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# ANNALS AUSTRALASIA

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*Australia's Oldest Catholic Magazine*

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

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*Front Cover:* The Hall of Baddeley Clinton, near Warwick, belonging to the Ferrers family, remained staunchly Catholic despite three hundred years when no Catholic could live at peace in England. Above the door to the old chapel where for centuries priests offered Mass in secret, is an inscription that defied the relentless political correctness of those days: *'Transit gloria mundi; fides Catholica manet'*: 'The glory of the world passes; Catholic Faith remains'. Our cover this month carries the coat of arms and the motto of the once-Catholic city of London, *Dirige nos Domine*: 'Lord, guide us'. The sword on the shield represents St Paul, London's patron saint since the first Catholic Church dedicated to him was built there in 604. May that Catholic and much loved motto strike a chord in our hearts. See our editorial pp. 3-6.

*Back Cover:* A selection of booklets published by Chevalier Press. They make ideal bedtime reading, and we recommend them to all Catholics wishing to deepen their understanding of their history, and of their faith.

Cover Photo: Paul Stenhouse

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**DO** not have Jesus Christ on your lips, and the world in your heart.

– St Ignatius of Antioch, Martyred in 107 AD, in the Colosseum in Rome.

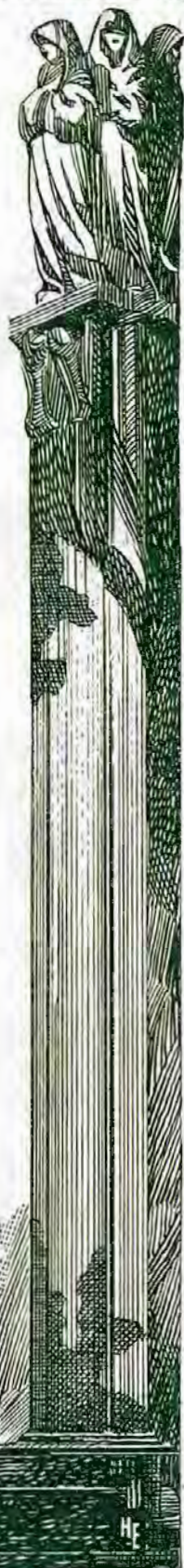

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n the name of the Father,  
and of the Son, and  
of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

## PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Sermons he heard,  
yet not so many

As left no time  
to practise any;

He heard them reverently,  
and then

His practice preached them  
O'er again.

— *Epitaph on Mr Ashton* by Richard Crashaw,  
Catholic Poet born in London around 1616.  
He died in exile in Italy in 1650.



*If you desire to praise Him, then live what you express.  
Live good lives, and you yourselves will be His praise.'*

*- St Augustine of Hippo [354-430 AD], Sermon xxxiv, 5-6.*

## ‘WHAT MEEKER THAN THE SAVIOUR’S HEART?’

**A**LL YE WHO seek a comfort sure  
In trouble and distress,  
Whatever sorrows vex the mind,  
Or guilt the soul oppress:

Jesus, who gave himself for you  
Upon the Cross to die,  
Opens to you his Sacred heart,

**O**h, to that heart draw nigh.  
Ye hear how kindly he invites;  
Ye hear his words so blest;  
‘All ye that labour, come to me,  
And I will give you rest.’

What meeker than the Saviour’s heart?  
As on the Cross he lay,  
It did his murderers forgive,  
And for their pardon pray.

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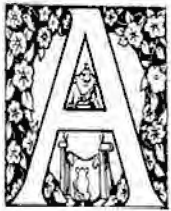
- Translation by Father Edward Caswell, 1814-1878  
of the Hymn *Quicumque certum quaeritis* at Vespers for  
the Feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. From the  
Office of the Feast in the Roman Breviary. The Feast  
of the Sacred Heart occurs on the Friday after the  
Second Sunday after Pentecost.



*Restoring the Keystone to the Arch*

# BRIDGING THE ABYSS [PART I]

By Paul Stenhouse PhD



AN ARTICLE two year ago in *The Times* noted that Catholicism is set to become 'the dominant religion in Britain for the first time since the Reformation'<sup>1</sup>. This not-unexpected revelation was followed by a leaked story that claimed that 'senior bishops' of the Catholic and Anglican Churches have agreed to 'radical proposals' to reunite Anglicans with Catholics 'under the leadership of the Pope'.

Instead of the calm analysis and dispassionate comment that these stories deserved, they stirred up a flurry of anti-Catholic tirades in certain quarters. Bloggers had a field day. 'No Popery!' emerged from its noisome, dank sectarian sewers and rearing its ugly head rivalled the anti-Christian propaganda emanating from some Islamist circles.

Anti-Catholic furbies were recycled for the umpteenth time, reminding one of the prophetic comment by Byzantines in the twelfth century that they would rather have the Turban in Constantinople than the Tiara.<sup>2</sup>

It was as if the doomed child-king Edward VI's *Book of Common Prayer* had been dusted off, and congregations long-dead were again being urged by ghostly regents to pray 'From the tyranny of the bishop of Rome and all his detestable enormities, good Lord deliver us'.<sup>3</sup> Some of the blogger reaction was reminiscent of Martin Luther's well-known children's song, to be sung against the 'two arch-enemies of Christ and his Holy Church, the Pope and the Turk'.<sup>4</sup>

Anglican Bishop of North Sydney Glenn Davies was unimpressed by the idea of the Anglican Church's

submitting to the Pope's authority. He commented:

'If a Pope gives a directive, every parish priest follows it. If the Archbishop of Canterbury offers a directive, most ministers of a parish would think that a nice piece of advice. The very thought we would hand over our authority would be a romantic notion at the least.'<sup>5</sup>

We were not much wiser after the bishop's comment. Does 'our authority' mean 'our [Protestant] authority' i.e. the Bible? Or is it his 'authority' as an Anglican bishop? But if he pays no heed to what his Archbishop says, why should any of his flock heed what he

has to say? And to *whom* would he not hand over 'our authority'? To the Pope? To the Archbishop of Canterbury? What is clear is that 'authority' [whatever it means] is a sticking point for many who reacted negatively to the prospect of reunion between Anglicanism and Catholicism.

## A [qualified] love of Antiquity and Tradition

Despite the popularity of the BBC's *Antiques Roadshow*, and the even more popular *Time Team* which spends a great deal of its time and team work uncovering the Catholic past of Britain,

## Advancing Christian Unity

Apostolic tradition as expressed in the uninterrupted teaching of the Fathers of the Church is crystal clear: full Communion [unity in Faith and Morals] with the Church of Rome is the *sine qua non* condition for laying claim to the title 'Catholic'. The See of Peter is the centre and test of Christian unity.

Over the more than 450 years since Henry VIII declared himself to be Head of the Church of England, re-establishing Communion with the Bishop of Rome has been the keenly nurtured dream of many members of that Church.

As we go to press, the Vatican has given notice of an Apostolic Constitution, by means of which return by members of the Anglican church to full Communion with Rome will be made possible. In reaction to this announcement Archbishop Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, commented follows: 'Today's announcement of the Apostolic Constitution is a response by Pope Benedict XVI to a number of requests over the past few years to the Holy See from groups of Anglicans who wish to enter into full visible communion with the Catholic Church, and are willing to declare that they share a common Catholic faith and accept the Petrine ministry as willed by Christ for his Church.'<sup>6</sup>

All Catholics, and, one would hope, all Christians of good will, can only pray that genuine and lasting Christian unity in Faith, Hope and Charity will be hastened by this Papal initiative.

- Ed. Annals. <sup>1</sup>Quoted Martin Barillas, *Spero News*, 'Anglican Conservatives to Go Home to Rome.'

## Advice to would-be Innovators

**W**HOEVER YOU ARE, if you make up new dogmas, I beg you to spare Roman ears. Spare the faith that was praised by the mouth of the Apostle. Why, after four hundred years, would you try to teach us something that had never been heard of up till now? Why would you teach something that Peter and Paul were unwilling to teach? Up until today, the world has been Christian without this doctrine. I am an old man, and I intend to persevere in that faith into which I was reborn as a child.

- St Jerome, Letter 84, written c. 400 AD. Migne xxii, ed. 1845, p.750.  
Translated by Paul Stenhouse MSC.

**Q**UISQUIS ES ASSERTOR novorum dogmatum, quaeso te, ut parcas Romanis auribus: parcas fidei, quae Apostoli voce laudata est. Cur post quadringentos annos docere nos niteris, quod ante nescivimus? Cur profers in medium, quod Petrus et Paulus edere noluerunt? Usque ad hunc diem sine ista doctrina mundus Christianus fuit. Illam senex tenebo fidem, in qua puer renatus sum.

- Sanctus Hieronymus, Epistola 84, scripta c. 400 AD. Migne xxii, ed. 1845, p.750.

it is curious that the Catholic Church – the most ancient of all Churches – and the Papacy – the oldest religious ‘dynasty’ existing in the world – can still stir up such opprobrium in a disunited Christian world whose disunity is its Achilles heel that continues to fester.

As we move into the first decade of the 21st century AD, despite being much battered by schism and heresy and misunderstanding over its 2,000-year-long history, the Catholic Church – the Church of Rome – still remains the largest [1.3 billion members] and the most widespread of all Christian Churches. It is also exposed most to media scrutiny, and the most vilified.

The resurrection of ‘No Popery!’ in England and England’s former colonies is all the more curious granted the degree of love for Rome and its bishop evident throughout the long history of Christianity in Britain.

A few examples come to mind.

In 1314 AD, King Edward II wrote a letter to the College of Cardinals during the *sede vacante* period following on the death of Pope Clement V on April 20th that year. King Edward wrote that Jesus ‘delivered over and

entrusted the care of [his flock] by an immutable ordinance, to Blessed Peter the Apostle, and in his person to his successors, the Roman Pontiffs, that they may govern it in succession. He willed that the Roman Church, who, for the time being, presiding as the Mother and Mistress of all the faithful, holds, as it were, the place of God on earth, should by salutary teaching direct the peoples of the said flock scattered over the whole world, in the way of salvation, and show them at all times how they should behave themselves in the House of God.’<sup>5</sup>

If that isn’t probative, then three-hundred years earlier another Edward – King Edward the Confessor [1005-1066] – wrote of ‘the extraordinary devotion that the English people have always had towards Peter and his successors’.<sup>6</sup>

If that isn’t enough, the Benedictine monk-historian Bede the Venerable, three hundred years earlier [673-735 AD] wrote that ‘Whoever separates himself in any way whatsoever from the unity of Peter’s faith, and from his communion, can neither obtain pardon of his sins, nor admission into heaven’.<sup>7</sup>

If still further proof be required that Communion with Rome long

antedated St Augustine of Canterbury’s arrival to convert the Saxons, three British bishops – Restitutius of London, Eborius of York, and Adelphius of Caerleon in Wales – attended a Church Council in Arles in 314 AD, nearly a century and a half before the Saxon invasions, and almost four hundred years before Bede wrote. They were British and they were Catholic. They were in communion with the See of Rome. Along with the other bishops who attended that Council, they wrote to Pope Sylvester I [314-335 AD] expressing their belief in his Primacy, and asking him to communicate their decisions to all the Churches.<sup>8</sup>

Until the so-called ‘Greek’ [really ‘Byzantine’] Schism in 1054 the Catholic Church included almost all the Eastern as well as the Western Christian communities under the aegis of the Patriarchal See of Peter and his Successors, the Popes of Old Rome.

### Vae Victis – ‘Pity the Conquered’

[for history is written by the victors]

Thirty-four years before Henry’s dire decision to set up his own church, with himself its pope in England, a Venetian traveller wrote in the year 1500 AD an account of the English<sup>9</sup> in which he said of his English fellow-Catholics

‘They all attend Mass every day and say many *Pater Nosters* in public. The women carry long rosaries in their hands, and any who can read take the Office of Our Lady with them, and with some companion recite it in the church verse by verse in a low voice, after the manner of churchmen.

‘On Sunday,’ he went on, ‘they always hear Mass in their parish church and give liberal alms, because they may not offer less than a piece of money, of which fourteen are equivalent to a golden ducat. Neither do they omit any form [of religious devotion] incumbent on good Christians.’

Despite persistent myths to the contrary that originated in the 16th century, until Henry VIII definitively broke with the Pope in 1534 and appointed himself Head of the newly constituted Church of England, there had been no *English, Welsh, Scotch or Irish* Church; all the British Isles and Ireland was Catholic and grateful for



papal Authority. And Henry VIII – ever the enigma – to his dying day wanted to defend the Teaching of the Catholic Church against Lutherans, Calvinists and others who sought to replace it with novelties.<sup>10</sup>

The nineteenth century Anglican Bishop Mandell Creighton puts a different if familiar spin on what happened under Henry VIII. According to the politically correct version of the bishop, the Protestant Reformation in England was the result of a slow process of alienation from Rome and papal authority:

‘... there never was a time in England when the papal authority was not resented,’ writes the bishop, ‘and really the final act of the repudiation of that authority, followed quite naturally as a result of a long series of similar acts, which had taken place from the earliest times.’<sup>11</sup>

### The Politically incorrect Truth

As much continues to be made in this country of the alleged anti-papal feeling among the British people prior to the Reformation, it may be helpful to attempt to lay that ghost once and for all.

James Gairdner, a Protestant historian acknowledged to have been well-versed in the official documents, reports, letters, pamphlets and private correspondence of those far-off times,

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responded to Bishop Creighton in these words:

‘I am sorry to differ from so able, conscientious and learned an historian,<sup>12</sup> and my difficulty in contradicting him is increased by the consciousness that in these passages he expresses not his own opinion but one to which Protestant writers have been generally predisposed. Was there anything like a general dislike of the Roman jurisdiction in Church matters before Roman jurisdiction was abolished by Parliament to please Henry VIII? Or did the nation before

that day believe that it would be more independent if the Pope’s jurisdiction were to be replaced by that of the king?’

‘I fail, I must say, to see any evidence of such a feeling in the copious correspondence in the twenty years preceding. ... Moreover, if any such sentiment existed, I cannot for my part understand why there was never an attempt to throw off papal jurisdiction before the days of Henry VIII. A nation may no doubt find it hard to release itself from the grip of a domestic tyrant or a foreign conqueror. But a spiritual power, as such, can only rule by the willing obedience of its subjects – unless indeed the temporal ruler find it his policy to strengthen spiritual jurisdiction by coercive laws.

‘That Rome exercised her spiritual power by the willing obedience of Englishmen in general, and that they regarded it as a really wholesome power, even for the control it exercised over secular tyranny, is a fact that requires no very intimate knowledge of early English literature to bring home to us. ... it was only after an able and despotic king had proved himself stronger than the spiritual power of Rome that the people of England were divorced from their Roman allegiance; and there is abundant evidence that they were divorced from it, at first, against their will.’<sup>13</sup>

### Politics not Religion at the root

Gairdner then asks what was the true nature of the struggle between papal and secular authority which Bishop Creighton would have us believe was a struggle for national independence from the tyranny of Rome. He replies

‘... we may say simply, and in a general way, that it was essentially the same as it was in the days of Becket. It was a contest, not of the English people, but of the King and his Government, with Rome’<sup>14</sup>.

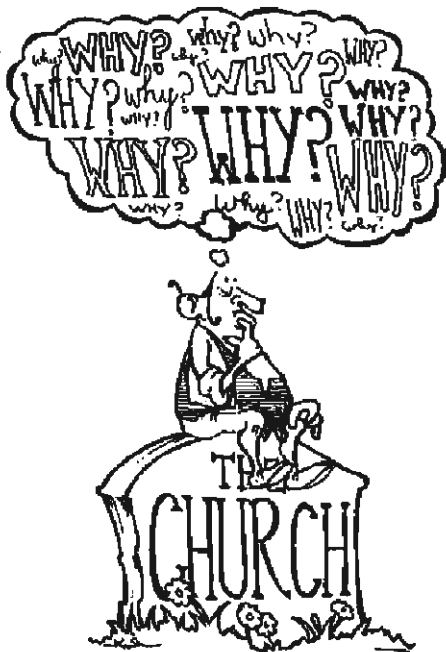
At the time Gairdner was writing [1908] he noted that the Pope’s claims had not been admitted in England [by the State or the State Church] for almost 400 years.

As I write, almost 500 years have passed since England was known as ‘Mary’s Dowry,’ since England was Catholic, and was in Communion with the Bishop of Rome.

## When England first lost its Memory and Identity

Having been charged and found guilty of treason on perjured evidence, [St Thomas] More spoke of that unity of Christendom and European culture, of which the English people had been an integral part for a thousand years until the momentous events resulting from the Divorce Question in the reign of Henry VIII. He referred in his final speech to ‘this Realm, being but one member and small part of the Church,’ and answered the charge of high treason by widening the whole perspective within the introspectively narrow and emotionally charged atmosphere of that English Court held under the hammer-beamed roof of Westminster Hall. It was a moment of high drama, pregnant with implication and consequences for the future history of the English people whose life, memory and identity were going to be changed radically by the ensuing events.

- Edwin Jones, *The English Nation, The Great Myth*,  
Sutton Publishing, 1998, p.12



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In an affectionate tribute to John Henry Newman, his former Master at Oxford, William Lockhart, comments on the situation of the Church of England at his time of writing [1891]:

Meantime great numbers of the ministers of the Church of England, with the prestige of their position, teach publicly nearly every one of those Catholic doctrines which our forefathers abandoned 300 years ago. They delight to call themselves Catholics, and to think that they are one in doctrine with the ancient Church, from the days of St. Augustine up to the days of Henry VIII. Perhaps there is but one doctrine they have not yet reached—the keystone of the arch—the See of Peter—the centre and the test of Catholic Unity.<sup>15</sup>

Despite signs of undoubted longing among many modern-day Anglicans for unity with the See of Peter—Lockhart's 'keystone'—still we find fear and misunderstanding arising when the question of Papal authority is raised.

How that augurs for realistic unity between Anglicanism—the fractured remnant of Catholicism's former British 'faithful'—and the Faith of the See of Peter—accurately described in Tudor times as 'The Old Religion'—will be examined in a further article.

*Next month:* Flaws in the Dream of a Churchless Christianity

1. Ruth Cledhill, 'Catholics set to pass Anglicans as leading UK Church,' February 15, 2007.
2. See Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Milman's ed. ii, pp.727, 753. Also John Henry Cardinal Newman, 'Lectures on the History of the Turks' in *Historical Sketches*, Longmans Green and Co, London, 1920 ed. p.138.
3. Edward died in 1553. This prayer was found in both the Edwardian Prayer Books.
4. Erhalt' uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort. See also Albert Hourani, 'Western Attitudes Towards Islam' (Southampton: The Tenth Montefiore Memorial Lecture, 1974) quoted Ahmad K. al-Rawi 'The Portrayal of the East vs. the West in Lady Mary Montagu's Letters and Emily Ruete's Memoirs,' *Arab Studies Quarterly*, January 1, 2008.
- 4a. See CathNews 25/2/2007
5. See David Wilkins, *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae a Synodo Verolamiensi AD 446 a Londoniensem AD 1717*, [4 vols.] i, p.450.
6. *ibid.* 1, p.319.
7. Homily xxvii.
8. See *Sacrorum Conciliorum Collectio*, Mansi ii, p.469.
9. *Relation of England*, Printed by the Camden Society.
10. James Cairdner, *Lollardy and the Reformation in England, An Historical Survey*, Macmillan and Co. Ltd, 4 vols, London, 1908, vol.1, p.414.
11. *Historical Lectures and Addresses*, edited by his wife, published in 1903.
12. An historian appointed first Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Cambridge in 1884.
13. *op.cit.* vol.1, pp.4-5.
14. *ibid.* p.5.
15. Cardinal Newman A Retrospect of Fifty Years, by one of his oldest living disciples by William Lockhart, B.A., Oxon. Burns & Oates, London 1891



*Preternatural phenomena, profitable fraud and unanswered questions*

# SEANCES, SPIRITISM AND MEDIUMS

*By Leslie Rumble, MSC*



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

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

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

And among these must be included Spiritism.

Spiritism has a very ancient history, having been rife among all primitive peoples. Through ignorance, many natural occurrences were attributed to the spirits of ancestors. Moreover, an irrational and superstitious belief in the magical powers of medicine men, wizards and necromancers prevailed. These were supposed to be able to communicate at will with the souls of the dead.

The classical example in the Old Testament is that of Saul's recourse to the heathen witch of Endor, demanding that she call up the spirit of Samuel – which Saul himself did not see – only to receive the dismal news of his own almost immediate end (1 Kings, 18, 7-20).

Various of the early Church Fathers explained this incident in different

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

An interesting point is that the Greek Septuagint, translation of the Old Testament dating from about two centuries B.C. suggests that her dupes only heard a voice which by 'ventriloquism' seemed to come out of

the ground – an explanation which has quite a modern ring about it.

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



## ANCIENT INKS

WHO HASN'T wondered at some time or other what ancients used when they were writing? A favourite source of ink was the cuttlefish which actually gave its Latin name – *sepia* – to the dark-brownish pigment produced from its black fluid. Pliny the Elder (23-79 AD) lists all the materials that in his day were used to make black ink: a sediment called *salsugo* (lit. *saltiness*) and a yellow vitriolic ore called *misy*. The latter name refers among other things to a type of mushroom as well as to copper sulphate. Pliny also speaks of *lamp-black* or a pigment made from soot produced in special huts built for that purpose where the smoke of burning pine-wood was channelled into an enclosed apartment. Sometimes soot from ordinary kitchen chimneys, or from the fires that heated the baths, was mixed with it. Black ink was also made from the ash of the refuse of grapes. Well into the nineteenth century this *noir de vigne* as it was called was used by artists and especially copper-plate printers, and considered by them to be the most beautiful black. Another black was produced from burnt ivory, and from charred fir-wood finely pulverised. According to Pliny, black pigments were improved by being exposed to the sun; and if vinegar were added it was much more durable, and less easily destroyed by washing.



of a man who had years ago been murdered in the house.

The story gained wide publicity. Neighbours called in, to hear the rappings for themselves. Wealthy people gave large sums to make possible public displays by the two girls of their occult powers. The fascinating thought arose that means had been found for systematically communicating with the dead: An epidemic of similar experiments spread through the United States.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

From the moment she arrived, the cottage went crazy. There were prolonged hammering noises throughout the first night; and in the



days that followed, doors opened and shut without human aid, drawers shot out as if pulled by invisible hands and spilled their contents on the floor, a box of dominoes fell from a table and the scattered pieces played around Carol's feet like live animals.

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

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

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

Attempting an explanation of such cases, the University of London's Council for Psychical Investigation said that 'a poltergeist is an invisible, malicious entity able by laws as yet unknown to physical science to extract energy from living persons, often young and to use it for their own purposes.' But who or what is this mysterious entity, able to shift things about and

send them flying through rooms? Nobody knows.

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

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

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

Spiritists have a subtle theory that every human being has not only a body and soul but also an intermediate 'perispirit', a kind of ethereal or astral body. The 'perispirit' of the departed soul can they claim, communicate directly with the 'perispirit' of a sufficiently sensitive medium. According

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

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

Despite these exciting attractions, however, spiritism soon fell into disrepute. Its seances seemed to provide ideal conditions for profitable fraud. Critical investigation revealed innumerable cases of trickery and false pretences on the part of many so-called mediums. Messages convincing to bereaved, credulous or sentimental people, were proved to be fabrications based on previously obtained information about dead persons or about the sitters themselves. Ghostly

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apparitions were exposed as the work of a medium's accomplice parading in fancy costumes. One enterprising investigator went along to a seance and as a 'materialised apparition' came near him, cut off a piece of the medium's ectoplasm. On returning home he found it was a piece of cheesecloth daubed with luminous paint!

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

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

This way of thinking gave rise in 1882 to the founding of the London Society for Psychical Research. Because it concerned itself with alleged preternatural occurrences at spiritistic dabbings in occultism and magic, the Society only gradually won its way to respectability. But its objectivity and determination not to accept the spirit-hypothesis wherever a natural explanation was possible, were beyond dispute.

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

## Faith, not Foolishness

**I**AM NO longer alive, it is Christ that lives in me.' ... Put that text from Galatians to a saint like St. Catherine of Genoa and she will take it in her stride. Put it to a philosopher like Fenelon and he (when he is writing in a cool hour) will comment on it with the precision it needs. Put it to a psychopath like [Miguel de] Molinos and he will tell you that he has become as God, knowing good and evil; he enjoys that participated light which can assure you that you are not sinning when you sin. Put it to a hysterical subject like Madame [Jeanne Marie de la Motte] Guyon and she will say anything, retract anything, sign anything; 'neither am I capable of giving any reason for my conduct, for I no longer have a conduct, and yet I act infallibly'.

- Monsignor Ronald Knox, *Enthusiasm: A Chapter in the History of Religion*, Oxford, 1950, p.251.

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

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

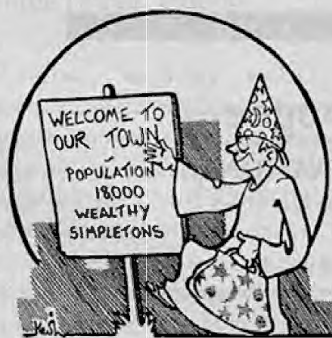
The programme included the investigation by experiment without recourse to spirit-influences, of telepathy or thought-transference; clairvoyance, or awareness of absent

external objects or events; recognition, or knowledge of future happenings; and psychokinesis (P.K.) the ability to move physical objects simply by willing it.

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

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

Were the scientists right, all would be reduced to communications between living persons, and the dead would not come into it at all. Yet extreme care is needed here. There is still room for the possibility of influences from spirit-world intelligences. If so, however, such influences would be from non-human intelligences, not from those of



## Magic and Magicians

**X**ENOPHON, the celebrated Greek Historian [617-517 BC] describes a magician who begged the gods to allow him to remain to practise his art only in places where there was plenty of money and simpletons.



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– Editor, *Annals*

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departed souls; and if from angelic agencies, not from good ones, but from evil ones, bent on our harm, not our welfare.

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

It is well to note here that it is folly to think spiritism can provide, as some have imagined, incontestable proof of the immortality of the human soul. Such 'proof' would depend entirely on the validity of the hypothesis that communications were in fact being received from disembodied souls. If such communications were due to telepathy or came from evil spirits they would be valueless as evidence for human survival.

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

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

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

But, apart from yielding to superstition; people who frequent spiritistic seances expose themselves to great mental and moral danger. Mentally, 'sitters' are expected to condition themselves by entering into a state of passive receptivity. They are



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warned that if they are sceptical or have their minds set for resistance they can't expect good results. They must be thoroughly 'in' the proceedings, with the result that their own mental balance is impaired and power of self-control weakened. In already unbalanced people the door is thrown open to hallucinations and other worse aberrations.

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

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

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

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

DR LESLIE RUMBLE was, in his day, one of the most widely-known priests in the English-speaking world. His two-volume *Radio Replies* sold many millions of copies world-wide, as did his numerous pamphlets on aspects of Catholic faith and doctrine and on various non-Catholic Churches and sects. He died in 1975. Many of his books are still in print, and *Annals* is about to reprint his popular *Questions People Ask*, written after the Second Vatican Council as an updated version of the ever-popular *Radio Replies*. In response to many requests we print the first of his fourteen articles on psychic phenomena which first appeared in *Annals* in 1958. The remaining articles will appear in subsequent issues. *Next Month:* The case of the dead boy's return.

*Interview with a former Sufi Muslim*

## THE PATH TO CATHOLICISM

*By Wanda Skowronska*



**T**O S H I K O HITCHINGS lives in Sydney, is Japanese by birth, and relates a interesting conversion story. Toshiko was interviewed by Wanda Skowronska in May 2009, after they met outside a church after Mass at the Sacred Heart church in Randwick. Toshiko was happy to tell of her long journey via Buddhism and Sufi Islam, to Catholicism.

### *Tell us a bit about yourself Toshiko.*

I was born in Japan in Kakogawa city near Kobe. I was educated there at Kakogawa High School and became a pharmacist. My family were Jodo Shinshu Buddhists, which means they followed literally the 'Pure Land Sect' of Buddhism. This was a movement in Buddhism which was founded by the monk Shinran Shonin (1173-1263), who was a pupil of the revered monk Honen, a reformer who simplified Buddhism and focused on recitations to the Buddha Amida, saying things such as, *Namu Amida Butsu* meaning "I take refuge in Amida Buddha."

### *What were your first thoughts of a spiritual nature?*

Well, my family followed the rituals of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, without knowing too much about it in the way that, I have seen some Catholics practise their faith. When my great grandmother died, she was burned in a Buddhist ceremony, and I remember asking myself 'Where is she going?' I went with my grandmother to the temple and over the years I also recall having some vague idea of future joy in going to meet Buddha.

During high school, I had a pen-friend – having a pen-friend was popular in Japan – and this friend was actually a Muslim and wrote to me about Islam and introduced me to the idea of fasting and prayer. This had a great impact on me. After I finished high school, I went to a pharmacy college and one of my subjects was anatomy. I remember seeing dead people in this class and thinking that the 'soul,' as I understood it then, was gone and wondering where it went. I thought the human being was not just a body but a unity of body and spirit. I

was interested in reading various holy books, which I did from time to time.

### *What did you do after you finished your studies?*

Well I wanted to go to travel somewhere. One idea was that I would be a volunteer somewhere in India and use my skills there. In my family, we were used to the idea of travelling as my father actually belonged to the Lions club and had organised for my brother to go to Australia on exchange for a while and an Australian boy came to our house in 1971 and so I heard about Australia.

In any case I ended up going to Australia in 1972, and went on a cruise on my way home I stopped in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Papua New Guinea. On that ship I met my husband, Patrick Hitchings, the ship's doctor, who was from New Zealand. He had been born a Catholic but had converted to Islam and he had many books and I was able to ask him many questions about his beliefs. At that time I did not agree with the use of the contraceptive pill and he agreed with me and we thought it was harmful to the body. We used to discuss topics such as what was harmful to the immune system and what was not. We married not long after and I became more and more interested in Islam

### *What did you do then?*

Then life became very interesting. We went to Iran, which at the time was under the rule of the Shah of Iran. The reason is that my husband was very interested in Sufi Islam and went to meet a master of Sufism - Seyyed Hossein Nasr – who lived in Teheran and who invited my husband to work as a doctor in a small village called Aleshta which is in the middle of Iran. I recall there being no running water, no electricity and very pure air and beautiful stars at night: I didn't mind. While we lived there my husband

## St Therese of Lisieux

**T**HE RELICS are on show in the cathedral for an unbroken 58 hours. I wish I could have come at four in the morning, when it would be cold, stark and very beautiful in the dim lighting. In the queue I am befriended by two thirty-something women, who tell me why St Thérèse is important to them. "She represents love and charity," says one. "I was always attracted to her, and took the name Thérèse at my confirmation. She's become a role model: she shows you how to do the little things with love; how to do things quietly, without anybody noticing."

- Stephen Moss, *The Guardian*, October 14, 2009, describing queueing up outside Westminster Cathedral in London to honour the relics of St Therese.



studied Sufi Islam and at some point was initiated to Sufism by Nasr. He would have to meditate for a long time and I became very interested in all this and about a year later I became a Sufi in Switzerland as well.

I used to meditate for a long time too and say special prayers. One of the prayers I said was to 'Mother Mary', yes, really, it was to the 'Virgin Mary'. A great master of Nasr, Frithjof Shuon, actually lived in Switzerland at the time. He was Swiss, but had come from a Protestant and Catholic background to Sufism. He had studied in Egypt and had founded a Sufi order reciting a 'Mother Mary' prayer. One of our practices was invoking Allah without ceasing. I was twenty six then and we were invited to come to pray with our master and his disciples so we went there in Switzerland. Sufi ladies helped me with understanding Sufism and taught me how to follow my husband's prayers. However, even though I prayed, I felt God was far from me.

During my prayers at the initiation to Sufism I had a kind of dream or vision - a 'mental vision' without opening my eyes. I saw a gold shining figure and walked through Golden pillars towards this figure and entered into his body. I felt the pillars as 'pillars of prayer' which I should build with each passing day.

In 1976 we felt we had to leave Iran as the revolution was looming. We knew that another master of our Sufi order, Martin Lings, lived in England. As my husband's father was English, we could stay in England without a visa at that time and so we decided to go there.

On the way we visited Maryamna (Mother Mary's house) in Ephesus in Turkey. There was hardly any one there as this was a time when few people came to see Ephesus I think. My husband and I prayed there together - to Mary - as we had wanted a child and had not yet had one. Six months later I became pregnant. At that time, my husband was looking for work but could not find any in England and so he then decided, after a while to accept an offer of a job in Saudi Arabia. We went there in 1977 and that was where my daughter was born. We called her

## Non-Violence and Catholics

**C**ATHOLIC TEACHING on war and peace is nowadays a combination of just war elements and a strong emphasis on non-violence. In 1993 the US Catholic bishops summarised it like this: 'In situations of conflict, our constant commitment ought to be, as far as possible, to strive for justice through nonviolent means; but when sustained attempts at nonviolent action fail to protect the innocent against fundamental injustice, then legitimate political authorities are permitted as a last resort to employ limited force to rescue the innocent and establish justice.'

- Austen Iverleigh, *Guardian*.  
co.uk, October 7, 2009

'Maryam' as we felt that 'Mother Mary' in Ephesus had answered our prayers for a child. My husband worked in the military hospital at Khamis Mushait, a city in southwest Saudi Arabia, near Yemen. We were there for over two years. Then tragedy struck. My husband had a massive heart attack at the age of 56 and died. Our daughter was only 2 years old. It was an immense shock and I had to plan what to do.

### *What did you do after your husband died?*

I could not stay in Saudi Arabia so I had to decide what to do. My parents said they could look after my daughter so I returned home and lived with them in Japan.

This is strange but when I returned I did not see any difficulty with returning to Buddhism as I thought all spiritual things led to wisdom and so I turned back to the faith of my childhood. I had also begun to feel

very guilty about not keeping up with the five times of daily prayer and more in Sufism and not being able to fast as often as required.

Back in Japan I started to read books about Buddhism again at home - it was easier for me to read about these beliefs in Japanese, after trying to grapple with Arabic and the Sufi prayers. As a Buddhist I could see that Buddha Amida is merciful and spoke of mercy to the sinner. Mercy was very much in my mind then and I pondered this quality in the Buddha. I became involved again with my spiritual reading and went to Kyoto, the home of Jodo Shinshu. There is a big temple there and I often did three days' retreats during which we were told about how we are attached to pride and self-centredness, and that by the mercy of Buddha Amida, we could be released from this. Reflecting on the quality of mercy gave me great consolation.

Then, as my daughter grew up, I realised that she should learn English. As I said my family were accustomed to travel. My brother was a diplomat and travelled quite a bit. I decided to go to New Zealand where we could stay, because of my deceased husband's being born there. My father said he could help us financially if we went there. We went to Wellington when my daughter was 13 and my daughter became fluent in English as well as Japanese and continued her education there. We had to get used to living there and taking care of ourselves. Somehow we managed with all the difficulties we had.

### *So how did you find a way to delve more deeply into the Bible?*

I looked for a Buddhist temple to attend but I could not find one. Then by chance I met an Anglican priest who invited me to come to a Bible study in Japanese. I was a bit confused as it is hard to go to something like that if you are an outsider. But I went along to listen. Well, one day in Wellington I was walking along the road and I saw a sign outside a church saying 'Adult Education Centre' It was outside a Catholic church and there was a sign advertising study of the Bible, the Old Testament and the New Testament. I felt an urge to study further. I went to the classes which were run by Fr



Edmond Little, who had studied in Israel. He knew Hebrew and could tell us a lot about Jesus and the Bible and so I learned a lot from going there. He was very logical and could explain the answers to questions. He was strict – we had to start exactly on time. I really learned a lot.

I was attracted to the teachings of the Bible and was interested in what I heard. The priest asked me 'Why don't you become a Christian?' I thought about this for some time without answering. I did want to do spiritual reading and study because that is what my nature sought all the time. I could not find a Buddhist temple to go to so I thought 'Maybe, God is calling me in a new direction'. In any case, I continued with my studies and was christened at the Lady's Chapel in 1997 in an Anglican church in Wellington in 1997. However, although I was happy with this, I felt I was missing something and looking back, it was devotion to 'Mother Mary'. There was no such devotion with the Anglicans, as good as they were, and I felt I could not grasp the Bible in the way I wanted to. I wanted to understand it more deeply.

I recall thinking that the Bible is not only remembrance about the past but it is also about the present, that the Old Testament is related to the New Testament. I got used to thinking about Jesus. Father Little asked me at some point 'Would you like to become a Catholic?' I did not know what to say as I did not want to go along with what I thought was a 'denomination' – I just wanted to be Christian. So I just said I would think about it. I finished the course and was still thinking about it.

***So, how did you find your way to becoming a Catholic?***

At that time, because I was interested in the prayer of the rosary, I asked a Filipino lady I met at the church, what it was about. She said 'I'll teach it to you'. She invited me to come to the Legion of Mary meetings held at the church and they said the rosary there, and so I learned to say it. I went along to the Legion even though I was not a Catholic – they welcomed me warmly. There, a lady used to tell me about Our Lady and about apparitions – Fatima, Lourdes, Medjugorje and so on. After all this, I

## Lost any Mail lately?

**G**LENDON worried that Catholics in America 'no longer know how to talk about what they believe or why they believe it. The people-called-together have lost their sense of who they are and what they were called to do.' Identity, in other words, is the problem. 'And they seem to have lost a lot of mail as well. How many lay people, one wonders, have read any of the letters that popes have addressed to them over the years? For that matter, how many Catholics can give a sensible account of basic Church teachings on matters as close to them as the Eucharist and human sexuality, let alone the lay apostolate? If few can do so, it is not for lack of communications from Rome. Building on *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*, the fathers of Vatican II reminded the lay faithful that it is their particular responsibility 'to evangelize the various sectors of family, social, professional, cultural, and political life.'

- Kathryn Jean Lopez, 'The Courage to say No,'  
quoting Mary Ann Glendon.

decided I really wanted to become a Catholic. I told a priest Father Berry I wanted to convert to Catholicism and he led me to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults [RCIA] course. But the course was quite a long way from home and when Father Berry realised that, he said 'I can give you a private course. And so it happened, I had a private course, and in 2001, in the Sacred Heart Cathedral in Wellington, I became a Catholic and am happy in my faith to this day.

After my conversion I went on a pilgrimage and among other places, I visited Medjugorje with my daughter and while we were there my daughter announced to me that she also would like to become a Catholic. 'I want to become a Catholic daughter' she said. So my daughter also became a Catholic.

Interestingly I thought that at Medjugorje I would become closer to Our Lady, but I got much closer to Jesus, especially when I climbed Mount Krizevac, where the cross is at the top. We had many deep spiritual experiences there and I feel so much closer to Jesus and our mother Mary. I came to a deeper understanding of the Eucharist and I remember that wonderful moment when I said 'The Eucharist (transubstantiation) is really true'.

I always feel that my life has been

a strange journey but that I have been very blessed. I thank God for blessing my life, for the blessings that were already there behind my husband's prayers. I have great peace in coming to Mass and in praying the rosary regularly.

My daughter got married and I came to Australia to live close to them. I have two grandchildren and one of them goes to St Margaret Mary's school in Randwick and I go to Mass every day at the church next to this school and at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in Randwick.

***What would you say to 'cradle Catholics'?***

I would say that I want them to appreciate the beauty of the Mass. The Eucharist is an extraordinary gift from God, the most extraordinary of all that I have encountered in my life. Also, I think it is very important to keep an open mind and heart in life, and leave everything in God's hands. If you are open to God, God definitely guides you to His Heart and gives you inner peace and happiness. God works mysteriously all throughout our lives.

WANDA SKOWRONSKA is a registered psychologist who works as a counsellor in inner city schools in Sydney. She has done voluntary work for the Catholic pro life organisation Human Life International.



*It seems rather that the colleges are prisoners of everyone's requirements and expectations for them, except of course the Church's.*

## DOOMSAYERS



IN 1990, on the Feast of the Assumption, Pope John Paul II published his Apostolic Constitution for Catholic higher education, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. The Holy Father called upon national bishops' conferences for ordinances to 'appl[y] concretely' the General Norms he promulgated. On that day Bill Clinton was governor of Arkansas. There was still a Soviet Union, and Mikhail Gorbachev was its President. Saddam Hussein had just invaded Kuwait.

Why has it taken (at least) twice as long to enact *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* [ECE] ordinances as it did to fight the Civil War, or to defeat Hitler?

Because the academic establishment cries doomsday.

Catholic college presidents say that implementing ECE will extinguish the institutions - their institutions, the Catholic universities - it is designed to structure and nurture. They say that they *cannot* be Catholic universities as envisaged by ECE because others, especially Caesar, will not *let* them be Catholic. Their group the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU) recently circulated a draft alternative to the ... norms.

This lukewarm proposal was 'especially mindful' of Catholic institutions' governance by state charters and civil laws, legal conditions necessary to qualify for needed public aid, criteria employed by regional accrediting associations, and 'other expectations' related to colleges and universities in the United States.

Ironically, ACCU opposes Canon 812, requiring episcopal approval of Catholic theologians, because it would compromise the colleges' 'institutional autonomy.'

It seems rather that the colleges are prisoners of everyone's requirements and expectations for them, except of course the Church's.

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*- Gerard V. Bradley, Professor of Law at the University of Notre Dame, reviewing The Catholic University as Promise and Project: Reflections in a Jesuit Idiom, by Fr Michael Buckley SJ, Professor of Theology at Boston College.*



*It is more reasonable to believe in God than to reject the hypothesis of God by appealing to chance; more reasonable also to believe, than to escape into agnosticism.*

# WITHOUT GOD WE ARE NOTHING

*By George Cardinal Pell, Archbishop of Sydney*



GOODNESS, truth and beauty call for an explanation as do the principles of mathematics, physics, and the purpose-driven miracles of biology which run through our universe. The human capacities to recognize these qualities of truth, goodness and beauty, to invent and construct, also call for an explanation.

The Irish philosopher Brendan Purcell cites the frequently used quotation from Einstein that: "The one thing that is unintelligible about the universe is its intelligibility"<sup>1</sup>; and he might have added the fact that human intelligences are able to strive to understand the universe is also unintelligible of and by itself.

By way of introduction let me follow Purcell again to try to set the scene for the God hypothesis in a rather simple and then in a more developed way. Purcell quotes the grumpy response of the British physicist Fred Hoyle, a former atheist, to his own discovery of the very narrow temperature range that allows the emergence of carbon in nucleosynthesis: "The universe looks like a put-up job"<sup>2</sup>. I believe it is!

From the beginning it is also important to realise that in arguing for God we are not claiming the existence of a super-quality physical cause or phenomenon, accessible to science, within the universe. God is not some fantastic UFO.

Purcell quotes the philosopher and atheist Thomas Nagel who explains that the purpose of the God hypothesis is to claim that not all is physical and "that there is a mental, purposive or intentional explanation more fundamental than the basic laws of physics, because it explains even

them"<sup>3</sup>. By definition, God must be self-sufficient, the reason for His own existence, which is a statement that young children, initially at least, do not find a very satisfactory answer to their frequent question about who made God. However just as youngsters generally cannot understand the lessons hidden in Christ's parables, so very few of the young before adolescence think philosophically.

In this paper I am not arguing for a covert atheism, where we retain Godly language but reduce Him to our ultimate human concerns (like the "God is dead" theologians of the 1960s); nor am I a Catholic atheist, someone who passionately loves and defends Christian civilization, but cannot or does not believe in God like the Italians Umberto Eco and Oriana Fallaci. I believe the one true God is real, not simply because I was born into the Catholic tradition, but because over fifty years my childhood beliefs have been tested and I have probed their rational foundations.

Every Catholic priest is supposed to study philosophy for a couple of years to develop his capacity for clear thinking, to introduce him to the metaphysical

tradition favoured by the Church, which stretches from Aristotle via Thomas Aquinas to the present, and to enable him to dialogue with those around him who do not share his Christian or even religious presuppositions. The God question has always been one of my intellectual interests and when I was a seminarian in Rome I took classes in the Institute for Atheism then run at my Catholic University by the Italian philosopher Cornelio Fabro.

Because of my vocation and because of my personality and education I have regularly encouraged my listeners and students over the years to ask and ponder the ultimate questions. Why are we here on earth? What is the point of it all, given suffering and death? What is the good life?

The existence of evil and suffering, to which I shall return later, is more of a problem for those who believe God is good rather than for those who see God only as the Supreme Intelligence, creator and sustainer of the universe.

If God was cruel and capricious, or even indifferent, it would be especially disappointing and hurtful to those who understand justice, value goodness and reject evil. Such human beings in a moral sense would be better than a cruel and capricious, or an indifferent and heartless God! Similarly an "impersonal" God would be less than a human person.

When a religion encourages and legitimizes a "holy" war or when a religion approves a "just" war, they have to justify their positions. But this is different from religious people ignoring the religious teaching of their tradition to wage war or impose evil.

My task today is to talk about God, but if God is rejected because of the evil deeds of religious people, we should follow this claim to see where it takes us.

While the fruits of religion might be





mixed, I do not concede that religions are generally poisonous. Indeed when people follow Christian teachings human life is enriched immensely.

However even if we admitted that religions generally are poisonous, what difference would this make to the logical case either for or against God's existence? God cannot be reduced to the activities of His followers. God and religion are two different realities.

In daily life, personally and psychologically poisonous religion might induce victims to curse the god who inspired his followers to commit such evil or to reject the possibility that such a god could exist. Such evil can be an effective counter witness against the existence of God. The suffering of innocent children is always terrible.

But scientifically and philosophically does this abolish the God question? The discussion of God's goodness and concern for us would need to be reframed, but many of the ultimate questions would remain. Who or what triggered the Big Bang? Are the astonishingly beautiful principles of physics and mathematics the products of chance? Why is there something rather than nothing?

Whether we are interested or disinterested, happy or unhappy, good or evil, and despite recurrent natural disasters, the ultimate questions will always remain to be asked and to be pondered. These questions have meaning, logically and psychologically, as thousands of years of such enquiry attest.

If fact in the Western intellectual world, which is unique in the extent of its scepticism and agnosticism, God is still travelling more safely than He was one hundred years ago. Today, hardly anyone of any persuasion expects that religion will soon disappear.

Pierre Manent, a French social philosopher whose work I have come to admire, in his book entitled *An Intellectual History of Liberalism*, has advanced the thesis that the French Revolution of 1789, with its explicit hostility to religion, was the first example of the secular state. One consequence of this is that Western democracies now follow the doctrine of the separation of Church and State, which finds a generally benign expression in the English-speaking world following the example of the United States, and often

## Reason and Liberty

INDEED, I can undertake to justify the whole Catholic theology, if I be granted to start with the supreme sacredness and value of two things: Reason and Liberty.

- G.K.Chesterton, *The Catholic Church and Conversion*, London, Burns Oates and Washbourne, Ltd 1927 p.107.

an explicitly anti-religious form in Europe<sup>4</sup>.

More significantly for our purposes, Manent claims that secular states discourage the discussion of ultimate questions, where religious bodies enjoy an enormous advantage. In a certain sense, ultimate questions are a religion's core business<sup>5</sup>.

Here in Australia public discussion and debate often proceed as though most of the population is godless, atheist or agnostic. In fact only 17 per cent do not accept the existence of God<sup>6</sup>. However the absence of God in Australian public discussion is not due generally to any English-language political theory, but more to the secularist hostility to Christianity which remains the most formidable barrier to their programme for an ever broader personal autonomy. Often God gets caught up in the secular hostility to the Christian defence of human life, especially at the beginning and the end,



the Christian defence of marriage, family and the linking of sexuality to love and life. Here in these culture wars lies the origin for most of the hatred of God and religion, while the violence of a minority of Islamist terrorists has given Western secularists new grounds to attack all religions. However, it is much safer to attack the Christians!

There are many more monotheists today than there were 100 or 1000 years ago, both in absolute terms and as a percentage of the world's populations. The proportion of people belonging to the world's four biggest religions rose from 67 per cent in 1900 to 73 per cent in 2005, and may reach 80 per cent in 2050<sup>7</sup>. Even more startling is the fact that "where pain, hardship and distress are far more prevalent, we find the highest rates of faith", even in those places in Africa where atrocious barbarism has recently occurred<sup>8</sup>. It is the religious situation in Europe today which is unusual throughout the world and equally unusual when we glance back through history.

I willingly concede that general beliefs, even when they endure for centuries, need not be logically compelling and such beliefs are regularly even less persuasive when they are popular for a limited period of time, for years or decades.

Over the centuries many approved of slavery. Today many believe that before Galileo most believed the earth was flat, which is quite untrue. Plato recognized the earth was round. Today also public opinion can continue to be quite mistaken: for example, in the majority approval of the moral legitimacy of abortion or in its enthusiasm for expensive scientific mythology. Most Australians for the moment seem to believe in global warming primarily induced by humans or even in humanly-induced catastrophic global warming.

There is not sufficient scientific evidence for either of these claims; less evidence that we could influence or reverse such climate outcomes and less evidence again that we could afford to attempt this. Religion has no monopoly on truth or on human folly!

Let me then conclude this introductory section by highlighting the extent of God's popularity throughout the world and through much of history. Present trends indicate that this will

continue and even intensify so that, for example, China by the end of the twenty-first century could have the largest Christian population of any country in the world!

It is useful to acknowledge this context to belief and unbelief, while recognizing explicitly that such popularity does not prove God's existence. Both popular and elite opinion can be wrong over long periods. More people come to know God through the kindness and witness of others than through logic. But reason and logic remain important, even if we accept A. E. Housman's two lines<sup>9</sup>:

Malt does more than Milton can  
To justify God's ways to man.

I will now examine what we mean when we speak of God; moving on to a discussion of the relevance of today's scientific knowledge for the God question, a few words about the achievements of the pre-Christian Greek philosophers in recognizing the existence of God and concluding with a section on the contribution of Judaeo-Christian revelation to our knowledge of God.

## Naming God

Different thinkers approach God from different directions, often emphasising different Godly attributes, but all concede that we face enormous problems of language when we set out to explain something of what we mean by God. It was the fifth century North African St. Augustine of Hippo, one of Christianity's finest theologians, who spoke of our "learned ignorance of God".

Some claim that every notion of God is so incoherent that somehow this means that God does not exist, while others claim that we cannot say anything useful about God. One traditional response to these problems is to explain that our terminology for God is analogical, that it does not fit God as well as human language describes physical or human reality. Human beings are "good" in very different ways and to different degrees, but when we claim God is good, the term has a radically superior meaning which does not contradict the basic human meaning. God is not only good, but better than we can imagine.

Different categories of believers believe in different types of God. Deists

do not accept that God is in any sense personal, but is a Supreme Being, a creator who does not intervene in the universe.

Pantheists identify God with the universe, regarding the universe as a manifestation of God. The mighty, often uncontrollable forces of nature often provoke awe in every type of person.

Monotheists believe only one God exists and traditional monotheists such as Jews, Christians and Muslims believe God to be transcendent and personal in some superior sense.

In other words, the transcendent God is not on our level of reality, not even as a thermo-nuclear trigger or giant rocket which set off the Big Bang at the start of the universe. God is beyond space and time, not part of the natural order, and therefore not open to observation by the natural sciences.

We often use apophatic or negative terminology to speak of this transcendent God. God is infinite i.e. cannot be measured, immutable and immaterial or spiritual.

God is spiritual, not material and therefore has no parts. The spirituality of God means that God is not human, is neither male nor female. Once when I gave this explanation in a radio interview, the host enquired whether this was only my personal view or Christian teaching. He seemed surprised when I explained that this was a basic monotheist doctrine.

I follow Christian convention in referring to God as "He" or "Him", accepting Jesus' teaching that we pray to God calling Him "Our Father," but this is an example of the use of analogical language.

When trying to explain to senior primary and junior-secondary students what we mean when we say God is spirit, I ask them to start from their

parents' love for them; a real, powerful and invisible force in their lives, very important to them, before I move onto the Christian teaching that God is love. The children rarely object to this sort of argumentation. In Australia it is easy to be a de facto materialist, so we often have to argue for the importance of the spiritual.

While it would be somewhat confusing to argue that our spiritual God has many faces, this Sublime Mystery can be approached in different ways as we glimpse hints of different facets of the Immortal Diamond, which has a heart of love.

His publicists claim that Antony Flew, a professional philosopher, was the world's most notorious atheist. He certainly was an influential and widely read unbeliever and he has recently changed his mind and written an excellent, clear and accessible book called *There is a God*, explaining that his story is a pilgrimage of reason and not of faith.

Flew has collected a number of short-hand terms which prominent scientists and philosophers have used about God.

He quotes Albert Einstein's avowal that he is neither an atheist nor a pantheist, although he did not believe in a personal God. For Einstein, God is a "superior reasoning force", an "illimitable superior spirit", the "mysterious force that moves the constellations"<sup>10</sup>.

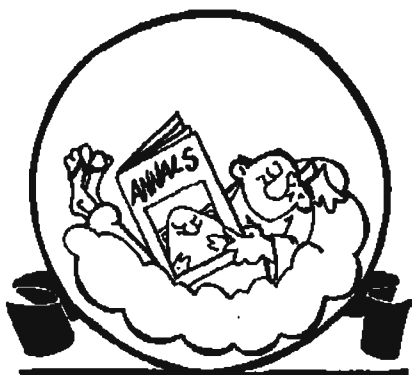
The philosopher Richard Swinburne is cited for his defence of God as "an omnipresent incorporeal spirit"<sup>11</sup>.

Even the well-known atheist and scientist Stephen Hawking, author of the best selling *A Brief History of Time* (which I struggled unsuccessfully to read) wrote the following question: "What is it that breathes fire into the equations and makes a universe for them to describe?"

In a later interview Hawking conceded "You still have the question why does the universe bother to exist? If you like, you can define God to be the answer to that question"<sup>12</sup>.

Two other quotations from different parts of the theistic spectrum will round off this section on naming God.

The first is from the Scottish Sydney-based philosopher Hayden Ramsay and the second is from St. Augustine's *Confessions*, the oldest surviving





autobiography in Western literature, a quotation Ramsay himself cites.

Ramsay writes that believers in God are not committed to any particular explanation of how the universe came about. However, he also writes:

they are committed to believing in the radical incompleteness of cosmology and astrophysics. The Universe's history does not explain why the Universe exists. Such an explanation is wrapped around in mystery, since it is not for any person to explain it. But if we can ask the question, we must ponder the answer and, bewildering though it is, that answer 'all men call God'<sup>13</sup>.

Ramsay introduces the extract from Augustine as expressing the "unique reconciliation of complexity and simplicity that is God"<sup>14</sup>.

St. Augustine wrote of God:

you are most high, excellent, most powerful, omnipotent, supremely merciful and supremely just, most hidden yet intimately present, infinitely beautiful and infinitely strong, steadfast yet elusive, unchanging yourself though you control the change in all things, never new, never old, renewing all things yet wearing down the proud though they know it not; ever active, ever at rest, gathering while knowing no need, seeking although you lack nothing.

Although written about 1600 years ago, these thoughts are one beautiful result of the interplay of Greek philosophy, especially Plato, Judaeo-Christian revelation, and the lived experience of the monotheistic tradition, which was then already about 2000 years old. I willingly concede that Augustine's description of God represents more than the fruits of reason alone.

## Science and God

As well as being an accomplished philosopher Antony Flew is also an excellent populariser, able to express controversial thoughts forcefully and pithily.

The most controversial claim in his recent book is "that of all the great discoveries of modern science, the greatest was God"<sup>15</sup>.

This is provocative for unbelievers, especially unbelieving scientists, and provocative for believers, who know that the roots of monotheism are found with Abraham about 3,700 or 3,900 years ago.

Although much of public opinion still regards science as an enemy of religious understanding and therefore of God, recent developments in physics and now in biology have strengthened the case for God the Creator as a first-rate mathematician as well as being prodigal and unpredictable in His creation.

We cannot arrive to God within the framework of science, because God is outside space and time. Flew explains neatly that when we study the interaction of physical bodies, such as sub-atomic particles, we are doing science. When we ask how or why these particles exist, we go beyond physics to metaphysics. We are doing philosophy<sup>16</sup>.

I should repeat that the God for which we are arguing is not a God of the gaps, not a God who is brought in to paste over the gaps in our present scientific knowledge, which might be filled later as science progresses. It is the whole of the universe which is not self-explanatory, including the infrastructure and elements we understand scientifically.

Many people over the ages have found evidence for the Mind of God in the laws of nature, in their regularity and symmetry.

The law of the conservation of energy, Newton's first law of motion and Boyle's law, mathematically precise

regularities, universal and tied together, are the examples Flew gives as he asks how nature is packaged in this way<sup>17</sup>.

Flew shows that as well as Einstein, the great scientists who developed quantum physics – Max Planck, Werner Heisenberg, Erwin Schrödinger and Paul Dirac – were all theists<sup>18</sup>. Even Charles Darwin rejected blind chance or necessity as the cause of the universe and looked to a First Cause with an intelligent mind<sup>19</sup>.

A number of writers espouse a theory called the Weak Anthropic Principle, which is that "matter evolved in an elaborate, finely tuned conspiracy to produce air-breathing, carbon based life forms possessed of self consciousness"<sup>20</sup>. Others have claimed as much by saying that the universe knew we were coming!

The universe is finely tuned. If the value of even one of the fundamental constants – the speed of light or the mass of an electron – had been slightly different then no planet capable of producing life could have formed<sup>21</sup>.

Other examples abound. If the nuclear strong force had been slightly weaker, no element heavier than hydrogen would have been formed. If the Big Bang had been more vigorous, matter could not have formed into stars and planets<sup>22</sup>. The one-force strength of electromagnetism enables carbon synthesis to occur in stars, allows stars to burn steadily for billions of years and atoms to exist, and ensures protons behave in such a way that chemistry is possible<sup>23</sup>.

All this is too much for blind chance. Neither do we have any satisfactory naturalistic explanation for the origin of life from non-living matter, for the fact (for example) that every animal for 600 million years has the same body plan, only the jelly fish is an exception!<sup>24</sup>

Living matter, or living beings, are purpose driven and directed. Aristotle was right since living beings are defined in such teleological terms, as is evident in the innate activity of a child feeding on its mother's breast, or a caterpillar developing into a butterfly.

On top of this, all forms of life are able to reproduce themselves and new and different species emerge in some mysterious way, which I suspect is more than random mutation and natural selection.



Another mystery of life is the origin of the coding and information processes in all life forms. The cell is a system which stores, processes and replicates information. Flew became a theist, changed his mind, after studying the directive capacity of DNA<sup>25</sup>, whose genetic message is replicated and transcribed to RNA. This message is conveyed to the amino acids, which are then assembled into proteins. How blind and purposeless forces could spontaneously produce such a process is unknown and I believe both unknowable and metaphysically impossible. Even atheist Nobel-prize winning biologists like Jacques Monod and DNA co-discoverer Francis Crick regard the emergence of life from chemical realities as almost miraculous.

Nor is this the end of the succession of miracles. I remember Sir Hans Kornberg, a distinguished biologist, asking me about the intelligence level of dinosaurs. I replied that it was low as we had no evidence they had produced anything worthwhile and they had a small brain. He said that they also had no voice box and that the development of the voice box which enabled human speech, personal communication, the exchange of thought and information was a development as spectacular as the development of life itself.

Some have alleged that life might have arisen by chance, but calculations and experiments have shown the odds to be impossibly high. In the 1980s Fred Hoyle and the astrophysicist Chandra Wickramasinghe decided to calculate the odds on whether random shuffling of amino acids could have produced life. They found the odds were one chance in  $10^{40,000}$ , an unimaginable number as the number of sub-atomic particles in the entire universe is about  $10^{81}$ .<sup>26</sup>

Flew also recounts Gerry Schroeder's refutation of the "monkey theorem". What were the odds against a group of monkeys thumping away on computer keyboards and so producing a Shakespearean sonnet? Six monkeys banging away in a cage for one month did not produce a single word, not even "a"! The odds against a sonnet were calculated by Schroeder as one in  $10^{690}$ , not as high as moving from amino acids to life but still impossibly high<sup>27</sup>. Life has not come about by chance.

## Greek Philosophy on God

We have inherited our love and respect for reason, via the Romans and Christian civilization, from the great pre-Christian Greek philosophers, especially Plato, Socrates and Aristotle. Plato quotes Socrates insistence that "we must follow the argument wherever it leads". This still should be our aim and it will always be a noble ambition.

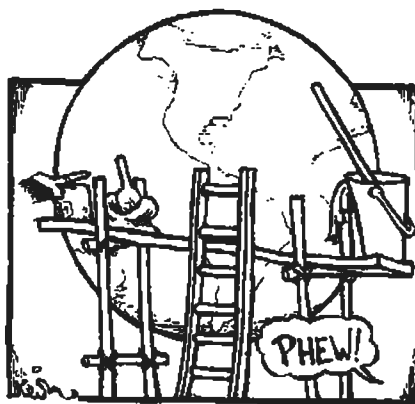
None of the major philosophers in the leading Greek schools were atheists, although they came to God by reason alone and were critical of the irrational myths of the traditional Greek religions of the time.

Xenophanes (565-470 BC) was the first philosopher to develop the concept of God as "the One", helping to purify the earlier mythological accounts of God from human projections and wishes. He criticised Homer and Hesiod for ascribing human weaknesses such as stealing, adultery and cheating to the gods. For him "One God is greatest among gods and men, not like mortals in body or thought". "The One", he said "is the God"<sup>28</sup>.

Parmenides was the first to formulate a philosophy, as opposed to a religious expression, of Being, about the year 475 BC, but he spoke of God as IS, not being:

One way only is left to be spoken of, that IS, and on this way are many signs that IS is uncreated and imperishable, whole, unmoved and without end. And it was not, and it will not be, for it is altogether Now<sup>29</sup>.

The two greatest Greek philosophers were Plato and Aristotle, but the tradition of St. Thomas Aquinas in which I was educated via the later writings of the Scholastics, drew heavily on Aristotle.



It is interesting to note that Aristotle's writings were largely unknown in Christian circles for the first 1000 years of our era. The philosophy of Plato was dominant.

It was only in the last quarter of the twelfth century that a number of Aristotle's texts were discovered in Toledo, Spain, hidden in old pottery jars. The local bishop, Nicodemus of Toledo, encouraged Jewish, Christian and Muslim scholars to translate these works and distribute them around Europe.

Therefore it was in the thirteenth century that Aristotle's thought became influential with Aquinas, Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch. The Church leadership, despite fierce opposition from the Platonists, came gradually to accept the "this worldliness" of Aristotle rather than the un-worldliness of Plato.

The historian Richard Rubenstein has written "Farsighted popes and bishops . . . took the fateful step that Islamic leaders had rejected. By marrying Christian theology to Aristotelian science, they committed the West to an ethic of rational enquiry that would generate a succession of scientific revolutions, as well as unforeseen upheavals in social and religious thought"<sup>30</sup>.

It was in the thirteenth century that we saw the beginnings of the great Western universities which continue today – Paris, Bologna, Salamanca, Oxford and Cambridge. The slow rise of Western civilization to world dominance had begun.

The famous five ways of St. Thomas Aquinas, the five proofs (or attempted proofs) for God's existence draw heavily from Aristotle.

For Aristotle God is pure Act, "The Understanding of understanding" and drawing on his philosophical conclusions, not on religious belief, he ascribes the following attributes to God: immutable, immaterial, omnipotent, omniscient, one and indivisible, perfectly good, necessarily existent<sup>31</sup>.

All of this is eminently compatible with the Judaeo-Christian notion of the one true God and it has been incorporated into our theology.

## The Christian God

For Jews and Christians the one true God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, while the Christians also see God as the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ.



Moses was told that God's name was "I am"<sup>32</sup>.

Accepting such claims does not require abandoning the reverence for reason that I have been advocating, but it does mean accepting a world which is wider than the physical, and criteria which are not scientific.

To accept that God has intervened directly in history by choosing one people as His own, His special agents to whom He has revealed more about his nature and plans than could be recognized philosophically, does require a leap of faith. But such a leap need not be irrational, although this leap can never be taken with mathematical certainty. Christians have a further challenge with their belief that Christ is divine as well as human. Christ should be accepted or rejected on the quality of his teachings, the integrity and plausibility of his actions during his lifetime, and the goodness and courage (or otherwise) of his followers as they strive to live out his teachings and defend their central doctrine that Christ rose after his ignominious public crucifixion.

As well as these intellectual challenges, the Christian concept of God immediately offers a formidable personal stumbling block.

Unlike many strands of Judaism, traditional Christianity has a clear doctrine on life after death, where the good are rewarded and the self-centred evil are punished, either for a time (according to the Catholics) or even permanently.

This is a two-edged sword, attractive to the victims of violence and oppression, but off-putting to the unreflective and threatening to the hard of heart, the obdurate who refuse to repent.

In a provocative inversion of Karl Marx's condemnation of religion as "the opium of the people" the Polish poet Czeslaw Milosz, himself a victim of communism, in his essay "The Discrete Charm of Nihilism" explains that the roots of twentieth century totalitarianism are found, not in religion, but in its nihilist antithesis. For Milosz "a true opium of the people is a belief in nothingness after death – the huge solace of thinking that for our betrayals, greed, cowardice, murders, we are not going to be judged"<sup>33</sup>. I think he is right.

## Knowledge of God

FOR ALL that may be known of God by men lies plain before their eyes; indeed God himself has disclosed it to them. His invisible attributes, that is to say his everlasting power and deity, have been visible, ever since the world began, to the eye of reason, in the things he has made. There is therefore no possible defence for their conduct; knowing God, they refused to honour him as God, or to render him thanks. Hence all their thinking has ended in futility, and their misguided minds are plunged in darkness. They boast of their wisdom, but they have made fools of selves ...

- St Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles, Epistle to the Romans, 1,19-23.

A just God needs an afterlife of reward and punishment, including purificatory punishment to balance the scales of justice, because history shows too many innocent victims.

Suffering, whether it comes from natural disasters or from human evil, is the greatest problem for those who believe in a personal, loving and just God. We find no entirely satisfactory intellectual answer.

However for those who believe that existence is purposeless that the universe is the product of blind chance, the problem of evil and suffering is submerged in the larger intellectual problem of why anyone should be happy, of why there should be goodness, truth and beauty. If the universe is only a brute fact, why did it emerge as good as it is, why does it not revert to chaos? Evil is a problem for theists, but the good things of life are a larger problem for atheists. Often

those who claim God is dead, silently assume the presupposition of the theist to criticise the sufferings in the world or the inadequacy of creation. One needs to assume, at least tacitly, that life should be good or just or peaceful before criticising reality on these scores.

## Conclusion

The God of the monotheist religions is much richer and more powerful than the same God recognized by the philosophers which is certainly one, true and good, but pale and thin in comparison.

A martyr is someone who is prepared to accept death rather than reject God and the twentieth century had more martyrs than any other century. Billions of believers continue to pray, live decent lives, love their families, contribute quietly to society in every monotheist tradition. But the militant in every tradition have gone to war in God's name. On the other hand no previous century has witnessed the systematic hatred and oppression of religions like that perpetrated by Hitler, Stalin, Mao and Pol Pot.

Even in tolerant societies God can and does provoke strong feelings, hatred and loathing. In some ways this is mysterious. Why be provoked by an absence?

God provokes the forces of evil and attacking the One, the True and the Good can bring out the darker side of the assailants, poisoning honest doubters and turning atheists into anti-theists. A person who is confident of his case does not need to be abusive, should try to answer objections, does not need to portray his opponents in



the worst light always and in every circumstance.

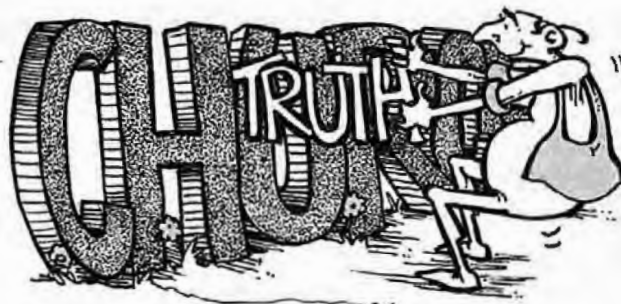
It is an intriguing question why so many in the Western world today are unable to believe, especially those culturally attached to Christianity and Judaism. For me the issue is too important for polemics and self-indulgence.

I will continue to believe in the one true God of love, because like André Malraux I maintain that "no atheist can explain the smile of a child".

Against this the tsunami also reminds us brutally of the problem of innocent suffering. But such suffering is worse if there is no afterlife to balance the scales of misfortune and injustice and worse again if there is no innocence or guilt, no good or evil, if everything has the moral significance of froth on a wave.

Without God we are nothing.

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28. Purcell "Deluded by What?" 6.
29. Ibid.
30. Quoted in Michael Novak, *No One Sees God: The Dark Night of Atheists and Unbelievers* (Doubleday, New York: 2008), 242-43.
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32. Exodus 3:13.
33. Czeslaw Milosz, "The Discrete Charm of Nihilism", *New York Review of Books* 45:18 (19 November 1998).



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# ISLAMIC COUNTRIES DEMAND TOLERANCE



ON 26 MARCH 2009, the Geneva based UN Human Rights Council adopted a resolution moved by Pakistan on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Countries condemning “defamation of religion” as a violation of human rights.

What kind of tolerance or respect does the leader of the Islamic bloc, Saudi Arabia, show for other religions? What kind of record does the frequent spokesman for the bloc, Pakistan, have in the matter of protection of religious places, sites shrines, and symbols of non-Muslims or for tolerating ethnic and religious minorities? The Hindus and Sikhs, subjected to unremitting oppression, have been reduced from 24% in 1947 to 1%. The Baluchis (an ethnic minority) have revolted repeatedly against the tyranny of the Pakistan government. Christians, who started as equal citizens have been facing the heat for decades. The Ahmadiyyas who gave Pakistan their first Foreign Minister (Sir Zafarullah Khan) and several war heroes and distinguished civil servants have not only been declared Non-Muslims but are liable to be jailed if they call themselves Muslims or refer to the places of their community prayers as “mosques”. ... the Shias have been targeted by aggressive Sunnis who demand that they be declared Non-Muslims. Having consistently oppressed and decimated the religious and ethnic minorities within their own territories, it is the height of hypocrisy for these countries to ask other countries to take steps for the protection of the religious symbols etc. of the minorities.

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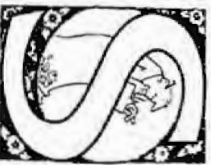
– J.P.Sharma, ‘Defending the Indefensible,’ *South East Asia Analysis Group*, Paper No. 3255, June 15, 2009.



*English Benedictines and the Catholic Church in Australia*

# DOWNSIDE TO DOWNUNDER

*By* Frank Carleton



INCE 1814 Downside Abbey and school have been located in the village of Stratton-on-the-Fosse, twelve miles from Bath in Somerset. Travel by bus from Bath to the abbey, which dominates the landscape, takes about an hour as the route covers a span of countryside villages.

Abbey and school are under the patronage of Pope St. Gregory the Great (540-604 AD), the fourth Latin Doctor of the Church and a Benedictine monk to whose *Dialogues* we are indebted for life of St. Benedict, the Patriarch of Western monasticism (480-547 AD). In 597 he sent St. Augustine of Canterbury (d. 605) with forty monks to convert the heathen English.

Thus began the thousand year Benedictine patrimony in England that was extinguished by the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation.

The death of Queen Mary, the last Catholic Queen regnant of England, in 1558 ended her efforts to restore the English monastic life destroyed by her father, Henry VIII with the dissolution of the monasteries between 1535 and 1540.

Of that king a 1920's Catholic school history of England asserts: "In his last agony he looked towards the door and cried in tones of terror, "Monks! Monks!". After the accession of his other daughter, Elizabeth, Englishmen could neither enter nor found monasteries in their native land. Some had recourse to Benedictine houses in Spain and Italy. But early in the seventeenth century specifically English Benedictine communities were founded at Douai in the Spanish Netherlands in 1607, at Dieulouard in Lorraine the next year and in Paris in 1615. The first at Douai was the original location of the Downside community.<sup>2</sup>

An English Benedictine Congregation derived from a 1619 union of these Continental foundations was formally reconstituted in 1633 by Pope Urban VIII's bull, *Phantata*.<sup>3</sup> English Benedictine monks became, along with Jesuits, other religious and secular priests, clandestine missionaries in their native land.

The brutal Elizabethan penal laws, which proscribed Catholicism, occasioned the martyrdom of six Douai Benedictine monks beginning with Blessed George Cervase in 1608 during the reign of James I and ending with Blessed Thomas Pickering in 1679 during Charles II's reign.<sup>4</sup>

The missionary impulse of penal times established a pastoral pattern that survived into the second half of the nineteenth century in England.

## Setting the Record Straight

IT is the contention of the first part of the book that late medieval Catholicism exerted an enormously strong, diverse, and vigorous hold over the imagination and the loyalty of the people up to the very moment of Reformation. Traditional religion had about it no particular marks of exhaustion or decay, and indeed in a whole host of ways, from the multiplication of vernacular religious books to adaptations within the national and regional cult of the saints, was showing itself well able to meet new needs and new conditions.

- The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional religion in England 1400-1580. Eamon Duffy, Yale University Press, 1992 p.4.

With the short-lived exception of the Abbey of Sts. Aidan and Dionsius, Lamspringe in lower Saxony (1644-1803) the Continental English Benedictine communities were driven back to England in 1795 by the anti-clerical excesses of the French Revolution.<sup>5</sup>

Following a nineteen-year sojourn at Acton Burnell in Shropshire the Douai monks and their schoolboys moved to Stratton-on-the-Fosse in Somerset. In the dining room of the Star Inn, Worcester, *en route* the monks and boys chanted the full Latin monastic Grace<sup>6</sup> to the probable consternation of other diners.

It was from Downside Abbey in 1833 that Father William Bernard Ullathorne OSB (1806-1889) came to Sydney as Vicar General of the English Benedictine Vicar Apostolic at Mauritius who had jurisdiction over New Holland. He brought about five hundred books which would become the basis of the Sydney Benedictine Collection of 5,698 titles held at the first St. Mary's Cathedral until transferred in 1864 to the Benedictine St. Mary's College, Lyndhurst in Glebe.

Most of that collection survives amongst the rare books and special collections in the Veech Library of the Catholic Institute of Sydney in Strahfield.<sup>7</sup>

To end disputes within the Catholic community of convict New South Wales Ullathorne recommended the appointment of a bishop. The first Catholic bishop in Australia arrived in 1835 in the person of John Bede Polding OSB (1794-1877), the former Novice Master at Downside.

In 1987 I found in the Sydney Archdiocesan Archives the badly deteriorated bifoliate manuscript which licensed Polding's successive ordinations to the subdiaconate and the diaconate in 1816 and 1818 at Downside.<sup>8</sup>



With the erection by Rome of an Australian Catholic hierarchy in 1842, Polding became the first Archbishop of Sydney. Sadly his dream of a Benedictine archdiocese ended with his successor, Roger Bede Vaughan OSB (1834-1883), the second and last Benedictine Archbishop of Sydney (1877-1883).<sup>9</sup>

Held at Downside Abbey are the archives of the English Benedictine Congregation which date from 1617. Located in the Archivist's office and on the lowest level of the six level monastic library they include many archives referring to Australia that were reproduced on six microfilms by the Australian Joint Copying Project in the 1970s.<sup>10</sup>

When viewed externally the library building, which is reached by a covered walkway from the monastic enclosure, vaguely resembles a 1970s spacecraft. Its collections amount to tens of thousands of volumes including many *rariora* of which the oldest are forty incunabula.<sup>11</sup>

For over thirty-five years the Archivist of the English Benedictine Congregation has been that most genial of church archivists, Dom Philip Jebb, OSB. A grandson of Hilaire Belloc, of whom he once published a charming childhood memoir,<sup>12</sup> Father Philip had to deal with EBC archives in his meagre "spare time" for most of his long tenure.

He was successively Deputy Headmaster, then Headmaster of the school, then Prior of the monastery from 1990-2000. Only some of his archival achievements and services to scholarship are represented by two editions of a guide to the archives, 1975 and 1995.<sup>13</sup>

## Setting the Record Straight [II]

That there was much in late medieval religion which was later developed within a reformed setting is obvious, but there was virtually nothing in the character of religion in late medieval England which could only or even best have been developed within Protestantism.

- The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional religion in England 1400-1580, Eamon Duffy, Yale University Press, 1992 p.4.

Amongst his many publications he co-authored an essay on the post Reformation rebirth of English Benedictine monasticism in a collection associated with a 1980 British exhibition, *The Benedictines in Britain*.<sup>14</sup> An effervescent fund of witty anecdotes, scholarly advice and perennial good humour, he has delighted many a researcher.

In early 2002 in the course of two visits of less than a week each to Downside I volunteered my services as an archivist. "Ah, a professional" said Father Philip without irony. I was assigned the papers of Dom Hugh Edmund Ford OSB (1851-1930), the first Abbot of Downside (1900-1906) and subsequent superior of the 1896 Downside foundation of Ealing Abbey in London until 1914.

Ford also had an early incidental Australian association: for the improvement of his indifferent health as

a young monk he voyaged to Australia in late 1873 in the party of the new coadjutor Archbishop of Sydney Roger Bede Vaughan OSB. An enthusiastic naturalist, Brother Edmund's pursuit almost proved fatal when he narrowly missed stepping on a death adder during a shooting expedition on Sydney's North Shore on 20th January, 1874. He returned to England and Downside in 1876.<sup>15</sup>

Twice Prior of Downside before it was raised to abbey status Ford became a pivotal figure in the reform of the Constitutions of the English Benedictine Congregation between 1880 and 1900. The history of that reform has yet to be written and much of the evidence of it lies in the Ford papers.

Ford was one of a minority of EBC monks, chiefly at Downside, who were protagonists of a fully monastic life. Because of its restoration in penal times the missionary impulse remained paramount for the English Benedictine Congregation decades after the monks had returned from the Continent and long after Catholic Emancipation in 1829 and the restoration of the English hierarchy in 1851.

The Congregation's primary focus was on pastoral work on missions beyond the monasteries where the monks had entered religious life. Organised in two provinces, Canterbury and York, the EBC had a common novitiate at Belmont Priory in Hereford from 1850.<sup>16</sup>

Tied to the Congregation rather than to their monasteries, monks could be moved about by decision of the Abbot President. Such an extra monastic



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regime made the English monks quite unlike other Benedictine monks.

On the conventual character of monastic life the first chapter of the ancient Rule of St. Benedict is explicit. It defines the *cenobites* as "the ones who are based in a monastery and fulfil their service of the Lord under a rule and an abbot."<sup>17</sup>

At the end of two decades the accomplishment of the EBC reform, without the abolition of the missions, was promulgated in Pope Leo XIII's bull *Diu Quidem* (1899). This raised the English Benedictine priories to abbeys. Against his stated wishes, given the poor state of his health, Prior Ford was elected first Abbot of Downside.<sup>18</sup> His short but vigorous abbacy, which included the building of the abbey church choir, was ended by his apparent exhaustion. This occasioned his 1906 resignation and removal to Ealing Abbey in London. He lived a further useful twenty-six years in Italy and England and died at Downside in 1930.

Abbot Hugh Edmund Ford's splendid abbatial tomb, which features his recumbent effigy vested as abbot, appropriately lies along the Epistle-side of the back of the monastic choir in the abbey church. It is immediately before that of his Downside monastic confrère and life-long friend, Francis Aidan Cardinal Casquet OSB (1846-1929), pioneer, if controversial, monastic historian, Archivist of the Vatican Secret Archives (1917) and Librarian of the Vatican Library (1924).<sup>19</sup> His numerous affectionate letters on a variety of monastic subjects survive amongst the Ford papers.

Seventeen years after Abbot Ford's death, his biographer, a later Abbot of Downside, noted the posthumous disorder of a very efficient abbot's papers: "... many documents, letters, notes and diaries have been accidentally destroyed, and much of what has been preserved is unfortunately far from complete."<sup>20</sup> Nonetheless there remains a huge body of personal and official papers in random and miscellaneous accumulations assembled by hands unknown in the distant past.

1. T.J. Livesey *The Primer of English history from B.C.55 to A.D. 1920* London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, [undated] p. 93  
2. Philip Jebb and David M. Rogers 'Rebirth' in *The Benedictines in Britain*. London: British Library, 1980 p. 92

## ANNALS CRYPTIC CROSSWORD No. 14

### ACROSS CLUES

- Nut cracked by wife of Boaz? ... It's a lie (7)
- Debra can supply dough (5)
- Grandad, a video jockey, conceals a Michelangelo creation (5)
- Sneak in favour of bowler dropping Miss Peep (7)
- Former leaders of Australian Capital Territory correct in every detail (5)
- Lay to rest in the centre of Amsterdam (5)
- Prophet designs a shoe (5)
- Cultivating ivy, he's joining a traditional Jewish school (7)
- Floor covering laid out for patron of widows (7)
- Invoked by Swedes to have a game of cards before end of August (7)
- Nuns' siblings? (7)
- Random jottings, not extreme essays (5)
- Parish priest into drink was the downfall of leading man (5)
- Religion converts Ms Ali... (5)
- ... or rites converted unruly mob (7)
- Bad grade for a king's guardian (5)
- Retreat is appropriate for this French saint (5)
- Rather devilish Cain sat apart (7)

### DOWN CLUES

- The 10th biblical month (for Jews) when animal doctor turns up with alien (5)
- Subordinate found below fish (9)
- With a cry of praise for the Lord a prophetess, according to Luke, supported 5 across sixty percent (7)
- Bitmaps arranged for sacrament (7)

- In this state no church allows a son of Cain inside (5)
- John, founder of brotherhood, leads Ella astray (2,2,5)
- Van Iran blew up to achieve absolute blessedness for Buddhists (7)
- God unusually tidy around start of Easter (5)
- Does it follow beatification for canonised Robin of Sherwood? (9)
- Tribute for network after trial before noon (9)
- Seen bra torn up in Hindu holy city of Varanasi (7)
- Toast is ruined by followers of Lao Zi (7)
- Told to cut down on corruption, though innocent? (7)
- Listener under directions to promise solemnly on oath (5)
- Back of ship that is leaving St Ernie very severe (5)
- Starting prayers all genuflect and nettle heathen (5)

### SOLUTION TO CRYPTIC NO. 13

B	A	M	D	I	V	G	I
M	A	R	Y	W	A	R	D
R	R	M	O	R	A	T	
A	N	N	A	I	L	L	F
A	E	I	N	D	R	N	
O	B	E	R	O	N	S	I
A	E	E	C	U			
I	S	H	M	A	E	L	
O	T	O	T	E			
O	V	E	R	S	E	E	R
I	S	R	A	R			
T	A	B	E	R	N	A	C
F	L	A	U	N	T		
E	L	Y					



*A brave and dedicated priest*

## FATHER CAPODANNO GOES HOME

*By Russell Shaw*

ON THURSDAY, September 3 at 7 p.m. a dedicated band of people gathered in the crypt of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington to honor a man who may some day be declared a saint. Archbishop Timothy M. Broglio of the Archdiocese for the Military Services will be main celebrant of the Mass—an annual event—which this year falls on the eve of the 42nd anniversary of the death of Father Vincent R. Capodanno, M.M., the ‘Grunt Padre.’

Information that could conceivably lead to his beatification and canonization is now being collected. Input from family, friends, and former military personnel will go to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome. Meanwhile Father Capodanno enjoys the designation ‘servant of God.’ The postulator of his cause is Father Daniel L. Mode, an Arlington priest and Navy chaplain who authored his biography, *The Grunt Padre* (CMJ Marian Publishers, 2000).

Vice-postulator Mary E. Preece says among those facing their own special ‘field of battle’ who believe Father Capodanno has helped them are soldiers recovering from amputations and life-threatening injuries, a Vietnam war veteran’s widow coping with his unexpected death, a young priest suffering from a blood disease, and others.

Vincent Capodanno was born February 13, 1929, youngest of ten children of an Italian immigrant couple. He grew up on Staten Island, joined the Maryknoll order to become a missionary, and was ordained in 1958. September 4, 1967 found him, a Navy chaplain in Vietnam, with elements of the 1st Battalion 5th Marines near the village of Dong Son in the Que-Son Valley. A Navy medic, Lt. Joseph E. Pilon, described the day’s events.

‘If you get three Purple Hearts you go home within 48 hours. On Labor Day our battalion ran into a world of trouble... 500 Marines against 2500 North Vietnamese Army regulars. We were constantly on the verge of [being] completely overrun and the Marines on several occasions had to ‘advance in a retrograde movement.’ This left the dead and wounded outside the perimeter...

‘Casualties were running high and Fr. C. had his work cut out for him. Early in the day, he was shot through the right hand which all but shattered his hand—one corpsman patched him up and tried to med evac him but Fr. C. declined. A few hours later a mortar landed near him and left his right arm in shreds hanging from his side. Once again he was patched up and once again he refused evacuation.

‘There he was, moving slowly from wounded to dead to wounded using his left arm to support his right as he gave absolution or last rites, when suddenly he spied a corpsman get knocked down by the burst of an automatic weapon. Fr. C. ran out to him and positioned himself between the injured boy and the automatic weapon. Suddenly the weapon opened up again and this time riddled Fr. C. from the back of his head to the base of his spine—and with his third Purple Heart of the day Fr. C. went Home.’

Vietnam remains a controversial affair. Father Capodanno believed what America was trying to do there was morally right, but in serving his beloved grunts he wasn’t making a political statement but ministering to men who needed him. He received the Medal of Honor posthumously. Other awards and honors have come his way. I don’t know if he will ever be declared a saint, but a brave and dedicated priest he unquestionably was.

*The forgotten pleasures of light verse*

# SWEETNESS AND SPITE

By R.J. Stove



IT IS ALWAYS sad when a valuable artist perishes. It is sadder still when a valuable art form perishes. It is saddest of all when a valuable art form did not need to perish, but was simply hounded to the culture's periphery by a deliberate, malicious process of what Fred Reed has called 'enstupitation.'

One art form belonging firmly to this last group is light verse. Today it is a drab, tiny creature, which, insofar as the major media tend it at all, survives more in Britain than in the States. Things were very different in the two decades following the Second World War. Back then, among Americans, light verse flourished. It owed part of its exuberant health to the enlightened attitude of *New Yorker* editor Harold Ross, who had an admirable policy of paying substantially more for light-verse contributions than for conventional free-verse bromides. But *The New Yorker* was not light verse's only home. The *New York Herald Tribune*, *Life*, and the *Saturday Evening Post* all found abundant room for it. As critic William H. Pritchard observed, 'Books by [light verse's] practitioners were reviewed in *The New York Times Book Review*, the general sense being that, in the age of [T.S.] Eliot and Wallace Stevens, it was an excellent alternative to high modernism.' The practitioners themselves won Pulitzers and honorary doctorates. They could even earn a middle-class living by producing the stuff.

There was E.B. White, a dab hand at such confections, although even in light verse's heyday White remained better known for his children's literature (*Charlotte's Web*, *Stuart Little*) and for his periodically acrid *New Yorker* cartoon captions. (Doting mother to fractious infant: 'It's broccoli, dear.' Fractious infant: 'I say it's spinach, and I say the

hell with it.') There was Ogden Nash, with his preposterously ingenious line endings (who else would have dared to emphasize that 'calliope,' properly pronounced, rhymes with 'diaper'?). There was Morris Bishop, professor of Romance Languages at Cornell, not to mention biographer of Petrarch, Pascal, La Rochefoucauld, and Samuel de Champlain. Bishop excelled above all at mimicry, as in his swipe at graffiti-carving tourists, which begins with a straight quote from Shelley's 'Ozymandias' but finishes:

'And on the pedestal these words appear:

"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings.

Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"

Also the names of Emory P. Gray,  
Mr. and Mrs. Dukes, and Oscar Baer  
●f 17 West Fourth St., Oyster Bay.'

I love to walk about at night  
By nasty lanes and corners  
foul, All shielded from  
the unfriendly light And  
independent as the owl.

By dirty grates I love to lurk;  
I often stoop to take a squint  
At printers working at their work.  
I muse upon the rot they print.

The beggars please me, and  
the mud:  
The editors beneath their lamps  
As – Mr Howl demanding blood,  
And Lord Retender stealing  
stamps.

Policemen speak to me, but  
I, Remembering my civic  
rights, Neglect them and do not  
reply. I love to walk about at  
nights.

- The Happy Journalist, by Hilaire Belloc

Representing post-war light verse's Little League was the young John Updike who died this year. His obituarists largely ignored his poems yet he once admitted, 'As a boy I wanted to be a cartoonist. Light verse ... seemed a kind of cartooning with words, and through light verse I first found my way into print.' Far too much of Updike's seriously intended poetry – the verse in which he took most pride – bore the unprepossessing paw-prints of Walt Whitman, whom P.J. O'Rourke accurately but unavailingly called 'a self-obsessed ratchet-jaw with an ear like a tin cookie sheet.' Happily, every technical virtue that Updike forgot in his serious efforts, he remembered in his light ones. Witty rhymes, as in a meditation on, of all topics, Venus's magnetic field ('Stern Mars is cold, Uranus gassy, / And Saturn hopelessly déclassé'); equally amusing enjambments across lines of otherwise strict metre ('Just turned nineteen, a nicely moulded lad, / I said goodbye to Sis and Mother; Dad / Drove me to Wisconsin ...'); lampoons that showed how well he knew the literary canon, as when newspaper reports of a pampered Iranian oil magnate reminded him of Coleridge:

'In Naishapur did Khaibar Khan  
With stately ease exclaim 'Kerchoo!'  
And Standard Oil dispatched its man  
With bales of linen to Iran  
To minister unto his flu...'

By general consent at the time, though, the doyenne of light versifiers in this period was not Updike or Nash or Bishop or White but Phyllis McGinley. A straw poll recently taken among half a dozen of the present writer's most bookish colleagues revealed that not a single respondent under the age of fifty had even heard of her. Seldom has any once vast reputation been so completely dissolved. Who now would imagine that in 1965, such was her renown, she



broke bread with LBJ and appeared on the cover of *Time*?

Miss McGinley actually disliked the rubric 'light verse,' preferring to call her manner 'poetry of wit.' She regarded herself as belonging to the tradition of seventeenth-century England's so-called Cavalier Poets – Robert Herrick, Richard Lovelace, Edmund Waller, and John Suckling, to name a handful – who eschewed the self-conscious, syntax-wrecking convolutions of John Donne and his followers in favour of a sweet urbanity. Something of this urbanity characterises Miss McGinley's own oeuvre. Yet a more immediate influence on it is that of her co-religionist Hilaire Belloc (whose poems Jonathan Chaves eulogised in *The American Conservative's* 19 July 2004 issue). Indeed, one could almost argue that the entire history of modern light verse comprises a series of footnotes to Belloc. When McGinley laments the dullness of modern American lodgings, she does so by invoking Belloc's 'Do you remember an inn, Miranda?'

Her theological allegiance – through which, on occasion, she subjected Calvin and John Knox to gentle raillery – will do nothing to dispel the widespread half-truth that America's only major modern writers have been Catholics or Jews. Orwell, a lifelong foe of Catholicism, nevertheless maintained that Catholics produced the best comic writing because they had 'a serious purpose and a noticeable willingness to hit below the belt.' Certainly, Belloc did so at times, as did his literary descendant Roy Campbell, who numbered among his plentiful aversions Elizabeth I's regime ('Cecil's OGPU') and Spain's bespectacled prime minister Manuel Azaña ('Four-eyed Janus ... the sodomites are on your side'). But where Belloc and Campbell wielded bludgeons, Miss McGinley preferred a stiletto. Where they bellowed, she teased.

She adopted, without necessarily being aware of doing so, William Carlos Williams's doctrine: 'No ideas but in things.' Suburbia awoke in her a passionate instinct for what a nineteenth-century Anglican hymnodist had called 'the daily round, the common task':

'Mankind is better off' with trifles:  
With Band-Aid rather than the Bomb,

## We will dominate

IN JUNE 2009, an incident took place at Conway Hall in London's Red Lion Square, the hallowed venue of secular leftist gatherings since the 1930s. Anjem Choudary, a radical Muslim preacher and leader of the Islamist organization al-Muhajiroun, was ejected after his followers attempted to segregate male and female members of the audience for a public debate. Choudary told the assembled media in the street outside: 'This country is rife with social and economic problems and only Islam has the answer. Muslims are multiplying at a rate eight times faster than the kaffir. In a couple of generations this will be a Muslim country, inshallah. We will dominate this country, my brothers, and implement the beauty and perfection of Islam.' Al-Muhajiroun members greeted the speech with cheers and cries of 'God is great' and 'Sharia for the UK.' The crowd included Simon Keeler, the first white British Muslim convert convicted of inciting terrorism.

- Daniel Johnson reviewing *Reflections on the Revolution in Europe*,  
by Christopher Caldwell,

With safety match than safety rifles.  
Let the earth fall or the earth spin!  
A brave new world might well begin  
With no invention  
Worth the mention  
Save paper towels and aspirin.'

Dwight Macdonald spent all too much of the 1950s bewailing Midcult and Masscult, yet from the vantage point of 2009, the 1950s were the great age of almost universal Highcult. Intelligent American artists then enjoyed genuine popularity, as they never afterwards did. During the *Pax Eisenhowerian*, Princeton and Petticoat Junction spoke, to a surprising extent, the same tongue. Miss McGinley's collections of verse had an average sales figure of 60,000 copies. Not for her the usual appurtenances of poets today: the vanity presses, the passive-aggressive demands for taxpayer funding.

For some peevish spirits – notably Comrade Betty Friedan, who treated

her to special invective (a badge of honour in itself) – Miss McGinley just was not dismal enough. Domesticity, that 'concentration camp' of Ugly Betty's feverish imaginings, seemed to Miss McGinley something like heaven:

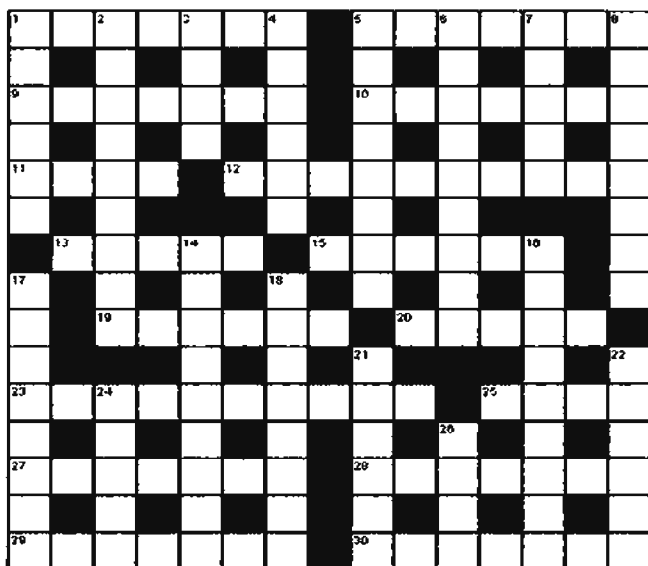
'Less woman, I suspect, than mouse,  
To alter fate I would not bother.  
I like my plain suburban house.  
I like my children and their father.  
In fact, I find it hard to see  
Exactly what I should disparage.  
I like my nationality,  
I like my relatives-by-marriage.  
Trapped, tricked, enslaved, but  
lacking sense  
To enter in the conflict single,  
I wear my chains like ornaments,  
Convinced they make a charming  
jingle.'

Then, at the very moment when you have Miss McGinley pegged for a mere jokesmith, she can turn around and overwhelm you with her tenderness, as in this tribute to her adolescent daughter:

'Thirteen's no age at all. Thirteen is  
nothing  
It is not wit, or powder on the face,  
Or Wednesday matinée, or misses'  
clothing,  
Or intellect, or grace...  
Thirteen keeps diaries and tropical fish  
(A month, at most); scorns jump-ropes  
in the spring;  
Could not, would fortune grant it,  
name its wish;  
Wants nothing, everything;  
Has secrets from itself, friends it  
despises;  
Admits none to the terrors that it feels;



# ANNALS CRYPTIC CROSSWORD No. 15



## ACROSS CLUES

1. Wool producer joins a son of Jacob during time of fasting for Muslims (7)
5. Petitions to God from front to back sprayer (7)
9. I'm returning church ale brewed for archangel (7)
10. We learn about transformation (7)
11. Metal fastener central to brain ailment (4)
12. Abandoned infants discovered fish (10)
13. Leading Presbyterian born earlier (5)
15. Founder of Solidarity movement Walesa goes around before noon with Father of Noah (6)
19. Apostle is the twenty-first Greek character with impudence (6)
20. A Buddhist domed building put back into South Africa (5)
23. Dave made an error growing puttyroot (4,3,3)
25. Sound comeback from one of the chosen people (4)
27. Place of damnation has directions for a Greek (7)
28. Last month Eve and I inside to mislead (7)
29. Chem sat out weddings and games (7)
30. Exhausted Queen inside with devilish looking tempter (7)

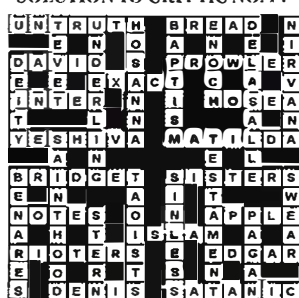
## DOWN CLUES

1. In New Testament book, according to Paul, mad Norma's wrecking manors (6)
2. Australian saint with raincoat to slay operator (9)
3. College of cardinals head finds leading

Anglican in den upsetting Dane (4)

4. Admiral Mandela? (6)
5. It's all about mums and dads having prenatal surgery (8)
6. Man let nun off with a formal invalidation (9)
7. Having wine drunkenly, media boss is to succeed first Christian King of Northumbria (5)
8. A follower of John Bosco auctions Ian (8)
14. He bet Liza could turn into Zechariah's wife (9)
16. Holy Willie shredded their copy... (9)
17. .... and ancient Semetic gods their map (8)
18. Ned's sink damaged by some consideration (8)
21. Dodges Peron above Rhodesian centre (6)
22. Trustworthy Polish saint (6)
24. Take tops off hall and cot to share out (5)
26. Mark that's left after cars crash (4)

## SOLUTION TO CRYPTIC NO. 14



Own half a hundred masks but no disguises;  
And walks upon its heels.  
Thirteen's anomalous – not that, not this:  
Not folded bud, or wave that laps a shore,  
Or moth proverbial from the chrysalis.  
Is the one age defeats the metaphor:  
Is not a town, like childhood, strongly walled  
But easily surrounded, in no city.  
Nor, quitted once, can it be quite

recalled –

Not even with pity.

Note the assurance with which she makes the shortest lines bear even greater emotional weight than the iambic pentameters. Having demonstrated her brilliance at such exigent medieval French verse genres as the ballade, the rondeau, and the villanelle, she told *The American Scholar* in 1965, 'Discipline is the groundwork of all art. The abstract painter has to know first how to draw,

the symbolist to write ordinary lines. And the poet, no matter how soon he intends to throw overboard his formalism, has first to be capable of a correctly rhymed and metered stanza.'

A recent *New York Times* profile made the depressing allegation that Miss McGinley in her last years became friendly with the priapic poltroon Nelson Rockefeller and followed his counsel even to the extent of supporting abortion. One hopes these allegations are false. But even if true, they did her no worldly good. Apologists for the 1960s Confessional Poets had only contempt for her poised, supple idiom. Clive James, himself an accomplished bard, referred with understandable tetchiness (in a 1977 essay for London's *New Statesman*) to the Confessional crew as being characterized by 'stringy hair, open-necked shirts, non-rhyming sonnets that multiplied like bacilli, and nervous breakdowns.' The Confessional Poets, with Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton, and John Berryman constituting their trinitarian godhead, turned poetry into that branch of psychobabble that it has mostly been ever since. Imitating Miss McGinley or her rivals requires skill, not to mention a functioning auditory nerve. Imitating Plath's 'Thalidomide' or Sexton's 'Menstruation at Forty' requires no discernible talent save the purest, most unembarrassable exhibitionism: any number can play. Such exhibitionism signified Whitman's posthumous triumph. By extension, it also showed the decline of any artistic medium that – like light verse – prides itself on knowing its architectural limits and on acknowledging (although seldom slavishly copying) established literary traditions.

Largely forgotten, Miss McGinley died in 1978, a month before her seventy-third birthday. Perhaps on her gravestone someone should have carved the credo of Dorothy Parker, whom in her steely metrical intelligence she so much resembled:

'A little humour leavens the lump, surely, but it does more than that. It keeps you, from your respect for the humour of others, from making a dull jackass of yourself. Humour, imagination, and manners are pretty fairly interchangeable interwoven.'

R.J. STOVE lives in Melbourne. This article originally appeared in *The Australian Conservative's* August 2009 issue.



*Caring more for Profit than for Women and their Children*

## ABORTION FOR PROFIT



THE ALAN CUTTMACHER INSTITUTE (ACI), the research arm of Planned Parenthood, estimates that there were 1.21 million

abortions performed in the U.S. in the year 2005. Of the 1.21 million annual abortions, approximately 88% (1.06 million) are performed during the first trimester. The other 12% (150,000) are performed during the second and third trimester. In 2005, the average cost of a nonhospital abortion with local anesthesia at 10 weeks of gestation was \$413. The Women's Medical Center estimates that a 2nd trimester abortion costs up to \$3000 (with the price increasing the further along the pregnancy goes). If we take the \$413 average for 1st trimester abortions and use a \$3000 average for 2nd and 3rd trimester abortions, here's what we get: \$438 million is spent each year on first trimester abortions and \$393 million is spent on late term abortions. That means that each year in the U.S., the abortion industry brings in approximately \$831 million through their abortion services alone. If you add in the \$337 million (or more) that Planned Parenthood (America's largest abortion provider) receives annually in government grants and contracts for, the annual dollar amount moves well past 1 billion.

Abortion, to put it plainly, is a very lucrative business, and this has been true from the beginning. By last count, Planned Parenthood (a tax-exempt organization!) has \$951 million in total assets! Marvin Olasky observes and documents in his book, *Abortion Rites*, that there have long been doctors who supported abortion "if not for principle, at least for principal." Like prostitution (which helped abortionists "flourish and grow rich" during the mid 1800's), abortion offers the opportunity to get

rich quick. For all of human history, the "blandishment of wealth" has led many to rationalize career choices that they would never otherwise dream of.

What this means to the abortion debate is that the people and organizations who defend the morality of abortion the most vehemently are generally the very same ones who rake in huge profits from its continued availability. This sets up a significant conflict of interest and should immediately call into question any claims they might make about their desire to reduce the number of abortions. When Planned Parenthood argues that they're working hard to reduce the frequency of abortion, the fact remains that their financial livelihood is built on abortion. Planned Parenthood, then, is just like the big

tobacco companies. Does anyone really believe that tobacco companies want people to stop smoking? Does anyone really believe that Planned Parenthood wants people to stop having abortions? Follow the money.

Why would they want women to know that there is a potential connection between breast cancer and abortion, if that information might cause them to rethink an abortion? (Planned Parenthood explains why anyone who mentions this potential link is an "anti-choice zealot") ([AbortionBreastCancer.com](http://AbortionBreastCancer.com))

Why should they be bothered by the fact that the women they counsel choose abortion over adoption at a rate of 120 to 1? After all, referring women to an adoption agency earns them \$0. Getting them to abort brings in an average of \$413! (Planned Parenthood's Annual Report - data on page 4)

Those who defend abortion, arguing that it is good and necessary for a healthy society, are defending an institution which is making them very wealthy. On the flip side, those who argue that abortion is an act of violence against an innocent human being, do so at great financial cost. There is no pay-off on the "pro-life" side. All the efforts to educate people about the reality of abortion consume large amounts of money, and there is no billion dollar product to refill the coffer. Think about it. Those who support abortion the most are growing rich off its continued availability while those who oppose abortion the most are losing money for their efforts. Who, then, is more likely to be honest and forthright about the issue at hand? Who is more likely to be motivated by principle and who is more likely to be motivated by profit?

### Abortion Push in Catholic Countries

By Piero A. Tozzi, J.D.

NEW YORK-BASED public interest law firm Center for Reproductive Rights (CRR) released its 2008 Annual Report this week, touting efforts to promote abortion worldwide and listing yearly revenue of nearly \$13 million. The report highlights a global caseload that appears disproportionately directed at expanding access to abortion and contraceptives in traditionally Catholic countries. Its 2008 docket includes three proceedings each against Poland and Peru, and two each against Mexico and Costa Rica, in forums ranging from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to national Supreme Courts. The report also singles out efforts in the Philippines to force public authorities to distribute contraceptives.

Source: The Case against Abortion. See [www.abort73.com/abortion/abortion\\_for\\_profit](http://www.abort73.com/abortion/abortion_for_profit)

# MEDIA MATTERS

By JAMES MURRAY

## Gee Up

Putting the cart before the horse is a metaphor so ancient that it is difficult to apply it to modernity or post-modernity. Yet the Rudd Labor Government has done so through its proposed Charter of Rights with a little help from priest-jurist Frank Brennan SJ and fellow members of the committee established to inquire into the general acceptability of a charter.

Their soundings entailed much analysis of the submissions by interested parties (not necessarily congruent with all those potentially affected).

Most reportage and comment took it as read that a charter would entail at minimum a shift in influence, if not real power, from parliament to the judiciary. Everyone knows precisely how parliamentarians get elected. Few, if any, know how judges attain their status.

One of the most clear-sighted of ex-High Court Judges, Ian Callinan, has come out robustly against the charter concept. In addition, Callinan (also a novelist and dramatist) is on record about the need for some kind of commission to oversee judicial appointments.

In other words: ensure the horse is fit before harnessing it to the cart. Rights charters look to the US Bill of Rights. Surely, it is only fair that senior-court judges submit to the kind of scrutiny their American counterparts endure as part of a system where the representatives of the people have a supervisory role in deciding judicial appointments?

## Cash Push

Elsewhere another spavined equine metaphor applies: the push to get readers to pay for

Internet reproduced copy constitutes locking the stable door after the horse has bolted. Leader of the push is Rupert Murdoch. Though more formidable than the original leader of the push, CJ Dennis's Bloke, Murdoch will have his difficulties (comparisons with King Canute do not apply).

One of his critics has been ABC supremo Mark Scott. Fortunately, Murdoch does not seem to be in vendetta mode. Were he to order the withdrawal of his contracted hacks from commentary gigs on the ABC, the air-time blanks would be startling.

Here a tribute to the newish ABC programme *Breakfast* is appropriate. Unlike its commercial rivals, Nine's *Sunrise* and Seven's *Today*, which tend to a soggy-cornflakes ambience, *Breakfast* is substantial fare: bacon, eggs, toast, marmalade and tea.

One of the *Breakfast* segments has particular appeal; it's the one where an ABC staffer comes on to read best bits from the morning newspapers to the programme's anchors, Joe O'Brien and Virginia Trioli.

Ripping stuff. It formalises a hidden, television ritual: rummaging through newspapers to find follow-ups.

## George Force

He is not the market. How could anyone single human be that mysterious interplay of commerce and self-interest, sagacity and rapacity conjured by the Enlightenment's Adam Smith to rule the world? George Soros is, however, undoubtedly one of the era's most influential market players, not least for having inflicted GFH (Grievous Fiscal Harm) on the pound sterling.

And he has made it clear he is putting his

## Changing the Moral Ecology of the Country

EACH TIME we make policy on abortion, euthanasia, or embryonic experimentation, we are changing the moral ecology of our country. We are either helping to build the culture of life or cooperating with the culture of death. It hasn't helped that the elite media, the powerful foundations, the sex industry, and the vast profit-making abortion industry have done their best to disguise the truth of what was happening.

— Mary Ann Glendon, 'The Greatest Grassroots Movement of Our Times,' *First Things*, October 13, 2009



money where his views are; he is investing in technological solutions to the perceived threat of global warming.

No matter the outcome of the Rudd-Turnbull hesitation waltz, the example of Soros is unlikely to be ignored at the Copenhagen Climate Summit even by economists, green with zeal for a market solution by way of an Emissions Trading Scheme.

Those who believe such a solution does not have a potential downside are already oblivious of the Global Financial Crisis or are living in that antediluvian environment for climate idealists: Cloud Cuckooland.

### Winged Words

They fly in like exotic migratory birds: unusual phrases which perch in books, newspapers and magazines before taking flight on radio, television, and the Internet. One such is 'cognitive dissonance', applied to those able to hold two contradictory principles simultaneously.

In his mighty novel *1984*, George Orwell invented a more effective term, *doublethink* for the mindset that enabled his hero Winston Smith to evince loyalty to a repressive regime while mentally rebelling against it.

The doublethink phenomenon is innate to the phrase, 'ageing Australia', and its variants (which are not exclusive to Australia). Generally these are used in isolation. Scant reference is made to what has caused the ageing and its consequent population imbalances: birth control policies by way of condoms, abortion and the contraceptive pill (here, the absent-minded revolutionary legacy of the conservative Menzies Government).

Labor's Arthur Calwell who failed to become prime minister is remembered for the slogan: 'Populate or perish'. His latterday counterpart Peter Costello (who also failed to become prime minister) will be remembered for his dictum: 'Demography is destiny'.

Note Costello did not say 'population' but 'demography', which has connotations on the mix of people in any given polity.

### Uni Origin

Who said? 'The modern university had its origins in mediaeval European ecclesiastic education?' Hilaire Belloc? CK Chesterton? Christopher Dawson? None of them. The comment belongs to the great Chinese scholar Liu Ts'un-yan, who made it in his inaugural lecture after he journeyed from Beijing to join the staff at the Australian National University, Canberra.

Professor John Minford, head of the ANU Chinese Centre, quoted the comment in an aptly generous obituary (*Higher Education Supplement, The Australian*, October 14).

In a world where there is a tendency for even the most ancient of academic institutions to become degree mills, it is a comment that should be remembered at all universities and above all at the nation's Catholic universities.

### Coded Play

Supposedly the game they play in heaven is rugby. What does that make rugby league? Historically league grew in those areas of England's north, mainly Lancashire and Yorkshire, which rose in arms against the Reformation during the reigns of both Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth I of England. Is League,

therefore, the Counter Reformation in action?

Real football (aka soccer)? It's the game they play in purgatory, full of anguish but always hope of heaven, led by the only team in the world founded to help feed the poor: Glasgow Celtic Football Club.

As to celestial play, the code with the strongest case is Australian Rules (once known as the 'Victorian Game'). Watching it in all its swift grace and athleticism inspires the thought that it was originally played by angels seeking to prove they were worthy of wings.

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## Moral Power

MORAL POWER was the key to success. Communism might have collapsed of its own economic incompetence, but why did it collapse in 1989 rather than 1999 or 2009 or 2019? And why did it collapse without violence (Romania excepted)? Our premier Cold War historian, John Lewis Gaddis of Yale, has the answer: the moral revolution launched by John Paul II during his first pilgrimage to Poland in June 1979 was the key to all the rest. There were winners and losers in this epic contest. Be grateful that we won. Be grateful for all those who sacrificed blood and treasure for the victory.

- George Weigel, 'Some Cold War Truths' *The Catholic Difference* (September 30, 2009)

*'They should have known better'*

# LA TRAHISON DES ARCHITECTES

By Tony Evans



HE phrase from which this title is borrowed, first appeared as the title of a book by the French writer, Julien Benda (1867-1956). In the original version the correct title is not *architects* but *scholars* or *intellectuals* [clerics]; *The Treason of the Intellectuals*. So popular has the French phrase become, that it is now freely quoted by journalists and commentators to indict those with special knowledge and position in society who are thought to have betrayed us by their silence, or by their collaboration with an enemy. In other words, because they were intellectually gifted they should have known better.

Although architects may not be accused of betraying us by their silence – their works are, after all, only too public and difficult to ignore – it can be argued that the once greatly-revered profession of artist-engineers has betrayed its ancient craft by becoming corrupted by twin ideologies – modernism and the demands of accountants.

As a result public and commercial buildings of the last fifty years, with a few noble exceptions, are mostly soulless glass towers, or pre-formed concrete boxes.

As Roger Scruton argues: 'Architectural modernism rejected all attempts to adapt the old language of the city. It rejected classical orders, columns, architraves and mouldings. It rejected the Greek and Gothic revivals: It rejected every written and unwritten rule that has shaped the growth of our towns.'<sup>1</sup>

He suggests that Modernism rejected those things not because it had any well thought-out alternative, but because it was intent on overthrowing the social order that they represented – 'the order of the bourgeois city, as a place of faith,

festivity, commerce and spontaneous hierarchical life.'<sup>2</sup>

Surely no age has been so dispirited nor out of sympathy with its contemporary urban environment as ours, with the result that when our business is finished for the day we hurry away, there being no reason for us to stand and admire as we would in older European city centres. It is in this sense that we have been betrayed by architects. They should have known better.

Scruton goes on to explain that modernism was a crusade to rid architecture of any past ideals since no one believed these ideals any more. The modern age was 'an age without heroes, without faith,' and so architecture must 'reflect a classless society from which all hierarchies had disappeared.'<sup>3</sup>

Given this definition it is surprising that these revolutionary modernist ideas also infected church architecture.

The liturgical reforms which followed Vatican II – although not always sanctioned in Conciliar documents – provided ready encouragement for sweeping changes in church design.

No longer would the sanctuary and the tabernacle be an exclusive space

guarded by altar rails. Statues, paintings and symbolic decoration were excluded as being too reminiscent of pre-Vatican II liturgy. In many modern churches, including those built today, the pews are placed in a semi-circle around the altar and the priest faces his 'congregation' in the mistaken belief that this was how the early Church celebrated the Eucharist. (A quick glance at a reproduction of Leonardo Da Vinci's 'Last Supper' should be sufficient to dispel this myth).

If Scruton is only half right in stating that modernist architecture reflects a moral vision of 'a society from which all hierarchies had disappeared, a society with no absolutes and only relative values,'<sup>4</sup> it is surely legitimate to ask to what extent the revolution in church architecture, so warmly embraced by many church leaders and their architects, has contributed to the decline in church attendance, the lack of reverence for the Blessed Sacrament, and the indisputable ignorance of their Faith by young Catholics.

There are many good reasons cited for this decline but seldom is modernist church design apportioned any of the blame; rather it is expected that modern design creates an informality, breaks down barriers, and encourages community friendship and togetherness – all supposedly more attractive to young people. Worthy concepts perhaps, so long as one can ignore the negative and more iconoclastic agenda implicit in modernist architecture and those who adhere to it.

Buildings have a far greater effect on our morale, and on our attitudes to authority and learning, than will be admitted generally. This has long been recognised by those responsible for the mid-twentieth century waste-lands, the high-rise slums on the edge of European cities where lawlessness, drugs and despair have made them into no-go

## Take the Best

THE best, the most urgent way of knowing one another, is for Orthodox and Catholic to know and to love one another in the most saintly representatives of their spirituality.

– Jacques Maritain, *The Things that are not Caesar's*, London, Sheed & Ward, 1930, 'On Russian Orthodoxy,' p.176.



areas. Alternatively, buildings of great beauty arouse feelings of joy, awe and well-being and can influence behaviour.

Beauty and tradition in church design can and often do elevate our spirits and suggest the Divine presence. As the great mid-nineteenth century church architect, Pugin, wrote in defence of his Gothic designs: 'The Mass, whether offered up in a garret, or a cathedral is essentially the same sacrifice, yet when surrounded by all the holy splendour of Catholic worship, those august mysteries appear ten times more overpowering and majestic ... while the senses are rapt in ecstasy by outward beauty, the divine truths will penetrate the soul thus prepared for their reception.'<sup>5</sup>

We can see most clearly the effect that modernist architecture has on the behaviour of churchgoers at Sunday Mass, although the precise damage to their Faith is less apparent.

Churches that resemble theatres or assembly halls, where the tabernacle is all but hidden from general view, will be treated by the public like theatres and assembly halls. There can be no blame attached to those who respond sincerely to the atmosphere of their surroundings.

Assembly halls are not approached with reverence and awe, but as friendly meeting places where greetings and gossip are exchanged. The blank and the unadorned walls and raked seating, positioned like an apron-stage theatre, and the auditorium, often lit with large windows which have the effect of bringing the mundane outside world with its distractions into the church, all add up to a denial of the transcendent.

In her book *No Place for God*, the architect Moyra Doorly, a critic of modernist church design, is uncompromising in her view that the modern age has witnessed the construction of the most banal and uninspiring churches in history: 'Contemporary church buildings,' she writes, 'as well as being the ugliest ever built, are also the emptiest.'<sup>6</sup> She maintains, citing much supporting evidence that modernist churches deny the transcendent, that they neglect their original purpose which was as a place of worship, sacrifice, and prayer. In these churches, she says, 'there is [now] no place for God.'<sup>7</sup>

## Belonging to the Lord

**WE** ARE at Jesus' disposal. If he wants you to be sick in bed, if he wants us to proclaim His work in the street, if he wants us to clean the toilets all day, that's all right; everything is all right.

— Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta

'That's all very well' replies the modern, ambitious architect, 'but would you have us reject all contemporary building techniques and materials, return to the past and merely reproduce ancient styles of architecture, denying the natural continuum of artistic creativity?'

It is difficult to counter this with a simple yes or no. One noted answer was given by John Hawes, the priest-architect who worked in Western Australia from 1915 to 1938 and who built the largely Renaissance-style Geraldton Cathedral: 'In the design of modern buildings, the aim of the architect should be to avoid, on the one hand, any straining after originality but be reminiscent of the past without being fussy.'<sup>8</sup>

Pugin would have answered that the Gothic style – the pointed style as he called – it was the perfect Catholic architecture which embodied and proclaimed the truths of the Faith as no other style could do, and therefore should be employed always.

William Wilkinson Wardell agreed and employed this style for his two great cathedrals, St Mary's in Sydney and St Patrick's in Melbourne and in all his smaller churches elsewhere – although adapting and modifying his designs to suit Australian conditions and limited funds.

Some inventions, styles and discoveries in the past have proved so satisfactory that no modification is ever thought necessary.

The violin is one such example, so perfect in design and beauty that it has defied any but the most subtle changes since the 17th century. An eighteenth century book looks exactly like a book published two-hundred years later.

A similar case might be made for the Gothic style in church design. It is certainly the best loved and longest surviving.

To those who argue that it is impossible to put the clock back, Chesterton has argued that, on the contrary, it is perfectly possible for us to do so, but the will to do so is wanting.

Whether or not a return to Gothic is the answer to improving church design is a contentious question and an unpopular one with architects. They want church architecture to move with the times. But what seems like common sense is surely a requirement that the architect of a modern Catholic church should be a practising Catholic with a thorough knowledge of the Faith and a respect for its traditions. Only in recent times has this seemed not to be a requirement.

It was the crusading architect, Le Corbusier, a self-proclaimed agnostic, who wrote 'Architecture is stifled by custom' – and his disciples cried in support, 'Down with the past!'

His futuristic chapel at Ronchamp (1950-54) subsequently became an exemplar, much praised, and a powerful influence on forward-thinking church architects since that time. After its completion and the publication of Le Corbusier's famous manifesto, church architects never looked back.

They should have. They should have known better.

1. *Scrutun*, R. Gault Regrets, London 2005. p.197

2. *Ibid*.

3. *Ibid*.

4. 198

5. Pugin. Lecture at Oscott College, published in *True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture*, New York, 1987

6. Doorly, M., *No Place for God*, London 2007, p. 1

7. *Ibid*.

8. Quoted in Evans, A. *The Conscious Stone*, Melbourne 1984

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 the very popular *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*. He has just completed a biography of William Wardell. The beautiful St John's College within the University of Sydney, founded in 1858, is the oldest Catholic University College in Australia, and first Catholic University College to be built in the English speaking world since the reformation; it is also one of the priceless cultural treasures bequeathed to Australian Catholics by William Wardell its architect.

*One impact of slower population growth is the smaller pool of potential recruits.*

## WOMEN IN COMBAT – AGAIN!

By Michael O'Connor



THE MINISTER for Defence Personnel, Science and Materiel, Greg Combet, reportedly intends to commission an academic investigation of the suitability of women for employment in military categories of the Australian Defence Force currently denied them. These generally include combat infantry, armour, and artillery in the army, and special forces in both the army and navy. Generally speaking, these categories involve especially dangerous operations in close proximity to an enemy. Usually, these are the branches that suffer most casualties.

Possibly deriving from his previous experience as a senior trade union official, the report in *The Australian* on 9th September suggested that Combet saw the issue exclusively as one of equal opportunity in employment, missing the obvious point that such service as well as offering employment opportunities also offered the opportunity to be killed or maimed as part of the job description.

Assuming that the investigation team is competent to assess the unique demands on the military in combat operations at a time when the pool of experienced people in the community is at an all-time low, they supposedly will focus upon the physical ability of women to handle the considerable variety of tasks that troops must handle regardless of the reality that psychological ability is at least as important. This is somewhat pointless. Some women will be able to cope while some, perhaps many, will not. But as with men, the ADF will select people for the task at hand based upon experience garnered over more than a century. The danger in such an investigation is that, as has happened in some police forces, the task will be redefined to fit the equal opportunity drive regardless of any effect on the

mission. There remains an inevitable suspicion that this is yet another investigation with a predefined outcome.

My view of this issue is somewhat ambivalent. From personal knowledge, I have enormous respect for the young women who do serve in the defence force. They are highly capable, well trained and well motivated. Many but by no means all are willing and able to take on any job they are given. But, despite some very silly interventions into the debate, this is not the issue. The commitment to this investigation obscures a far more important and fundamental philosophical issue of whether we as a community want to see our women on the battlefield, killing and being killed.

The question has never been put to the Australian people. Rather it has been decided by governments usually under pressure from minority groups and their various choristers to be an equal employment opportunity question. But battle is a monstrously bloody and ruthless business. No one in his or her right mind wishes to engage in it. Properly understood, it is a duty imposed rather than a right enjoyed.

Those who have done the duty of protecting their society have no wish to compel others to follow them. These

fearless equal opportunity enthusiasts and their various choirs are unique in two respects - they are unfamiliar with the brutal reality of combat and, like the usual advocates of conscription, they are quite unlikely to perform any kind of military service. Yet as our casualties continue to grow in Afghanistan, the question takes on an immediacy that cannot be ignored. Now we properly honour our combat dead, sometimes to embarrassingly mawkish levels. But that attitude is more than likely to change to popular outrage if a young Australian woman is killed, maimed or, perhaps worse, taken prisoner by the Taliban extremists.

Like many of his predecessors, the late Pope John Paul II had a clear understanding of the role of armed forces when he said: "Those who give military service must be considered ministers of the security and freedom of peoples and indeed if they carry out their duties properly, they also truly contribute to stabilising peace. Similarly, the Second Vatican Council noted in *Gaudium et Spes* n 79 (Document on The Church and the Modern World) "Members of the armed forces are custodians of the security and freedom of their fellow countrymen." The Church clearly understands that war is sometimes necessary but, clearly and consistently with its teaching on just war, does not regard the resort to war as anything but a last resort. In this context, the role of women in combat would seem to be idiosyncratic. Given their unique role and responsibility for the bearing and nurturing of children, their optional employment as lethal warriors is surely incompatible.

There is actually nothing new in the government's desire to extend employment opportunities for women in the ADF. In a tight labour market, even in a time of economic slowdown, the ADF is struggling to recruit even the inadequate numbers authorised by the

A Statesman is an easy man,  
He tells his lies by rote;  
A journalist makes up his lies,  
And takes you by the throat;  
So stay at home and drink  
your beer  
And let the neighbours vote,  
Said the man in the golden  
breastplate  
Under the old stone cross.

— 'The Old Stone Cross,' *The Collected poems of W.B. Yeats*, Macmillan and Co, London, 1950





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government. While some of the pressure for change certainly comes from the equal opportunity enthusiasts, especially those women with ambition to become generals, most comes from a government and bureaucracy whose outlook is crudely utilitarian. For at least 40 years to my knowledge, governments and their bureaucrats have not understood that to get recruits, the ADF must compete effectively in a tight labour market. To avoid that fundamental reality, Defence and successive governments have used the equal opportunity argument to get more women in to make up the numbers.

For as long as I can remember, Defence has used civilian employment precedents to set wages for the ADF. The fundamental flaw in the reasoning is that military service, especially in the high-risk combat specialisations, does not have civilian equivalents. The lowest paid people in the ADF are the combat infantrymen, yet theirs is the most dangerous job especially at a time when combat commitments have become almost a permanent feature of the force. Moreover in this age of modern warfare often against enemies that are hard to distinguish from the innocents, the combat infantryman is a highly skilled specialist who must also exercise many additional skills including those of the diplomat. Defence has tried to get around this difficulty by paying hefty allowances for deployments to combat zones but these have created their own

problems, including internal jealousies of those who benefit especially given that all ADF personnel are required to maintain combat readiness or be discharged. Under these circumstances, access to increased pay becomes a lottery organised by the personnel branches.

There is something dreamlike about the desire of the government and its bureaucrats to increase the proportion of women in the ADF much beyond the steady 13-15 per cent experienced over the past 20 years. The Victoria Police, whose women frequently engage in a less lethal but quite intense combat role,

have not been able to increase their female numbers significantly despite a deliberately discriminatory recruitment policy in their favour. Female numbers now stand at 23 per cent of the force, although this includes a significant number of part-time officers, mostly married females.

Counting full time officers only, Victoria Police have just 19 per cent female officers even after physical standards were reduced to qualify more women. In the ADF, while the numbers vary between the individual Services and the reserves, ADF employment is no comfortable *sinecure* for any personnel and thus does not appeal to many people, male or female, especially under present pay scales. Defence rather cynically banks upon a high degree of patriotic or adventurous commitment from its people and generally enjoys it until growing maturity or family commitments force a rethink and a consequent departure from the force.

Expanding female employment opportunities into the most difficult and dangerous categories is likely to have at best a marginal effect on the overall percentage of females in the ADF. At present these enjoy a number of privileges. One, of course, is that they may not be directed into close combat roles as males are. Every woman joining the ADF knows at the outset that, unlike her male colleagues, she is protected in that sense and it could well be that the change envisaged by the equal opportunity enthusiasts could result in a much lower rate of female employment. There does not seem to be much evidence that women are anxious to enjoy the bloody end of the military business.

More recently, commentators have introduced the demographic argument, that we don't have enough men to defend Australia. But the notion that 'demographic pressures' threaten the ability of the ADF to recruit sufficient numbers is a canard based on comparison of percentages rather than actual numbers. In fact, the recruitment pool is set to grow in raw numbers even if it does not grow as a percentage of the population. The logical flaw is to assume that recruitment targets will grow by the same percentage as the population or the recruitment pool. According to Treasury Secretary Ken Henry writing

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in the spring 2005 issue of *Defender*, the Australia Defence Association journal, demographic changes manifested by low population growth and a growing aged cohort mean "slower growth in the work force, slower growth in per capita incomes and slower growth in the aggregate economy."

Henry's figures are incontestable, but the issue is what they mean for defence. One impact of slower population growth is the smaller pool of potential recruits. Henry's data showed that the pool of 20-30 year olds in 1965 when Australia increased its commitment to the Vietnam War was about 1.1 million (counting for that time men only). In 2005, the figure for males and females together was around 3 million. But for 2045, the pool of males and females in the same age cohort is expected to be around 5 million, that is more than four times the 1965 figure and two-thirds more than for 2005. This is the pool from which the ADF must raise no more than 55,000 regular personnel unless the government finally admits that the authorised ADF is too small to meet its government-imposed commitments.

Of course, Defence must compete for people within that pool, but it is fundamentally the issue of competing that will decide whether sufficient troops are available. Competition can take a number of forms with the most extreme being some form of compulsory service. Whether compulsion is introduced – as it has been on at least four occasions since Federation – is fundamentally a political question. Compulsion is of doubtful military value in modern strategic circumstances and is very expensive. Nevertheless, depending upon those circumstances, it is always an option available to government.

In 1965, Australia had regular armed forces of around 76,000, albeit with the aid of limited conscription. That force represented some 69 troops per thousand of the 20-30 year old male cohort. At present, the figure is around 18 per thousand (counting males and females). Using the population projections for 2045 and assuming no expansion of the ADF, the demand for personnel would be significantly less at some 11 per thousand of the 20-30 year old cohort. If the ADF were to be expanded to 75,000 personnel (to take an arbitrary figure), the demand would

rise to around 15 per thousand, still less than at present.

Whether Australia could afford such an increase in troop numbers is fundamentally a political and strategic rather than an economic question. Australia's military employment of 2.5 per thousand of total population is significantly lower than Britain's at 3.5 per thousand and the United States at 4.61 per thousand. Even unthreatened and neutralist Eire employs 2.98 per thousand. (The less said about Canada and New Zealand the better, but they have the inestimable advantage of being defended by a bigger neighbour.) In this context, it should be noted that defence spending is qualitatively different from most other forms of government spending, especially those that can be

characterised as transfer payments. Defence outlays are a form of insurance premium rather than recurrent or even capital outlays and thus a legitimate business cost. The challenge is to decide whether to afford the premium and how to calculate it.

If Australia does have recruitment problems for the ADF, they will not be solved by politically correct equal opportunity gimmickry and ruthless utilitarianism but by some economically sophisticated solutions. That in itself would be no more than just to those who offer their lives to protect the rest of us.

MICHAEL O'CONNOR is executive director of the Australian Defence Association. A former patrol officer in Papua New Guinea he also served in the Royal Australian Navy as an intelligence officer.

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## The Boys are Back

And so is director Scott (*Shine*) Hicks, back on location at Myponga in his home state South Australia with Clive Owen leading a splendid cast. Owen is Joe Warr, a sports journalist, the kind of licensed wild man less common since the advent of computers.

He has left his first wife (Natasha Little) and their son Harry (George MacKay) in London to follow a beautiful horsewoman Katy (Laura Fraser) to South Australia and an idyllic life in a beautiful house with their son Artie (Nicolas McAnulty).

As the title indicates, Joe and his sons are reunited but not smoothly, given that they live by his rule: 'Just say yes,' and their nearest neighbours is his haughty ma-in-law (Julia Blake) and her husband (Chris Haywood).

It may be the movie's provenance: Allan Cubbitt's script is based on London-based journalist Simon Carr's memoir and was originally set in New Zealand. It may be the five years spent on setting it up. It may be the multiplicity of producers, corporate and individual. Overall the pace is flaccid.

This is not to forget the wonderful sea and landscapes together with scenes of compelling action and comedy. The actors, especially Owen transcending his saturnine image, are brilliant. Seven-year-old MacAnulty steals the movie with the aplomb of the Artful Dodger lifting a gold watch and chain. But the dread conclusion is: less than the sum of its parts.

M★★★NFFV

## MOVIES

By JAMES MURRAY

### Departures (Okuribito)

Inexpressibly sad yet joyful even funny, director Yojiro Takita and scriptwriter Kundo Koyama's masterwork deals with the Japanese ritualist known as *nokanshi* (encoffineer) through whose work corpses are prepared for cremation.

Daigo Kobayashi (Masahiro Motoki) is a cellist who loses his job, or more exactly his orchestra. With his wife Mika (Ryoko Hirose) he is compelled to return to his native village and the house his mother left him.

Due to a misunderstanding, Daigo finds himself working for Sasaki (Tautomu Yamasaki) in what he initially thinks is a travel agency. It is, in a sense, but specialises in the longest journey.

There are odd, beguiling Irish touches. Daigo and Mika sport fine Aran-knit sweaters. Joe Hizaishi's music contrives themes from the folksong Danny Boy. In a Christmas interlude Kobayashi plays on the cello a tune often rendered, well and ill, but of abiding grace.

In *The Loved One*, Evelyn Waugh took a satirical view of American funeral rituals. In their movie version, director Tony Richardson and writer Terry Southern sent the satire over the top, Rod Steiger leading the charge. No satire for Yojiro Takita. Some may think

he might have done more to emphasise the *burukumin* (untouchable) aspect of the trade. He fudges it as he avoids maudlin elements. Instead, he uses a montage of religious funerals including a Catholic one to emphasise that in all cultures people have seen death not as an end but an exit to another kind of life.

M★★★★NFFV

### Seraphine

It happens. But not often enough: extraordinary characters in history await extraordinary actors to embody them. Thanks to director Martin Provost, it has happened to the French painter known as Seraphine de Senlis (1864-1942). In the movie she is known merely as Seraphine and is played by Yolande Moreau with an awkward, shy determination and a shrewd simplicity that conceals acting of the highest order.

Seraphine, working as a housemaid in rural frugality, believes that her guardian angel has told her to paint her bold works of fruit and trees, birds and flowers. Provost integrates this religious element with subtle grace.

Opposite Moreau, Provost casts Ulrich Tukur as the German art critic and dealer Wilhelm Unde who discovered Seraphine and promoted her work along with other 'modern primitives' including the most celebrated, Le Douanier Rousseau.

This emphatically is Seraphine's story, told mainly in the sunny period when Europe awaited the darkness of the Great War of 1914-18. For those four years, the relationship between Seraphine and Unde was sundered. After the war, he returned to France and further promoted Seraphine to deserved wealth that was also bewildering. The movie, despite winning seven Cesars, is on limited release. Search for it and find a masterpiece.

PG★★★★SFFV

### Genova

Location. Location. Location. As with real estate so with movies: location can be crucial. By setting their sad romance in Genova - *La Superba* - with its working harbour, beaches, university and old city, writer/director Michael Winterbottom challenges his cast.

## Young People's Potential

IT IS VERY easy for young people to get trapped in the moral current of this culture, like getting trapped in the strong current of a river. Those so caught are carried along without thinking, allowing others to do their thinking for them, living merely to be comfortable, no longer wrestling with the big questions, and they eventually fall into cynicism about the world and about man. But after twenty-one years of teaching, I have come to realize that there is one thing that I am able to see better than any of my students, and that is their gifts and their potential. It is a wonderful experience having eyes for their gifts, because it is a source of never ending wonder to me.

- Douglas McManaman, 'Teenage Magnanimity and the Beautiful'. Douglas McManaman is past president of the Canadian Fellowship of Catholic Scholars.



He and co-writer Laurence Coriat add to the challenge by starting with a cheerful car game that shockingly turns to constant foreboding.

The cast rise to the challenge of the location and their characters. Joe, (Colin Firth) is an academic, is a sudden widower who takes his daughters Kelly (Willa Holland) and Mary (Perla Haney-Jardine) from the United States to a new start in northern Italy's and Genova's old city.

Kelly becomes wayward with the local scooterini set. Mary is haunted by the ghost of her dead mother Marianne (Hope Davis). All are helped by Joe's former colleague Barbara (Catherine Keener), particularly Mary whom she teaches to light candles in one of the old city's churches.

Winterbottom and cameraman Marcel Zyskind's shooting style is seemingly as random as life and death. Here and there they add glimpses reminiscent of Nic Roeg's *Don't Look Now*, set in Venice - *La Serenissima* - Genova's historic sibling rival. But Winterbottom brings his movie cleverly to its own innate conclusion.

M★★★★NFFV

### Sister Smile (Soeur Sourire)

On the cusp of the fifties and sixties, Jeannine Deckers (Cecile de France) wrote a sprightly guitar ballad called *Dominique*. In effect it was a potted biography of Dominic de Guzman, founder of the order of which she was a sister preparing for missionary work in Africa.

To everyone's astonishment, including hers, *Dominique* became a worldwide hit under the recording name, which is the movie's title.

The movie's main appeal lies in Cecile de France's performance as Sister Smile. She is a phenomenon of acting talent, by turns hoydenish, rebellious, spiritually confused, devout, plain, beautiful, frumpish, elegant, naive, shrewd, mischievous and finally accepting of her lesbian disposition.

As directed by Stijn Connix, the movie has a restrained, quasi-documentary feel. Nevertheless it does not hesitate to detail how the order under the letter of contract law retained copyright on the name Soeur Sourire and on recording royalties.

## 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.

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NFFV: Not For Family Viewing.

After leaving the convent, Deckers went on a comeback tour in Canada. As an encore, she sang a ditty called *The Golden Pill*. In depicting the reaction of the French-Canadian hierarchy to the provocation, the sequences are so over-the-top it looks as if Connix has used out-takes from *The Da Vinci Code*.

This is not sweet Hollywood schmaltz, not *The Bells of St Mary's* or *The Sound of Music*. It is a darker, bitter cup of Belgian chocolate.

PG★★★SFFV

## Amreeka

America as the home of the brave and the land of the free may be under criticism. But it is still the dream destination of thousands living in war-fraught situations.

Novice director Cherien Dabis focuses on a single mother Muna Farah (Nisreen Faour) and her son Fadi (Melkar Muallem) who get visas to travel from wall-shadowed Bethlehem to small-town Illinois.

There they are welcomed by Muna's sister Raghda (Hiam Abbass) and her doctor husband Nabeel (Yussef Abu Warda) living with their children in a Macmansion.

Hiam Abbass is not an easy player from whom to steal scenes. Nisreen Faour, an ample, bustling presence, does so as Muna copes with losing her cache of money and settling for work in a hamburger joint rather than the bank for which her skills fit her.

Her sister and her husband also have their worries. Their commodious Macmansion and their marriage, like many, is founded on a shaky mortgage. Will Muna's magnetic optimism eliminate their troubles and the troubles of her son? In the question lies the movie's quiet appeal.

M★★★★NFFV

## The Private Lives of Pippa Lee

Neat title. Neater characters created by writer/director Rebecca Miller from her own novel. To start with, Miller has Blake Lively and Robin Wright Penn to play the young and the mature Pippa Lee in a duet for lucent talents. Enter Maria Bello as Pippa's mother pushing her to banal stardom. Add Julianne Moore as a strung-out photographer aiding the tawdry process. Throw in Monica Bellucci as a pistol-packing nut.

What no men? Well, the latter's ex-husband, alpha publisher Herb Lee, complete with blood-pressure equipment, is married and father to the much younger Pippa's children. He is played by Alan Arkin who sees in a younger woman (Winona Ryder) a life extension.

All this can be taken as epitomising Miller's genetic inheritance as the daughter of playwright Arthur Miller and one of his wives, photographer Inge Morath.

Genetic inheritance, yes. Neopotism, no. Miller's husband, Daniel Day Lewis, does not appear (too busy at his other avocation, shoemaking). The part he might have played goes to Keanu Reeves.

And he makes a great fist of it or more exactly chest, which is tattooed with an image of Jesus Christ. This appears to be part of a religious sub-theme linked to a shadowy crucifix in the room where Pippa's mother set her on the path infamy and ill-fortune.

Miller shuffles past and present with a conjuror's deftness. Alan Arkin dominates as he dominated in *Catch 22*. Here he faces Catch 1: birth is a time-bomb fused for death.

Miller does not link this explicitly with her religious theme, preferring to go for the ending of so many American movies: the couple taking to the road and a new horizon.

M★★★★NFFV



## St Thérèse of Lisieux

**I** ALSO SPEAK to a middle-aged woman called Ann, there with her 21-year-old son. She used to be a Jehovah's Witness but became a Catholic about 15 years ago, at a time when her schizophrenic husband was abusing her. 'Since becoming a Catholic, I've had miracles in my life,' she says. 'My husband went into hospital for treatment and, when he came back, I was terrified the abuse would start again. He came home and the parish priest happened to pop in. The priest suggested my husband take confession, and they disappeared into a room together for about an hour. When they came out, I immediately felt the evil had left us. He has never abused me since.'

- Stephen Moss, *The Guardian*, October 14, 2009, describing queueing up outside Westminster Cathedral in London to honour the relics of St Therese.

### Julie & Julia

Bacon and eggs. Sausage and mash. Neither combination does justice to the delightful teaming of Meryl Streep and Amy Adams in writer/director/producer Nora Ephron's gastronomical comedy. It combines nostalgia about sixties TV cook Julia Child zeitgeist cool about blogger Julie Powell who achieved fame and fortune – but not Child's approval – by spending one year cooking the 524 recipes in the Child's *magnum opus Mastering the Art of French Cooking* (compiled with the aid of Louise Bertholle and Simone Beck).

Stanley Tucci plays Child's diplomat husband and palate. Chris Messina does a similar turn as Powell's husband whose job seems to be putting on a haversack and picking up a bike. But Tucci and Messina are sidedishes compared to the Streep and Adams *pieces de resistance*.

Hard to fault the work except for the impossible regret that its time-frame authenticity prevents an on-screen encounter between the diva Streep and the ingenue Adams, the former a maximalist, the latter a minimalist.

In effect, what Nora Ephron has done is update the nickelodeon double bill. She gives us two movies for the price of one. As the Guide Michelin used to say: 'Worth a detour.' Or possibly a champagne picnic while watching it at home on DVD.

PG★★★★SFFV

### French Kissers

Spotty romantic comedy (directed by Riad Sattouf, co-written by Marc Syricas) about spotty French, comprehensive-school teenagers

mimicking spotty American teenagers. The budding talents of the principals, Aurore (Alice Tremolieres) Herve (Vincent Lacoste) and Camel (Antony Sonigo), deserve better. In other words, virulently spotty and to be avoided like the plague.

M\*NFFV

### Surrogates

Actor Bruce Willis tends to give the impression that there's at least twice as much to him than meets the eye. Director Jonathan Mostow lets Willis validate the impression. He casts him in double roles: FBI agent Greer and his look-alike, same-name robot. As the first, Willis is his usual rugged, bald, sardonic self; as the second he's a smoother gent in a well-cut suit and equally well-cut blond wig.

M★★★NFFV

### Imagine That

Happily Eddie Murphy doffs the ill-worn fat-suit of his recent work. Unhappily the fat migrates to the script, making for an uneasy mix of acidic, big business satire and schmaltz-laden family comedy.

The satire results from Murphy as financial adviser Evan Danielson whose rise is halted by a glib native American rival, Johnny Whitefeather, played by Thomas Haden Church with wild relish, a wilder wig and all the authenticity of plastic wampum.

Director Karey Kirkpatrick and writers Ed Solomon and Chris Matheson should have made more of the Danielson-Whitefeather rivalry. Church's drollery is matched by Murphy's black chutzpah. But Kirkpatrick also had to deal with the movie's schmaltzy facet: Danielson's relationship with his daughter Olivia (Yara Shahidi), a charming moppet whose security blanket becomes the key to whether Danielson will outfox Whitefeather or not.

Martin Sheen plays the big boss, tough but benign, as if rehearsing for a gig as Santa Claus in a reform school.

C★★★★SFFV

## Choices last !

**T**HIRTY YEARS AGO, who could have imagined such a thing as partial-birth abortion! When I ask myself why so many people have been slow to realize how easily today's atrocity can become tomorrow's routine, one answer I come up with is that it was due in part to a failure to realize something very important about choice, namely that choices *last*.

- Mary Ann Glendon, 'The Greatest Grassroots Movement of Our Times,' *First Things*, October 13, 2009



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*A little known pioneer of Australian Music Theatre and of Religious Music*

## ANNE THÉRÈSE CLARKE/PART V

by JOHN COLBORNE-VEEL



ANNE THÉRÈSE CLARKE arrived in Hobart from London as an assisted immigrant in 1833. For seven years she worked as a respected theatrical performer, then in 1841, after managing the Royal Victoria Theatre for a time, she sailed London, engaged a first-rate professional cast and brought them back to Australia as assisted immigrants. The cast performed with much acclaim in both Hobart and Launceston.

After their contracts had expired, Mrs Clark's imported cast moved on to Sydney but the prestige and success that they had brought the company enabled her to replace them with other talented artists. Her new company was stolen by George Coppin whom she pursued to Melbourne in an unsuccessful attempt to regain her players.

Mrs Clarke returned to Hobart after her petition for a licence to perform in Melbourne had been rejected. The Tasmanian State Library has a poster advertising a benefit concert for Mrs Clarke soon after her return from Melbourne. Printed in black, on cream silk, edged with blue ribbons and bows, the poster gives the following details of the event, which took place at the Royal Victoria Theatre on Monday February 23, 1846:

'Lord of the Isles, or, The Gathering of the Clans...

Mrs Clarke's Benefit...the Excellent Band of the Fifty-first will be in attendance.

The interlude will consist of "A new passeul", after which an Irish song, "Molly Brawm" ...the whole will conclude with a historical drama in two acts, entitled "Nell Gwyne" or, "The Merry Monarch" ... by a Tasmanian.'

Stage Manager Mr Young.

Cast of Lord of the Isles Includes: Mr Young, Mr Campbell, Mr Stubbs, Mr Kenny, Mr Falchon, Mr Austin, Mr Jordan, Mr Smith, Mr Newsom, Mrs Clarke, Mrs Jones, Mrs Young.

Both Mrs Young and Mrs Jones (wife of actor Charles Jones) were Mrs Thomson's daughters Jane and Henrietta. Mrs Clarke's reliance on the Young and Thomson families seems to have been a factor that led to the eventual decline of and abandonment of her company.

In the time honoured tradition of theatre families Mrs Clark's daughter Anne Theresa made her first appearance on the stage at the age of ten in February 1846 and was often featured with the company from then until it disbanded.

In March, there was a rumour that Mrs Clarke had retired to Melbourne. The 'Britannia and Trades Advocate' March 5 1846 ventured to suggest that, "The life of great labour and anxiety had clearly become too burdensome." But, I think it more likely that she had gone to make another attempt to wrestle her company out of Coppin's clutches. Coppin only had the company under contract for twelve months and their obligation must have been due to expire.

The date of Coppin's departure from Melbourne seems to vary from one biographer to another. Some say June, some July and others August. From our point of view the fact that he left behind most of Mrs Clarke's company and that they found their way back to Hobart is important.

From now on the facts seem to tell the story of a company in decline but they don't give any real clue to what must have been going on behind the scenes, given that all of the participants (except for Mr and Mrs Clarke) seem to be either directly or indirectly related to Mrs Thomson.

### The Meaning of Life

IT IS NOT uncommon to see hordes of teenagers loitering every night at the local Tim Horton's, Country Style, or mall, doing very little with their lives if anything at all. This rather pusillanimous existence is by no means limited to teenagers. Many adults have settled for a very small existence, which usually includes but does not seem to go far beyond a house with a well manicured lawn, a colourful garden, a cottage perhaps, and sometimes a life that deliberately excludes children – but not pets. The virtue of magnanimity, which perfects the emotion of hope, involves a stretching forth of the mind to great honours. An emotionally whole life involves such a stretching forth to the great. Most teenagers are under the impression that striving after great honours is about the pursuit of financial success or great wealth. The reason is that financial success is what our culture tends to honor most. In a hedonistic culture in which pleasure is regarded as the principal good, a life in pursuit of wealth is the only one that makes any sense; for wealth buys pleasures.

– Douglas McManaman, 'Teenage Magnanimity and the Beautiful'. Douglas is past president of the Canadian Fellowship of Catholic Scholars.



In July 1846 (after Coppin's departure for Adelaide) George Herbert Rogers and his wife Emma (née Young) returned to Hobart. Rogers became Mrs Clarke's stage manager in Hobart and later in Launceston.

The former stage manager Charles Young (brother of Emma Rogers) and his wife (Mrs Thomson's daughter) have a falling out with Mrs Clarke.

In September 1846 Young forms a company in partnership with his mother-in-law Mrs Thomson – "A favourite with the public and the press as an actress of merit and a person who, in private life bears a most exemplary character." Mr Young and Mrs Thomson's new company immediately started performing in direct competition with Mrs Clarke.

Mrs Clarke must have been under enormous pressure, the workload and stress involved in trying to run a repertory theatre company, that was, for all intents and purposes in competition with itself, can only be imagined.

The 'Britannia and Trades Advocate' January 21 1847, obviously aware of the struggle, expressed its support for Mrs Clarke in the following editorial:

"It is seldom we notice except in general terms, the untiring exertions of Mrs Clarke for the amusement of the public. No praise we could bestow on her would exceed what she is entitled to, as an indefatigable actress of high character. Had Mrs Clarke been upon the English stage, and, had she had the benefit of its advantages, she would have been a star. Here although her qualifications are not lost, they are neutralised by distance, time and circumstances. Untiring in her study, and therefore always perfect in her music, and characters, she is on all occasions, excellent. ... We admire the attempt to make human beings rationally happy, and we care not for the particular method in which it is done, and thus it is that we hail with delight and approval, the manner in which the Hobart Town Theatre is now conducted. It is in every sense excellent."

But George Rogers and his wife didn't agree with the way Mrs Clarke ran the theatre, so they left in March 1847 after a disagreement over money.

## Muslims in Europe

EUROPE is home to 38 million Muslims – around 5% of its population with European Muslims making up slightly more than 2% of the world's Muslim population. More than half of the 4.6 million Muslims in the Americas live in the US – however they make up just 0.8% of the population there. The Pew Forum has said the findings will lay the foundation for a forthcoming study that will look at how Muslim populations worldwide have grown and what they may look like in the future. It also plans to compile figures for the other major world religions. According to internet-based group, Adherents, there are currently 2.1 billion Christians, 900 million Hindus and 14 million Jews worldwide.

– Source: BBC News October 8, 2009

What happened next is anybody's guess. But, in May 1847 George Rogers, Charles Young and Anne Clarke's estranged husband Michael became joint lessees Of the Royal Victoria

By June 1847 the coup was complete with Charles Young taking over as stage manager of the Royal Victoria and George Rogers as acting Manager. As far as the victors were concerned, Mrs Clarke's licence must have been a much-coveted prize but, in an apparent case of 'the grass always being greener on the other side,' the new management team didn't last long. Later in 1847, Rogers and his wife left to take a job for four pounds a week in Sydney. By 1849 Young and his wife had moved to Melbourne to manage the Queen's Theatre Royal.

After the take over of her theatre, Anne Clarke and her daughter disappear from the posters and simply fade from public view. Their fate is unknown.

O fickle people, veering like the weathercock,

Delighting in whatever is new,  
And changeable as the moon!  
Your chatter is dear at a farthing,  
And he is a fool who trusts in you!

Historically, Anne Thérèse Clarke's contribution to Australian theatre is significant. As an entrepreneur, she introduced and nurtured a range of performers who became the stars of our Colonial music theatre. As a manager, she was noted for reforming the theatre and making it suitable for

family entertainment. As a director, she was noted for her attention to detail and carefully rehearsed productions. Likewise as a performer her work overall was highly regarded. As a catalyst, much of what came later can be directly traced back to her influence, indeed, in regard to this the work of an anonymous playwright appears in her playbills simply credited as – 'by a Tasmanian.'

Mrs Clarke's choice of Hobart as a base for her company is significant. As far as theatre was concerned, Tasmania led the way at this time; apart from a ban on convicts either taking part in or seeing plays there were few restrictions. On the other hand, while Sydney was still hampered by censorship and building laws as well as being associated (as far as actors were concerned) with Governor Darling's outdated pronouncement that actors and their audiences were "rogues and vagabonds," Melbourne and Adelaide were little more than fast developing frontier towns.

Perhaps – like that of Mrs Clarke – Tasmania's role in the development of Australian theatre is largely overlooked and forgotten or simply misattributed elsewhere. Whatever the reason, the fact remains that both made a substantial contribution to our culture.

[Next Issue: Mrs Clarke's Legacy to Australian Theatre]

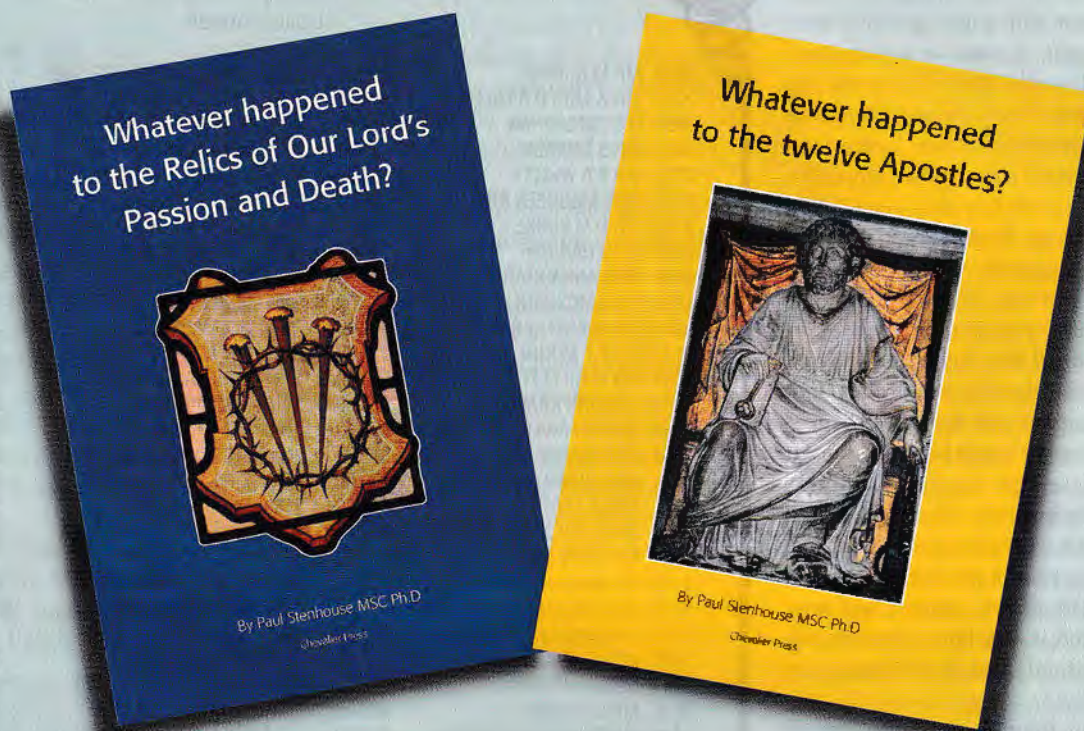
JOHN COLBORNE-VEEL is a regular contributor to *Annals*. For six years President of the Fellowship of Australian Composers, John is a distinguished jazz musician, composer and librettist.



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