



# THE MIX



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## Our Say – Why is conversation so difficult?

At the Los Angeles Religious Education Conference on April 1, 2006, the former Master General of the Dominicans, Timothy Radcliffe, addressed the participants. He recalled the late Cardinal Joseph Bernardin's Common Ground Initiative of 1996. Bernardin expressed concern for the polarisation in the Church and a desire "to create a space for dialogue, in which the different groups within the church could talk to each other." Radcliffe noted, further, that Bernardin's call to dialogue was resisted by many, including some of his fellow cardinals.

Radcliffe suggests one particular reason for the resistance – probably more common than we sometimes allow. He says, in the minds of some, dialogue is a "liberal sort of idea anyway." Thus – to extend Radcliffe's line of thinking – if we embrace dialogue we are embracing the "liberal" agenda and, by implication, jeopardising the integrity of the faith by exposing it to relativism and subjectivism.

It is entirely possible that individuals might – consciously or unconsciously – use the notion of dialogue – or conversation, as we prefer to name it in Catalyst – as a smokescreen to promote their own agenda. In other words, such a person could be using the *idea* of conversation to avoid the *reality* of conversation. This is just as destructive as resisting conversation altogether.

Why might someone act this way? Apart from those who are simply anti-social, egotistical and perhaps dishonest, an otherwise well meaning person who is an ideologue might do that. Ideologues – with the best of motives – can become so convinced of the superiority of their worldview, and so obsessed with imposing it, they can lose all sense of perspective. One of the outstanding characteristics of the ideologue is an inability – perhaps unwillingness – to hear the other.

Probably a more common source of such a distorted use of the idea of conversation is found in our unaddressed

personal agenda. The unresolved conflicts "within" invariably become part of our interactions with people, events and things, often without our even recognising it. When we are not facing what must be faced in our lives, this tends to be played out in our relationships with others. In flight from myself, how can I meet you? And if we are forced to interact, the interaction will almost certainly be frustrated by our personal demons.

If we are to have good conversation with others we must constantly and effectively pursue a ruthlessly honest conversation with ourselves.

Pope Paul VI (*Ecclesiam Suam*) linked this inner conversation of the individual with the great "conversation of salvation" initiated by God. For the person of faith, every conversation – with self and others – is no more nor less than a participation in the life of God. Conversation is a way to be in love. "The child is invited to it; the mystic finds a full outlet in it" (n.70). ■

## Terry McCarthy



We were fortunate on our arrival in Canberra to live in the newly-established parish of Holy Trinity, Curtin. The parish priest, Fr Barney Lynch was a great pastor and had a great influence on me and hundreds of others.

My father's people migrated to Australia in the 1880's. His father was a quarryman - literally a "rockchopper" - and died young. My mother, who was the dominant driving force in our family, left school at the age of 12 to assist her mother in the raising of 4 siblings. As there was no social security then, my grandmother had to take in washing and sewing to support the family. Life was tough and they knew poverty but didn't complain - that's how it was and there were many others like them - some even worse off.

My childhood and youth were very happy. My parents were very loyal and prayerful Catholics who were active participants in parish affairs and encouraged us to do likewise.

My father was proud of his Irish heritage and was a dedicated Irish nationalist. Equally he was a proud Australian, enlisting to fight in both World Wars insisting "that was what any loyal and good Australian did." He was an active trade unionist and Labor supporter and even from Australian politicians who came to Chicago to talk to him.

I was Ambassador to the Vatican during the reign of Pope John Paul II. I had several meetings with him and was in awe of the depth of his sincerity, sense of humour and intellectual capacity.

Margaret and I attended several of his private masses. It was here that we experienced the aura of his holiness and dedication to prayer. We have no doubts about recently I have been privileged to work with the Leaders of the three mainline Churches on an ecumenical exercise designed to promote Christian Social Values in Australia's Public Life. There is scant difference among us about the fundamentals of Christianity. I am sad that it has taken us so long to realize that fact.

Catholic background to me.

We were married in 1964 and have 4 wonderful children and to date, 7 grandchildren. A year later I left teaching to join the Public Service in Canberra. A few years later I was recruited to the Foreign Service, where I spent the remainder of my working career.

Since retirement in 1995, I have most of my spare time with duties as President of the National Social Justice Committee of the St Vincent de Paul Society.

I first eyed my wife during tutorials at Sydney University, but it was not until I joined the St Paul's Tennis Club that we met. Margaret comes from a similar Irish-Catholic background to me.

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I am most grateful to the Christian Brothers. They not only reinforced all that I was learning at home, but they also educated the likes of me out of poverty, giving me a firm basis for my faith through the teaching of apologetics (using Bishop Sheahan's book); teaching me about the imperative for pursuing social justice and giving me the ambition to do something with my life.

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Members: Marie Biddle RSI, Margaret Blake, Glenn Boyd, Jan Brady, Kevin Buges, Kevin Burke, Rosalie Carroll, Aidan Carroll SM, Mary Conlan, Maria Contempree, Margaret Costigan RSC, Mairea Donovan, Geraldine Doogue, Paul Dunkin, Peter Dwight, Maria George, Denny Goggim, Margaret Goggim, Andy Hamilton SJ, Catherine Hammond, Andrew Howe, Barry Hughes, Michelle Kamper, George King, Helen Kinglsey, Mary Kirkwood, Patrick Kirkwood, Francois Kunc, Ann McDowell, Richard McLachlan, Katharine Massam, Marcelle Mogg, Christine Morton-Evans, Chris Needs, Margaret O'Hearn, Tim O'Hearn, Mary Pearson, Denise Playoust, Peter Price, Paul Redmond, Margaret Rigotti, Roy Rigotti, William Roberts, John Stuart, Vin Underwood, Ruth van Herk, Carmel Vanny, Michael Whelan SM, Carole Wilson, Sue Winkworth.

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 unneeded, and charity in any case"; (*Gaudium et Spes*, n.92)

The Patrons are:

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## THE HUMAN FACE

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.

All items submitted for publication in *The Mix* should reach the Editor no later than the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month previous to publication. All original work in *The Mix*, unless otherwise indicated, is the work of the Editor.

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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.

Whenever the New Testament speaks about the resurrection, it speaks of the resurrection of the dead, never of the resurrection of the body, which is not found until Clement of Rome and Justin's *Dialogue* (80:5). Resurrection of the body in the sense of resurrection of the flesh (*sarx*), would not have been consistent with Paul's distinction between *sarx* and *soma* ('body'). The latter embraces the whole person, whereas the former is something weak, perishable and even sinful. . . . The resurrection of the body is attested to in the *Apostle's Creed*, the *Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed* (381); the so-called *Athanasian Creed* (late 5<sup>th</sup> century); the Fourth Lateran Council (1215); the Second Council of Lyons (1274); and in the Constitution, *Benedictus Deus* of Pope Benedict XII (1336). Usually the belief was included with other essential elements of Christian faith. Sometimes, however, the doctrine was specifically and deliberately formulated over against an heretical tendency to deny the radical goodness of the body, as in Lateran IV's rejection of Catharism, Albigensianism, and the Manichaeism upon which they were based. More recently the belief is reaffirmed by the Second Vatican Council in its *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* (n.51), and in its *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* (n.39), and also by the aforementioned Vatican Letter on Certain Questions Concerning Eschatology' (1979). (Richard P McBrien, *Catholicism* (Volume II), Dove Communications, 1980, 1149.)

**THE RESURRECTION**

*Denis Snell, Epping, NSW*

Saint Paul is regarded by Christians to have been a very intelligent and sincere individual and, therefore, a person who could not easily be fooled. He accepted the truth of post resurrection appearances that were conveyed to him by the early believers and he subsequently passed on these accounts to us in his writings.

It is not highly possible that the appearance accounts accepted by Paul were spiritual in nature, as was his own personal experience of meeting the risen Christ?

In the latter part of his article Father Ranson outlines the way in which the paschal mystery unfolds in our life (referred to as the journey from death to life). I believe that the contents of this section are for me and others a very helpful and concise description of our responsibility to the paschal movement.

It is historically documented that Jesus Christ was tortured and crucified like many thousands of his fellow countrymen. To Christians, however, Christ's death is considered to be the most important death ever recorded.

The belief that God raised Jesus from death to his eternal presence is even more important and is the basis for the further belief that we will be treated by God in like manner. We can only speculate as to what form this eternal presence will take, for, as Saint Paul has said, "no eye has seen and no ear has heard."

**Instances not literally true.**

I suspect some ordinary Catholics in the 21<sup>st</sup> century would feel more comfortable with the argument expounded by Father Ranson's friend. There appears to have been so much evidence in the last century to support the friend's claim that the gospels are in many instances not literally true.

At the beginning of his article, Father Ranson describes a friend of his who argues "that the resurrection accounts are not literal but entirely spiritual in nature and consequently it is a fantasy to think that Jesus rose physically from the dead". Father Ranson then goes on to describe his own belief in the resurrection as being both an historical and a physical event whilst at the same time drawing from its deeply symbolic and spiritual dimension.

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Passion Narratives from the four canonical gospels in a manner that facilitates comparison. The differences are not insignificant, but of further interest is Appendix VII of Volume 2 entitled "The Old Testament Background of the Passion Narratives".

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rather than two sides - mine and the wrong one; and where we listen to each other to understand and build agreement rather than listening to find flaws and reasons to disagree.

It feels so good to "win" after all. But at what ultimate cost to the greater good? If we can discipline ourselves to think beyond ourselves, the payoff is great for us personally and for the company we keep and the world we share.

I remember an occasion when I was speaking to a group about some of these ideas and one gentleman stood up to disagree quite disagreeably with me. Having just spoken about being a reconciling person, I dared not respond to him in kind, so while he ranted and raved, I prayed - silently - to the Holy Spirit. Realizing that no precise argument would be persuasive, when he finally took a breath, I said something like "I respect your right to your views and I'm glad you had the courage to voice them." He retorted in his booming voice, "Well, all right then," and promptly sat down, but somehow I knew this was not the end of the discussion.

As soon as the questions were finished and the group adjourned for coffee, this man raced to the front of the room, still agitated. He continued with his diatribe, to which I knew there was no adequate answer. Finally, I simply put my hand on his arm and said, "God must love you very much." He was puzzled and said, "Why are you saying that? No one has ever said that to me before." (Not too hard to understand why, I thought.) But I responded, "I know by what you said, you obviously care a great deal about the church and you want the best for it." Then I asked, "Do you remember last Sunday's Gospel? The one where Jesus comes to the apostles after the Resurrection? They are all gathered, fearful, in the upper room. He appears to them and says, 'Peace be with you. Peace be with you!' That is my wish for you, too."

The man was flabbergasted and began to cry. He confessed that he had moved five times in the past two years because he didn't like the parish he was in; his wife was getting very disgusted having to move a family of seven again and again. I suggested that he might try just to pray when he went to church and not to set every pastor right about how to say Mass. He talked calmly for a bit and then said he couldn't wait to come to tell his wife about what had happened.

I don't know the ultimate outcome for this man, but such moments remind us that we are better persons when we carry tension, as opposed to always looking for its easy resolution.

Fr. Kolheiser suggests, "We are called upon to do the same kind of pondering as Mary did. If we are willing to ponder and wait before we speak a sharp or unjustly critical word, before we judge family members unfairly and alienate them, before we depart from a gathering in anger, we can bring reconciliation. Fr. Kolheiser suggests,

beyond any power of our own, the grace of God works powerfully in others to transform their lives. The words of Jesus brought this afflicted man a degree of comfort. Granted, most of our opponents don't go away that easily, but this difficult exchange ended somewhat peacefully by simply listening to and respecting this person.

She "kept these things in her heart and pondered them." We are called upon to do the same kind of pondering as Mary did. If we are willing to ponder and wait before we speak a sharp or unjustly critical word, before we judge family members unfairly and alienate them, before we depart from a gathering in anger, we can bring reconciliation.

In his book, *The Holy Longing*, Ronald Kolheiser, OMI, speaks about the necessity of pondering if we are to sustain our faith. He says that

to ponder is less a question of intellectually contemplating something as it is of patiently holding inside one's soul, complete with all the tension that brings. Thus when Mary stands under the cross of Jesus and watches him die...she is carrying a great tension that she is helpless to resolve and must simply live with (p. 220).

Each of us will be returning to or moving into situations where we can contribute in small and large ways to unity and peace - beginning at home, moving to our place of work, and finally reverberating through the whole world. As we make this move beyond ourselves to the world awaiting our reconciling presence, we might consider the implications of living out our faith. Vincent Hovley, S.J., in an article, "A Rock to Build On," (*Review for Religions*, Sept./Oct. 1994), says that,

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By following such a path, we can bring into harmony those around us who are estranged. Whatever our humanitarian impulses or religious beliefs, we hold in common a desire for peace and a reverence for life. In words attributed to St. Francis of Assisi, we might

Start by doing what is necessary, then what is possible, and suddenly we will be doing the impossible.

One of us can make a difference in our fractured world, imagine if each person here tonight - let's say 1,000 of us - performed one reconciling act every day, what a different world we would know! In one year we would have 365,000 acts of reconciliation and in three years more than a million circumstances where healing is imparted.

At issue is whether we are willing to make a covenant of our lives in order:

- To find a heart to face our future without fear and with great trust, to surrender our spirit into God's hands,
- To find a heart to call down the flow of God's holiness and to plunge ourselves into it, to pass-over into it,
- To find a heart to pledge ourselves as bread and wine poured out for others - this is Christ again making his covenant, his passover, in us (p. 776).

All the tensions arising from political and economic concerns, from religious and personal worries, require of us a reflective stance that leads to a calming, reconciling presence as we incorporate into our thoughts and actions the hopes and longings of others. I invite you to be among those who renew the face of the earth one step at a time.

Great joy depends upon first having carried great tension (p. 221).

We need to sublimate our need for resolution to put other people's needs into the equation.

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# The Bible - The gift and the task

On the Feast of The Most Holy Trinity (Year B) - the Sunday following Pentecost - we meditate on a passage from Matthew's Gospel (28:16-20) that is as subtle as it is profound. Brendan Byrne SJ calls it "the climactic scene of the entire Gospel." (See Brendan Byrne, *Lifting the Burden: Reading Matthew's Gospel in the Church Today*, St Pauls, 2004. This is an excellent, very readable commentary on

**The power we need  
is the power already given.  
The life we seek  
is the life already given.**

Matthew's Gospel.) The mission of the Church is revealed: to introduce the people of the world to the life of God. "Make disciples of all the nations, baptise them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (vv.18-20). The promise is once again given: "I am with you always, to the close of the age" (v.20).

Earlier in Matthew's Gospel, we heard of the harrowing story of Jesus' temptations in the wilderness (see 4:1-11). In the last of those temptations, "the devil took him to a very high mountain" where he offered him a shortcut to "success." This is a telling moment. Jesus affirms his vocation: "Begone, Satan! for it is written, you shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve" (v.10). Jesus' success is going to come through the Cross. The Father will raise him up and the fullness of God's life and love will be let loose in the world through the Holy Spirit.

After the temptations in the wilderness, Jesus withdrew into Galilee (v.12). In this "climactic" reading from the end of Matthew's Gospel, "the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them" (28:16). This is a powerful statement of victory of Jesus over the evil one. It is also a call to each of us who would walk in The Way. We are made for more than the fictions of social status and material possessions and political power. And that "more than" for which we are made is beyond merely human effort. There is no shortcut. Only through him, with him and in him do we come to be what we are made to be. The power of this world is, in the end, powerless in the face of the task to be accomplished. The power we need is the power already given. The life we seek is the life already given. We are speaking of the power and life of the incomprehensible Being we understand as the Eternal Communion of Love, the unnamable One we call Three - the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

## The Tradition - The Christian vocation

The opening words of Pope Benedict's recent encyclical, *Deus caritas est*, are a clear and concise statement of the tradition on the vocation of the baptized: "'God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him' (1Jn 4:16). These words from the *First Letter of John* express with remarkable clarity the heart of the Christian faith: the Christian image of God and the resulting image of humankind and its destiny. In the same

**"Being Christian is not the  
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verse, Saint John also offers a kind of summary of the Christian life: "We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us." We have come to believe in God's love: in these words the Christian can express the fundamental decision of his or her life. Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction."

It is a tragic misreading of the Christian life when we think of it first and foremost in terms of what we must do. The Christian life is not Stoicism re-badged. The Christian life is a transforming event. When we allow God to embrace us in love (see Philippians 3:12) then - and only then - will we know what we must do.

**Words for a Pilgrim People**  
"If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." (John 8:31-32)

"We cannot tolerate polarization any longer. It is wounding the life and the mission of the church. Healing division requires of us, first of all, that we understand the distress of Catholics who are not like us. We must get some sense of their root shock, their loss of a feeling of being at home in the church. We must open our minds and imagination to what they endure. And when conversation seems to be getting nowhere, then we need to go deeper, until we reach a level where our fundamental insights and intuitions may be reconcilable." (Timothy Radcliffe OP, Address to the Los Angeles Religious Education Congress, April 1, 2006, reproduced online in *National Catholic Reporter*, May 5, 2006.)

"Let us allow opinions to be expressed even when we ourselves find them disquieting. Let us really allow 'public opinion' to have a place in the Church herself, where we are in a position to expand or to restrict the opportunities for expressing such opinions ... Such tolerance towards manifestations of integrity, truthfulness and independence of thought within the Church is never comfortable, and rarely appreciated. It is much easier and more rewarding to be prejudiced in one's ideas, whether one seeks support and confirmation from the faction in power or the opposition, but genuinely decent behaviour - and truthfulness is included in this - has never been the most profitable course, and this applies to communal life in the Church as well. And surely this must be so in the nature of the case even in the Church. For even here worldly values cannot altogether be avoided." (Karl Rahner, "Truthfulness" in his *Theological Investigations, Volume VII*, Darton, Longman & Todd, 1971), 251.

Catalyst Calendar  
(Info: Pauline on 02 9816 4262)

SIP Meetings  
SIP Promoter - Terry O'Loughlin on (02)

9816 4262.  
Email: terry\_catalyst@hotmail.com

www.catalyst-for-renewal.com.au/news.htm

NSW and ACT - 7.30-9.00pm unless specified:  
Albury New Albury Hotel, Kiewa St  
Blackheath Spirituality - The Australian Connection The Gardeners Inn (Info: Elizabeth 4787 6198)

Bowral The Grand Bar and Brasserie  
Braidwood Servicemen's Club (Info: Pauline 4842 2829)

Campbelltown Campbelltown Catholic Church August 9 "The Divorced and Remarried in the Church" Fr Frank Moloney sdb (Info: Rosemary 9603 2975)

Engadine - Note New Venue - United Services Club Sutherland, 7 East Pde, June 21 "How much justice is there in Society? How do current issues impact on people and their families?" Sr Margaret Hinchey & tba (Info: Elizabeth 9520 0617 or Annette 9548 2475)

Five Dock - Passion Check Venue with Conventor June 28 "Celebrating a passionate God" Sharon Brien & Veronica Kosier (Info: James 0418 242 932)

Goulburn Soldiers Club July 11 "Changes in Religious Life" Sr Beverley Gordon 9895 5836 & Margaret 9471

Goulburn Valley Terminals Hotel (Shepparton) 7.30pm-9pm July 28 Dinner at Makaby's Restaurant "Nothing so Beautiful, Nothing so Ugly!" Paul Collins (Info: Kerry 0408 579 904)

Mornington The Royal Hotel, Victoria Room, 770 The Esplanade, 8pm-9.30pm, (Info: Colleen 9775 2163 or Carole 5976

Newport - Newport Arms Hotel August 24 "Ethics and Wealth Creation" Robert Fitzgerald & Sandy Cornish (Info: Terry 9973 1192)

North Sydney - Be Attitudes Vs Me Attitudes Union Hotel, Pacific Hwy & West St, North Sydney, June 19 "Do I close my eyes to injustice because it's all too hard?" David Holdcroft & Rosemary Lalouch (Info: Michelle 9958 5963)

Paddington - The Getting of Wisdom Bellevue Hotel July 5 "Places of work; van & Peter Cullen (Info: Anne 9312 3595)

Woodend Holgate Brewhouse-Keatings Hotel July 25 "Taking it to the Streets - Street Ministry" Fr Wahid Riad (Info: Marg 5429 5907)

Other States  
Devonport (TAS) Molly Malone's Irish Pub, (Info: Graham 6424 8286)

Hobart North Moonah Cafe Bar & Bistro June 28 "Viewing with Spirit" Joclyn Cooper & Maz Gil-Harper (Info: Mary-Anne 6228 6000)

Perth (WA) The Elephant and Wheelbarrow, cur Francis & Lake Sts, Northbridge 7.30-9.10pm (Info: Deborah 0419 939 864)

Verdun (SA) Stanley Bridge Tavern, Onkaparinga Rd July 4 "Soul, Consciousness & the Spirit" tba (Info: Gerald 8388 5957)

Other Matters and Events  
St Mary's Towers Retreat Centre, Douglas Park, June 4-10 & 16-22 guided retreats; 16-18 prayer weekend; 23-25 men's retreat; July 1-9 directed retreat; 10-16 guided retreat; 21-23 prayer weekend (Info: 02 4630 9232)

Reflection Mornings Victoria 2006  
At Currajeen, 811 Bridge Inn Road, Doreen  
"The Spirituality of our Lives"  
9.30am - 12.30pm  
September 9  
Info: Margaret 9471 1410 (Bus hours) or Maria 0409792168  
Entry by donation

SIP Days for Organisers of Spirituality in the Pub:  
An opportunity for SIP people to come together to share insights and successes, pray together and talk about future plans.  
This is an ideal opportunity for anyone who is thinking about starting a new SIP venue, or joining an existing local committee.  
Ballarat (for all Victorians) Saturday, July 1st  
Sydney: Saturday, July 1st  
Saturday, July 22nd

Reflection Mornings in June & July.  
All welcome. Entry by donation.  
9.30am - 12.30pm  
Praying as a Man, Praying as a Woman  
Fr David Ranson  
With  
Saturday August 19  
1 Mary St, Hunters Hill  
Marist Centre

REFLECTION MORNING

811 Bridge Inn Road, Doreen

9.30am - 12.30pm

September 9

Info: Margaret 9471 1410 (Bus hours) or Maria 0409792168

Entry by donation

SIP Days for Organisers of Spirituality in the Pub:  
An opportunity for SIP people to come together to share insights and successes, pray together and talk about future plans.  
This is an ideal opportunity for anyone who is thinking about starting a new SIP venue, or joining an existing local committee.  
Ballarat (for all Victorians) Saturday, July 1st  
Sydney: Saturday, July 1st  
Saturday, July 22nd

Cynthia Bourgeault, *Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening*, John Garraff Publishing, 2004, 178 pages, notes and resources, pb, \$32.95. (Tel: 1300 650 878).

Laura Slattery, Ken Buttigan et al, *Engage: Exploring Non-Violent Living*, Pace e Bene Press, 2005, 301 pages, pb, \$35.

Richard Leaman, (ed.), *The Possibility of Belief: The Challenges and Prospects of Catholic Faith*, St Pauls Publications, 2004, 272 pages, pb, index, \$24.95.

This book will appeal to all readers who are familiar with meditation in the Benedictine tradition of Thomas Merton or John Main's and St Clare were supposed to have given people of their time: "Peace and all good to you!" "Pace e Bene's mission is to develop, and sustain, a spirituality and practice of active non-violence in our ways of living and being, with the hope of changing the current violence-dominated culture of our society." *Engage* is "a study as: woman, science, religious experience, beyond the ordinary and the spiritual. This form of prayer bypasses the more commonly understood forms of meditation, that use reason, memory, imagination, feelings and will. It looks more to perception than to uses of the more mental processes and our sense of selfhood. Centring prayer seeks to work on the individual's intention more than concentration and awareness. Attention is paid to thoughts that intervene in the wanting to learn more about this program praying: ordinary or attractive thoughts, insights and illuminations and even that which seems to come from the unconscious. All prayer is difficult at times and so too is centring prayer. Those who are adept at this challenging form often begin with twenty minutes of handling their thoughts before moving into centring. It is, thus, not for the "too busy to get involved" but extremely rewarding for those who persevere. This is partly a "how to" book but also a good introduction to various forms of prayer for those who take it seriously.

In early April this year, "Pace e Bene" was formally established in Australia. The name is taken from the greeting St Francis and St Clare were supposed to have given people of their time: "Peace and all good to you!" "Pace e Bene's mission is to develop, and sustain, a spirituality and practice of active non-violence in our ways of living and being, with the hope of changing the current violence-dominated culture of our society." *Engage* is "a study as: woman, science, religious experience, beyond the ordinary and the spiritual. This form of prayer bypasses the more commonly understood forms of meditation, that use reason, memory, imagination, world." It is designed especially for small groups which may be led with a minimum of facilitation. It would be suitable for use with senior high school students and adults. This project I to be applauded. Some may find the books references very American, but the substance is worth the effort. Those wanting to learn more about this program should go to the web site: [www.paceebene.org](http://www.paceebene.org). There are also local contacts: SA - Des: - VIC - Bob: Each chapter (there are fourteen in all) is well footnoted allowing for even further reading. This is an excellent text for beginners, those who may never have had the chance to study theology, for sen- Gill: [gill.burrows@madtechology.net](mailto:gill.burrows@madtechology.net). You could also phone Gill - short for Angelai - on (H) 02 9922927 or (M) 0417 487 135. Pace e Bene offers workshops and other publications. Any of the above mentioned folk will be only to happy to assist you with your inquiries.

Here is a theology book for all readers. The text is quite clear, the language is eas- understood by non-theologians, and perhaps best of all, the writers are all Australian. They write with insight and the chapters challenge the reader, many times in unexpected ways. The coverage relates to Faith. Along the way the various writers address sensibly and soundly matters such as: woman, science, religious experience, contemporary challenges such as justice, Christian marriage, a sexual ethic, Catholic spirituality, are all given full treatment. It is designed especially for small reader can focus on liturgy, tradition, the place of the Bible or doctrine. There is something for everyone in this quite compact treatment of issues facing us all. One of the great achievements of the book is the ways that the writers refer to other chapters in the text, thus consciously linking ideas and making it challenging for the reader to follow the suggested links. This also gives the appearance of a holistic approach to the theology under discussion. Des: - VIC - Bob: Each chapter (there are fourteen in all) is well footnoted allowing for even further reading. This is an excellent text for beginners, those who may never have had the chance to study theology, for sen- Gill: [gill.burrows@madtechology.net](mailto:gill.burrows@madtechology.net). You could also phone Gill - short for Angelai - on (H) 02 9922927 or (M) 0417 487 135. Pace e Bene offers workshops and other publications. Any of the above mentioned folk will be only to happy to assist you with your inquiries.

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**A PRAYER**

"We give thanks for our friends.  
Our dear friends.  
We anger each other.  
We fail each other.  
We share this sad earth, this tender life,  
this precious time.  
Such richness. Such wildness.  
Together we are blown about.  
Together we are dragged along.  
All this delight.  
All this suffering.  
All this forgiving life.  
We hold it together.  
Amen."

Michael Leunig, *When I Talk To You: A Cartoonist Talks to God*, HarperCollins. (No dates, no page numbering!)