



# THE MIX



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## Our Say – Process before personal agendas

Human beings grow into their humanity in and through relationships. For human beings, “to be” is “to be in relationship”. In the world view of the mature person, relationships are primary. All else finds its meaning and purpose in the context of relationships.

Christians grow into their Christianity in and through a relationship with Jesus Christ – a relationship that they experience, first and foremost, in their relationships with other human beings who are genuinely Christian. This relationship in and through Jesus Christ permeates and transforms all other relationships. The quality of our relationship in Christ is manifest in the quality of our relationships with people.

Thus our faith tradition speaks of the Covenant. God forges the Covenant with Abraham and Sarah and their descendants. That Covenant takes on a special force in the light of the Exodus. In the desert a profound intimacy is born between God and his chosen people.

God forges the New Covenant in Jesus.

That Covenant takes on a special force in the New Exodus of Jesus’ Passover and the new desert of Calvary. In this context, we are called to live the Great Commandment: love one another.

All Christian laws, dogmas, moral injunctions and customs find their *raison d’être* in the service of relationships. We must do all in our power to ensure that this remains so.

History has too many examples of law, dogma, moral injunction, ritual and symbol taking on lives of their own and subverting rather than serving relationships. This is fertile ground for all manner of sectarianism, bigotry and even violence perpetrated in the name of God. We do well to remember the Gospel injunction: the Sabbath is made for us, not vice versa.

And this is not just nice but irrelevant theory. It has a most practical implication for us today. We live in a time of immense, profound and rapid change. All

human institutions must deal with this. Not surprisingly, there are many opinions about how we, as Church, ought to respond. It is probably true to say that any thinking Catholic has some recommendation about what should happen.

Catalyst for Renewal offers a simple and practical suggestion: by all means, have your particular agenda but, whatever your agenda is, maintain – in theory as well as practice – the primacy of relationships. This is why we focus on the process of conversation rather than any particular agenda. Apart from the general agenda of renewal, Catalyst has no agenda. What we promote is a process: conversation.

A group can maintain a lively sense of unity amidst a lively sense of diversity of opinions and preferred agendas, if the spirit of conversation is maintained. This process is far more important than any particular agenda you or I might wish to promote. Our relationships as human beings and, in particular, our unity in Christ, takes precedence – in both theory and practice. □

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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## THE HUMAN FACE

My name is Peter Quin and I was born in Echuca. Dad was a doctor there in the late 20's. In 1935 we set off as a family of 5 children with mum and dad to a little island in the Pacific called Nauru. It is a phosphate island, right on the equator. In my six years there I can only remember one day putting on a jumper during the rainy season. Otherwise, we walked around without shoes, just a pair of shorts and a shirt.

Our school was one classroom with eight classes in it, one teacher, and 30 children. Every afternoon after school we would go to the harbour on the island to swim. Swimming became second nature to us.

When the Germans entered the war there were Raiders in the Pacific, and one of these destroyed several of the Phosphate boats, and shelled the island, to destroy the Phosphate equipment. I remember waking up early one morning and viewing this shelling from a hill above our house. It was a terrifying experience. And the first time in my life I can recall praying with fervour.

We left the island just short of Pearl Harbour. My father stayed behind to look after the natives on the island. He and four other Australians were imprisoned by the Japanese and when the Americans came back into the Pacific, the five of them were beheaded. This was another event in my life that brought a strong awareness of God and the need for his help.

My two brothers and myself were at De La Salle, Malvern and later moved to Xavier College in Kew, Victoria. It was the first of my four stays at this college. First, as a student; later as a Jesuit Scholastic; then much later in charge of the senior boarders, and in the late 80's in charge of Pastoral Care. In between times I studied at Watsonia, at the Melbourne University and later at Canisius College, Pymble. In my last year of studies in 1965 I went to Paray-le-Monial, France.

One of the great moments of my time overseas was hearing Yves Congar, the great Dominican Theologian, speaking about Vatican Council and Lumen Gentium. He had tears in his eyes, as if overwhelmed by the knowledge that many of his theological ideas had been blessed by the Vatican Council.

It was a heady time in Europe with the excitement of the post Vatican II days, and great concelebrations in the French language. I recalled the words of Dr Rumble, that there would be no changes in the structure of the Mass and was glad that he had prophesied so badly.

In early 90's I was appointed as Headmaster of St Ignatius College,

Riverview, a time of great reward and of great difficulty: a time of reward in meeting so many fine parents, staff and students; a time of difficulty because outside influences were playing such a strong role in the lives and minds of our students.

For the last 15 years I have been in the parishes of Kirribilli, Lavender Bay and North Sydney. I feel very much a priest in this work. It is full of sacramental life with baptisms, marriages, anointings, funerals, as well as the daily and weekly masses.

I have found a special apostolate with marriages. As part of my marriage preparation course, I meet with 4 couples around the dining table at Lavender Bay and have 3 meals with them. In getting to know the couples I can encourage them and challenge them in a relaxed atmosphere. Coming to know them fairly well, I try to keep contact with them.

So QMC (Quin Marriage Club) was born, with BBQ's, Balls, and Harbour Cruises. It also means that I try to help the couples when children arrive. A small group of psychotherapists, who specialise in child/parent relationships, have worked with me to create PIFA (Parent Infant Foundation of Australia). It is under the umbrella of Centacare and has helped many couples in the difficult and bewildering days of new baby and family.

Three years ago I contracted cancer. My surgeon was masterly and cut away the disease, but it has certainly given me a new look at life. I feel as if I have been given second chance at living, and my prayer has certainly changed. I feel drawn now to meet a much more personal God.



Peter Quin, SJ

# Your Say – Responses to Andrew Murray

Peter Coleman and John Brown

Thank you for the excellent essay by Max Vodola. However, I view your decision to publish the open letter of Dr Andrew Murray to the Prime Minister (in the April 03 issue) as highly inappropriate. I do not consider the pages of your journal to be a suitable forum for the expression of opinions on political issues and neither in tone nor in attitude does the letter, it seems to me, conform to the canons of 'good conversation'.

Engagement in war is a secular decision and my faith teaches me that God can draw good out of evil no matter what our human shortcomings may be. It is sobering to reflect that it was the brutal warlord Constantine who liberated Christianity.

As a regular reader of *The Mix* I have come to admire your efforts to promote a more balanced understanding and grasp of our Catholic heritage by encouraging 'good conversation'. Your pages are precious. Don't waste them.

Archbishop George Pell wrote recently, "Decisions about war belong to Caesar, not the Church". Let us concentrate our conversation on the Church.

Peter Coleman, Wollstonecraft, NSW

□□□

Dear Rev. Murray,

I have just read your letter in *The Mix* about "Bush's War" and, while I share some of your concerns, I have personally reached very different conclusions about the war in Iraq and Mr. Howard's actions in involving Australia. I am a transplanted American, which, I suppose, might make you believe that I am afflicted by some sort of nationalistic "virus" that blocks my power of independent judgement and makes me act as an "agent of the United States" like the Prime Minister. I can only assure you that that is not the case.

You might also question whether I can be a Christian and hold these views. After all, isn't it obvious that Christians must be pacifists? Again, I believe that "good" Christians can hold a non-pacifist point of view without being "warmongers."

You refer to the shame that future generations of Australians will feel about the "unprovoked war of aggression" in Iraq. In my pantheon of shame, other decisions, many by the UN and other collective decision-making bodies, rank far higher: The UN's failure to force Saddam to follow

the conditions set down in 1991, resulting in hundreds of thousands of innocent Iraqis dying while he robbed the nation of its oil revenues; the UN's failure to prevent genocide in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia; the former nations of the British Commonwealth's failure to stop Mugabe's massacres in Zimbabwe; the League of Nations' and Europe's failure to stop Hitler's genocide of the Jews, and so on.

The far greater shame of the 20th Century is that it has taken us so long to learn, finally, that evil thrives when good men do nothing (but talk) as Burke said.

So I say that future generations of Australians will look back in pride at the courageous actions of their Prime Minister to rescue 20,000,000 Iraqis from an evil tyrant — and to try to make the planet safe from the threat of global terrorism.

I won't detail the polemical and inflammatory statements you made in your letter. They are obviously intended to cast aspersions on the motives of Bush and Howard. Instead, I will quote Colin Powell's answer to the Archbishop of Canterbury who asked him about Bush's motives: Were the "Iraqi Plans an example of empire-building by George Bush?"

Colin Powell answered by saying that, "Over the years, the United States has sent many of its fine young men and women into great peril to fight for freedom beyond our borders. The only amount of land we have required is enough to bury those who died."

If you didn't understand what American (and Britain and Australia) motives were in the war in Iraq, why didn't you simply look at history? It would have been obvious, I think, who the "good guys" and bad guys are in the Iraqi situation.

Sincerely,

Jim Brown

[jim.brown@heartsandminds.com.au](mailto:jim.brown@heartsandminds.com.au)

A proud American and nascent Australian.

PS. Wisdom tells me I am nothing. Love tells me I am everything. And between the two my life flows (Nisargadatta Maharaj).

Editor's Comment: The Vatican II document, *Gaudium et Spes*, begins with the words: "The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of

Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts".

In conversation we need to distinguish between process and content. While the latter may be confrontational, the former must never be. Andrew Murray's letter — see *The Mix* of May 2003 — is part of a conversation we must continue to have in Australia; Peter Coleman's and Jim Brown's letters are part of that conversation. We welcome others who wish to contribute to it.

*From another reader, writing about the coverage of topics in THE MIX in general:*

*The Mix* is a worthy vehicle for conveying the ideas and ideals emanating from the Catalyst for Renewal movement within the Church. May I express my humble appreciation for it: its content, idealism based on Vatican II, and the traditions of the Church, as well as the personal journeys of fellow pilgrims.

Most of all, perhaps, I appreciate the tone I sense in the articles — conversational, yet with conviction, respect and learning. Thank you.

I share my copies around — about all an old bloke can — but it's something. I pray that others may become positive conversationalists, for the good of the Church.

I sit here — near Rabaul, P.N.G. — surrounded by bananas, cocoa shrubs and a million coconut palms, plus an active volcano across the bay. And lots of little kids playing all day long.

Blessings on all Catalysts!

Br. Brian M Cumming, CFC

OLSH Teachers College, Kabaleo, PNG

*Other reader comments:*

Thanks for the excellent work you do for the Catholic community. I find *The Mix* very relevant and thought-provoking.

B. Loch, Rockhampton, QLD

Congratulations for a very worthwhile publication for these days.

Dorothy Gooden, Lockhart, NSW

Thanks for the great magazine and for all the other great work. We benefit so much.

Veronica and Silvio Spasaro, Arcadia, NSW

# Essay – Where to Vatican II

by Elizabeth Reid

The following is most of the text of Elizabeth Reid's talk given at Spirituality in the Pub, the Southern Cross Club, Canberra, 27 March 2002.

Vatican II was a watershed for my family. That was when green salads, spaghetti and other strange things came into our lives. My mother went to Rome and, a mother of six children, had her bottom pinched. Life changed irreversibly.

My mother was at this time the Federal President of the Catholic Women's League in Australia. In 1960, during the excitement of preparations for Vatican II, she went to Rome for its World Congress. There Fr Roger Pryke was their chaplain. They had an audience with John XXIII and Fr Wally Black organised for her to go to St Peter's to witness the proclamation of a Saint, a humble Italian village woman.

She came home with stories of the simplicity and humanity of John XXIII, of Cardinal Ottaviani, the leader of the conservatives, praying to be able to die whilst still a Catholic, of a new spirit in Catholics, and a new vision in our Church.

When the Vatican II sessions started, I was studying Philosophy at the ANU, mentored by Fr Wally Black at the MSC Seminary. Fr Michael Sherris OP was sowing seeds of freedom of discussion and social conscience as university chaplain. Fr Martin Sharpe MSC was drawing his cartoons. Elizabeth Reid, another Canberra Catholic, was a member of the Grail working as a lay missionary in India, but I was not to discover this until the 70s.

In 1966, I went to Oxford, where Fr Herbert McCabe, one of the great progressive post-Vatican II theologians, was my parish priest, at Blackfriars. There discussion was intense, at the university chaplaincy at St Aldates, at Blackfriars and amongst friends. I read Fr Schillebeeckx, Karl Rahner, Barbara Ward, Hans Kung, Herbert McCabe, Teilhard de Chardin, Dorothy Day, Gustavo Gutierrez, Rosemary Haughton, Cardinal Suenens, Peter Hebblethwaite and so many more.

The pre-Vatican II Church that I was raised in was the Church of the green catechism, mission boxes, guilt, veiled nuns, the rote learning of the seven deadly sins (but not so much the seven virtues), violent canings, an obsession with sins below the waist, Children of Mary Sodality, State Aid, relics, confession, scapulars, novenas, the rosary, the DLP, the Bacon Priests, antagonism or worse to Protestants, threats of excommunication, and checking out who did

or did not go to Communion during Mass.

My Father was a cradle Catholic, of Irish descent, and an altar boy. He was well taught by the Marist Brothers. His masculine schooling was tempered by the loving nature of his mother, a dressmaker and strong feminist, who died, sadly, when he was only 18.

My mother converted from Methodism to Catholicism in the 40s. She talks about coming into a Church where, in her words:

- Priests stood with their backs to people and spoke in Latin, which she did not understand; Dad did.
- There was little sense of community in the parish; parishioners were rarely consulted in the running of the church, nor able to express a point of view.
- The nuns sat in their car in the driveway to drink a cup of tea for they were not allowed to come into your house. Meanwhile, Fr Bateman, our gentle parish priest, used to "drop in" each Friday night when he knew that Mum baked for the week.
- First communion was mass produced with the main role for parents being to pay for the clothes and the breakfast.
- No birth control was allowed except for the rhythm method, which women knew was not safe; families had to work out for themselves what to do.
- Children were sent to Catholic schools, despite their inadequacies, or you were threatened with excommunication. One of my sisters started school at St Felix's Bankstown in a class of 165 where one of her teachers spoke only Gaelic. Later, my parents sought permission from Monsignor Favier to send me to Canberra High School because of the lack of maths and science at St Christopher's. But my sister Trish who remained at St Christopher's suffered the backlash from the nuns, priests and kids.

**I agree with my Mother that the Holy Spirit and the spirit of Vatican II move amongst us. We are being called upon both to exercise Father McCabe's virtue of hope and to struggle actively to find those changes that will best express the Church in the world in which we live.**

Mum was struck by the role assigned to women in the Church. Mostly women were wives and mothers who were:

- To sit in the pews on Sunday with the children ranged out on either side of you.
- To bake the cakes and scones for Church fund-

raising events.

- To bring and arrange the flowers on the altar, and to clean the church.

It was not until 1958 when she joined the CWL that the Church came alive for my mother and she found community. She became Canberra-Goulburn President and then Federal President. She found within the CWL a lay apostolate: women with a vision of a different church, a church in which priest and laity (inclusive of women) all had a role. In this quest, they were supported by some outstanding men of vision, especially Archbishop Eris O'Brien, the local Archbishop, and Archbishop Gillie Young of Hobart. Both these men constantly encouraged the women of the CWL to move beyond the boundaries and to find a new role.

Then Vatican II was announced and all our lives were changed. My mother and those who were in Rome with her brought the vision of Vatican II back with them to a receptive Catholic Women's League. Cardinal Gilroy invited the delegation to brief him on the Congress and what they had learnt from this encounter. The CWL gained greater momentum in its work for women and for renewal in the Church in Australia.

My parents, both teachers, joined a group of lay people working hard for the reform of the Catholic education system.

In 1962, my mother moved from the public education system to teach at the just established Daramalan College, its first lay teacher and its first woman teacher. In the Sacred Heart priests, she found the same openness to the renewing church that she had seen in Pope John XXIII. Sermons reflected on the teachings of Vatican II. The biblical Jesus was explored in Gospel discussion groups.

The doctrine of the freedom of conscience was taken seriously: "every person who follows his or her conscience in religious matters has a right to authentic religious freedom". The divorced were not excluded from the community of the parish. Communion was seen as an expression of this community, the healing grace of Christ to the community as well as to its individual members. A ministry to the homosexual community was established.

The new relationship crafted in Vatican II between the priest and the laity was put into practice and lay people became an integral part of church activities. Home masses were held. The MSC Associates was established, providing more intimate,

participative and meaningful ritual and strong bonds of mutual support and friendship.

These MSC priests and brothers became my mother's community of friends and colleagues, and ours also. When four of them were expelled from the Archdiocese for writing a letter to the *Canberra Times* on freedom of conscience, a part of us was also expelled. The backlash to the vision of n XXIII was powerful and growing.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the world, I too was caught up in the excitement and passion of this post-Vatican II renewing church. The Holy Ghost became the Holy Spirit and entered my life to stay forever. Our Oxford discussions and debates were about the reconciliation of the doctrine of transubstantiation with ecumenism, how the limits of Papal infallibility were determined, the laity along with the bishops and the Pope as constitutive of the magisterium of the church, the role of the individual conscience, the worldly Church and the corruption of power, abortion, grace, and social action.

I returned to Canberra and the ANU in the early 70s. I lectured on creation *ex nihilo*, joined an informal Catholic discussion group on sexuality and the pill and started teaching philosophical theology at the Sacred Heart seminary. The energy was immense and I had found peace of mind in the resonance between the socialist vision of a better world, the tenets of liberation theology and my own Catholic vision.

I was now open to my life being shaped and determined by the words of Matthew: I was hungry and you gave me food, thirsty, and you gave me drink, I was a stranger, and you brought me home, naked, and you clothed me, sick, and you cared for me, a prisoner, and you came to me (Matt. 25.35-37). This has been my life's journey but the invitation to give this talk has brought me to ask the question: to what extent have I journeyed this path, as St Francis did, in dialogue with the church?

When, the other day, I asked my mother whether she thought that the vision of Vatican II had survived, her reply came swiftly. "You cannot put the genie back into the bottle", she said. "Can you imagine the nuns being forced back into the veil and re-secluded in their convents? They are now in the world. Lay people also", she said, "not only have a different role in the church, but know that this is their role, even if some parish priests and bishops still do not understand this. We must never despair".

These words caught at me for, in preparation for this talk, I had been re-reading Herbert McCabe's 1985, post-Vatican II

catechism, *The Teaching of the Catholic church: A New Catechism of Christian Doctrine*. Question 190 is: What attitudes are especially contrary to the virtue of hope? The answer: Two opposing attitudes are especially contrary to the virtue of hope: they are despair and presumption. The next question is: What is despair? Despair is the deliberately encouraged feeling that, because of the power of sin, God's love is not sufficient to save me or to transform the world. Despair says: it is useless to pray for God's grace or to work for his Kingdom. These are moving words when one reflects that Father McCabe had by then experienced excommunication by the post-Vatican Church. He was subsequently reinstated.

Fr McCabe expresses the difference between his post-Vatican catechism and the green post-Council of Trent catechism as follows:

...[firstly] the mystery of the Trinity permeates the entire teaching; secondly, the sacraments are treated not simply as channels of grace but as constitutive of the life of the church; and, thirdly, the moral life is seen as a cultivation of the virtues rather than simply an effort to keep within the commandments.

Let us accept this for the moment as one person's view at a particular point in time of the essence of the Vatican II renewal. To me, this is such a hopeful, yes, Christian vision of our faith. Yet, the years during and since then have seen an increasingly virulent backlash against the questions and teachings of Vatican II. In my years of working for social change, I have come to accept the seeming inevitability of backlash.

**"You cannot put the genie back into the bottle", she said. "Can you imagine the nuns being forced back into the veil and re-secluded in their convents?"**

The voice of the Church has ruled or arbitrated against so many of the things that I hold dear or would like to be discussing. But what most unsettles me is the tone and language of the voice. Too often it is threatening, abusive, vindictive, righteous, derogatory, scornful, and more. This separation of love from authority is characteristic of a deep backlash, a re-assertion of orthodoxy. But it is, in the end, I think, far more harmful than the claim to Truth, even than apostasy or heresy. To me, this voice is reminiscent of Stalin's and of the maxim he so brutally practised that the end justifies the means.

There are now deep divisions and diver-

gent paths within the church. ....

Are we a pilgrim people, a people subject to doubt, tempted to despair, a people seeking to understand our living faith and trying to live our understanding? Or is the Church in possession of the fullness of truth? Was Jesus a prophet and a liberator? Or was he sent to earth to establish the kingdom of God on earth and to rise again as the Son of God? Or both? Can we achieve respectful unity in diversity or must difference be excluded?

My mother says that we must not despair, that the Holy Spirit moves amongst us, that it is critically important that all voices be heard, including the authoritarian, the traditional, the conservative, the old style, the centralists, and that the church that emerges from Vatican II finds space for all of us. Myself, I am not sure that even if space were to be left for the fundamentalists, as distinct from those that I listed before, that they would come or that it would be possible to live with them.

Last year I stood in the Church of St Paul's Outside the Walls in Rome and looked at the vignettes of all of the Popes of the Church. I thought about faith and frailty. Yet this frailty is rendered invisible by orthodoxy.

For me, my faith is essentially a conversation, a quest for a better understanding of human existence and for social justice, a journey across cultures and time, a dialogue with mentors and role models, a respect for other pathways to God, and an exercise of the religious imagination, of compassion and of solidarity.

I am comfortable in how this differs from the beliefs of others, a humanist, for example. For whenever I express a belief which differs from that of others in the church, I am conscious that we are of good faith in our differing beliefs, that the space my belief inhabits holds other convictions and teachings, and that that space is most Christian when it is conversational, rather than adversarial. A secularist might talk about a woman's right to make an informed decision about abortion. So also might I. But if I do, I am infused with a consciousness that this is not in line with the teachings of the Church and that there are many in the church who have different points of view.

I agree with my mother that the Holy Spirit and the spirit of Vatican II move amongst us. We are being called upon both to exercise Father McCabe's virtue of hope and to struggle actively to find those changes that will best express the Church in the world in which we live. Yes, it is definitely unfinished business, perhaps ongoing rather, and I hope that I will never exclude myself from it. □

## The Bible – The spirit is let loose

### Words for a Pilgrim People

*The wind blows where it pleases; you can hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit. (John 3:8)*

□□□

*As I feel more and more the injustice, the inequalities and the exploitations of this world, I understand better why so many people throw themselves into political activity which aims to destroy the power-structure of our society. I understand better why people who are frightened of losing their possessions and power try to defend themselves and the structures which support them. Our world is moving towards universal conflict, pushed by the jealousies and hatred which come from fear. Jesus came to destroy hate and to lead all men into fraternity, universal love and peace. But this means that we must all reject our individual and group egoisms; we must all learn to die to ourselves and, reborn in the Spirit, to live for our brothers and for God our Father. I believe that the world will only change as people's hearts change and as people open themselves to love and tenderness. Our political and economic structures reflect our inner fears; they can only be changed as hearts change. This does not mean that we must not struggle against injustice on a political level, for we must. But above all we must become sources of love for others; we must become attentive to the little people, the wounded, the fragile and the lonely people. It is as this current of life grows stronger that structures will change. (Jean Vanier, **Be Not Afraid**, Paulist Press, 1975, viii-ix.)*

□□□

*Inspired by no earthly ambition, the Church seeks but a solitary goal: to carry forward the work of Christ under the lead of the befriending Spirit. And Christ entered this world to give witness to the truth, to rescue and not to sit in judgment, to serve and not to be served (cf. John 18:37; Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45). (**Gaudium et spes**, 3.)*

□□□

A small group of disciples “went back to Jerusalem” and “when Pentecost Day came around they had all met together when suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of violent wind ...” (Acts 1:13 & 2:1ff). (The word Pentecost comes from the Greek word meaning “fiftieth day” – the feast is on the fiftieth day after Passover.) This is all very Jewish. Pentecost, together with Passover and Tabernacles, was one of the three feasts when Israel had to present itself before Yahweh in the place chosen by Him in order to make a dwelling for His name (cf Deuteronomy 16:126).

According to Luke’s Gospel, however, these particular Jews – disciples of the Risen Lord – were under new orders: “Stay in the city then until you are clothed with the power from on high” (24:49). (The Greek word we translate as “power” is “dunamis” – from which we get our English word “dynamite”!) The life-giving “breath” (Hebrew: *ruah*) of God, the same breath which brought creation out of the formless void in the beginning (cf Genesis 1:1), brings forth a new creation in Jesus Christ.

John the Baptizer awaited this manifestation of the Holy Spirit of God: “I baptize you in water for repentance, but the one who comes after me is more powerful than I, and I am not fit to carry his sandals; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire” (Matthew 3:5).

In John’s Gospel Jesus uses a very revealing term:

“I shall ask the Father and he will give you another Paraclete” (John 14:16). The word *parakletos* – from the Greek words *para* meaning “at one’s side” and *kaleo* meaning “to be called” – is used three other times in John’s Gospel (cf 14:26, 15:26 and 16:7) and means “the one who comes to your aid”, “the one who stays by your side as protector and helper”, “advocate” etc. (The Latin word used here to translate the Greek is helpful: *advocatus*, from *vocatus* meaning “called” and *ad* meaning “to”.) Jesus Himself is a “paraclete”, but when he goes, another “paraclete” will be sent.

This new “paraclete”, like Jesus, is a Person. The breath of God is on our side. The Eternal Spirit that hovered over the waters, hovers over me and you and our world. Baptized in that Spirit, we are called to open our hearts to the wonders of a new creation. □

## The Tradition – Life in the spirit

St Paul, writing to the Christians in Rome, speaks magnificently of our life in the Spirit. There he says: “You received the spirit of adoption, enabling us to cry out, ‘Abba, Father!’ The Spirit himself joins with our spirit to bear witness that we are children of God” (8:15-16). Down the ages the Church has kept this wonderful vision alive – sometimes brilliantly, sometimes dimly. Nonetheless, it lies at the heart of our faith as followers of the Risen Lord.

St Basil, writing in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, expresses immense confidence in the life that is imbued with the Spirit of God: “Through his aid hearts are lifted up, the weak led by the hand, those going forward are perfected. Shining upon those who have been purified of every stain, He makes them spiritual in heart, through union with Himself. For just as when the sunlight falls on clear, transparent bodies, they too become resplendent, and begin to shine from another light within themselves, so the souls that contain the Spirit within them, become themselves spiritual, and their brightness shines forth on others.”

**... being made like to God,  
and, highest of all, that you  
are made God ....**

This is beautiful and inspiring enough. But listen to what follows: “From this comes knowledge of the future, the understanding of mysteries, the seeing of things hidden, the apportioning of gifts, heavenly association with the angelic choirs, joy without end, abiding with God, being made like to God, and, highest of all, that you are made God (cf 2Peter 1:4 – ‘... partaker of the divine nature.’). These then are some of the notions we possess regarding the Holy Spirit, to speak of but a few; and which we have been taught concerning his greatness, his dignity, and his operations, from the very words of the Spirit himself.” The great bishop of Caesarea – in modern-day Turkey – expresses the fullness of our faith better than most. Do you believe what Basil believes? □

# 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](mailto:terry_catalyst@hotmail.com)

<http://groups.msn.com/SpiritualityinthePub>

**NSW and ACT – 7.30-9.00pm unless specified:**

° **Albury** New Albury Hotel, Kiewa St June 11 “What Defeats Family?” Judy D’Astoli & Neville Powles (Info: Fr Glenn 6026 5333).

° **Alstonville** Catalyst Dinner July 26 “Human Rights: Challenges we face in Australia now and in the immediate future” Chris Sidoti (Info: Anne 6628 6428)

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

° **Campbelltown** Campbelltown Catholic Club June 11 “Possessed by Possessions – is it Wrong to be Rich?” John Marsden & Kerry Murphy (Info: Rosemary 9603 2975).

° **Canberra** – When Christ freed us, he meant us to remain free The Southern Cross Club Woden June 25 “Re-envisioning mission – a task for our time?” Brian Gore & Libby Rogerson (Info: Rita 6260 6737).

° **Engadine** – Pathways to God Engadine RSL June 18 “Blessed are Those who Hunger and Thirst after Justice” Libby Rogerson & Robert Fitzgerald (Info: Elizabeth 20 0617 or Annette 9548 2475).

° **Five Dock** – Challenges in a Changing Community The Illinois Hotel, Cnr Paramatta Rd & Arlington St June 23 “Reconciliation” Phil Glendenning (Info: Susanna 9798 8071).

° **Jamberoo** – Search for the Sacred The Jamberoo Hotel July 14 “Acting on the Passion Within” Bernice Moore & tba (Info Gabrielle 4232 2735).

° **Kincumber** – Out of the Chaos Came ... – The Kincumber Hotel, Avoca Drive July 1 “...drugs? ...no thanks!” Margaret McKay & Deborah O’Neill (Info: Clair 4333 7117 or Margaret 4382 2753).

° **Lismore** – I have Come that You may have Life Mary Gilhooley’s Pub June 18 “Young Adult Spirituality” Br Graham Neiest (Info: Lynne 6625 1195).

° **Newport** – Newport Arms Hotel August 7 “Spirituality and the Media” Tony Doherty & Geraldine Doogue (Info: Terry 9973 1192).

° **Northern Sydney** – Prayer, Faith & God Relationship Union Hotel, Cnr Pacific y & West St, North Sydney June 16 “My family, My Treasure: my family is a gift

from God, no exchange, no refund, no guarantee” George Szabo & Judy & Paul Taylor (Info: Michelle 9958 5963).

° **Paddington** – Of Human Life The Bellevue Hotel, July 2 “Everybody can make a Difference” Kerrie & Sean McArdle (Info: Marea 9387 3152).

° **Penrith** – Making a Difference Golf Club June 18 “Law and Order: Beyond Bolts & Bars” Terry O’Connell (Info: Sue 9760 2324).

° **Rouse Hill** The Mean Fiddler on Windsor Rd July 1 tba (Info: Maria 9680 2220 (H))

° **Rydalmere** – Responding to Change – Rydalmere Bowling Club June 10 Rosalind Bradley & tba (Info: Kerry 9630 2704).

° **St George Kings Head Tavern** South Hurstville June 25 “Corporate Values: Render Unto Caesar” Susanna Davis & Michael Walsh (Info: Ken 9580 1183 ).

° **Waitara** – Act justly, Love tenderly and walk humbly with your God: How do we meet this challenge in our world today? The Blue Gum Hotel June 18 Angela Ryan & Julian McDonald (Info: Carmel 9477 4824).

### VIC:

° **Ballarat North** North Star Hotel, Lydiard St, Second Wednesday each month 12.30-2pm (Info: Kevin 5332 1697).

° **Bendigo** Boundary Hotel June 11 “The Story of Faith vs the Story of Fear” Rev Tim Costello (Info: Helen 0409 212 009).

° **Clayton** The Notting Hotel, 8pm-9.30pm June 24 “The Recent Treatment of Asylum Speakers in Australia and the Politics of Fear” Ros Leary & David Spitteler (Info: Jo 9807 1912).

° **Colac** The Union Club Hotel September 6 “Our Song, Our Story, Our Spirit” Maria Forde (Info: Winsome 5235 3203).

° **Collingwood** The Vine Hotel, Cnr Wellington & Derby Sts, 8pm-9.30pm June 4 tba (Info: April 9327 4433)

° **Echuca** – The Power of my story through the window of... August 20 Denis Higgins & Brigid Arthur (Info: Carmel 5482 1342).

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

° **Heidelberg** Tower Hotel, 838 Heidelberg Rd, Alphington, 8pm-9.30pm August 13 “Ecumenism – Has Anything really Changed?” Cardinal Cassidy & Bishop Curran (Info: Susie 9859 6184).

° **Mordialloc** The Kingston Club, 7.30pm-9pm June 25 “Sustaining the Earth so the earth will Sustain us” Kim Healy & Trevor Parton (Info: Maria 9579 4255).

° **Mornington** The Royal Hotel, Victoriana

Room, 770 The Esplanade, 8pm-9.30pm July 23 “Dealing with mid-life: Crisis or Opportunity?” Terry Curtin & Catherine Brabender (Info: Colleen 9775 2163 or Carole 5976 1024)

### Other States

° **Devonport (TAS)** – Spirituality in the Workplace Molly Malone’s Irish Pub, June 25 “Hospitality” with a Publican & a Barman (Info: Graham 6424 8286).

° **Hobart North** The Mustard Pot Hotel Moonah August 4 “World Politics at a Glance: A New World Order” Gwynn MacCarrick & Peter Jones (Info: Gwayne 6228 2679).

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

° **Perth (WA)** – Towards Joy The Elephant and the Wheelbarrow, cnr Francis & Lake Sts, Northbridge 7.30-9.10pm June 24 “Towards Joy – The Young Persons Journey” David & Jasmine Parry (Info: Andrew 0422 305 742).

° **Macclesfield (SA)** Three Brothers Arms, Venables Street July 1 “Spirituality & Science & Me” Rob Morrison & Debra Kelly (Info: Michael 8388 9265).

° **The Talking MIX** is now available on tape. Annual subscription: \$40. For 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: Sue on 02 9247 4651).

° **Mount St Benedict Centre**, Pennant Hills, “The Road to the Cross in Mark’s Gospel” September 27 – October 3 “Arise and Come Away” (Info: 9484 6208).

° **St Mary’s Towers Retreat Centre** Douglas Park” July 4-10 guided retreat “Praying John’s Gospel”; July 11-19 directed retreats; July 25-27 Mid Years Spirituality; Aug 1-Sept 3 Ignatian Exercises; 2-10, 11-19 & 20-28 August Directed retreats (Info: Fr Ed Travers 4630 9159).

° **Catalyst Dinner** July 25 “Human Rights in Contemporary Australia” Chris Sidoti & Zita Antonios, Villa Maria Parish Hall, Cnr Mary St & Gladesville Rd, Hunters Hill (Info: Pauline 9816 4262).

° **Eremos Institute** June 14 Retreat day at Yaraandoo, near Dural 10am-4pm; June 21 Religious Trivia Night (Info: Kate 9674 1216).

# Recommended

Frank Brennan et al, *Refugees, Morality and Public Policy*, David Lovell, 2003, 108 pages, pb, \$16.95.)

Much has been written about refugees and the morality of public policy in Australia these past few years. Much more has been spoken on talk-back radio, at dinner parties and in occasional conversations (and arguments). Why did such public discussions not happen after the Second World War when we were flooded with refugees? And how much hard data do any of us who participate in the current discussions have? It seems that the refugees today are providing a moral test case for modern Australia, an Australia that is much more affluent and much more self-confident than that society of the late forties and fifties. *Refugees, Morality and Public Policy* provides useful information and helpful criticisms. It is a collection of brief papers – for the most part those presented in the Jesuit Lenten Series of 2000 and 2002 in Sydney and Melbourne. The papers are divided into two categories. The first deals specifically with our refugee policy – “Facts, Needs, Limits”. The second is more theoretical and addresses the morality of public policy at home and abroad. It is probably fair to say we are not very good at having the kinds of public conversations and debates promoted by these papers. They are a welcome stimulus to a conversation we desperately need to have. The popular style and the brevity of each paper make the book very readable.

Bernard Tickerhoof, *Paradox: The Spiritual Path of Transformation*, Twenty-Third Publications, 2002, 232 pages, pb, - available for \$49.95 from John Garratt Books, Tel: 03 8545 2905.

For all the wonderful insights and practical benefits brought to us via our rationalistic and functionalistic approach to the world, there is an awful flaw in it all. We seem to have been seduced by an illusion that the rational mind, through its straight-line logic and objective analysis, can know all there is to know about reality. We – of the modern Western mind-set – have lost the ability to tell and trust stories to speak the truth, we have greatly diminished imaginations, we are bereft of life-giving symbols. And our souls wither. Tickerhoof's fine little book lights a candle in the darkness of rationalism. He writes: “It is my belief that in recognising paradox and integrating it into our lives, we have a primary key, perhaps *the* primary key, to learning how to live fully the life and destiny that we were called to.” Life is teeming with “two-sidedness”, the author argues. Linear thinking inevitably tries to find “solutions” for this – and it cannot. The human person is “insoluble” and life is “insoluble”. And so is Jesus. Tickerhoof's reflections should also assist troubled and concerned Catholics to live within a Church that is teeming with “two-sidedness”. Maybe the desire to leave the Church or “renew” it this way or that is actually an impatience with reality. Read *Paradox* and ponder. It is very good.

Christopher Hayden, *Praying the Scriptures: A Practical Introduction to 'Lectio Divina'*, St Paul's Publications, 2001, 191 pages, \$24.95.

In matters human, there seems to be a general principle of life: when you increase possibilities, you also increase the dangers. We live in a time of greatly increased possibilities. One of the grave dangers of this time, emerging amidst those exciting possibilities, is that we will lose our roots in the authentic Gospel tradition. The Benedictine tradition not only offers us the nearest thing to a truly foundational Gospel spirituality – as distinct from simply one more special spirituality – it also offers us a very simple, practical exercise for developing our own spirituality. The ancient skill and art of *lectio divina* – an untranslatable term which means something like “slowed-down reading so that the words, especially the words of the Gospel, can get into your blood stream” – can be practised by everyone. Hayden, a biblical scholar, presents us with a very readable and helpful introduction to *lectio*. It is, as you might expect, also a helpful introduction to Gospels – it focuses on the Gospel of Mark – and to Christian prayer. The sustained and consistent practice of *lectio* will minimise the possibilities of us throwing the baby out with the bathwater in these times of theoretical and practical fluidity within the Church. More than that, it will contribute greatly to the one thing that matters in the end: our life in Jesus Christ.

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