



THE MIX



JOURNAL OF CATALYST FOR RENEWAL INCORPORATED

Circulation of 2000 in Australia and overseas

VOLUME 7 NUMBER 1

March 2002

Maria George

The human face 2

Peter Maher

What saddens me on my jubilee 3

Edmund Campion

Vatican II: historical reflections 4

The bible

The women and the empty tomb 5

The tradition

Proclaiming the Gospel 6

Our Say – Remembering well

We are all guilty of selective memory – as individuals and as groups. We tend to remember the things that make us feel good and “forget” those that distress us. For example, Australians rightly remember with pride the bravery, resourcefulness, generosity, sacrifice and commitment of Australian men and women in the two World Wars and the other military conflicts in which they have struggled and, in many instances, paid the ultimate price.

Yet, we seem to have great difficulty, as a nation, in remembering what we did to the original inhabitants of this land. The paradox is that we will always be less than our best possibilities so long as we refuse to remember. It is as important to remember the “bad things” as it is to remember the “good things”. Our integrity and truthfulness depend on us remembering well.

Whatever we might say about the wider society remembering or forgetting, it applies with even greater force to the Church. The Church quite simply ceases to

exist as Church when we cease to remember. Forgetfulness invariably leads to idolatry and sundry other deceits. When we remember well, the Church thrives.

The forgetfulness can be very subtle and it can even masquerade as a form of remembering. Thus we can allow the customs and habits of history to cause us to forget the radical simplicity of Jesus and his teaching; we can become so fascinated by the discoveries, challenges and insights of our time that we forget the wisdom of the ages; we can dismiss writers and writings simply because they are “dated”; we can be so overcome by the scandals and inadequacies of the institutional forms of the Church and her representatives that we dismiss all that is of the past, and so on. We can all find any number of reasons to justify forgetting.

Given our propensity to remember selectively – indeed our talent for forgetting – we had better be quite deliberate about remembering well. We have a golden opportunity in this coming year, the fortieth

since the beginning of the Second Vatican Council. To some the Council happened too long ago to be of any relevance; to others it was stillborn, promising so much but delivering so little and, therefore, not worth remembering or perhaps too painful to remember; still others remember it selectively, keen to use it in support of a particular ideological position. And so it goes.

Vatican II was, by any measure, a most significant event in the life of the Church. Like all great historical events, it cannot be snap-frozen in time. It must be remembered in the context of its own time and the time in which we live. Just as importantly, it must be remembered as an historical event, a turning point that demanded a whole new Christian consciousness, a new way of thinking of the Church and the world, a new way of being human and Christian.

The documents of the Council reflect the nature of its dynamism as part of history: they are not end points so much as starting points. It is our responsibility and privilege to remember this event well. □

THE HUMAN FACE

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

These are the current Members:
Dominic Beirne, Marie Biddle RSJ, Glenn Boyd,
Kevin Burges, Aidan Carvill SM,
Susanna Davis, Marea Donovan,
Geraldine Doogue, Paul Durkin,
Maria George, Denys Goggin,
Margaret Goggin, Catherine Hammond,
Francois Kunc, Maryellen McLeay,
Chris Needs, Rita O'Connor,
Margaret O'Hearn, Tim O'Hearn,
Margaret Rigotti, Roy Rigotti, John Robinson,
Louise Robinson, John Sharples, Ruth van Herk,
Michael Whelan SM, Carole Wilson

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)

The Patrons are:

Mr Robert Fitzgerald AM
Mr Gerald Gleeson AC
Prof Francis J Moloney SDB, AM
Dr Richard J Mulhearn OAM
Bro Paul O'Keeffe
Most Rev Geoffrey Robinson
Sr Deirdre Rofe IBVM

This journal is published ten times each year,
March to December. It is sent to all Friends of
Catalyst for Renewal.
(See coupon on back page for Friend's Application)

The Editorial Committee is:

Michael Whelan SM, Geraldine Doogue,
Catherine Hammond and consultants

Registered by Australia Post
Publication No: 255003/02125

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.

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

All original work in *The Mix*, unless otherwise
indicated, is the work of the Editor.

Printed by Serge Martich-Osternan
Printing and Publishing Pty Ltd, Annandale

My name is Maria George. I'm sitting
at my computer at work, on Sunday
morning, conscious of the deadline that I've
been given to write this article.

I think about my position here at St
Peter's, Bentleigh East, Victoria, as Pastoral
Associate, and one of a large team of
workers in the Parish. It's such a privileged
position. I'm not just working with a beautiful
team of ministers who share a common
vision and belief in ministry, but I'm part of
a large, vibrant, community that truly lives
out its mission statement: to make people
feel welcome, feel that they all have
something to give to the place, and that
each is gifted and unique.

I work with wonderful priests – our Parish
priest Gordon Gebbie, whose ministry in
the face of serious illness is an inspiration
for life and living to the full, and Shane
Carr, helping the parish part-time, whose
energy and creativity keep us all on our toes
– literally speaking! (He had us dancing at
Christmas Midnight Mass!!)

I'm part of a team that includes three
other women, a team that accepts you for
who you are – gifts and weaknesses alike,
can affirm and challenge you, and will
always support and stick up for you when
the tough times come – as they invariably
do.

I've been in Parish ministry for a long
time now – from years past when I was
involved in my own parish of Our Lady's,
Maidstone, as a teenager and young adult. I
was into music, YCW, Parish Council,
social committee, and was a catechist. Next
came work as a teacher in Catholic primary
schools, still continuing with parish life.
Then came life with Denis, my husband, as
young parents in our home parish of St
Luke's, Wantirna, in the days when the
Parish was just beginning.

Somehow, my life has *always* been tied
up with church, community, faith
education, liturgy. Fourteen years ago, I
was lucky enough to be sponsored to attend
the National Pastoral Institute and thereafter
begin working as a Pastoral Associate. Our
beautiful children, Sarah, David and Matt
(now 23, 19 and 16), grew up with me
working odd hours (much like a shift
worker), and I'm grateful for the support
they and Denis have always given me. I
don't think I could work without it.

I've been blessed to have worked with
visionary people, who see the challenges of
life and faith as an opportunity to think of
creative solutions, who are not afraid to test
out new ways of responding in faith, and
who actively promote the role of women in
leadership in all sorts of ways. I've been
challenged to develop my presiding skills,
to be more 'upfront' when it comes to

sharing liturgical leadership. I, and others,
have been entrusted with the responsibilities
of decision-making and pastoral care. I've
learnt much – about myself and about
others. I wouldn't swap it for anything.

One of the gifts in ministry over these last
few years has been for myself, and for
many of us in Victoria, the growing
strength of Spirituality in the Pub (SIP) and
Catalyst for Renewal. I was introduced to
SIP through a friend, Ann Halpin, who
helped run Notting Hill SIP, and was
immediately drawn to its sense of
inclusivity, openness, and its challenge to
learn from others.

A group of people whom I'd been
working with quickly realised that SIP
could be the answer to what we'd been
searching for (some kind of forum for
renewal), and before long, the Mordialloc
SIP was born. That was only the first step,
though, and through contact with the other
Melbourne/Victorian SIPs, we began liaising
with Sydney re a Victorian Chapter of
Catalyst for Renewal.

We thought we'd try with a dinner first.
After months and months of preparation,
anxiety, drama (Ansett collapsed the day we
were flying Geraldine Doogue and Michael
Whelan down from Sydney!), a wonderful,
successful night ensued. Feedback
included: "Let's have several of these each
year!" Whoa!! We need to recover first!

But we're on the journey – to who knows
where. Exciting stuff, and I love being a
part of it all. I thank God for all the
blessings in life given to me – family
friends, parish community, faith, and
experiences good and bad, and the future.
Whatever happens on this road called faith,
I know that we are in it together – and we
have Christ with us as we go.

[As we go to press, we have learned that Fr
Gordon Gebbie died peacefully at dawn on
February 7. May he rest in peace.]



Maria George

Your Say – What saddens me on my Jubilee

Peter Maher

Twenty-five years ago, the church bristled with energy in post-Vatican II euphoria. Churches were alive with change in almost every field of church life and world affairs as everything came under our

size. What saddens me, 25 years on, is that the church, at the institutional level, has not moved on from that discussion. We know, of course, that many Catholics have. They continue to keep the church alive in provisional communities at the edge: parishes that have responded to the challenges around them in spectacular and small ways; religious communities that struggle with power and passion for simplicity; and sometimes lonely but steadfast individuals who hang in there while hungering and working for a better world.

The church concerns itself with holding onto power, when a more pressing question might be: how will we include those who are at the moment on the margins of church and society? How could we begin to refashion church governance to be more inclusive of women, indigenous people, unemployed, tertiary students, youth, asylum seekers and migrants, people with a disability, those of other faiths and of no faith and those excluded when we take the moral high ground (for example: the divorced and remarried, gays and lesbians and people who have been through abortion).

Church governance might better create spaces where all of goodwill can learn how to shape the struggle for a just world, whereby the church might be some kind of beacon of hope.

While church meetings sometimes offer encouraging interventions, these seem to be overshadowed by the discussion of church governance and the need for a model of communion that does away with the celebration of diversity and the practice of inclusion, to look more like a strategy for conformity and uniformity. Diversity and inclusion seem to be at the heart of Jesus' practice, and thus need to be at the heart of church life in the Catholic tradition.

Even more worrying is that the tenure is: what can the bishops say, how can they teach what the church and the world need in these troubled times? Whereas the relevant question today is: how can the church position itself to engage in conversation with the world whereby the unique perspective of the gospel lived in the Catholic tradition might contribute to a culture of peace and to social

transformation? A humble circumspection about answers, indeed about problems, is more fitting to the times we live in. It is now more important to recognise that we don't have the answers.

Present global realities tell us that a position of prior knowing, firmly taken by the economic and religious fundamentalists of our time, results in the very terror on which we hope to shed some light. Osama bin Laden and George Bush assume that God approves their predetermined position — while we gospel types have to settle for a God who is more likely on a cross as a result of confronting violence with loving non-violence.

We find ourselves attached to a God who moves on the God-call, journeying where the struggle goes, discovering in the dialogue the God who sees justice done in response to a persistent struggle for justice.

My dream for the future is a church that is both daring and caring, one that includes and risks its own life for the sake of the suffering.

I have been privileged in my 25 years as a priest to work with some amazing and gifted people, who have formed and challenged me to live gospel faith — hoping against hope. But my last seven years working with tertiary students and university staff have been the most fruitful in forming me. For me it has been working with raw honesty and integrity about what matters in the world, with clarity of thought about who is at the heart of the struggle for justice, with courage to act in decisive ways in response to the present realities, with sheer determination to live life to the full, and with spontaneity to live in the *now* without too much worry for times we are not in: either before now or after now.

This approach, which is almost entirely unencumbered, allows the spirit of God to move in real people's lives in ways that affect them now. It seems most closely related to gospel living.

As I reflect on the 25 years I have lived as a priest in the Catholic church, I find the other key learning experiences have been in taking time to be in formation with adults becoming Catholics, working with those who struggle to create a culture of peace in the many justice groups in which I have shared, forming ministry in many parishes, doing retreat work with high school

students and sharing in the spiritual struggle of people. My dream for the future is a church that is daring and caring, one that includes and risks its own life for the sake of the suffering.

I guess what I fear most is the sense that we have engendered in people that the priest can, should or will do it. The church I believe in is one where we all do our bit. People with a passion to live the gospel in ways that mean something to them get on with it unencumbered with the priest's approval or disapproval. I hunger for the church that is filled with people operating this way in our parishes, universities, jails, hospitals and wherever there is a genuine struggle with the marginalised.

I am sick of the self-serving church. I hunger for a church that acts and learns through action. One that is self-reflective and is deeply called to act in concert with the results of its own dialogue with the world, in order to listen, love and heal for a new world.

So I see myself as a conservative — one who embraces the best of Catholic tradition. I see myself as one who struggles to proclaim the gospel challenge, welcome or unwelcome. I want to hold fast to the golden thread of the Catholic tradition of Sacraments that really do effect what they signify: the transformation of our lives and the world through action in solidarity with the human and earth community.

I see the only way for the church to act is communally — although by this I do not mean uniformly. Conformism is a product of a need to control, and it breaks the gossamer web of ingenuity and imagination that empowers gospel living in Catholic communities. The Catholic tradition has always valued the power of symbolism to fire the creativity that is our humanity. I believe in poetry and metaphor as the language of faith. Catholics have always seen the liturgy at the heart of where faith resides. I resist the return to the dull prose of catechisms.

I oppose the reactionary movements of economic and religious fundamentalism, in favour of the spirituality that looks deeply into one's own heart for the source of the love that conquers fear. I believe in the Catholic utopian view that the human community and the earth community can live together through active non-violence.

Now let's continue the journey and the conversation, without fear, and in love and daring.

Fr Peter Maher is the parish priest of St Joseph's Church, Newtown, Sydney.

Essay – Vatican II: historical reflections

by Edmund Campion

The Editor invited Fr Campion to write this essay as a contribution to our remembering the fortieth anniversary of the commencement of Vatican II.

One day in 1975 Mary Hoban, a Melbourne housewife, was in her garden picking daisies at Eastertime. As she picked, the honey smell of the flowers sent her mind back fifty years and she remembered how her mother used to pick Easter Daisy to take to their parish church, where she and the other ladies of the Altar Society would weave it with asparagus fern, geraniums and Cecil Brunner rosebuds. Then they would wind their garland round the Easter Candle, as a floral expression of resurrection joy growing out of the crucifixion. Mrs Hoban mused, 'How long is it since I've seen that done?' She thought of other little practices that had washed away from Catholic life, such as crowning Our Lady's statue as Queen in May or singing 'Faith of Our Fathers'.

So she sat down and wrote an article for a new magazine, *Footprints*, asking people to record for posterity their memories of the customs and usages of the Australian church before Vatican II in the 1960s. This was not mere nostalgia, for Mary Hoban was a serious historian: her *Life of Caroline Chisholm* had filled out with many interesting details the standard work by Margaret Kiddle of Melbourne University. Her article had some shrewd hits at enthusiasts for novelty, but she insisted that she was not interested in nostalgia. 'I love the Latin mass', she wrote, 'but I love the English more'. Collecting and recording the customs of the past were things worth doing: 'They were part of an Australian-Catholic subculture which was discarded rather too quickly, leaving a devotional vacuum in some hearts'.

Mary Hoban was surely right about the 'devotional vacuum'. For one of the unintended consequences of Vatican II was the evaporation of much of the popular religious culture which had sustained ordinary Catholics and given their lives a spirituality. You cannot think about the century of consolidation in Australian Catholicism, from the death of Father Therry, in 1864, to the Vatican II era, without seeing everywhere that lush overgrowth of a people's religion: holy water, guardian angels, miraculous medals, the nine First Fridays, feast days, stories of the saints ... Then the picture begins to fade.

No one ordered its closure; it just began to evaporate. Those engaged in pastoral

work noticed that people had begun to feel a hole in their hearts, a gap in their sense of Catholic selfhood.

The reason, as Mary Hoban saw, stemmed from the demise of the Latin mass. In those years of consolidation people went to mass in great numbers and, while there, they said private prayers from books such as *The Garden of the Soul* or they recited the rosary -- they attended mass rather than celebrated it: their prayer life was elsewhere.

Catholics took some pride in the seemingly unchanging form of the mass; but such immobilism could breed curious reactions. Among the laity, the frozen remoteness of the Latin mass brought on the efflorescences of popular piety. (Among priests it bred rubricism, the disabling psychology which fixated them on the rules of performance.)

Patrick Keegan of the Young Christian Workers addressed the council (the first time, some said, that a layman had addressed an ecumenical council since the Emperor Constantine spoke at Nicaea in 325).

This was a serious matter because at its deepest level the Christian community is a eucharistic people. Its most profound story is written when it is at mass. Indeed, you can say that the history of the Catholic church is the history of the mass. So changes in the mass must reflect changes already observable in the community at large. This is particularly true of major changes, such as changing the language in which you celebrate. A vernacular mass means a seismic shift deep inside the community. Which is why the English mass became *the* emblem of all that is meant by 'Vatican II'.

How did it happen? The twentieth century can fairly be called the century of the laity, with the lay apostolate one of its most significant movements. The lay apostolate tried to form a new Catholic laity, who would make its own impact on the world. It was Catholicism coming out of the ghetto after the Middle Ages and trying to find a place for itself in modern history. The lay apostolate put the Bible, especially the Gospels, into the hands of lay men and women, encouraging them to know the bib-

lical Jesus; it developed their social conscience through discussion and reading of topical Catholic writers and papal encyclicals; it made them self-reliant and loosened clerical controls; it opened their minds to new ideas, not all of them with a church provenance; and it brought them closer to the mass and made the liturgy the well-spring of people's spirituality.

The universities were testbeds of the lay apostolate. From 1950, Commonwealth scholarships, a Menzies government initiative, had opened up our universities to more and more young Catholics. The Menzies scholarships are a key element in the Australian Catholic story. They enabled great numbers of Catholics to move into the professions, thus changing the demographics of Australian Catholicism (and, in time, its politics).

As well, university experience would introduce Catholics to unfamiliar ideas and principles, such as the liberal principle of free speech. Not only that -- the Catholic culture they experienced at university was somewhat different from the culture of the parishes. Clergy and laity were closer together, so that there was a ready acceptance of lay leadership.

Ecumenism, biblical spirituality, congregational liturgy, openness to Australian culture -- such were the waves of the future already being experienced in lay apostolate groups at the universities and elsewhere. You cannot help noticing here many of the central themes of Vatican II, already up and running in Australia years before the bishops caught the ship for Italy, in 1962. That is to say, what the bishops did at the council was to stand on a high peak and discern what the Holy Spirit had been doing in the worldwide church. They then put their seal of authorisation on these initiatives. Vatican II did not start in 1962; it had been going on for many years before that date.

You can see what I mean by returning to the emblematic story of the liturgy. The year 1955 is something of an *annus mirabilis* in this story. That was the year of the national liturgical week, when 750 enthusiasts came to Melbourne during the January holidays, to swap experiences, hear about successes and failures, listen to lectures and, in general, renew their energies for what lay ahead. Binding them together was their commitment to making the mass central to Catholics' prayer life once again and giving lay people a place in the mass again, as if they too were responsible for Christ's work. Later that year -- another straw in the wind? -- the Sydney Marist

magazine *Harvest* would publish an article by the Chicago parish priest, H A Reinhold, arguing for the mass in English.

The same year, 1955, saw the beginnings of a remarkable artistic collaboration which transformed the Australian church at prayer. The link man was a young priest, a year out of the Manly seminary, who had been appointed to the parish of Ryde, Ted Kennedy. In the parish he found a gifted musician, Richard Connolly, who had pursued theological studies in Rome almost up to ordination to the priesthood. In 1956 he would join the ABC's religion department and by the time he retired he would be head of radio features and drama at the ABC. One Saturday afternoon at Ryde, Father Kennedy brought him round a page of verses and asked him to set them to music. Connolly had done very little composing, but he tried his hand, producing music which complemented the muscular, even martial, imagery of the hymn he had been given:

Help of Christians, guard this land,
From assault or inward stain;
Let it be what Christ has planned,
His new Eden where you reign ..

The writer of the verses was another Ryde parishioner, James McAuley. When Kennedy learned that the McAuley family lived in the parish, he remembered how in 1953, as newly ordained priests, he and his classmates had heard Cardinal Gilroy encouraging about the recent convert and his didactic Letter to John Dryden. By 1955, however, the cardinal and the convert poet had fallen out: they were on opposing sides of the Catholic political split – indeed, *Help of Christians* would become the battle hymn of the Catholic Right and it is not hard still to detect McAuley's political preoccupations in its words.

No matter: a new, decidedly Australian, hymn existed. Kennedy took it to a group of priests committed to realising the vision of the Melbourne liturgical week and they asked Connolly to compose some hymns to sing at various parts of the mass. Thus began one of the most successful hymn-making teams of the twentieth century, McAuley and Connolly.

In 1960 their work would anchor the *Living Parish* hymnbook, edited by Tony Newman and published by a group round Roger Pryke, which would sell one million copies over the next decade, enabling congregations to sing worthy hymns in an Australian voice.

In the *annus mirabilis* of 1955, Guilford Young became archbishop of Hobart. Aged thirty-one when he became a bishop, he relied on his commanding pres-

ence and the clergy's ingrained respect for authority to see him through. When he needed it, he could exert a powerful, self-conscious magnetism. In Hobart he used this ability, allied to his imperial intellect, to gentle the whole diocese into the tracks of the liturgical movement.

He began with the priests, whom he convinced about the validity of the new thinking. Putting his own mind to work, he went beyond the Roman theology he had taught as a young lecturer in the Brisbane seminary. He saw that the German Jesuit Karl Rahner was at the core of this new theology, so he set himself to master Rahner's complex thought. He saw too that history had practical use; so he re-read the history of the church, especially concentrating on those creative centuries which saw the crossover from Greco-Roman culture to the new Western nations. His findings he presented in lectures and seminars to priests, nuns and other diocesan leaders.

By 1960, (Archbishop) Young would report later, every mass in Tasmania featured full lay participation; and Tasmanians who travelled to the mainland expressed surprise at the silent, gloomy masses there. His campaign had succeeded because he had appealed to the people's intelligence; not, as would be done elsewhere, to their obedience.

Here was a fine example of episcopal leadership confronting pastoral challenges in the world of ideas. The priests on side, he got them to preach systematically on the major themes of the new thinking. Thus over several years Tasmanian Catholics worked their way through a corpus of theology. Only then did the parishes attempt to move liturgically.

Again, it was gently done ... slowly, slowly, a few minutes each Sunday. The bishop liked to mix with his people and gauge their reactions. Over time, he noticed that fewer people were complaining about novelties and more were expressing their joy at the spiritual deepening his liturgical campaign had achieved.

By 1960, Young would report later, every mass in Tasmania featured full lay participation; and Tasmanians who travelled to the mainland expressed surprise at the silent, gloomy masses there. His campaign had succeeded because he had appealed to the people's intelligence; not, as would be done elsewhere, to their obedience.

Guilford Young was the only Australian bishop to leave his mark on Vatican II. When the American Jesuit Walter M Abbott was compiling the first standard English translation of Vatican II documents – the book which would energise and inspire thousands of parish discussion groups – he turned to Young to write the introduction to the decree on the ministry and life of priests. When Derek Worlock, archbishop of Liverpool in England, died, in 1996, they found among his papers an unpublished essay on his personal spiritual journey. In this essay he recalled a dinner in Rome the night Patrick Keegan of the Young Christian Workers addressed the council (the first time, some said, that a layman had addressed an ecumenical council since the Emperor Constantine spoke at Nicaea, in 325). At the dinner, Worlock remembered, 'Archbishop Gillie Young of Hobart made an inspired speech about the caravan of God, trundling forward, some pulling ahead, some pulling back, some hanging on like grim death to the sides'. He was a bishop for a grown-up, Vatican II church.

Edmund Campion teaches history at the Catholic Institute of Sydney.

□□□

LETTER

I have just read your journal which was passed to me by a priest friend. I liked it a lot – especially the reflection by Susanna Davis. I resonate with that very closely! And the review of *Lantana*.

I was surprised though to see the extract from von Balthasar appearing in a third millennium paper as though it was something contemporary. A mentor for Cardinal Ratzinger, he was writing about the Church c. 1975 – ten years out from Vatican II (when the flow of clergy leaving their Church careers was huge). Now, it's twenty-six years on and two decades with John Paul II's pontificate, which has attempted to roll back most of the forward-looking features of that Council. Von Balthasar would have been 70 years old at the time of writing (he died in mid-1988, aged 83). I venture to suggest that the reasons for remaining in the Church (or in the clergy) would be quite different now and that von Balthasar's piece is of historical interest only.

Richard Flynn

CORRECTION: *The Mix* (6:10), first line of column one, page 4, "Columban's" should read "Columba's", and fifth last line of middle column, page 5, "not" should read "set".

The Bible – The women and the empty tomb

Words for a Pilgrim People

Jesus said, 'Mary!' (John 20:16)

□□□

This, too, is a very important point to attend to – knowledge of how to converse; to interrogate without over-earnestness; to answer without desire of display; not to interrupt a profitable speaker, or to desire ambitiously to put in a word of one's own; to be measured in speaking and hearing; not to be ashamed of receiving, or to be grudging in giving information, nor to pass another's knowledge for one's own but to refer it candidly to the true parent. The middle tone of voice is best, neither so low as to be inaudible, nor to be ill-bred from its high pitch. One should reflect first what one is going to say, and then give it utterance: be courteous when addressed; amiable in social intercourse; not aiming to be pleasant by facetiousness, but cultivating gentleness in kind admonitions. Harshness is ever to be put aside, even in censoring. [The more you show modesty and humility yourself, the more likely are you to be acceptable to the patient who needs your treatment. There are however many occasions when we shall do well to employ the kind of rebuke used by the prophet who did not in his own person utter the sentence of condemnation on David after his sin, but by suggesting an imaginary character made the sinner judge of his own sin, so that, after passing his own sentence, he could not find fault with the seer who had convicted him. (St Basil the Great, Letter to Gregory (Nazianzus), 5)

□□□

Everything that has been said above concerning the People of God is intended for the laity, religious and clergy alike. But there are certain things which pertain in a special way to the laity, both men and women, by reason of their condition and mission. Due to the special circumstances of our time, the foundations of this doctrine must be more thoroughly examined. (Vatican II, Lumen Gentium, 30)

□□□

The Good News begins with the women at the empty tomb. There would have been no “news” worthy of recording – “the Gospel” – except for the emptiness of that tomb. The women were the first proclaimers of the Good News. Consider Luke’s account.

A group of women who “had come from Galilee” with Jesus on the journey towards his Passover (cf 23:55) – “took note of the tomb and how the body had been laid. Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. And on the Sabbath Day they rested as the law required”. Women are not the power-brokers of this society. On the way to Calva “a large number of people followed him, and women too” (cf 23:27) – the expression suggests that the women are not “people”; they are therefore free to move outside the normal constraints of prejudice and social expectations and give expression to care and mercy, a very “Gospel thing”. This wonderful gentle man is dead, killed in the most miserable and ugly way possible ... We can hardly imagine what was going on in the minds and hearts of those women as they went about the normal tasks of getting the spices together; despite their profound grief and concern to prepare this broken body for its final resting, they observe the Sabbath – the Lord’s day; these women are deeply imbued with the Covenant tradition; they are faithful Jews.

The women realise what has happened ... The past is different, so is the future, so are they.

The women, “with the spices they had prepared”, went to the tomb “on the first day of the week, at the first sign of dawn”. What would they have been thinking? How would they have felt? How would they have walked? The turn of phrase, “at the first sign of dawn”, suggests some urgency. Can we put ourselves in their place, think their thoughts, feel their feelings, sense something of the emptiness of their world?

Luke says “they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. ... ‘Why do you look for the living among the dead?’ ... Then they remembered his words ...” (24:3-4, 6 & 9) The women realise what has happened; the Good News starts to dawn. They look back through the empty tomb at the rest of Jesus’ life – his teachings and actions. The past is different, so is the future, so are they. □

The Tradition – Proclaiming the Gospel

Jesus asked his disciples to proclaim the Good News to the whole world. The challenge remains – both to understand what it means to “proclaim the Good News”, then to do it. Paul VI dedicated his encyclical *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975) to this twofold challenge. He reminded us, in particular, of something that has been central to the Christian tradition of evangelisation, even if it has not always been energetically followed: The primary and most convincing witness is a life of fidelity to the person and teaching of Jesus. Pope Paul writes: “Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses.” ... “It is therefore primarily by her conduct and by her life that the Church will evangelize the world, in other words, by her living witness of fidelity to the Lord Jesus – the witness of poverty and detachment, of freedom in the face of the powers of this world, in short, the witness of sanctity” (41).

St Ignatius of Antioch, writing at the beginning of the second century, says something similar in his letter to the Church in Ephesus: “It is better to keep quiet and be, than to make fluent professions and not be. No doubt it is a fine thing to instruct others, but only if the speaker practises what he preaches. One such Teacher there is: He who spoke the word, and it was done; and what He achieved even by His silences was well worthy of the Father. Those who have truly mastered the utterances of Jesus will also be able to apprehend His silence, and thus reach full spiritual maturity, so that their own words have the force of actions and their silences the significance of speech. Nothing is hidden from the Lord; even our most secret thoughts are ever present to Him. Whatever we do, then, let it be done as though He Himself were dwelling within us, we being as it were His temples and He within us as their God. For in fact, that is literally the case; and in proportion as we rightly love Him so it will become clear to our eyes” (12-15). □

“It is better to keep quiet and be, than to make fluent professions and not be.”

Bulletin Board

Catalyst Calendar

(Info: Pauline on 02 9816 4262)

SIP Meetings

SIP Promoter – Terry O’Loughlin on (02) 6 4262 or (02) 9816 5091.

Email: terry_catalyst@hotmail.com

www.communities.ninemsn.com.au/
SpiritualityinthePub

NSW and ACT – 7.30-9.00pm unless specified:

° **Albury** – New Albury Hotel, Kiewa St April 10 “Christianity – Dictation or Dialogue” Rose Marie Crowe & Fr Alan Jarrad (Info: Fr Glenn 6026 5333).

° **Alstonville** – Catholic Church Parish Hall, Main St, **Dinner** March 16 7pm \$20 BYO drinks “Give me Shelter” Dr Mary Crock (Info: Anne 6628 6428)

° **Boorowa** – The Boorowa Hotel - Resumes 2002 (Info: Michael 6385 3351 or Marty 6385 3196).

° **Bowral** - The Grand Bar and Brasserie - Resumes 2002 (Info: Julian 4861 4649).

° **Campbelltown** – Campbelltown Catholic Club March 13 “Do I have a Voice in the Church?” Roger O’Halloran & Bernice Moore (Info: tba).

° **Canberra** – **Whatever happened to Vatican II** The Southern Cross Club Len March 27 “Unfinished Business?” Elizabeth Reid & Michael McGirr (Info: Rita 6260 6737).

° **Five Dock** – The Illinois Hotel, Cnr Parramatta Rd & Arlington St March 27 “Pathways to God” Sue Thomas & Rev Michael Kelly (Info: Noeline 9797 8862).

° **Jamberoo** – **Vatican II** The Jamberoo Hotel March 11 “Finding our Voice” Marea Donovan & Richard McLachlan (Info Anne 4232 1062 or Gabrielle 4232 2735).

° **Kincumber** – **Rekindling the Light** – The Kincumber Hotel, Avoca Drive April 2 “Journey from Moralism into Mysticism” Fr Michael Whelan sm & Sr Marie Biddle rsj (Info: Robbie 4390 0370 or Clair 4344 6608).

° **Lismore** Mary Gilhooley’s Pub, Cnr Woodlark & Keen Sts March 20 “Where are the Prophets?” Br Graham Neist (Info: Lynne 6625 1195).

° **Lower North Shore** – Union Hotel, Cnr Pacific Hwy & West St, North Sydney March 18 “Media: What is the message?” Speakers tba (Info: Michelle 9958 5963).

° **Newcastle** – The Mary Ellen Hotel, Glebe Merewether - Resumes 2002 (Info: Lawrence 4967 6440).

° **Paddington** – **Unfinished Business** for

the People of God The Bellevue Hotel March 6 “The Church & Culture” Francois Kunc & Dr Margaret Beirne; April 3 “The Church – is it ours?” Anne Maree Fagan & David Leary (Info: Marea 9387 3152).

° **Penrith** - Golf Club April 24 “Spirituality in Intimacy and Solitude” Vic O’Callaghan & Mary McGuinness (Info: Sue 9760 2324).

° **Rouse Hill** - The Mean Fiddler on Windsor Rd - Resumes 2002 (Info: Maria 9680 2220 (H))

° **Rydalmere** – **Responding to Change** – The Family Inn Hotel, Cnr Park & Victoria Rds March 12 “Unexpected Grace: Gay Catholics and the Future of the Church” Michael Kelly & “Life is changing, are you there Lord?” Fr Geoffrey Abdallah (Info: Kerry 9630 2704).

° **Waitara** – **Put Out Into Deep Water** The Blue Gum Hotel on the Pacific Hwy March 20 Dr Camille Paul & Dr Graham English (Info: Kathryn 9402 7842).

VIC:

° **Ballarat** – Ryan Hall, Ripon St Second Wednesday each month 12.30-2pm (Info: Kevin 5332 1697).

° **Clayton** – **Vatican II: Vision & Reality 40 Years On** - The Notting Hotel, 8pm-9.30pm March 12 “Stepping into an uncertain future as Church” Bernadette Keating pbvm (Info: Yvonne 9700 7340 or Joyce 9700 1250).

° **Collingwood** – **The Church of the Future – Where are we Going?** – The Vine Hotel, Cnr Wellington & Derby Sts, 8pm-9.30pm March 6 “Australian Leadership: Popularity before Integrity” Frank Brennan & Georgina Costello; April 3 tba (Info: April 9391 0787).

° **Geelong** – Resumes 2002 (Info: Denis 5275 4120).

° **Heidelberg** – Tower Hotel, 838 Heidelberg Rd, Alphington, 8pm-9.30pm March 20 “Asylum Seekers. Where is Our Christian Response?” Brendan Byrne sj & Marc Purcell (Info: Susie 9859 6184).

° **Mordialloc** – **Vatican II – Unfinished Business** – The Kingston Club Hotel, 7.30pm-9pm April 24 “Unity among Christian Peoples: That all might be One” Peter Cross & Morna Sturrock (Info: Maria 9579 4255).

Other States

° **Devonport (TAS)** - Molly Malone’s Irish Pub, 7.30pm-9pm – Resumes 2002 (Info: Graham 6424 8286).

° **Fortitude Valley (QLD)** – Dooley’s in Patrick’s Bar First Monday of month – Resumes 2002 (Info: Madonna 3840 0524).

° **Perth (WA)** - The Elephant and the Wheelbarrow, cnr Francis and Lake Sts,

Northbridge, 4th Wednesday of each month February-October 7.30pm-9pm – Resumes 2002 (Info: Michael 9448 2404).

° **Macclesfield (SA)** – Three Brothers Arms, Venables Street April 9 “Spirituality, Wine, Justice & Religion” Rt Hon John Doyle & Rev John May sj (Info: Michael 8388 9265).

° **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, May 4 “Treasures Old and New – An exploration of the gospel of Matthew” (Info: 9484 6208).

° **Fr Laurence Freeman** “The New Holiness. Meditation & Spirituality of our Times”, March 18 8pm Leone Ryan Auditorium, ACU, North Sydney.

° **Catalyst Reflection Morning** April 27 9.30am-12.30pm, Marist Centre, 1 Mary St, Hunters Hill.

NATIONAL FORUM

celebrating the 40th anniversary of the commencement of Vatican II

July 12, 13, 14, 2002

at St Joseph’s College, Hunters Hill

Fr Joseph Komonchak

as keynote speaker

Watch this space!

Rest in Peace

Fr Gordon Gebbie

A friend and supporter of Catalyst for
Renewal and SIP in Melbourne

SPECIAL CATALYST DINNER

There will be a Special Fundraising Dinner on **Friday April 5, 7pm for 7.30pm**, in the Parish Hall at 3A Mary Street, Hunters Hill. Theme: “Catholic-Jewish Relations: What has changed and what are our Hopes?”. Speaker: **His Eminence Cardinal Idris Edward Cassidy**. (Info: Pauline on 02 9816 4262).

Recommended

Tim Winton, *Dirt Music*, Picador, 2001.

Tim Winton has an extraordinary ability to get inside human nature. He describes people and their circumstances in very earthy, fleshy kinds of ways. You know these characters, after reading one of Winton's novels, as if you had travelled with them for many years. His writing is incarnational in the best sense of that word. There are no cute evasions, idealisations or gratuitous titillations. In the fleshiness of it all, the readers find themselves in the midst of a strange and wonderful paradox: Winton has been absolutely non-judgmental in his presentation of the individual, always warts and all – and who does not have “warts and all”? – yet there is an undeniable and powerful sense of compassion evoked. This author has a good instinct for what makes people tick. *Dirt Music* – like *Riders* and *Cloudstreet* before it – taps the deep longings of the human heart and the sad and often tragic sidetracks we all take until we start to discover the truth of who and what we are and what we actually want. *Dirt Music*, situated in a mythical town called White Point, north of Perth, revolves around three characters – Georgie, Jim and Lu. They are entangled by their yearning for love, their unaddressed memories and their longing for whatever it is that might bring a human being some sense of happiness and fulfilment. Perhaps the greatest gift of Winton to the reader of *Dirt Music* is that you actually grow to love these people in their brokenness and their searching.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Ideals and Realities of Islam (New Revised edition)*, ABC International Group, 2000, 215 pages, index, pb, \$17.95(US) through Amazon.com.

The works of Seyyed Hossein Nasr were recommended to this writer by a Muslim authority, as presenting a clear and faithful explanation of the faith of Islam. *Ideals and Realities of Islam* was especially recommended for the Westerner just beginning to learn about Islam. The book is made up of six lectures, originally given in 1964-65. Further readings are also recommended. In the new introduction the author writes: “This book was written for the purpose of expounding the meaning of traditional Islam in a contemporary language for both Westerners and those Muslims whose minds have been molded by modern education, and of opening another door for dialogue with Christianity and also Judaism. This aim still needs to be achieved and the goal of mutual understanding must be sought more than ever before.” Non-Christians seldom represent the teachings of Christianity accurately; we must expect non-Muslim writers to run the same risk when writing of Islam. This text is relatively easy to read, though the ideas and concepts are not always easy to grasp. But this is the nature of the things that matter most. *Ideals and Realities* reminds us that Christians and Muslims share much that does matter in the end. Reading a book like this will help to counter the ignorance most Westerners have concerning Islam.

John Paul II, *The Church in Oceania*, St Paul's 2001, \$6.50.

In November and December of 1998, the Catholic Bishops of Australia met with the other Catholic Bishops of the local Churches throughout Oceania for a Special Assembly in Rome, under the heading: “Jesus Christ and the peoples of Oceania, Walking His Way, Telling His Truth, Living His Life”. *The Church in Oceania (Ecclesia in Oceania)* is Pope John Paul's considered reflections arising from his own participation in that Assembly and his reading of the written documentation that emerged from the Assembly. The centrality of Jesus Christ is emphasized – He is our Way, our Truth and our Life (cf John 14:6). The theme of the Church as *communio* – put on the agenda by the Second Vatican Council (cf *Lumen Gentium*, 4; 8; 13-15; 21; 24-25) – runs through this document as a leitmotif: “The Synod Fathers were eager that *communio* be the theme and aim of all evangelisation in Oceania and the basis for all pastoral planning” (18). Culture is recognized as an essential component of the Church's life, demanded by the very nature of the Incarnation itself. A very frank apology is given to our own indigenous peoples for the failure to respect their culture: “The Church expresses deep regret and asks forgiveness where her children have been – still are party to these wrongs” (28). This document should be read carefully, especially by those who are aware of what remains to be done in the work of renewal.

✂----- Detach and post today -----

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

MY FRIEND'S DONATION OF \$40 FOR ONE YEAR IS ENCLOSED

(Sadly this donation is not tax deductible)

(NB: IF YOU CANNOT AFFORD \$40 ANY DONATION IS ACCEPTABLE)

I am paying by Cheque MasterCard Visa Bankcard

I AM INCLUDING A FURTHER DONATION TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF CATALYST:

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$500 Other

Friend's Donation:	\$
Other Donation:	\$
TOTAL:	\$

Name on card: Expiry date: / Signature:

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

Post to: Catalyst for Renewal, PO Box 139, Gladesville, NSW 1675