



THE MIX



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Our Say – The election of a pope

In 1996 Pope John Paul II promulgated his apostolic constitution, *Universi Dominici Gregis*, outlining the rules by which the next conclave will elect the new pope. With the exception of Pope John Paul I, every pope of the 20th century has changed the rules of the conclave to elect his successor. The current pope has also had erected a special building to house the conclave. This next conclave of cardinals will not have to live and sleep in makeshift quarters, long walks from bathroom facilities.

Perhaps, however, they will preserve the tradition of leading the newly-elected pope to the altar in the Sistine Chapel where, kneeling beneath Michelangelo's *Last Judgement*, he spends some time in prayer. Then he is led into the sacristy of the Sistine Chapel to be vested. The newly elected pope is the only one to vest there. This sacristy is known in Italian as *sala delle lacrime* ("the room of tears").

Sadly, John XXIII was the last to experience one other quaint but powerful ritual. As the newly-elected pope processed towards the altar for the installation ceremony, a barefooted Franciscan friar was

deputed to step out of the crowd, light some flax and, as the flax flared and burnt out, he proclaimed to the pontiff: "Sancte Pater, sic transit gloria mundi!" ("Holy Father, thus passes the glory of the world!").

The election of Giacomo della Chiesa as Pope Benedict XV in 1914 provides us with a useful catalyst for conversation about the papacy and the election of a new pope for this time. There are two particular factors about that election we can note. The first is utterly trivial, the second is highly significant.

First, the trivial item. The papal tailor has three white cassocks made ready for the man who is elected as the new pope – one small, one medium and a third large. Giacomo della Chiesa was so tiny, not even the small cassock fitted. The tailor had to do a quick pinning and stitching job so the newly elected pope could appear in his white cassock and bless the waiting faithful.

The more significant factor concerns the motivation for electing this man pope.

What prompted the conclave to elect Benedict XV was his reputation as a theological moderate. It is salutary and entirely relevant for us to remember that, at the critical point when the human family was about to engage in an insane, suicidal conflict, the leaders of the Catholic Church were absorbed by the dangers of theological error.

We find ourselves in a tension as we approach the election of a new pope: It matters who is elected and how he is elected, but it also does not matter. The Catholic mind thinks "both/and" rather "either/or." The Church is a human organisation, part of human history, with all that that implies, but the Church is much more than merely a human organisation. We can only tolerate that tension and remain wise within it if we are grounded beyond it. This is a time to reflect on what matters in the end and what contribution do I make. ■

THE HUMAN FACE

This journal is one of the works of
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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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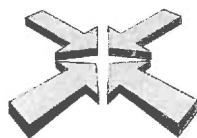
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The Four Arrows and the Cross symbolise diversity giving rise to communion in and through the Paschal Mystery. Those who are diverse by nature and culture, in and through Christ find life-giving unity.

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. Names must be supplied though, for good reason, the Editor may publish a submitted text without the writer's name being made public. Not all the opinions expressed in *The Mix* are those of Catalyst for Renewal Incorporated.

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My name is Denise Playoust. I'm a country girl by birth but a city girl by choice; Catholic by both birth and choice. My correspondence course in religion, as a child, probably started me on the path of looking for understanding rather than rote-learning, even in matters to do with faith.

Boarding school in the city was good for me, but the gaps in my schooling, both secular and religious, were hard to bridge. By the time I left school I had absorbed a religion which was fairly mechanistic: it had its magical properties, lots of rules and a variety of formal prayers.

When I started studying Science at University I joined the Newman Society. This was a pivotal decision in my life because the chaplain and members of this group helped me move from a childish Catholicism into one with some hope of maturing.

It also opened up a world of ideas, with insights that did not really surface in the formal course work at University.

As happened to so many, I also met the man I was to marry because of my involvement with this group. He was involved in the changes to liturgy, especially music, in the lead-up to Vatican II. They were buzzy days, not just because we were young, but because the church was exciting and we were part of it.

Our commitment was to be Christ present in the world. I was (and I remain) firm in my belief in God, the Creator. As I learned more about the natural world, my awe increased.

Then I was in at the deep end, trying to teach. Rescue came when I began to work under the guidance of a strong Christian. As well as modelling good teaching she also encouraged me to continue reading the New Testament, building on some studies I had done in my Dip.Ed. year.

At this stage I was feeling secure about life in general, but as I thought about God/Creator and what it was to be a Christian, I started to get a distaste for the Mary-dominated, devotional Catholicism that I had acquired at school. I tried to move towards a more robust, biblically-based faith, but one which was nurtured by Mass and the Catholic community.

Marriage followed: full-time work, part-time study and house renovations for both of us didn't seem to sap our energy. Life was good and we looked forward to having children.

Then came the disasters. Some we weathered well, but I learnt about intensity in prayer as I yelled at God about his mismanagement. Things gradually improved, but my husband never enjoyed

good health from a couple of years after we married until his death at 51.

In spite of this we had a rich family life. We were a church-going family and a favourite sport was (and still is) critiquing the Sunday homily; this may be part of the reason that our daughter became a biblical scholar.

For most of my professional life I held a variety of teaching and administrative positions at an Anglican school. There were some crazy times: for example, the year I studied Scripture at CTU and Astronomy at Macquarie while working full time. Leading religious services (which included preaching) for two years also kept me on my toes. Making tough decisions which involved other people's welfare helped me move my religious understanding from my head to my heart.

Many lessons learned in administration are important in my current thinking about my spiritual life and the Church. A major one is that I must take responsibility—"they" do not determine my response.

I get angry and frustrated by the actions of some churchmen and church organisations but I'm able to remind myself that these are not central issues.

I am conscious of being on a journey, but I keep redefining the goal as new perspectives become apparent.

My current studies and catechetical work help me to clarify my beliefs.

I am happy, I live in the knowledge that a loving God exists and I feel driven to share this belief.



Denise Playoust

Your Say – Women as witnesses

Sr Susan Connolly

This is an edited text of a talk given by Sr Susan Connolly RSJ at Spirituality in the Pub at North Sydney, August 18th, 2004. The subject for the night was “Women – nesses to the Truth.” Sr Connolly works in the Josephite ministry to the East Timorese. For a complete list of coming SIP venues, dates, topics and speakers see the Bulletin Board on page 7. If you have not yet been to SIP, you should consider attending one near you.

They did not believe them...” (Luke 24:11) I believe that the subordination of women in the Church, despite their role in standing near the Cross and being the first witnesses of the resurrection, places them in the unique position of symbolising all people who suffer because of the abuse of power, and gives them responsibilities as a result.

I was fascinated to read during the week the statement in the Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Collaboration of Men and Women in the Church and in the World, signed by Cardinal Ratzinger, that the Church is “expert in humanity.”

Despite women’s paramount place in witnessing, and witnessing to the central events of Redemption, the word of women has been ignored, manipulated and belittled. Cultural blindness swung in almost immediately, avid to call on biological determinism to keep women in different and subservient roles, but equally eager to deny that the difference of gender brought gifts essential to the human project.

Despite the example of the Lord, the Church has not been able to completely rid itself of cultural determiners and male dominance, and instead has canonised these pagan ways, declaring that they come from God. Mobilising the name of God in defence of the status quo appears to me to be somewhat irreligious.

The most appalling gaffes about women have been made in all seriousness by men whose profound influence on Catholic thought continues to the present time.

Thomas Aquinas said that woman is “defective and misbegotten” in her individual nature. The female falls short of the perfection of the male because her conception comes from some failing in the active force of the male seed, “or even from some external influence, such as that of a south wind...” Again, he says, “... woman is naturally subject to man, because in man the discretion of reason predominates.”

Augustine had held similar sentiments, developing the idea of female inferiority in

the following reflection on Genesis: “...the woman, together with her own husband, is the image of God,... but when she is referred to separately... then she is not the image of God, but as regards the male alone, he is the image of God as fully and completely as when the woman too is joined with him in one.” These texts have had influence on Church theory and practice, resulting in the opinion even last week in the Letter from Rome which denies that women’s subordination is a product of cultural and historical conditioning.

We all fall about laughing at the pompous stupidity of past statements, and we recognise the cultural overlays. But those who pronounced them invoked the name of God’s authority for such statements no less than those who now say that women’s biology precludes them from certain roles in the Church, notably priesthood, even though these roles do not entail biology at all.

Cultural determiners of women’s roles have no more relevance to God’s will than race does. The extent to which the Catholic Church is incapable of seeing, let alone addressing the abuse of power within its own structures is the measure of its inability to address worse aberrations within world societies.

The Church needs us to continue to be witnesses, to stand beneath whatever crosses there are and to declare that the tomb remains empty and the Spirit is abroad.

Women are to men as the poor are to the rich. Of course, Western women are far better off than those men who are oppressed because of their race or their lack of economic power. But the reality for women as a whole is that they are open to abuse and oppression, to manipulation and to violence because they are women. There are many men in the world who are oppressed because of race, religion or poverty, but men are rarely oppressed because they are men.

As the oppressed half of humanity, women are able to symbolise all the oppressed. They witness to the oppressed because they themselves have experienced what it means to be on the back foot, on the outer, receiving less in food or in wages, being poorer, working harder, being in physical danger because of who they are. They have seen it and felt it.

Women were the witnesses to the Cross and they were the first witnesses to the resurrection. They were not believed then, and we are not believed now. Women’s unique experience of life, of the world, of God, of Jesus, continues to be ignored, belittled and treated as suspect. We are spoken “about” as though we are external objects to be discussed and pondered upon.

It is within this very disharmony that we find the responsibility of living out the call to be witnesses to the cross and the resurrection. Any experience of human suffering changes the one who has witnessed it. I know this from my own experience. Having seen at first hand the trauma of the Timorese people, I see things very differently to the way I saw them ten or twelve years ago.

I realise like never before my obligation to go in to bat for the others, to address issues of suffering and injustice in whatever way I can, because I have seen, because I am a witness.

Reflection on the experience of being sidelined, patronised and objectified can change women, can lead us to empathise even more with the people of Dafur, our Aboriginal brothers and sisters, the people of Aceh.

Our own experience teaches us about the greater suffering of others. Women are not only witnesses, but long experience makes us judges as well. We stand in judgement on the systems which keep powerless ones down, and so we have the duty to be advocates as a result. - to speak up, to witness; to tell the brothers where the Lord is to be found – to stand with the oppressed; - to refuse to become part of the problem

What great champions the poor of this world could have, particularly in us, the women of the West, who have begun to claim our equality and humanity, and who are breaking through the barriers of ignorance, have tasted the good of the Tree of Life, are rising from hundreds of years of sleep, continually brought to life by that One who knew us so well and loved our company.

The Church needs us to continue to be witnesses, to stand beneath whatever crosses there are and to declare that the tomb remains empty and the Spirit is abroad. In the interests of not letting hyperbole replace action, nor of being cardboard experts, let us challenge each other on what further to do about asylum seekers, about West Papua, about the blatant abuse of truth in our Australian society. ■

Essay – Stories: a way of generosity and openness

Peter Maher

The following is the text of a talk given by Fr Peter Maher at Spirituality in the Pub at North Sydney, September 20, 2004. The theme for the evening was, "Generosity of Spirit." Peter Maher is a priest of the Archdiocese of Sydney and Parish Priest in Newtown, an inner-city suburb of Sydney.

Ariel Sharon, Israel's Prime Minister, lives on a ranch near the place he and his platoon were caught behind enemy lines in the 1948 Arab/Israeli War. He nearly died there from his wounds and thirst. The article in last Saturday's Good Weekend about understanding Sharon begins with this story. Whether this event can explain much about Ariel Sharon is hard to say but it is a reminder of how our experiences contribute to the formation of our identity. Recalling past events can be a way of constructing and indeed reconstructing the way we see ourselves.

So I thought I would offer a few moments in my story that have formed me in the way of generosity and openness to others. These stories are offered not to give you an example for living but to trigger moments in your own story that have helped make you generous and open people.

Home and upbringing are, for me, the beginning. I remember the faith of the family I grew up in – not because we went to Mass each week (although we did) but because my mother and father always believed in the good in their children. Once I was expelled from school for falling in love. I was only 12 at the time and the girl in question never knew she was the subject of my dreams. Oh well. On arriving home in disgrace, far from chastising me, I remember my mother at hearing my quaint story, offering no criticism of me or the principal. The night passed uneventfully and the next day she returned me to the school and made it all better. Somehow she saved my dignity and the school's. The power of this story still haunts me and reminds me of the value of trust in the goodness of the other.

I hated school – little wonder after that experience. At 14 I became a long serving secretary of the Legion of Mary at Marxist Brothers, Kogarah. Now this organisation is not known for being at the forefront of lay radicalism – and yet the years in that group offered me an experience essential to learning openness to others – that is real flesh contact with the other. In this case it

was the kids of the inner city, the Nursing Home residents, the State school kids, those needing assistance, friendship and a smile. We were a community of young people with high ideals. At Legion meetings we became students of the documents of Vatican II on lay participation in the church, religious freedom and the church as the people of God. I suspect most Catholics had never heard of "documents" – they thought Vatican II was a meeting of bishops that produced the "new Mass".

It was interesting to be in the seminary in the 70's. The world felt fresh to me – there was a new government and there was growing protest around the war Australia was fighting in Asia – the American War, as I was later to learn the Vietnamese called it. This, together with my personal experience of conscription, had converted me from being a supporter of the killing in Vietnam to serious consideration of pacifism. Other factors in my seminary education both formal and informal began to radicalise me. I remember the division caused in the student body on the invitation of Fr Ted Kennedy and Bobbie Sykes to address the students. All officially invited guest speakers till then were occasions for compulsory attendance. Student objections

"...the stranger on the road becomes the Christ figure as teacher and guide..."

backed by College leadership meant this event became the first official visit to allow voluntary attendance. About ten percent of the student body attended. I learned that walking with the other might mean leaving behind the majority and becoming a part of the few.

It would be over ten years before I met Ted Kennedy again during a street retreat in Redfern. On that retreat I also met a man who, when I refused him money on the grounds I had none, said – I know what that's like mate. Solidarity with the poor, even when contrived as I had intentionally gone out on the streets without any money, was a moment of recognition – the stranger on the road becomes the Christ figure as teacher and guide.

I have met many talented and amazing people then and since who have taught me the ways of circus and clowning spirituality. I learned how to laugh at the serious,

keep balance and juggle on the unicycle we call church, stay focused on the small just as the high wire artist focuses on the balance point as she negotiates her path; risk walking on stilts to see the big picture and above all to know that the ring leader is there to point the way – NOT to be the way. Being with those in the struggle is the secret to gospel living. Somehow we are called to recognise the glorified humanity of Christ in and through our humanity. An overemphasis on the divinity of Christ robs us of the freedom of the Christian message and leaves us with a God who still sits in judgement from outside our experience; rather than a compassionate God who knows us from within our humanity and our struggle and calls us to love.

Other key moments of my education include Charismatic Renewal – oh yes I learned to clap and sing in tongues along with the best of them; but I also learned that there are many ways to pray and act in solidarity with those who suffer. I have also enjoyed my membership of Action for World Development (AWD) especially the Aboriginal Justice Support Group which still survives AWD's demise.

This group keeps me in touch with the issues and people around the extraordinary marginalisation in Australia of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. I owe a great deal to the opportunities afforded me by working two years full time for the Marxist Brothers Youth Team giving retreats to young people; being a university chaplain for nine years and being national chaplain to the Catholic Graduates, ACMICA which stands for the Australian Catholic Movement for Intellectual and Cultural Affairs.

And recently I have found my involvement with Australian Reforming Catholics has engaged me in an interesting relationship with my Archbishop.

I learned a great deal from adults who risked all to embrace the Catholic church through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. I was a diocesan educator of parish teams for some years. This affirmed forms of democratised education, as Paulo Freire would say, that respects the dignity of each person even when challenging them (or should I say us) to see the reality we inhabit through gospel eyes with the support of the faith community.

As well, I also enjoy Interplay, a spiritual practice using the art of dance, poetry, story-telling and song to engage with life's deeper mysteries through fun. I learned that

the spiritual journey does not have to be all pain and yet can still retain its mystery and challenge. Indeed I have found Interplay allows me to engage more fruitfully with the spiritual realities. I have learned to find generosity of spirit and greater openness to myself as well as others.

I have been blessed to celebrate Mass with Acceptance, a Catholic gay and lesbian support group that meet every Friday night at St Canice's, Elizabeth Bay. They taught me how supportive true love and care can be and how much pain there is in being alienated from the church. I have also been privileged to walk with women and men who have suffered stress after an abortion through the work of Rachel's Vineyard Retreats.

This experience taught me that generosity of spirit was in saying – that must be very painful for you – rather than the judgemental statements they often associate with the church in their reality.

However it is the opening up of the scriptures that has produced the most profound change in me – this has offered me the clarity of insight that God is found in a direct line of sight with the poor and marginalized.

This is the way of openness to the other and generosity of spirit.

I began to view the texts through the eyes of the underside of history at the Redfern Friday evening gospel discussion group which I still find to be a primary support community for my spiritual life and survival in the church. Strugglers, street people, scholars and activists like Harold and Leo of Redfern, Ciaran O'Rielly, Marnie Kennedy, Marie Grunke, Anthony Gwyther, Elizabeth Ramage, John Bosman and Pat Ormesha here in Australia; and Daniel Berrigan, Dorothy Day, Jim Wallis, Joan Chichester, Thomas Berry, Ched Myers, Paulo Freire and Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza from overseas showed me that the gospel offers us the comic world of upside down theology where the poor are the valued ones in God's view; where each member of the earth community will teach us how to survive and where women, Indigenous people, disabled, gays, lesbians and children find themselves insiders from God's perspective.

Scripture offers us the technology of solidarity to engage with God's insiders; to risk being touched by insiders. I also noticed that going down the Emmaus road with such strangers, the road of God's insiders can be the road to outsidership and exclusion because those friends of God are outsiders in the dominant culture.

But I have learned that our scriptures are all we have to offer us healing and

hope once we have embarked on the journey to Emmaus. Let me finish by quoting a piece by Native American, Leslie Marmon Silko quoted in Ched Myers book, *Who Will Roll Away the Stone?* (p xix Orbis, 1994)

I will tell you something about stories, [he said]

They aren't just entertainment.

Don't be fooled.

They are all we have you see,

All we have to fight off illness and death.

You don't have anything if you don't have stories

Their evil is mighty but it can't stand up to our stories

So they try to destroy the stories

Let the stories be confused or forgotten.

They would like that, they would be happy

Because we would be defenceless then.

WHY ADULT EDUCATION IS SO IMPORTANT

Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk
of Cincinnati, Ohio, USA

Now I want to say something about why adult faith formation is so important and a bit about how we go about it. Notice that I am using religious education and faith formation as synonyms. This reflects the interpenetration of catechesis and evangelization that is one of the basic teachings of the General Directory for Catechesis.

Why is adult religious education/adult faith formation so important? One reason is because we are adults for most of our lives. While there is a sense in which it is true to say that in the sight of God we are all children, it is also true that the challenges and demands and frustrations of adulthood are not those of childhood. The pursuit of "the Christian wisdom which gives sense, unity and hope" to our life (as GDC puts it in No. 173) is an adult enterprise, it's the primary enterprise of our human existence and we can't afford to play it by ear. We need the wisdom of Christ and his church presented to us in ways that are appropriate to the needs and questions of adulthood.

Second, our faith is supposed to be the faith of adults, i.e., it is a faith for people who are mature enough to make choices and mature commitments - to each other, to their professions, to the Lord. We can't make faith-filled adult choices if the only faith equipment we have is the equipment of children. We can put that another way by observing that Christian life is about salvation and that salvation is a personal (and communal) relationship with the Lord, and that the healthiest and deepest relation-

ships are adult relationships. A childish level of faith is not appropriate for an adult for the same reason that 10-year-old children are not permitted to marry. You have to be an adult in order to make long-term, meaningful commitments.

Third, we need adult catechesis and faith formation because most instruments of evangelization, catechesis and sanctification are addressed to adults. Note that the basic evangelization process is the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. Most children can't handle the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It takes a certain level of spiritual maturity to participate in the Eucharist. To profit from the graces and gifts that the Lord and his church give us, we need constant nourishment for our maturity.

Most religious education that is done in the church is offered to children by adults. Adults are the primary educators of their own children. Some adults are educators of other people's children. The educator has to be more educated than the one being taught. If the educator does not have a constantly nourished adult faith, we have children educating children. Moreover, the goal of catechizing children is to lead them to adult faith. The teacher can't do that unless he or she is a person of adult faith, and the teacher will not be a person of adult faith unless his or her faith continues to develop and grow.

Finally, how do we go about adult religious education? There are lots of ways, and I just want to mention a few. There is the homily, which may be the most common medium of adult faith formation in that it is the one that most people are familiar with.

There is the diocesan newspaper, which I think is the handiest and richest adult faith-formation vehicle. Having the paper in the home is important, but it's not sufficient. People have to be encouraged to read it, and this encouragement can come from religious education personnel as well as from pastors and preachers.

Third, you will recall that I have asked that at every regular meeting of any office or agency of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati (including such things as parish councils and commissions) there be a period of at least 10 or 15 minutes of adult faith formation. If nothing else, this little practice can serve to remind us all that the development of our faith is supposed to be an ongoing feature of our Christian life.

The means are there. What we are being called to, I think, is to decide to use those means. I am convinced that adult faith formation should be our principal catechetical agenda item for the present and for the foreseeable future.

Words for a Pilgrim People

“I was hungry and you gave me food.” (Matthew 25:35)



“What a strange, narrow idea we sometimes form of the Truth of God! By what presumption do we imagine it to be a circumscribed realm of light around which the proprietors by divine right have, once and for all, set limits? By what inflexible obstinacy do I insist on conceiving of it as fixed and immutable, so that one single variation in my thinking seems to me an act of sacrilege toward it? Must the truth of God, once revealed, once contained in its entirety – in its entirety? – in the heads of some dozen men, stop with the words that were spoken?”

“For fear that it may escape, we enclose it, keep it in the tomb, set guards around it, roll over it the heavy stone which will prevent it from fleeing, and place on the stone the seal of authority. What precautions, repressions, prohibitions, threats, indictments, sentences, in order to preserve forever inviolate in its sacred immobility, the body – the corpse – of God!”

“But God lives, rises again, escapes in spite of the seal, the stone, the guards, and his Spirit blows where it lists over the land. It seems to me that a truth is all the truer if it is alive, moves, evolves, bears fresh fruit in every season; that it is all the more divine if it escapes us under one aspect to reappear a little farther on in a new light, all the more eternal if it remains forever unfinished in us who are finite, and changes in our eyes with the hour of the day, the age in life, the march of the centuries, while remaining fundamentally for all – centuries and men – an unfailling source of enlightenment and nourishment.”

“Such as this supreme Illumination: Love God with all thy might and thy neighbor as thyself.” (Marie Noël, Notes for Myself, translated by Howard Sutton, Cornell University Press, 1968, 19-20)



Luke’s Gospel contains some of the most memorable of the Gospel stories. Stories like “The Good Samaritan” and “The Prodigal Son” are known to all. So too the story of “The Road to Emmaus” which the Church meditates on throughout the world on the Third Sunday of Easter (Cycle A). One of “the two” on the road is called Cleopas. Is this the same one John refers to in 19:25? Perhaps the second person on the road is his wife, Mary? In the first meal of the Old Creation, the first husband and wife, Adam and Eve, eat and their eyes are opened (see Genesis 3:6-7). In “a first meal” of the New Creation, the husband and wife eat and their eyes are opened also. In the first instance, the outcome is estrangement and alienation from God, self, others and creation. In the second instance, the outcome is healing and reconciliation with God, self, others and creation. There is a New Creation!

The opening of the eyes and the seeing are a metaphor for being in the world in a special way because we see and know in a special way. Cleopas and Mary, in this story, are initially in the world as disconnected, alien, lost. This is the world of those who have seen the crucifixion but have not yet seen the resurrection. It is, if you like, a horrible condensing of the human experience of the world unredeemed, the world as it would be if the Incarnation had not occurred. The truly dark side of our estrangement from God is at the heart of the Church’s memory on Holy Saturday, the day God left us to our own devices. Worse, God was defeated!

The reader is drawn into what must have been a monumental struggle for those first disciples. One Scripture scholar notes: “Cleopas’s puzzled statement only needs the slightest twist to turn it into a joyful statement of early Christian faith: ‘They crucified him – but we had hoped he would redeem Israel’ would shortly become ‘They crucified him and that is how he *did* redeem Israel.’ And it was, of course, the resurrection that made the difference. They had been seeing it as the long story of how God would redeem Israel *from* suffering, but instead it was the story of how God would redeem Israel *through* suffering.” (Tom Wright). Do you see? ■

The Tradition – Where Jesus is present

Very early in the tradition, the community of the baptized learned two essential lessons. The first one we could call “the lesson of form.” They learned that the community must have “forms” to express the reality they intended to shape their lives. In other words, some kind of organization, structure and – dare we admit it – institution is of the very nature of being Church. The second lesson we could call “the lesson of faith.” They learned that the living heart of the community is the Risen Lord. In other words, there is an entirely incomprehensible, unnamable, charismatic essence to the life of the community. The second lesson prompts the community to ask, in every age, “What do we believe?” and the first lesson similarly prompts the community to ask, again in every age, “How do we best concretize what we believe?”

“Where the bishop is to be seen, there let all his people be; just as wherever Jesus Christ is present, we have the catholic Church.”

At the beginning of the 2nd century, the Bishop of Antioch, on his way to a martyr’s death in the coliseum, wrote to the community assembled in Smyrna: “Abjure all factions, for they are the beginning of evils. Follow your bishop, everyone of you, as obediently as Jesus Christ followed the Father. Obey your clergy too, as you would the Apostles; give your deacons the same reverence you would to a command from God. Make sure that no step affecting the Church is ever taken by anyone without the bishop’s sanction. The sole Eucharist you should consider valid is one that is celebrated by the bishop himself or by some person authorized by him. Where the bishop is to be seen, there let all his people be; just as wherever Jesus Christ is present, we have the catholic Church.” Just as Scripture must be read critically, so too we must also read critically the words of Ignatius. ■

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

<http://groups.msn.com/SpiritualityinthePubNSW> and **ACT – 7.30-9.00pm unless specified:**

° **Albury** New Albury Hotel, Kiewa St **Survival Today** April 12 “Hope & Meaning” Fr Terence Mahedy & Gail Whiteford (Info: Joan 6021 6880).

° **Batemans Bay** Mariners Hotel June 5 “Why are our schools full and our churches empty?” Sr Noelene (Info: Viviane 4471 1857).

° **Bowral** The Grand Bar and Brasserie April 27 “Why bad things happen to good people” Bishop George Browning & Bishop Pat Power (Info: Julian 4861 4649).

° **Campbelltown** Campbelltown Catholic Club April 13 “How to make a lively Parish” Martin Teulan & Joan Matthews (Info: Rosemary 9603 2975).

° **Engadine** – Engadine RSL April 20 “Community – A sense of belonging” Fr Peter McGrath & Patricia Thomas (Info: Elizabeth 9520 0617 or Annette 9548 2475).

° **Five Dock** The Illinois Hotel, Cnr Parmatta Rd & Arlington St **A Just Society April 27** “Working towards a Just Society” Leone Pallisier osu & Minh Nguyen (Info: Susanna 9571 7769).

° **Goulburn** Soldiers Club **Love your neighbour as yourself** May 10 “Youth Ministry” Rev Carol Wagner & “Looking after people with HIV” Fr Hugh Murray (Info: Tony 4822 2636).

° **Jamberoo** The Jamberoo Hotel May 9 “The power of active non-violence” Anne Lanyon (Info: Gabrielle 4232 2735).

° **Kincumber** The Kincumber Hotel, Avoca Drive **From Small Beginnings...** May 3 “Daring to Hope?” Alf Taylor & Jenny Fitzgerald (Info: Clair 4333 7117 or Sue 4334 3174).

° **Newport** – Newport Arms Hotel May 26 “Where is the life we have lost in living? The wisdom we have lost in knowledge? The knowledge we have lost in information?” Geraldine Doogue & Hugh McKay (Info: Terry 9973 1192).

° **Northern Sydney** Union Hotel, Pacific Hwy & West St, North Sydney April 18 “What is a reconciled life?” Rev David Angus & Anne Hollands (Info: Michelle 9958 5963).

° **Paddington** Bellevue Hotel May 4 “No

one is an island” Anne Chalfant & Jeff Gambin (Info: Marea 9387 3152).

° **Penrith** Golf Club April 27 “Realising the vision & living the reality: SIP Ten years on” Bishop Geoff Robinson & Ruth Glover (Info: Sue 9760 2324).

° **Rouse Hill** The Mean Fiddler on Windsor Rd April 12 “Divorce and the Church” Fr Gerard Gleeson & Isla Cameron (Info: Maria 9680 2220 (H)).

° **St George** Kings Head Tavern South Hurstville April 27 “Adam’s Rib – valuing Women in the Church” Fr John Crothers & tba (Info: Ken 9580 1183).

° **Waitara** – The Blue Gum Hotel “**I have a dream. I have a dream today..?** April 20 Camille Paul & Harris van Beek (Info: Carmel 9477 4824).

VIC:

° **Alphington** Tower Hotel, **Marketing Jesus** 8pm-9.30pm April 13 “The Theology of Rene Girard” Fr Kevin Lenehan (Info: Susie 9859 6184).

° **Ballarat North** Midlands Golf Club, Heinz Lane, Second Wednesday each month 12.00-2pm (Info: Kevin 5332 1697).

° **Bendigo** Foundry Arms Hotel 8pm-9.30pm June 8 (Info: Helen 0409 212 009).

° **Clayton** The Notting Hotel, 8pm-9.30pm May 17 “Modern day Prophets” Maryanne Confoy (Info: Jo 9807 1912).

° **Colac** Central Hotel-Motel April 20 (Info: Clare 5236 2091).

° **Darebin** Olympic Hotel, Cnr Bell & Albert Streets, Preston (Info: Gordon 9895 5836 & Margaret 9374 1844).

° **Echuca** Bar at the Star Hotel (Info: Carmel 5482 1342).

° **Fitzroy** Pumphouse Hotel, 128 Nicholson St, 8pm-9.30pm May 4 “Why is my son gay and my Church so cruel?” A Parent’s Personal Perspective (Info: Denise 9816 3001)

° **Goulburn Valley** Terminus Hotel (Shepparton) 7.30pm-9pm (Info: Kerry 0408 579 904).

° **Mornington** The Royal Hotel, Victoriana Room, 770 The Esplanade, 8pm-9.30pm, (Info: Colleen 9775 2163 or Carole 5976 1024).

° **Southern** Finbar’s Irish Pub, Cnr Bay & New Streets, Brighton, 7.30pm-9pm April 27 “The Gift of speaking freely” Terry Kean, Clare Griffin & Michael Wood (Info: Kevin 9776 2705).

° **Western** Victoria on Hyde, Yarraville 7.30pm May 10 “Being Catholic in a changing Church” Terry Monagle & Mary Cameron (Info: Anne 9312 3595).

° **Woodend** Holgate Brewhouse-Keatings Hotel (Info: Marg 5429 5907).

Other States

° **Devonport (TAS)** Molly Malone’s Irish Pub, (Info: Graham 6424 8286).

° **Hobart North – Health of Body, Mind & Spirit** Moonah Café Bar & Bistro April 12 “Humour and Spirituality” Mike Fitzpatrick (Info: Mary-Anne 6228 6000).

° **Brisbane (QLD) – Currently suspended** – awaiting the formation of a new committee. Anyone interested contact Terry above.

° **Perth (WA)** The Elephant and the Wheelbarrow, cnr Francis & Lake Sts, Northbridge 7.30-9.10pm **Relationships in the Contemporary World** April 26 “Relating through Music” Drew Jago & Phil Bayne (Info: Deborah 0419 939 864).

° **Adelaide (SA)** Criterion Hotel, 137 King William Street (Info: Michelle 8278 6353).

° **Mylor (SA)** Warrawong Earth Sanctuary, Stock Rd (Info: Gerald 8388 5957).

Other Matters and Events

° “**Healing Relationships**,” a 1-day seminar with **Terry O Connel:** Marist Centre, Hunters Hill, April 9 repeated April 10, 9.30am – 3pm. Organised by Aquinas Academy. (Info: Sandra on 9247 4651).

° **St Mary s Towers Retreat Centre**, Douglas Park, April 1-3 Mid-years spirituality; 8-14 Guided retreat; 15-23 Directed retreat; Apr 29-May 29 sabbatical retreat “Life’s Journey Experience”; April 30-May 8 “Spirituality of Journey” retreat/directed retreat; 9-17 Life’s Healing Journey/directed retreat; 19-27 directed retreat (Info: 02 4630 9159).

° **Mount St Benedict Centre** Pennant Hills May 28 “Creative Sacred Art” with Veronica Griffith sgs (Info: 9484 6208).

° **Catholic Institute of Sydney** Edith Stein “Knowledge & Faith” with Gerald Gleeson April 27, May 4, May 11, May 18, June 1 (Info: 9752 9500).

° **Intensive Journal Workshop** April 9-10 Mary MacKillop Place, North Sydney (Info: Kate 8912 4812).

° **Australian Interchurch Families** invite you to an International Conference “Sharing our Dream Downunder” August 18-22 at Noah’s on the Beach, Newcastle (Info: 02 4945 0200).

° “**Our Genetic Future**,” a lecture by **Bernadette Tobin:** The Crypt of St Patrick’s Church, The Rocks, 6pm, April 13. This is the second of the Jubilee Lecture Series for Aquinas Academy. (Info: Sandra on 02 9247 4651)

Recommended

Donald Cozzens, *Faith that Dares to Speak*. John Garratt Publishing, 2004, 138 pages, Index, pb, \$27.95 (Sophia: \$20.96). (Tel: 1300 650 878).

Readers will remember the late Bishop John Heaps' book, *A Love that Dares to Question*. Donald Cozzens' book takes its title from the 1997 Australian book and the contents rely heavily on the courage of John Heaps for writing the things that had to be said. Cozzens takes a hard look at the fallout of the sexual abuse scandals, the denial by some bishops of any problem, the refusal to deal openly with issues such as married clergy, fiscal mismanagement, poor governance and compulsory celibacy. Yet these are just the surface manifestations of a Church that needs to face up to the issues through conversation, by listening to the voice of God, by being true to the call to holiness and less concerned about the fate of being open to face risky issues head on. Cozzens asks that we don't try to listen just to solve problems; rather he suggests that we learn to be reflective, to listen intently to each other, and paradoxically, not remain silent when the truth must be spoken. He asks that we learn true humility, to respect the voice of God's people and to be true to Christ. We do this through prayer, attentive silence, to listen to what he calls the voice of God in others. It might seem a savage book to some. Actually it is a plea for honest conversation written by a caring priest. Cozzens sees the suffering that follows our failure to take a stand when we should.

Marion Maddox, *God under Howard. The Rise of the Religious Right in Australian Politics*. Allen & Unwin. 2005, 386 pages, pb, timeline, notes, index, \$29.95.

What you are told and hear is not all that is going on. That is one of this respected academic's messages. Marion Maddox portrays a covert agenda operating in Australian public life that is often clothed in religious respectability. She argues that the agenda is often not religious at all; rather it is secular and suited to particular government policies. The text traces the influence of the most conservative American evangelicals, the derision of hierarchy and clerics who speak out against government policies, the duplicity of senior figures, the influence of private "think tanks" and generally presents a depressing account of Australian public life. This is a very provocative analysis of the body politic, of how major religions have lost significant influence in public life, of the ways that policies have been deliberately shaped to sideline the more questioning church members in favour of the more populist movements. The religious right has a place in our national life; the claim is that its influence is being surreptitiously promoted and not always for the benefit of all and not always in support of religion but often for dubious political gain. The style is easy to read and the book would provide many an argument. Agree with the arguments or not; they cannot be ignored any longer. Well worth reading.

Gerard Moore, ed. *A Hunger for Reconciliation. In Society and the Church*. St Pauls Publications, 2004, 112 pages, Notes, pb, \$19.95.

This is one of the WINDOWS INTO series and is the print version of a number of talks delivered in 2003 by senior staff of the Catholic Institute of Sydney. The title indicates the vision of the writers: society at large and the Church, the latter in relation to its teaching of reconciliation and its practice. The six writers, Neil Brown, Gerard Kelly, Richard Lennan, Gerard Moore, David Ranson and Neil Ormerod are all well respected theologians and have a gift of demystifying complex ideas for the reader. Like all books in this series, the aim is to be introductory, and this book achieves that aim. Neil Brown, for example, argues that reconciliation has a public face and discusses the "sorry" word as it applies to public policy. Gerard Kelly takes a detailed look at the sacrament of reconciliation. Richard Lennan writes of sin and its place in our everyday existence. David Ranson takes the reader through an investigation of repentance. The text focuses on the Prodigal Son, Peter's denials of Christ, the suffering of Christ, and the rituals of forgiveness in the Catholic Church. All this is a broad treatment of reconciliation and our daily need for forgiveness. It is easy to think that slight texts have little to offer. Such would be a mistake as this book offers plenty to think about, especially in an age when the sacrament is less used than in former times.

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PETER BENENSON RIP

One Day in 1961, Peter Benenson was sitting on a London train reading the newspaper. He read a report of two students in Lisbon who had been jailed for publicly toasting liberty in a cafe. Benenson got off the train and went into the church of St Martin-in-the-fields to meditate. Amnesty International was conceived in those moments of prayer. Peter Benenson was born in London in 1921 to Jewish parents. He was educated at Eton where he became a Catholic. Like a contemporary of his, Thomas Merton, Benenson very early on developed a strong sense of social justice. He organized fund raising for the Spanish republican government and went to Dover to meet two German Jewish teenagers he helped escape from Nazism. He studied law, became a barrister and attempted three times unsuccessfully to become a Labour MP. He suffered the fate of many of the founders of religious congregations in the Catholic Church, coming into conflict with those who had subsequently joined him for the work of Amnesty International. He returned in 1980. Benenson was several times offered honours by successive British governments. Each time he declined, drawing attention to Britain's violations of human rights. Benenson and Amnesty International must take a good deal of credit for the awareness of human rights today, for the fact that 90 international treaties on human rights exist around the world. Peter Benenson died at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford on February 25, 2005.

Michael Whelan SM