



THE MIX



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Our Say – Why aren't we more eager about the truth?

In his book, *A Tragic Grace* (Liturgical Press, 1996), Stephen Rossetti, the president of The Saint Luke Institute – a psychiatric treatment centre in Suitland, Maryland for priests and religious – describes an encounter which we can all understand. A pastor had been charged with sexual abuse and removed from his parish. The parishioners met with the chancellor of the diocese, who became increasingly defensive as the meeting progressed. And as the chancellor got more and more defensive, the parishioners got more and more angry:

Voices got louder and more shrill. Finally, just when it seemed like the meeting would explode, the chancellor said, 'I am sorry. This is a terrible thing and it should never have happened.' Immediately, the atmosphere in the room changed. The tension level dropped. Voices quieted. The victims and their families heard what they needed.

The refusal to admit and humbly own mistakes and apologise shows a gross misunderstanding of human relationships. Fur-

ther, it manifests a lack of appreciation of the power of the truth to bring the freedom we all crave. It also indicates the potential for destroying human relationships when we are evasive, dissembling, manipulating and otherwise being less than honest.

Each of us is born with a genius for self-deception. None of us can claim to be absolutely honest, absolutely transparent – not even to ourselves. Truthfulness is a lifelong struggle. And if we are not going forward in this struggle and facing what must be faced in our lives, we are almost certainly going backwards, engaging more or less blatantly, more or less subtly, in various strategies of evasion and flight.

This human situation can elicit a range of reactions and responses from us. Perhaps the most mature and life-giving response – for individuals as well as institutions – is to deliberately and constantly work, as effectively as we can, at becoming aware of the truth in our lives and allowing that truth to emerge and determine our choices. In this

way we present a countervailing force to the tendency towards self-deceit.

Perhaps the most immature and death-dealing response, on the other hand, is to deliberately and constantly work, as effectively as we can, at evading the truth. We may even "succeed" quite brilliantly in these efforts, all the time convincing ourselves we are doing what is "right". And the latter is the greatest deceit of all.

Christians as individuals and the Church as an institution are subject to these forces. Sometimes it takes a crisis, with the painful revelations from beyond our entrenched, routine worlds, to awaken us to the truth that we have been either simply not seeing or simply evading. But, while others can draw our attention to what we must face, the facing can only be done by us.

Those of us who are followers of the One who identifies himself as the Truth ought to be leading the way in seeking, naming and submitting to the truth in all its concrete forms. □

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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Marie Biddle RSJ, Kevin Burges,
Aidan Carvill SM, Susanna Davis,
Marea Donovan, Geraldine Doogue,
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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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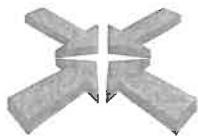
The Editorial Committee is:

Michael Whelan SM, Geraldine Doogue,
Catherine Hammond and consultants

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Address all correspondence to:
PO Box 139, Gladesville, NSW 1675, Australia
Tel/Fax: +61 2 9816 4262

Web site: www.catalyst-for-renewal.com.au



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.

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The Human Face

The phone rang. Would I, could I, write something for the 'Human Face' section of *The Mix*? This jolted me out of a wonderfully relaxed Friday evening reverie to reflect and share some of the personal experiences of my life. Not something I anticipated for this weekend but, knowing how much I have enjoyed these insights from others, I am happy to share some of my story.

My name is Pat Robinson (Prior), and my earliest years were spent with my mother, grandmother and four aunts who lived together during the early years of World War II. I was born in 1939. Within twelve months, my mother had married, given birth and farewelled her husband to war, never to see him again. He was killed in action in Bardia, in what is now Libya.

I think it speaks volumes that I could grow up in this highly charged, feminine household, and not think I was any different – advantaged or disadvantaged – by the fact that women were in charge, to provide the home and the bread on the table, as well as the love and nurturing.

When I was four, my mother was seconded by the government to return to the workforce, and she decided to send me as a weekly boarder to the Sisters of Charity. My age precluded me from class, so I was free to play in kindergarten, or busy myself in the kitchen with Sister (could this explain my love of cooking and good food?).

Friends now commiserate and say, 'What a sad experience for a young child!' I can only affirm the most wonderful of memories of those times. The Sisters were just like the aunts, only they dressed differently perhaps. I had the opportunity to meet up with some of those women in later years, and they remembered me, as I did them. I had a sense of belonging.

During my time as a boarder at the Dominican Convent in Maitland, Mum remarried. She had a baby daughter, Susan – a real family at last! Unfortunately, the marriage did not last very long. Again Mum went through the process of bringing up another daughter on her own.

After leaving school, I went on to secretarial college, the aunts approving. My first position was as a legal secretary; 'nice and safe,' they said. The practice I joined was one started by a Polish Jew. His clientele was mostly from war-ravaged Europe, so my education went ahead in leaps and bounds! I was the only native-English speaker in the practice – our articled clerk was from Czechoslovakia. We all had things to learn from each other.

In 1962 I met and fell in love with Allan Kyle-Robinson, and we were married in 1964. Thirty-six years down the track, we

have survived – to enjoy our family of four children; to be totally captivated by our grandson and his mother; to travel and meet extended family members in England and Canada; to travel to Japan with our daughter, who had spent two years living and working there; to open our house to the people our children have befriended a who, in turn, have become part of our extended family.

That word 'belonging' – I think the seeds of belonging were sown and fertilised in those early experiences of childhood. The motto of the Sisters of Charity, "*Caritas Christi Urget Nos*" (The Love of Christ Urges Us On) and the Dominicans' "*Veritas*" (Truth) still today inform my conscience and attitude.

I am not a great "joiner" of organisations, but I do belong to the Church, as opposed to a church that, for me, is a very significant yet troublesome family member. I belong to *Catalyst for Renewal*. And I belong to Christ. I am a follower of Christ, a Christian, but what was once so clear-cut, has become increasingly complex for me. The myriad of issues that confront me: from my appreciation of and now inability to participate in the Third Rite of Reconciliation, through to the highly contentious issue of women's role within the Church – all these continue to challenge me. It is not enough to merely be a Sunday Christian. It's all of life, all of the time.

And so I seem to practise my own unique way of following Christ, living as best I can, to love the Lord with my whole heart, my whole mind, all my strength and my neighbour as myself.

I have done this, I hope, in the nurturing of my family and friends, in the relationships I have formed, and in the bond with my little grandson. We said grace together last week for the first time, not joining hands as I was taught, but holding hands, as I am teaching.



Patricia Robinson

As an amateur philosopher, theologian, and historian, I appreciate the message that endeavouring to live out my earthly phase in a manner pleasing to God is my primary task. That Jesus told me how to do this by spending three years with a group of other spiritually uneducated humans is a cause for gratitude and also profound wonder.

With so much to tell us, why did God choose an era when the written word was so exclusive and risk it to the oral tradition? The subsequently recorded recollections are surely but a fraction of what the apostles learnt at fireside chats and group debates and then disseminated among the peoples of the time after Pentecost.

And why are the written excerpts from the oral tradition, emanating from other members of the 'college of bishops', given equal standing with Peter's recollections as recorded by Mark? Was this an inspired manifestation that the Spirit of Jesus prefers to work collectively for my benefit? The command to love others certainly implies community.

In the early times, with memories still fresh, it appears the apostles used their first-hand understanding of Jesus to solve local problems. Those in the 'too hard to get' were referred for collective recollection and the group wisdom relayed through Peter, acknowledged as the chairman.

Why give the world the impression the Spirit of Jesus guiding His Church is a Rome exclusive?

With the passage of time and the anecdotal Jesus being replaced by a dreamtime Jesus, it is reasonable to assume that the Bishop of Rome was not necessarily in a better position to solve the curly ones than any other apostolic representative. And, taking into consideration the problems of communication, it is again reasonable that this Bishop would gather around him a think tank. However, for major issues, he still collected as many apostolic members as possible as Council.

With the increased complexity and sophistication of evolving society, adaptation of the basically simple traditional Message presented major problems when scientific and psychosocial 'truth' is involved.

For me, as a lay member, science and psychology are more tangibly parts of

my everyday life than theology. It seems ironic that, in our time, more Bishops of Rome have not taken advantage of the relative ease of communication to seek truth in collaboration with, rather than in isolation from, their apostolic brothers.

It is a tragedy that so many (especially clergy) have felt it necessary to withdraw from the process of renewal...

Surely it is more reasonable to expect that the Spirit, restricted to functioning through the human medium, can better operate through a collective, given that our individual strengths are complementary. Why give the world the impression that the Spirit of Jesus guiding His Church is a Rome exclusive?

At least that is the way I see the advantage to the Church of accepting multiple sources for aiding understanding of how the Gospel Message can work for us. We all hear the same News but our comprehension is governed by those nuances which make each of us a unique image of the likeness of God... To suggest otherwise implies that we are spiritual clones and diminishes my concept of the attributes of an Infinite Being.

By the same token I see 'Spirit' advantages in bishops tapping into this Infinite Pool of Good News understanding that resides in the lay people of God. My opinion is worth no more than a grain of sand but, if echoed collectively through other reasoned and prayerful consciences, it becomes a beach.

Unfortunately we have now become obsessed with 'chip' time and expect our wants tomorrow. The historical evidence is that the Spirit of Jesus does not operate in this time scale. He is much more loving and gentle and protective and prefers to ease us slowly into what could be profound and destabilising changes for a single generation. An unexpected but welcome event like Mass in the vernacular spelt doom for some.

During WW2 the naval commander responsible for the convoy set the speed to suit the slowest vessel ... that way he could best be shepherd to each member of his flock, and more survived the hazardous journey. 'Hasten slowly' is often good advice, but the median tempo should be more brisk than, say, in 1899 and even

1949, if only because the laity now feel more empowered, more actively part of the renewal process, and more aware that concerned counterparts in the global community are like-minded.

I certainly feel comfortable being associated with Catalyst for Renewal, as it does not compromise my 'loyalty' nor give hint, at this stage, that I may be enticed out on a limb. It is a tragedy that so many [especially clergy] have felt it necessary to withdraw from the process of renewal because they feel that the sincerity of their criticisms and hopes will be brought into question if they remain in the fold.

Norman Rogers is a retired GP, living in Ballina, NSW. He is a member of his parish Jubilee book committee.

CONVERSATION AND PRAYER

The realisation that prayer is conversation may account for the resurgence of Celtic spirituality, for at its heart is an easy familiarity with God and the whole of creation.

The encounter between Jesus and the woman at the well is a good example of conversation, if we look at it from the point of view of the dynamic at work: The two speakers are on equal terms. Jesus does not talk down to her. He opens the conversation with a simple request, making contact, offering the woman the possibility of an exchange. She doesn't let the invitation die, but says something that Jesus picks up and develops. And thus the conversation goes on.

It is as real today as when John first wrote about it, its psychology and dynamic completely authentic. And it shows us much about Jesus and the woman that is not put into words. Their attitudes speak, as well as their words. In fact, you could say that John is a dramatist in his presentation of this and similar incidents in his Gospel. And this gives us a clue to what good conversation is like. It brings situations to life, as good drama does.

Regis Hickey, cfc, Sydney.

Thank you very much for John Heaps' article, *Loyal Dissent*, and for the many other excellent reading materials in *The Mix*.

Sr. Paul, mss, Bruny Island, Tas.

I appreciate the challenge and balance of *The Mix*. I have much to learn.

Mary Georgelin, Coburg, Vic.

Essay – Hope, anguish and the messy bits of humanity

by David Leary

The following is the text of a presentation given by David Leary at Spirituality in the Pub, Paddington, March 1, 2000. (Some details have been changed to protect confidentiality.)

I want to begin tonight by telling a story that inhabits my head and disturbs me greatly. But I'd like to preface my story with a clear message that although it is deeply disturbing, I'm not setting out to shock. What I am constantly trying to do is discover that vast meeting ground between the transcendent (the Other) and the reality that is our humanity - others and mine - and then remain there. And for me, that's an extremely messy place; and not just because of the young people with whom I work, but also because of the threads of my own story.

In August 1993, a young 19-year-old came to see me for individual therapy. When we first met he was anxious and sat quietly and nervously, always on the edge of the lounge chair in my room. He could never rest, even for a while. His story is greatly disturbing both to him and to anyone with whom he has contact. Early that year, his father murdered his mother in front of all his younger siblings. From that moment on, he became responsible for their wellbeing. This event divided and shattered his family. From a clinical point of view, they are traumatised beyond belief, and to this day they struggle to make sense of life and relationships. Images are shattered, symbols are transitory, isolation is acute, meaning is either negative or absent. Hope is like a fog that settles in the blackness of night.

He comes and sits; he is silent, he shakes his head and he worries about his brothers who use drugs. He trembles at the feelings of rage and violence he carries; he loves his parents but hates his inheritance. He runs away and life cowers around him. He sometimes feels his life is no more than a process of waiting for his inevitable destruction. His history is explosive and violent and he feels dangerous. The memories of violence enacted towards him and against his family never cease. I'm speechless in his presence!

Of one thing I am sure, and absolutely: this is the stuff of his life. We can neither avoid it nor deny its action on him or, for that matter, on me. His life is all of this and more, but certainly *it is this*: nothing less. He cannot leave it behind or extract it from his mind. There is no respite.

What can I say that could possibly make any sense to him, or more to the point, help him make sense of what it is he feels? For

that's the acute desire within me, to make sense, to heal, to comfort, to pacify the noises within. I can't do it. All I can do is remain.

For a little over 6 years we have traveled together, trying to make sense of the outrageous and the tragic. Dealing with the anguish, searching for hope. I have four actions in his life, all of them meagre compared with the weight he carries. I *stay* and try not to run; I *listen* and try not to shut down; I *touch*, for sometimes the warmth or even the sweat of my hand is the only word I have; I *resolve* the practical dilemmas that eat away at his emotional and physical stability. Sometimes I have confidence in what I am doing. Much of the time I rely on ancient voices and an uncomfortable and uncertain faith.

Does a woman forget her baby at the breast, or fail to cherish the son of her womb? Yet even if these forgot I will never forget you.

I can't know for sure whether he will survive or even whether I am helping. He disappears from time to time and though I think of him and what it is he carries, I also feel, quite intensely, my own doubt and inadequacy in the face of such agony.

Yet even if these forget, I will never forget you.

This juxtaposition is the essence of hope and anguish in life: acute pain and ambivalence lying right next to a desire to remain and not forget. They coexist, the same as he and I try to remain on an uncomfortable journey. They cannot be separated. They mark and define life struggling to remain fully alive. Dealing with our reality means dealing with the connectedness of both elements, in all its complexity. To deny the connectedness of these elements is to deny the essence of life itself.

Without the grit of my life, our public identity may be safe and certainly sanitised, but you would not have me. Nor would you have the Other

I think for me, the watershed religious experience of the last twelve months was the denial of communion to individuals wearing the *Rainbow Sash*: homosexuals, their friends and their families. Watershed, because I think it provided a dominant message

that we should never forget, not of authority, principle or firmness, but rather of fear within a withering aspect of the church – fear of the grit of life. Is Yahweh that small and fearful of life? Could that possibly be the case? I have thought for some time that the unspoken agenda within church, of whatever persuasion, is a desire to discover the transcendent *without a lot of messiness*.

From where I spend my days, that would be an impossible task. If you can imagine, it would be like entering the Royal National Park just south of Sydney not long after the bush fires, in order to meditate, only to begin with the request, "God, could you please remove that bushfire smell, it's distracting my meditation".

If you were to request of me, perhaps even respectfully, that I remove my shattered bits, or fragility or the differences in me that some call 'intrinsically evil', before I enter or work for church, you would not have me. Without the grit of my life, our public identity may be safe and certainly sanitised, but you would not have *me*. Nor would you have *the Other*, for it is in the rawness and grit of life, the tragedy, sadness and joy, that *the Other* is to be discovered. May I dare to say that like hope and anguish, all of these often messy bits form an integral part of me as murder and unspeakable sadness are co-terminous to the life of my silent and anxious friend.

If you wish to speak of faith today, it makes two very pragmatic demands on each of us. First, that we neither deny nor run from the reality that is life, in all its complexity; and second, that we straddle and not avoid the chasm that is hope and anguish, life and death, joy and sorrow: that we hold all of these points in a tension that speaks of life fully alive!

I came out of the theatre the other night and I was walking up Darlinghurst Road. One of our young people scurried up and walked a little way with us. He looked terrible. He said he'd lost our pager number and as I began to write it down for him, he stopped me, saying, "I'll only lose it if it's on paper". He grabbed my pen and wrote it on his hand: carved it, inscribed it deeply. I felt uncomfortable with his anguish but hopeful that he would not forget that we care for him.

Does a woman forget her baby at the breast or fail to cherish the son of her womb? Yet even if these forget I will never forget you. See, I have carved your name on the palm of my hands. (Isaiah 49:15-16)

David Leary lives in Sydney and has worked with marginalised young people since 1977.

THE TRUTH THAT FREES

Garry Wills

The following is an excerpt from Garry Wills' latest book, *Papal Sin: Structures of Deceit* (Doubleday, 2000), 308 and 309. The book is reviewed on page eight of this issue of *The Mix*.

Open speech is *parrhēsia*, which literally means "speak all", holding nothing back. In the Christian texts it means the speech of one totally transparent to the message being conveyed, the truth of God's word. No filter of falsehood stands between the Spirit and the proclamation that issues from the speaker's mouth. Over and over in the Acts of the Apostles, the disciples are said to have openness in their speaking. (See for example 2:29, 4:13, 4:29, 4:31, 9:27, 9:29, 13:46, 14:3, 18:26, 19:8, 26:16, 28:31.)

This is both free speech and freeing speech: "As they were in prayer, the place where they were meeting vibrated and they spoke, as liberated (*meta parrhēsia*), the word of God" (Acts 4:31). In the Gospel of John, Jesus sometimes does not speak with *parrhēsia*, but in signs and parables, because he has not completed his mission (10:24, 11:54, 16:25). But when he incorporates believers into his body by the power of the Spirit, "the Defender will come to pose the world's lie" (16:8).

What would a church that had, like Jesus, broken out of the violence of the world's lying system look like? It would be a victim, not a victimizer with Satan. Newman, marking the "scandal" of Pius IX's relying on French troops to oppress his own Roman subjects, said, "When he is persecuted, he is in his proper place – not when he persecutes." The whole church, in other words, would be that eschatological sign that Paul VI restricts to the celibacy of the priest – a prophetic life in the reign of God (*basileia*) that Jesus said is "here for you" (Lk 17:21).

It would be a church filled with the Spirit, speaking openly of glad access to God. It would not build flimsy barricades against the truth about past Catholic attitudes toward the Jews. It would not stand on pride to reassert, against all evidence, past attitudes on contraception. It would not involve the whole subject of sex in a darkness created when women were considered inferior and sex bestial. It would return to the baptismal cluster of freedoms, the multiple declarations of independence, at Galatians 3:26-28:

Baptized into Christ. You are clothed in Christ, so that there is no more Jew or Greek, slave or

free, man and woman, but all are one, are the same in Christ Jesus.

This church would not restrict the priesthood to men. In fact, it would not restrict the priesthood to priests – to magicians of the eucharistic transformation. It would not deprive whole communities of their own priests rather than relax a code of celibacy never imposed on the apostles.

It would not bring in substitutes for the Holy Spirit, making the Pope the monarch of the church. It would not make Mary an empress – drawing on the imagery of the world's violent system. It would not silence the free voice of the Spirit in believers' hearts.

If one wants to know what such a church would not be, all one has to do is look at the first Vatican Council, where schemes were hatched to foist a doctrine on the faithful by surprise, where the Pope pursued a stealth strategy, deceiving his own followers by pretending that the Council was not called to do his will. It would not suppress freedom of speech, hiding its proceedings behind a veil of silence, quashing the voice of conscience in the attending bishops, changing its decrees in secret before the final vote. It was not only the faithful, the critical, the questioning, who were excluded from that Council. The Spirit was excluded. None of the Council's distinguishing characteristics – secrecy, coercion, deception – is a characteristic of the Spirit. The old system of sacrifice was brought back, the one canceled by Christ on the cross – only here the believers were sacrificed to an idol, to the papacy. Pius IX stood not for all-speak (*parrhēsia*) but for no-speak (*ou-rhēsia*), for blind subjection, not liberation in the Light, the Light who enlightens everyone who comes into the world (Jn 1:9).

We Christians believe (the Spirit) has a special role to complete Christ's mission in us. Unworthy as we are, She calls us. She even calls the Vatican. All Christians need to respond to that soliciting. Including Popes.

Christ, Augustine said, is the way to the truth and is the truth. Every truth leads to him. Only falsehood blocks the path which he is. "Through him we travel to him." That is why the church lie was the worst lie in his eyes – the use of falsehood to proclaim the truth. He would have said that the new papal sin, of deception, is worse than the vivid old sins of material

greed, proud ambition, or sexual license. It is spiritual sin, an interior baffling of the Spirit's access to the soul. It is a cold act, achieved by careful maneuvering and manipulating, a calculated blindness, a shuttering of the mind against the Light.

But where can this church of the Spirit be found? Not in some imagined purity of the past. There were no good old days of the faith apart from what faces us today. There was betrayal and bitterness in the clash of Paul with Peter, Peter with Paul, as in the betrayal of both men to Nero. Then where is the church of Pentecost, that original feast of multilingual multiculturalism? It is anywhere the Spirit breathes freedom into a Christian community – where peacemakers are at work, where Sister Prejean is telling people that capital punishment is revenge and not a Christian action, where Daniel Berrigan is caring for those stricken with AIDS, where people unite to help the helpless, where Philip Berrigan is telling us that no one has the right to build weapons that can destroy the world.

When John the Baptist asked whether the reign of God had arrived, the answer of Jesus was simple: "The poor have the good news brought to them" (Mt 11:5). At a time when we hear that Catholics are less true to their belief than in the past, the campus churches I know have young people readier than I and my friends were at their age to work on soup lines, to minister to the inner cities. The Spirit is in them. He needs no license from the Vatican to repeat, in barrio, in ghetto, and in slum, the sign given John the Baptist.

I do not think that my church has a monopoly on the Spirit, which breathes where She will, in every Christian sect and denomination. In fact, She breathes through all religious life, wherever the divine call is heeded, among Jews and Buddhists and Muslims and others. But we Christians believe She has a special role to complete Christ's mission in us. Unworthy as we are, She calls us. She even calls the Vatican. All Christians need to respond to that soliciting. Including Popes.

Garry Wills is an adjunct professor of history at Northwestern University. Wills received a PhD in classics from Yale and has had a distinguished career as an author, with his book Lincoln at Gettysburg winning him the Pulitzer Prize in 1993.

"Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men. There is no worse heresy than that the office sanctifies the holder of it." (Letter from Lord Acton to Bishop Mandell Creighton; April 3, 1887.)

Words for a Pilgrim People

Not everyone who says to me 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 7:21)

□□□

*The Church is an evangelizer, but she begins by being evangelized herself. She is the community of believers, the community of hope lived and communicated, the community of brotherly love; and she needs to listen unceasingly to what she must believe, to her reasons for hoping, to the new commandment of love. She is the People of God immersed in the world, and often tempted by idols, and she always needs to hear the proclamation of the "mighty works of God" which converted her to the Lord; she always needs to be called together afresh by Him and reunited. In brief, this means that she has a constant need of being evangelized, if she wishes to retain freshness, vigor and strength in order to proclaim the Gospel. The Second Vatican Council recalled and the 1974 Synod vigorously took up again this theme of the Church which is evangelized by constant conversion and renewal, in order to evangelize the world with credibility. (Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* ("On Evangelization in the Modern World"), December 8, 1975, 15.*

□□□

*It is a temptation to our weakness and to our consciences to defend the Pope as we would defend ourselves – with the same care and zeal, with the same uneasy secret consciousness that there are weak points in the case which can best be concealed by diverting attention from them. What the defense gains in energy it loses in sincerity; the cause of the Church, which is the cause of truth, is mixed up and confused with human elements, and is injured by a degrading alliance. In this way even piety may lead to immorality, and devotion to the Pope may lead away from God. (Lord Acton (3.79), cited by Garry Wills, *Papal Sin: Structures of Deceit*, Doubleday, 2000, 11)*

□□□

John's Gospel is unique in its details of Jesus' trial before Pilate (18:33-19:16). In particular, the brief but telling interchange about "the kingdom" is noteworthy: "Are you the king of the Jews? Jesus answered, Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me? ... My kingship is not of this world; if my kingship were of this world, my servants would fight, that I might not be handed over to the Jews; but my kingship is not from the world. ... You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears my voice" (verses 34-37).

Pilate – and just about everyone – has absolutely no understanding of Jesus' mission. To begin with, Jesus represents no earthly ruler – he is sent by the Father (see, for example, 4:34, 5:19-47, 6:44, 7:16, 8:28 etc). He bears the eternally loving and wise intent of the Father. He carries no particular political or military or social or economic brief, except in so far as the Father's intent for the world has radical implications for these and all other fields of human endeavour. Precisely because he represents not a temporal but an eternal order, he has a huge impact on the temporal order. His very presence places demands for truth that can only be evaded through more or less violence.

The primary emphasis here is not on "kingdom" but "kingship".

Secondly, the primary emphasis here is not on "kingdom" but "kingship". The Father's will is everything to Jesus. Jesus is absolutely faithful to the Father. Therefore the disciple of Jesus is willing to submit to the Father's will embodied in Jesus and his life and teaching. This is what "kingship" means. If there is a "kingdom" engendered in this relationship, it is a "kingdom" constituted by the eternal truth and love which flows into us and through us as we submit to the "kingship" of Jesus who is the Christ.

Pilate does not understand. At this stage, even those closest to him do not understand what Jesus means by his "kingship" and the "kingdom". And the painful hours that follow, as they see all their dreams shattered with his body on the cross, plunge them into despairing confusion. Easter Day is the great affirmation that Friday was actually a *good* day, the day on which the "kingdom" was established once and for all. □

The Tradition – Celebrating Christ the king

The formal feast of Christ the King is a relatively recent introduction to the liturgical calendar. Pius XI instituted it in 1925. In the encyclical letter announcing the feast, Pius XI argues that the most effective weapon against the destructive forces of the age is the acknowledgement of the kingship of Christ. Whether or not it is a good thing to have the formal feast of Christ the King is open to debate. However, the thinking behind it – the affirmation of the kingship of Christ – is absolutely central to the tradition.

St Augustine represents the tradition well when he writes: "Come to the kingdom that is not of this world; come, believing, and fall not into the madness of anger through fear. He says, indeed prophetically, of God the Father, 'Yet have I been appointed king by him upon his holy hill of Zion (Ps 2:6)'; but that hill of Zion is not of this world. For what is his kingdom save those who believe in him, to whom he says, 'Ye are not of the world even as I am not of the world'? And yet he wished them to be in the world: on that very account saying of them to the Father, 'I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.' Hence also he says not here, 'My kingdom is not' in this world; but 'is not of this world.' And when he proved this by saying, 'If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews,' He saith not, 'But now is my kingdom not' here, but, 'is not from hence.' For his kingdom is here until the end of the world, having tares intermingled therewith until the harvest; for the harvest is the end of the world, when the reapers, that is to say the angels, shall come and gather out of his kingdom everything that offendeth (Mt 13:38-41); which certainly would be done, were it not that his kingdom is here. But still it is not from hence; for it only sojourns as a stranger in the world: because he says to his kingdom, 'Ye are not of the world but I have chosen ye out of the world.'" □

The affirmation of the kingship of Christ is absolutely central to the tradition.

Bulletin Board

Catalyst Calendar

(Info: Pauline on 02 9816 4262)

SIP Promoter – Terry O’Loughlin on (02) 9816 4262 or (02) 9816 5091.

email: terry_catalyst@hotmail.com

[NSW and ACT – 7.30-9.00pm unless specified].

◦ **Boorowa** – The Boorowa Hotel (Info: Margaret 6201 9802 or Christine 6385 3304).

◦ **Bowral** – The Grand Bar and Brasserie (Info: John 4878 5230).

◦ **Campbelltown** – resumes 2001 (Info: Sue Brinkman 4627 2953).

◦ **Canberra** – ‘The Australian Story’ – The Canberra Workers Club, Childers St, Canberra (Info: Rita 6288 4715).

◦ **Chatswood** – ‘Sowing Seeds: Fostering Growth’ Orchard Tavern, Cnr. Victoria Ave & Orchard Rd – resumes 2001 (Info: Michelle 9958 5963).

◦ **Five Dock** – The Illinois Hotel, Cnr Parramatta Rd & Arlington St – resumes 2001 (Info: Noeline 9744 8141).

◦ **Jamberoo** – The Jamberoo Hotel – resumes 2001 (Info Anne 4232 1062 or Gaye 4232 2735).

◦ **Glen Innes** – The Club Hotel, Grey St, (Info: Kerrie 6732 2023).

◦ **Kincumber** – ‘Proclaim Jubilee’, The Kincumber Hotel, Avoca Drive, November 14 “Jubilation – Prepare a Feast!” Dinner with Guest Speakers tba (Info: Robbie 4390 0370 or Clair 4344 6608).

◦ **Newcastle** – The Mary Ellen Hotel, Glebe Rd, Merewether, “The Seven Deadly Sins” November 20 ‘Wrath’ Speakers tba (Info: Lawrence 4967 6440).

◦ **Paddington** – The Bellevue Hotel, Resumes 2001 (Info: Marea 9387 3152 (H)).

◦ **Penrith** – Golf Club – resumes 2001 (Info: Dennis 4773 5521).

◦ **Rouse Hill** – The Mean Fiddler on Windsor Rd – will resume again in 2001. (Info: Tim or Margaret 9634 2927 (H)).

◦ **Waitara** – The Blue Gum Hotel on the Pacific Hwy – resumes 2001 (Info: Kathryn 9983 0162).

◦ **Wollongong** – Mt Kembla Hotel, Mt Kembla, November 13, Topic & Speakers tba (Info: Tom 4228 5038).

Other States:

◦ **Ballarat** – (Info: Kevin 03 5332 1697).

◦ **Clayton (VIC)** – The Notting Hotel, 8pm-9.30pm: November 28 “Healing the Inner Person, Healing Ourselves” Mary Ellen

Davis & Jack Stewart (Info: Yvonne 9700 7340 or Joyce 9700 1250).

◦ **Collingwood (VIC)** – The Vine Hotel, Cnr Wellington & Derby Sts, 8pm-9.30pm. (Info: Maree 0412 136681).

◦ **Geelong** – (Info: Denis 03 5275 4120).

◦ **Mordialloc (VIC)** – The Kingston Club Hotel, 7.30pm-9pm – resumes 2001 (Info: Maria 03 9579 4255).

◦ **Spirituality Café, Rosanna**, November 3 “Spirituality and mental health” Ros Cairns (Info: Marian 03 9459 4403).

◦ **Devonport (TAS)** – Molly Malone’s Irish Pub, 7.30pm-9pm, Last Wednesday of each month (Info: Fr Richard Ross 6424 2783).

◦ **Fortitude Valley (QLD)** – Dooley’s, First Monday of month (Info: Lois 3260 7384).

◦ **Perth** – The Elephant and the Wheelbarrow, cnr Francis and Lake Sts, Northbridge, 7.30pm-9pm (Info: Michael 9448 2404).

◦ **SIP Weekend Live-In** for those involved in running SIPs, November 18/19. Contact the office for details on 9816 4262.

SPIRITUALITY IN THE PUB
COMMUNITY WEBSITE
<http://communities.ninemsn.com.au/SpiritualityinthePub>

◦ **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.

Other Matters and Events

◦ **The Aquinas Academy** adult education centre, 141 Harrington St Sydney runs a series of programs, day and evening, with a special emphasis on spirituality. Michael Whelan SM is the Director (Info: Patricia on 02 9247 4651).

◦ **Mount St Benedict Centre**, Pennant Hills, “Jubilee Time” November 18; “The Carlson Chorale” November 26; “Preparing for the Christian Feast” December 15-22 (Info: 9484 6208).

◦ **Spirituality Courses Mary MacKillop Place**, North Sydney, “Signs of Life” November 22, 1.30-3pm and November 26, 11am-1pm (Info: Sr Jeanette Foxe on 8912 4887). “Guided Meditations on the Gospels” November 13 & 20, 11am-1pm; “Preparation for Advent/Christmas” November 27 & December 4, 11am-1pm (Info: Sr Elizabeth Crilley on 9954 9688).

◦ **St James Spirituality Centre**, King St, Sydney, runs a variety of adult education

programs (Info: Susanne on 9232 3022).

◦ **Eucharistic Reflection with Bishop Geoffrey Robinson**, November 25, 4 – 7pm, Parish Hall, cnr Mary St & Gladesville Rd, Hunters Hill, by donation. All welcome. Followed by light meal. RSVP November 17th.

◦ **Appeal for Volunteers** to help organise Reflection Days. Please phone Carole Wilson 9869 1036 or CFR office 9816 4262.

◦ **Richard Rohr** will be the guest of Aquinas Academy in November in Sydney, Canberra, Brisbane, Adelaide and Newcastle (Info: Patricia on 02 9247 4651).

◦ **Eremos Workshop** November 11 ‘The Body at Play and the Body at Rest: An Interplay workshop’, Rod Pattenden, Trish Watts, Sue Pain, Maree Haggerty, 9.30am-4pm, Centre for Ministry, 16 Masons Drv, North Parramatta. **An Address by Richard Rohr** “Nurturing the Contemplative” Friday, November 24th, 7.30pm at Santa Sabina College, Strathfield (Info 9683 5096).

KERRY MAREE TEULAN RIP

On October 10 Kerry Teulan died suddenly and unexpectedly. Kerry was 37. She leaves a husband, Martin, and three young daughters.

Martin Teulan was a founding member of Catalyst for Renewal.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Martin and his family at this time of profound sadness.

CATALYST ANNUAL APPEAL FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

We have launched our Second Annual Appeal by writing to our *Friends* to help us in our mission of raising the level of good conversation in the Australian Catholic Church.

Thank you for your generous response to the Appeal last year which raised \$55,000 and enabled us to employ our Projects/Development Manager.

We are hoping to raise a similar amount through this Second Appeal.

As of October 12, the Appeal this year had raised \$24,810.

We continue to ask for your generous support.

Recommended Reading

Kevin Coen, *Monsignor John Leonard and the Catholic Youth Organisation*, St Paul's, 2000, 190 pages, photographs, pb. (Available from the author for \$26.35 – post & pack included – from 17 Yarrabung Ave, Thornleigh 2120.)

Geoffrey Plant, *Tell Me A Story: Meditations For The Spiritual Journey*, Harper Collins, 2000, 245 pages, endnotes, pb, \$24.95.

Jennifer Cameron, IBVM, *A Dangerous Woman: Mary Ward (1585-1645)*, St Paul's, 2000, 306 pages, index, bibliography, endnotes, pb \$26.95.

This book is divided into three parts. The first gives a "portrait" of Monsignor Leonard, the second details the history of the Catholic Youth Organisation (CYO) in Sydney and the third reproduces some of the columns that Monsignor Leonard used to write for the *Catholic Weekly*. In all this we get an entertaining and informative view of the Catholic Church in Sydney during more than a quarter of a century immediately following the Second World War. The book makes no pretensions to be a serious historical or sociological study. It is written very much in terms of personal memories – of both the author and others involved. Monsignor Leonard and the CYO together symbolise a great energy and confidence that seem so remote from us today. There is no one currently in the Sydney Church whom we could compare with Monsignor Leonard and no structure or organisation that we could compare with the CYO. At its peak, the CYO boasted more than 160 branches with over 20,000 members in the Sydney Archdiocese as it was before Parramatta and Broken Bay were established as separate dioceses. Perhaps there is not a lot of what happened then that can be transferred to now, but we would be the less if we ever forgot it.

It is very hard for a rationalist to admit the need for stories. Stories belong, after all, to the realm of childhood and superstition. Real people only deal in facts! So some might think. *Tell Me A Story* could be a good Christmas present for such a person. Plant manages to be rational and factual even as he opens up the farther reaches of reality that can never be more than suspected by the rational mind. In the Preface he writes: "The book contains homilies preached to congregations at St Francis of Assisi Parish, Paddington, and Holy Family Parish, Menai. Preaching is about storytelling and the most basic stories are about identity and meaning. The homily is an attempt to build a bridge between two stories – the biblical story and my own story. As my own story resonates within the biblical narrative, I begin to see into the mystery at the heart of the human condition." Each homily is two or three pages. These are short enough – and rich enough – to provide the reader with good daily meditations. The style is very readable and should be accessible to a wide audience. Books such as this – and Michael McGirr's *The Things You Get For Free* – make valuable contributions to the quest for speaking coherently about our world without losing touch with the riches of the tradition. Leave this book by your bed for frequent reading.

There are a number of good reasons to listen to the voice of history. One, as Santayana has noted, is that we might avoid the mistakes of the past. There are better reasons and Cameron displays at least three of them well in this fine little study of Mary Ward, foundress of that group of women we know as the Loreto Sisters. Firstly, as you read this book you get a strong sense of Catholic roots and of a mighty tradition. Secondly, you will also find yourself inspired and encouraged. Religion and culture can get pretty dirty at times, bringing out the worst in some people. Paradoxically, those are the very times when we also find examples of humanity at its best. Mary Ward is one of the latter, her courage and well-grounded Gospel vision standing in contrast to the attitudes and thinking of those who judged her to be a heretic and suppressed her Institute. Thirdly, we are reminded of the part played by women in the history of the Church. The problem has not been the absence of great women but the absence of adequate and realistic recognition of those great women and all the other women who have contributed to the life of the Church. Cameron's style is matter of fact. Although she is writing about a saint – albeit uncanonised – she resists any temptation to idealise her subject. The facts are compelling enough.

✂----- Detach and post today -----

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PLEASE TELL ME HOW I CAN VOLUNTEER TO HELP CATALYST FOR RENEWAL

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