weight off shoulders — forgiveness.



We especially thank those who buy Fr Paul's book which costs \$10.00 and who give an **additional charity donation*** to help the persecuted Church in Sudan. A complimentary pair of the Vatican Rosary beads blessed by Pope John Paul II will be given to all those who can give an additional donation to help this essential work. Please tick the box below if you would like to receive the Papal Rosary beads.



Order Form: “The Wayside Stream – Reconciliation” by Fr Paul Glynn

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The publishers Marist Fathers have kindly allowed Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) to distribute Fr Glynn's book with all proceeds going to help the missionary projects of ACN in Sudan.

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HUMANS AND OTHER ANIMALS

Reviewed by DR TRACEY ROWLAND



THIS book is about the use of animals for the illustration of theological ideas in the works of the early church scholars, as well as the rôle of animals in scripture and the lives of the early saints. The author of the work is described as an episcopal priest who taught New Testament, Church History and the Humanities at the Divinity School of Chicago.

The first chapter looks at biblical animals. Here pigs, dogs and snakes tend to dominate the cast. There are references to the moral status of animals in the New Testament, including St Paul's condemnation of animal worship, and the existence of some early Christian vegetarians. The author

Early Christians and Animals
By Robert M. Grant. Routledge, London,
2003. 214 Pages. \$55

claims that the earliest document in which one finds the ox and ass named as witnesses of the nativity is the apocryphal gospel of Pseudo-Matthew.

Chapters two and three focus on unusual and mythical animals. These include friendly lions who live with hermits and help them go about their daily tasks, and considerate lions who prefer to crush Christians to death in the colosseum with the strength of their bodies, rather than eat them. There is a section on the whale which carried Jonah in its belly for three days, on Tobit's medicinal fish, on centaurs,

dragons, unicorns and the phoenix – a bird which has the capacity to self immolate and then be re-born. Readers of Harry Potter will be familiar with this mythical animal.

Chapter four surveys the references to animals in the works of the Alexandrian scholars such as Clement and Origen. It also looks at the *Physiologus*, an anthology from the second century that uses the character traits of animals in order to draw moral theological lessons from their behaviour.

The fifth chapter examines the appearance of animals in the works of the Antiochenes and the Cappadocians including St Basil the Great. Whereas the Alexandrians were very interested in the allegorical use of animals, the Antiochenes and Cappadocians were more interested in the eating and mating habits of animals and their general physiology.

The sixth chapter covers references to animals in the works of the Latin fathers, including Sts. Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, Isidore of Seville and Gregory the Great. My favourite reference here was to St. Isidore's description of a particular kind of cleric who 'lacks a head' and resembles a bippocentaur, that is, a kind of cleric who is part human, part horse!

The final chapter is devoted to St. Isidore's book *On Animals*, particularly his accounts of how animals acquired their names. The following explanations are a good example of the kind of information one finds in this work.

The sheep (*ovis*) is an animal with soft wool, weak in body, placid in spirit, so called from the Latin word for offering (*oblatio*) because originally sheep, not bulls, were the preferred sacrificial animal.

The lamb (*agnus*) acquired its name because more than other animals it knows (*agnoscat*) its mother, so that



Proportions of the Human Figure

From the chin to the starting of the hair is a tenth part of the figure.
 From the chin to the top of the head is an eighth part.
 And from the chin to the nostrils is a third part of the face.
 And the same from the nostrils to the eyebrows, and from the eyebrows to the starting of the hair.
 If you set your legs so far apart as to take a fourteenth part from your height, and you open and raise your arms until you touch the line of the crown of the head with your middle fingers, you must know that the centre of the circle formed by the extremities of the outstretched limbs will be the navel, and the space between the legs will form an equilateral triangle.
 'The span of a man's outstretched arms is equal to his height.'

From Leonardo's *Notebooks*, quoted by R. Goldwater and M. Treves *Artists on Art*
 London: Keegan Paul, 1947, p.51

even if it is lost in a large flock it immediately recognises the voice of its parent from its bleat.

The hare (*lepus*) is named from the Latin word *levipes* (light foot) because it runs fast.

Rabbits (*caniculi*) are named because of their likeness to *caniculi* (small dogs).

The pig (*sus*) acquires its name from the Latin verb (*subigat*) to dig up, because it digs up pasture.

The camel acquires its name from the Creek (*chamai*) for low and short, and (*camur*) for hump.

The lion acquires its name from the Creek (*leo*) for king.

The giraffe (*camelopardus*) is so called because it is covered with spots like a pard, has a neck like a horse, feet like cattle, and a head like a camel.

Whales (*bellenae*) acquire their name from the Greek verb (*ballein*) to emit, as they emit water from their spouts.

Throughout the chapters the author also includes references from classical Greek and Roman sources and some of the apocryphal documents of the early church. In one of these a lion presents himself to St Paul and asks for baptism. The work is very well referenced and there are 22 drawings from medieval and ancient bestiaries, woodcuts and mosaics. It would make a good present for an animal lover or anyone interested in early church history, or the allegorical meaning of animals in early Christian art.

However the disappointing aspect of the work is that themes are generally very underdeveloped. The reader is given a tasty morsel but left scrambling through the index to see if there might be a more extensive treatment of the topic in some other part of the book. The attitude of the writer is very detached. He simply presents the facts. One has no idea of what he thinks about vegetarian Christians or animals who present themselves to saintly hermits to have a thorn removed from a paw or some other infliction cured. Nonetheless, his translations from the *Physiologus*, Basil's *Homilies* and Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies* are valuable in themselves and the animal lover reader can tie these literary and theological *bon bons* together with his or her own reflections.



DR TRACEY ROWLAND is Dean of the John Paul II Institute for Marriage and Family, Melbourne



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— Editor, *Annals*

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