



THE MIX



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Our Say – Throw in the towel?

Immediately after the Second World War, a “new theology” began to find its voice in Europe. Its chief proponents were French and included such men as the Jesuits de Lubac and Daniélou, and the Dominicans Chenu and Congar. Directly and indirectly, their opinions were confronted in 1950 by Pius XII’s encyclical, *Humani Generis*. Their thinking – for example, on the nature of the Church, ecumenism and the role of the laity – was thought to be dangerous.

Indeed, their thinking was extremely dangerous for an institutional form of Church that had, over the centuries, become heavily burdened with political, social and cultural forms that had little or nothing to do with the person and teaching of Jesus. Furthermore, their thinking provided the freedom and vision for the Second Vatican Council.

There is a great – and not uncommon – irony in all this. Throughout the history of the Catholic Church, so many of those who called the Church back to the Gospel have been resisted, rejected and even killed, only

to be appreciated, embraced and even canonised by a later generation. In this instance, these individuals not only helped John XXIII open the windows to a more liberating vision of the Church, but all of them received great approbation and appreciation in the subsequent years before they died and three of them were made cardinals.

The journal of one of these prophetic men – Fr Yves Congar – has recently been published in French. He lived through the First World War – when his mother encouraged him to begin this journal – and survived the infamous Colditz prison in the Second World War.

However, this journal is not as significant for its records of Congar’s arguments with the German occupiers of his homeland, as it is significant for his arguments with the Roman authorities within the Church.

From 1946 those authorities began to closely scrutinise the writings of Congar and his colleagues. In 1954 he was sent to Jerusalem, to Rome in 1955 and to Cambridge

in 1956; during these same years he was virtually forbidden from publishing anything or speaking in public. He speaks of being “crushed, destroyed, excommunicated by a pitiless system that can neither emend itself nor even recognise its errors, but which is run by men who are disarming in their goodness and piety”.

This was truly a crucifixion for Congar. While at Cambridge he admits that he “cried and sobbed in my solitude without end. ... I realise that there is nothing for me to do until death delivers me, that as long as I breathe, I will be trodden underfoot and left to rot”. Yet he persevered, asking himself: “Do I have the right to throw in the towel?”

Congar remains an example for us all today, forty years on from the Council he helped to shape. His fidelity to the Church, his commitment as a Dominican and a first-rate intellectual, his obedience to conscience and his trust in God continue to be an inspiration and a source of hope. □

The Human Face

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.

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My name is Margaret Beirne. Born into an Irish-Australian Catholic family, my childhood was imbued with a mixture of all three of those elements. Family, friends and social life were intrinsically and unquestioningly linked to our common Catholic faith.

One of my earliest memories is accompanying my father to daily Mass, frequently being piggy-backed home so that we would arrive in time for the typically huge Australian breakfast, lovingly prepared by my mother after she had prayed her own litany of petition and praise.

Another of my memories is that of listening proudly in Granville Town Hall as Dad entertained parish gatherings with a range of Irish songs in his rich tenor voice, a practice that gave him great joy right to the end of his life.

I am the eldest of the five children born to Mary and Keith Beirne. Our faith developed in a relatively uncomplicated way. Family rosary, attendance at Mass, and Catholic education were all taken for granted.

At the ripe old age of fourteen, and with the blessing of my parents, I left home for the Sisters of St Joseph Juniorate, a kind of boarding school for prospective nuns. I shall always be grateful for the wonderful academic and musical education I received from the Josephites, both here and in my parish school. But by the time I was fifteen, I knew I was not meant to join them.

Deeply unhappy, I begged my parents to find me another school to complete my final year of secondary education. This they readily did and I was enrolled at Bethlehem College Ashfield, the only 'new girl' in the Leaving Certificate class.

Thus began, in the design of God, my lifelong involvement with the Sisters of Charity. By the end of that happiest of my school years, I knew why I had been led there. Deferring university, I entered the Sisters of Charity after a year 'in the world' and, in spite of many ups and downs since, have never doubted that this is my true spiritual home.

The Ignatian spirituality that shares the core of our inheritance from Mary Aikenhead took deep root in my soul from the moment of our first retreat. There it quietly grew until about ten years ago when, faced with the question of our congregation's future, I felt my "heart burning within" in utter conviction that the answer lies in our wholeheartedly reclaiming our Ignatian heritage. This conviction has never left me, even if the time of its full acceptance is yet to come.

During the past thirty-five years, I have

been involved in education at various levels and in youth ministry. I had the thrill of doing doctoral research at the Ecole Biblique in Jerusalem, and producing my thesis, *Women and Men in the Fourth Gospel: A Genuine Discipleship of Equals*.

In December 2000, at the invitation of Bishop David Walker, Chairman of the Centre's Board of Directors, I took over from him the position of Principal of the Centre for Christian Spirituality at Randwick. It is to his credit that this is the first time a woman (and non-cleric!) has been appointed head of a Catholic theological college in Australia.

Through the Centre, I have made many friends and acquaintances in the Sydney College of Divinity, as well as the wider Catholic community.

Throughout all of this, the faith inherited from my parents has stood me in good stead. While its small flame has at times been buffeted by distractions of one sort or another, it has never been extinguished. For this, under God, I owe a great debt of gratitude to my parents, family, friends and religious community.

As my own 'local church', they share my passion for the constant renewal of the wider Christian community, especially within the Catholic tradition.

I find it a source of real encouragement that an increasing number of our Catholic leaders, both here and abroad, are openly challenging those who would take us back to pre-Vatican II theology and practice.

In this, they have the support of the great majority who believe that the Spirit continues to lead us forward as ever more authentic witnesses to the abiding love of God present in the world (John 3:16).



Margaret Beirne

"Resistance to justice is a sacred duty"
(Mahatma Gandhi).

I often wonder what might fire Catholics to rebel. At what point would we go to the barricades and say, "Let my people go"? Or, like Gandhi, simply sit down in the road and say, "No"?

How can we liberate anyone when we ourselves are not free? How can we speak credibly about social justice when the Church so often behaves like the oppressive regimes whose policies it critiques and whose redemption it rightfully prays for?

The Church encompasses both what I most love, and what gives me most pain. On the one hand, the sacramental beauty, the waters of life, the pearl beyond price. On the other, the sin of sexism institutionally affirmed; scripture which can sanction racial hatred, religious intolerance, endemic violence and war; the Eucharist misused as a tool of political control.

Sometimes, just going to Mass can feel like colluding in intolerable injustice.

I passionately share Andrew Harvey's vision of "a Church stripped of all the patriarchal body and sex hatred and wholly unChristlike intolerance and love of authority that have deformed it for millennia" (*Essential Mystics*, HarperCollins, 1996).

I can't leave. I can't stay and remain silent. Therefore, I must speak and, if necessary, act.

The Church encompasses both what I most love and what gives me most pain.

I have to learn to stand in the fire, at the heart of an incongruence so deep it is schizoid. I practise lovingly standing my ground, fighting sacramentally. I think a lot about Gandhi and Martin Luther King and what they embodied.

The Church's ultimate weapon is the Eucharist. It withholds communion from those of us it fears or disapproves of. It gives itself the right to excommunicate, to unhouse.

During my journey into the Church — a cross between a pilgrimage and trench warfare — I was given an unexpected and powerful tool: the knowledge that I, in fact, couldn't be excommunicated.

Several months before I was finally baptised and confirmed four years ago, I chose at a time of personal anguish to break all the rules, to go to a church where I was-

not known and take communion. There was a period of months when the Eucharist was the only anchor I had, the eye of the hurricane.

Then that safety, too, was stripped away. I was reported for "illegally" receiving communion. I then had to think most seriously about what I would do if I were publicly refused the Eucharist. The very thought was violation.

There was a period of months when the Eucharist was the only anchor I had, the eye of the hurricane.

And there I was, back with Gandhi: "The first principle of non-violence is non-cooperation with anything humiliating". I hoped I would have the courage to not cede, to refuse to be refused, to continue to stand — kneel — weep in peaceful protest at the altar for hours or days or weeks, if that was what I felt was required of me.

Then I was given a gift that still takes my breath away. A stranger, a cradle Catholic who heard my story, said, "If you were with me at the altar, and I received the Eucharist and you were refused, I would share my Host with you." The hands and feet of Christ...

The power the Church has over us is that if we step too far out of line, we can be excommunicated.

But it doesn't. And we can't be.

*Anna March is a writer and conservationist from West Hobart, Tasmania. In her letter to the Editor, she says, "I've felt so frustrated with the Catholic press in this state that I've thought seriously about starting a feisty, yeasty, salty, soulful broadsheet here. I still might do it. In the meantime, it's a delight to have discovered *The Mix*."*

THE RURAL SCENE

I recently moved West with a very interesting and challenging role. I am working with Toowoomba Catholic Education to bring Religious Education to families in remote and rural parts of the diocese.

This project began in 1997, when interested people gathered in Charleville for a series of meetings. Some people came by plane from further west and from Toowoomba, while others, like myself,

travelled hundreds of kilometres to attend. This went on until 1999 when several decisions were taken by what was then a smaller committee.

An attempt to implement one of these decisions in 2000 failed to get off the ground. Towards the end of the year, when I was finishing up as Pastoral Associate in the Balonne Parish, the Director of Catholic Education invited me to consider managing the project.

The challenge ahead of me is to let people know about the project, because it began in the west but many families have left the land. They have either sold up or been replaced by single men as managers. Some properties have been bought out by one owner, so fewer families are needed to run them.

In my role I hope to assist adults to grow in knowledge, so that they will have more confidence to pass on an informed faith. ... I have found "The Mix" an invaluable resource in the past and know it will be in the future.

The face of this part of rural Queensland is changing, and is probably indicative of the rest of rural Australia. I am now targeting the Mass centres in rural parishes that are east of the western part of the diocese, and inviting someone from each to become my contact person. So far I have about fifty contacts. When I get my computer skills sharpened, I will contact people by email.

In my role I hope to assist adults to grow in knowledge, so that they will have more confidence to pass on an informed faith. Sacramental programs have been prepared for use by parents and their children living in isolation, with no ready access to reliable resources and mentors. We hope to have a chat room and access to a web page eventually.

I have found "The Mix" an invaluable resource in the past and know it will be in the future. Hence my eagerness to make sure you have my current address!

I am pleased and proud to be part of *Catalyst for Renewal*. Thanks to everyone for your efforts.

Di Phillips is a Sister of St Joseph ('Brown Joey's') who lives and works out of Charleville, Q'ld.

Essay – The ecclesiology of Vatican II

by Joseph Komonchak

The following are some brief excerpts from a paper by Joseph Komonchak, presented in a Symposium at Catholic University of America on March 27, 1999. For a full text of this paper, send a stamped self-addressed long envelope to the Editor, together with four 45-cent postage stamps.

I have been asked to attempt something that I would not allow my graduate students to try: to treat a very large and complex question in a very short time. The difficulty, even impossibility, of the task is fairly obvious. Karl Rahner remarked that Vatican II, “in all of its 16 constitutions, decrees and declarations was concerned with the church.”

The various conciliar documents were elaborated by distinct commissions working at different rhythms in the face of different problems and for different purposes, with a lack of coordination and of systematic interest that was not entirely offset by the fact that on many of them the same experts played major roles

In addition, on more than a few matters the council deliberately chose not to settle important issues but instead to state their terms and to leave it to theologians and others to work out a more coherent reconciliation than was possible at the time. The council also chose a rhetoric more discursive and allusive than the somewhat telegraphic language and argument characteristic of earlier councils.

It is a mistake, I think, to expect to find a fully coherent, systematic and comprehensive ecclesiology in the conciliar documents, and I will not attempt one here. I will ask three questions which are part of any ecclesiology and comment on what the council offered by way of position or clarification. They are: What is the church? Where is the church? What is the church for?

What is the Church? Vatican II did not offer a simple definition of the church, *Lumen Gentium's* first chapter is titled instead “The Mystery of the Church,” and respect for the mystery of God within the church led the council to approach it more meditatively and by a variety of means:

- A brief narrative of the history of salvation grounds the church’s Trinitarian basis and center, yielding its most comprehensive sense as the totality of those who will be saved, from Abel to the last of the just.

- A nuanced discussion of the church’s relationship to the kingdom is followed by a selection from among the abundant biblical images of the church, with special attention given to that of the body of Christ.

- The chapter ends with an insistence that it is at once a holy community of faith, hope and charity and a visible structure, the mystical body of Christ and a hierarchically endowed society, a spiritual community and a visible group endowed with heavenly gifts and existing here on earth, at once holy and always needing purification, a church that subsists in the Catholic Church (*Lumen Gentium*, 8).

The mystery of the church thus described is what the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* had already set out when it spoke of the eucharist, “the summit toward which all the activity of the church is directed and the source from which all her power flows” (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 100),

I am of the view, in other words, that one should not speak of several ecclesiologies in *Lumen Gentium* and in the other conciliar documents. There is no evidence whatever that the council fathers thought that they were juggling various images, notions or models of the church.

Lumen Gentium's second chapter is titled “The People of God,” and some interpreters have misinterpreted the chapter and its theme as if the council were now moving to another topic; some have even seen it as in a certain tension with the first chapter and its theme of mystery. It was not rare soon after the council to read suggestions that one had to choose between “body of Christ” and “people of God”, and the last decades have seen a shift away from “people of God” to “communion” as the key to the council ecclesiology, once again almost as if one had to choose one or the other.

How far such proposals are from the council’s intention is clear from the explanation offered by the doctrinal commission when it introduced this new second chapter. Chapter 2, it said, was an intrinsic part of the consideration of the mystery of the church and must not be separated from its inner nature and purpose; the material had been divided into two chapters simply be-

cause one chapter would have been too long.

The first chapter had considered the church in its great span from before creation in the plan of God until its fulfillment in heaven; Chapter 2 would discuss the same mystery in the time between the ascension and the Parousia, that time during which it lives by faith until it is perfected in the blessed vision.

Chapter 2, in other words, discusses the mystery of the church as lived out in history. It is the “communion of life, charity and truth” that is the “messianic people” which God uses as the instrument of redemption, “the visible sacrament of saving unity.” The chapter’s final description of the church as at once the “people of God”, the “body of the Lord” and the “temple of the Holy Spirit” returns to the Trinitarian center with which the first chapter had begun.

In these two chapters are concentrated the essential theological description of the church. Other chapters in *Lumen Gentium* spell out in detail the differentiation of the members of the church among the clergy, the laity and religious, their common call to holiness, their union with the saints in heaven and their final eschatological destiny, of which the Blessed Virgin Mary is the model.

Some interpreters have taken the clear difference in language and themes that mark especially chapters 3 and 4 as indicating yet another shift (or shifts) in underlying ecclesiology. I do not think that this is true either, unless one indulges the less-than-Catholic idea that differentiation is incompatible with communion or that law and charism are antinomies.

I am of the view, in other words, that one should not speak of several ecclesiologies in *Lumen Gentium* and in the other conciliar documents. There is no evidence whatever that the council fathers thought that they were juggling various images, notions or models of the church.

(Komonchak gives a similar space to addressing the other two questions he raises. There is not the space to include that material here.)

Final Reflections: The ambiguity and compromise character just noted with regard to *Gaudium et Spes* are visible elsewhere in the council’s ecclesiology and may serve as the first of several final reflections. It is a long-standing conciliar prac-

tice to work to achieve the greatest possible consensus which, when achieved in conditions of freedom and charity within a common faith, is regarded as the work of the Holy Spirit.

This method tends to frustrate intransigents of all colors because it requires them to be conciliatory and to work for compromise statements that do not settle legitimately controverted questions but rather express what all can accept as statements of the common faith.

Still, the council respected that tradition as is apparent in its final statements on the relationships between Scripture and tradition, between primacy and collegiality, between the whole church and the particular churches, between the primary and secondary ends of marriage, or on matters such as the morality of nuclear war or the authority of episcopal conferences, etc.

This is perhaps the reason why it is not rare that some people who reread the conciliar documents today, or others who read them for the first time, find them rather colorless; it is certainly the reason why some people appeal beyond the texts of the document to the "event" of the council and why some people prefer to appeal to the "spirit of Vatican II" rather than to its letter, this "spirit" often seeming to mean "what Vatican II would have said if there hadn't been any conservatives there." Justice to the council, and to what it did in every case of overwhelming majorities, recommends caution in such interpretations.

But it also means that the council, like every other magisterial statement and indeed like even the Scriptures, must be interpreted as an achievement that reflects the questions, the challenges, the resources of its time.

Of what has happened in the church much has been beneficial, and much of that can be attributed to decisions of the council. On the other hand, much that has happened has not been so favorable to the life of the church, much of that certainly not intended or desired by the popes and bishops of Vatican II. Whether or not the council should be held responsible for these aspects of its aftermath is, of course, a matter of considerable debate today. In any case, it is impossible, and quite unnecessary on good historiographical grounds, to pretend that all these things, good and bad, have not happened or to forbid them from entering into one's judgments about the council.

More particularly, with regard to Vatican II's ecclesiology, it has to be acknowledged that we are living with the consequences of the council's search for consensus. Many issues that it left unresolved in its documents remain unresolved in the life of the church, in the relationships between

clergy and laity, between pope and bishops, between Rome and local church authority, between the whole church and the particular churches, between church and world.

Ritualistic calls for fidelity to the council often ignore the fact that the council on many of these points, instead of supplying an answer, simply set out the terms of the problem. It is not clear to me that, on some of them at least, great progress has been made in the meantime.

With regard to Vatican II's ecclesiology, it has to be acknowledged that we are living with the consequences of the council's search for consensus. Many issues that it left unresolved in its documents remain unresolved in the life of the church

Let me end by suggesting a few challenges which Vatican II left to ecclesialogists. The first is that of integrating the set of statements which lay out the two great dimensions of the church that come together in its single mysterious reality: the divine and the human.

Since the council, in an understandable reaction to the concentration on institutional elements of the church, themselves often thought to exhaust the earthly, visible, human reality of the church, attention has focused on the distinct and transcendent dimensions of the church, particularly the communion in the divine life that is the church's deepest mystery. But, that this is a dimension of the church is neglected when it is taken as a definition of the church itself

The church is not itself divine; it is a community of creatures blessed beyond merit with divine gifts, enabled beyond their abilities to respond with faith, hope and love to the divine offer. I sense the danger of a new monophysitism in ecclesiology when the human responses of faith, hope and love and the intersubjectivity they enable and embody are not considered constitutive of the church, and when it is forgotten that this communion is realized in a people of God still on pilgrimage in history.

I think we still lack an ecclesiology adequate to *Lumen Gentium*, 8.

Second, the relation between the whole church and the particular churches still needs development, a need indicated by the persistence of the question, Which has priority, the universal or the local church? I think this question is ill-posed. Except in

the mind of God, which alone can comprehend the church from beginning to end, there has never been a church except in a place and except as composed of creatures responding, yes, to the same Gospel and enabled by the same grace, but receiving both within and as a way of dealing with particular challenges.

The dangers are, first, such a stress on particularity - as, for example, by way of inculturation - that the catholic, the redemptively integrative dimension of the church is lost from view, and second, such a stress on universality that the church is abstracted out of history.

I also do not think we have taken with enough seriousness the implications of the council's statement that the one church exists only in and out of the many churches, and of what this implies for the brave statements we make about the church, in the singular.

Third, there is the challenge of making mission - service of the whole saving purpose of God - an integral informing part of ecclesiology. This will require conceiving ecclesiology in terms of a theology of history and deriving categories from an anthropology that understands the social and historical dimensions of the human project to be more important, indeed constitutive, than they have typically been. There is never a church except within and as a response to a world, a response that alters the world, so that the genesis of the church is no more intelligible without reference to that world than an individual's conversion is intelligible apart from the drama of his or her own personal existence.

And this, in turn, will require us to take far more seriously and far more rigorously into account that the church whose inner nature we gratefully confess as God's gift and whose historic mission we undertake as our task is a church 99 percent of whose members are lay people. We need to explore more fully and more consistently the implications of this fact for the various levels of our discourse about the church, Newman's quip about the laity, that "the church would look foolish without them," has profound ecclesiological implications.

With these four suggestions for further work I will close, hoping that they will in turn be understood as themselves proof of the enduring achievements and challenges of the vision of the church lived out and expressed at the Second Vatican Council.

Fr Joseph Komonchak is Hubbard professor of religious studies at Catholic University in Washington DC, USA. He is also co-editor, with Giuseppe Alberigo, of a five-volume history of the Second Vatican Council.

Words for a Pilgrim People

For it was you who created my being, knit me together in my mother's womb. I thank you for the wonder of my being, for the wonders of all your creation. (Psalm 138:2)

□□□

*Therefore, the Council focuses its attention on the world of human beings, the whole human family, along with the sum of those realities in the midst of which it lives; that world which is the theater of human history and the heir of human energies, human tragedies and human triumphs; that world which the Christian sees as created and sustained by its Maker's love, fallen indeed into the bondage of sin yet emancipated now by Christ, who was crucified and rose again to break the stranglehold of personified evil, so that the world might be fashioned anew according to God's design and reach its fulfillment. (Vatican II, **Gaudium et Spes** ("Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World") 2)*

□□□

*There is a history in all men's lives. (William Shakespeare, **Henry IV, III**, i, 80.)*

□□□

*Without any understanding of man's deep-seated urge to self-transcend, of his very reluctance to take the hard, ascending way, and his search for some bogus liberation either below or to one side of his personality, we cannot hope to make sense of our own particular period of history or indeed of history in general, of life as it was lived in the past and as it is lived today. For this reason I propose to discuss some of the more common Grace-substitutes, into which and by means of which men and women have tried to escape from the tormenting consciousness of being merely themselves. human beings have felt the radical inadequacy of their personal existence, the misery of being their insulated selves and not something else, something wider, something in Wordsworthian phrase, 'far more deeply interfused'. (A. Huxley, "Appendix" from **The Devils of Loudun**, Penguin Books, 1971, 313f.)*

On the feast of John the Baptist, the Church returns to the beginning of Luke's Gospel to meditate on the Baptiser's place in salvation history (see Luke 1:57-66 and 88). Luke is telling no ordinary story here; this is not so much a statement of history as a statement of the transformation of history. The people named and the events described are expressions of God's loving and definitive intervention in the history of the cosmos. Henceforth whatever else is said about the history of the cosmos, or the history of our world, or the history of a particular people, or the history of any individual human being, it will be an incomplete statement if it does not incorporate – at least implicitly – the Gospel story.

This passage in Luke's Gospel begins: "The time came for Elizabeth to have her child" (v.57). Again, this is no ordinary "time". When we find ourselves at the intersection between the divine and the human, the finite and the infinite, words fail us. But we must speak. The words we speak ought to come out of silence and point back to silence; these words point, as if dumbly, towards the utterly incomprehensible. Liturgy helps us "speak" with ritual and symbol; it enables us to enter this point of intersection and remain there in reverence. Liturgy knows the sort of "time" about which the Gospel speaks and we must come to know it in and through the liturgy. In that "time" the ordinary time of our temporal existence finds meaning. Ordinary time is a sacrament of "time" beyond time.

Elizabeth's "No!" (v.60) – grounded in and necessitated by her original "Yes!" to God – confronts the pathetic limits of ordinary time that has ceased to be sacramental. "They were going to call him Zechariah after his father" (v.59). That would have been "the done thing". Something else is happening here and Elizabeth is alert to it: "He is to be called John" (v.60). Could we not say of every moment: "Something else is happening here"? So easily we become prisoners of time and place and habit. It is a vulnerability that has us regularly turning means into ends and relative things into absolute things. Those who are deeply anchored in "time" beyond time, the Real beyond the real, can hear the sub-text of each moment. For them, the whole of history is sacramental – it points beyond itself. □

Ordinary time is a sacrament of "time" beyond time.

The Tradition – Living in remembrance

The Fathers of the Church borrowed a metaphor from Plato to describe something of the human condition when they said we live in "the land of unlikeness". There is a certain "lostness" about our living. One of the implications of this fact is that we must constantly work at the business of being truly human. And one of the things most helpful in this work is remembrance. Mark the Hermit, a pupil of St John Chrysostom, says that "the source of all sin is to forget God. The soul's supreme inspiration is the knowledge of God's presence and the perpetual remembrance of his benefits".

Personal prayer and liturgy are central to this work of remembrance. Apart from that the tradition encourages us to call to mind the presence of God in the moments of daily living. The 19th century Russian monk, Theophane the Recluse, writes: "The more firmly you are established in the recollection of God – in mentally standing before God in your heart – the more quiet will your thoughts become and the less they will wander. ... In this way your spirit is restored to its just rights. When it is so re-established, there will begin an active and vital transformation of soul and body, and of outer relationships, until they are finally cleansed. And you will become a real human being."

And you will become a real human being.

St Augustine also reflects on the importance of remembering: "Too late have I loved you, O Beauty so ancient and so new, too late have I loved you! Behold, you were within me while I was outside: it was there that I sought you, and, a deformed creature, rushed headlong upon these things of beauty which you have made. You were with me but I was not with you. They kept me far from you, those fair things which, if they were not in you, would not exist at all. You have called to me, and have cried out, and have shattered my deafness. You have blazed forth with light, and have shone upon me, and you have put my blindness to flight! You have sent forth fragrance, and I have drawn in my breath, and I pant after you. I have tasted you, and I hunger and thirst after you. You have touched me, and I have burned for your peace" (*Confessions*, Bk. X, 27(38)). □

Bulletin Board

Catalyst Calendar

(Info: Pauline on 02 9816 4262)

SIP Meetings

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:

° **Albury** – New Albury Hotel, Kiewa St (Info: Fr Glen 6026 5333).

° **Boorowa** – The Boorowa Hotel (Info: Michael 6385 3351 or Marty 6385 3196).

° **Bowral** – The Grand Bar and Brasserie, June 27 “Where is the Church going?” Mary Shanahan rscj & Kevin Walcot (Info: Julian 4861 4649).

° **Campbelltown** – Campbelltown Catholic Club (Info: John 4647 3528).

° **Canberra** – The Southern Cross Club (Info: Rita 6288 4715).

° **Five Dock** – The Illinois Hotel, Cnr Parramatta Rd & Arlington St June 27 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after justice .. not those who whine but those who struggle” Speakers Michael Crewes & tba (Info: Noeline 9744 8141).

° **Jamberoo** – The Jamberoo Hotel (Info: Lynne 4232 1062 or Gaye 4232 2735).

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

° **Kincumber** – Seeds of Wisdom The Kincumber Hotel, Avoca Drive June 5 “He Ain't Heavy – He's my Brother!” Murray Davis & Yvonne O'Donnell; July 3 “Bridges” Sr Pauline Rae & Rev Ken Day (Info: Robbie 4390 0370 or Clair 4344 6608).

° **Lismore** – Crossroads. The Lismore Workers Club June 20 “Renewal” Fr Bill Mills & Marea Donovan Info: Lynne 6625 1195).

° **Lower North Shore** – Union Hotel, Cnr Pacific Hwy & West St, North Sydney June 4 “The Poor – Who Cares?” Brian Stoney & tba; July 9 “Reconciliation: The Bridge to Where?” Amanda Gordon & tba (Info: Michelle 9958 5963).

° **Newcastle** – The Mary Ellen Hotel, Glebe Rd, Merewether (Info: Lawrence 4967 6440).

° **Paddington** – Crossroads The Bellevue Hotel, June 6 “A conversation on alienation: crossroads for the young” Robert Fitzgerald

Lisa Alonso Love; July 4 “Is there time for God?” Fr Michael Whelan sm & Gabrielle Carey (Info: Marea 9387 3152).

° **Penrith** – Golf Club Sunday June 17th Luncheon (\$20 per head) Noon “What I've

learned along the way” Chris Sidoti & Gideon Goosen (Info: Dennis 4773 5521).

° **Rouse Hill** – The Mean Fiddler on Windsor Rd June 5 “Does the media lead or respond?” Speakers tba; September 4 “Is addiction replacing spirituality?” Fr Chris Riley & tba (Info: Tim or Margaret 9634 2927 (H)).

° **Waitara** – Things You Learn Along the Way The Blue Gum Hotel on the Pacific Hwy June 20 Sylvia Winton & Prof Kerry Goulston (Info: Kathryn 9402 7842).

° **Wollongong** – Mt Kembla Hotel, Mt Kembla.

Other States:

° **Ballarat (VIC)** – Golden City Hotel, Cnr Sturt St & Dawson St South (Info: Kevin 03 5332 1697).

° **Clayton (VIC)** – Does Religion Have a Future? The Notting Hotel, 8pm-9.30pm July 3 “Has art abandoned religion?” Speaker Rosemary Crumlins rsm (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 (VIC)** (Info: Denis 03 5275 4120).

° **Mordialloc (VIC)** – The Kingston Club Hotel, 7.30pm-9pm June 27 “Our search for meaning in Prayer” Jennifer Glenister & John Stuart (Info: Maria 9579 4255).

° **Spirituality Café, Rosanna (VIC)** (Info: Marian 9459 4403).

° **Devonport (TAS)** – The Seven Deadly Sins – Molly Malone's Irish Pub, 7.30pm-9pm (Info: Graham 6424 8286).

° **Fortitude Valley (QLD)** – Dooley's in Patrick's Bar First Monday of month (Info: Madonna 3840 0524).

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

Overseas:

° **Glasgow** – Chambers Bar beside the City Chambers June 19 7.30 (Info: Stephen 778 9323).

° **The Talking MIX** is now available on 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, September 29 to October 5 “For me to live is Christ” (Info: 9484 6208).

° **Spirituality Courses Mary MacKillop Place**, North Sydney, (Info: Sr Jeanette Foxe on 8912 4887).

° **The Centre for Spiritual Formation North Sydney** offers courses in Spiritual Direction (Info 8912 4881).

° **St James Spirituality Centre**, King St, Sydney, runs a variety of adult education programs (Info: Susanne on 9232 3022).

° **Geraldine Doogue** interviews John Spong for ABCTV Compass Program, Eugene Goosens Hall, ABC Centre Ultimo, June 28 7.30pm (Info: Eremos Institute 9683 5096).

Catalyst Dinner June 15

7pm for 7.30pm

“Hope in the Church of the Third Millennium – How do our Catholic Schools cope with this challenge?”

Speakers: Seamus O'Grady & Sr Denise Desmarchelier ibvm

Tickets \$40 (\$32 for Friends of Catalyst)

Parish Hall, Cnr Gladesville Rd & Mary St
Hunters Hill

Spirituality in the Pub

A live-in weekend for members of **organising committees** – share resources, help new people set up their SIPs, learn about making your venue more successful. November 24/25 2001. Watch this space for more information.

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH FORUM 2002

On **July 12, 13 & 14, 2002**, Aquinas Academy and Catalyst for Renewal will be co-sponsoring a national forum in Sydney, to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the beginning of the Second Vatican Council.

The purpose of the Forum will be to promote conversation for renewal by remembering the work of the Council and considering its significance for us to day.

Watch this space.

Recommended Reading

Faithfulness in Fellowship: Reflections on Homosexuality and the Church – Papers from the Doctrine Panel of the Anglican Church of Australia, John Garratt Publishing, 2001, 208 pages, footnotes, pb, \$34.95.

It would be difficult to find an area of human existence that is so fraught with ambiguity and paradox, than sexuality. There we are lifted to the heavens and brought down to earth, we find ourselves speaking beautiful words and yet telling so many lies. Possibly the fundamental truth is as Ernest Becker put it: Sex is of the body and the body is of death. Perhaps it is “the death” that disturbs and misleads. *Faithfulness* – as the title suggests – focuses on one aspect of sexuality – homosexuality. It also includes two more general papers – “Friendship” and “Starting with the Spirit: A Personal Reflection on Sexuality and Spiritual Gifts”. The opinions reflected by the Panel in their Conclusions have some points of agreement and some of strong disagreement. The book manifests “an essentially deep and difficult conversation” that is as courageous as it is necessary. Among other things, at stake in this conversation are the sanctity of marriage and the dignity of the human person – two pillars of the Gospel tradition and society at large. *Faithfulness* urges us to address this matter with the utmost seriousness and urgency. Here we are brought face to face with issues that are literally matters of life and death. This book is a good contribution to a conversation we evade at our peril.

Benedict Auer, *Soulpoeting: Healing Through Poetry*, St Pauls, 2000, bibliography, 141 pages, pb, \$21.95.

Soulpoeting brings us the honest reflections of a middle-aged man – a Benedictine monk – who has, in effect, just begun the spiritual life. He has done everything else, it seems, but engage that journey that is the very essence of the human vocation. “Everything I wanted had happened,” he writes. “I had been promoted to Associate Professor of Education. Been elected as a member of the Society of Fellows. I had spoken at three national conventions that year ... I had published my usual three articles in magazines. I had founded a Catechetics Institute that was going very well. Yet I felt hollow, empty. Nothing made sense.” The author invites the reader to join him in this journey by expressing human experience in metaphors and symbols. Chapters are brief and readable; they include themes such as “Giving Oneself Permission (To be, not to do)”, “Never Too Late (Addressing our ghosts)”, “Myers-Briggs and the Enneagram (Inventory insights)” and “Traumas and a Dialogue (Death, abuse and other issues)”. *Soulpoeting* offers a gentle and practical approach for those adults who are beginning to take the spiritual journey and honesty with themselves a little more seriously. The questions at the end of each of the brief chapters are useful. This little book could be well used by a small group of people seeking to support each other in their faith development.

Peter Malone, *The Same as Christ Jesus: Gospel and Type*, St Pauls, 2000, bibliography, 143 pages, pb, \$18.95.

One of the experiences which has proved to be both promise and threat, opportunity and danger in recent times, is the discovery and encouragement of individuality and difference. The danger and threat is individualism and forgetfulness of community responsibility; the opportunity and promise is originality, colour and fidelity to the deepest call of one’s unique and communal nature. Malone promotes the opportunity, with a personal approach to understanding Jesus as he is presented by the different Gospels. He uses the typology of the Myers-Briggs personality type indicator to bring to light the various facets of Jesus’ humanity. This method will not be to everyone’s liking. Yet the book does succeed in evoking and stimulating an appreciation for the humanity of Jesus, in all its possible variations and peculiarities – a much-needed focus for meditation in the ongoing life of the Church. It also, by the way, assists individuals to appreciate their own human peculiarities and characteristics in developing a fruitful relationship with Jesus. The portrait of Jesus so often presented in Christian tradition coming into the middle of the last century was stereotypical, lacking colour and particularity and therefore genuine humanity. Malone helps us to move beyond that, to approach Jesus with the expectation of being surprised and affirmed in our unique and communal selves.

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YES! I WOULD LIKE TO BE A FRIEND OF CATALYST FOR RENEWAL AND RECEIVE THE MIX

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