



THE MIX



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Our Say - The Lord's day

The Second Vatican Council, and the times in which we find ourselves, call us to a threefold process of *renewing*, *reforming* and *rethinking*. What sort of a future the Church has will depend on how well we engage in these three processes.

Renewing is about ongoing and ever-deepening conversion. It is a personal and communal process of opening ourselves to the Holy Spirit and being drawn more and more into the Paschal Mystery. This work will lead us in the direction of saying with St Paul, "I live now, not I but Christ lives in me". This is where the essential struggle for the future of the Church will be won or lost.

Reforming is about developing appropriate structures and forms to enable the baptised to live their vocations most effectively. Genuine renewal will lead to a healthy dissatisfaction with certain forms that were suited to another age or culture. Creative change must grow out of that experience.

Rethinking is about the ongoing critical process of examining what we believe and what is happening in our world, with a view

to developing a life giving conversation between the historical and cultural reality and the person and teaching of Jesus Christ.

All three must be consistently part of the Church's life in every age. *Renewing* is the heart of the matter. *Reforming* and *rethinking* are necessary instruments and servants of the *renewing*. Without the *renewing*, *reforming* and *rethinking* are at best innocuous and at worst very destructive.

On May 31 this year the Holy Father delivered his Apostolic Letter entitled *Dies Domini* ("The Lord's day"). Some of this text is very dense and demands concentrated meditation. At its best, the Letter is not so much theological as mystical. We have here some very rich and timely words of wisdom.

The focus is the Church's celebration of the Paschal Mystery, the saving death and resurrection of Jesus. From the middle of the first century, the day after the Jewish Sabbath was set aside as the one on which the community of believers should gather to

break the bread and drink the cup. The designation of this day - "the first day of the week" - is distinctively Christian and ancient.

Fundamentally, the matter of this Letter is about *renewing* - personal and communal. Liturgy - its rituals and calendars - among other things is about remembering. If we forget the Paschal Mystery and its implications for our daily lives, we cease to be Church. More mundanely, if we forget the need for leisure and celebration, festivity and the place of the divine in the rhythm of our lives, we will drift into chaos.

Pope John Paul also forces us to look at some central matters that need to be addressed in terms of *reforming* and *rethinking*: the Sunday precept, the long-term effects of Sunday worship in the absence of a priest, maintaining liturgical rhythms in societies where regularity has been replaced by irregularity, and fostering the spirit of the Sabbath in a materialistic, rationalistic and functionalistic social milieu. □

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

These are the current Members:
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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 unsettled,
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 life-giving unity.

Catalyst for Renewal Incorporated publishes *The Mix* as one of its forums for conversation. All reasonable expressions of opinion relevant to the renewal of the Church are welcome. The Editor reserves the right not to publish a submitted text. Not all the opinions expressed in *The Mix* are those of Catalyst for Renewal Incorporated.

All items submitted for publication in *The Mix*
should reach the Editor no later than the 12th
of the month previous to publication.

The Human Face

My name is Monica Brown. I live next door to my twin sister, Elizabeth, and her family. Being an identical twin to Elizabeth is such a beautiful blessing for me. She and I and my three brothers and older sister are extremely close. They are the most wonderful people I know. The death of our mother and the long term illness of our father have united us even more closely.

I was educated by the Good Samaritan Sisters at Pennant Hills and through them I was formed in the Benedictine Spirituality which has remained an integral part of my life. I learnt that change is possible. I learnt about reaching your potential and what it meant to be trusted, believed in and called forth to something more.

One of the warmest memories of my childhood is the Sunday morning ritual in my family. After Mass Mum would cook her special mix of eggs, bacon and tomato, while Dad played music from his tremendous collection of classical music. He used to play his favourite records and talked to us about the composers, orchestras and conductors. I remember lying with my ear pressed up against the speaker of the record player and feeling the music of Rachmaninoff vibrate through my whole being. Music was part and parcel of my family life and the memories I have around it warm my heart.

My faith and sense of God have been deeply shaped and formed within the context of my family and extended family. I grew up next door to my mother's Lebanese parents. They were one of the first Lebanese families to come to Australia. All their children were born in Australia, except for their eldest daughter, Aunty Emily, who was four when she arrived in Sydney. She tells amazing stories of their struggle and their remarkable faith.

My grandfather would come every day to our home and just be. In the midst of chaos he was the silent calming presence. He used to call each of us "my love". He would tell us stories of Jesus and I learnt from him that God was near and God was beautiful.

My mother lived the Gospel values. She walked the extra mile, turned the other cheek, fed the hungry and welcomed the stranger, the lonely and the sick. She stretched our hearts as a family beyond comfort and selfishness. My father quietly, faithfully supported her and loved her.

Nursing my mother in 1988 as she suffered with terminal cancer was one of the most precious experiences of my life. I learnt much about the struggle between hope and despair, life and death, holding on

and letting go. Singing in her ear as she lay dying and witnessing her final surrender was an awesome privilege, a moment that has marked me for life.

Despite what seemed to be a clear and deep conviction in my heart about the direction of my life, God led me in ways I would never have imagined, beyond what I knew, to roads I would never have chosen. My life was uprooted. I would never have dreamt, for example, that I would compose songs. The songs that come to me are more a gift to me than to anyone else. My ministry and the establishing of Emmaus Productions has emerged from this.

Through a second uprooting God led me back to my ministry with a deeper commitment to the movement of God through my ministry and a renewed appreciation of the ministry being about God's way and not my own. Through this I have learnt so much about finding God in the circumstances of my life, of living on the edge of faith and trust and hope. My ministry is the place where I meet God in my life.

The rewards of this ministry are many and most of them in the smallest of things: a letter from someone who has been through a hard time and has found comfort in one of my songs; a child's face as she or he delights in the clowning and music in our faith celebration concerts; witnessing people come close to their longing and hunger for God. The blessings are always in people whom I meet here and overseas, who inspire me by their faith and support and sustain me in my ministry.

I sense that the big issues for our Church are the same everywhere. For me the issues seem to be about credibility. There is clearly a crisis and in many ways it has nothing to do with God but much to do with the credibility of our institutional Church and its ability to feed the spiritual hunger and quench the thirst for justice that are gripping so many people's hearts.



Monica Brown

Your Say - Spirituality and work

by Val Noone

At the August 4th evening of Spirituality in the Pub in the Notting Hotel, Clayton, the topic was "Spirituality and Work". Val Noone was one of the speakers and in Val's presentation the following references were made to the work and writings of the late Cardinal Cardijn, founder of the Young Christian Workers Movement. Val began by asking the participants to do a reflection exercise.

What happened at work today? What has that got to do with the Spirit? What needs changing in your work to give it more spirit?

In 1913, Joseph Cardijn was appointed as assistant priest to the parish of Laecken in Brussels. From the beginning the people could see that their priest was a man with

different ideas. Every morning and evening they would find him out on the road meeting workers who were walking to or from work at the factories.

Instead of asking them questions like whether they were going to Mass, he asked them questions about their work: what was actually happening in there, why was this happening, what did they think about it and what effect was this having on their lives? The workers slowly came to see that, in the name of Christ, Cardijn was not only interested in the ordinary events of their lives as workers but passionately believed that the living of the Christian message meant involvement and action in daily life. (Hugh O'Sullivan, *Clatter of Wooden Clogs*, YCW, 1991, 4)

The review of life is one of the most important aspects of the YCW method: see, judge, act. ... Lay Christians are formed first of all by the discovery of the facts, followed by a Christian judgement, resulting in the actions they plan, the plans they carry into effect, the responsibilities they shoulder. (Joseph Cardijn)

We must make known to the working class its divine mission, which in God's plan is indispensable to the Church. ... Men and women are not animals. Men and women are not machines. They are not vegetables. They have value and dignity infinitely greater than the whole of creation. A worker is worth more than all the gold in the world. (Joseph Cardijn) □

Letters

Keep up the fine and needed work with *The Mix* and your gatherings. It continues to be a source of inspiration and animation to me and a vital reference in my work of formation with our Salesian seminarians. Many thanks. Don't tire too quickly.

eter Carroll SDB, Oakleigh, VIC

Thank you for your letter of 26 June 1998 and copy of the Catalyst for Renewal Annual Report for 1997-98. With every best wish and be assured of my prayers.

Bishop Philip Wilson, Wollongong, NSW

Thank you for your copy of the Annual Report and the Overview of Catalyst for Renewal. The movement has been a great success and is making an important contribution to the life of the Church in Sydney.

Bishop David Walker, Broken Bay, NSW

Thank you for your recent note and the enclosures about the Catalyst for Renewal group. It's extraordinary what can develop if we give the Spirit a chance. Be assured *~~to~~ remembrance in my prayers.

Bishop William Brennan, Wagga, NSW

Thank you for the Annual Report for Catalyst for Renewal and also the little overview that was enclosed. I wish to congratulate you and all involved in Catalyst for Renewal for being precisely that in the Australian Church. I believe that you are provid-

ing a very important forum for good and concerned Catholics to give some expression to their involvement in, and hopes for the Church. I have attended a couple of meetings of Spirituality in the Pub here in Canberra and I am to be a speaker at one in Bowral in August. May your good work continue to prosper.

Bishop Pat Power, Auxiliary, Canberra

Thank you for keeping the conversation going. Wonderful contributors are certainly opening our eyes to some beautiful thoughts and deepening our faith. We are glad there are others who think and feel like us.

Ann McDowell, Beverly Hills, NSW

Keep up the wonderful work of spreading the good news. You provide a focus around which I can en flesh my ideas and beliefs about how I see my God. Warmest regards.

Marie Menhinnit, Brisbane, QLD

I was fascinated by the essay of Karl Rahner in *The Mix* of April 1998. The ideas he expressed in the first section reminded me of a book I read many years ago: *Lord of the World* by Robert Hugh Benson. In his book, written in 1908 I think, Benson says that the Church of the future will be a very small group who have only one rule to live by and that is to be ready to die for their faith.

Verna Coad MSS, Bruny Island, TAS

Please continue the excellent initiative and efforts.

Margaret Ryan, Canberra

I enjoy your *Mix*. - there are many walls still to be broken and many bridges to cross.

Br R A Parton, New Delhi, India

Great inspirational articles. Keep being courageous.

Bruno Stocci, Port Augusta, SA

May I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your magazine, which I find not only very interesting, but also extremely informative reading.

Val Dunn RSJ, East Melbourne, VIC

Thank you very much for *The Mix*. I find it very informative and I enjoy the articles very much. Keep up the good work.

Dorothy Newberry, Wellington Point, QLD

I picked up a copy (of *The Mix*) in Brisbane recently and was very taken with it. Gary Stone's article was very good and it seems to be a very good publication, very much needed in this day and age. I am a pensioner and can't help you much, but you do have my good wishes and my prayers. More power to you all!

Dan Browne, Allora, QLD

Essay - Can you be successful and happy?

by John Lyons

This is the text of a talk given by John Lyons at Spirituality in the Pub, The Bellevue Hotel, Paddington, NSW, on June 3, 1997. John was, at the time, Editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

When I was first asked by Sister Marie Biddle to speak at the 'Spirituality in the Pub', I thought how lucky I was that I had not been asked to speak about one of the earlier topics - 'How to be Happy and Catholic'. At least mine is a relatively simple one.

A few years ago, when I was living in New York, I saw an interview with Larry King where he was asked what he would do if he had two messages put in front of him at the same time: 'Please call your wife urgently', and 'Please call CNN urgently'. Without missing a beat, Larry King said, "I would call CNN". Which may help explain why Larry King has had seven wives.

A few months ago, a new Prime Minister was appointed in Russia, 35-year-old Sergei Kirikov. On the day he was appointed, there were many demands by the media and his political colleagues to speak to them. But Kirikov refused all requests for his time: "I must leave - it is my six-year-old daughter's birthday party tonight. I promised her I would be there".

To me, that indicates a very important set of values and priorities.

As people are appointed to higher positions, they often sacrifice the most important things in their life. His daughter will never have another sixth birthday and he will probably value that day with her more than many of the other appointments which come upon him.

I know of one senior executive in the Australian media who could not make his daughter's 21st birthday - he was at work. She was killed in a car accident a few months later.

I know of a former editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald* who was in a news conference in the evening when his wife gave birth.

To me it is all a matter of priorities. Titles such as Editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald* come and go. Too often I have seen people with prominent positions in effect put on hold their lives with their friends, families and outside interests. Then they can suddenly have the title taken from them - a Prime Minister can be swept from office by a landslide as happened to Paul Keating, the Australian Cricket Captain can be demoted from the one-day games as happened

to Mark Taylor, or an Editor can have their position taken from them without warning.

If their whole persona has been tied up with that position and title, they can find themselves in effect unemployed and with friendships having withered through lack of nourishment.

I think it is important to have a life outside the office which one can always retreat to. By nature I used to be a worrier. But when I became Editor three-and-a-half years ago, I realised I would not last more than a year if I allowed the job to dominate me or break me.

"God only knows comedy - it's just that He's got some pretty rotten actors."

I have a group of friends who we get together once a month. They are from all walks of life, ranging from a stand-up comedian to a philosophy lecturer. We have dinner and our rules are that we are not allowed to talk about work, politics or sport.

To me, one of the happiest times is to be around a table having a meal with good friends. I have also made it a priority to try and stay healthy - physically and mentally. I try never to take any worries to bed with me. For me, sleep is a reward for the day's work.

I must confess, however, that I do not have as much time as I would like to reflect on matters spiritual or religious.

I wonder sometimes whether it is convenient for me to be so busy so that it distracts me from having to think too hard about matters spiritual. Then I console myself by saying that such knowledge comes in time.

I grew up in a very conservative, Catholic family and went to a very strict Christian Brothers school in Melbourne where, in my view, we were "force fed" on a very narrow view of religion.

After 14 years of such a setting, when I left school I decided that I would "start again" and try and find my own answers. This has involved examining different religions and even staying in a Buddhist wat when I went to Thailand on holidays.

I don't think we ever find absolute answers to any of our questions in life.

An occupational hazard - or a safety valve - of being a journalist is that you can go through life asking other people questions but not ever wanting to answer such ques-

tions yourself. If you've ever asked a journalist a personal question, you'll probably know what I mean.

I can remember sitting down over dinner one night with my own aunt, Sister Nuala Lyons, and asking her and some other sisters their definition of God. After a couple of hours discussion, she finally turned to me - "Well, John, why don't you tell us your definition of God?"

Suddenly, I was on the spot, but that was a good thing.

I think having success is not about what title you have but about the richness of your friends, family and belief in your own honesty and integrity. As a colleague remarked today: "If you are happy, you are successful".

To me, being happy is about your determination to be so. It's about your general view of life. As the humourist Garrison Keilor once said: "Too many people in life walk around wondering whether life is a comedy or a tragedy. But God only knows comedy - it's just that He's got some pretty rotten actors". □

THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE CHURCH IN THE FUTURE

by Karl Rahner

The following is an excerpt from Karl Rahner's book, *Concern for the Church*. (This excellent little book is reviewed on the back of this issue of *The Mix*.) Lest the wrong impression be given by the strong emphasis on personal experience in this small piece, Rahner's unambiguous call for loyalty to the Church should be remembered. For example, in this same book he says: "The spirituality of the future will always be one living in the Church, receiving from it, giving itself to the Church, founded in it and sustaining it, even though it is as yet very uncertain what this implies exactly and concretely in the future" (p.145).

The spirituality of the future will not be supported or at any rate will be much less supported by a sociologically Christian homogeneity of its situation; it will have to live much more clearly than hitherto out of a solitary, immediate experience of God and his Spirit in the individual. ...

For this decision of faith in particular is less than anything else in a person's existence something for which he can shift re-

sponsibility to others, to other causes or to other causes preceding it. But formerly this act of faith on the part of the individual took place within a homogeneously Christian milieu, even though of the secular and bourgeois society; it was possible to believe what was believed by more or less everyone at least in the public sphere and in verbal communication, so that it almost seemed as if a person was relieved, particularly in the dimension of faith, from the supposedly untransferable burden of responsibility, of the decision of faith against unbelief, of hope against all hope, of unrewarded love; and in the area of spirituality it was a question only of the intensity by which we ourselves chose on a particular occasion what was taken for granted by everyone. Today it is different.

Christian faith today (and consequently spirituality) must be continually freshly realized: in the dimension of a secularized world, in the dimension of atheism, in the sphere of a technical rationality, declaring from the very outset that all statements which cannot be justified in the light of this rationality are meaningless ...

In such a situation the lonely responsibility of the individual in his decision of faith is necessary and required in a way much more radical than it was in former times. That is why the modern spirituality of the Christian involves courage for solitary decision contrary to public opinion, the lonely courage analogous to that of the martyrs of the first century of Christianity, the courage for a spiritual decision of faith, drawing its strength from itself and not needing to be supported by public agreement, particularly since even the Church's public opinion does not so much sustain the individual in his decision of faith, but is itself sustained by the latter. Such a solitary courage however can exist only if it lives out of a wholly personal experience of God and his Spirit.

It has already been pointed out that the Christian of the future will be a mystic or he will not exist at all. If by mysticism we mean, not singular parapsychological phenomena, but a genuine experience of God emerging from the very heart of our existence, this statement is very true and its truth and importance will become still clearer in the spirituality of the future. For, according to Scripture and the Church's teaching, rightly understood, the ultimate conviction and decision of faith comes in the last resort, not from a pedagogic indoctrination from outside, supported by public opinion in secular society or in the Church, nor from a merely rational argumentation of fundamental theology, but from the experience of God, of his Spirit, of his freedom, bursting out of the very heart of human ex-

istence and able to be really experienced there, even though this experience cannot be wholly a matter for reflection or be verbally objectified.

Possession of the Spirit is not something of which we are made factually aware merely by pedagogic indoctrination as a reality beyond our existential awareness (as great theological schools, especially of post-Tridentine theology asserted), but is experienced inwardly.

***The Christian
of the future
will be a mystic or he
will not exist at all.***

This cannot be explained here in detail and at length. But the facts are there: the solitary Christian makes the experience of God and his liberating grace in silent prayer, in the final decision of conscience, unrewarded by anyone, in the unlimited hope which can no longer cling to any particular calculable assurance, in the radical disappointment of life and in the powerlessness of death if these things are only voluntarily borne and accepted in hope, in the night of the senses and the spirit (without, as the mystics say, being able in this respect to claim a special privilege), etc.

All this however assumes that he accepts the experiences merely indicated here and does not run away from them in what is in the last resort a culpable fear; under these circumstances he really has the experience, even though he cannot attempt to interpret it or give it a theological label.

It is only in the light of this experience of God, which is the real basic phenomenon of spirituality, that theological indoctrination by Scripture and the Church's teaching acquires its ultimate credibility and existential enforceability. □

PRAYER

by Robert Llewelyn

(Address given at Taizé Service, Norwich Catholic Cathedral, 24 November 1995.)

I have been to Taizé only once and that was about 25 years ago. Père Schultz spoke to us on several occasions. I can remember just five words of what he said, and they have come back to me again and again. "For me" said Fr Schultz, "prayer is waiting".

There is much in Scripture to support

those words. "The Lord is good to those who wait for him", says Jeremiah. "They that wait for the Lord shall renew their strength", writes Isaiah. "I waited patiently for the Lord, and he heard my cry", from the Psalms. And more than 2,000 years later, and moving beyond the Bible to St John of the Cross, we read that in prayer we are to learn to rest in loving waiting upon God.

And so, when the time for silence comes, I ask you to take up your position for prayer (and sitting is usually best for most of us), and then, having asked the help of the Holy Spirit, to be content to wait, patiently, expectantly, lovingly, longingly. Try to realise this is all that you can do for yourself. God must do the rest. See yourself as the parched earth looking upwards waiting patiently for the rain to fall. You can only wait....

This period of waiting is sure to be demanding. And you will find yourself asking: "Is it any use? Am I really praying?" And here are words of comfort. And they come from St Augustine. "Your very desire is itself your prayer; if your desire is continued, so is your prayer also. Whatever you are doing, if you are desiring to pray, you are praying. If you do not wish to cease from prayer, do not cease from desire". And these words are true, the intention or the desire *is* prayer whether we are speaking of vocal prayer, eucharistic prayer, office prayer, Jesus prayer, rosary prayer or, as now, the prayer of the silence of the heart before God....

Undoubtedly in this period of waiting, waiting, we are sometimes taken hold of. The parched earth is rewarded with a shower of rain. St Antony the Great says that he prays best who does not know he is praying. Watch a group of children at play. They are so engrossed in their game that they do not know they are playing....

So you cannot now say at prayer, "Now, I am praying", but can only say later, "I prayed". I am not speaking of any exalted state. If the phone rings you will hear it at once. These showers of rain, as it were, come and go, and the parched earth cannot determine their time or intensity. So, too, these periods of which I have spoken depend on God and not on us. They may be waited for, but not sought, least of all striven after: striving would be in vain.

Prayer is waiting, intending, desiring God. Prayer, we might say, is a holding on to God, until waiting, waiting, waiting, we move into the knowledge that we are being held. □

To pray is to think of God, loving him. (Charles de Foucauld)

Words for a Pilgrim People

Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her. And there I will give her her vineyards, and make the valley of Achor a door of hope. And there she shall answer as in the days of her youth, as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt. And in that day, says the Lord, you will call me "My husband". (Hosea 2:14-16)

□□□

*The work of evangelization presupposes in the evangelizer an ever-increasing love for those whom she or he is evangelizing. (Pope Paul VI, **Evangelii Nuntiandi** (1975), n.79)*

□□□

*Who will speak to (the people) quite simply of God as of a person he or she intimately knows, and make the reality of the presence of God come alive for them once more? Before such need, how superficial, pathetically superficial, is much of the busyness with renewal. We reformers know so much about religion and about the Church and about theology, but we stand empty-handed and uncomfortable when confronted with sheer hunger for God. Holiness is less easily acquired than fluency in contemporary thinking. But people, who after listening to our enthusiastic discourses, quietly ask us to lead them to God are, though they do not know it, demanding holiness in us. I fear they may find everything else but that. The harnessing of modern publicity and know-how to reforming zeal is a potent cause of deception. Saints were required in the past to renew the Church. We suppose we can get by as spiritual operators. Zeal for renewal may be used as a way for escaping God. The busier we are about liturgical matters, the lay apostolate, ecumenism, the biblical revival, reform of Church structures and all the rest, the more incessant our activity in the cause of the *aggiornamento*, the less need there is to confront the reality of God in our own lives. A fear prevents us admitting the emptiness we should find there. (Charles Davis, "A Hidden God", **America**, #114, January 29, 1966, 173)*

□□□

The Bible - The pharisee and the publican

Luke repeatedly reminds us that what *seems* is not always what *is*. Thus we find constant contrasts: mighty-lowly, first-last, humbled-exalted, rich-poor and so on. What society might say about us may bear little resemblance to the truth of who we are in the sight of the One who sees all. "Virtue" may be "vice". Luke emphasises three things about righteousness. Firstly, self-congratulation will not wash with God. Secondly, Jesus is the model and, like him, the genuinely righteous person will do genuinely good deeds. Thirdly, God is the ultimate vindicator of the righteous as He is the vindicator of the innocently suffering Son.

The parable of the pharisee and the publican is unique to Luke. (Of approximately 50 parables in the Synoptics, Luke records 40 of them and 15 of those are unique to his Gospel.). The Pharisees targeted here are most likely Christian Pharisees in the Lucan community. Their forbears arose out of the time of persecution recorded in the Books of the Maccabees (about 150BC). Literally "Separated Ones", they remained faithful to the tradition in the face of great persecution. Luke refers to the Pharisees some 35 times - not always negatively - in his Gospel and Acts. Clearly there was a problem with this group in the community.

The first thing to strike the reader is the exposition of false "virtue". We are all geniuses at self-deception. In fact, human beings invest much talent, craft and energy in evasions and pretenses. "Humankind cannot bear very much reality" (T S Eliot). One of the tragic ironies of religion is that it can so subtly become a mode of escape from, rather than encounter with, the living God. What is my "virtue" worth if I "despise" anyone? What is my religion worth if I do not love people as Jesus did? What do I bring to the breaking of the bread and the sharing of the cup, the great sacrament of reconciliation and unity, if I am self-absorbed and self-centred? We are all "Pharisees" sometime. That comes naturally to us.

And the Publicans - what wretches they were! They made a living by collecting taxes for the Romans, the oppressors, and keeping a commission for themselves. Luke's parable cuts through this and exposes another possibility. This man is brutally honest. He does not say much but what he says is real. He is transparent. The vindicator and judge of all can reach this man's heart. And so the parable leaves us, via the Publican, staring into the eyes of the God of all mercy, facing the open arms and gracious invitation of the Real beyond the real. □

The Tradition - A chariot drawn by sin

Ronald Knox, writing of the Montanists of the second century observes: "It is that of a naked fanaticism, that tried to stampede the Church into greater severity, when she had not forgotten how to be severe. And its chief importance for our present subject is that it helped her to make up her mind, thus early in her experience, about the recurrent problem of human weakness and her own commission to forgive." In the best of the Tradition, mercy always wins out over revenge, forgiveness over sin and compassion over respectability. This is, if you like, the heart of the Church's pastoral presence. And it invites us all to move beyond the pretenses and evasions that so easily make our lives opaque and self-centred, and humbly acknowledge our need for mercy. Indeed it encourages us to seek out and face, by the grace of God, anything that prevents us being utterly transparent.

St John Chrysostom (c.347-407) offers us a remarkable expression of this spirit in one of his homilies which were gathered under the title *On the Incomprehensibility of God*: "Imagine two chariots. Harness virtue and pride to one, sin and humility to the other. You will see the chariot of sin outstrip that of virtue ... To understand why one of these vehicles is faster than the other, remember the Pharisee and the publican ... One relied on his own righteousness, on his own fasting and on the tithes that he paid. The other needed to say only a few words to be free of all his sins. That was because God was not only listening to his words, he also saw the soul of him who spoke them, and finding it humble and contrite he judged him worthy of his compassion and love ...

"That is precisely what Christ wanted to demonstrate when he said: 'Come to me all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest' (Mt 11:28). So it is that he calls to us; let us not keep our distance. If our sins are countless, that is all the more reason for going to him, for we are the sort of person he is calling. In fact he says: 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners' (Mt 9:13). ... He is called the God of consolation, of mercy, because unceasingly he consoles and encourages the unfortunate ones and the afflicted, even if they have committed thousands of sins. Let us then be content to surrender and go to him and never to leave him." Perhaps in a time of great stress such as today, we need to be quite deliberate and explicit about appropriating this Tradition again. □

Bulletin Board

Catalyst Calendar

(Info: Pauline on 02 9816 4262)

• Spirituality in the Pub (SIP):

Promoter - Ms Kate Englebrecht is SIP Promoter and can be contacted on (02) 9960 4061 or 0412 400 519.

°**Ballarat** - (Info: Kevin on 03 5332 1697).

°**Bowral** - The Grand Bar and Brasserie, 7.30pm-9pm: October 22 "Here's Hoping" (Marie Byrne & Julian Miller) (Info: John on 02 4878 5230).

°**Campbelltown** - The Catholic Club, 7.30pm-9pm: October 14 "Happy under Fire" (Bishop Geoff Robinson & Geraldine Doogue) (Info: Sr Julianne on 02 9603 3000 (W) or 02 9603 2749).

°**Canberra** - The Olims Hotel, Ainslie Ave, Braddon, 7.30pm-9pm: [Please note this is a change of venue]. October 28 "Working to be Happy and Happy to be Working" (Rev Tim Costello & Senator Kate Lundy) (Info: Rita on 02 6288 4715).

°**Chatswood** - Orchard Tavern, Cnr. Victoria Ave & Orchard Rd, 7.30pm-9pm: October 13 "Career and happiness: Are they compatible?" (Catherine Hammond & tba) (Info: Helen on 9956 8232).

°**Clayton** (VIC) - The Notting Hotel, 8pm-9pm: (Info: Ann on 9701 7076 or 9701 3740 or Joyce on 9700 1250).

°**Kincumber** - The Kincumber Hotel, October 6 "Many Pathways to Happiness" (Lance Smith & Les Murray) (Info: Sue on 02 4334 3174 (H) or Toni on 02 4341 6986 (H)).

°**Newcastle** - The Hotel Delany, Darby St, October 20 "Change and Growth: Rights and Responsibilities" (Marion Armstrong & Chris Sidoti) 7.30pm-9pm: (Info: Gail on 02 49791141 (W) or Gerard on 02 4945 5343 a.h.)

°**Paddington** - The Bellevue Hotel, 7.30pm-9pm, November 4 "Vignettes of happiness" (Michael Whelan & Kate Englebrecht) (Info: Marea on 9387 3152 (H))

°**Penrith** - The Golf Club, 7.30pm-9pm, November 11 "Yearning for Happiness - a journey of discovery" (Dr Ken Nunn & Ms Kate Craig) (Info: Dennis on 02 4773 8429).

°**Perth** - The Elephant and the Wheelbarrow, cnr Francis and Lake Sts, Northbridge, 7.30pm-9pm, October 28 "Spirituality in Australia: The Search for Balance" (Sheryl Carmody and Neville Watson) (Info: Michael on 08 9448 9404)

°**Geelong** (Info: Denis on 03 5275 4120).

°**Ramsgate** - The Intersection Hotel, cnr

Rockey Pt Rd and Ramsgate Rd, 7.30pm-9pm: October 20 "Finding Meaning through Artistic Expression" (Richard Gill & Penny Chapman) (Info: Claudette on 02 9587 3039 (H)).

°**Richmond** (VIC) - The Prince Alfred Hotel, first Wednesdays, 8pm-9.30pm. (Info: Simon on 03 9497 1631).

°**Rouse Hill** - The Mean Fiddler on Old Windsor Rd, 7.30pm-9pm: October 27 "The Good News: It sets us free, but will it make us happy?" (Prof Peter Sheehan & Claire Barbeau) (Info: Tim on 9634 2927 (H)).

°**Waitara** - The Blue Gum Hotel on the Pacific Hwy, 7.30p-9pm: October 21 "Dying to be happy" (Petrea King & Dr Peter Hakewill) (Info: Marie on 9869 8101 or Robyn on 9876 6139)

• SIP for young adults:

°**Dee Why** - Dee Why Hotel, Pittwater Rd, Dee Why, 7.30pm-9pm: October 21 "Our Past & Present: Our Road Together" (Maisie Kavanagh & Chris Puplick) (Info: Fr John on 9905 3022).

°**Waitara** - The Blue Gum Hotel on the Pacific Hwy, 7.30pm-9pm: November 3 "Can I Change the World?" (Marilyn Buckley & Br Robert Love) (Info: Greg on 9418 2397).

• **Conversation at Chameleon Café**, 48 Lackey St, Summer Hill. (Info: Gerard and Lindy on 02 9799 2907)

THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH and THE FUTURE OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

Papers from our first two Forums for the Future are now available. They have been bound in small booklets and may be purchased for \$5 each + \$2 for postage and packaging.

• **Catalyst Dinner** on Friday October 16 at 7.30pm in the parish hall, corner of Mary Street and Gladesville Rd, Hunters Hill. The topic is "Tradition: Reading the Signs of the Times", the speakers are Paul Brazier and Tony Kelly CSsR. RSVP October 12. (Info: Pauline on 02 9816 4262)

• **Reflection Morning for SIP organisers** will be held on Sunday November 1, 11am-2pm, at 1 Mary St Hunters Hill. It is intended to be an opportunity to meet other organisers, debrief, share what is going on, discuss possible themes and speakers for the coming year. BYO lunch.

• **Eucharistic Retreat Evening led by Bishop John Heaps** at the parish hall, corner Mary St and Gladesville Rd, Hunters Hill, Saturday November 7, 4pm-7pm. Light supper provided. Suggested donation \$10. All welcome! RSVP November 5.

• **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.

• **Emmaus Productions** has a number of resources for people involved in catechetics, parish liturgies and work with young people. Monica Brown is the Director. (Info: Maree on 02 9484 0252 or PO Box 54, Thornleigh NSW 2120)

• **Enneagram and Spirituality:** Br Don Newton, a Marist Brother, will be conducting a spirituality weekend based on the Enneagram at St Paul's Seminary Kensington, November 14-15. (Info: Don on 02 9349 7333 or 0417 691 904)

• **Have the Sacraments Changed?** A day with Fr Frank O'Loughlin, one of the foremost thinkers in sacramental theology in Australia, Saturday November 7, 10am-4pm, at Mt St Benedict, 447A Pennant Hills Rd, Pennant Hills. Cost: \$20. This is just one of many such seminars and workshops and adult education opportunities made available at Mt St Benedict's by the Good Samaritan Sisters (Info: 02 9484 6208).

• **Men's Spirituality Night at St Mary's North Sydney**, October 29, 7.30pm. Speakers: Herb Elliot, Tom Uren, Phil Glendenning. MC Michael Whelan. (Info: 02 9955 1183).

• **Are you interested in learning how to meditate?** You might like to contact someone in the Australian Christian Meditation Community: **ACT** - Richard on 02 6286; **NT** - Ric & Mary on 08 8948 4637; **NSW** - Jillian (Sydney) on 02 9489 7480, John (Avoca Beach) on 02 4381, Col (Southern Highlands) on 02 4862 1591, Carmel (Newcastle) on 02 4963 1104; **QLD** - Jan (Far North) on 07 4068 1164, Nyree (Central) on 07 4928 5624, James (Sunshine Coast) on 07 5447 4321, John (Gold Coast) on 07 5578 9359; **SA** - Jill (Adelaide) on 08 8562 8181; **TAS** - David (Hobart) on 03 6228 4736; **VIC** - Patricia (Bendigo) on 03 5443 2377, Eileen (Melbourne) on 03 9435 8943, Kate (Point Lonsdale) on 03 5258 4003; **WA** - Sam & Vesta (Perth) on 08 9444 5810.

Recommended Reading

Edward de Bono, *I Am Right You Are Wrong*, Viking, 1990, 293 pages, hb and pb.

Most readers will be familiar with de Bono's writings, perhaps especially with his reflections on "lateral thinking". *I Am Right You Are Wrong* is in the same racy style, but with some depth of insight. De Bono argues that "the last Renaissance was clearly based on the re-discovery of ancient Greek thinking habits of logic, reason, argument, truth and the importance of man." This style of thinking, he argues, replaced the more naïve style based more on dogmas and religious belief. He suggests that the technical progress that came out of the last Renaissance was remarkable, but "our habits of conflict are as primitive as ever, even though the weapons we use have benefited from our technical excellence". De Bono suggests that a New Renaissance can emerge from a new way of thinking based on the way the human brain works. The value of this book is probably not found in any brand new, ground-breaking way of thinking. Rather, its value is more likely to be in its ability to make us think about thinking, to wonder about our assumptions and explore new horizons. For example, the images of "rock logic" and "water logic" are evocative. Both are valuable. Neither is sufficient to deal with the complexities and mysteries of life. Given the immensity of the issues facing the human family in general, and the Church in particular, at this time, we ought not leave any reasonable avenues, such as de Bono offers, unresearched.

Robert Ellsberg, ed, *All Saints: Daily Reflections on Saints, Prophets and Witnesses for Our Time*, A Crossroad Book, 1997, index, 576 pages, pb, c. \$42.95.

We find it hard to believe any more in simple goodness, heroism, self-sacrifice and fellow human beings who are willing to pay the ultimate price for their brothers and sisters. This is a dangerous state, being an expression of cynicism and barely one step removed from outright despair. Ellsberg lights a candle in the dark. He tackles the task that is as necessary as it is difficult: re-defining sanctity. He does this through the lives of 365 holy people - one for each day of the year. There is a wide variety of people, from Mary, the Mother of Jesus to Catherine de Hueck Doherty, Job to Walker Percy, Origen to Vincent van Gogh, St Clare to Dorothy Day. The Kristallnacht Martyrs are included as are St Gregory the Great, Charles Péguy, Leo Tolstoy, St Martin De Porres, St Catherine of Genoa, Margery Kemp and Maura Clarke and her Companions, who were martyred in El Salvador in 1980. Ellsberg's style is very readable. The people come alive. Unburdened by the idealizations that have tended to characterise hagiography over the centuries, they rise off the page and speak to us. More disturbingly, they challenge us and ask us questions about our personal lives and the assumptions of our culture and times. Ellsberg is not a propagandist, nor is he an ideologue. He is a truth-sayer who lets good people speak for themselves.

Karl Rahner, *Concern for the Church*, Darton Longman and Todd, 1981, index, 191 pages, hb and pb.

Karl Rahner was one of the outstanding theologians of this century. He had an extraordinary ability to remain thoroughly grounded in the moderate realism of St Thomas Aquinas while continuing a ground-breaking conversation with contemporary thinkers. He was one of the significant thinkers at the Second Vatican Council. *Concern for the Church*, published a few years before his death in 1984, is a free-flowing reflection on various aspects of the Church that has begun to emerge in the wake of the Council. Although the English translation of Rahner is not stylish, the content is worth any effort we might have to make to read it. The book is divided into four major parts: "Faith and Church", with an emphasis on "ecclesial Christianity"; "Priesthood", with an essay on "women and the priesthood"; "Life in the Church", with an emphasis on freedom and social justice; and "Future of the Church", with reflections on the Second Vatican Council, "the future of the Church and the Church of the future", structural change and spirituality for the future. It is critical that those of us who seek to promote renewal within the Church and especially those who stand in public forums and speak about renewal, study material such as this. The issues are complex and subtle. Thinkers like Rahner, when brought to the table of conversation, can keep us aware of the ultimate vision.

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