

# ANIMALS

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# ANNALS AUSTRALASIA

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*Front Cover:* An image of the Risen Christ taken from a Roman Missal ornately decorated during the Pontificate of Pope Julius II, in 1513. The latin text reads: 'This is the Day the Lord has Made'. Our Lord is represented as rising above the empty tomb. Notice the angelic face under His feet, and the three Roman soldiers falling to the ground in shock at Christ's resurrection. Pope Julius granted the dispensation that enabled Henry VIII to marry his brother's ill-fated widow, Catherine of Aragon. He founded the first bishoprics in South America, and was a patron of the arts - inspiring Michaelangelo, Raphael and Bramante. He prepared plans for the new St Peter's, and laid the foundation stone on April 18, 1506.

*Back Cover:* Sculpture of St Joseph, Our Lady and the child Jesus, manufactured from volcanic ash deposited by the 1991 eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines. Chevalier Press has a limited number of these 18 cm by 14 cm sculptures of the Holy Family. Price: \$20, including postage anywhere in Australia, and GST.

Cover Photo: From a print: Vatican Library, Chigi.C.VIII 230 f. 32v.

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Have been at pains to send you this small essay so that, in addition to your faith, you may be put in complete possession of knowledge as well!

- St Barnabas, Epistle 1,1ff, written around 70AD.

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

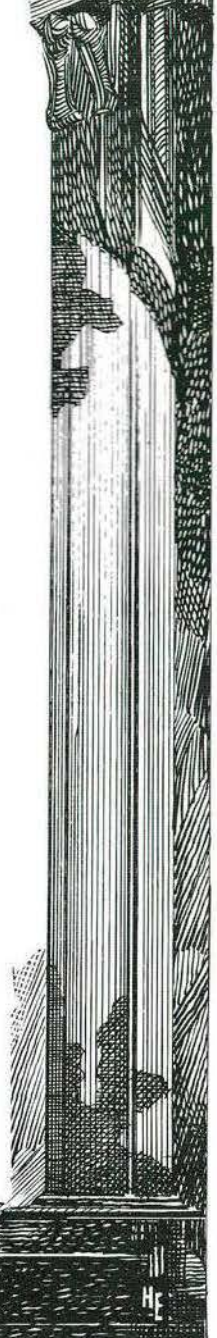
## Easter – the Feast of the Lord Jesus

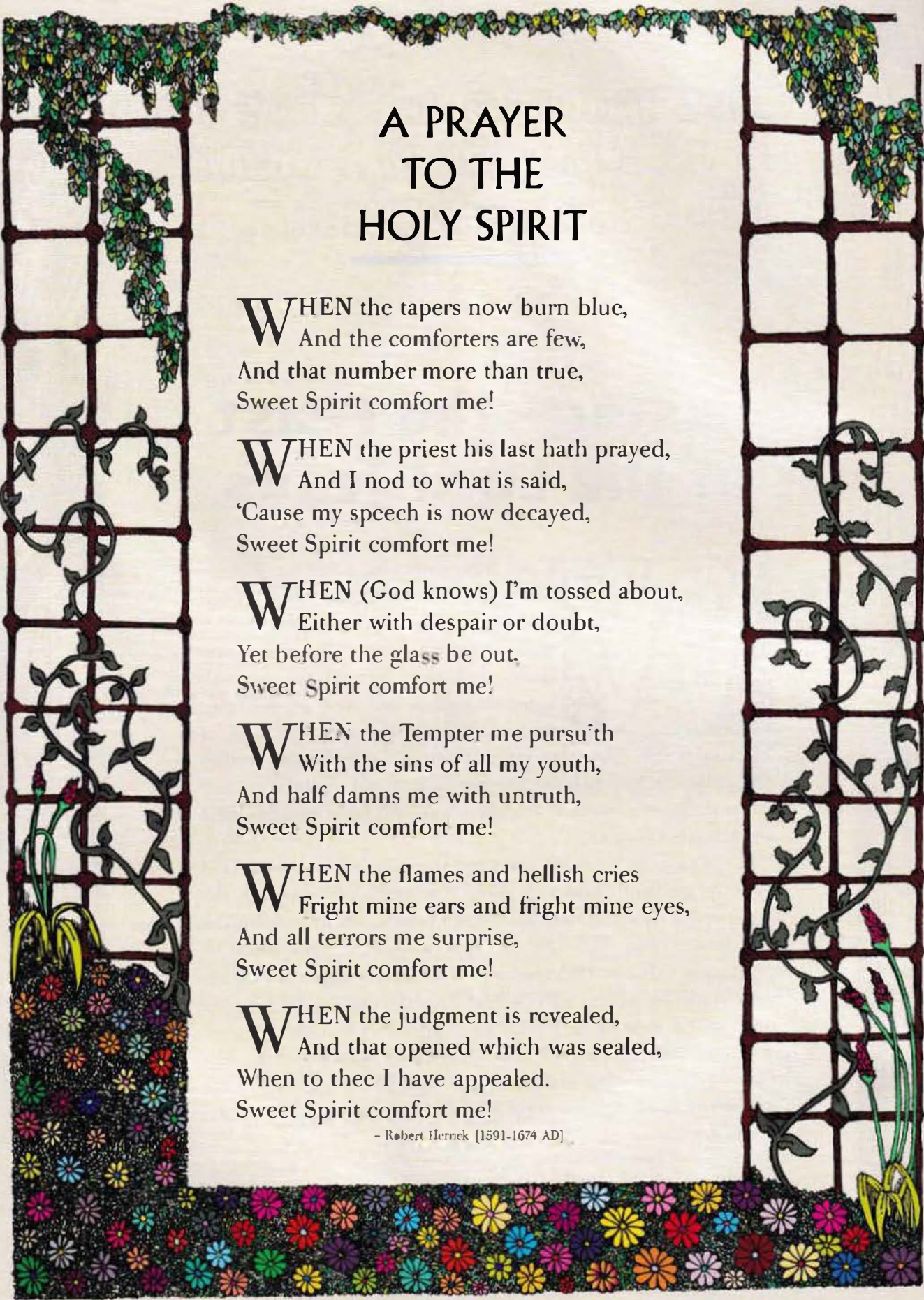


We are now observing a Solemn Feast – which path are we to take? As we draw near to this day of celebration – whom shall we have as leader? No one, dearly beloved, except him whom you will name with me – our Lord Jesus Christ, who said: ‘I am the way’. He it is, as Saint John says, who takes away the sin of the world. He purifies our souls – as Jeremiah the prophet says: ‘Stand on the ways and see and discern which is the right way and on it you will find cleansing for your souls.’

In the past the blood of goats and the ashes of a calf sprinkled over the unclean could only purify the body; now through the grace of the Word of God each and everyone is cleansed to the full. If we follow close behind him, we shall be permitted to contemplate that eternal feast even here in anticipation, as if we were standing in the courts of the heavenly Jerusalem – just as the blessed apostles, who followed the Saviour as their leader, and were then and are still now teachers of a like grace, for they said: ‘Lo, we have left everything and have followed you.’ For we follow the Lord, and we keep the Lord’s feast not only in word but in action.

– St Athanasius of Alexandria, 296-373 A.D. *Easter Letter* 14,1-2





## A PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

**W**HEN the tapers now burn blue,  
And the comforters are few,  
And that number more than true,  
Sweet Spirit comfort me!

**W**HEN the priest his last hath prayed,  
And I nod to what is said,  
'Cause my speech is now decayed,  
Sweet Spirit comfort me!

**W**HEN (God knows) I'm tossed about,  
Either with despair or doubt,  
Yet before the glass be out,  
Sweet Spirit comfort me!

**W**HEN the Tempter me pursu' th  
With the sins of all my youth,  
And half damns me with untruth,  
Sweet Spirit comfort me!

**W**HEN the flames and hellish cries  
Fright mine ears and fright mine eyes,  
And all terrors me surprise,  
Sweet Spirit comfort me!

**W**HEN the judgment is revealed,  
And that opened which was sealed,  
When to thee I have appealed.  
Sweet Spirit comfort me!

- Robert Hernek [1591-1674 AD]

*Man the Creator: the Ultimate Fantasy*

THE BENEFITS OF DIS-ILLUSION

By PAUL STENHOUSE



**I** WAS ordained a Catholic priest in July 1963. My journey to the priesthood had taken ten happy years and all these were filled with prayer, study and more study: philosophy, logic, psychology, cosmology, history of philosophy, ethics, theodicy, dogmatic theology, scripture, moral theology, church history, canon law and so on.

In those far off days most of the subjects were taught in Latin. When we read Tertullian, Augustine, Jerome or Thomas Aquinas [or for that matter, the *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum* of the young English king Henry VIII – ‘The Defence of the Seven Sacraments,’ against Martin Luther] we met them face to face: in conversational mode as it were – without intermediaries whose agenda might or might not be sympathetic to what the authors had to say. We would approach them timidly at first until we grasped their style, and then with confidence, satisfying our ever hungry minds with the riches overflowing from these literary treasure-houses from our Christian past.

I embarked on my priestly career with enthusiasm and gratitude; and with a love for the Church that has never waned. I thought that I was reasonably well-prepared for whatever might eventuate during the life-span God was going to grant me.

I was prepared, which cannot be said of many who leave school or university or seminary these days; but I little knew how well. For I was in for a shock. I imagined that having spent four years studying theology, the queen of sciences, in all its complexity, that this would be my principal resource in coping with the questions life was going to throw my way.

Looking back on what has been a long priestly life, I confess that few if any of the causes of problems I have

met have been theological. Their symptoms may have appeared to be religious or theological, but we poor humans, with or without faith, are as beset as our ancestors were by myriad illusions, philosophical dilemmas. Psychological traumas and emotional upheavals, to say nothing of political opportunism and economic rationalism thoroughly confuse us, and make play-things of our minds and bodies and ultimately our souls.

The year before I was ordained, Daniel Boorstin, a lawyer and University Professor who would eventually become Librarian of Congress, published a book entitled *The Image, or What Happened to the American Dream?* It could just as well have been entitled *Whatever happened to the Australian or the European Dream?*

In this far-sighted book<sup>1</sup> Boorstin described a world of our own making, in which our wealth, literacy, technology and progress – to which we might add freedom and democracy – have been used to create a thicket of unreality that

stands between most people and life. And if the ‘technology’ in 1962 was a tool in the hands of illusionists, what is to be said of the incomparably more sophisticated and more dangerous technology of the 21st century?

Before we get too self-congratulatory Boorstin reminds us that each of us has provided the market, and the demand for the unreality that floods and befogs our experience, and deceives us.

Boorstin, who died in 2004 aged 90, pointed out that we demand and believe the illusions that dominate our lives because we have been conned into having unreal, extravagant not to say impossible expectations of life – human relations, work, play, family, love and yes, God. Our expectations, he said, are extravagant, i.e. they ‘go beyond “the limits of reason or moderation”. They are excessive.’

When we pick up our newspaper at breakfast, we expect – we even demand – that it bring us momentous events since the night before. We turn on the car radio as we drive to work and expect ‘news’ to have occurred

**Ideals and Fashions**

**T**HAT is the real lesson that the enlightened traveller should learn; the lesson about himself. That is the test that should really be put to those who say that the Christianity of Jerusalem is degraded. After a thousand years of Turkish tyranny, the religion of a London fashionable preacher would not be degraded. It would be destroyed. It would not be there at all, to be jeered at by every prosperous tourist out of a *train de luxe*. It is worthwhile to pause upon the point; for nothing has been so wholly missed in our modern religious ideals as the ideal of tenacity. Fashion is called progress. Every new fashion is called a new faith. Every faith is a faith which offers everything except faithfulness. It was never so necessary to insist that most of the really vital and valuable ideas in the world, including Christianity, would never have survived at all if they had not survived their own death, even in the sense of dying daily. The ideal was out of date almost from the first day; that is why it is eternal; for whatever is dated is doomed. As for our own society, if it proceeds at its present rate of progress and improvement, no trace or memory of it will be left at all.

– G. K. Chesterton, ‘the Philosophy of Sight-seeing’, in *The New Jerusalem*, Thomas Nelson, London [undated].

since the morning newspaper went to press. Returning in the evening, we expect our house not only to shelter us, to keep us warm in winter and cool in summer, but to relax us, to dignify us, to encompass us with soft music and interesting hobbies, to be a playground, a theater, and a bar. We expect our two-week vacation to be romantic, exotic, cheap, and effortless. We expect a faraway atmosphere if we go to a nearby place; and we expect everything to be relaxing, sanitary, and Americanized if we go to a faraway place. We expect new heroes every season, a literary masterpiece every month, a dramatic spectacular every week, a rare sensation every night. We expect everybody to feel free to disagree, yet we expect everybody to be loyal, not to rock the boat or take the Fifth Amendment. We expect everybody to believe deeply in his religion, yet not to think less of others for not believing. We expect our nation to be strong and great and vast and varied and prepared for every challenge; yet we expect our 'national purpose' to be clear and simple, something that gives direction to the lives of nearly two hundred million people and yet can be bought in a paperback at the corner drugstore for a dollar.

We expect anything and everything. We expect the contra-dictory and the impossible. We expect compact cars which are spacious; luxurious cars which are economical. We expect to be rich and charitable, powerful and merciful, active and reflective, kind and competitive. We expect to be inspired by mediocre appeals for 'excellence,' to be made literate by illiterate appeals for literacy. We expect to eat and stay thin, to be constantly on the move and ever more neighborly, to go to a 'church of our choice' and yet feel its guiding power over us, to revere God and to be God.

Never have people been more the masters of their environment. Yet never has a people felt more deceived and disappointed. For never has a people expected so much more than the world could offer?

Too few seem to have read or understood Boorstin, and fewer still acted on what they read. I can't recommend his conclusions unequivocally, but his insights into the harm wreaked by our passion for illusion and self-deception, are valuable. Most will relate positively to his observation that 'some are born great,

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some achieve greatness, and some hire public relations officers.<sup>23</sup> ●r should that be 'media moguls'?

While our technology may be 21st century, the philosophy which is the engine that drives and directs and uses the technology is 17th century Cartesianism. It has drips attached that are pumping 18th, 19th and 20th century scepticism, materialism, pragmatism, utilitarianism and atheism into the body politic, the body social [especially the educational infrastructure] and the body religious as they lie exposed and vulnerable for their daily dissection on the TV screen. And those who oversee the dissection in media studios and newsrooms

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 - Editor, *Annals Australasia*

are today's equivalent of vaudeville performers from the Theatre of the Absurd.

As a young priest I had been impressed by the evident truth of St Anselm of Canterbury's expression 'Fides quaerens intellectum' - *Faith seeking understanding* - which has been taken as a definition of theology.

May I suggest that genuine 'philosophy' - literally 'love of wisdom,' or 'love of life in all its complexity' could be termed '*Spes quaerens intellectum*' - *Hope seeking understanding*.

For hopelessness has become a characteristic of life in our time. Hope is a virtue whose absence fills our ever busy hearts and minds and our lives - with all their unreal expectations - with grief at their emptiness and seeming powerlessness. Yet the presence and support of the virtue of hope are guaranteed by our baptism as Catholics. How often do we call upon that formidable resource?

The hopelessness permeating much of modern society [not just in the so-called secular First World, but also in Third World countries, and especially in Islamic societies], is fall-out from the prevailing tendency to prefer illusion to reality, and to remain passive under the spell of the illusionists.

In First World countries it flows from the denial of any place for faith and hope and Christian love in private and public life; from repudiating belief in the supernatural, from embracing hedonism, denying sin and retreating into political correctness like some kind of security blanket.

In Third World countries it is often a by-product of the illusion that First World countries have it right. Some in Third World countries, notably Islamic ones, react violently when confronted by the price demanded for membership of the Western Secular Club, wrongly thought by them to be Christian.

Members of that exclusive First World body who are deluded into believing that physical life is all that there is, under pressure, are found willing to pay any price, even if it entails the loss of their much vaunted freedoms, in order to stay alive. The unhappy saga of the Danish and other caricatures and the way the media and politicians have handled violent protests

by Muslims, bodes not at all well for a future filled with more of the same.

No wonder secular democracies can't understand what's happening. They are as oblivious to the reality of Islam understood literally by dedicated souls, as were the Hashemite sharifs of Mecca and Medina in 1924 and 1925 when the officially non-Muslim and ostracised Hanbali/Wahhabi barbarians emerged from the desert to overwhelm and dispossess them.

Instead of driving them back into the desert where they belonged, the mainly British and French 'Power Brokers' of the time welcomed them ['Might is Right' being a major illusion in their repertoire] clad now in white burnouses, red kuffiyehs held in place by elegant black iqals, and jewelled toy daggers, and handed them untold billions of dollars worth of oil, along with the power to play mind-games with it, and then sat back to watch the fun.

Like an earlier fictitious Power Broker, Dr Frankenstein, they imagined that the monsters they had created or at least adopted would obey their every whim.

Their disillusionment has still not run its course. Among other things they forgot, or thought of no importance, was the influence the Hanbali/Wahhabis were to exert on the many millions of Muslim pilgrims who have visited Mecca since 1924-25 and drunk deeply at the source of Islamic fanaticism and illusion.

A Dutch East Indies representative in Mecca writing after spending time there in 1884-1885 warned:

For the moment one still finds among these Hajjis scattered over the [Indonesian] countryside, inflammable material not to be underestimated, which can flame up should any rash man produce a spark. This inflammability is due to the fact that the interests of the Hajjis are usually contrary to those of the Government, whilst many have brought from Mekka pan-Islamic tendencies which can easily develop into fanaticism.<sup>4</sup>

This, at a time [1885] when the Wahhabis were still rampaging naked through the desert astride horse and camel killing Muslims they disagreed with, denied the right to call themselves Muslims by fatwas from Sunni and Shi'ite imams alike in India, and



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– Editor, *Annals*

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throughout the Ottoman Empire.

Like all such games, the fun ends abruptly when masks drop and principal characters reveal themselves as the monsters or cowards that they really are. As a result many in the First World, governed by the latter, feel hemmed in by gloom and despair.

Hopelessness is a *cul-de-sac*. Political correctness is life-threatening. Hope on the other hand is an open road leading to salvation. But if our hope is to be effective it needs to be realistic and courageous, and we need to be willing to shed our illusions. And confront the virtual, illusory and real horrors that threaten Christian and civilised life at its core, and watch the ghoulish mirages dissolve before our eyes.

What most ails the Christian World [if I may adapt Boorstin's comments about America] is not our Faith, but what we have substituted for it. And what is nightmarish and generating hopelessness in the young and the disadvantaged is not reality, but the illusions we have put in its place.

We are dangerously close to discovering that having excluded God from the human equation, and having created our brave new world in our own likeness, or at least in the likeness of our fantasies, we are at the mercy of these illusions. They have assumed a life of their own, and the result isn't pretty.

Driving out the ghosts that inhabit the world of our fantasies, as Boorstin says, 'will not give us the power to conquer the real enemies of the real world, or to remake the real world. It

## Compromise and Genuine Faith

... the enlightened Englishman, from a cathedral town or a suburban chapel, walks these wild eastern places with a certain sense of assurance and stability. Even after centuries of Turkish supremacy, such a man feels he would not have descended to such a credulity. He would not be fighting for the Holy Fire or wrangling with beggars in the Holy Sepulchre. He would not be hanging fantastic lamps on a pillar peculiar to the Armenians, or peering into the gilded cage that contains the brown Madonna of the Copts. He would not be the dupe of such degenerate fables; God forbid. He would not be grovelling at such grotesque shrines; no indeed. He would be many hundred yards away, decorously bowing towards a more distant city, where, above the only formal and official open place in Jerusalem, the mighty mosaics of the Mosque of Omar proclaim across the valleys the victory and the glory of Mahomet.

— G. K. Chesterton, 'the Philosophy of Sight-seeing', in *The New Jerusalem*, Thomas Nelson, London [undated].

Wittgenstein, [1889-1951] one of the most influential philosophers of his day was a baptised Catholic of remote Jewish origins. In a memoir, Norman Malcolm, one of his students, recalled his saying: 'A person caught in philosophical confusion is like a man in a room who wants to get out, but doesn't know how. He tries the window, but it is too high. He tries the chimney but it is too narrow. And if only he would *turn around* he would see that the door has been open all the time.'<sup>6</sup>

The door is philosophy [hope] but it leads to theology [faith]. The illusion from which we must work to be freed, is thinking that the door leads to another door that is closed. And that we have no hope. This is what is happening to good people today.

They have forgotten the warning Isaiah<sup>7</sup> the Hebrew prophet gave to contemporary illusionists: *mutatis mutandis* it applies to us in the 21st century AD as much as to the Israelites in the 7th century BC:

Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and rely on horses; who trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen because they are very strong, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or consult the Lord!



may help us to discover that we cannot make the world in our own image.<sup>5</sup>

That would be a start. Another step would be to recognize that the problems we face are largely philosophical, not theological. Ludwig

1. New York: Atheneum, 1962
2. *op cit*, Introduction, pp 3-6
3. *The Hamlyn Pocket Dictionary of Quotations*, by Jonathan Hunt, 1979
4. C. Snouck Hurgronje, (1857-1936) *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century*, Brill, 1931 p.290. The author was a Dutch scholar of Oriental cultures and languages and Advisor on Native Affairs to the colonial government of the Netherlands East Indies.
5. *op cit*, p 6
6. Ludwig Wittgenstein A Memoir OUP, 1984, p.44.
7. Isaiah xxxi. 1.



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## WHAT CONSTITUTES A UNIVERSITY?

By PROFESSOR PIERRE RYCKMANS

**I**N order to function, a university requires basically four things – two of these are absolutely essential and necessary; the other two are important, but not always indispensable.

First – a community of scholars. Sir Zelman Cowan told this anecdote: some years ago in England, a bright and smart politician gave a speech to the Dons at Oxford; he addressed them as ‘employees of the university’. One don immediately stood up and corrected him: ‘We are not employees of the university, *we are the university*. And one could not have put it better: the only employees of the university are the professional managers and administrators – and they do not direct or control the scholars – they are at the service of the scholars.

The second essential thing – a good library for the humanities, and well-equipped laboratories for the sciences. This is self-evident and requires no further comment.

Third – the students. The students constitute, of course, an important part of the university. It is good and fruitful to educate students; but students should not be recruited at any cost, by all means, or without discrimination. (Note: in this country, foreign students who pay fees bring every year nearly two billion dollars to our universities. In the university where I last taught, in a written communication addressed to all staff, the Vice-chancellor once instructed us to consider our students not as students, but as customers. On that day, I knew that it was time for me to go.)

I dream of an ideal university that would deliver no degrees, nor give access to any specific occupation, nor award any professional qualifications. The students would be motivated by one thing only: a strong personal desire for knowledge; the acquisition of knowledge would be their only reward. In fact, this is no mere utopian dream of mine. Examples of this model are actually operating; the most illustrious one was established in the 16th century and is still the highest seat of learning in Paris: the Collège de France.

The fourth requirement for operating a university: money. It would be foolish to deny the importance of money – and particularly inappropriate here to-night: *Campion College* urgently needs our support! And we remember that one has seen great universities performing their task in conditions of extreme deprivation.

[Excerpt from an address delivered on Friday April 23, 2006, on the eve of the opening of *Campion College*, Toongabbie, NSW, Australia's first Catholic Liberal Arts College.]

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*The ongoing elimination of Christianity from modern life*

# CHRISTOPHOBIA

By TONY EVANS



THE popular belief that the ostrich buries its head in the sand in an effort to ignore the approach of an enemy is false apparently, like so many time-honoured legends that are supposed to teach us what to do and what not to do in certain circumstances.

Naturalists tell us that what the ostrich actually does is to crouch with its long neck stretched flat upon the sand so that it will be less conspicuous to an enemy in the vicinity. Thus the saying 'to bury ones head in the sand' is based on a false premise.

Nevertheless the action of the ostrich – whether you choose the fictional or the factual version of his behaviour – has an uncomfortable resonance today

**Philosophical Bonfires**  
**‘WHEN** we run over libraries ... what havoc must we make? If we take in hand any volume; of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance; let us ask, *Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning number or quantity?* No. *Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence?* No. Commit it then to the flames: for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion.’  
 – David Hume, *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Oxford 1951 ed. p.165.

for Catholics, and indeed for Christians of any other denomination. At a time when liberal opinion pays lip service to toleration and free speech, perversely it

becomes more damaging to admit to the belief and practice of Christianity. If you go to Mass best to keep your head down, like the ostrich – particularly if you aspire to public office or a job in the media or the arts. As Chesterton suggested in his Autobiography, 'religious liberty might be supposed to mean that everybody is free to discuss religion. In practice it means that hardly anybody is allowed to mention it.'

The story is often quoted of how Hilaire Belloc held aloft his Rosary on the hustings, and challenged any in his constituency to withhold their votes because of his religion. That he was returned to Parliament with a comfortable majority in 1904 suggests that one hundred years ago the public was inclined to trust the integrity of a parliamentarian with religious convictions. There appeared no conflict in those days between privately held belief and public morality. No similar trust exists today. Practising Christians who do not keep their heads down are dismissed as 'the Christian Right' at best, or like Tony Abbott recently, insulted and deprived of his powers because it was feared Catholicism might adversely influence his judgement.

It was the international Jewish legal scholar J.H.H. Weiler who coined the word 'Christophobia' to describe the contemporary elimination of Christianity from modern life – in politics, business, the arts and culture. Why, he asks, is high culture so enamoured of the present and so contemptuous of both religious and secular tradition? Why, he asks, is Christianity mocked with crude caricatures on television in a way that similar defamations of Judaism and Islam would never be?

Weiler was writing primarily of the situation in Europe where the proposed Constitution (later to be rejected) deliberately ignored the West's religious foundations; and where an Italian practising Catholic was deprived of

## The Silence of the Experts

SCHOLARS and nonspecialists alike should be grateful to Dr. Bostom for making these documents available for further research. I write should be grateful – but will everyone be pleased to have this comprehensive anthology that gainsays the myth of Islamic tolerance in an ineluctable way? And why did it take a nonspecialist such as Dr. Bostom, a scholar from another discipline – clinical epidemiology and randomized clinical trials in medicine – to discover, and have translated and published for the first time in English, this primary and secondary source material? Where were the Orientalists, Islamologists, and professors of Near Eastern studies?

There are a number of scholars writing and living in the West whose works are widely read, respected, and influential but who, for various reasons, wish to play down the history of the *dhimmis*\*, including the Armenian genocide, and the periodic but persistent massacres not only of Jews and Christians, but the oft-neglected Hindus, Zoroastrians, and Buddhists, living under Islam. Some are concerned for the security of Israel and are grateful to Turkey for their treaties with Israel; hence these scholars do their best to deny or at least minimize the Armenian massacres. Since any discussion of *dhimmis* often ends in a discussion of the Armenian genocide, the negationist scholars are hostile to any works highlighting the plight of Jews and Christians under Islam in general. Others are simply Turkophiles, having made Turkey their field of speciality, and have friends and colleagues and even girlfriends or wives from Turkey. Others again are grateful to Turkey for its support during the cold war.

– Ibn Warraq, Forward to *The Legacy of Jihad*, ed. Andrew G. Bostom, Prometheus Books, New York, 2005, p.21.

\*Dhimmis: 'tolerated' non-citizens – the name given to non-Muslims in Islamic countries

his place as a European Commissioner because of his religion.

Christophobia, however, is not confined to Europe; like a pandemic it has spread worldwide and exists no less in Australia than in Germany, in Italy, or in Indonesia. The recent attack on Tony Abbott is only one manifestation of the disease.

'Keep religion out of politics' has become a popular mantra and even those who would not normally quote the Bible conveniently remember the text about rendering to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's. The problem of defining what is Caesar's and what is God's, and whether they sometimes overlap, doesn't seem to trouble the sceptics. Pope Benedict, who quotes the text in his first encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est* is more specific. The encyclical was received with almost universal approval, even praised by normally sceptical commentators, some seeing it as an endorsement of the view that the Church should keep out of politics.

A careful reading of the document, however, shows that the Church should never be silent in the face of political controversy. '[The Church] must not remain on the sidelines ... she has to play her part through rational argument and she has to reawaken the spiritual energy without which justice, which always demands sacrifice, cannot prevail and prosper.'

George Weigel, the Catholic lay theologian and acclaimed biographer of John Paul II, in his latest book, *The Cube and the Cathedral*, sets forth fourteen indices of Christophobia in Europe. In confining ourselves to only four of the fourteen we can, nevertheless, measure how accurately they may apply to Australia: (1) how high culture is contemptuous of both religious and secular tradition; (2) how the bizarre approach to death - to abortion, euthanasia, and biological experimentation, is as though the deceased and the as yet unborn are deprived of any rights; (3) how the demographic suicide of nations in Europe is the greatest sustained reduction in the population since the Black Death of the 14th century, and (4) how many European authorities deny these demographics which are without parallel in human history and are the defining reality of the twenty-first century.

Weigel, in writing mainly about Europe, demonstrates that not only Europe but also those countries which have been

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built on a foundation of Christian Western culture are facing a future without hope 'because in the final analysis societies and cultures are only as good as their spiritual aspirations.'

'This is no time for burying our heads in the sand - or crouching on the earth to avoid recognition, like the ostrich. It is a time to be visible, to reclaim our Christian patrimony which is being squandered by the Christophobia disease. In the words of

John Paul II, (*Ecclesia in Europa*) we must '... recover ethical and spiritual values in creative fidelity to the humanist and Christian traditions of Europe.'



TONY EVANS was a producer with the ABC for many years and is now a freelance writer living in Western Australia. He has published three historical biographies, the latest being *C.Y. O'Connor, His Life and Legacy*, published by UWA Press. Evans founded the *G.K. Chesterton Society* in W.A. Recently it became the national *Australian Chesterton Society*.

*Bishop Abouna gives worst situation report to date*

## IRAQ: 'CHRISTIANS ARE DESPERATE'

By JOHN PONTIFEX

**B**AGHDAD'S Bishop Andreas Abouna has given his bleakest assessment yet of the situation in Iraq, speaking of the despair that is driving more and more Christians to leave the country.

Describing a worsening of the security situation since last December's parliamentary elections, the Chaldean bishop told how people were living in fear of their lives.

Speaking to Aid to the Church in Need, Bishop Abouna said: 'The Christians feel desperate and so many are leaving.

'In their hearts they do not want to leave their country,' he added, 'but because of the situation, they prefer to be outside Iraq.'

Throughout the interview, the bishop highlighted a security crisis. 'Security is now very bad,' he said. 'There are a lot of police in Iraq, especially around Baghdad - you can find them everywhere and they are increasing all the time.

The problem is that the quality of the policing is indifferent,' explained the bishop. 'Sometimes people feel afraid because - more so than before - they do not feel secure.'

The interview comes after Bishop Abouna's superior, Emmanuel III Delly, Patriarch of Baghdad for the Chaldeans, called a two-day fast for peace to take place next Monday and Tuesday (April 3 and 4).

Zenit news service quoted Patriarch Delly as saying: 'We have moved away from piety and virtue, from forgiveness... because of this, the blood of so many brothers has been shed and so many children have remained orphans.'

Emphasising that Christians have suffered no worse than others, Bishop Abouna said:

'We still hope that Iraq will rise again but it is very difficult when we have a government who cannot decide anything. Can you imagine what life is like without any real form of government?'

He echoed concerns of a full-scale descent into civil war but added that it was unlikely, saying such conflicts were unprecedented in Iraq's history.

The interview, staged in London, where Bishop Abouna was attending an international conference on religious freedom, comes amid reports showing the clergy stepping up efforts to discourage the faithful - especially the young - from leaving the country.

'Christians are getting fewer and fewer,' said Bishop Abouna, who went on to say that despite the exodus, churches were packed for services. 'When you look inside the churches, they are full of Christians. But when you go outside you feel that Christians are finished in Iraq.'

Latest estimates give the number of Christians in Iraq as about 750,000, down from more than one million before the Allied invasion.

Bishop Abouna, who has responsibility for church youth initiatives, described holding retreat weekends in Baghdad for college students, with Mass, spiritual discourse and workshops on leadership and vocational subjects.

He said: 'When the young people came together last time, the bombs were falling everywhere. The roads were blocked. And yet somehow 1,500 people came. It was amazing. I said to them: 'The fact that so many of you have come encourages us to lead you.' They were very, very happy.'

*Modern relevance of ancient Church wisdom*

**CARDINAL POINTS**

*Reviewed by* IAN MACDONALD



HE author provides succinct reading, product of deep and wide scholarship. In just over 100 pages, he provides insightful profiles of the philosophers who like combat engineers of the spirit defended the foundations of Christendom in the fourth century while they repaired and strengthened them.

By ellipsis rather than emphasis, he makes it clear that the century, so distant in calendar terms is similar to our own in its spiritual turbulence and the variety of its heresies. His historical context he delineates in three and a half pages, remarking: 'We refer to prominent teachers and writers of the early Church as Fathers of the Church. It was the Arian heresy and its denial of God the Son's divinity (and consequently that of the Holy Spirit) that these Fathers of the fourth century had to wrestle. It is difficult for us today to realise just how powerful and all pervasive Arianism was and how close it came (humanly speaking) to ultimate victory. Although officially laid to rest by the Council of Constantinople in 381, it stubbornly held on in certain areas, and for a period of time in the sixth century underwent something of a revival in the West through the barbarian migrations.'

This fight against Arianism he defines as a central theme giving common purpose to the lives and labours of the fathers. Another common linkage is monasticism whereby the faithful, singly or in groups, withdrew from society and lived according to an established daily rule.

Of the eight original Doctors of the Church seven lived in the fourth century: Ambrose, Augustine and Jerome in the West, and John Chrysostom, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus and Athanasius in the East. Only Gregory the Great lived in

*God's Trailblazers: Great Figures in the Early Church*

By Cardinal Edward Clancy  
St Pauls Publications. rrp \$15.95.

the fifth century. Others with whom the book deals include St Anthony of Egypt, St Ephrem of Nisibis (in what is now Turkey), St Hilary of Poitiers and St Martin of Tours.

In the overall period, the Church may have passed from the catacombs of persecution to the protection and support of the Emperor Constantine

and his successors. But the early fathers had to deal with a question that is again current, the respective powers of State and Church, and the optimal degree of separation between religion and republican. What is astounding in the lives of these men – pre-fast travel, pre-telephones, pre-computers – was the extent of their journeys, the scope of their influence and the amount of their writing.

Of its quality the author gives generous examples which show the work has a continuing validity and cogency in our time of New Age fancies, rock-'n'-roll and crystal gazing.

St Basil: 'Of the beliefs and practices whether generally accepted or publicly enjoined which are preserved in the Church, some we possess derived from written teaching; others we have received delivered to us "in a mystery" by the tradition of the Apostles, and both of these in relation to true religion have the same force. And this no one will contradict – no one at all events, who is even moderately versed in the institutions of the Church.'

St Ambrose: 'Rightly then the Church of the Lord amid all the seas of the world stands immovable, built, as it were, upon the apostolic rock. On that solid foundation it endures the force of the raging billows. The waves pour over it, but it is not shaken. Although this world's elements often dash against it only to be thrown back with a mighty roar, still it offers a secure harbour of safety to receive the distressed.'

St Jerome: '... I am not, I repeat, so ignorant as to suppose that any one the Lord's words is either in need of correction or is not divinely inspired; but the Latin manuscripts of the Scriptures are proved to be faulty by the variations that all of them exhibit, and my object has been to restore them to the form of the Greek original, from which my detractors do not deny they have been translated.'

**The Dogwood Tree**

THE legend of the Dogwood tree

Tells that it once shared symmetry

With other timbers straight and tall.

In time an axe on one would fall  
To make, a cross on Calvary's hill,

The Holy Scripture to fulfil;  
Unwilling wood shared Jesus' shame,

His hands and feet nailed to its frame,

The Son of God whose agony  
Would from damnation set man free,

Died, and was laid within the cave

To rise in three days from His grave,  
Triumphant, and the gibbet gone

No part of infamy hereon,  
Supported by a twisted trunk  
In penitence its new roots sunk,  
Blossoms like tears fall to the earth

To celebrate a tree's re-birth.

– Anastasia Cuddy

IAN McDONALD is the pen-name of a prominent Sydney journalist and author.



Church.  
with the early Fathers of the provide a fascinating contrast of its movers and shakers might well probably cover the period in a couple of hundred pages. And his assessment With his skill in summary, he could art form.

numbers crunching has always been an and Archbishop of Sydney, a city where 1983 and 2001 when he was Cardinal book: a memoir of the period between the author inspires a wish for another local figures crunching the numbers; When he writes of one of his history-  
canny who blazed a trail for posterity; edness to those giants of the fourth West today share an immense indebted-  
with our Eastern past. Both East and among us, and constitute a living link such communities that live and worship the Melkites, the Ukrainians and other experience he praises; the Maronites, Clearly drawing on his own pastoral Christian faith;

Eastern Church is now under the aegis of Islam. We of the rest of the Christian world are deeply indebted to the Christians who still live in those parts, and continue, often in very difficult circumstances, to keep alive the flame of Christian faith;

Much of what was the domain of the Eastern Church today must learn to breathe with both lungs;

well did Pope John Paul II declare that the Universal Church's tradition, and has made an invaluable contribution to Church, the Church of the East was. It the Pope in the West. And a vigorous though qualified by the location of predominantly a Church of the East, the Church in the fourth century was

In his conclusion he writes that missionary thrust has been binned; become something of a ghetto and its and when it has failed to do so, it has always followed the Cappadocians' lead God. Unfortunately the Church has not but absorbing what was good and of that was contrary to Christian belief were to be found, rejecting indeed all barrel but learnt from it where lessons reject pagan culture, lock, stock and Church's response. They did not simply Fathers as leaders in the framing of the The author credits the Cappadocian Greek culture;

although he continued to draw on

**Jesus, Word of God**  
 HIS Word, with the Father in the beginning and co-eternal with Him was at the appointed time revealed to the Apostles and by them proclaimed and humbly received by the peoples who believed. The Word then is in the Father, in the mouth of the Preacher, and in the heart of men.  
 -- Baldwin, Cistercian monk and Archbishop of Canterbury, died in St Jean-d'Acre [Akko] during the 3rd Crusade, 1190 AD.

St Augustine: Let us rejoice, my brothers, let the nations exult and be glad because no other visible sun but the invisible Creator of the sun has consecrated this day (Christmas) on which the Virgin, a true but inviolate Mother, gave birth to him who became visible for our sake and by whom she herself was created. A virgin conceived, yet remains a virgin, a virgin is heavy with child; a virgin brings forth her child, yet is always a virgin ...  
 All the early fathers did have challenging topics ranging between heresy and fundamentalism. Arianism to one side, these included Apollinarians who denied Christ's possession of a human soul. Pneumotomachians who denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit; Religiants who argued the human will's independence of divine grace; Macedonians who taught the inferiority of the Son to the Father of the Holy Spirit to the Son; Donatists who claimed the validity of the sacraments depended on the spiritual condition of the minister; Marcionites for whom the God of the Jews was not the God of Christians; Novatians whose belief was that Christians who had fallen away could not be reconciled with the Church; Spanish Priscillianists who like African Melitians were rigorous, reac-

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*Efficiency as a Virtue*

# THE TYRANNY OF SELF-INTEREST

By GARRICK SMALL



**E**FFICIENCY has become an overriding value in Australian society. For workers, efficiency is denominated in productivity, a vague expression that seems to mean the index of what their employers can make from them. As for government departments, popular opinion has been groomed for years into believing that they cannot be efficient and that it will only be a matter of time before their functions are privatised.

Economics weighs in as the force behind the appeal of efficiency and the greatest good in our culture is held to be the economic good. Economics is all about getting more for less so now that we get so much more for so much less, we could expect to be living well in our finely tuned efficient world. Efficient workers or managers should be able to work less to enjoy a high standard of living.

This seems to be the case if we compare toil and standards of living between Australia and Ethiopia. But a different picture emerges when we compare Australia today to Australia a generation ago. A generation ago nobody had a cell phone or a VCR, colour television was a novelty and people were able to exist without the internet or even home computers. Increased efficiency has brought us all these contemporary necessities. On the other hand, a generation ago a family could afford to live on a single income, the working week was forty, going on thirty five hours, unemployment and inflation were both steady at about 3% and home mortgages were at an historic high of about six and a quarter percent.

Both then and now the average family struggled. Now the average family struggles to support less than two children on two incomes, compared to the inefficient families of the 1960s

that had over twice as many children and half as many incomes. I think that means they had twice as much spare time. The average family in 1970 started out at marriage with a deposit on a block of land and back then banks required deposits of about 40% of total value. The average family today starts with somewhat less, finding it extremely hard to scrape together the five or ten percent deposit for their home. The one thing that has not become cheaper is land. Over that time the real value of land has doubled and the difficulty of acquiring it has quadrupled. It seems land has avoided the prescriptions of efficiency.

Efficiency demanded that the Post Master General's department be broken up into Australia Post and Telstra and

later that Telstra experience quasi-competition from competitors who still share much of their infrastructure. It demanded that the rail system be shattered into an array of public and private enterprises all using the same tracks. Most other public utilities have experienced similar pressures to be prodded into our more efficient new economic order, which seems to have helped our national financial status. We now have bigger, more efficient companies, many owned by international investors who vote with their investment dollars to support Australia's profile as a leading efficient economy.

Now we have our garbage collected by efficient private contractors and our roads built and operated by efficient international construction companies. Gone are the bad old days of Council workers leaning on their shovels or roads departments taking forever to build our highways. The new lean and efficient private organisations save us money by performing public services at lower costs. Sometimes they use better technology, sometimes they use better management and planning, but usually they use less labour. By using less labour they give us cheaper services and have enough left over to export additional profits to parent companies. Everyone appears to win.

A look at the entrenched unemployment levels today indicates the success of these efficiency techniques. Unemployment is now stable at a level considerably higher than a generation ago. As an indicator of efficiency, living better with a smaller relative workforce must be good. Good for everyone except the unemployed at least. Closer analysis is less convincing. By multiplying unemployment in Australia, we have covertly crippled the society's purchasing power. Eventually that will lead to reduced economic



## Count your blessings

**I**F you can read this message, you just received a double blessing in that someone was thinking of you, and furthermore, you are more blessed than over two billion people in the world who cannot read at all.

activity and further unemployment.

Unemployed people will need cheaper goods and services, which will lead to more efficiency and more unemployment. This is not a spiral to be encouraged, especially when its solution also includes rolling up even more private profits to leak out of the country and hence out of range of creating any domestic demand growth. If work has any value beyond being just a cost for employers to avoid, then our high unemployment levels mean something more sinister for the community, a fact that appears to be invisible to economic science.

The council worker leaning on his shovel at least represented an Australian wage earner who would spend most of his income within the Australian economy. He also represented additional capacity that was available if required. Having extra capacity is extremely useful in human society as it means less stress and greater ability to respond to the unexpected. If the power supply systems of New Zealand or Victoria had had modest excess capacity, the devastating failures of those systems would have been avoided. They were too efficient for that. Similar failures have happened in other countries, usually associated with private generation systems. The Australian public sector once had considerable excess capacity. This meant that Telstra linesmen had the extra time to explain how to use telephone gadgets to little old ladies or to train apprentices better. A generation ago most public authorities provided the best workplace training in the country, whether it was accountants with the Australian Taxation Office, or land surveyors with Lands Department.

Training and education have also been directly affected by the efficiency drive. Students once strolled the lawns of universities to contemplate the contemporary significance of classical history and the liberal arts. Somehow they went on to be effective CEOs of major organisations. This leisured approach to education has been replaced by business studies programmes and efficient timetables squeeze the full time week into two or three intense days so students can use the rest of the week to work, or squeeze 18 months of class into 12, so they can



be out in the workforce being efficient sooner.

Technical education has partially reversed this trend with more technical courses being run full time, so students do not get underfoot in industry before they have sufficient skills to be efficient. Nurses no longer learn their craft from the bottom up in hospitals, they now study full time at university to be more efficient when they hit the wards. As a result an entire new

underclass of enrolled nurses has been created to do traditional nursing, while graduate nurses compete with doctors. The activities both these classes of nurses appropriate from the higher occupational level are done at less cost to employers, though the savings seldom reach the wider community.

Efficiency has also hit the weekend. Once, Saturday afternoon was for football and cutting the lawn. Now it is for shopping and housework. So is Sunday. A leisured weekend is an extinct species for most ordinary Australians with two incomes and no time. The weekend recreations that now are being promoted are efficient, usually expensive, social interactions. Gone is playing in the backyard with your kids. Backyards are bits of land you have to waste time maintaining, when developers can more efficiently use them to build apartment blocks. Having children is expensive and distracts couples from gainful employment. The contraceptive mentality is more efficient.

Many newer parts of our cities are now dominated by dwellings and

## A Prayer for his younger brother Caesarius

**T**AKE to yourself, now, I pray you, our brother Caesarius, the forerunner of us who remain. Take us also to yourself in your own good time, once our allotted span of life has been completed. May the fear of the Lord make us prepared and yet unperturbed, so that at our death we shall not be drawing back and loath to depart, not dragged and torn from this life as men enthralled by the world and the flesh, but rather going out readily and willingly to the life of eternal happiness in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

— St Gregory Nazianzen, [329-389 AD] Or. 7, 23-24. From the *Roman Breviary*, the Second Reading at Matins, Friday in Week 31 of the Year. Caesarius was a physician. He died in 369 AD. The above prayer is taken from the panegyric preached at his funeral by his brother Gregory. Caesarius is venerated as a saint in the West on February 25.

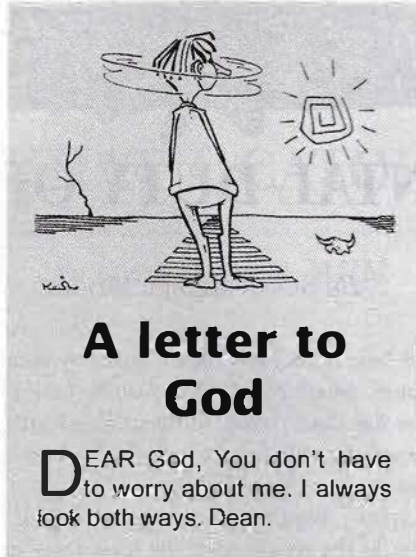


recreational infrastructure that are oriented towards people with little time but some spending money. It is a lot more efficient: efficient use of our time, efficient profits for bars and gyms, efficient use of our land. In the USA some apartments now are built without kitchens or laundries, giving an indication of how much more efficient our core dwellings can become when cooking and washing are outsourced.

In this quest for efficiency, something very human about human life has been forgotten. Leisure is no longer sought for its creative potential, but regarded as a waste of time to be avoided. Life itself is now modelled on business, that is, *busy-ness*. There is no accident in the construction of the word business or its relationship to *negotiation* which comes from Latin meaning 'no leisure' and is an apt description of both the business mentality and the society it produces. Machines have no leisure, nor do slaves. Machines and slaves are efficient, as are families to whom you don't have to pay enough for them to afford a backyard or a family.

All the while land prices rise making us wealthy as if by magic. Over two centuries ago, Adam Smith saw behind the magic of land prices when he wrote that every improvement in the circumstances of society eventually found its way into land prices. Every productivity increase, every efficiency, every bit of cost cutting, extra busy-ness and every negotiation eventually pushes up the price of land. When our homes appreciate in value, we celebrate our rising fortunes, but few realise that they rise because of the efficiencies in the rest of our life – efficiencies that ultimately deprive us of leisure and human experiences.

And rising property prices mean hardship for the next generation, who have to borrow ever more to pay the capital gains of the outgoing owners. Consequently, efficiency does not always mean falling prices, certainly not for land, but often not for other things as well. To afford those higher land prices, the other players in the economy cannot afford to sell their products for less, rather they have to be more profitable. That means driving more of a gap between selling price and the costs associated with bringing goods to market. Therefore efficiency is really



## A letter to God

DEAR God, You don't have to worry about me. I always look both ways. Dean.

about keeping prices as high as possible while cutting costs, costs which are ultimately paid for out of the quality of life of producers and their employees. William Cobbett recognised this and exhorted the virtues of *cheapness* to the English about a century after Smith. Cobbett could see that rising prices ultimately hurt everyone, despite appearing to benefit the individual. If all prices, even wages, are held low then

leisure and family become affordable as well.

There is something delightful about country lanes compared to freeways, and slowing down to play with the children rather than working late for the boss. St. Francis of Assisi recognised the peace and joy that comes from having less. His life was a radical imitation of the gospel and he could see that possessions often possess us. By having less, we often have more of what really matters. Economics earned its title, *the dismal science*, as a result of misunderstanding that very human paradox.

By hailing efficiency as the master virtue for public life, we may have really enthroned a harsh and dehumanising tyrant, one which Adam Smith believed drove all human action and which he named *self-interest*. Despite the promises of the dismal science, the little poor man of Assisi may have had the upper hand in understanding true economics.



DR GARRICK SMALL is a property economist and an Associate Head at the University of Technology Sydney's School of Construction, Property and Project Management. He has an interest in the relationship between property and society.

## The cooling of Miss Helen Williams' taste for Revolution

'SAW twenty peasant girls from Poitou, relates an eyewitness to a typical scene in the Conciergerie, 'all of whom were to be executed together. Overcome by the fatigue of their long journey, they lay in the courtyard of the Conciergerie, sleeping on the paving stones. Their giances betrayed no understanding of the fate that awaited them, resembling those of oxen herded together in the market place. They stared fixedly about them without comprehension. They were all guillotined a few days after their arrival. At the moment these unhappy women were going to their deaths, a guard took from the breast of one of them the baby that she was nursing ...'

It is perhaps of parenthetic interest that someone named Helen Maria Williams confirms the story about the twenty peasant women from Poitou. Miss Williams was one of several English Liberals who, thrilled by the Revolution, hastened to Paris to be on the scene of great events. She applauded Danton's *coup d'etat* of August 10 with a snowstorm of enthusiastic letters home to England. After the September Massacres, however, her enthusiasm began to wane. With Robespierre's ascendancy in the Committee, she was thrown into prison (all persons of English or foreign origin being declared 'suspect'), where she began to experience herself some of the anguish that, in her transports of sentimental altruism, she had so callously overlooked in the fate of others. From that moment Miss Williams's revolutionary ardor is said to have 'considerably cooled.'

– Stanley Loomis, *Paris in the Terror, June 1793-July 1794*, Lippincott, Philadelphia and New York, 1964, pp. 239.

# PARENTAL DUTY OF CARE

By SUSAN REIBEL MOORE



**T**HANKS largely to John Hirst's quarterly essay on the Australian Family Law court, *Kangaroo Court: Family Law in Australia*, recent public attention has been drawn to disturbing features of the history of Family Law: especially, the issue of parental access to the children of a failed marriage.

An equally important legal issue, which has received little public attention, is the meaning of the term Duty of Care, applied to parents' responsibilities for children.

In the Australian Family Law Act of 1975, a child is considered fully adult at the age of 16. What this means is that the adolescent children of broken families, at one of the most emotionally vulnerable periods in their young lives, have no legal redress if one or both of their parents abandons them.

In intact families, as we all know, adolescence imposes large stresses in the home. These stresses are financial as well as emotional and moral. At no other period in the life of a family are possessions, linked with future options, more costly. Obvious expenses for 16-year-old children include clothing for extra-curricular school activities and job interviews, transportation to and from home, and an array of educational resources including HSC text-related aids and home computers.

Additional stresses are linked with decisions about the future. Obvious tough decisions faced by children of 16 include which subjects to study, whether to secure part-time work to help defray prospective vocational costs, how to respond to peer pressure, how to become more independent of parents without creating severe familial upheaval, and how to handle relationships – especially, sexual ones. In stable homes, joint parental guidance makes it much easier for youngsters to cope; but even then, stress is unavoidable.

For 16-year-olds who face family breakup in addition to these other large issues, daily life can easily become unmanageable – particularly if one or both of their parents decides to act on the Family Law Act by foregoing all Duty of Care.

We know from countless studies of family life that in the lives of adolescents who have suffered divorce, the incidence of substance abuse, crime, and poor school performance is significantly higher than it is for 16-year-olds who live in intact homes. In the case of children whose parents forsake the Duty of Care, the scenario is far worse. Yet the Family Law Act has not changed to accommodate well-known research conclusions.

Devoted fathers and mothers normally take it for granted that their Duty of Care does not end when their progeny reach the age of 16. Even when children are adult and independent – typically, when they are in their 20s – concerned parents normally help them in key areas of daily life. Many provide loans for cars, housing, and vocational expenses related to vocational course work (materials required for TAFE, for example). An even larger number offer free or inexpensive room and board at the family home.

Why, then, has there been relative public silence about the Family Law Act's dubious assumption about when adulthood begins? Are there really Australians today who think, as Lionel Murphy did 40 years ago, that the legal Duty of Care of a wise parent should legitimately end when a child is only 16?

Angels at the Marriage Feast of Cana

WHAT A CATCH!

By JAMES MUHREN, MHM

**G**OOD News presses, lately under the capable leadership of Maximilian Kolbe, were churning out thousands upon thousands of posters. As soon as they came off the press, still wet as it were, they were snatched up by eager angels who flew them to the furthest ends and corners of the universe.

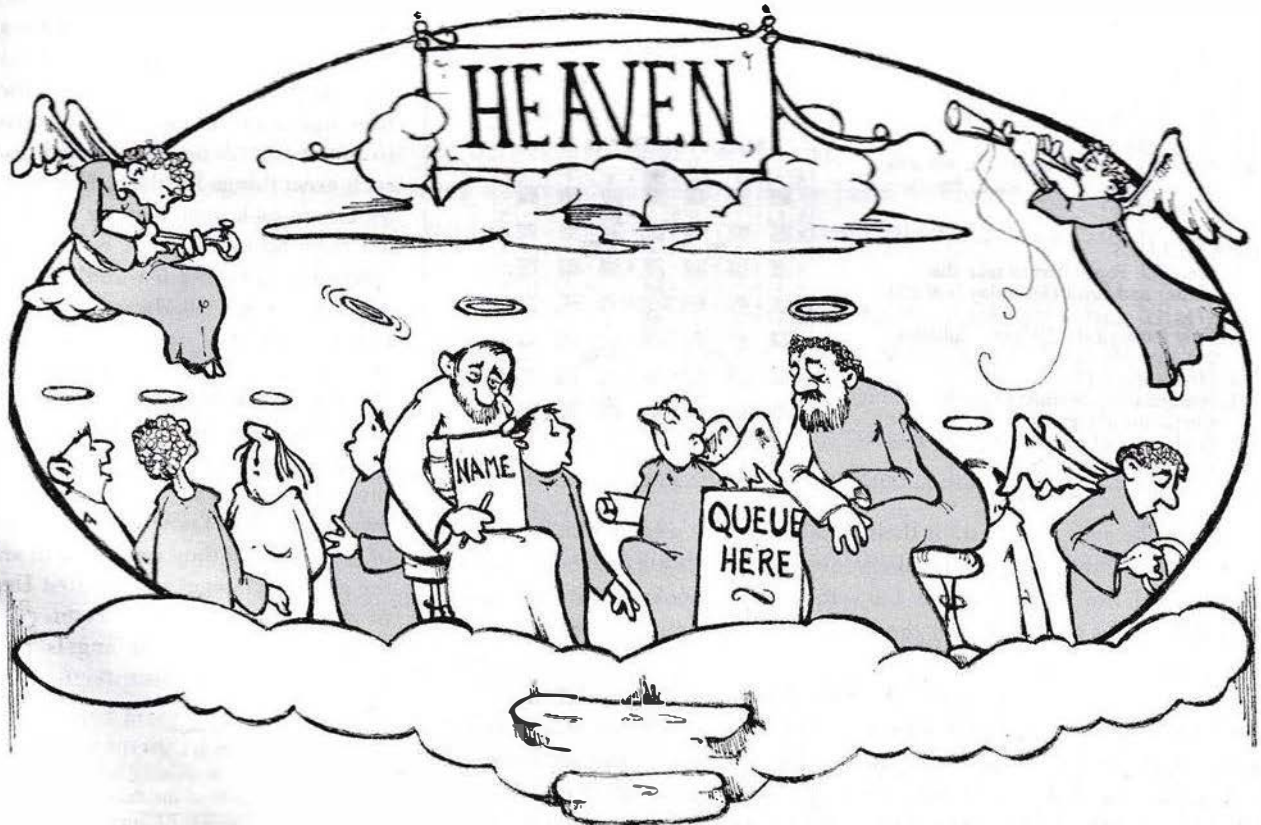
Some of the angels advertised their wares with loud and penetrating voices. It was rumoured that they had had their basic training from some of the fishmongers, amongst the saints. 'The latest Good News' they cried. 'Get your copy! Peter's Catch! Now available! All fishermen to the hall behind the Sixtine Chapel! Before ten o'clock! Heaven being heaven and no disobedience



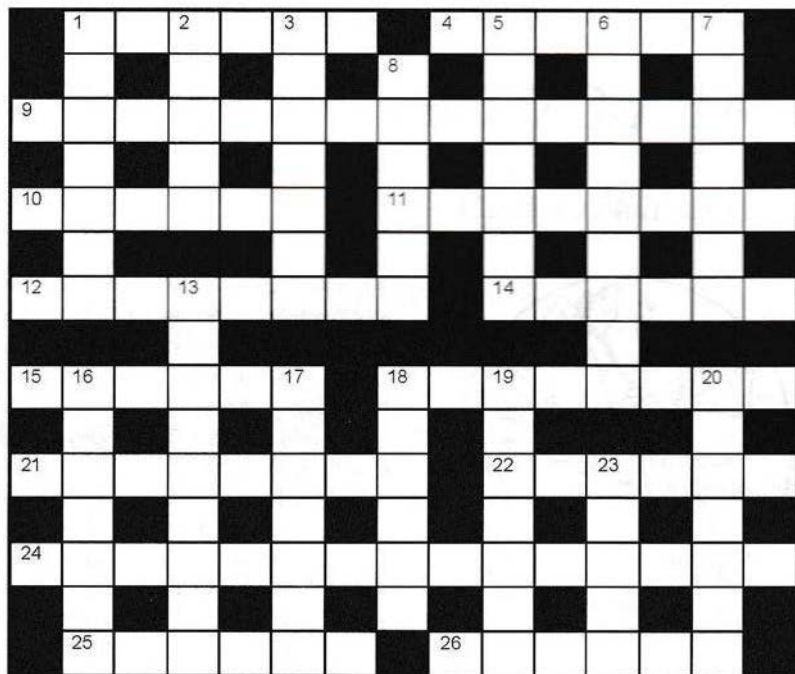
**T**HESSE whimsies of Father James Muhren offer a refreshingly Catholic perspective on heavenly life. We may find theology with a dash of humour, as well as generous servings of faith, hope and charity – all the while drawing on the priceless treasury of Catholic tradition and imagination. Ed.

anywhere and eagerness to please, everywhere, fishermen of all ages and countries, dressed in their traditional finery, were seen to be flocking to the hall. Every dialect of the world was heard and if you sniffed carefully, you could smell a peculiar fishy perfume here and there.

In the great hall it was pandemonium. The angels could hardly believe that humans could raise such a level of noise. Some angels even looked for hidden loudspeakers and microphones. But it was not to last long. A mighty flutter of wings was heard and down came gliding from above near the throne of the Almighty the huge Archangel Piscator. His voice bellowed over the crowd. 'Let the nets be ready!' Amazingly from all corners trolleys came gliding along loaded with the finest of the finest fishing nets, nets such as fishermen



## ANNALS CROSSWORD No. 38



### ACROSS CLUES

1. Pure; decent; modest (6)
4. Division of a group into opposing factions (6)
9. Envy, lust, anger etc. (5,6,4)
10. Fattier-in-law of Moses (6)
11. Felt contrition for (8)
12. Emphasised; suffering mental tension (8)
14. Allowing travel in one direction only (3,3)
15. Cleansed (6)
18. Book of the Old Testament (8)
21. In accordance with what is proper and just (8)
22. A religious house (6)
24. Seventh day after the Ascension of the Lord into heaven (9,6)
25. To pass by (of time) (6)
26. Saint; King of Northumbria; surname of the presumed assassin of President Kennedy (6)

### DOWN CLUES

1. Merciful; Pope (first to take this name) and Saint (feast day Nov 23) (7)
2. First letter of the Hebrew alphabet (5)
3. Monotonous (7)
5. Nymph who detained Odysseus on the island of Ogygia for seven years (in Homer's *Odyssey*); type of West Indian dance (7)

6. Hypocritical (9)
7. Former President of African National Congress and winner of Nobel Peace Prize (7)
8. Holy; consecrated (6)
13. Word used by Jesus to the deaf man, enabling him to hear (Mark 7:34) (9)
16. City in Texas; region ruled by Lysanias (Luke 3:1) (7)
17. Shortcomings; blemishes (7)
18. Nationality of Karol Wojtyla (6)
19. Fights against; resists strongly (7)
20. Patron saint of mountaineers (7)
23. Ancient region of West Central Asia Minor colonized by the Greeks (5)

### SOLUTION TO NO. 37



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throughout the ages had used for their trade. Piscator continued: 'Remember the words of the blessed Lord: Let the nets down for a catch. Lower them overboard in Peter's lake!'

The angels hovered over the fishermen, as they all, true to tradition, made a sign of the cross and said the Angelus. The bells of the heaven pealed majestically and clear over the

lake. The nets went down. Some of the more adventurous angels jumped into the lake and looked below the surface. Miracle of miracles, from everywhere fishes came hurrying along, jauntily swimming into the nets.

After only a short while Piscator called out his second command: 'Up! Up now! Haul Up the nets! Jump to it!' And angels and fishermen obeyed with

## Advice for the Shepherds

LET those who teed the sheep of Christ love him, not themselves. Let them feed the sheep as his, not as their own.

Those who feed the sheep of Christ must, above all, be on their guard against this vice of self-love lest they look after their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ, and put to the service of their own greed those for whom Christ shed his blood.

- St Augustine of Hippo [354-430 AD],  
Treatise on St John, 123,5. From the  
Second Reading at Matins, in the *Roman  
Breviary*, for the Feast of St Nicholas of  
Bari, December 6.

a mighty 'Ah hoy! Ah hoy!' What a catch! There they came up, big fishes and small fishes of all shapes and colours. Heaven being heaven, that was not the last of it. Heaven is for blessed souls and not for tasty fishes. Piscator raised his voice again and summoned: 'In the Lord's name, remember his command: "I will make you into fishers of men." Show your true faces.'

What a transformation is now taking place! All these dear fishes started to smile; the eyes were humanized, the snout became a nose and a mouth; the fins changed into arms and legs; the scales turned into hair and skin. And they all looked up out of their nets, opened their mouths and started to praise the Almighty who had done such great things for them. Angels and fishermen took them by their hand and led them up into heaven. Soon Peter's lake was empty. But it would be filled time and again till the end, of time. Piscator laid his arm gently round the shoulders of the first fisherman in Jesus' flock. 'Come Peter,' he said. 'The blessed Mother wants to hear the news of today's miraculous catch and the salvation of so many from your own mouth. You know she is very fond of you.' And off they went, arm in arm, the great Archangel and the first Head of the Church of Jesus. Peter. A whole multitude of angels accompanied them.



FATHER JAMES MUHREN is a Mill Hill Missionary who has devoted his life to working among the people of Borneo, principally in the Parish of St Mary in Sibuluan. He is now retired and living in Holland.

*Pope Benedict XVI met his priests of the diocese of Rome on March 2, in the Sala di benedizioni, The Hall of Blessings, in the Vatican.*

## THE HOLY FATHER SPEAKS WITH HIS PRIESTS

After a greeting by Cardinal Camillo Ruini, vicar of Rome, the Holy Father responded to questions and statements by ten of his priests, and later responded to the interventions of five others. The following is a synopsis of ten of the fifteen questions and a translation of the Holy Father's responses. Next month *Annals* will print the remaining five questions.

**The Holy Father:** I am going to speak straightaway, for otherwise, if I wait until the end of all the interventions, my monologue will become too long.

I would first like to express my joy at being here with you, dear priests of Rome. It is a true joy to see so many good pastors at the service of the 'Good Shepherd' here, in the first See of Christianity, in the Church which 'presides in charity' and must be a model for other local Churches. Thank you for your service!

We have the shining example of Father Andrea [the Italian priest killed in Turkey recently *Ed*] who shows us what it means to 'be' a priest to the very end: dying for Christ during a moment of prayer, thereby witnessing on the one hand to the interiority of his own life with Christ, and on the other, to his own witness for people at a truly 'panpheral' point in the world, surrounded by hatred and the fanaticism of others. It is a witness that inspires everyone to follow Christ, to give one's life for others and thus to find Life.

**1st Question:** Holy Father, we are meeting you at this Lenten gathering for the first time. I want to remember the beloved Servant of God John Paul II. In the words you spoke at his funeral I saw a sign of continuity between you and your beloved Predecessor: 'We can be sure that our beloved Pope is standing today at the window of the Father's House, that he sees us and blesses us.' This thought inspires a sonnet written in Roman dialect that I have dedicated to you: 'A window on high in Heaven.'

**The Holy Father:** With regard to the first intervention, I first of all say a big 'thank you' for this marvelous poem! There are also poets and artists in the Church of Rome, in the presbyterate of Rome, and I will have the possibility of further meditating upon and interiorizing these beautiful words, mindful that this 'window' is always 'open.' Perhaps this is an opportunity to recall the fundamental legacy of the great Pope John Paul II in order to continue to increasingly assimilate this legacy.

Yesterday, we began Lent. Today's liturgy gives us a profound idea of the essential significance of Lent: It is a guide for our life.

It therefore seems to me - I speak with reference to Pope John Paul II - that we should insist a little on today's First Reading. Moses' great discourse, on the threshold of the Holy Land after the 40-year pilgrimage in the desert, sums up the whole of the Torah, the whole of the Law. Here we find the essential, not only for the Jewish people but also for us. This

essential is the Word of God: 'I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore, choose life' (Deuteronomy 30:19).

These fundamental words of Lent are also the fundamental words of the legacy of our great Pope John Paul II: 'choose life.' This is our priestly vocation: to choose life ourselves and to help others to choose life. It is a matter of renewing in Lent our own, so to speak, 'fundamental option,' the option for life.

But the question immediately arises: How can we choose life, how should we do this? Reflecting upon this, I remembered that the great defection from Christianity which has occurred in the West in the past 100 years was precisely in the name of the option for life. It was said – I am thinking of Nietzsche but also of so many others – that Christianity is an option opposed to life. With the Cross, with all the Commandments, with all the 'nos' that it proposes to us, some have said that it closes the door to life.

But we, we want to have life and we choose, we opt, ultimately, for life, freeing ourselves by the Cross, freeing ourselves by all these Commandments, by all these 'nos.' We want to have life in abundance, nothing but life.

Here, the words of today's Gospel immediately come to mind: 'Whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake, he will save it' (Luke 9:24). This is the paradox we must first be aware of in opting for life. It is not by arrogating life to ourselves but only by giving life, not by having life and holding on to it but by giving it, that we can find it. This is the ultimate meaning of the Cross: not to seek life for oneself, but to give one's own life.

Thus, the New and Old Testaments go together. In the First Reading from Deuteronomy God's response is: 'I command you this day, by loving the Lord your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his

commandments and his statutes and his ordinances, then you shall live' (Deuteronomy 30:16). At first sight we may not like this, but it is the way: the option for life and the option for God are identical. The Lord says so in St. John's Gospel: 'This is eternal life, that they know you' (John 17:3).

Human life is a relationship. It is only in a relationship, and not closed in on ourselves, that we can have life. And the fundamental relationship is the relationship with the Creator, or else other relations are fragile. Hence, it is essential to choose God. A world empty of God, a world that has forgotten God, loses life and relapses into a culture of death.

Choosing life, taking the option for life, therefore, means first and foremost choosing the option of a relationship with God. However, the question immediately arises: with which God? Here, once again, the Gospel helps us: with the God who showed us his face in Christ, the God who overcame hatred on the Cross, that is, in love to the very end. Thus, by choosing this God, we choose life.

Pope John Paul II gave us the great encyclical 'Evangelium Vitae.' In it we can clearly see – it is, as it were, a portrait of the problems of today's culture, hopes and dangers – that a society which forgets God, excludes God, precisely in order to have life, falls into a culture of death.

Precisely in order to have life, a 'no' is said to the child, because it takes some part of my life away from me; a 'no' is said to the future, in order to have the whole of the present; a 'no' is said to unborn life as well as to suffering life that is approaching death. What seems to be a culture of life becomes the anti-culture of death, where God is absent, where that God who does not ordain hatred but overcomes hatred is absent. Here we truly opt for life.

Consequently, everything is connected: the deepest option for the Crucified Christ with the most complete option for life, from the very first moment until the very last.

To me this also seems in some way the nucleus of our pastoral care: to help people make the true choice for life, to renew their relationship with God as the relationship which gives us life and shows us the way to life. And thus, to love Christ anew, who from being the most unknown Being whom we did not reach and who remained enigmatic, became a known God, a God with a human face, a God who is love.

Let us keep this fundamental point for life before us and consider that this program contains the whole Gospel, the Old and the New Testaments, that center on Christ. Lent should be for us a time to renew our knowledge of God, our friendship with Jesus, to be able to guide others in a convincing way to opt for life, which is above all the option for God. It must be clear to us that in choosing Christ, we have not chosen to deny life, but have really chosen life in abundance.

The Christian option is basically very simple: It is the option to say 'yes' to life. But this 'yes' only takes place with a God who is known, with a God with a human face. It takes place by following this God in the communion of love. What I have said so far is intended as a way of renewing our remembrance of the great Pope John Paul II.

**2nd Question:** As a parish priest, I ask you for a few words of joyful encouragement for mothers. In memory of our mothers, Your Holiness, for their faith and spiritual strength that can be seen in the human and Christian upbringing that they gave to us, help us talk to the mothers of all the boys and girls who attend catechism classes and are often distracted. Say a few words that we can pass on to them, saying: 'This is what the Pope says to you.'

**The Holy Father:** We come to the second intervention, which was so nice, about mothers. I would say that I cannot communicate important programs just now, words that you could say to mothers. Simply tell them: The Pope thanks you! He thanks you because you have given life, because you want to help this life that is developing and thereby to build a human world, contributing to a human future.

And it is not only by giving biological life that you do so, but by communicating the heart of life, making Jesus known, introducing your children to knowledge of Jesus and friendship with Jesus. This is the foundation of every catechesis.

Therefore, one must thank mothers above all because they have had the courage to give life. And we must ask mothers to complete their gift by giving friendship with Jesus.

**3rd Question:** The Blessed Sacrament is exposed for adoration 24 hours a day in St. Anastasia [Parish] on the Palatine. The faithful take turns in making perpetual adoration. My suggestion is that there should be perpetual adoration of the Eucharist in each one of the five sectors of the Diocese of Rome.

**The Holy Father:** The third intervention was by the rector of St. Anastasia's Church. Here, perhaps I can say in parentheses that the Church of St. Anastasia was already dear to me even before I saw it because it was the titular church of our Cardinal de Faulhaber. He always let us know that he had a church in Rome, St. Anastasia's. We always met with this community for the second Mass of Christmas, dedicated to the 'statio' of St. Anastasia.

Historians say that it was at St. Anastasia's that the Pope had to visit the Byzantine governor and that it was there that he had his seat. The church also reminds us of the saint, and hence, of the 'Anastasis.' At Christmas we also think of the Resurrection.

I did not know and I am glad to have been

told about it, that the church is now a place of 'perpetual adoration'; thus, it is a focal point in Rome of the life of faith. I confidently place in the hands of the cardinal vicar this proposal to create five places of perpetual adoration in the five sectors of the Diocese of Rome.

I only want to say: Thanks be to God that after the Council, after a period in which the sense of Eucharistic adoration was somewhat lacking, the joy of this adoration was reborn everywhere in the Church, as we saw and heard at the Synod on the Eucharist. Of course, the conciliar constitution on the liturgy enabled us to discover to the full the riches of the Eucharist in which the Lord's testament is accomplished: He gives himself to us and we respond by giving ourselves to him.

We have now rediscovered, however, that without adoration as an act consequent to Communion received, this center which the Lord gave to us, that is, the possibility of celebrating his sacrifice and thus of entering into a sacramental, almost corporeal, communion with him, loses its depth as well as its human richness.

Adoration means entering the depths of our hearts in communion with the Lord, who makes himself bodily present in the Eucharist. In the monstrance, he always entrusts himself to us and asks us to be united with his Presence, with his risen Body.

**4th Question:** You are a 'teacher' who guides thought in a 'fully human' faith. We never fail to be moved by your words, by the harmony in which each point finds its mark, in lively synthesis, especially in a time as fragmented as ours. How can we help lay people grasp this synthesis of harmony, this catholicity of faith?

**The Holy Father:** We now come to the fourth question. If I have understood it correctly, but I am not sure if I have, it was:

'How do we acquire a living faith, a truly Catholic faith, a faith that is practical, lively and effective?'

Faith, ultimately, is a gift. Consequently, the first condition is to let ourselves be given something, not to be self-sufficient or do everything by ourselves – because we cannot – but to open ourselves in the awareness that the Lord truly gives.

It seems to me that this gesture of openness is also the first gesture of prayer: being open to the Lord's presence and to his gift. This is also the first step in receiving something that we do not have, that we cannot have with the intention of acquiring it all on our own.

We must make this gesture of openness, of prayer – give me faith, Lord! – with our whole being. We must enter into this willingness to accept the gift and let ourselves, our thoughts, our affections and our will, be completely immersed in this gift.

Here, I think it is very important to stress one essential point: No one believes purely on his own. We always believe in and with the Church. The Creed is always a shared act, it means letting ourselves be incorporated into a communion of progress, life, words and thought.

We do not 'have' faith, in the sense that it is primarily God who gives it to us. Nor do we 'have' it either, in the sense that it must not be invented by us. We must let ourselves fall, so to speak, into the communion of faith, of the Church. Believing is in itself a Catholic act. It is participation in this great certainty, which is present in the Church as a living subject.

Only in this way can we also understand sacred Scripture in the diversity of an interpretation that develops for thousands of years. It is a Scripture because it is an element, an expression of the unique subject – the People of God – which on its pilgrimage is always the same subject. Of course, it is a subject that does not speak of



itself, but is created by God – the classical expression is ‘inspired’ – a subject that receives, then translates and communicates this word. This synergy is very important.

We know that, according to the Islamic faith, the Koran is a word given verbally by God without human mediation. The Prophet is not involved. He only wrote it down and passed it on; it is the pure Word of God.

Whereas for us, God enters into communion with us, he allows us to cooperate, he creates this subject and in this subject his word grows and develops. This human part is essential and also gives us the possibility of seeing how the individual words really become God’s Word only in the unity of Scripture as a whole, in the living subject of the People of God.

Therefore, the first element is the gift of God; the second is the sharing in faith of the pilgrim people, the communication in the holy Church, which for her part receives the Word of God which is the Body of Christ, brought to life by the living Word, the divine Logos.

Day after day, we must deepen our communion with the holy Church and thus, with the Word of God. They are not two opposite things, so that I can say: I am pro-Church or I am pro-God’s Word. Only when we are united in the Church, do we belong to the Church, do we become members of the Church, do we live by the Word of God which is the life-giving force of the Church. And those who live by the Word of God can only live it because it is alive and vital in the living Church.

**5th Question:** Eugenio Pacelli was born in Rome on March 2, 1876, and on March 2, 1939, was elected Pope and took the name of Pius XII. This great Pope is shrouded in silence, and we are deeply indebted to this Pontiff, who also had great love for Germany. We all truly hope he will soon be raised to

the honor of the altars.

**The Holy Father:** The fifth intervention was on Pius XII. Thank you for your intervention. He was the Pope of my youth. We all venerated him. As was rightly said, he deeply loved the German people; he also defended them in the great catastrophe after the war. And I must add that before he was nuncio in Berlin he was nuncio in Munich, because at the outset there was no papal representation in Berlin. He was also really close to us.

This seems to me the opportunity to express gratitude to all the great Popes of the last century. The century began with St. Pius X, then Benedict XV, Pius XI, Pius XII, John XXIII, Paul VI, John Paul I, John Paul II.

I believe that this is a special gift in such a difficult century with two World Wars and two destructive ideologies: fascism-Nazism and Communism. It was in this very century, which was opposed to the faith of the Church, that the Lord gave us a series of great Popes, hence, a spiritual inheritance that I would say historically strengthened the truth of the primacy of the Successor of Peter.

**6th Question:** The Diocese of Rome is seeking the best way and a new approach to respond to the needs of today’s families. Families must be given fresh vitality, they must be made the subject rather than the object of pastoral care. In our time, the family is threatened by relativism and indifference. Parents, engaged couples and children must be assisted with catechesis and continuous guidance; they need priests expert in humanity who understand peoples’ needs. Married couples must be encouraged to revive the grace of the sacraments.

**The Holy Father:** The next intervention dedicated to the family was made by the parish priest of St. Sylvia. Here, I cannot but fully agree. Furthermore, during the ‘ad limina’ visits I always speak to bishops about

the family, threatened throughout the world in various ways.

The family is threatened in Africa because it is difficult to find the way from 'traditional marriage' to 'religious marriage,' because there is a fear of finality.

Whereas in the West the fear of the child is caused by the fear of losing some part of life, in Africa it is the opposite. Until it is certain that the wife will also bear children, no one dares to enter marriage definitively. Therefore, the number of religious marriages remains relatively small, and even many 'good' Christians with an excellent desire to be Christians do not take this final step.

Marriage is also threatened in Latin America, for other reasons, and is badly threatened, as we know, in the West. So it is all the more necessary for us as Church to help families, which are the fundamental cell of every healthy society.

Only in families, therefore, is it possible to create a communion of generations in which the memory of the past lives on in the present and is open to the future. Thus, life truly continues and progresses. Real progress is impossible without this continuity of life, and once again, it is impossible without the religious element. Without trust in God, without trust in Christ who in addition gives us the ability to believe and to live, the family cannot survive.

We see this today. Only faith in Christ and only sharing the faith of the Church saves the family; and on the other hand, only if the family is saved can the Church also survive. For the time being, I do not have an effective recipe for this, but it seems to me that we should always bear it in mind.

We must therefore do all that favors the family: family circles, family catechesis, and we must teach prayer in the family. This seems to me to be very important: Wherever people pray together, the Lord makes himself

present with that power which can also dissolve 'sclerosis' of the heart, that hardness of heart which, according to the Lord, is the real reason for divorce.

Nothing else, only the Lord's presence, helps us to truly relive what the Creator wanted at the outset and which the Redeemer renewed. Teach family prayer and thus invite people to pray with the Church and then seek all the other way.

7th Question: Hearing of a mother and some women religious who have helped priests through a crisis prompts me to ask: Why should not women also have a hand in governing the Church? Women often function charismatically, with prayer, or on a practical level, like St. Catherine of Siena, who obtained the popes' return to Rome. It would be right to promote the role of women in institutions too, since their viewpoint, which is different from that of men, could help priests in decision-making.

The Holy Father: I now reply to the parochial vicar of St. Jerome's – I see that he is still very young – who tells us how much women do in the Church and for priests themselves.

I can stress that in the First Canon, the Roman Canon, the special prayer for priests: 'Nobis quoque peccatoribus,' always makes a deep impression on me. Here, in this realistic humility of priests, precisely as sinners, we pray to the Lord to help us to be his servants. In this prayer for the priest, precisely only in this prayer, seven women appear who surround the priest. They show themselves to be the believing women who help us on our way. Each one of us has certainly had this experience.

Thus, the Church has a great debt of gratitude to women. And you have correctly emphasized that at a charismatic level, women do so much, I would dare to say, for the government of the Church, starting with

women religious, with the sisters of the great Fathers of the Church such as St. Ambrose, to the great women of the Middle Ages – St. Hildegard, St. Catherine of Siena, then St. Teresa of Avila – and lastly, Mother Teresa. I would say that this charismatic sector is undoubtedly distinguished by the ministerial sector in the strict sense of the term, but it is a true and deep participation in the government of the Church.

How could we imagine the government of the Church without this contribution, which sometimes becomes very visible, such as when St. Hildegard criticized the bishops or when St. Bridget offered recommendations and St. Catherine of Siena obtained the return of the popes to Rome? It has always been a crucial factor without which the Church cannot survive.

However, you rightly say: We also want to see women more visibly in the government of the Church. We can say that the issue is this: The priestly ministry of the Lord, as we know, is reserved to men, since the priestly ministry is government in the deep sense, which, in short, means it is the sacrament [of orders] that governs the Church.

This is the crucial point. It is not the man who does something, but the priest governs, faithful to his mission, in the sense that it is the sacrament, that is, through the sacrament it is Christ himself who governs, both through the Eucharist and in the other sacraments, and thus Christ always presides.

However, it is right to ask whether in ministerial service – despite the fact that here sacrament and charism are the two ways in which the Church fulfils herself – it might be possible to make more room, to give more offices of responsibility to women.

**8th Question:** I am responsible for the rehabilitation of the victims of religious sects. I am grateful to you, Your Holiness, for your frequent denunciation of the harm

they cause. Many simple people are unable to discover their tricks without help, like unfortunate travelers on the infamous road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Your Holiness, do you not think it is urgently necessary today to train Good Samaritans? Would not such preparation be good in the seminaries and in specific courses held at the university level and in the permanent formation of the clergy responsible for the care of souls?

**The Holy Father:** I did not quite understand the words of the eighth intervention. I more or less understood that today, 'humanity' on the way from Jerusalem to Jericho falls among robbers. The Good Samaritan offers assistance with the Lord's mercy.

We can only emphasize that in the end, it is man who fell and who falls again and again into the hands of robbers, and it is Christ who heals us. We must and can help him, both in the service of love and in the service of faith, which is also a ministry of love.

**9th Question:** The feast of the holy patrons of my parish, the Holy Martyrs of Uganda, is celebrated on June 3. I praise God for this pastoral experience. May more people join in prayer in and for Africa.

**The Holy Father:** Then, the Martyrs of Uganda. Thank you for your contribution. You remind us of the African continent, which is the great hope of the Church.

In recent months I have received the majority of the African bishops on their 'ad limina' visits. I found it very edifying and comforting to see bishops of a high theological and cultural standard. They are zealous bishops, truly enlivened by the joy of faith. We know that this Church is in good hands, but that she still suffers because the nations are not yet formed.

In Europe it was precisely through Christianity that, in addition to the ethnic groups that existed, the great bodies of

nations, the great languages were formed, and thus communion of cultures and places of peace, although later, these great areas of peace, in opposition to one another, created a new sort of war that had previously not existed.

However, in many parts of Africa we still have this situation where there are above all dominant ethnic groups. The colonial power then imposed boundaries within which nations now have to develop.

But there is still the difficulty of finding oneself in a great mass and of discovering, in addition to the ethnic groups, the unity of democratic government as well as the possibility of opposing forms of colonial abuse that continue. Africa still continues to be the object of abuse by the great powers, and many conflicts would not have taken this form if the interests of these great powers had not been behind them.

Thus, I have also seen how, in all this confusion, the Church with her Catholic unity is the great factor that unites in dispersion. In many situations, especially now, after the great war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Church has remained the one reality which functions and makes life continue, which provides the necessary assistance, guarantees coexistence and helps to find the possibility of creating one great solution.

In this sense, in these situations, the Church also carries out a service that replaces the political level, giving the possibility of living together and of rebuilding communion after destruction and of rebuilding, after the outburst of hatred, the spirit of reconciliation. Many people have told me that precisely in these situations, the sacrament of penance is of great importance as a force of reconciliation and must also be administered with this in view.

In a word, I wanted to say that Africa is a continent of great hope, of great faith, of moving ecclesial realities, of zealous priests and bishops. But it has always been a continent which, after the destruction we brought to it from Europe, needs our brotherly help. And this cannot but be born from faith that also creates universal love, over and above human divisions.

This is our great responsibility in this epoch. Europe has exported its ideologies, its interests, but has also exported, with the mission, the factor of healing.

Today, we are especially responsible for having a zealous faith that is communicated, that wants to help others, that is aware that giving faith does not mean introducing an alienating power but means giving the true gift that human beings need precisely in order to be creatures of love.

10th Question: I see with concern the situation in Rome, especially the plight of young people and adolescents 'on the fringe of humanity,' many of whom do not go to church. I believe that priests, lay people and religious should be closer to our faithful, especially youth, and we should put our charisms at the service of catechesis.

The Holy Father: A last point was touched on by the Carmelite parochial vicar of St. Teresa of Avila who has rightly revealed his worries to us.

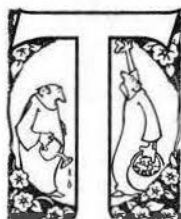
A simple and superficial optimism which does not discern the great threats to youth, children and families today would certainly be erroneous. We must perceive with great realism these threats that come into being wherever God is absent.

We must be more and more aware of our responsibility so that God will be present and thus, the hope and the ability to walk confidently towards the future.

*Universities under attack*

## DEFEND THE IVORY TOWER

By PROFESSOR PIERRE RYCKMANS



Two points are particularly under attack.

First, the *elitist character* of the ivory tower (which results from its very nature) is denounced in the name of equality and democracy. The demand for equality is noble and must be fully supported, but only within its own sphere, which is that of social justice. It has no place anywhere else. Democracy is the only acceptable political system; yet it pertains to politics exclusively, and has no application in any other domain. When applied anywhere else, it is death – for truth is not democratic, intelligence and talent are not democratic, nor is beauty, nor love – nor God's grace. A truly democratic education is an education that equips people intellectually to defend and promote democracy within the political world; but in its own field, education must be ruthlessly aristocratic and highbrow, shamelessly geared towards excellence.

The second aspect of the ivory tower that is constantly under attack is its *non-utilitarian character*. The heart of the problem is memorably expressed in the paradox of Chuang Tzu – a Taoist philosopher of the 3rd century BC, one of the most profound minds of all time: 'People all know the usefulness of what is useful, but they do not know the usefulness of the useless'. The superior utility of the university – what enables it to perform its function – rests entirely upon what the world deems to be its uselessness.

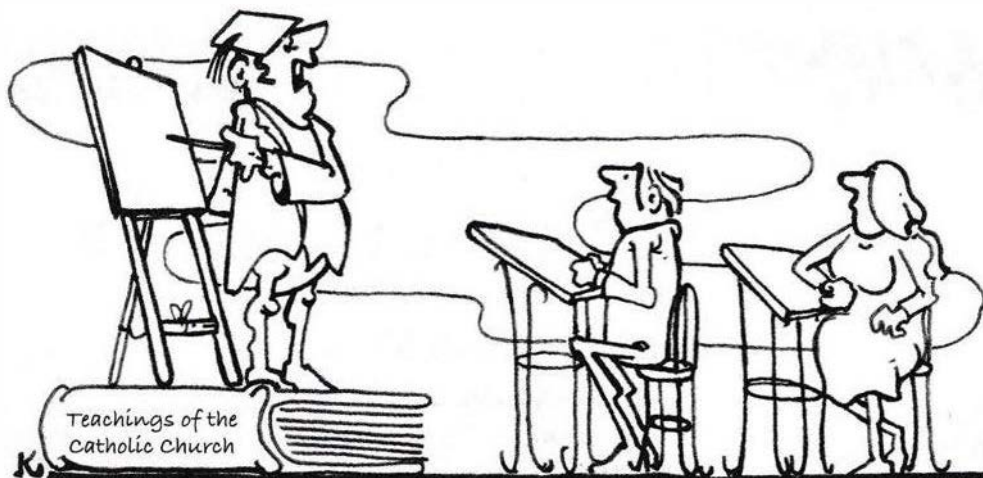
Vocational schools and technical colleges are very useful – people all understand that. As they cannot see the usefulness of the useless universities, they have decided to turn the universities into bad imitations of technical colleges. Thus the fundamental distinction between liberal education and vocational training has become blurred, and the very survival of the university is put into question.

The university is now under increasing pressure to justify its existence in utilitarian and quantitative terms. Such pressure is deeply corrupting. I have no time now to examine all aspects of this corruption – let me give you just one example – only one, but it has ominous significance. In Europe, not long ago, a respected university hard hit by funding cuts, felt compelled to wind up some of its courses. An entire department had to be closed down – the most vulnerable, the least economically viable, a department which had more lecturers than students, which offered no future to its graduates, which performed no visible service to society and the State. The department that was abolished was the Department of Pure Philosophy – ivory tower within the ivory tower, historical heart and origin of the university itself.

When a university yields to the utilitarian temptations, it betrays its vocation and sells its soul. Five centuries ago, the great Renaissance scholar Erasmus defined with one phrase the essence of the humanist endeavour: *Homo fit, non nascitur* – One is not born a man, one becomes it. A university is not a factory producing graduates, as a sausage factory produces sausages. It is a place where a chance is given to men to become what they truly are.

[Excerpt from an address delivered on Friday April 23, 2006, on the eve of the opening of Campion College, Toongabbie, NSW, Australia's first Catholic Liberal Arts College.]

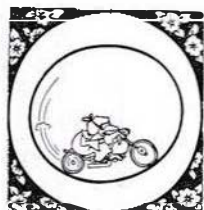
Donations should be sent to *Campion Foundation*, P.O. Box 952, Toongabbie East NSW 2146.



## DOCTORS OF THE CHURCH

By MAX BARRETT, CSSR

This is the fourth in a series of articles that look briefly at the lives and teachings of those saints who have been honoured with the title of 'Doctor' of the Church. The title is awarded *sanctitatis sapientiaeque causa* 'by reason of sanctity and wisdom,' by the reigning Pontiff.



OCCASIONALLY – but only occasionally – one of the saints is declared a *Doctor of the Church*. This declaration, coming from the Pope, recognises the outstanding value of the saint's writings. Up to 2006 A.D., thirty-three 'teacher' saints have been declared *Doctor*.

What is offered in this series is an introduction to each of the thirty-three, and a brief sampling of each one's writing.

Cronologically, the earliest of those officially declared *Doctor* is St. Athanasius of Alexandria (296-373 A.D.). The most recently recognised *Doctor* is St. Therese of Lisieux (1873-1897).

Before St. Athanasius and after the closure of the New Testament Scripture, there were saints of the 2nd and 3rd centuries who spoke of Christ with their pen. We have already looked briefly at three of these 'Fathers': Pope St. Clement of Rome (who died in 99 A.D.), St. Ignatius of Antioch (35-107 A.D.), and St. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna (69-155 A.D.). A fourth early saintly-teacher was Justinus Flavius, known as St. Justin Martyr.

### St. Justin Martyr [c. 100-166 A.D.]

Justinus Flavius was born of pagan Greek parents at Shechem, near where Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well [John's Gospel, 4, 9]. Justin said he was a 'Samaritan,' but whether he was a 'Samaritan,' or born of pagan parents who lived in Samaria, and was therefore a 'Samaritan,' is much disputed. His thirst for knowledge, plus the example of Christians who fearlessly died for their faith, led to his conversion around 130 A.D.

Up till Justin's time, Christians were for the most part ready to put up with distorted notions of their religion if only to prevent their sacred mysteries falling into the hands of unbelievers. The Eucharist was sometimes misrepresented as cannibalism or an occasion for moral improprieties. Justin took a different approach. He argued that 'It is our duty to make our doctrines known.' St. Justin was an *apologist*, a debater; he *argued* the truth of Christianity. His writing did not lend itself to lyrical expression of what he believed. He opened a Christian school of Philosophy in Rome and composed there his First Apologia for Christianity which he addressed to the Emperor Antoninus Pius [86-161 A.D.], and to

his adopted sons Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus. In it, Justin described the rite of Baptism to the Roman Emperor, and went on to speak of the Mass:

Then, bread and a chalice containing wine mixed with water are brought to the one presiding ... He takes them and offers praise and glory to the Father of all ... At the end of these prayers and thanksgiving, all present express their approval by saying *Amen*. And when he who presides has celebrated the Eucharist, they whom we call deacons permit each one present to partake of the Eucharistic bread, and wine and water, and they carry it also to the absentees. We call this food 'the Eucharist,' of which only he can partake who has acknowledged the truth of our teachings, who has been cleansed by baptism ... and who regulates his life upon the principles laid down by Christ. Not as ordinary bread or ordinary drink do we partake of them but, just as – through the word of God – our saviour Jesus Christ became incarnate and took upon himself flesh and blood for our salvation – so ... the food which has been made the Eucharist ... and which nourishes our flesh and blood by assimilation, is both the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh. The apostles in their memoirs – which are called

# God's Way

**'NOT** by Might  
and not by Power  
but by my Spirit,  
says the Lord  
Sabaoth'

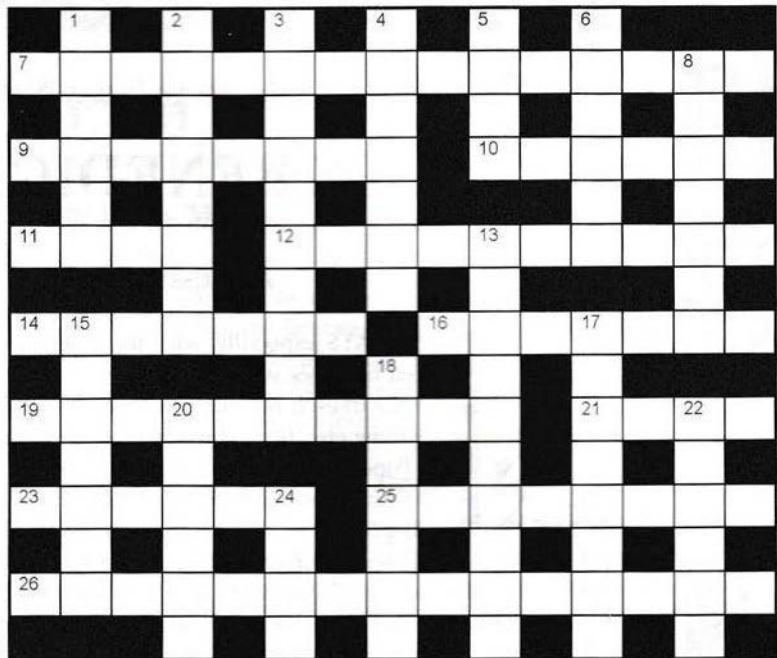
— Zechariah 3,1-4-14

Gospels – have handed down what Jesus ordered them to do; that he took bread and, after giving thanks, said: 'Do this in remembrance of me. This is my body.' In like manner he took also the chalice, gave thanks and said: 'This is my blood ...'

A fragment of St. Justin's statement on the resurrection of the body has come down to us. It should be remembered that, in large part, Justin was speaking to people of a Greek culture, and the Greeks thought poorly of the body. At Athens, when St. Paul spoke of bodily resurrection, they 'laughed' at him. There is profound content in Justin's statement that the human creature is not a 'person' without the body; and that God does not 'begrudge' an eternal reward to the human body.

We must now speak with respect to those who think meanly of the flesh, and say that it is not worthy of the resurrection. But these persons seem to be ignorant of the whole work of God, both of the genesis and formation of man at the first, and why the things in the world were made. For does not (Scripture) say: 'Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness?' ... It is evident, therefore, that man made in the image of God was of flesh. Is it not then absurd to say that the flesh made by God in his own image is contemptible? ... Quite true, they say, yet the flesh is a sinner ... But in what instance can the flesh possibly sin by itself, if it have not the soul going before it and inciting it? ... Would God so neglect his own possession and work that it becomes annihilated ... Should we not call this labour in vain? ... Where God promises to save man, there he gives his promise to the flesh. For what is man but a rational animal composed of body and soul? Is the soul by itself man? No; but it is the soul of man. Would the body be called man? No, but it is called the body of man. Neither of these is by itself 'man', but that which is made up of the two together is called 'man', and God has called 'man' to life and resurrection ...

## ANNALS CRYPTIC CROSSWORD No. 5



### ACROSS CLUES

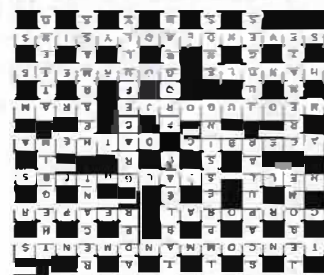
7. "Order men into canvas covers" – instructions given unto Moses? (3,12)
9. Petty Officer in corral with communion cloth (8)
10. see 8 down
11. He will shortly give us a place of damnation (4)
12. Massacres causing sounds of merriment aboard ship (10)
14. Heard a Serb in command is rather viriolic (7)
16. District Attorney in front and graduate behind the fortress in 1 Maccabees 5:9 (7)
19. Medium pitcher, or quarter Jeremiah in place of reported visions of Our Lady (10)
21. A woolgrower is maybe the son of Shem (4)
23. Something to hold the composer of "The Messiah", say (6)
25. I leave grouse Tim cooked for gastronomes (8)
26. Fatal transgressions by Snow White's friends? (5,6,4)

### DOWN CLUES

1. Saint gets Rome to support heartless Jude (6)
2. Scar Paul disguised with part of monastic habit (8)
3. Grim's spine is broken, forcing men into service (10)

4. Drama group able to be covered with Greek letter (7)
5. A red upset in Jewish calendar month (4)
6. Royal Engineers cannot shortly withdraw (6)
8. and 10. across. A fatally indiscriminate harvester (3,4,6)
13. Leaving the confessional in an elegant manner (10)
15. Burn the Maori after whipping cream (7)
17. Attend service and listen to crowd (4,4)
18. Agenda in favour of little weight (7)
20. Considers Old Testament book (6)
22. Give attention to a teetotaler at finish (6)
24. Comes to conclusion in friendship (4)

### SOLUTION TO CRYPTIC NO. 5



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St. Justin goes on to meet a further objection: the soul is of its nature incorruptible; the body is by nature corruptible. Justin answers along the lines: God is not a grudging God. He made the human *one* out of soul and body; he will save the human person as one, exercising his generosity by letting the body transcend its natural limitation.

Justin and six of his disciples were

denounced as Christians by the Cynic Philosopher Crescens, according to Tatian [a disciple of Justin]. When they refused to offer sacrifice to the gods, they were scourged and beheaded in 166 A.D. The official court report of their martyrdom is extant.



FATHER MAX BARRETT is a Redemptorist priest now resident in Sydney.

Next Month: St Irenaeus of Lyons [130-200 A.D.]

One Year on: Radiating Peace, Serenity and Joy

## POPE BENEDICT XVI

By RUSSELL SHAW



OWADAYS especially, with the complexity of our problems, Christianity often becomes so complicated for us that we can no longer see the forest for the trees. It is a matter of being led back to the simple heart of it, not to anything else, but to the essentials – conversion to faith, hope, and love.

Pope Benedict XVI said that a couple of years before becoming pope. The first anniversary of his election came up on April 19. He appears to be living it out.

People have called Benedict surprising. Some mean it as a compliment, others are voicing disappointment. But the surprise in both cases is that he has turned out to be very unlike the pre-election caricatures depicting him as a Grand Inquisitor who would make heads roll.

Still, for those who took the trouble to listen to what Joseph Ratzinger was saying all those years ago, the pontificate of Benedict XVI ought to come as no surprise. This former professor is now hard at work delivering a refresher course on the basics of Christian faith.

If there was any doubt about that, Pope Benedict's first encyclical – *Deus Caritas Est* – should have settled the matter. 'God Is Love' – what could be more basic than that? And unless I miss my guess, Benedict has a compelling reason in mind for making the point.

It's this. Many people today – including many Catholics – have strayed so far from the truth, done such an effective job of closing their ears and hardening their hearts to the word of God and the teaching of the Church, that it's a waste of time that risk being counterproductive to confront them yet again with hard truths. (The Church's teaching about sexual morality is an instance, though hardly the only one.)

So, what's a conscientious pope to do? Another pope might have another answer. Benedict's appears to be: Go back to first principles – God is love – and begin the long, slow process of leading people who've strayed from truth back to the fullness of faith.

Pope Benedict said as much a few weeks ago in his address to the plenary assembly of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which he headed for a quarter-century.

'Jesus Christ, who is the fullness of the truth, draws to himself the heart of each person, enlarges it, and fills it with joy ... Thus, service to the faith, which is a witness to the One who is the entire Truth, is also a service to joy, and this is the joy that Christ desires to spread in the world.'

From this point of view, he told the members and staff of the CDF, your doctrinal ministry can appropriately be defined as "pastoral".

From Lefebvrist on the far right to Hans Kung on the far left, Benedict XVI has pursued a policy of reconciliation. Will this emphasis on love, truth, and joy work? I have no idea, and I suspect Pope Benedict doesn't either. But it probably has more chance of working than the take-no-prisoners approach some conservatives were looking for a year ago.

There's a name for it – Christian. Over lunch a couple of weeks ago after a trip to Rome, I was telling a friend that – as others have remarked – Pope Benedict in person visibly radiates serenity and joy. My friend, a Jewish convert to Catholicism, thought about that for a moment and then said, 'I guess that's what you'd expect a Christian to do, isn't it?'

To which only one answer is possible: I guess it is.





# MEDIA MATTERS

By JAMES MURRAY

## Gerry Mandate

World Youth Day, scheduled for Sydney in 2008, with Pope Benedict plus an estimated 500,000 attending, has inspired a noteworthy piece by Gerard (Sydney Institute) Henderson (*SMH*, April 11).

He began by noting: 'Many histories of Australia downplay, if not ignore, the importance of religion in society since European settlement in 1788.'

Even more emphatically, he concluded: 'Whatever the faults of Christian faiths, it is a fact that Christianity has coexisted with democratic forms of government. This is manifestly not the case with some secular ideologies (that is, communism, fascism) or with some fundamentalist theocracies (that is, Iran under Ayatollah Khomeini).'

Buy that man a new filing cabinet.

## Cole Face

While Royal Commissioner Terence Cole no doubt calls for his pipe, his bowl and his fiddlers three before concentrating on the Gargantuan task of digesting the evidence given at the Australian Wheat Board Limited inquiry, several things are already clear.

First, the commission's terms of reference effectively curtailed the Westminster convention of ministerial responsibility. Second, Australia's international reputation for honest trading has suffered deep harm. Third, *The Australian* newspaper, the chief proprietor of which Rupert Murdoch has often been accused of partiality, was driven by the straight news value of the affair, a factor underestimated by the Howard Coalition and its minders

but not by reporter Caroline Overington who ran first and strongest with the story. Fourth, there is a gap in the pharmaceutical market for a medicine to cure PADSAS (Political Attention Deficit Selective Amnesia Syndrome).

## Downer-ed

Possibly the bravest sufferer of PADSAS has been Alexander Downer: focus of not one but

two editorials in *The Australian*, castigating him as prime mover in the wreck of the AWB road-train.

Yet it must be said that after his short take-off and crash landing as Leader of the Opposition, Downer showed true grit in flying again and reaching the heights as Minister for Foreign Affairs.

After his display of chutzpah under fire from John Agius SC at the Cole Commission can he fly even higher? Unlikely. His reported ambition to be Treasurer is now a wingless wonder. So, too, his ambition to be deputy Prime Minister or even Prime Minister.

A consolation prize as Ambassador to Washington? And pigs will fly over Baghdad. His best bet: The Australian

High Commissionership in London, once held by his father.

Downer junior did carry off a neat play before Cole. He sought to avoid responsibility while refusing to blame his underlings, telling counsel for AWB executives Terry Forrest QC: 'I think they fulfilled their duty, I think they are very professional people.'

Criminals are regularly described as professional.

## Prayers from Prison

WHEN Sir Thomas More, England's greatest mind, and a bright star in the crown of the Catholic Church, was in prison awaiting execution by order of his close friend King Henry VIII, his thoughts turned to his fellow Catholics enduring in Hungary, their first year of occupation by the Turks. His famous *Dialogue of Comfort Against Tribulation* features a Christian prisoner in Hungary. He comments in his *Supplication of Souls* that England's vulnerability to attack (ay from within, more than from without) if the clergy in England, he argued, represent such a small percentage – one four hundredth part – that means that there are sufficient men in England to defend it and one need not fear the Turk 'unless,' More added, 'you suffer to grow among you in great number these Lutherans that favour him.' The Lutherans in those days preferred Turks to Catholics. In much the same way, from the 70s until just recently, the US and the Western Powers, followed by the US and Western media, seemed to prefer a Syrian dictator in formerly democratic Lebanon, to Catholics and other Christians.



## Minchin Dogma

Pragmatists, yes. But philosophers are rare among working politicians. So let us now praise Senator Nick Minchin for profundity in his address to the HR Nicholl's Society.

His quintessence was that more needs to be achieved in the field of industrial relations law. This, however, must be done discreetly because most of the electorate 'violently disagrees' with the new Work Choices legislation.

But, of course. How can the electorate compare with a new Plato from the Athens of the South, Adelaide? And yet, and yet. Senator Minchin's worldview is narrow. He takes no account of the greatest investor-philosopher of the age, Warren Buffet, who plays the market like his ukelele – with a master's touch amplified by his corporate boom box. Berkshire Hathaway (21.5 per cent average return per annum over the last 40 years).

For Senator Minchin, the new Plato to ignore Buffet is akin to the old Plato ignoring the old Aristotle. Buffet's philosophy encompasses what he calls 'Hyper Helpers' – money managers.

'A record portion of the earnings that would go in their entirety to owners – if they all just stayed in their rocking chairs – is now going to a swelling army of Helpers,' he says.

'Particularly expensive is the recent pandemic of profit arrangements under which Helpers receive large portions of the winnings when they are smart or lucky, and leave family members with all the losses – and large fixed fees to boot – when the Helpers are dumb or unlucky (or occasionally crooked).'

Buffet cites his peer in another philosophical field, Sir Isaac Newton, pointing out that if

Newton had not been traumatised by his losses in the South Sea Bubble, he might have discovered the Fourth Law of Motion: returns decrease as motion increases.

His lapidary thought is matched by his view that 'executive compensation in the US is ridiculously out of line with performance'.

Bearing this in mind, Senator Minchin must couple industrial reform at the workplace level

with equivalent reform at the executive-boardroom level. ●r be accused of implying that the latter is a hive of drones, an implication philosophers of jurisprudence may recall when the High Court appraises Work Choices – a name tendentious enough to have been coined by a consultant from what Warren Buffet calls, 'the ever-accommodating firm of Ratchet, Ratchet and Bingo'.

## Centrist Surplus

In a related context, surprising to read of the HR Nicholl's Society criticising the Work Choices laws as 'centrist', and drawing comparison with command economies such as the former Soviet Union – a comparison demonstrating that a right-wing measure taken to extremes becomes in effect a left-wing measure.

Unmentioned by the society was the multi-billion dollar Future Fund which under the management of David Murray and his Board of Guardians will invest government finance. ●f course, the investment will be at arms-length from the government. But the source of funds will be known and will undoubtedly influence (command?) the market.

Incidentally the use of the word guardian is intriguing. In its traditional context, a board of guardians looked after the insane. And there is something insane about over-

## Keep your Sense of Humour

IT was John Calvin, the founder of Calvinism, who wrote a book asking for an inventory of all the relics on Christendom, which was translated into English in 1561. It was this book which gave currency to the often repeated slander, originally spread, it seems, by Erasmus in a dark mood, that if all the relics of the true cross were collected they would fill a large ship: the truth, as usual, was quite other, for someone actually did the computation and found that the major relics were not extensive, and almost all of them were splinters, even though their reliquaries were quite large and beautifully designed.

No one denies that some relics were rather far-fetched. But I fancy that those who claimed in Florence to have the stone with which St Stephen was stoned, were in the same category as the enterprising businessmen these days who market fresh air, or clean water, or fragrant odours. The Florentines were probably desperate and some civic father got the idea that might attract some tourists.

Our mediaeval brethren could laugh at themselves. Why should moderns take as their model a humourless Calvin?



taxation being used to fund public service pension liabilities rather than fine-tuning the tax system while returning surpluses to owners, the taxpayers.

### Feuds and Factions

The rise of pre-selection infighting is not peculiar to the Labor or Liberal parties. Democrats, Greens and other minor parties can also be subject to it, for it is a symptom of the careerism that now inspires so many who climb the greasy pole of politics from within party machines

Those who urge the end of factionalism and its melodramatically defined 'war lords' are talking impossibilities. Factions – or coteries, cliques and cabals – are intrinsic to all organisations including media organisations, not least the Australian Broadcasting Corporation whose grizzled anchor Tony (*Late Line*) Jones led the pack in baying for an end to factioneers. Can't he make a start internally?

### Game Show

The Commonwealth Games in Melbourne were 'simply the best' – simply, on the basis of selective coverage by the Nine Network, the best Commonwealth of Australia Games.

### Brown Study

The trial and acquittal in London of Dan (*Da Vinci Code*) Brown on the charge of plagiarism had the benefit of exposing his working methods, specifically the Internet research by his wife Blythe. She, unfortunately, did not appear to explain her belief that the Catholic Church, which honours Mary as the Mother of God, has suppressed the female principle in religion.

The wide ranging urgency of her research made him less an author of creative originality than her uxorious amanuensis willing, for example, to take in without double checking the Priory of Sion, guardians of the secret that Christ survived crucifixion to marry Mary Magdalene and leave royal issue – all the fiction of a petty conman who wanted to prove he was the rightful, Merovingian king of France with presumably unlimited free travel on the Metro.

Trial reports made no mention of Bertelsmann, parent publisher of Random House which also published *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*, two of whose authors Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh were the plaintiffs in the law suit.

Pity. Any author with a Brownesque or Blythe capacity for wild conspiracies could join the dots between the Nazi hierarchy's quest for a new, anti-Christian, Germanic tribal religion

and Bertelsmann whose World War II activities on behalf of the Nazis included morale boosting pamphlets.

More seriously, it cannot be over emphasised that narratives such as *The Da Vinci Code* derive their power from the truth on which they are parasitic (a) are the first of the sub-genre, the apocryphal and gnostic gospels such as the recently re discovered *Gospel of Judas*.

### Pot Stir

The evidence is in: Mary Jane or marijuana is not benign in its effects: it has deleterious psychological and physical effects. But where are the apologies from the Sixties counter-culture gurus who advocated its use?

And when will the Byron Bay local authorities ban its use as strictly as they intend to ban the rental of beachside houses?

### Blair-itis

Talk about infatuation at first sight. The reaction of local media to the visit of British Prime Minister Tony Blair was so potent it revived the moribund cultural cringe.

Here was a politician caught in the Iraq quick sand where only in its third year are British, limited-warfare tactics, used effectively during the Malayan Emergency and the Indonesian *confrontasi*, being considered by shock'n'awe Americans.

Here was a politician also caught in the petty-cash huckstering of devalued, life peerages. Yet from the tone of local coverage you could have sworn that were he to resign, he could emigrate and become Prime Minister of Australia – under the banner of Liberal Labor or perhaps Laberal.

The Blair ascendancy is yet another example of the British genius for transforming outsiders into insiders. His grandmother was a Red Clydesider who lived in Govan, the guts of Scotland's ship-building industry where the first Soviet Collective outside of Russia was proclaimed. Your correspondent cherishes the notion that he used to deliver milk to her when he was a boy.

### One for Israel

*Paradise Now* – a thriller about a brace of Muslims preparing for a suicide mission into Israel – was nominated for an Oscar in the Best Foreign language category. Deservedly; it was balanced, even sympathetic. Yet none of the comment referred to the fact that the movie was generously financed by the Israel Fund.

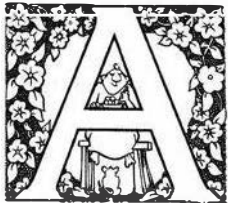
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*If any person kills an apostate... Nothing [i.e. no punishment] ... is incurred by the slayer. – The Hidayah by al-Marghiniani [died 1197 AD].*

## UNDER THE SCIMITAR OF DAMOCLES

By ANDREW G. BOSTOM



ABDUL Rahman faced death at the hands of our Afghan allies for the 'crime' of converting to Christianity. This fate is no fluke, not a brutal Afghan variant on the practice of 'tolerant' Islam. Death for apostasy is part and parcel of Islamic scripture and tradition. When Afghanistan's leading clerics endorse his death, they are on solid ground. Thus, in the wake of appeals by world leaders, including the Pope, even though Mr. Rahman appears to have received a 'dispensation' by the Karzai Government – for 'mental health', or other reasons, unfortunately, he is and remains guilty as per Afghan religious leaders, and Shari'a.

John Ralph Willis, Princeton University Professor of Near Eastern Studies, has described the 'apparent paradox' that jihad wars and razzias (p.343) – rationalized as struggles to liberate men from unbelief – became, through the mass enslavement intrinsic to these campaigns, 'a device to deprive men of freedom.' And freedom, in the Muslim conception, 'being perfect slavery' to Allah, the sole (distant) hope of earthly freedom from the bondage and humiliation of slavery for the subjugated infidel – whose dignity and very legal essence were annihilated by jihad – was to '...incarcerate his spirit in Islam,' and await manumission at the discretion of his Muslim overlord.

Another respected Princeton scholar of Islam, Patricia Crone, has stated bluntly (or one might argue, self-evidently) regarding such jihad enslavement – a major historical modality for Islamization –

... it would be absurd to deny that force played a major role in their [the vanquished infidels] conversion [to Islam].

A strikingly similar 'paradox' of Islam is the ~~contention~~ *compulsion* ~~enforced by~~ *in religion.* Koran 2:256, 'There is ~~no~~ *no* compulsion in religion.' The ~~poignant~~ *poignant* ~~concrete~~ *concrete* ~~travails of Afghan Muslims convert to Christianity~~ *travails of Afghan Muslims convert to Christianity* ~~Abdul Rahman illustrate~~ *Abdul Rahman illustrate* another uniquely Islamic fusion of absurdity and denial: ~~in light of Koran~~ *in light of Koran* 2:256 and repeated ~~claims that Islam~~ *claims that Islam*

is characterized by freedom of belief and creed, devoid of compulsion, why has apostasy from Islam always been punished so harshly, for thirteen centuries, into the present era?

Ibn Warraq's seminal 2003 study of apostasy, *Leaving Islam* (p.31), distinguishes transient doubt – edified by discovering the 'truth' of Islam – from apostasy:

Doubt is a very good passageway, but a very bad place to stop in. However, apostasy is a matter of ~~reason~~ *reason* and ideological treachery, which originates from hostility and hypocrisy. The destiny of a person who has an ~~Islamic handicap~~ *Islamic handicap* is different from the ~~desire~~ *desire* of one whose hand should be cut off due to the development of a ~~dangerous~~ *dangerous* and infectious disease. The ~~apostasy~~ *apostasy* of a Muslim individual whose ~~parents~~ *parents* have also been Muslim is a very ~~incurable~~ *incurable*, dangerous and incurable ~~disease~~ *disease* that appears in the body of an ~~animal~~ *animal* (people) and threatens peoples lives, and that is why this rotten limb should be severed.

And punishment by death for apostasy from Islam is firmly rooted in the most holy Muslim texts – both the Koran, and the hadith – as well as the sacred Islamic Law (the Shari'a). Koran 2:89 states:

They desire that you should ~~disbelieve~~ *disbelieve* as they have disbelieved, so that you might be (all) alike; therefore take not from among them friends until they fly (their homes) in Allah's way; but if they turn back, then seize them and kill them wherever you find them, and take not from among them a friend or a helper.

One of the most authoritative Koranic commentators, Baydawi (d. 1315/16) interprets this passage thus:

'Whosoever turns back from belief (irtada), openly or secretly, take him and kill him wheresoever ye find him, like any other infidel. Separate yourself from him altogether. Do not accept intercession in his regard' (cited in

### Omar Sharif: Death Threat for being an 'Apostate'

A message on a website linked to al-Qaida has threatened death to the veteran Egyptian actor Omar Sharif after he played St Peter in an Italian TV film, in remarks widely reported in Italy earlier this month, the 73-year-old actor, a convert to Islam, said he had 'seemed to hear voices' during the filming of St Peter, a two-part mini-series shown last week. Sharif was quoted as saying: 'Playing Peter was so important for me that even now I can only speak about it with difficulty. It will be difficult for me to play other roles from now on.' The Italian news agency *Adnkronos International* said that a message on a web forum used in the past by al-Qaida had a link to a site carrying the threat. 'Omar Sharif has stated that he has embraced the crusader idolatry,' it said. 'He is a crusader who is offending Islam and Muslims and receiving applause from the Italian people. I give you this advice, brothers, you must kill him.'

– John Hooper, 'St Peter Role Prompts Death Threat' in *The Guardian* October 31, 2005.

Zwemer, *The Law of Apostasy in Islam*, 1924, pp. 33-34).

Ibn Kathir's (d. 1373) venerated commentary on Koran 4:89 concurs, maintaining that as the unbelievers have manifested their unbelief, they should be punished by death. These draconian judgments are reiterated in a number of hadith (i.e. collections of the putative words and deeds of the Muslim prophet Muhammad, as compiled by pious transmitters). For example, Muhammad is reported to have said 'Kill him who changes his religion' in hadith collections of both Bukhari and Abu Dawud. There is also a consensus by all four schools of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence (i.e. Maliki, Hanbali, Hanafi, and Shafi'i), as well as Shi'ite jurists, that apostates from Islam must be put to death. Averroes (d. 1198), the renowned philosopher and scholar of the natural sciences, who was also an important Maliki jurist, provided this typical Muslim legal opinion on the punishment for apostasy (vol. 2, p. 552):

An apostate ... is to be executed by agreement in the case of a man, because of the words of the Prophet, 'Slay those who change their din [religion]? ... Asking the apostate to repent was stipulated as a condition ... prior to his execution.

The contemporary (i.e. 1991) Al-Azhar (Cairo) Islamic Research Academy-endorsed Shafi'i manual of Islamic Law, *Umdat al-Salik* (pp. 595-96) states:

Leaving Islam is the ugliest form of unbelief (kufr) and the worst ... When a person who has reached puberty and is sane voluntarily apostasizes from Islam, he deserves to be killed. In such a case, it is obligatory ... to ask him to repent and return to Islam. If he does it is accepted from him, but if he refuses, he is immediately killed.

Finally, Warraq (p.19) summarizes the means by which convicted apostates have been killed, typically by the sword (i.e. beheading)

... though there are examples of apostates tortured to death, or strangled, burned, drowned, impaled, or flayed. The Caliph Umar [d. 644] used to tie them to a post and had lances thrust into their hearts, and the [Mameluke] Sultan Baybars II (1308-09) made [their] torture legal.

Thus even if Mr. Rahman gets a 'dispensation' by the Karzai Government – for 'mental health', or other reasons, unfortunately, he is and remains

## Miracles – When Disbelief was not held to be a Privilege

THE Fathers wrote for contemporaries, not for the eighteenth or nineteenth century, not for modern notions and theories, for distant countries, for a degenerate people and a disunited Church. They did not foresee that evidence would become a science, that doubt would be thought a merit, and disbelief a privilege; that it would be in favour and condescension to them if they were credited, and in charity that they were accounted honest. They did not feel that man was so self-sufficient, and so rappy in his prospects for the future, that he might reasonably sit at home closing his ears to all reports of Divine interpositions till they were actually brought before his eyes, and faith was superseded by sense; they did not so disgrace the Spouse of Christ as to imagine that she could be accounted by professing Christians a school of error, and a workshop of fraud and imposture. They wrote with confidence that they were Christians, and that those to whom they transmitted the Gospel would not call them the ministers of Antichrist.

– John Henry Cardinal Newman, *Two Essays on Biblical and Ecclesiastical Miracles*, 1918 ed. Longmans Green and Co. London.

guilty as per Afghan religious leaders, and Shari'a. As such, once released from prison, should any pious Afghan Muslim kill him (heeding the calls of local Afghan clerics), according to the Hanafi school of jurisprudence (which prevails in Afghanistan), specifically the important legal text *The Hidayah* by al-Marghiniani (d. 1197).

If any person kills an apostate ... Nothing [i.e. no punishment] ... is incurred by the slayer. At this stage, perhaps the only way to assure that Mr. Rahman avoids a tragic and gruesome fate ('We will call on the people to pull him into pieces so there's nothing left,' maintained Abdul Raouf a 'moderate' cleric jailed for his previous

opposition to the Taliban), is to find sanctuary for him outside of Afghanistan.

For a decade, three courageous, prescient scholars – Ibn Warraq, David Littman, and Bat Ye'or – have warned about the grave dangers posed by Shari'a-based 'human rights' constructs, such as the 1990 Cairo Declaration (i.e. the so-called Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Islam, to which all member states [now 57] of the Organization of the Islamic Conference – including 'secular' Turkey – are signatories). Indeed the intrepid Senegalese jurist Adama Dieng (a Muslim, who subsequently became a United Nations special rapporteur), then serving as secretary-general to the International Commission of Jurists, declared forthrightly in February 1992 that the Cairo Declaration, under the rubric of the Shari'a,

... gravely threatens the inter-cultural consensus on which the international human rights instruments are based; introduces, in the name of the defense of human rights, an intolerable discrimination against both non-Muslims and women; reveals a deliberately restrictive character in regard to certain fundamental rights and freedoms, to the point that certain essential provisions are below the legal standard in effect in a number of Muslim countries; [and] confirms the legitimacy of practices, such as corporal punishment, that attack the integrity and dignity of the human being. And distracting, fatuous conceptions such as 'Extreme Shari'a' are mere



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## 'Tablighi Jamaat' – Islamic Fifth Column

EVERY fall, over a million almost identically dressed, bearded Muslim men from around the world descend on the small Pakistani town of Raiwind for a three-day celebration of faith. Similar gatherings take place annually outside of Dhaka, Bangladesh, and Bhopal, India. These pilgrims are no ordinary Muslims, though; they belong to a movement called Tablighi Jamaat ("Proselytizing Group"). They are trained missionaries who have dedicated much of their lives to spreading Islam across the globe. The largest group of religious proselytizers of any faith, they are part of the reason for the explosive growth of Islamic religious fervor and conversion. Despite its size, worldwide presence, and tremendous importance, Tablighi Jamaat remains largely unknown outside the Muslim community, even to many scholars of Islam. This is no coincidence. Tablighi Jamaat officials work to remain outside of both media and governmental notice. Tablighi Jamaat neither has formal organizational structure nor does it publish details about the scope of its activities, its membership, or its finances. By eschewing open discussion of politics and portraying itself only as a pietistic movement, Tablighi Jamaat works to project a non-threatening image. The prominent Deobandi cleric and scholar Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Kandhalawi (1885-1944) launched Tablighi Jamaat in 1927 in Mewat, India, not far from Delhi. From its inception, the extremist attitudes that characterize Deobandism permeated Tablighi philosophy. Ilyas's followers were intolerant of other Muslims and especially Shi'ites, let alone adherents of other faiths. Indeed, part of Ilyas's impetus for founding Tablighi Jamaat was to counter the inroads being made by Hindu missionaries. They rejected modernity as antithetical to Islam, excluded women, and preached that Islam must subsume all other religions.

—Alex Alexiev, 'Tablighi Jamaat; Jihad's Stealthy Legions,' *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2005.

enervating delusions which do nothing to combat this growing, lethal threat to the most fundamental rights of free societies. Invoking the difficult lessons learned from Cold War experiences, David Littman stated with the requisite moral clarity that

... only a firm and uncompromising stand on the most fundamental questions can bring about the effective implementation of the ideals set forth in the International Bill of Human Rights. Diplomatically correct words and gestures are not enough.

More than 80 years ago, in his 1924 *The Law of Apostasy in Islam*, Samuel Zwemer made these observations, still depressingly relevant today, and extending beyond the 'Near East', to the entire Muslim world:

The story is told that Damocles, at the court of Dionysius of Sicily, pronounced the latter the happiest man on earth. When, however, Damocles was permitted to sit on the royal throne, he perceived a sword hanging by a horse-hair over his head. The imagined felicity vanished, and he begged Dionysius to remove him from his seat of peril. Today [circa 1924] we read of new mandates, of liberty, and of promised equality

to minorities under Moslem rule; and newspapers assert that a new era has come to the Near East. Economic development, intellectual awakening, reforms, constitutions, parliaments and promises. Does the sword of Damocles, however, still hang over the head of each convert from Islam to Christianity? Is the new Islam more tolerant than the old? Will the lives and property of converts be protected, and the rights of minorities be respected?

Again and again has European pressure, aided by a few educated Orientals, endeavored to secure equality before the law for all religions and races in the Near East. But as often as the attempt was made it proved a failure, each new failure more ghastly than the last. The reason is that the conscience and the faith of the most sincere and upright Moslems are bound up with the Koran and the Traditions. Civilization cannot eradicate deep-seated convictions. Rifles and ironclads, the cafe, the theatre, written constitutions, representative parliaments; none of these reach far below the surface. A truer freedom ... than the one supplied by their own faith, must come before Moslems can

enter into the larger liberty which we enjoy.

Denial or obfuscation of the role played by the very essence of Islam – by Shari'a – will never remove this murderous scimitar of Damocles hanging over the heads of hapless 'apostates' such as Abdul Rahman, and others, perhaps untold thousands, if not more, like him, throughout the Muslim world. And burgeoning, often irredentist Muslim populations in the West, especially Western Europe, have established de facto Islamic colonies within their host countries, punctuated by demands for local jurisdiction under Shari'a Law.

Should nothing be done to desacralize the Shari'a and divorce it entirely from the governance of civil societies, future Western generations, may face the same brutal application of Shari'a punishments for 'apostasy', or as the Danish cartoon jihad demonstrated, for 'blaspheming' the Muslim Prophet Muhammad. If that frightening scenario unfolds, Westerners may be forced to experience Mr. Rahman's current dire predicament – to paraphrase (albeit inelegantly) John Donne: 'Do not ask over whom the scimitar hangs, it hangs over thee.'

[\*For three simultaneous translations of Koran 4:89, see here:

**YUSUFALI:** They but wish that ye should reject Faith, as they do, and thus be on the same footing (as they): But take not friends from their ranks until they flee in the way of Allah (from what is forbidden). But if they turn renegades, seize them and slay them wherever ye find them; and (in any case) take no friends or helpers from their ranks.

**PICKTHAL:** They long that ye should disbelieve even as they disbelieve, that ye may be upon a level (with them). So choose not friends from them till they forsake their homes in the way of Allah; if they turn back (to enmity) then take them and kill them wherever ye find them, and choose no friend nor helper from among them.

**SHAKIR:** They desire that you should disbelieve as they have disbelieved, so that you might be (all) alike; therefore take not from among them friends until they fly (their homes) in Allah's way; but if they turn back, then seize them and kill them wherever you find them, and take not from among them a friend or a helper.]



ANDREW G. BOSTON is the author of *The Legacy of Jihad*.

## BOOK REVIEW

*Can a medium so expedient, so venal in its financial ongoings provide a moral compass?*

# LIGHTS, CAMERA: DEBATE ON FILMS AND MORALITY

*Reviewed by* JAMES MURRAY



One writes with more knowledge and enthusiasm about movies than the author, Peter Malone, reverend doyen of reviewers.

He is not merely a movie buff, however, he is a philosopher of film, fossicking through movies to find shining, spiritual nuggets in a way reminiscent of Shakespeare's Touchstone in *As You Like It*, who 'found tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones and good in everything'.

Yet at least half of all movies are profit-driven, conveyor-belt dreck, dross or worse. Only once, by mentioning 'money-men', does Peter Malone allude to the financial side of what is less an art form than an industry. The greatest of the old Hollywood dream factories was Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer with its 'more stars than heaven', roaring lion and motto, *Ars Gratia Artis* – Art for the Sake of Art.

Humbug. MGM, like the other Hollywood studios operated mainly on the basis of *Hokum Gratia Pecuniarum* – Hokum for the Sake of Money as witness Tinseltown's current shonks and scamsters, not to mention budget-padders, money-launders and an accountancy system so impenetrable that even films highly successful at the box-office may never show a profit share to creators low on the money-tree.

Among Peter Malone's chapters is *Priests on a Pedestal – and Priests Toppled*. In this he describes how the likes of Spencer Tracy, Pat O'Brien, Gregory Peck and Bing Crosby played amiable priests and how such roles have shifted to something less amiable, a shift he explains on the basis of the scandal of sexual abuse by clerics without pointing out its relatively limited scale

### *Can Movies Be a Moral Compass?*

By Peter Malone.

St Pauls Publishing rrp (UK pounds) 7.99.

and the social context of laissez-faire (Hollywoodian?) sexuality in which it was perpetrated.

This is part of the work's benign tone. Occasionally Peter Malone does show that a sharp wit lies beneath the accentuation of the positive, elimination of the negative. Not every critic shares his benevolence. In *Hollywood VS America* (1993), Michael Medved has a chapter entitled *Comic Book Clergy* in which he excoriates Hollywood's shift in attitude from the benign.

'In the last fifteen years, Hollywood has swung to the opposite extreme – presenting a view of the clergy that is every bit as one-sided in its cynicism and hostility as the old treatment may have been idealised and saccharine.'

He adds: 'As the world's single most visible and powerful religious institution,

the Roman Catholic Church has provided a convenient focus for the anti-clerical impulse in Hollywood.'

To support his contention, he cites a list of movies that begins with *The Runner Stumbles* (1979) and ends with *Black Robe* (1991). It is not necessary to agree with each of his assessments to admit the pertinence of his general verdict: 'The most important point to keep in mind about all these movies and their grim and skeptical view of the Church of Rome is that their negativity is never answered by simultaneous releases that offer sympathetic treatment of Catholicism.'

Medved, as does Peter Malone, praises *Romero* (1989), director John Duigan's movie about the martyr for justice Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador. But Medved criticises the movie's 'propagandistic messages that are totally in line with "politically correct" thinking in the film capital' while pointing out it was produced independently by the Paulist priest, Ellwood 'Bud' Kaiser, who raised 'private Catholic support' to make it.

Neither, incidentally, mentions Maurice Cloche's *Monsieur Vincent* (1949), starring Pierre Fresnay as St Vincent de Paul, perhaps the greatest movie of sanctity in action ever filmed.

Michael Medved is Jewish. Some may argue that here and elsewhere he displays a stricter than Pauline rigour in his criticism. Intriguingly, however, Graham Greene, no puritan, relates an anecdote in his introduction to *The Pleasure Dome*, a collection of his film criticism that shows how ingrained is Hollywood's attitude to Catholicism.

Greene had worked with producer David O Selznick on the movie version of *The Third Man*. Years later, Selznick invited him to lunch to discuss a new project: the life of St Mary Magdalene. Greene ate the lunch but refused the

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project. Selznick didn't argue. 'I have another idea,' he said. 'It will appeal to you as a Catholic. You know how next year they have what's called the Holy Year in Rome. Well, I want to make a picture called The Unholy Year. It will show all the commercial rackets that go on, the crooks ...'

'An interesting idea,' I said.

'We'll shoot it in the Vatican.'

'I doubt if they will give you permission for that.'

'Oh, sure they will,' he said. 'You see, we'll write in one *Good Character*.'

*One Good Character.* There you have Hollywood's attitude summed up: ambivalent expediency rather than malign antipathy. Peter Malone may well take a different view. In his *Afterword*, he writes of what he defines as the 'dialogue between movies and morality.'

'I have been able to listen to a great deal of feedback and critique which, I hope, I have absorbed. Another source of feedback has been the interviews with film directors, especially Australian directors, hearing of their approaches to values – and their spirituality.'

It would have been fascinating to read more on this topic. Meantime, he also reveals that he has been working on what he calls, 'A Movie Lectionary'

## More than Coincidence?

WHEN Napoleon heard reports of the Pope's preparedness to excommunicate him, he replied: 'Does he think that the world has gone back a thousand years? Does he suppose the weapons will fall from the hands of my soldiers?' Two years later, in 1812, they did when the *Grande Armée* fell victim to the horrors of a Russian winter and was almost completely destroyed. Sir Archibald Alison [1792-1867], a Protestant historian commented 'there is something in these marvellous coincidences beyond the operation of chance'.

involving the linking of a popular movie with the Sunday Gospel readings and titled, *Lights, Camera? Faith!*

'With over 200 movies considered for the three volumes, I am convinced that there is a fruitful dialogue between movies and the biblical texts and themes. In the United States similar books and

guides have proliferated meaning that this approach makes a great deal of religious sense and talks the language that people are comfortable with. It also meant that we have been exploring *Lights Camera Faith* for the Ten Commandments and more recently, *The Beatitudes and the Seven Deadly Sins*.'

He concludes by answering the question posed by his title: 'Yes, I do believe, strongly, that movies can be moral and spiritual compasses.'

Which raises another question: How can a medium so expedient, not to say venal in its industrial and financial origins provide a moral compass? At best, surely, it provides a compass rose – the card on which the cardinal points, north, south, east and west, are set out with every other point in between.

This works only with a compass needle that swings to true north. In other words, a reviewer and cineaste with the informed conscience and depth of knowledge of a Peter Malone, particularly when he is using his sharper needle.



JAMES MURRAY is a Glasgow-born Catholic. A Sydney-based writer his career includes ten years in Fleet Street and contributes to Australia's major publications. He writes *Annals* film reviews, and is the author of our ever-popular *Media Matters*.



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## New World

Opens with a sequence of lyrical foreboding: a flotilla of small sailing ships enters a river estuary. On shore the native inhabitants flit from tree to tree, watching in wonder

The year is 1607. William Shakespeare is still thriving. And writer/director Terrence Malick has a subject that Shakespeare could have envied: the romance between Captain John Smith (Colin Farrell) of the Virginia Company and Pocahontas (Q'Orianka Kilcher), a romance that helped to make America, still, for all its faults, the last, best hope of the world.

Malick and his team do not recreate the past for us. They make us time-travellers to it, its foreignness and crudity, savagery and beauty, not least by filming in natural light and in the original location where the first settlement, Jamestown, was established.

Farrell, all beard, swagger and glower, is adequate to his role. Q'Orianka Kilcher, a teenager of South American Indian ancestry, is revelatory as Pocahontas (meaning Playful One) who, abandoned by Smith, is christened Rebecca and transformed through marriage to a settler John Rolfe (Christian Bale).

She becomes a new Eve journeying from her Eden to London and its awesome palaces yet for all her elegance still carrying the pristine aura of her past.

In her, Terrence Malick has found a guiding star for another of his masterclass movies, movies that revalidate a medium adulterated by too much sleazoid dross and chronic sequelitis.

MA 15+ ★★★★★ NFFV

## Separate Lies

Begins as one of those *House Beautiful* movies, set somewhere in England's Home Counties. But in an early, shocking twist actor/writer Julian Fellowes, making his debut as director, cracks the idyll to show the moral ambiguity within.

His superlative cast includes Tom Wilkinson, Emily Watson and Rupert Everett playing the classic triangle of uptight husband, dissatisfied wife and the cad who bounds between them with fatal results.

## MOVIES

By JAMES MURRAY

Fellowes based his script on the Nigel Balchin novel *A Way through the Wood*. The result is reminiscent of Graham Greene's *The End of the Affair*. But where Greene was explicit about the redemption, Fellowes is discreet, indicating his moral intent in his opening sequence showing a beautiful house with a cross perched on one of its gables – an architectural device rarely, if ever seen, in the Home Counties.

M ★★★★★ NFFV

## Lassie

Even the dog over-acts in this new version of Eric Knight's 1940 novel, *Lassie Come Home*. But that may be because it's trying to keep up with that old dog Peter O'Toole displaying more acting tricks than a wagon load of monkeys as an aristocrat dividing his time between a Yorkshire place (Pudding Palace?) and a Scottish place (Haggis Castle?).

Writer/director Charles Sturridge tops memories of 10 feature movies and more than 600 half-hour TV episodes by emphasising the grittiness of the original Yorkshire mining village location and the World War II period. Moreover modern technology enables him to go beyond Hollywood backlots into the haunted, majestic harshness of the Scottish Highlands for Lassie's epic journey home.

And Sturridge assembles a strong cast to match those Highlands, starting with Jonathan Mason as Joe Carraclough, Lassie's owner. Unlike previous child actors Elizabeth Taylor and Roddy McDowell who looked as if they'd been brought up on milk, honey and Mars bars, Mason has the pinched look of a sparrow during a hard winter. Samantha Morton and John Lynch play his parents with a similar downcast but brave air.

To add comic charm to the drama, Sturridge casts members of what might be called The Anglo-Scottish Film Repertory Company such as Robert Hardy, Edward Fox, Kelly Macdonald and Gregor Fisher.

Peter Dinklage gives the dog a chance to rest by dominating scenes as Rowlie,

the travelling puppeteer. All in all this version is so convincing, you feel like sending the dog, well, what about a can of Chum in the shape of an Oscar?

PG ★★★★★ SFFV

## Ice Age: The Meltdown

They're back: Ray Romano, John Leguizamo, Denis Leary. The trio are in splendid voice as Manny, the Woolly Mammoth, Sid, the Sloth and Diego, the Sabre Toothed Tiger. Add Queen Latifah as the voice of a female mammoth, Ellie (who thinks she's a possum), and you have a quartet fit to tackle all the comical perils nature throws at them.

For Disney take-over reasons, the name of the production company may have changed from Pixar to Blue Sky but the high-definition computer cartooning remains.

G ★★★★★ SFFV

## She's the Man

One of Hollywood's working rules is, when in doubt reach for the collected works of William Shakespeare. Director Andy Fickman and his writing team, Ewan Leslie, Karen McCullah Lutz and Kirsten Smith do, and come up with a lively update of *Twelfth Night*.

Amanda Bynes is Viola Hastings who impersonates her twin brother Sebastian (James Kirk) to win a place in the Ulyria Prep football team. There she learns to bend it like Beckham under the hard eye of coach Dinklage (Vinnie Jones, an ex-pro footballer) and the admiring eyes of Duke (Channing Tatum) and Olivia (Laura Ramsey).

The comedy of gender switching works as brilliantly for today's popcorn munchers as it did for yesterday's orange-eating groundlings. Bynes in particular is more bubbly than a magnum of Bollinger and it is possible to imagine Shakespeare's ghost giving her and her fellow mummies a round of applause.

PG ★★★★★ SFFV

## Last Holiday

Is this the ultimate re-make? Directed by Wayne Wang, written by Jeffrey Price and Peter S Seaman, it is said to be based on a script by JB Priestley. No mention, however, of the movie of the same title in which Alec Guinness starred back in 1950.

Hence the ultimate tag: the understated Guinness part of a character having a last fling before dying is taken by the ebullient Queen Latifah.

She plays Georgie Byrd, a choir singer and kitchenware salesperson in St Louis who on being diagnosed with a fatal illness decides to whoop it up and move into Central Europe's grandest of grand mountain hotels, Hotel Pupp (appropriately pronounced Poop).

There Latifah turns on the glamour to such effect she makes the greatest of her co-stars, Gerard Depardieu, playing a chief, looking like an underdone cod. As for Timothy Hutton, playing her tycoon former boss: stunned mullet time.

The Guinness version ended blackly. Queen Latifah, being unquenchable, her version ends in a blaze of romance in which every snowflake seems to be heart-shaped.

PG ★★★★★ SFFV

### Neil Young: Heart of Gold

Director Jonathan Demme pays tribute to singer-songwriter Neil Young in this beautifully paced documentary, shot in Nashville's Ryman Auditorium during the premiere of Young's *Prairie Wind* concert last year.

As well as the title song, Young performs other great ballads from his repertoire including the profound, *When God Made Me*. Among those who match his skills on stage are his wife Pegi Young, Emmylou Harris and bandleader/steel guitarist Ben Keith.

Young makes it clear that the prairie he is singing about is the Canadian prairie where he was born. His highly individualistic style is complemented by his group's backing music and vocals. The result is a musical documentary that makes you realise how deeply rooted country and western music is in the ballads of England, Scotland and Ireland.

In particular, Neil Young's nasal delivery, characteristic of so many contemporary singers including U2's Bono, reminds us of William Hazlitt's description of the street singers of Dublin more than two hundred years ago, though Young and Bono are on better money than the pennies earned by the street singers.

PG ★★★★★ SFFV

### Official Classifications key

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

### Annals supplementary advice

SFFV: Suitable For Family Viewing  
NFFV: Not For Family Viewing

### Where the Truth Lies

Writer/director Atom Egoyan's punning title is the key to his theme: surface veneers can hide knotty reality. He takes us into the public performance and private lives of madcap clown Lanny Morris (Kevin Bacon) and straightman Vince Collins (Colin Firth) who mysteriously split at the height of their Las Vegas fame in the 1950s.

Catalyst for their brief off-stage re-engagement in the here and now is writer Karen O'Connor (Alison Lohman), seeking the true reason for their split after Vince signs a million-dollar contract okaying a book.

Egoyan, usually a director of great discretion, does not spare the lubricious details of Lanny and Vince's intermingled private life. Bacon and Firth, each playing against type, give performances that should have seen them pulling out their thank-you lists at the Oscars.

Second thought: Bacon does not play against type; he has no type only the ability to play the widest range of characters. Lohman initially seems too young for her part. But she goes on to display a kind of frail fortitude as she strays to the wrong side of objectivity in pursuit of the truth.

The sense you get of a showbiz legend being enacted is well founded. Egoyan's script is based on the novel by Rupert Holmes who went closer to identifying the duo. Hint: not Bud Abbott and Lou Costello.

MA 15+ ★★★★★ NFFV

### Hidden

Juliette Binoche and Daniel Auteuil, at the top of their game play Anne, a publisher, and Georges, a TV book pundit. What could be cosier? Add a son Pierrot and you appear to have the makings of a breakfast cereal commercial.

In the world of writer/director Michael Haneke, however, all is not what it appears. The present indicative of Anne and Georges is invaded by the past imperfect, an invasion triggered by the receipt of videotapes indicating they seem to be under surveillance, and giving clues as to their origin.

The trouble with this psychological thriller is that Haneke is not content with mystification. In so far as his impenetrability allows us to discern, he seems to be into collective guilt.

M ★★★★★ NFFV

### Two for the Money

So many times has Al Pacino played Mephistopheles to the naive that he could do the part in his sleep. And probably has. But not here, because director DJ Caruso and writer Dan Coker have created such an eye-opening environment for him - a cable TV show that tips winners for high-stakes gamblers.

Pacino is the show's producer/anchor, Walter Abrams. He discovers Brandon Lang (Matthew McConaughey), an ex-footballer with an instinct for tipping winners. Will Brandon really succumb to the wealth and life-style Walter offers? Will Walter's wife Toni (Rene Russo) succumb to Brandon's easy charm or remain faithful to Walter who Pacino makes as go-go as a mad March hare - or a battery-powered rabbit in a TV commercial?

M ★★★★★ NFFV

### American Dreamz

Writer/director Paul Weitz bounces his satirical comedy off the never-ending quest for instant celebrity, focused on the eponymous top-rating, Idolesque show, anchored by Martin Tweed (Hugh Grant).

Into his gravity field come any number of wannabes. They include a milkshake and venom blonde Sally Kendoo (Mandy Moore) with a soldier boyfriend William Williams (Chris

Klein), Jewish cantor, rap artist Sholem (Adam Busch) and hapless terrorist songster, Omer (Sam Colzari).

In seeking to fulfil their ambitions, they become involved in a plot to assassinate the US president Joe Staton (Dennis Quaid).

Crant does a compelling turn, giving Tweed a mordant edge somewhere between the posh David Frost and the plebian Eddie McGuire. Quaid's president is not dumb, merely a donkey into a second stint for which it doesn't have the stamina.

Like much effective satire, this one skips lightly just above reality, in this case the war on terrorism. It even suggests a method of smuggling plastic explosives that could have air travellers being required to spit out their chewing gum before boarding.

Some may find comedy in the midst of terror unseemly. But tell that to the marines. Or the fatwa mullahs.

M ★★☆☆☆ SFFV

### Aeon Flux

Is Peter Chung's animated character given human dimensions by Charlize Theron, her normally blonde hair black enough to have been shined with Kiwi boot polish and the rest of her sculpted from candied honey so that she looks like the offspring of James Bond and Emma Peel.

Remote offspring. Her character lives in the year 2415 in a walled, city state, Bregna, that is not as perfect as it looks. Its ruler is Trevor Goodchild (Marton Czokas) who Aeon is ordered to kill by The Handler (Frances McDormand in a red-fright wig that may be a subliminal plug for Ronald McDonald and his burgers).

Aeon hesitates to kill, sensing a mysterious link with Trevor ... All sci-fi hokum, of course: balletic fisticuffs, impossible escapes, beathtaking stunts. For her locations director Karyn (*Girlfight*) Kusama relies not on the expected computerised backgrounds but the structures of the Bahaui period (1919-28) including Berlin's Maria Regina Martyrum building and Potsdam's Schloss Sans Souci and Buga Park – so powerfully elegant you are tempted to forget the actors and admire the architecture.

M ★★☆☆☆ NFFV

### Cry Wolf

Director/co-writer Jeff Wadlow and producer/co-writer Beau Bauman have put together a thriller of great technical proficiency befitting two graduates of the Southern Californiana School of Cinema-Television. But their slick edits and sudden flashbacks are like hundreds and thousands sprinkled on a stale bun.

Their plot involves a group of students at a private school who form a Liars Club, headed by Dodger (Lindy Booth). She and the rest of cast, including Jon Bon Jovi, have talent to spare. But they should not have spared it for this one – unless at dire risk of eviction for non-payment of rent. The shock, horror and gore are predictable when they hook their lies into a real-life local murder.

M ★★☆☆☆ NFFV

### The Weather Man

David Spritz (Nicholas Cage) is the weather man, orchestrating forecast,

for a TV station in Chicago where winds blow strong and ice forms on the Great Lakes. Yet nothing in the weather patterns matches the trough of low pressure that is his life. He is divorced and his ex-wife Noreen (Hope Davis) treats him with the benign contempt of a woman who has found someone else less endearing but steadier. His son (Nicholas Hoult) and daughter (Gemmenne De La Pena) have their problems. His father Robert (Michael Caine), a Pulitzer Prize winning author, is old and ailing.

Working from a Steven Conrads script, director Gore Verbinski draws from Cage an extraordinary characterisation of an on-camera virtuoso of the isobars who is hapless in life. But not quite hopeless. He even – frabjous prospect – gets the opportunity to join Bryant Gumbel (played by Bryant Gumbel) on a New York morning show called *Hello, America*.

MA 15+ ★★☆☆☆ NFFV

### The Pink Panther

Blake Edwards, creator of the original franchise which starred Peter Sellers, alive and dead, as Inspector Clouseau, gets a credit on this one. But it lacks the breakneck pace and spontaneity which made the Edwards-Sellers Clouseau a chain reaction of hilarious accidents waiting to happen.

The reason? Steve Martin not only stars as Clouseau nouveau, he co-wrote the script with Len Blum and is credited as executive producer. Did someone say something about too many credits spoiling the comedy? Martin insists on stopping the action for special bits like his American accent lessons. He even includes that ploy of desperate classroom clowns: a flatulence joke.

Kevin Kline abets as Clouseau's boss; the great French heavy, Jean Reno, plays Clouseau's partner. Emily Mortimer, having shown she can play very English and very Scots is very French. Clive Owen, once tipped as the new James Bond, takes cameo revenge by playing Agent 006, in the movie's funniest sequence.

PG ★★☆☆☆ SFFV

### Inside Man

Usually speed of execution is the hallmark of classic heist movies. Not in director Spike Lee's effort, based on a

## Ahead on Points?

'Pour me a stiff one,' said Mike to bartender "I just had another fight with the little woman".

'Oh, oh,' from bartender. 'how did this one end?'

'When it was over,' said Mike, 'She came to me on her hands and knees.'

'Really', the bartender gasped, 'quite a switch! What did she say?'

She said, 'Come out from under the bed, you chicken.'

script by Russell Gewirtz. They build slow tension from the ramifications of their plot, Clive Owen being darkly brilliant as the mastermind Dalton Russell.

Against him are arrayed the NYPD Emergency Services Unit led by Captain John Darius (Willem Dafoe) and a detective Keith Frazier (Denzel Washington) as well as his partner Bill Mitchell (Chiwetel Ejiofor). Between them is Madeline White (Jodie Foster) a New York power broker with links to the city mayor and to the heist bank's president Arthur Case (Christopher Plummer).

Theirs is the kind of ensemble playing that deserves a special group Oscar. And so clever is the plot that Owen opens the movie by revealing its resolution. But he does this in a way more cryptic than any crossword so that you may well be still surprised at the ending.

MA 15+ ★★★★★ NFFV

### Little Manhattan

Does not go on as it begins – with a bout of classroom projectile vomiting to symbolise that this romantic comedy is about lovesickness among sub-teen schoolchildren.

Fortunately the husband and wife team of director Mark Levine and scriptwriter Jennifer Flackett allow the charm and talent of Gabe (Josh Hutcherson) and Rosemary (Charlie Ray) full play. He is a chunky, regular kid living with his estranged Pop (Bradley Whitford) and Mom (Cynthia Nixon) in a cramped apartment. She is long-haired, slim, and lives an idyllic life in a spacious apartment overlooking Central Park.

Think Romeo and Juliet, separated by real estate snobbery rather than a family feud, whose encounters of consequence take place in karate class.

Levine and Flackett work some neat fantasy into the romance and Hutcherson carries the movie in a state of freckled bewilderment matched by his laconic voice-over.

G ★★★★★ SFFV

### Firewall

Jack Stanfield (Harrison Ford) is a computer whiz working for a bank. Into his life comes Bill Cox (Paul Bettany) with a deal too ruthless to refuse:

## Pot and Pipe Worship

JOHN Ruskin's answer to an old prejudice. In describing for English schoolgirls a visit to the Cathedral of Amiens, the poet concludes: 'And now, last of all, if you care to see it, we will go into the Madonna's porch – only if you come at all, good Protestant feminine reader – come quickly and be pleased to recover... that neither Madonna-worship nor Lady-worship of any sort, whether of dead ladies or living ones, ever did any human creature any harm – but that Money-worship, Wig-worship, Cockeyed-Hat-and-Feather-worship, Plate-worship and Pot-worship and Pipe-worship have done and are doing a great deal – and that any of these and all are quite million-fold more offensive to the God of Heaven and Earth and the Stars than all the ... lovingest mistakes made by any generation of his simple children about what the Virgin-Mother could or would or might do, or feel, towards them.'

– John Ruskin, *Our Fathers have served us*, 1884, pp.202-203

if he is not given the codes for the electronic transfer of millions, he and his henchmen will kill Stanfield. Beth (Virginia Madsen) and children Andy (Jimmy Bennett) and Sarah (Carly Schroeder).

So far, so familiar. But director Richard Loncraine and his scriptwriter Joe Forte polish up the antique plot. Every move Jack makes, for example, is monitored. And Bettany brings the cold eyes of a shark to his part. Ford? He morphs from suburban quiet man to ferocious hero though there are moments when he seems slow on his pins. Hopefully he will not have to run and catch a bus in his next Indiana Jones adventure.

M ★★★★★ NFFV

### Basic Instinct 2

Long unawaited sequel to the 1992 original, again starring Sharon Stone as Catherine Tramell, a writer whose plots are poison to those attracted into her

orbit. Among them is Dr Michael Glass (David Morrissey) who ends up where many of his ilk do – in an asylum but not practising his speciality: psychiatry.

Director Michael Caton-Jones (and his script-writers Leora Barish and Henry Bean) re-locate Tramell from San Francisco to London. Not trad London – the London of glitz, plate glass and perversity with never a Beefeater in sight. Too much perhaps of Stone's enduring charms as she heads towards the age of the celebrated Jeanne Marie Bourgeois, alias Mistinguett, of whom JB 'Beachcomber' Morton wrote: 'A rose-red cutie half as old as time.'

Stone is not likely to win an Oscar though a Golden Turkey is a distinct possibility, the only relief being when she gives in to her inner comedienne and plays her *femme fatale* for ludicrous not lethal effect.

MA 15+ ★★★★★ NFFV

### Kinky Boots

Charlie Price (Joel Edgerton) is the heir who thinks the family shoe-making business won't fit him. But to preserve the business – and its workers – going under a flood of cheap imports, he engages Lola (Chiwetel Ejiofor) a transvestite designer with the aim of creating a niche market.

As directed by Julian Jarrold, the result is lovable and hilarious though some may find the real machines in the shoe factory more fascinating than the mechanical repetitions of the storyline.

M ★★★★★ NFFV

### Slither

Why bother? Nauseating version of alien monster zombifies small town in America. Writer/director James Gunn comes up with a monster that, having infected a human being, resembles a giant squid and throws out mini-monsters that look like Sydney slugs with the speed of Sydney cockroaches.

The only question of consequence: why do actors of talent hire out for this kind of emetic farrago? In the days of studio Hollywood, actors such as Humphrey Bogart and Bette Davis took suspension rather than appear in material they felt beneath their talent. So why do talented players like Elizabeth Banks, Nathan Fillion and Gregg Henry volunteer?

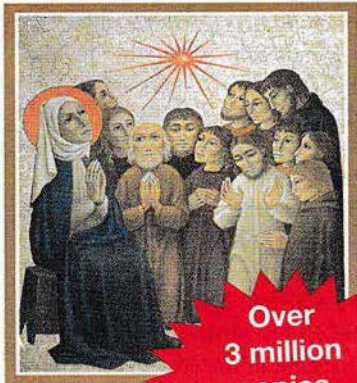
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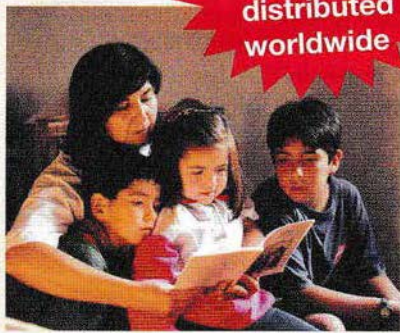
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*The Church's lone voice as it appears to today's young in the West*

## THE NEW ORTHODOXY

By JOANNA BOGLE



It is becoming almost a cliché to note the new mood of orthodoxy among young Catholics in Britain. Members of Youth 2000 in vigils of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, outdoor processions for Corpus Christi, a revival of interest in the Rosary and – perhaps the most remarkable of all – a rediscovery of Confession, are all among features of a trend that has emerged over the past five to ten years.

It's not a massive trend – and must be set against the tragic inertia produced among thousands of would-be Catholics in nominally Catholic schools, with poor Religious Education using inadequate or doctrinally unsound textbooks. The young people to watch are those who have escaped this inertia. They are a minority, but a significant one: they are the ones who do attend Mass, belong to various Catholic groups, organise them-

selves for activities, and are beginning to create their own future within a Church they are rediscovering through a fog of confusion.

It was perhaps inevitable. The great defections of the 1970s – from the priesthood and religious life, from obedience to liturgical norms, and from support for orthodox teachings – are now seen as evidence of a tragic era in the Church, from which many of today's problems flow. Practicalities also made a difference: Sister Sandal and Father Folk-Mass belonged to an era of political assumptions that were found to be wrong. The great triumvirate of John Paul II, Thatcher and Reagan saw off Communism and the Cold War ended, leaving CND campaigners and Liberation Theology rather stranded, their slogans irrelevant.

Most important, however, is the mood within the Church. Young people who

today are in their late teens or early twenties were children in the 1980s. The anguished face of Pope Paul VI ('Is anyone listening to me?' he once asked during a speech to major religious superiors in the middle 1970s) is for them a day-before-yesterday image. The word 'Pope' spells only one name – John Paul II, either vibrant in health and striding the world as a dynamic white-clad image of sturdy Christianity, or stooped and seated, and still packing in the crowds and defiantly making his own statements, a sort of beloved grandpa figure whose world seems gives junior members of his tribe a sense of continuity and shared pride.

Issues have also changed. Campaigners of the 1968-era, who saw opposing the Church's teaching on the wrongfulness of contraception as a matter of exciting rebellion, are confused. Today's young people in the West have grown up with contraceptives being displayed in school sex-ed classes, distributed at youth groups, promoted by crassly vulgar advertisements, endlessly pushed by Health Authorities. The Church's lone voice, if they manage to hear it, is something extraordinary, refreshing, different, a radical alternative demanding a change of heart and a radical re-think of lifestyle. The pro-life movement has been one beneficiary of this, and occupies for some young Catholics the place that things like the Young Christian Workers occupied many decades ago in a vanished Britain when the social and economic issues demanding debate were so different. But there is something more – to work for Social Justice or to explore concepts such as a Fair Wage in the 1950s or early 60s did not involve making a massive personal commitment involving the derision of the mass media and effective exclusion from much of mainstream culture. To be chaste in today's Britain requires a courage and depth of commitment of a quite extraordinary kind.

It is a fact that most pupils at Catholic

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secondary schools are not practising their faith. Those who do are usually from unusually strong families and/or involved with one of the New Movements that are increasingly providing backbone and support within the Church. These are by no means the clear-cut formal associations of previous eras. While some groups such as the Neo-Catechumenate have a definite membership and their own ways of doing things – including meeting separately for Mass – others have a more general influence. There is an overlap between the FAITH groups and Youth 2000, young people attending a retreat given by one and then dropping in at a weekend event run by another. A prayer-group established by Youth 2000 may gradually absorb – or be absorbed by – the Confirmation group of a particular parish, or be associated with some Divine Mercy devotion or Rosary group which in turn has links with a local pro-life apostolate connected with promoting chastity among teenagers or helping troubled pregnant girls. At a different level, Opus Dei runs retreats and conferences, and has centres where youth and family activities are organised, where by no means all the attendees are signed up members of 'The Work'.

New publishing and media groups have emerged that both flow from and feed this new orthodoxy. Most significant is probably EWTN, the American-based Catholic TV network: this taps into the renewed sense of Catholic identity which is a hallmark of the new orthodoxy generally and the New Movements in particular. Home-grown products in Britain include the Catholic Truth Society – the formal pamphlets of old have given way to a whole range of new leaflets, videos, DVDs, tapes, and materials for schools and youth groups which mesh well with the style of a new mood which is hungry for information and knowledge, so often missing from the doctrinally messy RE lessons of recent years.

It was of course to be expected that much of this would cause panic among those who see right-wing conspiracies everywhere. The ageing sisters of the feminist story-sharing circle, and the organisers of liturgical/polemical conferences are understandably frustrated that the ground is slipping from beneath their feet. Less predictable was the reaction of ole-time traditionalists, who for two or three decades have felt themselves to be

## Questions nobody seems to ask



... why they don't make the whole plane out of the material used for the indestructible black box?

the Lone Campaigners for the Faithful remnant of authentic Catholicism. Now they feel threatened. The new style is not theirs. Much of its tone seems to be flavoured with words previously used by evangelicals. It comes packaged with

people whose idea of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament might be a night vigil with music from guitars, everyone in scruffy jeans, candles everywhere, no mantillas in sight and some people kneeling with their faces to the floor, arms outstretched. It looks messy and theatrical – and indeed, liturgically, it could probably do with some improvement (the over-use of amplifiers an obsession with clapping and swaying, and much third-rate music, albeit with good words, tend to be hallmarks of New Orthodox communal prayer).

But, in a Church scarred and wounded by scandal, in a culture dominated by crass TV soap operas and a worship of football, fed by a media that is vulgar and pornographic, the emergence of a new spirit of orthodox Catholicism, even on a small scale, is a sign of hope.



JOANNA BOGLE is a London-based author, journalist, and broadcaster. She spent the early years of her married life in Germany where her husband Jamie was serving with the British Army. Her books include a biography of the last Emperor of Austria-Hungary, written jointly with Jamie.

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