



THE MIX



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Our Say - Are we losing the eucharistic tradition?

Two recent documents from Rome draw our attention to the centrality of Eucharist in the tradition: the *Instruction* of November 1998 (see *The Mix*, 3:1, 1) and the Apostolic Letter, *Dies Domini* of May 1999 (see *The Mix*, 3:7, 1). Paragraphs 42-45 of this last document are particularly beautiful in the way they speak of that faith tradition and the celebration of Eucharist.

The Second Vatican Council had already spoken of this tradition when it referred to the Eucharist as "the fount and apex of the whole Christian life" (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, 11; cf also eg *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 10 and 47-58; *Decree on the Bishop's Pastoral Office in the Church*, 15; *Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, 5-6).

The words used in these documents echo those of Pius XII's *Mediator Dei* of 1947. Together they all echo the magnificent Gospel tradition of breaking the bread and drinking the cup to proclaim the saving death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. This is the very heart of our faith.

While this beautiful teaching can inspire and liberate us, and invite us to be drawn more deeply into the mystical heart of our faith, it also forces us to ask some difficult and immensely complex questions. This questioning may lead us in paths we would rather not go. It may evoke deep anxiety, even anger. It may also provide room for the Holy Spirit to recreate us.

Is the current *form* of priesthood - as distinct from priesthood *as such* - appropriate to our times? What form of priesthood do we need today to enable Christian communities throughout the world to celebrate Eucharist, "the fount and apex" of their lives together as believers? What must we do to ensure that this heart of our faith is kept alive in generations to come?

In asking these kinds of questions it is important that we continue to focus on the Gospel, often reminding ourselves of the deep truths of the Paschal Mystery. We must resist the temptation to mere pragmatism, easy answers, fearful evasions or willful intransigence. These sorts of reactions

reveal more about our angers, anxieties and ignorance than they do about the Gospel, the genuine needs of the Church at this time or the great promise "I am with you!"

This issue of *The Mix* carries an article from a priest in Peru (see pages 4-5). His story is, in its essence, a common one. It deserves a serious and well-considered response. How might we respond?

In the first instance, we must acknowledge that we have a problem. We need to become proactive about it, be willing to engage in serious conversation about it. We must do all in our power to understand that problem. And that might be about the best our generation can accomplish.

At the least the Church's failure to provide the opportunity for huge and growing numbers of the baptised to celebrate Eucharist, the central mystery of our faith, ought to make us ask what is happening, whether we have yet done all that can be done. Maybe this could be the focus of a Synod to mark the beginning of the new millennium? []

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 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 John Heaps. I was born in Hamilton, NSW, in 1927, of an Anglican father and a Catholic mother. I had two brothers and a sister. One brother became a priest but was killed in a car accident shortly after ordination. My father died when I was twelve, so at fourteen I left school and worked at Consolidated Press. I joined the AIF when I was eighteen and served for two years. I took an accountancy entrance examination and came third in Australia, but I decided to enter the seminary.

After time at St Columba's, Springwood, and St Patrick's, Manly, I was ordained by Cardinal Gilroy in 1958, and subsequently worked in the parishes of Harris Park, Waitara, Guildford and Woollahra. Among the priests who made a very positive contribution to my life during those years were Dr Con Keogh and Dr Harry Davis in the seminaries, and Msgr Frank McCosker and Archbishop Carroll. Pope John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council were great lights and an inspiration to me.

I became director of the Catholic Immigration Office in 1972, relating to 50 migrant chaplains and their communities. Unity in diversity, multiculturalism, acceptance of and growth through differences were themes of my apostolate, my writing, and political interventions. With other non-government agencies, we were able to achieve changes which made a great difference to the lives of many people. I was a member of the committee that brought about 2EA radio. I received the MBE for work in the resettlement of migrants.

I returned to parish work as parish priest of Malabar in 1978. It was a flourishing parish and I was able to put into practice my theories on parish councils and shared responsibility. They worked.

In 1981, I was ordained bishop - auxiliary to Cardinal Freeman and bishop of the Eastern Region of the Sydney Archdiocese, consisting of 45 parishes. I founded the Eastern Region Youth Ministry and the Institute of Parish Ministry in an attempt to have lay people well informed and more involved.

In addition to my given Episcopal duties, I was involved with migrant welfare, the Aboriginal apostolate and the land rights issue, and the peace movement. I walked in the front line in peace marches and spoke at rallies. At this time, I was parish priest of Dover Heights, which developed into a parish dependent on shared responsibility.

When I had to relinquish some of my activities because of ill health, I was welcomed by Fr Don Willoughby at Bondi parish and worked from there. In 1992, I

retired to live privately at Ramsgate. I am able to write, to conduct short retreats and speak at parish council renewal days. I do some spiritual direction and counselling.

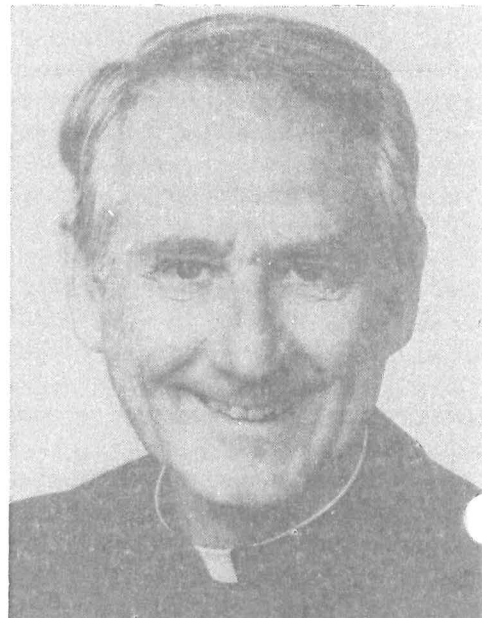
Through all of these years and activities, good friends and trusted co-workers have been invaluable. I have never feared to share responsibility and to have trust in the people I share with. It has always worked out. Being a member of a fraternity of priests, praying and sharing life experiences, has been a great help, particularly in rough times - and there have been plenty.

My helper and secretary for twenty years, Cecilia Martin, has been a constant friend, encourager and one without whom I could not have attempted so many things.

Since retiring I have written five small books, including the most recent, *A Love That Dares to Question*. They all deal with matters dear to me.

The response to that most recent book has been extraordinary. I have received messages from hundreds of people over the widest spectrum: married, single, divorced, lay women and men, religious women and men, priests and bishops. Although it is not published overseas, supportive letters have even come from England, Ireland, New Zealand and the United States. To my knowledge the oldest correspondent is 82.

People express thanks for inspiration, encouragement and hope. They are grateful to know that they are not outsiders because they think and wonder about alternatives. The kindness of these people in writing and telephoning has been an immense encouragement to me. Their loyalty to the Church, and their concern for the direction it is taking are inspirational. My hope is that the real concerns of the people will get onto the agenda of the millennium Synod and be treated with respect and openness.



Bishop John Heaps

Your Say - Poetry and the street people

by Colette Rayment

Like nearly everybody else she knew, a woman had set out on the continuous journey to find God in the world. Deciding to put some effort into the matter, she spent a few years in the company (at least in print) of some poets. Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, declaredly atheist, or honestly agnostic, they seemed to her to be able to perceive in the world a presence which she thought she recognised as divine - prompting self-criticism, acting as mentor on the pilgrimage, retrieving whatever was salvageable from devastation, and requiring some form of attestation.

The kind of thing that struck her was Joseph Brodsky's poem in which he lists the range of joys and sorrows of his life (which include the Nobel Prize for literature and imprisonment in the Gulag), and which he concludes with the celebratory declaration:

What should I say about life?
That it's long and abhors transparency.
Broken eggs make me grieve;
the omelette, though, makes me vomit.
Yet until brown clay has been crammed down
my larynx,
only gratitude will be gushing from it.

Now, although she had never had any experience of Stalin or the Gulag, Brodsky's sustaining gratitude struck the woman as something relevant even to her own largely domestic milieu. Raising five children over the years, she thought she recognised the experience: "It's long and abhors transparency!" (She thought of sleepless nights, rude teenagers, disappointments and one particular tragedy in her family.)

And yet in the end, she had to agree with the poet: there is only gratitude. Not having the poet's skill when she tried to write about this gratitude, she had to plagiarise her own eight-year-old. He had once asked her:

We're all scared

by Morris West

As one gets older, one is aware that the customary supports of life slip away. They erode. Relationships erode. Your self erodes - the physical self. Certainly institutions and their relevance to you erode. And you become more and more aware, whether you can put it into words or not, of yourself as a piece of the cosmos, with a mysterious beginning and an equally mysterious end.

The notion of salvation changes - the sense that nobody and nothing falls out of the hands of the living God. This is the

"Why isn't having a baby a sacrament, Mum?" And at the time of his training for his first Communion he had replied to his teacher's "How do you know God loves you?" with his own question: "Well, you don't destroy anything you create, do you?" Yes, the woman told herself, we are loved and there are visible externals to signal it.

Taking another tip from the poets, however, the woman recognised uncritical smugness when she saw it, especially when she felt it within. Epiphanies, she reminded herself, were momentary and various and do not permit any form of complacency.

One day the woman met a man who had little time for reading, and no children. He spent his life living with the street people of the city. The woman spoke with the man about seeking God. The only place to find Jesus in the world, he asserted, was amongst the poor. All else (including finding God in poetry, the man insisted, was nonsense.

Not for the first or last time, the woman who loved to find God in the poets grieved. How could it be nonsensical to seek God where she had been almost certain she had found Him? And what of the children, wasn't there some undeniable Truth in the child's theology? Some indisputable beauty in his certainty? But how could such a man - thirty years on the streets with the poor - be mistaken?

The only sensible response to this man, the woman decided, was to interpret his assertion as a challenge. If God were only to be found amidst a community of street people, would He be there for her too if she were to visit the street people, assist in the washing-up after lunch, sort out a few clothes in the back room?

least frightening of arrivals.

I was talking two nights ago with a very distinguished priest who had just been struck down with a heart attack and was about to undergo surgery. He was going through all the agony that this entails. I said to him, "Look, this will be the most frightening night of your life, because it will be a long night. And it's going to be an *alone* night. All the rituals have been done, both medically and spiritually. You're just there. And this talk we are having is just a hand in the darkness."

The woman's tentative visits to the community of street people did not result in immediate and dazzling manifestations of God. She washed dishes, she sorted clothes, she met the people of the streets, she prayed with them. There was certainly something to be said, she conceded to herself, about the quiet trust and acceptance amongst these people. Street dwellers and volunteers alike, they had even accepted her occasional visits with love. Love was tangible in their small and smoky inner-city rooms, especially as they made their intercessionary prayers to the God of all needs.

But that "something", the woman had to admit, was somewhat hampered by her incompetence in the community's kitchen, her indecision over the sorting of donated clothes, her distaste for the fact that she contributed little to the community. How was God to be found here when He had constantly eluded her in her own household?!

And then a strange thing happened. The community sought to encourage the writing of poetry. Some of the people, the woman was informed, were interested. Would she start a poetry group within the community? Even if this invitation might have been a creative and kindly ploy to remove her from the busy kitchen, it was accepted enthusiastically.

From then on she pondered the connection between seeking the Lord, gifts (such as a love of literature) and His expectation that such gifts be not buried or regarded as irrelevant. Frequently the woman told herself, as her child had previously told her, these things were sacramental. □

Dr Colette Rayment, Teacher at Australian Catholic University

"I never thought of it that way," he said. And I said, "Well, you are scared. We're all scared. *You won't be scared in the morning.*"

I think that this experience is what we all basically share. It is what we have in common.

The foregoing is taken from an interview with the distinguished author at his home in Avalon, NSW early in 1998. More of this interview will appear in future issues of The Mix.

Essay - Eucharist in wonderland

by Michael Garnett

The Eucharist is the heart of the Catholic faith. Yet Catholic communities are dying for the lack of it. A Westminster priest attached to the diocese of Cajamarca describes the situation in the Peruvian Andes, and asks that first-class passengers on the barque of Peter give a helping hand to those in steerage before the ship sinks.

I began working in the Andes in 1972 and my last parish had 45 communities. I had an excellent full-time lay assistant who spent his days out and about encouraging the work of our 70 rural catechists, and together we planned that I would celebrate First Communion in as many communities as possible. During one of these celebrations - it was the second that day - I noticed a plaque on the chapel wall which proudly announced that the building had been put up by the local community seven years previously. Afterwards I asked the young catechist how long it was since the previous Mass. He smiled and replied: "Father, this is the first one".

Vatican II makes it abundantly clear that the liturgy is "the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed" as well as "the fountain from which all its power flows". This central place of the liturgy in the Christian community, with the priest as a key figure, is reinforced by the recent "Instruction on certain questions regarding the collaboration of the non-ordained faithful in the sacred ministry of priests". The ministerial priesthood is "necessary", this Vatican document says, for a community to exist as part of the Church. The ordained priesthood, it goes on, ought not to be thought of as subsequent in its existence to the church community, "as if the Church could be imagined as already established without this priesthood". Indeed, "were a community to lack a priest, it would be deprived of the exercise and sacramental action of Christ ... which are essential for the very life of every ecclesial community".

But no matter how hard a priest dashes from community to community - if dash is the right word to describe getting from one part of an Andean parish to another - he can only make a stab at their being eucharistically centred. The faithful are virtually unchurched, whilst the priest himself lives a life of deep tensions and frustration. There is something especially soul-destroying to have to celebrate even such privileged moments as the Easter vigil in the shortest form possible and with one eye on the clock. My Easter vigil schedule for this year started at

6 pm, and three vigils later - including a crazy ride across the mountains in pitch darkness - ended at 3.30 am. There was something particularly poignant as I rushed into the third church to the ringing of the bells. They were not ringing for me but for the Gloria. "Father", said the catechist, "we started because we weren't sure whether you'd make it". I was in fact nearly an hour behind time, so when I reached the altar I apologised for arriving so late, only to be greeted by smiles and candles waving amidst the posies of flowers in the hands of everyone present. "Don't worry, father", they called back. "Thank you so much for coming."

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been able to create solid
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Then to be told by the papal nuncio that the solution to the shortage of priests is for the bishop to give carefully prepared catechists the faculty to administer Communion is infuriating. Yet that is the prescription which I, along with the other priests of the diocese, have received from him. This is a pretence that the problem is a temporary aberration which will be solved in time by an increase of vocations to the priesthood. That it is an aberration I agree, but temporary? Apparently the 1997 instruction thinks so, because it speaks of "very difficult and emergency situations". I don't know what the Vatican's definition of an emergency is, but according to the Church's doctrine about its own nature, the situation in the Peruvian Andes has been "very difficult and an emergency" since November 1532, when the Dominican friar, Vicente Valverde, confronted the Inca Atahualpa right here in Cajamarca where I live. It was a clash between two cultures and two religions without the slightest chance of an understanding between them because, given

their respective viewpoints, it was a dialogue of the deaf. From that day to this, the majority of the faithful in our parishes have never been able to participate in the Eucharist in more than a haphazard fashion.

The Vatican instruction is optimistic: "While the numerical shortage of priests may be particularly felt in certain areas, it must be remembered that in other areas there is currently a flowering of vocations which augurs well for the future". I don't want to sound unduly cynical, but we are supposed to be enjoying something of a "flowering of vocations" in Peru, yet the situation in remote Andean communities (and in many of the sprawling shanty towns) remains much the same as it has always been. This is partly because the percentage increase in vocations is far below that of the numbers of the general population, partly because in the poorest and most marginal places there is virtually no economic support for a priest.

The whole of the sacramental life of the Church is a mess. The one sacrament that most people do want for their children is baptism, but confirmation, marriage, reconciliation and anointing have never been part of the lives of most of the faithful he and the priest all too often finds that they become a burden rather than a joy. I have found myself responding with something rather less than holy enthusiasm on being asked, after spending six or seven hours in the confessional and then at the altar, and with the night approaching, to go to confess and anoint someone who lives an hour or more's ride on horseback away. On one occasion I asked the bishop whether there was any likelihood of Rome's allowing the local ordinary to grant a faculty to the catechists to anoint the sick. He told me that he had raised the question, but that the cardinal with whom he had spoken did not quite see it. I retorted somewhat brusquely that if his eminence would care to accompany me on a pastoral hike out into the mountains he'd probably see it in rather less than 15 minutes.

Twenty-five years ago, when we tramped the hills for weeks on end to "show the flag", we felt that we were doing everything within our power to keep the barque of Peter afloat. We still try, but in many places *St Peter* has sunk. To communities starved of the sacraments and deprived of any meaningful sense of the Church, the preaching of Protestant and pan-Christian pastors has fallen on fertile ground because

their hearers feel they are receiving some kind of spiritual food. On occasions we might call it junk food, but we have no right to criticise if we cannot offer anything better.

Wherever we have not been able to create solid Christian communities, groups promoting a fundamentalist interpretation of the Bible and a promise of salvation which can only be found by joining them have encountered a ready audience. In much the same way, the rabid Maoist teachings of the "Shining Path" terrorists really did seem to offer light and hope to the most marginal sectors of the population submerged in the political and social darkness of the country. The sects and the terrorists are perhaps two sides of the same coin, offering certainties in an uncertain world. Also, just as the terrorists would involve youngsters in killing someone, so the sects will incite people to insult the Virgin or the saints, and to burn statues or pictures. Anyone who has performed such an action is psychologically trapped.

Our catechists have been threatened by terrorists and bribed by the sects, whilst the clergy and sisters who have done their best to build up the Church have often been deprived of encouragement or help and been on the receiving end of insults or criticism that they are Marxists. It is true that many of us who have worked amongst the most marginal sectors of society have adopted a pastoral practice orientated by liberation theology. How sad I felt when I came across a passage in Paul Johnson's *The Quest for God* which encapsulated the criticism that we have received: "Even Marxism itself ... has reappeared in a quasi-religious form in the teachings known as liberation theology. This is plainly and simply an anti-Christian heresy, without any moral basis, and indeed, as experience in Latin America has shown, a source of violence and great moral evil". So much for the hundreds of martyred Christians - bishops, priests, sisters, catechists and lay people - who have sought to help create a just society based on Christian values, in the midst of one riddled with structural violence and injustice perpetuated by those who have always had abundant food on their tables and a ready access to the Eucharist.

Popular preaching often offers a link between the Eucharist and food on the table, but perhaps in only a rather superficial way. Given present structures and disciplines within the Church, the Eucharist is most likely to be celebrated precisely in those places where there is material abundance, and least likely to be celebrated where this abundance is lacking. To point this out, to warn that for lack of food people are dying and that for lack of eucharistic food Chris-

tian communities are dying, and then to be told that one is subscribing to "an anti-Christian heresy", is "as perverse as to accuse of arson the very person who warns you that your house is on fire". I quote words once used by Gustavo Gutiérrez, the Peruvian father of liberation theology, during a lecture.

Again, if I may be permitted to return to the metaphor of the barque of Peter, the people amongst whom I have worked here in the Peruvian Andes are the steerage passengers. It was the steerage passengers on the *Titanic* who realised the gravity of their situation long before those in the first class, insulated initially by many decks and the luxury of their surroundings from the icy Atlantic pouring into the liner. Of course, a solution was available to cope with the emergency: board the lifeboats. But, as we all know, the steerage passengers got a rough deal. They were furthest from the boats, which were anyway too few. Amongst the weakest and poorest group of all, the children of the steerage class, over twice as many were drowned as were saved.

Our catechists have been threatened by terrorists and bribed by the sects, whilst the clergy and sisters who have done their best to build up the Church have often been deprived of encouragement or help and been on the receiving end of insults or criticism that they are Marxists.

I would maintain that SS *St Peter* also suffers from some very serious design failures, and the poor, in spite of the fact that the documents of Medellín and Puebla spoke of a preferential option on their behalf, remain steerage passengers; and surely a system which starves people of the Eucharist is as sinful as one which starves them of bread?

For my part I am convinced that many of our local difficulties in celebrating the Eucharist and establishing Christian communities stem from a European notion of sacraments and parish - just to mention two things - being imposed upon a culture and a geography where they will never do more than perch uncomfortably. I would not have

thought it beyond human ingenuity to find solutions, though I suspect that what I would propose would almost certainly cause someone who is comfortable under the present dispensation, with food on the table and a ready access to the Eucharist, to scramble for bell, book and candle.

No solution will be forthcoming, however, if there is a continued refusal to face facts. The first-class passengers on SS *St Peter* can argue all they like about irrelevancies - the synod of bishops for America which met earlier this year in Rome has for all practical purposes proved a non-event - but those of us down in steerage know that icy waters are pouring in and the liner is sinking. Like many other groups in the complex society of the modern world, the poor of the Andes and the teeming shanty towns of our cities have a right to be taken more seriously when the doctrine and the discipline of the Church with regard to the Eucharist is under discussion.

A contemporary cartoonist always refers to Peru as "Wonderland" (as in *Alice*), a place where the mind spends much of its time boggling at bizarre and ridiculous events. So today to suggest that the Eucharist is the central celebration of the normal Catholic community is indeed to live in "Wonderland". Would it not be truly wonderful if this topsy-turvy world could be righted so that all Catholics might be able to enjoy the real Wonderland that Christ intended when he offered himself in the eucharistic banquet?

One of the proposals for the millennium is that it should be a jubilee, with a pardoning of the vast Third World debt which is in great part responsible for the fact that on many a table there is little or no bread. Could not the millennium also be an opportunity to reappraise our theology of the sacraments so as to ensure that they were no longer denied to the poor and underprivileged?

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"Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people "as a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people" (1Pet 2:9; cf 2:4-5), is their right and duty by reason of their baptism."

(*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 14)

Words for a Pilgrim People

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. (1 Cor 11:26)

□□□

In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else; for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit. (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 14)

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The Church, consisting, like a human being, of many members, is refreshed and grows, is compacted and welded together, by both (preaching and Eucharist). St Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus*, I. vi (38)

□□□

Among the central mysteries of Christian and Church life we proclaim in the Lord's Supper the death of the Lord until he comes again. We Christians, then, are really the only people who can forgo an "opiate" in our existence or an analgesic for our lives. Christianity forbids us to reach for an analgesic in such a way that we are no longer willing to drink the chalice of the death of this existence with Jesus Christ. And to this extent there is no doubt that in living out its Christian existence Christianity is required to say in an absolute and sober realism: yes, this existence is incomprehensible, for it passes through something incomprehensible in which all of our comprehending is taken from us. It passes through death. And it is only when this is not only said in pious platitudes, but rather is accepted in the hardness of real life - for we do not die at the end, but we die throughout the whole of life, and, as Seneca knew, our death begins at our birth - and it is only when we live out this pessimistic realism and renounce every ideology which absolutizes a particular sector of human existence and makes it an idol, it is only then that it is possible for us to allow God to give us the hope which really makes us free. (Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith*, A Crossroad Book, 1978, 404)

The Bible - The eschatological vision

One of the defining marks of the New Testament is its conviction that God has sealed the final outcome of history in Christ. The disciples look forward to the end time - *eskhaton* - with confidence. That end time will be marked by "the coming" - *parousia* - of the Lord of history, Jesus Christ. This gives rise to a spirituality that is profoundly and confidently *eschatological*. That is, it is a spirituality defined by the conviction that Jesus Christ, through His death and resurrection, has conquered sin and death and the fulness of that freedom will be manifest at the end time. Life not death, goodness not evil, truth not the lie, love not hatred, will have the last word in history.

In each of the Synoptic Gospels we have the incident of the fig tree (cf Mt 24:32f; Mk 13:28f; Lk 21:29ff). In each Gospel this is followed by words about "the end time", a warning that we do not know when it will be - Matthew and Mark going so far as to say that not even Jesus knows, only the Father - and that we must live in watchfulness. Matthew's Gospel, 24:37-44, offers a particularly useful window on this *eschatological* nature of biblical spirituality.

Matthew, having reminded his listeners that "only the Father" knows when "the end" will come (v36), goes on to compare the coming of the end with the flood of Noah's time and a thief in the night. He then draws the conclusion: "Therefore, you too must stand ready because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect" (v44).

Anyone familiar with the Gospels will also be familiar with strong, even startling, metaphors and images. We must sit with those metaphors and images and resist the temptation to draw facile lessons. At first blush, Matthew seems to be giving a negative spin to his eschatology, perhaps aiming to evoke fear in his listeners. That could be. A closer examination, however, reveals other possibilities: The true disciple is awake, alert to God at work in history, always confident of finding "the treasure" in the field of daily life; the disciple faces each moment knowing it already carries the seeds of the triumph of the end time - no matter that the moment is as barren as the desert, as bleak as Calvary; the disciple is thus a person of indomitable hope, and that hope is founded quite simply in the belief that "my Redeemer lives". □

The Tradition - Eucharist and eschatology

The eschatological vision is an essential characteristic of the Tradition. That is, as disciple of Jesus we live in expectation of the consummation of history in Jesus Christ, we look forward to His Second Coming when the fulness of the Paschal Mystery - the saving death and resurrection of Jesus - will be manifest throughout the whole of creation. This belief, far from rendering the present moment and its particular needs irrelevant, invests every moment with a certain urgency and definition. Put concretely, the eschatological nature of our spirituality throws us into the tension of *waiting upon* even as we *wait for*. We bring to each moment and its particular needs the hope and confidence of those who believe Jesus lives, we do not reduce discipleship to just one more ideology, another political or social welfare project. A full-blooded eschatology enables us to hope when there is no human reason to hope.

The Eucharist - "source and summit of the Christian community" - celebrates *the eskhaton* even as it remembers the saving death and resurrection and plunges us into the present reality. This is nowhere better summed up than in St Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians (11:17-24). St Paul recalls the historical event of Jesus' death and resurrection in the context of urging the Corinthians to behave like true disciples. And all this "until he comes".

The Syrian catechetical manual - the *Didache* - dating probably from the end of the first century, includes the following prayer for celebrating the Eucharist: "Remember, Lord, thy Church, to deliver her from all evil and to make her perfect in thy love, and to gather from the four winds her that is sanctified into thy kingdom which thou didst prepare for her; for thine is the power and the glory forever. Let grace come, and let this world pass away. Hosanna to the God of David. If any is holy, let him come: if any is not holy, let him repent. Maranatha. Amen". St Athanasius (296-373) writes of this same eschatological dimension of Eucharist: "It is no temporal feast that we come to, but an eternal, heavenly feast". The Second Vatican Council recalled this same eschatological vision implicit in the Eucharist (cf *Gaudium et Spes*, 38).

The eschatological perspective must be constantly part of our attention to the present. The Good News speaks of an ultimate liberation that can only be intimated by liberation from this or that oppression. We fight oppression wherever it is, always remembering and confident in the hope: "Christ has died! Christ is risen! Christ will come again!" □

Bulletin Board

Catalyst Calendar

(Info: Pauline on 02 9816 4262)

• Spirituality in the Pub (SIP):

SIP Promoter – Sr Marie Biddle rsj is SIP Promoter and can be contacted on (02) 9745 3444.

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

°**Bowral** - The Grand Bar and Brasserie, 7.30pm-9pm: (Info: John on 02 4878 5230).

°**Campbelltown** - The Catholic Club, 7.30pm-9pm: (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]. (Info: Rita on 02 6288 4715).

°**Chatswood** - Orchard Tavern, Cnr. Victoria Ave & Orchard Rd, 7.30pm-9pm: November 10 "Happiness: The gain after the pain" (Fr Peter McGrath op & tba) (Info: Helen on 9956 8232).

°**Clayton (VIC)** - The Notting Hotel, 8pm-9.30pm: (Info: Ann on 9701 7076 or 9701 3740 or Joyce on 9700 1250).

°**Kincumber** - The Kincumber Hotel, (Info: Sue on 02 4334 3174 (H) or Toni on 02 4341 6986 (H)).

Newcastle - The Hotel Delany, Darby St,) 7.30pm-9pm: November 17 "A Just World?" (Bishop Roger Herft & Sandi Cornish) (Info: Gerard on 02 4979 1211 (W))

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

°**Penrith** - 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, The theme for 1998 is "Spirituality in Australia: A Contemporary Conversation". (Info: Angela on 08 9337 9224)

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

°**Ramsgate** - The Intersection Hotel, cnr Rocky Pt Rd and Ramsgate Rd, 7.30pm-9pm: (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: (Info: Tim on 9634 2927 (H)).

°**Waitara** - The Blue Gum Hotel on the Pacific Hwy, 7.30p-9pm: (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: November 18 "Personal Integrity & Social Justice in 1990's Australia (Sandy Cornish & Stephanie Long) (Info: Fr John on 9905 3022).

°**Waitara** - The Blue Gum Hotel on the Pacific Hwy, 7.30pm-9pm: December 1 "Success – Are we there yet?" (Anni McCallum & Dr Peter Fletcher) (Info: Greg on 9418 2397).

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

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by
Richard Lennan and Teresa Pirola

*THE FUTURE OF WOMEN
IN THE CHURCH*
by
Gerald Gleeson and Moira O'Sullivan

• **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 Centre for Christian Spirituality, Randwick**, invites you to a Reflection Day at the Centre on Wednesday, January 6th, 1999, with Rabbi Elliot Ginsburg from Oberlin College, Ohio. Rabbi Ginsburg is a scholar of Jewish Mysticism and will be presenting a day of lectures and experiential work in Jewish Spirituality. (Bookings and Info – Kate Englebrect at the Centre on 9398 2211)

• **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. This evening is organised by Catalyst for

Renewal and is designed to provide an opportunity to reflect on, and within, the central mystery of our faith.

SISTOS

The Sydney Institute for the Study and Teaching of Spirituality will open at 1 Mary Street Hunters Hill in 1999 on the site of the Catholic Theological Union which closes at the end of 1998 after 25 years. The Director of SISTOS will be Michael Whelan SM PhD and the Executive Director Marie Biddle RSJ MA MTh. SISTOS will offer a series of formal and informal courses and seminars in spirituality. SISTOS will also offer research and sabbatical opportunities by negotiation. (Info: Michael on 02 9816 3614)

• **Mary MacKillop Haven - House of Hospitality.** Do you need peace and quiet, time for yourself, the opportunity to re-focus the direction of your life? The Sisters of St Joseph run this house at 5 Page Close, Wyong NSW - about 1 km from Wyong railway station. (Info: 02 4352 2414)

• **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.

• **The Centre for Religion, Literature and Arts at Australian Catholic University**, invites you to attend a lecture: "Doctor Newman's Toast: Matters of Conscience" by Morris West. Main Auditorium, Mount St Mary's Campus, Australian Catholic University, 179 Albert Road, Strathfield on Sunday November 15 1998 at 3pm. Refreshments after the lecture. Cost: \$20 or \$25 concessions. (Info: Michael Griffith on 02 9739 2102)

Recommended Reading

Paolo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, The Seabury Press, 1970, 186 pages, pb, available in libraries and second-hand bookshops.

By far the greatest number of books published have little or no lasting value. Very occasionally a book is published that contains rare insight into truth, carries ideas that are liberating and lucidly expressed or articulates a vision that is foundational to human striving. For anyone of these reasons, and perhaps others, Freire's book is still worth reading. It is now 30 years since the Portuguese manuscript was first translated into English. Freire believes in the dignity of the human being, our "ontological vocation" to be a "Subject", one who knows and acts responsibly, in contrast to an "object", which is known and acted upon. Life is an ongoing dialogue, says Freire, one that demands we think and act like the "Subjects" we are. We are all capable of questioning and looking critically at our world in dialogue with others. "Dialogue cannot exist in the absence of a profound love for the world and for people". Thus we learn to "name the world" and in this naming we discover the power of words. This book gave us a special word: *conscientização* - *conscientisation* - meaning to perceive contradictions and take action against oppressive elements of our worlds. All true words, says Freire, demand both reflection and action. Otherwise words become "blah" and action mere "activism". Freire has much wisdom for us today.

Robert Manne, *The Way We Live Now: The Controversies of the Nineties*, Text Publishing Company, 1998, 281 pages, pb, \$22.95.

Anyone who reads the major daily newspapers in Australia or listens to "Life Matters" on Radio National will be familiar with Robert Manne's work. He has established himself as one of Australia's most significant intellectuals, someone with an incisive mind, an excellent and objective grasp of contemporary issues and a style that is clean and unencumbered by emotive or tendentious language. He is a genuine conversationalist, someone with something helpful to say, even if it might not be what you want to hear. Manne invites thoughtfulness and honest questioning. It is hard to find many others in Australia today who bring that dimension to our public life, let alone many who do it as well as Manne does. This is a selection of 43 short pieces previously published in various places. They are gathered under six main headings. Topics treated include: "The Stolen Generations", "Lying in Politics", "Thoughts on Australia", "Bob Santamaria", "Pauline Hanson's Truth" and "Life and Death on the Slippery Slope". Robert Manne has at least four things to offer those of us pursuing renewal in the Church: he takes the public realm seriously in its own right; he approaches it in a conversational rather than adversarial way; he focuses primarily on ideas and never resorts to *ad hominem* argument; he does his homework very well.

Edward R F Sheehan, *Innocent Darkness*, Penguin Books, 1993, 339 pages, pb, \$16.95.

This is a novel set on the border of the United States and Mexico in our times. It is the story of one man - a very wealthy man - who is deeply unsatisfied by his wealth. He finds himself drawn to the plight of refugees from Central and South America trying desperately to escape the violence and poverty of their home countries and find a new life in the United States. Sheehan spares the reader nothing, describing in detail the violence, depravity and despair that is found amongst the refugees and those who hunt and exploit them. Like all good novels, *Innocent Darkness* is multi-layered. Most obviously, it is a spiritual journey, one man's search for meaning and integrity, a search that is as desperate as the search of those refugees he tries to help. The external terrain he traverses speaks of the internal terrain he must cross if he is to become a man. The novel is also about the affluent North meeting the desitute South, the ambivalence of wealth and poverty, the roots of human oppression beyond structure and ideology, roots that lie deep in every heart. There are passages in this book that will turn the stomach and send a chill down the spine of the hardest readers. But even as it wrenches at your insides, it will also inspire and challenge, haunt and encourage you. At a time when we are so familiar with human tragedy we might forget the horrible evil of it. Sheehan will not let us forget.

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