



# THE MIX



JOURNAL OF CATALYST FOR RENEWAL

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## Our Say -Vatican II and the appointment of Bishops

In one of his sermons, about four years before his death, Augustine looks back on 35 years as Bishop in Hippo and recalls how he came to be in that position:

I feared the office of a bishop to such an extent that ... I would not go to any place where I knew there was no bishop. I was on my guard against this: I did what I could to seek salvation in a humble position rather than be in danger in high office. But, as I said, a slave may not contradict his Lord. I came to this city to see a friend, whom I thought I might gain for God, that he might live with us in the monastery. I felt secure, for the place already had a bishop. I was grabbed. I was made a priest ... and from there, I became your bishop.

This appointment-by-acclamation was a common occurrence in the Later Empire. Who can say what cultural dynamics, political connivances and primitive group energies were at work on such occasions. Indeed, we can probably be fairly sure that it was no simple, straightforward theology of Church governance that motivated Bishop Valerius and the people of Hippo in their conscription of Augustine.

It would therefore be dangerous to draw any easy lessons from this historical event. It would likewise be dangerous to

ignore it as having no relevance. Our respect for tradition demands that we pay close attention to such incidents.

Bishop Geoffrey Robinson has pointed out in previous issues of *The Mix* that there has been a marked shift in the Church's self-understanding in the light of the Second Vatican Council. We are in process of recovering the truths that the defining Sacrament is Baptism, not Ordination, and the Church is a community of Christ's disciples before it is a legal organization.

One significant aspect of this vision of the Council is its emphasis on collegiality in Church governance. This point was at the heart of the lecture given by Archbishop John Quinn recently at Oxford University. He said that the unity of which the Pope is the sign is expressed first and foremost in his relationship with the College of Bishops. The Archbishop went on to call for structural reform within the Church that would bring it into line with the vision of the Council. He even went so far as to call on the Pope to convoke an ecumenical Council to address the serious challenges before us.

The structures of the Church, as well as Her pastoral practice, must conform to the Church's authoritative teaching. This applies to all aspects of the Church's life, including governance. As Paul VI repeats a number of times in his document *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975), we must witness what we teach (e.g. n.41). This is not only a matter of the Church's credibility in the wider community, it is also a matter of integrity for the Church as such.

Specifically, the processes whereby Bishops are selected and appointed to serve the community ought to conform to the vision of the Second Vatican Council. For example, open and serious consultation with representatives from the community would be a reasonable step to take in accord with the Council's vision.

It is both unjust and imprudent to bypass such consultation - even though a very good person may in fact be appointed. Unjust, because it prevents the baptised from participating effectively in a matter that is of the utmost importance to their lives as believers. Imprudent, because it will tend to alienate people who will then employ their energies attacking the structures or simply give up in frustration. D

This journal is one of the works of the Sydney based group Catalyst for Renewal.

These are the founding members:

Marie Biddle R.S.J., Marie Byrne, Marea Donovan, Geraldine Doogue, Kate Englebrecht, Michael Kelly S.J., Robyn Lawson, Stephanie Long, Chris McGillion, John Menadue, Tony Neylan, Josephine Scarf, Martin Teulan, Ruth van Herk, Michael Whelan, S.M.

The following is its mission statement:

We are believers who are attempting to establish a forum for conversation within the Catholic Church of Australia. Our aim is to prompt open exchanges among the community of believers, mindful of the diversity of expression of faith in contemporary Australia. This springs explicitly from the spirit of Pope John XXIII and Vatican II: "Let there be unity in what is necessary, freedom in what is unsettled, and charity in any case" (*Gaudium et Spes*, n. 92).

This journal is published eight times each year, April to November. It is sent to all Friends of Catalyst for Renewal.

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The Four Arrows & the Cross symbolise diversity giving rise to communion in and through the Paschal Mystery. Those who are diverse by nature & culture, in and through Christ find lifegiving unity.

## The Human Face

**M**Y NAME IS KERRY CHIKAROVSKI. I am the eldest of four girls. I went to Monte Sant' Angelo College for my secondary education and am very grateful for what I received there. I then studied at Sydney University where I gained an Economics/Law degree.

Dad worked for the United Nations and was imbued with the spirit that the world *can* be changed, that we *can* make a difference. When he was with the UN in New York, I remember very vividly scenes from the Vietnam War on TV and not being able to go to school because of the riots when Martin Luther King was assassinated. I met Bobby Kennedy on the beach at Long Island when I was twelve. His idealism impressed me.

At Monte we got a lot of encouragement to develop our gifts and, in particular, give something back to society. I had wanted to be a politician since I was fourteen and I wanted that because I thought it was a way I could get things done for people. The driving force that brought me to politics has not changed. I still want to do things for people, to improve things. Governments are essentially about trying to resolve issues for people and you need a vast range of experiences represented in that process. That is one of the advantages of having women in Parliament. It is also an advantage of having women with strong opinions in places like Cabinet.

In Australia at the moment we need to work towards the eradication of poverty. It distresses me that there is an expectation that government will take care of it. We as a community - government included - have to come together on this. Whilst there is an obvious material poverty, there is also a poverty of thought and a poverty of spirituality in the Australian community today.

Our social structures are changing. For example we have far more single parent families. I believe our response must be to the need that presents. There is no point bemoaning the fact or castigating people for it. It is a reality and we should support those people in need. We need people to think creatively about this and other issues. I also have a concern about spirituality. I believe we had a spirituality that had a community dimension to it but now we are much more selfish. We must remember that we are not isolated, that we are a family. The more we lose this the more difficulty we will have in addressing serious social issues. People will simply say "It's not my problem".

I am concerned the Church is not providing the sort of leadership it used to provide. I am not in favour of the Church leading political debate as such, but the Church should be able to speak out on significant community issues, giving some leadership in important debates. The Church has to be able to say what is of fundamental importance to it, that there are some absolutes. It must also be able to enter a conversation with contemporary society and explore and debate. Unfortunately the absolutes tend to dominate and there seems too little willingness to enter the contemporary debates with openness.

I have great admiration for John Howard. I believe he is a man of great integrity who stands up for what he believes. He has been a good mentor for me. When I got pre-selection he said, after a long chat: "Just remember that, at the end of the day, you will have to look at yourself in the mirror and like what you see". I also have a huge admiration for Bishop Geoff Robinson. In the midst of difficult circumstances for the Church in recent times, he has done a wonderful job and he is a person I admire tremendously.

The heart of the faith for me is being part of a community, having a sense of responsibility in relation to others. Life is about more than being an individual and only being concerned about what happens to me. I should not act in isolation, I cannot act in isolation and I do not act in isolation. What I am proposing is more than a merely humanist vision. I do it because I have a relationship with God and that relationship implies other responsible relationships. If I lived outside of these relationships with their responsibilities, I would be forgetting what it means to be religious or Catholic, because I would have lost what is fundamental. 0

(Ms Kerry Chikarovski JVP is the NSW State Member for Lane Cove.)



Ms Kerry Chikarovski MP

## Your Say Let's get the mix right

by Simon Feely

We're all so often asked to pray for the poor, the disadvantaged, the downtrodden. We hear incessantly about 'social justice', from both sides of the spectrum - those authentically striving for a fair go for all but also those meting out what they believe to be justifiable, what they call economic rationalism. But I would like to hear it for the wealthy.

I firmly believe it is the wealthy we should be praying for. The well-off, those who have 'made it'.

It's my experience the wealthy have no time to pray for themselves or their colleagues. They are very deliberately very busy most of the time, leaving little or no time for solitude, reflection or prayer. We owe it to them, we owe it to ourselves, if we're truly interested in social justice, to pray for those who don't have time to pray for themselves.

It's very much a struggle or it certainly is and has been in my case - to try to

find a balance, to try to integrate the material with a spiritual life. Having spent so much of my working life, striving to become a success - quite successfully - nowadays my preference is quality, not quantity, more. Trying to work on things which have meaning rather than on things which simply pay well. And striving to find time also to spend with some of those same disadvantaged, downtrodden people whom we are so often asked to pray for, but effectively ignore. I find doing so in small ways very stimulating and rewarding - I don't know what, if anything, it does for them!

But that, coupled with having visited so many 'poor' places around the world - in India, in Thailand, in Hong Kong, in Yugoslavia, in Melbourne - I'm convinced that these poor people actually have something we don't have. The smiles on the faces of the slum-dwellers, especially

the children, tells me we are missing something.

As we amass material wealth, as we feel sorry for and pray for the dispossessed, we should stop for a moment or two to pray for ourselves as well. If we are serious about getting the right mix in our lives, if we have real compassion for those less well-off than ourselves, we should make time to reflect on those who may in fact need our prayers even more than the poor and the disadvantaged. Us. 0

Simon Feely is 49, a public relations consultant, married with three teenage sons, and lives in Melbourne.

If a man really knew himself he would utterly despise the ignorant notions others might form on a subject in which he had such matchless opportunities for observation.

George Santayana, *The Life of Reason*

## Letters

At beautiful Terrigal we have for several years been delighting in what has come to be known as "The Coffee Club". It all began several years ago when two or three people began meeting after morning Mass to enjoy a cup of coffee and the company of friends to start the day. The original group has now grown and most days gather at Mouthfulls, a local coffee shop.

Conversation is very wide ranging and many issues are debated or discussed sometimes quite excitedly (when we then tend to become very loud) at other times in a more reflective mood. Parish news is shared, messages are passed on as is news of those who may be sick. The avid movie watchers and book readers are always happy to share their thoughts on the latest movie or current best seller. Father Robert our P.P. is a great raconteur and usually has a joke or humorous story to share. Much of the hilarity comes from the quick wit and easy friendship of the coffee drinkers and we do on occasions become very noisy, perhaps not unlike our friendly neighbours the gulls. We are sometimes joined by friends from the local Uniting Church and occasionally by their Minister. It is good to be able to get to know them in a more informal setting. During holiday time we are often joined by visitors, family and friends from near and far. Two much loved visitors come from Seattle, USA each summer and keep in

touch when they have returned home. Recently we enjoyed the company of Fr Kevin Trehy from England who was holidaying here.

We value the companionship which enables us to share our times of sadness and joy. Most importantly WE LAUGH A LOT. If you are visiting here or if you live here please do come and join us. You are assured of a great welcome.

Anne Chang, Terrigal, NSW

I did enjoy the Catalyst Dinner and look forward to further opportunities to meet you.

Caroline Benedet, Sydney, NSW

Good luck dear friends on your journey. You have my love and support.

Vince Whiteman, PP Wari//a, NSW

The article on life/death just wonderful.

Dennis O'Brien, Sydney, NSW

Thank you and your committee for organizing the Dinner - it was an enjoyable and positive evening! Thank you for a great night.

Greg Constable, Fairy Meadow, NSW

May I add my voice to those who welcome

the advent of *The Mix*? It was a pleasant surprise to find it well established on my recent return to Australia. I wish every blessing on those whose hard work ensures the existence of this "forum for conversation".

Mary Cresp RSJ, Executive Director, Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes

Many thanks for *The Mix* #3. I found the journal very interesting and the letters section has whetted my appetite to see the back numbers, if available. Keep up the great work.

Dell Lohan, Lane Cove, NSW

Very pleased to see your initiative. All the best.

Tony Stokes, Townsville, QLD

I have shown your journal to my friends and especially appreciate your article on words, language and one of the most precious things in life - human conversation.

Mrs Kerry Anne Kelly, Epping, NSW

Editor's Note: Back copies of *The Mix* are available on request. A stamp SA envelope would assist us. We would appreciate it if you would help us spread *The Mix*. Share it with others. Encourage them to become Friends. Thank you.

# Essay - The role of the laity in the Church (Part 2)

by Kate Englebrect (Part 1 by Geoffrey Robinson appeared in the last issue of *The Mix*)

There are three elements which I hope we know something more about by the end of the evening:

1. Catalyst for Renewal, and how it relates to a sense of emerging ministry;
2. Tradition, and the dynamic nature of it;
3. Our role as People of God in this emerging community.

But first I would like to drop the word *laity*. The word reeks of negativity; it smacks of being unqualified and not clerical. It marks the clergy as a primary reference point, and fails to reflect a new ecclesiology. The word does not speak to me of who I am; I do not feel like the bottom rung on any hierarchical ladder. Rather, I feel like a woman called into a relationship with Christ; I feel like one of the chosen people of God. My new topic for this evening is "The Edgering Sense of Ministry and Vocation in the Community of the People of God."

Catalyst for Renewal reflects a perceived spirit, mood and vision. Presumes where death is, there also is life. Where there is confusion, there is also direction. The Lord will remain, and is present in, our crisis in His Church. That truth is revealed in gentleness, and through true conversation and desire for it. It seeks to reclaim questions such as, "What's happening?" and "How are we called to be in relationship with Christ and others?". It seeks to build up, not tear down, does not have the answers. It desires a sense of our relatedness and seeks

to share ideas, concerns. It wants to listen and trust, and seeks a disposition which might allow a genuine prayerfulness and discipleship.

Tradition and its dynamic nature - is it about the present and future, or only the past? Can we move in new directions and still claim to be in continuity with the tradition? Is the Church bound to all the teachings and structures which are its inheritance? Is it the case that our traditions not only may but must develop? (Cf Richard Lennan, "The Halifax-Portal Lectures", May 1996. Paper on Orders: *A Developing Tradition?*)

Are our structures a unique act of institution by Jesus, or a reflection of our own past efforts to shape ourselves in response to the needs of moments in history? Do we measure tradition by whether it helps to make present the reality of God revealed by Jesus? Does dissent necessarily mean disloyalty? Is it a truly authentic tradition if it does not develop and build on foundations already laid? Do we cling to former certainties and label them tradition? Is a refusal to move and change actually a refusal to participate in the tradition? Do we try to deny that the Church too lives the Paschal Mystery? (Cf. for example, Richard Lennan's article, "Kindly Light or Encircling Gloom?") Are our faith and tradition understood as a dynamic reality?

Let us now consider the role that we play in this emerging community. It is vital that we participate, that we remain within the Church. We need to participate in the dying and the emerging. We must wait, even when it is uninspiring and even deadening.

Comforter, where, where is your comforting?

Mary, mother of us, where is your relief. (Hopkins: *No worst, there is none*)

*Our role is  
to want community  
in Christ,  
to want to serve God.  
Our role is  
to keep on wanting it,  
when we are not  
experiencing it,  
to build for it  
when we can barely feel  
the possibility of it.*

Our role is to want community in Christ, to want to serve God. Our role is to keep on wanting it, when we are not experiencing it, to build for it when we can barely feel the possibility of it. Our role is to reclaim our passion for it, to want it, to believe it, to work for it, to wait for it. Our role is not to become indifferent about it.

Slowly, the wall between them rose,  
Cemented by the mortar of indifference.  
One day, reaching out to touch each other,  
They found a barrier they could not penetrate,  
And, recoiling from the coldness of the stone,  
Each retreated from the stranger on the other side.  
For when love dies,  
It is not in a moment of angry battle,  
Nor when fiery bodies lose their heat,  
It lies panting, exhausted,  
Expiring at the bottom of a wall  
It could not scale.

The poem is "The Wall": it describes what happens to people and relationships when indifference triumphs. At this point in the history of the Church, we have to keep alive relationships, and not allow indifference to deaden our passion. We are called not to be extraordinary, but rather to be ordinary. That ordinariness finds itself in our relationships, and identifies itself in terms of them. Our role is to reclaim that sense of the self that finds itself asserted in the bonds we forge with others. The self is intrinsically a part of, and function of, the other.

We may be called to consider this a sacred time, to think of ourselves as living ministries. We may be called to demythologise the clerical office. We may be called to remember that it is the ministry of the priest that made ordination meaningful, and not vice-versa. We may be drawn to ask ourselves some of the following questions: Does priesthood have to be associated with permanence? Could we imagine ministry that was part-time, temporary? Could the actual shape of Church ministry depend on unique historical decisions? Is it the Church's freedom to be innovative in regard to office? Has the priest become a cultic figure? Does the Church's obligation to provide pastoral care have priority over the demand for a celibate clergy? Does a willingness to experiment in the Church reflect a constitutive element of the Church? (Cf. Richard Lennan, "The Open Church and the Future", *The Ecclesiology of Karl Rahner*, O.U.P., 1995).

Do we identify the gifts and talents amongst our number, and let the structures develop as a consequence? Do we choose the right people first? Do we seek the person with the ministry, then create the position? (Cf. Teresa Pirola, "Church Profes-

sionalism • When Does It Become 'Lay Elitism'?", in Richard Lennan (ed), *Redefining the Church*, B.J. Dwyer, 1995, pp.11-87). Do we allow the Church to sail, or do we try to drive it? Do we ask ourselves about our own ministries, and claim our own authority within that? Do we speak of our ministry, and hope to separate it from our spirituality?

Our role may be to be agents for change, to be those who offer a vision, and break through the chains of pessimism and collective depression (Cf. Michael Whelan, "'Tis Death that makes life live" in *The Mix*, #3). Our role may be to help others see that things do not necessarily have to be the way they are? To be people who do not fall back into apathy after disappointment and hurt?

We, the Church, might be envisaged as running from our offices and school rooms, getting out of our suburban homes, forgetting solemn posturing, to scurry down to the nearest beach and plunge back into the sea to remember who we are all over again. We will be seen swimming out into the ocean's silence, into the simple bracing depth of things, stripped naked now of all disguises and fashions, washed clean of all cosmetics. Then, cleansed, and refreshed, we are caught up in a huge dumper to be dumped unceremoniously onto the wann sand. And so dazed, yet with a triumph of escape, we get slowly to our feet, turn about us and laughingly help to drag the

rest out of the pounding waves. And as our eyes turn to the shore, we make great gestures of greeting to those who are there long before us. With them will be those saints who have been quietly watching, astonished by the whole performance. Then, not without a sense of survival, not without a sense of wonder at this place, at the grace of this meeting, we will begin again slowly to learn the language of faithfulness (Tony Kelly, *A New Imagining: Towards an Australian Spirituality*, Collins Dove, 1990, 132-33).

This is our role; this is our vocation; this is our ministry. To reclaim a sense of the spirituality at the heart of our tradition, to plunge back into silent conversation with God, to remember and to participate in the process which is discipleship in Christ, to remember and participate in and to remain hopeful in - the dynamic tradition which is behind all the structures in our Church.

Our role is to ask the questions and to keep asking the questions that keep alive the conversation which is the Church. 0

*Ms Kate Englebrect is studying for her Masters in Theology. She lives with her husband and 3 children in Sydney.*

## OPEN LETTER FROM GEOFFREY ROBINSON IN RESPONSE TO ROSEMARY HUTCHENS

(See last issue of *The Mix* for Rosemary Hutchen's Open Letter to Bishop Robinson)

Dear Rosemary, -

Would it surprise you to hear that a bishop can also find some of the structures and ingrained attitudes in the Church limiting and even deadening? That there are times when I have to find my own way to be both a Christian and a bishop at the same time? That speaking my mind honestly is not always good politics? That I too can long for a freedom that I don't find? That I frequently feel quite powerless? I would be happy to work with you to change many things in the Church that need to be changed.

I also realise that the official Church remains very ambivalent concerning the place and role of women in the Church. Nice words can cover less friendly realities, and if the realities are not confronted, nice words are all that is left.

On the other hand, I must do my best to understand the structures and work with them, e.g. there are few requirements for employment as a teacher in a Catholic school, but it seems reasonable to ask for a commitment to the Church before taking on promotion to a leadership role, and attendance at Mass is only one small part of the assessment of that commitment.

I must also do my best to understand the reasons for the things the Church says, e.g. I can understand intercommunion when the people concerned first make sure that they share the same faith in the Eucharist, but I have problems when this is not done and intercommunion is in a practice based on the idea that it does not matter whether the Eucharist is the body of Christ or a piece of bread.

must also be aware that the whole world has changed dramatically in my lifetime and that this can cause demands to be placed on the Church that cannot always be met. It is good to remember that the biggest changes in parish life in recent times have not been caused by the Second Vatican Council but by the car and the

television set. Parishes can easily seem too large and small groups can answer many needs, but small groups can exclude many people who are more at the margins or who don't share a common language, and it is essential that every single person has a priest and a whole community who have a responsibility towards them.

If we were both to describe our ideal church, I suspect that we would agree on many things. Unfortunately the ideal Church has never existed, though I don't give up hope of working towards it. This may seem a very strange statement to make, but the thing I most hope on for the future is the revelation of sexual abuse that has occurred, for this more than anything else has the potential to bring about very serious change within the Church. It will do this only if we face the whole issue squarely and honestly, but there is great pressure to do exactly that. The pressure is coming from victims, the media and the whole Catholic population and it is not going to go away until answers are given. Tragedy can become opportunity, and we must all recognise and use this quite unique opportunity.

The only reservation I would make is that for each of us the first person whose attitudes we must seek to change is the person we see in the mirror. I have had to learn many things in a hurry over the last six months and I know that I have a long way to go. If we want to see change occur through this tragedy/opportunity, we must constantly remind ourselves that we are the Church. Thank you for the dialogue.

Yours in Christ Jesus,  
*Geoff Robinson*

## CANDLES IN THE DARK

Thank you. After reading each article in *The Mix* and listening to the speakers at the Catalyst Dinner, I feel as though lighted candles are appearing in a previously pervading darkness. Dust laden covers being removed from furniture within a house that has been shrouded for a long time. Windows opened, fresh air flowing, people mixing, voices sharing their losses and their birthing hopes. Music filtering, Christians marching for peace and new life, swelling numbers joining this procession for honesty, faithful determination, truth and love. *Remembering* the Way, the part we can choose to play. Living the tension of who we are and walking humbly with each other. "'Tis death that makes life live". Ditto for all you said about Bishop Robinson. Face of light in the darkness. As I

listened to him on a recent TV program, my admiration and my heart went to him as I saw how he struggled not to say words that would pollute. So grateful to hear that somewhat silent yet very powerful voice.

*Joan Ward, Terrigal, NSW*

*Make your home in my word and you will learn the truth and the truth will make you free.* Jn. 10:14f.

*Throughout the course of the centuries, people have labored to better the circumstances of their lives through a monumental amount of individual and collective effort. To believers, this point is settled: considered in itself, this human activity accords with God's will. For human beings, created to God's image, received a mandate to subject to themselves the earth and all it contains, and to govern the world with justice and holiness; a mandate to relate themselves and the totality of things to Him Who was to be acknowledged as the Lord and Creator of all. Thus, by the subjection of all things to humanity, the name of God would be wonderful in all the earth. This mandate concerns the whole of everyday activity as well. For while providing the substance of life for themselves and their families, men and women are performing their activities in a way which appropriately benefits society. They can justly consider that by their labor they are unfolding the Creator's work, consulting the advantages of their brothers and sisters, and are contributing by their personal industry to the realization in history of the divine plan.* Gaudium et Spes, n.34

*A brother asked one of the elders, saying: There are two brothers, of whom one remains praying in his cell, fasting six days at a time and doing a great deal of penance. The other one takes care of the sick. Which one's work is more pleasing to God? The elder replied: If that brother who fasts six days at a time were to hang himself up by the nose, he could not equal the one who takes care of the sick.* I.Merton, The Wisdom of the Desert, New Directions, 1960, 60.

*Notice that in the Gospels there is never, unless I am mistaken, question of a search for God by man. In all the parables it is the Christ who seeks men, or else the Father has them fetched by His messengers. Or again, a man finds the Kingdom of God as if by chance, and then, but only then, he sells all.* S. Weil, Intimations of Christianity Among the Ancient Greeks, Ark Paperbacks, 1987, 1.

## The Bible

Our English word *canon* comes from the Greek word meaning *criterion, general rule or principle*. We use the word with respect to the Bible to note that sets of texts accepted as belonging in the Bible, distinct from those texts that might have been included but in fact have been excluded by the tradition. The canon of Sacred Scripture as we know it today has not always existed and not everyone is in perfect agreement about that canon. Consider the Old Testament.

The canon of the Hebrew Bible - what we loosely refer to as *the Old Testament* - was fixed by the Palestinian Jews at the beginning of the Christian era. Modern Judaism accepts the same canon, as does the Protestant tradition.

The texts of the Hebrew Bible were translated into Greek (probably) several centuries BCE, for the benefit of those Jews dispersed in Greek speaking societies. It has been traditionally referred to as the *Septuagint* - from the Greek word for 70 - in reference to a supposed group of about 70 translators who made the Greek translations. This Greek Bible or *Septuagint* contains all the books of the Hebrew Bible with a few variations, additions and omissions in some texts. Important additions are found, for example in Esther and Daniel. The Greek Bible also contains entire books not found in the Hebrew Bible - e.g. Judith, Tobit, Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus. These added books are known as *deuterocanonical* books.

Since the end of the 4th century BCE, when the Christian Canon began to take some definite shape through the deliberations and decisions of the so called African Councils, the tradition has generally accepted the Greek Bible as inspired. Today, within the Catholic tradition the Old Testament therefore includes the *deuterocanonical* books and those changes made within the Greek text. Whenever the Old Testament is used in the liturgy of Eastern Christianity, it is the Greek text that is used as it has been since earliest times. D

Suggested Reading: See the Introduction in most Bibles - e.g. Jerusalem Study or Revised Standard Version. See also *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*. - especially 68:56-62.

## The Tradition

The Christian tradition is grounded in the Christ Event - the action of God in Christ, liberating the world from the power of sin and death. The primary source for our knowledge of this Christ Event is the Sacred Scriptures - particularly the Gospels. In each human story, in every culture and historical era, the Good News of that Christ Event continues to be revealed. Thus, we also look to tradition for our understanding of the Christ Event.

When we look at the tradition we can distinguish certain periods in terms of the writings that characterised them. Reflected in those writings are the influences of historical and cultural events, specific issues that faced the Church and particular individuals who were gifted in their ability to bring the light of the Gospels to bear.

Naming these periods in terms of the dominant writings, we can think of the initial period, after the writing of the New Testament in the second part of the first century, as that of the *Apostolic Fathers*. In ancient times the word *Father* was applied to a teacher (e.g. 1Cor.4:15; Clement of Alexandria (150-215): "Words are the progeny of the soul. Hence we called those who instructed us fathers".) In the midst of the controversies of the 4th century, the word *Father* was generally applied to all those teachers faithful to the Gospels. By the 6th century the custom was to evaluate or prove a teaching by reference to the authority of the Fathers.

The era of the Apostolic Fathers was dominated by the writings of a small group of men, including Bishop Clement of Rome and Bishop Ignatius of Antioch. The latter, on his way to martyrdom in Rome, wrote letters to a number of the Christian communities along the way. The writings - brief as they are - of both these men are available in good English translations.

Credal formulae certainly were common to this era. Although the so called *Apostles Creed* belongs to a much later time, it certainly has its roots here. There is already evidence in the NT of such credal formulae - e.g. Acts 8:37; Rom. 1:3; 1Cor. 15:3 and 1Pet. 3:18-22. The ICHTHUS (Fish) symbol, being the first letters of the Greek words *Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour*, was used during this era. This era finished about the middle of the 2nd century. O

Suggested Reading: M. Staniforth (trans.), *Early Christian Writings: The Apostolic Fathers*, Penguin Books, 1975 - small paperback, for anyone interested in reading original texts, a wonderful source; J. Quasten, *Patrology, Volume 1* - this is part of a 4 volume work, an excellent authoritative reference on the literature of the tradition .... check a good theology library; B. Ramsey, *Beginning to Read the Fathers* Paulist Press 1985 - fine overview of themes and texts, very readable, highly recommended; S. Tugwell, *Ways of Imperfection*, DLT, 1984 - scholarly, excellent introductions to writers and themes through the ages.

## News in Brief

• In late June a group tailing itself **ARK2** Open Door Television announced in Dublin it would begin broadcasting in Ireland in October. It will be the second Christian TV channel transmitting in Ireland, the other being UNITAS 2000. **ARK2** says it will be ecumenical. It has had conversations with Mother Angelica of the United States to negotiate some kind of co-operation with her company.

• Six former political prisoners of Robben Island (South Africa) have discovered a novel way to raise money for those, like themselves, who cannot get employment. They are breaking chunks of rock brought from the quarry on the island where they once worked as political prisoners. The rocks are being broken down to the size of tennis balls and neatly packaged in a box bearing a picture of Nelson Mandela - Robben Island's best known former inmate - and a certificate of authenticity. These Robben rock balls are selling well in the tourist shops.

• An international ecumenical conference on Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church was held at Melbourne University on July 5th-8th. The theme for the conference - *Reclaiming the Tradition* - offered a twofold hope. Firstly, that by drinking from the ancient springs of our heritage our lives will be renewed for today. Secondly, that a new awareness of the mothers and fathers of the early church will help us develop a more rich biblical and personal spirituality for today. As the Convenor Deacon Lawrence Cross stated:

## Bulletin Board

• Spirituality in the Pub continues. Paddington on the first Wednesdays of the month at 7.30pm; "The place of ritual" (Sept.) & "Leadership in the Church" (Oct.) (*Info: Michael 02 9816 3614*) and Pymble on the last Tuesdays of the month (note the change from Wednesday); "Aboriginal reconciliation" (Aug.), "Wealth creation" (Sept.) & "Human rights" (Oct.) (*Info: Marie 02 9869 8101*).  
• Spirituality at St James' (Philip St, Sydney). Ongoing program includes lectures and seminars. All welcome. On Saturday August 14th, John Thornhill SM will offer a seminar at St James - "An Australian Spirituality?" (*Info: Jane 02 9327 7217*)  
On Wednesday evenings, July 31st - September 4, St James will run a series

"The study of the Fathers of the Church provides both rich resources and a starting point for all Christians who wish to have a clear focus for expressing the Gospel in the 21st century. We look back to go forward." (*Report by Colleen Keating.*)

• Archbishop John Quinn, former Archbishop of San Francisco, gave a lecture at Campion Hall (Oxford) on June 29. In that lecture he responded to the Holy Father's invitation in his 1995 encyclical *Ut Unum Sint (that they may be one)*. There the Pope invited pastors and theologians to engage with him in "a fraternal and patient dialogue" in an attempt to discover new ways of "exercising the primacy ... while in no way renouncing what is essential to its mission". Archbishop Quinn, former President of the US Bishops' Conference, said "I am not an angry man. I am not angry at the Pope. I am not angry at the Roman Curia. I am not angry at the Church. I have given my whole life to the service of the Church since I was 14 years old. But I am a grown man now, and all this does not prevent me from seeing what I judge to be defects and things that need adjusting". The need for greater collegiality, in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, was a major emphasis of the lecture. Quinn sees "the model of control" operating currently rather than "the model of spiritual discernment" and this reflects "a basic lack of trust in the Holy Spirit". (*The Mix* will publish substantial extracts from the Archbishop's

assist anyone get a full copy of that lecture - just send a stamped, SA long envelope with your request.)

entitled "Exploring the Basics: Spirituality and the Christian Experience" (*Info: Tim 02 9484 3900 or Phillip 02 9660 4669*)  
• Sydney Catholic Social Justice Conference, Thursday August 29. Sponsored by Promoter of Justice and Peace Issues, Archdiocese of Sydney at *Caritas Christi*, Wahroonga. (*Info: Fr John 02 9390 5100 or 02 9427 2034*)  
• Action for World Development offers educational programs and resources for global justice & sustainable development. (*Info: Leigh 02 9212 5275*). AWD is conducting a series of seminars on Aboriginal social justice, Wednesday evenings in August (*Info: Lorelle 02 9212 5275*)  
• Catholic Adult Education Centre has the following Seminars coming up:

• The National Conference of Priests of Ireland in 1995 asked its President, Fr. Enda McDonagh, to prepare proposals for a synod. Fr. McDonagh now says there has been a move away from the idea of a synod because it would be too restrictive. He said they wanted to include a wider range of Catholics in discussions, "not only committed Catholics but also those in the margins, people with different views. This could culminate in some form of national consultation akin perhaps to the pastoral council which was held in Liverpool in 1980".

• The former head of Caritas in Beirut, Fr. Lawrence Jenco, died of cancer recently, aged 61. Three months after he arrived in Beirut in 1985 he was kidnapped by Shi'a guerillas and held hostage for 594 days. For the first 6 months of his captivity he was kept alone in a tiny cell, naked, chained by his leg to a wall and frequently blindfolded. He was fed only once a day on bread, rice and foul water and was frequently taunted and abused. Terry Anderson, who was held for a time with Fr Jenco, said of him: "He was my great friend and mentor, and possibly the nicest, sweetest and holiest man I have ever met". Jenco wrote in his account of the ordeal, *Bound to Forgive*: "I willed myself to live. There were days when the depression was unbearable. And then there would be this tremendous sense of hope that I would one day be free".

Though you drive nature out with a pitchfork she will still find her way back. (Horace: *Epistles* Lx.24)

"Infallibility and Catholic Teaching", Aug. 20th with Fr Gerald Gleeson; "God Finds us in the Everyday", Aug. 20th with Fr Brian Yates; "Suicide Prevention Workshop", Aug. 24th with Ms Margaret Appleby (*Info: Grace 02 9792 3144*)  
• Caroline Jones is back on air - Sunday nights, a segment on 1269AM (Sydney), between 8pm and 10pm. Starting on Sunday August 11th, she will have an ongoing series of conversations with Michael Whelan SM in that segment.  
• The Australia and East Timor in WWII Photographic Exhibition is on at NSW State Parliament House from August 5th to August 16th, 9am-5pm daily. Admission free. Presented by Australia-East Timor Association (NSW).

