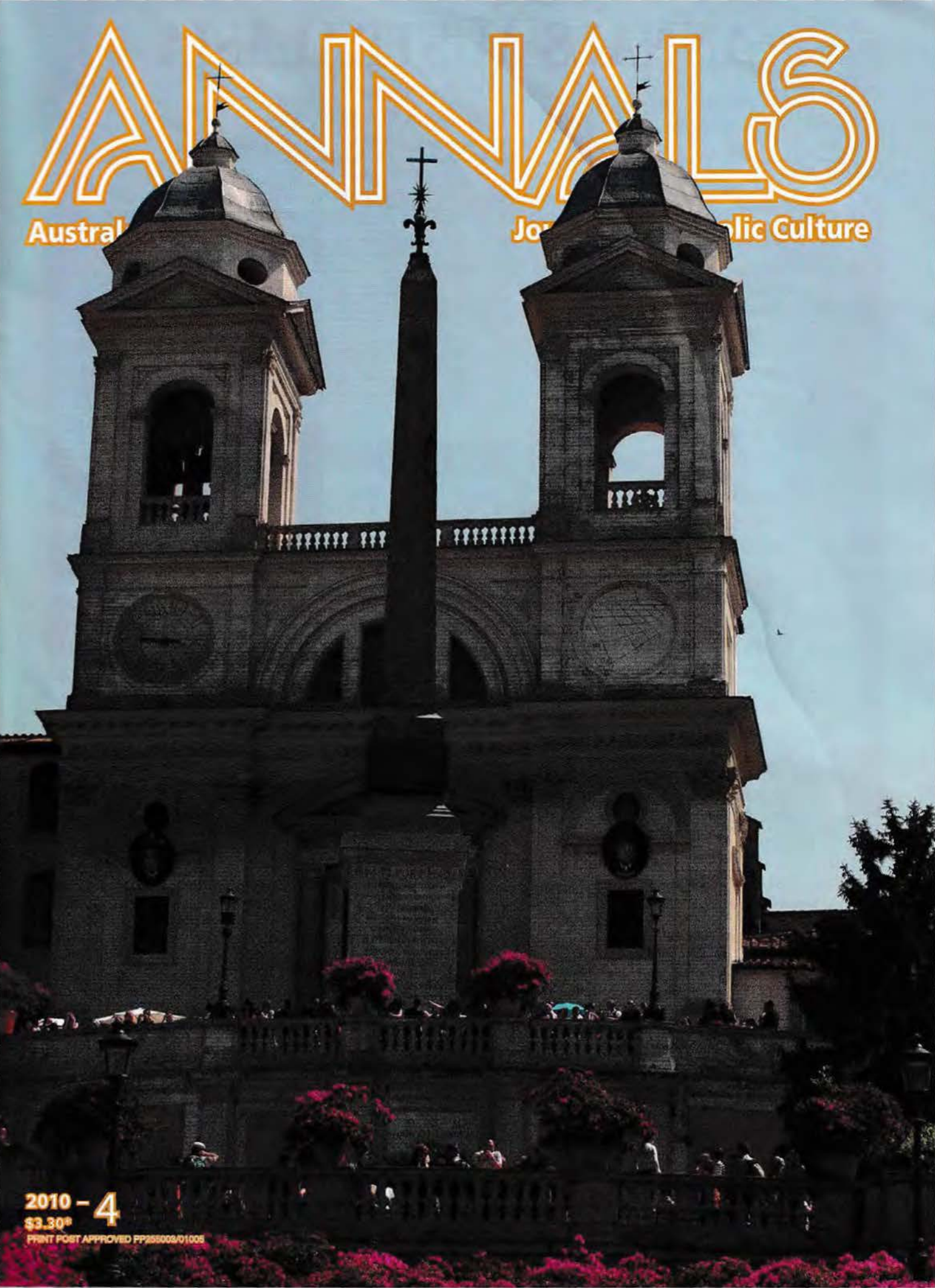


# ANNALS

Austral

Journal of Catholic Culture



2010 - 4

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# ANNALS AUSTRALASIA

*Journal of Catholic Culture*

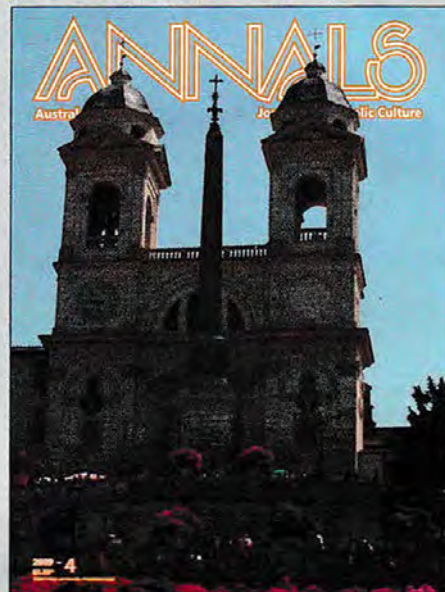
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[Sunday Year C/weekdays Year II]

*Australia's Oldest Catholic Magazine*

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

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*Front Cover:* View of the Church and Monastery erected in Rome on the Pincian Hill overlooking the site of the ancient Campus Martius, by Charles VIII of France in 1495 for the order known as Minims, at the request of St Francis of Paola who founded the Order. The monks occupied the site until driven out during the French Revolution. It is now occupied by Dames du Sacré Coeur, founded by Madeleine Sophie Barat and well known in Sydney for their convent school at Rose Bay. Known as 'Trinità dei Monti', 'Trinity on the hills', the church looks down upon the 138 steps of the widest, longest and most beautiful outdoor staircase in Europe, known as the Spanish Steps. These connect the residence of the Spanish Bourbon Ambassador to the Holy See in the Piazza di Spagna below, to the French Bourbon Church and Monastery above. Designed in a fan-shape by Francesco de Sanctis, the steps were built between 1723 and 1725. At Christmas, a 'living crib' with real sheep, shepherds, Mary, Joseph and child from the Abruzzi region is to found at the top of the steps; and at Easter the steps are filled with spring flowers, especially azaleas. Our pic shows only the top of the 'scalinata' or staircase.

Cover Photo: Paul Stenhouse

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


**D**O 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.




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

## QUENCH THE FIRES OF HATE AND STRIFE



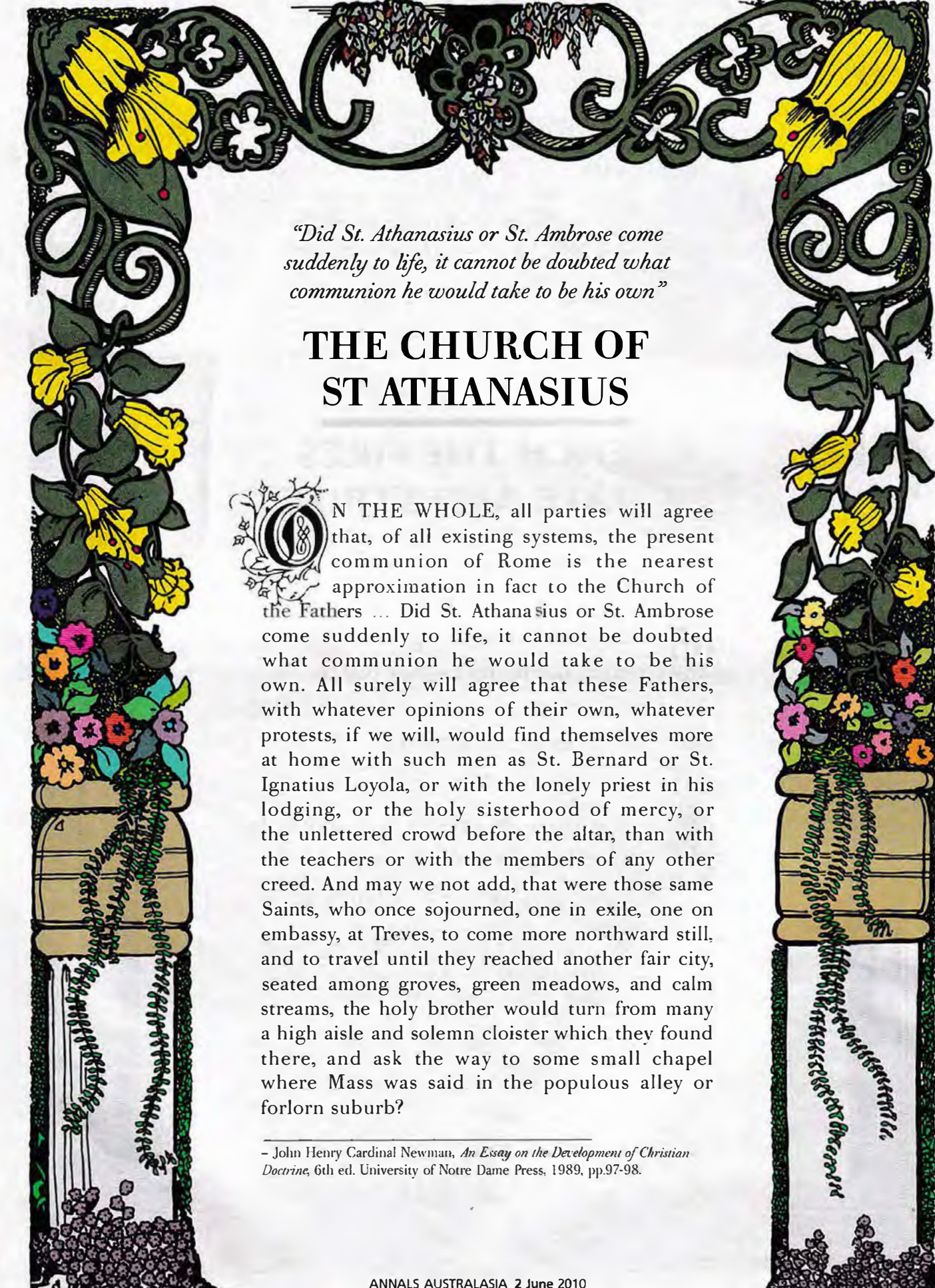
God, who cannot change nor fail,  
Guiding the hours as they roll by;  
Brightening with beams the morning pale,  
And burning in the midday sky.



Quench Thou the fires of hate and strife,  
The wasting fever of the heart;  
From perils guard our feeble life,  
And to our souls Thy peace impart.

- St Ambrose [340-397 A.D.] Hymn for Sext,  
the sixth hour [12.00 noon] in the *Roman Breviary*.





*"Did St. Athanasius or St. Ambrose come suddenly to life, it cannot be doubted what communion he would take to be his own"*

## THE CHURCH OF ST ATHANASIUS

**I**N THE WHOLE, all parties will agree that, of all existing systems, the present communion of Rome is the nearest approximation in fact to the Church of the Fathers ... Did St. Athanasius or St. Ambrose come suddenly to life, it cannot be doubted what communion he would take to be his own. All surely will agree that these Fathers, with whatever opinions of their own, whatever protests, if we will, would find themselves more at home with such men as St. Bernard or St. Ignatius Loyola, or with the lonely priest in his lodging, or the holy sisterhood of mercy, or the unlettered crowd before the altar, than with the teachers or with the members of any other creed. And may we not add, that were those same Saints, who once sojourned, one in exile, one on embassy, at Treves, to come more northward still, and to travel until they reached another fair city, seated among groves, green meadows, and calm streams, the holy brother would turn from many a high aisle and solemn cloister which they found there, and ask the way to some small chapel where Mass was said in the populous alley or forlorn suburb?

— John Henry Cardinal Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, 6th ed. University of Notre Dame Press, 1989, pp.97-98.

*God will show mercy only to the merciful*

## DON'T TURN OFF THE MERCY TAP

*By* George Cardinal Pell  
Archbishop of Sydney

Fifty years ago when I was in secondary school we studied one of Shakespeare's plays each year from year nine. It was hard going sometimes but it was more worthwhile than studying advertisements.

I cannot be sure whether we started with *Julius Caesar* or *The Merchant of Venice* but I remember the relentless figure of Shylock demanding his pound of flesh and this beautiful quotation about mercy:

"The quality of mercy . . . droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven . . . . It is twice blessed: it bleaseth him that gives and him that takes".

Christ's teaching "blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" is one of the most popular of the beatitudes, easy to understand and politically correct. We all like to be on the receiving end, but it can be demanding work to be regularly merciful to others.

Public opinion reflects this because it imposes strict limits to its shows of mercy. Those excluded include terrorists, rapists, traitors to their country, paedophiles. Opinion is divided on how much mercy should be shown to the boat people. Are they genuine refugees or queue jumpers, poor or well able to pay the people smugglers? Majority opinion in Australia has never supported the abolition of the death penalty for some crimes.

Whatever of public opinion, Christian teaching has regularly called us to seek God's mercy and be merciful to others, but not at the expense of justice and the common good.

Nearly all Catholics in Australia follow the Roman or Latin rite for the Eucharist (Mass) and we still pray the "Kyrie eleison," the ancient Greek words for "Lord have mercy" which survive in the Latin rite.

At that stage we are preparing to pray by asking forgiveness for our sins, and mercy is linked closely to forgiveness and justice.

Christ's parable of the prodigal son would be better entitled the parable of the merciful father; who welcomed back his wild younger son after dissipating his inheritance.

Did the father still have some regrets about the money wasted; still nurture some hurt from the earlier departure? Did he have to swallow his pride to set these feelings aside? All of these instincts or temptations were submerged by his unselfish love of his son. His warm welcome displayed his feelings and his actions confirmed his genuine mercy.

We should not turn off the mercy tap, because God will only show mercy to the merciful.

- This article was first published in Sydney's *The Sunday Telegraph* on May 16, 2010. Reprinted with permission

*Daring to confront the Lords of 'nothingness and death'*

## DANCING WITH THE ANGELS

By Paul Stenhouse, MSC



WHEN I WAS a student for the priesthood, in the days before Pope John XXIII called the Second

Vatican Council, our Professor of Moral Theology lectured us at length on sin and its consequences. He spoke of the difficulties we experience in living up to the ideals held out by our Catholic Faith and spelt out in the Commandments of God and the Commandments of the Church.

I recall asking him: 'What's the point of an Ideal if it is beyond the ability of most of us to attain it?' He looked at me thoughtfully, and said something like this: 'Without the Ideal we are lost: it's the goal, the object of our quest, the standard against which we measure ourselves, and are measured by God. If there are no objective standards, then we fall back on subjective ones; and we are notoriously prone to finding excuses for whatever we want to do, or not to do; with dire spiritual consequences for us, and those whom we are pledged to serve.'

St Basil, called The Great [330-379 AD] touches on the same subject of Catholic ideals, though in a more metaphorical vein, when he describes the gifts of the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, he reminds us, enables believers to reverence mysteries, to fix their minds on heavenly things, and ... to dance with the angels.<sup>1</sup>

### Ideals under attack

I haven't fully done justice to what was said, but continuing assaults on Christian Ideals within almost every stratum of our society brought the late Father Maurice Griffin's words to mind – especially in these days when the Church herself, and especially the Pope,

are under attack because of alleged and sometimes proved physical and sexual abuse of minors by clergy, religious and laity in Catholic institutions.

No reasonable person can object to straight reporting by the media of matters of public interest that affect the Catholic Church or any other religious or civil Institution. But straight reporting in the media in this country is becoming as rare as the *Australian Desert Bandicoot* or the *Big-eared Hopping Mouse*, neither of which has been seen lately.

### Ban Facebook and Twitter?

New information says violent drug cartel shoot-outs in Mexico have killed nearly 23,000 people since 2006 ... The government's response? It's thinking of banning Twitter and Facebook, because criminals are using it to communicate and avoid military raids. While the government's concern with cartel communication is understandable. Twitter and cell phones are survival tools for civilians. In Reynosa, just across the border from McAllen, Texas, locals used Twitter to tell fellow residents which streets were currently most dangerous or ask for safety advice. 'We use Twitter to protect ourselves as citizens,' a 17-year-old Reynosa resident, who asked to remain anonymous, told CNN. 'The governor tells us it's our psychosis, but at night the city is empty. The authorities here practically don't exist.'

- Source: Jen Phillips, *Mother Jones*, 'In the Blogs,' April 15, 2010

We can hardly be surprised at this – granted the paucity or almost complete absence of moral ideals and standards based on our Judaeo-Christian tradition to be found in the political, social and legal structures of most Western societies today.

### Complicity with 'nothingness and death'

Well before the Second Vatican Council Jean Daniélou SJ – later to become a cardinal – foresaw this. The then Father Daniélou saw that the rebellion against Christian values and ideals – typified in the writings of the German philosopher and atheist Friedrich Nietzsche – was gathering momentum. In the late 60s Nietzsche's writings were to popularise the slogan *God is Dead* which in turn became a mantra for the 60s sexual and secular revolution.

Daniélou saw Nietzsche as jealous of Christ, and of Christianity: rebelling against the obligation of acknowledging in Another a greatness, a reality, that was beyond him.

What is more, Daniélou saw this rebellion as *pre-existing* any injustice that might be alleged as a pretext for it; and as seeking justification in the absurd, and in what he called 'a secret complicity with nothingness and death.'

In essence, this complicity 'with nothingness and death' was, he said, 'the expression of a determination to be one's own master.' It is not a revolt against injustice; it is a revolt against dependence. Nietzsche and those following him are not saying 'no' to injustice, but to the sovereignty of God. Their rebellion is refusal to obey. Pride needs unhappiness to feed its rebellion.<sup>2</sup>

### Not Excusing – Explaining

If it be objected – as it usually is – that the real scandal in the case of child

abuse was the 'cover up' by bishops and religious superiors who were allegedly closing ranks and trying to protect the Church's good name, and the good name of the accused, it should be borne in mind that under most systems derived from English Common Law both the Church and the accused have the right to be considered innocent until proved guilty. This presumption of innocence is routinely ignored by the media and some maverick lawyers when it is a question of Catholic clergy or religious. They are often denied natural justice by being named, and they are found guilty in the court of public opinion long before their case comes to trial.

That bishops and religious superiors have difficulty in believing priests and devoted laity in their charge to be guilty of abusing young children, is hardly to be wondered at since any parent would have similar difficulty in accepting that a husband or wife or brother or son or daughter were guilty of such a crime. It is not realistic to expect a mother to call the police immediately a family member is accused of a crime; nor is it realistic to expect a bishop or religious superior to treat an accused member of the community as guilty without first looking into the matter. That abuses have occurred is acknowledged and deplored; but this in no way justifies the continuing vilification of Catholicism and the Pope at the hands of the media and predatory lawyers.

### The Law and Abuse

In the light of Daniélou's insights, and in the context of media and legal

assaults on the Church, consider, for instance, interactive computer games involving gratuitous violence and explicit sexual imagery that are legally available in Australia. One such is being advertised city-wide as I write, on practically every bus stop and public phone booth

They have an MA15+ rating – as though 15-year-olds were somehow less impressionable and vulnerable than 12-year-olds or 9-year-olds. These games are easily accessible to children under 15.

Up to the present the highest rating available for a computer game was MA15+. Now we find that the gaming industry wants the Attorney-General to legalise even more violent and sexually graphic games, with an R18+ rating. As if these won't be just as easily accessible down the adolescent 'entertainment' chain, to minors.

'Overseas research shows that children are able to access violent 'adult' games despite the best attempts of parents to shield their children from them. An R18+ rating for games would frustrate the efforts of parents to protect their children from violent media content. These parents are already battling a tide of inappropriate violent and sexual content. The Government should support their efforts, not hinder them.'<sup>3</sup>

Even though legal hair-splitting often defies common sense, and ignores the Common Good, most citizens (many politicians and government-sponsored boards and committees excepted) can usually spot material that is unsuitable for human consumption. If they protest,

however, they are ridiculed and vilified for raising the dreaded 'c' word – censorship – and undermining freedom of speech and freedom of artistic expression and risk being condemned as, in the words of a recent article in Brisbane's *The Courier-Mail*, 'narrow-minded book-burners from Australia's increasingly strident moral minority'.<sup>4</sup>

Despite protests, the film *Salò*, or the *120 days of Sodom* – a sadistic and graphic film by director Pier Paolo Pasolini about nine teenage boys and girls who were subjected to one-hundred-and-twenty days of physical, mental and sexual torture, has reportedly been approved for release on DVD, rated R18+ by the Australian film Classification Review Board.

It was first banned in Australia in 1975, then permitted for showing in 1993 and then then banned again in 1998.

The fact that it shows graphic scenes of sexual torture, rape and murder of minors and what Victorian Liberal Senator Julian McCauran<sup>5</sup> describes as '... every form of sexual fetish against minors [children under 16 years]'<sup>5</sup> seems not at all to have fazed the Board members. And the fact that it will inevitably find itself in the hands of minors seems not to have concerned them either.

The Board's advice to potential viewers that consumers should consider 'whether this is a film they wish to see as it contains scenes of torture, degradation, cruelty and sexual violence that may offend some sections of the community'<sup>6</sup> also puts media attacks on the Catholic Church in a grimmer if more realistic light. Which sections of the community, you may well wonder, would not be offended 'by scenes of torture, degradation, cruelty and sexual violence' of minors?

The Board is in interesting company. Its approval of *Salò* is shared by a UK Heavy Metal Band, *Cradle of Filth*, which cited the film recently.<sup>7</sup> They noted that they had been influenced musically by, among others, *Judas Priest*, *Venom*, *Emperor*, *Destruction*, *Slayer*, *Iron Maiden*, *Black Sabbath*, *Misfits*, *Paradise Lost* and Tim Burton's *The Nightmare Before Christmas*.

Were the Catholic Church to condemn a movie like *Salò*, the hackles of media pundits, atheists, civil

## Hebrew-speaking Catholics of Israel

The Hebrew-speaking Catholic community celebrates 55 years since its establishment this year. Those who founded the communities and developed them are Israelis and permanent residents, Jews and non-Jews, from various and sundry backgrounds who began in the 1950s following the waves of immigration to the State of Israel, waves that included no small number of Catholics. Among these Catholics were the spouses or children of Jews who immigrated to the country together with Jewish family members. Among them were also Righteous from Among the Nations (people who had saved Jews during the Shoah) and their families ... in recent years, mixed Jewish-Catholic families have been arriving, particularly from the ex-Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and the Catholics among them seek out the Church and find a community that is Hebrew-speaking and integrate into it.

- Father David Neuhaus, Patriarchal Vicar for Hebrew-speaking Catholics in Israel. Source: Zenit – International Catholic News Service.

## Bureaucrats ban Grace

WHEN IT COMES to meal-time prayers, Georgia's Senior Citizens Inc. may have bitten off more than it can chew. In a ridiculous new decision, the organization told its elderly that it 'violates federal rules' to pray before meals. Because Port Wentworth's Center receives government money, one local official said the individuals' prayers compromise the group's funding arrangement. Mayor Glenn Jones said he was irate about the decision and will try to find a solution with the city's attorney. 'For me to look at their eyes and tell them they can't thank God for their food, it's unheard of.' It's also unlawful. Several members of Congress qualify as 'senior citizens,' and they open every day with prayer provided by an official government chaplain! We've gone from seniors in high school not being able to pray at graduation ceremonies to seniors at retirement centers unable to pray over food. This is truly a new era of religious intolerance.

- Opinion, by FRC May 10, 2010. See [www.opposingviews.com/i/georgia-seniors-banned-from-saying-prayer-before-meals](http://www.opposingviews.com/i/georgia-seniors-banned-from-saying-prayer-before-meals)

libertarians and self-styled 'rationalists' would rise, and familiar catch-cries like 'censorship,' 'Index of prohibited films,' and 'new Inquisition,' would alternate with 'No Popery!' as warnings to a bemused public.

The author of the *Courier-Mail* article referred to above described as 'feral' a Christian lobby group that called for the DVD's banning, and went on to reassure possibly sceptical readers that *Salò*, a film he describes as 'gruelling and unrelentingly sadistic' that depicts '120 days of the most unspeakable misery, sexual depravity and death,' was 'not in any way titillating or cheaply exploitative'.<sup>8</sup>

Readers of *Annals* may recall the Dutch judge quoted in our last issue who decided in July 2006 that the Netherlands pedophile party - *Partij voor Naastenliefde, Vrijheid en Diversiteit* [PVND] - could not be banned because 'freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and freedom of association ... are foundations of the democratic rule of law'. The party's platform involved lowering the age of consent for sexual relations to 12; legalising child pornography, and de-criminalising bestiality.<sup>9</sup>

### Double Standards

We have come light years away from St Basil's ideal of reverencing mysteries and dancing with angels. All the above are instances of civil law gone or going haywire; of ideals rejected and human beings cut adrift by the same secular

society that tolerates [when it does not initiate] sacrilegious and scurrilous attacks on the Catholic Church and the successor of St Peter, the Bishop of Rome.

The deplorable behaviour of a tiny fraction of the Church's members - clergy and laity - most recently offered a pretext for these attacks, despite the incontrovertible fact that this behaviour is manifestly condemned as contrary to the Church's moral teaching and canon law.

It is curious that no one seems to acknowledge that Catholic moral law and practice is crystal clear in its opposition to pedophilia, and to much else that is patently immoral although legal - while the much-vaunted civil law in most countries is not only not clear, it is thoroughly murky.

### Anti-Catholicism, alive and thriving

Regrettably, much of the media coverage of the Catholic Church in



recent months is reminiscent of the tsunami of anti-Catholic literature and other propaganda that has deluged the West since the Reformation. The 19th century was notorious for its bigotry and discrimination against Catholics.<sup>10</sup> The 20th century managed to match or excel it in venom and vituperation.<sup>11</sup> The 21st century appears to be following suit.

This build-up in the intensity of anti-Catholic tirades raises a question that begs an answer: How can the Catholic Church be attacked with impunity in such blatantly distorted and prejudicial ways, while other social, racial, legal, commercial and religious bodies are exempted from it?

The answer that suggests itself gives the lie to claims that scientific objectivity, reason, and a concern for truth and justice count for much in our post-post-modern world.

It also implies that the Lords 'of nothingness and death' take the Catholic Church seriously, for they see her as the principal obstacle in their continuing struggle for control of our minds and hearts. As the 'peace' they offer involves a *renunciation* of happiness and abandonment of Faith, one can only await the outcome with trust in the power of God's grace to touch hearts and souls. The alternative is dire.

1. *Treatise on the Holy Spirit*, ix, 22-23. Quoted in *The Roman Breviary*, Second Reading at Matins, for Tuesday in the Seventh Week in Easter tide.
2. Jean Daniélou, S.J. *The Scandal of Truth*. The Catholic Book Club, London, 1962, pp.44-45.
3. [www.ag.gov.au/www/agd/rwpattach.nsf/VAP/96283A679CB96C92794AF1031D9395C5C200629-Group+submission+-+Australian+Christian+Lobby+-+PDF.PDF/\\$file/Group+submission+-+Australian+Christian+Lobby+-+PDF.PDF](http://www.ag.gov.au/www/agd/rwpattach.nsf/VAP/96283A679CB96C92794AF1031D9395C5C200629-Group+submission+-+Australian+Christian+Lobby+-+PDF.PDF/$file/Group+submission+-+Australian+Christian+Lobby+-+PDF.PDF)
4. 'Cut it out, don't let life mirror art with controversial Pier Paolo Pasolini film *Salò*,' Paul Syvret, *The Courier-Mail*, April 20.
5. Media release May 6, 2010.
6. 'Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Salò* cleared for DVD release' *The Australian*, May 6, 2010.
7. <http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salò>
8. Paul Syvret, art. cit. *The Courier-Mail*, April 20, 2010.
9. See 'Press Freedom or 'Press Freuzy', Editorial, *Annals* 2010/3 p.6.
10. See, e.g. Charlotte Brontë's novel *Villette* [1853] or the first novel ever to be published by an ex-Prime Minister of England - Benjamin Disraeli's *Lothair* [1870] of which *The Morning-Post* suggested that it should be called 'The Romance of 'No Popery'. See Susan M. Griffin, *Anti-Catholicism and Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p.185, and *passim*.
11. Looking only at cinema: the 1979 Monty Python blasphemous satire *The Life of Brian*, or their 1983 fellow-upanti-Catholic skit *The Meaning of Life*, or Francis Ford Coppola's 1990 seriously hard-nosed anti-Catholicism in *The Godfather III*. See Philip Jenkins, *The New Anti-Catholicism, The Last Acceptable Prejudice*, OUP, 2003, pp.158-176 and *passim*.



**S**ELF-DECEPTION is a perplexing thing, not least because we are both deceiver and deceived. How is it possible that

we can believe what it is we know to be a lie? And it gets even stranger, for we have to lie to ourselves about having lied to ourselves. We blind ourselves to the truth, and then blind ourselves to having blinded ourselves! We make ourselves forget that we have made ourselves forget. There are many means by which we do this

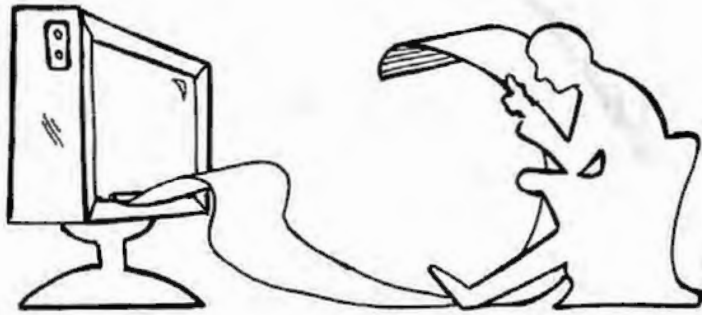
but the most effective is to blame others for our own faults. We project onto others the responsibility for what it is we have done, which has the added bonus of justifying our hatred of them.

But if self-deception in an individual is wondrous, what if a whole culture is self-deceived? *That* is really something to behold! And a good example of this is how Modernity has contrived to focus blame for the Nazis on the Church, and Pius XII in particular.

This is not to deny that there are a number of works that have taken this view to task but few of these actually point out what National Socialism and Communism were: they were the outgrowth of liberal and revolutionary Modernity. Furthermore, both ideologies actively opposed the Church and were set on her destruction, and both, in turn, were opposed by the Church exactly when those who styled themselves liberal and progressive did nothing. Thus, it was the Church that opposed eugenics and racial theory from the very beginning; it was the progressive liberals who promoted it.

As a number of historians have shown, from at least the eighteenth century on the claim of Modernity to being the true universal philosophy has been informed by racial and anti-Semitic sentiments. Sentiments which were often tied to anti-Catholic views. Following certain arguments in Protestantism, the Church was damned as being a corrupted form of Christianity by reason that it had been *Judaised*. Thus, both the Church and the synagogue were seen to be the enemies of enlightened and universal progress. Enemies that had to be got rid of. It was an opinion that informed, and was promoted by, the bulk of German biblical and theological scholarship. An opinion that bled into the neo-pagan and anti-Catholic sentiments of Hitler, as well as the thinking of the atheist ideologues of Communism.

I stress, none of this is particularly



## MODERNITY AND SELF-DECEPTION

By ROBERT TILLEY

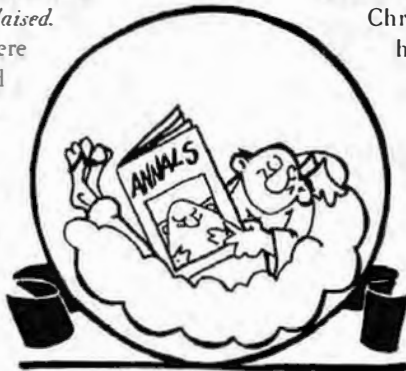
*this* institution is *now* seen to be a major culprit in the crimes committed by the very foes it had for so long opposed!

Might there not be in this just the tiniest piece of cultural self-deception? Something that is just a little self-serving? Today one need only think of how eugenics and euthanasia are back in a big way, how human life in the womb is regularly killed and then, under the auspices of modern capitalism, turned into the means of commercial and medical fodder, to see that the very things that the Nazis promoted are, to this day, central to liberal Modernity. How Nazi beliefs are again considered progressive, and how, once again, these beliefs are opposed by the Church.

For us to consider the Nazis and see how closely our ideologies match is, for the moment at least, a little disconcerting, so why not blame Pius XII for all things bad!

One of the sure signs of self-deception is the refusal to accept responsibility usually by recourse to spurious self-justifications. Justifications that always end up blaming someone else. It's something Modernity has always been adept at doing, though it's usually the Jews who get the blame, while coming a close second is the Church. Thus, in the early twentieth century the breakdown of marriage, the dissemination of pornography, the destruction of religion, all of which things were promoted by a liberal Gentile culture were blamed instead on a secretive group of orthodox rabbis! Today, and I kid you not, modernists like Christopher Hitchens blame the Church for the high rates of abortion by reason of the fact that she opposes it too much!

We live in a culture of self-deception, and you might want to keep that in mind when next they blame the Pope for paedophilia.



ROBERT TILLEY has a PhD from the University of Sydney. He currently lectures in Adult Education on Philosophy and History of Ideas. He also lectures in Greek and Biblical Studies at The Catholic Institute of Sydney [CIS] and in literature and theology at Aquinas Academy.

*Father Brown is not as interested in the arrest and capture of the guilty man as he is in saving his soul – an unfashionable and much misunderstood goal in today's world.*

## FATHER BROWN'S BIRTHDAY

*Celebrated by Tony Evans*



FATHER BROWN celebrates his one-hundredth birthday this year, although as you might expect of a private eye, the exact date of his birth remains a little obscure. The first collection of his mysteries was published in 1911 under the title *The Innocence of Father Brown* which might suggest that his centenary will occur in 2011.

But not so fast. A few of the stories had appeared in magazines the previous year. Much earlier, in 1904, Father Brown's equally famous chronicler, G. K. Chesterton, first met Father John O'Connor, who was said to be the inspiration for Father Brown's character – if not his appearance. It seems reasonable to suppose that the idea for the priest-detective formed slowly in Chesterton's mind over several subsequent meetings. In those years Father Brown might be described as 'in utero'.

Thus, in the absence of any contradictory evidence we are confident that the year 2010 is an entirely proper year to hold centenary birthday celebrations.

All five books of the Father Brown stories, comprising 49 stories in total, have been continuously in print for a hundred years, and in spite of fierce rivalry and reader loyalties the priest-detective maintains his prominent place in the Pantheon of British private detectives. He is senior to Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple, and is ten years older than Lord Peter Wimsey. Only Sherlock Holmes takes precedence as the prototype of them all.

Even those with little knowledge of Chesterton but may have learnt a poem, or studied an essay or two at school,

will connect him with the Father Brown stories. Chesterton wrote many other and more profoundly important works, but the Father Brown stories remain indelibly linked with the author in the public mind. In a sense the names, G. K. Chesterton and Father Brown, are almost interchangeable – possibly because there is much in the character and appearance of both author and his priest-detective that is held in common.

Chesterton describes Father Brown as 'round as a Norfolk dumpling', and

elsewhere as 'other-worldly,' 'simple and impractical,' prone to drop his parcels, uncertain which direction to take, and which end of his return railway ticket to offer to the porter. He always carried a shabby umbrella and wore an air of distraction as though his mind were elsewhere. This could easily be a description of Chesterton himself in similar circumstances. Father O'Connor described Chesterton's way of working 'as if mooning' but he never mooned. He was always working out something in his mind and when he drifted from his study into the garden, and was seen making deadly passes with his sword-stick at the dahlias, we knew he was getting his thoughts in order?

Another well-known Chesterton story tells how he stopped the traffic in Fleet Street by standing in the middle of the road deep in thought, having momentarily forgotten where he was. In both these and many other similar incidents we may ask, was this Chesterton; or was it Father Brown? They could be a description of them both.

But this angelic simplicity and apparent other-worldliness of both Chesterton and Father Brown veiled a profound understanding of human behaviour and the human tendency to evil, arising from the Catholic doctrine of original sin.

According to Chesterton's first biographer, Maisie Ward, O'Connor 'shattered Gilbert with certain lurid knowledge of human depravity which he had acquired in the course of his priestly experience.' Later, arising from these conversations, grew the idea of a simple priest – armed with experience gained both in the confessional and in close observation of human nature – who could be one jump ahead of the

### The Dizzy Vision of Liberty

But the best way of putting what I mean is to repeat what I have already said, in connection with the satisfying scope of Catholic universality. I cannot picture these theological ultimates and I have not the authority or learning to define them. But I still put the matter to myself thus: Supposing I were so miserable as to lose the Faith, could I go back to that cheap charity and crude optimism which says that every sin is a blunder, that evil cannot conquer or does not even exist? I could no more go back to those cushioned chapels than a man who has regained his sanity would willingly go back to a padded cell. I might cease to believe in a God of any kind; but I could not cease to think that a God who had made men and angels free was finer than one who coerced them into comfort.

- G.K.Chesterton, *The Catholic Church and Conversion*, London, Burns Oates and Washbourne, Ltd 1927, p.108

criminal (and the police detective) and would be able to solve the crime.

Paradox too – as one has learned to expect from Chesterton – also plays an important part in Father Brown's sleuthing. Chesterton consistently returns to some of his philosophical ideas, first expressed in his more serious works, and uses them as paradoxes in the plots of the detective stories.

An obvious example can be seen in the story, *The Invisible Man*. Chesterton was fond of showing that we run the risk of drawing the wrong conclusions if we consistently view a problem from one superficial observation. But if we could be persuaded to view the problem from a different angle we might draw a completely different conclusion.

As one of Chesterton's characters says in *The Man Who Was Thursday*, 'We see everything from behind. That is not a tree, but the back of a tree. That is not a cloud but the back of a cloud. Cannot you see that everything is hiding a face? If we could only get round in front!'

He uses the same idea in a different context in the Father Brown story, *The Invisible Man*. The hall porter of a block of flats, a policeman on duty and a street vendor, all three posted to watch for a stranger entering the building, swear there was no one who did so. Father Brown realises that they overlooked the postman because they thought someone so familiar didn't count: they were looking for a possible stranger. As Father Brown explains: 'Have you ever noticed that people never answer what you say? When the lady of a big country house is asked, "Is anybody staying with you?" The lady doesn't answer, "Yes the butler and the parlour maid and three footmen". The lady replies: "There is nobody", meaning nobody of the sort you mean.'

The members of staff are invisible. People are telling the truth but it is partial truth, the truth they think the questioner wants to hear.

A similar theme is the basis of another famous story, *The Queer Feet*. At an eccentric gentlemen's club there are supposed to be fifteen waiters attending the Club Members at their annual dinner. The members swear there is the usual number of waiters – it's a rule of the club. They each testify that they were aware of fifteen.

But in fact there were only fourteen because one waiter was dead upstairs

## By Hook or by Crook

Father Ronald Knox, with that felicity that is so good that the wit almost seems like good luck, has remarked that the Catholic Church really does have to get on by hook or crook. That is, by the hook of the fisherman and the crook of the shepherd: and it is the hook that has to catch the convert and the crook that has to keep him. He said in this connection that the conversions to the Church just now were so numerous that they would be obvious and overwhelming, like a landslide, if it were not that they were neutralised in mere numbers, or rather lessened in their full claim of numbers, by a certain amount of falling away in other directions.

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

in bed. As Father Brown discovers, a thief who attempted to carry away the precious silver fish knives cleverly impersonated two waiters by changing the character and the speed of his footsteps in the passage from kitchen to dining room. The priest, sitting in an adjoining room was puzzled by the sound of irregular footsteps, 'First came quick, funny little steps like a man walking on tip-toe for a wager; then came careless, creaking steps, as of a big man walking about with a cigar. But they were both made by the same feet, I swear.'

In this and so many other stories, Father Brown is not as fundamentally interested in the arrest and capture of the guilty man as he is in hearing his confession and saving his soul – an unfashionable and misunderstood purpose in today's world.

This ever-present religious dimension to the stories, and the priestly duty that motivates the detective are the main reasons why the Father Brown stories are not universally popular with film and television producers – as the Agatha Christie and Sherlock Holmes stories are, where no religious point intrudes. Few people nowadays believe in souls and the pressing need to save them.

However, this theological point was well made in the 1954 Father Brown film loosely based on *The Blue Cross* and starring Alec Guinness. Father Brown (Alec Guinness) not only recovers the valuable Cross, but persuades the master criminal, Flambeau, to persuade him to repent and save his soul – an idea less foreign to audiences in the post-war period than

it would be today. (But evidently not foreign to Alec Guinness who recounts in his autobiography that an incident occurring while making that film helped him decide to enter the Catholic Church).

On a practical level many of the Father Brown stories are likely to stretch our credulity; they rely on fantastic happenings or implausible constructs. But the willing reader will suspend disbelief or objection because of the ingenuity, the spontaneous gaiety of the plots, and the simplicity and insightful wisdom of the priest-detective.

As one reviewer wrote when *The Innocence of Father Brown* was first published: 'The insight of Father Brown is unclouded by even the faintest interest in himself. His knowledge and estimate of evil is of an accuracy not to be reached except by the unshakably innocent.'

We wish you a Happy Birthday, Father Brown. And may your stories be told and read, and re-read, by appreciative readers for another hundred years.

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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.E.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 cultural treasures bequeathed to Australian Catholics by William Wardell its architect.

*'Hold on with one mind to God the Father and  
to the Church our Mother'*

## THE CHURCH IS OUR MOTHER



LET us love our God, let us love his Church: the former as our Father, the latter as our Mother; the former as Lord, the latter as his handmaid, for we are sons of his handmaid (Ps.cxv). But this nuptial union (between Christ and his Church) is knit together with great charity. No man offends the one and wins the good graces of the other.

Let none say: "I resort to idols, I consult mediums and fortune-tellers, but still I do not leave the Church of God. I am a Catholic. Holding on to the Mother, thou hast offended the Father.

Another says: "Far be such things from me, I consult no fortune-teller, I look out for no medium, I seek no sacrilegious divinations, I go not to adore demons, I serve no stones - but I do belong to the Church of Donatus". What does it profit thee not to have offended the Father, seeing that the Father punishes thy offence against the Mother?

What does it profit thee if thou confessest the Lord, honourest God, acknowledgest his Son, confessest him sitting at the right hand of the Father, and all the while blasphemest his Church?

Art thou not corrected by the examples of conjugal love among mankind? If thou hadst a patron to whom didst pay daily court, wearing out his threshold with thy services, daily saluting, nay, even prostrating thyself before him, wouldst thou dare enter his house if thou madest so much as one charge against his wife?

Hold on then, dearly beloved, hold on with one mind to God the Father, and to the Church, our Mother.

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- St Augustine of Hippo [354-430 A.D.] *Sermon on Psalm 88*. Translated by Joseph Rickaby, SJ in *Readings from St Augustine on the Psalms*, London, Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1925, pp.145-146.

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

## KISSED BY A GHOST

*By Leslie Rumble, MSC*



● **N** Saturday, 3rd October, 1863, the Inman Line ship 'City of Limerick' steam and sail, left Liverpool for New York under the command of Captain Jones. The captain was looking forward to a quick passage, under the fifteen days if possible; perhaps in twelve, or even ten.

The huge liners of today, of course, make the journey in about four days; but in the 1860s a fifteen-day trip was considered good time. It was certainly an improvement on the seventy days it took Columbus to make his first voyage across the Atlantic.

Among the passengers on the 'City of Limerick' was an American businessman named Wilmot, who was returning to the States with his mother and sister. Mr Wilmot was sharing a two-berth cabin with a friend, Mr W.J. Tail – a cabin rather uncomfortably situated towards the stern of the ship, the sloping sides of which resulted in the upper berth, which was occupied by Mr Tait, being set somewhat further back than the lower one.

When the ship was about two days out from Liverpool, soon after passing Kinsale Head, about twenty miles beyond Cork on the southern coast of Ireland, a very severe storm arose, which was to last for nine full days.

During the whole of that time there was never a glimpse of the sun by day, nor of the moon or stars by night. The vessel plunged and rolled. Few of the passengers were able to eat. None could sleep.

'The bulwarks on the weather bow were carried away,' wrote Mr Wilmot, 'whilst one of the anchors broke loose from its lashings and did considerable damage before it could be secured. Several stout storm sails, though closely reefed, were carried away, and the booms broken like matchwood.'

On the eighth day, however, the storm began to abate and on Monday night, 12th October, Mr Wilmot slept for the first time. He slept heavily, worn out as were so many others by long nights of wakefulness and not a little anxiety.

It was early in the morning, at about 4 a.m., that the thing happened. He had a most vivid dream that his wife, who was in U.S.A. and who had gone to live with her parents in Watertown, Connecticut, during his absence in Europe, opened the door of the cabin, hesitated there for a few moments as she saw that the upper berth was occupied by another man, and then came across to his own berth, bent over and kissed him; and then, without having said a word, went as she had come.

An ordinary enough dream. But only a dream? Imagine how startled Mr Wilmot was when, on awakening and yawning at about 7 a.m., he found Mr Tail leaning over the edge of the top berth and saying to him: 'You're a nice one, to have a lady visiting you during the night like that!'

'What on earth do you mean?' asked Wilmot.

Whereupon Tait described exactly what his companion had seen in the dream.

'I was awake,' he said, 'and I saw the

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

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

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

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

## Closeness of mother and child

**E**ACH CHILD echoes its mother's moods, cross and crying if she is tired and worried, at peace and laughing if she is happy. It also seems, at a later age, to perceive with her when she is out of its sight and hearing, and even to remember things in her mind which have sunk below the level of her own consciousness and are forgotten. Perhaps I may cite [an] instance known to me. The mother of Jessica, a three-year-old, was in her own bedroom, checking through the linen that had come back from the wash. The door was open, as was the door of the room along the passage where the child was playing, but they could not see one another. As the mother sorted the handkerchiefs, she heard her little girl, who had just learned the names of colours, saying in a drawling, sing-song way 'white, yellow, blue, pink. . . ' and so on, and realized with a shock that each word corresponded to the colour of the handkerchief at the moment in her hands. The child continued accurately to chant the names of the colours until her mother had finished the sorting. Asked why she had done so, Jessica replied that the colours had just come into her head.

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

lady standing at the door of the cabin for a moment or two; after which she came across, bent over and kissed you, and then went as she had come.

Later in the day, meeting Miss Wilmot on deck, Mr Tait asked her if she had visited her brother during the night. To her surprised 'no,' he replied by telling her of what he had seen and what her brother had dreamed.

Some nine days later, on Wednesday, 21st October, the 'City of Limerick' berthed in New York; and next day, Thursday, Mr Wilmot arrived by rail in Watertown, Connecticut, going at once to the home of his father-in-law, with whom his wife was staying.

He was welcomed by all, but almost the first question his wife asked him when they were alone was: 'Did you receive a visit from me last Tuesday week?'

'Last Tuesday week,' he replied, 'I was in mid-Atlantic, over a thousand miles away.'

'I know,' she replied. 'But I had an extraordinarily vivid sensation of having visited you. The weather at the time was shockingly bad, with violent storms. It was reported that the 'Africa' which sailed from Boston for England on the same day your boat, the 'City of Limerick' left Liverpool, had been wrecked on Cape Race, Newfoundland. I could not sleep for anxiety about your safety; and whilst I lay awake at 4 a.m.

I had the strongest possible impression of going out through the storm and across the ocean. I came to the ship and remember climbing the side, although I don't know how; and I went down to your cabin, bent over, and kissed you.'

'Tell me,' she added, 'was not the upper berth set back further than the lower one? A man above you seemed to be looking at me, and for a moment I was afraid to go in.'

It was all very bewildering, for Mrs Wilmot had never seen the 'City of Limerick,' nor set eyes on the cabin!

Experts have racked their brains to find the explanation of this famous 'Wilmot Case.'

To admit any direct communication between one mind and another with no physical means such as the energy radiation necessary for wireless transmission would undermine the fundamental principles of physical science as hitherto accepted. For that reason some materialists have denied the reality of telepathy, clairvoyance, and all other purely psychical phenomena.

Professor Gilbert Ryle, in 'The Concept of Mind,' even goes so far as to deny the existence of a 'mind,' or even of a 'spiritual' soul' in man at all. He thinks man's body and brain, belonging to the purely physical order, can account for all human activities; and he violently attacks what he calls 'the dogma of the ghost in the machine.'

Normally, of course, we think of ghosts as apparitions of disembodied souls. But if there are souls at all, then there is a 'ghost' in every one of us. It just isn't wandering about independently of our bodies yet. Professor Ryle, therefore, correctly declares the interpretation of man as a soul-body composite to imply 'a ghost in a machine.'

But the wholesale denial of psychical phenomena is based simply on a blind refusal to face established facts. Other scientists, therefore, admit their reality, and agree that they prove the existence of a spiritual soul and mind distinct from the material body and brain.

They then go on to concede that such phenomena belong to the depths of the human personality, where activities occur which are beyond the range of ordinary laws of physical causality; and of which the natural sciences have no means of providing an adequate explanation.

Abbot Wiesinger, O.C.S.O., in his 'Occult Phenomena in the Light of Theology', p.224, holds that the human soul, being a spirit, possesses certain traces of purely angelic powers, including the power to influence matter regardless of any considerations of distance. It is a question of 'willing,' not the creation of new matter, but a transformation of matter. A collaboration of minds and wills below conscious levels could result in intensified powers.

Modern nuclear physics tells us that matter is but energy in another form, and that matter and energy are really convertible. Thus, in the physical atom there is a tremendous concentration of energy. When, in nuclear explosions, the energy is released into space, the atom disappears.

It is not incredible, therefore, that the mind should have the power to build up energy from external sources to the point of visibility, producing an existent object which can be perceived by the senses of other people.

St Thomas Aquinas, who lived in the 13th century, knew nothing of modern nuclear physics. Yet to explain the apparition of the angel Raphael in bodily form to act as guide and companion to Tobias, he wrote: 'Although the atmosphere when rarified has neither shape nor colour, when condensed it can be given visible forms and colours, as we see in the clouds. ... In such a way angels

assume bodies by condensation of the atmospheric elements into apparent bodies." (Summa Theologica. P. I. Q. 51. art. 2, ad 3).

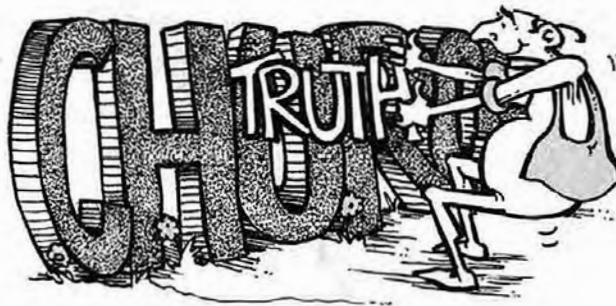
His explanation certainly showed remarkable insight for the times in which he lived. Be that as it may, the 'apparition' which identified itself as the angel Raphael was undoubtedly an objective reality, actually seen and conversed with by Tobias.

In somewhat the same way, Abbot Wiesinger would hold that the combined influences of the subconscious minds of Mr and Mrs Wilmot, and Mr Tait also, produced the real apparition of Mrs Wilmot which Mr Tait saw, the mental impression of it which Mr Wilmot experienced in his dream, and the transference to Mrs Wilmot's mind back in Watertown, Connecticut, of the details both her husband and Mr Tait knew of the cabin.

Of course, there may be a better explanation of this whole strange affair than the one suggested; but, if there is, I confess I cannot imagine what form it would take. For the rest, I am personally convinced at least of the fact that Mr Wilmot was actually kissed by a ghost!

For the reality of apparitions we have to rely on human testimony, asking ourselves whether the witnesses who claim to have seen them are sane, and whether they are telling the truth. The facts of this case are fully recorded in the 'Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research,' Vol. 7, p.41. Every effort was made to check the details. The S.P.R. was able to get first-hand confirmation from Mr Wilmot and his wife; and also from Mr Wilmot's sister, who remembered the questions Mr Tait put to her on board the 'City of Limerick'. The files of the 'New York Herald' were checked for shipping information and passenger lists. Not a single discrepancy was found to give grounds for doubting the reality of the incident.

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. In response to many requests, we print the fifth 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 Bishop and the murdered Archduke.



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*We need to be prepared to accept  
whatever God sends us*

## WHY DO WE NEED TO PRAY?



WHY DOES the Lord advise us to pray, when he knows what is needful for us before we ask it of him? This can puzzle us, if we do not understand that our Lord and God does not want our wishes to be made known to himself, since he cannot be ignorant of them; but he wants our desire to be exercised in prayer, thus enabling us to grasp what he is preparing to give. That is something very great indeed; but we are small and limited vessels for the receiving of it. So we are told: 'Widen your hearts; bear not the yoke with unbelievers.'

This very great reality 'the eye has not seen', because it has no colour; 'nor has ear heard', because it has no sound; 'nor has it arisen in man's heart', because man's heart must rise up to it. We shall have the greater capacity to receive it, the more trustfully we believe, the more firmly we hope, the more ardently we desire.

So we pray always with unflinching desire in that faith, hope and charity. We pray to God at fixed intervals of hours and times, and in words, in order to remind ourselves by these symbols of reality, and to be aware how much progress we have made in our desire; also to rouse ourselves the more keenly to increase this desire. The more fervent the affection that precedes, the more worthy the effect that will follow. Thus the apostle's saying, 'Pray without ceasing', means nothing else but: without ceasing, desire, from him who alone can give it, the blessed life, which is none other than eternal life.

- St Augustine of Hippo [354-430], *Letter to Proba*, 130. From the *Roman Breviary*, Second Reading at Matins for Sunday of the 29th Week of the Year.



### *Low-dose celebration of The Pill*

# FIFTY YEARS LATER ...

*By James Murray*



FIFTY YEARS since the introduction of the contraceptive, known generically as The Pill. The anniversary has been duly marked with all-media coverage. But only duly, all in all, the jubilee has lacked jubilation. No razzamatazz. No maypole dancing. No distribution of free samples at railway stations by Big Pharma companies.

The sense of low-key ambivalence may be put down to folklore – women's business folklore – which is not always as glowing as pharmaceutical company promotional material.

Nor, given media zeal to record firsts, has there been appropriate emphasis on Australia's extraordinary role in pioneering the use of The Pill, extraordinary in its occurrence on the watch of Robert Gordon Menzies, making that arch-conservative, willynilly, the nation's most significant social revolutionary.

By a quirk of post-World War II politics, the Australian branch of Schering AG, the German company controlling an early formulation of The Pill, was still enemy alien property controlled by the Menzies government.

Thus the historic responsibility of a conservative government for the introduction of The Pill to Australia. As a *quid pro quo* for its overseer role, the government received £50,000 a year.

Moreover in 1965 when it decided to auction the local Schering Pty Ltd, its German parent, Schering AG, made it clear that none of its formulations would be supplied to an outside buyer.

Result, the company reverted to its original Schering control under Alexander Hald, one of the nation's most efficient but non-flamboyant millionaires. The Schering contraceptive pill, marketed as Anovlar, was first used in Australia in 1960 at least six months

before it was released in Europe and specifically Germany its country of origin.

In a similar way, the United States pharmaceutical company Searle's version, Enovid, was first tested in Puerto Rico before its release on the mainland, the period between test and release being longer: 1956-1960.

Here another distinction looms. In her book, *Sexing the Millenium* (HarperCollins 1993), Linda Grant recounts an exchange in 1954 between the scientist Katherine Dexter McCormick and the matriarch of contraception, Margaret Sanger.

McCormick asked her: 'How can we get a "cage" of ovulating females to experiment with?'

McCormick was not talking about female rats or rabbits, she was talking about other women. Sanger was inspired less by women's rights than by the pseudo-science of eugenics whose most enthusiastic proponents were the intellectuals and scientists of Hitler's SS.

McCormick with Gregory Pincus and John Rock (a Catholic father of five) did produce an oral contraceptive. Their 'cage' of ovulating females comprised the women of Puerto Rico. Australian women played an equivalent role.

The official line is that clinical trials were carried out at Crown Street Hospital, Sydney. There is another line: 'No testing. No trials.' This could be dismissed except that its source is Jim Thomson, an accountant who during the Anovlar launch period was company secretary working closely with Hald.

Thomson recalled that Hald, on a business trip to Schering AG in Germany was party to discussions about launching its formulation of The Pill. Schering was considering a far-away launch in South America. Hald convinced his German colleagues to launch in further-away, and potentially more profitable, Australia.

Marketing techniques were known as 'propaganda actions'. They included exporting The Pill to New Zealand and supplying Fiji's family planning programme virtually free of charge.

Schering's annual turnover in this period was £3,500,000, making the government's £50,000 take modest; mining companies should be so lucky.

What Linda Grant wrote in *Sexing the Millenium* still holds true:

'A long shadow was cast over The Pill which has not yet passed, linking it with weight gain and more seriously breast cancer and strokes. The Pill was to become one of the most potent symbols of the Sixties' faith in progress, but also an iconic representation, like the inner-city tower block, of the failure of technology to fulfil our dreams.' See *Annals* 6/1995 for a first, and fuller account, of the episode, un-queried by the pharmaceutical industry and overlooked or ignored by other researchers and writers.

Obviously since those pioneering days, the range of trade-marked contraceptives has increased in the market place. With the increase has come a refinement of formulations.

One aspect, the demographic, is clear and compelling as noted earlier this year – *Annals* 1/2010, *Media Matters*. No nation where The Pill has been widely used has escaped population decrease. Desirable some may argue. And not all of them have green cheese for brains and a preference for hugging trees rather than babies.

What of population imbalance involving ageing populations and shortage of young-labour to drive the economies that in turn are the key to ending poverty and ensuring global prosperity?

The biological evidence is not as conclusive as the demographic. Extensive research has been done. The



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- Editor, *Annals*

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late Frances Hackney (D.Sc., FRSA) noted in these pages [*Annals* 2/1997] the invaluable findings of John Wilks (B. Pharm. MPS) contained in his book, *A Consumer's Guide to The Pill and Other Drugs*.

This drew on 278 studies from the world's most respected journals between 1972 and 1996; it lists 710 references, making its scientific integrity indisputable. But it is by no means an ode to the joy of The Pill.

It long-lists a number of deleterious, potentially fatal side-effects. Samples:

\*A 350% rise in pre-malignant cervical conditions in users of The Pill compared with non-users.

\*Data from 47,000 women showing that those who had used The Pill for ten years or more were three times more likely to develop cervical cancer than non-users.

\*A 130% increased cancer risk from use of The Pill for more than three years.

\*Legal action in England by a group of women against manufacturers of The Pill for failure to disclose its full health implications.

Research continues. Findings contra The Pill continue to be wide ranging: from thrombosis to loss of female libido. Unscientific but fair to say that if a male contraceptive pill with similar negative side-effects were developed, men would not take to it as eagerly as they do to booze.

Big Pharma has had its scandals: profitably consigning, for example, out-of-date formulations to the Third World. It has, however, maintained a benign image compared, say, to Big Oil, its twin in transnational profitability.

The many effective, relatively risk-free medications Big Pharma produces burnish the benign image. And shrewd PR initiatives, as the Schering 'propaganda actions' showed, can be very effective. These range from basic, free, test sampling to the more sophisticated cultivation of favour among the medical profession on the conference-seminar-forum-junket circuit.

A by-product has been the umbrella-protection given to the drug RU40 which numbers of scientists, including Dr Hackney, have classified not as a contraceptive but as an abortifacient.

Another element is the fudging of possible causes. Clusters of cancer sufferers are pertinent. When, for example, the Australian Broadcasting



*'Courage - like honour and integrity - has increasingly departed the public scene'*

## THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN

*By* Giles Auty



IN an era in which every traditional virtue is likely to find itself challenged by some person or group from within the cosy physical and professional confines of one of Australia's universities, an odd coincidence brought just such an issue into especially sharp focus for me.

On the day on which the April issue of the Australian monthly magazine *Quadrant* arrived in my letterbox, I rediscovered a book I had mislaid since first reading it many months earlier on a return flight from England.

The book in question is a paperback which rightly achieved best-seller status. *First Light* by Geoffrey Wellum (Penguin Books 2003) is a first-hand account written by a former fighter pilot who began flying Spitfires during the Battle of Britain at the age of eighteen.

The author was in his late seventies when his book was published yet the freshness, modesty and humour of his account provides an intensely moving and credible story of the lives of otherwise ordinary young men who risked those lives on a daily basis.

Possibly Wellum's narrative was especially poignant for me because he was a pupil at a school which was a close local rival of the one I attended myself. Both of us were designated captains of cricket of our schools who were unable, for various reasons, to take up our appointments.

Wellum was half a generation older than I but I was at least an onlooker, as a small boy, of a good selection of the aerial warfare of the Second World War from the vantage point of my family's garden in Kent. Indeed, I recall to this day glorious summer skies full of hurtling combatant aircraft.

While beautifully written and highly descriptive, Wellum's book is essentially

a tale about the specifically military virtue of courage - although courage can admittedly take many other forms - and about the perennial debt which society should acknowledge towards those who displayed such virtue to an extraordinary extent on its behalf.

What then is the coincidental connection with the April edition of *Quadrant*?

The main feature article of that edition by Mervyn Bendle, who teaches at James Cook University, tells the story of a growing assault by certain Australian academics against all kinds of military tradition and against Anzac in particular.

The article is appropriately called *A New Academic Onslaught against Anzac* and its author's brave exposure of this will undoubtedly place him offside with many of his university colleagues.

### Tragic Disunity

The identification of Papal Rome with the Babylon of the Apocalypse ... became practically an article of faith - and a very central one - in all the Reformed Churches. It is difficult for us today to realize the existence of this belief which dominated Protestant Europe for three hundred years and which still remains as a subconscious undercurrent in Protestant thought. But it is easy to see that it entirely altered the nature of the Christian dualism by transforming it from an opposition between the Church and the World to a conflict between two forms of Christianity.

- Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State*, London, Sheed and Ward, 1935, pp.84-85.

In the same issue is another piece by regular columnist Peter Ryan who, like Wellum, began active wartime service at the age of eighteen - although in his case serving on his own behind Japanese lines in Papua New Guinea.

Ryan refers to the great military and civic virtue of stoicism and tells how aided he was in his wartime ordeals by such supreme historic exemplars of stoic philosophy as the Roman Marcus Aurelius.

Ryan also refers in his article to one from the January/February edition of *Quadrant* written by Dr. Michael Evans, who is a Fellow of the Australian Defence College in Canberra, which describes current Australian society as: "fundamentally unsympathetic to the profession of arms. The zeitgeist now wallows in the vicinities of post-modernism and in the insipid feebleness of moral relativity. What was once, with all its faults, a firm and familiar Australian culture is now a jellyfish, drifting aimless on seas of trendy hedonism. It has been reduced to this limp state very largely by the assaults, ignorance and neglect of its own schoolteachers and 'humanities' academics..."

Mervyn Bendle's article in *Quadrant* was triggered specifically by the recent publication of *What's Wrong with Anzac? The Militarisation of Australian History* (New South 2010) which is co-edited by Henry Reynolds and Marilyn Lake. Reynolds's name will be familiar to many from his involvement in the so-called 'history wars'.

As Bendle explains "The book continually contrasts Anzac to the anti-war movement, with which the authors were directly involved or strongly identify. Consequently, the authors insist it is now high time to do justice to Australia's anti-war tradition, by according it (and therefore themselves and their comrades) the

same level of recognition as the Anzac tradition. This is an objective the Left has been pursuing at an international level for some twenty years, seeking to transform deserters, draft dodgers, anti-war activists and conscientious objectors into latter-day heroes, to be revered as much as the soldiers who actually faced frontline dangers in war.

Some may think, as I do, that Australia as a whole is discredited by the increasing decadence and corruption of young minds which flows out today into wider society – like ripples on a pond – from too many of its schools and universities.

The increasing Left-wing politicisation of education here does nobody credit and should be resisted strenuously by all who value and would encourage the development of independent young minds.

Public education is a particular culprit here because in many instances parents have too little choice about where to send their children to school. How would you like your own children to be encouraged to become deserters in a time of national conflict especially if you have experienced military service yourself?

During my lifetime, courage – like honour and integrity – has increasingly departed the public scene with predictable consequences for society. In their place have come manufactured and purely supposed virtues such as political correctness which could at best be described as ersatz substitutes for the real thing.

What post-modernism has attempted to destroy above all is moral certainty because in a rudderless and splintered society one philosophical idea may appear as good as any other – to the young and ignorant, at least – and no moral philosophy whatsoever possibly the best option of all.

Where universities were once looked on as repositories of academic and moral wisdom, many seem today to have become instead promoters of the kind of total moral vacuum that Australia may eventually become.

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

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– Editor, *Annals*

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*Seeking a basis for consensus on Fundamentals***THE NATURAL LAW***By Russell Shaw*

**I**F I HAD the chance to ask just one question at the Senate confirmation hearings on Elena Kagan's fitness to be a justice of the Supreme Court, it would be this: 'What do you think of the natural law?' I'd ask that question because it's more important than most, even all, of the questions that will get asked, not because I have any doubt what the answer would be: 'Not much.'

I say this not to the individual discredit of Kagan, Solicitor General of the United States, but precisely because she's a prominent representative of the Harvard-Yale law school axis now dominating the Supreme Court. As such, it's safe to say, natural law is simply not a part of her intellectual universe. And that is worth putting on the record, if for no other reason than to dramatize the sorry straits in which American jurisprudence finds itself these days.

Natural law theory is the conceptual backbone of the Western legal tradition. It guided the framers of the American Constitution. Despite what some imagine, it isn't a doctrine of the Catholic Church, though Catholic thinkers were largely responsible for its elaboration for centuries. A thumbnail sketch of it might be along these lines:

Human rights and duties arise from human nature. The conceptualization of this body of principles expressing fundamental conditions for individual and communal human fulfillment (not instant gratification but longterm happiness) is called natural law. Manmade laws don't create these rights and duties but are meant to express and defend them. When manmade law fails to do that—when rights and duties are products only of the ideological preferences of lawmakers—society is ruled by a curious mix of relativism and power politics.

Natural law theory began to pass out of favor well over a century ago under the influence, among others, of that eminent relativist Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes (1841-1935). Now, practically speaking, in elite law schools and generally on federal courts peopled by their alumni, it is as dead as the proverbial dodo.

That is a very serious matter. For, as John Courtney Murray, S.J., the eminent American thinker on church-state matters, remarked 50 years ago, 'public consensus' on fundamentals is what held a diverse and pluralistic nation like the United States together, and the basis of the American consensus up to then had been natural law. The Civil War was fought largely to test that proposition. When Father Murray wrote in 1960, it was slipping away.

Today it has all but disappeared from sight. Hence the culture war. Consider the sort of questions Americans, lacking a healthy public consensus, often argue about now: whether abortion is allowable simply as an expression of individual choice; whether homosexual relationships should be recognized as marriages (answerable only on the basis of some definition of marriage); whether elderly, sick people should be helped to commit suicide—or put away quietly if they're too out of it to decide for themselves.

It goes without saying that Elena Kagan is a liberal like the president who nominated her. She is pro-choice and has a disquieting interest in gay rights issues. Barring some astonishing disclosure, she will undoubtedly be confirmed.

I don't suggest she be asked the specific questions above as part of the confirmation process. I simply wish the process would shed light on her basis for answering them—including her stance toward natural law. She and the other members of the Supreme Court are likely to be called on to answer those questions in the years ahead.

*A gracious and insightful source for the battle between good and evil'*

## LET'S GIVE THE DEVIL A FRIGHT

Reviewed by PAUL STENHOUSE, MSC



IT IS SAID of St Benedict that he considered that the two hearts of a monastery were its chapel and its library; and a 12th century abbot, describing a new abbey, said that 'a monastery without a library is like a castle without an armoury.'

For truly 'The pen is mightier than the sword'. This maxim was coined by Edward Bulwer-Lytton for his play *Richelieu* that opened at London's Covent Garden Theatre on March 7, 1839. In it we find one of Cardinal Pell's 17th century predecessors in the College of Cardinals declaring in Act 2, scene II:

'Beneath the rule of men entirely great  
The pen is mightier than the sword.'

Shakespeare, in *Hamlet* Act 2, scene II, has Rosencrantz put the same thought thus:

'... many wearing rapiers  
are afraid of goose quills'

And well might they be.

Cardinal Pell's latest book entitled *Test Everything; Hold Fast to What is Good* bears out the truth of both versions of the maxim. It contains a collection of 80 assorted homilies, pastoral letters, speeches, addresses, articles, and talks. These were delivered at various locations around the world: Sydney, Rome, the Isle of Wight, Oxford, Malta, Virginia and beyond to a variety of audiences: of all ages and backgrounds: to the faithful at Mass, to members of university and other scholarly institutions, to members of the judiciary, to school children and to retreatants - to all of us, in other words.

The book is a credit to its author, editor and publisher. But it is a lot more than a collection of essays with which to while away a few hours in pleasant reading on a wet Sunday afternoon.

It is a rich treasure-house of Catholicism in action: a no-holds-barred resource in our daily struggle to promote, explain and defend our faith; an encyclopaedia of Catholicism in

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*Test Everything: Hold Fast to what is Good*, by George Cardinal Pell, Connorcourt Publishing, 386 pp. rrp pb \$34.95, hb \$49.95.

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context. It is ideal sustenance for young and old in the home, in the class room, in the work place, and when our faith is under attack - as it often is these days.

What we are offered in these essays is the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in précis: Catholic teaching - dogmatic and

moral, ascetical and spiritual - fleshed out in the men and women, the young and old, the learned and the simple faithful, who loved it and lived it, and inspire us still.

We learn of a Jesus who didn't say: 'Here are five or six different Faith packages: choose whichever one pleases you'. He said: 'I am the Way the Truth and the Life.'

The Cardinal reminds us that virtue is beautiful, and that while vice is deforming, there is a demonic beauty that can beguile us to evil ends unless we are on guard.

He even suspects that it is difficult for someone who is a serious gardener to be a bad person - because they are too much in tune with what is good and beautiful in nature.

We learn among other things the name of Moses's mother [Yochebed]; and that until recently Scotland had no holiday for Christmas.

We are reminded that attendance at Sunday Mass is not an optional extra for Catholics.

It goes without saying that *Test Everything* cannot touch on *everything* Catholic, but it offers a refreshingly positive and open perspective on the central doctrines of our Faith, and the major issues perplexing 21st century men and women. It is an extensive resource from which a wise man can bring forth treasure old and new.

The Cardinal pulls no punches. 'I cannot promise you a second spring. I can only promise you a hard slog'. But then he goes on: 'The Catholic Church, gathered around the Pope the successor of St Peter - the rockman on whom Christ built the Church - and the bishops, is still the core and axis of the Church of Christ: the focus of God's work in the world.'

We learn that St Jerome who died in 420 AD, secretary of Pope Damasus, urged 'singers at Mass to sing to God

### The Church at the Coal-Face

THE RELIGIOUS IDEAL of the separated Christian East is not false; it is incomplete. In Eastern Christendom for the last thousand years religion has been identified with personal piety and prayer has been regarded as the one and only religious activity. The Western Church, without disparaging individual piety as the true germ of all religion, seeks the development of this germ and its blossoming into a social activity organized for the glory of God and the universal good of mankind. The Eastern prays and labors. Which of the two is right? Jesus Christ founded His visible Church not merely to meditate on heaven, but also to labor upon earth and to withstand the gates of hell. He did not send His apostles into the solitude of the desert, but into the world to conquer it and subject it to the Kingdom which is not of this world, and He enjoined upon them not only the innocence of doves but also the wisdom of serpents.

- Russia and The Universal Church, Vladimir Soloviev [1853-1900] translated by Herbert Rees. London, The Centenary Press, first published 1948.

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with their hearts, not with their voices; and not to plaster their necks and throats with ointments like stage players churning out theatrical tunes and songs in the Church?

And that St Ignatius of Antioch who was born a couple of years after our Lord's crucifixion and was put to death in Rome in 107 AD, was the first to speak and write of the 'Catholic Church'.

The Cardinal tells it as it is: 'Many Australians think of the Catholic Church as a source of many things, nearly everything in fact except genuine religion, worship, prayer and spiritual wisdom. For too many, their instinct is to look elsewhere, to New Age trickery, or to Asia, for such things.'

He reminds us that Cardinal Fisher was the only bishop to resist Henry VIII, to acknowledge publicly that the issue of the king's divorce was not merely a disputed annulment case, nor just another quarrel with Rome that would soon be over ... but in fact the rejection of the central role of the Papacy that would split the universal Church and set in train the destruction of Christendom whose aftershocks are still being felt.

On the subject of war: Only the very

young, Cardinal Pell tells us, or the very foolish, glorify war. When Australia had five million people, more than 60,000 died in the First World War. New Zealand had a population of one million, and lost 15,000 dead. This was 2,000 more than the number of Belgians who died, though Belgium's population was seven times greater than that of New Zealand.

We learn that at the 1990 Synod in Rome on the preparation of priests, many journalists, a number of them ex-priests, were campaigning busily for a married clergy. One bishop remarked that if the theme of some future Synod were to be agriculture, a fair percentage of the press would want to talk about celibacy.

Jesus promised that the Gates of Hell will not prevail against the Church.

This is usually understood to mean that the devil will not be able to succeed in his attempts to overpower the Church. This is all well and good; and true. The devil is continually - 24/7 - trying his hardest to seize control of the Church, of us and of our lives. He has already made inroads into our world which seems continually to be *selling the pass* and capitulating on his terms.

But actually, our Lord is describing in St Matthew's gospel the Church's mission in terms of *our* besieging and assaulting the Ancient Enemy, the devil, Satan, Lucifer, in his very bastion, Hell.

We are supposed to take the battle to him, to wear down *his defences*, and ultimately we've been assured of victory. We have our Lord's word for it: the Gates of Hell [Hell's power] will not prevail against the Church.

But the siege has to be maintained - it is ongoing - and we have to resist the temptation to change sides: to join the forces of our undoubtedly much more relevant, modern, politically correct, well-presented, handsome, money-rich and subtly persuasive enemy. That temptation has never been so seductive.

Cardinal Pell looks at our Faith and our world calmly and sympathetically, from many angles, and prepares us to have a positive role in both. *Test Everything* offers us a gracious and insightful resource for the perennial battle between love and hate, good and evil, truth and lies, beauty and ugliness.

How often have we heard it said that books are a thing of the past. The demise of printed books has been trumpeted electronically since the invention of the computer chip and the friendly mouse.

The death of God and the end of Catholicism have likewise been predicted but over a much longer period. As this book of Cardinal Pell demonstrates, God is alive and well, and Catholicism is girding itself for yet another siege before the Gates of Hell, aka the secular and hostile wasteland that, tragically, is all that remains of much that once was Christendom.

What was once said of some mid-Victorian novelists applies, I regret to say, to much of our secular media today: 'they were not only shackled in their liberty of creation; they were also driven into insincerities, and prevented from setting their shoulders squarely to face facts. Their reticences concealed the meaning of life. Their complacency was hollow. In the light of the whole truth, their half-truths were lies.'<sup>2</sup>

That could never be said of George Cardinal Pell. More power to his pen, or should that be, to his *goose quill!*

1. Francis Afsan Gasquet. *OSB The Old English Bible and other Essays*. London, John Nimmo, 1897, pp.2-3.  
2. *The Light Reading of our Ancestors*. Lord Ernle, Hutchinson & Co Ltd, London [undated] p.317.





*Pope St Gregory the Great [540-604 A.D.]*

## THE BLIND LEADING THE BLIND

**S**INCE no one can teach a skill unless he has first diligently learnt it, what is it that makes the unlearned so rash as to enter the profession of teaching, when the art of teaching is the art of all arts?

Everyone knows that injuries to the mind are more difficult to deter than wounds in a body. Physicians of the body would not be so presumptuous as to attempt to suggest cures for complaints they could not pinpoint, especially if they knew nothing of the disease, or of the effects of the herbs that were to be used.

Sometimes, however, there are teachers, who are physicians of the mind, who although they are ignorant of spiritual matters, unblushingly set themselves up as physicians of the mind.

Since, in our day, by God's grace, the world bestows great honour on the pious, it appears that many lay claim to being devout teachers because they desire the honour of the world. Since they have undertaken Pastoral Care out of pride and vanity they are incapable of fulfilling their role adequately, and cannot themselves teach others to be humble.

It was such people whom God criticised through the mouth of prophets, and reproached them for their behaviour when he said: 'They reigned, but not by my will; they were princes, but do not acknowledge them'. If they exercise authority, they do so by their own power, not by that of the Highest Judge. Their authority does not rest on a foundation laid down by God's Power, nor were they appointed because they possessed special qualities. It was of their own volition, and because they wanted to grasp power, rather than be given it as their just dessert. And the eternal and unseen Judge allows them to rise, as if he did not know them. He does not interfere, as an example of patience. But though they perform many wonders in their office, when they come before him eventually, he will say to them: 'Depart from me, you evildoers; I do not know you'.

He also rebuked them for their lack of learning when he said, 'The shepherds had no understanding: they had access to my Law, but they did not know me'. Often, through the folly of the teacher, disciples come to grief; and often, because of the wisdom of the teacher foolish disciples are saved. But, if both be foolish, then we must consider what Christ said in his gospel: 'If the blind lead the blind, then they will both fall into a ditch'.

- From 'Pastoral Care' by Pope St Gregory the Great [pope from 590-604 AD] from a west Saxon version translated from the Latin by King Alfred of England [848-899 AD]

## HIV AIDS

*That condoms don't always work is 'common knowledge among good scientists who have no political agenda.'*

# BENEDICT XVI AND THE FIGHT AGAINST AIDS

*By* Stephen Hitchens



HE campaign against the Catholic Church is like the AIDS virus – persistent, inventive, and apparently impossible to eradicate because it is constantly changing its form. One of the most malicious recent forms has been the assault against the Church's attitude to the AIDS crisis.

In 2003, the BBC ran a program called "Sex and the Holy City", which was a vicious, all-out assault on Catholic moral teaching. In particular, it attacked Cardinal Trujillo, the late president of the Pontifical Council for the Family, for asserting the "scientific nonsense" that condoms have holes through which HIV particles can pass<sup>1</sup>. To support the BBC, a WHO spokeswoman claimed that "Comments like this are quite dangerous," and the chief scientific advisor to UNAIDS protested: "From a technical point of view, the statements are totally incorrect. Latex condoms are impermeable. They do prevent HIV transmission."<sup>2</sup>

The attack was renewed in March 2009, after a journalist asked Pope Benedict for a comment on the question of AIDS in Africa. The Holy Father spoke of the many Catholic groups that care for AIDS patients and added that "the scourge cannot be resolved by distributing condoms; quite the contrary, we risk worsening the problem."<sup>3</sup>

The result was virtually universal condemnation by the world's media, branding the Church as uncaring, unthinking, and completely out of touch with reality. The president of the International AIDS Society called the Pope's comment "irresponsible and dangerous."<sup>4</sup> Rebecca Hodes of the Treatment Action Campaign in South Africa said that "his opposition to condoms conveys that religious dogma is more important to him than the lives of Africans."<sup>5</sup> And *The Lancet*, one of the world's oldest and most respected medical journals, stated:

Pope Benedict XVI made an outrageous and wildly inaccurate statement... by saying that condoms

exacerbate the problem of HIV/AIDS, the Pope has publicly distorted scientific evidence to promote Catholic doctrine on this issue.

So why does the Church continue to contradict the combined wisdom of the scientists, the doctors, the AIDS workers, the United Nations, the politicians, diplomats and journalists? Simply because the Church is right.

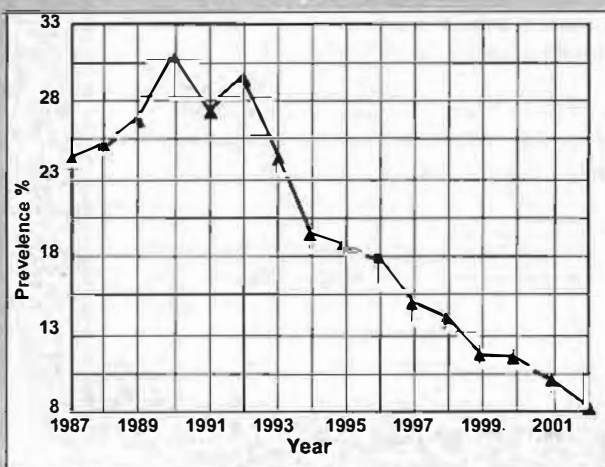
Dr. C. Michael Roland, a leading American expert on rubber chemistry, has published a scientific paper showing that latex rubber, as used to make condoms, naturally contains holes between 5 and 70 micrometres in diameter – between 50 and 700 times the size of an HIV particle<sup>6</sup> – and he has the electron micrographs to prove it. Moreover, Dr Roland says this is "common knowledge among good scientists who have no political agenda."<sup>7</sup>

Some critics accept that latex has holes but claim that condoms are "double-dipped" in the latex to eliminate the holes. But the fact is that condoms leak. Statistics show that 3% of women whose husbands or partners regularly use them get pregnant. And the HIV virus is 25 times smaller than a sperm cell.<sup>8</sup>

One of the most poorly reasoned attacks on Pope Benedict was an editorial in the *New York Times* which said "he deserves no credence when he distorts scientific findings about the value of condoms in slowing the spread of the AIDS virus..."<sup>9</sup> However, the attack backfired because the only evidence the NYT could quote was an authoritative study showing that "condoms can reduce the transmission of the AIDS virus by 80 percent."

Given that AIDS is one of the most unpleasant ways to die, an 80% reduction in the infection rate is hardly

HIV in Uganda<sup>12</sup>



something to get excited about. In fact, the only exciting news is the success rate of sexual abstinence. And yet, nothing upsets the experts more than the mention of abstinence.

At the 2004 Annual Meeting of the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) the key address was by Dr King Holmes, who described government policies promoting abstinence as "ideologic, misguided, frightening, and harmful." The president of IDSA was quick to support him, pointing out that IDSA had protested against President Bush for allocating money for abstinence education.<sup>10</sup> The same year, the Union of Concerned Scientists collected the signatures of 6000 scientists, including 48 Nobel Prize-winners, protesting against Bush's policy.

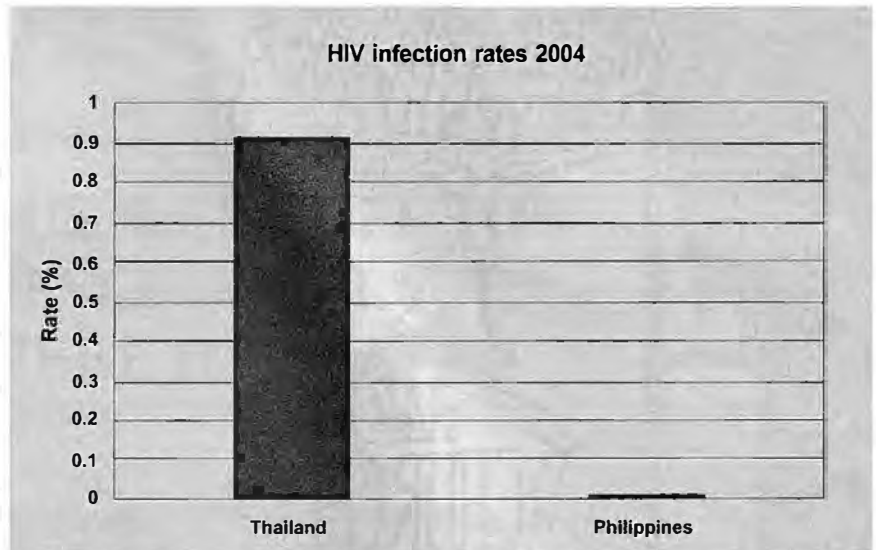
And in an astounding act of hypocrisy, Australian health officials actually blamed abstinence education and prayer for the US failure to control AIDS:

If you want Australian HIV/AIDS caseloads to increase tenfold then follow America's example, and try to legislate and pray HIV/AIDS out of existence.<sup>11</sup>

The allegation is that abstinence education does not work, especially in the third world - in fact, they say, it makes the problem worse, because people who take abstinence pledges end up breaking them and then become very promiscuous trying to "make up for lost time" but without taking "precautions".

The most surprising defence of the Church's teaching has come from Dr Edward Green, former Director of the Harvard School of Public Health AIDS Prevention Project - surprising, because he is a liberal who supports the use of condoms. Dr Green is a medical anthropologist who has devoted most of his working life to AIDS-prevention projects and research. In his book *Rethinking AIDS Prevention* he charts his personal journey from condom enthusiast to condom sceptic, based on his experiences in Africa. He documents the incredible case of Uganda, previously one of the worst-affected countries in the world, which experienced a two-thirds decline in infection rates at a time when huge rises in rates were occurring in other African countries.

He attributes Uganda's success to a variety of factors, beginning with



the leadership of president Museveni, who implemented the famous "ABC" policy, in which the first and second priorities are A = Abstinence, especially for the young, and B = Being faithful to one partner, with C = Condoms as very much a third priority. The other major factor is that, while other countries imported expensive overseas advisers, the front line in educating the Ugandan people consists largely of non-government organisations, especially schools and churches, including many Catholic groups which use an "AB" policy, refusing to promote condoms.

Dr Green shows that the decline in infections has been closely associated with a huge increase in the practice of abstinence and fidelity, and that the regions with the lowest infection rates are also the regions with the lowest condom use. He points out that the

only other African countries achieving any success in the fight against AIDS are Zambia and Senegal, whose leaders have followed President Museveni's example.

Another remarkable example is South East Asia, where in 2004 the Philippines had only 9000 cases of HIV (0.0114% of the population), while nearby Thailand had 850 000 cases (0.917%). In other words, the infection rate in the Philippines was 98.8% lower than in Thailand.<sup>13</sup>

This contrast is shown in the graph above, based on UN figures:

A 98.8% reduction in the disease that is devastating the world should be the greatest headline in medical history, and yet hardly anyone seems to be even interested! UNAIDS, the UN agency responsible for the fight against AIDS had this to say:

Thailand is known as a centre for various aspects of development in Asia... There is an increasing demand on Thailand to share its experiences with other countries.<sup>14</sup>

The Philippines has an HIV/AIDS epidemic that has a huge explosion potential.<sup>15</sup>

But what is the secret of the Philippines' success?

While Thailand accepted billions of dollars worth of free condoms, the Philippines rejected them. Dr Rene Bullecer, national director of AIDS-Free Philippines, spent more than twenty years travelling through the country promoting abstinence, despite the warning of the "experts" that the country faced a major epidemic by the year 2000. He lists the major reasons

## A New Cult

FOR MANY of Freud's followers, indeed, for an embarrassingly prominent set of his most famous disciples, Psychoanalysis did develop into a religious cult.

- Rodney Stark and Walter Sims Bainbridge. *The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival and Cult Formation*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1985, p.419. Quoted Richard Noll, *The Aryan Christ*, Random House New York, 1997 pp.61.



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for the low rate of infection as the high understanding of HIV/AIDS, the strong culture and tradition, and the influence of the Catholic Church. He adds: "UNAIDS was so mad in 2001 when we in the Philippines failed to have an epidemic proportion of AIDS."<sup>16</sup>

In 2010 they are still waiting for the epidemic. But the sad news is that in recent years many Filipinos have begun accepting the free condoms, with the inevitable results. In 1999 there were only 363 recorded cases of AIDS in the Philippines, so the 2004 figures represent an increase of 25 000% in only five years. Moreover, there is a strong push in parliament for promoting condoms and other forms of contraception.

The lesson is clear: the scientific and statistical information shows that the propaganda is all wrong, and Pope Benedict is right: not only are condoms not the answer to AIDS, but they make the problem worse.

Of course, the real answer to AIDS, as to all sexually transmitted diseases, abortion and numerous other calamities, is not merely abstinence education, but education in chastity – or more correctly, education in all the virtues, so that the beautiful virtue of chastity can be seen in its proper place, along with faith, hope, charity, humility and the other virtues as the soul's loving response to God. Only then will we be able to turn the tide against this fearsome disease.

STEPHEN HITCHINGS is a science teacher at a state high school in Sydney. He has written several articles on pro-life issues and the relations between society and the Church.

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2. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/3176982.stm>
3. [www.catholicnewsagency.com/news.php?id=15403](http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news.php?id=15403)
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14. UNAIDS National Response Brief: Thailand
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16. Personal correspondence

*Doesn't God know what we need before we ask him?*

## **JESUS WENT OFF TO A DESERTED PLACE, WHERE HE PRAYED**



**WHAT IS THE USE** of wandering hither and thither, looking about for what we should be asking for in prayer? Let us rather say in the words of the psalm: 'One thing I ask of the Lord; this I seek: to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life' (Ps 27[26],4). Now, there 'all the days' do not pass by, coming and going, nor does one begin when another ends, but all exist at once; they have no end: because the life itself, whose days they are, is without end.

To enable us to win this blessed life, he who is in person the true life has taught us to pray. Not with a flood of words as though we would be answered by reason of our babbling. For indeed, as our Lord himself said, we are praying to him who knows what we need before we ask him (Mt 6.8).

Doesn't he know what we need before we ask him? In that case, why does he exhort us to pray without ceasing? (Lk 18,1). This might surprise us: but we should understand that our Lord God has no wish to be informed of our desire - of which he cannot be ignorant. But he wants our desire to be stirred up by prayer so that we might be able to receive what he is preparing to give us. For that is something very great, whereas we are small and of meagre capacity!

That I why we are told: 'Open wide your hearts' (2 Cor 6.11.13). This is something very great indeed...: and we shall be all the more able to receive it insofar as we believe in it with more faith, hope for it with more confidence, desire it with more ardour. Thus it is in faith, hope, love and uninterrupted desire that we pray always.

- Saint Augustine (354-430), Bishop of Hippo (North Africa) and Doctor of the Church - Letter to Proba on prayer: 8-9



# MEDIA MATTERS

By JAMES MURRAY

## Cult statism

Separation of Church and State, supposedly an inflexible rule of modern life, is being bent, if not breached, more by secularists than by religious believers (who recall Jesus Christ's dictum: 'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's').

The introduction in state schools of ethics classes as an alternative to religious instruction is a vivid example, not least because ethics are intrinsic to religious instruction while religion is not intrinsic to secularist ethics.

Without the Caesar-God dialectic, the unintended consequence for secularists, individual liberty their highest good, is a totalitarian State.

Where Church authority is eroded or suppressed, the State through an *apparat* becomes supreme. Examples could be multiplied; the French Revolution in its terror phase may be seen as prototypical.

Pragmatic paradox: better instruction from a countervailing Church you don't believe in than instruction from a State that has your number.

Or did George Orwell write in vain when, in his novel *1984*, he created a polity without Church-State division because there was no Church, only secularism (totalitarian-Communist variety).

## Disunited kingdom

Ideological-party politics are shifting to the managerial-process variety in the context of television's evolution as the prime chamber of government (whether democratic or autocratic).

Hence the extraordinary coverage in Australia and New Zealand of the British General Election fandango for spinning politicians.

Ironically Labour's Gordon Brown, whose CV

includes a TV producer stint, was the ideological guy brought low by a fluke on-camera catastrophe.

The final picture of him with his wife and their two sons in Downing Street was the election winner he refused to exploit during the campaign.

The Conservative David Cameron and the Liberal Democrat Nick Clegg resembled a pair of sales gents offering bitser, as if it were armoured Rolls-Royce Silver Clouds.

Oxbridge twins by education, Siamese by necessity. If the tag Con-Dems sticks, you have their fate. Enter, then, the Labor brothers: David and Ed Milliband from educational backgrounds similar to Cameron-Clegg.

Establishment? Never! Only, as here, a restricted pool.

## Evolving TV

The Prime Minister Plenipotentiary Kevin Rudd is walking talking evidence of the evolutionary shift from Parliament to the prime-status television studio.

In Parliament, he is an assured performer. But that counts little against what happens in the television studio. On the ABC's *730 Report* his response to Kerry O'Brien was scarcely the equivalent of Force 5 on the Beaufort Scale (i.e. a fresh breeze). Yet it was reported as if it were at least Force 8 (a gale).

To their credit the panel of the ABC *Insiders* took a less excited view though cheapshot describes the use of lead-in footage from *Shrek*, implicitly comparing Rudd to a midget, vainglorious king.

Cale-force from Rudd would've been justified; O'Brien's indignant use of the bean-label word 'brand' about Rudd's conduct of policy, was startling.

## Freedom

Confused? If so, take heart, because in that confusion is a lesson about the danger and the opportunity that lie before us. God made the human person for the dignity of freedom. Americans built a great nation on freedom, and we still love freedom's vocabulary. Our marketing campaigns are filled with it. But freedom is hard. It implies responsibility.

- Charles J. Bishop *Craps, Deus ex Machina: How to Fight About Technology*, CRIS S Oct. 1998



Two of the panel on the day, Barry Cassidy and Andrew Bolt, are ex-Labor minders (Hawke era). It would have been fascinating to hear them comment on whether O'Brien's indignation was a vestige of his stint as a Labor minder (Whitlam era).

### Antic Abbott

The Leader of the Opposition Tony Abbott provided further evidence of the evolutionary shift. In Parliament, his Budget address in reply showed the right stuff. He transformed this to mush by philosophising on the ABC's *7.30 Report* to Kerry O'Brien about spontaneous as opposed to scripted statements.

In such antic behaviour, Abbott resembles the leader-writer he once was thinking aloud during a long lunch about the validity of deadline-hasty editorials. Or possibly an ex-minder (Hewson's) magging to another ex-minder (Whitlam's).

Abbott's CV includes a stint as a concrete-plant manager. He should remember it and stick to plain talk rather than indulging in circumlocution.

Compared to Parliament, the television studio is a hostile environment, a bullring where the matador has the advantage, and wins even if gored.

### Cloudy weather

The continuing Melbourne Storm salary cap scandal provides a clear example of what in last month's issue was described as institutions protecting their *raison d'être*.

The Grand Fleet of News Limited vessels defended but always with the better part of valour, discretion: in this case, about who knew what and when.

Against them, the Fairfax Group flagships, *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*, attacked all guns blazing (or as many as the master-gunner lawyers allowed).

The News Limited Admiral of the Fleet (at this writing) is the judicious John Hartigan. He may, however, have been a touch injudicious in castigating Storm chief executive Brian Waldron by grabbing, like a sub-editor under pressure, for the ready-made line 'rat in the ranks'.

Waldron looks nothing like a rat, in or out of the ranks. He comes on as hard nut who will not take a backward step. And will give as bad as he gets if threatened court-action by Storm independent directors goes forward.

Under-emphasised: News Limited and the National Rugby League's awareness of conflict of interest shown when, well before the scandal broke, they began a reform process of setting up a commission to oversee the code.

Irony: the code's genesis grew from the need of key players in the early 1900s to be paid going rates, a genesis which makes the notion of a salary cap odd ball.

Still to be revealed: the detailed conduit for subsidy to Melbourne Storm (and other teams). Those with any knowledge of international operations – and News Limited has made Rugby League a world code – may wonder whether any off-shore locations were conduit connected.

Suggestion: Rugby League should add to its team-line-up, the Suits who would play in pin-stripes and be paid current salary, expenses and share-option rates.

Like Super-A hacks in the field? No way. Like ace, desk-jockey executives. Otherwise, in the context of market forces preached by News Limited, salary caps are humbug. Or possibly News-Leaguebug.

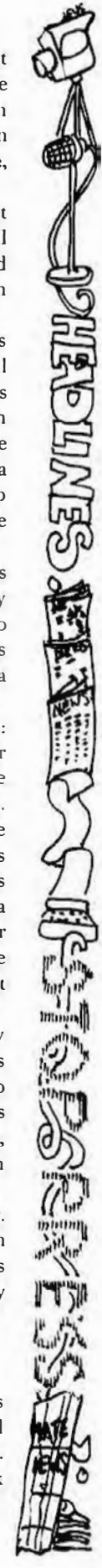
### Movie raj

Australia-India relations have not been as close as they could be. This despite trading and military links that go back to pre-partition days. The trade has included railway rolling stock

### It's a Mad World

In 1993 the Patent Office was already awarding scores of patents each month on medical procedures, and by early 1996 the number had reached an unprecedented one hundred per month. As Medical Economics pointed out, many of the ownership claims cover skills most doctors are expected to learn during their medical residencies. One doctor, for instance, owns the rights to a basic technique for suturing the stomach to the intestines. Another claims exclusive rights to the common technique of making slits in a skin graft to expand it. Individual practitioners already own such simple procedures as treating a nosebleed with a catheter wrapped in gauze. One doctor even patented the common practice of applying the anesthetic lidocaine to the skin to treat nerve pain associated with the herpes skin infection known as shingles.

- Seth Shulman, *Owning the Future*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1999, pp.13-14.



from India to Australia and Water horses from Australia to India.

In both world wars, India mustered, alongside Australian units, the largest volunteer armies in campaigns that included Gallipoli and the Western Desert. The word 'station' (as in cattle station) is of Indian origin. And arguably the classic suburban house owes more to the India's bungalows than California's.

Attacks on Indian students – and subsequent news coverage – have further diminished relations. One area of potential mutual benefit lies in the respective film industries: Bollywood and Oziewood.

Attendance at the launch of this year's Indian Film Festival showed your correspondent the scope of that mutual benefit, Indian showbizniks, Australia- and India-based, attended in camera-toting strength.

Indian producers talked freely about raising funds. Local producers might well envy the fact that Indian investors are pro-active in seeking movies to back. Bureaucracy is at a minimum.

The tireless promoter of the festival and of significant Indian movies is Adrienne McKibbins (who also also runs the Film Critics Circle of Australia, your correspondent being a member).

The Arts Minister, Peter Garrett, could do worse than make Austral-Indian filmbiz a vehicle for the recovery of his career, de-railed by the insulation scandal.

### Bank cashing

The class action against the high level of retail bank service charges has been welcomed; it should have been unnecessary. The phenomenal creep-up of these charges should have been noted by the Government and halted, possibly as a condition of tax-payer aid at the height of the Global Financial Crisis.

### Dig in

Immediate reaction by stake-holders to the proposed tax on mining super-profits was predictable; the definition of fair profit has always been contentious.

When Venice was a mighty trading republic, it used its force of arms in arguments. So, too, did British, French and Dutch trading companies. Modern mining companies do not resort to such force; they do not need to; from their global power bases, they can threaten to disrupt a national economy down

to the collateral level of relatively innocent by-standers, known condescendingly as Mum and Dad investors.

In the matter of the Australian Government versus BHP Billiton, Rio Tinto *et al* the mining company bosses, like the Chinese Communist cadres with whom they also play hard ball, escalated to threats.

Rio Tinto boss Tom Albanese (Venetian by ancestry?) delivered a stand-off missile from the US. The PM Kevin Rudd and his Treasurer Wayne Swan reacted with the commendable sangfroid of Ben Chifley or, in the commercial sphere, Rupert Murdoch, preparatory to negotiating a deal.

In his reaction, Tony Abbott went knee-deep deep into TV no-nos; a nation's alternative prime minister should not allow himself to be perceived as scurrying to meet mining bosses; he should also refrain from emerging gasping that he, too, is ag'in their being taxed.

Rather he should make it clear publicly that they visit him, announce he has heard their views and will consider them in relation to the national interest (not global, corporate profit, including profit-linked, truck-load, executive packages). Nor should he stand in Parliament and say that if the tax becomes law he will rescind it.

### Ken pol.

Suggestions here that Treasury Secretary Ken Henry has the potential to be an up-front politician tend to be confirmed by his open stance on policy matters. More and more he resembles the organ-grinder to the monkey, the Treasurer Wayne Swan (credit for the organ-grinder-monkey reference to UK Labourite, Nye Bevan).

Ex-Treasury\* Secretary John Stone, who became a redoubtable senator and Joh for Canberra-ite, has added force to the suggestion by criticising Henry's stance.

### End query

Q: What is the difference between a Coalition levy on rich company profits and a Labor super-profits tax?

A: One aims to look after real babies; the other to look after fiscal foundlings.

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*Tales of the Nankikuringurr*

## DOUBLE KILL

*By* Fr. John Leary, MSC



NOT long after this flattering incident when the children mistook the bishop for God [see 'Mistaken Identity', *Annals* 2010/1], they asked me to take them to Hermit Hill, some twenty miles away, to get a piggy-piggy. They were hungry for meat. So with ten or so children on a jeep and a box-trailer behind we set off somewhat late in the afternoon in search of the prey. Because of fading light it was a matter of shoot whatever first appeared. It happened to be a boar and the largest pig one would ever see. He promptly succumbed to a bullet from my 303 rifle. An unforeseen problem now presented itself: how to get the monster into the box-trailer? The trailer was disconnected from the jeep and tipped on one side. Then, after a lot of manoeuvring and levering with big sticks and pushing with small hands the pig was in the trailer, legs stretching to the heavens. Next, it was all hands to the high side of the trailer to get it back on its two wheels. This done and the trailer once again attached to the jeep, it was hasten home before the dark. Hurrying along the narrow bush track I manoeuvred the jeep, amid screams, round a large, obtruding ant-bed. Unfortunately the trailer with its load ran one wheel up the sloping ant-bed, and out shot the pig into the trunks of a nearby tree. When I jumped out the children were, already gathered round the pig. Minnie was engaged in delivering traditional "sorry hits" to her head and calling out in distress: 'Poor bugger pig! you bin kill 'im twice!'

— Nankikuringurr means 'Deep Water'. It is one of the principal language groups, along with the Waugaman, Marathiel, Maringar, Mulluk Mulluk and Nangiomeri, on the Daly River, 250km south of Darwin in Australia's Northern Territory.

*Evelyn Waugh on his Conversion to Catholicism*

## NOT BIRDS' EGGS AND MODEL TRAINS



I was born in England in 1903 with a strong hereditary predisposition toward the Established Church. My family tree burgeons on every twig with Anglican clergymen.

My father was what was called a 'sound churchman'; that is to say, he attended church regularly and led an exemplary life. He had no interest in theology. He had no interest in politics but always voted Tory as his father and grandfather had done. In the same spirit he was punctilious in his religious duties.

At the age of ten I composed a long and tedious poem about Purgatory in the metre of *Hiawatha* and to the dismay of my parents, who held a just estimate of my character, expressed my intention of becoming a clergyman. The enthusiasm which my little schoolfellows devoted to birds' eggs and model trains I turned on church affairs and spoke glibly of chasubles and Erastianism. I was accordingly sent to the school which was reputed to have the strongest ecclesiastical bent. At the age of sixteen I formally notified the school chaplain that there was no God. At the age of twenty-six I was received into the Catholic Church to which all subsequent experience has served to confirm my loyalty.

I am now invited to explain these vagaries to American readers.

First, of my early religiosity. I am reluctant to deny all reality to that precocious enthusiasm, but it was in the main a hobby like the birds' eggs and model trains of my schoolfellows. The appeal was part hereditary and part aesthetic. Many are drawn in this way throughout their lives. In my case it was a concomitant of puberty. But those who do not know my country should understand that the aesthetic appeal of the Church of England is unique and peculiar to those islands.

Elsewhere a first interest in the Catholic Church is often kindled

in the convert's imagination by the splendors of her worship in contrast with the bleakness and meanness of the Protestant sects. In England the pull is all the other way. The medieval cathedrals and churches, the rich ceremonies that surround the monarchy, the historic titles of Canterbury and York, the social organization of the country parishes, the traditional culture of Oxford and Cambridge, the liturgy composed in the heyday of English prose style — all these are the property of the Church of England, while Catholics meet in modern buildings, often of deplorable design, and are usually served by simple Irish missionaries.

The shallowness of my early piety is shown by the ease with which I abandoned it. There are, of course, countless Catholics who, for a part of their lives at least, lose their faith, but it is always after a bitter struggle — usually a moral struggle. I shed my inherited faith as lightheartedly as though it had been an outgrown coat. The circumstances were these:

During the first World War many university dons patriotically volunteered to release young school-masters to serve in the army. Among these there came to my school a leading Oxford theologian, now a bishop. This learned and devout man inadvertently made me an atheist. He explained to his divinity class that none of the books of the Bible were

by their supposed authors: he invited us to speculate, in the manner of the fourth century, on the nature of Christ. When he had removed the inherited axioms of my faith I found myself quite unable to follow him in the higher flights of logic by which he reconciled his own scepticism with his position as a clergyman.

At the same time I read Pope's *Essay on Man*; the notes led me to Leibniz and I began an unguided and half-comprehended study of metaphysics. I advanced far enough to be thoroughly muddled about the nature of cognition. It seemed simplest to abandon the quest and assume that man was incapable of knowing anything. I have no doubt I was a prig and a bore but I think that if I had been a Catholic boy at a Catholic school I should have found among its teaching orders someone patient enough to examine with me my callow presumption. Also, if I had been fortified by the sacraments, I should have valued my faith too highly to abandon it so capriciously. At my school I was quite correctly regarded as 'going through a phase' normal to all clever boys, and left to find my own way home.

The next ten years of my life are material more suitable to the novelist than the egg-cavist. Those who have read my works will perhaps understand the character of the world into which I exuberantly launched myself. Ten years of that world sufficed to show me that life there, or anywhere, was unintelligible and unendurable without God. The conclusion was obvious; the question now arises: Why Rome? A Catholic who loses his faith and rediscovers the need of it returns inevitably to the church he left. Why did not I?

Here, I think, the European has some slight advantage over the American. It is possible, I conceive, for a man to grow up in parts of the United States without ever being really aware of the Church's unique position. He sees Catholics



as one out of a number of admirable societies, each claiming his allegiance. That is not possible for a European. England was Catholic for nine hundred years, then Protestant for three hundred, then agnostic for a century. The Catholic structure still lies lightly buried beneath every phase of English life; history, topography, law, archaeology everywhere reveal Catholic origins. Foreign travel anywhere reveals the local, temporary character of the heresies and schisms and the universal, eternal character of the Church.

It was self-evident to me that no heresy or schism could be right and the Church wrong. It was possible that all were wrong, that the whole Christian revelation was an imposture or a misconception. But if the Christian revelation was true, then the Church was the society founded by Christ and all other bodies were only good so far as they had salvaged something from the wrecks of the Great Schism and the Reformation. This proposition seemed so plain to me that it admitted of no discussion. It only remained to examine the historical and philosophic grounds for supposing the Christian revelation to be genuine. I was fortunate enough to be introduced to a brilliant and holy priest who undertook to prove this to me, and so on firm intellectual conviction but with little emotion I was admitted into the Church.

My life since then has been an endless delighted tour of discovery in the huge territory of which I was made free. I have heard it said that some converts in later life look back rather wistfully to the fervor of their first months of faith. With me it is quite the opposite. I look back aghast at the presumption with which I thought myself suitable for reception and with wonder at the trust of the priest who saw the possibility of growth in such a dry soul.

From time to time friends outside the Church consult me. They are attracted by certain features, repelled or puzzled by others. To them I can only say, from my own experience 'Come inside. You cannot know what the Church is like from outside. However learned you are in theology, nothing you know amounts to anything in comparison with the knowledge of the simplest actual member of the Communion of Saints.'



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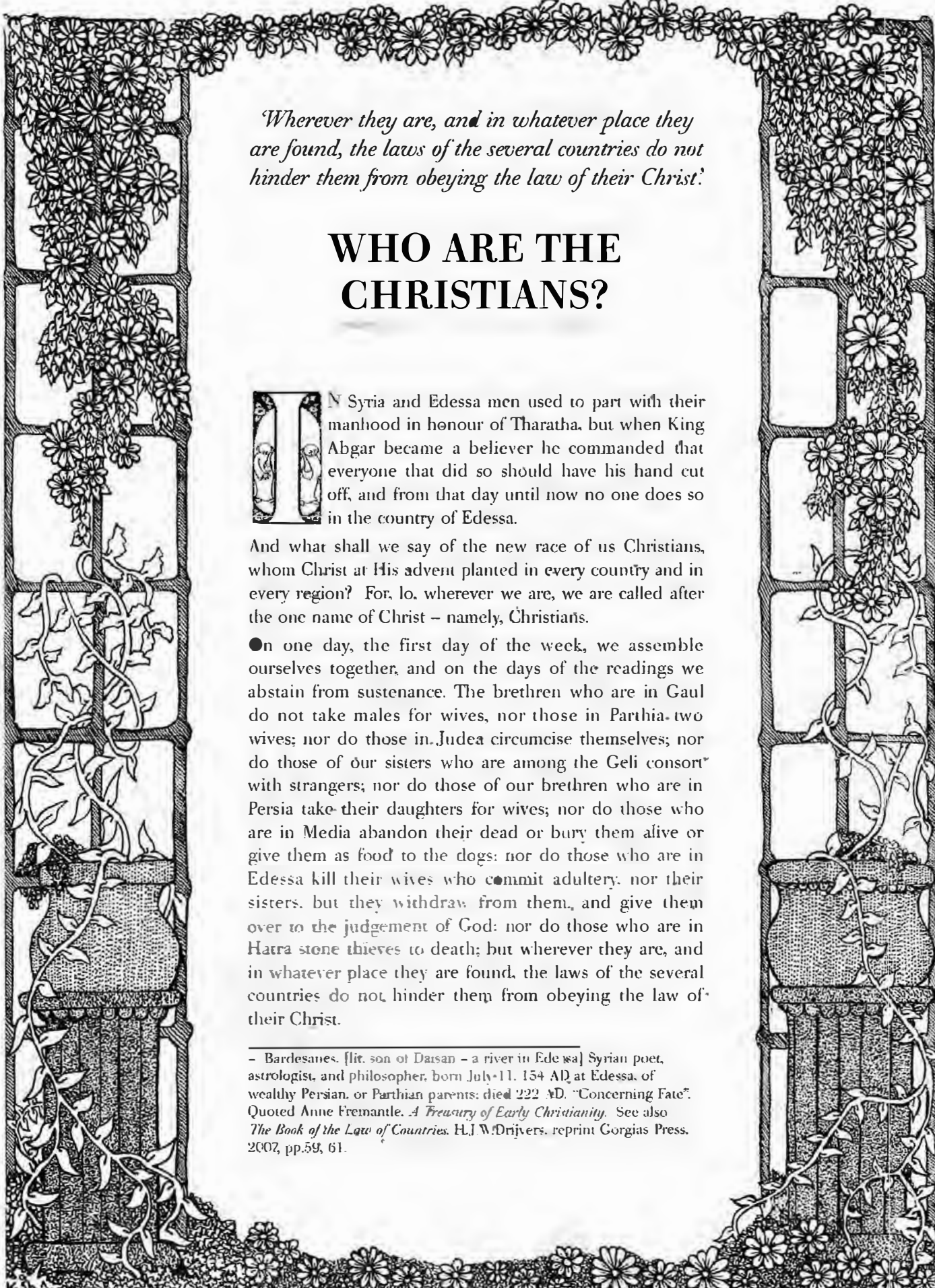
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- Editor, *Annals*

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*'Wherever they are, and in whatever place they are found, the laws of the several countries do not hinder them from obeying the law of their Christ.'*

## WHO ARE THE CHRISTIANS?

**I**n Syria and Edessa men used to part with their manhood in honour of Tharatha, but when King Abgar became a believer he commanded that everyone that did so should have his hand cut off, and from that day until now no one does so in the country of Edessa.

And what shall we say of the new race of us Christians, whom Christ at His advent planted in every country and in every region? For, lo, wherever we are, we are called after the one name of Christ – namely, Christians.

● On one day, the first day of the week, we assemble ourselves together, and on the days of the readings we abstain from sustenance. The brethren who are in Gaul do not take males for wives, nor those in Parthia two wives; nor do those in Judea circumcise themselves; nor do those of our sisters who are among the Geli consort with strangers; nor do those of our brethren who are in Persia take their daughters for wives; nor do those who are in Media abandon their dead or bury them alive or give them as food to the dogs; nor do those who are in Edessa kill their wives who commit adultery; nor their sisters, but they withdraw from them, and give them over to the judgement of God; nor do those who are in Hatra stone thieves to death; but wherever they are, and in whatever place they are found, the laws of the several countries do not hinder them from obeying the law of their Christ.

– Bardesanes, [lit. son of Daisan – a river in Edessa] Syrian poet, astrologist, and philosopher, born July 11, 154 AD at Edessa, of wealthy Persian, or Parthian parents; died 222 AD. "Concerning Fate". Quoted Anne Fremantle, *A Treasury of Early Christianity*. See also *The Book of the Law of Countries*, H.J.W. Drijvers, reprint Gorgias Press, 2007, pp.59, 61.

*The Priestly Vocation of*

*Bishop Wilhelm Emmanuel Baron von Ketteler, 1811-1877*

## THE BISHOP AND THE STRANGER



IN 1869, a German diocesan bishop was sitting together with his guest, Bishop Emmanuel von Ketteler from Mainz. During the course of their conversation, the bishop brought up his guest's extremely blessed apostolate. Bishop Ketteler explained to his host, 'I owe thanks for everything that I have accomplished with God's help, to the prayer and sacrifice of someone whom I do not even know. I can only say that I know somebody has offered his or her whole life to our loving God for me, and I have this sacrifice to thank that I even became a priest.'

He continued, 'Originally, I wasn't planning on becoming a priest. I had already finished my law degree and thought only about finding an important place in the world to begin acquiring honour, prestige and wealth.

An extraordinary experience held me back and directed my life down a different path.

'One evening I was alone in my room, considering my future plans of fame and fortune, when something happened which I cannot explain. Was I awake or asleep? Did I really see it or was it just a dream? One thing I do know, it brought about a change in my life. I saw Jesus very clearly and distinctly standing over me in a radiant cloud, showing me his Sacred Heart. A nun was kneeling before him, her hands raised up in prayer. From his mouth, I heard the words, "She prays unremittently for you!" I distinctly saw the appearance of the sister; and her traits made such an impression on me that she has remained in my memory to this day. She seemed to be quite an ordinary lay sister. Her clothing was very poor and rough. Her hands were red and calloused from hard work

Whatever it was, a dream or not, it was extraordinary. It shook me to the depths of my being so that from that moment on, I decided to consecrate myself to God in the service of the priesthood.

'I withdrew to a monastery for a retreat, and I talked about everything with my confessor. Then, at the age of 30, I began studying theology. You know the rest of the story. So, if you think that I have done something admirable, now you know who really deserves the credit - a religious sister who prayed for me, maybe without even knowing who I was. I am convinced, I was prayed for and I will continue to be prayed for in secret and that without these prayers, I could never have reached the goal that God has destined for me.'

'Do you have any idea of the whereabouts or the identity of this person has prayed for you?' asked the diocesan bishop.

'No, I can only ask God each day that, while she is still on earth, he bless and repay her a thousand-fold for what she has done for me.'

The next day, Bishop Ketteler visited a convent of sisters in a nearby city and celebrated Holy Mass in their chapel. He was distributing Holy Communion to the last row of sisters when one of them suddenly caught his eye. His face grew pale, and he stood there, motionless. Finally regaining his composure, he gave Holy Communion to the sister who was kneeling in recollection unaware of his hesitation. He then concluded the Mass.

The bishop who had invited him the previous day, came and joined him at the convent for breakfast. When they had finished, Bishop Ketteler asked the Mother Superior to present to him all the sisters in the house. Before long she had gathered all the sisters together, and both bishops went to meet them.

### The Net of Christ

THOSE are you and me, those fish. All the souls that have been brought into the Church of Christ all through the centuries have been brought there because they were drawn by the grace of Christ, not for any other reason. Without grace, our lives, if we could see them in the true perspective, are all haphazard and purposeless, like the movements of the fish in the lake we were thinking about just now. We play about, in love with our own shadows, darting here and there at our pleasure, excited by a thousand perishable hopes, a thousand imaginary alarms; so brisk, so bustling, so self-important. In the midst of all that, a force that was not of nature drew us, we knew not why, we knew not whither. Drew us into the net the Church had spread for us; yes, it is Peter spreads the net, but it is Christ who draws the fish into it. From our Lady downwards, no soul ever attained the means of salvation unless it were drawn by the grace of Jesus Christ.

- Monsignor Ronald Knox, 'The Fisherman,' sermon published in *The Tablet*, 24 June 1939. From *Pastoral and Occasional Sermons*, reprinted 2002, Ignatius Press

## Susceptible Hearts

Sanctity has its influence; intellect has its influence; the influence of sanctity is the greater on the long run; the influence of intellect is greater at the moment. Therefore, in the case of the young, whose education lasts a few years, where the intellect is, there is the influence. Their literary, their scientific teachers, really have the forming of them. Let both influences act freely, and then, as a general rule, no system of mere religious guardianship which neglects the Reason, will in matter of fact succeed against the School. Youths need a masculine religion, if it is to carry captive their restless imaginations, and their wild intellects, as well as to touch their susceptible hearts.

— John Henry Cardinal Newman, Feast of St. Monica—Sunday after Ascension, 1856.  
Preached in the University Church, Dublin

Bishop Ketteler greeted them, but it was apparent that he did not find the one he was looking for.

He quietly asked the Mother Superior, 'Are all the sisters really here?'

She looked over the group of sisters and then said, 'Your Excellency, I called them all, but, in fact, one of them is not here.'

'Why didn't she come?'

'She works in the barn,' answered the superior, 'and in such a commendable way that, in her enthusiasm, she sometimes forgets other things.'

'I would like to see that sister,' requested the Bishop.

A little while later, the sister who had been summoned stepped into the room.

Again Bishop Ketteler turned pale, and after a few words to all the sisters, he asked if he could be alone with the sister who had just come in.

'Do you know me?' he asked her.

'I have never seen Your Excellency before.'

'Have you ever prayed for me or offered up a good deed for me?' he wanted to know.

'I do not recall that I have ever heard of Your Excellency.'

The Bishop was silent for a few moments and then he asked, 'Do you have a particular devotion that you like?'

'Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus,' was the response.

'You have, it seems, the most difficult task in the convent,' he continued.

'Oh no, Your Excellency' the sister

countered, 'but I cannot lie, it is unpleasant for me.'

'And what do you do when you have difficulties with your work?'

'For things that cost me greatly, I grew accustomed to facing them with joy and enthusiasm out of love for God, and then I offer them up for one soul on earth to whom God chooses to be gracious. As a result, I have left it completely up to him and I do not want to know. I also offer up my time of Eucharistic adoration every evening from 8 to 9, for this intention.'

'Where did you get the idea to offer up all your merits for someone totally unknown to you?'

'I learned it while I was still out in the world,' she replied. 'At school our teacher; the parish priest, taught us how we can pray and offer our merits for our relatives. Besides that, of course, he said that we should pray much for those who are in danger of being lost. Since only God knows who really needs prayer, it is best to put your merits at the disposition of the Sacred Heart of Jesus trusting in his wisdom and omnipotence. That is what I have done,' she concluded, 'and I always believed that God would find the right soul.'

'How old are you?' Ketteler asked.

'Thirty-three, Your Excellency,' she answered.

The Bishop paused a moment. Then he asked her, 'When were you born?' The sister stated her day of birth. The Bishop gasped; her birthday was the day of his conversion! Back then he saw her exactly as she was before him

now. 'And have you any idea whether your prayers and sacrifices have been successful?' he asked her further.

'No, Your Excellency.'

'Don't you want to know?'

'Our dear God knows when something good happens, and that is enough,' was the simple answer.

The Bishop was shaken. 'So continue this work in the name of the Lord,' he said. The sister knelt down immediately at his feet and asked for his blessing.

The Bishop solemnly raised his hands and said with great emotion, 'With the power entrusted to me as a bishop, I bless your soul, I bless your hands and their work, I bless your prayers and sacrifices, your self-renunciation and your obedience. I bless especially your final hour and ask God to assist you with all his consolation.'

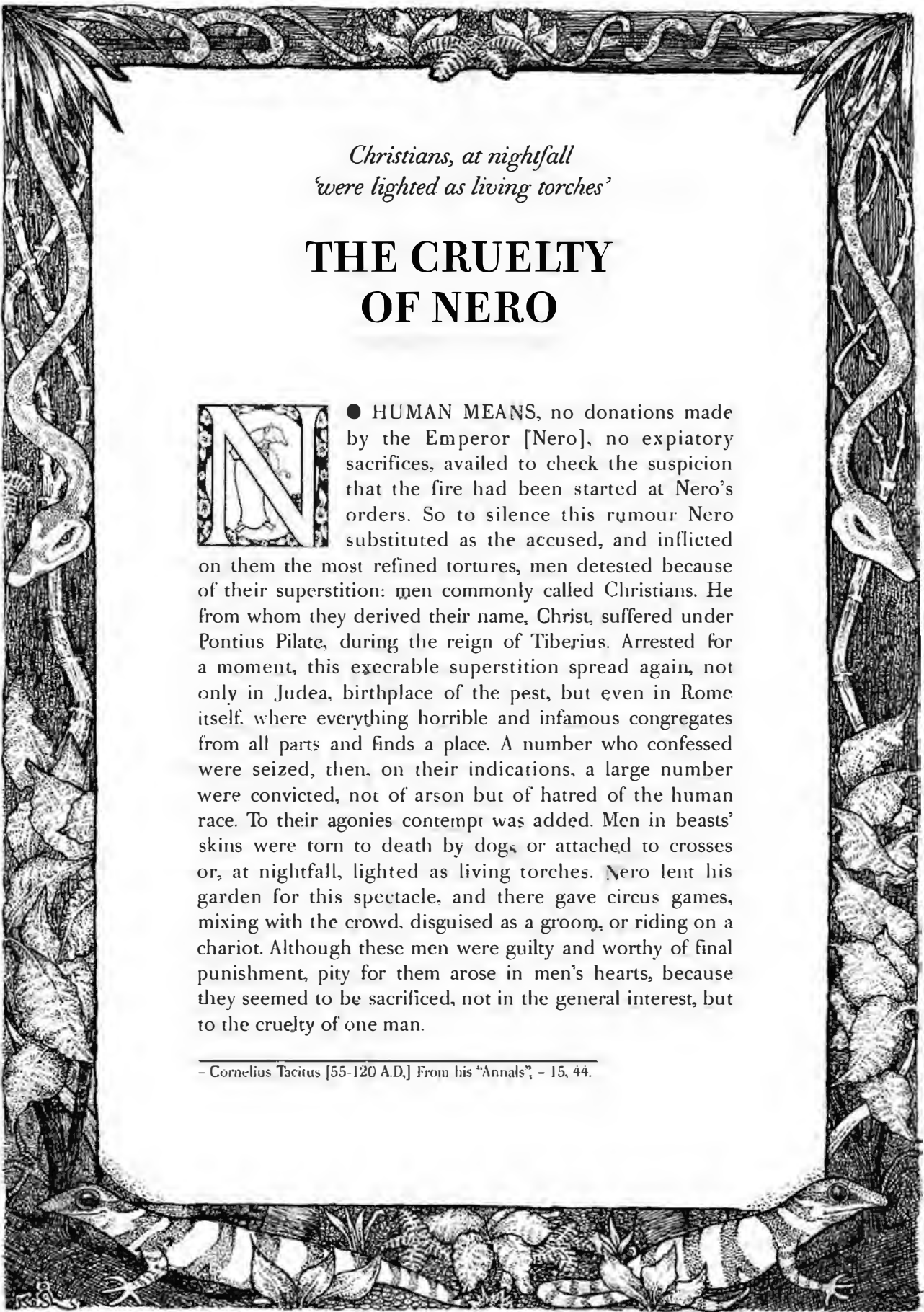
'Amen,' the sister answered calmly, then stood up and left.

The Bishop, profoundly moved, stepped over to the window in order to compose himself. Some time later, he said good-bye to the Mother Superior and returned to the apartment of his bishop friend.

He confided to him, 'Now I found the one I have to thank for my vocation. It is the lowest and poorest lay sister of that convent. I cannot thank God enough for his mercy because this sister has prayed, for me for almost 20 years. On the day she first saw the light of the world, God worked my conversion accepting in advance her future prayers and works.'

'What a lesson and a reminder for me! Should I become tempted to vanity by a certain amount of success or by my good works, then I can affirm in truth: You have the prayer and sacrifice of a poor maid in a convent stall to thank. And when a small and lowly task appears of little value to me, then I will also remember the fact: what this maid does in humble obedience to God, making a sacrifice by overcoming herself, is so valuable before the Lord Our God that her merits have given rise to a bishop for the Church.'

Source: <http://www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/ccladoration.pdf> Eucharistic Adoration for the sanctification of the Clergy, and spiritual motherhood, Congregation for the Clergy. Authorised by Archbishop Mauro Piacenza, Secretary of the Congregation.



*Christians, at nightfall  
'were lighted as living torches'*

## THE CRUELTY OF NERO



● HUMAN MEANS, no donations made by the Emperor [Nero], no expiatory sacrifices, availed to check the suspicion that the fire had been started at Nero's orders. So to silence this rumour Nero substituted as the accused, and inflicted on them the most refined tortures, men detested because of their superstition: men commonly called Christians. He from whom they derived their name, Christ, suffered under Pontius Pilate, during the reign of Tiberius. Arrested for a moment, this execrable superstition spread again, not only in Judea, birthplace of the pest, but even in Rome itself, where everything horrible and infamous congregates from all parts and finds a place. A number who confessed were seized, then, on their indications, a large number were convicted, not of arson but of hatred of the human race. To their agonies contempt was added. Men in beasts' skins were torn to death by dogs, or attached to crosses or, at nightfall, lighted as living torches. Nero lent his garden for this spectacle, and there gave circus games, mixing with the crowd, disguised as a groom, or riding on a chariot. Although these men were guilty and worthy of final punishment, pity for them arose in men's hearts, because they seemed to be sacrificed, not in the general interest, but to the cruelty of one man.

- Cornelius Tacitus [55-120 A.D.] From his "Annals", - 15, 44.

*"Rome's fate seems to act as a warning that strength and success will always prove transitory in the end, and civilization will not automatically triumph."*

## THE FALL OF ROME

Reviewed by JUDE P. DOUGHERTY



In his opening pages, Goldsworthy assures the reader that this is not a book about modern America and its place in the world. "This book is about Rome, an empire long vanished and from a world where technology and culture were so very different from today."

Though he disclaims any thought of relevance to the present, he cannot avoid reference to the United States and even cites his participation in a small seminar of established historians, including two medievalists, organized by the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment under United States sponsorship.

After chronicling the course of the Roman Empire from its peak at the death of Marcus Aurelius in 180 to the abortive effort of the Eastern Empire to recapture its lost territories in the sixth century, Goldsworthy, in his conclusion assures the reader that the United States is not of necessity destined to repeat the Roman decline. Other parallels cannot escape his notice.

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Adrian Goldsworthy, *How Rome Fell: Death of a Superpower*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009. pp. x +531. Cloth, \$32.50.

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In the nineteenth century it was common to compare the grandeur of the British Empire to that of Rome. The comparison no longer pertains, except maybe in a negative sense. Allowing that Britain has been a fairly depressing place in the past decade or so, Goldsworthy finds that it is easy to draw a parallel with the Roman Empire in the fourth century. "The self-righteous tone of much government legislation certainly chimes with Late Roman imperial decrees, as does the apparent failure to achieve its aim." Given that human nature does not change and structures of governance vary little, the reader may find many more similarities.

But the book is about the fall of Rome. It lives up to its author's intent by providing an informed study of both the internal and external problems faced by the empire.

An introductory chapter is devoted to the *status quaestionis*, a review of current attitudes and efforts on the part of historians to explain what happened. Apparently there is no generally accepted explanation of the fall of the Western Empire in the fifth century.

It was near the end of the fourth century that the empire had split into eastern and western halves, each ruled by its own emperor. The Eastern Empire, known to modern scholars as the "Byzantine Empire," was to last another thousand years after the dissolution of its western counterpart, that is, until the Turks overran Constantinople. In writing about the Western Empire, some historians reject the word "fall," preferring the word "transition."

The concept "decline" is similarly out of fashion. The "Dark Age" myth, although it lingers in the popular mind, was laid to rest by historians long ago. Goldsworthy also notes the tendency of historians to speak of "late antiquity" where they formerly spoke of the "Early Empire," and of the "Late Roman Period" where they formerly used "Late Roman Empire."

This lengthy study begins as did Gibbon with the death of Marcus Aurelius in 180, when the empire seemed to be in its heyday, and ends with the deposing of Romulus Augustulus in 476, the last Roman emperor to rule from Italy, closing short of the end of Gibbon's narrative that carries the story a century further.

It is common to name 476 as the year the Western Empire ended, though evidence suggests the event did not seem to be of massive importance to contemporaries. Most of the Western provinces – Gaul, Spain, and North Africa – had already been carved up into kingdoms by warlords of

### Blind Spots

The possibility of autonomous powers is simply ignored by Islam. This has never expressly been stated in the sources because it was a blind spot in the eyes of the scholars. But once identified we can connect it directly with the theocratic doctrine with which the whole Islamic system is impregnated. The omnipotence of God, passed down on earth to his vicar, cannot tolerate the existence of any power derived from another source. The acknowledgement of other autonomous powers on earth is nothing more than polytheism [Shirk].

- J.H.Kramers, *L'Isam et la Démocratie*  
Translated by Paul Stenhouse



Germanic origins. The same fate befell Italy in that year with the invasion of ●doacer who killed Romulus's father and deposed the young emperor.

Clearly the Western Empire did not have far to fall. True, the empire had been larger and lasted far longer than any of the great empires of the ancient world. The influence of Rome on the modern world and especially on Western culture remains profound, especially in that part of the world that until recently was commonly called "Christendom." Christianity emerged in the Roman period and eventually became the religion of the empire; hence, says Goldsworthy, we have "a Catholic Church and a pope in Rome."

Marcus Aurelius was succeeded by Commodus, who was murdered less than a dozen years after assuming power. In Goldsworthy's account, the names of the emperors roll by, most short lived, many murdered by rivals or their own staff. Some names stick in a schoolboy's memory for reasons good and bad, Caracalla, Diocletian, Constantine, of course, Constantius, Gratian, Theodocius, Honorius, and the Eastern Emperor, Justinian.

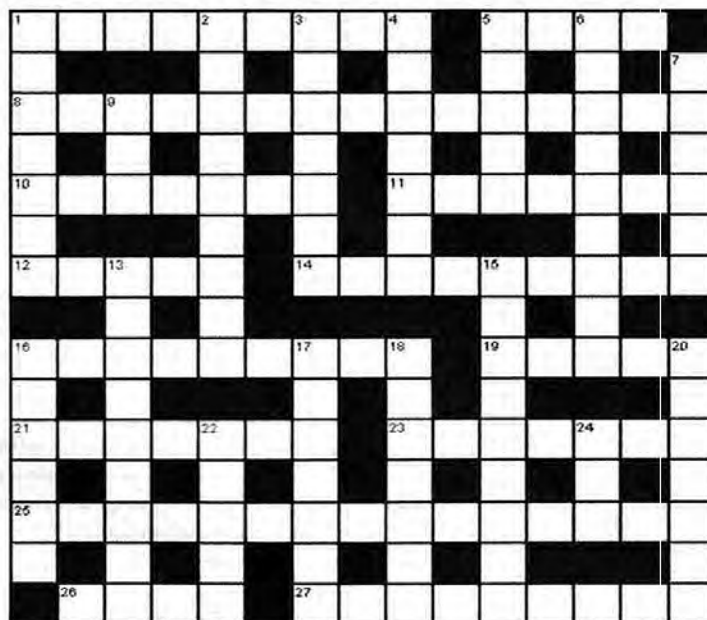
Perhaps without intending a reference to Brussels, Goldsworthy notes: "The Late Roman Empire was not designed to be an efficient government, but to keep the emperor in power and to benefit the members of the administration."

As admirable as its many achievements may have been in literature, law, architecture, and engineering Goldsworthy reminds his reader, "Rome's fate seems to act as a warning that strength and success will always prove transitory in the end, and civilization will not automatically triumph."

Goldsworthy is known to many for his early works as a military historian and for his prize-winning book *Caesar*, and to others for his historical documentaries produced on the History Channel. This volume will cement his reputation as a superb storyteller.

PROFESSOR JUDE DOUGHERTY is Dean Emeritus of the Philosophy Faculty, Catholic University of America. Editor, *The Review of Metaphysics*, and General Editor, *Series Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, Washington, D.C.

## ANNALS CRYPTIC CROSSWORD No. 20



### ACROSS CLUES

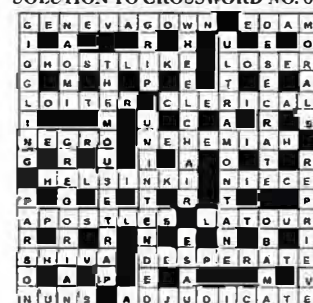
1. Prepare fish that are fragmenting (9)
5. Cullible chaps doing backward springs (4)
8. Sanctuary found in Book? (6,2,7)
10. Put soot around frontier (7)
11. Sort of syrup a hungry Cyril found in tree (7)
12. Alien returns with the wrong grinders (5)
14. Rich saint converts a true believer (9)
16. To get your own back, tear a tile out (9)
19. Scoundrel included in Castro guest list (5)
21. Vehicle I'd reversed, starting fully filled in Wales (7)
23. Bring a charge against one member each (7)
25. Leading Israelite interrupts plans of Sarah's man in Canadian battlefield (6,2,7)
26. One thousand run back for a knot ... (4)
27. ... then Alan's off. What are you looking at? (3,6)

### DOWN CLUES

1. Actors on strike to get demon exorcised (4,3)
2. Wager harlot is upset at engagement (9)
3. It's rather senseless if I'd a spasmodic twitch around about ten (7)
4. No tiger mauled biological father (7)
5. So, Emma turns up without a flower in France (5)
6. Sermonising pastor loses heart with each gin cocktail (9)

7. Royal Australian Navy leaders set off on back of ship (6)
9. Faints, even when healthy (3)
13. Hacks into internet, a way to amuse (9)
15. Old metal used in fight? (5,4)
16. Capers about and goes over again (6)
17. Insult a leading friar's face (7)
18. Half of them are angry with an Arab state (7)
20. Digs up former Archbishop of Westminster Basil on first of September (7)
22. Central to Queen supporting traveller's resting place (5)
24. Distributed on a Wednesday when Hindu retreat is lacking butter (3)

### SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD NO. 67



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## What the Public Wants

**W**ONDER sometimes what the world would do without the help of the men 'who know what the public want! Their concern for the intellectual, aesthetic welfare of others is paramount, their hardness can only be compared to that of the methusalesque tortoise, their only weakness is that they do not always know 'what the public want'.

- Edmund Dulac. *A Fairy Garland*. London, 1928. Dulac (1882-1953) was one of the great figures from the Golden Age of Illustration. Born in Toulouse, he moved to London where he was in tremendous demand from publishers. Dulac's most famous works of art include beautiful illustrations for books like the *Arabian Nights*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Stories from Hans Christian Andersen* and the *Rubāiyāt of Omar Khayyām*. After World War I ended, demand for illustrated deluxe books tailed off and Dulac moved into other areas of design. He died in 1953 of a heart attack while illustrating John Milton's *Comus*. He was 70 years old.

## Animal Kingdom

What have we here? Lions? Tigers? Leopards? Think hyenas and writer/director David Michod's metaphor implodes. This is no animal kingdom. This is human cops and robbers, or more exactly robbers and cops.

Pope Cody (Ben Mendelsohn) is an armed robber targeted by a crew of corrupt cops. His mate Baz (Joel Edgerton) wants out, recognising that simple banditry is no longer viable.

Cody's younger brother Craig (Sullivan Stapleton) is deeply into new venture drug trafficking while the other Cody brother Darren (Luke Ford), who may represent the audience, is trying to work out what's going on.

Into their lives comes a nephew Joshua. Waiting to strike, as vengeance and murder erupt, is an honest cop Nathan Leckie (Guy Pearce).

Jacki Weaver plays the Cody matriarch like Shakespeare's Mrs Quickly gone gangster, cueing scenes of extraordinary ensemble acting.

Movies of this sort used to be ripped from the headlines. Now they are ripped from television grabs in Melbourne, Sydney or wherever.

There's Michod's challenge: to surpass television news coverage. It is a measure of his talent that his failure lies in the technical impossibility of keeping up with ongoing developments. Even television's *Underbelly*, wrecked by blatancy and flatulent advertising, was unable to do this.

Michod and his cinematographer Adam Arkapaw have, however, created a take of such impact that real-life crims may adopt the Cody style.

MA15+★★★★NFFV

## The Waiting City

Into the chaos surrounding Kolcotta airport, come Fiona (Radha Mitchell), a careerist, and Ben (Joel Edgerton), a guitarist. Questing for curried culture shock? Not exactly. They are in India to receive a child, Lakshmi, the preliminaries having already been completed.

On their way to an orphanage run by Mother Teresa nuns they meet Scarlett (Isabel Lucas), a hippie temptress and Krishna (Samrat Chakrabarti), a driver-guide.

Writer-director-producer Claire

## MOVIES

By JAMES MURRAY

McCarthy's debut feature is impressive. In the beginning, however, its storyline risks being lost in the colourful locations (which may be why Bollywood storylines tend to be bold and simple).

Through the compellingly distinctive acting skills of co-producer Mitchell, Edgerton's seemingly lackadaisical yet dynamic performance and Chakrabarti's deft underplaying, McCarthy and her cinematographer Denson Baker regain control to bring off final scenes that are touching and enlightening.

M★★★★NFFV

## City Island

Family-romantic comedy which whirls like a merry-go-round on the premise of a prison guard Vince Rizzo (Andy Garcia, secretly ambitious to be an actor. Not just any actor, the new Marlon Brando). But he is too ashamed to tell his wife Joyce (Julianna Margulies).

After Vince meets another wannabe, Molly (Emily Mortimer), Joyce suspects he is using his regular poker games as cover for an affair. She begins to favour the mysterious young ex-con Tony (Steven Strait) her husband has brought home to live with them.

Writer-director Raymond De Felitta shows an acute empathy for the tribulations of jobbing actors through drama coach Malakov (Alan Arkin), a grump still humping an ambition to make it biggish.

Does Vince fulfil his ambition? No comment. But laughter grows with Margulies, Garcia and the rest of the cast.

Manhattan is the world's most photographed island. Yet De Felitta discovered his fresh title location there, a discovery which brings codswallop enhancement to his finely crafted comedy.

M★★★★NFFV

## The Stoning of Soraya M

Beautiful but, to borrow from WB Yeats, a terrible beauty and it was born in a remote village in Iran, following the

ousting of Shah Mohamed Reza Pahlavi and the accession of Ayatollah Khomeini.

Jim Caviezel plays the Franco-Iranian journalist Freidoune Sahebjam who in a 1994 bestseller broke the story of a woman buried to the waist in 1986 and stoned to death for alleged adultery.

Sahebjam (under *fatwa* for other reportage and now living a covert life) could not have told the story without the singular courage of a village woman who revealed the truth to him in tape-recorded sessions.

Director Cyrus Nowrasteh and his scriptwriter wife Betsy Giffen Nowrasteh use these sessions and their aftermath to frame their flashback narrative.

Zahra (Shohreh Aghdashloo) and Soraya (Mozhan Marnó) find themselves drawn ever deeper into trumped up charges by Soraya's divorce-seeking husband Ali (Navid Negahban) who aims to put her on show-trial with the connivance, forced and voluntary, of other villagers.

Plot bitterness is counterpointed by the austere grandeur of the landscape. The acting has the ring of cold-forged truth. Were it not fact-based, the storyline could have come from the dark imagination of an Elizabethan or Jacobean playwright.

The scenes of the stoning are so powerfully realised that you would not wish to see them again. Or want to recall that this remote village event has not been unique.

No word in the script from the prophet honoured in Islam (and played by Caviezel in *The Passion of the Christ*) who said: 'He who is without sin, let him cast the first stone.'

MA15+★★★★NFFV

## Robin Hood

Director Ridley Scott's swashbuckler comes loaded with promises that it differs from previous RH versions. It is different; it is also overloaded with falsity, a creaking styro-foam cart painted to resemble honest oak.

Russell Crowe, his screen-presence peerless, comes on initially as the archer Robin Longstride (a name that may owe something to Crowe's refusal to wear tights). Crowe makes of him a laconic, north-country warrior who'd rather fight than trip a measure.

Cate Blanchett, his equivalent for screen presence, is Marion, no maid but the widow of the noble Locksley (Douglas Hodge) whose identity Longstride assumes, a spontaneous move later validated by Locksley's father (Max Von Sydow) in board and in Marion's bed.

Mark Strong plays the ambivalent Sir Godfrey in what is now his accustomed manner. Here is a player who does not steal scenes. He smashes and grabs them.

Matthew MacFadyen does supply a different take on the Sheriff of Nottingham, making of him a weak fop rather than a bold dastard.

Battle scenes are shot with tremendous sound and fury, blood, mud and boiling oil. Some, however, may wonder at mediaeval French invasion barges resembling American, ramp-bowed World War II landing craft.

In the climactic battle scene, the script has Blanchett's Marion switching to Joan of Arc prowess.

Ridley Scott's undoubted masterwork is *Blade Runner* based on a sci-fantasy by Philip K Dick. This has created a preconception in his approach, the preconception, seen also in *Kingdom of Heaven*, that you can broadbrush the historical past as you might an imagined fantastical future.

With scriptwriter Brian Helgeland, Scott's treatment of Richard the Lionheart (Danny Huston), King John (Oscar Isaac) and his barons occasionally resembles a comedy: *Carry-on Up the Magna Carta*.

The wars between France and England are shown as national not feudal, France ze naughty invader, the truth being that, on the basis of lineage, both the English and the French vied for land in each other's parts of Europe.

Again as in *Kingdom of Heaven*, Scott exhibits prejudice against the pre-eminent faith of the era: Catholicism. Bishops are broadbrushed for greed. Friar Tuck is a caricature: shrewd, fat, if amiable, a bootlegger of mead.

Scott's broadbrush follows the lines of post-Reformation Protestant propaganda debunked by historians, led by the great John Lingard, working from archival material not idle prejudice.

The movie's ending suggests that Scott is ready to make a sequel. In this,

## Official Classifications key

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

## Annals supplementary advice

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

he could have Robin Hood take part in the Pilgrimage of Grace, the armed uprising of north-country nobility, clerics and laity.

Under the banner of the Five Wounds of Christ, they sought to restore Catholic ways, including monastic feeding of the poor. Not the last such rising.

M★★★NFFV

## Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time

Starring in a hokey costume drama has long been a rite of passage for young actors: a kind of Hollywood schoolies week. In this effort, Jake Gyllenhaal grabs a sword as a rebel prince leaping to the rescue of a damsel in distress played fetchingly by Gemma Arterton.

Alfred Molina and Ben Kingsley are on hand to deliver thick slices of skulduggery ham. Director Mike Newell ensures that the ham does not spoil a rattling good yarn, fabricated by Doug Miro, Carlo Bernard, Jordan Mechner and Boaz Yakin.

M★★★SFFV

## Mother and Child

Karen (Annette Bening) is a tense nurse who, at 14, more than thirty years ago, gave up her illegitimate daughter for adoption, and is still caring for her own demented mother.

Elizabeth (Naomi Watts) is the daughter, grown to be a cool, seemingly

detached lawyer. Their performances are of Oscar calibre.

Samuel L Jackson is the urbane, law-firm widower Paul who employs Elizabeth and gets more paternity than he bargained for. Jimmy Smits, padded up to conceal his lean self, is Paco the sympathetic co-worker who breaks through Karen's iciness.

Lucy (Kerry Washington) is the young wife desperate to adopt a child through an agency run by a nun Sister Joanne (Cherry Jones).

Writer-director Rodrigo Garcia plaits these strands into a rope that draws his characters ever closer to acceptance.

In what seems to be a kind of reversal of stereotypes, Garcia makes the Anglo characters display a degree of feckless indifference whereas the Latinos are solidly supportive. Ironically in his scenes involving sex, Garcia exhibits cold, calculated off-putting manipulation of his characters and the audience.

MA15+★★★NFFV

## Street Dance 3D

Even in good, old 2D, this would be a lively, high-decibel piece. In it directors Max Giwa and David Pasquini do their variation on the street-dancing craze (which surely owes a debt to the Jerome Robbins choreography in *West Side Story*).

The non-stop charmer Nichola Burley is Carly who leads a team of combined street and ballet dancers in competition against various rougher rivals.

Older audience members may register surprise at the presence of Sixties troupers Eleanor Bron and Charlotte Rampling amid the boom-boxes and dancing madness. Stardom is brief. Mortgages are forever.

TBA★★★SFFV

## Letters to Juliet

The basic conceit is beguiling: *New Yorker* magazine fact-checker Sophie (Amanda Seyfried) holidays in Italy with Victor (Gail Garcia Bernal). He is a chef ravening after vino and pasta in the environs of Verona. In the city, she joins a group of women who answer lovelorn letters addressed to Shakespeare's Juliet.

In a saucy piece of star-power nostalgia, director Gary Winnick casts

Vanessa Redgrave and Franco Nero, off-screen, on-screen lovers in the Sixties, as vintage lovers Claire and Lorenzo re-united through a Dear Juliet letter.

Basta? Not at all. *Neighbours* alumnus Christopher Egan as Claire's grandson-driver Charlie turns up to provide rivalry for Victor.

The superstars are Italy's landscapes and cityscapes. These inspire the thought: would they have become such works of art and craft had greenies been around to keep them as a wilderness for hikers with lettuce sandwiches in their backpacks?

PG★★★★SFFV

### The Burning Plain

Beneath the blonde shimmer of Charlize Theron's beauty lies a shadow of sadness. A similar sadness lurks beneath Kim Basinger's beauty. In realising their characters Sylvia and Gina, writer Guillermo Arriaga draws on their sadness in his debut as a director.

Arriaga shuffles time zones and his Anglo-Latino characters and locations to conjure from deaths past a future of reconciliation.

M★★★NFFV

### Soul Kitchen

Born in Germany of Turkish parents, director Fatih Akin is in no way orthodox. It shows in his treatment of an unpretentious Hamburg restaurant, Taverna, owned by Greek-German Adam Bousdoukos.

He co-wrote the script with Akin which accounts for its arak, retsina and lager flavours. Bousdoukos also plays Zinos who runs the fictional Soul Kitchen.

Akin stirs in other ingredients: Illias (Moritz Bleibtreu) Zinos's con-artist brother on leave from gaol; Nadine (Pheline Roggan), Zinos's rich girl friend and, most effectively, Shayn (Biro Unel) a *chef de brigade* of genius eccentricity. Result a dish of Euro romantic comedy.

Note: Gratuitously crude sex scenes that should have gone into the waste bin intrude on the comedy like, well, a dog's breakfast prepared by one of the cooks who spoiled the broth.

MA15+★★★★NFFV

## Dictatorships

On the whole it seems to me that it is the Turkish form of dictatorship that is at once the most typical and the most likely to spread. It has already had an immense influence in Asia, where the new forces of Oriental nationalism tend instinctively or deliberately to model themselves on the Turkish pattern. At the same time, conditions in the Balkans favour a similar type of development in south-eastern Europe, while Russia herself, the first and greatest of the post-war dictatorships, is showing signs of moving in the same direction.

- Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State*, Sheed and Ward, London 1935, p.18.

### I Love You Too

Yob Fantasy Five. Or is it Twenty Five? Either way it is yet another in the sub-genre where one yob has a rough charm and his mate is ever ready with a belch.

Brendan Howell and Peter Hellier play the yobs Jim and Blake. Yvonne Strahovsky is Jim's charming girlfriend Alice threatening to ship out to England if he doesn't shape up.

What saves the movie is the innate dignity of Peter Dinklage as Charlie a widower seeking consolation from a rendezvous with the fab Italian model Francesca. In the role, Megan Gale shows she is more than the face that launched a thousand sales.

Director Daina Reid handles the Charlie-Francesca sequences with just the right touch of schmaltz. But this does not quite obliterate the gross material.

Peter Hellier took eight years to get his script up which argues a certain originality to start with. To put a local spin on what is essentially an American sub-genre, his yobs are the grown offspring of Barry McKenzie's union with Edna Everage before she left him to drag her way to superstar damehood.

M★★NFFV

### 44-inch Chest

When Colin Diamond's wife Liz commits adultery, he does a Humpty-Dumpty. His mates try to put him

together again by kidnapping Liz's lover (Melvil Poupaud) so that Colin can deal with him at leisure.

Ray Winstone is Colin, a raging bull, haunted by memories of Liz (Joanne Whalley).

Impossible forgiveness or probable vengeance?

Peanut (John Hurt) is an old terrier yapping at Colin's heels, Archie (Tom Wilkinson) a hardcase mummy's boy, Meredith (Ian McShane) a homosexual cat ready to spring, Mal (Stephen Dillane) an elegant blade sheathed in fine suiting.

Together they create a dark, forbidding ensemble. Winstone may be first among equals. Hurt is the scene heister supreme. Yet director Malcolm Venville shows a sad failure of nerve in his ability. As Hurt winds into a monologue, a superlative *tour de force*, Venville intercuts Technicolor scenes from - Gorbliney! - Cecil B DeMille's *Samson and Delilah*.

Scriptwriter Louis Mellis and David Scinto have provided an essay in South London gangster chauvinism, its pauses punctuated with profanity beyond even the late master, Harold Pinter.

MA15+★★★★NFFV

### Iron Man 2

More iron-mongery mayhem: it is saved - **unexploded puns ahead** - by the irony with which Robert Downey Jr reprises the role of Stark, smooth armaments tycoon. His irony lead is followed by Sam Rockwell as rival tycoon Hammer and by Mickey Rourke as an uncouth Russian inventor bent on electric-whiplash revenge.

Gwyneth Paltrow turns up again as Stark's girl Friday and Scarlett Johansson comes on as a sleek guardian. Samuel L Jackson fits in as a spook.

The quality of the playing inspires the idle thought of a different movie: *Othello*. Jackson in the title role, Downey, Iago, Paltrow as Desdemona and so on.

Downey has made a remarkable comeback after years of drug abuse. Not inconsequential to remember one of those who visited him in jail: Mel Gibson. Nonetheless, Iron Man 2 must be defined as Superman in a sardine tin.

M★★★★NFFV

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*Three US states showed as one of their two representatives, the statue of a priest*

# HEROIC PRIESTS

*By* Peter Roach



**L**EARNING of the canonisation on October 11, 2009 of Father Damian, apostle to the lepers of Molokai in the Hawaiian islands, has prompted me to record some experiences my wife and I were privileged to enjoy.

Once we had the pleasure of visiting a son then working in the Pentagon at Washington D.C. Washington, like Canberra in Australia, is a centrepiece of the federation formed from the regional states which together constitute a single political entity. There was much to be enjoyed: admiring the Lincoln monument; seeing the Korean war memorial; and visiting the Supreme Court of the United States when in session. Also while there we had the privilege of being escorted through the Capitol building, home of Congress – comprising the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America – and while there observing Statuary Hall.

On a later visit we were able to visit the chapel dedicated to Father Damian on the main island of Honolulu. That visit, impressive though it was, was overshadowed by an experience we had had on that earlier visit when we had been escorted over the Capitol building in Washington D. C. There was much that was impressive about that visit; but nothing more impressive than Statuary Hall.

What gives that name to the Hall is that each of the 51 states of the Union is represented by statues of two figures prominent in the history of the state. What was surprising was to see that three states showed as one of their two representatives, the statue of a priest.

Wisconsin, one of the states on the Canadian border, was represented by the Jesuit, Jacques Marquette S. J. (1637 – 1675) – one of the many Jesuits who had given their lives in order to carry Christ to the pagan Indians long before the United States established itself independently of Great Britain. The film *Black Robe*

dramatically told something of their story. In the course of his missionary journeys Marquette was the first European to discover the mighty Mississippi river.

California had chosen a Franciscan priest as one of its representatives: Junipero Serra (1713 – 1784) – a missionary who had brought Christianity to California, again well before it became one of the United States of America. A Spaniard, at the age of 56 he was sent to California to establish the first of twenty-one missions. Later, before leaving continental America, we attended morning Mass in one of the old Spanish style mission churches – outstanding for some of its decorative features reflecting that Spanish influence.

Tasmania, too, has known heroic priests. To name but two, one has only to think of the experience of Tasmania's pioneer priest, the Irishman Philip Conolly who ministered here in a British penal colony, isolated and alone, for many years – as recorded for posterity by Father Terry Southerwood; or the French-born Father Martial Mary who, despite all difficulties of language, according to *Out of Darkness – a short history of the East Coast Catholic Church*, recently published by Tim McManus, rendered "unrivalled pastoral service" to the Catholic population of the East Coast for 14 years – during which time he baptised my father.

But in the United States it was one of the two statues representative of Hawaii – a state which had only recently joined the Union – which provided the most outstanding memory.

It was a statue dedicated to the Belgian priest Father Damian de Veuster (1840-1889), far better known to the world simply as Father Damian –

## 'Our Lord, Mankind'

**T**hus political life was transformed into a struggle for self-expression and the quest for happiness – conceived in highly religious terms. Discussion of how the blessed state was to be achieved generated mountains of print over the next two centuries. Attempts to put the more 'scientific' of the theories into practice would result in human misery on an unprecedented scale and leave behind them mountains of corpses. But in the latter part of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth, the quest for salvation drove many to immolate themselves rather than others. Fired by the urge to redeem mankind and themselves, many young men struggled and died in a kind of crusade whose Jerusalem was an idealized projection of 'Our Lord Mankind,' the nation, death in the service of which brought martyrdom and life everlasting.

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

now St. Damian – apostle to the lepers who were isolated and abandoned on the island of Molokai. After many years given to caring for the physical and spiritual needs of the lepers he would ultimately contract leprosy himself. He gave his life for his people. The film, *Father Damian*, is a fine representation of his life and his lonely commitment to the service of his people.

Mahatma Gandhi, the hero of India, said of Damian:

“The political and journalistic world can boast of very few heroes who compare with Father Damian of Molokai. It is worthwhile to look for the sources of such heroism”.

The author Robert Louis Stevenson was another admirer. In responding to the criticisms of Damian made by a Presbyterian minister in writing to another pastor, Stevenson was quite prescient when he made the comment:

“if that world remembers you on the day Damian of Molokai is made a Saint it will be in virtue of the one work: your letter to (the other Protestant minister)”.

Later, he would write his famed open letter in vindication of Damian.

Yet there was one even more impressive circumstance which touched us when we observed the figures in Statuary Hall in the Capitol building.

Whereas Father Marquette was conventionally sculpted as a figure in the black robes of a Jesuit; and Father Serra was similarly presented as dressed in the brown robes representative of a Franciscan, the presentation of Father Damian – now St. Damian – was quite different and dramatically so.

## Faithful Guardian of the Mysteries of our Salvation

**W**HEN THE DIVINE goodness chooses someone to receive a special grace, it gives him all the charisms he needs, which greatly increases his spiritual beauty. This is wholly confirmed in the case of Saint Joseph, legal father of our Lord Jesus Christ and rightful husband of the Queen of the world and Sovereign of angels. The eternal Father chose him to be provider and faithful guardian to his chiefest treasures, namely his Son and his bride – a function he faithfully fulfilled. That is why the Lord said: «Good and faithful servant, come, share your master's joy» (Mt 25,21).

If you compare Joseph with all the rest of Christ's Church ... it is in him that the dignity of patriarchs and prophets receives its promised fruit. He alone possessed in reality what divine goodness had promised to them. Nor indeed should we doubt that the closeness and respect Jesus showed to Joseph during his earthly life, as a son to his father, were ever denied in heaven; rather, He enriched and completed them. So, with reason, the Lord adds: «Enter into your master's joy».

Blessed Joseph, remember us; intercede with the help of your prayers to Jesus your adopted Son; and may you likewise ask the blessed Virgin, your spouse, to intercede us, for she is the mother of Him who, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns world without end.

– Saint Bernadine of Siena (1380-1444), Franciscan,  
Sermon on Saint Joseph; OC 7, 16. 27-50

Instead of the sculpture following the shape and form of a clothed human body, Damian was presented as a person enclosed by hard, straight lines as if within planks of wood rather than a soutane. It was as if he was already in his coffin. It appropriately symbolised the giving of his life.

Seeing that statue was for us an unforgettable experience.

All three men so represented were truly heroic pioneer priests. So too were Tasmania's own Philip Connolly and Martial Mary.

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



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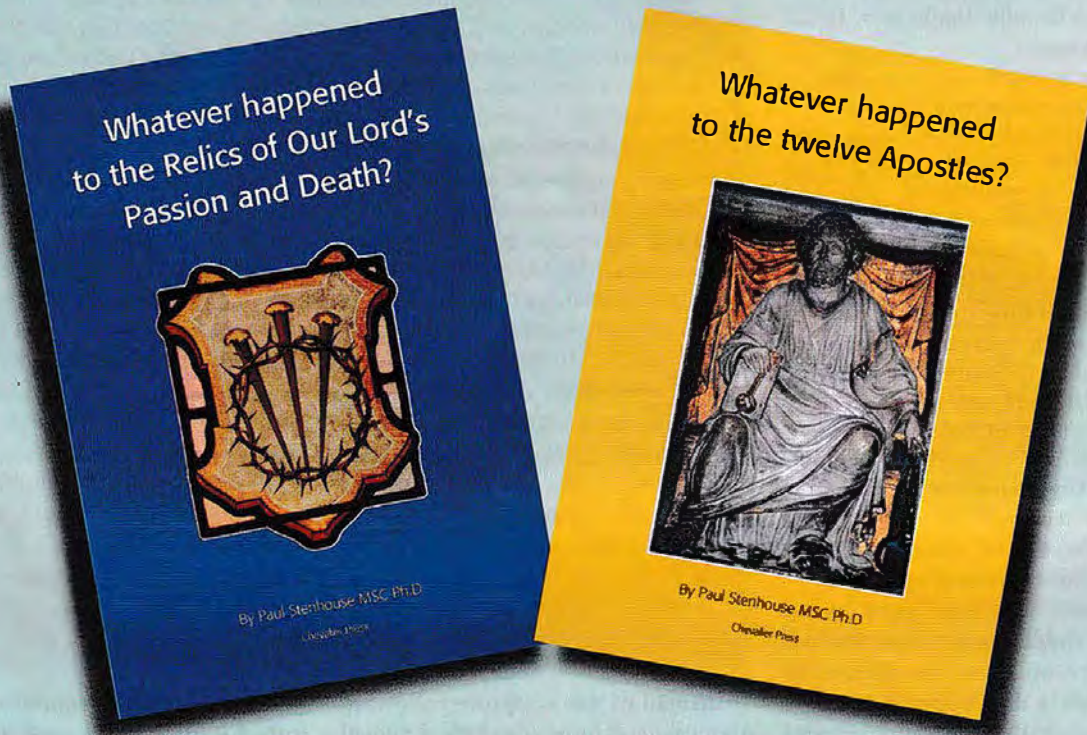
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