

ANNALS

Australia

Journal

of Literature



2008 - 1

\$3.30*

PRINT POST APPROVED PP255003/01005

ANNALS AUSTRALASIA

Journal of Catholic Culture

Volume 119, Number 1 January-February 2008

[Sunday Year A/weekdays Year I]

Australia's Oldest Catholic Magazine

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

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Front Cover: St Thomas Moore, Lord Chancellor of England, martyred under Henry VIII on July 6, 1535 represented here delivering judgement, with a clerk recording the matter. From a window in the chapel of St John's College within the University of Sydney. St John's celebrates this year the sesquicentenary of its erection in 1858. See elsewhere in this issue [pp.10-12] the speech delivered by Her Excellency the Governor of NSW, Professor Marie Bashir, on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the Royal Assent that granted land for the College on December 15, 1857.

Back Cover: Act of Consecration of the Family to the Sacred Heart of Jesus with artwork by the late Kevin Drumm. This beautiful prayer of consecration is available from Chevalier Press both in A4 and A3 size. These may be obtained for 50 cents each if postage is not required. Orders not exceeding three copies and that require postage will cost an additional \$5 to cover the cost of a cylinder and postage. If more than three copies requiring postage are ordered, please ring Chevalier Press to check the cost of postage.

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Executive Editor *Chevalier Press:* **Editor** *Annals Australasia:* Paul Stenhouse, MSC Ph.D; **Layout and Design:** Paul Stenhouse MSC. **Administration:** Peter Macinante; Hendrikus Wong. **Subscription:** Bank/Visa/Master Cards accepted. Please make cheques, money orders payable to The Manager, *Annals Australasia*, 1 Roma Avenue (P.O. Box 13), Kensington, NSW Australia 2033. **Correspondence:** The Editor, P.O. Box 13, Kensington NSW Australia 2033. **Phones:** (02) 9662 7894/9662 7188 ext. 252. **Fax:** (02) 9662 1910, **Email:** annalsaustralasia@gmail.com. **Unsolicited material:** We regret that unsolicited material cannot be returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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Those Who Dishonour Religion
Ts it I whom they hurt?
 - it is the Lord who speaks -
 Is it not, in fact, themselves, to their own confusion?
 - Jeremiah the Hebrew Prophet, [born c.650 BC] vii.19.

Printed by National Capital Printing, 22 Piric Street, Fyshwick, ACT 2609, Phone: (02) 6280 7477.

Colour Separation Digital Graphic Communications Pty Ltd, Suite 5, Level 2, 51-53 Bourke Rd, Alexandria 2015. Phone: (02) 9669 6144.

ABN 40 938 805 168 Dewey Number: 248-88 AT ISSN 1444-4178. Recommended Retail Price only.

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

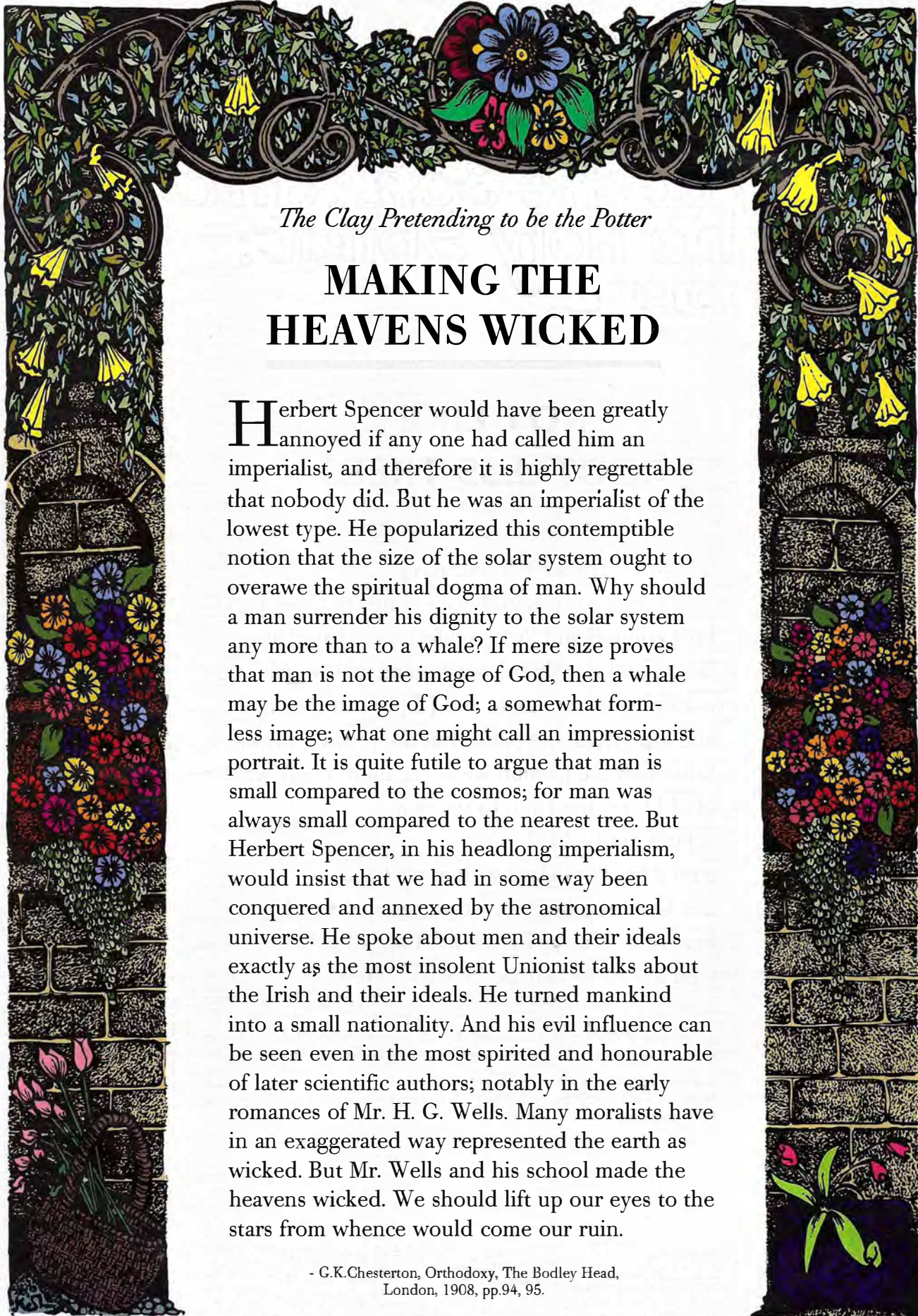
NOT LIKE ROOTLESS TREES

IF THE FAITH were in our days
As fervent as it hath been ere this in times past,
little counsel and little comfort would suffice.
We should not [have] much need with words and
reasoning to extenuate and [di]minish the vigor
and asperity of the pains; but the greater, the more
bitter that the passion were, the more ready was,
of old time, the Faith to suffer it
... [and not be like]
a reed ready to wave with every wind,
nor like a rootless tree, scant set up on end
in a loose heap of light sand, that will,
with a blast or two, be blown down.

A Dialogue of Comfort in Tribulation, by St Thomas More, Soho, London
Thomas Baker, [undated; the publishing house was established in 1849] p.225.

Written in the Tower of London in 1534. On July 1, 1535, Thomas was tried for
High Treason because he denied Henry's supremacy over the Catholic Church.
He was executed on July 6, 1535.





The Clay Pretending to be the Potter

MAKING THE HEAVENS WICKED

Herbert Spencer would have been greatly annoyed if any one had called him an imperialist, and therefore it is highly regrettable that nobody did. But he was an imperialist of the lowest type. He popularized this contemptible notion that the size of the solar system ought to overawe the spiritual dogma of man. Why should a man surrender his dignity to the solar system any more than to a whale? If mere size proves that man is not the image of God, then a whale may be the image of God; a somewhat formless image; what one might call an impressionist portrait. It is quite futile to argue that man is small compared to the cosmos; for man was always small compared to the nearest tree. But Herbert Spencer, in his headlong imperialism, would insist that we had in some way been conquered and annexed by the astronomical universe. He spoke about men and their ideals exactly as the most insolent Unionist talks about the Irish and their ideals. He turned mankind into a small nationality. And his evil influence can be seen even in the most spirited and honourable of later scientific authors; notably in the early romances of Mr. H. G. Wells. Many moralists have in an exaggerated way represented the earth as wicked. But Mr. Wells and his school made the heavens wicked. We should lift up our eyes to the stars from whence would come our ruin.

- G.K.Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*, The Bodley Head,
London, 1908, pp.94, 95.

Plain Speaking on Jihad from a leading scholar of Islam

WAR, SUBJUGATION AND EXPANSION

by Johannes J.G. Jansen

*The Legacy of Jihad: Islamic Holy War
and the Fate of Non-Muslims*

Edited by Andrew G. Bostom.

Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus, 2005. 759 pp.

BOSTOM, an associate professor of medicine at Rhode Island Hospital, has compiled a large collection of documents concerning jihad in his voluminous *The Legacy of Jihad*. Bostom's book amply documents the systematic and destructive character of Islamic jihad, refuting the much-repeated argument that jihad is a "rich" concept that has many meanings and that jihad first of all signifies "inner struggle." Jihad is first of all war, bloodshed, subjugation, and expansion of the faith by violence. The book implicitly devastates the fashionable but uninformed opinion that all religions are elaborations of the Golden Rule. *Jihad is everything the Golden Rule is not.*

Jihad has been extremely effective and has served Islam well. In the light of this success, it can hardly be expected from Muslim leaders that they renounce jihad for more peaceful methods for propagating their faith. Renunciation of jihad would simply not be in the interest of Islam. But it would, to the contrary, be very much in the interest of the rest of the world. How should the rest of the world react to Muslim insistence on the legitimacy of jihad? Do modern, free, and democratic societies have the stomach to withstand jihad? This question becomes more and more important when jihadists see themselves increasingly not as an alternative to Christianity, Judaism, or any other faith but as an alternative to democracy. One almost gets the impression that present-day jihadists fervently desire to add Islam to the list that starts with Nazism and communism.

Bostom not only presents us with classical mainstream Islamic sources and their justifications for jihad, plus witness reports from victims that survived by accident, etc., but he also quotes contemporary Muslim clerics. For example: Yusuf al-Qaradawi (b. 1926) discusses "martyrdom operations," a relatively new tactic of jihadists. Are such operations jihad or suicide? This is an important question because Islam forbids suicide. Luckily Qaradawi, regarded by many in the West as a moderate, knows the exact difference between suicide and a martyrdom operation. Someone who kills himself is "too weak to cope with the situation" in which he finds himself. "In contrast, the one who carries out a martyrdom operation does not think of himself. He sells himself to Allah in order to buy Paradise in exchange."

If this is how the moderates reason, what can we expect from the radicals?

- Professor Jansen's review of Andrew Bostom's book appeared first in *Middle East Quarterly* Winter 2008. Reprinted with permission.

'... for decades the main outlet for Australian poets and story tellers'

THE BULLETIN: 1880-2008

By PETER COLEMAN



IT IS always sad when a famous newspaper or magazine dies. Journalists lose jobs, free-lancers lose an outlet, readers lose a companion. It is particularly sad when the paper is an old one, like *The Bulletin* which folded this week.

The Bulletin lasted for 128 years. It covered a lot of Australia's history – from the capture of Ned Kelly to the election of Kevin Rudd.

From its first issue in 1880 it was an organ of Australianism, sometimes narrowly conceived. Its final issue this week is appropriately an Australia Day celebration featuring excellent and sometimes critical articles on "Why We love Australia" by Tom Keneally, Frank Moorhouse and Richard Flanagan.

In the intervening years the magazine (or paper we used call it) underwent several mutations. Some like me who loved the old *Bulletin* do

not believe it died this week. The old *Bulletin* died decades ago. What we mourn now is the passing of a title – a lively, always readable magazine which had little in common with *The Bulletin* of legend.

Its editorial problem over the long years has long been to maintain its historic character and still move with the times. I can best approach this story by giving my own experience as editor in the 1960s.

In its earliest days in the 1880s *The Bulletin* was famous for its isolationist, republican and xenophobic editorials and cartoons, for its bushwacker legends, and for its ballads and short stories. Its editors went to gaol for libel – a great publicity stunt, but the paper's circulation remained small.

Phil May caught something of its politics in his cartoons. One showed Australia as Little Red Riding Hood looking up to an Imperial Wolf labelled *London's Downing street*. The little

girl says: "What great teeth you have, grandmamma!" The Imperial Wolf replies: All the better to eat you with my little Colonial dear!"

Another showed a giant octopus with a Chinese face, its tentacles strangling Australia with drugs and cheap labor.

In later decades *The Bulletin* softened its rage and widened its appeal. Its politics became a mix of Australian nationalism and British imperialism. Its cartoonists, often biting but usually affectionate, reflected all aspects of Australia – cow cockies and squatters, dopey Pommies, stingy Scots, "mine-tinkit" Aborigines, bowelless wowers, diggers and conchies, flappers and bodgies.

Hop's cartoon about the death of Queen Victoria captures its spirit in its "heroic" period: An Aussie drunk, his tongue hanging out, is squatting in the doorway of a pub which has closed for Her Majesty's funeral. The sketch is labelled: "A Nation Mourns."

Between its pink sepia covers the paper ran a series of old-favourite, gossipy columns – Smoke Oh (about city life), Aboriginalities (life in the bush), Business, Robbery etc (finance). The most famous column of all was not gossipy: it was The Red Page which reviewed, debated and celebrated Australian literature.

The Bulletin was for decades the main outlet for Australian poets and story tellers. It attracted an astonishing range of writers. They were all there in the wonderful Jubilee issue of 1950 – from Henry Lawson and Miles Franklin to Christopher Brennan and Breaker Morant.

But in the 1950s, following this famous issue, the magazine began to lose its way. The old conservatism was dying. The jokes no longer raised a smile. Circulation tumbled. People would offer the dispiriting compliment:

Fear the Fury of the Deracinated

AMONG those things deserving of our love – demanding our love – is home. The street where we live. The dirt under our feet. South Orange. It is only from this love that a 'cause,' even one so noble as peace, or life, achieves justness. Without 'land under us/to steady us when we stood,' in Wendell Berry's phrase, a political movement is doomed to a formless rage that is as ugly, in its own way, as the Robert McNamara – Donald Rumsfeld cold calculus of death. 'Uprooted, I have been furious without an aim,' wrote Wendell Berry. We should fear and despise the fury of the deracinated, who know what they hate but not what they love – whose motivation is hatred, never love, and who cannot credibly protest war because they rest their case upon a defence of ... nothing. To combat nomadism, one must make a home; to combat war, one must embrace peace, and that peace is more, much more, than the mere absence of war.

- Bill Kauffman, 'Look Homeward, America: Following Chesterton and Dorothy Day Down the Little Way,' *The Chesterton Review*, xxxiii, fall-winter 2007, p.572.

“Dad never missed an issue!”

In 1960 Frank Packer bought the ailing magazine and put in the late Donald Horne as editor. He set out to square the circle: to retain *The Bulletin's* character and revitalise it. Before he could find form he was sacked and replaced by Peter Hastings, who widened its appeal and then resigned.

It was now my turn. I wanted *The Bulletin* to be a literary-political review of Australian bias, something like a weekly if livelier *Quadrant*. The great issue of the day was Vietnam but we also debated republicanism, the Sydney Opera House, Manning Clark's *A History*, the hanging of Ronald Ryan, the future of communism, Vatican II, the development of Northern Australia, and the emerging genius of Barry Humphries. I was also able to lure back some of the poets, story writers and cartoonists who had deserted the magazine under its new ownership.

We found a new, loyal and growing readership. The trouble was that it was not growing fast enough. The cartoonist Pep hit the nail – and perhaps me – on the head: a bearded man in shorts and singlet, with a hammer-and-sickle tattoo on his arm and a cross around his neck, is writing to the Editor by the light of a lamp in his tent in the Northern Territory: “As an ex-student of the University of Tasmania and now a convert to the Catholic faith and a student of Professor Knopfmacher, I look forward each week to my copy of *The Bulletin*...” Pep brought it up to date with another version in which a faithful reader writes: “As a disenchanted republican and a former supporter of the Ord River Scheme, I have resigned from the Philosophy Department of Sydney University to emigrate to New Guinea...”

I left *The Bulletin* in 1967. In the subsequent forty years the idea of a weekly literary-political review gradually faded. The editorials, cartoons, verse and stories all disappeared. *The Bulletin* became a successful news magazine. The death blow to the old *Bulletin* was the decision to merge it with *Newsweek*. The life blood of the paper, the source of its readers' and writers' loyalty, was its Australian voice. To become half-American was to admit defeat and commit suicide.

But *The Bulletin* became a successful,

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large-circulation magazine with lively editors such as Trevor Sykes and contributors such as Laurie Oakes.

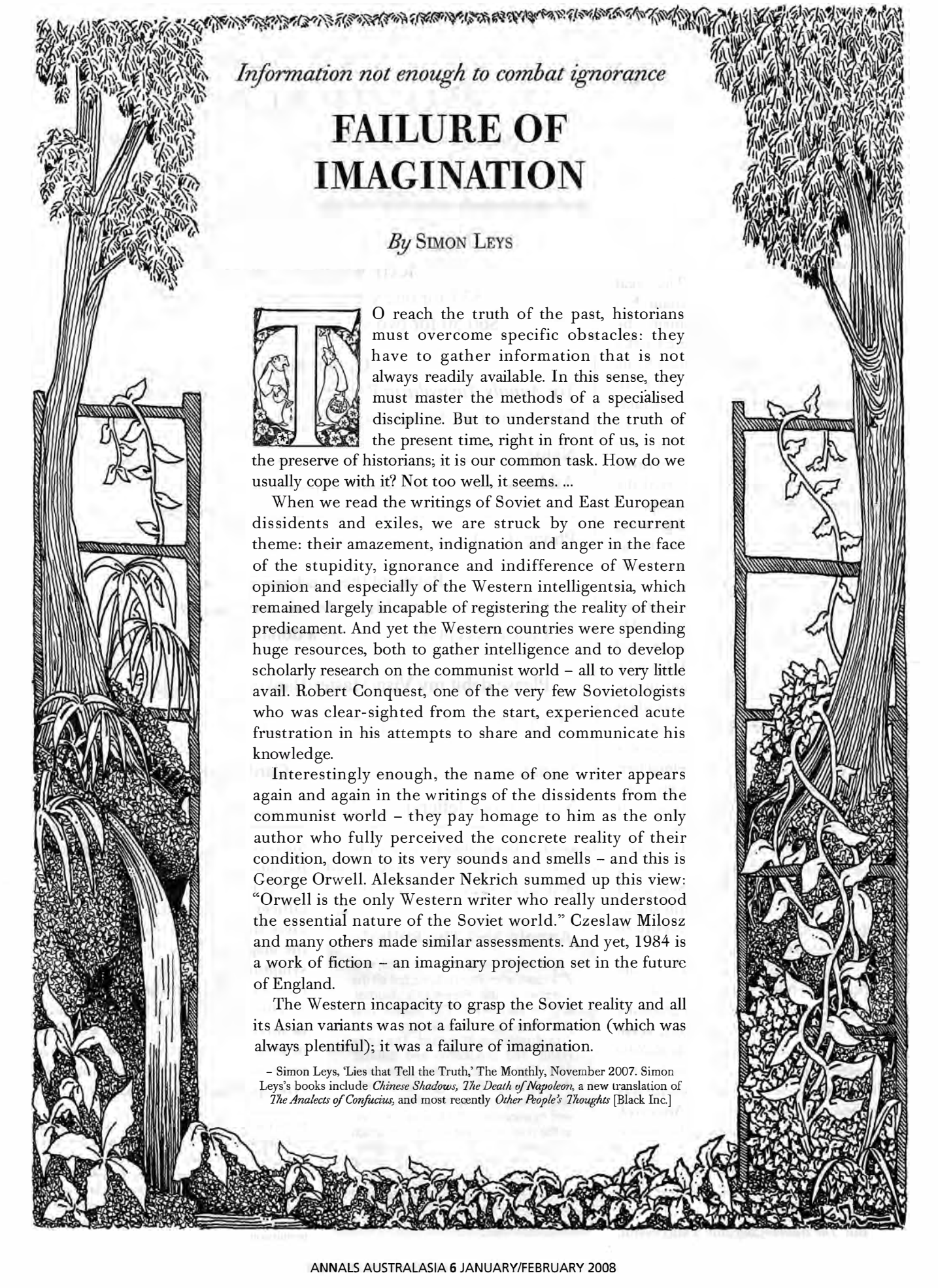
Annals and The Bulletin

ANNALS first appeared in 1889, nine years after *The Bulletin*, hot off the presses of the *Freeman's Journal*, first hit the streets. *The Bulletin* now joins *The Illustrated Sydney News*, *The Australian Standard*, *The Lone Hand*, *The Stockwhip* and *Satirist*, *The Express*, the *Melbourne Star*, the *Sydney Evening News*, *The Boomerang* and myriad other journals and newspapers which have returned to the pulp, lead and dust out of which they emerged. *Annals* is, we think, one of the oldest [if not the oldest] continuously published magazine in Australia. Can any reader confirm this? - Ed. *Annals*.

Successful, that is, until it confronted the internet with its global circulation. As Scott Lorson, the Chief Executive Officer of Australian Consolidated Press Magazines put it a little obscurely, the magazine's closure is “somewhat symptomatic of the impact of the internet on this particular genre.”

The *Bulletin* may have been able to survive as a literary-political review of modest circulation. But as a weekly news magazine, it was suffocated in cyberspace and the blogosphere.

PETER COLEMAN is a former editor of *The Bulletin* and *Quadrant*. He spent some years in the State and Federal Parliaments. Among his other books are an autobiographical volume entitled *Memoirs of a Slow Learner*, and *The Struggle for the Mind of Postwar Europe*. This article appeared first in *The Australian*, January 25, 2008. Reprinted with permission.



Information not enough to combat ignorance

FAILURE OF IMAGINATION

By SIMON LEYS



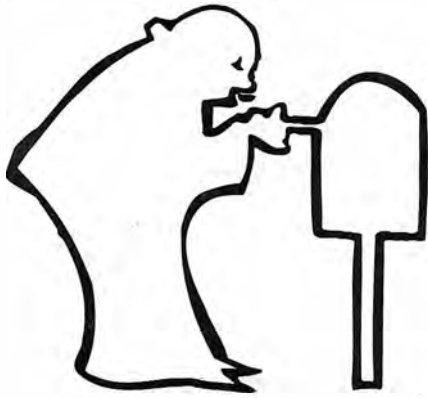
To reach the truth of the past, historians must overcome specific obstacles: they have to gather information that is not always readily available. In this sense, they must master the methods of a specialised discipline. But to understand the truth of the present time, right in front of us, is not the preserve of historians; it is our common task. How do we usually cope with it? Not too well, it seems. ...

When we read the writings of Soviet and East European dissidents and exiles, we are struck by one recurrent theme: their amazement, indignation and anger in the face of the stupidity, ignorance and indifference of Western opinion and especially of the Western intelligentsia, which remained largely incapable of registering the reality of their predicament. And yet the Western countries were spending huge resources, both to gather intelligence and to develop scholarly research on the communist world – all to very little avail. Robert Conquest, one of the very few Sovietologists who was clear-sighted from the start, experienced acute frustration in his attempts to share and communicate his knowledge.

Interestingly enough, the name of one writer appears again and again in the writings of the dissidents from the communist world – they pay homage to him as the only author who fully perceived the concrete reality of their condition, down to its very sounds and smells – and this is George Orwell. Aleksander Nekrich summed up this view: “Orwell is the only Western writer who really understood the essential nature of the Soviet world.” Czeslaw Milosz and many others made similar assessments. And yet, 1984 is a work of fiction – an imaginary projection set in the future of England.

The Western incapacity to grasp the Soviet reality and all its Asian variants was not a failure of information (which was always plentiful); it was a failure of imagination.

– Simon Leys, ‘Lies that Tell the Truth,’ *The Monthly*, November 2007. Simon Leys’s books include *Chinese Shadows*, *The Death of Napoleon*, a new translation of *The Analects of Confucius*, and most recently *Other People’s Thoughts* [Black Inc.]



Ecclesial Spirit

I can't begin to tell you how much I use *Annals* in my work as the Secretary for Catholic Life and Evangelization for the Diocese of Allentown. Amid a lot of the nonsense that is coming out in print these days, the *Annals* articles are thought-provoking, challenging, very faithful to the teachings of the Church, and solid in Catholic tradition. I can imagine that this must provoke some people sometimes, but, as Pope Benedict tells us, we are interested in quality rather than in numbers. We are slowly starting to recapture our old Ecclesial spirit, thank God! Keep up the good work!

Aurora, IL USA

[FATHER] MIKE CAMILLI, MSC

To Hell or High Heaven

How many jihadist suicide bombers have blown themselves up in recent years? Must run into thousands and one must presume that the great bulk (if not all) of them believed that their sacrifice would earn them direct entry into paradise. It follows from this conviction that Allah willingly opens the gates to eternal bliss to bloodstained hands - hands which have procured the violent and outrageous death of numerous innocent victims, including children, including numerous good Moslems.

Does this fervent jihadist faith accord with the world-wide mind of Islam, with the Koran and with the words of The Prophet?

I ask this question because my first thought was that murderous, suicidal jihadism would be anathema - an outrage - to all decent, average Moslem people and to Islam. Accordingly, I would have expected that it would be denounced in thunderous tones from every mosque on the planet; that Imans and the Mullahs would be admonishing their flocks in

LETTERS

no uncertain terms about the heresy of serving Allah with blood. And, of course, they would be warning would-be jihadists killers that their likely fate is not the joys of paradise but the fires of hell. (Not to mention those who foster and facilitate them).

I stand to be corrected - indeed, I yearn to be proved wrong - but I have not heard jihadist suicide murder condemned throughout the world of Islam.

Leopold, Vic 3224

FRANK COLVER

St Bernadette of Lourdes

Thank you for always making each *Annals* a learning experience. Peter Malone (*Annals* 8/2007) reminded readers how the Divine works through the diversity and influence of human experience when he referred to Franz Werfel's story of Lourdes. By coincidence I had just bought a second hand book 'Bernadette of Lourdes' by Therese Taylor [Burns & Oats, London, 2003] who is a Lecturer in modern History at Charles Sturt University. I am finding it most interesting. Taylor says that the purpose of her book is 'to put [Bernadette] within

the context of her time, to describe the social forces and specific events which were important and to trace her individual life'.

Beaconsfield WA 6162

ROBERT POTTS

Striking a Balance

'Religion, real religion,' writes Chris Hedges (*The London Tablet*, Dec 1, reviewing *The New Atheists*) 'is about fighting for justice, standing up for the voiceless and the weak, reaching out in acts of kindness and compassion to the stranger and the outcast, living a life of simplicity, finding empathy and defying the powerful. It is about caring for the other'.

This is certainly a widespread view, but may I raise one tiny and distant voice for God? I really thought he had something to do with religion, and, as he is our origin and sustainer, so he is the very purpose of our existence - we were made to know, love and serve him, and simply to praise him. If we do not do that, we have missed the point of living, Omit God, and what is left of religion? I had assumed the reviewer was opposing the atheists.

Many believe that a key reason why the Mass no longer draws the faithful is that the user-friendly form it now takes, focusing on the community, means that they miss the age-old and uncompromising focus of the liturgy on God-praising, thanking, hearing and indeed facing God.

Some say that the reason why many orders no longer attract vocations, or keep the ones they do, is precisely that they focus not on the search for God, but on 'the creation of an egalitarian society for man on earth'. I quote the writings of Fr Albert Di Ianni, S.M., gathered in his *Religious Life as Adventure*, Alba Press, NY.

I'm all for a faith that does justice, but there is a danger that justice takes over, faith fades, and activity is sustained by an ideology, not faith.

Toowong Queensland 4066

GREGORY JORDAN, S.J.

Real Blood on Muhammad's Sword

FROM VISIONS of the catastrophic end of this evil world Muhammad now evolved, with an abrupt transition, the conception of a realm that was of this world. 'The change was in some ways detrimental to his character. ... He brought the sword into the world; he did not merely 'smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips slay the wicked'. The trumpet of war he sounded was real enough. Real blood clung to the sword he wielded to establish his realm. An Islamic tradition asserts that in the *Torah* Muhammad is given the epithet 'Prophet of Struggle and War'. This is a correct assessment of his career.

- Introduction to *Islamic Theology and Law*, Ignaz Goldziher, Princeton University Press, 1981, p.23

The Heart has its Reasons

I do not have my copy of Bishop Geoffrey Robinson's before me as I write so I take on trust your reviewer's reference ['A Sensitive Conscience' *Annals* 8/2007 pp.22-3] to a dilemma of conscience on page 161. Not being strong on the finer points of logical reasoning, I am also, for the present purposes,

prepared to assume that Dr Tilley has made out a case founded on reason and logic. After reading and reflecting on what Dr Tilley wrote in his article on Bishop Robinson, and on a book which has drawn favourable comment from other Catholics, I was left with a feeling of sadness that not the least attempt had been made to address the issues prompting the writing of 'Confronting Power and Sex in the Catholic Church'. Just a retreat into sterile, academic debating ground. What gave me hope, however, was that I recalled a thought made famous by Pascal that the Heart has its reasons that Reason cannot know. Elsewhere in the same issue of *Annals* I found the same quote in another context. I commend that larger vision to Dr Tilley.

Hawthorn SA 5062

DENNIS O'LEARY

Speaking of Unions and Banks

Before the recent elections much was made of decline in union membership. But not a word was said about the part they played in raising the standard of living of Australians in past years. What of men like Andrew Fisher who as a boy of 10 was sent down the pits in Scotland, and backed by the Australian Workers Union went on to become Prime Minister of Australia? His was the government that vivified the Australian economy with the Commonwealth Bank. In the years before it was privatised, the bank proved to be a bastion against what its principal founder King O'Malley – ironically from capitalistic America – called the 'money mongers' and the 'boodle bludgers'. It helped usher in the steel city of Newcastle with finance to BHP from 1915 onwards. And in the 1940s provided General Motors with cheap finance that, rubber-stamped by the union-oriented Ben Chifley, helped establish the Australian car industry with the Holden.

It should be recognised that foremost media like *The Australian*, of Murdoch, and *The Age* and *Financial Review* of Fairfax obviously won't let their Australian readers know that the Helen Clark Labor Government in New Zealand has been running a Government-owned bank – Kiwibank – for six years. Just try to find Kiwibank in the index to their business sections. This is a bank which has forced down home mortgage interest rate and which now has more branches in New Zealand than any of

Delusions about Islamists

NON-MUSLIM priests of Enlightenment in the West have come, actively and passively, to the Islamists' defence. These "progressives" frequently cite the need to examine "root causes." In this they are correct: Terrorism is only the manifestation of a disease and not the disease itself. But the root-causes are quite different from what they think.

- Tawfik Hamid, *The Wall Street Journal*, Tuesday, April 3, 2007. A onetime member of Jemaah Islamiya, an Islamist terrorist group, Dr Hamid is a medical doctor.

the four or five big banks quartered in Australia. They have branches in post offices, pharmacies and supermarkets – not massive buildings – an opportunity for folk across the Tasman to escape the clutches of the banking buccaneers.

Altona Victoria 3018

LARRY NOYE

War against Muslim Women and others

Congratulations on your issue of November-December 2007, which told us that an aggressive Islamist group is seeking permission to build Europe's largest mosque in London, to be near the proposed site of the 2012 Olympics. We also learn that the Brick Lane Mosque was originally a Huguenot Christian church, later Methodist, and later a Jewish Synagogue. It is now a Muslim mosque.

The UK *Telegraph* reported that when Miss "Sofia Allam" of Dagenham in London left the Muslim faith for Christianity both her parents started verbally attacking her, made death threats and ordered her out of the house, calling her a Kaffir (i.e., infidel). They brought all her uncles around to browbeat her.



After three weeks of bullying she left. An ex-Muslims' organisation said that some of the supposed "honour killings" in Britain were possibly due to changing religion. Death threats are also reported by ex-Muslim leaders in Holland and Germany. In Canada, we read in *The West Australian* of December 14, Miss Aqsa Parvez was strangled, allegedly by her father, for repeatedly taking off her hijab (head-scarf, or veil) when she got to high school. And on January 13 2008 the *Independent-on Sunday* (UK) reported that on Friday a coroner had ruled that 17-year-old Miss Shafilea Ahmed was 'unlawfully killed' and that 'the concept of an arranged marriage was central to the circumstances of her death'.

So, Father Stenhouse and colleagues, do not weaken in your resolve to report and comment on the grave danger that civilisation faces from the Islamist onslaught, just as your book [*The Conquest of Abyssinia*] reports what happened to the people of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) years ago.

Well done *Annals* for your scholarly educational work on this subject.

Perth, WA "INFORMED OBSERVER" [NAME SUPPLIED]

What is God's?

Tony Blair's conversion, wrote Paul Sheehan in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, shows it is possible for "devout Christians" in the Western political system to separate church and state even when "core principles collide". "Devout Christians"...

Christ said, "Give to Caesar what is due to Caesar, and to God what is due to God" (Mt 22:21). The implication of Matthew's passage is that what belongs to God includes Caesar himself: thus Caesar too must obey God. Did that pivotal notion escape Tony Blair when he voted in favour of 'abortion rights', stem-cell research, and other "core principles"?

Was Tony Blair unaware that separation of Church and State did not mean separation of God and State? Did he not know that he was not to treat the religion he was to embrace as a purely private matter that one engaged in only after parliamentary hours?

Beacon Hill, NSW 2100

HENK VERHOEVEN

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

Jesus the Christ and the Church

THE LAMP AND THE LAMPSTAND



THE LAMP that is set on the lampstand is the true light from the Father, the light that enlightens every man coming into the world, namely our Lord Jesus Christ. By becoming one of us and assuming our human nature he became and was called the lamp.

This means that he is by nature the wisdom and word of God the Father, which is faithfully and loyally preached in God's Church and which is raised up as a shining and resplendent light among the nations by a life of virtue led in accordance with the commandments, giving light to all who are in the house (by that I mean in this world).

So the divine Word says somewhere: 'Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.' Clearly he is calling himself a lamp, for while he was God by nature he became a man according to God's plan of salvation.

I think that in his wisdom the great David understood this when he called the Lord a lamp: 'Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.' For that is the sort of Saviour my Lord and God is, delivering men from the darkness of ignorance and sin, which is also why scripture calls him a lamp.

Like a lamp he has dispelled the gloom of ignorance and the darkness of sin, and in this way he alone has become the path to salvation for all men. By virtue and knowledge he brings to the Father all those who are resolved to follow him, who is the way of righteousness, by keeping the divine commandments.

The Holy Church he calls the lampstand, for through its preaching the word of God shines out on it and enlightens all that live in this world, as in a house, with the brightness of truth, filling the minds of all men with the knowledge of God.

- Discourses of St Maximus the Confessor [580-662 AD] addressed to Thelassius, *Quaestio* 63.

Speech at Royal Assent Dinner in the Great Hall of St John's College within the University of Sydney to commemorate the Act of Parliament on December 15, 1857, which enabled the granting of land for the College's foundation

ST JOHN'S COLLEGE

*Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO
Governor of New South Wales*



IT IS A GREAT pleasure – indeed a privilege – to join you this evening as we celebrate the historic Act of Parliament on this very day 150 years ago, December 15th 1857, an

act that enabled the granting of land for the foundation of St John's College.

First, may I record my respect for the traditional owners of this land upon which we gather, the Eora Gadigal people – the first Australians – their ancestors, and descendants, indeed for

all Australia's indigenous people who have nurtured our great continent for tens of thousands of years.

Ladies and gentlemen, as you would expect this commemorative celebration has considerable meaning for me, both as Governor of New South Wales, and as Chancellor of this great University.

Firstly, that Act, following Royal Assent 150 years ago, was signed – and I have no doubt that it was strongly supported – by my eminent predecessor, the eleventh governor of New South Wales, Sir William Thomas Denison, who held office for the six years from 1855 – 1861.

Certainly, the historical relevance of that act was considerable. For this was the first time that the University granted land to religious-based institutions. And the grant to St John's enshrines this College's unique status as being the oldest Catholic University College established in the English-speaking world since the Reformation.

I am informed that the Rector, Dr Daintree, takes much delight on reflecting that 'St John's is older by far, than many of the Colleges within Oxford and Cambridge'.

Following the Act, this College of St John the evangelist was founded on July 1st 1858 with the proclamation of the *St John's College Act* in the Parliament of New South Wales.

Its founder, Archbishop Bede Polding, in naming the College after the Apostle who had written the beautiful Fourth Gospel, also chose for the College the traditional symbol of St John, the proud eagle.

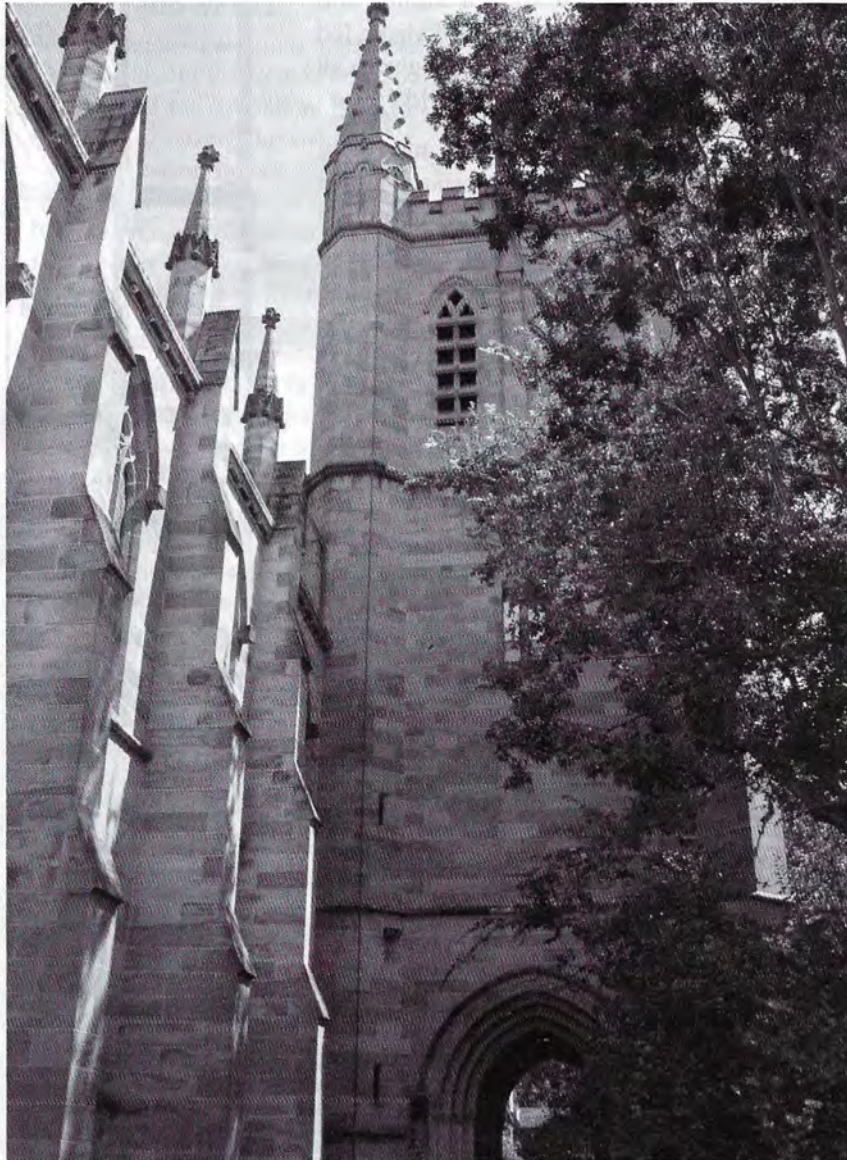


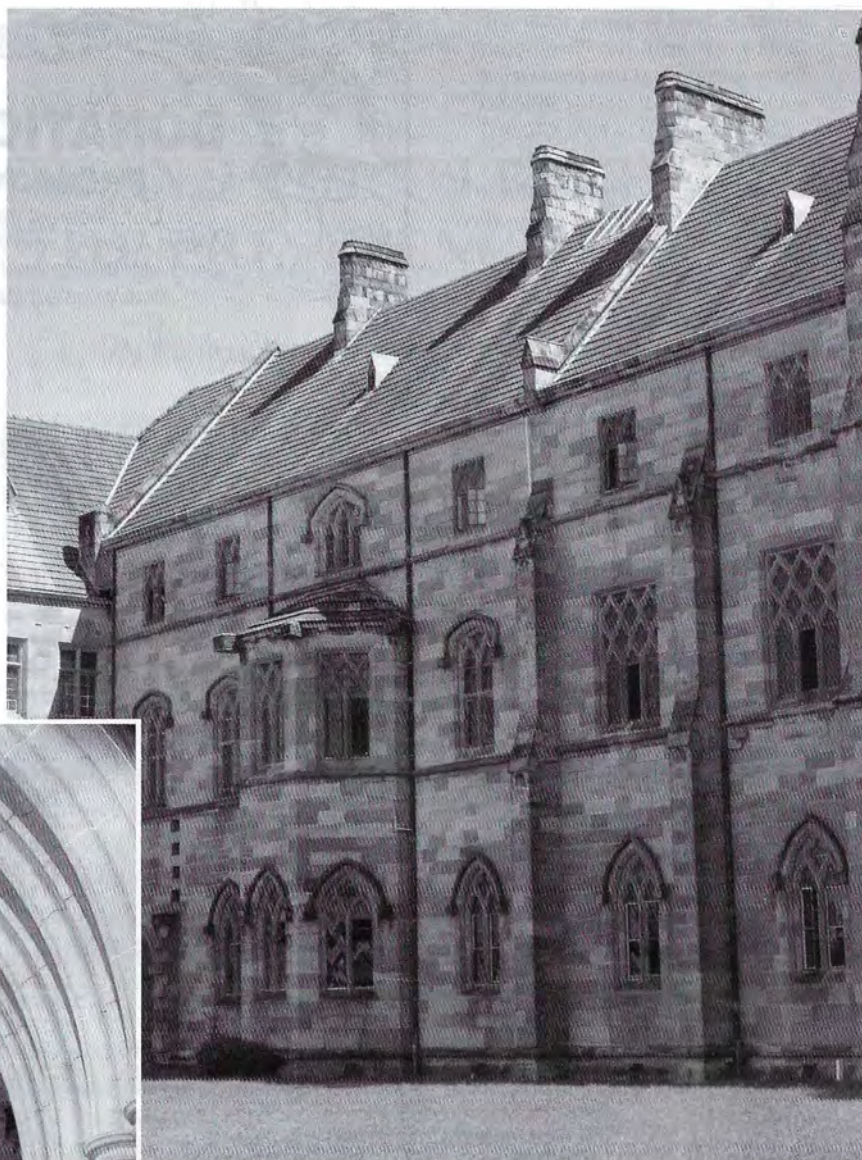
Photo: Paul Stenhouse

The Freehill Tower, a feature of the impressive Carriage Gateway of St John's College.

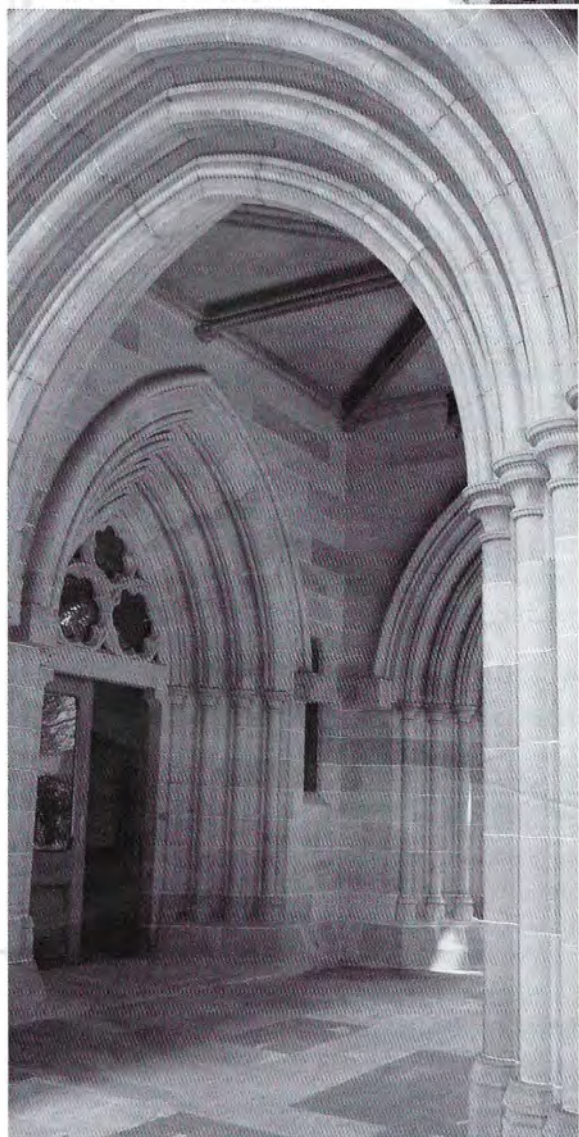
This symbolic expectation is indeed appropriate for so many St John's men across the diverse professions since foundation. Their achievements have not only been academically and professionally impressive, but the contribution to their society, and indeed to the world beyond, has been considerable.

It is fitting in commemorating this visionary initiative in establishing St John's, to reflect upon the influential people of that period and the times in which they planned and acted.

The Governor, Sir William Denison, educated at Eton College and subsequently at the Royal Military College, had graduated as lieutenant engineer. He had an unflinching commitment to education and upon discovering that 6,060 of the 9,767 children in the colony between the ages



Top Right: The asymmetrical neo-Gothic eastern façade of St John's, with offices on the ground floor, the Christopher Brennan Hall on the second, and students' quarters on the top floor. Bottom Left: The Carriage Gateway and Main Entrance to St John's



of 4 and 14 years were receiving no education, he introduced a bill into the Legislative Council providing for an annual tax of five shillings on every free adult to pay for the education of these children.

Although that was thrown out twice, he eventually agreed to put the cost of schools on the colonial treasury.

Governor Denison's term of office was also distinguished by the fact that it was he who proclaimed the Constitution Act of 1855, which led the way for the establishment of

responsible bicameral democratic Government in New South Wales, one of the earliest such systems in the world.

1857 was an extraordinary year for many reasons:

- St Vincent's hospital was opened
- The Sydney Exchange commenced its trading
- Sir Charles Nicholson presented his wonderful collection of Egyptian, Greek, Etruscan and Roman antiquities to the University
- Establishment of St John's College. So there would be no half measures in the

building (and I quote from the College history), the New South Wales government had promised a pound for pound subsidy of up to a £20,000 limit, if at least £10,000 was raised by public subscription.

It is awesome to note that this not inconsiderable amount for those days was raised by public subscription in the six months from July 1857.

The proclamation of the first St John's College council took place the following year, 1858, on July 1.

In 1887, James Francis Hogan was to write in *'The Irish in Australia'*, that 'St Ignatius College Riverwood, St Joseph's Hunters Hill, and St John's College within the University of Sydney, are three educational institutions that reflect the highest credit on the Catholic population of the parent colony'.

May I say that those words – the parent colony – resonate just as proudly today.

Features both in the beautiful design, construction and material, as well as religious ideals and philosophy, included the Benedictine influence – Archbishop Polding having formally been an English Benedictine monk of Downside Abbey – and the English Benedictines inspired the generous public in the founding of St John's.

The choice of the architect William Wilkinson Wardell was a decision of considerable import, for he was also responsible for the design of St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney and St Patrick's in Melbourne.

And if that were not an adequate architectural pedigree, it is also a joyful fact that he passed the construction supervision over to another of the colony's great architects, Edmund Blacket, who was just finishing St Paul's College.

These historical associations are more than cold facts. Surely we must also believe that they bring a precious blessing, a spiritual dimension which transcends mere words.

In a description of the culture of St John's College today, it has been said and I quote, 'in the spirit of Christian humanism, it seeks to demonstrate that there is an irresistible connection between high intellect and deep faith'.

May it ever be so.

My best wishes are with this great College always, and with you all.

Thank you.



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– Editor, *Annals*

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'It takes more than churchgoing to get my vote'

RELIGION AND THE US RACE FOR THE PRESIDENCY

By RUSSELL SHAW



POPE Benedict XVI won't be drawn into American politics when he comes to the US in April in the middle of a heated presidential race. That's what the Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, told an Italian Catholic magazine, and I'm glad to hear it.

Of course the likelihood of Pope Benedict's talking politics here was always virtually nil, but Cardinal Bertone's comment reduces the chances that anything the Holy Father does choose to do or say will be misinterpreted – accidentally or on purpose – by some journalist stretching for a story.

So much for the Pope. Now maybe we can hope that politicians will take a leaf from his book and stop talking about religion. That would come as a big relief.

To be sure, this is a situation that may be on the way to resolving itself as the campaign moves into a new phase and new venues. But I wouldn't be too sure. Some of these people seem likely to return to religious themes whenever it suits their purposes.

Even as it stands, I can't recall another campaign in which candidates have gone on at such great length about their religious affiliation and personal faith.

On the Republican side, Mike Huckabee, former Arkansas governor and a Baptist minister, has made his religion a core element in reaching out to his evangelical Protestant base. Among Democrats, Sen. Barack Obama (D-IL) and Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY) have been competing for months to win the God-talk prize. Obama is a member of the United Church of Christ, Clinton a Methodist.

As someone who's written often over the years in defence of religion's right to a voice in the public square, and specifically in the political debate, my reaction to all this religious rhetoric

is simple: Enough already! Find something else to talk about, folks.

I'm willing to assume that Clinton, Obama, and Huckabee are sincere. But their sincerity doesn't alter the unpleasant fact that there's something inherently exploitative of religion itself in a candidate's using his or her faith this way. Inescapably, a certain message comes through: Vote for me because I go to church. To which my reply is: Glad to hear it, but it takes more than churchgoing to get my vote.

The one candidate whom I'd exempt from this complaint is Mitt Romney. Back in December, it will be recalled, the former Massachusetts governor gave a speech defending his right as a Mormon to seek the presidency. Say what you will about it, Romney wasn't cashing in on his religious affiliation. He spoke under duress in the face of an apparently rising tide of anti-Mormon sentiment. I wouldn't vote for Romney just because he's a Mormon, but it's shameful that some Americans apparently would vote against him on those same grounds.

Does a candidate's religion therefore count for nothing? On the whole, knowing that an office seeker is a practising member of some respectable religious body (I tend to exclude snake-handlers and devil-worshippers) leads me to take a somewhat more positive view of him or her than might otherwise be the case. When it comes to voting, though, what matters isn't religious affiliation, but the candidate's policy stands, competence, and character.

Put it like this. As far as I'm aware, what Americans currently are busy doing, in our long drawn-out, lumpy, noisy American way, is choosing a president, not a pope. The job descriptions for the two positions – and therefore the qualifications for the offices – just aren't the same. I bet Pope Benedict agrees.

A Well-known Gospel Passage in search of a Meaning

TRANSLATORS/TRAITORS

By PAUL STENHOUSE, MSC



HAVING spent a great deal of my life translating into and from various languages, I admit to the truth of the well-known if hackneyed Italian adage, *traduttore/traditore* – ‘a translator is [may be] a traitor’.

It is said of the American Classics scholar Paul Shorey [1857-1934] that when he finished his book *What Plato Said*, in 1933, he intended to write a sequel *What Plato Meant*.¹ There is a lesson here for all of us. It is harder than one may imagine, to remain faithful to a text – being content to tell the reader what it says, without interpreting or re-casting it. And not all can resist the temptation.

Translator or Interpreter?

In 1995 an Armenian friend and I stood in a cold, sparsely furnished, office in Yerevan, Armenia, attempting to get permission to travel to Nagorno-Karabakh, the Armenian territory handed over in 1923 by Stalin to neighbouring Azerbaijan. It had been the scene of terrible inter-ethnic violence between 1988 and 1994. The ‘Armenian’ official inexplicably spoke only Russian, so we had to enlist the aid of an Armenian who spoke Russian to handle our questions. The ‘translator’ proved to be an ‘interpreter’. She told the official what she thought he should hear of what we asked, and told us what she thought we needed to know.

Modern Italian readers of a popular translation of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy [*Il Signore degli Anelli*] have had to deal with revelations concerning infidelity and downright creative writing on the part of ‘translators’. Much loved words and key phrases in J.R.R.Tolkien’s original were omitted, changed or added to with the result that readers were advised to ‘read the book in the original

language’ i.e. in English, if they wanted access to it, and not just to a modified ‘version’ produced by the translator.²

This advice is seldom practicable, as most of us have to fall back on translations at some time or other. Especially is this true in our reading of the Old and New Testament whose proximate ‘original’ languages were Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.

Unless they give the words in context, dictionaries are frail reeds to lean upon.

I recall as a young man reading a translation from French that had people from Papua New Guinea ‘driving’ canoes through a ‘corrugated’ sea. True, ‘ondulé’ may mean ‘corrugated’ when used of iron, or of cardboard cartons, but when used of the sea shouldn’t it mean ‘choppy,’ ‘rough’ or ‘stormy’? And as for ‘driving’ a canoe ... The dictionary may define words for us, but their *meaning* will probably elude us if we ignore the context in which they are used.

All languages have myriad examples of such contrasting meanings. In Latin, for instance, ‘odor’ may mean a pleasing scent or perfume; but it can also mean an unpleasant smell, a stench. ‘Versutus’ is a Latin word that means ‘clever’ and ‘ingenious’; it also may mean ‘wily,’ ‘crafty’ and ‘deceitful’.



Hated or Loved Less?

The verbs in Old Testament Hebrew [סָנֵא *sané*] and New Testament Greek [μισέω *miseo*] that are translated ‘to hate,’ are a case in point.

Sometimes the words do mean ‘hate’ in the sense of ‘wishing someone harm’ or ‘not wishing someone well’. When this is the case, usually there is no ambiguity.³

But the Hebrew root [סָנֵא *sané*] can also mean ‘to love less,’ and the Greek root [μισέω *miseo*] can also mean ‘not to tolerate,’ or ‘to be dissatisfied with’.

Thus, in *Genesis* 29,31 we are told that ‘Leah was hated’. In the preceding verse, however, we discover what is meant by the word ‘hate’. Here we discover that Jacob is said to have ‘loved’ Rachel ‘more than Leah’. The word ‘hated’ in verse 31 is well-translated as *meaning* that Leah was ‘less loved [than Rachel],’ not that she was *unloved* or *hated*.

We find ‘love’ and ‘hate’ contrasted in *Malachy* 1,2: ‘I love Jacob but I hate Esau’. This passage should rather be translated ‘I prefer Jacob to Esau,’ as is made clear in *Genesis* 25, 23. There we learn that of the twins the younger [Jacob] is to be the stronger; and the older [Esau] will be the servant of the younger. ‘Hatred’ is not in question here; we are talking about *priority*, and *preference*. God ‘preferred’ Jacob [for whatever mysterious reason] to Esau.

When we turn to the New Testament we find the Greek word for the verb ‘to hate’ translating the Hebrew and Aramaic words referred to above.

A well-known passage in St Luke’s Gospel [14,26] which typifies these problems of translation is usually rendered as follows:

‘If someone comes to me and does not hate his father, his mother, his wife, his children, his brothers and sisters and even his very self, he cannot be my disciple’.

It is not 'hatred' that is in question here. The meaning – if not the words – of St Luke is clear:

'If someone comes to me and does not love his father, mother, wife, children, brothers and sisters and even his very self less than he loves me, he cannot be my disciple.'

The issue is resolved by referring to the parallel passage in the oldest of the Gospels, St Matthew, [10,37] which reads:

'He who loves his father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he who loves his son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.'

It is not to be wondered at that St Matthew the former tax collector understood the idiom well. He wrote in Palestinian Aramaic for largely Judean Christians.

St Luke, on the other hand, was a gentile, Greek-speaking Christian doctor from Antioch in Syria who unlike St Paul [whose disciple he was, and whose gospel he wrote down] seems not to have known Aramaic. He wrote in scholarly Greek and used *μισέω* [*miseo*] which as usual translated *שנא* [*sané*]. The educated gentiles for whom his Gospel was intended would not have been misled into thinking the verb meant 'to hate'.

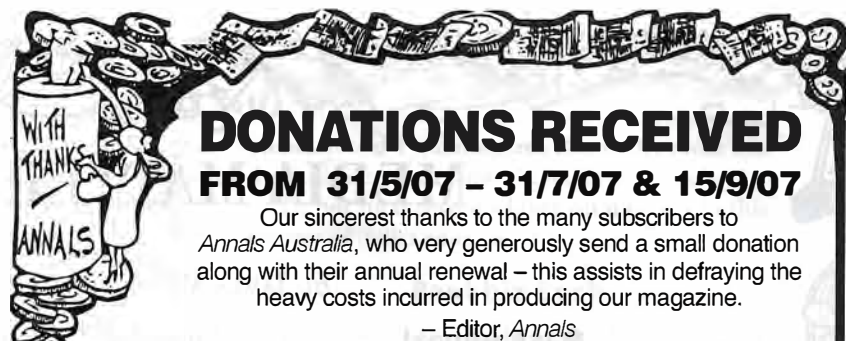
St Thomas of Aquin, [1225-1274] the 'Angelic Doctor,' warns the readers of his *Commentary on St John's Gospel* not to jump to conclusions about the meaning of words. His advice to novice readers was that they should always see *what other things Jesus said, and how Jesus acted*, if they wanted to understand what he *meant* by what he said.⁴

Such good advice needs to be kept in mind as we read the Gospels. It should be required reading for translators before they touch their computer keyboard.

Luke 14, 26 needs to be read in conjunction with the earlier statement of Jesus in Luke 6,27:

'But I say to you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.'

1. See Anton C. Pegis, *St Thomas Aquinas, On the Truth of the Catholic Faith: Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book One, Jamge Books, New York, 1955, p.50.
 2. <http://www.gondrano.it/immag/anelliB.htm>
 3. See e.g. Deut. 1,27; 7,10; 19, 4,6,11; Judges 14,16; 15,2; Proverbs 5,12; 8,13; Ecclesiastes 2,17; Isaiah 1,14; Job, 8,22; Amos 5,15; etc. etc
 4. Super Ioannem, cap.xviii, lectio iv, ii [=Jo 18,23]. Referring to Matthew v,39.



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– Editor, *Annals*

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MEDIA MATTERS

By JAMES MURRAY

Mass Appeal

Christmas holiday reading can lead to fascinating contrasts. Among books from the Santa Claus Mobile Library, *The Battle for Benmelong: The Adventures of Maxine McKew, aged 50 something*, a work by lawyer turned journalist, Margot Saville, who at one point boasts 80 words a minute shorthand (Wow!)

The work is so partisan it could have been printed on Fantale wrappers, particularly the copy on McKew and her long-time partner, Bob Hogg, former ALP national secretary.

Occasionally Saville does go beyond the Fantale, asking McKew why she had not taken Communion at a Mass she attended. McKew's response: "I have a pretty old-fashioned pre-Vatican II view of things. I am a deeply unworthy, imperfect Catholic. I love the Catholic Mass but I am an irregular attender."

Saville, despite her 80 words a minute shorthand, did not seek elaboration, contenting herself with: 'Hers is a fragile faith.'

The contrast? Norman Sherry's third volume of *The Life of Graham Greene*, covering his final years 1955-1991. Sherry makes it clear Greene retained his belief in the power of the sacraments, his sometimes wavering faith notwithstanding, and his way of life, including drugs (Benzedrine, opium and booze) plus his adulterous liaison with Yvonne Cloetta.

For this reason – and it was a reason – Greene organised matters so that he had his own travelling chaplain, Father Leopoldo Duran. Sherry records

that Father Duran was with Greene at the end and said at his funeral: "Let us be reminded that Graham Greene is not dead...Greene was born to eternal life on April 3 at 11.40 in the morning soon after I told him, 'My dear Graham, God is waiting for you just now. Pray for us, help us all, when you will be forever in God's presence ... I give you the last absolution.'"

Pre-Vatican II? Or integral to the sacramental life of the Catholic Church in all ages and all nations?

Separation of Church and State

The [Roman] state did tolerate private religions, but only on condition that they recognized the state cult itself, the solidarity of the heaven of the gods under the aegis of Rome, and acknowledged the state religion as the supreme structure over all private religions. Christianity did not accept this and deprived the state of its sacral nature. It thus called into question the basic construction of the Roman empire, indeed, of the ancient world as such. In this sense, the separation [of Church and State] is ultimately a primordial Christian legacy and also a decisive factor for freedom.

- Pope Benedict XVI, writing when Cardinal Ratzinger, in *Salt of the Earth: The Church at the End of the Millennium*, Ignatius Press, 1997, pp.239-240.

Cruise Missile

Who'd have thought it? Publishers and booksellers retreating in the face of Scientology whose founder L Ron Hubbard first swam into your correspondent's ken in 1950s photographs of him using a galvanometer to demonstrate that when plucked tomatoes felt pain.

That galvanometer appears to have been transformed into the gizmo used in auditing sessions on neophyte Scientologists who in a different sense are plucked but painlessly.

The retreat was triggered by St Martin's Press in America,

publishers of Andrew Morton's unauthorised biography of Tom Cruise, Hollywood superstar and high-altitude Scientologist. Morton's work while reportedly debunking much showbiz gossip about Cruise also repeats details of his belief system's sci-fi cosmology.

Good to see Brian Wilder (in his time publisher of Xavier Herbert's *Poor Fellow My Country* and Colleen McCullough's *The Thorn Birds*) pointing out that under international law restrictions on Morton's book are illegal.

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Better to read in the Fairfax press David Marr's brief on the kerfuffle. He included Cruise's Scientological habit of reaching for lawyers and proselytising celebrities such as James Packer as well as the decision of Labor jurist Lionel Murphy to validate Scientology as a religion in Australia.

Marr is Murphy's appointed biographer. Doubtless he will have more to say when restrictions on the Murphy archive are lifted.

Meanwhile, there's always GK Chesterton's dictum that those who give up faith in God will believe anything.

Larrikin Cricket

Whatever happened to cricket, lovely cricket as defined in the West Indies calypso? Sledging, a world's worst practice from Australia, happened. It should be banned totally.

And India, which has given bungalow, pukkha, thug and other words to English, should borrow from the Australian vernacular one word: larrikin, used to cover a wide range of dubious behaviour, including sledging that for too long went unreported because it was unprintable.

Both the Andrew Symonds 'monkey' incidents involved the Sikh, Harbajandar Singh, an unhappy coincidence, since Sikhs have a strong claim to be honorary Anzacs.

Only a single Australian field gun was brought ashore on Day One of the Gallipoli landings at what is now Anzac Cover. (See appendices to General Sir Ian Hamilton's account).

Covering fire for the initial Anzac advance came from a battery of mountain guns, manned by Sikh artillerymen.

The Australian cricket team has already visited Anzac Cove and played a memorial game there. What about the new Indian Cricket League organising a reconciliation series between an Australia-New Zealand team, an India-Pakistan team and an all-Britain team?

In the related controversy over umpiring decisions and whether or not umpires should have benefit of television and accoustic replays, the unmentioned Tyrannosaurus Rex in the room was the humungous amount of gambling on cricket.

To put total responsibility on umpires in this context of dollar-rupee fever is naive.

Bankbiz Bosh

The word 'victim' has been widely used in print, radio and television about businesses and banks affected by the subprime mortgage crisis in the United States. Is it truly applicable? Surely such institutions must have been aware of the risks and required by their fiduciary duty to shareholders not to invest.

Not that all shareholders go unprotected. Banks reacted with Mach 1 speed to up their interest rates in compensation for losses, actual and potential. Thus they passed the risk, once intrinsic to investment, not to shareholders but to borrowers, particularly home loan customers. Simultaneously, of course, executive remuneration and options packages are also protected.

Similar distortion of market forces occur when airlines lumber customers with levies to offset fuel price increases rather than pass them to investors by way of a lower return on shares, fuel being a cost of doing business.

That sound you hear is Adam Smith turning in his tomb in the Glasgow Necropolis. There again, Smith who saw market

forces as 'the invisible hand', benign in its actions, also wrote of, 'conspiracy aganst the public' by, 'people of the same trade'.

And roughly speaking, as the Treasurer Wayne Swan should remember, business and banking executives are of the same trade.

He might consider carrying a picture of Ben Chifley and laying it on the table when he meets bankers to remind them bank nationalisation was once a Labor Party option - one that if pursued

Former Muslims Speak Out

We discovered that Islam is beyond alteration, because Muslims who attempt to modernize and reform its unremitting bigotry, mindless rituals and its barbaric and draconian punitive measures are targeted for annihilation. Our verdict was that the only way to escape from the tyranny of Islam is to leave it for good. That is why we discarded Islam from our lives - to be free, to enjoy a normal, pleasant and humane life, in complete harmony with all people on earth irrespective of their religion, race or creed. Let the world watch Islam through www.islam-watch.org <./index.html> and be warned.



now, such is the general animus against banks – would have more popular support than in 1949 when it cost Chifley re-election.

Porn Away

Those who argue against moves to filter-out on-line child pornography as an infringement of civil liberties can do so. But only if they disconnect the pornography from the children subject to the vile torments of its production by its purveyors.

Admittedly, filters are not a total protection. Nor are laws against murder and rape. Yet no one calls for their abolition as an infringement of civil liberties. Historians may wonder at the sanity of the generation which gave so much thought to the health of the biosphere and so little to the psychosphere involving its children.

Heather Tops

Best holiday replacement for Kerry O'Brien on the ABC's *7.30 Report*: Heather Ewart. Unlike O'Brien, a double-barrelled Purdey kind of a guy, she's a single-shot Derringer gal. She asks one pertinent question at a time, thus adhering to the rule of the great cross-examiner, Tom Hughes QC.

If Ewart is Annie Oakley (as played by Betty Hutton), another of the holiday replacements, Ali Moore, is Calamity Jane (as played by Doris Day).

Tough and sharp as a Bowie knife. Leigh Sales? She's Lauren Bacall in *The Confidential Agent*.

A lustrous trio, fit to be the nucleus for a women's own channel, advocated by your correspondent in *The Age*, Melbourne, 20 years ago.

Holiday viewing of the ABC's main news bulletin before the *7.30 Report* once again brought into focus the over-lapping nature of the programmes. The death of the peerless jockey George Moore, for example, was given full

coverage on the news and subsequently even fuller coverage on the *7.30 Report*.

Shorter bulletin items alluding to upcoming *7.30 Report* coverage would save time for more news. ABC managing director Mark Scott has the power to make it so.

Freeman Speech

Movie star profiles tend to be ho-hum, bland when not sycophantic. Nicola Graydon's of African-American star Morgan Freeman was different; it contained a startling nugget (*Good Weekend*, *SMH*, January 12).

She mentioned *Amistad* as the only mainstream historical film about slavery. "He corrects me, saying, '*Amistad* was not about slavery. It was about the separation of powers between the executive and the judiciary. Slavery as a trade had already been outlawed, so these people had been kidnapped. We need to clear up some stuff about slavery. We look upon the US as the culprit, but all they were doing was taking advantage of cheap labour. Slavery existed in Africa for hundreds of years. We didn't go in there and capture people, they were kidnapped by African and Arab slavers. It'd be a good thing to finally take that stigma off ourselves.'"

Not a view with which the makers of

the more recent mainstream BBC movie *Amazing Grace* would agree. They had William Wilberforce (Ioan Gruffudd) fighting English and Scots slave traffickers. No mention of African or Arab involvement.

Question: how does the African-American Nation of Islam reconcile that involvement with its stance?

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In the World

If a man came to this world from some other world in full possession of his powers he might discuss whether the advantage of midsummer woods made up for the disadvantage of mad dogs, just as a man looking for lodgings might balance the presence of a telephone against the absence of a sea view. But no man is in that position. A man belongs to this world before he begins to ask if it is nice to belong to it. He has fought for the flag, and often won heroic victories for the flag long before he has ever enlisted. To put shortly what seems the essential matter, he has a loyalty long before he has any admiration.

- G.K.Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*, The Bodley Head, London, 1908, pp 104-105.





NE might assume that as the level of literacy rose, the level of general intelligence would rise with it, and consequently that the economic demand for good literature would also rise. This, roughly, was Mr. Jefferson's idea and indeed it has always been at the root of our system of free public instruction for everyone. It has, however, somehow failed to work out according to expectation.

The level of literacy has been pushed up very nearly to the practicable limit, but the level of general intelligence seems not to have risen appreciably, and the economic demand for good literature is apparently no greater in relation to the population of a hundred and thirty million than it was one that was going on for sixty million; in fact, one would say it is much less. The



LITERACY – DOES IT HELP INTELLIGENCE?

reason for this is plain enough; there is nothing recondite about it. In his view of literacy, Mr. Jefferson was only half right. He was obviously right in premising that no illiterate person can read; but he was guilty of a thundering non distributio medii in his tacit conclusion that any literate person can read. On the contrary, as I discovered as long ago as my undergraduate

days: very few literate persons are able to read, very few indeed. This can be proven by observation and experiment of the simplest kind. I do not mean that the great majority are unable to read intelligently; I mean that they are unable to read at all - unable, that is, to carry away from a piece of printed matter anything like a correct idea of its content. They are more or less adept at passing printed matter though their minds, after a fashion, especially

such matter as addressed to mere sensation (and knowledge of this fact is

nine-tenths of a propagandist's equipment), but this is not reading. Reading implies a use of the reflective faculty, and very few have that faculty developed much beyond the anthropoid stage, let alone possessing it at a state of development which makes reading practicable.

- ALBERT JAY NOCK (1870-1945), *Memoirs of a Superfluous Man*.



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Intellectual and Moral Rot undermining High Places

POPE BENEDICT XVI AND DIALOGUE WITH MUSLIMS

By SAMIR KHALIL SAMIR, SJ

Vatican representatives and Muslim thinkers will meet in Rome next March to hammer out a few guidelines for dialogue between Christians and Muslims. There is a risk of hollowness or falsity if the dialogue addresses theology alone, and not the concrete problems of the two communities.



THE masterful lecture by the pope in Regensburg, so widely criticised by much of the Muslim (and also Western) world, is producing positive results in the very domain of dialogue with the Muslim world. Following the address in Regensburg (September 12, 2006), 38 Muslim scholars sent an initial letter in response (October 13, 2006), and a year later a second letter (signed by 138 scholars, whose number has since grown to 216) in an effort to find common ground of collaboration between Christians and Muslims.

In his turn, last November 19 Benedict XVI responded to the letter of the 138, opening the way to possible collaboration in various areas. A few weeks ago (December 12, 2007), in a letter to Cardinal Bertone, Jordanian prince Ghazi bin Muhammad bin Talal agreed to lay the groundwork for collaboration: between February and March, personalities of the Vatican curia and of the Islamic world will meet in Rome to establish the procedures and subject matter of this dialogue. But it's possible that all this work will go right down the drain. It seems to me, in fact, that the Muslim personalities who are in contact with the pope want to dodge fundamental and concrete questions, like human rights, reciprocity, violence, etc, to ensconce themselves in an improbable

theological dialogue "on the soul and God". Let's take a closer look at the problems that have emerged.

1. The Letter of the 138: "A Common Word between Us and You"

The letter of the 138 is full of goodwill: the Islamic scholars say they want to look "at what unites" Islam, Christianity, and the other religions. They have even made an effort to express themselves in "Christian" terms, saying that the heart of religion is "loving God and neighbour". Islam does not express itself in this manner. This is an expression of the Old Testament, resumed by Jesus in a more realistic, concrete, and universal sense in the parable of the

good Samaritan (Luke 10:23-37). Jesus says two important things: first of all, he ranks the first commandment as "equal" to the second (and this was not so clear even in the Old Testament); in the second place, he clarifies who the neighbour is – he is not the one "closest to me" (as expressed by the Muslim intellectuals in the Arabic version of their letter, using the word *jâr*, close), but the one to whom I make myself "neighbour". The Gospel, in fact, overturns the question of the scribe ("who is my neighbour?") and asks who behaved as a "neighbour" to the dying man. The neighbour is therefore every human person, including one's enemy, as the Samaritan was for the Jews.

From Jihad to Slavery

The jihad slave system included contingents of both sexes delivered annually in conformity with the treaties of submission by sovereigns who were tributaries of the caliph. When Amr conquered Tripoli [Libya] in 643, he forced the Jewish and Christian Berbers to give their wives and children as slaves to the Arab army as part of their *jizya* [tax on non-Muslims]. From 652 until its conquest in 1276, Nubia was forced to send an annual contingent of slaves to Cairo. Treaties concluded with the towns of Transoxiana, Sijistan, Armenia, and Fezzan (Maghreb) under the Umayyads and Abbasids stipulated an annual dispatch of slaves from both sexes. However, the main sources for the supply of slaves remained the regular raids on villages within the *dar-al-harb* [House of War, i.e., non-Islamic regions] and the military expeditions which swept more deeply into the infidel lands, emptying towns and provinces of their inhabitants.

- Bat Ye'or, *The Decline of Eastern Christianity Under Islam: From Jihad to Dhimmitude*, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1996, p. 108.

In the Gospel one often finds parables in which Jesus overturns common values: the Pharisee and the tax collector, the pagans with respect to the Jews, the child with respect to the adult.

The greatest danger of the letter of the 138 is in *its silences*, in what it *does not address*: there is no reference, for example, to the problems of the international community in regard to the Muslim community, or to the real problems within the Muslim community. The Ummah finds itself at a very delicate point, in a phase of widespread extremism and radicalism among a significant segment of Muslims, which is a form of exclusivity: those who do not think as we do are our enemies. This is evident every day in the Muslim press, and we see violence and attacks in Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, among Sunni and Shiite Muslims, or against Christians or Jews, or simply against tolerant Muslims . . . and they do exist!

The danger for Islam is not violence: this is present all over the world and in all religions and ideologies. The danger is that of justifying all this *through religion*. Even certain forms of violence against women and their rights are justified using the Qur'an. For example, I know a Muslim woman who cannot get a divorce, because divorce is the husband's right; she can only ask for the favour of being repudiated by him. He, on the basis of the Qur'an, can also remarry (up to four wives) and make a new life for himself, but the woman, who lives apart, does not have this right. She, a young wife, complained to me because "there is no justice". These situations, in which one uses the Qur'an or sharia law to exclude the other, are frequent.

II. The pope's response: four areas of collaboration

In the reply from the pontiff – sent through Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, Vatican secretary of state – Benedict XVI expresses "deep appreciation" for the positive spirit that inspired the letter of the 138, and for the appeal for joint action to promote peace in the world.

Having said this, the pope suggests seeking what the two sides have in common. But the elements are not

A Key Question

IT IS IRONIC and discouraging that many non-Muslim, Western intellectuals – who unceasingly claim to support human rights – have become obstacles to reforming Islam. Political correctness among Westerners obstructs unambiguous criticism of Shariah's inhumanity. They find socioeconomic or political excuses for Islamist terrorism such as poverty, colonialism, discrimination or the existence of Israel. What incentive is there for Muslims to demand reform when Western 'progressives' pave the way for Islamist barbarity? Indeed, if the problem is not one of religious beliefs, it leaves one to wonder why Christians who live among Muslims under identical circumstances refrain from contributing to wide-scale, systematic campaigns of terror.

– Tawfik Hamid, *The Wall Street Journal*, Tuesday, April 3, 2007. A onetime member of *Jemaah Islamiya*, an Islamist terrorist group led by al Qaeda's second in command, Ayman al-Zawahiri, Dr Hamid is a medical doctor.

identical. First of all, he makes an annotation: they should seek what they have in common "without ignoring or downplaying our differences". This means that for the pope there are differences between the two communities that must be taken into account, not hidden: we can be brothers and different, brothers who disagree. This is a golden rule in the area of religion and dogma.

In the letter of the 138, it is suggested that what is held "in common" is faith in one God. The Islamic thinkers cite the Qur'an itself when they say "Come to a common word between us and you", which requires that nothing be placed alongside of God. But this is addressed to Christians, who place Jesus Christ next to God.

For the pope, the "things in common" exist, but differences exist as well, and these must be kept in mind. The pope lists three of these "common things":

- belief in the one God, the provident Creator;
- God, the universal Judge "who at the end of time will deal with each person according to his or her actions"¹;
- we are called "to commit ourselves totally to him and to obey his sacred will"².

The pope then proposes a concrete application: the formation of a dialogue

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group that would seek common ground. This terrain must be found on a number of levels:

a) The first is that of identifying values capable of guaranteeing "mutual respect, solidarity and peace". "Respect" here also means that there are differences that must be guaranteed and welcomed. For example, a Muslim can say to a Christian: I do not agree with what you believe, that Jesus has a human and divine nature. You Christians are polytheists, because you place other gods, your Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, beside the one God. I say: let us seek to live in mutual respect. You have the full right to say that the Islamic conception excludes the Trinity, the divine-humanity. But leave me the right to say, for example, that Mohammed was not sent by God. I can acknowledge that he was a great personality on the human and political level, a social and spiritual reformer, that he also brought negative contributions, but not that he was a prophet. Do I have the right to say that, or not? As you have the right to say that you do not believe in the divinity of Christ – and in this you are consistent in your faith – we, too, have the right to say what we think about Mohammed³. In short, there is no such thing as a "taboo" topic, but there are only taboo means and methods, because these are violent and disrespectful.

b) The other level is that of human life as "sacred". This ethical dimension embraces a very wide field, which ranges from the rejection of abortion to the natural end of human life. But it also includes non-violence, which is one of the noblest forms of respect for human life. And it also means love for all the works of human culture and progress: for equality among men, for human rights – a respect for life and for what helps it to emerge and flourish. In his address to the Roman curia on December 22, 2006, the pope said: "one must welcome the true conquests of the Enlightenment, human rights and especially the freedom of faith and its practice, and recognize these also as being essential elements for the authenticity of religion". For Benedict XVI, "the content of the dialogue between Christians and Muslims will be at this

time especially one of meeting each other in this commitment to find the right solutions". And together with Muslims, to work "to oppose violence and for the synergy between faith and reason, between religion and freedom". The foundation is "the dignity of every human person", expressed by human rights.

At this point, the pope suggests four topics to the 138:

1) *Human rights*. This is the first foundation of dialogue;

2) *Objective knowledge of the religion of the other*. This means knowing the other for who he defines himself to be. The Christian must know Islam for what the Qur'an and modern Muslims define it to be; the Muslim must know Christianity through the Gospels and the teaching of the Church⁴. Objective knowledge is fundamental for a real relationship.

3) *Sharing of religious experience*. This element has not been emphasized until now. Religious experience is more than knowledge. It recognises that even if the other's dogma is not my own, he can enrich me from a human and spiritual point of view. A few days ago, while flying from Beirut to Paris, I had a chance to talk for three hours with a young African woman returning from Mecca, where she had been on pilgrimage. It was a beautiful and profound conversation. And it helped us to appreciate, but also to correct, the image that we have of each other⁵.

4) *A commitment to educating the young*. If we do not prepare the young

to live out this reciprocal respect today, tomorrow we may find ourselves still in conflict with among ourselves.

This ends our look at the pope's letter: brief, but very dense, a sign of his profound reflection.

III. The reply to the pope from Ghazi Ibn Talal: only theological dialogue

The reply of the 138, signed by Ghazi Ibn Talal, prince of Jordan, is dated December 12, 2007. After a few introductory remarks, the letter says that they accept the idea of dialogue, and that in March they will send some of their representatives to specify the organisational and procedural details.

But then (in the fifth paragraph of the text) they propose a distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic, and explain: "By 'intrinsic' I mean that which refers to our own souls and their inner make-up, and by 'extrinsic' I mean that which refers to the world and thus to society". They propose starting on the basis of the letter that they wrote, "A Common Word Between Us and You", and concentrating on "the unicity of God and the twofold commandment of love of God and neighbor". Everything else belongs to the extrinsic dimension, including social concerns.

Honestly, I find this distinction weak and even un-Islamic. Because if "intrinsic" is the soul and "extrinsic" is the world and society, then the Qur'an speaks a great deal of "extrinsic" things, and very little of "intrinsic" things. The Qur'an talks about the

The End Justifying the Means

Muslims naturally saw in the [Islamic] conquest armies the hand of God, [and] His hand was providential. In His infinite mercy, God had restored monotheism to Arabia; Muhammad's followers, inspired as they were by their direct acquaintance with God's final prophet, responded to God's injunction to 'fight in the way of God'. To Christians (and some Jews), the conquests were proof that Muhammad's claim to prophecy was a lie, for, as one very early Christian put it, 'Do prophets come with a sword?' (the answer was: no). To Muslims, the conquests were proof that Muhammad's claims were true, for God had sent Muhammad to make his religion prevail (Qur'an 9:33 and 61:9), and this was exactly what God had had them do.'

– *Islamic Historiography*, Chase F. Robinson, Cambridge University Press, 2003 p.131.

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world, commerce, life in society, war, marriage, etc., but it says very little about the soul and one's relationship with God. But above all, the Qur'an never makes this distinction. On the contrary; the problem of Islam is precisely that of not making any sort of distinction between these two levels. Why in the world do the 138 want

to address only "intrinsic" things? I think they're afraid of confronting the complete reality of the two religions.

Ghazi's reply continues: "It is on this common intellectual and spiritual basis, then, that we understand that we are to pursue, God Willing, a dialogue in the three general topics of dialogue Your Eminence wisely mentioned in

your letter: (1) 'Effective respect for the dignity of every human person'; (2) 'Objective knowledge of the religion of the other' through "sharing of religious experience", and (3) 'A common commitment to promoting mutual respect and acceptance among the younger generation'⁷⁶.

The prince continues with an exhortation to dialogue, citing a conference organised by the Community of Sant'Egidio.

And finally, they distance themselves from "some recent pronouncements emerging from the Vatican and from Vatican advisors - which cannot have escaped the notice of Your Eminence - as regards the very principle of theological dialogue". I think that the persons to whom they are referring are Cardinal Tauran (and perhaps Fr Christian W. Troll and myself), who have expressed our reservations about the possibility of theological dialogue between Christians and Muslims.

The prince himself says that he maintains as "inherently" impossible "complete theological agreement between Christians and Muslims", but that in spite of this he wants dialogue on this level, "whether we wish to call [it] 'theological' or 'spiritual' or something else - for the sake of the common good and towards the good of the whole world, God Willing".

The prince thus reaffirms his commitment to collaboration on the theological and spiritual level. And there is an ambiguity here: Islam, more than Christianity, blends the theological with the political, and even with the military. And here they claim to speak only of the theological. In all probability, there is some theologian behind Ghazi's thought. I think of an interview with professor Aref Ali Nayed, conducted by Catholic News Service last October 31 and reprinted by "Islamica Magazine" - in the interview, he stated, "Many Muslim theologians are not just interested in mere ethical dialogue . . . If dialogue is to be serious, it must be theologically and spiritually deep".

A few months ago, he also affirmed that his conception of dialogue "excludes everything that is not theological and spiritual". But honestly, this distinction cannot be made:

the human and social consequences of theological positions cannot be avoided.

IV. Conclusion

To sum up, then, we must say that some important good results for dialogue are beginning to appear. And it must be recalled that everything began from Regensburg, from that masterful lecture that seemed to have destroyed any basis for dialogue, but instead revived it.

The address in Regensburg was built upon the reign of reason as the foundation of dialogue. This presupposes all of the adaptation of the religions in the face of Enlightenment principles, but without impoverishing reason. In short, the foundation of everything is not religion, but the human reason that is common to all human beings⁷.

The Regensburg address begins from precisely this problem: how can a common foundation be found for humanity and the religions, including Islam?

In the modern state, the common foundation is expressed with the universal declaration of human rights, of freedom of religion, etc . . . In dialogue between Christians and Muslims, too, these must be taken as the basis of dialogue; otherwise we will achieve nothing. In the past, many Muslim theologians have rejected the universal declaration of human rights, and have drafted an "Islamic" declaration, accusing the "universal" one of being only "Western". But this denies that there can be universality, and therefore denies that we can have common principles. This is the foundation of the conflict between the Islamic world and the West, or the rest of the world.

Kofi Annan, when he was invited once by the Organisation of Islamic Countries to open a conference, stated clearly that there cannot be "Islamic", "African", "Christian", or "Buddhist" declarations of human rights. Either the declaration is universal, or it cannot exist.

But the letter of Prince Ghazi seems to say, instead, that human rights are not important, and are only a political question. Only theological dialogue is of interest. But what good does it do to talk about the one God, if I do not recognise that man has an absolute

Islam, Booty and Slavery

Historian Speros Vryonis observes that 'since the beginning of the Arab **H**razzias [raids] into the land of Rum [the Byzantine Empire], human booty had come to constitute a very important portion of the spoils.' As they steadily conquered more and more of Anatolia, the Turks reduced many of the Greeks and other non-Muslims there to slave status: 'They enslaved men, women, and children from all major urban centers and from the countryside where the populations were defenseless.' The Indian historian K. S. Lal states that wherever jihadists conquered a territory, 'there developed a system of slavery peculiar to the clime, terrain and populace of the place.' When Muslim armies invaded India, 'its people began to be enslaved in droves to be sold in foreign lands or employed in various capacities on menial and not-so-meneial jobs within the country.'

- 'The Persistence of Islamic Slavery' by Robert Spencer, FrontPageMagazine.com July 20, 2007.

dignity in the image of God? That freedom of conscience is sacred, that the believer has no more rights than the non-believer, that man has no more rights than woman, etc?

It must be affirmed that man comes before religion: respecting man comes before respect for religion. This is the Christian approach.

I would not like for some theologians, finding themselves in difficulty over the affirmation of the dignity of every man, to look for a way of escape in theological dialogue. This method risks producing nothing but falsehood. But this is a problem that also exists within Islam itself. Until this has based everything upon the human person and reinterpreted the faith in the light of human rights, it will never be modern.

In the two Islamic declarations on human rights, it is repeatedly affirmed that Islam admits human rights, "as long as these conform to the law". To an unsuspecting person who reads the English translation, this may seem to be just fine. The point is that for the English translation "law", the Arab versions say "conform to sharia". This means that the "Islamic" human rights risk re-proposing the usual injustices and violence: apostasy, blasphemy, stoning, injustice toward women and children, etc⁸.

Of course, interreligious dialogue cannot focus only upon human rights, but neither can it act as if there were not a serious problem precisely in this regard.

Let me conclude by citing a passage

from the letter of Saint James (2:14-26), although it is a bit long. In this context it seems fairly important to me, both for the question in verse 19 and because it gives the example of "Abraham, the friend of God" (*Khalil Allah*, as we say in Arabic), who is so respected by the Muslims:

What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well," but you do not give them the necessities of the body, what good is it? So also faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

Indeed someone might say, "You have faith and I have works." Demonstrate your faith to me without works, and I will demonstrate my faith to you from my works. You believe that God is one. You do well. Even the demons believe that and tremble. Do you want proof, you ignoramus, that faith without works is useless? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered his son Isaac upon the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by the works. Thus the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called "the friend of God." See how a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. And in the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she welcomed the messengers and sent them out by a different route? For just as a body

without a spirit is dead, so also faith
without works is dead.

1. That we will be judged on our actions, on facts, is an idea common to Christians and Muslims. The Qur'an speaks of "those who believe in God and in the Last Day and who do good deeds" (2:62, 5:69). But this means that there is an ethical code that could also be held in common. Constructing a common ethics would be very important. Similar things have happened in the past. At the UN conference in Cairo on population and development, in 1994, the Vatican voted with the Islamic countries. Various ambassadors criticised the Holy See because it sided with the fundamentalists. In reality, on questions of the right to life, Christians and Muslims come together. The astonishment comes only from the secularised West, which has created a relativist ethics, leaving what is good and evil to the individual's subjective decision. This point requires urgent and extensive work.
2. The Muslim is perfectly comfortable hearing this, because for him obedience is the structure of life, it is abandonment to the will of God, islâm. And for the Christian, too, dedication to God (and to men) is a great ideal. But the discussion of this point needs to be expanded and clarified: what does it mean that we are called "to dedicate ourselves completely"? For an Islamic extremist, dedicating oneself to God also means killing, strapping on a bomb, blowing oneself up. Here, too, there appears a difference between Christians and Muslims, and it demands attention: non-violence is a spiritual choice, not a political one.
3. We Christians living in the Arab world suffer greatly in this regard, because we are not permitted to say what we really think. Often the Muslims ask us for "an exchange of favours": we believe that Jesus was a prophet, so you should believe that Mohammed was a prophet.
4. In this mutual objective knowledge, the Muslims run the greater risk. Since Islam came after Christianity, and since there are references to Jesus, Mary, and Christians in the Qur'an, very often Muslims do not make an effort to understand Christianity for what Christians understand it to be, but content themselves with what the Qur'an says about it. But the only way for Christians to discover Islam is by reading the Qur'an.
5. This means that we can share our religious sensibilities without renouncing our principles. Prayer together can also be considered. Many times in the past the criticism has been made of Ratzinger that he had a negative view of the meetings in Assisi, where since 1986 religious personalities have met together to pray. The controversy that has erupted so many times is whether persons of different religions should pray together. The position of the then-cardinal Ratzinger was that it was necessary to avoid anything that might suggest confusion or syncretism. But praying together, as the pope did in the mosque in Istanbul, is the height of respect and dialogue.
6. It should be noted that the recipients of the letter did not realise that the points cited by the pope are four, and not three: the sharing of religious experience, in the pope's text, is a third point.
7. 10th-century Islamic thought had very clear ideas about this, and it respected a foundation common to all men. Later the Islamic world increasingly closed itself off, even against the rationalist Muslims (like Averroes).
8. It is worth asking how much impact the letter of the 138 has had. Among experts, there has been increasing agreement: the 138 signatories have grown to 216. But in the population, nothing has happened. I have seen just a few articles in Arabic, in the Arab and Islamic newspapers. None of these analysed the content of the letter of the 138. Some of them gave nothing but the news itself, others recounted only that Christians and Muslims wanted to meet to discuss faith in the one God. It therefore cannot be said that this letter has moved the Islamic world.

SAMIR KHALIL SAMIR, an Egyptian Jesuit, is professor of Islamic studies and of the history of Arab culture at the *Université Saint-Joseph* in Beirut and at the *Pontifical Oriental Institute* in Rome; he is the founder of the *Centre de Recherche Arabes Chrétiennes* and president of the *International Association for Christian Arabic Studies*.



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Yielding to the will of the crowd

WASHING ONE'S HANDS OF THE TRUTH

By SIMON LEYS



URING the successive days of the Christian Holy Week, we read in church the four Gospel narratives of the last two days in the life of Christ. These narratives each contain a passage on the trial of Jesus in front of the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate; the concept of truth appears there in a brief dialogue between judge and accused. It is a well-known passage; at that time, it struck me in a very special way.

The High Priests and the Sanhedrin had arrested Jesus, and they interrogated him. In conclusion, they decided that he should be put to death for blasphemy. But they were now colonial subjects of the Roman Empire: they had lost the power to pronounce and carry out death sentences. Only the Roman governor possessed such authority.

Thus they bring Jesus to Pilate. Pilate finds himself in a predicament. First, there is the problem inherent to his position: he is both head of the executive and head of the judiciary. As supreme ruler, he is concerned with issues of public order and security; as supreme judge, he should ensure that the demands of justice are being met. Then there is his own personal situation: the Jews naturally see him for what he is – an odious foreign oppressor. And he distrusts and dislikes these quarrelsome and incomprehensible natives who give him endless trouble. During his tenure, twice already there have been severe disturbances; the governor handled them badly – he was even denounced in Rome. He cannot afford another incident. And this time, he fears a trap.

The Jewish leaders present themselves as loyal subjects of Caesar. They accuse Jesus of being a rebel, a political agitator who tells the people not to pay taxes and who challenges Caesar's authority by claiming that he himself is a king. Now, if Pilate does not condemn him, Pilate himself would be disloyal to Caesar.

Pilate interrogates Jesus. Naturally, he finds Jesus' notion of a spiritual kingdom quite fanciful, but it seems also harmless enough. The accused appears to be neither violent nor fanatic; he has poise; he is articulate. Pilate is impressed by his calm dignity, and it quickly becomes obvious to him that Jesus is entirely innocent of all the crimes of which he has been accused. Pilate repeats it several times: "I can find no fault in this man." But the mob demands his death, and the Gospel adds that, hearing their shouts, "Pilate was more afraid than ever." Pilate is scared: he does not want to have, once again, a riot on his hands. Should this happen, it would be the end of his career.

In the course of his interrogation, as Pilate questions Jesus on his activities, Jesus replies: "What I came into the world for, is to bear witness of the truth. Whoever belongs to the truth, listens to my voice." To which Pilate retorts: "The truth! But what is the truth?" He is an educated and sophisticated Roman; he has seen the world and read the philosophers; unlike this simple man, this provincial carpenter from Galilee, he knows that there are many gods and many creeds under the sun

However, beware! Whenever people wonder 'What is the truth?' usually it is because the truth is just under their nose – but it would be very inconvenient to acknowledge it. And thus, against his own better judgement; Pilate yields to the will of the crowd and lets Jesus be crucified.

Pilate's problem was not how to ascertain Jesus' innocence. This was easy enough: it was obvious. No, the real problem was that, in the end – like all of us, most of the time – he found it more expedient to wash his hands of the truth.

– Simon Leys, 'Lies that Tell the Truth,' *The Monthly*, November 2007. Simon Leys's books include *Chinese Shadows*, *The Death of Napoleon*, a new translation of *The Analects of Confucius*, and most recently *w* [Black Inc.]

Never ... a paragraph of puffery. ... the epitome of trustworthiness and loyalty'

PADDY McGUINNESS R.I.P.

By FRANK DEVINE



FOR SUCH an energetically professing atheist, the famous journalist Padraic Pearse McGuinness, who died in Sydney on January 17 at the age of 69, possessed an almost exorbitant store of Christian charity. A sophisticated young woman, who knew him well, sent me an email from Tokyo describing him as "kind and gentle."

Paddy's benevolence to friends, including some virtually outcast in misery, was prodigal. It seems frivolous to mention a tiny kindness he once bestowed on me, in the context of his many large kindnesses (including to me), but it mirrors his *modus operandi*, the practicality and painstaking quality of his generosity. He believed I would enjoy reading *A Suitable Boy* by Vikram Seth, but I was about to go abroad for several weeks and Paddy did not want to encumber me with a 1000-page paperback. So he carefully tore the book into five sections and meticulously taped each section together, so I could leave four chunks of *A Suitable Boy* in my luggage and carry a slim volume about in my pocket.

In a profession not altogether free of betrayal and skulduggery, Paddy was the epitome of trustworthiness and loyalty.

Writing in *The Australian*, the former Governor General Bill Hayden, a close friend who employed McGuinness as a policy adviser when he was Minister for Social Security, praised the ease with which Paddy, a middle class intellectual, mixed and communicated with working people. He was attentive, respectful and prepared to learn from the unpolished and untutored. Hayden added: "Paddy embodied integrity and was always honourable in his dealings."

The public McGuinness, columnist, editor and controversialist, was a more fearsome creature. He was the enemy of

enforced silence, enraged by the notion that there were things people were not supposed to talk about or think about or read about. He was scornful of popular wisdom, of positions taken without examination or thought, of ideologues and fashionable zeitgeisters. Some of the most gaping holes in the now crumbling wall of political correctness were blasted through by shellfire from Paddy.

A supreme individualist, PPMcG as his email address titled him, consciously presented himself as distinctive, invariably dressing all in black, with a

bushy, thrusting beard, and for a time, traffic cop dark glasses. I didn't know him during the period when he topped this off with a black, silk-lined opera cloak. He must wisely have concluded that looking like Count Dracula was not really his style (apart the hygiene problems presented to a vampire by a bushy beard) and reverted to looking clerical.

His great friend, James S Murray, an Anglican priest, recalls having a drink in a pub with McGuinness and being undecided whether to feel complimented or not when, as he was leaving, he heard a bar patron say to another: "Boy! those two priests can put it down."

In his later years, Paddy came to look like an intransigent bishop, though I fancy the Church has put up with worse.

He wrote millions of words, full of learning, wit, sharp reasoning and good purpose. When, as editor in 1980, I lured him over to *The Australian* from the *Financial Review*, I had misgivings about his desire to write a column every day. But colleagues of his assured me that it would be OK, that Paddy had an opinion on everything.

Such was the case. With a huge network of contacts, an excellent education in politics from Sydney University and the London School of economics, a wide range of interests from opera to the movies and cooking (at which he was gratifyingly adept), Paddy never wrote a paragraph of puffery. If he was short of a subject of his own devising he wrote about a book he'd read.

His reading was prodigious. The 14,000-volume of the Centre for Independent Studies was launched by a gift from Paddy of 5000 books. He claimed that they were "just cluttering up the garage." Paddy didn't own a car but clearly he felt he could spare 5000 books from his own shelves.

Of his journalism, *The Australian* commented in an editorial after Paddy's

The US and its Embassy to the Holy See

Lincoln was convinced that ever since the tide of emigration set in upon the continent of America, 'the head of the Roman Church and States has freely recognized and favoured the development of this principle of political freedom on the part of the Catholics of this country, while he has never lost an opportunity to express his satisfaction with the growth, prosperity and progress of the American people. It was under these circumstances that the Government, in 1848, wisely determined that while it maintained representatives in the capitals of every other civilized State and even at the capitals of many civilized States which reject the whole Christian religion, it was neither wise nor necessary to exclude Rome from the circle of our diplomatic intercourse. Thus far the new relation then established has proved pleasant and beneficent [sic].'

— American Archives, State Department. Seward to Blatchford, quoted in *Atlantic Monthly*, October, 1929, p. 501

death: "Sometimes irreverent and deliberately provocative, Paddy always argued his case with intellectual honesty, substance and a bracing wit. His greatest achievement is that, through the power of his mind and keyboard, he helped change the nation - for the better."

This does Paddy's professional career no more than justice.

Of his atheism, I have always been sceptical. I accused him of betting on a Marchmain conversion (after the sign of the cross made shortly before drawing his last breath by the sinful Lord Marchmain in Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*) and he retorted by describing religion as "the artistic impulse of the untalented." Insult is common currency in philosophical dispute between friends.

Paddy was baptised and raised a Catholic and attended Riverview, a Jesuit high school to which he often referred with some affection. He received with scepticism, however, some of the instruction he received there and was incensed by restrictions placed on his reading, in particular, by the confiscation by a Riverview priest of his personal copy of Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*. In an interview with the Anglican Murray for Murray's remarkable collection of interviews with prominent Australians about their religious faith, or lack of it (*Would You Believe?*, Millennium Books, 1997), McGuinness traces the beginning of doubt from this incident, when he was 15.

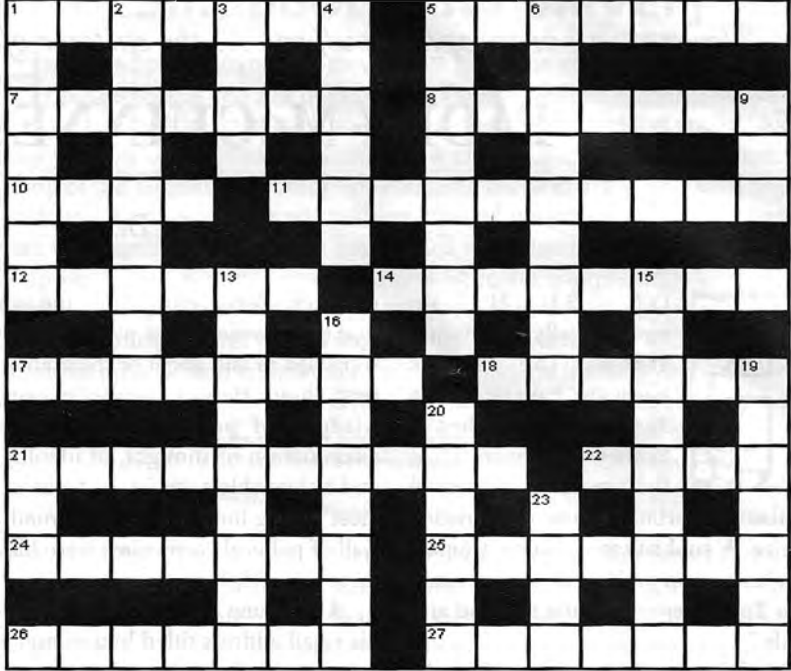
One might feel (and, if engaging in insult, assert) that Paddy followed the wrong St Thomas in rejecting God because he could personally find no evidence of his existence.

But he respected religion, telling Murray: "In a sense, religion is everyman's high art." He also described being moved by the religious passion of Bach's music.

One of Paddy's initiatives when he began his triumphant ten years as editor of *Quadrant* was to encourage writing on religious subjects, which the magazine, without being anti-religion, had sidestepped in a gingerly manner for 40 years. McGuinness believed Christianity to be a seminal part of Western culture and civilisation and not ignorable in a journal of ideas.

He published numerous articles by Cardinal George Pell and Father

ANNALS CROSSWORD No. 51



ACROSS CLUES

1. Beetles regarded by the ancient Egyptians as divine (7)
2. Earnestly entreating God (7)
3. Surname of "The Satanic Verses" author (7)
4. Members of unruly mob creating a disturbance (7)
5. Monstrous or cruel person (4)
6. Friar, missionary and reformer, often called "The Apostle of Italy" (10)
7. see 22 across
8. Adviser to Tzarina Alexandra, he was assassinated by a group of Russian noblemen (8)
9. Supreme; best of all (8)
10. Biblical strongman (6)
11. Candidates seeking admission to a religious order (10)
12. and 12. across. When Christ's entry into Jerusalem is celebrated (4,6)
13. French town that is a leading town of pilgrimage (7)
14. The fourth book of the Old Testament (7)
15. Time of thirty day fast by Moslems (7)
16. Contributes, especially to a charity (7)

DOWN CLUES

1. Homilies (7)
2. A promise of support; freedom from doubt (9)
3. Assists (4)
4. Patron Saint of Bricklayers (6)
5. Relating to mothers and fathers (8)
6. An appendix to the Old Testament; the Pseudepigrapha (9)
7. To institute legal proceedings (against) (3)
8. Overwhelmed with amazement (9)
9. A covenant instituted between man and God (9)
10. A member of a secret sect of Muslims who murdered their victims, usually Crusaders (8)
11. In Greek mythology, the goddess of retribution and vengeance (7)
12. Made amends (for) (6)
13. Close friend (3)
14. So be it! (4)

SOLUTION TO NO. 50

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Paul Stenhouse, MSC. He admired the Cardinal for his intellect and strength and also for the humorous nonchalance with which His Eminence batted away Paddy's attempts to stir him up with harsh comments about God and the Church.

"I think he must be a religious maniac," the Cardinal observed after a lunch at which Paddy had been especially operatic. "He doesn't seem to want to talk about anything else."

During his long illness, Paddy berated friends he suspected of praying for him and ordered them to knock it off.

Though going behind Paddy's back did not come naturally, an immense blackmarket in prayer developed. Paddy was a worthy recipient.

FRANK DEVINE is a columnist for *The Australian* which once he edited, and for *Quadrant Magazine*. A New Zealand-born journalist and long-term resident in Australia, Frank has a distinguished service record on various literary fronts in this country and overseas.

Taking a fresh look at the Roman Liturgy's 'sacred treasury'

WORSHIPFUL MUSIC

By RICHARD PERRIGNON



VER the years, criticism of music in Catholic worship has become something of a fashion. But when an internationally renowned musician of the calibre of Peter Phillips – artistic director of the world-famous vocal ensemble, The Tallis Scholars – joins in, and looks to the Pope for the Church's artistic salvation ("Can Pope Benedict restore church music?" *The Spectator*, 28 November 2007), it is time for the Church to sit up and take a good look at itself. Phillips makes his point thus:

"For a Church which prides itself on continuation and tradition this [public criticism of church music in the 20th century as in the 16th] is a sorry record indeed. The Anglicans, with their long-lived choir schools and uninterrupted support for good choral music of every period, have done very much better. As have the Orthodox. Nonetheless it does seem as though the low standards tolerated and encouraged by the Catholic hierarchy since Vatican II are at last being addressed. ... Through countless reigns it has been assumed that music is something which can be ordered to size and then cut to fit an agenda, like a vestment or a smell or even an architectural interior, and yet still be attractive music. That this is not true is something which is coming home to roost."

He refers to Mgr Valentin Grau's recent criticisms of the choral standards at St Peter's Basilica, which he says were not enhanced by the previous pope's practice of inviting foreign choirs to sing regularly, and applauds Benedict's push to make more of the local Vatican choir. After drawing a parallel between Benedict's love of chant and that of his predecessors in the sixteenth century, Phillips continues:

"By 1600 polyphony was on the way out, chant was not on the way in, and the standard of singing in Catholic

services began a long descent which eventually made possible the decisions of Vatican II."

In this way, Phillips echoes a chorus of criticism which has been growing since the 1960's, when implementation of the Vatican II pronouncements on music commenced. See, for example, Prof. T. Day, *Why Catholics can't sing: The Culture of Catholicism and the Triumph of Bad Taste*, New York, 1990; D. Daintree, "Spare me this music", *The Tablet*, 24 June 1995; D. Thompson, *In the name of all that's holy*, *The Spectator*, London, November 2007.

A fresh assessment is called for. But by what standards should such an assessment be conducted?

According to Phillips, "true art ... is the goal here". One might ask, as did Pilate of truth, "what is art?" Perhaps the correct answer is, "that which humanity judges it to be over the ages". From experience, Phillips knows that the sacred polyphonic music of the Renaissance era – by which I mean

music sung in many parts, usually unaccompanied, by composers like Palestrina, Lassus, Victoria, Guerrero, Dufay, Brumel, Tallis and many others – is considered by people around the world to be "high art", no less than the paintings of Leonardo da Vinci, the sculpture of Michelangelo, or the architecture of Bernini.

Specialising in this sacred polyphony, Phillips and the Tallis Scholars regularly fill concert halls around the globe, and sell recordings as if they were hot cakes. *The New York Times* has dubbed them "the rock stars of Renaissance vocal music". Theirs is not 'popular music', in the sense that the rock'n'roll industry might use the term, but its popularity is manifest nevertheless. So powerful is its intrinsic appeal, expressing as it does the entire gamut of human emotion, that it retains its popularity even when divorced from the Catholic liturgy for which it was designed.

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phenomenon. Due to the prodigious musical scholarship of the twentieth century, and the advent of ever more advanced recording and distribution technologies for sound and printed music, this form of sacred art is more widely appreciated, available and demanded today than it has ever been in history. The pity is that today, great Catholic polyphony is far more likely to be found in a record store, or on iTunes, than in a church. By failing to reserve a place for this art in its worship – or worse, by driving it from the liturgy altogether – the Church fails to keep up with the times, and loses the very contemporary relevance which many clergy so ardently crave.

Its popularity aside, there is another compelling reason why this music ought be re-connected with the living liturgy. It expresses the sacredness of the liturgical action, and of the occasion. It is, by its very nature, “other worldly”. It defines sonically the difference between a sacred space or experience – that is, within a church or sanctuary – and the ordinary experience of everyday life. Recently, Pope Benedict referred to this concept, in a different context, as the “sacrality” of religious experience.¹ A sense of the sacred is absent when the air waves are dominated by music whose aim is to express and reflect the ordinary in human experience, either by adopting musical idioms common to pop music or strains commonly heard in American sitcoms, or simply by the banal nature of monodic musical construction, which characterises much of the music heard in Catholic parishes today.

How, then, can this high art be re-connected with the liturgy of the Catholic church, or of other Christian denominations which seek to make appropriate use of our common cultural heritage?

Phillips points to the Anglican tradition, “with their long-lived choir schools and uninterrupted support for good choral music of every period ...”. There can be little doubt that good choral music needs good choral schools. But the Catholic Church has no lack of excellent choir schools. For centuries, the endowment and conduct of such schools has been at the centre of Catholic tradition. Excellent contemporary examples are readily to be found at Regensburg Cathedral in



Germany (of which Benedict’s brother, Georg, was himself musical director), Notre Dame in Paris, Westminster Cathedral in London, and at St. Mary’s Cathedral in Sydney, to name but a very few. Though the Anglican choral tradition is a fine one, the practice of music in contemporary Anglican worship is not without problems², and it would be controversial, to say the least, to suggest that it surpasses, or ever did surpass, that of the Catholic tradition at its highest levels.

Like the Anglican church, the Catholic Church has chosen to concentrate its artistic resources on the pursuit of musical high art in those cultural centres where it is considered most appropriate – namely, the major cathedrals around the world. There is simply not the money to endow professional choir schools in every parish.

This, however, cannot explain why liturgical music generally – and parish music in particular – has reached its current state. Nor does it justify denying ordinary Christians, for whom it is not convenient to attend Mass at a major cathedral, access to high musical art in the context of their worship. Still less can it justify denying to the children of the faithful proper access to instruction in the techniques of its practice. After all, the Catholic Church has spent enormous sums over the centuries amassing a corpus of musical art which is second to none. It has a cultural duty – quite apart from its religious duties – to ensure the survival of that corpus, and its continued availability to the faithful whom it exists to serve.

So, how did we come to this pass, and what’s the way out?

Much – though perhaps not all – of the current malaise can be traced back to the Second Vatican Council, and the implementation of the norms contained in Chapter VI of its Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum concilium*, which was promulgated on 4 December 1963. It is not intended here to examine the arguments for and against the policies expressed in Chapter VI, or to engage in controversy over the extent to which sacred music was already in decline prior to the 1960s. Doubtless, debate on these issues, and the historical legacy of Vatican II, will continue for many years.

Three things, however, are tolerably clear.

First, it was not the intention of the Council Fathers to denigrate sacred music, still less to eliminate chant or sacred polyphony from the liturgy. So much is clear from the terms of *Sacrosanctum concilium* itself. Indeed, it is stunning – and sad – to compare the sentiment and exhortations expressed by the Fathers with the reality of their sequelae today:

Article 112: “The musical tradition of the universal church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art. The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as a combination of sacred music and words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy. ... Therefore, sacred music is to be considered the more holy, the more closely connected it is with the liturgical action, whether making prayer more pleasing, prompting unity of minds, or conferring greater solemnity on the sacred rites. ...”

Article 114: “The treasury of sacred music is to be preserved and cultivated with great care. Choirs must be diligently developed, especially in cathedral churches. Bishops and other pastors of souls must do their best to ensure that whenever a liturgical service is to be accompanied by chant, the whole body of the faithful may be able to take that active part which is rightly theirs, as laid down in articles 28 and 30.”

Article 115: “Much emphasis should be placed on the teaching of music and on musical activity in seminaries, in the novitiates and houses of studies of religious of both sexes, and also in other Catholic institutions and schools. To impart this instruction, teachers

are to be carefully trained and put in charge of the teaching of sacred music. It is desirable also that higher institutes of sacred music be established whenever possible.

Article 116: "The Church recognises Gregorian chant as especially native to the Roman liturgy. Therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services. Other kinds of sacred music, especially polyphony, are by no means excluded from liturgical celebrations, so long as they accord with the spirit of the liturgical action laid down in article 30."

Reading these exhortations, one can be forgiven for wondering, *what went wrong?* The contemporary reality is so far divorced from the desires of the Fathers, that one's natural inclination is to inquire who sabotaged the implementation of these fine sentiments. Much of the blame, regrettably, must lie with those charged with that implementation and with the administration of the affairs of the church generally – that is, the clergy itself. And – unless the Church undergoes a radical reorganisation of its hierarchical structures, which seems unlikely – it is from the clergy that the proper implementation of the Council's desires must ultimately come.

Secondly, in the implementation of *Sacrosanctum concilium* which followed around the world, local bishops took advantage of the permission in article 36 to use their vernacular languages in the celebration of the new Latin rite ('Novus Ordo'), which was published in the Roman Missal of 1970. Thus, Latin as a language was driven from the liturgy entirely, ensuring its worldwide extinction. The immediate result was that chant and polyphony – the art forms that had been used over the centuries to set these Latin prayers to music – became immediately obsolete. Not only were they not encouraged or catered for in the vernacular liturgy, they were seen as being indelibly associated with an obsolete liturgy, and the Tridentine tradition generally.

The latter view was historically misinformed. Most sacred polyphony pre-dated the Council of Trent by decades or centuries. The Council of Trent expressed a negative attitude to sacred music in general, and gave no encouragement whatever to sacred



polyphony⁴. Though it ultimately declined to ban it – giving rise to the Abbé Bains's apocryphal account of how the Council Fathers were persuaded against such a course by the music of Palestrina, who thereby "saved" sacred music⁵ – its negative attitude among other things ensured that sacred polyphony did not survive the Council by more than fifty years. The Tridentine era was, as a whole, hostile to polyphony and authentic chant, which had to await the twentieth century for their official rehabilitation in the eyes of the Church.⁶

The fact is, there was no need to throw the baby out with the bathwater. There were and still are plenty of ways to utilise sacred polyphony – and chant – in the vernacular liturgy, to its great benefit. This is done by skilled choirs weekly, if not daily, in major cathedrals around the world. But one must remember the social and historical context in which Vatican II was conducted. The 1960s witnessed an era of iconoclasm, and the glorification of youth, which in the West at least, was enjoying the benefits of post-war prosperity and the economic empowerment that comes with disposable income. It was the era of the Beatles and the Rolling Stones and other popular ensembles who were accumulating immense fortunes by forging new mass markets for the consumption of recorded and printed music, composed of emerging generations of cashed-up teenagers. It was an era in which anything old was despised, and which saw the general deconstruction of anything which smacked of tradition. As Bob Dylan proclaimed, "*The times, they are a-changin'.*"

Thirdly, the Council Fathers desired – by no means unreasonably – that the faithful should actively participate in the liturgy. This was one of the most pervasive themes of *Sacrosanctum concilium*:

Article 14: "It is very much the wish of the church that the faithful should be led to take that full, conscious and active part in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy, and to which the Christian people ... have a right and to which they are bound by reason of their Baptism. In the restoration and development of the sacred liturgy the full and active participation by all the people is the paramount concern, for it is the primary, indeed the indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit. ..."

The Council desired that congregational participation should extend to music-making, among other things:

Article 30: "To develop active participation, the people should be encouraged to take part by means of acclamations, responses, psalms, antiphons, hymns, as well as by actions, gestures and bodily attitudes. ..."

However, the Council never

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contemplated that musical activities of congregations would banish properly trained choirs from the liturgy, for which they specifically reserved a place:

Article 29: "Servers, readers, commentators and members of the choir also exercise a genuine liturgical ministry. They ought, therefore, to carry out their functions with the sincere piety and decorum which is appropriate to so exalted a ministry and which God's people rightly expect. Consequently, they must all be ... trained to perform their functions in a correct and orderly manner."

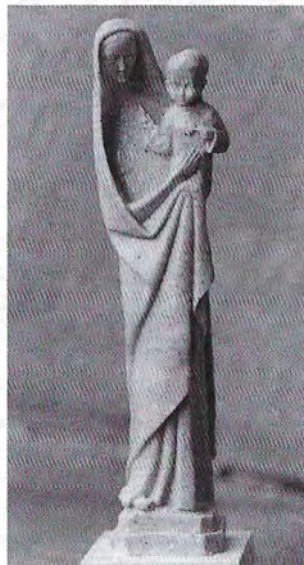
The Council expected and desired a balance between choral and congregational music-making. Precisely where that balance should lie would no doubt depend on the solemnity of the occasion and other practical factors. The requirement for balance was quickly forgotten, or conveniently ignored, in the zeal of many clergy and lay musicians – particularly those who had neither a taste for musical high art, nor the skills to perform it – to appear to implement the norms of the Council.

There grew up in the 1970s a mentality in which anything learned or old – chant, for example, or sophisticated choral music – was feared and loathed as being "elitist" and ripe for destruction. Choral music was often replaced wholesale by monody. That is, single-line music with instrumental accompaniment – almost always an electric organ. This led to the absurd contemporary spectacle of cantors – often egged on by an admiring clergy – singing so-called "congregational" music solo, or practically so, amplified by ever more powerful public address systems, which serves only to belie the fact that the congregation cannot, or do not want, to participate in this way.

So it was almost inevitable that, despite the manifest intention of the Council Fathers to preserve the "sacred treasury" of music built up by the Church through the ages, that very treasury should be driven from the Church, in the perpetual search for something new. Now, in the fullness of time, our folly in this sad saga of artistic deconstruction has become clear, rendering our worship commonplace and often uninspiring.

If that is the cause of the problem, what is its cure? Is it simply a contest between "good" and "bad" music,

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between what Professor Day has described as "reformed folk" and high art? Is one kind of music to be preferred to all others, and are those others to be excluded from worship? The answer must surely be "no". Such a course would only perpetuate the



so-called "liturgy wars", which have raged in America for decades, between musicians and so-called "liturgists" of either faction. It turns us against each other without justification, and produces nothing but the scandal of division at the Lord's table.

The answer, surely, is education. At present, Catholics in Australia are often denied access to the simplest musical education at parish level, which would enable them to appreciate – or even perform – the art which is their culture and heritage. It is here that the parish choir tradition, for which the Anglican Church is famous, provides a valuable example. Children in an ordinary English village have a much better chance of joining a properly directed parish choir than do children in Australia, regardless of denomination. In a properly formed and instructed choir, they can learn basic skills of music reading and voice production, and of singing in multiple parts, accompanied and unaccompanied. They are exposed to an artistic repertoire stretching from chant to the present day, which can form the basis for more detailed study later, or just for exploring the artistic riches of their cultural heritage in adulthood.

It is this culture which produces the great musicians of the English cathedrals, and of the world-renowned college choirs of Oxford and Cambridge universities, of which the choirs of King's College and St. John's College are but examples. We in Australia would do well to emulate this parish tradition, and to encourage its higher development at our university colleges and cathedrals. It means investment, yes, but of a much more modest character than setting up professional choir schools of paid singers outside the cathedrals. It is a practical goal. It has the potential to disseminate musical learning to a far greater cross-section of Christians than currently, and to feed our cathedral choir schools with already formed musicians, capable of greater artistic achievement by reason of their learning and experience. Education itself will in time create the demand for a higher standard of musical worship, ensuring that the vision of the Council Fathers is achieved.

For this to occur, there must first be a change of heart among those entrusted with the administration of the affairs of the Church. What is needed is a

new-found respect – echoing and giving effect to that of the Council Fathers – for tradition, for learning, and for the proper place of high art in our worship.

So, from where will this initiative come? It has already started in the right place – that is, in Rome. In a hierarchical organisation like the Church, reform often has a greater chance of success if it comes from the top. Peter Phillips is right in looking to Benedict for artistic salvation, and right to hope that, from Benedict, it will come. One must remember, however, that Benedict is not young. Let us hope that reform will come soon.

- Benedict XVI, letter dated 7 July 2007 addressed to the Bishops of the world, accompanying the *Motu Proprio, Summorum Pontificum*. The latter authorised the more general celebration of the Tridentine mass as published in the Roman Missal of 1962, as the extraordinary expression of the Latin rite, alongside the “ordinary expression” of the same rite, as published in the post-Vatican II Roman Missal of 1970 (“Novus Ordo”). Both are in Latin, but the latter has been translated into the vernacular, and celebrated in parishes around the world from the 1970’s to the present day.
- For a trenchant critique of the current situation in Sydney, see Peter Phillips’ article, “*Beyond words: Sing in the Pews*”, *The Spectator*, 16 January 2008.
- Translated in A. Flannery O.P. (ed), *Vatican Council II: Constitutions Decrees Declarations*, New York 1996.
- The recommendation of the Council made at its 22nd sitting on 17 September 1562 read as follows: “Ab ecclesiis vero musicas eas, ubi sive organo, sive cantu lascivium aut impurum aliquid miscetur, item saeculares omnes actiones, vana atque adeo profana colloquia, arceant ut domus Dei vere domus orationis esse videatur ac dici possit.” [Let them exclude from churches those pieces of music, whether sung or played, which are tainted with anything sensual or impure, and all things secular, and vain or even blasphemous utterances, so that the house of God may be seen to be, and may truly be called, a house of prayer.] (Author’s translation)
- Baini, G., *Memorie storico-critiche della vita e dell’ opera di Giovanni Pierluigi de Palestrina*, Rome, 1828. For critiques of Baini’s account, see Stove, *Palestrina: Prince of Music*, Sydney 1990, page 46; Pyne, *Palestrina: His life and times*, New York 1970, page 47ff; and Coates, *Palestrina*, London 1948, page 11 et seq.
- The official version of Gregorian chant in the Tridentine era was the *Editio Medicaea* published in 1614, which was essentially reprinted by Friederich Pustet as the Regensburg edition of 1871. Though completed after Palestrina’s death in 1594, this grew out of the papal commission to him and Zoilo of 25 October 1577, to conform the chants of the day to the new *Breviarum Romanum* (1568) and *Missale Romanum* (1570), prepared on the recommendations of the Council of Trent. For the text of the commission, see Strunk, *Source Readings in Music History*, New York 1950. It was not until the *Motu Proprio* issued by Pius X in 1903 that the scholarly revisions of the chant by the monks of Solesmes were adopted as the official versions of the Church: see Wickerson, *The Story of Christian Music*, Oxford 1992, pages 126-127.

RICHARD PERRIGNON is an Australian Catholic musician with over 25 years experience in writing and directing sacred music in the liturgy. He is artistic director of Capella sublima, a performing ensemble which specialises in Renaissance polyphony, and a visiting choirmaster at St. Mary’s Cathedral, Sydney. He was Director of Music at the former Dominican Priory at Wahroonga, Sydney, from 1998 to 2006. He is a Fellow of St John’s College within the University of Sydney.



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– Editor, *Annals*

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1. A Journalist's view of Cardinal Pell's Recent Book on Church and State

UNAPOLOGETIC APOLOGETICS

Reviewed by IAN MACDONALD



SLIM VOLUME. Or more exactly lean but not mean, and intellectually high calibre due to concise writing that compresses into 174 pages an eight-page bibliography [from Brian Appleyard's, *Understanding the Present* to Sacha Zimmermann's *On Human Nature*].

As the title indicates, a key element of the essays is the biblical rendering to Caesar and to God as manifested in the separation of Church and State.

In his introduction, the author writes that Catholics in Australia welcomed the separation initially, 'as some protection against an Anglican-Protestant majority, quietly ignoring the encyclical of Pius X *Vehementer nos* of February 1906 which condemned the separation of Church and State as a supreme injustice done to God.'

The 10 essays (edited by MA Casey) are grouped under two main headings: *Catholicism and Democracy* and *Faith, Reason and Life*.

In the first of the 10, *Law and Morality*, the author asks the question: 'Is defending life on the basis of the inviolable dignity of the person really the same as imposing one's personal moral views on the rest of the community?'

And responds: 'If it is, then the same must hold for laws against genocide and slavery and unjust discrimination which are also based on the inviolable dignity of the person.'

Having set up his point of logic, he hammers it home: 'If opposition to abortion or euthanasia is no more than a "personal" matter, a product of idiosyncratic religious or moral beliefs, then so too is opposition to slavery and genocide. It is an interesting indication of the depths of our confusion that while a legislator who was personally opposed to the

God and Caesar, Selected Essays on Religion, Politics & Society.

By Cardinal George Pell. Conor Court Publishing, rrp \$29.95.

legalisation of slavery but voted for it anyway would be regarded as a humbug, a legislator who does the same thing on abortion is treated as a moral hero.'

The State and Welfare of the Soul

ATHIRD liberal error consists in denying that civil society has itself an end not only of a material but also of a moral order. ... if civil society has not itself an end in the moral order, it does not of itself postulate – always presupposing the elevation of man to the supernatural order – its subordination to the society entrusted with the task of leading souls to the supreme supernatural end, and any such subordination would then be doing violence to civil society. This error is as categorically condemned by the teaching of Leo XIII as by St. Thomas Aquinas. 'Nature itself,' says Leo XIII, 'cries out that society ought to give the citizen the means and facility of living honourably, that is to say according to the laws of God. Governments are strictly bound to take steps to secure, by the wisdom of their legislation, not only exterior advantages and benefits, but also and above all the welfare of the soul.'

– Jacques Maritain, *The Things that are not Caesar's*, London, Sheed & Ward, 1930, 'On Liberalism,' p.138, quoting Pope Leo XIII's Encyclical on Human Liberty [*Libertas*].

The passage is typical of the author's general approach: he is ready, willing and able to tackle opponents on their own terms. In his third essay, *Catholicism and the Architecture of Freedom* he displays another facet of his approach.

Through his office, he is a pontifex - a bridge-builder - and he demonstrates this by linking British Prime Minister Lord Rosebery's ignoring of the unrepealed religious tests against Catholics to ensure that John, Lord Acton, scion of a recusant family, entered Cambridge in 1894.

Acton's Cambridge advent, he further links to Vatican II and his memory of Boston's Cardinal Cushing reminding the council fathers of Acton's, 'freedom is the highest political end' - 'a sentiment that the council partly endorsed in its Declaration of Religious Freedom, *Dignitas humanae*.'

Such linkages he multiplies in traversing his topics. In his eighth essay, *The Case for God*, he quotes the atheist scientist JBS Haldane on what the latter deduced about the nature of the Creator from his creation: 'An inordinate fondness for beetles.'

Having credited Haldane with 'urbane derision', he points out that the response is at odds with the open mind of other eminent scientists, citing Einstein who said that with every advance the physicist finds himself, 'astonished to notice how sublime order emerges from chaos'.

Apropos, he refers to Professor Russell Stannard's point that God is not an object that exists, in the way we might speak of an apple existing, and goes on: 'To ask' 'who created God?' is, strictly speaking, meaningless because it confuses things that exist with the source of existence. Likewise to try to think of God before space and time came into existence, before the Big Bang, is to make the mistake that God

exists only in time. Certainly God can be found in time – every time we pray in fact – but God is also beyond time. This is what we mean when we say God is eternal, although we are likely to become confused on this point if we make the mistake of thinking that eternity simply means limited time, rather than the reality that transcends time.

The name Pell has become synonymous with thought-provoking. Take his introductory reference, mentioned above, to Pius X's *Vehementer nos* being quietly ignored. Doesn't separation of Church and State entail a risk of Orwellian 'double think' when Catholic politicians have in conscience to cope with political exigencies in conflict with Catholic doctrine?

Such double-think crosses party lines on embryo stem cell research and the social justice encyclicals. Nor is double-think confined to Catholics. It tends to be forgotten that a kind of double-think enabled the Lutheran Dietrich Bonhoeffer to live initially with Naziism. His heroism was not instant; it was hammered into him on the anvil of Hitlerian neo-paganism as the banality of evil became more blatant in its cruelties, some of them scientific.

In other words, the separation of Church and State, like the separation of powers, is an ideal not an absolute, otherwise why Edmund Burke's remark: 'Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgement, and he betrays it, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion.'

It may be the word 'separation' itself is inept. Symbiosis (pilot fish and shark, say) better defines the relationship of Church and State. And lack of creative tension between rendering to Caesar and to God can mean theocracy: John Calvin's in Geneva and earlier Muhammed's in Mecca and Yathrib (renamed Medina), later structured on the concept of a spiritual/temporal caliphate, again being preached with explosive vigour by the likes of Osama bin Laden.

There have also been, it must be said, secularocracies: Stalin's, Hitler's and Mao's totalitarian states. And potential secularocracies in Money as

Not a Democracy

CHRISTIANITY ... did not attempt to reform the world in the sense of the social idealist. It did not try to destroy the Roman Empire, or to abolish slavery. It simply brought a new principle of life to the human race. As Robert Wilberforce, one of the ablest, if the least remembered, of the converts of the Oxford Movement puts it: 'It was as when the seeds of plants, which have lain dormant during the cold of winter, are quickened into life by the warmth of spring. For the long winter of heathenism had passed away; the Sun of Righteousness had arisen; it was the spring-time of the new creation ... Thus, he goes on to point out, the new life found organic expression in a new society: 'The Church was not a mere democratic confederacy, having its principle of union in the consent of mankind; but it was the infusing into the world of a supernatural life. . . . The Church did not derive its existence from the consent or necessities of mankind, but from the Incarnation of the Son of God.'

– Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State*, London, Sheed and Ward, 1935, pp.-112-113.

the measure of all things or Nature given absolute precedence over humanity.

The fifth essay, *Is There Only Secular Democracy?*, gives the author a chance to show his willingness to take on heavies such as Nietzsche, 'master of dubious aphorisms'. Specifically he knocks Nietzsche's remark that what doesn't kill us makes us stronger.

'For most of us, however,' the author writes, 'and for most of man's history, it is truer to say that what does not kill us we learn to live with.'

Television and its free-ranging schedules including bestiality, he suggests, is one of the things we have learned to live with. Artificial contraception is another.

'The limitlessness of freedom in secular democracy is also the limitlessness of power. It is not a matter of state surveillance, although that is also becoming an issue as secularism seeks to impose through administrative and judicial means certain "enforcible understandings" on issues such as homosexuality.'

Against this, the author posits what he calls 'democratic personalism' based on the transcendent dignity of the person - 'perhaps the last alternative to secular democracy within Western culture as it is presently configured.'

He does not burke the issue of other possibilities, particularly Islam, adducing the small but growing conversion of native Westerners within Western societies to suggest that Islam

may provide in the 21st century what Communism provided in the 20th, a focus, 'both for those who are alienated or embittered on the one hand, and for those who seek order or justice on the other'.

In the 10th essay, *Human Dignity, Human Rights, and Moral Responsibility* the author concludes: 'Pope John Paul II, especially in *Veritas splendor* and *Evangelium vitae*, has made an invaluable contribution to this long struggle in which we are privileged to participate, not least by reminding us and underscoring the unbreakable linkage between God, truth and freedom.'

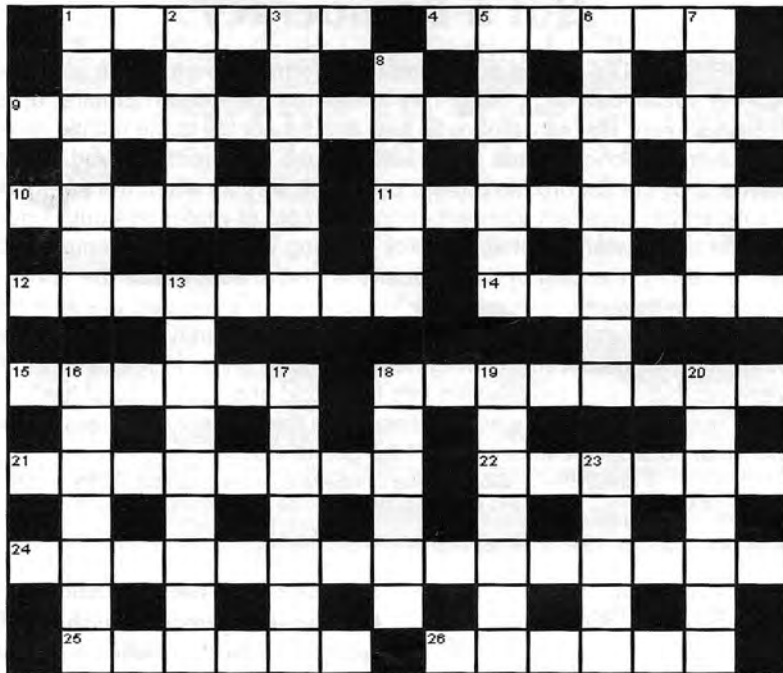
Timely. And timeless as emphasised by Monsignor Brian E Ferme's foreword with its scholarly reference to the impact on the civilised world of the sacking of Rome in 410AD as if it had happened yesterday.

God and Caesar is a work for news and views journalists, for concerned individuals of all faiths, and for atheists whose faith is the faith beyond belief. Universities, including Catholic universities, seeking set texts should acquire it for their reading lists.

Not only does it treat of crucial topics but it is written in an exemplary plain, jargon-free style that may aid students whose CVs list Remedial English.

On and off the playing field, Cardinal George Pell has sustained hard knocks. Here he takes the highest of marks: a Cazaly of literature in

ANNALS CROSSWORD No. 52



ACROSS CLUES

1. Christian festival (6)
4. A roll of parchment, paper, etc., usually inscribed with writing (6)
9. Christi eleison (6,4,5)
- 10 & 11. Patron of social justice (Feast day 3rd Nov) (6,2,6)
12. Indecent; improper (8)
14. Acts of civil disobedience (3-3)
15. Underground burial places (6)
18. Name taken by successor of Pope John Paul II (8)
21. Indifferent; unsympathetic (8)
22. Acting in a gloomy and aimless manner (6)
24. Take an oath in court (5,2,3,5)
25. Elegant in attire (6)
26. Either of two books of the Apocrypha (6)

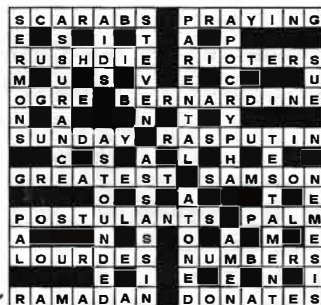
DOWN CLUES

1. The younger son of Joseph (7)
2. A canonised person (5)
3. Friendly understanding between parties (7)
5. One of the Apostles joined by Jesus on the road to Emmaus (7)
6. Assessed too highly (9)
7. A reading desk or support in a church (7)
8. Brigand (6)

13. An institution for abandoned children (9)

16. Restored (7)
17. Seamen (7)
18. Narrow minded and intolerant people (6)
19. Fourth book of the old testament (7)
20. Tapers (7)
23. The deputy head of a monastery or abbey (5)

SOLUTION TO NO. 51



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defence of reason and faith, the sword and shield of human freedom.

2. An Educator's view of Cardinal Pell's Recent Book on Church and State

Reviewed by SUSAN MOORE

IN VIEW of the common cry that religious leaders should stay out of politics and keep their opinions to themselves, the publication of Cardinal George Pell's *God and Caesar, Selected*

Essays on Religion, Politics, and Society is welcome indeed.

From the start George Pell compellingly argues that those who consider reasoned discourse an essential feature of civilised life should actively engage in the public discussion of moral issues. On such vital matters as the connection between freedom and human rights, the relationship of law to morality, the difference between imposing one's views and airing them, and the link between soundly conceived

legal systems and natural law, he is lively, judicious, engaging, and lucid.

Underlying Cardinal George Pell's diverse and illuminating observations about public life is the view that human freedom cannot be separated from the love of truth. What this means in practice is that there is no place in well-ordered societies for an isolated individualism indifferent to service to others, and to the concept of human solidarity underlying devotion to the common good. Unless the need to uphold the dignity of all human beings is authentically embraced, there can be no domestic and public prosperity.

Among the more interesting points made early on, in a discussion of law and morality, is that complete reliance upon empiricism is self-defeating. Despite the obvious importance of empirical data, George Pell insists, it is the values underlying empiricism that matter most. During a period in which threats to marriage and the family are everywhere in evidence, it is vitally important that people of faith, who know the importance of loving marriages and loving homes, speak out fearlessly on issues whose philosophical underpinnings impinge in crucial ways on the lives of children.

For the sake of a future worth having, good citizenship must be anchored in virtue. Appropriately conceived, political activism is not the rightful province of relativists, nihilists, or hedonists. Lay people who have been taught the difference between principle and ideology therefore have a vital civic role to play. Solid instruction in the civil structures that facilitate justice must be undertaken by knowledgeable religious thinkers so that sound theory and practice are complementary, living realities.

Active believers, *God and Caesar* makes clear, are *passionately* committed to goodness and truth. If their civic passion is genuine, they have a well-defined grasp of proportion, a sense of responsibility, and a capacity to engage with reality in a spirit of concentration and inner serenity. To give others a genuinely fair go, they are prepared to work long and hard, to suffer for others, and to take for granted the fact that they are not going to be thanked for the sacrifices that they are prepared as matter of course to make.

Reflection on the inordinately large number of murders that took place in the last century demonstrates that the underlying source of unspeakable carnage has been a mendacious view of human nature and a corresponding failure to appreciate each and every human person. On the most useful correctives to the mind-forged manacles responsible for countless, senseless, 20th-century deaths, no contemporary thinker is cited more often in these essays than John Paul II—not least, because of his intimate experience of Nazism and its effect on the Poland of his youth.

Bearing in mind the degree of contemporary confusion about the primacy of conscience and the desirability of doing one's own thing, Cardinal Pell's reminders about the late, great Pope's insistence that conscientious choice must be congruent with centuries of Church teaching are particularly useful. For good reason, George Pell insists that it is folly to believe that our consciences are better than those of our ancestors, or to claim that we know more than centuries of magisterial teaching have disclosed about the good life.

Although the secular minds that dominate academic and media thinking about civic issues appear uninterested in the origins of the values that have shaped life in universities, hospitals, and schools, it is an incontrovertible fact that Christian assumptions about human dignity have played a vital role in all of these institutions from the beginning. How these assumptions can best be sustained in milieus that are increasingly hostile to religious thought is a question not easily answered. But it is obvious that the active involvement of lay believers in institutional management is key.

Bearing in mind the melancholy fact that dogmatic secular liberals have tried very hard to exclude religious voices from dialogue about how key institutions are run, a more thoroughgoing emphasis on what Cardinal Pell calls *democratic personalism*—adherence to a belief in the transcendent dignity of the human person—is required. To supplant the fearful championing of individual autonomy at the expense of the common good, the resurgence of

By their Fruit you will know them

CLOSE your ears then if anyone preaches to you without speaking of Jesus Christ – flee for your very life from these men; they are poisonous growths with a deadly fruit and one taste of it is speedily fatal. They are none of the Father's planting; if they were they could at once be known for true branches of the cross, and there would be no corruption in their fruit.

– St Ignatius of Antioch [martyred 107 AD] 'Letter to the Trallians,' *Roman Breviary*, Second Reading at matins for Wednesday in the 27th week of the year.

hope must be a high priority. At the grassroots level, this of course means that communities must be welcoming, and must value and protect diverse contributions to equity and well-being.

To the extent that John Paul II's *Theology of the Body*, and its concomitant focus on the goodness in human beings anchored in our divine origin, is understood and accepted, pro-life forces in modern culture will gain momentum. For this to happen on the scale required, however, believers who know from their lives that faith works must be candid about the congruence of an informed conscience and God's law. Unmistakably, they must adhere to the view that one opinion is not as good as another, and that the most vulnerable members of society are and must continue to be protected by limits on the human will.

What some of these key limits are, *God and Caesar* makes attractively clear. Without oversimplifying, or ignoring the most potent secular arguments commonly posed, Cardinal Pell dramatises the organic relationship of faith, plain speech, and intellectual acuity. His book is a must for everyone who believes that in political life, every player has a moral agenda—and that, therefore, the last thing people of faith can afford to do is absent themselves from lively involvement in political activity.

The Vicar of Bray

[Benefits of Political Correctness]

IN GOOD KING Charles's golden days,
When loyalty no harm meant;
A zealous High Churchman was I,
And so I got preferment.
To teach my flock I never missed,
Kings were by God appointed,
And damn'd are those that dare resist,
Or touch the Lord's anointed.
And this is law, I will maintain
Until my dying day, sir,
That whatsoever king may reign,
Still I'll be the Vicar of Bray, sir!

When Royal James obtained the crown,
And popery came in fashion;
The Penal Laws I hooted down,
And read the Declaration:
The Church of Rome, I found would fit,
Full well my constitution,
And had become a Jesuit,
But for the Revolution.

And this is law, I will maintain
Until my dying day, sir,
That whatsoever king may reign,
Still I'll be the Vicar of Bray, sir!

When William was our King declared,
To ease the nation's grievance;
With this new wind about I steered
And swore to him allegiance:
All principles I did revoke,
Set conscience at a distance,
Passive obedience was a joke,
A jest was non-resistance.

And this is law, I will maintain
Until my dying day, sir,
That whatsoever king may reign,
Still I'll be the Vicar of Bray, sir!

The illustrious House of Hanover,
And Protestant succession,
To these I do allegiance swear,
While they can keep possession:
For in my faith, and loyalty,
I never more will falter,
And George, my lawful king shall be,
Until the times do alter.

And this is law, I will maintain
Until my dying day, sir,
That whatsoever king may reign,
Still I'll be the Vicar of Bray, sir!

– *The British Musical Miscellany*,
Volume I, 1734. Text as found in
R. S. Crane, *A Collection of English
Poems 1660-1800*. New York: Harper
& Row, 1932.



IN a concert recorded in the 1970s the lead singer of Led Zeppelin, Robert Plant, broke off from singing *Stairway to Heaven* and plaintively asked, 'Does anyone remember laughter?' If those present had forgotten, then Plant's rather self-important and fey delivery must surely have jogged their memory. But the remark occasioned no hilarity, indeed it seemed to have been received with due reverence. And why not?

After all, in our consumer world of entertainment, mocking laughter is something of a piety and a sense of black humour marks one out as being virtuous.

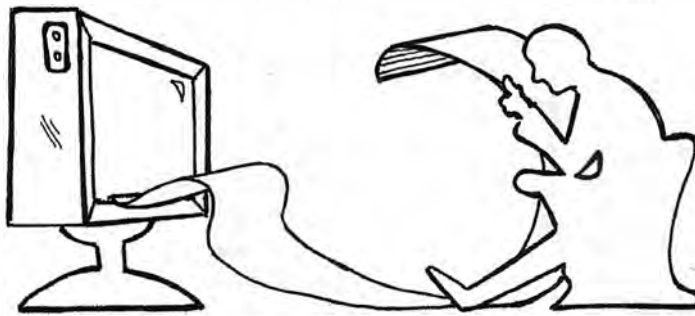
In our entertainment-oriented world, mockery is higher even than religion. All things sacred must be subject to its reach. All is a fit object for mirth. If you cannot laugh at yourself or your beliefs then you must be a humourless fundamentalist fit only for Maximum Security, to be released when you can treat your faith with the requisite degree of derision. Then you will be tolerant, intelligent, and a good Aussie.

Mockery is a passion, and like every other passions it is habit forming and able to be easily manipulated, which is why it's the soul of entertainment. Like sex and violence, mockery sells. The bigger the laugh the bigger the audience and the bigger the take. That, in a nutshell, is the kind of logic which informs our world of free-market and consumer ideology.

Because mockery sells so well it's accorded every honour: we are told it's a levelling force and thus promotes egalitarianism; it dispels pretension; promotes good health; it even makes for good lovers!

But above all else mockery is an intellectual matter: if you can make a joke of something then you have effectively dispensed with it. To laugh at something is to disprove it. And, it's in this spirit that the two terms "laughter" and "satire" have become synonyms. The fallacy behind such reasoning can be seen if we look at the TV show the *Chaser*.

Now, *Chaser* is *Jackass* with pretensions. It's the *Footy Show* without the drag but still with dress-ups: only the *Chaser* dresses itself up as satire. It does this by three simple ploys, ones that are all too common in contemporary comedy shows.



SATIRE AND THE ART OF CHASING RATINGS

By ROBERT TILLEY

Third, it confuses *Candid Camera* slapstick with being *challenging*. Thus, you intrude into people's beliefs and dignity, regardless of what they have or have not done. If they get angry or storm off then all the better, it's good TV. The current affairs programs championed this one and *Chaser* have followed their lead. Because mockery is the highest virtue when someone refuses to submit to it then they deserve derision: they're simply *not* 'one of us'.

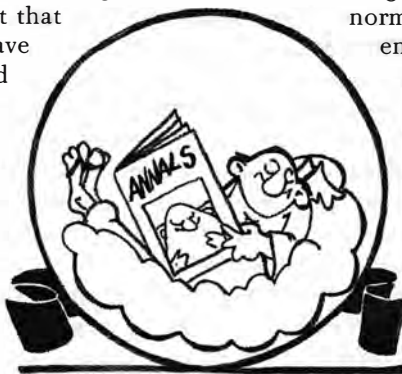
Genuine satire requires higher standards than those of the objects of one's scorn. Mockery requires no such standards. Truth is the concern of satire; mockery's concern is entertainment. What, then, of *Chaser*?

It was revealed - by Channel 7 I think - that *Chaser* had routinely lied - many of its stunts were faked. Many of those puzzled and outraged victims were in on the joke. In defending itself *Chaser* answered with a joke. It showed an obviously false stunt as if all the fake ones were just as obvious. But they weren't, of course. In other words, *Chaser* added lie to lie. The thing is it didn't matter one bit, in fact their ratings went up! What's more, Channels 7 and 9 stepped up their attempt to lure *Chaser* from the ABC to work for them. And this is satire? Rather, it's Crazy Home Videos with an edge.

Satire is about wit and unmasking corruption.

Mocking laughter lets everything proceed as normal. Satire is known by the powerful enemies it makes; whereas mockery is profitable and is known by its ratings. 'Woe to you when men speak well of you,' might be the motto of all satirists. But it could only be so if the satirists in question had a keen sense of something that was more sacred than laughter. Which is to say, something higher than ratings.

ROBERT TILLEY is a regular contributor to *Annals*.



Blindsight

Take one blind teacher Sbrive Tenberken who, refused admission to a German aid group, journeys to Tibet and sets up Braille Without Borders and a school for the blind in Lhasa where blindness is considered a transmigrational curse and/or a sign of worthlessness.

Add blind American climber Erik Wiehenmeyer who made it to the top of Everest and the cover of *Time* magazine. Together they decide, aided by sighted colleagues, to climb in the Himalayas, their objective Lhakpa Ri - Stormy Mountain - 23,000 feet high as against Everest's 29,035 feet.

Beyond extreme for they also decide to take a group of six blind children: Kyila, Sonam Bumtso, Tashi, Gyenshen, Dachung and Tenzin.

From this fact-stranger-than-fiction base, director Lucy Walker, producer Sybil Robson-Orr, director of photography Petr Cikhard and their team have fashioned a documentary of unrivalled potency, conquest turning to something more valuable as the children and their guides climb step by oxygen-starved step in growing confidence and care for each other, the latter dictating the final outcome. Not to be missed.

PG★★★★★ SFFV

Closing the Ring

The ring of the title links Northern Ireland's recent troubles and the crash of a B-17 bomber into Belfast's Cave Mountain during World War II. The context is a transgenerational love story involving Ethel Ann Roberts (in youth Mischa Barton, in age Shirley MacLaine) and three US airmen Teddy (Stephen Amell), Jack (in youth Greg Smith, in age Christopher Plummer) and Chuck (David Alpay) all of whom love Ethel Ann.

Into this basic plot, director Richard Attenborough and scriptwriter Peter Woodward interweave the story of Belfast lad Jimmy (Martin McCann) and Quinlan (Pete Postlethwaite) who scavenge the bomber's buried wreckage and find the ring, used in a secret wedding ceremony by Teddy and Ethel Ann.

From his players, the old master Attenborough (born 1923) draws

MOVIES

By JAMES MURRAY

superlative performances in crafting a piece, polished with the beeswax of nostalgia and lustrous with tears of reconciliation.

MA★★★★NFFV

Bella

Director Alejandro Monteverde's own story is skin-of-the-teeth stuff. When he applied to the University of Texas, he could speak no English yet got himself a degree.

Unsurprisingly, his romantic comedy drama is imbued with a sense of struggle against odds. His hero Jose (Eduardo Verasteguil), fallen from football stardom, works as a cook at his brother's Mexican restaurant in New York. A waitress Nina (Tammy Blanchard) is fired. Jose sides with her.

They spend time together and in so doing their pasts emerge and a potential future, both in different ways haunted by a child. Verasteguil and Blanchard make an amiable couple, Monteverde splicing their story strands together to create a captivating ending.

It betrays no plot twists to add that the movie by implication, rather than explicitly, sends an eloquent message against abortion.

PG★★★★SFFV

In the Shadow of the Moon

Simple but brilliant premise. Interview all the surviving American astronauts who made it to the moon.

The documentary's authenticity derives less from awesome, space technology than from the fact that the astronauts are now of grandfather age so that it as if they are passing on to posterity a great saga for folkloric remembrance.

The documentary has conclusive words for conspiracy nuts who allege that the first moon landing was a hoax carried out in an aircraft hangar. If it was indeed a hoax, why carry it out five more times, a sixth effort resulting in the death of the crew?

G★★★★SFFV

The Bucket List

Mix Jack Nicholson and his gravy-train grin with Morgan Freeman and his gravitas and what have you got? If you're director Rob Reiner, you've got the most gag-packed yet profound comedy since Jack Lemmon teamed with Walter Matthau in Neil Simon's *The Odd Couple*.

Nicholson plays hospital tycoon Edward Cole, Freeman mechanic Carter Chambers. Cancer brings them together in a two-bed ward of a hospital owned by Cole.

Reiner and writer Justin Zackham are too shrewd a couple to avoid fear and pain as context for comedy. And in Nicholson and Freeman they have a brace of pros at the top of their form, taking off on a spree outlined in the title list, better understood as the kick-the-bucket list.

The comedy mixes road movie, romance and family elements as well as questions of faithfulness and faith. In addition, there's schmaltz. But Reiner adds it subtly like vermouth in a fine dry Martini.

M★★★★NFFV

The Great Debaters

Nobility is not generally a word associated with movies. Denzel Washington in his debut as director and in the lead role of Melvin Tolsen, activist professor at a Deep South college in the 1920s attains it.

His subject matter, debating is not obviously visual. But fine performances from his African-American co-stars, Forest Whitaker, Nate Parker, June Smollett and Jermaine Williams, playing from the heart as well as the head, ensure that the movie is never less than compelling. (Oprah Winfrey adds a little help as executive producer and main financial backer).

The climax - a debate on violence versus civil disobedience with a white team from Harvard - drives home the message, true then, true now: education is the way forward.

M★★★★NFFV

Feast of Love

More lust than love, observed by a genial professor Harry Stevenson (Morgan Freeman) living happily with his elegant wife Esther (Jane

Alexander), their happiness marred by memories of an only son who died of a heroin overdose.

Everyone, except Harry and his missus, stoops to stripping in director Robert (*Kramer V Kramer*) Benton's romance, scripted by Allison Burnett, based on Charles Baxter's novel of the same title.

Some, however, may see it more as an Oregon campus version of the French classic, *La Ronde*. Coffee shop owner Bradley Smith (Greg Kinnear) and his wife Kathryn (Selma Blair) are first on the carousel until she leaves him for another softball player, Jenny (Stana Katic).

Bradley, hope triumphing over experience, takes up with a tough, real estate agent Diana (Radha Mitchell, smiling delightfully, no monsters in sight only a few clichés). Bradley is again bereft when she leaves him for her longtime married lover David (Billy Burke).

In the coffee shop, Chloe (Alexa Davalos) romances the ill-fated Oscar (Toby Hemingway) bullied by his drunken Pa (Fred Ward).

Result: a denouement which does not quite mesh with the lusty opening: Harry and Esther play surrogate parents to Chloe and grandparents to her unborn child. Not so implausible if you look next door.

MA15+★★NFFV

Juno

Girl, Juno MacGuff (Ellen Page) meets boy, Paulie Bleeker (Michael Cera). A child is conceived. How Juno, 16, copes with the problem is the burden of this tragi-comedy, written by the pseudonymous Diablo Cody and directed by Jason Reitman.

It's an ensemble piece also starring Allison Janney and JK Simmons as Juno's supportive stepmother and father plus Olivia Thirlby as her friend in need, Leah.

Yet every ensemble is held together by one player, the gold in a circlet of diamonds. Ellen Page is that player, at once knowing and innocent, cool and nervous, wry and sweet in a performance that puts her in Oscar contention with Cate Blanchett.

Discreet abortion is an initial, plot option. Juno is confronted by a placard-wielder outside the abortion

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.

clinic who informs her foetuses have fingernails and is further deterred by the matter-of-fact atmosphere of the clinic.

So to the adoption option, the closed, not open, variety involving Jennifer Garner and Jason Bateman as a MacMansion couple eager for parenthood. But as birth time approaches, he decides he is not ready for fatherhood.

The baby delivered, Juno has a further decision to make. The solution is not perfect and is linked to a sentimental reconciliation between Juno and Paulie, enabling them, not to live happily ever after, merely strum guitars together.

In their solution, however, Cody and Reitman do propose the idea, shocking to some, that an illegitimate birth and adoption is to be preferred to a legitimised death.

M★★★NFFV

Sweeney Todd: the Demon Barber of Fleet Street

Give director Tim Burton a choice between overdoing the bizarre or the grotesque, and he is prepared to compromise; he overdoes both. In his version of Steven Sondheim's musical, even in the opening credits blood runs more copiously than plonk at El Vino.

By the time Todd (Johnny Depp) and Mrs Lovett (Helena Bonham-Carter) have sung their way into their pie shop joint venture, the

Fleet River is as scarlet as the sins of dastard Judge Turpin (Alan Rickman) and his raffish henchman Beadle Bamforth (Timothy Spall in a turn cutely reminiscent of WC Fields's Mr Micawber in *David Copperfield*).

Sacha Baron Cohen comes on as a flamboyant, rival barber, Pirelli, threatening to expose Todd as Benjamin Barker, an escaped convict sentenced to the term of his natural life in Australia by Judge Turpin who coveted his wife Lucy (Laura Michelle Kelly) and infant daughter, Joanna.

John Logan's script deftly integrates sub-plots of young love and orphan loyalty. Melodramatic stuff as strong as the meat in Mrs Lovett's pies.

The singing of Sondheim's tricky music and lyrics is, however, mostly in the key of try-hard, Burton deploying special effects to disguise inadequacies the way Luciano Pavarotti deployed his white handkerchief.

Certainly the singing is not of the class displayed by the great Peter Carroll and Geraldine Turner in the Australian theatre production presented by Wilton Morley and Peter Davis in the 1980s

Intriguing to see expatriate talent getting a run in the movie's early sequences. Cockroaches are not up to the rigours of the British climate. The ones that infest Mrs Lovett's pishop are clearly talented denizens of Sydney, given honorary Cockney status.

No sign of Fleet Street's main traders in pre-Murdoch days: hacks. Pity. This reviewer has long held the theory that Sweeney Todd, when not razor-slashing throats, was cutting copy as a sub-editor on *The Police Gazette*.

MA15+★★★NFFV

Cloverfield

Director Matt Reeves and writer Drew Goddard share the distinction of possibly the most awesome monster movie yet created. Director of photography Michael Bonvillain's camera work is seemingly and appropriately hand-held amateurish in the opening sequence.

This is a wild a 20-minute party scene, prelude to a group of survivors trying to escape the obligatory monster which comes on like an overgrown,

ill-tempered jelly-baby, announcing its explosive advent by hurling the head of the Statue of Liberty, like a huge bowling ball, into downtown Manhattan.

Thunderous, seat-shaking sound effects add to the IMAX scale of events which also include the collapse of the Brooklyn Bridge. The documentary sense is intensified by a cast of relative unknowns: Lizzy Caplan, Jessica Lucas, TJ Miller, Michael Stahl-David, Mike Vogel and Odette Yustman.

Strictly for schlock-horror fans with their own high-decibel ear-plugs.

M★★★NFFV

American Gangster

Carpet-bag title for a thriller in which director Ridley Scott crams every variety of the cops and robbers genre, from early Warner Brothers efforts involving George Raft to Francis Ford Coppola's, *The Godfather* series, and its television derivative, *The Sopranos*.

Heavy baggage. Scott's stars, Denzel Washington and Russell Crowe, shoulder it manfully. They play out the parts of the drug-dealer Frank Lucas who cut out middlemen during the Vietnam war period to become rich beyond the dreams of those whose lives he helped to wreck and Richie Roberts, the cop who put him behind bars, despite the intervention of allegedly crooked cops.

Scott makes much of Frank's rise from Italian mafia driver to African-American mafia kingpin complete with a big, ante-bellum mansion in which he lodges his Mamma (Ruby Dee) in a move that echoes Jimmy Cagney's line, 'Top of the world, Ma.'

Star power appears to shape the ending. Lucas cuts a deal with Roberts and co-operates in revealing the truth. This allows Ridley Scott to shift to a buddy sequence in which Washington gets to flash his trademark grin: Only kidding, folks.

(News note: in reality, the allegedly crooked cops have reached for their lawyers).

MA15+★★★NFFV

National Treasure: Book of Secrets

Buckingham Palace, the White House, the Library of Congress

Something to Remember

I cannot forget that, at a time when Celt and Saxon were alike savage, it was the *See of Peter* that gave both of them, first faith, then civilization; and then again bound them together in one by the seal of a joint commission to convert and illuminate in their turn the pagan continent. I cannot forget how it was from Rome that the glorious *St. Patrick* was sent to Ireland, and did a work so great that he could not have a successor in it, the sanctity and learning and zeal and charity which followed on his death being but the result of the one impulse which he gave. I cannot forget how, in no long time, under the fostering breath of the *Vicar of Christ*, a country of heathen superstitions became the very wonder and asylum of all people, the wonder by reason of its knowledge, sacred and profane, and the asylum of religion, literature and science, when chased away from the continent by the barbarian invaders.

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

and Mount Rushmore are stepping stones in the madcap plot of director Jon Turteltaub's sequel to *National Treasure* starring the same team: Franklin Gates, Abigail Chase and Riley Poole (Nicholas Cage, Diane Kruger and Justin Bartha).

Against them is pitted Ed Harris as a southerner who holds a clue to the whereabouts of a pre-Columbian City of Gold. Turteltaub mixes his hokum with humour and his pseudo-historical verbiage with thrills. The pseudo-history includes the revelation that Queen Victoria secretly backed the Confederates in the American Civil War.

No reason given. Perhaps she and her favourite prime minister, Benjamin Disraeli, wanted to incorporate the southern states into the British Empire as a guaranteed source of cotton for soldiers serving east of Suez.

PG★★★SFFV

The Darjeeling Limited

Whacky, screwball, inane: director Wes Anderson is all three. Plus funny as he takes estranged Whitman brothers, Francis, Peter and Jack (Owen Wilson, Adrien Brody and

Jason Schwartzman) on a bizarre and bazaar journey through India aboard a train that might have chuffed out of Rudyard Kipling's imagination.

A healing journey as it turns out when they meet their mother (Angelica Huston) at what appears to be an ecumenical Catholic convent in the Himalayas.

The stars, it must be said, are almost overcome by the main product placement: a magnificent set of mock-antique Louis Vuiton baggage, eventually disposed of, packed with their fraternal troubles.

M★★★NFFV

Hunting & Gathering

Camille (Audrey Tautou) is a Parisian waif but not a stray, a talented artist trapped in a dead-end job and an attic bedroom. Her life begins to change when she meets the aristocratic Philibert (Laurent Stocker) who occupies a grand, family apartment which is up for sale.

Director Claude Berri, working from Anna Gavalda's novel, is too magisterial a filmmaker to go for the expected change. He introduces Franck (Guillaume Canet) a chef as

What makes suicide bombers tick

The Death Dealers

I have the means to make myself deadly, but that in itself, you understand, is absolutely nothing in the way of protection. What is effective is the belief those people have in my will to use the means. That's their impression. It is absolute; Therefore I am deadly.'

'There are individuals of character amongst that lot too,' muttered Ossipon ominously.

'Possibly. But it is a matter of degree, obviously, since for instance, I am not impressed by them. Therefore they are inferior. They cannot be otherwise. Their character is built upon conventional morality. It leans on the social order. Mine stands free from everything artificial. They are bound in all sorts of conventions. They depend upon life which, in this connection, is a historical fact surrounded by all sorts of restraints and considerations; a complex organised fact open to attack at every point. Whereas I depend upon death which knows no restraint and cannot be attacked. My superiority is evident.'

— The 'Professor,' speaking to Ossipon about the work of suicidal anarchists, in Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent*, J.M. Dent, 1907 p.68.

surly as a salmon up the wrong river without a fin.

Eternal triangle? No way. Berri introduces Franck's grandma, Paulette (Francoise Bertin) whom he loves and cares for. Camille and Philibert aid him in his endeavour.

From his players, Berri draws contrasting but complementary performances, Stocker (associate of the Comedie Francaise) putting on a one-man act fit to halt the film in its sprockets.

There are further Berri twists on the way to a happy ending. You'll want to believe them.

M★★★NFFV

Two Days in Paris

Writer/director Julie Delpy co-stars as photographer Marion with Adam Goldberg as her boyfriend, Jack, in a comedy romance that sets out to explore the *joie de vivre* of Parisians by comparison with a buttoned-up Americans.

That Jack is a heavily tattooed, New York interior decorator does not quite

fit his horror at mould in a bathroom and eating rabbit casserole.

A real, New York decorator would probably try to improve the dish, if not offer mould-eating cockroaches from Park Avenue. Nonetheless, despite the aged nature of her material, Delpy does create a sprightly movie in which the new relationship is salvaged and old family ties enhanced.

MA15+★★★NFFV

Atonement

Based on Ian McEwan's novel, set in the country of the past where they do things differently, not far from the one created by LP Hartley in *The Go Between*.

In the McEwan version, the lovers are the upstairs lady, Cecilia Tallis (Keira Knightley) and her downstairs, but university educated, suitor Robbie Turner (James McAvoy). Their romance is betrayed by her jealous sister (Saoirse Ronan), establishing the context in which Turner is blamed and jailed when a gent's rough and tumble with a lady goes awry

Dunkirk scenes are central. Obviously time and money were spent but director Joe Wright overdoes the shambolic nature of the exercise. No sequences of the disciplined queues waiting to be taken off the beaches. None of the units that fought rearguard actions.

More, *Oh, What a Lovely War*. Or Mills and Boon with bombs, and a paen to the captivation of the English class system where atonement is attained through a novel by the sister, grown-up and famous (Vanessa Redgrave) in which Cecilia and Robbie enjoy the idyll they were prevented from having.

Neat literary trick but heretical, attributing to the pen a saving grace equivalent to that of the cross.

MA15+★★★NFFV

I Am Legend

More hit and myth. The difficulty is that director Frank Lawrence and scriptwriters Akiva Goldsman and Mark Protosevich have wrought a remake of remake of a remake, based on Richard Matheson's sci-fi novel, first published in 1954.

Sure the opening scenes of a deserted New York are eerily powerful. But overall the thriller lacks high definition even though the lead role of Dr Robert Neville, a virologist, is played with maximum star-power by Will Smith.

Neville does have a companion, Samantha, a German shepherd that looks like a descendant of Rin Tin Tin (saved from a German dug-out during World War I to star in Hollywood).

The thriller is another in the genre where a laboratory virus runs amok and turns people into wild, cannibalistic mutants. This computer generated sub-species, like Count Dracula, cannot face sunlight and comes out to slay only at night, baying like louts in search of lager.

Amid the horror, Lawrence offers a scene of ludicrous embarrassment: Dr Neville cradling the dying Samantha in his arms and weeping over her.

Without her, can he halt the mutants and save uninfected survivors? Broad hint: he is an army virologist and knows how to pull the pin on a grenade.

M★★NFFV

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Please Help Poor and Oppressed Youth attend World Youth Day 2008



The Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) will be assisting up to 100 youth from Sudan, Myanmar (formerly Burma) and other poor and oppressed countries, attend World Youth Day (WYD) in Sydney, 15 – 20 July 2008. Without financial assistance, youth from these poor and oppressed countries, would not be able to respond to the Pope's invitation for all youth of the world to attend WYD.

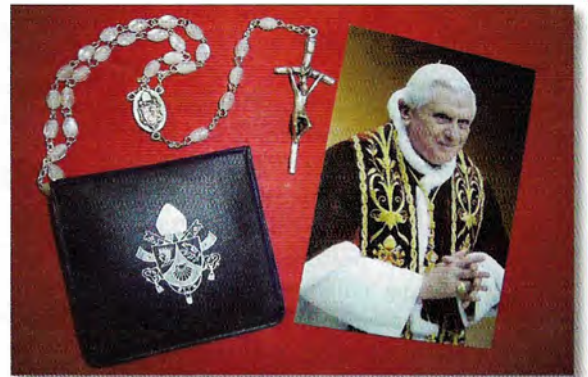
ACN sponsored the youth delegation, pictured left, to WYD in Cologne 2005. These young people from Sudan returned home and spread the good news of their meeting.

James Shawish will never forget the words of the Holy Father. "He encouraged us to feel united with God, our country and the world at large. He urged us to go and proclaim what we had heard to our friends, to their families and to share what we had experienced when we were together as brothers and sisters from all over the world."

Join us in Prayer with the Pope and for the success of World Youth Day

Anyone able to help this cause will be sent a complimentary Papal Rosary of Pope Benedict XVI, and a Holy card with a prayer for World Youth Day. We ask you to join the Holy Father and the Catholic community in prayer for the success of this unique and faith filled event.

To send your donation please fill out the coupon below and tick the box* if you would like to receive the complimentary Papal Rosary and prayer card.



Help Poor and Oppressed Youth attend World Youth Day 2008

Aid to the Church in Need, PO Box 6245 Blacktown DC NSW 2148

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

Any surplus donations we receive will be used for the youth apostolate in those countries where the Church is persecuted or suffering.

Kidnapping Children's imagination and disseminating Unbelief

BOWDLERISED COMPASS STILL SWINGS WILDLY AGAINST CHURCH

By JAMES MURRAY



IN the line of box-office hits based on JR Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, and CS Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia* comes *The Golden Compass*, adapted from Philip Pullman's *Northern Lights*, first of a cult trilogy.

Where the Tolkien and Lewis works are underpinned by a transcendent, Christian faith, however, Pullman's work has a murkier more atheistic sub-text.

Pullman, former Anglican Church choir boy, is on record as describing Tolkien's work as 'infantile' and Lewis's as 'ugly and poisonous,' signs of an overweening ambition, though his own work is derivative of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, from which he takes the trilogy's overall title, *His Dark Materials*.

This has given New Line Cinema (which also produced *The Lord of the Rings*) a problem not completely solved in the adaptation by writer/director Chris Weitz after the dropping of an earlier script by Tom Stoppard.

Weitz, a Cambridge University graduate, has been reported as saying: 'We bent over backwards, not so much to denude the story of its religious content, but to be considerate of people's feelings.'

So, instead of using the explicit, mocking reference to the Catholic Church from the book, Weitz seeks to fudge by positing a covert organisation, *The Magisterium*, with a plan for universal dominion.

Scarcely bending over backwards: the term *Magisterium* – teaching authority – is inseparable from, and historically synonymous with the Catholic Church.

How pertinent are suggestions that the work is anti-Christian in general and anti-Catholic in particular? When Pullman promoted it in book form, he had no hesitation in saying so.

Promoting the movie in line with the ambivalent adaptation by Weitz, Pullman has softened his stance – seemingly not having the courage of his non-convictions.

Intriguingly the book is published by Scholastic, the American company (with satellites in the UK and Australasia) which direct markets a range of reading books to schools, including Catholic schools.

Your reviewer remembers skimming them when his children brought them home from school and deciding that, although original, they were blandly American, and ensuring that his children also read more solid, classic fare.

One of the movie's stars, Nicole Kidman, bought into the debate by

saying she is a Catholic and would not do anything to harm her faith. Well said.

Sam Elliott, who plays a rough, tough, gruff space cowboy, was reportedly not so vehement. At the Cannes Film Festival his studio brief was to talk round the movie's religious aspects.

The movie does set a rattling pace, rattling being the operative word since the plot is ramshackle. When in doubt, Weitz conjures with superlative computer generated images. Among them are two polar bear warriors (voiced by the Ians, McKellen and McShane), leaders of rival tribes whose members give the impression of having wandered in from a Bundaberg Rum commercial for a punch-up.

These parallel universe special effects

Fake Diaries and BBC Educational Programmes

EMILY Lawless tried unsuccessfully to trouble-shoot the ethical issue by infantilising literary forgery in 1897 as 'the very superfluity of naughtiness'. A few years earlier she had displayed her own aptitude for such naughtiness as the 'editor' of *With Essex in Ireland (1890)*, a work of fiction that purports - successfully as far as W. E. Gladstone was concerned – to be 'extracts from a diary kept in Ireland during the year 1599 by Mr. Henry Harvey'. *With Essex in Ireland* has affinities, therefore, with fake diaries designed to deceive historians into thinking them part of the archival record. One such example is *The Diary of a Farmer's Wife 1796-1797 (1964)* by 'Anne Hughes' (Jeanne Preston), which was televised by the BBC and screened as an educational programme to show British schoolchildren what everyday life used to be like in rural Georgian England. Another is Mary Chestnut's *A Diary from Dixie (1949)*, which Edmund Wilson read as a contemporary account of the American Civil War (1861-65) by the wife of a Confederate official, although eventually it was shown not to have been written until the early 1800s. Ethical critics could not accept Lawless's tolerant view of these matters because her own literary practice showed her to be part of the problem.

– K.K. Ruthven, *Faking Literature*, Cambridge University Press, 2001, p.43.



are the real stars of the show along with ironically marvellous location shots at Oxford University, that living monument to the education of the young in Christendom's High Middle Ages.

The movie Cobblers, kidnappers of children, are fearsome but not as clearly delineated as in the book where it is emphasised that the word Gobblers is derived from General Oblations Board, triggering critical reference to parents offering children to the service of God as oblates.

No contextual reference to the fact that children were also sent early to boarding school in preparation for a professional life and straight to the Royal Navy as midshipmen. Or indeed to modern pre-school education in preparation for the service of what the American philosopher William James called the Bitch Goddess, Success.

The teachers of the taken children

are mainly women, habited in white – surprise, surprise – like nuns.

Kidman and Daniel Craig as Marisa Coulter and Lord Asriel, not only have to compete against the bears and a clan of Cyptians but a gang of Dickensian kids who appear ready to burst into the Lionel Bart number, *Food Glorious Food*.

The gang is led by Lyra Belacqua (Dakota Blue Richards being feisty with all the charm of an Enid Blyton

A Better Way

DO everything without complaining or arguing; so that you may be innocent and pure as God's perfect children who live in a world of corrupt and sinful people. You must shine among them like stars lighting up the sky.'

– St Paul to the Philippians, 2,14-15.

heroine). She possesses the last alethiometer aka Golden Compass that can answer all questions (Symbolic of Science?). Needless to say members of The *Magisterium* wish to destroy it.

Much is made of daemons – animal-form guardians – that accompany the characters. Coulter's is a monkey, Asriel's a lion, Lyra's variable. No reference is made to the book's revelation of the relationship between Lyra, Mrs Coulter and Lord Asriel (she is their illegitimate child).

The movie is open-ended to allow for sequels. Whether New Line Cinema and Weitz make the other parts of the trilogy, *The Subtle Knife* and *The Amber Spyglass* remains in doubt.

How Weitz would deal with elements of the sequels including Lyra's teen sexuality and Lord Asriel's ultimate aim – to kill God – may test the skills which also gave us *American Pie*, a movie that took audiences into realms of bawdiness beyond *Portnoy's Complaint*.

As with other anti-religious movies, *The Golden Compass* takes what power it has, not from innate originality but from its parasitic nature. Think ivy and oaktree. Or better: ivy and rock – the rock called Peter on which Christ built his church..

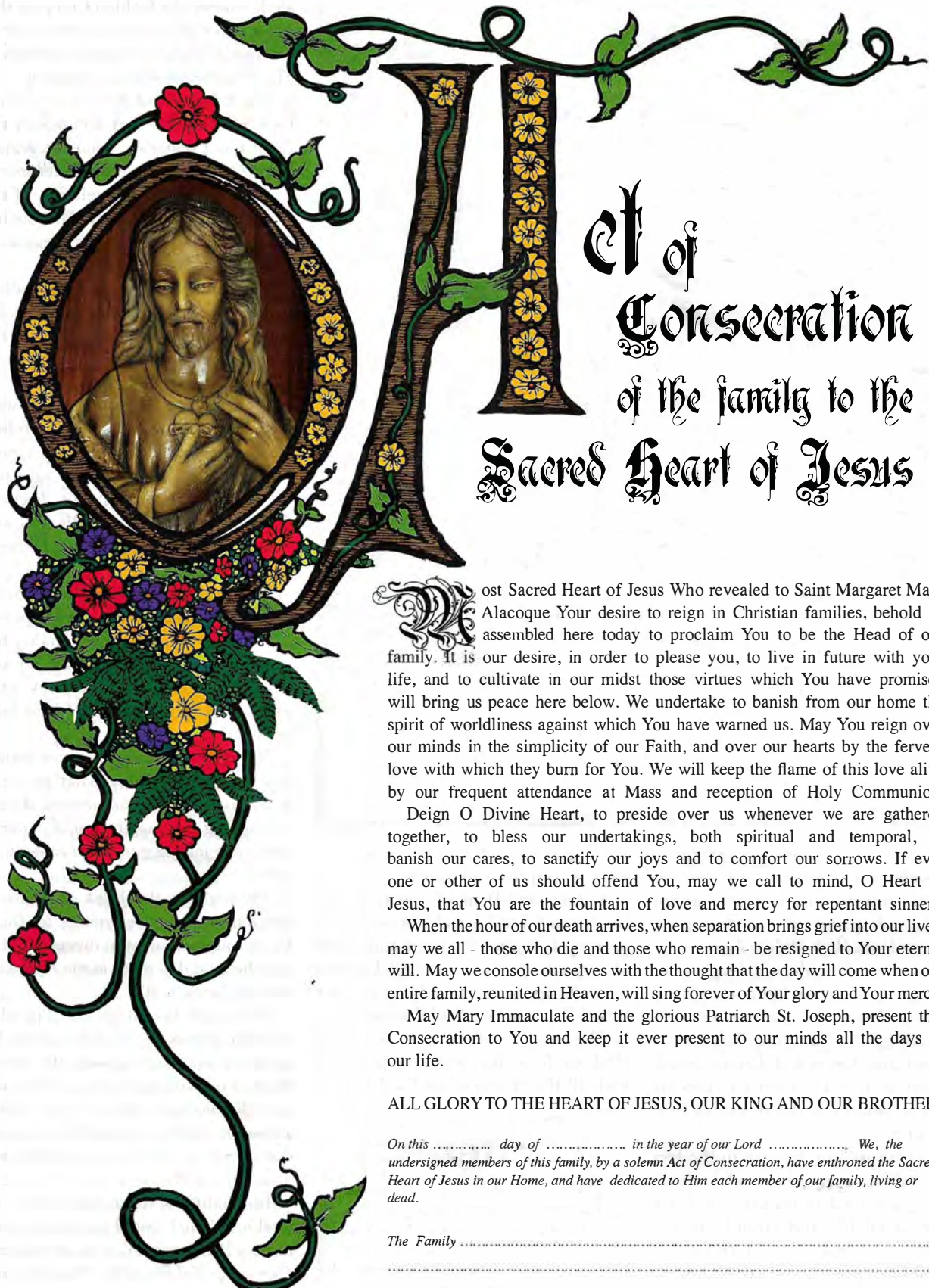
Nor does the movie show any inkling that Pullman is doing what he seeks to accuse the *Magisterium* of doing: kidnapping the imagination of children but disseminating non-belief rather than belief.

Throughout the book and movie, there are running references to 'Dust'. Mysterious, potent, even divine stuff but also the kind described in the Australian vernacular as 'bull'.

Pullman's invention of a parallel universe proves the extent to which his narrative, and consequently the movie, depend on what they attack. Strip out the religious material and what's left is a mumbo-jumbo, abracadabra fantasy dotted with occasional polysyllables like plums in a duff.

Inevitable. A narrative based on total non-belief would necessarily have to be a blank page. Call it, *Atheism and Humanity: Till Death Do Them Part*, and it would make a riveting blank-screen movie, relief from the slings and arrows of cinema advertisements.

PG★★NFFV



Act of Consecration of the family to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Who revealed to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Your desire to reign in Christian families, behold us assembled here today to proclaim You to be the Head of our family. It is our desire, in order to please you, to live in future with your life, and to cultivate in our midst those virtues which You have promised will bring us peace here below. We undertake to banish from our home the spirit of worldliness against which You have warned us. May You reign over our minds in the simplicity of our Faith, and over our hearts by the fervent love with which they burn for You. We will keep the flame of this love alive by our frequent attendance at Mass and reception of Holy Communion.

Deign O Divine Heart, to preside over us whenever we are gathered together, to bless our undertakings, both spiritual and temporal, to banish our cares, to sanctify our joys and to comfort our sorrows. If ever one or other of us should offend You, may we call to mind, O Heart of Jesus, that You are the fountain of love and mercy for repentant sinners.

When the hour of our death arrives, when separation brings grief into our lives, may we all - those who die and those who remain - be resigned to Your eternal will. May we console ourselves with the thought that the day will come when our entire family, reunited in Heaven, will sing forever of Your glory and Your mercy.

May Mary Immaculate and the glorious Patriarch St. Joseph, present this Consecration to You and keep it ever present to our minds all the days of our life.

ALL GLORY TO THE HEART OF JESUS, OUR KING AND OUR BROTHER.

On this day of in the year of our Lord We, the undersigned members of this family, by a solemn Act of Consecration, have enthroned the Sacred Heart of Jesus in our Home, and have dedicated to Him each member of our family, living or dead.

The Family

.....

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N.B. The Consecration should be renewed annually on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, which should be observed as a Family Feast day.
 Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, Sacred Heart Monastery, Kensington NSW 2033 [02] 9662-7894. *Imprimatur*, George Cardinal Pell, Archbishop of Sydney Dec 20, 2006