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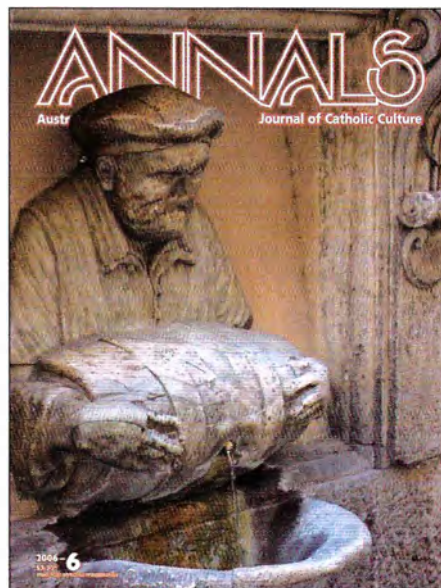
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Front Cover: One of the many hundreds of small water fountains that have supplied Romans and pilgrims [and now tourists] with water from springs since the time of the Empire and beyond. Of the many larger fountains, the better-known are perhaps the twin fountains in the Piazza of St Peter's Basilica, the Trevi Fountain in the Piazza di Trevi, whose water comes from a spring fourteen kilometers away from Rome by underground aqueducts, the fountain of the Tritone [half-man half-fish] by Bernini in the Piazza Barberini, the three fountains in the Piazza Navona and the Babuino [baboon] fountain, close to the Creek College founded by Gregory XIII in 1576, from which the via del Babuino takes its name.

Back Cover: A selection of new booklets recently published by Chevalier Press. They are ideal as gifts for relatives and friends interested in the Catholic Faith, for RCIA groups following catechism courses in preparation of baptism at Eastertide, 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: Paul Stenhouse MSC.

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

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

One Mind, One Hope

‘On no account persuade yourselves that it is right and proper to follow your own private judgement. Have a uniform act of worship which everybody attends; one united supplication, one mind, one hope, in love and innocent joyfulness. All of you together, as though you were approaching the only existing Temple of God and the only altar, hurry to the one and only Jesus Christ, who came down from the one and only Father, is eternally with that One, and to that One is now returned.’

- St Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, 35-107 AD, from his Letter written to the Christians in Magnesia-on-the-Meander, as he was on his way to Rome to suffer martyrdom in the Flavian amphitheatre, known as the Colosseum





TONGUES THAT ARE EASILY UNDERSTOOD



A person who is filled with the Holy Spirit speaks several languages. These several languages are the various ways of witnessing to Christ, such as humility, poverty, obedience and patience, with which we speak when we practise them towards our neighbour. Language comes alive when it speaks by deeds. Enough of talking; let actions speak. We are bloated with words and empty of works. That is why we are accursed by the Lord who cursed the fig tree on which he found no fruit but only leaves. 'It has been laid down as a law for the preacher,' says Pope St Gregory the Great, 'that he should practise what he preaches. It is useless for a man to boast that he knows the law, if his behaviour contradicts his teaching.'

The apostles, for their part, spoke as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance. Blessed is he who speaks under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and not as his own human spirit suggests. There are some who speak from their own spirit: they pilfer the words of others and pass them off as their own, taking credit to themselves. It is of these and others like them that the Lord speaks in Jeremiah: 'Behold, I am against the prophets who steal my words from one another. Behold, I am against the prophets, says the Lord, who use their tongues and say 'says the Lord'. Behold, I am against those who prophesy lying dreams, says the Lord, and who tell them and lead my People astray by their lies and their recklessness when I did not send them or charge them; so they do not profit this People at all, says the Lord.

-St Antony of Padua, born in Lisbon, Portugal and died in 1231 AD. Sermons 1,226, quoted in The Roman Breviary, June 13, the feast of saint Antony. From the Second Reading of the Office of Matins.

RECIPROCAL RELIGIOUS RIGHTS

By GEORGE CARDINAL PELL, ARCHBISHOP OF SYDNEY



truce to end the war in Israel and Lebanon has been declared. How long it will last is unknown.

So too the success of the Pakistan authorities and the British police in thwarting terrorist attempts to blow up planes over the Atlantic has disappeared from the front pages.

Just recently a politician said to me that we don't want any of that trouble here in Australia. Nearly every Australian would be of that view, but saying so does not make it so. We have to deal with the facts.

What principles, what rules of thumb might we follow to help keep the peace and protect the rights of all Australians?

These issues need public discussion, perhaps even debate, because when trouble is brewing it does not help to do nothing.

Recently the Vatican has recognized this by speaking more publicly about the hostile pressures, even persecutions and death suffered by Christians in some Islamic countries. There has been a public silence on this for many years, but the situation continued to worsen.

On May 17th, the Vatican Foreign Minister Archbishop Giovanni Lajolo spoke on the need for reciprocity, a principle often ignored by Moslem states. Just as we recognize the rights of all religions to worship publicly in Australia without obstacles, to build their places of worship, so too non-Muslims must have these rights in Islamic countries. The religious rights of minorities are to be respected everywhere.

Catholics have a right to affirm their identity. Silence about oppression

is interpreted by radical Islamists as weakness.

Archbishop Lajolo restated the need for dialogue, regretted the lack of separation between religion and the state in Islamic societies and added that Muslims in Western societies should integrate, without of course any need to abandon their religion.

The Archbishop concluded by reasserting the right to spread the gospel in the Islamic world, and among Muslims generally.

Reciprocity is a key concept for all of us. As a Catholic leader I am sometimes called on by critics to explain and defend Christian teachings, which some regard as objectionable. I recognize that I should do this.

So too when terrorists justify their activities by invoking the Quran, it seems legitimate to ask our Islamic friends whether this is justified by traditional Islamic doctrine, and whether they personally agree with these claims. Accusations of ignorance or bigotry in response to these queries are disappointing.

Similarly while we recognize the rights of all groups to live where they choose and can afford, no group of old Australians or new Australians has the right to harass their neighbours and drive them away because they are of the "wrong" race or religion.

I have written that the most important struggle is between Islamic moderates and extremists. If this is correct, then we seem to be in trouble, because most moderate Islamic spokesmen will only criticize outsiders, not their own.

Scepticism and Incredulity

AN APPEAL TO COMMON SENSE

St John, Apostle, Evangelist and Theologian



he continual tradition in the Catholic Church from the earliest times has been that the Apostle John was the author of the gospel, and of the two epistles and of the book of the Apocalypse in his name.

The criterion for accepting writings into the 'canon' or accepted body of writings called the 'New Testament' was that they should genuinely be written by those to whom they were attributed, and that they should belong to the Apostolic Age - i.e. they were written while Apostles were still alive who could vouch for the soundness and accuracy of their content.

Writing of the first letter of St John, St Augustine [345-430 AD] comments [Commentarium 1, 1.3] 'See how his letter corroborates his gospel, from which you have heard a short time ago "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God."

Despite the constant teaching of the Church, some modern writers have taught that the author of the Apocalypse was a different John from the beloved Apostle.

They base their argument on the fact that the author was sometimes described as 'John the Divine'.

We know nothing of the background to this 'John the Divine' if he be not the same as John the Beloved Apostle.

Is it likely that a writer of the theological depth of the author of the Apocalypse should have remained completely unknown to Christian tradition: neither his family, nor his birthplace, nor his relationship to our Lord, nor his fate?

If he were different from, and yet had the same name as John the Beloved Apostle, someone would have noted this extraordinary fact. Yet no one did.

There is a relatively rich store of information about sectarian writers none of whom is of the calibre of this mysterious 'John the Divine'.

John the Apostle lived in Ephesus, and so did John the Divine. The likelihood of there being two Johns contemporaneously living in Ephesus and not being distinguished one from the other by the Christian community - especially when one was the Beloved Apostle, and the other an unknown writer - is minimal.

In the unanimous opinion of early Christian writers, including Justin Martyr [150 AD], Melito of Sardis [170 AD], Eusebius of Caesarea [260-340 AD] and St Irenaeus of Lyons [130-200 AD] whose teacher Polycarp was a disciple of St John, John the Beloved Apostle and Evangelist was the author of the Apocalypse. Modern acceptance of another John - The Divine - dates from Martin Luther [in 1522 AD]. There is no good reason for following him.

-Editor, *Annals*

THREE CATHOLICS TO BE EXECUTED BEFORE THE BALI BOMBERS

Paul Stenhouse, MSC



Today, August 12, I offered Mass in the chapel at Kensington Monastery, here in Sydney, for three Catholic men who had been sentenced to death for their alleged involvement in the deaths of around 200 Muslims during an attack on an Islamic boarding school in Poso, Central Sulawesi in May-June 2000.

The timing of their execution by firing squad was announced only last Tuesday, August 8. It was scheduled for 3.15 a.m. [Australian Eastern Standard Time] today. I offered the Mass only a little while after the time set for the executions.

I learned later this afternoon that the executions had been delayed only hours before they were due, after yet another appeal by Pope Benedict XVI.

In mid-March this year the Pope had intervened personally when he received the bishop of Manado, Mgr Joseph Suwatan MSC in Rome. He gave him rosaries and crucifixes for the condemned men which the bishop handed over to them in the prison in Poso where they were awaiting execution.¹

Lest the Indonesian Government should appear to be heeding the Pope's call for clemency, General Sutanto, National Police Chief explained to reporters that he was too busy organising Indonesia's Independence Day Celebrations on August 17, to go ahead with the executions.

Fabianus Tibo, 61, Dominggus da Sila, 39, and Marinus Riwu, 49 had been found guilty at a court hearing in May 2001 where key defence witnesses were not called to appear. The defendants claimed that they had been in a Church during the attacks with which they were charged, and for which they were sentenced. They said that they had

been protecting Christian women and children from marauding mobs.

Witnesses backed up the men's story, but were not called to give evidence. Earlier this week Fabianus Tibo asked for help 'from everyone involved in this so that the ones who are really responsible can be arrested'.

The Australian's Jakarta correspondent quoted supporters of the three Catholic men accused of masterminding the riots, who said that 'police investigation into 16 men whom Tibo said were directly involved in the Poso attacks is still not finished, casting doubt on the timing of this morning's executions.'² The 16 men in question include members of military intelligence as well as government officials.

For many Indonesians the integrity of the trial and condemnation of the three Catholics was highly doubtful. Intimidation by Islamists was widespread during it, and some observers considered that the jury had no choice but to give in to the pressure groups that wanted the men to be found guilty.³

Despite evident grey areas the Supreme Court upheld the death sentences on the three Catholics, and

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono rejected their pleas for clemency on November 10 last year.

Masdar Farid Mas'udi, President of the Nahadlatul Ulama - Indonesia's largest Muslim organisation - demanded an examination of the evidence and declared himself willing to support the cause of the three condemned Catholics. He also warned that the execution of the three would have dire consequences for the religious communities concerned.⁴

Usman Hamid, of the Commission for Missing Persons and the Victims of Violence was quoted as asking, 'Is it possible that this [hurried execution] is related to Amrozi and co's execution, so as to avoid communal conflict? Tibo and co are to be executed first as a pay-off.'⁵

Amrozi, Imam Samudera and Ali Gufron *aka* Muklas are detained in Nusakambangan prison awaiting execution after being convicted of masterminding the bombings that killed 202 people, 88 of them Australians.

The Prosperous Peace Party [PDS] met with the Vice President Jusuf Kalla on Tuesday last and 'asked Jusuf Kalla to stay the executions because there were still 16 witnesses to be interrogated'.⁶ Kalla is reported as saying that the Government had closed the case and that there would be no further investigations.

The Catholic bishop of Manado, Mgr Josef Suwatan, MSC said that the three were simple, illiterate men who had migrated to Poso from the island of Flores in search of a better life. According to Mgr Suwatan, they had not taken part in the rioting in Poso but were 'victims of riots that totally burned St Theresa's Catholic Church and rectory, a sisters' convent and Catholic schools'.⁷

Stefanus Roy Rening who coordinated the legal team for the three Catholics, gave the three men's last request: They want to deliver an

Robin Hood and Our Lady

'Robin loved Our dear Lady
And for doubt of deadly sin
Would never hurt a company
That any woman was in'.

- Old Ballad of Robin Hood, quoted
by G.K.Chesterton as an introduction to
his poem about the two Maid
Marians : *The Two Maidens*.

open letter to the President through a press conference on the day before their execution. And they would like three people to attend their executions: Antonius Sujata, Head of the National Ombudsman Commission; Father Norbert Betan, Director of the Advocacy Service for Justice and Peace in Indonesia; and Father Jimmy Tumbelaka, pastor of St Theresa's Catholic church in Poso.

They also want their bodies to be brought to St Mary's church in Palu and request that Bishop Suwatan MSC preside at a Requiem Mass for them.⁸

As I write, no new date has been set for the execution but it will take place, according to the Indonesian officials who announced the stay of execution today, after August 20.⁹

Pressure currently being brought to bear on the Australian Government to call on Indonesia to abolish the death penalty¹⁰ may result in Amrozi and his companions' being condemned to life in prison for their involvement in the Bali bombings, but it may restore some long over-due credibility to Australia's call for Australian's on death row in Bali to have their sentences commuted.

It may also, if it comes in time, save the lives of three Catholic men who, seemingly, are scheduled to be executed as a sop to public opinion in Indonesia.

In interviews on Thursday, two government officials said that, for political reasons, it would be very difficult for the government to execute the Bali bombers if it did not first execute the Christians from Poso.¹¹

It should be noted that imprisonment for life would be a far more severe penalty for the jihadist Amrozi and his companions; and so far no Muslims have been charged with involvement in the riots in Poso.

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– Editor, *Annals*

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1. George Evers, *Endangered Co-existence*, Herder Korrespondenz, 5/2006 pp.249-255.
2. Catholics' execution a "pay-off" for Bali; Stephen Fitzpatrick, *The Australian*, August 12, 2006.
3. 'Poso Bishop declares Catholics' death sentences unjust', *AsiaNews*, November 26, 2005.
4. *ibid.* See also George Evers, *art. cit.*
5. *The Australian, art.cit.*
6. 'Poso: Three executions to go ahead', *The Jakarta Post*, April 12, 2006.
7. *AsiaNews art. cit.*
8. See 'Thousands protest impending execution of Catholics in Poso', *Indian Catholic*, August 11, 2006.
9. *Catholic News Service*, August 11, 2006.
10. See *ABC Online* August 9, 2006 'Condemnation of Bali Bombers' executions urged', Leigh Sales for PM.
11. 'Indonesia to Execute 3 for Roles in Riots That Killed Hundreds', Raymond Bonner, *New York Times*, August 11, 2006.

Don't feel the Need for It?

CONFESSION

By RUSSELL SHAW



WHY don't Catholics go to confession any more – or, more precisely, why do so many go so seldom? Here is an old problem that doesn't seem to be getting better. Evidently we need to dig deeper into its causes and solutions.

In a book-length interview called *God and the World* (Ignatius Press, 2002), Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger – now, Pope Benedict XVI – acknowledged that the 'misuse of guilt feelings' can occur. But something even worse, he said, was 'to extinguish the capacity for recognizing guilt.' The Nazis sought systematically to do that.

Are we once again reaching that point? A Catholic friend once informed me he hadn't been to confession in years and added, 'I don't feel any need for it.' To be sure. The relevant question is: Why not?

I can think of several possible reasons.

One is the idea that sin – sin in general and my sin in particular – doesn't amount to much. Is it so? 'If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt, Lord, who would survive?' That's psalm 130 speaking, and the same question is repeated over and over in the psalms and the Old Testament. As for the New Testament: 'If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us (1 John 1.8). Are we to think the Bible is pulling our legs?

Another reason for skipping confession is the notion that God forgives sins outside the sacrament of penance. And so he does. But a Catholic who accepts the Church's teaching that Christ instituted this sacrament for the forgiveness of sin must accept the corollary that this is how Christ ordinarily wants our sins

to be forgiven and is, exceptional circumstances aside, the necessary means of forgiveness in the case of mortal sin.

People who resort to this rationalization also need to ponder this question: If God forgives my sins outside the sacrament of penance, just

when does that forgiving take place? Shall we suppose that if enough time elapses, the fact that we have sinned will slip God's mind? It seems a great deal more likely that we will forget than that he will.

A third reason offered for skipping the sacrament is that nobody goes to hell—either because there is no hell or because no one goes there in actual fact. The only reasonable reply to this is: How can you be sure?

On this point, too, Scripture's testimony is profoundly different. Jesus speaks about hell and about people being there – the rich man in the story of Lazarus and the rich man, a disturbingly large number of people in the Last Judgment account in Matthew 25. Not to put too fine a point on it, the casual denial of hell appears to be one more aspect of the corrosive sentimentality currently corrupting so much religious thought.

What can be done about these confused attitudes and bad ideas? One thing that could and should occur is a return to regular preaching about the sacrament of penance and the reason it's needed—sin. These matters are seldom discussed from many pulpits today. But if confession is going to make a comeback, earnest pastoral salesmanship will be required.

In the interview mentioned above, Cardinal Ratzinger spoke of how hard it is for people to 'cross the threshold of personal confession' in this individualistic age. Still, he insisted, it 'can be learned anew. Above all because this is not an admission of guilt before men, but before God, and because it ends with the word of forgiveness.'



Of Snakes and Doves

THE Lord, however, does want them to contribute something, lest everything seem to be the work of grace, and they seem to win their reward without deserving it. Therefore he adds: You must be clever as snakes and innocent as doves. But, they may object, what good is our cleverness amid so many dangers? How can we be clever when tossed about by so many waves? However great the cleverness of the sheep as he stands among the wolves – so many wolves! – what can it accomplish? However great the innocence of the dove, what good does it do him, with so many hawks swooping upon him? To all this I say: Cleverness and innocence admittedly do these irrational creatures no good, but they can help you greatly. What cleverness is the Lord requiring here? The cleverness of a snake. A snake will surrender everything and will put up no great resistance even if its body is being cut in pieces, provided it can save its head. So you, the Lord is saying, must surrender everything but your faith: money, body, even life itself. For faith is the head and the root; keep that, and though you lose all else, you will get it back in abundance.

– St John Chrysostom [347-407 AD]
Homily 33, 2. From The Roman Breviary,
Matins for Thursday of the 34th Week of
the Year.

RUSSELL SHAW is a freelance Catholic writer from Washington D.C. who is a former Secretary of Public Affairs for the National Conference of Bishops/United States Catholic Conference. He can be emailed at Rshaw10290@aol.com

From Lebanon to Central Asia

THE RISE OF SHI'A MUSLIMS

By SANDRO MAGISTER



COMING on the heel of one another, a book and an essay in "Foreign Affairs" by Vali Nasr, a report by Peter Waldman in "The Wall Street Journal" and an editorial in Italian daily *la Repubblica* by Khaled Fouad Allam [see elsewhere in this issue, page 27] are drawing attention to an historical shift now underway in the Islamic world: the Shi'a revival.

"The Shi'a revival" is in point of fact the title of Vali Nasr's book on the issue. Born in Iran, the 46-year-old scholar is the son of another well-known expert on Islam from an important family that can trace

its ancestry back to the prophet Muhammad. Both father and son lived in Tehran till Khomeini's 1979 revolution upon which they immigrated to the United States. Vali Nasr's father, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, teaches at George Washington University, while he is a professor at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

In both his book - published in the United States by W.W. Norton & Co. - and his essay which appears in the July-August issue of "Foreign Affairs", the prestigious US journal of geopolitics, Nasr substantiates his thesis with an impressive array of data.

The greatest novelty has occurred in Iraq, where majority Shi'ites

were largely powerless till the fall of Saddam Hussein. No more! Now they occupy most command posts. The holy city of Najaf is now more than ever the religious capital of the world's Shi'a community. From near and afar pilgrims come in increasing numbers to visit the shrines of Najaf and Karbala. And ties with Iran's Shi'a regime are growing closer.

But similar changes are taking place in a wider area that runs from Lebanon to Central Asia. Power over Shi'a Islam is no longer a prerogative of Iran and Persians. From Iran and Iraq Shi'a power has spread to Lebanon thanks to the 'Party of God' - Hezbollah - to Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States, Pakistan, and is taking in increasingly transnational forms. As Nasr writes in "Foreign Affairs":

"Ethnic antagonism between Arabs and Persians cannot possibly be all-important when Iraq's supreme religious leader Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani is Iranian and Iran's chief justice Mahmoud Shahroudi, is Iraqi."

Khaled Fouad Allam is an Algerian-born expert on Islam who now lives in Italy where he teaches at the universities of Trieste and Urbino. He is held in high esteem by the Catholic Church of Rome and what he has to say easily finds ears that listen. His analysis goes further than Nasr's. Largely inspired by Khomeini's revolution, the Shi'a revival is for the first time finding significant support amongst Sunni Arabs and threatens to spread across the entire Middle East. Politically, Iran might become what it never was in Khomeini's lifetime, a great regional power.

So what is in store for international politics? In a report that appeared

Public Opinion and New Directions

People should beware of leaving the problems of peace and disarmament to the efforts of a few men without putting their own attitudes in order. Civil rulers, who must at the same time promote the welfare of the whole world as well as protect the interests of their own people, depend to a very great extent on public opinion and public feeling. Their peace-making efforts will be fruitless as long as hostility, contempt, and distrust as well as racial hatred and uncompromising ideologies continue to divide men and put them in opposing camps. Hence a very great need arises to re-educate people's attitudes and to guide public opinion in a new direction.

Those who are engaged in education, especially the education of the young, and those who mould public opinion should regard it as among their greatest responsibilities to educate people to want peace. Every one of us needs a change of heart; we must keep in mind the needs of the whole world and see what tasks we can all perform together in order to bring about the improvement of mankind.

- *The Constitution of the Second Vatican Council: 'The Church in the Modern World,' 82-83.*
From *The Roman Breviary*, Second Reading at Matins for Monday of the 31st Week of the Year.

in the August 4 issue of the "The Wall Street Journal", Peter Waldman writes that the Bush administration is increasingly paying attention to what Nasr is saying. Two White House foreign policy officials attended one of his conferences in Washington in early August and Condoleezza Rice had a meeting with him. "But his influence on U.S. policy is unclear," for now.

Nasr argues that the United States must accept that Iran is going to play the role of regional power and ought to start talks with its leaders. Instead of trying to overthrow the regime in Tehran, it should work in ways to contain it.

In other words, Nasr is suggesting the US follow a realist policy of "containment." This runs against the advice proffered by Bernard Lewis, an Islamic history specialist and hitherto the neo-Conservative voice with the greatest influence in the Bush administration, his idea being that the democratization of Iraq would lead to the collapse of neighboring dictatorships, first of all that of Iran.

In Nasr's opinion, US policy has created in Iraq the first Shi'a-dominated Arab state, and this has unleashed the aspirations of 150

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million Shi'ites around the world, and yet U.S. policy is still operating under the "old paradigm" based on Sunni predominance in the "Great Middle East".

The Sunni-Shi'a split goes back to Muhammad's death and the problem of his succession. Those who became "Shi'ites" were initially "Shi'at 'Ali," (in Arabic) i.e. followers of Ali, the prophet's son-in-law. Ali's adversaries were able though to prevail and appoint the first three

caliphs before he finally donned the prophet's mantle. But in the end, he was still killed. His son Hussein was defeated and killed as well. But his martyrdom in what is now Iraq has left an indelible mark in the Shi'ite memory – the commemoration of his death constitutes the most solemn religious observance in the Shi'a calendar. In addition to the issue of succession, Sunnis and Shi'ites come down on different sides on important matters of doctrine to the extent that some radical Sunni groups consider Shi'ites heretical.

In his "Foreign Affairs" essay, Nasr provides the following percentages indicating the size of the Shi'a population in various countries:

- Iran 90 %
- Azerbaijan 75%
- Bahrain 75%
- Iraq 65%
- Lebanon 45%
- Kuwait 30%
- Pakistan 20%
- Afghanistan 19%
- Qatar 16%
- Saudi Arabia 10%
- United Arab Emirates 6%
- Syria 1%


These percentages include only the main Twelver branch of Shi'a Islam. Other Shi'a groups include Alevis, well-represented in Turkey; Alawis, who run Syria thanks to the Assad clan, and the Ismailis, who recognize the Aga Khan as their leader and have a large community in Afghanistan and even a larger one in Pakistan.

The Holy See and Iran have regular diplomatic relations. Traditionally, Vatican diplomacy has been closer to the realist approach advocated by Vali Nasr rather than the "regime change" policy associated with US neo-conservatives.



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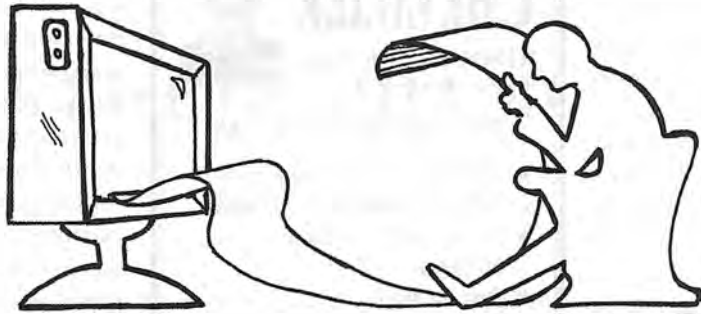
Some years ago I was browsing through the books in a St. Vincent de Paul shop, in a small country town. Amongst the books were the Kama Sutra and D.H. Lawrence's Lady Chatterly's Lover. They were unobtrusive nostalgic reminders of once heated controversies. They'd once been the artistic standard bearers of enlightened values and

freedom. Now they were dirty and greasy, not by reason of vice but because they'd sat there undisturbed for many years. Fifty cents and they were yours. Clearly that was fifty cents too much for most punters. So, there they were in a Catholic opp-shop run by retired country ladies. Were these really the books that launched so many trials?

Either this is cause for celebration, we're now so tolerant no one gives a damn anymore, or a cause for despair, precisely because no one gives a damn. I tend towards the latter view, and so too if they have any sense would every artist. When no one gives a damn the only standard left is entertainment. Morality declines but so too does art. People won't care for anything very much except for thrills and special effects. As for outrage? forget it, we've got reality TV for that.

If tomorrow I go to my local Vinnies and see one of Damien Hirst's pieces on sale next to the box of vinyl records I won't be offended. Nor will it cause me consternation if I see tucked in among the cooking books Robert Mapelthorpe's book of photos of more exotic gay male behaviour. But it should cause those who believe in art some anguish, after all if no one's moved, what then? The only people who are moved, who do still seem to believe in art, are fundamentalists. A point made clear in the Teletubbies (remember them?), Harry Potter and the Sponge Bob sagas. How people laughed!

As far as I could see the fundamentalists were laughed at because they treated art seriously. They actually felt that stories could affect people! To be fair, advertisers also believe in the power of artistic persuasion, that's how they sell things. Both they and the fundamentalists knew that having read Harry Potter many kids would want to be a magician. It's just that the advertisers and fundamentalists differed on how they reacted to this fact; one party sold merchandise the other picketed it.



THE KAMA SUTRA AND SPONGE BOB

By ROBERT TILLEY

Nothing very much matters, which is the legacy of immoral or bad art.

Bad art panders to the baser passions and soon leaves one jaded and bored. Thus, one finds delight only in the nod and the knowing wink, in irony, but then even that seems insipid. Nothing appeals, nothing offends, yesterday's celebrated cause has become today's Sponge Bob. And waiting for them all is Vinnies.

While good art trains the palate bad art gives the taste for what is quick and easily digestible. Easy shock, quick profundity, the delightful feel of being in the know, ready for the next spectacular titillation. "Wow, Matthew Barney supersized! That? That's Tracey Emin, put her in the bag with the old jumpers?"

Bad art appeals to bad passions, and they make people do bad things. Impatient and impetuous the passionate seek out newer scandals and thrills, and when those scandals also end up in Vinnies things have to be cranked up that little bit more. The old voltage has lost its charge. The next step is violence, and not the simulated stuff. Blood still has a charge, and death, one's own or others, can still thrill. Everything else will seem passé.

Special effects can't compare with real ones; to play with real lives, destroy and create as one wills, that's artistry. The Colosseum as performance art, where the wonderful transgression of the liminal occurs; a skull is split, a belly is sliced open! The incision on the margins of the body as text. Or words to that effect. Gladiatorial combat will be a celebrated cause; people have every right to do with their lives what they want, including die in an artistic spectacle.

It'll be known as Postchristian art, which will mean among other things that there'll be no more Vinnies for works to end up in. Which, I suppose, will give some consolation to the jaded.



Interview with Superior General Father Kolvenbach

ON THE FUTURE OF THE JESUITS



Last February, Father Peter Hans Kolvenbach, father general of the Society of Jesus, convoked a general congregation for January 2008, to elect his successor.

It was an unexpected announcement, as the office is for life, but the superior general has his reasons.

In this interview with ZENIT, Father Kolvenbach explains why he called the meeting, and what other important issues the representatives of the world's close to 20,000 Jesuits will also address.

Q: What symptoms prove that the moment has come to call a general congregation?

Father Kolvenbach: St. Ignatius did not favor the idea of general congregations being called at a fixed period. He thought that the preparations necessary to convoke a general congregation and to call a large number of Jesuits worldwide to Rome might affect the apostolic work in which they were engaged.

Therefore, he prescribed that only "for reason of great importance," when the issues were of such magnitude that they went beyond the capacity of the Society's ordinary government to address, should a general congregation be convoked. In fact there have only been 34 general congregations in the 465-year history of the Society.

The Church and present-day society are facing problems that require careful and creative examination.

Globalization, emigration, massive displacements, relativism, secularization and so many others are challenges that to one or another degree affect all countries and impose important changes on our apostolic planning. The general congregation is the instrument available to the Society to find, with God's grace, the way to serve the Church and the world.

To this very important reason is added another of a personal nature: the many years I have had at the head of the government of the Society and the suitability of electing my successor.

St. Ignatius saw valid reasons to prescribe that the office of superior general be for life. And, of course, it cannot be denied that it entails certain advantages.

However, that decision of St. Ignatius was made in the 16th century when life expectancy was much shorter than now. Ignatius died at 65, a rather advanced age for the time, after having been superior general for 15 years.

His two immediate successors died respectively at 53 and 62 years of age, after a generalate that in both cases was reduced to seven years.

Compared to them, my period as superior general is already longer than 22 years, and if God so wills, in 2008 I will be about to celebrate 80 years of age and 25 as superior general. These are circumstances which question legitimately the appropriateness of putting an end to such a long period.

Q: There have been ups and downs in the relationship between the Society and the Pope. Why?

Father Kolvenbach: In the framework of a special relationship between the Pope and the Society of Jesus -- desired and professed by both parties -- it is understandable and human that historical circumstances influence the tenor of this relationship.

On the other hand, as Pope Paul VI said so affectionately, in an address in which points of attention were not lacking in regard to certain tendencies he observed in the Society, the Jesuits have always been in the trenches, at the crossroads where problems have been debated that did not always have a clear answer.

It is not strange that, in the service of the Church, some abandoned the security of the trenches to launch themselves defenceless beyond the orthodox demarcations in search of new answers to new problems.

The case of Father Mateo Ricci is enlightening. Profoundly knowledgeable of the Chinese culture and mentality, he made the effort to show that reverence to ancestors was not an idolatrous worship as was said in the West, but a social and family custom which did not contradict the Christian faith or justify the denial of baptism to those who remembered their ancestors in that way.

This position made him the target of criticisms by other religious and, finally, of Rome's condemnation. There is no doubt that this closed the door to many

A Catholic University

At her best the Catholic Church has always valued and encouraged the intellectual life. Today we heard the apostle John describe the Godhead, or at least the Second Person of the Trinitarian God, as the Word. "In the beginning was the Word: the Word was with God and the Word was God".

And this divine Logos, eternal reason, the origin of the universe became flesh and lived among us. Ultimately truth is not abstract, much less empty. Truth became incarnate in a person, and that person is Christ, who calls us in obedience to love.

These linkages of faith and reason, of flesh and spirit, of truth and the human person constitute together a uniquely Christian set of insights and still provide the substance of our response to today's successors of Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, who cynically muttered to Christ "What is truth?"

More than ever our society needs to hear cogent arguments for moral realism, truth claims, the uniqueness of the human person and the reality of the Transcendent. Such is one task of a Catholic university.

- George Cardinal Pell, Archbishop of Sydney, at the official opening of Notre Dame University College, Broadway Sydney on Friday 3 March 2006

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possible converts. Only in the 20th century was Ricci recognized as ahead of his age in the proclamation of the Gospel and as a precursor of inculturation in the missionary endeavor.

Not all the Jesuits who have been called to Rome can attribute to themselves Ricci's preparation and nobility of intentions, but neither have those who have served the Church with faithfulness and dedication been few, who were not recognized until a long time after. Father Teilhard de Chardin is, perhaps, one of the most representative cases.

Q: The spiritual life of Jesuits is, of course, one of your concerns as superior general. Will it be a topic to address at the general congregation and, if so, in what terms?

Father Kolvenbach: On examining the state of the Society at the meeting of all the major superiors, which we had in Loyola in December 2005, we came to the conclusion that the spiritual health of Jesuits was good. The instrument to measure Jesuits' spiritual health has always been and continues to be, unconditional consecration to the mission.

Today as yesterday it is profound personal identification with the Lord, the one sent by the Father, which characterizes and defines the way to proceed in the Society. However, it will in any case be a topic that the general congregation will address because it is proper to the Jesuits not to be satisfied with what they have achieved.

We must serve the Lord in a society in which trivial thought reigns supreme and tends to undermine a profound love of Jesus Christ and an unconditional commitment to the mission. That is why it is a topic of constant timeliness which undoubtedly the general congregation will want to put on the table, though it is still too early to venture into speculation on the congregation's agenda.

Q: There are many institutions of the world, especially universities in the United States, called Jesuit, but in which the presence of Jesuits is very reduced. Have you thought of some solution?

Father Kolvenbach: This situation has not arisen now. We have already addressed it before and we agreed to accept that this situation of a reduced presence of Jesuits has led us to discover new avenues: the incorporation of lay men and women in our works in consonance with the splendid rise of the apostolic awareness of the people of God,

a "sign of authentic hope" as Benedict XVI called it recently.

We believe the desire of the laity to take an active part in the mission of the Church to proclaim the kingdom is a grace of our time, inspired by the Spirit. The last general congregation exhorted Jesuits to be "men for others and men with others."

It is true that the decline of vocations to religious life -- and also to the Society -- has been a stimulus to bring about that cooperation with the laity which the general congregation of 1965 had already urged. But it is not about alleviating a shortage, but about opening ourselves to a latent apostolic reality in the Church.

The "solution" which you refer to is to cooperate in our works with lay men and women who act under Ignatian inspiration. In fact, there is already a number of Jesuit institutions in which positions of responsibility are entrusted to lay men and women. The number of Jesuits physically present in these institutions is not decisive if we have men and women imbued with the Ignatian spirit to serve the Church.

Q: Will some juridical formula be studied, during the next congregation, to integrate lay men and women in the Society of Jesus?

Father Kolvenbach: The last general congregation gave it a green light so that for a decade, on an experimental basis, the provinces were able to establish groups of men and women associates united with a contractual agreement without that implying integration in the body of the Society.

In this way their lay vocation is safeguarded even when they take part in the Jesuits' apostolic work. The experience of these last years will be subjected, without a doubt, to discernment by the general congregation.

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Q: The Xaverian and Ignatian Year is being celebrated. What do you expect from these celebrations?

Father Kolvenbach: The obvious desire is that on remembering the three first companions – the memory of Blessed Peter Faber, next to Ignatius and Xavier, must not be forgotten – the Jesuits will revive in their lives and in their apostolate the three charisms that they embodied: to encounter God and unite oneself to him through the work to lead everything to its fulfillment, as Ignatius did; to proclaim passionately

the Gospel as Xavier; and to deepen one's spiritual life as Faber.

Q: The preferential option for the poor, social justice, interreligious dialogue, refugees, the realm of culture and education, are only some of the Society's priorities. Is there a new field in which the Jesuits want to be involved?

Father Kolvenbach: The Pope reminded us recently -- on April 22 on the occasion of the commemoration of the 2006 Jubilee of the Jesuits -- what the Church expects from the Society with special emphasis on the field of philosophy and theology traditionally cultivated by the Jesuits.

As geographic preferences we feel called to contribute in a special way to the evangelization of Africa and China. But it will be material for reflection on the part of the future general congregation to discern if some of the situations of today's world, such as globalization, the cultural dialogue or relativism, for example, require an adjustment of our apostolic commitment.

-Source, Zenit: ZE06073023



Whatever happened to democracy?

Among many other banes of our lives in these first years of the third millennium, *special interest groups* must surely hold pride of place. Once upon a time, such groups would have been specially interested in promoting stamp-collecting, butterfly hunting or raising roses. Now they find their fulfilment in bullying people into agreeing with them that not being interested exclusively in entomology or philately or rose gardens is a danger not just to the environment, but to our general well-being. Try swimming against the tide. Refuse to cry 'down with people who don't like spiders and snakes, or koalas; who collect coins or grow chrysanthemums,' just because some *special interest group* calls for a boycott. We need to be cautious of people who want to narrow our perspective. God gave us two eyes; let's use them both. - Ed. *Annals*

Bishop speaks out after stay of execution for three Catholics

GLIMMER OF HOPE FOR MEN ON DEATH ROW

By JOHN PONTIFEX



A bishop fighting for three Indonesians awaiting the death penalty has said a last minute postponement gives renewed hope that justice will prevail in their favour.

The three Catholics who were accused of orchestrating violence in 2000 at the height of the Muslim-Christian conflict in Indonesia, were due for execution last Saturday (August 12th) but were granted an eleventh hour temporary reprieve.

Speaking to Aid to the Church in Need earlier this week, the bishop of the accused, the Rt Rev Joseph Suwatan of Manado, hinted that the decision to postpone the execution could prove crucial to the ultimate outcome of the case.

Justice for the three – Fabianus Tibo, 60, Domingus da Silva, 39, and 48-year-old Marinus Riwu – has been overshadowed by reports of intimidation by extremists who are accused of threatening behaviour outside the court-house and making death threats to the defence lawyers.

Now they have been given a stay of execution to Sunday (20th August) at the earliest.

Reflecting the new up-beat mood, Bishop Suwatan said: “We are still looking for ways to ensure [the execution] is postponed indefinitely,” he said. “We are hoping very much for that.”

He stressed that following the trial, important new evidence had come to light providing at least

one of the accused with an alibi.

“The new evidence from the witness has shown that it was impossible that [at least one of them] committed the crime,” he said.

“We are trying to integrate this into the legal proceedings so that justice can take place,” said the bishop. “We should not just stick to the formalities. We should look at the evidence and act on it.”

“We are asking for a postponement at least for a time so that investigations can take place,” he said.

The bishop said it was impossible to gauge the impact

of wide-ranging appeals made on behalf of the accused, most particularly a letter to President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia sent by Pope Benedict XVI.

He told how public demonstrations held on behalf of the accused had taken place across the Sulawesi island and also in the Indonesian capital, Jakarta.

The bishop said:

“People are saying: ‘Life is in the hands of God and man has no right to interfere.’”

Bishop Suwatan said he had made an ‘open appeal’ for clemency, which had been posted on websites and published widely in newspapers.

He said he would be keeping up the pressure to ensure justice for the three men.

The Church has played an important role in rebuilding relations after the clashes between Christians and Muslims throughout Indonesia.

Many dioceses have set up inter-faith dialogue forums and social action groups enabling joint Muslim and Christian initiatives to tackle issues such as education and housing.

In Manado, there are inter-faith youth group meetings and in Ambon diocese, in east Indonesia, the Church has worked hard for peace between Muslims and Protestants.

But across the country, the threat from militant groups remains.



History through an Upside-down Telescope

As Christians and Muslims, and occasionally Jews, mingle there [in the Auburn, NSW, Mosque] one is reminded of a past age in the city of Cordoba in Andalucia, Spain where under Muslim rule Jews, Christians and Muslims lived together as a shining example of tolerance, justice, compassion and even prosperity until it was brutally brought to an end by short-sighted Christian rulers. Perhaps now, in our own century, in Australia, we have been given another opportunity to recapture some of that earlier vision and reality.

- Sister Trish Madigan, OP
‘Learning From Islam’.

For information about *Aid to the Church in Need*, contact The Director, Philip Collignon, on [02] 9679-1929.

The power of the Good has taken refuge in the nature of the Beautiful. (Plato)

MEMORY HOLES

By PAUL O'DONNELL



On Monday February 26, 2001, the Taliban in Afghanistan decreed not only the destruction of all statues and images in museums, but also the obliteration of the second century giant Buddhas carved in cliff faces, and considered to be part of the cultural heritage of the world. Despite international protest, they began their work of destruction on Thursday March 1, 2001. Explosives, tanks, and anti-aircraft weapons blew apart two colossal images of the Buddha in Bamiyan Province, 230 kilometers (150 miles) from the capital of Kabul.

This cultural tragedy seems so pointless. However, such things would come as no surprise to those who see in this act a chillingly familiar hallmark of totalitarian regimes. This often involves the obliteration of beauty and meaning, which are founded upon memory. George Orwell, in his classic work *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, coined the term *memory holes* to describe a kind of shredder in which the past is consigned to oblivion.

Loss of *memory* has verifiable de-humanising effects upon individuals and communities. This may help us to understand why the conservation of physical and cultural heritage has emerged with such importance in recent decades. Such conservation is not about pickling the past or giving new things the *pastiche* of an old fashioned make-over. It is essentially concerned with the power of those memories and aspirations, which help people to make sense of the present

A Lament for Walsingham Abbey

[Founded in Norfolk, 1061 AD by Richard de Faverches; destroyed by Henry VIII in 1538]

BITTER, BITTER, O, to behold
The grass to grow
Where the walls of Walsingham
So stately did show.
Such were the works of Walsingham,
While she did stand.
Level, level, with the ground
The towers do lie,
Which with their golden glittering tops
Pierced once to the sky.
Owls do shriek where the sweetest hymns
Lately were sung;
Toads and serpents hold their dens
Where the palmers did throng.
Weep, weep, O Walsingham,
Whose days are nights,
Blessings turned to blasphemies,
Holy deeds to despites.
Sin is where Our Lady sat,
Heaven turned is to hell.
Satan sits where Our Lord did sway;
Walsingham, O, farewell.

- Possibly by Philip Earl of Arundel.
Bodleian Lib. MS Rawl. Poet 291 fol 16.

and to consolidate identity. In large part, contemporary understandings of heritage conservation were born of the destruction that were wreaked by the Napoleonic wars and the rapid social changes of the industrial revolution. Words such as the common heritage of mankind and items of cultural identity probably had their first secular formulation in the 1874 Brussels Declaration (*on protecting cultural property in time of war*). This passed in lineage to the subsequent conventions of Geneva and the Hague. These not only

influenced such schedules as *UNESCO World Heritage*, but also the establishment of peak bodies for heritage conservation such as *ICOMOS*¹, and the subsequent filtering down of their principles and guidelines to national and local authorities. In the past few decades a substantial body of writing has also emerged which explores the practical connections between cultural heritage, aesthetics, morality and psychological well-being². Such texts, which have important applications in health care, education, sport and workplace design, contend that stark ugliness and *memory holes* not only blunt the imaginative and spiritual dimensions of people, but are partly responsible for personal and social pathologies. The application of such ideas to religion is obvious.

The Vatican has also played an active role in the formulation of principles and practices for heritage conservation. In Church language it is often referred to as our Catholic *Patrimony*; the inheritance of things handed down and handed on, and which by touch, enable us to make contact with past generations. It constitutes that large range of built and movable items which engage the senses in expressing the spiritual life of a community. The intensity of the presence of God revealed through the five senses is not only one of the great Catholic gifts to the world, but can also be seen as a powerful instrument for evangelization.

In the years around the millennium celebrations Pope John Paul II, who greatly understood the *memory holes* left by various twentieth century ideologies, often spoke of the

Catholic legacy of beautiful things and beautiful lives as enabling the *soul to find a homeland*. In this he stressed the evangelising power of *memory, a power that comes to us from the Spirit and makes us witnesses because we are children of witnesses*³. At the 2001 Consistory, it was further noted that today's climate of popular hesitation about *goodness* and popular uncertainty about *truth*, perhaps provides an opportunity for re-kindling the evangelizing power of *beauty*⁴.

For many, the experience of growing up Catholic meant that such ideas had a particularly personal and domestic meaning. For generations, the pictures stored in our heads, the feel and sound of the liturgy, the look of sacred things and the remembrance of stories which connected lives; even the living with the dead, brought to life that family album of statues, pictures and stained glass in the local church and the school. These are aspects of a faith that is not only cerebral and social, but also sensory; and one which exists in the continuum of time, enriched by both memory and imagination. Again, as John Paul II expressed it: *belonging*

**'The lips
of the faithful
are the
doors of
Christ's Temple'**

- St John Chrysostom, Cat. 3, 14-15.

*to a history which precedes and follows (us)*⁵. In this regard it has been noted often enough that successful moves and transitions of parishes and religious houses, and the fostering of new ones, have a remarkable parallel to successful domestic moves and adjustments. Pictures and furnishing, those things that delineate a history and statement of the family, are given a new home and new walls rather than being abandoned.

The past decade has evidenced some important signals about re-implementing memory and beauty as part of the program for the *New Evangelisation*, and it is to be hoped that this direction will be picked up creatively at local levels. On 28 June, 2005, for instance, Pope Benedict XVI presented the new *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*. It

includes 14 full colour sacred images which he considers to be so integral to the production that they are to be reproduced in all further translations. Commenting on this important move, renowned international scholar Timothy Verdon, of *The Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church*, has pointed out that beauty and art are nothing new in catechesis; nor for Catholics are they simply decorative, illustrative or pragmatic. They have strong foundations in the New Testament: St. Paul defines Christ as the *Icon* of the invisible Father, while St. John stresses that in Jesus, the Word of God is contemplated, seen and touched.⁶

In the Catholic Church, beauty, in buildings, images, artefacts, sacramentals, as well as in the visibly celebrated signs of the sacraments, has long been regarded with the kind of reverence which suggests that it is a parallel and direct expression of *beauty itself*: God. It is moreover a beauty which evangelises by inviting conversion. We may recall the words of St. Augustine, *Late have I loved you, O Beauty so ancient and so new*. John Paul II, speaking of the particular



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aesthetic which emerges from memory and meaning noted that: *'humanity, every time it loses its way, will be able to lift itself up and set out again on the right path. In this sense it has been said with profound insight that beauty will save the world.'*⁷

This background may give some insight into the reasons behind the creation in 1993, by Pope John Paul II, of *The Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church*. The Pope noted that when he was Archbishop of Krakow, he was able to *establish dialogue with those who had distanced themselves from the Church, by means of the comprehensible and acceptable universal language of cultural objects.*⁸ The Commission was set up

Beauty will save the world

—Pope John Paul II.

with the approaching Millennium in mind. Its aim is to promote a dialogue with associations dedicated to the conservation and appreciation of cultural objects, and also to assist the Church and its ministers in *the moral management of a heritage that is an unparalleled instrument of evangelization; to tell about and encourage the faith, and to elevate the soul.*⁹

Some examples of the Catholic legacy in these matters, as well as some hopeful proposals, will be examined in the following two articles in this series.

1 The International Council on Monuments and Sites
2 See for instance the very current work of Alain de Botton *The Architecture of Happiness*
3 *Oriente Lumen* para 8
4 Cardinal C. Daneels, *The Contemporary Person and the Church*. An intervention at the 2001 Consistory
5 *Oriente Lumen* para 8
6 Verdon, T. *Chiesa* 5 July, 2005
7 John Paul II, *Letter to Artists* 1999 Para 16 and citing Dostoyevsky *The Idiot* Part III Ch.5
8 John Paul II. *On the Cultural Patrimony of the Church and the New Evangelization*, at the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church, 30.3.2000
9 See, Most Rev. Archbishop F. Marchisano - Commission President; Address to the Heritage Council of Ireland

Fr Paul O'Donnell is currently engaged in PhD research at the University of Sydney's Faculty of Architecture. He holds post-graduate degrees in Arts (History), Education and Architectural Heritage Conservation, and consults in a professional capacity on heritage matters.

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The true Mystery unveiled: why do otherwise sensible people read rubbish?

THE DA VINCI CODE

By PAUL GIXNN, S.M.

Brown says Emperor Constantine shifted the Christian day of worship from Saturday to Sunday. O'Collins: Temple worship, as in 2 Chronicles 5:14, 7:1 etc. Professor Kleinberg of the History Department in Tel Aviv University, pointed out the many such 'gross historical errors and lies' in his critique of *The Da Vinci Code* published in *Haaretz* when the book appeared in Israel. Brown has not responded to Kleinberg, nor to O'Collins, nor to dozens of other recognized scholars who have gone public to attack the book's many falsifications of plain history.

Brown claims that Mary Magdalene married Jesus, had a child by him and that she, not Peter, was made head of the Church. The only historical 'proof' attempted by Brown relies totally on discredited 'documents', first appearing in 1966, supposedly written by *The Priory of Sion*, which he claims is a European secret society founded in 1099 – is a real organization? (Brown claims this at the beginning of his book, under the heading 'Fact' In May, 2003, Brown stated that this, and '99% of it (the book) is true: You find this claim aired in Lisa Rogak's long article on Brown, in the *Sydney Morning Herald* Spectrum section, Weekend Oct. 29-30, 2005).

Brown offers no evidence for the existence of this *Priory of Sion* from any recognized historical source. Let's study briefly the Frenchman Pierre Plantard, the man who published copies of these so called 'documents'. France's official Police Archivist, the historian Claude Charlot investigated files on Plantard after his claims about *The Priory of Sion* surfaced in the French media. Charlot found that the man first came under police suspicion during World War II. The file on this investigation concludes: 'The young man's mind is cloudy. He fantasises and is not to be taken seriously; Charlot next discovered that

MERITUS Professor Gerald O'Collins of the Gregorian University, Rome, has published a spirited challenge to Dan Brown's 'many historical untruths and mistakes' in *The Da Vinci Code* – quite sure Brown won't dare sue him for libel. O'Collins writes that he'd relish the chance to name all Brown's untruths in a court of law.

Brown's book claims that until Emperor Constantine convened the Council of Nicea in 325, Jesus was viewed by his followers as a mortal prophet, great and powerful, but a man? O'Collins replies: Paul of Tarsus wrote his 13 famous letters before Nero executed him in 64 A.D. In them he clearly states the Christian belief that Christ is God e.g. Philippians 2:5-11; praying to both a male god and to a goddess, 'Shekinah'; and sacred prostitutes offering ritualistic sex in official Temple services. Shekinah is as Christian belief that Christ is God e.g. John 1:1; 20:28. A multitude of pre 325 A.D. writers do the same.

Brown writes fantastic things about Old Testament worship in Jerusalem, with Jews in the era before Christ praying to both a male god and to a goddess, 'Shekinah'; and sacred prostitutes offering ritualistic sex in official Temple services. Shekinah is not a word found in the Bible but is a post-Biblical word used by rabbinical

Philosophy could be Helpful

MILLIONS of men are starving and bleeding to death because defied abstractions are now at war. For when gods fight among themselves, men have to die. Could we not make an effort to realize that Evolution is to be largely what we will make it to be? That Progress is not an automatically self-achieving law but something to be patiently achieved by the will of men? That Equality is not an actually given fact but an ideal to be progressively approached by the means of justice? That Democracy is not the leading goddess of some societies but a magnificent promise to be fulfilled by all through their obstinate will for friendship, if they are strong enough to make it last for generations after generations? I think we could, but a good deal of clear thinking should come first, and this is where, in spite of its proverbial helplessness, philosophy might be of some help.

- Etienne Gilson, *God and Philosophy*, 2nd edition, Yale University Press, 2002. pp. 186-187. (Powell Lectures on Philosophy, Indiana University, 1939-40)

several years later, in 1953, Plantard was jailed for six months, convicted of fraud. This was 13 years before Plantard's *Priory of Sion* claims were made.

By French law anyone beginning a new organization must first register all pertinent data at the Bibliotheque Nationale. Archivist Charlot searched there and found that Plantard registered a number of nationalistic and anti-Semitic organizations 'that only existed on paper'. For instance, when Plantard registered his *French National Renewal* organization, he stated it had 3000 members. The police investigated this and discovered there were 4 members!

In 1956 Plantard registered a new organization called *The Priory of Sion* with Bibliotheque Nationale, its name coming from Mt Sion, a mountain near Plantard's residence. The stated purpose of the organization: helping people get cheaper housing. A decade later in 1966, Plantard again came to Paris and registered a very high-sounding pedigree for his *Priory of Sion*, listing the organization's 'Grand Masters,' dating from 1099, and among them famous men like Victor Hugo and Leonardo da Vinci. He stated this 'ancient' *Priory of Sion* had been set up in Crusader-ruled Jerusalem in 1099 to guard an explosive secret they discovered there: Mary Magdalene had a child by Jesus; she eventually brought the child to France to become the progenitor of the Frankish Merovingian line of kings. Furthermore, Plantard had proof that he himself was the existing heir to this line, and so the rightful successor to the French throne!

Plantard also deposited a copy of two 'ancient' parchments corroborating these claims. He stated that they were discovered inside a 'hollow, visigothic pillar' by Rev. F. B. Saunier, Abbe of a town in south eastern France, Rennes Le Chateau. The discovery, he claimed was made late in the 1800's when Saunier renovated his church.

That Saunier renovated his church is a fact. This was one of his grandiose enterprises that had townspeople wondering where the money was coming from. Some suggested the priest had found buried treasure - or maybe discovered a startling secret, enabling him to blackmail someone, maybe the bishop, maybe about some

Saudi Prince Buys Share of Fox News

SAUDI Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal has purchased 5.46 percent of the Fox corporation, according to *Gulf Daily News*, raising concern that the conservative Fox News may soften its anti-terror stance due to the views of the new shareholder.

Al-Waleed, the nephew of the late Saudi King Fahd, was in the news when he visited the World Trade Center's remains just after the September 11th attacks and offered then-New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani a \$10 million check for relief efforts. Al-Waleed then released a statement blaming US foreign policy and support for Israel for the attacks.

Giuliani returned the prince's check with a statement that, 'There is no moral equivalent for this attack. The people who did it lost any right to ask for justification when they slaughtered ... innocent people ... Not only are those statements wrong, they're part of the problem.'

- Israel National News.com Sunday, September 25, 2005

grave Catholic scandal? In 1909 the bishop ordered an investigation of Saunier's frenetic building program and discovered the source of his money. It came from huge-scale trafficking in Mass stipends. Saunier had been writing to people all over France, persuading them to send him stipends for Masses that were never said. The bishop forced him to resign as Abbe of the parish. Disgraced Saunier died in 1917. These are sad facts.

In 1955 Noel Corbu opened a restaurant in Rennes le Chateau. Hoping to drum up visitors to the town and patrons for his restaurant, he added some enticing elements to the townspeople's original guesses about the source of Saunier's substantial supply of money. Corbu then fed these fantastic stories to a willing journalist who published them, creating a minor media sensation. Plantard went to see Corbu, was impressed by his mystery tales and further worked on them. Plantard persuaded a friend, Philippe de Cherisey, a minor T.V. actor with the hobby of creating puzzles as jokes, to produce two 'ancient' parchments supposedly unearthed by Abbe Saunier. Copies of these parchments, 'authenticating' his *Priory of Sion*, were formally registered at the Bibliotheque Nationale.

Later these 'ancient' parchments came into the possession of writer Jean-Luc Chaumeil. Intrigued, he had two experts examine them. They concluded

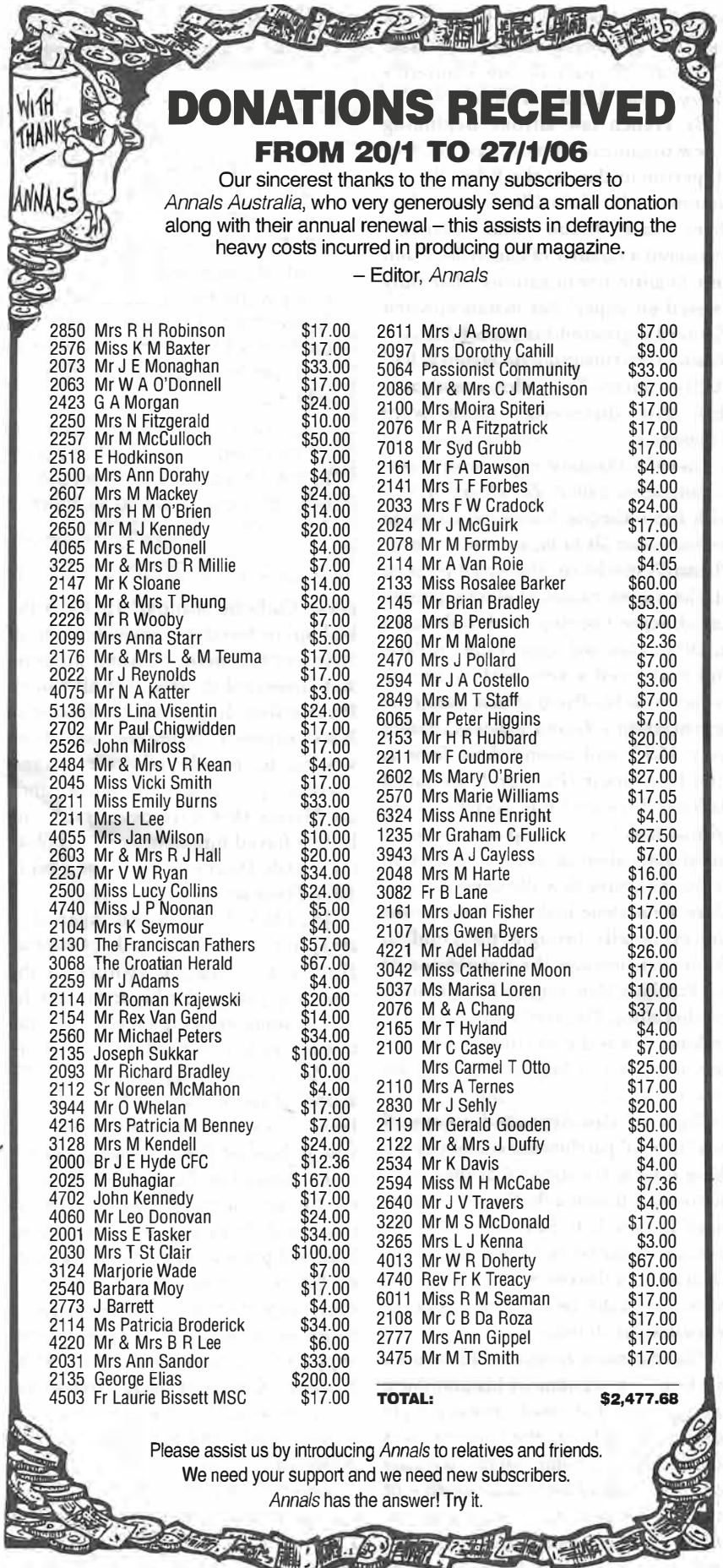
they were certainly not ancient. Apart from the texture of the material, several words in the parchments had only come into use around 1889. They were obviously forgeries. Chaumeil, armed with this information, challenged de Cherisey, who finally admitted he had manufactured the documents. Chaumeil had de Cherisey admit this in a signed statement which is still in his possession.

Police Archivist Claude Charlot concludes from his extensive investigations: apart from Plantard's three discredited 'documents' absolutely no evidence of *The Priory of Sion* exists. In 1974 Rene Descadeilles brought out a book debunking *The Priory of Sion*. No serious scholar in France now gives Plantard's claims any credence. Dan Brown, however, still making grinning visits to the bank, thanks to his book and the Sony movie, seems to have no intention of backing down from his 'righteous' claim of debunking the Gospels that are 'the most dramatic cover-up in history.' Ah, and also the sly Vatican! Truth-crusader Brown has 'the Vatican' suppressing the real evidence about Jesus, back in 325 A.D., hiding the scandalous truth by creating the present 'forgeries', the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John! Despite the advertising hysteria about this book and movie being 'perfect for history buffs', no recognized historian has taken it seriously.

The discredited 'documents' tell a graphic tale of crusaders setting up *The Priory of Sion* in the Jerusalem of 1099, after digging through a huge amount of solid rock to discover thousands of documents proving the Jesus-Mary Magdalene story. Professor Jonathan Riley-Smith, formerly of the Church History Department at Cambridge University, a renowned specialist of the Crusader-Jerusalem era, gives a disgusted thumbs-down to all this as sheer unhistorical nonsense. Concerning Brown's 'proofs' that Leonardo da Vinci filled his *Last Supper* with clues to the Jesus-Mary Magdalene claim, let's hear from an art expert, Bruce Boucher, Curator of the Art Institute of Chicago. In a *New York Times* article he writes that Brown's interpretation is 'extremely eccentric'. He adds: Brown's book should become an opera rather than a movie, 'because if it's too silly to be said it can always be sung.'

Tom Wright, a world ranking New Testament scholar and Anglican Bishop of Durham in the U.K., gave an interview to journalist Jill Rowbotham in *The Australian*, 13.4.06, in which he says: 'Granted *The Da Vinci Code* is such manifest rubbish, why is it a bestseller, why do people take it seriously? ... The story of Christian origins that so many in the Western world want today is a form of Gnosticism in which self-discovery, particularly discovery of gender-based aspects of 'myself', whether it's the sacred feminine or whatever is hugely important ... Learning that in fact the heart and centre of genuine spirituality is not about my insides but about God coming in love and grace to do something fresh for me is not what people want to hear ... They don't want to hear what Christianity authentically offers. They want this substitute called Gnosticism in one of its many forms ... I have seen this over 20 years; every 2 or 3 years somebody writes a book saying that Jesus didn't think he was the Son of God, didn't die on the cross or didn't rise from the dead, and that he was really like a Buddha figure teaching that if only we look inside ourselves, we will find a new form of authenticity.'

FATHER PAUL GLYNN, SM has spent 25 years as a missionary in Japan. Author of *A Song for Nagasaki*, and *Healing Fire From Frozen Earth*, Father Glynn is stationed at Villa Maria, Hunters Hill, NSW.



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Death of Maori Queen

DAME TE ATAIRANGIKAAHU

Benedict XVI expressed sorrow for the death of the queen of New Zealand's indigenous Maori, Te Arikinui Dame Te Atairangikaahu, and sent a message of sympathy to her relatives and people.

In a telegram sent by Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Angelo Sodano, the Pope assured the deceased sovereign's loved ones of his prayer at this time of national mourning.

"The Holy Father commends the late Dame Te Atairan to the loving mercy of Almighty God and invokes upon the country the divine gifts of consolation and peace," stated the message, published today by the bishops' conference of New Zealand.

The queen died on August 15 at age 75, from kidney failure.

The country's Catholic episcopate confirmed that the vicar general of the Diocese of Hamilton, Monsignor David Bennett, along with other Church officials paid their respects Aug. 17 to the deceased queen at Turangawaewae Marae, while awaiting the arrival from Australia of Bishop Denis Browne of Hamilton, president of the New Zealand bishops' conference.

In his absence, Monsignor Bennett, on behalf of New Zealand bishops and particularly of Catholic Maori and the Hamilton Diocese, expressed his prayerful condolences to Dame Te Ata's family.

"Many have attested to her qualities of leadership," he said, stressing her sincerity, graciousness, gentleness and humility.

Monsignor Bennett spoke of the friendship and personal regard between the queen and the first Catholic Maori prelate, Auxiliary Bishop Takuira Max Mariu of Hamilton, who died last December at 53.

During his 1986 visit to New Zealand, Pope John Paul II also had a cordial meeting with Dame Te Ata.

The vicar general of Hamilton mentioned that in 1981, when Bishop Edward Gaines was installed as the first Catholic Bishop of Hamilton, "Dame Te Ata presented him with a carved crozier. And when Bishop Denis Browne was installed as the second bishop of Hamilton, Dame Te Ata brought the crozier forward again to give it to him. This crozier is always used by the bishop in our cathedral church."

"The fact that people of diverse cultures and backgrounds are coming in great numbers to Turangawaewae to pay her tribute, attests to the way in which Dame Te Ata brought peoples and cultures closer together," observed Monsignor Bennett.

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- Editor. *Annals Australasia*.

The new Maori king is the son of Dame Te Ata. Vatican Radio reported on Monday that Tuheitia Paki, 51, assumed his duties, according to tradition, while his mother was being buried on Taupiri mountain, where all Maori sovereigns are buried.

Thousands of faithful attended the ceremony, including New Zealand's prime minister and numerous representatives of the government and other Pacific countries.

The new king will have the task to continue his mother's legacy, which kept the various Maori tribes united and obtained positive results in the area of territorial and political rights for her people, commented Vatican Radio.

Tuheitia Paki is the seventh king since New Zealand's indigenous monarchy was instituted in 1858 to counteract the colonization of the territories.

About 500,000 of New Zealand's 4 million inhabitants are Catholics.
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Affectionate recollections of a vanished era

A MEMOIR OF CHILDHOOD IN THE GREAT DEPRESSION AND WARTIME

By KEVIN HILFERTY



TIMES were tough in the mid-1930s. If a man was offered a job he took it, even though it meant settling his wife and two small sons 1,000km away from family and friends. So it was with my father, Jack Hilferty. He was a skilled tradesman, a boilermaker, but there was no work in Melbourne. In Sydney there was a job for him, so the decision was easy.

He had learned his trade in the Glasgow shipyard of John Brown, Clydebank, but when he completed his apprenticeship aged 20 in 1916 he enlisted in the Royal Navy as a stoker. He saw a lot of action and carried to his death fragments of German shrapnel in his forehead. He spent a year after the war on minesweepers clearing the vast minefields laid by Britain and Germany in the North Sea during the conflict.

Then he went to sea again on merchant ships and eventually came ashore in Sydney and found work on the construction of the Harbour Bridge. The State Government agency responsible for the Bridge was the Main Roads Board, a heavily Masonic organisation. It is hard to credit today, but Catholics found it almost impossible to get jobs in such places. My father and one of his Glasgow workmates knew the Masonic grip and phrases so the Main Roads Board bosses assumed that they were Masons. They were able to recommend for jobs scores of Catholics who would otherwise have been denied them. But as soon as the Bridge was completed the entire workforce was sacked.

My mother, Phyllis George, who had grown up on a family farm in Gippsland, was working as a waitress in Sydney

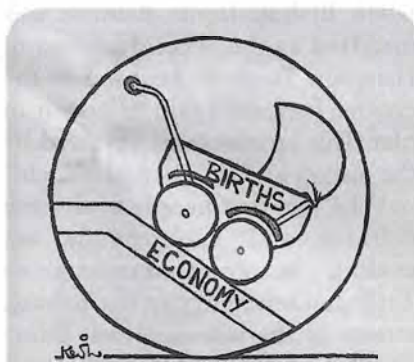
when she met my father. They went to Melbourne to marry but the great depression was biting. At one stage my father had an offer to install the machinery on a gold dredger in North Queensland. But he had to find his own way there by 'jumping the rattler' on freight trains. For much of these hard times my mother was the family breadwinner, while my father cared for my younger brother Jim and me in our little house in Carlton. When I began to speak I had a distinct Glasgow burr.

My father got a job in Sydney and sent for us to join him; I was five and Jim was three. We travelled third class on the coastal steamer *Canberra* (this being cheaper than the overnight express and also saved my mother the hassle of changing trains at midnight at Albury with two small children).

The *Canberra* was one of a fleet of coastal passenger ships. Built in Glasgow for Howard Smith Ltd, she was launched in 1912, a coal-burner of 7,700 tons and cost 186,000 pounds. Her regular run was from Melbourne to Sydney, Brisbane, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns and return, with passengers and general cargo. She could carry over 400 passengers: 170 in first class, 180 in second class and 60 in third class.

I can't remember much about the voyage but I recall a kindly cabin steward who gave us some fresh fruit in cardboard boxes and suggested we keep the boxes by us that winter night. As the ship passed through The Rip at the entrance to Port Phillip and turned into Bass Strait we were all violently seasick into them. I remember sitting on the deck the next day watching the beaches and headlands as we steamed north and our arrival the following morning at Erskine Street (now beneath the glass and concrete restaurants and apartment blocks of King Street Wharf).

My father had taken two rooms in a large house in Mansfield Street, Glebe with a gas ring outside on a landing for cooking. A few months later my mother rented a three-bedroom terrace house not far away in Avona Avenue and some years later she bought it; this was to be the centre of our family life for half a century. Previous tenants had chopped up some wooden internal doors for firewood – a common trick in those days. Unemployment was high and there



False Economising

MANY in developing countries no longer believe the populationist line. Mercy Walbin from *Eco-News*, Kenya, complains that the population programs being promoted in Africa are not living up to the promises made for them:

We have successfully reduced our population to an average of 3 children from 4... Our reduction in population is not matched by a corresponding improvement in our economy. In fact things are worse.

– Dale O'Leary, *The Gender Agenda*, Vital Issues Press, Lafayette, Louisiana 1997.

was considerable hardship.

Looking down on our house from the higher side of the Avenue was *Strathmore*, a sad reminder of an era when Glebe was the Point Piper of its day. It had been a grand three-storey bluestone mansion, with elegant rooms, a handsome veranda and an east wing. A curved driveway from Glebe Road gave access to carriages and gardens and orchards dropped away in terraces to Blackwattle Bay.

One of the early Glebe landowners was George Boyce Allen (born 1800, died 1887), stepson of a convict. Allen became a prominent solicitor. In 1831 he bought 91 acres of land from the old St Phillip's glebe and on part of it he built a two-storey mansion, *Toxteth Park*. His orchard is now Harold Park Paceway. With his son Sir George Wigram Allen he founded in 1847 the law firm Allen Allen and Hemsley (now Allens Arthur Robinson).

Sir George Wigram Allen (1824-1875), a solicitor, wealthy businessman and MP for The Glebe, was one of the early owners of *Strathmore*. Visitors to the Allen family homes arrived by ferry or steam launch at Glebe Point wharf where they were met by a horse-drawn carriage. Sir George sold *Strathmore* after his father's death and moved into *Toxteth Park*, adding another storey and a tower. In 1901 the Sisters of the Good Samaritan bought *Toxteth Park* from Sir George's widow, Lady Marian, using the money the State Government had paid to acquire their convent and girls' high school in Lower Pitt Street for Central Railway Station. On it they established St Scholastica's College.

The Allen family members left their mark on Glebe in street names: Allen and Boyce Streets and Wigram Road. But even by this time the detached houses of the middle class and the cottages of the working class were moving into the big estates; the terraced houses in Avona Avenue were built between 1900 and 1906.

The next owner of *Strathmore* was Sir Andrew Carran, a journalist and lawyer who became editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald*. He sold the property for 2,000 pounds to the Church of England and it became a girls' home.

Two more old Victorian mansions stood between *Strathmore* and Forsyth Street, *Avona* and *Tress-Manning*. By the



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time we arrived the Church of England housed homeless and unemployed in all three properties. Those in *Strathmore* were a very rough lot and there was much wife-beating and other forms of violence. For a few years after the homeless departed *Tress-Manning* became the Charlton Boys' Home but all three were eventually demolished to make way for home units.

At the beginning of 1936 I had started school at St Brigid's, North Fitzroy, so my mother enrolled me in the kindergarten class at St James' Superior School, conducted by the Sisters of the Good Samaritan. Two classmates, Kevin Scott and Noel Sara, were to become lifelong friends. Our teacher was Sister Imelda Mary (Callaghan).

In 1939 we all moved into third class conducted by Brother Fidelis Downes in the Patrician Brothers School in Bridge Road. We called this kindly man Fiddlesticks. He had the bizarre habit of taking snuff and it was an honour to be sent to the tobacconist to buy it for him.

Glebe was a working class suburb and St James, Forest Lodge, was a big and busy parish, staffed by Monsignor Patrick Doherty and two curates. There was an almost tribal sense of community built around St James and the many

organisations that flourished there: the Holy Name Society, the Sacred Heart Society, the Children of Mary, St Vincent de Paul, the Hibernians, the CYO, the Legion of Mary and the Catholic Scouts and Cubs. Also in our parish was the church-school of St Ita's in St John's Road above Wentworth Park.

We were loyal to our parish, school, the Balmain football team, Australia and the Labor Party. The ladies always wore coats and hats to Mass and devotions while the men, mostly blue-collar workers, wore suits. We all sang loudly, our favourite hymn being *Faith of Our Fathers*.

By today's standards, life was hard but we tolerated it. My mother cooked meals on a coal-burning stove. She heated water for washing in a copper in the laundry, lighting a fire beneath it of scrap wood. The copper also provided hot water for baths, carried to the bathroom in buckets.

The milkman came around every day in a horse-drawn cart, pouring bulk milk from a dipper into our billy or jug. The iceman arrived every second or third day to put a block of ice into our ice-chest. We also had regular deliveries of coal. There were hawkers in the streets; one sold clothes-props cut from bush

timber to hold up clotheslines (there were no Hills Hoists then!); his street call was 'Clo-Prop!' Another sold fresh rabbits for the pot and advertised his presence with a loud call of 'Rabbit-O!'

Other hawkers came on foot, lugging their heavy sample bags. One was a Chinese man who sold clothing while the Rawlings representative offered his range of jellies, essences, spices and flavourings.

Every Monday morning, a man from R W Stone, Real Estate Agent of Bridge Road and Ross Street, came to collect the weekly rent of 25 shillings. My mother bought some items that made life easier through time-payment, such as a chip heater for the bathroom, a gas stove and a large radio so we could listen to serials and the war news. Our bedrooms had gas brackets for gas lighting, but we only used them during electricity blackouts. Noel Sara's family lived in a gas-lit house in Cottenham Street.

Times were still hard and I wonder just how many parents were able to send their children to school with the modest fees of a few shillings a week tied in the corner of a handkerchief.

After Sunday Mass (mornings only) we looked forward to a traditional



The Blame Game

There *have* been frauds among Catholics, and for gain, as among Protestants, whether churchmen or dissenters, or among antiquarians, or transcribers of MSS. or picture-dealers, or horse-dealers; for the 'Net gathers of every kind' but that does not prove the Church to be fraudulent, unless geological or chemical frauds are slurs upon the character of the British Association.

- John Henry Cardinal Newman,
*Two Essays on Biblical and on
Ecclesiastical Miracles*

roast lunch but the rest of the day was very dull (unless it was summer and we went to the beach by tram). Shops were shut from noon on Saturday until Monday morning. Pubs did a big trade on Saturday afternoon (as did the SP bookies in a nearby back lane) but they shut their doors at 6 pm. They remained shut on Sunday, as did the movies.

We lived in Carlton and Glebe long before these suburbs became trendy, with good restaurants and coffee shops. The only places that sold hot food in Glebe Road were fish and chip shops and hamburger joints. We rarely had coffee at home but when we did it came in a bottle labelled Coffee and Chicory which my mother mixed with boiling water.

Jack tried to rejoin the Navy when World War II broke out but was persuaded he would be more useful to the war effort in the Garden Island naval dockyard.

The war took the young men of the parish into the armed services. The appearance in the street of a telegram boy on his bicycle was dreaded: the messages they carried too often told of a family member's death in action, wounding or capture. For others, the war meant job opportunities, especially in building and repairing ships around Balmain and at Cockatoo Island.

Troops heading off to the war zones were assembled at Ingleburn then put on trains which travelled along the goods lines to emerge from the tunnel near the Wentworth Park viaduct below Monkey Hill. Here their families waited to greet them; bearing cardboard signs with someone's name, number and unit and decorated with streamers in the unit colours. The trains steamed on to the wharf at 20 Pymont from where a fleet of ferries took the men out to the *Queen Mary* or *Queen Elizabeth* moored in Athol Bight. They always sailed at night, slipping away into the darkness unobserved.

While our parents coped with worries about creating air raid shelters, rationing of food and clothing, shortages of everything and the blackout, we boys found the war years exciting. Glebe Council dug slit trenches in Rest Park, near the school, as shelters. On the night of the Japanese midget submarine raid on Sydney Harbour, the sirens wailed and the locals rushed to the trenches

and jumped in. But rain had left them three parts full of muddy water; we had a good laugh about this.

A boom – a gigantic steel fence – was strung across the Harbour between Chowder Bay and Nielsen Park and the Manly ferries had to wait for the gates to open so they could pass through. A ferry trip to Manly or Neilson Park was exciting; the Harbour was filled with warships and merchant vessels, often bearing the scars of war – holes blasted by torpedos or shells.

There was a local legend about a US Navy cruiser badly damaged in the Coral Sea and towed to Cockatoo for repairs. A gang had been paid the staggering sum of 20 pounds a day for a weekend's grim work of removing the bodies of a score of American sailors from the tangled wreckage of their gun turrets.

A US Army camp was set up

Origenes Adamantius

In Origen [185-253 AD] we have the first detailed record of a Christian boyhood. His father Leonides was martyred in the 10th year of the Emperor Severus [202 AD]. Origen spent his life explaining the Christian faith to Jew and Gentile, taught Greek philosophy, encouraged his students to read the philosophers and poets of every nation, 'with faithful candour and wise Catholicity'. Theology and study of the Sacred Scriptures was for him the crown in the hierarchy of the sciences – logic, physics, ethics. Gregory Thaumaturgus [210-270 AD] was his student, and wrote of him: 'We were allowed to become acquainted with every doctrine, barbarian or Greek, on things spiritual or civil, divine and human'. Gregory Thaumaturgus, later bishop of neo-Caesarea, is the first recorded person to have had an apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Origen saw many of his Christian friends and students put to death as martyrs, and himself was tortured under Decius. The emperor's death in 215 AD saved his life, but he died aged 69 in 253 AD his health broken by torture and many hardships.

at Wentworth Park displacing the greyhounds and another in Jubilee Park and we saw black soldiers driving (on the left) Mack supply trucks from Woolworth's bulk store in Hereford Street to the docks. American combat units were then all white; black soldiers were assigned to support or labouring roles.

The Brothers did not allow the war to interfere with our education. In 1940 we moved into our handsome new school in Woolley Street and our old school became the parish hall then years later the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Dance Theatre. It now houses the offices and lecture rooms of the NSW Institute of Health Sciences.

Our other teachers over the years were Brothers Norbert Phelan, Rodan Bergin ('Butch'), Cyril Boland, Baptist McGrath and Nicholas Duffy who were all Irish and one Australian, Brother Ignatius Barrett. Brother Baptist had arrived from Ireland, aged 16, in 1888 to join the Redfern community and had taught at all the Order's schools in Sydney and country areas. While at St Patrick's, Bathurst, his pupils included Ben Chifley, who became Treasurer and then Prime Minister of Australia, 1945-49.

The school day began and ended with prayers; at noon the sexton rang the large bell in the grounds of St James and we joined in the Angelus. We gave our spare pennies to the Missions. The Brothers taught us Religious Knowledge, Latin, French, English, Mathematics 1 (algebra and arithmetic), Mathematics 2 (geometry and trigonometry), business principles, history and geography. When classes ended the Brothers often walked around the parish, visiting families of their pupils.

Apart from an occasional reference to John Bull, the Brothers' Irishness never intruded into their teaching. When the dominant influence in Australian life was the British Empire, they sought to foster in us a sense of Australian nationalism. We never called in song on God to Save the King; instead we sought His blessing on Our Lovely Morning Land. I cannot recall ever seeing a flag in the school.

I have always been grateful to the Brothers for teaching me Latin and French because these showed me how to use English with economy

and accuracy. They also helped me to quickly learn other languages later in life. Latin gave me a key into the Roman world and sparked an interest that took me to Rome and to traces of the Roman Empire across remote parts of the Middle East and Europe such as Hadrian's Wall and the great aqueduct at Segovia in Spain.

Brother Baptist was a gifted teacher of French; he insisted that I spoke French with him in school or on a tram coming back from an excursion. One such excursion, unthinkable today, was a visit to St Mary's Cathedral in March 1940 to join a long file of schoolchildren passing by the open coffin of Archbishop Michael Kelly. This was my first sight of a dead body. I remember the robed and mitred corpse with a large episcopal ring on the right hand.

In those years Latin was the language of the Church. I became an altar boy; tips for serving at Nuptial or Requiem Masses supplemented my pocket money. The liturgy for the great feasts, the High Mass, Missa Cantatas and Benediction and the Forty Hours Devotions brought some colour into the lives of parishioners.

It was common in Glebe then to buy day-old chickens at Paddy's Markets for a penny each, house them in a makeshift pen or turn them loose to roam the back yard to live on kitchen scraps for a few months then kill them for Christmas dinner. One year my mother offered Brother Roden a shoebox full of cheeping chicks; he gladly accepted them and the chickens pecked their way through the monastery garden until they vanished at Christmas.

There were only 12 boys in my class - the birth rate during the great depression had been very low. At the end of 1945 nine of us sat for the Intermediate Certificate examination in the Paddington Town Hall and suddenly school was over. My subsequent career path led me into newspapers (beginning as a copy boy aged 14) then into news and communications across the world.

But St James remained an integral part of my life. I was married there in 1960 to Joan Colahan from Tully, North Queensland, whom I had met in London. Our first three daughters were born while we were living in a flat above a shop in Glebe Road. Then we bought a house in Denistone parish and

The Gender Agenda

MY interest in feminism began with the publication of Betty Friedan's *Feminine Mystique*. The book came out right after I graduated from Smith College, which also happened to be Ms. Friedan's alma mater. My fellow alumnae were excited about Ms. Friedan's 'myth-shattering' insights, but I found myself unconvinced. As the years passed, the more I heard about feminism, the less I liked it. Feminists claimed to promote the progress of women, but the feminists appeared to me to have a very warped idea of what it meant to be a woman, and an even weirder idea of what constitutes progress.

Intrigued by what appeared to me to be obvious contradictions in the feminist ideology, I decided to investigate feminism. I read the popular feminist writers: Simone de Beauvoir, Betty Friedan, Kate Millett, Susan Brownmiller, Gloria Steinem, and numerous others. Oppression of women certainly does not seem to have prevented them from getting books published. Libraries and bookstores display stacks of feminist literature. The *New York Times* book review section regularly publishes glowing reviews of the latest weighty feminist tomes.

Most of the books I read had a

common theme: Men are monsters, and women always and everywhere have been oppressed. The weight of this evidence might have been convincing (certainly many others had been converted by it to the feminist cause); however, I wasn't convinced because what they said was contrary to my experience.

For example, feminists talked about how all women in the 1950s had been oppressed, but I had lived in the 1950s and knew firsthand that the things they said weren't true for all women. Feminists talked about the oppression of women in the nineteenth century, but my grandmother and great aunts had grown up in the nineteenth century and they weren't oppressed. They were tough, resilient women. My mother's mother supported the family when her husband lost his job and his confidence. My father's mother managed to hold the family together when her husband went blind. My great aunts were professional women. After several months of reading feminist diatribes, I said to my husband, 'I don't understand why feminists are always complaining about oppression. I have never been oppressed.' He smiled and replied, 'Of course you haven't. No one would ever dare.'



- Dale O'Leary, *The Gender Agenda*, Vital Issues Press, Lafayette Louisiana 1997.

had another three children and in time 12 grandchildren.

The Requiem Masses for my parents were celebrated in St James, for Jack in January 1975 and Phyllis in September 1985. My affection for St James remains strong.

In September 1947 I had my last glimpse of the *SS Canberra*. She was being towed stern first down the Harbour on her way to Singapore to be broken up. But her new Greek owners had other plans. They refitted

and renamed her and put her on the emigrant run between Scandinavia and North America then on the Caribbean trade. She plied the oceans until she was scrapped in 1959, almost 50 years after she was launched. As Jack Hilferty often said, they built very good ships on the Clyde.

Sydney journalist and regular *Annals Australia* contributor KEVIN HILFERTY wrote this affectionate recollection of a vanished era, which appeared originally in *The Green Sash*, the bulletin of the Patrician Brothers' Sydney Inner City School Alumni.

A Predictable Consequence of the Israeli Invasion of Lebanon

IRAN'S HEGEMONY

By KHALED FOUAD ALLAM



ne of the consequences of the ongoing conflict in Lebanon is a power shift between Shi'ites and Sunnis.

What is happening in Lebanon and the role Hezbollah is playing in it suggest that the unthinkable might be happening. Hezbollah seems in fact poised to succeed in what Khomeini himself failed to do whether in relation to the Palestinian question, which it is successfully turning into a Shi'a issue, or in terms of its role as the ideological vanguard of Khomeini's revolution around the world.

In fact, while nationalism played a restraining role in Ayatollah Khomeini's Shi'a revolution, Hezbollah threatens to carry the latter to most of the Middle East. The pan-Shi'a dream that was mothballed in the early nineties for pragmatic reasons is now being realized.

As a result of Hezbollah's actions and the Iraq crisis, Iran's Shi'ites have seen their position grow stronger. In an unprecedented turn of events in the history of the Islamic world, Iraq has suddenly become the second largest Shi'a country in the world. Ethnic differences between Iranian and Arab Shi'ites aside, Hezbollah is bringing the two sides together. Khomeini's revolution is the basis of this convergence, a revolution which, lest we forget, was not born in the Iranian city of Qom but rather in the universities of the Iraqi city of Najaf.

Arab and Iranian Shi'a revolutionaries in fact share the same leader - Mohammed Bakr Sadr. He is the true father of the doctrine of the 'government by the Jurisconsults', in Arabic Wilayat al-Faqih, which was first elaborated in Najaf and is now embodied in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Although Saddam Hussein had him killed in 1982, Sadr's books are still bestsellers in southern Lebanon. Hezbollah's activism has been fueled by

'If twenty years ago Arab Nationalism fueled the Palestinian resistance, now radical Shi'ism is taking the lead ...'

this type of political writings. While it is true that in the last few years the self-styled Party of God has turned itself into a political party, albeit one with guns, and had members elected to parliament, it has never lost its transnational character.

Indeed, in modern Islam all religious political movements consider the nation-state a phase to be overcome and replaced by one, great transnational Ummah. For Sunnis this means restoring the caliphate; for Shi'ites it means setting up a state whose boundaries would go from Iran to Lebanon and include Iraq and Bahrain.

On the one hand, the ongoing conflict in Lebanon runs the risk of encouraging Sunni terrorism like that of al-Qaeda, which, in its public statements, still describes Shi'ites as heretics and considers their rising political power in Iraq as something illegitimate that must be smashed.

On the other hand, like in the early eighties right after the Iranian revolution, Shi'ites' revolutionary activism still has a certain appeal even among Sunnis. For some Sunni ideologues, revolutionary Shiism can provide the model for an Islamic state, a dream that the Muslim Brotherhood has never been able to elaborate theoretically or turn into reality, but which now seems closer than ever.

A Shi'a-Sunni clash seems therefore a real possibility. All the regimes in place in the Middle East are alarmed by a pan-Shi'a breakthrough as well as Hezbollah monopolizing the Palestinian question, something which would draw Hamas into its sphere of influence. If twenty years ago Arab nationalism fueled the Palestinian resistance, now radical Shi'ism is taking the lead and turning it into a regional conflict. Organizationally, Hamas

is already a carbon-copy of Hezbollah—its propaganda relaying the same revolutionary mystique. And for both, Israel should not exist.

But what appears most surprising is al-Qaeda's silence, which speaks volumes about the situation in which it actually finds itself: between a rock and hard place. It failed to anticipate Hezbollah taking on Israel militarily and is now forced to compete against it on the same issue, namely the Palestinian question. With a different military-political strategy and propaganda, Hezbollah has been successful in bringing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict back to center stage and draw together various Mideast groups. Over the next few months, it is very likely that opposition between al-Qaeda and Hezbollah will intensify because of the total rejection of Shiism by al-Qaeda's Salafi Sunnis.

This kind of confrontation could also spill over into Iraq where Muqtada al-Sadr's militias are not that different from Hezbollah's.

But the most important fact is that through Iraq, Iran's position as 'the' Mideast regional power has been reinforced despite its tactical decision to play a low profile in the Iraqi conflict.

One reason for that is that in Iraq like in Lebanon radical Arab and Iranian Shi'ites are reinforcing each other and this has set off alarm bells in all of the region's capitals.

Another one is that as a centuries-old power relationship collapsed in Baghdad in the spring of 2003, the danger that followed was no longer just one of rattling sabers but rather of something nuclear nightmares are made of.

A native of Algeria, KHALED FOUAD ALLAM is a sociologist and a specialist of the Muslim world who teaches at the University of Trieste and the University of Urbino as well as the Stanford program in Florence. In addition to his academic commitments, Professor Allam has been an editorialist and columnist for the national Italian newspaper *La Repubblica* since 2003.

MEDIA MATTERS

By JAMES MURRAY

Carr Tune

Inspiring to see the Abe Lincoln of Australia, Bob Carr leading the charge against the dug-in guns in the Valley of Post Modernism, his slogan: 'History as a stand-alone subject!'

Perhaps as a consultant to Macquarie Bank, he will have even more power to spike the guns than he did during his long tenure as premier of New South Wales when he assailed and defeated those holding the Heights of Nonsense Academe to make plain history obligatory in his state's schools.

How can he deploy his increased power? What about a Macquarie Bank History Digest, edited by him for free distribution to schools nationwide? For starters your correspondent suggests extracts from the nation's first published Aboriginal author David Unaipon's *Native Legends* which found common ground between Aboriginal and Christian virtues

Another must: Donald Horne's best book. No, not *The Lucky Country*, the grittier and more apt, *Money Made Us*. And Carr should put aside his incredible modesty to include extracts from his own diaries.

Pros and Cons

Science characterises the Church's opposition to embryo stem-cell research, science

underpinned by the most meticulous and up-to-date analysis of the embryo's essentially human nature plus the empirical evidence that adult stem cell research is already begetting positive results.

By contrast sentimentality marks proponents of embryo stem-cell research. They rely on emphasising the remote possibility of cures for a range of diseases: Alzheimer's to motor neurone, Parkinson's to multiple sclerosis. Yet - surprise, surprise - positive results are (as with South Korea's Hwang Woo-suk money-driven research) of snake-oil quality or non-existent.

Add to the sentimentality the power of Big Pharma in alliance with biotech companies. They see in the research the possibility of publicly subsidised yet privately patented therapies they can announce to the investment market with profitable results equivalent to old-fashioned miners who have 'salted' a claim.

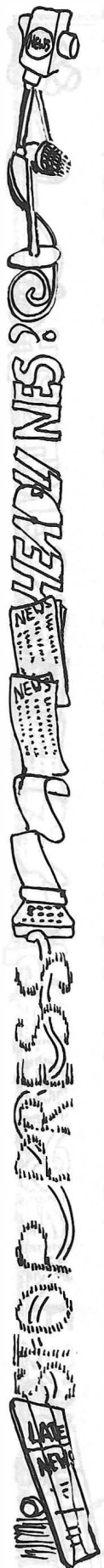
General coverage of the debate swings to the sentimental side while forgetting the money-driven side. Revelations of the influence being brought to bear are uncommon.

Congratulations, therefore, to columnist Christopher Pearson (*The Weekend Australian*, August 9) for exploring off-spinners involved. His mentions in dispatches include Australian Democrat Senator Natasha Stott Despoja



Before the Second World War, just six drugs accounted for sixty percent of all prescriptions, and, for the most part, new drugs were discovered by accident, not by design. In comparison, in the past decade alone, American companies have come out with more than three hundred new medications, treating everything from AIDS to cancer to colds. Today, we expect there to be a drug, either at the pharmacy or in the lab, for every ailment we can name.

- 'Big Pharma's Drug Problem,' by James Surowiecki, in *The New Yorker*, October 16 and 2000



who is preparing a private members bill to liberalise the laws governing embryo stem cell research and has spoken at the Australian Stem Cell Centre.

Pearson suggested she should acknowledge that the chief executive of the Gavin Anderson PR firm which off-spins for the Australian Stem Cell Centre is Ian Smith, her husband.

Another proponent, Liberal backbencher Mel Washer, was cited by Pearson as saying it was 'total, utter psychotic rubbish' to concede a human embryo the same rights as a human being. This without adding that he is the father of Stewart Washer, chief executive of the biotech company Phylogica.

More light of this kind is needed. Perhaps the story should be moved from the general news pages to the financial pages where rigorous investigation of profit factors occurs.

JP II at No. 15

Pope John Paul II's encyclical *Centesimus Annus* (1991) has come in at No 15 in the Institute of Public Affairs list of the 20 most influential (free-market) books.

Apart from the irony that John Paul II was by no stretch a free marketer, it is a timely mention if only in the light of the following passage:

The 'new evangelisation', which the modern world urgently needs and which I have mentioned many times, must include among its essential elements a proclamation of the Church's social doctrine. As in the days of Pope Leo XIII, this doctrine is still suitable for indicating the right way to respond to the great challenges of today, when ideologies are being increasingly discredited. Now as then, we need to repeat that there can be no genuine solution of the 'social question' apart from the Gospel, and that the 'new things' can find in the Gospel context for the correct understanding and the proper moral perspective for judgement on them.

Your correspondent confesses that he has not read the No1 book: *The Calculus of Consent: Logical Foundations of Constitutional Democracy* (1962) by James M Buchanan and Gordon Tullock. He intends to remedy this as as soon as he can find a copy.

Meantime he thinks the Church's social justice encyclicals, from *Rerum Novarum* to *Centesimus Annus*, inspired the decision of Catholic Social Services to pull out of administering the federal government's newish and more stringent welfare-to-work management programme which carries a \$650 per capita fee for service.

The Human Services Minister Joe Hockey should re-read or read the encyclicals before going off half-cocked with a quote like: 'It could only be described as too cute that Catholic Social Services are shoulder-to-shoulder with the National Welfare Rights Network and the Labor Party and the programme's only been in place a month and a half.'

Too cute? Where do politicians learn to speak with such clarity?

Mel's Maelstrom

Call it negative serendipity: finding yourself drunk, speeding and being pulled over by a cop. You then proceed to crank the negative serendipity to a stellar level by lambasting the cop, not for asking you to exhale into a breathalyser, but for being Jewish. You pile rank stupidity on insult by informing the cop that Jews started all the wars.

You are Mel Gibson, actor and film maker of the highest repute. The egregiousness of the performance was exceeded only by the media reaction which, oddly enough, while excoriating his shameful anti-Semitism indulged in shameless anti-Catholicism.



Supreme Tragedy

The science I pinned my faith to is bankrupt...its spread of enlightenment has been a spread of cancer. Its counsels that were to have established the millennium have led straight to European suicide. And I - I who believed in it as no religious fanatic has ever believed in his superstition! For its sake I helped to destroy the faith of millions of worshippers in the temples of a thousand creeds. And now look at me and behold the supreme tragedy of the atheist who has lost his faith.

-George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950), *Too True to be Good*. (1931)

Moot question. No question, however, that Mel Gibson's *mea maxima culpas* will make fascinating viewing.

Devine Horin

With more imaginative editing The Sydney Morning Herald columnist Adele Horin could with Miranda Devine be transformed into a must-read duel of angels. Devine is never less than elegantly formidable in her news views. Horin is succinct in her issues views.

Occasionally her succinctness leads to intriguing omissions. In her column (SMH, August 19-20) she wrote as 'a card carrying secular humanist' and cited statistics to prove that the moral majority [Christianity?] is in fact a minority.

Minority, shminority. She omitted to mention the most spiritually and culturally enduring minority religion in history: Judaism, its offshoot being Christianity or as the notable writer-politician Benjamin Disraeli put it: 'Christianity is completed Judaism or it is nothing.'

Judaism was part of Disraeli's heritage, and it was he who said: 'There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies and statistics.'

Vale Hall

James (Jim) Hall achieved a notable double. He was an editor of both The Australian and The Bulletin. He was also a writer of rapier elegant copy, a cavalier rather than a round-head.

As Graham Greene was the best novelist never to have won the Nobel Prize for Literature, James Hall was the best feature writer never to have won the Walkley Award.

(RIP)

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Pack leader was Christopher Hitchen, going downmarket to the blog-buster Slate from the super-glossy Vanity Fair. By repute the brilliant Hitchen is not a light luncher. Following the 9/11 outrage in New York, he was foremost in giving currency to the tag Islamofascists to describe Muslim fundamentalists (Islam-Trotskyites or Islamo-apparatchiki would have been equally apt but that would have intruded on Hitchen's sensitive lefty past as a Taitinger Trot).

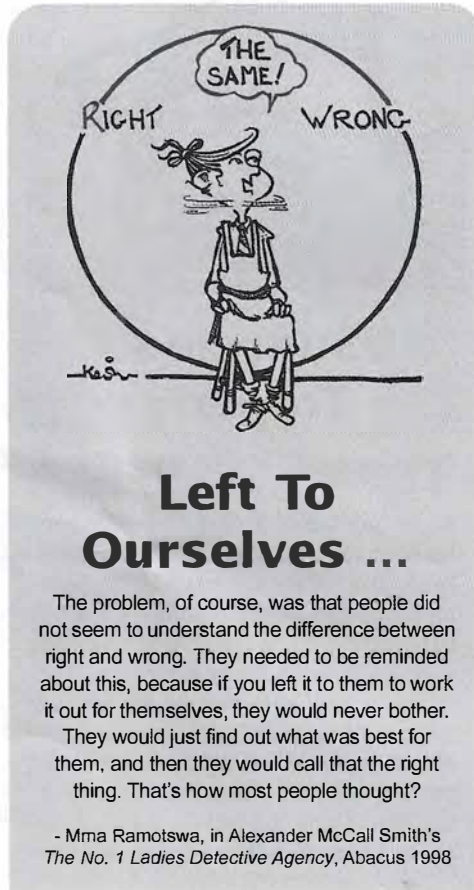
Missing from his coverage, which included predictable criticism of Gibson's masterwork, The Passion of the Christ, was any sense of, 'There but for the grace of God...'

Other hacks shared his puritanical self-righteousness. Drunk on their own verbiage, they suggested that Gibson would be ostracised by Hollywood. Eh? Hollywood is a company town. Almost impossible to ostracise a film-maker with Gibson's track record plus his own production and distribution entity: Icon.

Perhaps the hacks would have gone easier had they known Gibson's boozing has a journalistic element. Way back, your correspondent interviewed him in connection with his first movie, Sun City. He made it clear that he had a hankering to have a drink in a journos pub, possibly to fuel a residual ambition to be a journo.

Your correspondent led him to one of the pubs near the Australian Consolidated Press offices in Park Street, Sydney. Gibson surveyed the two-fisted style of journos unwinding after a hard stint at their steam-typewriters. And, your correspondent suggests, made their style his own.

More seriously your correspondent has always admired the attitude of the Japanese to drunkenness. They classify it as temporary madness. Is anti-Semitism forgivable during temporary madness?



The problem, of course, was that people did not seem to understand the difference between right and wrong. They needed to be reminded about this, because if you left it to them to work it out for themselves, they would never bother.

They would just find out what was best for them, and then they would call that the right thing. That's how most people thought?

- Mma Ramotswa, in Alexander McCall Smith's *The No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency*, Abacus 1998



Pope Benedict VIII [1012-1024]
and the Saracen Chief Mujahid [1014-1044]

PUT YOUR MONEY ON THE RICE



THE Pope was anxious to bring about peace and goodwill among the people of Italy. The great ones of the land, intent upon serving their own interests, took no heed of their common foe, the Saracens, who in southern Italy had seized Cosenza [1010 AD] only a year or two before Benedict came to the throne and, in the course of the next few years had burned Pisa and seized Luna in northern Tuscany. From this centre they ravaged the country.

The leader of this band was Mujahid, a Spanish Muslim, who had attacked from Sardinia. The news of their outrages at Luna filled Benedict with indignation. He determined to combat them himself, if no one else would. To prevent their escaping by sea he sent a fleet of ships. At first the Saracen chief was indignant that the Pope should dare to think of facing him, but when the papal fleet arrived, his courage failed him. Afraid of being cut off, he abandoned his wife and his people, and escaped to Sardinia. The Saracens kept the Pope at bay for three days; but at length the Christians were victorious.

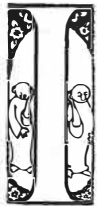
Furious at the misfortune which had overtaken him, Mujahid sent the Pope a bag of chestnuts with a message that he might expect him in the following summer with as many soldiers as there were nuts in the bag. Benedict accepted the chestnuts, and sent back the bag full of rice. 'If your master,' he said to the astonished messenger, 'is not satisfied with the damage he has already done to the dowry of the Apostle, let him come again, and for every grain of rice he will find an armed warrior waiting to receive him.' The Pope did not wait to be attacked; he stirred up the Pisans and Genoese, who cooperated with him at Luna, to carry the war into the enemy's country. The combined fleets of both cities sailed for Sardinia in 1017 AD. And none too soon; for Mujahid or Mugetto as he is called by the chronicles of Pisa, made up for his want of courage by atrocious cruelty, and was engaged in crucifying the Christians of the island. As before, he saved himself by fleeing to Africa.

[Source: Horace Mann, *The Lives of the Popes in the Early Middle Ages*, vol. v 999-1048, pp.173-175. Abridged, with some additional information. Ed.]

Government of the people, by the people (sometimes) and for the elite.

PEACE IN TIMOR: A MAJOR CHALLENGE

By MICHAEL O'CONNOR



In his Media Matters column [*Annals*, June 2006], James Murray noted that 'Vatican policy for East Timor ... included a 10-year inter-regnum to prepare the former colony for democracy.' I have a recollection that East Timor's Bishop Belo thought that 25 years would be necessary and credence ought to be given to the opinion of that dynamic leader on the spot.

But who would undertake such an inter-regnum? Not the United Nations which was always anxious to extract itself on the grounds of expense from any but short-term commitments and which was – and remains – incapable of running a beleaguered pseudonation. Could Australia have done it? Probably, but only at considerable expense and for a limited period, certainly not a quarter of a century. Indonesia tried for as long but, for a variety of reasons, including its own incompetence and an externally supported insurgency ultimately gave up. If Australia tried to do the job, it would likely face a similar insurgency and quickly lose any political or popular enthusiasm for the task.

By way of a very brief history, Marxist revolutionary Portugal walked away from its East Timor colony in 1974 and left the power structures in the hands of the Marxist Fretilin party. Civil war erupted and Indonesia invaded and occupied the territory a year later. In 1999, Indonesia surrendered the territory being no longer willing to carry the expense in money and casualties. For 24 years, Indonesia had poured money and experts into East Timor but had to cope simultaneously with an insurgency that was cheered on by the political Left in Australia but

provided with the necessary arms, money and training from Portugal. None of us should ever be under any illusions that any localised insurgency can survive without external logistic support.

From my own conversations with leading Indonesian military officers, I know that some at least of the initiative to abandon East Timor came from the military who simply wanted some sort of face-saving exit. Was it petulance that led Indonesia's president B J Habibie to wash his hands of East Timor by asking for a UN-conducted plebiscite? Who knows. What is certain is that Australia through prime minister Howard encouraged the

launch of a predictably flawed process late in 1998.

At that time, I had just concluded a study of peacekeeping operations through the United Nations University and agreed totally with Bishop Belo's insistence on an extended inter-regnum. I proposed that, unless the plebiscite opted for remaining with Indonesia, the UN should establish a trusteeship over East Timor run by a prominent and experienced governor from the region such as former Philippines president Fidel Ramos. His task would be to build the structures of government and develop the economy until the trustee was satisfied that East Timor could go it alone. In the meantime, security would be provided by brigade-size forces from Australia and Malaysia whose troops were experienced and expert in the very challenging peace operations. The proposal was sent to key Australian ministers, none of whom even acknowledged it.

Instead, the UN rushed ahead with the plebiscite, ignoring the warning signs that, whatever the result, the 1974 civil war would break out again – as it did. The UN wrung its collective hands in despair until Australia took the lead to insert a military force to enforce a sort of truce while the UN tried to cobble together some sort of political structure that would give an appearance of democracy that would enable it to claim credit for the birth of a new nation. Now, of course, the underlying problems in East Timor have re-emerged and Australia has sent in the troops to restore some semblance of order while the East Timorese struggle to sort out the mess.

While the soldiers and police from Australia and Malaysia will do a good but very limited job, no one can be

The Muslim Brothers

The overwhelming majority of Muslims are peaceable and tolerant, and most political parties that identify themselves as 'Islamic' are likewise. Public opinion surveys in Africa do not show significant differences in support for democracy and tolerance between Muslims and non-Muslims. Our concern here is with a particular strand of militant Islamism that developed out of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt, which has repeatedly incubated a violent jihadist fringe, and which took control of the Sudanese state in 1989, and confronted other states in the region shortly thereafter. The political significance of this fringe is wholly disproportionate to its numerically small following of committed mujahidiin. But we must also face the reality that the political claims of the extremist fringe and even its 'propaganda by deed', such as terrorist actions, have been applauded by a larger constituency.

- Alex de Waal, Introduction, *Islamism and its Enemies in the Horn of Africa*, Shama Books Addis Ababa, 2004

confident that the involvement of aggressive Portuguese paramilitary police will be helpful. A fundamental rule of peacekeeping is – or should be – that troops of the former colonial power should not be involved in a peacekeeping operation. While we may admire the work of the Australian and Malaysian soldiers, their task – as in the Solomons – is properly one for police acting within a strong and impartial judicial system. Soldiers may be useful in controlling armed insurgents but have neither the equipment nor the training to deal with the teenage gangs that have rampaged through Dili. The problem for Australia, if we are to help, is that we simply don't have police to spare. No state – and the states are responsible for policing – have sufficient numbers of police.

In fact, Portuguese involvement in East Timor at any level effectively reinforces the interests of the hardline Fretilin leadership of people like Mari Alkatiri and Nicolas Lobato. They are hostile to the Catholic church which remains the principal unifying institution in East Timor. They are the people who have established Portuguese as the official language although very few can use it. Education, especially higher education, is conducted in Portuguese, so reinforcing the rule of a highly politicised and authoritarian elite. As with many other nominally democratic regimes, East Timor is characterised by a government of the people, by the people (sometimes) and for the elite.

Commentators have expressed confidence that the flow of oil royalties to East Timor will solve most, even all, of the tiny nation's problems. It won't unless the money is handled more effectively than has been the case elsewhere. If the money is used for sound development of infrastructure and the wider economy, the risk is that it will be used for political aggrandisement. If the teenage gangs are not diverted into productive jobs, they will continue to be teenage gangs and the money will flow offshore into numbered bank accounts.

Effective development demands more effective land use, especially in

a growing population. Land has to be made available to entrepreneurs instead of being locked up in families and then divided among growing numbers of heirs. Investment from the oil royalties has to be directed to job creation because, ultimately, the most productive element of any economy is the work of everybody from top executives to ordinary labourers. In a typical enterprise, labour accounts for between 60 and 80 per cent of the cost of production. Coupled with management (itself an element of labour) and organisation, the effective use of labour is the key to achieving long-term growth and wealth. Thus, if we in Australia and many other countries are wealthy, it is primarily the result of generations of effectively managed work by people, both skilled and unskilled.

The task of government is to provide the basic infrastructure of roads, ports, power and water supplies that will allow development to progress. But it must also provide

a system of law with an independent and incorruptible administration so that everybody including the entrepreneurs can be sure that their investment is secure beyond the ordinary risks of business. Clearly, that has not happened yet in East Timor.

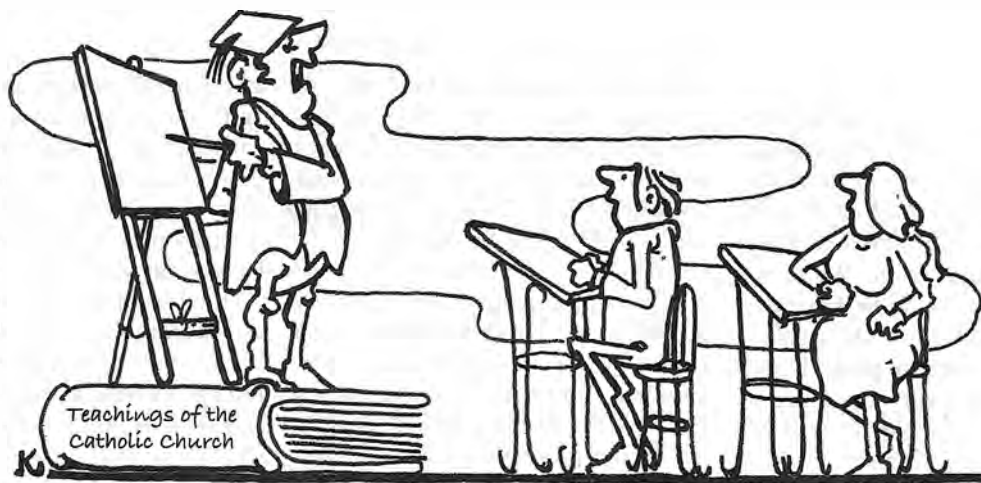
The bottom line is that Australia can do no more than apply the occasional bandaid to East Timor's near fatal injury. Soldiers and police will come and soon depart, usually at the behest of those interest groups threatened by their presence. Aid agencies can do a little more but their efforts achieve little and may indeed tend to entrench East Timor's grinding poverty. The United Nations can do virtually nothing because of its chronic political and economic weakness. The solution to East Timor's fundamental problems lies in that country and nowhere else. Like most other developing countries, East Timor needs a government devoted to the welfare of all the people rather than just the governing class.



The War of Deified Abstractions

“A world which has lost the Christian God cannot but resemble a world which had not yet found him. Just like the world of Thales and Plato, our own modern world is “full of gods.” There are blind Evolution, clear-sighted Orthogenesis, benevolent Progress, and others which it is more advisable not to mention by name. Why unnecessarily hurt the feelings of men who, today, render them a cult? It is however important for us to realize that mankind is doomed to live more and more under the spell of a new scientific, social, and political mythology, unless we resolutely exorcise these befuddled notions whose influence on modern life is becoming appalling. Millions of men are starving and bleeding to death because two or three of these pseudo-scientific or pseudo-social deified abstractions are now at war. For when gods fight among themselves, men have to die. Could we not make an effort to realize that evolution is to be largely what we will make it to be? That Progress is not an automatically self-achieving law but something to be patiently achieved by the will of men? That Equality is not an actually given fact but an ideal to be progressively approached by the means of justice? That Democracy is not the leading goddess of some societies but a magnificent promise to be fulfilled by all through their obstinate will for friendship, if they are strong enough to make it last for generations after generations?”

- Etienne Gilson: *God and Philosophy*; 2nd edition, Yale University Press, 2002. pp. 186-187.
(Powell Lectures on Philosophy, Indiana University, 1939-40(7))



DOCTORS OF THE CHURCH

By MAX BARRETT, CSSR

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



occasionally - but only occasionally - one of the saints is declared a *Doctor of the Church*. This declaration, coming from the

Pope, recognises the outstanding value of the saint’s writings. Up to 2006 A.D., thirty-three ‘teacher’ saints have been declared *Doctor*.

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

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

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

Last month [July] we look at the

background to the heresy of Arius [260-336 AD] an Alexandrian priest whose teachings reduced Jesus to the status of another prophet [as in Islam which has been likened to Arianism in many ways] and denied his divinity. His principal opponent was

St. Athanasius of Alexandria (296-373 AD)

The error of Arius was nailed at the Council of Nicaea in 325 which declared that Jesus was “God from God, Light from Light” true God from true God; begotten not made; one in essence with the Father.” That was surely clear enough.

Three years after the Council, Athanasius, the first to be declared Doctor of the Church, was made bishop of Alexandria (despite strong opposition) and tirelessly condemned the heresy.

Why didn’t Arianism wither on the vine? There were a number of reasons.

1. Christianity had only latterly become the Palace religion, the emperor’s religion. By and large, the citizens of the empire followed suite. This huge number was added to the leaven of the deeply committed Christians who had endured years of persecution. Christianity had, therefore, a broad base of support.

2. But Christianity was a (religious) system within a (secular) system, it was disciplined and well-organised. These characteristics triggered an amount of uneasiness in the Palace where the Church could be seen as a powerful rival to the emperor. In point of fact, two of Constantine’s emperor sons thought along these lines and gave their allegiance to Arianism.

3. While there was a popular movement towards Christianity, there was a strong minority that did not move with ‘the herd’. This minority comprised the intelligencia of the old culture and the moneyed class, groups that did not see Christianity as likely to improve their status. This minority veered towards Arianism.

4. A *very* powerful element in the empire was the army. For reasons to be considered later, the army (and especially its leaders) were Arian.¹

5. At the Council of Nicaea, virtually all the bishops signed what amounted to the condemnation of Arius. But, secretly, a number of these prelates remained with Arius. These dignitaries realised that it would be most impolitic to oppose Nicaea publicly, because Nicaea had the Emperor’s backing. So they went underground. They pretended acceptance; and they initiated a smear campaign against Athanasius.

6. Constantine’s wrath was directed against Arius whom he

called "Ares, a god of war". But then the Arian pretence began to work: not with Athanasius, but with the Emperor who grew exasperated with Athanasius' seeming intolerance in not receiving into communion "repentant" Arian prelates.

The Bishops' smear campaign included accusations of witchcraft, murder (they put the story about that Athanasius had murdered an heretical bishop) and the absurd fabrication that Athanasius had prevented the export of grain to Rome. Egyptian grain was Rome's life-line. The Emperor - without investigating the charge - ordered Athanasius into exile.

Constantine died in 337, and the empire was divided between his three sons. But there was no improvement in the situation for Athanasius: the eastern part of the empire fell to Constantius II - an Arian.²

Five times Athanasius was driven into exile. His opposition included two Emperors: the weak-kneed Constantius, and Julian who dubbed the small-of-stature Athanasius "that mannikin". (History has dubbed Julian "the Apostate".)

In the face of heresy, Athanasius was unflagging in using all his powers - which included, at times, a heavy hand. In his panegyric for Athanasius, St. Gregory Nazianzen felt that he had to answer some criticisms.³

St. Athanasius spent his life proclaiming unflinchingly: *Jesus Christ is God*. Do we sufficiently appreciate that his defence of Christ's divinity was, at the same time, *the claiming of human dignity for us?* He wrote: "[Christ] assumed humanity that we might become God."

He added:

The Word of God, incorporeal, incorruptible and immaterial, came down to our world. Not that he had been far off before, since no part of creation was ever without him. Together with the Father he filled all things ... He built himself a temple, a body that is, in the Virgin, and so made himself ... known. In this way he took from us a body like our own and, since all men are subject to the corruption of death, he surrendered his body to death for all, and offered it to the Father lovingly for our sake. His purpose was that, as all men died in him, the law of death which

was in force against men should be abrogated. Death would have its final say in the body of the Lord and would thereafter be powerless against his fellow men ...

The above précis of St. Athanasius' life and achievements is intended as a tribute to him primarily as a doctor of the Church, as a writer.

An 8th Century monk quoted by hagiographer Donald Attwater left no doubt about his assessment of the saint: "If you find a book by



Neither Wiser nor Better

Of course there are cruel and treacherous people in England —one has only to look at the police courts—and examples of public infamy can be found, such as the Amritsar massacre. But one does not look at the police courts or the military mind to find the soul of any nation ; and the more English people one meets the more convinced one becomes that the charges as a whole are untrue. Yet foreign critics often make them. Why? Partly because they fix their eyes on the criminal classes, partly because they are annoyed with certain genuine defects in the English character, and in their irritation throw in cruelty in order to make the problem simpler. Moral indignation is always agreeable, but nearly always misplaced. It is indulged in both by the English and by the critics of the English. They all find it great fun. The drawback is that while they are amusing themselves the world becomes neither wiser nor better.

- E.M. Forster, *Abinger Harvest*, March 1936

Athanasius and have no paper on which to copy it, write it on your shirts."⁴



- 1 See *The Great Heresies*, a Sheed & Ward publication in 1927 and still the best analysis of Arianism.
- 2 Substantially from Karl Baus, *History of the Church*, Burns & Oates, 1980, Vol. 2, pp. 16-32.
- 3 Frances M. Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, SCM Press, 1983. P. 67. In pages 65-68, Young gives the 'good' legend of Athanasius and also a more critical assessment.
- 4 *The Penguin Dictionary of Saints*, 1965.

Next Month: St Hilary of Poitiers, 315-368 AD.

THEY SING HYMNS TO CHRIST AS A GOD

By DENNIS J MURPHY MSC



Bithynia was the name of a small section of North Western modern Turkey. St Paul had once wanted to preach there (Acts 16:7), but probably never did. However, Christian communities were well established in the area quite early. Evidence for this is found in the First Letter of Peter (1:1), and also in the correspondence between the Roman Emperor Trajan and Pliny the Younger, his legate there from the years 111-113.

In Letter 96 of this correspondence, Pliny mentions the problems he had in dealing with Christian communities: "The contagion of that superstition has penetrated not only the cities, but the villages and country; yet it seems possible to stop it and set it right". He had already condemned some of them to death, and felt that this would be effective.

One of the things Pliny discovered about Christians was "their habit to assemble on a fixed day before daylight and sing antiphonally a hymn to Christ as to a god" (ib).¹ Our evidence for this sort of worship of Jesus Christ does not depend on his testimony alone. Nor was it confined to Bithynia. The letters of St Paul, which are the earliest documents of the New Testament, show it was already accepted practice then.

Paul's letter to the Philippians was written in the mid-fifties AD; around twenty five years after the death of Jesus. Throughout his letters he insists on his fidelity to what 'was handed on', to what 'he had received'. Though he was a man of powerful insight, he was not an innovator.

Chapter 2 contains what scholars recognize to be a hymn; a number feel it was not written by Paul, but was already commonly used in worship. A few even think there is evidence that it was originally written in Aramaic. Independently of those details, the passage certainly describes worship of Jesus Christ. The hymn concludes, "So that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and

every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father" (Phil.2:10f).

Amazingly, the words echo the sentiments of the Old Testament worship of the One God of Israel. A helpful parallel can be found in Isaiah 45: 18-25, which is one of the outstanding expressions of the central Old Testament belief that God is *ONE*, meaning "there is no other".

"For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens (he is God!), who formed the earth and made it (he established it!): I am the LORD, and there is no other. *To me every knee shall bow, every*

tongue shall swear" (Isaiah 45: 18,23).

Paul is not setting out to establish the divinity of Jesus Christ

in this text. He takes it for granted. And he also takes for granted that his readers accept it as a basic fact. His point is that the Jesus Christ they worship was of a lowly status and died on a cross for them; therefore: "Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others" (Phil 2:4).

In the Hebrew Bible, the supreme name of God is 'Yahweh'. It was considered so sacred that it was never pronounced. The word 'Adonai' (Lord) was said instead. This custom is also followed in most English translations; 'Yahweh' is written as Lord, but spelt in small capitals, as in the Isaiah text quoted above. In the Greek translation of the Old Testament the word 'Kyrios' (Lord) was also used to translate 'Yahweh'. It is clear from Pauline usage that when 'Lord' is applied to Jesus, this is its background, sometimes quite explicitly, as when St Paul says: "no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit" (1Cor 12:3). More is involved than just an honorific human title.

In another letter, written around the same time as the one to the Philippians, Paul affirmed explicitly his faith in the One God, yet at the same time he recognized Jesus Christ, the Lord, as inseparably sharing in his Father's divine activity: "For us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one

One of the things Pliny discovered about Christians was 'their habit to assemble on a fixed day before daylight and sing antiphonally a hymn to Christ as to a god'. Our evidence for this sort of worship of Jesus Christ does not depend on his testimony alone. Nor was it confined to Bithynia. The letters of St Paul, which are the earliest documents of the New Testament, show it was already accepted practice then.

AMONG MANY RELIGIONS

Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist" (1 Corinthians 8:6).

The early Christians were not polytheists. They did not accept Jesus Christ as a second god. That would have been unthinkable for them in the light of their acceptance of the Old Testament. But at the same time, the language used in the New Testament makes it clear they did not accept him either just as one of the prophets, even as the greatest of the prophets. He was worshipped in a unique way not applicable to others.

It was evident to them that Jesus Christ was not identical with God his Father; they were intimately related, but obviously different. On the other hand, it was equally evident that God his Father would not be Father without Jesus Christ. 'Father' in the New Testament is not a general way of speaking about God. It is defined by God's relationship with his Son, Jesus Christ. God is our 'Father' through our sharing in Jesus' relationship with him.

This did not lead them into abstract speculation; but it did lead them into worship. Jesus Christ and his Father, together, became essential, inseparable elements in their experience of the One God.² Or, if it helps us to put it more speculatively, Jesus Christ (even dead on the cross) became an essential part of their definition of God. They were convinced of this so deeply that, as Pliny witnessed, some were even prepared to give their lives for it.

From the earliest evidence we have, Christians, as individuals and as communities, worshipped God in a way that was unique in religious history. It would have an extraordinary impact on their lives and on all future history. It was not some abstract doctrine that dropped from heaven or the discovery of some bright theologian, even a New Testament theologian. It was their response to the impact of a series of events: the life, message, death, resurrection of Jesus and the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost. The New Testament is not an account of discovers of some abstract truth; they prefer to call themselves 'witnesses' of truth. Witnesses testify to something that they know has happened.

"We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched

with our hands concerning the word of life... (1 John 1:1).

Since New Testament times, men and women have reflected on this belief and worship of the early Church. Each age has brought and will bring its own questions. At times, Church Councils have had to be summoned to decide authoritatively on the correctness or not of answers being given. There is ample original material available on the history of these disputes. But even when new terminology had to be used to answer some new questions, the ultimate criterion was always what fitted in with and preserved the faith and worship of the Church of the Apostles. These clarifications would in time become incorporated into our creeds.

Finally, we need to note that on the model of the New Testament, any statement about the divinity of Jesus Christ cannot be merely one among other adjectives applied to him in isolation, e.g. he was a Jew, a male, a carpenter, and also happened to be divine. It was and remains a statement about the very nature of God that is unique to Christian faith.

On this model also, any statement about the divinity of Jesus is a statement about human nature itself and its openness to God. In Jesus, God comes and gives value to each human being. He reveals what, in God's plan, it means to be human: what is the aim and purpose of human life.

In this model, any statement about the divinity of Jesus is a statement also about the nature and

purpose of the material universe in which we live.

When the Church of the Apostles confessed "Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father", it summed up the whole meaning of God and creation. We, as members of that same Apostolic Church, continue to do the same.³

Paul's letter to the Philippians was written in the mid-fifties AD; around twenty five years after the death of Jesus. Throughout his letters he insists on his fidelity to what 'was handed on', to what 'he had received'. Though he was a man of powerful insight, he was not an innovator.

1. The Latin, *carmen dicere*, can be translated also "to recite a 'poem' or 'formula' to Christ as a god". It makes no difference to the main point here whether the form of worship is said or sung.
2. I leave aside God as Spirit in the New Testament simply in order to concentrate on the early Church's worship of Jesus, but a somewhat similar line could be taken.
3. I hope in a future article to examine what light the faith, worship and life of the early Church throws on the Gospels themselves. For example, scholars commonly assume that the theology found in St John's Gospel would have taken a couple of generations to develop. Yet statements of similar depth are already found in the letters of St Paul, written much earlier. This needs to be given more serious attention; it has implications in quite a number of areas. For those interested in examining this topic more academically two recent books of Professor Larry W. Hurtado (Edinburgh University) are highly recommended: *Lord Jesus Christ. Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003; and *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God? 2005* (Same Publishers), He and others have been researching this point for some years.



KNIGHTS OF MALTA

900,000 HOMELESS IN LEBANON

The Order of Malta is finding that its humanitarian work in Lebanon is more crucial than ever.

The order has been delivering help to the country since 1975, when the war started. It now scrambles to aid more than 900,000 homeless people, about half of them children.

The ancient lay religious Order said it is now installing an ultramodern structure for the education of children with encephalopathy in Bhannes and two institutes for the elderly in Roum and Kefraya. In recent years the Knights of Malta have established 10 medical-social centers in several areas of the country, open to all regardless of race or creed.

These centers offer 250,000 medical consultations or interventions a year. Given that the clinics also organize medical visits to villages, at times they are the only possibility of care for the indigent sick of whole areas of Lebanon.

Many of these installations are located a few kilometers from the area

where battles have been going on for weeks; every day they receive hundreds of fleeing civilians. More than 8,000 homeless people are received, cured and fed in the Order of Malta's center at Rmeich, and close to 1,000 at Caza de Jezzine.

At the Kefraya center in the Bekka valley, close to 60 new civilians arrive every day; more than 300, among them many children and newborns, are housed in the Khaldieh center. This is also the case in the Siddikine, Barqa, Ain el Remmaneh and Kobayat centers.

Fifty-five national associations of the Knights of Malta have been activated in support of the Order's Lebanese association, with an initial sum of some \$200,000 to cover most urgent needs.

Moreover, the Order of Malta's international rescue corps, established in June 2005, has allocated 60,000 (\$76,800), and, since the cease-fire, has been preparing to intervene in Lebanon.

Needed are medicines, bandages, milk for newborns and babies, drinking water, clothes and blankets, fuel for vehicles and electric generators, and food. Meanwhile, the risk of epidemics in refugee camps is growing.

Defense of Christian Values

CHRIST, THE GREATEST REVOLUTION

Jacobinism, Nazism and Communism have not succeeded in banishing God, and "Christ is the greatest revolution of history," a sociology professor told a mass gathering in Rimini.

Rosa Alberoni, writer and professor

at Milan's IULM University, was summarizing the content of her latest book, "La Cacciata di Cristo" (The Expulsion of Christ), published by Rizzoli. She made her presentation Sunday at the weeklong 27th Meeting of Friendship among Peoples.

Alberoni referred to words of Pope John Paul II, according to whom "history has amply demonstrated that to make war on God to extirpate him from men's hearts, leads a fearful and impoverished humanity to options that have no future."

The sociology professor contended that "the Enlightenment, Nazism and Communism tried to eliminate God, to deny Christ, thus legitimizing dictatorship, doing away with individuals and spreading paganism."

Illustrating the second part of the book, the author analyzed the great revolution in history presented by Christ, and how "the Christian message is essential to address challenges such as the Islamic and Chinese -- which exert pressure today on our borders - - and the scientific atheist spirit on the domestic front."

"Christianity is the only religion in which God becomes tangible, becomes man to speak to men, and is Father of brothers to whom he also gives the freedom to rebel against him," Alberoni said.

She continued: "In Islam, instead, Allah is not proposed as Father. For Muslims, the 'Our Father' is a blasphemy. Free will is not contemplated.

"We must not await, passive and inert, the destruction of Christian civilization. The moment has come for believers to raise their heads, to speak out, to defend Christian values by practicing them, re-consecrating them in our gestures, because only in this way can modern challenges be faced."

"Why don't we have the courage to speak openly of Christ?" wondered Alberoni, noting the media's relative silence about him. "Instead, we must not be afraid to speak of Christian civilization, not simply of Western civilization, because, the Soviet system having fallen, we are one Christian people in Europe, Russia, America, Australia and part of Africa and Asia."

Source: ZENIT Catholic Newsservice.

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By Paul Stenhouse, MSC

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See advert on back page of this issue



Up To Our Eyeballs In Debt

By ANTHONY PERCY

INTEREST RATES climbed again last week. Money is like any commodity. Demand more of it and the price will increase, unless of course the supply increases at the same time.

Interest rates are the price we pay for money – for borrowing and lending. We are told that over the last ten years or so Australia's household debt has climbed dramatically. And so, a greater demand for money means that the price of the money must necessarily go up.

One of the reasons we are becoming more and more indebted in this country is the sheer cost of buying a home. Some months ago a man in Marrickville revealed that in 1985 it would have cost him twice his blue-collar wage to buy his semi. Today, he would need eight times his wage to buy the exact same semi.

The other reason for our explosion of debt is one that we probably don't want to hear. We have become greedy. For instance, young couples starting out a life together in marriage often want to start where their parents are finishing. The instant home, garden, etc., seems to be all the rage. Doing without is not all that popular.

A cartoon in last week's Sydney Morning Herald captured this unpalatable truth. Here was a man sitting on the steps outside his place of work. He looked down and out – his face forlorn. His posture was slouched. Both hands were placed on his crestfallen face and his elbows were resting on his knees.

There was a tin can to his right – for donations. To his left was a billboard of sorts. It read: "Please help – 3 family mobiles, blackberry and V8 to support." It was a cry for help.

But the man is deluded – severely deluded. He is – no doubt – a symbol for many an Australian. In many ways, life has never been better. We live in much bigger houses than our forebears. Our homes are much better serviced. They have become – in some cases – like cathedrals. Much the same could be said about our cars.

But we don't seem to realise it. We seem to have lost our senses. Consumerism seems to have a stranglehold around our necks.

Have we forgotten the parable of the sower? Some of the seed fell amidst thorns. People hear the word, "but the worries of this world, the lure of riches and all other passions come in to choke the word, and so it produces nothing." That image of "choking" is shocking, but true. It is the Kingdom of "thingdom."

So this little nudge from the Reserve Bank last week is in fact an opportunity to stop and have a good think about what is occupying our thoughts. Are we spending too much time opening up credit card bills?

Might we not be better off getting back into the "garden" and ripping out some of those weeds and prickly thorns, which are suffocating the spring flowers? As a consequence, our lives may not be as comfortable, but certainly a lot easier.

Father Anthony Percy is the Parish Priest of Goulburn, NSW. He was ordained in 1990 and obtained a Doctorate in Sacred Theology (STD) from the John Paul II Institute for Studies in Marriage and Family, in Washington, D.C., in 2003. He is author of the recently published book: "Theology of the Body Made Simple" available from Connorcourt Publishing.

The African-American actress Ruby Dee has long adorned her country's stage and screen. How marvellously strange that she should find her greatest role in a New Zealand movie.

Her Maori-Fijian grandmother, Nanna Maria, determined to have a last feast is a superb mixture of matriarchal authority, charm, nostalgia and an enduring Catholic faith. In her insistence that her extended family provide a roast pig, she is culturally predictable. But by adding red wine and a priest as in Sicily, she seems at first hearing to be indulging in an old woman's whimsy.

But writer/director Toa Fraser makes it subtly clear that memory not whimsy is at work, the memory of the maori and pakeha soldiers who slogged their way through Sicily and up the length of Italy during World War II to make many corners of it forever Aoteroa-New Zealand.

Toa Fraser sets a high mark for Dee. She achieves it on wings of grace allied to a beautifully judged professionalism. The rest of the cast, including Mia Blake, Taungaroa Emile, Xavier Horan and Rene Naufahu, rise with her in a movie of the rarest vintage.

PG****SFFV

World Trade Center

Director Oliver Stone is not renowned for understatement. He attains it in this drama about the 9/11 suicide air attack by focusing on one facet: the true story of Port Authority cops: John McLoughlin (Nicholas Cage) and Will Jimeno (Michael Pena) trapped in the ruins while taking part in a rescue attempt.

Stone, a notorious sceptic, remains faithful to the ordeal of his heroes, including a vision of Christ experienced by Jimeno. He opens his movie with a marvellous sequence: New York awakening to a new day before the advent of the unassailably different.

By JAMES MURRAY

From the necessarily static nature of the ordeal while the cops endure the quiet terror of wondering whether they will be rescued, Stone intercuts to flashbacks and to scenes involving McLoughlin's wife (Maria Bello) and Jimeno's (Maggie Gyllenhaal).

Here the movie falters. But there can be no gainsaying its final message: 9/11 was the opening phase of a new kind of world war.

M***NFFV

Hephzibah

Curtis Levy's portrait of the pianist Hephzibah Menuhin is, to put metaphors in the Mixmaster, a symphony of light and shade: her marriage at 18 to Australian sheep farmer Lindsay Nicholas, heir to the Aspro fortune, their estrangement and her second marriage to the sociologist Richard Hauser, return to Europe as a concert pianist and activist for human rights.

All documentary makers dream of finding vivid archival footage. Curtis Levy edits his treasure trove of such footage with masterly effect, intercutting it with interviews of his subject's children and her brother Yehudi Menuhin, and always lifting the documentary with the great, classical music they played.

G****SFFV

Footy Legends

Who'd have thought it? Out of Vietnamatta comes a comedy that's like a throwback to Nino Culotta/John O'Grady's sunny natured classic, *They're a Weird Mob*. as directed by Michael Powell.

Director Khoa Do, who also takes a writing credit with Anh Do and Suzanne Do, has contrived a comedy set in the western suburb Yagoona which manages to avoid backyard barbecues. Instead he focuses on an insignificant sevens rugby league team led by Luc Vu (Anh Do) who

also has to care for his sister Anne (Lisa Saggars).

The key to their way out is a footy comp for which he, his best mate Lloyd (Angus Sampson) and the rest of the team start training in a sudden-death game with a pick-up team of garbos.

The movie has its climax in a match between the insignificant seven and a team of golden oldies. Claudia Karvan and Peter Phelps add lustre in cameo roles.

Khoa Do backs his comedy with a shrewdness unknown to Michael Powell. The football comp involves product placement for Holdens and for the clothing retailer Lowe's. Despite this, if Khoa Do had added sub-titles, he might have been listed for an Oscar, best foreign language comedy.

Long listed, of course.

PG****SFFV

Thank You for Smoking

Nick (Aaron Eckhart) is a spinmeister for coffin nails aka cigarettes. Abby (Katie Holmes) is a reporter for The Washington Probe whose weaponry includes a tape recorder and seduction.

Will his pillow talk wreck his credibility and enhance her career? Writer/director Jason Reitmann (working from Christopher Buckley's novel) spins from this question a smart satire that contrives to knock both the tobacco industry and the nanny state represented by outrageous caricatures, played respectively and in high style by Robert Duvall and William H Macey.

The Washington shennanigans of lobbyists are, of course, a long way from the pure, unmercenary politics of Canberra. Nonetheless, there are locals who may find them amusingly reminiscent.

MA15+ *** NFFV

Step Up

Tough street kid Tyler Gage (Channing Tatum) goes to the Maryland School of the Arts, not fired by ambition but under a

community service order. There he meets Nora (Jenna Dewan) and finds that his talent for spontaneous break dancing matches hers for classical and jazz ballet.

Choreographer Anne Fletcher, making her debut as a director, ensures that the obvious Romeo and Juliet elements of the plotline are diversified by brilliant dancing and musical sequences.

Rachel Griffith, up from *Six Feet Under*, puts in a telling appearance as the school's stylish and sardonic principal who gives Gage his chance.

PG *** SFFV

A Scanner Darkly

Fine cast. Finer acting. But do we really need to see the likes of Woody Harrelson, Robert Downey, Keanu Reeves and Winona Ryder tricked out to look like characters in a flickering comic book set in one of Philip K Dick's future worlds where surveillance cameras and drugs are everywhere?

Not really, especially when the movie ends with a series of facile captions exculpating the real lifers who inspired the characters.

TBC**NFFV

The Libertine

During the Restoration period, a period when outrageous bawdiness mixed with stalwart piety, John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, was notorious for his poetic wit and rake's progress. Johnny Depp plays him to the swaggering hilt (and incidentally makes it clear that his *Pirates of the Caribbean* Jack Sparrow owes as much to Rochester as to Rolling Stone Keith Richards).

To counterpoint Depp's commanding presence director Laurence Dunmore has cast Samantha Morton as the actress Elizabeth Barry and John Malkovitch as Charles II. With Rosamund Pike as Rochester's wife, theirs is a dance of love, death and porn in a murky swirl of glistening gold and mud.

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.

At times *Dunmore* loses control of his material (adapted by Stephen Jeffries from his stage play). Yet his final sequence is a tour de force for himself and his star: the rake, now syphilitic, turns to God and makes his crippled way to the House of Lords to deliver a speech of irrefutable eloquence on the right of the Catholic James Stuart to succeed his brother King Charles II - a right later disputed in bloodier circumstances at Boyne Water.

MA 15+***NFFV

Confetti

Director Debbie Isitt's spoof documentary has a high hpmf - hoot per minute factor. Under the aegis of an all too believable glossy magazine she brings together three couples to vie for a house, prize for living out their dream wedding ceremonies.

The ceremonies include a tennis match involving Josef (Stephen Mangan) and Isabelle (Meredith MacNeil), a nude effort involving Michael (Robert Webb) and Joanna (Olivia Colman) and a Busby Berkeley show involving Matt (Martin Freeman) and Sam (Jessica Stevenson)

The maladroit wedding planners who add chaos to the mix are played high camp by Jason Watkins and Vincent Franklin. Isitt workshopped her concept with this cast to increase a raucous spontaneity.

The winner? Your guess may be better than your reviewer's. Hopefully the movie's satire may do something to decrease the increasing flamboyance of wedding ceremonies. There again it may well have a couple seeking to outdo the satire.

M***NFFV

You, Me and Dupree

There's the eternal triangle and the temporary triangle. Many dramas have been made about the first. The second is the basis for this romantic comedy, written by Michael LeSieur and directed by Anthony and Joe Russo.

Into the home of newly marrieds comes the husband's best friend. Owen Wilson plays the friend Dupree with the manic intensity of a jack struggling to get out of its box. Matt Dillon is the stolid husband Carl and Kate Hudson is the sparky wife, Molly.

To complicate the comedy Carl works for Molly's father (Michael Douglas) a land developer who thinks him dull but takes a shine to Dupree. The brothers Russo are too clever to allow these elements to add up to the expected conclusion. Interesting to speculate how Wilson, a skilled writer, might have ended the movie. Rumour has it, he is writing a different ending off-screen.

M***NFFV

Barnyard

Odd cartoon variation on George Orwell's *Animal Farm* in which the animals party rather than talk politics. And they talk with the voices of Kevin James, Courteney Cox, Danny Glover and Andie Macdowell.

So far so predictable. But writer/director Steve Oedekerk decides that the cows, walking on hind legs, udders prominent, should talk tough in deep, male voices. Whatever his intent (satirising feminists?), this makes for ickiness and could be disconcerting for the young.

PG*SFFV

Curious George

Is a monkey who magnetises trouble the way a pooch does fleas. Unlike Shrek and other recent cartoons, this one is not designed to work on two levels: sophisticated in-jokes for adults, simple fun for children.

Director Matthew O'Callaghan and writers Ken Kaufman and Mike Werb adhere to the spirit of the original books by Margret and HA Rey. The result is a quietly funny adventure saga with lots of monkey business to delight younger children but not necessarily children of all ages.

C***SFFV

49 Up

Director Michael Apter continues his documentary saga on the life and times of a group of English children that began with the Granada Television's Seven Up almost half a century ago. This time finds his subjects are less inclined to stay in frame.

Indeed some of them are downright stropky at his manipulation which raises the question: should the saga end with the surviving subjects interrogating Apter on the way his brilliant career has been enhanced by his exploitation of them?

PG***SFFV

Miami Vice

Writer/director Michael Mann's new take on his pastel-coloured television series has less to do with Miami or vice than with the international drug trade. It is a dark and violent, high definition, digital-camera take (cinematographer Dion Beebe).

Guns blazing, stubble rough, Colin Farrell and Jamie Foxx rampage on as the undercover cops Sonny Crocket and Ricardo Tubbs who leave their discomfort zone in Miami for the wild, druglord lands where the borders of Uruguay, Brazil and the Argentine meet in a patch of anarchy.

Add Gong Li as a drug-syndicate accountant who brings more than an abacus to her role. Her English may not be completely fluent but her elegance is lethal.

MA***NFFV

Brick

No cheer leaders. No pom-poms. But in its own funny-peculiar way this is a high school movie. Its director Rian Johnson has grafted onto it the mean-street, noir elements of a Raymond Chandler novel.

And it works. But only like a clock with a tired spring despite the cool playing of the young cast. Joseph Gordon-Levitt dominates as Brendan investigating the death of his girlfriend Emily (Emilie de Ravin).

M**NFFV

White Masai

Director Hermine Huntgeburth's version of Corinne Hofmann's best selling autobiography of her romance with a Masai warrior captures the beauty of Kenya from the white beaches and markets of Mombasa to its arid inlands.

There Carola (Nina Hoss) seeks to establish an enduring marriage with Lemalian (Jacky Ido) and a life for their child. She is aided by a sympathetic missionary priest but caught inevitably in the culture clash of her Swiss business instincts against tribal customs of sharing.

M**NFFV

Puppy

Far out storyline: suicidal street kid Liz (Nadia Townsend) is rescued from death by schizoid Aiden (Bernard Curry) who then imprisons her in his remote home as a surrogate for his estranged wife Helen (Susan Ellis).

In the ensuing struggle for domination Townsend and Curry show promising talent in the way they deal with writer/director Kieran Galvin's script improbabilities. These include the quick disposal of Helen, the local GP Dr Holden (Terry Donovan) and an anonymous guard dog. Galvin then contrives a surprise twist. Not content with that, he twists on the twist.

MA15+***NFFV

Fearless

Director Ronny Yu takes Jet Li back to the past to show the origins of modern wushu, martial arts, of which Li is an acknowledged master. Li plays Huo Yuanjia celebrated in pre-Communist China for fighting all comers on the basis that the bigger they are, the harder gweilos fall.

The biggest is the boxer Hercules O'Brien (played by Australian wrestler Nathan Jones). All great knockabout fun. But beneath the knockabout is a nationalistic propaganda that links the past to the present triumphal, and repressive, regime.

M***NFFV

The Devil and Daniel Johnson

Daniel Johnson sings like a sparrow with laryngitis and plays guitar as if paralytic. Yet his simple, love songs enjoy a cult vogue. Director Jeff Feuerzeig has captured the reason for this in his sharp documentary: Daniel Johnson is a holy fool, an innocent abroad in a crooked industry.

M***NFFV.

The Heart of JAMES MCAULEY

Life and Work of the Australian Poet

by Peter Coleman

Forward by R.J.Stove

BOOK LAUNCH

by Paul Stenhouse MSC

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PG519

Angels at the Marriage Feast of Cana

MARVELS GALORE

By JAMES MUHREN, MHM



HERE was a general agreement both in the choirs of Archangels and amongst the thousands and thousands of angels that were at the command of the Almighty. Of all the creatures that the Lord God had created, these tiny creatures belonged to the most beautiful and interesting ones. Straight after their creation on the fifth day it was decided by the Council of Archangels that it was not practical to assign a personal angel to each one of them. It would mean that they would have to ask the Almighty to create more angels. Angels as you know are spirits and so they cannot reproduce themselves. Instead of a personal angel, a group of a million or two would have one angel.



Every twenty million would be guided by an Archangel. It would be too difficult for an ordinary angel to oversee so many all by itself. It was a constant delight for the angels to watch these tiny creatures as they went about their business. They were so highly organized. If a bit of earth, just a tiny grain really, was too heavy for two or

three to push along, or if it had to be pushed up a small incline, there would be helpers rushing to their aid. The long trail was constantly on the move. The angels wondered what the scouts were all called. They were really clever in that they always were able to choose the shortest path to the source of food. The angels knew also that the cleverness of the ants was to be found in the inborn urge to form a scented trail for others to follow. But it was the government of the ants that caused the greatest admiration. As they looked down on a gigantic ant heap somewhere in the wilds of Africa, some of the archangels and the angels could not resist humming: 'Oh Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder consider all the world thy hands have made.' Their spontaneous reaction to the marvellous creation of the ants drew a response from angels and saints



everywhere in the universe. Soon that most beloved of hymns was ringing from cloud to cloud and from heaven to heaven. All for the glory of God.

Meanwhile on the African soil the ants diligently continued to roll and to push thousands of grains of soil in the right direction. There were also the scouts who looked for grassy material for the roof of their new home. It might take fifteen to twenty ants to move one biggish blade of grass. Others were busy masticating in order to have the glue to hold it all together. The angels admired them very much for they knew that the rains could be quite fierce in that part of the world. And unless the new home was solid and hard it would not last.

They continued to wonder about the orderliness with which the work proceeded. Each one knew exactly what was expected of him or her. And each one accepted his or her role. Some of the guardian angels, especially those who were being kept awake at night because their human charges were such night-revelers, were hoping that they would get some of the discipline of the ants. But then they agreed that ants will be ants and human beings will be human beings. The only thing they could do was to try and keep them on the proper God-given trail to a short life here on earth or a long life in eternity with happiness and joy for ever and ever.



Fudging the Facts aka Playing the Numbers Game

The fallacy of numbers pervades our thinking. Perhaps because of the saturation of our popular culture by the media, with their obsession with smart facts, with asking questions, and determination to get the answers they want. The world was definitely fashioned in a Big Bang between ten and twenty billion years ago. Right? No doubt about it? Ummmmm! To quibble about the figure or what's worse, to introduce God into the equation, is to betray yourself as a right-wing conservative dinosaur. Our TV programming is built around nano-seconds of intelligence framed by hours of mediocrity – all presented as adequate treatment of complex subjects that are, like it or not, unsuitable topics for the quick-grab so beloved of TV

ANNALS CROSSWORD No. 41

ACROSS CLUES

7. Saint, nephew of Pope Pius IV; feast day Nov 4th (8)
9. A place of refuge, sanctuary (6)
10. An image or picture venerated in the Eastern church (4)
11. Cupboard used to store consecrated hosts (10)
12. Frail, weak (6)
14. Rebuke; disgrace or shame (8)
15. Patron Saint of music (7)
17. Irish Saint, founder of monastery on Hebridean island of Iona (7)
20. Clergyman; head of a government department (8)
21. Jacob's most loved son (6)
22. Assisted; gave favour to (10)
24. Grandmother of Timothy (2 Tim 1:5) (4)
25. A nine day devotion of prayers (6)
26. Subjugated (8)

DOWN CLUES

- 1, 16 down. Ecce Homo (4,4,2,3,3)
2. Asian republic (4)
3. He sought to foster harmony between the Pope and the German empire (feast day June 6th) (7)
4. Stigmatized saint (5,3)
5. Buildings for Jewish religious services (10)

6. Without legal force; invalid (4)
8. Bishop's liturgical headdress (5)
13. Prayers, psalms, hymns etc, to be recited daily by members of certain orders (10)
16. See 1 down
18. Christened (8)
19. A Patron Saint of Sweden (7)
21. Small peephole in door; betrayer of Jesus (5)
23. Another name for Esau (4)
24. Untruthful person (4)

SOLUTION TO NO. 40

J	O	H	N	T	H	E	B	A	P	T	I	S	T
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producers, and newspaper editors in search of arresting headlines.

Let's assume that one billion people believe that there was a Big Bang and that God doesn't exist – then one billion people can't be wrong. Right? Wrong. Numbers have no bearing on the truth or value of what such people believe, fight for, stand for, read or watch, or support through thick and thin.

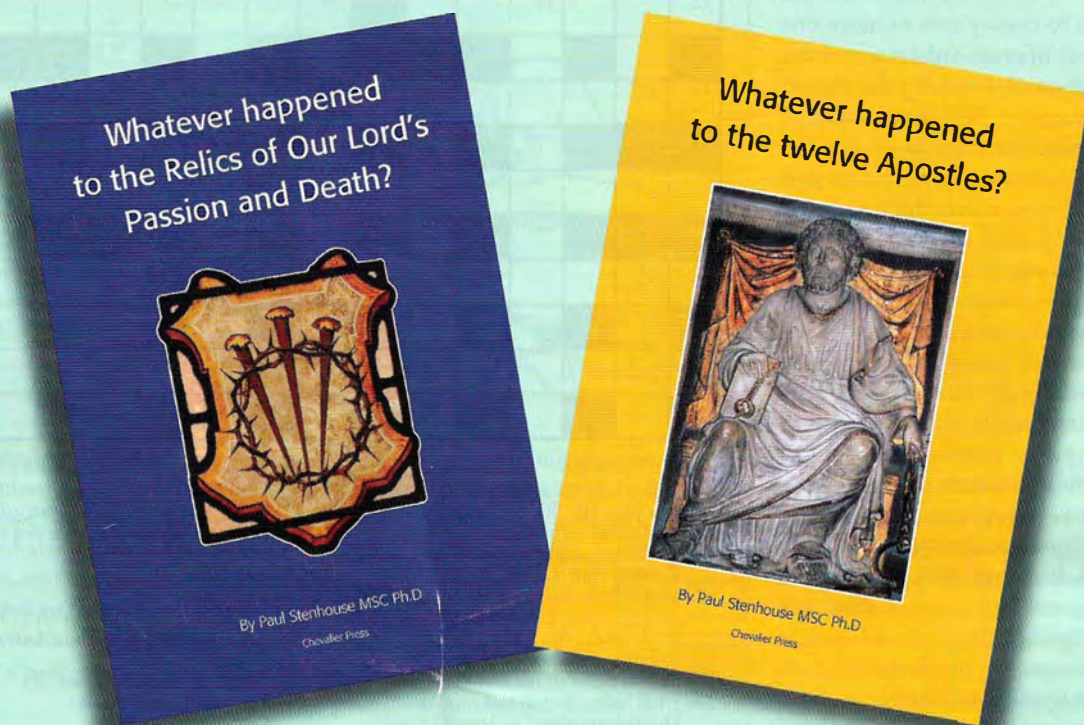
In the seventies billions of people believed that the next Ice Age was imminent, and that we needed to modify the global climate in order to prevent this extreme cooling. Now

billions of people have become convinced that the earth is warming, the ice caps are melting and greenhouse gases will destroy us all unless we sign the Kyoto agreement. Others more competent than I doubt that global warming is occurring, or if it is, that it poses a serious problem. I have no way of knowing where the truth lies, but I do know that the numbers of people who subscribe to either view are no guarantee that the opinions are correct. We have to seek another way of determining the truth than by canvassing public opinion. – Ed. Annals

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