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REVIEW BY PETER DAY



Front Cover: Pre-dawn crowds wait at the entrance to St Peter's Square in Rome on canonisation day. 'Imagine walking along the cobbled streets in the pre-dawn darkness, as I was, and suddenly hearing people singing with great gusto, alternating the 'Our Father' with 'Waltzing Matilda' and 'Hail Mary/Centle Woman' with 'Advance Australia Fair'. There were Mary MacKillop balloons and Australian flags of all sizes within close range of the papal apartment and when its lights came on, the Holy Father could well have seen this antipodean spectacle right outside his window.' [See our leading article by Wanda Skowronska, pp. 4-7. Ed.]

Back Cover: A selection of booklets available from Chevalier Press. They are ideal as Christmas or birthday gifts or as gifts for relatives and friends interested in the Catholic Faith, for RCIA groups following catechism courses in preparation of baptism at Easter time, or as school prizes. They make ideal bedtime reading, and we recommend them to all Catholics wishing to deepen their understanding of their history, and of their faith.

Cover Photo: Wanda Skowronska

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

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




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

NOËL



CHEERLESS and cold was the wintry night
Bleak was the cave and chill,
Faint was the flickering lantern's light
Wild were the winds and shrill.
Animals drowsed in the tousled straw
Sheltering till the morn,
And there on a lowly stable floor
The Lord of All was born.



MELODY filled the
enraptured skies
Echoing heavenly joy.
Rustic shepherds and lordlings wise
Knelt to an infant boy.
While Mary's eyes shone rapture-bright
With radiant love serene,
At the newborn Monarch's clear delight
To recognise His Queen.

- James Muirhead, SJ, former editor of *Social Survey*,
and *Twentieth Century*.





*Pilgrims from Australia, New Zealand, Scotland,
Peru and East Timor honour Saint Mary of the Cross*

AUSSIES IN ROME

By George Cardinal Pell



ON SUNDAY October 17 it was heart-warming to see the huge banner with St. Mary MacKillop's image hanging from the facade of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, the world's largest and most famous church.

Images of the six new saints provided a background for the Mass in the Square, where Pope Benedict issued the decree of canonization.

Eight thousand came from Australia for the celebrations and more from New Zealand, Scotland, Peru and East Timor where sisters of St. Joseph are now working. Originally I was claiming that it was the largest peace-time movement of Australians to any one gathering, but a bright young priest corrected me by pointing out that bigger crowds gather at Callipoli to commemorate Anzac Day.

Mary MacKillop is of course Australia's first officially recognized saint and the Vatican authorities realised how significant that is for local Catholics. The widespread approval in the general Australian community was particularly welcome to Catholics and was manifest in the bipartisan parliamentary delegation led by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Deputy Opposition Leader, which came to Rome.

Tim Fischer, the first full-time Australian Ambassador to the Holy See was at everything, organising a number of successful celebrations. At one morning tea we even had lamingtons.

He also arranged to have "Kanga Two" parked in the Via di Conciliazione, the main approach to St. Peter's. This was a caravan to provide information and help to Australians in need. I heard of one broken leg and fourteen stolen or lost passports, which was a good result considering the numbers involved. The Australian embassy to Italy was also very supportive.

October weather in Rome is often changeable, with occasional storms, but generally pleasant and mild. Rain threatened on the Sunday morning but it held off for the large congregation which filled three quarters of St. Peter's Square. I thought that the crowd was greater than the 100,000 who attended the AFL grand final.

On Monday about five thousand were present at the official Mass of Thanksgiving celebrated in the ancient Basilica of St. Paul, outside the Walls of ancient Rome, built on the traditional site of Paul's burial after his martyrdom in about 64 A.D.

St. Paul's, the second largest Church in Rome was chosen for this uniquely Australian celebration because it was large enough to hold our group and because of its ancient links with the English speaking world. Before the Reformation the Catholic kings of England were honorary canons of the basilica, which is now the traditional setting for ecumenical services.

First published in Sydney's *Sunday Telegraph*, October 24, 2010. Reprinted with permission.

Australia's first Saint ... somehow did not seem too far away

CANONISATION OF ST MARY OF THE CROSS

By Wanda Skowronska



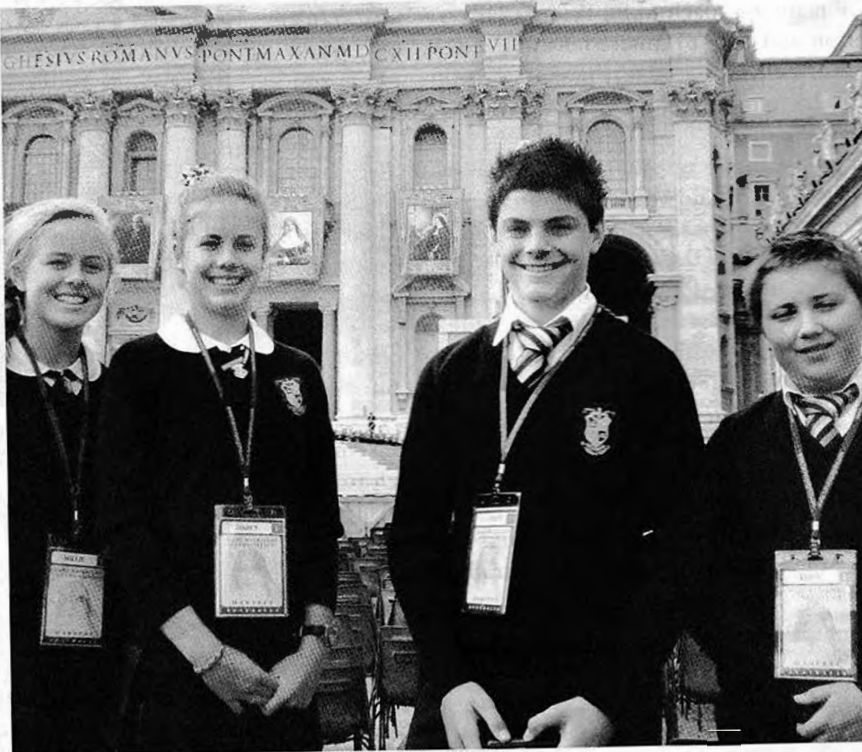
THE CANONISATION of Australia's first saint – Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop – on October 17, 2010 in St Peter's Square in Rome – was an occasion of immense national, historic and spiritual significance. A peaceful invasion of Rome by almost 10,000 Australians had occurred for several weeks prior to the canonisation Mass for the founder of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, [the Josephites], the builder of schools and orphanages, woman of heroic patience in the face of difficulties, a champion of the poor and neglected and the dreamer of dreams to help them.

Most people travelling to Rome had begun preparations well in advance. Hotels, guest houses, convent and monastery accommodation was booked-out and many who had left it late were scrambling to find anywhere to stay. A temporary Australian consular office was set up on the sidewalk of the Via della Conciliazione near St Peter's Square and an Italo-Australian consular official who introduced himself as Lorenzo said officials were ready to help Australians in need. Preparations were also well advanced in small side streets around the Vatican, one of which is the Via del Falconi, off the Borgo Pio, where in a small warehouse Claudio de Angelis and his family were producing Saint Mary MacKillop medals by the thousands.

On the morning of the 17th of October, a crowd of Australians were already waiting before 6 am well in advance of the canonisation Mass, at the Via di Porta Angelica, one of the roads leading to St Peter's. Imagine walking along the cobbled streets in the pre dawn darkness, as I was, and suddenly hearing people singing with great gusto, alternating the 'Our Father' with 'Waltzing Matilda' and 'Hail Mary/Gentle Woman' with 'Advance Australia Fair.' There were Mary MacKillop balloons and Australian flags of all sizes within close range of the papal apartment and when its lights came on, the Holy Father could well have seen this antipodean spectacle right outside his window.

Sister Joan Goodwin, a Josephite sister from Unanderra in Wollongong, said that over 150 nuns had come from Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, Peru, Brazil, East Timor and Scotland, representing the entire federation of Josephites. Sisters Patricia Bell, Frances Baker and Helen Monkitch from the Mercy order were also among the first people at the entrance joining in the festive mood.

People came from all over for the canonisation ceremony. Bob and Leigh Steele had come from Quakers Hill in Sydney and Father Andre Maria, a Franciscan Friar of the Immaculate, had come from Toodyay in Western Australia. A group of forty-one pilgrims had come from the Sale diocese in Victoria, including Giuseppe Cannatta, Colleen Harney, and Bernice and Tony Van Rossan, many wearing 'Leongatha' caps. Near Leongatha is the Mary MacKillop Regional College in South Gippsland whose first principal was Ed Carmody and whose daughters Renay and Jacinta were now leading pilgrims on this epic journey to Rome.



Millie Hartcher, Darcy Greaves, Jonathan Maloney and Cody Kauter: all students from St Joseph's in Lochinvar NSW in school uniform in St Peter's Piazza for the Canonisation.

Phillip Maloney, an ex student from Chevalier College Bowral, had come from Newcastle with his wife Margaret. A group of students from St Joseph's Lochinvar, led by their teachers Louise Mahoney and Nicholas Wickham, wore full school uniform for the occasion. Also among the crowd of pilgrims were Queensland teachers in Josephite schools, Dell Reynolds and Catherine Downing.

There was such an air of excitement by the time the gates to St Peter's opened at 8 am, that many literally ran to seats in the square, after their security checks, as endless lines of buses kept arriving from all sides and people poured in from every entrance. This kind of Vatican event is extraordinary to behold for its vibrancy, breadth, organisational complexity and the electric sense of expectancy. All the seats in the large square were taken by 9.00 a.m. an hour before the Mass was due to begin. Sister Anne Derwin, Congregational head of the Josephites, Sister Marion Gambion, leader of the Australian province along with Sister Judy Sippel and Sister Katrina Brille among many other fellow sisters was seated up the front as were descendants of Mary MacKillop. Other invited guests and various dignitaries took their position close to the main altar.

As there were to be six canonisations on that same day, there were groups from many countries, notably Poland, Spain, Canada and Italy, all with their



Jacinta Johnstone and Renay Littlejohn, sisters from Leongatha in Victoria.

flags and city emblems. The other canonisations were of Father Stanislaw Kazimerczyk Soltyk [Poland, 1433-1489], Brother André Bessette [Canada, 1845-1937], Sister Candida Maria De Jesus Cipitria Y Barriola [Spain, 1845-1912] Sister Giulia Salzano [Italy, 1846-1929], and Sister Battista Camilla da Varano [Italy, 1458-1524].

The canonisation ceremony began with solemn music and cardinals, bishops and priests entered the Square in a impressive, visually captivating and seemingly endless procession. Then suddenly all eyes turned to Pope Benedict XVI, Servant of the Servants of God, standing within an open, white car as he was driven through the crowds up to the main altar where he was to say Mass. Gradually the things of earth gave way to those of heaven, time gave way to the timeless realm, visible spectacle to invisible grace which pervades our lives with its continual mysteries.

With his eyes fixed on the other world, the Pope with measured step took his position beneath a canopy flanked by acolytes and an almost tangible peace descended upon the pilgrims. Earlier exuberance gave way to reflection on the significance of the saints' lives and on sanctity itself, the ineffable sense of holy love triumphing over the evils and injustice of this world. After the Holy Father began the Mass, which was mostly in Latin with the Gospel also being read in Greek, he listened as the spiritual biographies of those to be canonised were read out in several languages. All these accounts were filled with examples of extraordinary love, courage and loyalty in difficult circumstances.

Excerpts from the writings of Mary MacKillop [1842-1909] were read aloud and revealed an early awareness of God's presence and her sense of refuge and consolation in the Heart of Jesus in what she saw as a cold and selfish world. Helping to support her parents and seven brothers and sisters from her earliest years, she then turned to help the poor, orphans, prostitutes, prisoners and the elderly as she grew older. With the help of Fr Julian Tenison Woods, she opened the first school in Penola in 1866 and started a religious congregation in 1867. [The congregation currently has 850 Sisters in five Australian provinces, a New Zealand province, regions in Peru and Ireland and ministry in Brazil, East Timor and Scotland.] The future saint dealt with the many pragmatic issues, leaking roofs, financial problems, tiredness and illness. Despite being caught in many confusing conflicts, she had a spiritual equanimity and was



Pope Benedict arriving in the Piazza for the Mass.

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always charitable and forgiving, even to those unkind to her.

The prayers accompanying canonisation ceremonies come early in the Mass and it is moving to hear the Litany of Saints intoned, as if the company of heaven were physically present, gazing from the tranquillity of eternity as people on earth asked for their prayers. Then after the sung litany, the canonisation was formally pronounced and the elevated, large cloth portrait of Saint Mary MacKillop gazed with benignity onto a turbulent world. The Mass then proceeded and Holy Communion was given to several hundred thousand people. This aspect of Vatican logistics is no mean feat – it involves hundreds of priests taking up positions accompanied by helpers holding up umbrellas in Vatican colours, in the vast area of St Peter's Square, with people queezing into the nearest line to receive the Eucharist. One suspects there is divine choreography here as well as priestly organisation.

After the final blessings, Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop, while among the heavenly hosts, somehow did not seem too far away, especially because of the lifetime of practical care and love she had shown to so many.

Several pilgrims had stories to tell of answered prayers, apart from the miracles which had assisted the cause of the Saint. Cynthia Quintana from Castle Hill in NSW had prayed for someone to obtain a job and the prayer was answered soon afterwards. Not only that, but the money she did not think she had for the pilgrimage had suddenly come from an unexpected source and Cynthia was delighted to be present in Rome. Another pilgrim related that 'Rick Peterson was cured of Parkinson's disease' through the saint's intercession and another told of a Victorian priest's total cure from cancer.

Another story came from a group of Malaysian pilgrims I had met a few days before the canonisation en route to Assisi. One lady recounted that she had visited the tomb of the then Blessed Mary MacKillop at North Sydney in 2008 praying specifically for her Buddhist mother's conversion to the Catholic faith. On her return to Malaysia, she was surprised to by her mother's announcement on greeting

her – ‘I want to become a Catholic.’ The name of Mary MacKillop has great renown in that Malaysian parish.

After the canonisation ceremony the crowds moved out of St Peter’s Square in admirable order. In fact the longer I stayed in Rome the more awestruck I became at how this enormous city runs – no doubt due to the combined action of the carabinieri, clergy and the Communion of Saints. While I bought bus tickets for my journeys across Rome, no one else seemed to, and no one seemed to check. Passengers showed bemused interest as I put my ticket in the *ticket machine* – single-handedly making a voluntary contribution to the Transport department of Rome.

However such anomalies pale into insignificance on seeing streets bearing names such as ‘Viale Giulio Cesare, Via Pompeo Magno, Via Virgilio, Via degli Scipione, and Via dei Gracchi,’ reminders that the toga-attired people referred to, really did once walk along the streets of Rome where buses, cars and macho motor bikes now whizz past. Also the many churches, from the enormous, ornate Gesù to the tiny four pew Santa Maria del Riposo, are built where multitudes of Christians walked to their deaths. The streets almost evoke their bodily forms, and whisper the never-ending stories of their love of our merciful God. Walking across the Ponte Sant’Angelo one can imagine the Papal entourage fleeing through secret tunnels to the Castel Sant’Angelo to escape from enemies. And one realises that Saint Mary of the Cross herself had once walked these very paths of Rome in 1873-4 seeking approval for the Constitutions of her congregation, encountering as much mayhem and noise then as one would in Rome today.

After the canonisation Mass, Bishop Prowse from the Sale Diocese, took pilgrims on a tour of Rome, pointing out places of historical interest, [and the best gelato bar] and in particular referring to places that Saint Mary of the Cross would have frequented, among them the English College, the Gesù Basilica and the Piazza del Collegio Romano. He related that the saint had arrived in Rome knowing very few people and yet ended up with an audience with Pope Pius IX [who was impressed with her] within a fortnight.

She was to stay in Rome a while longer till the provisional Constitutions [which were finally approved in 1888] were signed before returning to Australia to continue her work under direct leadership of the Holy See, not diocesan control, causing considerable opposition from some and support from others notably Bishop Vaughan and Cardinal Moran.

Father Paul Gardiner SJ in his comprehensive biography *An Extraordinary Australian: Mary MacKillop* [2007] writes that the ‘list of her troubles – the injustices, misunderstandings, the slanders she suffered – is long and at times hard to believe ... her life seemed to have more than the normal share of the physical pain, annoyance, disappointment and disturbance that is the lot of human beings’ but quotes the future saint saying ‘My one prayer is that God may bring glory to Himself out of all this confusion and that He may protect the

interests of our Holy Church and not suffer anything but good to come out of the present sorrows.’¹

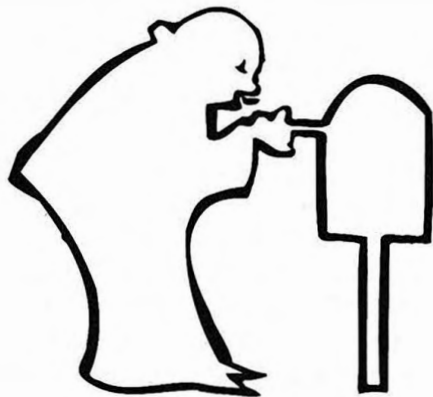
While her sorrows on earth have ended, one suspects that the story of Saint Mary of the Cross, as amazing as it already is, has really just begun. Even though she is now in the eternal world, she gazes on us all and cannot forget those who suffer. She will continue to intercede with great solicitude for her fellow human beings for whom she had, and will always have, an authentic and deep love.

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

1. Paul Gardiner *An Extraordinary Australian: Mary MacKillop* [David Ell : Sydney 2007. This edition published in association with the Sisters of St Joseph is an amended edition of the original published in 1993]. 67. 224.



Part of the crowd of pilgrims in St Peter’s Piazza for the mass of Canonisation.



In Search of a Family

Your article about people in the West searching for a sense of family in their embrace of Islam [‘Rewakening Primal Instincts’ *Annals* 4/2010] was very good and very interesting – and in a way that was close to home for me. I knew a 15 year old girl a few years ago – she came from a neglectful family – her mother had basically abandoned her and her father was a bit of – I don’t know how else to say it – a ‘deadbeat dad’ who was not around much. The girl was in the care of her grandmother who also had an active social life. So the girl went to seek out her own social life and ended up one day with young friends visiting a Muslim family. Well she just loved the hospitality and warmth and being part of the group. She had a Muslim boyfriend for a while and then he dropped her as his family were not happy about him going out with a non-Muslim. Undeterred she still associated with Muslim families in the area and yes – the inevitable happened – she became a Muslim. She has red hair and a pale Irish complexion and I’m sure knows very little about Islam. I suspect her grandmother could not care less. So this girl is still swanning around wearing a hijab and enjoying the family life she missed out on by going to all the Muslim events. And I’m sure she is not the only one this has happened to.

Sydney 2000

[NAME SUPPLIED]

De-baptised?

A couple of years back we learnt that a Lutheran Church in Europe was offering a church service for couples who wished to have church recognition of their divorces.

In the June/July edition of *First Things* it was reported that the National Secular Society of England has begun a campaign that promotes ‘de-baptism’. For three English pounds one can get a parchment de-baptism certificate which purports to revoke and renounce whatever church it was that performed the baptism.

First Things comments: ‘If God is likely to have any say in the matter these de-baptisees might be in for a surprise come the other side of death, but then it will be too late to get a refund.’

Ashwood Qld 3147

Leo Bohan

Threats to Spiritual Freedom

AT THE present time the old forms of individualism are everywhere passing away before the pressure of the modern State; but although this destroys some social injustices, it also creates others and contains the possibility of a new and more serious menace to spiritual freedom. And this tendency is not confined to a single country or to any one particular political or social system. It may, I think, even be argued that Communism in Russia, National Socialism in Germany, and Capitalism and Liberal Democracy in the Western countries are really three forms of the same thing, and that they are all moving by different but parallel paths to the same goal, which is the mechanization of human life and the complete subordination of the individual to the state and to the economic process.

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

Father Hackett and Irish History

Tony Evans’s review of Brenda Niall’s book *The Riddle of Father Hackett* [*Annals* 5/2010] contains misconceptions that seem to bedevil any discussion of Irish religion and politics.

Tony Evans writes: “Charles Stewart Parnell – ‘the Chief’ – was the hope of the Republican cause...”. No. He wasn’t. Parnell was an aristocratic Anglican monarchist who often said that he felt more sympathy for the British Conservative Party than he did for the Liberal Party. He was leader of the Home Rule party, believed in Home Rule for Ireland but Home Rule meant an Irish Parliament in Dublin under the British Crown. It did not mean a republic. Neither he nor his successor in the Irish Parliamentary Party, John Redmond, were republicans.

It is part of the Great Lie that is now universally taught about Irish history that the Home Rule supporters of the 19th and early 20th century were republicans. It is simply untrue.

Part of the confusion lies in the use of the term “the repeal of the Union” which moderns simply assume means Ireland’s departure from the United Kingdom. It meant no such thing. The phrase was shorthand for the repeal of the Act of Union of 1800 when the Irish House of Commons and Irish House of Lords were suppressed and Ireland was ruled directly from Westminster.

Dan O’Connell, who led the repeal movement, was even more of a monarchist and retained an affection for Queen Victoria all his life. He repudiated utterly the men of violence, the bomb-throwers, the Fenians and the IRB.

It is true that Parnell occasionally flirted with the Fenians and the IRB but only out of a political expedience. He, himself, was, like O’Connell, a constitutionalist, as were John Redmond and John Dillon. Once the Fenians saw that Parnell was a constitutionalist, they rejected him and reviled him.

As a matter of fact, the constitutionalists achieved far more for Ireland than ever the bomb-throwers, the Fenians and the IRB did.

In 1914 the Home Rule Bill finally passed and would have been

implemented but for the First World War, the 1916 rebellion and the IRA war of 1919.

These intervening events – precipitated by men of violence like Collins and de Valera – were a disaster and led to civil war in Ireland, pitting Irishman against Irishman. Collins was later killed by his own, with the connivance of de Valera.

Once the Free State was set up, its exclusively Irish leaders oversaw the trial, conviction and execution of some 77 IRA killers (more than 3 times as many as the British did) and the internment of 13,000 more of them, something the British would never have dared do. The Free State government (consisting exclusively of Irishmen) oversaw the trial and execution of Erskine Childers, who had been found in possession of firearms.

This severity seemed partially to work. In May 1923 de Valera and the IRA high command ordered their men to lay down arms.

Eventually, even de Valera could not restrain the hotheads of the IRA who later murdered Irish Justice Minister, Kevin O’Higgins. De Valera eventually broke with the IRA and formed a new party called Fianna Fail.

But it was not Fianna Fail or De Valera who declared Ireland a republic. Ireland remained part of the UK until 1948 when the Fine Gael leader declared a republic.

Has the republic been a success? Not necessarily. Ireland has gone from poverty, to boom, to bust and is now in a sorry financial state. It has also gone from being a devoutly Catholic country to a country with a massive clerical abuse problem and an equally massive negative reaction against the Church and the clergy.

It is never wise to build the foundations of any country on the basis of terrorism and rebellion but this must surely apply with particular force to any country that claims, like Ireland, to be Catholic.

The true history of Ireland is very different from the version which regularly gets trotted out by reviewers and commentators.

Kings Bench Walk, Temple,
London EC4Y 7EB

JAMES BOGLE

Damian of Molokai and Joan of Arc

I have long admired your work and have repeatedly attempted to introduce teachers to use *Annals* as a resource. In the same way I’m trying to promote Fr Damien [see The Stevenson Letter, by Ian MacDonald, *Annals* 6/2010] as a wonderful example of what our Faith produces. I have often reflected on the fact that, whatever the Dawkins-Hitchins crowd thinks of our theological arguments, it’s hard to argue with the force of Damien’s witness! I find the boxed quotes in *Annals* excellent, and make bold to offer one for your consideration. You may well have used it, but I will dig it out and email it later. It is a beautiful quote by Mark Twain on the Church. As you would know he seems to have detested the Church in his early days, but little Joan of Arc won him over. He said his Life of Joan was worth more than ‘all my other books put together’.

Middle Park, [Father] F. E. Burns
Vic. 3206

[Copies of *The Prophecy of Robert Louis Stevenson: Damien of Molokai the Leper Saint* reviewed in *Annals* 6/2010, may be obtained from Fr Burns at: feburns@optusnet.com.au. Ed.]

Look Beyond Science

Many of those who claim to be atheists are not. To be an atheist involves a specific act of faith – that there is no God. A good friend of mine, raised a Catholic, claims to be an atheist because science cannot prove the existence of God. That simply shows a lack of understanding of what we mean by God, that is an all-powerful, all-knowing Being who is the ultimate source of all Creation. And without whom there would be no science! If my friend’s science cannot for example cure Alzheimer’s Disease, the cross



being borne by my beloved wife, it is no surprise that science cannot prove that God exists. So, he needs to keep looking beyond science.

My friend and many of those who claim to be atheists are in fact agnostics. According to my Oxford Dictionary, an agnostic is “one who holds that nothing is known or likely to be known of the existence of a God or anything beyond material phenomena.” In reality most so-called atheists base their lack of belief upon inadequate knowledge and, perhaps, a refusal seriously to seek God. Because they base their beliefs solely upon material phenomena, they are incapable of recognising or refuse to recognise the reality of what Cardinal Pell so often refers to as “truth, goodness and beauty”.

Gisborne,
vic., 3437

Michael O’Connor AM

Matters of Life and Death

Some pro-life Democrats have supported the pro-abortion Senate Health Care bill in exchange for President Barack Obama’s promise to issue an executive order banning abortion funding in it.

Pro-lifers won’t hold their breath, though: before gaining the top job, Obama was the most extreme pro-abortion member of the US Senate, and also was the most extreme pro-abortion legislator ever to serve in the US Congress. Besides, since becoming President, and even before his inauguration, he surrounded himself with an army of pro-abortion officials, including Kathleen Sibelius, Edward Chen, Dawn Johnsen, Ellen Moran, Rahm Emanuel, Tom Daschle. Obama appointed Thomas Perrelli as the third highest attorney in the US Justice Department.

Perrelli was the the lawyer who represented Terri Schiavo’s husband Michael in his efforts to dispose of his disabled wife when she was in a coma; eventually, a court ordered that no food or water be given to Terri who, needless to say, had a most horrible death. God help America!

Beacon Hill NSW 2100

Hank Verhoeven

(Readers’ comments are welcomed, not just on material that appears in *Annals*, but on issues that concern the Catholic and the wider community. Please keep your letters short. They may be edited if too long. Always print your full name and address, and include a daytime phone or fax number or e-mail address at which you can be reached. Editor, *Annals*).

POPE BENEDICT XVI IN BRITAIN

By Giles Auty



WHEN THE EDITOR of this journal asked me to write some thoughts about the recent visit of Pope Benedict XVI to Britain

I realised rapidly that I could not do this sensibly without first making a few autobiographical points to illustrate a vital part of my theme.

I was born in England and until the age of 59 – foreign interludes apart – that was where I lived. However, for the first 28 of those years, I was not a Catholic.

Happily my parents – although not practising Christians themselves – were certainly not hostile to Christianity and from the ages of 10 to 17 I attended a staunchly Anglican English boarding school.

In those days education was neither heavily nor surreptitiously politicised in the manner which has happened subsequently in almost every Western country – most noticeably perhaps in public sector schools.

In any case the school I attended was a private one where infliction by members of staff of overtly political views on their students would surely not have been tolerated. In short, parents certainly did not pay in those days to have their offspring indoctrinated with the latest political or sociological fads.

During my schooldays subjects were still taught largely as discrete entities and certain of the subjects I studied – Latin, Greek, French and Mathematics, for example – would have been very difficult anyway to teach in a political fashion.

However it could be argued, I agree, that History, Geography and English might certainly have been taught with a high degree of patriotic if not overtly political bias. Schools such as mine valued patriotism very highly not least

LISTENING to television commentaries about the papal visit to Britain back here in Australia it was stated confidently by some that Pope Benedict XVI and his predecessor Pope John Paul II would be the very last, so-called 'conservative' popes. That was because the Catholic Church needed in their view, at least, to 'move with the times' and thus become 'more relevant' and 'user-friendly'. It seems possible to me, at least, that no country in the world has more overweeningly conceited or ignorant television commentators than Australia. Many imagine themselves to be intellectuals yet most seem incapable of grasping even the most elementary principles of religious faith.'

because the Second World War, in which many former pupils had served with distinction, had ended only very recently when I was sent there.

Why would not a ten year old boy have been intensely proud, at that time, of his British heritage?

The point I wish to make via the foregoing – somewhat circuitously I admit – is that an extremely strong strain of patriotism, if not xenophobia, was once a common element of British character.

Our island nation had not been invaded successfully since the Norman conquest in the 11th century and had mostly given a very good account of itself militarily against continental powers such as France, Germany and Spain. Waterloo, Trafalgar and the defeat of the Spanish Armada hardly played a lesser role in the national consciousness than the more recent,

successful evacuation of Dunkirk, the Battle of Britain or the victorious allied struggle at El Alamein.

I cannot recollect now whether I studied 16th century British history for any of the exams I sat at school but certainly I read books on Tudor history extensively from quite an early age. In most of such history Elizabeth I was presented as a heroine who had successfully kept Britain free from the influence – or clutches – of foreign, generally Catholic powers.

While her much-married father Henry VIII was regarded slightly more ambiguously he was nevertheless widely excused – in terms of international politics, at least – because of the apparent need for a male heir to the English throne. That was argued – by some commentators at least – as a legitimate excuse for his multiple marriages.

The fact that Henry VIII and Elizabeth I did much between them to wreck the previous Catholic unity of Western Europe gained little or no mention in popular British history books of the time.

Neither, of course, did the utterly barbarous cruelties inflicted on Britain's traditional Catholic laity or on Catholic clergy such as St. Edmund Campion.

To this day, in fact, Britain's historic and deeply damaging split with Rome is widely regarded by the ignorant and unthinking in Britain as a thoroughly desirable patriotic outcome.

During the years when I taught art history briefly in an English art school I would occasionally test the alertness of students by asking them questions such as: "Why do you think there is so much ugly Catholic ecclesiastical architecture in Britain?"

Foreseeably their thoughts would fly immediately to examples such as an unsightly and often circular 1970s Catholic Church from their own vicinity – or to the famous so-called

Paddy's Wigwam, known otherwise as Liverpool's Catholic cathedral.

The point that eluded most of such students is that all of Britain's wonderfully uplifting Gothic cathedrals and churches were formerly Catholic.

St. Paul's, of course, was the first purpose-built Anglican cathedral in Britain.

All of the earlier cathedrals were thus essentially taken by force from their former owners and congregations. Catholicism has generally had to struggle to survive in Britain for much of the time since the Reformation.

Catholic marriages, for instance, were still not recognised in Britain as recently as 50 years ago. Bride and groom were obliged in those days also to undergo and pay for a civil ceremony.

The important point I am seeking to make here is that for non-Catholics in Britain, anti-Catholic sentiment is more often than not simply a by-product of a kind of historically ignorant patriotism.

With a rapid rise in historical ignorance, especially among former pupils of state schools, very few indeed in contemporary Britain realise any longer that theirs was once a staunchly Catholic country or that, prior to the historic 16th century schism, Henry VIII was widely regarded in Europe as an outstanding Catholic monarch.

It was in precisely the kind of context I have just described, in fact, that the historic papal visit to Britain took place back in September.

Foreseeably there were expected protests from lobby groups which support widespread contemporary views about homosexuality, contraception,



the ordination of women, abortion and what is seen as inadequate response by the Catholic Church to sexual abuse of children by a small minority of clerics.

The last topic aside, the previous four issues are generally regarded as being treated 'more sympathetically' or even 'more relevantly' by the Anglican Church today – in the Western world especially. Curiously traditional Christian teaching is upheld much more vigorously today by Anglican bishops in so-called 'third world' countries. Does that not tell us something about the growing moral softness and decadence of our prosperous 'first world'?

Listening to television commentaries about the papal visit to Britain back here in Australia it was stated confidently by some that Pope Benedict XVI and his predecessor Pope John Paul II would be the very last, so-called 'conservative' popes.

That was because the Catholic Church needed in their view, at least, to 'move with the times' and thus become 'more relevant' and 'user-friendly'.

It seems possible to me, at least, that no country in the world has more overweeningly conceited or ignorant television commentators than Australia.

Many imagine themselves to be intellectuals yet most seem incapable of grasping even the most elementary principles of religious faith. Regarding themselves as ideals of 'advanced' modern thinking they regard all alternative forms of thought, philosophy or belief as inferior and undesirable. In short, only if Catholic doctrine could perfectly resemble their own might it at last become 'relevant'.

Regular readers of my column in this journal will be aware by now of my belief that the combined doctrines of so-called post-modernism represent a greater threat to Christianity – and civilisation itself – than do any alternative systems of religious belief even including that of fundamentalist Islam.

It is therefore no surprise to me that on his visit to Britain the Pope warned Britain not to lose sight of its Christian heritage in its "multicultural" and "aggressively secular" modern culture. He was strongly critical of the 'marginalisation' of Christianity in modern Britain, claiming that churchgoers were often forced to act against their consciences in the name of secular equality.

Thus he attacked, for example, the politically correct notion that Christmas should not be celebrated for fear of offending minorities and that the Christian faithful should be obliged to keep their beliefs to themselves.

Because of the seriousness of such broad issues, the Pope often felt obliged to defend Christianity in general rather than the Catholic Church in particular to his British audience.



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As I write this, first news of the release of the trapped Chilean miners has just broken.

It seems significant to me that while concentrating on the trivialities of an historic occasion, Australian commentators found themselves unable to face the central issue of what had kept the trapped miners alive and disciplined in their underground hell.

Could it have been that unthinkable, unmentionable, unfashionable and irrelevant thing called religious faith?

Worse still, could it have been Catholic religious faith?

Pope Benedict XVI was only the second pope to visit Britain since the time of the Reformation and it is significant perhaps that while Anglican

congregations have generally declined in recent times Catholic Church attendances have been growing.

Certainly great enthusiasm for the papal visit was shown by the crowds that lined the routes and the Pope rightly emphasised the continuing importance of the Christian message in Britain where it has been a vital part of overall culture for well over a thousand years.

In Britain, as in Western Europe as a whole however, the influence of Christianity has generally declined in inverse proportion to increases in national prosperity. It might be easy to conclude from this that only the poor or politically oppressed continue today to find a central role for a Christian God in their lives.

I am one of a growing number who believe that the election of Karol Wojtyla in 1978 as the first non-Italian Pope since 1522 was a first, vital mainspring which triggered the collapse 11 years later of years of total domination by atheistic communism in Eastern Europe.

Under the oppression of communism, Poland had indeed re-established itself as a heartland for European Catholicism. Amazingly the number of religious – priests, nuns and monks – grew rather than declined in the years following the Second World War. According to Catholic historian Paul Johnson up to 95% of Polish children received Holy Communion after instruction at 18,000 catechetical centres and over 90% of Poles were buried according to Catholic rites. Up to 75% of town-dwellers were also married in church.

Poland. I submit, showed a magnificent example to the non-oppressed Western world just as Pope John Paul II had done by the uncompromising integrity of his views.

Christianity has survived, so far, for over 2,000 years. If it had been 'progressive' – as many of its more radical critics apparently wish – for all of that time it would clearly be unrecognisable and probably meaningless by now. Ancient religions are, by their nature, necessarily conservative since the values that are their core are similarly timeless.

Popes, by the nature of their unique authority, need to be unyielding in their faith but charitable as well as enterprising in its practice.

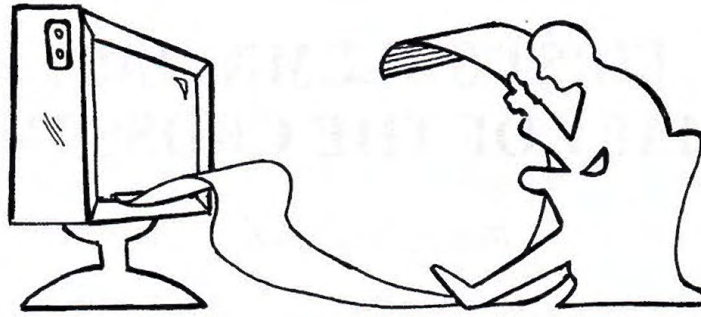
I believe that the visit by Pope Benedict XVI to the unpromising terrain of contemporary Britain was therefore a charitable and very important initiative.

Even popes cannot necessarily hope to see the consequences of all of their efforts.

Yet some vital seeds were surely planted last September in 'England's green and pleasant land'.

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

THE STORY GOES that a royal function some unfortunate man made something of a *faux pas*. Not recognising the woman to whom he was speaking he thought to bluff his way through, and by way of small talk, asked her how her sister was. To which the woman replied, "Oh, still the Queen." He was speaking to Princess Margaret.



MARY'S SMILE

By ROBERT TILLEY

I must confess I had something of a similar experience, though in rather different circumstances. Whether or not it was a dream or something of a graceful vision, I cannot tell. There are times when one has a dream and there are certain people present in the dream, who, one feels, are in it and yet are not of it. It is as if they are, as it were, making a visit. Many years ago I had one of these dreams, and in this one it was Mary who visited. It is still very vivid, and although I wish that I could have that dream again, my wishes have not been granted.

I was being escorted by someone through low scrub and sparse bush to a single small, compact Queenslander. There, at the top of the stairs leading to the verandah, was Mary. How did I know it was her? Well, I just knew. What can I say? – she was plainly attired, quite normal by country standards, only this normality served to highlight her beauty. It is pointless for me to try to describe this beauty for it is far beyond my ability. Suffice to say she was gracious, lovely, delightful, restful, composed, and everything else you could imagine – but on reflection perhaps the oddest thing was that she appeared so natural such that all else seemed unnatural and contrived by comparison. That's why I say, she was *in the dream* but seemed not to be *of the dream*.

But, if there were one thing that seemed to perfect her grace and beauty it was her smile.

I felt a mixture of bewildered surprise and awe, as well as joy. I went down upon my knees, only she picked me up and set me on my feet, and that in such an effortless way that I was even more confused. Which is when, like the man in the anecdote above, I began to babble and asked her how her son was. I felt silly while I was saying it, but *nothing* in her manner made me feel that way. And that's where

the dream ended. Whether it was merely a dream or something more I cannot say, but whatever it was after twelve or more years it still has an effect on me. Especially so when I remember Mary's smile.

A few years ago I was reading Ruth Harris' study on Lourdes (*Lourdes: Body and Spirit in a Secular Age*, 1999), and learnt how believers and unbelievers alike were taken by Bernadette's appearance when she was having her

vision or when she was just recollecting one. In particular what impressed many was her smile. For Bernadette's smile was a reflection of Mary's smile. If it was anything like that which I saw in my dream then I can easily understand why people on seeing it went away happy.

I think that one could build a theology of revelation on that smile, for just as Bernadette's smile reflected Mary's, Mary's reflects that of her son's, and thus reflects the beauty and glory and grace of God. In Exodus 34, when Moses came down from the mountain, having been in the presence of God, his face reflected something of the glory of God, but this proved fearful to the Israelites and Moses had to veil his face. In 2 Corinthians 3, St Paul takes up this incident and argues that all such veils are removed when face to face with Jesus Christ. Here there is no fear – and yet, like the Israelites, we do still fear. Nevertheless, God works to give us His grace tempered to our needs and gives us Mary the Mother of God Incarnate, so that upon her face grace quite literally smiles!

From Mary's smile we can trace the path of grace through the Incarnation into the very nature of God the Holy Trinity, and, doing so, we can conclude as Scripture concludes, that God is Love.

At the Cross there was grief, but Christmas is the festival appropriate for the smile, for surely Mary smiled this way when she first looked into the face of her baby just born. And, surely she smiles this way at all people because on the face of her son she saw, and still sees, his love for all people everywhere.



ROBERT TILLEY has a PhD from the University of Sydney. He currently lectures in Adult Education on Philosophy, Theology 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*.

Josephite Foundress honoured in the Basilica built over the tomb of St Paul

FIRST SOLEMN MASS OF ST MARY OF THE CROSS IN ROME

By Wanda Skowronska



ON OCTOBER 18, 2010, the day following the canonisation of Saint Mary of the Cross, Cardinal Pell, Archbishop of

Sydney, offered Mass in the Basilica of *St Paul outside the Walls* in Rome on the Via Ostiense. Reaching the altar after a long procession that included a group of aborigines, young people from Timor Leste, Josephite sisters, priests and bishops, Cardinal Pell called all to reflect on the historic nature of the occasion: the first Mass of thanksgiving in honour of Saint Mary of the Cross in Rome. A choir from the Australian Catholic University sang throughout the Mass which was attended by five thousand pilgrims, among them the Australian ambassador to the Holy See, Tim Fischer and also Kevin Rudd, Julie Bishop and Barnaby Joyce, among many dignitaries from several countries.

Cardinal Pell reminded his listeners that after his execution in around 64 AD St Paul was buried in this very spot, where Pope Damasus was to commence construction of a church in 380 AD and where prayers have been continually offered for over 1,600 years. The church had been renovated and enlarged several times, and then after being partially destroyed in a fire in 1823 was subsequently restored by Pope Pius IX, whom St Mary of the Cross met while in Rome. Cardinal Pell also recalled that the ground on which pilgrims were walking in Rome was the very ground on which many Christian martyrs had walked to their deaths.

During his sermon the Cardinal gave a comprehensive account of the historic context in which St Mary of the Cross established her new congregation. He recounted that only a few decades



Cardinal Pell at the entrance to the Basilica built over St Paul's burial place on the Via Ostiense, Rome.

before the future saint was born, Major General Lachlan Macquarie – later Governor Macquarie – arrived in Australia in 1810, twenty-two years after the arrival of the First Fleet, in order to restore order after the Rum Rebellion.

In the early years of the colony, the Mass was forbidden, Catholics were subjected to sectarian prejudice and were even flogged for not attending Protestant services. Governor Macquarie was obliged to swear on oath he did not believe in transubstantiation. However, despite such inpropitious beginnings the new governor was

determined to change the convict colony into a freer, more educated country. He became a champion of all Australians, even Catholics, and was present for the laying of the foundation stone for the original St Mary's Cathedral in 1821. When St Mary of the Cross was born in Melbourne in Fitzroy in 1842, Australia was in the process of rapid growth. The future saint also saw a vision of a better and freer country, if only the poor, among them many emancipated convicts, could receive an education, which involved not only the three Rs but also

knowledge of God's love and the and the Catholic Faith.

From the beginning, Cardinal Pell stated, St Mary of the Cross had sought out the poorest, most neglected part of God's creation and did this through becoming a religious nun, devoted to the evangelical counsels. She set her heart on God's kingdom. She often suffered from misunderstanding and sought support from Pope Pius IX [who himself was under much attack during his papacy] in a long and difficult journey to Rome in 1873, to get the Rule of her congregation approved. The Pope recognised the hand of God in her work and, Cardinal Pell added,



Paulino Santos from Timor Leste at the Mass at St Paul's outside the Walls.

'to use an Australianism' – in backing Mary, he 'backed a winner.' Though the future saint was unjustly treated by some and even excommunicated for five months by the irascible Bishop Sheil of Adelaide, in all her trials she showed her greatest virtue – her forgiveness. While some say that they can bury hatchet, Cardinal Pell explained, they never seem to forget where the hatchet is buried. St Mary of the Cross on the contrary both forgave and forgot and considered that to be hard and censorious was no longer to have the spirit of St Joseph, the patron of her order.

Cardinal Pell went on to say that while many nowadays downplay the



Australian Students carrying a cross decorated with aboriginal motifs as part of the Procession into the Basilica.

cost of redemption, in the nineteenth century Catholics understood this doctrine much better. St Mary of the Cross understood what the 'cross' truly meant. She bore many crosses patiently and told her sisters to expect crosses and to bear the faults of others as God bears with us, dispensing much good Christian advice to others during her life. The cardinal said that in St Mary of

Prayer to St Mary of the Cross

HOLY GOD, source of all goodness, you show us in Mary MacKillop a woman of faith who lived by the power of the cross. Teach us to embrace what she pioneered: new ways of living the gospel that respect and defend the human dignity of all in our land. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

- Prayer from the Mass for the Feast of St Mary of the Cross, August 8.

the Cross there was no sensationalism or eccentric spirituality – she was one of us, lived an Australian way of life, her voice was an Australian voice. Her example in forgiving others and in resisting hardness of heart with love, however, was something that went beyond national boundaries and spoke to all people of all cultures in all ages.

After the Mass, the congregation gathered outside among the imposing columns of the basilica, and its porticos, and the noble sculpture of St Paul



Pilgrims from Australia who took part in the Procession into the Basilica

gazing with fatherly interest on the occasion. Sister Marion Gambin, Provincial leader of the order in Australia, along with her fellow sisters, spoke with pilgrims among whom were Paulino Santos from Timor Leste currently studying in Australia, Fr Milton Arias parish priest of Humpty Doo in Darwin, Clare Lyons of MacKillop College in Werribee, Victoria, Anna Dimo, pastoral care worker for the Sudanese community in Sydney and members of the AJASS group – the Association of Josephite Affiliated Secondary Schools.

Enhanced by the solemnity of the occasion, there was an atmosphere of unity, friendship, and ineffable joy that pervaded the proceedings: a heavenly gift of St Mary of the Cross for all her fellow Australians.

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

'If God were to go on holidays he would stay with Noah'

THE SIMPLE LIFE OF NOAH DEARBORN

By PETER MALONE



FOR OLDER AUDIENCES – and for those who enjoy older films on Television or on DVD – the name of Sidney Poitier brings back fond memories. This year he turns 83.

When he was 71 he made this pleasing film for television, *The Simple Life of Noah Dearborn*. It is a film about a good man, and making a film about goodness is a very difficult task. Drama is the conflict between good and evil, and evil is generally fascinating for us all. There is conflict in this film so it works well as a drama. It is just that the figure of goodness, Noah himself, played with great dignity by Sidney Poitier, is such a strong and admirable character.

This performance from 1999 reminds us of the role that Poitier himself played in bringing African American characters to the screen when this was something the Hollywood studios were not so ready to do unless the performers played maids or were comedians.

It was in 1950 that Poitier starred in a serious drama, *No Way Out*. He was one of the students in the controversial *Blackboard Jungle* in 1954. If you wanted to see a fine early Poitier character, *A Man is Ten Feet Tall* (1957) is very impressive.

But it was his Oscar-winning role in the 1963 *Lilies of the Field*, a builder putting up a church for some nuns who had escaped from East Germany, that brought him to greater attention, winning the Academy Award for the year of Civil Rights demonstrations, the march on Washington and Martin Luther King's 'I have a dream' speech.

Most will remember his peak in the mid-1960s with the genial teacher of *To Sir, with Love*, the unexpected guest in *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* and the strong detective of *In the Heat*

To rent or buy, enquire at your local DVD store. Compare with Amazon prices before buying.

of the Night. These were roles that consolidated the screen presence of African Americans. The Academy honoured his life and career in a special Oscar in 2001.

A lot of the qualities of his popular films can be found in *The Simple Life of Noah Dearborn*.

Noah is aged 91. He certainly does not look it and his vigour in his carpentry work and his generous labour for townspeople belies his age. But, it is the end of the 20th century and the key word is 'development'. Noah is about to become the victim of corporate greed, younger lawyers working for investors who want to buy his land, inherited from his father, and set up a shopping centre. This has been a favourite theme for many films, the 'little person', the underdog who holds out against the business giants and their pressure.

When Christian Nelson (George Newbern) wants to oust Noah from his land because of mental incompetence, he sends his psychiatrist girlfriend, Valerie (Mary-Louise Parker) to visit him and make an assessment. Noah sees right though her. But, she is charmed and returns again and again to ask him questions. We, the audience, discover more about Noah and his simple life along with her.

Born in 1908, Noah loses his parents during his teen years but is mentored as a carpenter by his uncle and friend, Silas. The film provides a number of flashbacks so that we see and understand Noah better, especially in his talent as a carpenter and Silas's advice to focus and concentrate on his talent.

The consequence is that he has lived alone, working hard during

the day, sleeping at night (he has no electricity), never relating deeply to anyone. Through this simple life he has survived. He is a man of respect, responsibility, generosity, all trustworthy qualities. The townspeople have trusted him with their buildings and their repairs.

Ultimately, he is touched by Valerie's concern and help. While he has experienced friendship, especially with the café owner, Sarah (Diane Wiest). It is through his time with and his concern about Valerie that he learns a little about love.

There are many warm moments in the film but the cast avoids sentimentality. In fact, Valerie tells Noah it is all right to be angry and, to our amazement, he does burst out unexpectedly. The evil is represented by contemporary greed and a belief in progress at any cost. The simple life gives the lie to this way of business and exploitation, especially of people's lives and values.

Noah is a good man. Sarah says that the townspeople's opinion is that, if God were to go on holidays, he would stay with Noah.

This is a film that most audiences could watch. It has a PG rating because of the initial relationship between Valerie and her boyfriend and the themes would not appeal to younger children. Since this film, Sidney Poitier has made only one other, something in the same vein, *The Last Brickmaker in America* (2001). But Noah Dearborn is a valuable part of his contribution to our entertainment and reflections.

FATHER PETER MALONE MSC reviewed movies for *Annals Australasia* from 1968-1998. He also edited *Compass*, a theological Journal, from 1971 to 1998. He was president of the Catholic Church's World Association for Communication, SIGNIS, and a member of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, from 1999 until 2006. He now lives and works in Melbourne.

'CLUMSY' 'DRAKES,' 'AWKWARD' 'PRICES' AND 'NEALE'S GRANDSONS'

By Paul Stenhouse MSC



O, your editor hasn't lost his senses, at least not entirely - merely luxuriating for a moment in a treasure every living soul possesses, to a greater or lesser extent: language.

When I was a child I was fascinated by words: especially by how they developed and changed over centuries; and how they never fail to entrance us, and when they have us under their spell, plays tricks on us.

All languages do it, but my mother tongue - English - which shamelessly borrows from the languages of all who set foot on her soil, delights in amazing us with her perennial youth and mystery.

One of my earliest disappointments was to discover that not everybody shared my interest in language. *Annals* readers are, it goes without saying, an exception.

'A mere child'

I used the adverb 'merely' a few sentences ago. This beautiful word is something we inherited from the Golden Age of latin. I don't think it was inherited from the Romans who had occupied Britain since 55/54 BC. But whether they left it behind when the last legionaries pulled out of Britain in 410 AD to defend the collapsing Empire against the Barbarians, or whether the Norman French brought it with them in 1066, matters not. We have it. 'Merus' means something admirable, 'pure' and 'unadulterated'.

'Mere' means 'pure' and 'simple,' that is 'genuine,' 'authentic,' 'true to itself.'

'Mere wine,' for instance, means pure, unadulterated, unmixed wine. 'Perfect' in that sense. 'Mere' laypeople are model believers: lay Catholics whose Faith is so strong that they can defend and promote their faith respectfully but competently against all comers. 'Mere'

children are youngsters who love and obey their parents, and set an example to their peers.

These days we have put the word on its head, and now it has a pejorative, disparaging ring to it, as if being 'merely a mother,' or 'merely a farmer,' or 'merely a tradesman,' is somehow shameful; something to be deplored.

Bring back the old meaning. A 'mere' housewife is the genuine article, a perfect and pure embodiment of what it means to be a wife and mother; a 'mere' farmer is a competent, knowledgeable and dedicated agriculturalist; and a 'mere' tradesman is someone that we should all be proud to be.

'Abandon Hope all ye who enter Here'

[Sign outside Hell in Dante Alighieri's
Divine Comedy]

Now, take the word 'abandon'. If I asked, I'm sure most would say that the verb 'abandon' means 'to desert,' or 'to sever ties' with, or 'to cast out,' 'set aside,' someone or something.

It is a perfectly respectable English word, with a Mediterranean flavour, coming from a latin word 'bannus' meaning a decree. Originally spelt 'abannen,' 'abandon' meant 'to publish far and wide,' 'to proclaim' or 'announce,' something publicly. No thought there of 'leaving behind,' or 'casting aside.'

When I was a young priest this original meaning still survived but [as so often is the case] only in the Catholic Church. The marriage 'banns,' for instance, were read out ['published'] for weeks before a wedding at each Sunday Mass in the Church where it was to be celebrated.

Over time this thoroughly positive word acquired, like 'mere,' a negative meaning - and we find words like

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St. John's Seminary School of Theology, CA	98	-13
Notre Dame Seminary, LA	98	-11
Sacred Heart School of Theology, WI	95	-4
St. John Vianney Theological Seminary, CO	90	+7
Mount Angel Seminary, OR	89	+10

Source: Vatican Yearbook Annuario Pontificio

'banish' meaning to drive somebody away [following on a decree], and 'banned' meaning something or someone proscribed by the promulgation of a punitive law. And of course 'abandon,' now meaning 'to reject,' 'to turn away from,' and 'to banish'.

Feeling awkward ?

'Awkward' ['awk-ward'] is another gem, this time from farther afield. It is a mixture of English and Icelandic.

'Awk' is a Middle English word from Iceland – compliments of the marauding Vikings I should think – meaning 'wrong' or 'contrary'. 'Ward' is the good old sturdy English suffix we find in 'onward' and 'upward' and 'forward', 'northward', and 'homeward'. The meaning is *towards-up*, *towards-north* and *towards-home*.

Today, 'awkward' has been trivialized to mean 'clumsy' but its original meaning was more like 'contrary-wise' or 'perversely' or 'going the wrong way'.

Why couldn't 'awkward' have been left alone to mean 'going the wrong way,' or 'doing the wrong thing'? 'Clumsy' [another word from the cold climes of Sweden and Iceland] doesn't need any help. It is quite capable of doing a good job – it means 'benumbed,' and as we all know there's nothing like having numbed hands or feet to make you 'clumsy'.

Slips of the Tongue

When I was a seminarian in the late 1950s we had a Superior whose name was Father Drake. When some of the ducks at our Monastery were stolen, Melbourne newspapers had a field day over the stealing of Father Drake's ducks. But, as I hope to show, at least part of a 'duck' had been taken from Father 'Drake' many hundreds of years earlier.

I wonder did he know that his *real* name was Middle English, and it wasn't 'Drake' but *Aened-rake*, and that it literally meant 'king' [rake] 'duck' [aened]? I can only surmise that the Saxons and Normans grew tired of pronouncing *aenedrake* fully. Eventually it was slurred until all that was left of the poor 'duck' was the 'd' of 'aened' – and soon everyone, including us, got used to saying 'd-rake,' and then 'drake,' meaning a male 'duck'.

Speaking of names, and of letters dropping off, or being slurred, I wonder how many of us whose family names are Powell, or Price, Pugh or Pritchard, Probin or Bevan, Pumphry, Perry, Parry or Barry know that the English versions of our names are *Howellson*, *Rhysson*, *Hughson* [Hewson], *Richardson*, *Robinson*, *Evanson*, *Humphryson*, and *Harrison*.

The culprit is the Welsh prefix for 'son' which is 'ap'. Thus Evan son of Hugh was 'Evan ap Hugh'. Through slurring, ap Hugh eventually became

Pugh. Richard son of Rhys was 'Richard ap Rhys'. Ap Rhys eventually became *Prhys* and finally *Price*.

'Son' also had a tendency to drop off, so we find that David's son became Davidson or Davison, and then simply Davis; Harry's son became Harrison, then Harris; John's son became Johnson, then Jones; Evan's son became Evanson, then Evans.

The Welsh gloried [and maybe still glory] in their ancestors. And naturally 'ap' has its part to play. In 1842 Marc Antony Lower¹ described an Englishman riding one night in the mountains of Wales who hearing a cry for help coming from someone who'd fallen into a ravine, yelled out: 'What or who are you?'. The response came swiftly and fluently: 'Jenkins ap Griffith ap Robyn ap William ap Rhys ap Evan'. To this the Englishman, not much versed in Welsh, replied: 'What lazy fellows you are: why can't you help one another?'

What about Neil's grandson?

But enough of Welsh and English, Icelandic and Latin, what about the Irish and Scotch?

Oops – these days Scottish people prefer 'Scots'. This is despite the fact that Robbie Burns, to say nothing of Sir Walter Scott and Lord Byron [*Scotch plaids*, *Scotch snoods*, etc], always wrote 'Scotch'. As Robbie was the 'Scotchest' of all Scotsmen, there are those today who think that whatever was good enough for him should be good enough for them.

Whatever be the truth of that, our concern today is with the Irish, especially the O'Farrells, O'Donals and O'Neills and their ilk with the familiar affix 'O' in their name. Unlike 'Mc' this 'O' does not mean 'son of,' but 'grandson of' Farrell, and 'grandson of' Donal, and 'grandson of' Neale [or Niall] or Neil or Neill.

But ... we have come to the end. Not that we've run out of words; it is our 'tide' [or is that 'time?'] that has ebbed.

Now, about 'ebbed' ...

Don't be Bamboozled

AS TO ... the question 'what becomes of man after death?' we do not see that a highly educated European, left to his unassisted reason, is more likely to be in the right than a Blackfoot Indian. Not a single one of the many sciences in which we surpass the Blackfoot Indians throws the smallest light on the state of the soul after the animal life is extinct. In truth all the philosophers, ancient and modern, who have attempted, without the help of revelation to prove the immortality of man, from Plato down to Franklin, appear to us to have failed deplorably. Then, again, all the great enigmas which perplex the natural theologian are the same in all ages. The ingenuity of a people just emerging from barbarism is quite sufficient to propound those enigmas. The genius of Locke or Clarke is quite unable to solve them.

– Thomas Babington Macauley, *Critical and Historical Essays*, 1843, Vol II, review [first published October 1840] of 'Leopold von Ranke's History of the Popes'. Macauley was a Protestant. His paternal grandfather was a Presbyterian minister, his mother was a Quaker.

1. English Surnames: Essays on Family Nomenclature, London, 1842, p.8.

*'The Vatican Gardens resounded to the music of the
Australian aboriginal didgeridoo'*

ABORIGINAL ROME

By George Cardinal Pell



THE ILLUMINATED DOME of St. Peter's Basilica provided a stunning background as a couple of hundred Australians gathered on the roof of the Vatican Museum on the Saturday night before the canonization of St. Mary MacKillop.

We were present for a concert of aboriginal dancing and music after the official opening of a display of aboriginal artefacts in the restored ethnological section of the Vatican Museum.

The evening was perfect autumn weather, cool enough to wear a jacket. We were flanked by the Vatican Gardens, gathered under a couple of ancient Roman pines, surrounded by flaming torches and not far from a large, elaborately carved Greco-Roman funeral urn. It was an exotic setting.

I suspect this was the first time that the Vatican Gardens had resounded to the music of the aboriginal didgeridoo, expertly played by William Barton, backed by the Barton quartet.

The music was beautiful and haunting evoking memories of Australian bird sounds at dusk by the beach. Our consciousness that we are Australians was heightened by the music and the realisation that we were far from home. Another musical setting portrayed the handing on of traditions to the next generations, which is a challenge for every culture.

The dancing was also first rate, well drilled and snappy, provided by the Australian Catholic University MacKillop dancing group, supplemented by a number of youngsters from Nudgee College in Brisbane.

Australian Catholic University also provided the choir for the Saturday concert and prayer service recounting St. Mary's life and for the Thanksgiving Mass on Monday. Members came from all around Australia and were chosen after auditions.

Earlier on Saturday evening an historic exhibition was opened in the Vatican Museum on "Rituals of Life. The Spirituality and Culture of the Australian Aboriginals".

The exhibits were chosen from the hundreds of pieces sent from aboriginal Australia to the Vatican from the vast missionary exhibition of 1925 organized by Pope Pius XI.

The pieces came from the Catholic missions at New Norcia and Kalumburu in West Australia and from the Tiwi Islands in the Northern Territory. The National Museum of Australia cooperated to exhibit the collection.

The Australian Embassy to the Holy See supported the project and Father Maselli, the director of the Vatican's Ethnological Museum, visited the Australian communities which produced the works to obtain their consent and co-operation.

Australia had its first saint and this exhibition was also an excellent first.

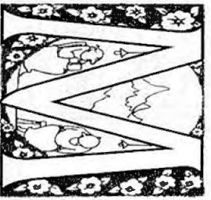
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WORLD WAR II

110,000 Japanese soldiers died in the Battle of Okinawa, along with 75,000 civilians who had been caught between the two armies.

KAMIKAZE, THE TRAGEDY OF WAR

By Paul Glynn, SM



Y last year in high school was 1945. Since early 1942 when the Japanese forces were relentlessly storming south, and had not been beaten or even made pause in any major battle, we Australian schoolboys had been training regularly in khaki, shouldering rifles and practising throwing grenades.

I remember how an army sergeant from World War I scared the living daylights out of us when the Cadet Corps started. It was a time when we knew there was a real possibility that the Japanese would invade Australia. If that happened, we eighth graders told one another solemnly, a Resistance would be set up like the one in Occupied France that we were hearing about. Would we have the courage to take part in it? The sergeant did little to allay our fears of a Japanese invasion of Australia. He told us very graphically what the Japanese would do to us if they caught us. He meant to scare us and he succeeded.

From the start, we were being taught by Army personnel to hate the Japanese. Soon we were being trained to shoot straight (more or less) with rifles that Australian soldiers had used in the Boer War (1899-1902). You could hardly say Australia was ready to meet the superbly trained Japanese Army, and the veteran sergeant drummed this in to us to make us prepare very seriously.

Several years later, as the Japanese were finally being driven back from the lands they had conquered, we began hearing about the Kamikaze. Japanese pilots, flying Zeros and other fighter planes with bombs lashed beneath them, were crash-diving into American navy ships, above all trying



Young Kamikaze pilots Chiran, Kagoshima, Japan 1945.

to hit aircraft carriers. Some media people, usually virulently anti-Japanese in those grim days, suggested that the Kamikaze pilots had to be drugged, or even chained to the cockpits! We school lads believed this and hated the Japanese all the more for this grotesque fanaticism. Of course we approved of junior-kamikaze tactics on the rugby field and in our yearly boxing tournament! We viewed the latter as glorious; in no way fanatical!

Meanwhile in Japan Kamikaze pilots who had finished their training and were waiting for their one-way orders, were coming on pilgrimage to the Shinto Shrine outside Ise City. Japanese had worshipped here at the Ise Grand Shrine for the last 2000 years.

Toyoko was the five-year-old daughter of an Ise inn-keeper where many of the youthful Kamikaze stayed during their pilgrimage. Delicacies were rare in those days but Toyoko noticed how they appeared on the food trays taken up to the Kamikaze pilots' rooms.

She also noticed the strips of glowing, snowy paper, covered in large ideographs, that the young men gave her parents. The latter would lower their heads and receive the paper reverently on outstretched, upturned hands. Bowing deeply they took the paper strips to the tokonoma, the alcove in traditional dwellings where precious objects are displayed.

In those days it was most unusual

in Japan for a man to pick up someone else's child and give a big hug. Toyoko has very clear memories of that happening to her as the youthful pilots were leaving. She enjoyed this fond attention from men who were very special in her parents' eyes.

Toyoko traveled to Australia in 1998 to participate in a reconciliation ceremony for peoples involved in the Pacific War, hosted by St. Joseph's College, Hunter Hill. The prayers were led by a Japanese Buddhist priest and a Catholic bishop, with a messages from Tokyo's Cardinal Shirayanagi and other notables like Governor General Sir William Deane.

An Australian soldier who was a Japanese prisoner on the Burma-Thailand Railroad returned a samurai sword to the Buddhist priest as his sign of reconciliation. Prayers for forgiveness of past hatreds were offered by returned armed services personnel and by people from the nations involved in that bloody war, each in their native tongue, dressed in their traditional clothing. A choir of new Australians from the Philippines led the Lourdes hymn, asking the Mother of the human family to help us get over past hurts and live as peace makers.

Toyoko was interviewed by journalist Tony Stephens for an covering article that appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald, on May 2, 1998. She told the journalist she now understands why the young pilots did the un-Japanese thing of picking up and hugging the daughter of people who were not relatives. The young Kamikaze knew they would never have children of their own! Toyoko momentarily became the child they would never father.

She brought to Sydney some of the "strips of paper" that her family had carefully preserved. They were farewell poems of the Kamikaze, composed in accord with a tradition coming down from Japan's pre-medieval times. For samurai of the simple, straightforward, vigorous and Zen-inspired culture that was born in late 12th century Kamakura, dying without fear was the mark of a real man.

Before going into battle they would kneel in the formal *seiza* style, take a brush and write a *jisei no uta*, literally

If only ...

If I knew then what I know now
(I thought I did you know
somehow)

If I could have the time again
I'd take the sunshine leave the rain
If only time would trickle slow
Like rain that melts the fallen snow
If only Lord if only
If only Lord if only

- Roger Whittaker

a 'parting-from-this-world' song. It was a short poem, a farewell gesture and a keepsake for their loved ones. It would show that if death was his fate in the coming battle, he died willingly and serenely because he was going to war out of fidelity to his *shukun*, his liege lord.

Some Kamikaze pilots wrote a *jisei no uta*, such as the *haiku-like* composed for the benevolent Ise inn-keeper. Almost all wrote a farewell letter to their parents before their fatal flight. Many of those farewell letters are touchingly beautiful. A great number of Kamikaze pilots were university students. The war effort needed students doing courses like engineering, so most student volunteers accepted into Kamikaze wings were arts students.

Most well-educated Japanese of that era possessed a fine knowledge and love of poetry. You see this manifested in the widespread Kamikaze custom of going to death with a photo of their mother in one of the flying suits' pockets and a slim volume of their favourite poet or writer in the other.

Many of these last letters are kept in the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo. If you read them, it becomes obvious that the writers loved life like any normal person but thought this was the only way to stop the American juggernaut - far more powerful in weaponry than Japan. The dream of all Kamikaze pilots was to sink one of the U.S. aircraft carriers that were launching the planes that were attacking Japanese cities and towns day and night, with a terrible toll of civilians. By the end of the Pacific War, the official Government count of Japanese killed in air raids would rise to 509,469.

Ryuji Nagatsuka was a Kamikaze whose plane developed engine trouble and nosed down into a rice field just before the war ended. He survived the crash and later wrote a book, *I Was a Kamikaze*. He had done well in high school and passed the tough entrance exam for Japan's top place of higher learning, Tokyo Imperial University. He intended to study French literature for which he had a passionate love. These fond hopes paled into insignificance against the national emergency and the call for Kamikaze pilots.

It was 1945. He had finished his flying training and had a day's leave on April 29, the Emperor's birthday. Cherry blossoms were very much in his thoughts that day. The Japanese people have had a long love affair with cherry blossoms, expressed in poems you can read in the Manyoshu collection that dates back to the last half of the 7th century.

Because the beautiful blossoms fall not many days after blooming, they symbolize almost perfectly one of Japanese Buddhism's central teachings, the impermanence of all things on this earth. The blossoms became the samurai's symbol, for he must be prepared to die young in fighting battles for his liege lord. The Kamikaze were very much in tune with *bushido*, the samurai code. They adopted cherry blossoms as their symbol, often painting them on the fuselage of their planes.

Now, with a day off and walking alone to the station to catch a train to Tokyo, Nagatsuka hummed the song he had sung a few weeks before, walking arm and arm with Kamikaze comrades along the cherry blossom avenue close to their base.

Petals of the same cherry tree,
That flowered in our squadron,
you and I
Blossoms open at the same
moment,
As we shall fall at the same time
Fated to scatter our precious
fragrance
Courageously, together for our
motherland.

When he reached Tokyo he was rocked to see the devastation caused by the napalm bombs that the huge B-29 were dropping on the capital. General Curtis Le May began the final phase of bombing Japan when,

after midnight on the 11th of March, 334 B-29s sowed napalm-filled M47 bombs all over downtown Tokyo in a raid that went on until almost dawn. Sixteen square miles of Tokyo went up in flames and city officials put the number of dead at 130,000.

The cherry blossoms young Nagatsuka saw that day were mostly pitiful charred skeletons. The American aircraft carriers were sending fighter planes to protect the big U.S. bombers that sowed fiery destruction and death. He wandered about the stricken streets musing on his chance to take out an aircraft carrier in his death dive. He reflected on the C.O.'s warning against instinctively shutting their eyes as they zeroed in an enemy ship. That might make them miss. Looking soberly at the scale of damage in Tokyo he began to think about the unthinkable. What if the Kamikaze operation failed, what if the Americans broke through Japan's last ditch defences? What would become of the Japanese people; of his own family? Would Japan end up a western colony like India?

After a very gloomy day he was now standing on the platform waiting for the train that would take him back to his air base. He was having trouble adjusting the braid that had come loose on his officer's sword.

Suddenly he became conscious that a very refined woman was talking to him, suggesting that she adjust the braid. After she fixed it she looked approvingly at his Kamikaze insignia. She said her pilot son had recently died on a suicide mission. She and her daughter were just now coming from the cemetery where they had erected a memorial stone in his honour. 'He is always in our thoughts,' she continued 'and my daughter cannot get over his loss. You will one day swoop on the enemy as he did. You brave Kamikaze are protecting us from invasion and all the death and dishonouring of women that would follow. You are our guardian angels'. There were tears in the eyes of mother and daughter as they bowed deeply to him and left.

He was moved to his depths by this encounter. The beautiful features of the daughter captivated him. She was all the more beautiful for the sadness that clouded her face, and despite her tears that shone like diamonds, her

spirit was unbroken. Yes, that was the kind of woman he would have married had there been no war. He began to fantasize: He was a professor of French literature, working at home in his study late into the night. He was very happily married to this woman of his dreams.. They had a fine son, and the three of them had enjoyed a stroll along the river bank that day. Now he was pleasantly weary and Ah! The swish of her kimono as she brought him some hot green tea.

He turned to watch the backs of the mother and daughter blurring into the crowd. There and then he renewed his solemn commitment to carry out his desperate mission faithfully, getting one enemy warship, maybe even an aircraft carrier. It was very worthwhile dying to save that magnificent mother and her splendid daughter, and his own dear family, and millions like them.

But back to Toyoko. 38 years after the uncomprehending but joyful five-year-old was lionized and hugged by the young Kamikaze pilots, she went to Okinawa, the place of the last pitched battle to halt the American advance on Japan. She was shocked to be told that 110,000 Japanese soldiers died in the Battle of Okinawa, and 75,000 civilians who had been caught between the two armies.

Of the 170,000 U.S. soldiers who landed on Okinawa, 12,520 were killed and 36,400 were wounded. For 19 U.S. ships sunk and 25 seriously damaged, more than 15,000 Kamikaze pilots perished. Their bodies would have disintegrated on impact, their life blood scattered like tempest-struck cherry blossoms, and on the very shores and waters she was looking at. Sobs shook her and the heartlessness and futility of war overwhelmed her.



What could she do to honour the young Kamikaze for their heroic patriotism and the sacrifice of their unfulfilled lives? What could she do for reconciliation that is the premise for peace between nations?

On Anzac Day 1988 she did something special. Welcoming the opportunity, she had come down from Japan to take an active part in a Sydney prayer gathering of peoples whose nations were involved in the Pacific War. She carried precious farewell poems the Kamikaze had left with her parents at the Ise Inn, sensing that somehow there would be a kind of fulfilment to the yearnings behind those sad poems if she brought them to this gathering for peace and reconciliation - where Japanese, Westerners, Chinese, Filipinos and Pacific Islanders, Christians, Buddhists and Shintoists like herself would sing and pray together for reconciliation and peace.

As her own personal offering, she sang a poem composed by Saigyō Hoshi, a 12th century samurai general who saw the folly of warfare, relinquished all his possessions and became a Buddhist monk. The poem described how he, now a Buddhist priest, leaving his hermitage in the Yoshino mountains on a pilgrimage by foot, experienced the presence of the Compassionate One as he came to the Shinto Shrine at Ise. He was so overwhelmed by the Presence that tears of gratitude streamed down his cheeks.

She also read several of the poems left by young Kamikaze at her parents' inn 44 years before. The Japanese rhythm and haiku-like pithiness is lost in the English translation but the meaning of them is this: "Elegy for my nuptials that shall not be, for my bride is an enemy aircraft carrier." Another goes: "Though my body disintegrates in southern waters, my heart is fixed on the spring that will come." A third one: "I shall flutter into the Greater East Asia Sea like a cherry blossom."

FATHER PAUL GLYNN, SM has spent 25 years as a missionary in Japan. Author of *A Song for Nagasaki*, *Healing Fire From Frozen Earth*, and *The Wayside Stream: Reconciliation*, Father Glynn is stationed at Villa Maria, Hunters Hill, NSW. Excerpted from *The Wayside Stream: A Little Girl and the Kamikaze*.

Another view of Finland and Scandanavia in the wake of the Reformation

THE FAITH OF OUR FOREFATHERS

By Oskar Garstein



JOHANNES JUSSOILA (1555-1604) was the best known representative of the Counter-Reformation in Finland. He was born in Rauma, Finland, at a time when his country formed an integral part of the

Swedish kingdom. Sweden had already become Protestant, but Johannes converted to Catholicism as a young man, and, from 1578-1580, studied at the Jesuit-run *Collegium Germanicum* in Rome, where he was ordained a priest by the papal legate, Antonio Possevino.

Johannes later returned to Sweden as chaplain to the Catholic Crown Prince, Sigismund Vasa.

He preached numerous sermons, in Swedish and Finnish, and wrote books and tracts opposing Lutheranism. His activities alarmed the Protestant clergy, who challenged him to a public theological disputation before a meeting of the three highest Estates.

The disputation was viewed by Catholics as ending in a splendid victory for Jussoila. To shield him, however, from the Lutherans' mounting hostility, Jussoila was assigned to the Brigittine convent of Vadstena to serve as the nuns' confessor.

He subsequently rejoined the Prince's entourage, and accompanied him to Poland in 1587, when Sigismund was elected King of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In Poland, Johannes initially worked at the Royal Chancery in Cracow, but, during the early 1590's, became parish priest of Pärnu and a canon of Vilna Cathedral.

This period saw the struggle for power between Sigismund, the legitimate heir to the Swedish throne, and his usurping uncle, the (fiercely Protestant) Duke Charles. In 1600, Charles' forces seized Pärnu and captured Jussoila. He was held in prison in Stockholm, while Charles demanded an exceptionally high ransom for his release.

Tragically, despite many appeals to family and friends, Jussoila was unable to raise the ransom. At the Duke's orders, he was then tortured to death.

During his years in Rome, Johannes wrote a remarkable letter to his parents. It suggests that Catholic beliefs and practices had never been entirely extinguished in his family, and is a striking testimony to the ardor and tenderness of Jussoila's missionary zeal:

'My warmest and most affectionate greetings, and God's blessing!

'As I now have the opportunity of writing to you, I want you to know that I am very happy and rejoice in the Lord, as if I were personally present amongst you. I enclose some representations, printed on paper and parchment, in the hope that they may inspire you to follow the example of the holy men of the past and of their God-fearing ways, which mankind was created to follow.

'To you, my dear father, I present the likeness of St John Chrysostom, hoping that you will adopt him as your patron saint and dwell upon his good works. The stone he holds in his hand was used one whole night to beat his breast until evil desire left him; he lived chaste the rest of his life.

'I also want you, father, to keep the picture of Christ crucified and have it every before your eyes...So, also, the likeness of the Blessed Virgin and the print of any other Saint which takes your fancy in in the hope that these representations may move you to a greater knowledge of God and to a life of penitence, so that the Saints may now intercede for you to God the Eternal as they did in the time of our forefathers... Further, I beseech you not to follow the paths of evil, but rather the path of righteousness. By all means avoid the path of the excommunicated Martin Luther and of all his disciples, for it leads directly to hell. So, too, the paths of those to whom - in the idiom of St Augustine - the Church of God refuses to be a mother and Christ a father.

'To my sister Catherine I give the picture of St Catherine; and I ask that she take her as her patron Saint as our dear mother entreated us to do while she was still alive...

'My sisters Anne and Elizabeth and other members of the family may take their pick from what is left of what I now send. But young Matthias must have the print of St. Francis, who, as you can see in the likeness, during a moment of prayer had a vision of Christ

Sistine Chapel Ceiling 'Inspired'

FOR CENTURIES writers on Michelangelo have criticised Julius for taking him off the tomb, on which he had set his heart, and putting him to work on the painting of the Sistine Ceiling, although he always said he hated the act of painting. I think it was a stroke of inspiration. The original project for the tomb included almost forty marble figures, over life-size. How could Michelangelo ever have completed it? We know that he carved marble faster than any mason, but even with his heroic energy the tomb would have taken twenty years, during which time his mind was changing and developing. And the fact that, on the Ceiling, he decided to illustrate themes, not simply to concentrate on single figures, freed him to extend his thoughts about human relationships and human destiny.

- Sir Kenneth Clarke, *Civilisation*, 1971 ed. With thanks to Roger Sandall.
http://www.rogersandall.com/Spiked_By-the-Skin-of-our-Teeth.php

Spot the Totalitarian State

CAN WE HOPE to reverse the present tendency of Western society and to restore a Christian civilization? Or must we withdraw from the world and resign ourselves to a subterranean persecuted existence like that of the early Christians?

This is a serious dilemma, for it is much easier to state the objections to either course than to find a solution. The history of our civilization is so bound up with Christian traditions and ideals that it seems wrong to acquiesce in the victory of secularism without a struggle. Yet on the other hand any attempt to associate Christianity with a definite programme of political or economic reform is fraught with difficulties and dangers. As we have seen, modern secularism is not a single united force; it appears in the modern world under three, separate forms which are not only different from one another but mutually antagonistic. Consequently it is no use attacking one of them, if the defeat of one merely leads to the victory of another.

Religious people are not always very clear-sighted in political matters and nothing is easier than for them to mistake the real danger and to waste their time attacking that form of secularism which happens to be the most unpopular in their own society, and consequently the least likely to succeed, while they close their eyes to the real source of danger. And thus we find Christian Nationalists, like the *Deutsche Christen*, attacking Marxism as the embodiment of antichristian secularism, while they appear to be entirely oblivious of the dangers to spiritual freedom and to Christian moral ideals involved in the Nazi cult of the racial state. And in the same way we find Christian Socialists in this country who are determined to destroy Militarism and Capitalism and Nationalism as the enemies of the Kingdom of God, but who do not realise that Socialism itself is capable of becoming just as dangerous to spiritual freedom. It is easy for us to denounce the unchristian behaviour of the Nazis, because we have no temptation to behave as they do.

Nobody supposes that the Y.M.C.A. or Toc H are likely to start hunting down pacifists or trying to beat up Lord Melchett or Mr. Lansbury. Our temptations are more subtle, but no less real. It may be harder to resist a Totalitarian State which relies on free milk and birth-control clinics than one which relies on castor oil and concentration camps. The latter offends all our humanitarian instincts and traditions, the former appeals to those very instincts and allies itself with the movement for social reform which is so intimately connected with modern English religion.

- Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State*, London, Sheed and Ward, 1935, pp.106-108.

in the sky, transfixed to the Cross with pierced hands, feet, and side...

'My brother Michael is to have the picture of the Blessed Virgin Mary to whom the Angel announced that she would become the Mother of God. I want him also to keep several prints of the Saints, for instance, those of St Ambrose, St. Augustine, and St Anthony.

'Furthermore, I charge my brother Michael to read every Friday the Litanies specified in the note enclosed in this letter. He is to read them for his mother, grandmother, grandfather, and sisters, who have all passed on before us. Moreover, I charge him to pray most sincerely every day for those of our family who are still among the living. He should do so as soon as he rises in the morning...Indeed, he should also instruct his brothers Martin, Benedict, Joseph, and Laurentius in the faith of our forefathers until, God permitting, I myself am in a position to return to you and instruct you more fully.

'If the noble Reverend Legate (*Antonio Possevino*) in whose retinue I left the country, will receive any of you or if he writes to any of you, then be prepared to follow his instructions and come here to Rome, where you will ensure your eternal salvation. I will send you a prayerbook in Latin by the same courier who brought you this letter, if it ever reaches you safely, which I doubt.

'Write back to me and inform me if you are alive or not...

'On the representations I now send you, I have written the names of all the Martyrs of God. If you have difficulty in remembering them, look at the back, and you will find the answer written there for you to consult whenever you need to do so...Recite the Rosary and take care that every single one of you procures one of them. Keep them with you at all times...

'Rome, the Metropolis of Christendom, 25 December Year 1578.

'Best wishes in the name of the Lord.

Remember me to Pastor Anders and entreat him to read the Holy Scriptures with great care and to try to understand them correctly. So, too, the teachings of the Church of Rome, so that he will perceive that in adopting the doctrines of Luther he has gone astray and is following false paths.

Jöns Månsson Jussoila
your affectionate son.'

Source: Oskar Garstein, *Rome and the Counter-Reformation in Scandinavia: Jesuit Educational Strategy, 1553-1622*, Brill, 1992, pp. 119-122

From 240 to 420 AD: The Blink of an Eyelid

ORAL TRADITION

NEAR AQUILEIA in northern Italy, at Concordia Sagittaria, St Jerome [345-420 AD] the future secretary of Pope Damasus I [304-384 AD] and future translator of the Bible and chronicler of Eusebius of Caesarea [260-340] met around 370 AD an elderly man called Paul. In his youth Paul had known at Rome a secretary of St Cyprian of Carthage who died in 258. We quote here from the letter in which St Jerome, when sending him one of his works concerning the holy writers, delighted in describing and praising the robust old age of this dweller in the remote Catholic past.

‘Behold, your hundredth year is passing, and ever faithful to the Saviour’s precepts you find in present blessings a foretaste of the bliss to come. Your sight is clear, your steps firm, your hearing quick, your voice sonorous, and your body full of sap. Your rosy complexion contrasts with the whiteness of your hair, and your strength contradicts your years. Old age has not destroyed your memory, as with so many, nor a cooling blood blunted the keenness of your mind or extinguished its fire. No wrinkles furrow your brow or line your face. Your hand does not tremble: upon the waxen tablets it guides an un-swerving stylus. God, who in your person illustrates the vigour and verdure of the future resurrection, has given us a lesson. If sin is the cause of others being already dead in the flesh although still alive, then your virtue has won you the privilege of still seeming young when of an age which is young no longer.’ [*De viris illustribus - Concerning Famous Men - chapter liii.*]

St Jerome gathered much precious knowledge from Paul whose wonderful and rare old age he so much admired. From him he learned that St Cyprian professed a keen admiration for Tertullian whose works he daily read, and whom he called his master. Thus through oral tradition Jerome began that study of Church History to which he later was to contribute so largely.

- See *St Jerome*, by Augustin Largent, 1913, translated by Hester Davenport, pp.16-17.

The British Media, and Benedict XVI's visit to the United Kingdom

THE PAPACY – THE TRUE X-FACTOR

By Kevin Grant



THE DAY AFTER Pope Benedict flew away from Birmingham Airport, the British newspapers gave us their immediate impressions of his visit, before the pundits and the professors could overlay the event with their retrospective analyses and theories. This round-up records those morning-after reactions.

In Britain we used to divide our papers into the *qualities*, which were all broadsheets, and the *populars*, which were all tabloid papers. But three of the quality papers have now gone tabloid, including *The Times*. I have ranked the papers by the extent of the coverage they gave.

The **DAILY TELEGRAPH**, the best-seller among the quality papers and the only one still in broadsheet format, gave the fullest coverage, by a long way. It spread 1,144 column centimetres (cms) over seven pages, including seven pictures.

A huge p.1 picture of Pope Benedict waving as he departed was captioned 'Pope's fond farewell to Britain'. Then, spread over pp. 4 and 5, was a pageant picture of the Beatification Mass in Cofton Park, Birmingham, the huge portrait of Newman a backdrop to all the figures, including the Holy Father, in liturgical action below. The inch-high headline sweeping under this was 'Relics, ritual and rain in Middle England'. My old friend Christopher Howse, assistant editor and a Catholic, wrote the main story, noting that the precise moment of Cardinal Newman's Beatification was 10.37am. 50,000 people had been standing in muddy grass for five hours under gentle rain but their individual comments were all joyous. Mary Buxton had left Skelmersdale at 3.00 in the morning. 'I did get wet. Someone gave me this umbrella. I have enjoyed it.' Despite

the design of the altar and the vast crowds spread before it, Christopher felt that the atmosphere was more like that at an agricultural show than at a pop concert.

Martin Beckford, religious affairs correspondent, wrote stories under several headlines: 'Cardinal Newman, the rebel with a holy cause,' 'Miracle that set Victorian cardinal on the path to sainthood,' 'Beatification – how to become a saint,' and, 'Britain's resistance to Nazism praised.'

Under a rambling headline 'The Pope's parting gift – Benedict XVI's historic visit to Britain has been a

resounding success – and may have changed attitudes towards the role of religion in modern life,' Peter Stanford, author and former *Catholic Herald* editor, wrote that 'Benedict's voice may have been devoid of intonation, and his face curiously immobile, but his eyes conveyed that same pastorly warmth and humanity that he praised in Newman.' He noted that Benedict was careful not to challenge British Catholics in those areas where they have shown themselves to dissent from official church teaching.

The **DAILY MAIL**, affording the event 725 cms spread over seven pages and with eight pictures, was the most positive of all the papers. Heading its leading article 'A frail voice, but a resounding message' it recalled that 'they' had said Benedict XVI would be unwelcome in Britain, finding little sympathy for moral teachings little changed over 2,000 years. But he had drawn large and joyful crowds. Most non-believers and followers of other faiths had shown him nothing but tolerance and goodwill. Millions found it impossible to accept the Vatican's continuing opposition to the use of condoms in tackling Aids but they judged that his central theme deserved a hearing in a society increasingly devoted to instant self-gratification.

Their leading columnist Peter McKay said Pope Benedict had given Christianity a shot in the arm. His opponents seemed shrill and ill-mannered alongside the hundreds of thousands who received obvious pleasure from seeing and hearing him. He had reminded us that those who conduct the Church's affairs are fallible human beings but McKay had been struck forcibly by the contrast between the gentle Pope and the hard, cynicism of those decrying him. Benedict had diffused some of the hatred building against his Church.

The Papacy

THE PROUDEST royal houses are but of yesterday, when compared with the line of the Supreme Pontiffs. That line we trace back in an unbroken series, from the Pope who crowned Napoleon in the nineteenth century to the Pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth; and far beyond the time of Pepin the august dynasty extends, till it is lost in the twilight of fable. The republic of Venice came next in antiquity. But the republic of Venice was modern when compared with the Papacy; and the republic of Venice is gone, and the Papacy remains. The Papacy remains, not in decay, not a mere antique, but full of life and youthful vigour.

- Thomas Babington Macauley, *Critical and Historical Essays*, 1843, Vol II, review [first published October 1840] of 'Leopold von Ranke's History of the Popes'. Macauley was a Protestant. His paternal grandfather was a Presbyterian minister, his mother was a Quaker.

Under a general heading of 'Farewell Benedict' a double-page spread had a main headline in letters an inch-and-a-half deep: 'Britain 'yearning for Christianity' '. He had confounded his opponents' predictions of thin congregations and empty parks, overshadowing the views of protesters led by Stephen Fry and gay rights activist Peter Tatchell.

They ran a story across the foot of both pages: 'Almost a saint... convert who was buried with his soulmate'. Considering Newman's friendship with fellow priest Ambrose St John it quoted Newman writing when his friend died that he found it difficult to believe that any sorrow could be greater than his. But it quoted defenders of Newman who say the modern world no longer understands the closeness of friendship. And it recalled the reputation Newman built for tireless efforts on behalf of the poor and sick.

The paper gave extensive coverage to David Cameron's exchanges with Pope Benedict. 'You've made us think, Cameron tells Pope' was the large headline. 'Faith is not a problem for legislators to solve but rather a vital part of our national conversation,' the young Prime Minister added.

'If only the Archbishop dared to speak with a fraction of Benedict's authority,' was the heading to another full-page piece by Stephen Glover. The Pope said he had discovered a deep thirst among the British people for the good news of Jesus Christ. Glover wrote: 'Look at the young people in Hyde Park or those lining Princes Street in Edinburgh or those standing outside Westminster Cathedral... they invite moral certainty... By contrast the atheist extremists such as the actor Stephen Fry, the lawyer Geoffrey Robertson and the writer Philip Pullman are nihilists who have nothing to offer by way of hope to the young or anyone else.'

THE TIMES printed 510 cms across five pages, including eleven pictures. A p.1 pointer ran: 'Cameron draws British vision with papal help'. Somehow the tabloid format does not suit *The Times* and one cannot say that the change has worked. It is like being in the company of an old gentleman who has gone back to wearing short

The Appropriate Guide for Catholics

ECCLESIASTICAL authority, not argument, is the supreme rule and the appropriate guide for Catholics in matters of religion. It has always the right to interpose, and sometimes, in the conflict of parties and opinions, it is called on to exercise that right. It has lately exercised it in our own instance: it has interposed in favour of a pure University system for Catholic youth, forbidding compromise or accommodation of any kind. Of course its decision must be heartily accepted and obeyed, and that the more, because the decision proceeds, not simply from the Bishops of Ireland, great as their authority is, but the highest authority on earth, from the Chair of St. Peter.

- John Henry Cardinal Newman, *The Idea of a University*.

trousers. The main headline to their excellent spread coverage over pp. 6 and 7 was "Cameron co-opts Pope to promote his vision of a compassionate Britain".

Long-serving religious affairs correspondent, Ruth Gledhill, wrote that Mr Cameron had enlisted the Pope in his vision of Britain as a compassionate society and that he does not believe that that the nation has been overtaken by secularism. He told the Pope, in a farewell address at Birmingham airport, that faith was 'part of the fabric of our country' and 'a vital part of our national conversation.' Under an intriguing top banner giving pictures and brief lives of nine saints, including Joan of Arc, Thomas More and St Anthony of Padua, she reported the Prime Minister's view that atheists were included in this vision of the common good.

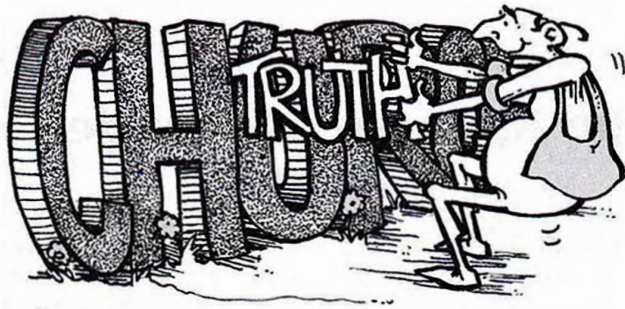
The paper carried a background panel on Newman; 'Convert who became an irritant to Rome,' and also sent reporters to mingle among both believers and sceptics. The banners of the believers said things like 'Blest is best,' 'Holiness is the true X Factor' and, less fortunately perhaps, 'Catholic Über Alles'. The so-called sceptics were surprisingly positive. 'I've been so impressed with the Pope. He's drawn me back in. I'm going to start going to church again,' said Shirley Hobbs, 64. On the hilltop dog-walkers, lapsed Catholics and agnostics, exchanged the sign of peace.

Richard Owen, in a commentary titled 'Not bad for a man maligned

as a Teutonic hardliner,' wrote 'The effects of four days of wall-to-wall media coverage may fade, but if what the Vatican called 'this wonderful trip' changes Britain, it may also change the Pope'. He felt that when Benedict spoke of the shared traditions and culture of Anglicans and Catholics on Britain's path towards a healthy pluralistic society with its many religious traditions, he was not using the language of the man who was elected Pope five years ago.

Finally, *The Times* gave a column to London's 'mayor extraordinaire' Boris Johnson. He pretended that the greatest question in his mind was whether the Popemobile should pay the £8.00 congestion charge levied on all private vehicles in London. He did in fact meet the Holy Father and asked him a question about the Roman legions abandoning Britain in 410 AD. 'Very interesting,' was all he got from the Pope for his laboured erudition.

The **DAILY MIRROR**, spreading 495 cms over three pages, and including nine pictures, had a gigantic headline, letters two inches high, saying 'A thank you ... to the few' in reference to the Battle of Britain pilots. 'Benedict XVI delighted the 70,000-strong crowd by honouring the 70th anniversary as one of the most heroic episodes in Britain's resistance to Hitler ... The German-born Pope said: 'My thoughts go in particular to nearby Coventry which suffered such heavy bombardment and massive loss of life in November 1940.' (He made no mention of the British bombing



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of Germany.) The paper's pictures included one popular with many, of Bridgettine nuns with umbrellas built onto their helmet-like headwear. And they showed a section of the crowd all in yellow plastic shower-hoods. Another positive story was head-lined 'Praise for abuse work.'

In a leading article the paper said the Visit had succeeded, but that the Pope's views on equality, condoms and abortion were so controversial that even most Catholics thought him old-fashioned. But because he had shown that he was ready to build bridges the paper hoped it would not be another 28 years before the next papal visit. They ran a piece by Chris (Lord) Patten headlined 'He's historic.' Patten hoped we would realise the need for a serious dialogue between religious and secular groups. But right below another article was headlined 'He's history,' and recounted the positions of Pope Benedict's opponents on **contraception** and abortion.

THE SUN gave the story 350 cms, over four pages with twelve pictures. Their opinion piece said that his stay was short but Pope Benedict left his mark on Britain. The Pontiff's visit had proved much more substantial than anticipated. Benedict launched a passionate anti-PC defence of our right to celebrate Christmas. 'So let's hear no more rubbish about 'winterval' He (the Pope) insisted Christianity still has a vital role in national life. Joyous crowds proved him right.'

In its news cover *The Sun* emphasised 'Pope's comfort for Cam' (a front-page story), expanding this in a double-page spread with a large picture of Mr Cameron taking leave of the Pope and the half-page headline, 'Pope's touch consoles PM on his days of sadness'. The background to this was the recent death of David Cameron's father, Ian, 77. The funeral had kept the young Premier from being in Westminster Hall to hear the Pope's history-making address to both houses of Parliament on the Friday of the visit. Four former Prime Ministers had sat together there; Lady Thatcher, Sir John Major, Tony Blair and Gordon Brown.

THE INDEPENDENT devoted 224 cms through five pages, to the Visit, including six pictures. A leading article,

'Benedict spoke to Britain,' admitted that the paper had questioned why a country with an established Protestant Church had hosted a state visit by the head of the Catholic Church but acknowledged that many people, not just Catholics, had found consolation and encouragement in the pastoral aspects of his stay. His calling abuse of children by priests 'a crime' had been, in itself, a form of penance. It said that while the secular media had veered between extreme deference and extreme hostility, the Pope's words had indisputably struck a chord. 'He may have left Britain a little more broad-minded than he found it.'

The paper's news cover, under the compound headline, 'Pope beatifies Newman and pays tribute to Battle of Britain victors' included the fact that Mass attendance in Britain has been boosted by Catholic immigration from 800,000 a week to 1.1 million since 2000. *Tablet* editor Catherine Pepinster contributed an item asking if the Pontiff's values could have a lasting impact on society.

THE GUARDIAN (175 cms across three pages with two pictures) titled a leading article, 'The religious and the rest,' in which it stated that the Pope could pull in crowds that exceed those that any politician or virtually any celebrity could ever hope to attract. Despite Benedict XVI's unbending and in some senses cruel conservatism, the paper said, it had supported his visit. 'There was diplomatic business to do and perhaps a chance of reconciliation'. It linked the Visit protesters - 'He belongs in jail' - with the anti-papist mobs of the past. But it saw the rapprochement required today as not so much between Protestant and Catholic as between the religious and the rest: 'Benedict leaves without denting that divide.'

Germaine Greer wrote on the poverty of modern Catholic art. Her article was headlined 'Catholic art was once the domain of Titian. Now, we get Susan Boyle' (Miss Boyle won a televised singing competition and sang popular hymns for the Pope at the Bellahouston gathering in Glasgow.) Greer deplored the mosaic of St David, reproduced with her text, and which the Pope had blessed in Westminster Cathedral, as 'timid mediocrity'.

Peter's the Name; Rome's the See

IF THEN THERE is now a form of Christianity such, that it extends throughout the world, though with varying measures of prominence or prosperity in separate places; that it lies under the power of sovereigns and magistrates, in various ways alien to its faith; that flourishing nations and great empires, professing or tolerating the Christian name, lie over against it as antagonists; that schools of philosophy and learning are supporting theories, and following out conclusions, hostile to it, and establishing an exegetical system subversive of its Scriptures; that it has lost whole Churches by schism, and is now opposed by powerful communions once part of itself; that it has been altogether or almost driven from some countries; that in others its line of teachers is overlaid, its flocks oppressed, its Churches occupied, its property held by what may be called a duplicate succession; that in others its members are degenerate and corrupt, and are surpassed in conscientiousness and in virtue, as in gifts of intellect, by the very heretics whom it condemns, that heresies are rife and bishops negligent within its own pale; and that amid its disorders and fears there is but one Voice for whose decisions the peoples wait with trust, one Name and one See to which they look with hope, and that name Peter, and that see Rome; such a religion is not unlike the Christianity of the fifth and sixth Centuries.

- John Henry Cardinal Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, 34-36; 38-40. Quoted Ian Ker, *The Achievement of John Henry Newman*, HarperCollins, London, 1991, p.114-115.

The **DAILY STAR** (165 cms. on two pages, five photos.) published five excellent photos, one of the Pope half-blessing and half-applauding the crowd at the Beatification Mass, and four of the crowd's imaginative rainwear, bishops in clear plastic sipping coffee from cardboard coffee cups, young people all in blue plastic, and those Mary Poppins-looking Bridgettines again. The large headline was 'Prayin' in the rain -50,000 join in Pope's Mass'.

THE FINANCIAL TIMES (138 cms, nearly half of it another picture of the umbrella-hat Bridgettines) headlined its report; 'Pope signals role for police in sex abuse enquiries,' with an inset story; 'Faith is in our fabric, says Cameron'. Their reporter wrote that the Pope had quelled some of the animosity toward the Church that sex abuse scandals have engendered. He had, for example, urged bishops 'to share the lessons you have learnt with the wider community'.

It recounted, with most other papers, that six men who worked as street cleaners in Westminster had been released without charge on Saturday night after being rounded up by

counter-terrorism police investigating an alleged plot to attack the Pope. The scare had arisen from light canteen gossip.

The local morning paper nearest to where I live, Bristol's **WESTERN DAILY PRESS**, gave 100 cms over two pages with two large pictures. Their front page carried a wonderful picture of the Pope greeting, Alice O'Neill, a Bristol girl, on the steps of Westminster Cathedral on the Saturday. It was as good as any picture of the Visit in any paper.

Britain's most scandalous tabloid, the **DAILY SPORT** (72 cms, two pictures on two pages) ran a long factual caption below a picture of the Popemobile with scurrilous speech-bubbles. A more thoughtful diary paragraph recalled that the media had expected mass protests and widespread vilification but it hadn't worked out like that. '10,000 turned out to protest, hundreds of thousands turned out to cheer'.

KEVIN CRANT is a British journalist, and more recently a Catholic book distributor. He has a first-hand, and first-rate, knowledge of the principal currents of Catholic life and thought in the United Kingdom.



THE SPYTTELL HOUS

[The House of Hospitality]

[In addition to help that was offered to the poor, the homeless and the sick by the 542 monasteries and abbeys, friaries and convents seized by Henry VIII, there were more than 750 'Hospitals' in mediaeval Catholic England. These were places founded for the relief of the sick, the poor, the homeless, pilgrims, wayfarers and the dying. To an enquirer, the Porter of such a 'hospital' explains who is welcome in it - at no charge. If read aloud the archaic spelling will reveal the sense. Readers who have difficulty, see our inside back cover for a version in modern English. Ed.]

[To the Porter]

Syr, I pray you. who hath of you *relyefe*?

[Porter]

Forsooth, they that be at such myschefe
That for theyr lyyng can do no labour
And have no frendes to do them sucour
As old people sick and impotent
Poore women in childbed have here *easement*
Weake men wounded by great vyolence.
And sore men eaten with pocks and *pestylence*
And honest folk fallen in great poverte
By mischance or other infyrmyte.
Way faryng men and maymed souldyours
Have theyr relefe in this poore hous of *ours*:
And all other which we deem good and *playne*
Have here lodging for a night or twayne.
Bedridden folk and such as cannot crave.
In these places most relyef they have
And if they hap within our place to dye
Then are they buryed well and honestly;
But not every unsick stubborn knave,
For then we should over many have.

- From *The Hyeway to the Spytell Hous* [around 1536].

THE SEVEN GREAT 'O' ANTIPHONS

GHRISTMAS was a feast much beloved of our Catholic forebears. It heralds salvation for mankind, and gives meaning finally to tenderness as well as suffering. Among many pre-reformation Catholic writers, Wulfstan the Anglo-Saxon Benedictine monk who was Archbishop of York and died in 1023 A.D. expresses the wonder of Christmas, and the Incarnation: 'Christ made himself wonderfully humble ... when he was a child they fed him just as other children are fed. He lay wrapped, in a cradle, just as other children do, and they carried him until he could walk ... The Great 'O's are offered to Annals readers in the hope that their sentiments and music will bring Christmas truly into our hearts this 2002nd anniversary of Christ's birth. Wulfstan sang them, as did St. Thomas a Beckett and St. Thomas More. They are part of our heritage as Catholics.

What they are

For the seven days before the *vigil* of Christmas [December 17 to 23] all priests say [and monks and nuns sing] special antiphons before and after the Magnificat during the evening office of vespers. Each antiphon begins with 'O', and contains prayers and sentiments drawn from the Old and New Testaments referring to the hope for the coming of the Messiah.

Their origin

Originally of course they were in Latin, and four of the prayers [O Sapientia - O Wisdom; O Radix Jesse - O Root of Jesse; O Emmanuel, and O Clavis David - O David's Key] are found prefigured in a work by Pope Damasus [366-384 A.D.]. We find St. Ambrose of Milan [339-397 A.D.] also referring to Jesus as David's Key in his *Concerning the Institution of Virginity*. The same phrase was used in the ancient Roman Pontifical or Mass Book, during the Mass for the consecration of a King. The Antiphons were always seven in number, and are first found in their present form in the 8th century A.D. although some scholars attribute them to the 7th century.

Artwork: the late incomparable Hal English, RIP.
Transcription of Gregorian Chant: John Colborne-Veel
Text and English translation of Antiphons: Paul Stenhouse

December 17 O Wisdom

O Wisdom which came from
the mouth of the Al-migh-ty God's Red-ding
the world's furthest bounds.
Gent-ly ordering all things, Come
teach us the way of pru-dence.

December 18 O Adonai

O A-donai and royal prince
of Israel: who long a-go revealed, ourself to
Moses in fiery flame and gave to him
the law. Come to save us



Follow the Magi →

How they were sung

The music, despite the modern notation, is the ancient Church chant called 'Gregorian' after Pope St Gregory the Great [590-604 A.D.]. During the singing of Vespers in the evening Office of the seven days preceding the Vigil Mass of Christmas, the singing of the Great 'O's, as they were called, was reserved to various dignitaries in Monasteries and Cathedral Chapters. Thus, the first [O Sapientia - O Wisdom] would be sung by the Abbot or Bishop, the second [O Adonai - O Lord] by the Prior; the third [O Radix Jesse - O Root of Jesse] by the Doorkeeper, the fifth by the Cellarer and so on until the last evening. The monastery church or cathedral would have been packed for the Vespers and the Singing of the Great 'O's. The atmosphere of expectancy proper to Advent was heightened by the singing and colour that accompanied the traditional Latin Vespers, and is still to be found in monasteries where the Divine Office is sung.

At the conclusion*

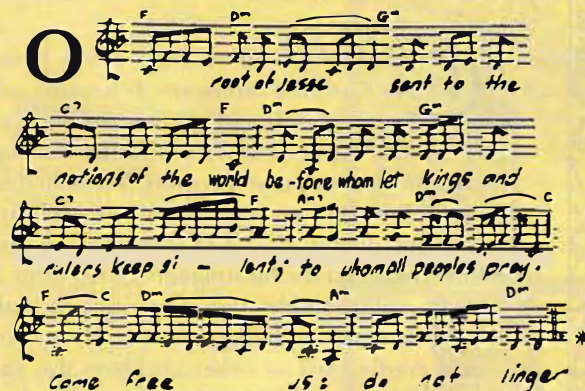
Each of the Antiphons concludes thus: You who live and reign with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen. This is sung in a monotone using the note F for all the syllables until the words 'forever and ever' for which the notes have been provided below. In the music, at the end of each 'O' antiphon, the final note with, an asterisk, is F. In singing the chant, it is important for the music to flow with the words and for that reason there are no bar lines.



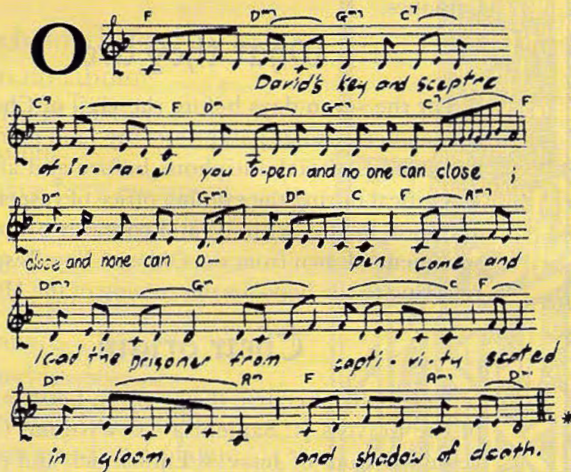
Christmas banned!

Christmas was not a holiday in Communist countries, and Christmas is not celebrated in Muslim countries. The fairly general observance of this Catholic Feast in the West is all the more remarkable when we recall that in Britain in the 1600s it was banned! It was declared a fast day by Act of Parliament to stop the people from celebrating it; even eating plum puddings was forbidden! After the Restoration 'Yuletide' was called 'Foolstide' and in the early days of the United States the Feast was forbidden by law. Modern paganism seems intent, today, on reducing the Religious Feast to a time of merrymaking and holidays, without much reference to the birthday of Jesus Christ.

December 19 O Root of Jesse



December 20 O David's Key



Secret message of the Great 'O's

The singing of the O Antiphons was eagerly awaited each Christmas from early mediaeval times right up to the present century, when the liturgy was still exclusively in Latin. When the final antiphon has been sung on the Christmas Vigil, the initials of each prayer, in inverse order, form an acrostic. Thus (reading backwards): O Emmanuel, O Rex Centium, O Oriens, O Clavis David, O Radix Jesse, O Adonai, O Sapientia form the words, in Latin, ERO CRAS - "I shall come tomorrow". This acrostic was interpreted by the faithful down through the Middle Ages as our Lord's response to the prayers that were offered during the preceding seven days.

The Nativity Of Christ

Follow the Magi →

BEHOLD the father is
his daughter's son,
The bird that built the nest
is hatched therein,
The old of years
an hour hath not outrun,
Eternal life
to live doth now begin.
The Word is dumb,
the mirth of heaven doth weep,
Might feeble is,
and force doth faintly creep.
O dying souls,
behold your living spring;
O dazzled eyes,
behold your sun of grace;
Dull ears, attend what word
this Word doth bring;
Up heavy hearts,
with joy your joy embrace.
From death, from dark,
from deafness, from despairs,
This life, this light,
this Word, this joy repairs.
Gift better than himself
God doth not know:
Gift better than his God
no man can see.
This gift doth here
the giver given bestow;
Gift to this gift
let each receiver be.
God is my gift,
himself he freely gave me;
God's gift am I,
and none but God shall have me.
Man altered was by sin
from man to beast;
Beast's food is hay,
hay is all mortal flesh.
Now God is flesh
and lies in manger pressed
As hay,
the brutest sinner to refresh.
O happy field
wherein this fodder grew,
Whose taste doth us
from beasts to men renew.

- Saint Robert Southwell (1561-1595). A native of Norfolk, Robert was educated by the Jesuits at Douai and Paris and entered the Jesuits in 1580. After working as a priest in England for 8 years, he was betrayed by Anne Bellamy, daughter of Richard Bellamy of Harrow. He was hanged, drawn and quartered as a traitor in 1595. He was canonized in 1929.

December 21 O Morning Star

O Morning star splendour of
light e-ternal and shining sun of jus-tice
Come sh-igh-ten those who sit in
dark-ness, and shadow of death.

December 22 O King of Nations


O King of nations, hope of all the
peo-ple and corner stone:
Bond that unites us, Come and save
man-kind, whom from the earth you formed.

December 23 O Emmanuel

O E-ma-nu-el, King and
Giver of law; the hope of all na-tio
and their fa-vours: Come O our Lord
and God and save us.

← Follow the Magi





ANNALS Australasia offers the Great 'O's in an English form, and with musical notation more easily sung by modern-day Catholics, in the hope that families or parish groups or school choirs may be able to join in the choral Preparation for Christmas in the traditional Catholic manner: A suggested format for the preparation, drawn from the Roman Breviary, is as follows:

Family/Parish/Group Preparation for Christmas

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

Leader: O God, come to our aid.

All: O Lord, make haste to help us.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Amen.

Reading: (From St Paul's letter to Philemon) Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice, let all men know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand.

Leader: Let your face shine on us and we shall be safe.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

All: Come to us and save us, Lord God Almighty.

Antiphon (depending on the day)

Magnificat: recited by all.

Intercessions:

Leader: The Son of God is coming with great power;
All mankind shall see his face and be reborn.

Response: Come Lord Jesus, do not delay!

All: You will bring us wisdom, fresh understanding and new Vision.

Response: Come Lord Jesus, do not delay!

All: You will bring us good news and power which will transform our lives.

Response: Come Lord Jesus, do not delay!

All: You will bring us Truth, showing us the way to your father.

Response: Come Lord Jesus, do not delay!

All: Born of a woman, you will open in our flesh the way to eternal life and joy.

Response: Come Lord Jesus, do not delay!

All: Our Father, etc.

Prayer: Father, by your will your Son took upon himself that human nature which you fashioned and redeemed. Grant that the Word who took flesh in the womb of the ever-Virgin Mary and became a man like us, may share with us his Godhead. We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Follow the Magi ->

Magnificat

*Song of Blessed Mary
the Virgin*

MY soul proclaims
the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God
my Saviour;
for he has looked with favour
on his lowly servant,
and from this day on
all generations will call me
blessed.

The Almighty as done
great things for me;
holy is his Name.
He has mercy on those
who fear him
in every generation.

He has shown
the strength of his arm,
he has scattered the proud
in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty
from their thrones,
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry
with good things,
and has sent
the rich away empty.

He has come to the aid
of his servant Israel
for he has remembered
his promise of mercy,
the promise he made
to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children
for ever.





'CHARITAS NIMIA' OR *THE DEAR BARGAIN*



ORD, what is man? why should he cost thee
So dear? what had his ruin lost thee?
Lord what is man? that thou hast overbought
So much a thing of nought?

What Alas, sweet lord, what wer't to thee
If there were no such worms as we?
Heav'n ne'er the less still heav'n would be,
Should mankind dwell -
In the deep hell,
What have his woes to do with thee?

What was it to thy precious blood
If my foul heart call'd for a flood?
What if my faithles, soul and I
Would needs fall in
With guilt and sin,
What did the lamb, that he should die?
What did the lamb, that he should need,
When the wolf sins, himself to bleed?

Why should his unstained breast make good
My blushes with his own heart-blood?
O my Saviour, make me see
How dearly thou hast paid for me
That lo & again my life may prove
As then in death. o now in love.

- Richard Crashaw [1613-1649]. The son of a Puritan divine he became a Catholic in 1644. From *Poetry & Life, An Anthology of English Catholic Poetry*, compiled by Frank Sheed and contributed by Madelaine Wiles, Babinda Q'ld. 'Dear' here as in much poetry of the period, means 'costly'.

'Everything [in the Summa] was freedom of spirit, purity of faith, integrity of the intellect enlightened by knowledge and genius.'

JACQUES AND RAISSA MARITAIN

By John Young



RAISSA OUMANSOFF was born in Russia in 1883, of Jewish parents. They moved to Paris when she was ten years old and her sister Vera was seven.

The move was due to oppression of the Jews in Russia. She describes her experience when enrolled in school in Paris and not knowing the language, and how she concentrated intensely for the first fortnight, and by the end of that time had acquired, as it were, the essence of the French language, so that from that point on it was a matter of developing it from within.

Her parents moved away from their practice of Judaism when they went to France. Raissa, as a teenager, and tormented by the problem of evil – how could an infinitely powerful and supremely good God allow the evil we

see about us? – found her belief in God fading out.

She went to the *Sorbonne* at seventeen, and there sought answers to the ultimate questions through the physical sciences, enrolling in biology and other science courses. When she told one of her professors that she wanted to know nature in its causes, its essence, its end, he responded: "But that is mysticism." And that was the general outlook of her teachers: for them the deep questions were dismissed as unreal, as mystical.

At the *Sorbonne* she met her future husband. She describes him: "...I saw coming towards me a young man with a gentle face, a heavy shock of blond hair, a light beard and a slightly stoop-shouldered carriage." He had a petition protesting the treatment of socialist students in Russia under the Czar.

Jacques Maritain was born in 1882.

His mother had been a Catholic, but became Protestant as a young woman. His father was a non-practising Catholic.

Soon Jacques and Raissa were inseparable. Both had the same yearning for the truth, but were appalled at the materialistic outlook dominating the *Sorbonne*. They resolved to die by suicide if they could find no more meaning in life than what the *Sorbonne* could offer them. Raissa: "We wanted to die by a free act if it were impossible to live according to the truth."

Henri Bergson showed them there was more to reality than materialism. He taught in the *College de France*, across the road from the *Sorbonne*. He maintained we have an intuition of deeper realities than empirical means can attain. Raissa speaks of their enthusiasm for Bergson: Jacques "Bore aloft ... the revolutionary torch of a passionate socialism and of the philosophy of intuition."

The engagement of Jacques and Raissa occurred in an informal and spontaneous way. She describes how they were sitting in her parents' home; she reached out her hand and stroked his hair; they looked at each other – and knew they wanted to marry.

It was some time after their conversion and reception into the Church that they encountered the philosophy and theology of St Thomas Aquinas, and it was Raissa who first did so. Their spiritual director, Father Clerissac OP recommended to her the reading of St Thomas' *Summa Theologiae*. She describes, in her book *We Have Been Friends Together*, how she approached the *Summa* with trepidation.

"Was not Scholasticism, according to the reputation which had been given

Christian Unity

The more deeply one considers such questions, the more clearly one perceives that the chief obstacle to union lies in a misunderstanding, a confusion between the *spiritual temperament* and the culture of one or other and *the Church* which is universal. The spirit of Orthodoxy is not the same thing as the Russian spirit; the spirit of Catholicism is not the same thing as the Latin spirit. Once these things are well and truly realised on both sides, unity will not be far to seek. The most genuine and irreducible differences [they are to be found everywhere: 'The East,' said Mgr. Szepticky, 'differs from the West even in questions where there is no difference at all'] are legitimate differences, and they ought to remain: differences not only in rite, but also and above all in psychology and spirituality. If due proportion be observed, such differences no more prevent unity in faith and discipline than differences in the West between, e.g., Benedictine and Franciscan spirituality. And besides, the nearer they get to God, the closer are souls brought together. ... The best, the most urgent way of knowing one another, is for Orthodox and Catholic to know and to love one another in the most saintly representatives of their spirituality.

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

it, a tomb of subtleties fallen to dust? And would not even the Prince of the schoolmen himself throw a little of this dust on the flames of our young faith?

"From the very first pages [First Part of the *Summa*; the Treatise on God] I understood the emptiness, the childishness of my fears. Everything, here, was freedom of spirit, purity of faith, integrity of the intellect enlightened by knowledge and genius."

At first Jacques had intended to concentrate on the physical sciences. The philosophy he had done at the Sorbonne, and which he was eligible to teach, he rejected. But when he turned to the thought of Aristotle and St Thomas he realized that here was the truth. First he taught philosophy at a Catholic secondary school, the *College Stanislas*.

He rapidly became known as an outstanding thinker; and the French bishops commissioned him to write a series of books covering the whole of philosophy, to be used in French seminaries. Only the first two were written: *An Introduction to Philosophy* and *An Introduction to Logic*, the latter also published under the title *Formal Logic*.

His works embrace the whole range of philosophical questions. His most far reaching and profound book is *The Degrees of Knowledge*, published in French in 1932.

In his last years he wrote the best-selling book *The Peasant of the Garonne*, which is a critique of the state of the Catholic Church after Vatican II.

Raissa's writings are mostly of poetry, but she collaborated with her husband on some works, and took a constant interest in all of them until her death. It is impossible to say how far she influenced his understanding of philosophy and theology. If we compare his earlier and later writings, we find a softening in his criticisms of his opponents. In the earlier writings he could be very harsh. Raissa's influence may be seen here.

The Maritains were keenly interested in the whole culture of their times: it's art and general literature as well as philosophy and theology. They opened their home to gatherings of friends and acquaintances to discuss the intellectual topics of the day, and were in contact with the leading figures, especially those in France.



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PROTESTANT RELIGIOSITY was said to be distinguished by its wholeness and integrity: individual reading of the Bible and personal experience of the divine make for a religion that runs deep. Unlike Catholicism, a religion which is theatrically performed, real (Protestant) Christianity permeates the believer, makes for a genuine, homogeneous self. But the teleology of Protestant history, which linked the global march of civilization to progressive religious development, reaching its apogee in the Protestant nationalism of Britain and America meant that, as Protestants looked back at the past, they were forced to see the Catholic Church as in some sense originary. Indeed, so powerfully is the claim of Catholic priority felt that Protestant polemic assimilates the Church of Rome with Judaism. While the trajectory and meaning of this religious teleology was, of course, understood distinctly in the two nations, what was shared was the resulting defensive characterization of nineteenth-century Catholicism as anachronistic: William Sewell calls Roman Catholicism 'virtually a restoration of Judaism,' and the Jesuit appears repeatedly in polemical fiction as the Wandering Jew, an unregenerate, archaic figure, stubbornly clinging to the idea of an 'Old Testament' patriarchal God of harsh judgment and physical punishment.'

-Susan M. Griffin, *Anti-Catholicism and Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p.5

Inseparable from the Maritains was Raissa's sister Vera, who lived with them, attended to the daily running of the home, and helped Jacques with secretarial work. Raissa had very poor health, and found it a constant struggle to do as much as she did.

In 1940 all three moved to the United States and stayed there until the war ended. This was probably fortunate not only because Raissa and Vera were Jewish, but because the German authorities, as Jacques learned later, had made inquiries as to his whereabouts.

After the war Jacques was, from 1945 till 1948, French Ambassador to the Holy See, a position obtained for him by General de Gaulle, and which he reluctantly accepted when his patriotism was appealed to.

Vera died in 1959, after a long and painful battle with cancer. Raissa died nearly a year later of heart trouble. Jacques was to live until 1973, the later part of that time with the Little Brothers of Jesus near Toulouse. The Brothers led a life of poverty and asceticism, and combined service to the poor with a strong intellectual formation. Maritain went there to give

their members courses in philosophy, and lived with them. Towards the end of his life he became a member of the Little Brothers.

He remained active until the end, continuing with his writing, notably *The Peasant of the Garonne*, *On The Church of Christ*, and *On the Grace and Humanity of Christ*.

Fundamental to the work of the Maritains was their deep spiritual lives. All flowed from that. This is more obvious in the case of Raissa because of the more directly spiritual character of her writings, but his life of close union with God had its fruit in Jacques' outlook and all his

**WHEN our Saviour
come on earth,
God blessed
his country.**

- Origen, AD
185-254

writings. Raissa's *Journal*, published after her death, reveals a soul absorbed in God, and constantly striving for greater perfection. There was a great deal of aridity in her spiritual life, as in that of so many saints – including Mother Teresa. Raissa's was a life of contemplation which overflowed into her intense friendships and concern for all those she met.

In her *Journal* and her notebooks are entries like the following (from 10th March, 1918): "Silent prayer full of joy which delivers me suddenly from the residue of a heavy grief which was weighing on my heart and undermining my physical strength."

After Raissa's death Jacques wrote of her union with God during the war years in New York, the later years in Rome, and the time in the United States that followed, when he taught at Princeton. "And while strength, peace, light and a kind of winged gaiety emanated from her, she plunged into a deeper and deeper solitude with her God and she had no longer more than a very slender foothold on earth."

The day before he died Jacques stated that he had had the great privilege of having lived with two saints – Raissa and Vera. He himself died a very holy death in his poor hermitage with the Little Brothers.

Regarding his achievements. In the philosophy of knowledge, we can note his clear and profound explanation of how we can have objective knowledge of things – how a thing can be outside the knower, yet at the same time within the knower.

Then there was his masterly treatment of the degrees of knowledge. Physical science, mathematics, logic, natural philosophy, metaphysics, ethics, art, each has its way of engaging the real world. He deals, too, with supernatural knowledge, including that found in mystical contemplation. In Jacques Maritain we see philosophy come alive in a human mind, and illuminating the whole of existence.

JOHN YOUNG has lived and taught for many years in Sydney, especially at the Centre for Thomistic Studies, and now lives in Melbourne. He is the author of several books on philosophy and related topics, including *Reasoning Things Out* (1975), *The Natural Economy* (1997), and *The Scope of Philosophy* (2008). This is a slightly edited version of a paper he delivered at the Chesterton Society's 8th Annual Conference held at Campion College, Toongabbie, NSW in October 2009.

What a tremendous blessing the year had been

MY YEAR OF THE PRIEST: A REVIEW

By Michael P. Orsi



TN THE WORDS of Socrates, preserved for us by Plato, 'The unexamined life is not worth living.' This enduring truth underlies numerous practices which the Church advocates for knowing one's own heart, such as the *Examen*, a daily period of reflection on thoughts and actions, initiated by one of Catholicism's greatest spiritual guides St. Ignatius of Loyola.

There are many occasions in life which prompt us to review where we've been, how we got there, and where we hope to go. Birthdays, New Year's Eve, and Lent have always been favorites. Recently, I found myself engaging in this exercise at the conclusion of the *Year for Priests*. I looked back over that period (June 19, 2009–June 19, 2010), which for me held many highs and lows. A certain distance from the events of the year offered perspective, allowing me to recognize some genuine blessings which I had received.

My year began with a definite high. I had the opportunity to be part of a retreat/pilgrimage to Rome designed to bridge the closing of *The Year of Saint Paul* and the opening of *The Year for Priests*. The Legionaries of Christ provided a program of prayer, study and events, including Masses and lectures at various sites of Pauline significance. Hearing St. Paul's words read in the very places where the early Christians of Rome gathered to celebrate the Eucharist 2,000 years ago connected me with our blessed forerunners in Faith. It gave me a deeper appreciation for the unity of the Body of Christ that exists among believers of every age.

The stories and historical events of the Church's foundational era are a source of support, strength and inspiration. They remind us that we are connected to something greater than

ourselves – the Church – a realization that's particularly important in a time when so many of us are overcome by a sense of alienation and isolation.

The week was made even more special for me by being in the company of brother priests. It was so uplifting to be among 15 men of different ages, from different parts of the country, all of whom were involved in a wide

diversity of ministries, loved their work, enjoyed being priests, and were striving for holiness.

Each day held its special graces, the most uplifting times for me being our concelebration of the Mass and our evening gatherings. The Mass, that sacred center of our lives, reminded us of who we are and who we commonly serve. We are the fraternity of priests in union with the One Priest, Jesus Christ. This truth requires reflection and a refreshing of consciousness on a daily basis, and those Masses in Rome performed that function perfectly.

We concluded each day with a glass of wine and conversation, during which we each had the opportunity to share the story of his call to the priesthood. To glimpse the magnificence of how God's grace worked in the lives of each priest was a meditation that taught and inspired us. Each one of these men was unique in his own way, yet all of us had so much in common. I wish these testimonies could have been transcribed for publication. They would make a wonderfully uplifting book.

During the week, we had an opportunity to be part of a Wednesday audience with Pope Benedict XVI. He spoke about the importance of *The Year for Priests*, holding up St. John Vianney, the Curé of Ars, as a role model for us. The Holy Father drew special attention to St. John's devotion to prayer, the confessional, and personal penance, emphasizing their importance in *our* priestly lives. He pointed out that there is no better model for a parish than a holy priest, a fact that's crucial, both for the priest's individual sanctification and for the edification of the people he serves.

Standing within an arm's length of the Pope as he passed by in the *Popemobile*, I experienced one of those special moments of connection. He

New Age or Old Age

THEN ONE examines many New Age traditions, it soon becomes clear that there is, in fact, little in the *New Age* that is new. The name seems to have gained currency through Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry, at the time of the French and American Revolutions, but the reality it denotes is a contemporary variant of Western esotericism. This dates back to Gnostic groups which grew up in the early days of Christianity, and gained momentum at the time of the Reformation in Europe. It has grown in parallel with scientific world-views, and acquired a rational justification through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It has involved a progressive rejection of a personal God and a focus on other entities....

- Jesus Christ The Bearer of the Water of Life, an examination of New Age theory and practices, by the Pontifical Council for Culture, and Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, Rome. St Pauls Publications 2003, pp.10,11

Building on Shifting Sand

UNIVERSAL TOLERANCE is everywhere proclaimed today as a principle, and any kind of intolerance is condemned outright. But who takes the time to examine the true meaning of these words? Who bothers to examine and clarify the ideas behind them in the light of reason, and with reference to history and experience? Hardly anyone. People use these words parrot-like; they are employed in matters of the highest importance - without a glimmer of understanding that beneath these words there are ideas whose true or false comprehension, whose just or unjust application, is of paramount importance if society is to survive. Few people seem to understand that underneath these words are profound and sensitive questions of Right, and a vast historic panorama. Too few people notice that certain solutions to the 'problems of tolerance' condemn all the past, and turns the present on its head. And all that is left to build the future on is a moving bed of sand.

- l'Abbé Jacques Balmes, *Le Protestantisme compare au Catholicisme dans ses rapports avec la Civilization Européenne*, Paris, Debécourt, Libraire-Editeur, 1842, p.171.
Translated: Paul Stenhouse, MSC

looked me directly in the eye and raised his eye-brows. Not a word was said, but I knew that *this was Peter*, and that he knew me. His expression told me he was counting on me to help him in his ministry as universal pastor. It's the kind of experience every priest should have - and every priest should *seek*. All priests should visit Rome. Being there confirms our identity. It's a tremendous source of energy for our ministry.

As if all this wasn't a great enough beginning to my Year-for-Priests experiences, I had one further engagement before leaving Rome. I was asked to witness the marriage of one of our law school professors in the wedding chapel at Saint Peter's Basilica. This was a first for me in more than thirty-three years since my ordination, a thrilling and grace-filled occasion.

Like many priests, I had come to dread weddings. My attitude resulted from years of frustration in dealing with poorly catechized couples, the unreasonable demands they often make in trying to *personalize* their ceremonies, and the dispiriting number of divorces that occur even after good marriage preparation. However, this Rome wedding was perfect: the couple, the liturgy, the setting. As I and thousands of others assembled in the basilica watched the bride come down the aisle, and especially when the vows were exchanged, there was no doubt that this sacrament was important, for the bride

and groom, as well as for the life of the Church.

In fact, it's a key building block for the communion of love that the Church is called to be. Every wedding provides an opportunity for the priest and the couple to grow in grace and further the ministry of Christ. Never again will I look at the sacrament of marriage as problematic, or at shepherding a couple to their big day as a burden. Grace is not cheap - every wedding in Christ is worth the work and the risk.

I returned to the United States on July 5, re-energized and full of zeal. The law school had just relocated to Naples, Florida, from Ann Arbor,

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Michigan. There was a lot of work to be done. Organizing our new chapel, setting out our schedule of liturgical events, and meeting the local clergy were all high priorities.

Additionally, I was looking forward to helping out in the parishes of my new diocese. This had been an important aspect of my ministry. Since the law school has no Sunday Mass, I helped out in various Michigan parishes during the school's nine years there. Always short of priests to fill in on weekends or cover special events, the Chancery Office would call, or I'd get requests from local pastors. I never felt more like a priest than during this weekend ministry, celebrating Mass or hearing confessions. For my spiritual welfare I needed the support of the Catholic community. It was the highpoint of my week.

I presumed that the practice would continue in Florida. But, when I received my faculties from the local bishop, I found that they were limited to Ave Maria properties: the law school (which is near where I live) and the campus of Ave Maria University (which is about 40 minutes away). I inquired as to why such a restriction would be imposed, but the only answer I received was cryptic at best: 'It is because of the times we live in.'

Canon law allows the diocesan bishop wide discretion over the exercise of ministry in his diocese by priests incardinated elsewhere. And while I was shocked and quite disappointed, I recalled a banner with the famous 'Serenity Prayer' that had hung in my room during college and seminary days. It had gotten me through the late 60s and early 70s, a time of turmoil in the Church (as throughout society in general) when I was daily upset by the theological nonsense being taught and the liturgical abuses perpetrated in the name of that illusive 'spirit of Vatican II.' Now, faced with these limitations imposed by the bishop, I found reflecting on the prayer's words most helpful. It asks God's grace to accept 'with serenity the things that cannot be changed.' Forty years later, this wisdom once again proved invaluable.

Well, what options did I have? A private Sunday celebration in the law school chapel was possible. From time to time over the years, I had found such

Masses spiritually edifying. After all, no Mass is really private, since it's said in communion with the whole Church: militant, suffering and triumphant. As Bishop Sheen so often reminded us, 'All the saints and angels are present.' In a sense, however, that very inclusiveness argues against limiting Mass only to selected earthly participants. While a closed liturgy might benefit a priest's spirituality, it's not a good idea to make it a regular weekly practice without proper cause.

My faculties in Florida did allow for concelebrating in parish churches. But the first reaction I had to the idea was that this limitation was demeaning to a priest with all my years of service, my education, and a good clean record. Surely I deserved to be the principal celebrant and homilist. *Why was this happening to me?*

I recalled the experiences of two saints, Romuald (AD 951-1025) and Pio of Pietrelcina (AD 1887-1968) who, at certain points during their priesthoods had limitations imposed on their ministries. In both cases these limitations were undeserved. I read their life stories again, and found that they exemplified a virtue I was sorely lacking: *humility*. It never was my favorite virtue, probably because I was so deficient in it. But, the Holy Spirit had spoken through the accounts of these two pious and patient men. And at this stage of my life, with more years behind me than ahead, humility must be cultivated if I want to get to heaven.

I began visiting the local parishes on Sunday mornings, asking the pastors if they minded me concelebrating. They were all very kind, and in some cases were personally saddened at my limited faculties – especially those who needed weekend help. I was uncomfortable at first, taking the subordinate role at Mass, but to my surprise, the blessings began to flow.

Most priests will readily attest to the fact that pre-Mass preparation is very difficult (sometimes impossible). Distractions are numerous. Coordinating the other participants in the Liturgy – readers, servers, Eucharistic ministers, choir, ushers, etc. – take a priest's mind off his sacred duties to come, as do the questions and special needs of some parishioners, even their friendly greetings and

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chatter. Being a guest concelebrant, I didn't face that. I found I had time to meditate, to focus on what was about to take place, and to let Jesus speak to me.

This pre-Mass prayer time greatly enriched my participation in the Liturgy. But beyond that, on three separate occasions, I actually experienced *locutions*, thoughts that came from a source outside of me. They were words I had heard and read many times in the past, but now they were personally spoken to me by Our Lord.

First was a passage from Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy (2:13): 'We may be unfaithful, but he is always faithful.' This line touched me in an especially pointed way. For so many years, I have been troubled by my sinfulness. This has led to questions

about whether I was worthy to be a priest. Psychologically, such self-doubt places a limitation on our work and zeal. It causes some men to leave the active ministry. But Jesus reassured me that as long as I remain faithful, if I believe in Him and trust in His love, He will never let me go. Even if I am unfaithful, he is always faithful. It is his priesthood, not mine. He can work through my imperfections and save me, despite my sins. In essence, He gave me the reassurance noted elsewhere in Scripture (2 Cor. 12:9): 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is complete in what is feeble.'

On another occasion I heard the words: 'You are my son, today I have begotten you.' (Ps. 2:7) What a powerful statement! I belong to God and nothing or no one can hurt me. He wills my good; He cares for me; I am special to Him. How often have I ignored this filial relationship over the years. Intellectually I could accept it, but rarely did I feel it. This emotional realization of God's fatherly concern for me was a reaffirmation of my own identity, a source of strength for the uncertainties and trials of life, present and to come.

And, finally, I heard, 'You are a priest forever...' (Ps. 110:4) There were times when I wondered if the priesthood was right for me, so many of my brothers having decided it wasn't for them. No doubt I could have found many excuses to dismiss myself from the obligation I assumed at ordination. I'd had a few difficult pastors, some of my living conditions were not the best, I'd once had a very petty bishop, etc., etc. A reasonable person would understand my decision, if I turned away from the priesthood. Yet, Jesus' words reminded me of the permanence of God's call and the importance of perseverance.

Along with these remarkable (if you will, *mystical*) experiences, another blessing became apparent almost as soon as I began concelebrating. I now had the opportunity to listen to the homilies of other priests. Although I had always prepared and prayed over my Sunday sermons, I realized that I too needed to be fed by the faith experience of others. I wish I had done this from time to time in the past, as part of my spiritual regimen. What an opportunity for grace! Sundays have

now become for me a weekly retreat to which I look forward.

The homilies I hear are, for the most part, very good, sometimes even exceptional. Not every priest is Fulton Sheen; no one can score a home run week after week. But I have heard homilies that are thoughtfully prepared, that are both theologically correct and relevant to world events, that speak to personal spiritual needs, and which are well delivered. They put to bed the old canard that 'Homilies in the Catholic Church are deficient.' Indeed, Catholics should be proud of their priests and commend them for their efforts.

Traveling about to different parishes meeting so many priests brought an additional and unexpected benefit: I found an outstanding spiritual director. During certain periods in my priestly life, I had availed myself of spiritual direction. But, as many priests will attest, it's not easy to find the right director, someone with both good qualifications and the right personality to help you on your spiritual journey. However, whenever I was in need of guidance, God had always provided me with the right man – and now was no different.

I met on Oblate of St. Francis de Sales, Father Thomas Gillespie, OSFS, who had once been involved in formation work but was now active in parish and hospital ministry. I heard him preach at the Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper. His explanation of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist was very simple and direct; one might even say *obvious*. But it was made with such faith – words that came from the heart of a believing priest – that it was a profound statement on the greatest Mystery of Christianity. I realized what had sustained him for 50 years of ministry, and I knew he could be helpful to me. He consented to my request for his direction, and our meetings have been most valuable. I'm deeply grateful to God for this great priest.

That same weekend, I had occasion to attend a Good Friday service celebrated according to the Extraordinary Rite by the Fraternal Society of Saint Peter. I found it enchanting. My Latin is rusty, but language was no barrier. In fact, understanding Latin wasn't even

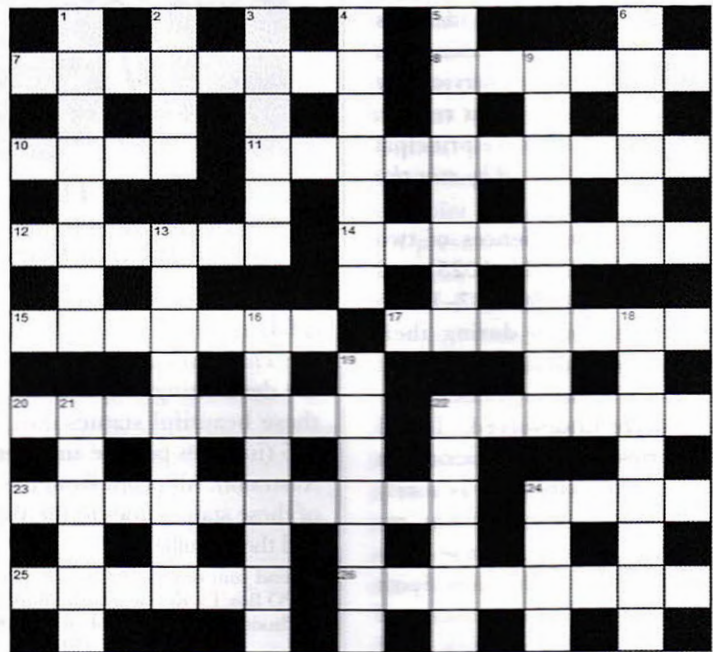
necessary. The rite drew me into itself. It was a spiritual experience that touched my whole being. It bespoke a spirituality that brought me into the timeless act of the crucifixion in a ritual that had sanctified men and women for many hundreds of years prior to the recent liturgical reforms. It was 'active participation' on a different level. It was a Good Friday I will not forget.

Next day, I was able to attend the

Easter Vigil at a parish where two of our students were being received into the Church. The presence of many Ave Maria School of Law students and the two students who acted as sponsors for the Catechumens was an affirmation that our school was fulfilling its mission. The service was beautiful and moving. Blessed a third time!

In May, my home parish in Brooklyn, New York, celebrated its 125th

ANNALS CRYPTIC CROSSWORD No. 23



ACROSS CLUES

7. Semite keen to get musical instrument (4)
8. Disagree with reformed Popes embracing leading Orangeman (6)
10. Small herring slid out broken lids (4)
11. Wild elf leads in sacrifice of one's desires (4-6)
12. Sam mops up oil spill where a tower came crashing down (6)
14. Man lies about Christians (8)
15. Leading editorial in what you're reading makes things tough (7)
17. Relative from Greece and Pennsylvania (7)
20. Sailors left competent enough to be easily carried (8)
22. Coward without fish cutter in European city (6)
23. Hymn Sue or I composed for Jerome (10)
24. Row it back very loudly for a wee drop (4)
25. Councillor is twice in a critical situation (6)
26. These days Victoria's chap is a patron of Poland (8)

DOWN CLUES

1. System of belief has Ron holding High Priest over soldier (8)
2. Employed American media boss (4)
3. Redemption for converted Romans (6)
4. Expression of regret for a horsey game, extremely gory (7)

5. Name Lord can be mistaken for a British capitalist (9)
6. Property in the west a terrible investment (6)
9. Writer opens senior receiver of benefits (9)
13. Open? Sure! Arrange some music (9)
16. Abel seen out with a citizen of Tripoli (8)
18. Set of shoes found in railway station? (8)
19. He is on top, I'm next, then lad turns up with guardian of the Rainbow Bridge (7)
21. Roses I cultivated into trees used by basket weavers (6)
22. Endlessly wish butter rises in German part (6)
24. Loved? Flittermouse initially irons Japanese sock (4)

SOLUTION TO CRYPTIC NO. 21



anniversary. Since I had no assigned Mass scheduled for that weekend, I was free to attend. I was honored by being asked to offer the toast. Since it was *The Year for Priests*, I toasted the priests who had served in the parish over the years. I made particular mention of the priest who baptized me, the priest who gave me my First Communion, the priest who sponsored me at ordination, and the priest who provided the celebration for my Silver Jubilee, as well as the current pastor who had made this event possible. But in my heart I was remembering all the priests who had helped me by their ministry, example and personal concern. How important these men were to the parish and to me. I was kneeling on the shoulders of giants. Priests need priests before and after ordination. I shall forever be grateful for the blessings I received through these men, past and present.

Pope Benedict officially closed *The Year for Priests* the weekend of June 12-13, so it was especially appropriate that on Sunday, (June 13), my spiritual director was recognized by his parish for the Golden Jubilee of his ordination. I had the privilege of being one of the concelebrants for the special Mass. The Mass and his homily summed up the greatness of the year and the blessings it brought to me and other priests. Father Thomas acknowledged the great gift of the priesthood with which God had graced him with for half a century.

Over and over again, he expressed his thanks and made the critical point that, 'God is good.' At the end of his homily, upon returning to the presider's chair, he pointed to each of his brother priests on hand in the sanctuary, and observed that this celebration was really for *all* priests. I realized anew that I was part of something greater than myself: the Priesthood of Jesus Christ. What a tremendous blessing the year had been.

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He had a family 'determined to make him a musician if it killed him'

PUCCINI

By R. J. STOVE



Puccini's church music: whoever heard of such a thing? Is not the very phrase as oxymoronic as 'Debussy's rugby songs' or 'The collected theological wisdom of Christopher Hitchens'? Puccini himself, near his life's end – while he struggled with his last and noblest opera, *Turandot* – assured a colleague: 'Almighty God touched me with His little finger and said: 'Write for the theatre – mind, only for the theatre.' And I have obeyed the supreme command!'

As an explication of artistic principles, and as an insight into his genius's particular strength, this assertion is unexceptionable. As a statement of fact, it is less than candid. Far from 'obey[ing] the supreme command' to let non-theatrical music alone, Puccini wrote quite a bit of it. Mostly in his early days, it is true. Even then, he avoided attempting symphonies, sonatas, and concertos. Still, he had grown up in an ecclesiastical locale; and to the musical adornment of this locale, he periodically devoted himself.

At his baptism (he had been born in Lucca, Tuscany, on 22 December 1858) his godparents supplied him with a cumbersome set of Christian names: Giacomo Antonio Domenico Michele Secondo Maria, of which he subsequently suppressed all except 'Giacomo.'

Several other great composers – Handel, Schumann and Berlioz are examples – faced parental opposition to their musical hopes. Young Puccini had the opposite problem: a family determined to make him a musician if it killed him. Ever since the 1730s, Puccini after Puccini had faithfully served Lucca as composer, organist, and choirmaster. Giacomo's father Michele 'would take ... Giacomo to the organ loft and set him up on a bench, and this was at a

time when the boy was almost too young to walk.² Michele died when the lad was a mere five years old; but Michele's widow kept an equally firm belief in her son's musical future, and obtained for him a scholarship, bestowed by Italy's Queen Margherita, to study at Milan's Conservatoire.³

Already Puccini had shown artistic promise in Lucca, as a boy soprano (in which capacity he once earned two lire for singing at the Feast of the Holy Cross),⁴ as organist in his father's stead, and as creator. We find him, from 1877, producing a small but distinctive body of sacred works: *Plaudite Populi*, *Vexilla Regis*, a *Credo*, and – most impressively – a full-length Mass setting for solo tenor, solo baritone, choir and orchestra. What strikes the listener most forcefully in these pieces is how much of their composer's mature musical personality they indicate.

Development of Doctrine

I respectfully invite submission of a single solid example of a doctrine properly adopted at one time by the Church that was later abandoned in favor of an opposing doctrine, and if one can find such a change, to show that dissent from important doctrines was a contributing cause of the change. I will remain open to the possibility, but I believe that a fair examination of the historical record will show that no such example exists.

- 'Might a Little Dissent be a Good Thing?', by Robert G. Kennedy. Robert G. Kennedy is in the department Of management at the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota. This essay was posted on an internal electronic bulletin board at that university.

The Mass, though finished in 1880, remained unpublished until 1951, when Puccini's loyal priest friend and biographer Dante Del Fiorentino issued it under his own title *Messa di Gloria*. Inevitably it exhibits the influence of Puccini's two favourite composers, Verdi and Wagner: the former in its dramatic choral declamation, the latter in the high string writing at the very start, which suggests *Lohengrin's* prelude. ('Beside him [Wagner]; Puccini observed shortly before his death, 'we are nothing but mandolinists and dilettantes.'⁵ But the score's originality far outweighs its derivative moments, and Puccini recycled some of it (the *Agnus Dei*) in his first consistently outstanding opera, *Manon Lescaut*. The relevant passage, with its unmistakable atmosphere of china shepherdesses and Marie Antoinette, actually makes more sense on stage than in church. In 1905 the composer briefly returned to sacred composition, with what must be the shortest Requiem of all time. Dedicated to the rest home for aged musicians that Verdi had founded, this essay lasts all of six minutes.⁶

Puccini's own later attitude to religion has been little discussed in the relevant scholarly literature. Incontrovertible is the fact that, having left Lucca and begun to concentrate on secular art, he seldom went to Mass. Well after he had become world-famous with such immortal operas as *La Bohème*, *Tosca*, and *Madama Butterfly* – that is, after he had turned into an object of pilgrimage for all sorts of admirer – clergy would sometimes be warned against visiting him, on the grounds of his alleged unbelief.⁷

No casuistry can conceal the truth that Puccini regarded the Sixth Commandment as to be honoured more in the breach than in the observance. Since his twenties he had been an industrial-strength fornicator, whose exploits could well have made him a

role model for John F. Kennedy, had not that statesman's musical interests begun and ended (on his own wife's testimony) with renditions of 'Hail to the Chief.'

Puccini's chief mistress, Elvira Cemignani, deserted her husband and lived with her lover for almost two decades. Only after the husband died in 1903 did Elvira and Giacomo marry. Meanwhile Giacomo's casual affairs continued, despite or because of Elvira's fierce suspicions. She would ransack his clothes and intercept his mail, usually finding incriminating evidence of trysts with other women. (One such woman, known to us only as 'Corinna', actually threatened a breach-of-promise legal action against him. Happily for him, nothing came of this.)

Luigi Illica, co-librettist for several of Puccini's masterpieces, commented snappishly: 'People get the governments they deserve, and so does Elvira.'⁸

Yet to infer from such behaviour either atheism or hypocrisy on Puccini's part would be misguided. It is notable that Puccini, when among his few intimates, never pretended to more piety than he felt. To Del Fiorentino, whom he repeatedly called Connellone (literally 'Big Skirt'), he admitted: 'I am just a poor Christian, *Connellone*. I need your prayers. Whatever my sins have been, I never lacked respect for the faith of my mother. I never joined any anti-religious organisations [a reference to Freemasonry?] ... Strangely enough I have been mixed up with priests all my life.'⁹ He 'used to cross himself or pay a hasty visit to his mother's grave whenever his date of birth happened to be mentioned in some newspaper article.'¹⁰ His almost childlike expressions of gratitude to the priest who permitted a church wedding for him and Elvira are significant. Elvira could almost certainly have obtained, in Germany or Switzerland, a divorce from her first husband – plenty of her compatriots did so before Italy legalised

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divorce in 1970 – but this manoeuvre seems never to have occurred to Puccini. And like other compositional giants he ascribed his creativity to divine intervention. Of *Tosca* he said, 'The music was written by God, not by me.'¹¹

What his sexual appetites failed to do in undermining his health, his diabetes and his chain-smoking achieved. Add to these a depressive temperament afflicted with extreme indolence, and the marvel is that Puccini finished any project whatever. With better use of the zeal that he expended upon fussing obsessively over fresh productions of his existing operas, he could probably have written two or even three new ones; and his secret benefactions also cut greatly into the time he spent at his writing desk.

Characteristically, when in 1923 the local Fascist Party branch sent him a membership card, he neither completed it nor rejected it.¹² Although Puccini showed mild enthusiasm for Fascism – in the spirit of 'Anyhow, it makes the trains run on time' – his meeting with

the Duce went unsatisfactorily: 'I saw Mussolini but only for a few minutes, and I wasn't able to talk much.'¹³ Aggravating the dictator's impatience, no doubt, was Puccini's exalted reputation among Italy's royals. With a melancholy shrug of the shoulders, Puccini privately concluded: 'Mussolini is a mountebank.'¹⁴

Nonetheless, both sides found it in their interest to maintain an exterior amity until the composer's death, which occurred in Brussels on 29 November 1924, after a long and atrocious battle with throat cancer. (Monsignor Clemente Micara, papal nuncio to Belgium, administered to Puccini the last rites.) Italy's government, having already accorded Puccini the title of Senator for Life, made no protest when Puccini received a Requiem Mass in Milan so lavish that it attracted international news coverage. Toscanini, following up his similar role at Verdi's funeral, conducted La Scala's theatre orchestra in an extract from Puccini's early and unsuccessful opera *Edgar*. Among the dignitaries present were consular representatives from Austria, Germany, Japan, Switzerland, and the United States.¹⁵ Not a bad farewell for one who – with that innate modesty which he retained all his days – could never really believe the public wanted him, even when the evidence of its continuing approval made him a millionaire; and who, except for his surpassing musical gift, might well have spent his whole life as (to quote a phrase from his own opera, *La Fanciulla del West*) 'obscure and good for nothing'.

Social Casualties

A RECURRENT story in world history is the potential for frustrated ex-combatants, shunned, devalued and jobless, to start insurrections and revolutions, turn to crime and mercenarism, or to simply become social casualties.

- Islamism and its enemies in the Horn of Africa,, ed. Alex de Waal, Shama Books, Addis Ababa, 2004, p.46.47

1. Stanley Jackson, *Monsieur Butterfly: The Story of Puccini* (W. H. Allen, London, 1974), p. 239.
2. Dante Del Fiorentino, *Immortal Bohemian: An Intimate Memoir of Giacomo Puccini* (Prentice-Hall, New York City, 1952), p. 10.
3. Jackson, pp. 11-12.
4. Del Fiorentino, p. 26.
5. Jackson, p. 243.
6. Julian Budden, *Puccini: His Life and Works* (Oxford University Press, New York City, 2002), p. 279.
7. Del Fiorentino, p. 174.
8. Budden, p. 237.
9. Del Fiorentino, p. 178.
10. Jackson, p. 134.
11. Del Fiorentino, pp. 104-105.
12. Mary Jane Phillips-Matz, *Puccini: A Biography* (Northeastern University Press, Boston, 2002), p. 284.
13. Budden, p. 436.
14. Del Fiorentino, p. 205.
15. Budden, p. 444.

R. J. STOVE lives in Melbourne. This article originally appeared in the Canberra-based Catholic magazine *Oriens*.

BOOK REVIEW

Santayana claimed that Renaissance humanism delayed the advent of modern science by breaking the Scholastic tradition of exact logic and rigorous demonstration.

ESSAYS BY A CULTURAL CATHOLIC

Reviewed by JUDE P. DOUGHERTY



omplied with an introduction by Martin A. Coleman, this volume consists of more than 60 essays and excerpts from books by Santayana, covering a period from 1915-1951. Given Santayana's omnivorous intellect there is hardly a topic of import that Santayana has not addressed. A realist in philosophy, he looked upon much of his work as a contemporary expression of Aristotle, be it his metaphysics, ethics, or politics. Among the selections included many may be considered timely. Given the present political situation, two immediately command one's attention, "Government of the People," and "The United States as Leader." Both are taken from the

Santayana, George. *The Essential Santayana: Selected Writings*, ed. by the Santayana Edition. Bloomington, Ind., Indiana University Press, 2009. xlvii + 647 pp. Cloth, \$75.00; paper \$US29.95.

book *Dominations and Powers: Reflections on Liberty, Society and Government*, a work published a year before Santayana's death in 1952. *Dominations and Powers* can still be read with profit. Santayana himself describes it as being "concerned with rationality in government rather than with moral rightness in principles or ideals. Moral rightness has its credentials in nature. All life, if not all existence has an intrinsic direction: it therefore evokes phantoms of good and evil according as things (or words) seem to

support or impede its own élan. There can be no question, no possibility of abolishing moral allegiance: only when it breaks down in part, to get it together rationally in its own interests." Elsewhere he writes, "Now the Americans' way of talking is doctrinaire, as if they were out to save souls and not rationalize commerce. And respect for majorities instead of wisdom is out of place in any matter of ultimate importance. It cuts off all possibility of a liberal civilization."

Santayana belongs to what is often called the "golden age of American philosophy," a period that included not only Santayana but William James, Josiah Royce, Alfred North Whitehead, Charles Saunders Peirce, and John Dewey. Yet a noted author addressing the spirit of American philosophy, with some justification, could omit Santayana from the American literary pantheon. He didn't fit the pattern. Born in Spain and migrating with his mother to the United States when he was nine years old, Santayana received his early education at the Boston Latin School and then completed a baccalaureate degree at Harvard. After college he spent two years in Berlin and returned to Harvard to write his doctoral dissertation under Royce on "Lotze's System of Philosophy." The German experience, plus subsequent studies at Cambridge and the Sorbonne may have contributed to a distinctive Old World outlook. One could with reason call him a cultural historian, given his detached view of several temporary abodes and his ability to feel equally at home in Britain, Germany, and Italy. Upon completing his doctorate degree, he was invited to join the Harvard faculty in 1889 and rose to the rank of full professor by 1907. He served



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at Harvard for 24 years, but when news of his mother's death reached him while he was traveling abroad, he promptly resigned his position and never returned to the United States. The outbreak of World War I found him at Oxford where he remained for the duration of the war. In 1924 he settled permanently in Rome. Throughout life, Santayana retained his Spanish citizenship and, when asked, identified himself as a Catholic. Although he never practised the faith of his childhood, his philosophical naturalism and skepticism did not prevent him from embracing a cultural Catholicism. He ended his days in Rome where he loved to meditate at St. John Lateran, the Pope's own church, among the titans lining the nave of that great church. He died in Rome at age 89, attended in his last years by the Blue Nuns whose hospice had been made available to him during the years of the Second World War.

From the selections included, one can find many that alone would justify the price of the volume. There are insightful essays on James, on Royce, on Emerson, on Nietzsche, and on the Renaissance humanists. The editors of this volume set out to select, in their words, "works based on their traditional influence and popularity, their representativeness with respect to Santayana's philosophical vision, or their importance according to Santayana's comments in his correspondence. One must say that they have succeeded admirably. No matter how well read one may be with respect to his work, Santayana can be surprising. Although he is often called a humanist, he was severely critical of Renaissance humanism. Apart from him, some philosophers of science claim that Renaissance humanism delayed the advent of modern science by breaking the scholastic tradition of exact logic and rigorous demonstration. Santayana tells us, "The humanists of the Renaissance were lovers of Greek and good Latin, scornful of all that was crabbled, technical, or fanatical; they were pleasantly learned men, free from any kind of austerity, who, without quarrelling with Christian dogma, treated it humanely, and partly by tolerance and partly by ridicule hoped to neutralize all its metaphysical and moral rigor." He goes on to say,

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Selected Writings includes excerpts from the books, *Reason in Society* and

Reason in Common Sense, both of which are worth revisiting. Santayana's Aristotelianism gives his work a kind of time-transcending value, absent from most contemporary academic philosophy.

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.

If listened to, and their arguments fairly judged, pessimists may yet save our ship of state – indeed our civilization – from the hazards ahead of us

IN DEFENCE OF PESSIMISM

By Tony Evans



PESSIMISTS have never been popular, even when proved right – in fact especially when proved right. The ancients first drew our attention to this phenomenon by showing that those who foretold disasters or defeats were either done to death, like Laocoon who distrusted the Greeks when bearing gifts and was swallowed by serpents; or Cassandra, who foretold disasters but was condemned never to be believed.

Mindful of the Greek experiences we have wisely agreed never to 'kill the messenger' – advice more honoured now in theory than in practice because there are more ways of killing the messenger than by drawing blood. Because we shrink from bloody murder, we turn to murdering a reputation instead. This is achieved by either denying the pessimist a public voice or, if too prominent and talented to be ignored, then dubbing him or her a reactionary, a fascist, a has-been, or worst of all, a conservative.

There has always been among Catholics and other Christians, an inherent dislike of pessimism because it seems to run contrary to the doctrine of Hope, and the assurance that we have the promise of God that He himself will be with us even until the end of time. This engenders great confidence that adverse circumstances will turn out alright in the end. Hope enables us to withstand the slings and arrows and the buffetings, and the insults, that we suffer notably in the media and in public life. It follows that Christians by nature are optimists.

But a reliance on spiritual hope – being optimists – should not breed in us a complacency and a blindness in the face of a deteriorating situation, or an attack on our freedoms, and the decline

of Christian civilization such as we face today.

On these occasions the pessimist has his role. A pessimist alerts us to the dangers ahead and reminds us of Burke's words, 'all that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing'. There is nothing quite so wearing and so destructive of action as the optimists' clichés, 'always look on the bright side' and 'things are not as bad as they seem', or simply, 'don't listen to him, he's a pessimist.'

Surely a pessimist, would have been useful on the bridge of the Titanic on the night of 14th April, 1912. But like Cassandra, he most likely would not have been listened to. The Greeks knew so well how human nature works, how we cannot bear the truth if it is unpleasant and how we must kill the

messenger, if not by one means then another will do as well.

The difference between an optimist and a pessimist: according to one amusing definition, is that an optimist believes that this is the best of all possible worlds, and the pessimist fears that this may well be true. The Oxford Dictionary limits its definition of a pessimist as one who takes the worst view of a situation, leaving open the question of whether the worst view is the accurate one or not.

There are many instances in history of optimists who have frustrated or denied action to avert disaster, believing that their opponents were merely pessimistic – the appeasement faction in the British parliament opposing Churchill in 1938-9 is a famous example, as was the rhapsodic approval shown by many intellectuals of conditions in Stalin's Russia during the cold war. Pessimists – those with a contrary message – were ridiculed and not generally believed. The truth was too unpleasant.

The novelist Thomas Hardy, known widely for his rather gloomy view of the human condition, argued that 'Pessimism is really only a reasoned view deduced from facts unflinchingly observed'. He said he was always sceptical of professional optimists: 'they wear too much the strained look of the smile on a skull'. He admitted that he often got depressed at the sight of so much pain in the world – constant pain.

In temperament and character Hardy was the opposite of Chesterton but it is seldom acknowledged by Chesterton's admirers – those who see him merely as a jolly, laughing, beer-drinking joker – that toward the end of his life he admitted (like Hardy) to feelings of depression. Who can listen to recordings of Chesterton's last broadcasts without recognising the

Left Speechless

UNFORTUNATELY, as we never seem to learn, extend[ing] Man's power' can lead in some brutal directions. Recently the *New York Times* reported that Dutch police had discovered a ring of traders in child pornography 'whose images of abuse of even babies and infants were peddled over the Internet' to clients around the world. According to a psychologist consulting with police on the case, 'For professional reasons, I have seen a lot of such porn, but this left me speechless.'

– Bishop Charles J. Chaput,
*Deus ex Machina: How to Think About
Technology*, CRISIS 18, pp.18-22
(Oct. 1998).

great sadness in his voice and his fears for the future?

When discussing optimism and pessimism he wrote of the 'cheap cheerfulness' of the optimist and how we must judge any case of alleged degeneracy on its own merits. 'We are not judging them [the pessimists] but the situation they judge, or misjudge' In other words, listen to the argument put forward by the pessimist, and judge it, rather than dismiss it because it is not a pleasantly optimistic view.

We do not need to rely solely on writers of the past to see how dangerous it is to ignore pessimists. The contemporary French economist and presidential advisor, Jacques Attali, in his blog *L'Express*, condemns the widespread tendency to think well of optimism. He writes that it would be dangerous to discredit pessimism and then goes on to argue that in the blackest periods of our history the pessimists have always been right.

In every age, and particularly in ours, there are voices raised which warn of disasters ahead, wrongful policies, or unpleasant consequences of popular human actions and decisions. They are the pessimists, the *Cassandras* and the *Laocoons* of today, whose opinions are minority ones, not generally found on the front pages of newspapers or on television. We have to seek them out, be alert to the publications where their views can be found. If we take Chesterton's advice we should judge what they have to say, weigh the evidence, and not ridicule them, or dismiss them merely because they take an unduly pessimistic view of world and religious affairs.

Defend the pessimists of this world! They too have their role to play, and who knows, if listened to, and their arguments fairly judged, they may yet save our ship of state - indeed our civilization - from the hazards so plainly in view ahead of us.

TONY EVANS was a producer with the ABC for many years and is now a freelance writer living in Western Australia. He has published three historical biographies, the latest being the very popular *C.Y. O'Connor, His Life and Legacy*, published by UWA Press. He has just completed a biography of William Wardell. *Building with conviction*, Connorcourt, Victoria. 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.



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GIBBON ON MUHAMMAD

FROM ENTHUSIASM to imposture, the step is perilous and slippery: the daemon of Socrates affords a memorable instance, how a wise man may deceive himself, how a good man may deceive others, how the conscience may slumber in a mixed and middle state between self-illusion and voluntary fraud.

Charity may believe that the original motives of Mahomet were those of pure and genuine benevolence but ... the stern passions of pride and revenge were kindled in the bosom of Mahomet, and he sighed, like the prophet of Nineveh, for the destruction of the rebels whom he had condemned.

The use of fraud and perfidy, of cruelty and injustice, were often subservient to the propagation of the faith; and Mahomet commanded or approved the assassination of the Jews and idolaters who had escaped from the field of battle. By the repetition of such acts, the character of Mahomet must have been gradually stained; and the influence of such pernicious habits would be poorly compensated by the practice of the personal and social virtues which are necessary to maintain the reputation of a prophet among his sectaries and friends.

Of his last years, ambition was the ruling passion; and a politician will suspect, that he secretly, smiled (the victorious impostor!) at the enthusiasm of his youth and the credulity of his proselytes.

A philosopher will observe, that *their* cruelty and his success, would tend more strongly to fortify the assurance of his divine mission, that his interest and religion were inseparably connected, and that his conscience would be soothed by the persuasion, that he alone was absolved by the Deity from the obligation of positive and moral laws.

If he retained any vestige of his native innocence, the sins of Mahomet may be allowed as an evidence of his sincerity. In the support of truth, the arts of fraud and fiction may be deemed less criminal; and he would have started at the foulness of the means had he not been satisfied with the importance and the justice of the end. ... in his private conduct Mahomet indulged the appetites of a man, and abused the claims of a prophet?

Edward Gibbon, *The Saracens: their history and the rise and fall of their Empire*, London, Frederick Warne and Co [undated], pp.43-44. See: *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, by Edward Gibbon, Ward, Lock and Co., Limited London, [undated], vol II, p.456ff.

LIBERTY, EXTREMISM AND THE 'THIRD CHOICE'

Reviewed by Peter Day



IN SYDNEY RECENTLY, an inner-city studio artist called Sergio Redegalli was heaved by the state police, condemned by his local council, and vocally abused by a stream of passers-by in the street, all for the creation of a mural on his own wall.

If Redegalli's name had been Bill Henson and his mural had been a child-photo with erotic overtones, all the forces of contemporary righteousness would have risen as one in furious defence of his rights to free expression. If such a work had incorporated some kind of anti-Christian iconography, even more so. Alas, the spirit of Mr Redegalli's work was captured in the simple painted words: 'say no to burqas'. Of course, he never stood a chance.

The Newtown artist, who usually works in glass, told the *Sydney Morning Herald* that his mural was 'not about knocking Muslims, it's about extremist viewpoints which don't work in this country. Young women should be allowed to be like every other person.' But in its coverage of the affair, the Herald was far more sympathetic to the forces of official censorship – and to the vandals who defaced Mr Redegalli's work – than to Mr Redegalli. And so the artist has now removed his mural: a triumph, certainly, but for whom?

The only consolation to draw from this little parable is that it might have occurred anywhere in the Western world, even the home of *liberté* itself. The French philosopher Pascal Bruckner writes that today, 'in France, a country with an anticlerical tradition, one can make fun of Judeo-Christianity, mock the Pope or the Dalai Lama, and represent Jesus and the prophets in all sorts of postures, including the most obscene, but one must never laugh

Mark Durie: *The Third Choice: Islam, Dhimmitude and Freedom.*
Deror Books, 2010.

at Islam, on pain of being accused of discrimination. Why', asks Bruckner, 'does one religion and one only escape the climate of raillery and irony that is normal for others? Why indeed?'

Mr Redegalli's reference to the *burqa* being about 'extremist viewpoints' was of course correct: throughout the world, the garment is a reliable marker of extremism (and is for that reason often frowned upon by more or less secular Arab regimes such as Syria and some Muslim teaching authorities, even at Cairo's al-Azhar university).

The very word 'Islamophobia' seems to have been invented as a way of intimidating women who were opposed to wearing the burqa – or rather, opposed to the Iranian version of the garment, known as the chador. (That was in the late 1970s, when the ayatollahs who had then seized power in Iran wanted to spread the use of the chador as a symbol of their fundamentalist cultural revolution. The word 'Islamophobia' was a weapon to silence feminist critics of the garment.)

As Bruckner explains, the word 'Islamophobia' is still used 'to silence Muslims who dare to... denounce fundamentalism, or call for reform of

[Muslim] family law...; and to 'stigmatize the young women who want to free themselves from the veil and go out in public without shame, their heads uncovered...' But somehow, hostility to any criticism of Islam, including fundamentalist Islam, is being steadily absorbed into the corpus of western, non-Muslim political correctness. Again, the question is, why?

One scholar who has put more thought into that question than just about anyone else in the world is Melbourne's Mark Durie, and we are fortunate that he has now distilled the fruits of his thought into a brilliant book titled *The Third Choice: Islam, dhimmitude and freedom.*²

That word in the title, *dhimmitude*, will of course be unfamiliar to many English-language readers. Very briefly, it refers to the condition of those non-Muslim peoples who have been known through history as *dhimmis*: meaning non-Muslims who are permitted to live under Muslim regimes, provided they agree to certain conditions and curtailments – both personal and institutional – as contained in what is known in Islam as the dhimma pact. (This was the 'third choice' offered by Islam to conquered peoples: the first and second being conversion to Islam or death.)

Since there is hardly a word wasted in Durie's very reader-friendly book, it is impossible to give justice here, by way of summary, to his inquiry into the nature of *dhimmitude*, or to his argument about its continuing significance, or the meaning that it carries for non-Muslims in western countries today. Suffice to say that his presentation is as lucid as it is compelling.

More than any other book I know of, Durie's work enables the reader to actually understand the



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precise psychological character of the moral capitulation that we now see overtaking so many minds in Australia as elsewhere, whether in universities, churches, the media, political parties or indeed police forces.

The significance of the subject matter can hardly be overstated. For as the noted Egyptian-born historian Bat Ye'or writes in her introduction to the book, the phenomenon which Durie elucidates and explores is manifestly 'contrary to human freedom and dignity'. Among the forces undermining our civilization, it is now well to the forefront.

The scholarly credentials that Durie brings to his task are impeccable. A former head of the department of linguistics and language studies at the University of Melbourne, his specialty as a post-graduate student was the language and culture of the Acehnese, a Muslim people of Indonesia among whom he worked for many years, and about whom he published numerous books and articles.

He has also worked at the University of Leiden and at leading universities (as a Harkness Fellow) in the United States, including Stanford and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. After a change in career, he is now a minister of the Anglican Church in Melbourne's Caulfield.

Readers with enough interest in the topic to have read this far should, I believe, jot down Durie's book as required reading – but not only for themselves. If we are all now required to accept that the policing of a bogus 'Islamophobia' is now among the responsibilities of our state constabularies, local governments and other authorities, we are entitled to demand that the politicians who are ultimately responsible broaden their education. Mark Durie would be an excellent teacher for them to start with.

PETER DAY is a regular contributor to *The Spectator* magazine and a former New York and Washington correspondent for *The Australian* newspaper. His articles have also appeared in numerous other major publications, including *Quadrant* in Australia and the *National Interest* and *Weekly Standard* in the United States.

1. The quote is from Pascal Bruckner: *The Tyranny of Guilt: an essay in Western Masochism*. Princeton University Press, 2010.
2. Mark Durie: *The Third Choice: Islam, Dhimmitude and Freedom*. Deror Books, 2010.



MEDIA MATTERS

By JAMES MURRAY

Century theme

The decade began with the blazing exclamation marks of NY 9/11/2001. These emphasised a truism; two main polities are concurrent. Both profess toleration. One, more than the other, practises it in its governance systems. Transmigrants use this toleration legally to their benefit.

Extremists among them take advantage of the toleration to promote by terrorism what they consider to be a superior global polity, even though its establishment would lead to the elimination of what they used in its promotion.

Essentially members of the first polity react in a way that shows identity of defensive means between the cave and the skyscraper: fight fire with back fires.

As the assassin's bullet of 1914 that started the war to end all wars continued to ricochet fatally through the rest of the 20th century, the blazing exclamation marks of NY 9/11/2001 will dominate the rest of the 21st century.

Excelsior

Next year's News Awards, called in-house 'The Ruperts' after chief proprietor Rupert Murdoch are already being planned. Your correspondent noted the winners of this year's award, startled that the catalogue did not appear to include one specifically for freelance contributions.

Sir Keith Murdoch, whose name is on the top award (congratulations Susannah Moran) had an early excursion to Fleet Street where he gave thought to following his father into the Presbyterian ministry. His freelance success rate was, however, enough to keep him in journalism after his retreat Ozward.

No need to elaborate on his subsequent excursion to Fleet Street, wielding his Gallipoli Letter. Yet freelancing was make or break for him. Without it he would not have produced his most dynamic issue: Rupert Murdoch.

During awards exultation, the word 'family' was used of News Limited. Way too much to suggest this is akin to the Mafia self-description *La famiglia*. But hacks are hacks and, with notable exceptions, decamp for better money – or possibly, for the same reason, return home.

Home? Newsrooms are not family rooms although rumpuses do occur in them. To suggest the contrary is the kind of linguistic fudging that enables people to think that sentiment entitles them to alter meaning as, for example, in misapplying the word marriage to same-sex unions.

Steel harvest

Great-grandpa, who sold fish door-to-door in Yorkshire, left a carrot. But his legacy is not part of a hard-times, "looxury" story for which some of Yorkshire folk have become celebrated.

As arts supremo Anthony Steel reveals in his book, *Painful in Daily Doses*, the carrot is made of gold embellished coral, relic of a bet – 1,000 pounds to a carrot – his great-grandpa. by then a bookie, made with the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) who settled in royal style.

Untoppable anecdote? Not for Steel who has subtitled his book. *An Anecdotal Memoir – an ever richer harvest of anecdotage from his family, once synonymous with United Steel, Sheffield; from his time at Oxford University and his National Service in the British Army.*

Posted to the Royal Army Service Corps he won a medal: fastest typist on his course. The Joint Services School for Linguists followed, giving him command of Russian, invaluable in his arts career.

Along the line of his advance from the family business, Steel reveals how he became Adelaide Festival supremo only to miss out on what would have been a notable sequel: directorship of the Edinburgh Festival.

His failure turned on his inability to see that the Lord Provost of Edinburgh might take amiss an expectation of support similar to that received from Don Dunstan, premier of South Australia.

Between Steel's wry lines you get the stream of consciousness: Don who? Of where? You're in Edinburgh, man, capital of Scotland! And – can ye not see? – I'm its Lord Provost!

The episode was, however, merely a tarmac blister on Steel's high road. Gambler, like his great-grandpa, although for different stakes, he was also a rambler who criss-crossed the world via its cultural capitals. He ate when he was hungry, drank when he was dry and sang



in choirs. He took risks on acts rich and strange, triumphal and catastrophic for the broad spectrum of festivals he organised throughout Australia.

On his travels he met more *panjandrums* of culture than Barry Humphries and his alter ego Dame Edna Everage. Characteristically he spotlights an obscure Austrian parish priest, Josef Herowitsch. His claim to attention? He decided his parish needed an international festival.

A tale of submissions to arts bureaucrats beseeching funding? No way. In 1981, Father Herowitsch announced a ten-day holiday from his normal duties and involved his parishioners in the inaugural festival: mediaeval behaviour in the present tense and best sense.

Steel's pell-mell approach makes for engaging reading. Necessarily there are names galore. Steel does not drop them; he rains them down like a latterday Jupiter.

Few in the cultural sphere created so much from so little for so long as Anthony Steel, and in the bygoing stimulated so much copy for so many commentators.

This is not his summing up. His book does not end. He stops typing at medal-winning speed.

Another book might serve him, and Australia, well while further enlivening his return to Adelaide. In *Painful in Daily Doses* he comes on as jolly-good featherweight. He should upscale to his true weight, super-heavy. And – stir the possum time – focus on the current state of the arts including whether importing works for festivals increases cultural cringe and stultifies, not inspires, relevant new local productions or revivals.

Who needs, for example, to revive the theatrical works of Barry Oakley or Jack Hibberd when the Big Macs of American culture, Tennessee Williams and Eugene O'Neil, can be star-sauced and microwaved for the local market? As for that non-pareil, Irish-cod Mikado of theatre, Sam Beckett: bow down you lower colonial classes.

Meanwhile everyone, professional or amateur, with any interest in culture, including the Minister for the Arts, Simon Crean, should put *Painful in Daily Doses* on Christmas-present lists – if absolutely necessary, their own. (Wakefield Press, Adelaide \$39.95).

Guilt presumption

There is a growing secularist presumption that Catholic beliefs nullify the validity of any argument however rational or socially beneficial it might be.

Presumers should recall that once upon a time job advertisements included: No Catholics need apply. They should ask themselves whether that anti-Catholic job discrimination is morphing into exclusion of Catholics from the public square.

Historically such job discrimination was not defeated by the kind of law that now makes many forms of discrimination illegal: it was defeated by education in fortitude.

Generally Catholics stood up as Catholics. By the same virtue they should enter the public square.

Boy-o-Boyer

Good to see the vice-chancellor of the University of Melbourne, Glyn Davis, mention Erasmus in the opening to his first ABC Boyer Lecture 2010

(*The Australian*, Nov 13-14). Even better if, instead of describing Erasmus rather limply as an 'academic', Davis (ex-Marist Brothers High School, Kogarah) had reminded readers that the Dutchman, Desiderius Erasmus (1469-1536), was influenced by Thomas More. But, like the latter, Erasmus was no 'academic': he was one of the greatest scholars of his generation.

Unlike More, Erasmus did not lose his head yet he remained a devout Catholic while influencing both sides in Reformation controversies and writing his enduring satire, *In Praise of Folly*.


Davis's first lecture was high on praise of the 'republic of letters' and its modern by-product 'a huge world trade in higher education worth more than \$35 billion a year in English-speaking countries alone'.

Who could disagree with such boosterism? Certainly not your correspondent. But that other academic satirist, Kingsley Amis, did say: 'More will mean worse.'

Grog on

Twitters continue following the naming by *The Australian* of a public servant blogger, Greg Jericho, writing of politics under the pseudonym Grog's Gamut. Will pseudonyms vanish like anonymous copy, displaced by a plethora of by-lines, except on editorials including those of *The Australian*?

Pseudonyms do have their value. In 1808 Peter Plymley wrote letters favouring Catholic Emancipation. His subsequent identification as the Anglican clergyman, Sydney Smith, wit and founder of *The Edinburgh Review*, added power to the letters.



Plymley had a predecessor Junius, a pseudonym appended to anti-Tory letters in *The Public Advertiser*, London. The identity of Junius remained secret. The favoured candidate has been the Dublin-born Sir Phillip Francis (1740-1818).

After public service in India, he returned to Britain and became an MP – a precedent for Greg Jericho (who has resumed blogging). As an MP, Jericho could leak anonymously to journalists who, at risk of jail time, would protect him as a source.

Disclosure: your correspondent, on occasion, uses pseudonyms.

Raffles exchange

One obvious point has been missing from debate on the deal involving the Australian and Singapore Stock Exchanges. If, following Singapore's creation, the ASX (or its then equivalent) had pushed for a merger and/or take-over of its counterpart how would Lee Kuan-Yu, the island-state's creator, have reacted?

His response, it's fair to suggest, would've been a blunt negative. Nor would this have been xenophobia: it would have been a gifted politician's explicit recognition that modern sovereign states need independent symbolic institutions: stock exchange, parliament, judiciary, communications, police, armed forces and a belief system, even one reduced to statism.

Vive the Brench

News of the brigading of British and French army units is a reminder of a crucial anniversary: St Valery. There, for the last time on the European continent during World War II, French and British units were on stand-to together, the year 1940, the year of the Dunkirk evacuation.

The cover-story at the time was that the British unit involved, the 51st Highland Division, could not be evacuated because the Royal Navy was unable to provide shipping.

Not so according to Saul David's book *Churchill's Sacrifice of the Highland Division*. David maintains that Churchill kept the division in position to show the French that Britain, despite the Dunkirk evacuation, was ready to continue fighting.

France's capitulation to Nazi Germany meant that the Division, mainly Scots but also comprising English units, was ordered to surrender.

In their honour the Franco-British brigade might well be named *The St Valery Brigade*.

Australia's Defence Minister Stephen Smith, in view of an increased US military presence here, might care to propose a similar Austral-American brigade.

Name: *The Hamel Brigade* to commemorate Monash's command of American infantry alongside Australian infantry at the battle of Le Hamel during World War I.

Double entry

Bank industry spin meisters must suffer from irony deficiency. Why else would they give their bosses the term 'populism' to counter 'bank-bashing'? Banks are supremely populist in their advertising but elitist in the style with which they make hyper profitability belonging to shareholders the servo-mechanism of executive packages.

These are factors your correspondent does not recall being discussed on the ABC's cryptically named *Cruen Transfer*: less a *Napisan* wash of the advertising industry than a *Palmolive* soft-soaping despite the satiric wit of Will Anderson (on camera) but possibly because of Andrew Denton's shrewdness (off camera).

Bank rank

In the bank stoush, Shadow (Over-Shadow?) Treasurer Joe Hockey has played another Joe – Joe Kennedy, the finance insider recruited by President FD Roosevelt to sort out Great Depression skulduggeries.

Hockey, too, is an insider. Indeed he can look more like a banker than a banker, one of the avuncular kind used in advertising. Where can he or, for that matter bankers of good will, find a model bank?

There's always Monte dei Paschi, founded 1600 by Duke Cosimo de Medici in Siena. It charged five and a half per cent on loans and paid five per cent to shareholders. Salaries and overheads were kept to a minimum. All excess profits went to hospitals and community works.

Too good to continue? Your correspondent remembers a Sydney branch, result of the Hawke-Keating (or vice versa) policy of exposing local banks to competition. No current address in the telephone book. Did it Chase-Manhattan back home?

Happy Christmas!

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THE MAKING OF CAPTAIN MELVILLE

By Alan Katen Dunstan



NE OF THE interesting features connected with bushranging in Australia is the youthfulness of many of the principal participants. Ned Kelly, king of the outlaws, had his first brush with the law at seventeen and his last when he was hanged in Melbourne jail at twenty-seven; William Westwood, better-known as Jacky Jacky was, to use the term current at the time, 'launched into eternity,' on Norfolk Island at twenty-six; and it said that most of those who rode with Ben Hall were in their teens. Similarly, many came out from the old country as young criminals.

Martin Cash, a Wexford lad, was eighteen when he was shipped to Botany Bay for seven years. Another eighteen-year old was Henry Garrett from Leicestershire who, after a short career as a bank robber in Victoria, won fame as the first bushranger in New Zealand.¹

Then there was Captain Melville possibly the youngest of all the young offenders. His life was set on the wrong course from the beginning by 'too early an experience' of the ice-cold hand of penury.

Born in 1824 in Perth, Scotland, Captain Melville, alias Thomas Smith,² was baptized Francis McNeish McNeil McCallum, and his first known encounter with the law came at twelve when he was given three months for stealing. His second came at fourteen when he was transported for house-breaking.

Brought to Australia in September 1838 aboard the barque *Minerva*, he was thrown into the infamous boys' reformatory at Point Puer, Port Arthur, in Van Diemen's Land - as Tasmania was then called. As for being a place

of reform, for Melville Port Puer was anything but, and the treatment he received there warped him for life.

For a minor breach of discipline Melville - as McCullum now called himself - was thrown into solitary confinement in a dark, forbidding pit and fed on bread and water.

On another occasion he was sentenced to twenty lashes for fighting. Shortly thereafter, when he was dragged before the visiting magistrate and sentenced to more time in solitary confinement, the punishment he most dreaded, he shouted abuse at the guards - unfortunate behavior which earned him a charge of 'violent and disorderly conduct in the presence of a magistrate' - for which he was given twenty-six strokes of a birch rod across his buttocks. Later, for escaping from a road-gang, his sentence was extended to transportation for life.

It seems certain that such treatment ate up everything good in him and soured him against society. And, driven by the thought that he might never be free again, Melville, who suffered violent and extraordinary mood swings, attacked a fellow prisoner, was charged and sentenced to thirty-six lashes. Tied to the triangle, he groaned in pain as

the "cat" cut into his flesh to re-open the wounds of his earlier flogging.³

And there were other occasions too, when for disorderly conduct, insolence, disobedience, idleness or misconduct, he again found himself in solitary, in chains or in receipt of further punishment at the triangle.

None the less, despite these set-backs in 1849 he was granted a 'ticket of leave.'

However, from the vignettes sketched so far, we should not be in the least surprised, that given this freedom, Melville in defiance escaped to Victoria where, in the twelve months from December 1851, he led a gang (said to be eighty strong) in a series of hold-ups on the road from Melbourne to the gold-diggings.

His career as a highway man, however, was short-lived and ended when he was captured in a brothel in Geelong on Christmas Day, 1852.⁴

However, once they had him in custody the authorities proceeded to make an example of him. He was convicted on three charges of highway robbery and, being 'a danger to society,' received, in all, sentences amounting to thirty-two years, thus tying the record thirty-two years given to the more famous highway man, Frank Gardiner.⁵

His term, however, according to the judge, was meant to be spent in hard labour on the roads, the first three years in irons!

But instead of being put to work on the roads, he was taken to Melbourne and thrown into what was Victoria's most inhuman jail - the prison hulk *President*, moored with three other hulks off Gellibrand Point lighthouse, near Williamstown.

These ships were, like the *fascas* of ancient Rome, symbols of State power and a stark reminder to all who saw them, and whilst the other hulks *Deborah*, *Success* and *Sacramento*, held those thought least likely to re-offend,

Mathematics Taliban-style

LITTLE OMAR has a Kalashnikov with three magazines. There are twenty bullets in each magazine. He uses 2/3rds of the bullets and kills sixty infidels. How many infidels does he kill with each bullet?

- Asne Seierstad, *The Bookseller of Kabul*, Back Bay Books, 2002, p.58. 'Teachings Maths under the Taliban'.

the *President* was a place of maximum security wherein the spirit of the hardest criminals might be broken.

The *President* was the brain-child of Samuel Barrow, Inspector-General of the Victorian Penal Service, and one-time resident magistrate under John Price on Norfolk Island.⁶

And because Melville was young and strong, he was fitted with irons weighing the maximum allowable, that is, thirty-six pounds, and confined in a cell below the waterline that was three feet wide, six feet long and six feet high. His bedding, such as it was, was limited to a single lice-infested blanket that was never washed, aired or changed.⁷

Along the seawalls of the punitive cells, about three feet from the floor, were rows of massive ringbolts, to these men were handcuffed with their hands behind their backs. To sit or lie down was impossible. Not surprisingly, Melville was punished in this manner and chained on one occasion, so close to a ringbolt that for two days he could only stand or kneel.⁸

Relief of a kind came to the prisoners but once a day when they, wearing their heavy chains, were hauled with block and tackle on to the upper deck, chained in pairs and permitted to shuffle about in silence for an hour's exercise.

But for most of the time he was simply a target for the warders who it seems were little inclined towards mercy, and who, to show their contempt, repeatedly bashed him for no reason.⁹ For defending himself on one such occasion, Melville was charged with assault and sentenced to twenty days' solitary confinement.

And when it seemed he might waste the whole of his life away in confinement, his *nemesis* Samuel Barrow, resigned under pressure of public opinion against his cruelty. Yet despite the harm done under the system devised by him, and carried on with the most ferocious barbarity, Barrow was parachuted into the position of immigration agent for Victoria and replaced by John Price, then living in Hobart although still nominally commandant of the penal settlement on Norfolk Island.

Though no humanitarian, Price did initially show leniency towards the inmates of the prison ships by letting some work in the quarries on Cellibrand Point, near where the hulks

ANNALS CROSSWORD No. 63

ACROSS CLUES

1. Eucharistic cup (7)
5. The angel in charge of the abyss (Rev 9:11) (7)
9. Moment (7)
10. Thoughts (5)
11. Holy Ghost (9)
12. Astonish (5)
13. A weighted hook used in trolling (5)
15. Degree, extent or frequency of occurrence (9)
17. Religious ministers (9)
19. Tumults (5)
22. Prepares (text) for publication (5)
23. Greek philosopher, pupil of Plato and tutor of 6 down (9)
25. Hike; homeless person (5)
26. Inscription on a tombstone (7)
27. Nun and missionary to India, widely known as "Mother" (7)

DOWN CLUES

1. Cut, snipped or trimmed with scissors (7)
2. European country, capital Vienna (7)
3. Son of Abraham and Sarah (5)
4. Immoderate, uncompromising, or fanatical behaviour (9)
5. Nimble (5)

6. King of Macedon and pupil of 23 across (9)
7. Contempt (7)
8. A non-existent place (7)
14. To make or pass laws (9)
16. Prayer admitting to sinfulness and an entreaty for forgiveness (9)
17. Merciful (7)
18. An Apostolic letter (7)
20. Rejected or abandoned (7)
21. Raged with anger (7)
23. The first letter in the Greek alphabet (5)
24. Robber (5)

SOLUTION TO CRYPTIC NO. 23

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were anchored. In the meantime, the breaking process was evidently thought to be working on Melville and he was removed to the hulk *Success*, and finally, set to work in the quarries.

Strangely enough, despite the back-breaking nature of the work, or perhaps because he was able once again to experience the simple joys of open space, blue skies and fresh air, his moods quietened. And, with his rages seemingly under control he spent the little leisure time he had translating

the Bible into the language of the Australian aborigine, in which language, it was said, he could speak with astonishing fluency.

None the less, there were other times when he went to what psychologists call a 'bad place' wherein, like King Lear, he felt himself "more sinned against than sinning," back to where he was still a ruddy-faced, smiling but hapless child of loving but poor Celts, a victim of iniquitous laws. And so it was that on October 22, 1856, or about two

years after he'd been transferred to the *Success*, with nine accomplices, he overpowered a guard and seized the longboat which towed the convict barge between the ship and the quarry.

The water-police quickly took up the pursuit, and in the end recaptured the escapees. But not before one of the prisoners, Billy Stevens, killed Constable Owen Owens the unfortunate guard who'd been held on the longboat as a hostage. It should be noted, however, that in penal times there were cells for refractory prisoners – sufficient it was said to drive a man mad and keep him mad.

Perhaps in a final act of madness Stevens, who'd spent long periods in such cells, jumped overboard and drowned.¹⁰

From there, events moved quickly. Melville and his eight surviving companions were charged with murdering Owens. But by the time the trial began four weeks later in Melbourne public hostility had been roused by Melville's persistent allegations of cruelty and evil goings on. Apart from the everyday bashing of prisoners at night *le vice Anglais*, was rampant throughout the hulks.¹¹

Put on trial separately, Melville quizzed the Crown's witnesses with a brilliance that belied his lowly status, the witnesses, none the less, all insisted they had seen the accused batter Owens to death with a heavy stone-breaking hammer, on the other hand in a rare demonstration of solidarity, or mateship? Melville's companions unswervingly claimed Stevens, not Melville, battered Owens.

In his summary, Judge Molesworth pointed out, that: "if Melville was a party to a concocted plan to escape, and an officer was murdered, even though he may not have concurred in that specific act, he was responsible for it."¹²

Thus not surprisingly, after a paltry thirty-five minutes consideration the jury, that 'palladium of liberty',¹³ found Melville guilty. And when he appeared for sentencing two days later, was told what he had experienced on the hulks was no excuse for violence; Molesworth then sentenced Melville to be hanged.

Meanwhile his companions were brought to trial for the murder of Owens; and in spite of the fact that the Crown witnesses stuck to their stories, only two of the men were found guilty but with a strong and unanimous

Doctrine and the Media

THE POPULAR MEDIA tend to present [the Second Vatican Council] as a doctrinal revolution, plunging the Catholic Church into all the ambiguities of the secular world, dismantling her venerable traditions, and dissolving or at least weakening the authority of her hierarchical government.

- Avery Dulles, S.J., 'Catholics in the world of Mass Media, Lecture for the Salesian Guild, Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio, January 23, 1999.

recommendation for mercy. The other six convicts were acquitted. However, a new sensation followed shortly thereafter when the Victorian Full Court quashed Melville's conviction.

At his trial Melville had made the point that the warrant for his arrest was made out in the name of Thomas Smith, one of his aliases. Likewise he stressed he had been sentenced to work on the roads ergo his imprisonment on the hulks had been illegal.

The Full Court decided, therefore, that Melville had not technically been in lawful custody when he tried to escape. And while this meant he was saved from the gallows, he still faced serving the remaining twenty-eight years of his original sentence.¹⁴

Such a thought ignited the fires that lurked within him, and lodged in Melbourne Jail there, at intervals, he broke out into paroxysms of bestial rage. On 28 July 1857, he attacked the governor of the prison and as a consequence, this recalcitrant was placed under medical observation so that his sanity might be measured.

Yet, despite being under observation, less than a month later, on the morning of 12 August 1857, Melville was found strangled to death in his cell. His silk scarf had been drawn with a slipknot around his neck, then passed tightly around three times and the end tucked in.

But how could a man strangle himself in this way? Little wonder that there were cries of "Murder" from many quarters when the prison doctor said it was a case of suicide, and a verdict to that effect was later returned by the coroner's jury.

Yet it was said at the time and accepted by many that the hapless Melville had been strangled by his guards as payback for killing Owens. The mystery surrounding his death, however, remains unsolved to this day. The only thing that can now be said with certainty is that someday Melville will face a higher court – the Higher Court of Heaven! and he will find mercy there.

1. "New Zealand's First Bushranger." *Parade Magazine*, Sandhown Press, Melbourne, February 1961.
2. "Who Strangled Melville?" *Parade Magazine*, Sandhown Press, Melbourne, May 1961. Hereafter, referred to as *Melville*.
3. Martin Cash records seeing one man sentenced to 130 lashes receive 50 per day for three days, thus causing the agony. Martin Cash, *Martin Cash: The Bushranger of Van Diemen's Land*, J. Walsh & Sons, Hobart, 1977.
4. Bernard Cronin, *Bushranging Silhouettes*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1932, p. 148, Hereafter referred to as *the bushranger*.
5. *Bushranging*, p.151.
6. James Seuple Kerr, *Out of Sight, Out of Mind*, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney, 1988, p.72. Hereafter referred to as *Sight*.
7. *Sight*, p.7.
8. *Melville*, p.7.
9. I am grateful to James Seuple Kerr, for explaining that being tied to a ringbolt "was to ensure bludgeoning and gagging, often into insensibility and beyond it. The bludgeoning they called warming you and then the cooling down came in the shape of sundry buckets of cold sea water to wash the blood of you, leaving you to hang on the ringbolt to dry. While thus suspended your food, a pound of bread, would be flung on the floor among salt water, urine, blood and excrement."
10. *Bushranging*, p. 152.
11. James Seuple Kerr, *Design For Convicts*, National Trust, Sydney, 1984, p.145.
12. *Melville*, p.7.
13. William H. McNamara, "The Irish Coercion Bill," *Liberator*, Melbourne, 4 September, 1887, p.230.
14. *Melville*, p.7.



ALAN DUNSTAN is a professional photographer with an abiding interest in Australian and Catholic Church history. He has a PhD from Macquarie University for a thesis on *The Land Question and the Early Labour Movement in Australia*.

Fair Game

Valerie Plame was the blonde spy driven from the cold into the blaze of publicity during the spin-dazed, pre-Iraq war quest for hard evidence that Saddam Hussein possessed Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Plame was also married to a former US-Africa diplomat, Joe Wilson. They wrote her and his book about their experience: *Fair Game and The Politics of Truth*.

Lights, camera, action. And into frame come Naomi Watts and Sean Penn to play the couple against a background of international location filming deftly intercut with archival footage showing the likes of President George Bush and Vice-President Dick Cheney.

No one does tough fragility better than Watts. Penn is coiled-spring indignation personified. Their director/cinematographer is Doug Liman. Doug Liman? Yes, director of the spy thrillers *The Bourne Identity*, *The Bourne Ultimatum* and *Mr and Mrs Smith*.

Just the guide for Mr and Mrs Wilson. She worked under the trade title: CIA non-official covert operative; he, at her discreet suggestion, participated. After due on-location diligence, he decided that Niger had not supplied uranium to Iraq.

White House operatives kept trying to spin evidence. Wilson, under a byline, went public in *The New York Times*, not, some might think, the most logical outlet given it also published pro-war, unattributed copy.

The movie ignores this incongruity possibly because the British scriptwriter brothers Jez and John-Henry Butterworth admit they knew nothing of the situation when commissioned.

Simplemindedness can be a response to complication. White House operatives leaked Plame's spy status. Accident or combined punishment and counter-spin?

Either way, collateral damage is shown: first, in terms of Mr and Mrs Wilson's Washington lives, their twin children and network of friends; second, her loyal overseas contacts were made expendable.

Mere speculation to wonder which of these aspects will be more noticed: US spin or US abandonment of allies?

MOVIES

By JAMES MURRAY

What the movie does show is that Plame did want to keep quiet and move on: Wilson was for fighting publicly. She joined him.

End credits give details of outcomes including the jailing of Cheney's chief of staff, I. Lewis 'Scooter' Libby whose sentence was commuted by President Bush. The details are run alongside archival footage of Valerie Plame testifying before a US government investigative committee.

One of effect of conspiracy thrillers is popcorn paranoia. Is the thriller itself part of the spin? If so, where does the Abu Dhabi main production credit fit in?

M★★★★NFFV

The American

Enigmatic Jack (George Clooney) is not only a contract gunsmith but a deadly shot and a Lothario, ready to kill to protect his cover while on the run from mysterious fellow killers.

Clooney's performance has the ruthless precision of a rifle bolt snapping a round into the breach.

Director Anton (*Control*) Corbijn, working from Rowan Joffe's script, locates his thriller in Italy's mountainous Abruzzo region around Castel del Monte. Its moral location is Greenland - Graham Greeneland.

In the streets of the town Jack meets Father Benedetto (Paolo Bonacelli). Later over supper in the presbytery, the priest offers spiritual guidance. Jack prefers the beguilement of a prostitute, hallmarked heart of gold (Violante Placido) as he completes a contract for a mystery woman (Thekla Reuten).

Concealed beneath the thriller format is a parable about how chances of redemption are offered. Pendent to this: the possibility that we may die by the means we ourselves have made.

MA15+★★★★NFFV

Sarah's Key

Not for the first time a shameful episode in French history is exposed: the 1942 Vichy regime round-up of Jews in Nazi-occupied Paris.

Writer/director Gilles Paquet-Brenner's take on the episode is based on Tatiana de Rosnay's best-selling novel.

As Julia Jarmond, a Franco-American journalist, Kristin Scott Thomas brings needle-point timing to showing detachment shading to horror and pity as she finds her personal life is linked to the episode. Melusine Mayance and Charlotte Poutrel play Sarah as the child and young woman who holds the agonised key to the death of a sibling.

Paquet-Brenner inserts a powerfully understated sub-text: will Jarmond go along with the cult of death she has been investigating by aborting a child at her husband's behest?

M★★★★NFFV

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part I

The further adventures of the young wizard trio: Harry (Daniel Radcliffe), Ron Weasley (Rupert Grint) and Hermione (Emma Watson).

They outshine the constellation of character actors, or Potter Pensioners, who have played cameo roles so numerous they deserve their own Trivial Pursuit.

As the fearsome Voldemort, Ralph Fiennes leads the forces pursuing the young wizards. They in turn have to sort out the question that has been growing since JK Rowling's saga coincided with the start of the decade: does Harry or Ron win the heart of Hermione?

Rhetorical question, of course, to Potter scholars who have studied the texts. Director David Yates and scriptwriter Steven Kloves set the question amid an array of big-screen computerised special effects.

These may startle or scare but do little for narrative coherence. Nor does the sight of Harry, Ron and Hermione running from enemies like school children from playground bullies do much for the reputation of Hogwarts Academy; it suggests that the Hogwarts wizard alumni might be defective in magic which is like suggesting Eton, Harrow or Fettes could produce functionally illiterate pupils.

Hallows is not a bedtime story for very young children. There again, neither are the tales of the Brothers Grimm nor JR Tolkien's *Lord of the*

Rings which Rowling has emulated. Does this Potter totter? No way. There are, however, signs of Potter fatigue. What should have been the last of JK Rowling's saga has been cut like cold plum duff into two slices, the last of which is scheduled for distribution next year.

The saga, it needs to be said, is less a series than a phenomenon which proves what Hollywood has long known but frequently forgets: films may be co-operative enterprises but the prime begetters of the most successful are writers.

M★★★SFFV

Legend of the Guardians: The Owls of Ga'hoole

Even on an IMAX screen the vivid computer-generated images by Animal Logic do not quite allay the confusion of the storyline based on Kathryn Lasky's 15 novels. Owls good (The Guardians) and bad (The Pure Ones) are in conflict on the planet Ga'hoole which smoulders incessantly without singeing a feather.

Zack Snyder directs with bravado like of traffic cop in a fog. Geoffrey Rush and Jim Sturgess lead the voice talent. Strictly for the birds (ouch). Or for those with an intelligent, talking cockatoo to clarify the storyline.

PG★★★SFFV

The King's Speech

Lionel Logue was an Australian speech therapist. His academic qualifications were dubious, his formative experience being in Melbourne aiding World War I veterans shell-shocked to the point of inarticulacy.

Bertie Windsor was a British royal, bearing the title Duke of York. On public-speaking occasions, his stutter froze him into silence

From the Logue-Windsor encounters director Tom Hooper and scriptwriter David Seidler have created enthrallment. Colin Firth, nothing like the Duke of York, plays him with fierce, chain-smoking intensity, convincing you this is how the duke should have looked.

Geoffrey Rush is Logue to the last rounded Austral vowel. Encounters are enacted amid the 1930s crisis in which David, Prince of Wales (Guy Pearce), opted for Mrs Simpson (Jennifer Ehle),

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.

the dukedom of Windsor and exile, leaving two legacies: the Windsor knot and a vacant throne.

For Bertie the latter entailed the terror of an acceptance broadcast.

Helena Bonham Carter brings her inherited posh to the role of Bertie's wife, Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, forever posthumously, The Queen Mum.

M★★★SFFV

Life as We Know It

Bub movies have been around and around for almost as long as nappies (or diapers). Director Greg Berlanti comes up with a fresh element: mutual dislike.

Holly (Katherine Heigl) and Eric, who prefers his surname Messer, (Josh Duhamel) collide under one roof after their best friends leave them a little something in their will: their daughter Sophie (played by triplet, Alexis, Brynn and Brooke Claggett).

Berlanti and script writers Ian Deitchman and Kristin Rusk Robins sprinkle the movie with baby powder, and Heigl and Duhamel stardust; they quarrel, panic and frolic as the movie switches to romantic-comedy in which the bub (how fashionable) is the marriage broker.

M★★★NFFV

Diary of a Wimpy Kid

Director Thor Freudenhal tackles Jeff Kinney's best selling cartoon books about an American middle schoolboy

Greg (Zachary Gordon) and his older bullyboy sibling (Robert Capron). Freudenhall retains the cool of the originals and their cartoon sketches and live action cleverness.

PG★★★SFFV

The Social Network

Difficult to follow the opening stanzas of the Facebook genesis which made Mark Zuckerberg a billionaire quicker than most of the *nouveaux riches* can borrow a million.

Director David Fincher's pace is set by scriptwriter Alan (*West Wing*) Sorkin's staccato dialogue, unhelpful in clarifying how Zuckerberg outwitted friendly and unfriendly contemporaries at Harvard.

Jesse Eisenberg's take on Zuckerberg is superlative in his transit from uncertain nerd to boss whose pimples went hubristic. He is outmatched by Justin Timberlake's playing of Sean Parker, who introduced him to party delights and near disaster.

Fincher and Sorkin create a settlement of a sorts but lawyers still hover over the rich remains of the feast.

The movie is hyper-realistic in style. It does, however, contain one implausibility: characters operate computers while drunk. Impossible. Typewriters, yes. Risk: jammed keys. Computers, no. Risk: vanished files.

M★★★NFFV

Genius Within The Inner Life of Glenn Gould

The subject was a renowned Canadian pianist. Directors Michele Hozer and Peter Raymonde pay documentary tribute to his prodigious virtuosity in performance of Bach and to his private life which little resembled Bach's in dutifulness.

C★★★SFFV

Rare Exports: A Christmas Tale

Writer/director Jalmari Helander presents a village group dependent on butchering reindeer who find that the reindeer herds are being killed before they can corral them.

The solution comes from Pietari, a village child, played with insouciant cheek by Onni Tomila.

In a season devoid of trad, Dickensian movies, this one based on a Lapland folk-tale which purportedly predates the Santa Claus story is short on marzipan and long on quasi-documentary wryness. Its laughs are cut with a meat cleaver

M★★★SFFV

Cats & Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore

Cats are clever, dogs more clever. Or is the other way round? Either way felines and canines in this comedy appear so intrepidly ingenious in their spy-agency exploits that they should be made members of Actors Equity.

Director Brad Peyton gives us: supercat Mr Tinkles (voiced by Sean Hayes), ex- police dog Diggs (James Marsden) and lead dog Butch (Nick Nolte).

Top dogs? No one tops Kitty Galore as miaowed by Bette Midler. Too much of a good thing? Junior reviewers may disagree.

G★★★★SFFV

La Danse

On stage and behind the scenes Frederick Wiseman's documentary examines the *Ballet de l'Opera National de Paris*.

Long but never dull, its sequences of dance rehearsals, performances and management discussions are fascinating in their insider point of view. Could it have been cut? Easily.

Shots of the roof tops of Paris could have been eliminated. That, however, would be to spoil a labour of love. Still an interval, during one of the filmed intervals would have helped. A documentary for connoisseurs and aspirants.

PG★★★★SFFV

Wild Target

Victor Maynard (Bill Nighy) is an assassin. He is as finicky about everything as James Bond is about Martinis: where Bond is government authorised Maynard is a freelance following a family tradition. Rose (Emily Blunt) is blithe and bonny but not always good being a kleptomaniac fraudster.

When Maynard is commissioned to

kill Rose in punishment for her latest caper, confusion occurs in spirals of hilarity.

Director Jonathan Lynn works from Lucinda Coxon's script (based on Pierre Salvadori's *Cible Emouvante - Moving Target*). He gives the panache of the original an Ealingesque dimension through the twitchy playing of Nighy allied to Blunt's madcap enchantment.

They are supported laugh for laugh by the supporting cast. But topped by Eileen Atkins who plays Maynard's mother with the kind of lethal gentility that would make a cucumber sandwich a deadly weapon.

M★★★★NFFV

The Messenger

The title should be plural. Not one but two of the US Army's Casualty Notification Unit, Staff Sergeant Will Montgomery (Ben Foster) and Captain Tony Stone (Woody Harrelson), have the duty of breaking the news to relatives that a loved one has been killed in action.

From Foster and Harrelson, co-writer/director Oren Moverman quarries performances of tombstone bleakness. Jena Malone plays the woman who decides against Montgomery in favour of a civilian. Samantha Morton is Olivia, the war widow who, against protocols, picks up the pieces.

MA15+★★★★NFFV

Made in Dagenham

Director Nigel Cole's comedy-drama is being marketed as 'feel good'. He and script-writer Billy Ivory find their inspiration in the late Sixties when women working as upholsterers at The Ford Motor Company, Dagenham went on strike, their slogan: equal pay for equal work.

The strike pitted them against both union bosses and company executives. The movie might have been just a tardy mix of actuality, fiction and nostalgia were it not for the spark-plug performance of Sally Hawkins as Rita, the young wife and mother, who assumes leadership of the goup. Miranda Richardson does a turn as Labour minister Barbara Castle although her northern accent

occasionally drifts south. Rosamund Pike is a sympathetic teacher, her doltish husband also a company executive. Bob Hoskins is the shop steward who helps Rita and her group to win.

No sign of two of Dagenham's greatest creations; muso-comedian Dudley Moore and the Dagenham Girls' Pipe Band. Nonetheless, definitely 'feel good' as long as you forget that the equal pay problem is still with us, as our first female Prime Minister has made clear by reneging on a promise to support equal pay for lower paid women.

M★★★★NFFV

Town

Impossible to re-invent the heist thriller. Director Ben Affleck does, however, increase the tension revs. He sets his effort in the Boston neighbourhood, Charleston, heist capital of the world according to the movie's foundation book Chuck Hogan's *Prince of Thieves*.

Affleck also co-stars as gang-leader Doug MacRay and turns in a performance of ambivalent power. John Hamm, belying his name, is superbly controlled as the FBI agent in hot pursuit of McRay.

Chris Cooper plays Doug's father, Stephen, an object lesson that cool heist money can mean cooler jail-time. Pete Postlethwaite, his accent suggesting the Dr Ian Paisley Elocution Academy, plays the florist controller of the heist train.

Amidst the tough nuts, Rebecca Hall's performance as Clare Keesey shines like the proverbial good deed in a naughty world and draws MacRay to... Any more would spoil Affleck and his co-writers Peter Craig and Aaron Stockard's ending.

MA15+★★★★NFFV

Red

Skilful variation on the thriller genre: a group CIA veterans under attack come together, their linkage being secrets to die for.

The group Frank Moses is played by Bruce Willis who has long endured criticism that he cannot act. Yet here he is surrounded by a gold reef of talent - Helen Mirren, Morgan Freeman, John

Malkovich, Richard Dreyfuss, Ernest Borgnine, Brian Cox- and he still shines: sardonic, self-mocking, assured.

Director Robert Schwentke works from a script by the brothers Jon and Erich Hoeber. As it transpires that the secrets could affect the selection of a US presidential candidate, Julian McMahon comes on to play him and play him with born-to-rule assurance.

Schwentke's direction and Willis's performance do for the thriller what Serge Leone and Clint Eastwood did for the western in a *Fistful of Dollars* and other pasta sagas.

As a bureaucrat drawn into the action during phone chats with Moses about his pension (nice touch), Mary-Louise Parker, heists the movie. Her exquisite timing enables her to bite off mundane lines and spit them out as diamond quips worthy of Dorothy Parker.

M★★★★NFFV

Gainsbourg

In Australia they're ratbags, in Britain eccentrics. In France the most redoubtable are *monstres sacres* – sacred monsters. Painter, singer, song-writer, novelist Serge Gainsbourg (born Lucien Ginsberg) was one of them.

Now his residual fame rests less on his popsongs than on the women he wooed: Brigitte Bardot, Juliette Greco and Jane Birkin (played by Laetitia Casta, Anna Mouglalis and Lucy Gordon).

Writer/director Joann Sfar does not go for a conventional bio-pic. His setting, after all, is mainly the drug and ego-addled Sixties. Boldly he diversifies with touches from an earlier *monstre sacre*, Jean Cocteau. Accordingly Ginsburg/Gainsbourg is haunted by his other self, a grotesque puppet.

As Ginsburg/Gainsbourg, Eric Elmosnino walks the risky line drawn by Sfar who is set on hewing faithfully to his subject's complexities: his loving Russian-Jewish immigrant family, his yellow-starred boyhood in Nazi-occupied Paris, his re-invention of himself in the louche aftermath of World War II that was the opening of a another longer, colder, war.

It is the war between existential romance and the transcendently sacred. In the cause of the first, Joann Sfar has deployed too much sycophancy

By Chance?

WHEN the first moon rocket took off from Cape Canaveral, two U.S. scientists stood watching it, side by side. One was a believer, the other an unbeliever. The believer said, 'Isn't it wonderful that our rocket is going to hit the moon by chance?' The unbeliever objected, 'What do you mean, chance? We put millions of manhours of design into that rocket.' 'Oh,' said the believer, 'you don't think chance is a good explanation for the rocket [hitting the moon]? Then why do you think it's a good explanation for the universe? ...'

– Kreeft, Peter, and Ronald K. Tacelli.
Handbook of Christian Apologetics.
Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press,
1994.

and too little scepticism; result: another essay in secular hagiography.

M★★★NFFV

The Loved Ones

The blood-boltered horror genre goes back to Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*. Horror movies may not be quite so long in the tooth but over them hangs a red smog of reminiscence.

Writer/director Sean Byrne's debut feature is no exception. He begins as he means to go on by using for his title the plural of *The Loved One* (1965), the brilliantly obnoxious Hollywood version of Evelyn Waugh's satire on the American way of death.

And he assembles a standard set of teenage characters: the high-school heart-throb Brent (Xavier Samuel), his sweetheart Holly (Victoria Thaine), the spurned Lola (Robin McLeavy), the disaffected Mia (Jessica McNamee), her nerdy suitor Jamie (Richard Wilson) and, for adults, Lola's besotted Daddy (John Brumpton).

Such characters make the horror genre less an exercise in creativity than a rebranding exercise which can defeat talent. It does here. As if to compensate for the pervasive reminiscence, Byrne drives his cast over-the-top into an ever more gory and queasy melodrama.

Fans of the genre may enjoy spotting favourite bits from other movies (which range from *Carrie*, 1976, to *Wolf Creek*,

2005). For others, such horror is inspirational: the way to avoid walking out of movies is not to walk in.

MAI5+ ★★NFFV

Monsters

Over-use of this word in titles has enfeebled it. Director Gareth Edwards handicaps his movie further by basing it on the ancient premise of an alien invasion. Yet he does manage to generate high tension.

His expertise in computer generated images helps him to create a devastated zone in South America and the monsters (which appear to be hybrids of octopuses and box jellyfish with amphibious capability).

What lifts the thrill quotient is his casting of Scoot McNairy as a photo-journo and Whitney Able as his boss's daughter whom he must get to safety, at all hazard including presumably his expenses and a sequel.

M★★★NFFV

The Last Exorcism

Director Daniel Stamm's low-budget mockumentary (or shockumentary) toys with the idea of a mercenary sceptic, Cotton Marcus, (Patrick Fabian) who heads into the back blocks of Louisiana to perform an exorcism.

Marcus gets more than he has bargained for. Audiences may feel they are getting less than they paid for.

MAI5+★★NFFV

Eat Pray Love

Surely genre's end is signalled when an American woman goes to Rome and sits enraptured before a plate of saucy spaghetti as part of finding herself? Why not New York's Little Italy? Or any other quarter of Italy's gastro-empire on which the sun-dried tomato never sets?

The answer is Elizabeth Gilbert bolted Romewards, a move described in her best-selling memoir which gave director Ryan Murphy a basis and title. In this low-budget mockumentary (or shockumentary) where the producers outnumber the cast.

So, like Gilbert, Julia Roberts must scoff illuminating Italian dishes after leaving her husband (Billy Crudup) and lover (James Franco).

Scarcely pausing to belch, she smiles her way east to pray modishly and find true love in the shape of Javier Bardem, Latin lover of the decade. Basta!

M★★NFFV

Help Keep Christianity Alive in the Land of Christ's Birth

The Holy Father's concern for the Christian presence in the Holy Land and Middle East led him to call on the Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) to prioritise support for a Church that is "threatened in its very existence". Benedict's XVI's plea for the faithful in the Middle East follows an upsurge of anti-Christian fundamentalism, which has helped cause a mass exodus from the region.

Among the places worst affected is the Holy Land, where the number of Christians has dwindled to barely 150,000. Over the past 60 years, the percentage of Christians in Bethlehem has plummeted from 85% of the population to only 12%. In Jerusalem the figure has fallen from 20% to just 1.1%. What would Christmas Day at the birthplace of Christ be like if the faithful were no longer there to gather, worship and celebrate?

Please help us to sustain the 'living stones' - the faithful themselves - who walk the lands Christ knew so well, otherwise Christianity worldwide runs the risk of losing this first-hand witness and the Holy Places simply becoming museums for tourists to visit.

Your donation will help ACN's projects to support the faithful in the Cradle of Christianity. These include support for priests, religious and lay people, offering subsistence help to refugees and building and repairing churches and convents. Help is also given to crucial media projects aimed to promote the message of Christ.

A beautiful set of six handcrafted Christmas tree ornaments, made of olive wood in Bethlehem, will be sent to all those who give a donation of \$15.00 or more to help this campaign.

Please tick the box below if you would like to receive the Christmas tree ornaments*.



"... Churches in the Middle East are threatened in their very existence... May God grant ACN strength to help wherever the need is greatest."
Pope Benedict XVI



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Aid to the Church in Need a Catholic charity dependent on the Holy See, providing pastoral relief to needy and oppressed Churches

Memories of growing up Catholic in the west end of Adelaide

THE FLAME THAT BURNS AGAIN

By John Kelly



BEING BORN in a hospital called 'Calvary' and raised in my earliest years in the shadow of the spire of a church called 'St. Patrick,' not to mention having a name like 'John Kelly' no doubt shaped significantly my sense of who I was from the time I became aware of these aspects of my identity; indeed, my very personality. The Catholic faith and my Irish background are an inseparable part of me to this day, and will be when I meet God, who, through the love of my parents, made me.

St Patrick's was in Grote Street, in the west end of Adelaide. I suppose that makes me a city boy, though there is much of the country in me, too, as, throughout our childhood years, frequent trips to Willaston, where my mother grew up, and to Nuriootpa,

where one of her sisters, Margaret, and her family lived, provided me with a sense of freedom and adventure, of wide space and endless time, that the city lacks. And there was never a city shop, not even Balfours with its famous 'frog cakes,' that could match Aunt Margaret's lamingtons and pavlovas.

The first house we lived in was 'Little Grandma's,' my father's widowed mother who shared it with her sister, Mary, and her brother, Richard, whom I knew as 'Uncle Dick.'

'Little Grandma' was the title we bestowed on her to distinguish her from 'Big Grandma,' my maternal grandmother, who seemed considerably taller.

The house had no front garden to speak of, and a similarly small back yard with a galvanized iron fence and cyclone gate that opened onto a narrow lane, the scene of many dust-bin wicket

cricket matches and end-to-end footy sessions with my brothers and the local kids. The rooms, especially the kitchen, were tiny. Smells of lavender, camphor and home-baked cake and biscuits wafted up the passage, lingering in bedroom wardrobes, but the bathroom had a scent all of its own that seemed to exude from the neatly placed bars of **milk-white soap** that bordered the wash **basin and bath.**

It was **Uncle Dick** who aroused my fascination with the printed word. **Long retired,** he rarely seemed to move from his chair at the kitchen table. In winter he wore a tea-cosy on his head, his shiny pate a legacy, I was later told, of losing his hair virtually overnight when his fiancée suddenly broke off their engagement. In the corner next to the table rose, almost ceiling-high, carefully stacked columns of newspapers, the lower ones yellow with age. He read with a pencil in one hand and a magnifying glass in the other, his tortoise-rimmed spectacles curiously angled on his wide and constantly sweat-beaded, pale forehead. He would often set me on his knee, slip me a peppermint when Little Grandma was not looking, and sound out the incomprehensible words to me. He wrote elegant comments in the margins of articles, usually ending with exclamation marks, and religiously completed the crosswords. His reading, though was not confined to newspapers – I still have on my bookshelves his copies of Dickens's *Pickwick Papers* and *Great Expectations*, Alphonse Daudet's *Femmes d'Artistes* and Cervantes's *Don Quixote*, which I treasure almost as fondly as do *The Collected Poems of A.B. Paterson* my father used to read aloud to me and my brothers last thing on Friday nights in the days before television (BTV).

Planned Parenthood: Deceitful and Deadly

THE ABORTION industry has told African Americans for decades that killing our own children is beneficial, even therapeutic. We bought their lies, and life in the inner city has become cheap. Black women are now three times more likely to abort than white women. Yes, 8,000 African Americans were murdered by guns and knives in 2005, but hundreds of thousands more were terminated by more socially acceptable weapons. We have sown the wind of death in abortion clinics and reaped the whirlwind of violence in our streets. The killing has to stop. If we are to restore our communities and our families, respect for individuals has to begin when their lives begin, in the womb. Planned Parenthood must stop using and lying to my family and the entire community of humanity.

- [Dr] Alveda King, Pastoral Associate of *Priests for Life* and niece of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Years later, in a scrap album of my father, I discovered a cutting from the *Adelaide Advertiser*, reporting the 'heroic rescue' of a zoo attendant by a 'nineteen-year-old Richard Nugent', who leapt over the snake enclosure wall to uncoil an overly friendly python from the neck of its hapless caretaker. As with Scout in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, when Atticus shoots the rabid dog, this realization aroused in me a deeper appreciation of my elderly uncle.

Sunday entertainment commenced after Mass and the mandatory roast: a walk through the city's tree lined streets. The grown-up strollers promenaded in their 'Sunday best': the men wore suits and broad rimmed hats; the older women, fox furs, knee-length dresses, stockings, laced-up shoes and feathered headwear. Hats were tipped and pleasantries exchanged on the footpath, and by-passers with perambulators often stopped for what seemed interminable conversation about the latest snoozing, caterwauling or chuckling arrival. This gentility contrasted markedly with the touting and haggling of rabbitoes with their ankle-bound, droopy-eared quarry, the booming call and clinking carts of the 'bottlos', and the nasal cry of the newspaper boys on the corner throughout the week. A treat or 'shout', as Uncle Dick called them, was a choc-ice or a 'spider' at the corner shop just before we arrived home.

It was at this corner shop, with its high step and bright green wooden door that, according to family folklore, I uttered my first full sentence - 'Look, look grandma: the back doogie is fighting the white doogie!' - referring to the dog-fight that erupted without warning between two leashed dogs whose walkers had a hard time keeping the two scrappers apart. And it was from my description of this event that I gained my first nick-name, based what my brother regarded as an hilarious mispronunciation of 'dog'. No amount of Aunt Mary's scolding could make my brother desist from his teasing. Uncle Dick took a more sanguine view of my brother's provocations, gently admonishing his spinster sister: 'Leave the mollycoddling, woman - there's no harm in it at all. Don't we all know it's not his real name!'

The Mediaeval 'Hospitale'

[To the Porter]

Sir, I pray you, whom do you help?

[Porter]

Well, they who are in such distress

That that they can no longer work to earn
a living,

And have no friends to help them.

Old people, for instance, sick and powerless;

Poor women in childbed can be assisted here;

Helpless men, victims of savage violence,

And ill men eaten with disease and pestilence

And honest folk fallen in great poverty

By mischance or other infirmity.

Wayfarers and injured soldiers

May find help in this poor house of ours;

And all others which we deem good and simple

Have here lodging for a night or two.

Bedridden folk and such as have no one to ask
for help.

In these places most can find relief,

And if they should die while they are with us

Then they will be buried well and with dignity.

.....

But not every unsick stubborn knave,

For then we should be crowded out.

- From *The Hyeway to the Spytell Hous* [around 1536].

Note: *Hospital* is from the Latin neuter adjective 'Hospitale' describing a place for guests. See above, page 30.]

After tea, usually the cold leftovers of the midday dinner, we would gather round the pianola and sing, or listen to the radio: a concert, drama or 'The Catholic Hour'. Just before we move from Grote Street, my brother and I attended our first evening benediction at St Patrick's, where the sea of candles, vestments, incense and chants inducted me into the beauty and mystery of Latin litanies and, more compellingly still, into the monstranced, white, consecrated host at the altar's centre that brought grown men to their knees in silent reverence. I had often been in the lounge-room with my grandmother, aunt and mother praying the rosary, and I had been to morning Mass with my parents but this, in my three-year-old experience, while related to these already familiar practices, was something else . . . *Tantum ergo*

sacramentum, veneremur cernui . . . Visus, tactus, gustus, in Te fallitur . . .

Some years later, as a student, I would recall this sublime sensation, and read with empathy, the words of Charles Ryder at the end of Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*:

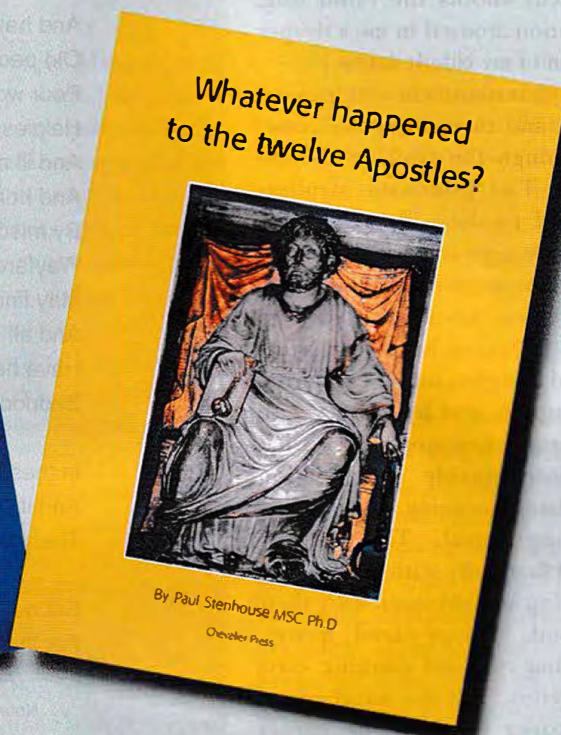
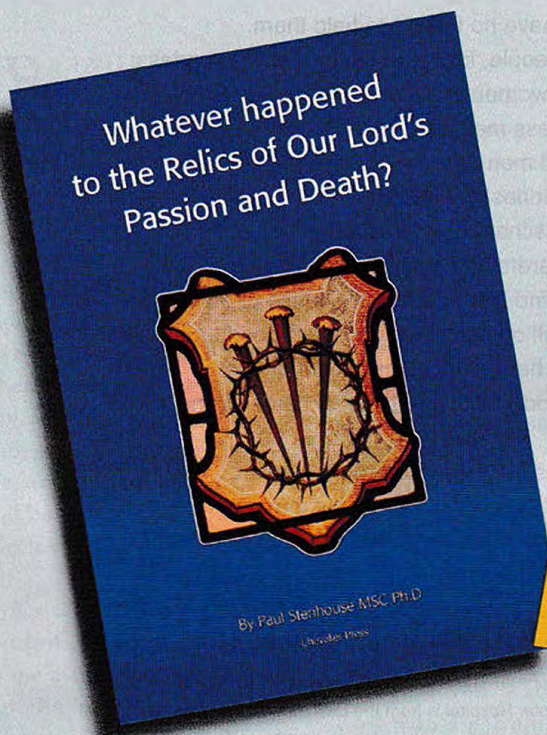
The chapel showed no ill-effects of its long neglect . . . the *art nouveau* lamp burned once more before the altar . . . a small red flame . . . the flame which the old knights saw from their tombs, which they saw put out; the flame that burns again. It could not have been lit but for the builders and the tragedians, and there I found it this morning, burning anew among the old stones . . .

JOHN KELLY Teaches English, Classical Studies and Religious Education at Sacred Heart Senior School, Somerton Park, SA.

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