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## Our Say - The ironic revelation

ne of the most powerful means by which truth is revealed in daily living the is irony. The English word comes from the Greek word eironia meaning simulated ignorance. Irony is about layers of meaning. What seems to be "this" is also "that", what seems not to be, is; what we say, is also not what we say and so on.

It takes a certain amount of sophistication to use irony deliberately and constructively in language. More often it is used in not so constructive ways, being simply sarcasm or even cynicism in another dress, and is meant to cut. When we harbour unacknowledged and unprocessed resentment, hurt, anxiety and anger we are particularly prone to a sort of chronic irony in degree with the world. This ironic mode is yellow the sort of chronic mode is the sort of chronic mode.

Irony, at its potentially most constructive and revealing, is not used deliberately by us. That is an essential part of the irony. At its best, irony simply emerges. We find ourselves caught in the ironic - accused,

bemused, amused, revealed. When we thought we were doing and achieving "this", we discover we were actually doing and achieving "that"; what we thought was virtue we discover is not quite so; what we thought an awful frustration we discover to be an advantage. And so it goes.

with echoes of the tragicomedy that life is. They can be, at once, sad and funny. In them the Spirit calls us to a humble recognition that we are not in charge, were never meant to be and never can be; that we are called to be gracious participators in life rather than controllers of it.

Whether these ironic moments are in fact constructive or destructive depends on us. We may try to hide from these ironies of life, pretending that we are above them. Or we may turn and embrace them in gratitude, pleased that we have been called back to reality, saved - for the moment at least - from the illusions of egocentricity.

the Spirit speaks to our spirit, if we reflect Christ. on our own lives as Christians, women and anxiety, we are prime candidates for irony. moments of irony in the way we deal with men who profess to be disciples of Jesus knowledged or unprocessed anger and and opinions differ strongly from our's those within the Church whose positions When we confront each other out of unac-We might perhaps be blessed by some of these ironic moments in which Ī particular, we may discover

Thus, in fighting autocracy we can become autocratic, in challenging dogmatism we can become dogmatic, in exposing lack of openness we can become manipulative and surreptitious. Driven by strong emotion we tend to become what we fight.

The ironies of life might be amongst our best companions in the long journey of renewal. Through them the Spirit might save us from some unfortunate successes, whereby we replace one bad situation with another at least as bad if not worse.

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

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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).

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

## The Human Face

W NAME IS TED KENNEDY. I Was born in Marrickville, the third of four children. My brother died earlier this year and one of my sisters died two years ago. My sister Marnie and I are left now. Marnie is a Sacre Coeur nun.

She would ask us to give one of our mother, too, was very sensitive to the poor. charged poor people for his services. My of legalism or religious show of any kind. them both I got a rich spirituality, one free an Irish family and had a strong faith. ther was a doctor, my brother kept and it had to be one of the best of our gifts. had to be someone we knew personally, Christmas gifts to a poor person - and it Dad did a lot of honorary work. He never father had a lower key kind of faith. From who were doctors. My mother came from practice. I also had two uncles and an aunt practice I came from a medical family. My fagoing and now his son has the My the

when and in his resonant Irish brogue, made me died a young man. Then he bade me kneel, just before I entered the seminary. It was a clericalism and triumphalism. cil for an end to the Church's legalism, pealed from the floor of the Vatican Counthe college". I remembered that years later priesthood, I will have broken every rule in nia-Forbes, that before I am ordained to the Lordship Thomas Fox, Bishop of Wilcansolemnly promise, say after him: who had been his curate at Erskinville and as he spoke of my uncle, Ted McMahon, Fox was there. He embraced me and wept hot afternoon and my cousin Bishop Tom Tuomey at Dulwich Hill in February 1947, Tom Dunlea. I'll never forget going to see on me were Monsignor Tuomey and Fr Two people who had a great influence Bishop de Smedt of Belgium ap-Ţ, in the presence of his Edward Kennedy, do

lot of my faith in the Church again.

After 7 years of university chaplaincy, I a greater academic freedom. I found that think I lost all the faith I ever had in the in the Church, until I got to Rome. of the young. I thought I had a solid faith 60's - I went overseas. I was aware that the of great questioning for me, out of the system somewhat. It was a time freedom of lifestyle than most priests. I was exhilerating and it enabled me to recover a Church was fading from the lives of many priesthood. During this period - in the mid-Church. But when I got to Ireland I found As a university chaplain I had greater especially of There I

After 7 years of university chaptaincy, I was led to join a group of 15 priests in Sydney - among them a number of younger

men who soon left the ministry. We were trying to get permission to live an alternative lifestyle and develop new ways of ministering in the inner city.

We wanted, in particular, to reach the poor who were alienated from the Cb h. Three of us - myself, John Butche. de Fergus Breslin - got permission to come to Redfern 25 years ago. We opened the presbytery and it was amazing how quickly we made contact with the poor and the aborigines.

Living and working with the poor has changed the way I see things. It transfers you into another dimension altogether. The Scripture comes alive in a most stark way when you are rubbing shoulders with the poor. The more open you are to the poor, the more open you are to the pages of the Scriptures.

dard missionary practice reflected in the cle on what seemed to me to be the stannear Mt Isa called Dajarra, I wrote an artiturning point for me term positive no ownership by the people and no long ritual, the nuns driving the little kid couple weeks, performed the prescribed fied with the poor. nowhere in terms of actually being identiseemed to me that the Church was going their generosity and their openness, working with the aborigines there. Despite ministry of a wonderful priest and sisters participate in the Mass. There seemed w be Some time ago, after I visited a place effects either. That was a The priest came every 0

A person who has had a great influence on my understanding of Church is the Maryknoll priest, Bill Frazier. Some years ago I read his article on the shifting understanding of the Church as "sign in the world" rather than "sanctuary from the world". It made a deep impression on me. Living with the poor has also deeply affected my understanding of Church.



Fr Ted Kennedy

#### Your Say Marriage and ministry: Parish communities in the future

by Gary Stone

The Catholic Church in Australia faces a chronic shortage of clergy to lead it in the candidates for the priesthood, the bottom line is that our ability to regularly provide the sacraments of the church to our people diminishes daily. The irony is that the vocations we need are available in our communities - but they are currently ineligible for ordination because they have celebrated the sacrament of marriage.

make do with 3 priests for our 8 parishes where I live, we have been asked to plan to will sort itself out. We have had 25 "lean tries threefold for the priests who remain. and increasing other sacramental miniseliminating 18 Sunday masses in the area by the year 2001. Practically this means will have has had no new candidates. This drought time in its history Banyo Seminary in 1997 years" in attracting vocations. For the first we cannot continue hoping this situation care of our people is such a major one that The matter of leadership and pastoral In the western area of Brisbane a long-term impact on our

n struggling with this issue, an Assemonth of the parish of St Johns Wood/The Company on 17 November, 1996, brought forth an ecclesiology for the future church they desired. Two key points that emerged and were endorsed by 9 of the 10 discussion groups included:

The maintenance and continued nurture of

existing Eucharistic communities was paramount, irrespective of the number of priests available. "We don't want to be amalgamated or relocated"

An ordained clergy is very much the desired form of pastoral leadership, but married priests, deacons and deaconesses (who were part of our early church structure) should be permitted.

Significantly they pointed out that the priest shortage will get far worse beyond 2001. The briefest look at the age profile of our clergy might indicate that in 2011 we will have 1 priest for 8 parishes! By 2021 there might be none!

We are and want to remain a sacramental church. We believe that the Eucharist is the source and summit of our life. Our rapidly decreasing ability to provide these sacraments to our people should thus be of great concern. Our people have a right to this (cf Canon 243).

We are not short of potential ordinands. Gifted people abound. Within my parish there are a number of spirit-filled men and women who have gifts and experience in leadership and who have the charism and witness of a joyfilled sacramental marriage to bring to ordained ministry. We need to be discerning, calling and equipping them now, so that when our current priests retire (or die on their feet due to overload), we have someone who can take over from them.

The Eastern rites of our church have

maintained a tradition of both married and celibate priesthood without detriment. In the UK, hundreds of former Anglicans are being ordained as married Catholic priests. It is just unbelievable that we cannot make this available to "cradle" Catholics as well.

To continue to hold marriage as an impediment to priestly ordination is denying the church the vocations it needs. It is saying to our people that maintenance of the rule of celibacy takes precedence over provision of the sacraments.

LVL any people, myself included, see this current situation of decreased vocations as the work of the Holy Spirit leading the church to a return to its former discipline. The Church has been wise not to make any impulsive decisions, but surely the 30 years since the Council have been sufficient to see that the needs of people for priestly leadership can be met by both married and celibate clergy.

Surely it is not unreasonable to petition Rome on this issue for the good of our Church. Leaders of our Australian Church, could you please respond to this call?

Gary Stone is a deacon of the Military Ordinariate, currently serving in Brisbane. Gary spent 26 years as an infantry officer before being ordained in 1994. He is married with 4 children.

#### Letters

of different denominations is part of a unifellowship. Breaking bread with Christians hopouring the foundational tradition by tion' (Essay: Tradition, June 97); rather as munities do not see themselves as 'breakarist are essential. These ecumencial comorder to be church, both Word and Euchadogma of versal movement towards way groups' nor as 'diminishing the Tradgather around the Eucharist because, Christian communities will continue to I have consistently noted the thinly-veiled at least one member of your editorial team for renewal too narrow. In the writings of I will not be renewing my subscription to Catalyst for Renewal as I find your agenda christian community across denomiecting the Eucharist with meal and institutional control. radically inclu-Small in

system's boundaries. It is not always a detheme strikes me as being at odds with the charism of the founder. Had Jesus worked ecumenical picture. The closing paragraph mate agenda for renewal today must be open to, if not embedded in, the bigger of being true to oneself and working liberate choice so much as a consequence have often found themselves outside vastly diminished. his vision of the kingdom would have been day and age, rather than what was ideal, on the basis of what was possible for his of the possible rather than the ideal'. This of the same article exhorts your readers to nations (eg L'Arche, Taizé). Any legiti-Those who work prophetically for change would never have led him to the cross 'work within the system (and) on the basis Indeed such a choice pasthe

sionately for what one believes in. It is good to remind ourselves sometimes that, in the words of Joan Chittister, 'Reform has nothing to do with the survival of the church; reform has to do with the survival of the Gospel.'

Rosemary Hammerton

Catalyst chooses to promote conversation, rather than confrontation or politicisation or lobbying, as the focus of its mission. We enlobbying, as the focus of its mission. We enlobbying, as the focus of its mission. We enlobe that conversation, highlighting the basic principles wherever possible. We also choose to remain within the historical- social reality we call "the Catholic Church". We believe this is the best place from which to build the Body of Christ in unity. Others may take a different approach. We respect that. (*The Editor*)

THE MIX Page 3

In the October issue of *The Mix* we published the first part of a paper on the Church by Richard Lennan. This is the second and final part of that paper.

which requires perfect conditions, rather than God's reign, which can come about judge not to be level. to be less than perfect. even when we would judge the conditions mask a desire to build our reign, a reign go home rather than play on a field they and collectively, prefer to take their bat and ten, members of the Church, individually Church itself is less than perfect. set of conditions for the reception of the does the world fail to provide the perfect in the Church are outraged that not only The future begins when we face the reality of the present. Too often, people and its message, This outrage can but that the Too of-

our tendency to repeat our long-practised the regime, we need to situate it in the make mandatory for supposed enemies of when the love of God revealed in Jesus is seek to live our truth whatever the condineither despair nor flee from reality, but mystery of Jesus by which life comes from nise in our lives the pattern of the paschal sion, to be a pilgrim people, and to recogcontext of the God who calls us to converthe self-criticism which totalitarian rulers like. Lest such an exercise become simply standard higher than what we like or disacknowledge our inclination to accept no resonance in the contemporary world, to rhetoric even after it has ceased to find a to remain where we are, to acknowledge This requires us to acknowledge our desire indeed our truth and our passion. We need, therefore, to be self-critical Such a response is possible only What is required of us is that we

For us to affirm that the present is good because it is in the present and nowhere else that God is to be found. Paradoxically, it is this affirmation of the present which is the key to the future. Our affirmation of the present which is the present, our willingness to respond to whatever conditions we experience, enables the future to emerge organically. A failure to value the present condemns us to a life either fixated on the past or tied to an imaginary future which can never come into being because it had no real past.

neither as good as it could get nor was it worthless. The past was rather somebody's place where God's reign is unfolding, also place where God is to be found, as the tional to how we understand God to be for surpassable golden age. might become apparent to others, espebe lived today in order that their value ask how these foundational elements are to ent ourselves to the world. We need also to us, can continue to shape the way we presspond as well as they could to the God who present, a time when people sought to reever grand its claim might be, was an un-It means that no period of the past, howcially the young have inherited that, because it is foundais from our past that must abide, what we Spirit of Jesus. We need to ask what there invited them into communion through the provides us with a perspective on the past. The affirmation of the present as the The past was

What is required of us is that we neither despair nor flee from reality, but seek to live our truth whatever the conditions. Such a response is possible only when the love of God revealed in Jesus is indeed our truth and our passion.

the inheritance of those who follow us. If what we have inherited and will become in this present. can make, because only we experience God from our present, but neither must we preimply that God's creative spirit is absent not simply repeat the past as this would There is a response to God which only we taught us how to recognise and name God. been enriched by others, that they have not has begun only with us, that we have not tend that God's relationship with humanity have lived before us. We cannot and must we deny that we are dependent on our inerase our capacity to relate to those who We are, inextricably, bound to the present. That fact does not, however, Our response will add to

heritance, or if we refuse to make our response in the present because that present seems less significant than our past if we act as if no further construction was be needed after us, we are endangering the future of the Church.

The fact that, in response to the conditions of the present, we can build on the past in order to move into the future, reminds us that the tradition of the Church is best understood not as a set of doctrines, but as the mystery of God revealed in Jesus Christ. Such a tradition is not, therefore, merely backward-looking, not something that is merely to be preserved.

Our tradition is capable of development. Indeed, unless that tradition develops, unless the past is brought into dialogue with the present, revelation is reduced to information about God, rather than being the self-disclosure of God.

where God is, we need to be aware of the shape of the present. True, not everything in the present will speak of God, but even our critique of the present ought to proceed from a base of sympathy for the pr

spirit of God is present in the lives of all the too narrowly, that we have interpreted the the fact that we have defined catholicity far people. only implicitly, but it is to affirm that the which is not present where God is known with God opens us to a level of r is not to forget that an explicit relationship the value of membership of the Church, Church. To suggest that God is not bound by baptismal certificates is not to demean operate God's reign to mean that God does not existence of the Church as the sacrament of has been exercised outside the confines of of human creativity when this creativity beings to be co-creators with God, it puzzling how often the members of the Church have failed to appreciate the value Given our belief that God calls human Church. outside the boundaries of The incarnation is the paradig-Perhaps this failure reflects

matic catholic event; a Church which loses sight of the God present in all people, ceases to be catholic.

The need to broaden our understanding

of life reality of life in the 1990s. For others, it sivity of God, we must learn that fulness monochromatic Australia can reflect the sity of a trinitarian God, anymore than a challenge to learn that a monochromatic lenge for all of us. For some, it will be the inimical to unity. requires diversity and that diversity is not Church of the future is to reflect the inclufreedom is not necessarily destructive of destructive of freedom or, conversely, that to learn that structure is not necessarily munion. this implies that I have no need for comsertion of my right to be different where catholicity cannot be equated with the aswill be the challenge to learn that genuine Church cannot reflect the reconciled diverof catholicity applies not only to the inship between the Church and the it applies also to our understanding within the Church itself. For still others, it will be the need In this, there is a chal-If the

The recovery of an authentic catholicity is an urgent need. The heart of the catholic genius has always been its ability to eschew "either/or" perspective in favour of the oth/and" perspective. In the last generation we have come close to the loss of this insight. If we lose it definitively, it would be a sure sign that the Spirit has abandoned the members of the Church to their in-fighting.

our first response to difference are irreconcilable with the unity of the range of views within the contemporary we learn to listen to, and talk with, the respect difference within the Church; until mean that none but the most dysfunctional range of options which life presents us all phistication of our contemporaries and the initiate new members. not be a united Church into which we can have the right to declare that some views Church's becoming one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church's future depends, therefore, on the will want to join a divided Church. The Church, the rejection of others must not be Church; until we learn that, although the Until we are renewed in our desire to teaching authority does indeed - meaning each and all of us The level of so-- we will

our own communion is, of course, an aspect of the broader question of the unity of the whole Church. Christianity has a future only as the one Church of Christ.

pleted. actions to what expresses the degree of We must, therefore, give priority in our sion of the Church only when each of us to be regarded as what we attend to when first be dissatisfied that the one Church of communion which exists already between whole Church independently of the well-being of the our own denomination cannot be secured becomes convinced that the well-being of everything in our own backyard is comhas never previously enjoyed, it tends still menism now has a status in the Church it Christ remains divided. the churches. Ecumenism will become the pas-This means that we must Although ecu-

We need to ask what there is from our past that must abide because it is foundational.

We need also to ask how these foundational elements are to be lived today.

energy: Surely, it might be asked, the fuised. ture is simply what comes about if we keep virtue. change in order to help that future be realwe want, just as we cannot will the weather cannot will God to bring about the future both of those observations are true. even be suggested that concern about the getting out of bed each morning? It might there is no reason to suggest that it will not true of the past, if it is true of the present, not bypass the human. must not be promoted as an evangelical synonym for passivity. we want. pel's call to trust in God. On one level, future expresses a refutation of the Goscarnate the Spirit of Jesus in the present. response to the new challenges which inpreservation of our essential past and our results from the marriage between the be true of the future. carnation is that God's self-disclosure does is a God-given ability, as is our capacity to lyse our present and to imagine our future o some people, Angst about the future might seem to be a waste of time and A failure to dream, a failure to plan The fundamental truth of the In-Faith in God is not, however, a Our ability to ana-The future is what If that has been We

In order to help that future come about, we must continue to be open to the presence of the Spirit who moves in the lives of each of us, but who is also present in the

Scriptures, our living tradition of faith, the signs of the times, and in the Church's teaching authority. Even with such a panoply of resources, planning for the future remains an act of faith rather than the following of a blue-print.

which no longer needs to live by faith. A can never do more than venture a response answers. to acknowledge that we do not have all the response to contemporary needs, reluctant Church, we are often reluctant to venture a us that we be willing to experiment. As a than in the past and present, we will be in A Church with all the answers is a Church we also act as such a Church. by knowledge; authenticity demands that fact a Church which lives by faith and not beings to belong. may have to be revised later, is the only willing to suggest a possible answer which Church which is willing to experiment, Church to which it is possible for human In concrete terms, that faith requires of The truth, however, is that we In the future, no less

question how well we engage with our and affirm its creativity as the expression world, how well we know it, fices for the fulfilment of the Church's thinking that a well-run bureaucracy sufthe past. they are leading us into the future and structures in order to ascertain whether purpose of the Church is lost good news for that world, and if we cease to be good news for the world, then the of the Spirit. If our attitude to the world is missionary mandate. whether they are seeking merely to repeat willing to evaluate our present strategies merely that of a critic, then we cannot be Authenticity also demands that we be We must not be seduced into Similarly, learn from it, we must 01

those difficulties is a response founded but it does ensure that our response ties which the Church faces in the present, a response does not obliterate the difficulother words, we must recover our passion and enter into our "second naivete". Such want to live as members of the Church. which initially gave us hope and drew us to God's love for us in Jesus, the experience then we must rediscover our experience of works through us. no less. Jesus. We can do no more; we ought to do Church is to be more than mere survival, The future of the Church does depend on the Spirit of God, but that Spirit If the future of the In In 6

Fr Richard Lennan is the Editor of Redefining the Church (E J Dwyer, 1995).

### Words for a Pilgrim People

The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off happy, sells everything he owns and buys the field. (Mt 13:44)

many benefits from it, the Church has the universal sacrament of salvation ple of God during its earthly pilgrimage can offer to the human family may come, and that the salvation of Gaudium et Spes, n.45) God's love for humanity. (Vatican II, (cf Lumen Gentium, n.15) simultanestems from the pass. For every benefit which the peothe whole human race may come to a single intention: that God's kingdom While helping the world and receiving manifesting fact that the Church is and exercising

p.80) the utterances of Jesus will also be spoke the word and it was done (Ps. Staniforth, Apostolic "The Epistle to the Ephesians", n.15, cance of speech. (Ignatius of Antioch, actions and his silences the signifithat his own words have the force of thus reach full spiritual maturity, able to apprehend His Father. A Man who has truly mastered His silences was well worthy of the 33:9); and what He achieved even by One such Teacher there is: speaker practises what he preaches. and not be. No doubt it is a fine thing Indeed, it is better to keep quiet and instruct others, than to make fluent professions Christian Fathers, trans. but Writings: Books, silence, and only if Maxwell He who 1975, The the SO

where we are. can and, The living Truth, the great breaker of idols and destroyer of false gods, is SPCK/Paulist, 1973, p.11) is lived with. At least with that God we who can only really be known when he unknowing in the presence of the One from our fears, and stand naked and the faith that was only a protection God we found it easy to envisage, and forting of lies. It is better to lose the easier to live with than the most comthat that already indeed, must begin Asking does not There can be no the start **Fathers** (Aelred from from be-

# The Bible - The church and the kingdom

sins. First-century Jews knew that they ought to be nice to each other. In so far as they thought at all about life after death, they believed that their God would look after them, and eventually give them new physical bodies in his renewed world. (The phrase 'Kingdom of Heaven' which we find in Matthew's gospel, does *not* mean 'a Kingdom-place called "heaven".' It is a reverent way of saying 'the Kingship of God'.) There is no sign that first-century Jews were walking around gloomily wondering how their sins were ever going to be forgiven. They had the Temple and the sacrificial system, which took care of all that. If Jesus had only said what a lot of Western Christians think he said, he would have been just a big yawn-maker. 'heaven'; or that God had decided at last to do something about forgiving them for their theological scheme) there would be a rosy future waiting for them when they got would have meant only one thing: liberation from political, religious and social oppression. Scripture scholar N T Wright notes: "Twentieth century Western Christians need to shed a few ideas at this point. When people downed tools for a while and trudged off up a hillside nice to each other; or that if they behaved themselves (or got their minds around the .- ont to hear this Jesus talking, we can be sure they weren't going to hear someone tell them At the time of Jesus' birth, if any mention was made of the messiah or king or kingdom, to

"What he in fact said was so revolutionary that it woke everybody up. It was so dramatic that Jesus seems to have adopted a deliberate policy of keeping to the villages, always moving quickly on. ... Why? What was so different?" (Who Was Jesus?, p.97f.)

sus' behaviour is challenging, even affronting - he frequently celebrates and generally with "the wrong people", he heals and forgives people right where they are (outside "the system"), he goes to Jerusalem and chooses to die. In and through the Cross is the kingdom finally brought about. This kingdom, if we dare to listen, is as revolutionary and dramatic in contemporary Western culture as it was in first-century Jewish culture. The kingdom preached by Jesus - on the face of it at least - is a disappointment. It includes more than Jews, it is catholic, and it sweeps away many of the old laws (eg food laws). Je-

that same Spirit. This is what a renewed and renewing Church always seeks summoned by His Spirit. Thus, the Church in every generation, that community of disciples gathered in and by the Spirit of Christ, must bear witness to this Kingdom by the power of The ekklesia of the NT - the Church - comes into being as disciples gather around Jesus,

# Tradition - The church is the kingdom?

It has been claimed that Jesus preached the Kingdom and the early Church preached Jesus. The French Jesuit Alfred Loisy (1857-1940) commented with more than a little cynicism concerning those first generations of Christians: "The Kingdom of God was expected and it was the Church that came". Both comments have a grain of truth even though both are gross oversimplifications.

example, manifests something of this thinking in his Bull of November 18, 1302, *Unam Sanctam*: "We declare, we proclaim, we define that it is absolutely necessary for salvation Throughout Christian history various interpretations of the Kingdom have held sway. One of the key issues has been the relationship of the Church with the Kingdom. Is the Church to be considered co-extensive with the reign of God, the Kingdom? St Augustine identified the Kingdom with the Church in heaven. In medieval times it was not uncommon to find that every human creature be subject to the Roman Pontiff." theologians identifying the Kingdom with the Church on earth. Pope Boniface VIII, for

of princes, came away much less encumbered. In the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, we read: "The Church is a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the The simplistic identification of the Church with the reign of God went hand in hand with medieval feudalism and gave rise to much of the grandeur and triumphalism that was a feature of the Church coming into the Second Vatican Council. The Cardinals who went to disciples who give witness to and promote the Kingdom. oped a clear and unambiguous ecclesiology. It could not have done that. However, it defiunity of all mankind" (n.1). (See also Ch 4 of Gaudium et Spes.) The Council never develthat Council with trains (shortened from 30 feet to 10 feet by Pope Pius XII) and the status nitely invited a more realistic exploration of the nature of the Church as a community of

In 1974, the Synod on evangelization continued that exploration amidst vigorous debate. Unable to agree on a joint statement, the members of that Synod left their notes with Pope Paul VI who produced the fine document *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975). The conversation continues. Clearly this conversation is absolutely foundational to renewal.

#### News in Brief

- tive' organizations to follow". Of the offender treatment programs put into effect by the Catholic Church the Commission states: deal of evidence and assistance was provided by the Catholic Church, it is not the case that the Commission finds particular fault with that Church or its constituent comprehensive, impressive and innova-"The model developed is, on any view, a model for other Church and religious disclosed by the Commission is held up as bodies. Indeed, its response to the matters much media coverage: "While a good vt. The following section did not resecond part of Justice Wood's Commission Was released in
- heretics in the past: "The Church must always be tolerant. We must ask the Lord for rardon for these past deeds. May he is to understand that the Church journalist's question about the burni heretics in the past: "The Church gestion that there be some apology by the they should take up Pope John Paul's sugvided in their opinions as to whether or not • Cardinals attending the National Eucharistic Congress in Bologna are dithe Holy Father when he Catholic Church for the wrongs done over centuries Cardinal Ratzinger represented to other responded to a peoples burning of and

- must not make martyrs but be a Church of martyrs".
- The Archbishop of Cologne, Cardinal Meisner has likened the Church to a car with a weak engine. Cardinal Meisner, who made his name by standing up to the East German communist regime in Berlin for 8 years, said it had been easier in the communist East than the capitalist West. He said: "The German Church is like a car that has too weak and engine and too large a body. Unless we can build a stronger engine we will have to trim its body if we are to reach a heavenly Jerusalem". Cardinal Meisner also said that a shortage of money was forcing the Catholic Church in Germany to close some of its institutions. He said that, although there was a great yearning for religion in Germany., it was "a religion without God, which leaves only disappointment".
- r The World Methodist Peace Award has been given to the St Egidio commudinity, an international Catholic lay association based in Rome, for its work in "lifting the level of life" for thousands of people and its efforts to "further reconciliation ism, love in other words, which has extremely important practical implications.

- In succinct and realistic terms, love is not and world peace". The St Egidio community has negotiated successfully in conflicts in a number of countries, helping to end wars in, for example, Mozambique and Guatemala.
- that statement noted: "The complicity the statement to the Commission. In part counseling for all South Africans - victims greatest sin. . levels of of ongoing and systematic oppression at all rather than commission. Silence in the face the church is found in acts of omission commission of the Conference, presented Sean O'Leary, head of the justice and peace Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Fr South Africa has made a submission to the and perpetrators alike the Church to a program of education and state apparatus". The Bishops committed systematic violation of human rights by the have been done to protest the ongoing and culture of resistance, a culture of protest creation of a culture of human rights, said that the church did contribute to the .... However we recognise that more could Catholic Bishops' Conference society is perhaps the church's With hindsight it can be 0

#### **Bulletin Board**

• Catalyst Calendar (Info: Pauline on 02 9816 4262)

November 25: Rouse Hill SIP - "The Good Life - Here's Hoping!" with Patrick Duignan and Ken Nunn.

- For SIP at Bowral (Info: Kevin on 048 6118 37), Ballarat (Info: Kevin Murphy on 03 5332 1697), Geelong (Info: Denis on 03 5275 4120) and Melbourne (Info: Simon on 03 9497 1417). Note Melbourne's next SIP will be at 30 Bayles St, Parkville on November 26; the topic is "Compassion and Public Office: Do they go together?", with speakers Jacinta Heffey (Vic Deputy State Coroner) and Fr Bob Maguire (Parish Priest of Sth Melbourne and Open Family Foundation Director). We also hear on the grapevine that something is happening in Hamilton (Western Victoria).
- Sip Venues? If you would like to discuss the possibility of a SIP venue in your locality contact Francis on 02 9228 7806 (W), 9460 0225 or 0411 419 332.
- Conversations at Chameleon Café (In-

- ner West Inner Quest), 46 Lackey St Summer Hill NSW. Two evenings already held. Next one: November 26: "Life After Madness: A Personal Journey" with Leonie Manns, and "People with Mental Illness: The Forgotten Ones" with Myree Harris rsg. (Info: Gerard & Lindy on 9799 2907 or Helen & Bernard on 9797 0998)
- AudioMIX? *The Mix* is now available on audio tape, thanks to the generosity of several volunteers. For further information contact Pauline on 02 9816 4262.
- The Catholic Institute of Sydney at Strathfield will run Summer Schools in 4 subjects starting January 12, 1998 on: "Foundations of Christian Faith", Modern Moral Dilemmas", "Vatican II Comes to Australia" and "World Religions". CIS also offers a range of courses for people interested in deepening their faith, from single subjects to Masters degrees. Info: Melissa 02 9752 9500). Note: Ed Campion will explore grassroots Australian Catholic experience through the unique resources of the Veech Library, in his 10 day course "Vatican II Comes to Australia".
- Ecology and Religion, with Fr Sean

- McDonagh. Morning colloquium and evening lecture at Columban Mission Institute, 420 Bobbin Head Rd, Nth Turramurra, Friday November 28. (Info: Michael Gormly on 02 9488 8844)
- The Epiphany Association is planning a National Rally in 1998. They welcome suggestions and expressions of interest. (Info: Jim and Doreen Madden, 33 Minyara St, Jindalee, QLD 4074. Tel 07 3376 5342 and Fax 07 3376 1738)
- Elm Grove Sanctuary, Goobarragandra, Tumut NSW 2720, provides hospitality, counselling, directed retreats and ongoing support, through a ministry of prayer to all who go there in need. Elm Grove is run by The Little Followers of St Francis, an ecumenical group, and has as its Bishop Protectors Archbishop Frank Carroll (Catholic Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn) and Bishop George Browning (Anglican Bishop of Canberra and Goulburn). (Info: 02 647 5766)
- Wrap with Love ("Cold humanity is our concern") is continuing to knit rugs on a voluntary basis. Any help appreciated. (Info: Sonia on 02 9361 0348)

## **Recommended Reading**

• N T Wright, Who Was Jesus?, SPCK, 1992, endnotes, 107 pages, pb, c.\$15

the freedom to explore occasionally carries admirably in presenting a brief and readof a worshipping community". the Gospels is best done within the context convinced that "serious study of Jesus and acclaimed Scripture scholar from Oxford marvelous little book, with it some strange thought and wisdom. Predictably, however, antidote to poor scholarship. derstanding the Bible. He has are not scholars but are serious about unthat is somewhere quite different from Scriptural scholarship might take us. Bishop John Spong. In the final chapter, journalist cal Jesus, the author turns his attention to summary of earlier portraits of the historihe also exposes some of the strange outnew terrain concerning the historical Jesus, not only takes us to some of that wonderful One of the great opportunities of a time of able guide to the historical Jesus, and an Wright gives a brief sketch of where good Wright's book is written for those who contemporary Thiering, Wright says he is more than ever and Thiering, Z Wilson and Spong take Wilson and America's English novelist and authors: Australia's the internationally outcomes. terrain succeeded . In this After a And of

 William Dalton, ed, A Parish Pastoral Directory, The Colomba Press, 1995, index, recommended readings, 270 pages, pb, \$31.95. Available from Pauline Books and Media.

tions. those the headings of the post-conciliar parish, land, is a valuable reference book for all the priests of the diocese of Ossory in Irepresent in the Eucharist".) A useful book to than fixed laws and guidelines. For examlian parish. The reader should look to it for tical reference book useful in the Austraneeds. Although some of the references are suggestions for on each of the Sacraments and practical lying parish pastoral care, brief reflections council", to theological principles under-"draft constitution for a parish pastoral "norms for a finance committee" and a and ecumenism. It contains such things as each of the Sacraments, liturgical worship This handbook, originally assembled for read with others on Church and parish faithful is one of the chief ways Christ is cellent material (eg "The assembly of the The Celebration of Sunday has some exand not very helpful. But the section on ple, the section on Reconciliation is bland ideas and stimulating possibilities rather is, in the main, a common sense and pracspecific to the Irish Church, the Directory The chapters are developed under involved in parish pastoral situaaddressing particular

Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference,
 People First - Plan of Action, 39 pages,
 \$3. Also People First - Conference P s
 \$126 pages, \$19.95.

The Hollongworth, John Usher, Eva Cox, John the People First! Conference held at ACU tolerance and challenging racism" young people", "Working for peace and economy", "Acknowledging the spirituality and rights of indigenous people", "Valuing particular tasks, tralia today. The action plan singles out 12 the most pressing social problem in Ausfor participation. Unemployment is seen as omy is one which maximises opportunities for addressing poverty in the community General, Sir William Deane, launched the mended for personal and group reflection. lia if we are to redress the growing inequito a conversation we must have in Austracontribution from the Bishops' Confe. Jace These documents are part of an or Phillips, Geraldine Doogue, that Conference included Frank Brennan basis for the action plan. Participants in Strathfield in 1996, provide much of the "Educating for justice" participatory society", Catholic Bishops' Conference action plan On Friday October 17, document proposes that a just econthe community. Highly Bettina Cass and Pat Powers including Kim "Developing a just 1997, the Governor . The papers from Beazley,

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