

Retrench or rebuild?

Perhaps it is an abundance of caution, but *Oriens* decided not to leap into the debate over Peter Seewald's interview with Pope Benedict XVI (published under the title "Light of the World") and the pontiff's remarks on condoms in the fight against AIDS. Instead we decided to sit back and watch.

Here were some of the biggest name conservatives in the Church - like Fr. Joseph Fessio SJ - clearly discomfited by something a pope had said or done. Being thus thrown out of countenance - a "failing" often attributed disparagingly to traditional Catholics - is an uncommon experience among those who would

the Church with pontifical sanction since Vatican II.

Sceptical

Oriens also has decided to stay on the side lines over the implementation of *Anglicanorum Coetibus*. This was decreed on 4 November 2009 to provide a mechanism by which doctrinally conservative Anglicans could re-unite with Rome while preserving much of their tradition. On 16 January this year, in Westminster Cathedral, London, the first major step in implementing this plan was taken. Three former Anglican bishops were ordained Catholic priests. One enthusiastic commentator in the blogosphere

The spiritual re-conquest of England will only become feasible when the mainstream Catholic hierarchy becomes convinced that it has an obligation to take England back.

normally be considered among the most formidable protagonists of papal authority and teaching. Critiquing a pope - his statements, his theology, his speculations, his policy, his anything - is simply "out of rôle" for post-conciliar conservatives. It will be interesting to see, then, whether this new experience, for some of the Church's leading pro-papal thinkers and activists, will dispose them to sympathise, even a little, with the position of Catholics who felt compelled to critique liturgical policies - and, more broadly, the cultural orientation - adopted by

proclaimed that the reconversion of England would be dated from this event. *Oriens* is more sanguine. If *Anglicanorum Coetibus* helps the last handful of orthodox Christians within Anglicanism to return to the Mother Church, then Pope Benedict's generous measures will have served a good purpose. However, if England is to be reconverted, that is unlikely to be mediated by an Anglican-rite Catholicism alone. The spiritual re-conquest of England will only become feasible when the mainstream Catholic hierarchy becomes convinced

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that it has an obligation to take England back. It does not yet have that conviction.

In any case, though England and the Anglicans might be important to those of us who cherish our inherited Anglo-Saxon culture, in world religious affairs they are not the main event. This is reserved to the Orthodox and Catholic Churches and to the quest for unity between them. Yet even in this greater game *Anglicanorum Coetibus* plays an important albeit indirect part. It sends a clear message to the Orthodox – who unlike the Anglicans have an authentic hierarchy, priesthood and Eucharistic sacrifice – that union will not come at the cost of their customs and traditions and, above all, at the expense of their Holy Liturgy.

Speaking of the Orthodox reminds us – strange, perhaps, to say - of a report published in the December 2010 edition of *Voice*, the official organ of the Archdiocese of Canberra-Goulburn.

Canberra-Goulburn is an essentially rural diocese with Australia's national capital situated awkwardly in the middle of it. In this report, Archbishop Mark Coleridge paints a picture of decaying country towns, hollowed out parish communities, the death of priests, the shortage of new vocations, and foreshadows the amalgamation of presbyteries and parishes and the closing of churches.

Death or rebirth?

The problems of Canberra-Goulburn are real enough. Economic and demographic decline do not, however, necessarily spell retrenchment in the churches. Something else is at work. The issue, surely, is whether the flame of religion is flickering out or sputtering back into life.

In this edition of *Oriens*, in “Confessions of a Slavophile”, we report on a country where the economic and demographic problems are far more severe than anything conceivable in Australia, yet bishops there appear to face problems that are the reverse of those confronted by bishops here. In that strange land young men celebrate the liturgy and the people, rich and poor, are funding the restoration of old churches and the building of new ones.

Still, even in the decadent heart of the West – yes, even the very Anglosphere – there are signs of hope.

In 1999, a group of Monks from Fontgombault in France – many of them Americans – established a daughter house in the Ozark mountains of Oklahoma. They didn't seem daunted at the prospect of building a Romanesque monastery in the new world – in a county, Cherokee County, that was 2% Catholic. Earlier this year, Clear Creek became an Abbey, with 18 professed monks (12 priests-monks and six lay brothers), with seven junior monks (under their first vows) and another eight novices and postulants. (Since then they have acquired another lay brother, their first Australian, as Kirk Kramer reports.)

Also since then, work has begun in earnest on the Church: walls have risen 25 feet, and soon the monks will no longer need

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A bishops' egg?

Last year's pre-election statement by the Australian Catholic bishops - *Your Vote Your Values* - prompts Canberra writer and editor **Lyle Dunne** to reflect on the dangers when churchmen tread unskillfully on political terrain.

The recent 20th Anniversary Christus Rex Pilgrimage, from Ballarat to Bendigo, was a triumph: in excess of 430 people, of average age somewhere in the range of my children. It was a shame about the weather on the Saturday – some of us older and less courageous souls took French leave after a fairly amphibious Mass, and sneaked back in in the course of Sunday morning, whistling nonchalantly.

A bonus, however, was that I was thus more than usually rested - let's be candid, for a change I was fully awake – for the final triumphal Mass of Christ the King, and Bishop Eliot's excellent sermon. Some of you may have read reports in the Herald-Sun.

In it, His Lordship observed that in Australia

the warped practice of eugenics is rising from its Nazi tomb

and that it was not surprising that euthanasia was

the policy of a political and ideological force that puts more value on wattle and wombats than people.

Less well-publicised, but equally punchy, was a sermon on a similar theme from Fr Michael Rowe at the "Pilgrimage Recovery" Mass (of All Saints' Day this time) the next day.

Both emphasised pro-life issues, and both referred to a document called *Your Vote Your Values – Statement from The Catholic Bishops on the* [then-imminent] *Victorian Election*.

As it turned out, however, they were quoting somewhat selectively – if prudently – from the document.

The document itself opens, very promisingly (after a brief preamble on the right to vote) with a discussion of the core issues.

Good start

During the life of the current Parliament our elected representatives

support for expecting and new mothers in our community?

- Do you respect the rights of conscience of health professionals, opposed to abortion, to refuse to refer for abortion?

One might quibble about whether the third of these is of the same order as the others, but this seems like a good start. However there are many more questions to go, over a broader

What are we to make of statements on abortion and euthanasia? Is the Church's traditional teaching on the sanctity of life to be reduced to a mere "consideration"?

have debated significant legislation with profound ramifications for the common good. A Bill to legalise euthanasia was defeated, while a law which dramatically extended the availability of abortion was passed. Already we are hearing of efforts that will be made following the election to again have euthanasia legalised.

Then we get down to of questions on life issues (the document is structured around a series of questions for citizens rather than Bishops, to ask candidates) such as:

- Will you oppose any attempt to legalise euthanasia and assisted suicide whatever it may be called?
- What is your attitude to abortion?
- Will you work to provide better

range of subjects, some advocating quite specific programs: "at least 3000 additional social housing places every year"; "halving overall homelessness"; "funding for Catholic schools at 25% of the cost of education in a Government School"; "the continued presence of Catholic public hospitals in Victoria and the provision of sufficient funding for their services to the community"; and "additional resources for community based support, such as crisis support and supported housing."

One can understand the Bishops' desire not to be seen as preoccupied with the issues of abortion and euthanasia – unattractive subjects, to be sure. Perhaps there's a desire to appeal to a broader range of values, where there may be a likelihood of

garnering sympathy from the wider community.

But I wonder if they've considered the message that's being sent by this grab-bag of statements (and leading questions) of different status, on a range of subjects?

Certainly the Church has a right to lobby for support for Catholic schools and hospitals. But the risk here is that the inclusion of what could be seen as self-interested positions will impart to the whole document a flavour of mere lobbying for specifically Catholic interests. Already, by virtue of the shameful withdrawal of other religious bodies from the field, there is a risk that life issues will be seen as specifically "Catholic" issues – and dismissed by some on this spurious ground alone.

Bleeding heart

In other areas, the Bishops appear to have given in to the temptation to "baptise" what could be characterised as a series of "bleeding heart" positions: more care for the disabled, more public housing, more "support" and "prevention" – after all, who could oppose support and prevention?

But these are areas where Catholics can legitimately differ. Some may argue that while we as individuals have an obligation to help the disadvantaged, this obligation is not discharged by voting in "compassionate" governments to do so from the public purse: passive welfare carries its own risks. Others may query whether 3000 was the appropriate number of additional social housing places – or even how the Bishops could possibly be in a position to judge.

Defenders of the statement would doubtless claim that the Bishops were not advocating particular positions on these issues (despite the strong inference arising from quantitative targets) – just "raising some issues and questions".

But here, they risk being hoist on their own petard.

If the Bishops here are not exercising their teaching authority, but merely raising "issues and questions", drawing our attention to "considerations" – then what are we to make of the statements on abortion and euthanasia? Is the Church's traditional teaching on the sanctity of life to be reduced to a mere "consideration"?

We do not have to look very far to find the answer.

Archbishop Hart was interviewed by Josephine Cafagna on Lateline

Bishops should put on their mitres and clock on

on the subject of the document; the Melbourne Archdiocesan website helpfully provides a link to the interview. Here the balance was less problematic, as dictated by the ABC's view of what's important – or at least, what's newsworthy. Here the most conspicuous issue was the Archbishop's reluctance to draw what seemed to the interviewer, and doubtless to most of the audience, to be the obvious conclusion from the principles enunciated:

JOSEPHINE CAFAGNA: So the bottom line about the Greens' view on this issue [euthanasia], you don't support it?

DENIS HART: We disagree totally with the Greens' view on this issue. We believe that the value of life is so important that we can't step aside from it.

JOSEPHINE CAFAGNA: And therefore you can't support the Greens?

DENIS HART: We can't support the Greens on this issue.

JOSEPHINE CAFAGNA: On this issue, but obviously it influences

a vote. If they're in support of euthanasia, you're saying really to your congregation, to your supporters, 'Don't vote for them.'

DENIS HART: We are saying that this is a very important issue. We respect the right of each individual voter. For me, of course, I could never vote for someone who took that position.

The document takes the line that the Bishops' role is not to endorse particular parties. But surely any student of twentieth-century history can think of some parties that deserved the Church's condemnation? And I can

imagine a number of Catholic viewers wishing that His Grace, instead of telling us his personal preferences, would put on his mitre and clock on.

The ABC, perhaps in frustration, joined the dots themselves, heading the interview *Catholics urged not to vote for the Greens*.

The Bishops' statement says in its Conclusion:

We urge each voter to vote consistent with their own values, so that these will be represented in the parliamentary representatives we elect.

In vain does one search the document for any direct statement of what those values should be, however. In fact the implication of this conclusion – although I'm sure their Lordships don't think this – is that the Bishops think a Parliament with a cross-section of values representing those of the broader community is more to be desired than one whose values, in toto, favour sparing the lives of the innocent.

Papal visit silences the secularists

James Bogle provides an eyewitness account of the recent Papal visit to the UK, wherein Benedict XVI confounded his critics and won over the ‘hearts and minds’ of the British public.

THIS was the disaster that never happened. A disaster it certainly threatened to be. The bishops’ preparations were neither effective nor timely, and their appointed organisers looked as if they simply were not going to make a go of it. Chaos appeared to reign, and for some time no-one even knew where to apply for tickets.

‘Arrest the Pope!’

To make matters worse, for months before Pope Benedict’s arrival in Britain, secularists, atheists, moral libertarians – and Australia’s most unusual export to Britain, ‘homosexual rights’ campaigner and advocate for lowering the age of consent, Peter Tatchell – were featured regularly in the media loudly protesting the prospective visit.

Wizards of Oz

Unbelievably, some even threatened to arrest the Pope and to have him committed before the International Criminal Court in the Hague – for crimes against humanity!

This was the advice of that other well-known Australian export, Geoffrey Robertson QC, who had managed to rush out a book in time for the visit entitled *The Case of the Pope*, sub-titled “Vatican accountability for

Human Rights abuse” and chiefly notable for its misapprehension of key facts and its unusual spin on international law.

Even Britain’s export to America, Christopher Hitchens, weighed in behind the campaign to arrest the Pope, portentously telling American media that “justice is coming” for the Pope.



Pope Benedict XVI “enthroned” during his UK visit

Eventually wiser heads prevailed. It became obvious that quite apart from his status as a visiting sovereign, there was simply no case for arresting the Pope (as even Tatchell openly admitted).

Nevertheless the campaign against the visit continued, with wide media coverage, posters reading “Pope?

Nope!”, and attempts to smear the Pope with blame for the clerical abuse scandals.

For a time it seemed that this hostile media campaign had won the day, and the visit might be a disaster.

I travelled to Scotland for the papal arrival in Edinburgh on 16 September, to parade with the Knights of Malta. We were corralled into a school yard beyond the far eastern end of Princes Street with many other parading groups, over 1,000 pipers in pipe bands from all over Scotland, and more pipers from Canada and Australia.

What would be the public reaction? Would there be demonstrations? Of course, there would be a hostile media reception.

Soon we were marching down Princes Street, flags and banners waving and the skirl of the pipes resounding across the city and re-echoing from the Castle mount.

Protestant salute

We began to encounter the people of historically Protestant Edinburgh. At first we saw only ranks of school children, but soon it became clear that the crowds had thickened significantly. As we approached the Balmoral hotel, it was instantly clear that the citizens

of once Protestant Edinburgh had turned out to see Pope Benedict in great numbers – and that this visit was going to be a remarkable success. Fully 150,000 lined the streets to see the Roman Pontiff.

A pageant of figures from Scottish history formed part of the parade, including John Knox. Even he, it seemed, had come out to see the Pope!

True, there were a few demonstrators, but they were all from ultra-Protestant sects, and largely harmless. TV cameras panned to the place allotted for the secularist demonstrators – an empty space. If any had, in fact, turned out, they must both have nipped off to the pub at just the wrong moment!

The Pope was taken to Holyrood Palace for a state reception with Her Majesty the Queen and HRH the Duke of Edinburgh. He was greeted by a parade of the Royal Company of Archers, the Queen's Bodyguard for Scotland, consisting of the chief nobility of the Scottish realm. An address of welcome from the Queen was followed by the Pontifical response.

Then the Popemobile took the Holy Father down Princes Street with Cardinal O'Brien, the Archbishop of Edinburgh and St Andrews, who had presented him with a newly designed tartan prepared for the papal visit. The Pope obligingly wore it draped upon his shoulders.

It was a most auspicious start and, indeed, set the tone for the remainder of the pontifical visit.

In the afternoon, Pope Benedict was taken to Bellahouston Park to preside at Mass, before a crowd of 80,000, and heard Glaswegian Susan Boyle, the extraordinary discovery from TV show Britain's Got Talent, singing for him.

That evening he arrived in London and was greeted by crowds at the Nunciature.

The show was on the road – and it was not turning out as the media expected.

The secularists were beginning to feel the heat. After dominating so much of the media coverage before the visit, they were now taking a back seat, and their protests became more and more muted.

From initially expressing outrage at the whole idea of a papal visit (let alone a state visit), and threatening to arrest the Pope, they were reduced to complaining that while he was "entitled to his view", it was "regrettable" that the public were partly paying for the event.

A more rapid climb-down by secularists has not been seen in years. It was a huge defeat and disappointment for them, and they left the field to lick their wounds, worsted by a short, elderly Bavarian.

Meantime, the rest of Britain had begun to warm to the little figure in the white robe with his soft accent and wise counsel. Whilst some parts of the media continued to howl for blood, the machinery of "event coverage" began to take over in the studios and editorial rooms. Soon the coverage was becoming positively hushed and awed, and unfolding events were described in reverential tones – even by the BBC!

One might readily be forgiven for believing that no such figure as King Henry VIII, nor any movement called the English Reformation, had ever existed!

After visits to centres of Catholic education and a meeting with religious leaders, including Chief Rabbi, Lord Sacks, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, the papal entourage headed for famous Westminster Hall, where the assembled audience included dignitaries, politicians and community leaders.

We sat listening to the band of the

Coldstream Guards in the great hall where St Thomas More, King Charles I and Warren Hastings had all been tried. The Pope was late. Would he arrive soon? There was a feeling of anticipation, an extraordinary silence, as all – atheist and believer; Christian and Jew; Muslim and Hindu – waited upon the Supreme Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church.

Then in he came. The State Trumpeters, standing in alcoves by St Stephen's entrance, sounded a regal flourish, and in came the diminutive figure in white, stopping to acknowledge, smilingly, the liveried figures saluting his entry.

He was guided to a velvet-covered chair – almost a throne. One might readily be forgiven for believing that no such figure as King Henry VIII, nor any movement called the English Reformation, had ever existed: before the leaders of the nation sat the Supreme Pontiff enthroned.

Outside, the large crowds again utterly swamped the small number of demonstrators: motley groups of secularists and ultra-Protestants, each of whom, ironically, detested each other more than they did the Pope.

Inside, Pope Benedict gave a moving address, praising the institutions of Britain, but warning of the uncivilising effects of secularism, of the persecution of religion and of injustice. He then was led down to the plaque that marks the spot where St Thomas More was tried.

Evening prayer followed at Westminster Abbey.

Mass vigil

Saturday saw courtesy calls from the political party leaders, Mass in Westminster Cathedral, and a vigil of prayer in Hyde Park.

80,000 were catered for, but outside the official seating many more

Londoners clamoured to see the Pope. Irish dancing, Polish dancing and African drums featured. Testimonies followed: the Mizen family whose son, Jimmy, 16, had been murdered in a random attack in a London shop, received a standing ovation.

Banners both serious and comic could be seen. "Give it some welly for the Pope in the Park!" said one, carried by a lass sporting one yellow and one white wellington boot. Another read "We love you Papa – more than beans on toast!" – surely the ultimate British accolade.

One might have been forgiven for imagining that Henry VIII had never reigned or that the English Reformation had never happened

A massed choir of young people, and the trio "the Priests" from Ulster, sang beautifully; the Pope presided at Benediction.

By day's end it had become clear that this papal visit was a triumph, eclipsing in many ways the visit of Pope John Paul II 28 years earlier.

Police reported that there was no evidence of even one crime having been committed.

Sunday quickly came, because we had to get to Cofton Park near Birmingham by 4am, so with many others I had to leave London by 2am.

As I drove up the M6 I could see coach after coach converging on the highway and making their way rapidly to the Park. Arriving in pitch dark, we were bussed to the Park, and then gingerly made our way on foot to our

allotted seats in the first light of the dawn.

Secular and sacred Song filled the hours until 9.30am, when the Papal helicopter arrived, to waves and cheers of good will.

Newman beatified

The day had finally dawned when Cardinal John Henry Newman, the founder of the 19th century Second Spring of the Catholic Church in Britain, was to be beatified by a Pope who had a special devotion to him.

Once again the crowds did not disappoint, and there were over 80,000 once again. The 3,000-strong choir sang their hearts out.

The Archbishop of Birmingham, Dr Bernard Longley, read an address to the Holy Father requesting him to beatify the great Cardinal, and the Pope responded in kind, with scholarly grace.

It was a fitting end to an astonishingly successful tour that had begun with much foreboding and anxiety.

And there was no doubt who had stolen the show: the Pontiff himself.

He later visited Newman's Oratory at Edgbaston, Birmingham, and then lunched with the British bishops at Oscott College before a departure

ceremony at Birmingham International Airport.

"How many divisions?"

The whole country seemed rather stunned by this four-day whistle-stop tour. The hostile media had been wholly wrong-footed, and the secularists and anti-Catholics were largely cowed and silenced, their plans utterly foiled and even reversed.

No-one could have predicted it.

Stalin, when warned that some of his actions might lead to adverse reaction from the Papacy, famously asked "and how many divisions has the Pope?"

If the Pope's visit to Britain is anything to judge by, the answer is that he has a great many – and hugely more than the secularists and anti-Catholics.

It will be a while before the secularists recover from this papal visit, though assuredly they will.

The rest of the British people, however, will for very much longer recall the visit of a small, white-haired, polite and cultured grandfatherly figure, so very different from what they had been led to expect by the more hostile elements of the media.

The myth of the "Panzer cardinal" has been laid to rest, replaced by the true picture of a saintly, scholarly pope with the power to quell opposition by his mere presence.

From the perspective of those things that really matter, a greater triumph could hardly be imagined.

In the words of the old hymn, "God bless our Pope"! This visit has surely shown how extraordinarily fortunate we are to have been blessed with such a Supreme Pontiff.

All roads lead to...Moscow?

Stephen McInerney* ponders why the reknowned monastic and master of patristics, Father Gabriel Bunge OSB, has converted to the Russian Orthodox Church.

“On 27 August, 2010,” the website of the Moscow Patriarchate reports, “Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk officiated at the All-Night Vigil at the church of the ‘Joy to All the Afflicted’ Icon in Bolshaya Ordynka Street in Moscow.” It continues: “Concelebrating were Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia... and a well-known Swiss theologian, Hieromonk Gabriel (Bunge) who became an Orthodox before the divine service.”

While Metropolitan Hilarion is a familiar name, as the head of the Russian Orthodox Church in Western Europe, a man who has met with the Pope and pushed for cooperation between Orthodox and Catholics in the face of the moral crisis confronting Europe; and while Metropolitan Kallistos [Ware] is known to many as the author of the best-selling *The Orthodox Church*, the last name is perhaps not so well-known as the Moscow Patriarchate’s press secretary would have us believe.

Who is Hieromonk Gabriel Bunge? The answer will shock many Catholics. He is not simply “a well-known Swiss theologian”. Fr Gabriel Bunge was, until recently, a Benedictine monk, a Catholic priest, and a renowned patrologist, whose work has been published by Ignatius Press and praised by, among others, Francis Cardinal George, Christoph Cardinal Schönborn, and Fr Benedict Groeschel. Originally a monk of Chevetogne in Belgium – a monastic community founded by Dom Lambert Beauduin OSB, whose members include monks of both the Roman and

Eastern rites – Fr Gabriel has lived as a hermit in Switzerland since 1980. As Fr Anthony Lambrechts, a monk of the community, has written on the Eirinikon blog:

Father Gabriel Bunge, after he left our Community of Chevetogne in 1980, celebrated in his hermitage in Roveredo (in Ticino, the Italian speaking part of Switzerland) according to the Ambrosian rite (at least for the Eucharist). For his personal prayer, of course, he was very free in adopting a prayer life of a hermit. [After about] one year, he returned to the Byzantine rite. Here in Chevetogne, where he lived for about 20 years, he was of the Byzantine (slavic) rite. As a hermit, until his recent conversion to Orthodoxy, he was affiliated to the Benedictine monastery of Einsiedeln (in Switzerland). [grammar and spelling edited.]

Clues

How do we account for this event? How do we make sense of such a renowned figure, a son of St Benedict for over 50 years, breaking communion with the See of Rome and embracing the Eastern Orthodox faith? So far, Fr Bunge has made no public comment on his reasons for his move. Nonetheless, readers of his study *Earthen Vessels: the Practice of Personal Prayer According to the Patristic Tradition*, will find there some clues to this fascinating and somewhat troubling event.

“Tell me how you pray’ one might say”, Fr Bunge declares, “and I will tell you what you believe”. It is a variation on the familiar idea that the law of prayer determines the law of belief. This sentiment animates Fr Gabriel’s exploration of personal prayer and the way it should draw nourishment, principally, from liturgical prayer. In the process, he identifies a number of practices – including fasting, signing the cross from right to left (in the manner of the Eastern Christian),



Father Gabriel Bunge OSB

orientation (facing East), prostrations, and others – that were at the heart of the prayer life of ancient Christians, who, he argues, regarded such practices as part of the unwritten Apostolic tradition of the Church and certainly not as “mere externals” that could be discarded without losing something precious. Many of these practices, according to Fr Gabriel, which have

been handed down and faithfully preserved in the Eastern Church to this day, were – for various reasons – jettisoned or, at least, diminished in the Western Church. Indeed, the “crisis of faith” in the West, he believes, has its origin, in some respects, in this diminution, and will find its solution only via a reconnection with these neglected traditions that underscore the important relationship between body and spirit, between what we do outwardly (in ritual gesture just as much as in good works) and what we inwardly believe. Significantly, the neglect of these traditions in the West is for Bunge (as for many Orthodox writers) a neglect of the spiritual life, and this in turn results from the idea that “the Person of the Holy Spirit is the Great Absent One in the ‘spirituality’ of the West, as has often been lamented”.

How and when?

In essence, like another eminent patrologist and monk before him, Fr Placide Deseille, who left the Catholic Church in the late '70s for Orthodoxy, Fr Bunge is concerned to isolate how and when things started to go wrong in Western Christendom. The following comments are representative of the position Fr Bunge adopts in this study (described by Cardinal Schönborn as “a masterpiece of tradition-rooted guidance” and by Fr Groeschel as offering “very good insights into patristic thought and practice”).

On fasting, he notes:

Since biblical times another bodily custom has been just as closely connected with prayer as watching and waking: fasting, which should not go unmentioned, still less because it has been associated, since time immemorial, with designated seasons. For most people in the Western world today it is known, if at all, only in the

secularized form of ‘dieting’. The “Great Lenten Fast” before Easter, for instance, makes no difference to the daily life even of practicing Christians. That was not always the case, as we have said, and it is still quite otherwise in the Christian East (emphasis added).

Our problem is not one hundred or five hundred years old. It seems more and more likely that we are in the middle of a storm that has been at least a thousand years in the making.

On the practice of kneeling in prayer, with reference to the testimony of Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Nilus of Ancyra and Tertullian, he declares:

The custom of not bending the knee [kneeling down] on Sunday and during the entire Easter season until Pentecost is one of those ‘original, unwritten traditions’ of the apostles, which formerly were common to East and West but which today are only preserved in the East (emphasis added).

On metania (or profound prostrations), he comments:

For centuries the gesture of prayer called the metania, which John Cassian describes here for his Western readers, was no less familiar in the West than in the East... Today this practice, which in former times was the common property of all Christendom, has almost completely disappeared in the West.... [A]s a result [Christians in the West] have been robbed of a mighty weapon in the spiritual life.

On the manner of making the sign of the cross, Fr Gabriel explores the Patristic witness to the symbolism of the sign of the cross (two fingers placed on the palm, designating the two natures of Christ; thumb and two fingers joined indicating the three persons of the Trinity, etc.), before quoting Pope Innocent III, writing in the twelfth century:

One should make the sign of the cross with [the first] three fingers [of the right hand], because it is traced while invoking the Trinity – of which the prophet says: ‘Who has poised [that is, weighed] with three fingers the bulk of the earth’ – in such a way that one goes down from high to low and then from right to left, because Christ descended from heaven to earth and passed over from the Jews to the Gentiles.

Of course, what Pope Innocent III here describes (and urges), in the twelfth century, is the manner of signing that was then common in the Western Church, and which is still the practice in the Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Catholic churches; it is a form much richer in theological symbolism than the truncated Western form.

“Even after the Great Schism of 1054, then,” Fr Gabriel writes, “the sign of the Holy Cross, a gesture with profound, carefully thought out symbolism, continued for the time being to unite East and West”. Alas, this did not last. Pope Innocent notes with some concern that ‘some people’ altered the tradition, for various

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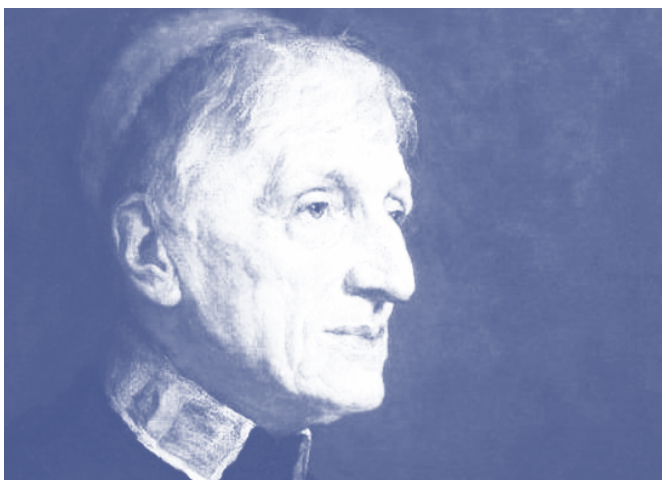
Newman's Sanctity

John Lamont* considers the criteria for sanctity and how Blessed John Henry Newman's life measured up against them.

My topic is Newman's sanctity; and by sanctity I mean those features of his life that can be presented as justifying his canonisation. The Church, in deciding whether or not to canonise an individual whose cause has been proposed, considers two factors. The first is the personal holiness of a candidate for canonisation: with the exception of those who die as martyrs, a saint must have exhibited heroic virtue, which guarantees that their souls are in Heaven rather than in purgatory or a worse place. The second is whether the candidate is a suitable object of devotion for the universal Church. Holy people who get to heaven number, we hope, in the millions. There would be no point in canonising them all, because canonisation means inaugurating a universal public devotion, and it is impossible to have universal public devotions to every member of the Church Triumphant. Blessed souls in heaven are chosen to be the objects of such devotion because of an exceptional degree of holiness that makes them unusually powerful as intercessors, or because their life in some way serves as a valuable model for all Christians in their pursuit of sanctity.

With respect to the first factor, there are a number of virtues that Newman possessed to a heroic degree. His personal life was marked by great asceticism, in fasting and abstinence from pleasures of the senses, in lengthy prayer that could last two hours a day, and in relentless hard work. Pope St. Pius X praised this last quality, in terms that are uncomfortable for a theologian

to read: 'Truly, there is something about such a large quantity of work and his long hours of labour lasting far into the night that seems foreign to the usual way of theologians.'¹ Newman's asceticism was a true one because a cheerful one, untainted by humourlessness or gloom. At the height of his Anglican career, he was probably the most important and influential figure in the Church of England, which in those days meant that he was one of the most important people in Britain. He sacrificed this position



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when he converted to Catholicism, along with many friendships. He did not expect an important career in the Catholic Church; he was 45 at his conversion, an age that seemed closer to old age than today, an age at which Napoleon had been forced to abdicate and retire to Elba in Newman's youth. His low expectations were amply fulfilled. His efforts to use his talents in the service of the Church were frustrated by his enemies in high ecclesiastical positions, most notably by Cardinal Manning and by Mgr.

George Talbot, Pope Pius IX's private secretary. He lacked the duplicity needed in a successful ecclesiastical politician, and his objectives of improving the intellectual level of the Church and promoting the initiative of the laity did not meet with sympathy or understanding among his superiors – although we lament today that his farsighted plans were ignored. The heroism that Newman showed in his conversion was exercised throughout the rest of his Catholic life, in which he never stopped trying to do useful

work in the face of discouragement and defeat – popping up like a jack-in-the-box, as one irreverent commentator put it, after every seeming failure.

There are two objections that have been made to Newman's character: it has been claimed that he was hypersensitive, and that he was sharp and cutting towards those he disliked. It is certainly true that he was of a sensitive nature. This is not an obstacle to sanctity; sensitivity only becomes a moral flaw when it takes offence at innocent actions. It is admitted however that the people towards whom Newman was allegedly hypersensitive were ones who behaved in difficult, treacherous, or offensive ways. As for his sharp and cutting remarks, these were not made in the course of personal quarrels, but in public disputes where the good

of souls was involved. These alleged flaws in fact have a useful lesson to teach about sanctity. Newman's main life work was as a controversialist, opposing enemies of the faith and damaging trends in the Church. This line of work is a form of fighting, whose point is to win. It is wrong to win by immoral means, and Newman respected this, but even fair fighting is a form of fighting; and in fighting, you need to act in ways that will make people afraid of you if you are to win. Newman's readiness to strike back against attack, and to use harsh words, meant that he was a bad man to cross. But this fact about him was a key to his achievement. If he had not been a bad man to cross, he could not have done the great work for God that he did; and this work is an essential part of what makes him a saint.

Opus vitae

We can admire the heroism of Newman's life, but canonisation, as we have seen, is more than an endorsement of heroism: it teaches that the saint is an example for the universal Church. What was it about Newman that made him such an example? As with other saints, it is the work to which he devoted his life that must give the example. Newman described this work in the speech he made in Rome after being named a cardinal: 'I rejoice to say, to one great mischief I have from the first opposed myself. For thirty, forty, fifty years I have resisted to the best of my powers the spirit of liberalism in religion. ... Liberalism in religion is the doctrine that there is no positive truth in religion, but that one creed is as good as another.' This repeated his claim in the *Apologia* fourteen years earlier, where he said: 'From the age of fifteen, dogma has been the fundamental principle of my religion: I know no other religion; I cannot enter into the idea of any other sort of religion; religion, as a mere sentiment, is to me a dream

and a mockery.' So Newman's life work was being dogmatic about the Christian faith. This is the feature that is supposed to make him a pattern for all Catholics to imitate.

Many people will be surprised and repelled by this idea. Dogmatism is now thought of as a vice; it carries the connotations of being narrow, uncritical, judgmental, reactionary – in a word, dogmatic. How can this be a saintly virtue that all Christians should imitate? Was this not a shortcoming of Newman's, which the Church should excuse rather than celebrate?

first standard biography of Newman, agreed with Tyrrell on this issue, and held that Newman's thought was condemned by Pope St. Pius X's encyclical *Pascendi* against the modernists. Ward wrote to the Duke of Norfolk: 'I don't believe the Pope meant to condemn Newman, But he has done so beyond all doubt so far as the words of the encyclical go – not only on development but on much else.'³

A related attack on the faith, one that seeks to discredit Newman rather than hijack him, is that mounted by

Some count it against Newman that in controversy he proved a bad man to cross. But had not Newman been so, he could not have done the great work for God that he did.

As often happens, a good way of understanding the truth about a question related to the faith is by answering the attacks of its enemies. An early attack that made use of Newman was that mounted by the modernists, many of whom claimed him as a support for their cause. George Tyrrell, the leading English modernist, describes Newman's conception of theology as follows, in a letter to Wilfrid Ward:

He puts theology on all fours with the natural sciences and its relation to its subject matter. It formulates certain subjective immanent impressions or ideas exactly analogous to sense impressions which are realities of experience by which notions and inferences can be criticised. *In principle* (with one or two unimportant modifications) this is *Liberal* theology.²

Ward, the influential author of the

Prof. Frank. M. Turner, the John Hay Whitney Professor of History at Yale University. In 2002, Turner published a book, *John Henry Newman: The Challenge to Evangelical Religion*, in which he argues that Newman's claim to have devoted his life to upholding dogma was a falsehood, designed to curry favour with conservative Christians both Catholic and Protestant. Turner asserts:

The most fundamental religious experience of Newman's life was his adolescent conversion to evangelical religion. His reception into the Roman Catholic Church almost thirty years later represented the final step in what had been a long process of separation from that adolescent faith. That the conclusion of the process, which commenced in his mid-twenties, was Roman Catholicism, does not make it any more of a loss of evangelical faith than if, like others of his or later generations, he had ended in

Unitarianism, like his brother Francis, or in agnosticism.⁴

We can pass over the suprising absurdity of claiming that changing from evangelicalism to Catholicism is really the same kind of thing as changing from evangelicalism to agnosticism, because it is not relevant to our subject. The valuable aspect of Turner's thesis lies in this: understanding why he is wrong about Newman having been converted to evangelicalism opens the door to understanding why Newman's fidelity to dogma is a crucial virtue that is model for the Church.

Doubt Rejected

The idea that Newman's conversion was an evangelical one is disproved by the records he left at the time of his conversion in 1816, and in the years following. His initial temptation and sin was to intellectual doubt, and his conversion was a repentance and rejection of that doubt and sin; but rejection of intellectual doubt is intellectual belief. His private journals show no signs of evangelicalism, with his prayers focusing instead on the straightforward Christian request for the graces to resist sin and to grow in virtue. When in June 1821 he dreamt that an angel spoke to him, the topic of their conversation was not anything to do with evangelical religion, but the difficulty of understanding the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.⁵ The book that most influenced him in his conversion, Thomas Scott's *The Force of Truth*, was the story of a man 'being led on from one thing to another, to embrace a system of doctrine, which hitherto he had despised'.⁶ Scott's conversion was from rejection to acceptance of the doctrines of the Trinity and the divinity of Christ. When Scott refers to 'Methodism' in his book, he makes clear that he understands it to mean Calvinism, which Newman initially accepted. The changes in belief that Newman underwent during his early career

as an Anglican minister are more properly described as an abandonment of Calvinism, than as a rejection of evangelicalism. Newman's description of faith is a dogmatic one, which does not bear any traces of evangelicalism:

What is faith? it is assenting to a doctrine as true, which we do not see, which we cannot prove, because God says it is true, who cannot lie. ... he who believes that God is true, and that this is His word, which He has committed to man, has no

Knowledge must ever precede the exercise of the affections. We feel gratitude and love, we feel indignation and dislike, when we have the informations actually put before us which are to kindle those several emotions. We love our parents, as our parents, when we know them to be our parents; we must know concerning God, before we can feel love, fear, hope, or trust towards Him. Devotion must have its objects; those objects,

Because it was centred upon the self and the emotions, Newman regarded evangelicalism as a form of Liberlaimism

doubt at all. He is as certain that the doctrine taught is true, as that God is true; and he is certain, because God is true, because God has spoken, not because he sees its truth or can prove its truth. That is, faith has two peculiarities;—it is most certain, decided, positive, immovable in its assent, and it gives this assent not because it sees with eye, or sees with the reason, but because it receives the tidings from one who comes from God.

... We should religiously adhere to the form of words and the ordinances under which [Revealed Truth] comes to us, through which it is revealed to us, and apart from which the Revelation does not exist, there being nothing else given us by which to ascertain or enter into it.

Attacking 'the common mistake of supposing that there is a contrariety and antagonism between a dogmatic creed and vital religion', he says:

as being supernatural, when not represented to our senses by material symbols, must be set before the mind in propositions.

Tyrrell & Ward

Newman's dogmatism can be better understood by contrasting it with Ward's own view. Ward wrote:

[The High Church position] catches at, and is fascinated by, the gentle spirit of Catholic devotion, but shrinks from the iron walls and spiked palisades of anathema and definition, which are really necessary in the long run to preserve the life of devotion within from the inroads of free thought. ...The world in one generation laughs at the Church's senile superstition, in another reluctantly admires her strong organisation. Few look for her secret in the preservation of the primitive Christian ethos within that ugly wall of defence, made of bricks of different shapes and dates, the dogmatic theology.⁷

The similarity between Ward's account and Tyrrell's is obvious. An ethos, or an experience, or a devotion, is the real heart of the Christian life, and the dogmas of the faith are meant to subserve it. Tyrrell thought that the dogmas should be discarded when they are no longer adequate to experience (for example, some time before the anti-modernist encyclical *Pascendi* he had already decided that the Pope was an Antichrist and that Jesus had not intended to found a church), but Ward is more cagy about their dispensability. For Newman, on the other hand, belief in dogma is not subordinate to the heart of the Christian life: it is the heart of the Christian life. We encounter God through understanding dogma, and we follow God through choosing to believe dogma. Everything else is subordinate to that.

It is obvious on philosophical grounds that Newman is right about dogmas being essential to religion; we cannot actually see or touch the supernatural, so our knowledge of it can only arise from the information that God gives us about it, which is what dogmas are. But this does not tell us why an insistence on dogma is spiritually valuable – why a dogmatic conversion should have made Newman a saint rather than merely a good thinker.

We can understand this by considering what it would have been like if Turner was right, and Newman's first conversion had been to evangelicalism. Such a conversion would in the first place have been about Newman himself; it would have been Newman's having an emotional conviction that 'Christ loves me, Christ died for me'. Newman's actual conversion, however, which we can call a dogmatic conversion, did not have Newman himself at centre stage; it was believing, against Voltaire and Hume, that Christian doctrine is true because God says so. Newman himself, of course, had a place in

this conversion, but he was not the main actor in the drama. The great story of creation, redemption, and judgment that Christian dogma sets forth includes Newman among the countless throngs of the redeemed (if he repented) or the condemned (if he did not). His conversion was in the first place accepting this story as true, and then stepping forward to play his small part in it. The main human factor in the drama of Catholic dogma is not Newman, but the Church. That



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is why the Church was central to his faith and his life.

A similar point can be made about the modernist conception of Newman. The modernists saw the basis of faith as a personal experience that was in some way deeply attractive. This puts the self and its gratification at the centre of religion. Newman not only denied that personal experience was the essence of faith; he denied that the dogma that was at the centre of faith was primarily concerned with the well-being of the believer. In Tract 73, he wrote:

Mr. Erskine [Thomas Erskine of Linlathen, a Scottish Episcopalian lay theologian], by a remarkable assumption, rules it, that doctrines are facts of the revealed divine governance, so

that a doctrine is made the same as a divine action or work. ... the Church Catholic has ever taught (as in her Creeds) that there are facts revealed to us, not of this world, not of time, but of eternity, and that absolutely and independently; not merely embodied and indirectly conveyed in a certain historical course, not subordinate to the display of the Divine Character, not revealed merely relatively

to us, but primary objects of our faith, and essential in themselves, w h a t e v e r dependence or influence they may have upon other doctrines, or upon the course of the Dispensation. In a word, it has taught the existence of *Mysteries* in religion, for such e m p h a t i c a l l y must truths

ever be which are external to this world, and existing in eternity;—whereas this narrow-minded, jejune, officious, and presumptuous human system teaches nothing but a *Manifestation* ...

Turner is in fact half right when he says that Newman, as an Anglican, devoted his efforts to attacking evangelicalism. What he fails to acknowledge is that Newman did this because he saw evangelicalism as a *form* of liberalism. Because evangelicalism was centred on the self and the emotions, the dogmatic truth about God and the supernatural was not essential to it, and ended up dropping out of the picture. This is what happened to England in the 19th century; a country that in the early

decades of the century was heavily evangelical had by the end of the century become largely unbelieving. It is what is happening in America today.

Newman's dogmatism was thus a fundamental rejection of a religion based on the self. The difficulty of living by faith, living by the divine oracles that were the object of Tyrrell's sneering hatred, rather than by experience or emotion, is in itself very great. It is made greater by the fact that after all we do not form most of our judgments through private, unaided experience. Our beliefs are shaped by, and largely taken from, what the people around us believe. The Catholic faith is thus confronted by a competitor, described by Newman in his last public writing, 'The Development of Religious Error' (1885):

The World is that vast community impregnated by religious error which mocks and rivals the Church by claiming to be its own witness, and to be infallible. ... The World is a collection of individual men, and any one of them may hold and take on himself to profess unchristian doctrine, and do his best to propagate it; but few have the power for such a work, or the opportunity. It is by their union into one body, by the intercourse of man with man, and the consequent sympathy thence arising, that error spreads and becomes an authority. Its

separate units which make up the body rely upon each other, and upon the whole, for the truth of their assertions; and thus assumptions and false reasonings are received without question as certain truths, on the credit of alternate appeals and mutual cheers and imprimaturs.

In a sermon given to seminarians in 1873, he predicted the condition that the World is in today:

I think that the trials which lie before us are such as would appal and make dizzy even such courageous hearts as St. Athanasius, St. Gregory I, or St. Gregory VII. And they would confess that dark as the prospect of their own day was to them severally, ours has a darkness different in kind from any that has been before it. The special peril of the time before us is the spread of that plague of infidelity, that the Apostles and our Lord Himself have predicted as the worst calamity of the last times of the Church. And at least a shadow, a typical image of the last times is coming over the world. ... You will say that their theories have been in the world and are no new thing. No. Individuals have put them forth, but they have not been current and popular ideas. Christianity has never yet had experience of a world simply irreligious.

... consider what the Roman and Greek world was when Christianity appeared. It was full of superstition, not of infidelity. There was much unbelief in all as regards their mythology, and in every educated man, as to eternal punishment. But there was no casting off the idea of religion, and of unseen powers who governed the world. ... But we are now coming to a time when the world does not acknowledge our first principles.

Faith now involves not simply giving our assent and committing our lives to doctrines whose truth we take on faith, but doing so in the face of the vast moral pressure exerted by the World that surrounds us. This pressure is exerted in a negative form as scorn of belief in dogma and in a God who reveals it, and in a positive form as an endorsement of the worship of self that the modernists promoted, and that is the religion of our day. Newman's lifelong commitment to dogma was a merciless war against these pressures, which had already become strong in his own time. That is what makes him a model for all Christians, and an especially important model for our time.

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1. St. Pius X, letter to Edward Thomas, Bishop of Limerick, in *Acta Sanctae Sedis*, vol. 41, 1908.
2. George Tyrrell S.J., letter to Wilfrid Ward, 4 January 1904, in *Letters from a 'Modernist': The Letters of George Tyrrell to Wilfrid Ward 1893-1908*, ed. Mary Jo Weaver (London: Sheed and Ward, 1981) p. 92.
3. *Letters from a 'Modernist'*, p. xxviii, quoting from Ward's unpublished papers.
4. Frank M. Turner, *John Henry Newman: The Challenge to Evangelical Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), p. 11.
5. See John Henry Newman, *Autobiographical Writings*, ed. Henry Tristram (London: Sheed and Ward, 1956) pp. 151-153, 166.
6. Thomas Scott, *The Force of Truth* (London, 1814), p. 122.
7. Wilfrid Ward, 'The Exclusive Church and the Zeitgeist', in *The Life and Times of Cardinal Wiseman* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1897), vol. II, pp. 561, 562. This epilogue to Wiseman's biography was by Ward's confession his own manifesto, and had nothing to do with Wiseman.

Confessions of a Slavophile

An economic basket case and a nation in sharp demographic decline, Ukraine's Christians decline to retrench Australian-style. Gary Scarrabelotti recollects from a recent visit.

I blame it on Tolstoy.

One summer holiday in the 1970s I read *Anna Karenina* and that's where it began. I became a Slavophile. Not that I had much opportunity to indulge it. There were other things to do. But my distant admiration for the "Slavic soul" did not fade.

Then, in the late 1980s, before the partial restoration of the traditional Latin Mass by Pope John Paul II, I took refuge from the Roman Church's liturgical chaos with the Ukrainian Greek-rite Catholics: not a long-term home, but a temporary shelter in which I made contact, for the first time, with the Slavs at prayer.

In 1991 the Soviet Union collapsed; no one in Australia, outside of the Ukrainian diaspora, could have been happier than I. I felt, I suppose, what a troubadour might feel when his lady is rescued from her high tower: he rejoices, but she does not - she cannot - reciprocate; and, like the troubadour, I followed from afar with anxious eyes every move in her subsequent story.

Our lives took their separate paths.

Then in August 2010 I found myself on a business trip in Kiev.

Kiev? Ukraine?

Yes. That's the one: the door through which Christianity passed in 988 to the people of "Rus". But what that statement meant, I did not understand when I arrived. It was bookish knowledge about a dead past ... or so I thought.

City of dust

In the centre of Ukraine, Orthodox Metropolitan Yefrim rules over the diocese of Kryvyi Rih and Nikopol. It encompasses perhaps the ugliest city in Ukraine - Kryvyi Rih (in Ukrainian) or Krivoy Rog (in Russian) - a 100 kilometre sprawl of mines and steelworks and factories and dilapidated apartment blocks ... and dust.

or so, but for what gives a very good impression of being eternity itself. It's all sung, backed by a mini choir of two practised, if aged, female voices. People file in and out, joining and leaving the liturgy. The hardier souls, mostly youngish women, stand erect throughout the entire service, bowing and crossing in striking gestures of disarming simplicity and grace. A knot of young toughs in semi-military

It's like a complex dance: the formal liturgy before and behind the iconostasis, and the popular cult of the icons, each weaving in and out of the other with effortless timing.

In this industrial wasteland Metropolitan Yefrim's glorious, near new cathedral appears like a beautiful ring on a rough and dirty hand. Inside it glints with gold and silver from a maze of icons facing the church's three iconostases. A wonder to behold, the craftsmanship makes the visitor gape: beside the icons themselves, there's the carpentry, joinery and wood carving, and gilding that is needed to build and decorate a church in the classic Orthodox style.

It's a weekday. There are people in the cathedral, and not just the party of *babushki* who combine the roles of sacristans and church wardens. The liturgy is rolling on as it does every day - not for an economical 30 minutes

clothing stand at the front of the congregation directly before the holy doors and do not even shift from one leg to the next as the liturgy rolls on and on. Meanwhile, another stream of people passes silently around the interior reverencing the icons with a devotion moving to see. Around they go: crossing, bowing, kissing, resting their foreheads on the icons, kissing, retreating, crossing, bowing and passing on to the next one. It's like a complex dance: the formal liturgy before and behind the iconostasis, and the popular cult of the icons, each weaving in and out of the other with effortless timing.

The priest and deacons celebrating the liturgy are young men - mid 30s at most. After it's all done (yes, eternity



The restored Mikhailovsky golden domed cathedral in Kiev

does come to an end), the toughs fall into conversation with one of the priests. He has long hair and matching long thin face and hands as if he has stepped out of one of the icons. His clerical confrere is built more like one of the lads: broad shoulders and bull neck. He does not fit any modern western clerical stereotype. He looks neither theologian nor liturgist, but like the kind of man who could bear the weight of the cathedral on his shoulders if commanded to carry it. But the young men seem captivated by their living icon, and they stand around him taking in his every word; he makes little gestures as he speaks, like Christ blessing his disciples. Eventually they head off in a huddle toward the bus stop and the knot re-forms in the back of a bus, and the little Sermon on the Mount fades out of sight against a back drop of distant grey apartment towers.

Iron monks

Departing from the same stop beside the cathedral I found, with

the help of a colleague, a couple of monasteries.

Along a winding, dusty, stony road with trucks occasionally roaring up and down, and rusted ironmongery towering over mine heads never far out of sight, the monks have set themselves up in an abandoned sanatorium circled by trees and fronted by a garden. The monks get a lot of attention from the bishop, who celebrates the liturgy with them once a week. More young men are in evidence and a piece of ground has been marked out for a new monastic church. It's a relief to sit, even in the oppressive heat, and close the city out of your mind, but the grounds are tatty.

"Not like the French Benedictines," I think to myself.

Then came the corrective, prompted perhaps by the guardian angel of the place.

"Slavs don't make contact with landscape as something that must be manicured."

"Uh-ha."

A visit to the temporary monastic chapel - a refectory chapel, in fact - revealed an icon representing the royal family: the Romanov martyrs. There are tender kisses for them too.

Back tracking toward Metropolitan Yefrim's cathedral, I am led to a convent of nuns. This time the place is manicured. Women at work. The liturgy has recommenced and nuns sing lessons in front of the iconostasis, and two young laywomen with perfect voices sing the responses from the choir stalls at the back of the chapel. Lay people, young and old, trickle in and trickle out. They attend very devoutly to the liturgy in the 35°C heat. Outside a vast basilica is rising. The sight of it makes me gasp - or is it the heat? A thunderstorm mercifully breaks over the convent. Straight down pours the torrent, red-grey in the late afternoon light. After the storm, a damp rusty smell pervades everything - monastic life in a factory.

On Sundays, Yefrim's parish churches seem to be bulging. In one place, in appalling heat, the people

crowd into and around a semi-roofless church undergoing renovations. The congregation seems surprisingly young. Of course there are old people. But not so many as I expected. Perhaps it is the demographic reality. Life is much shorter in Ukraine than in the West, especially for men; to be 40 is to be “middle aged”. But demography aside, in the West the 15 to 40 year olds are missing. In Ukraine they are manifestly represented.

Widow's mite

Driving through the countryside I see decayed villages surrounding a church with a newly gilded dome. Rural Ukraine is in sharp demographic decline; people are flowing to the cities. But country churches are being repaired and restored rather than closed by their impoverished parishioners.

Now I am in Kiev and I expect to see much less religiosity. I am mistaken. Yes, it's a city of the political class, of bureaucrats and of oligarchs. There is a trendy middle class, or something that aspires to it. People dress better. They dine out more. In the churches on weekdays there are more people at all hours than I had seen elsewhere. The liturgy is celebrated by young men. The choirs are younger and more accomplished; their singing is easy and robust. All ages visit the churches and famous monasteries of the city – St Volodymyr's, the Mikhailovsky, and the Pechersk Lavra stand out. The dominant age group doing the rounds appears to be in the range of 20 to 45 years. There are even teenagers, apparently at ease with the rituals and the company of parents. Here is a group of people transfixed by the liturgy; there, others pass silently by the icons. If anything the prayers are more intense. People linger intimately over the icons; they rest themselves against them. The faith and love is palpable: the impetus behind the extensive church building and repairs.

From the widow and her mite to the oligarch and his millions, giving to church projects is a mass phenomenon.

(Back home in Australia a Ukrainian acquaintance also returned from a visit is perplexed and slightly disapproving of the way people “have taken to religion”. It is a search for identity and a sign of desperation: it's an anti-communist statement; it's the economic crisis; it's the uncertain nature of the national character; it's the collapse of the Orange Revolution.

“People feel helpless.”

“Maybe so,” I think. “Here in Australia people, evidently, don't feel helpless enough.”

Yes, the Ukrainian Orthodox, and Greek-Rite Catholics too, inhabit a universe quite different from our own.)

Sunday faraway

“OK, on Sunday I need to get to a Catholic church.”

“No problem. We have found one. I will take you. Otherwise you will get lost. And, when you do get lost, you will not be able to ask the way. Your accent is terrible!”, so volunteered my realist colleague. “But you must show me what to do when we are in church.”

“There'll be no difficulties.” I reply. “The liturgy is the same as for you, only it's in Ukrainian.”

Come Sunday morning, we took a stifling mini-bus and rattled and bounced our way to Mass. Eventually, through the dirty windows, a church appeared. But there were no onion domes, and only very slowly (as usual) I wake to what has happened.

Apparently to the Orthodox, Greek Rite Catholics are, as Tsar Paul I put it back in the 18th century, *ni miaso, ni ryba*: literally, neither meat nor fish. So if you ask for a Catholic church you get a Roman Catholic one.

“Lord, have mercy.”

As we enter the austere appointed OMI mission church, I said, “Well, this is not what I was expecting; you'd better just follow whatever I do.”

Before Mass, a charming, fully accoutred young nun, with joy streaming from her face, served as sacristan. Meanwhile, priests (plural) heard confessions. They were young men and ardent. For Mass, a great team of acolytes appeared – not a girl among them. The sermon was very serious. Later, Communion was on the tongue. Still, the celebration of liturgy, though piously executed, was marked by a rubrical style unavoidable in the *Novus Ordo*, as if the human body were an untidy obstacle to ritual. And there was the overhead projector, the folksy hymns bracketing a *Kyrie* and a *Sanctus*, and a single, loud female voice leading them all. At the end of Mass, after a hearty *Salve Regina* (Ukrainians can sing!), most people stayed on their knees in the church and prayed. Silence reigned. Despite the jarring signs of new-paradigm normalcy, I sighed with relief and admiration. If only it was easier to find in my own country a parish so regular, so well ordered, so patently devout, and so demographically well-structured as this one.

Throughout Mass, I was only faintly aware of my guide as a hazy outline and a slightly uncomfortable presence to my right. When it was all done, caught up in my own thoughts, I sat musing to myself; then my Orthodox friend, whom I'd almost forgotten, leaned toward me in a move that hinted of suppressed anxiety and alarm, and whispered.

“Gary, is this a Lutheran church?”

The end of Christianity in the Middle East?

Eden Naby and Jamsheed K. Choksy in *Foreign Policy* examine how the bombing of a church in Baghdad may be the last straw for the 2,000-year-old minority community

Screaming “kill, kill, kill,” suicide bombers belonging to the Islamic State of Iraq, a militant organization connected to al Qaeda in Iraq, stormed a Chaldean church in Baghdad. A spokesman for the group subsequently claimed they did so “to light the fuse of a campaign against Iraqi Christians.” The assailants’ more immediate grievance seems related to a demand that two Muslim women, allegedly held against their will in Egyptian Coptic monasteries, be released. When Iraqi government forces attempted to free approximately 120 parishioners who had been taken hostage, the terrorists – who had already shot dead some of the churchgoers – detonated their suicide vests and grenades, slaughtering at least half the congregation.

Exodus

But the massacre in Baghdad is only the most spectacular example of mounting discrimination and persecution of the native Christian communities of Iraq and Iran, which are now in the middle of a massive exodus unprecedented in modern times as they confront a rising tide of Islamic militancy and religious chauvinism sweeping the region.

Christians are the largest non-Muslim religious minority in both Iraq and Iran, with roots in the Middle East that date back to the earliest days of

the faith. Some follow the Apostolic Orthodox Armenian Church. Others subscribe to the 2,000-year-old Syriac tradition represented mainly by the Chaldean Catholic Church in Iraq and by Aramaic speakers widely known as Assyrians in both Iraq and Iran.

Iraqi and Iranian Muslim leaders claim that religious minorities in their countries are protected. In September, former Iranian president Ayatollah Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani reassured the patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East that religious minorities are respected and safeguarded in Iran. Yet members of Iran’s Christian denominations, like their Jewish, Zoroastrian, Mandaean, and Baha’i counterparts, don’t feel safe. A member of the National Council of Churches in Iran, Firouz Khandjani, lamented in August, “We are facing the worst persecution” in many decades, including loss of employment, homes, liberties, and lives, he said, “We fear losing everything.”

In Iraq, Chaldean and Assyrian Christian communities have witnessed increasing violence by militant Muslims against their neighborhoods, children, and religious sites since the U.S. invasion. Even pastors are not safe -- two died in the recent Baghdad bombing; many have been killed by Sunni and Shiite Iraqis since 2003. In Iran, other clergymen, including members of the Armenian, Protestant,

and Catholic churches, have been arrested, kidnapped, imprisoned, tortured, or even summarily executed, over the past three decades.

Targeted

“Many Christians from Mosul have been systematically targeted and are no longer safe there,” said Laurens Jolles, a UNHCR representative, in 2008, after Chaldean women were raped while their men, including Archbishop Paulos Faraj Rahho, were tortured and killed in warnings to Christians to abandon their homes and livelihoods. In Iran, Christian clerics have been targeted -- Tateos Mikaelian, senior pastor of St. John’s Armenian Evangelical Church in Tehran was assassinated in 1994, as was Bishop Haik Hovsepian Mehr, who headed the evangelical Assemblies of God Church.

Why Christians? Of the many justifications offered by al Qaeda and other fanatical groups in Iraq, and by hard-line mullahs in Iran, one is repeated most often: These indigenous Christians are surrogates for Western “crusaders.” As early as 1970, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini issued a fatwa accusing Christians in Iran of “working with American imperialists and oppressive rulers to distort the truths of Islam, lead Muslims astray, and convert our children.” Fearing a backlash against their institutions and lives, Christians have often made

efforts to prove their loyalty, as when Iranian Assyrians wrote to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in September denouncing American Christians who wished to burn Qurans as “enemies of God.”

But the roots of Christian decline in the Middle East actually date back centuries. In Iran, intolerance toward all non-Muslim minorities took a sharply negative turn from the 16th century onward with the forced Shiification of Iran by the Safavid dynasty. The early 20th century saw pogroms against Armenian, Assyrian, and Greek Christians in the Ottoman Empire and northwestern Iran. Under the Pahlavi shahs, Assyrians, Armenians, Jews, Zoroastrians, and Baha'is regained some of their rights and came to represent the modernizing elements of 20th century society. But the Islamic Revolution of 1979 undercut all those advances. Prejudice and oppression now occurs with impunity.

Numbers eloquent

The numbers speak for themselves: The population of non-Muslims in Iran has dropped by two-thirds or more since 1979. From Iran, these groups flee to Turkey and India -- often at risk to life and limb through the violence-ridden border regions of Iraq and Pakistan. The number of Assyrian Christians in Iran has dwindled from about 100,000 in the mid-1970s to approximately 15,000 today, even as the overall population of the country has swelled from 38 million to 72 million people over the same period. In Iraq, Christians are fleeing in droves. U.N. statistics indicate that 15 percent of all Iraqi refugees in Syria are of Christian background, although they represented only 3 percent of the population when U.S. troops entered in 2003. The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees estimates that between 300,000 to 400,000 Christians have been forced out of Iraq since 2003.

And Christians have left because the message from Sunni militants and Shiite ayatollahs is crystal clear: You have no future here.

There is now an alarming possibility that there will be no significant Christian communities in Iraq or Iran by century's end. Christian schools, communal halls, historical sites, and churches are being appropriated by

religious minorities in Iraq. The quick, though unsuccessful, attempt by the Iraqi government this weekend to rescue the Christian hostages appears to have been in response to such American pressure -- no official Iraqi interventions had occurred in previous attacks.

In Iran, however, the persecution of Christians continues unabated. Two

As early as 1970, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini issued a fatwa accusing Christians in Iran of “working with American imperialists and oppressive rulers to distort the truths of Islam, lead Muslims astray, and convert our children.”

national and provincial governments, government-sponsored Muslim organizations, and radical Islamist groups. Economic and personal incentives are offered to those who adopt Islam. Last month, the Vatican convened a major summit to find ways of mitigating this crisis, noting that “Christians deserve to be recognized for their invaluable contributions ... their human rights should always be respected, including freedom of worship and freedom of religion.”

Faint hopes

There is a faint glimmer of hope. On Aug. 5, the U.S. Senate adopted Resolution 322 expressing concern for

Protestant pastors, arrested in post-presidential election crackdowns, face the death penalty. An Assyrian pastor was arrested and tortured in February 2010 and faces trial too.

The Senate resolution noted that “threats against the smallest religious minorities ... jeopardize ... a diverse, pluralistic, and free society,” words applicable in full measure to Iran as well. Will Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's government heed this call? It's doubtful. But one thing's for certain: If the world doesn't champion religious freedom openly and vigorously, he won't have to.

Learning by painful experience

Lyle Dunne offers some thoughts on how to handle family funerals when traditional liturgy is not an option

Some pious Catholics used to keep about them such *memento mori* items as coffins, and even the skulls one associates with St Jerome. Today this would be viewed as macabre (if not illegal), but as the words of the Ash Wednesday service remind us, Catholics should not shy away from the idea of death, as others in society increasingly do as faith fades from our culture. In fact there are strong arguments for focussing specifically on funeral services as well.

A sung requiem in the extraordinary form speaks to the bereaved on a variety of conscious and subconscious levels: it acknowledges the reality of grief, and offers real consolation. By contrast, a liturgical approach that pretends it is the duty of a Christian to be happy at all times can simply intensify grief.

Illusions shattered

And it is in the midst of grief that we come closest to the infinite: it is when our most carefully-constructed illusion - that this world is all - is ripped away, that we are most in need of, and most open to, the psychological and spiritual balm of the funeral liturgy. We embrace the *Dies Irae*; we feel the black vestments, the solemn music, the slow chant enter into our mood, share and somehow lighten it.

But such a funeral is the ideal: the reality is often far different. The funeral of a close relative can be the single most confronting and difficult liturgical experience for most traditional Catholics. One often finds one's views on liturgical matters are not shared – sometimes by funeral

directors (though in general they assume the “customer is always right”), more often by relatives, clergy and other ecclesiastical functionaries. And, to put it mildly, one is hardly in a position to have a stand-up fight on these matters.

Areas of likely disagreement include booklets, music, vestments, eulogies – and the question of the whole purpose of a Catholic funeral. I'm afraid I scandalised a couple of Diocesan functionaries when discussing arrangements for my father's funeral by suggesting that I thought the emphasis should be on praying for the repose of my father's soul, not a “celebration of his life”.

It sometimes seems to me that *Novus Ordo* Liturgy is imbued by presumption, and this is nowhere clearer than in the approach to funerals, which can take on aspects of canonisation.

That uneasy feeling

A recent post by Francis Phillips on the (UK) Catholic Herald blog site, *Funerals that pay tribute to the foibles and frailties of the deceased make me deeply uneasy*, makes this point, observing that panegyrics (eulogies) centred on the deceased's “achievements, foibles and lovable frailties” are now ubiquitous, noting;

“I suspect this practice has crept in alongside a weakened understanding and belief in life after death and a thin grasp of sin and its effects.”

There are rare occasions when a eulogy (for want of a better word) can be used to make a significant moral or theological point – I'm thinking of a

recent case of the heroic father whose son had died of a drug overdose – but in general they are at best sentimental, at worst potentially embarrassing and upsetting.

I was also told in relation to my father's funeral that white vestments, communion under both species (and thus Eucharistic Ministers), were simply “the way we do things here” and not open for negotiation. I was told the Roman Canon would not be permitted – though as a concession, “Eucharistic Prayer Number One” was! (In the event I was told immediately prior to the commencement of the Requiem Mass that it wouldn't be used.)

So I was very happy to see the recently-released guidelines on Catholic funerals from the Archdiocese of Melbourne, which were widely reported - and widely criticised - as banning football theme songs (along with “romantic ballads, pop or rock music, political songs”) at Catholic funerals.

There are many strong positive signs in this document.

I was particularly pleased to see they say explicitly that a Catholic funeral should never be a “celebration of the life”. They note:

the booklet should be prepared to assist all present to participate fully and actively. The texts of the Mass should be included when non-Catholics are expected to be present.

(I was told a booklet could not include readings as they were copyright!)

Continued on page 27

Desolate City

David Warren of the *Ottawa Citizen* marks the loss of Anne Roche Muggeridge.

The easiest columns become the hardest to write. When I learned that Anne Roche Muggeridge had died, my first thought was incommunicable; but my second was, I must write a column to tell my readers, since I'm not sure they'll find out from the news pages. My third was: Now, that is a column that will write itself! It didn't.

She died [September 14th 2010] in an institution in Toronto, after many years of an excruciating illness.

That much news will serve the many Roman Catholics, and other Christians, for whom Anne was a life-changing influence, whether directly, or through media, or most often through two remarkable books: *The Gates of Hell* (1975), and *The Desolate City* (1986, revised 1990). The first is now almost impossible to obtain, the second difficult. This is not the occasion to explain why.

The latter, which carried the subtitle, *The Catholic Church in Ruins*, will survive and ultimately be reprinted, because it is a historical and religious classic. A reader in some future time, who wishes to know what happened to the Church not only in Canada but everywhere, in the shadow of Vatican II, will find in it a mine of diamonds. For not only does it put names and faces to the revolution that happened within the Church, in the 1960s and '70s, it gives the flavour of the times, superbly.

The attack from within, on the authority of Rome, can be understood only by analogy to a secular revolution. It came to climax over Pope Paul's encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*, from the summer of 1968, which affirmed the traditional teaching of the Church

“on human life,” and thus necessarily reprised sexual morality. The flashpoint was doctrinal opposition not only to abortion, but to contraception. This teaching was openly mocked, as “totally out of touch with the times.”

One might say the problem was not with the teaching, but with the times; Anne went deeper. She realised that, for the revolutionary or “progressive” factions within the Church, contraception wasn't really the issue. It did not impinge on the lives of the radical priests, feminist nuns, and others who feigned apoplexy over it. For them it was the crowbar with which to challenge papal authority openly, after years of more secret and subversive operations; and those who had pretended to speak for the Church's “better traditions”, now came fully out of the woodwork to oppose everything, and attempt their coup.

It was also a lever. The radicals could not expect to quickly change the doctrines of 20 centuries and, after the publication of the encyclical, had no foreseeable hope of advancing their agenda to things like married or woman priests. That front line was holding. But they soon held the whip hand in something perhaps more powerful: “liturgical reform” .

In the space of a very few years, the Catholic Mass was changed almost out of recognition, with the substitution of sludgy and anti-poetical modern-language translations for the rich, precise, ancient Latin texts. But beneath that were two startling innovations. The first was to turn the priest around, so that he would be facing the congregation, instead of the Sanctuary. The second was to permit, and then encourage people to take

Communion in the hand.

Those changes were revolutionary in a way non-Catholics must struggle to understand. Instead of man being for God, they declared God to be for man. The whole purport of Catholic teaching was reversed in these symbolic gestures, and the most solemn act of worship turned into what could finally be reduced to a rather dreary public entertainment.

The Catholic Church was indeed in ruins. What was done ostensibly to fill the churches, in fact emptied them, and left a “me generation” with faith hanging by a thread. That the Church would recover, Anne never doubted; but her purpose was to document and explain the catastrophe, in historical terms.

Her book was also a religious classic. Taking its title from the Lamentations of Jeremiah – “How doth the city sit desolate that was full of people; how is she become a widow that was mistress among nations” – she inquired also into the Church's deep past, and invoked the Christ who had righted her after many previous topplings. Anne carried a light of faith, even through desolation.

More than this, and more personal than this, I cannot write in a column; beyond mentioning that Anne was a beloved friend and true inspiration, long before I was myself received into the Catholic Church. And for all her reputation as an “axe-swinging reactionary” (she genuinely scared liberal priests and bishops), a warm, charitable, often deliciously funny, and very beautiful human being.

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Traditions continue in the hills of Cherokee County

A young Australian makes his profession in an Oklahoma Benedictine monastery. **Kirk Kramer**, an Oklahoma journalist reports.

LOST CITY — On her first full day in America, Melissa Middeldorp had just exited the monastic church at Clear Creek Abbey. The two-and-a-half-hour long Mass at which her brother James had pronounced his solemn profession as a Benedictine monk was over.

James and Melissa Middeldorp are the oldest in a family of six children from Adelaide, Australia. All the incense and Gregorian chant in Oklahoma could not repress the cheekiness for which Australians are famous.

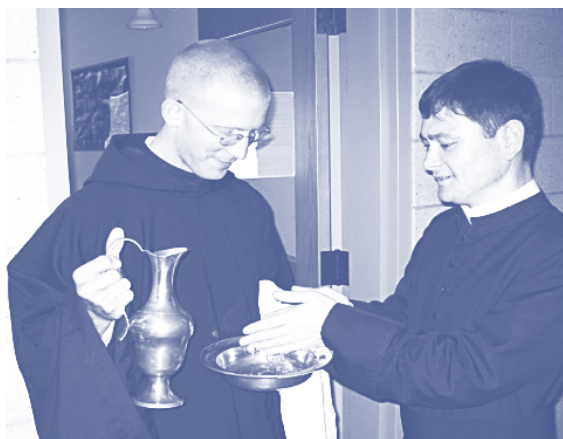
Asked how she felt after watching her brother make vows that bind him for life to his Cherokee County monastery, Melissa Middeldorp asked in response, “Apart from jet-lagged?”

She had arrived at the monastery’s guesthouse at 10 p.m. Thursday, after a day-long trip across the Pacific Ocean and half the North American continent.

It is Melissa Middeldorp’s first trip abroad. And it is the first time she has seen her brother since he left their family home in the state of South Australia six years ago to become a monk in Oklahoma.

Michael Rowe, a Catholic priest from Perth on the west coast of the country, also came for Friday’s ceremony. He has known the Middeldorps since he was a seminary student 20 years ago, when Brother James, now 26, was a small boy.

“He was always interested in the monastic life,” Rowe said of Middeldorp. “A generous Australian family, the Watsons, took him on a trip several years ago to Europe to visit several monasteries. They also came to America and visited Clear Creek.”



Brother James washes the hands of Fr. Michael Rowe of Perth

Returning to Australia, Middeldorp sought Rowe’s counsel about his calling in life.

“James is a serious sort of fellow,” Rowe said. “He’s contemplative, prayerful, always looking at God’s will for his life. He decided God was calling him to be a monk.”

Middeldorp entered Clear Creek Monastery on St. Patrick’s Day, 2004.

Middeldorp’s parents, Peter and Lorna, gave their children a deeply religious upbringing. Melissa Middeldorp said the date of her brother’s profession, Aug. 6, was an important one in their close-knit family.

“It’s the anniversary of my Grandpa Middeldorp’s death,” she said. “For my grandmother, that’s made this extra special.”

A high point in the ancient ceremony of religious profession, repeated countless times since monasticism was established in the West by St. Benedict in the fifth century A.D., is the singing of the “Suscipe” by the monk making his vows.

“Suscipe me, Domine, secundum eloquium tuum et vivam,” chanted Middeldorp in a strong voice, with his arms raised and looking up. “Receive me, O Lord, according to thy word, and I shall live.”

Then kneeling and folding his arms on his chest, he continued with the next line from Psalm 119: “And let me not be ashamed of my hope.”

Later in the ceremony, Middeldorp received the “kiss of peace” from the abbot and all the monks. Each one embraced him and welcomed him to full membership in their monastic family.

In seclusion in the days preceding his profession, Middeldorp and his sister were reunited for the first time after the Mass.

Melissa Middeldorp will remain at Clear Creek for five days.

Later in 2010 year James Middeldorp was be allowed to visit his family at home.

Requiescat in pace
Joe Sobran
 1946 - 2010



job writing for National Review. Their friendship lasted until 1993 when Sobran was sacked for his opposition to the Gulf War and his attacks on America's support for Israel. They reconciled before Buckley's death in 2008.

All of this political controversy, however, overshadowed Sobran's real concerns, which were primarily moral and literary. The ultimate mystery at the heart of human existence, the impossibility of man's ever completely comprehending through his rational intellect the complexity of the human social organism, was the basis of Sobran's conservatism.

Most of the world is a mystery. Consciousness is a little clearing in a vast forest; every individual has his own special relation to the area of mystery, his own little discoveries to impart. Discovery is by definition unpredictable, and it is absurd for the state to foreclose the process of learning. There are moods when we are too exhausted to imagine that there is still more to be learned; an

The highest form of appreciation is worship. I don't insist that there is a correlation between formal religion and conservatism. But there is an attitude prior to any creed, which may make a healthy-minded unbeliever regretful that he has nobody to thank for all the goodness and beauty in his life that he has done nothing to deserve. One might almost say that the crucial thing about a man is not whether he believes in God, but how he imagines God: as infinitely good and adorable, or merely as an authoritarian obstacle to human desire? The opposite of piety is not unbelief, but crassness.

Joe Sobran, 1985

Firebrand American conservative writer, Joseph "Joe" Sobran, died in Fairfax County, Virginia, on 30 September. Notorious for his opposition to America's involvement in foreign wars, and one-time protégé of William F. Buckley and writer—later senior editor for Buckley's National Review magazine – Sobran passed his remaining years ostracised by his old friends in the US conservative movement for his criticism of America's unwavering support for the state of Israel and his opposition to the Republican establishment, which he believed had sold out traditional conservatism in favour of a radical neo-conservative agenda.

Always the traditionalist conservative, Sobran remained a

devout Latin Mass Catholic to the end – despite two marriages ending in divorce – and often lamented the decline of traditional values in modern America. In fact, Sobran had little interest in foreign policy and economics, preferring what he called a more "a literary, contemplative conservatism" to the right-wing activism that dominated the Republican Party in the 1980s and 1990s. And despite his opposition to the explosion of the US Federal Government through LBJ's Great Society programs of the 1960s, his political philosophy always remained firmly grounded in a concern for morality and culture and a fierce opposition to what he saw as the anomie and rootlessness of modern American life.

A child of the Midwest, Michael Joseph Sobran Jr. was born on 23 February 1946 in Ypsilanti, Michigan. He studied English and American literature at Eastern Michigan University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in 1969, and went on to do graduate work on Shakespeare, a lifelong preoccupation. In 1997 the Free Press published his *Alias Shakespeare: Solving the Greatest Literary Mystery of All Time*, an argument in support of the theory that Shakespeare's plays were written by Edward de Vere, the Earl of Oxford.

While at Eastern Michigan, he sent letters to several professors who objected to an impending visit by Buckley, rebutting their criticisms point by point. Buckley later saw the letters and in 1972 offered Sobran a

ideology is a system of ideas that wants to end the explorations we are constantly making at the margin of consciousness, and to declare all the mysteries solved ... In talking of mystery this way, I don't at all intend to sound mystical. It is a very practical matter. The world is inexpressibly complex. Every individual is a mystery to every other, so much so that communication is difficult and fleeting. Moreover, the past is a mystery too: very little of it can be permanently possessed. We have various devices – words, rituals, records, commemorations, laws – to supply continuity as forgetfulness and death keep dissolving our ties with what has existed before.

This understanding of conservatism is a world away from much contemporary conservatism, with its worship of the capitalist free market and its radical desire to transform the world in the image of western, hedonistic modern man. The neo-conservative obsession with spreading American style democracy around the world Sobran believed was ultimately a radical one, unrelated to true conservatism with its belief in man's fallen nature and concern for continuity in man's moral and political life.

For Sobran, the man who personified the shallowness and rootlessness of modern America was former President Bill Clinton. With his shallow charm and boundless faith in the capacity of human reason to change the world for the better, Clinton personified for Sobran the rootless modern individual. The fact that Middle America seemed to embrace the Good ol' Boy from Arkansas, ignoring his womanising and hypocritical optimism, made it all

the more depressing for Sobran. That such a man could become President of the most powerful nation on the planet was more than he could bear.

Sobran's last years were a literal nightmare of physical suffering. The agony of diabetes destroying the body through multiple and varying assaults is not only incredibly painful, it can totally demoralise the patient. Joe turned to his Catholic Faith for hope and support in confronting his terrible affliction.

Friends came from as far away as Texas, Illinois, and New York to say a last farewell to conservative Catholic commentator and author Joseph Sobran at his Tridentine Requiem Funeral Mass at St. John the Beloved in McLean, Virginia, celebrated by Fr. Paul Scalia on 5 October.

In his homily, Fr. Scalia followed the traditional path of mentioning Joe, observing how he maintained a childlike innocence throughout his busy life, and the role of the Church in leading men and women to salvation, explaining in some depth then Church's mission to teach, rule, and sanctify.

Joe Sobran's life was a constant battle to defend the Permanent Things against the assaults of the modern barbarians. Perhaps Joe should have the last word:

There is no question of "resisting change." The only question is what can and should be salvaged from "devouring time." Conservation is a labor, not indolence, and it takes discrimination to identify and save a few strands of tradition in the incessant flow of mutability.

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Do you wish, in the event of your death, that the Oriens Foundation arrange to offer the Traditional Latin Mass for the repose of your soul?

Then perhaps you might consider adding appropriate clauses to your will to give effect to your decision in these matters.

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1. I GIVE AND BEQUEATH to the Oriens Foundation (incorporated in the Australian Capital Territory, Registration No. A04619) the sum of (\$___) and I HEREBY DECLARE that the receipt of my bequest by the then Treasurer or other proper person of the Oriens Foundation shall be full and sufficient discharge to my executors/trustees for this legacy AND FURTHER my executors/trustees shall not be bound to see to the application of this legacy.

2. I GIVE AND BEQUEATH the sum of (\$___) to the Oriens Foundation for the specific purpose of the payment of a stipend fee by the Oriens Foundation to a Priest of Priests as nominated by the then Chairman of the Oriens Foundation for Masses to be offered for the repose of my soul AND I DECLARE that the receipt of my bequest by the then Treasurer or other proper person of the Oriens Foundation shall be full and sufficient to discharge my trustees / executors shall not be bound to see to the application of this legacy.

3. IT IS MY REQUEST BUT NOT MY COMMAND that immediately upon my death my executor/trustee contact the then Chairman of the Oriens Foundation and request the Chairman to arrange for a Requiem Mass to be offered in the Roman Rite according to the Missale Romanum of 1962 and I FURTHER DIRECT my executor to pay to the then Treasurer or other such proper person of the Oriens Foundation all such costs incurred by the Society for the arrangements pertaining to the said Requiem Mass.



European Union

The Ninth; Beethoven and the World in 1824;
by Harvey Sachs; Random House; New York City, 2010

Reviewed by R. J. Stove*

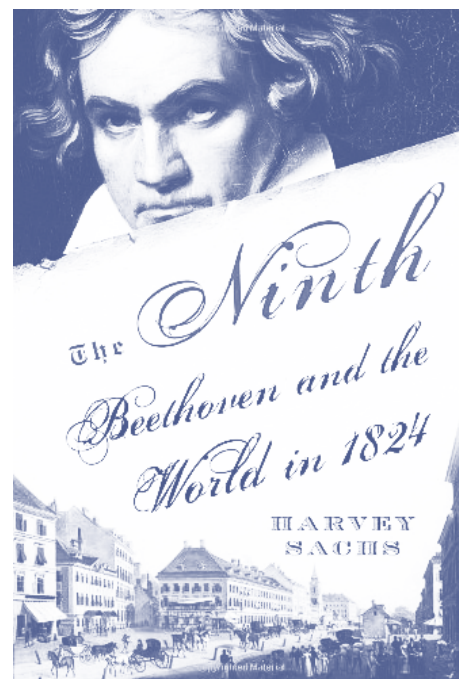
Sometimes short books on great musicians markedly surpass longer ones. *Aspects of Wagner*, by British philosopher and ex-parliamentarian Bryan Magee, provides a much better guide in its 112 pages to the Master of Bayreuth than do most other Wagner-related books of seven times the size. Similarly, Edmund Morris's 2005 *Beethoven: The Universal Composer* (256 pages, all spaciously printed) contains far more genuine discernment than numerous scholarly marathons. And so with this latest concise publication by the Cleveland-born, now Manhattan-based, and for long Italian-domiciled Harvey Sachs. Sachs's earlier works include comprehensive biographies of Toscanini and Artur Schnabel, as well as a piercingly perspicacious 1982 essay on Glenn Gould (which concedes all Gould's pianistic virtues while exposing, with quiet mercilessness, Gould's fundamentally adolescent philosophising).

Any music-lover – no matter how well he knows, or thinks he knows, Beethoven's *Choral Symphony* – will learn something new from Sachs's account, which is neither pure musicology nor pure aesthetic rumination, but a fascinating mixture of both. Herbert von Karajan's comment on Beethoven's symphonies in general accords with Sachs's attitude: "They become younger and younger every day; and the more you play them the more you know you can never get to the bottom of them." Sachs

himself, with an equally refreshing scorn for the critical *Zeitgeist*, calls *The Ninth* "a vastly oversized and yet entirely inadequate thank-you note to Beethoven." A thank-you note: how bizarre! How sentimental! How hopelessly non-postmodern! But how good a précis of what Sachs has tried, and has managed, to produce.

Beethoven's verbal descriptions of his own music are fragmentary and few. He called the *Pastoral Symphony* "more an expression of feeling than of painting"; he famously dedicated the *Eroica Symphony* "to the memory of a Great Man" (his erstwhile hero Napoleon); but he never revealed his motivations in writing the *Choral*. By his silence on this point – as well as by the astounding demands which the Ninth made on its performers and audiences from the start – he left an interpretative vacuum which later composers and critics sought to fill. Far greater in length than any previous symphony, by Beethoven or anyone else, the Ninth went well beyond the realms of what musicians in 1824 considered possible. As Sachs observes:

A brand-new score that required innovatory approaches to technique; a mixture of professional and amateur instrumentalists and singers who were not accustomed to working together; vocal soloists who considered some segments of their parts unsingable; hard-to-read, error-ridden manuscript



parts for players and singers alike; and grossly insufficient time for study and preparation: under these conditions, only two rehearsals of the complete ensemble were held! One wonders whether even 50 per cent of this new music could have been presented intelligibly, let alone convincingly, at the concert [in Vienna's Kärntnertor Theatre] of May 7.

What remains staggering, almost two centuries afterward, is how rapidly the Ninth transcended its inauspicious debut, which Beethoven himself survived by less than three years. Within a decade of Beethoven's death, the Ninth had become a staple of concert life in Paris, of all places, where Wagner heard it conducted by local maestro François Habeneck and found the result "perfect and so moving." Berlioz also championed the piece tirelessly, both on the rostrum and in his journalism. Bruckner, born a few months after the première,

demonstrated (in Sachs's words) "what may be called a 'Ninth Symphony Obsession'" with his own output, which reveals that he never recovered from the emotional impact of the Ninth's opening bars, as frightening as they are mysterious. Brahms took so long to emerge from Beethoven's shadow – in his own estimation even more than in that of his early admirers – that his First Symphony acquired, rather to its creator's annoyance, the tag "Beethoven's Tenth." Debussy (in a passage unmentioned by Sachs) referred to the Ninth as "a universal nightmare": a characteristically spiteful remark, but not without half-truth, since even Wagner, with all his arrogance, retained a sense of the work as being a *ne plus ultra*. Much of the work's structure is conveyed by Sachs (pp. 133-161) in an exegetic *tour de force* simultaneously detailed and readable, requiring no particular score-reading know-how, but with abundant revelations for those who do have the printed music handy.

Byron, Delacroix, Stendhal, Heine, and Pushkin: all impinge on Sachs's account of life in 1824, though of the

five only Heine had much interest in Beethoven, and that interest was mostly hostile (he attributed Beethoven's late compositional eccentricities to the effects of deafness). At least these artists' presence in Sachs's narrative gives a sense of context, and serves as a reminder that Europe probably came closer to being a unified nation in the years between 1815 and 1848 than at any time since. Balzac and Baudelaire cherished Beethoven as fervently as any German author could have done. Sachs cites both men; he also acknowledges later and more specialised writers on music, from the meritorious (musicologist Alfred Einstein) via the predominantly inane (T. W. Adorno) to the unashamedly demented (such as femocrat Adrienne Rich, who supposed the Ninth to be a "sexual message ... [written] in terror of impotence or infertility"). Benjamin Britten once harrumphed that "the rot set in with Beethoven", this verdict being a veritable masterpiece of unconscious humour from one whose own claims to moral status consisted of draft-dodging and sharing his bed with pre-pubescent boys.

Sachs is at times less convincing on his subject's other music than on the Ninth. Like all self-confessed unbelievers dealing with Beethoven, he gets the *Missa Solemnis* wrong, exaggerating its doctrinal heterodoxy. After a comparison of outstanding ineptitude between the *Missa's* "Agnus Dei" movement and Woody Allen's kvetching, Sachs calls the *Missa* as a whole "humanistic, nondenominational": thus echoing a widespread myth painstakingly exploded by former Regensburg professor Warren Kirkendale in *The Musical Quarterly* four decades ago. These are nonetheless small faults in a book that for the most part demands, and should get, admiring attention for its elegant prose and for its intelligently unhackneyed insights.

*R. J. Stove lives in Melbourne, and is working on a biography of César Franck. This article originally appeared in the February 2011 issue of *Chronicles* (Rockford, Illinois).

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Leader - Continued from page 2

to celebrate mass in the crypt, and Gregorian chant in the high manner of Solesmes will ring out across the Ozarks from a fitting home.

Newman's firmness

Meanwhile, as James Bogle reports, last year's papal visit to the UK – a country now renowned for its irreligion – rose from what seemed like a public-relations and organisational debacle to a popular triumph, culminating in the beatification of Cardinal John Henry Newman who, as John Lamont writes, could fortify the flaccid spirit of the English Church with a firmness of purpose for teaching the traditional doctrine of the faith.

On matters of liturgy, the Catholic Herald reported a poll showing that

"Almost half of English and Welsh Mass-goers would attend Masses in the traditional form of the Roman Rite if it was celebrated in local parishes" – and the Chairman of the Latin Mass Society in a letter to the *Tablet* chides them:

Perhaps your reporters thought that *Tablet* readers would not wish to hear that the number of regular Sunday Masses celebrated according to the *Usus Antiquior* has almost doubled since before the *Motu Proprio*, or that the number of Masses on a typical feast day has increased by more than 60%.

In Australia, as Lyle Dunne reports, an ever-growing group of young traditionalists have again embarked on a pilgrimage that is now older than many of them: the twentieth anniversary *Christus Rex* pilgrimage,

from Ballarat to Bendigo, attracted a record 430 people – and some of them, inspired by the experience and again looking back to the French model, are garnering support for an Australian chapter on the 30th anniversary of the revived Paris-Chartres Whitsunday pilgrimage in 2012 (which inspired the Australian version), in the manner of hidebound traditionalists – through Skype and a Facebook page!

So, even as the old world repays its debt to the new in Oklahoma, it seems young pilgrims from Australia will be repaying their debt to their inspiration, and to France, where the revival in traditional Catholic faith and life has taken the greatest strides.

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Roads to Moscow- Continued from page 9

reasons, believing that “one ought to cross oneself in the very same way in which one is signed with the cross during a blessing...Innocent offers no comment on the symbolic reason [for the altered practice], but he does not grant the validity of the practical one.” Finally, Fr Bunge concludes: “It is regrettable that ‘some people’ soon became ‘many’ and then ‘all’, despite the very clear words of this great Pope, and that we thus lost one more bit of that common heritage that formerly united East and West. It is even more regrettable that today in the West there is probably next to no one left who still knows the sacred symbolism of the sign of the cross, as the Fathers handed it down to us”. One can only agree.

As the examples multiply through the study, as the list grows longer of Western deviations from patristic practice, what seemed initially like a

tenuous argument against developments in the Western Church – of relatively minor importance, perhaps, in any given case – starts to become more and more convincing, even compelling. For those of us who know what has happened to the great liturgy of the West, and what has replaced it in the majority of our churches – with the tacit endorsement of the majority of bishops, priests and faithful – the questions also multiply. Certainly, for Fr Gabriel Bunge:

The traditions of the Church, of Scripture, and of the Fathers have left us an abundant treasure, not only of texts, but also of customs, forms, gestures, and so on, associated with prayer. In the modern age – especially in Western Christianity – little or almost nothing of it remains. Where these seemingly ‘external things’ are lacking, however, prayer becomes ‘routine, cold, and shallow’ (Joseph Busnaya), and faith itself, which ought to be

expressed in it, imperceptibly grows cold as well and finally evaporates.

Whatever we, as traditional Catholics, make of Fr Gabriel Bunge’s decision to break communion with Rome (and leaving aside the numerous difficulties in which his type of archeologism can embroil the impressionable zealot), many of us would, I suspect, say a hearty, manly, full-bodied “Amen” to his assessment of the nature of the problem we are confronting. For our problem is not 40 years old, or even one hundred or five hundred years old. On the contrary, it seems more and more likely that we are at present in the middle of a storm that has been at least a thousand years in the making.

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O

Learning - continued from page 8

The options of black, white or violet vestments are made explicit.

It is true the admirably clear quote from the General Instruction of the Roman Missal

At the Funeral Mass there should, as a rule, be a short homily, but never a eulogy of any kind

is compromised a little by provisions for one eulogy (which “may be shared by several people”!) at the beginning or end of the service, “for pastoral reasons”. But “pastoral reasons” may include the consideration that an outright ban on lay eulogies may be simply unenforceable in today’s Australian Church.

We “know not the day nor the hour” when we may have to deal with a funeral service, but there are some pieces of advice which may ease the process:

- Plan your own funeral in advance; discuss the service with family members; consider preparing a booklet. (I wouldn’t advise emulating the father of a colleague who died at about the same time as my father – writing your own eulogy seems a bit too controlling!)

- Discuss funeral plans with relatives – but remember funerals are for the living. If I survive my mother, I’m prepared to answer to her in the hereafter for vetoing Come as you are.

- Praise your relatives for their virtues when they are alive, at birthdays, anniversaries etc – don’t wait until the funeral!

- If faced with relatives who are keen eulogists, consider suggesting a vigil or wake as a better venue for sharing memories of the deceased. A good wake can be profoundly cathartic, even if you’re not Irish.

(Spiritual benefits aside, a rosary is a good way to give structure and a sense of decorum to a vigil.)

- For traditionalists who may find the funeral of a relative difficult for the sorts of reasons mentioned above, remember the Church’s prayers for the dead are not confined to the funeral service. The ancient practice of the “Month’s mind” can be a great comfort. The Missal gives propers for “a Mass on the third, seventh or thirtieth day” after death. In the case of my father, the prospect of a beautifully-sung traditional requiem helped me through a funeral which was animated by a different spirit.

Have a look at these guidelines, even if you don’t live in Melbourne. They’ll at least provide a basis for arguing that wanting, say, black vestments is not evidence of mental illness.

O

In Search of the wrong turn, and a way back

Benedict XVI: A Guide for the Perplexed

by Tracey Rowland; T & T Clark, London, 2010

The Banished Heart: Origins of Heteropraxis in the Catholic Church

by Geoffrey Hull; T & T Clark, London, 2010

Work of Human Hands: A Theological Critique of the Mass of Paul VI

by Rev Anthony Cekada; Philothea Press, 2010

Reviewed by Stephen McInerney

The recent beatification of John Henry Newman has created renewed interest in Newman's life and works. Of these, if the *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* is the most interesting, and – according to Anthony Kenny – the most important work of spiritual biography since Augustine's *Confessions*, it is *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* that has had the most influence on the contemporary Church's understanding of how, though Christian doctrine does not essentially change, it does develop, as the oak tree develops from the acorn, as from a single principle. The difficulty Newman sought to resolve, as Kenny writes, is, if the Christian revelation ceased with the death of the last Apostle "and the Christian faith was proclaimed to be unchanging... how can this be reconciled with the manifest variation in the theological beliefs recorded during the long history of the Church"? It is quite clear, for instance, from any reading of Church history, that the role of the Bishop of Rome was understood somewhat differently in the early Church than it is today by most Catholics, and, to give another example, that the early Church, while clearly believing in the Real

Presence in the Eucharist, did not explain this mystery in the way the Church came to explain (and dogmatically define) it centuries later, since the Church had not yet encountered Aristotelian philosophy (an encounter that was itself almost as controversial in its time as any of the issues currently engulfing the Catholic Church), which provided concepts and terms essential to the definition of Transubstantiation.

Metaphor collapse

The difficulty, then, is how does a Christian know whether these apparent differences are corruptions and deviations, or simply legitimate extensions and fuller expressions of the original deposit of faith? As Kenny writes in his recent review of John Cornwell's biography of Newman: "Newman hoped to solve [this problem] by presenting a theory of the development of doctrine, and offering a set of criteria for distinguishing healthy from unhealthy growth". In doing so, Newman developed a series of metaphors, such as that of an organism whose apparent alteration in growing is in fact natural and quite distinct from, say, the changes the organism undergoes in illness and death, these latter being destructive of the organism itself. The problem, however, as

Andrew Louth points out in his essay "Is Development of Doctrine a Valid Category for Orthodox Theology?", is that Newman is eventually forced to "abandon his reliance on the organic model", since he believed that human beings were unable, infallibly, to distinguish adequately a legitimate alteration from an illegitimate one, unless they were aided in their efforts by one who could not be mistaken. In other words, as Louth writes, "there needs to be some definite way of distinguishing authentic development from corruption. Newman is no longer prepared to stick to his organic metaphor, and makes it clear that recognition of authentic development ultimately needs an unquestioned and unquestionable authority, such as developed in the teaching office of the see [sic] of St Peter". The further difficulty, according to Louth, is that "there is a certain circularity in the argument here, as the development of the teaching office of the Pope is an example of development."

This rather lengthy introduction to a review of three newly published, thoroughly researched and eminently readable works of scholarship provides important background, I think, since the problems of Tradition and Reform, the differences between Reform and Revolution, organic growth and corruption, and the role of the papacy in all this, lie at the heart of all these works, which, though they emphasise different elements of the post-Conciliar era, all engage with and seek to account for recent dramatic changes in the Catholic Church. Whereas Professor Tracey Rowland does this in the context of, and as a consequence of exploring, the theology of Benedict

XVI, Professor Geoffrey Hull and Rev. Anthony Cekada do so, in quite different ways, by engaging directly with the liturgical question itself.

Benedict XVI: A Guide for the Perplexed is the second work Prof. Rowland has written on the current Pope. Like the first, it owes an obvious debt to Aidan Nichols's *The Theology of Joseph Ratzinger*. Whereas her first work on Benedict XVI was written for a general audience, "this work offers a guide... for those who are already studying theology or embarking upon it". It is Rowland's third major book, and it relates in important ways to her first, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition After Vatican II*, in particular in the way it reveals the problems resulting from the inadequate account of culture, as the context for faith, in the Second Vatican Council's *Gaudium et Spes*, in the Leonine Thomistic revival and, much further back, in dominant strands of counter-reformation theology and practice. For the *Communio* scholars, including Ratzinger, and for Rowland herself: "The problems in contemporary and late-twentieth-century Catholicism had their origins at least as far back as the sixteenth century and certainly did not begin in 1962".

History shapes thought

Rowland sets out to synthesise what she identifies as the fragmentary academic output of Joseph Ratzinger. In essence, as she argues, the heart of Ratzinger's theological project is the attempt to present "a Catholic understanding of the mediation of history in the realm of ontology", to respond to "the relationship between theology and metaphysics, anthropology and history, whose genealogies can be traced to conceptions of truth and freedom in German idealism and to the [largely Protestant] biblical scholarship of the nineteenth century" and, linked to this, "the need to get beyond the

ahistorical temper of scholasticism without ending up in the ditch of moral and epistemological relativism". This is a large and complex project, one to which Ratzinger has given his life, and Rowland does an admirable job in explaining, clarifying and advancing it, especially in her discussion of the influence on Ratzinger's thought of German Romanticism (which helps explain his hostility to neo-Thomism) and his intellectual affinities with von Balthasar, Henri de Lubac and other *Communio* scholars. She is most engaging, too, in painting a picture of the limitations of the "Cartesian-hued rationality" of neo-Thomism, its "impersonal, ahistorical character", which, for Ratzinger, made it ill-equipped "to deal with mid-twentieth-century existential thought". Rowland suggests that Ratzinger's frustration with neo-Thomism made him "a typical member of his generation" and there is much evidence to support this, though Rowland does not really entertain the possibility that some of this generation may have had "itching ears", in the Pauline sense. (The philosopher Anthony Kenny, whom I have quoted above, has also written cogently about his negative experiences studying philosophy in Rome in the 1950s, which, he has suggested, led indirectly to his loss of faith. Taught from manuals, with next to no exposure to primary sources, such courses seemed arid for many students, more like the Gradgrind school of facts in Dickens' *Hard Times* than an education worthy of the great Catholic tradition.)

With this atmosphere of influence – and counter influence – impressively explored in the opening chapters, Rowland goes on to explore, intelligently and convincingly, Ratzinger's view on such matters as aesthetics, liturgy, tradition, the centrality of the theological virtues, the relationship between history and ontology, Christianity "in the

marketplace of faith traditions" and, finally, ecumenism.

Ratzinger the Perplexing

If I have one criticism of the work, it is that Rowland pursues her task, at times, without enough critical distance from her subject who, in her eyes it seems, can do no wrong. (There is an irony here given her and her subject's impatience with ultramontaniam. Perhaps she protests too much in this respect). The problem here is not that Rowland admires Ratzinger (it's easy enough to do) but that this admiration often blinds her to aspects of Ratzinger's thought and practice which are deeply perplexing. There is no need to rehearse all these here; two examples will suffice. The first concerns the realm of liturgy and aesthetics, the second, doctrine. First: For a man who has criticised as pastoral pragmatists those who reconcile themselves to pop culture's invasion of our churches, Benedict XVI has seemed peculiarly unable to respond adequately to – by spurning – such pop culture when it is thrust upon him, as it routinely is on papal visits and at World Youth Days. (In this respect, and on these occasions, he has proved to be something of a pastoral pragmatist himself, but Rowland seems blissfully oblivious to this). Second, on the question of doctrine, Rowland does not explain what if anything it can mean to suggest that Catholics must accept all the teachings of the Second Vatican Council – which Benedict XVI expects dissident traditionalists, like the Society of St Pius X, to do – if, as he himself has claimed, some of this teaching is "downright Pelagian" (notably, sections of *Gaudium at Spes*). It is possible there are answers to these conundrums, but Rowland does not explore them.

Geoffrey Hull's *The Banished Heart* first appeared in 1995. Since then it has gained a reputation among thinking Roman Catholic traditionalists as

perhaps the most remarkable piece of scholarship to have emerged in response to what it describes as the Pauline liturgical revolution (that is, the *Novus Ordo Missae* promulgated by Pope Paul VI in 1969). The work is remarkable not only because of its erudition and scholarship, but even more because of its convincing and highly original thesis (one that goes far beyond – without disparaging – the typical traditionalist polemic). In essence, the thesis maintains that “present-day mainstream Catholicism grew directly from the official conservatism of the Church as it was before the Council”, and that this conservatism was, on the eve of the Second Vatican Council, the apotheosis of a legacy of ultramontanist, rationalism and legalism that had been subtly but surely distorting the heart of Catholicism for centuries.

Loss of sensibility

Hull situates the Pauline liturgical reform in the larger context of the divergent mentalities of the Eastern and Western churches and argues that the nature of this reform and its imposition can be explained, in part, by the Western Church’s loss of the Eastern Church’s feeling for Tradition. The “heart” that has been banished from the Roman Church, then, is precisely this perspective (or, even more precisely, the liturgical praxis from which this perspective emanates), which sees right worship as *theologia prima* and dogmatic theology as *theologia secunda*, the second flowing out of and supporting the first, rather than the other way around, according to the old axiom: the law of prayer determines the law of belief (regrettably reversed by Pius XII, in *Mediator Dei*, as Hull explains). In this paradigm, the Western Catholic Church, especially since the split with the Eastern Church, has tended to stress dogmatic theology and obedience to authority over (and sometimes at the

expense of) the “primary theology” of right worship. While the West has tended to stress the “head”, indicated historically by the growing awareness of the role of the Petrine office in the Church’s visible head, the Pope, and the scholastic understanding of theology as faith seeking (rational)

the real cause of the centuries-old division between the Eastern Churches and Rome, a conflict arising from culture rather than from faith.

Hull’s thesis, to which the above is the telling conclusion, is further developed by a detailed exploration

Present-day traditionalist dissidence has brought into clearer relief the real cause of the division between the Eastern Churches and Rome

understanding, the East has tended to diminish the importance of the “head” (both the role of the papacy and the role of reason in explaining and defining doctrine), preferring to lay stress on the “heart”, on a feeling for and tangible experience of tradition incarnated in orthopraxis.

For Hull, then, the head and heart of the Church, which obviously need each other, are in schism, and this is true even in the West itself, where Catholic traditionalists, as the custodians of the West’s ancient liturgical patrimony embodied in the traditional Roman Rite, have been separated emotionally from the See of Peter since the imposition of the Pauline liturgical reform in the late 1960s and, canonically (in the case of many), since the suspension *a divinis* of Archbishop Lefebvre in 1976 and his excommunication in 1988.

Hull’s position can best be summarised by the following passage:

Far from being a domestic dispute within the modern Western Church, present-day traditionalist dissidence reveals its providential role in the history of Catholicism, since it has brought into clearer relief

of the effects of nominalism and rationalism on Western Christendom, before and after the Reformation; by an examination of distortions in the understanding of the role of the papacy and of the charism of infallibility in relation to the liturgy – and, as part of all this, by a passionate defence of the nature and role of tradition in the Catholic faith, including a fascinating analysis of the etymological significance of the word/concept that ranges over Hebrew, Latin, Greek, Welsh, Aramaic and German variants, among others. (This can be fruitfully compared with Rowland’s chapter on “Revelation, Tradition and Hermeneutics” in *Benedict XVI*.) Along the way, *The Banished Heart* sheds light on some dark corners of recent Catholic history – liturgical and political – including the shocking treatment of Eastern Catholic Christians and Eastern Catholic culture by both conservative and liberal Roman Catholic clergy.

In some respects, Hull’s work is surprisingly aligned in its concerns with Tracey Rowland’s study. Rowland, describing one of the many theological connections between the thought of von Balthasar and Ratzinger, explores their common critique of post-Tridentine theology, where “the head was severed from the heart.” Like Ratzinger, Hull is

frustrated by a rationalist tendency in neo-Scholasticism, although he clearly admires St Thomas and acknowledges the legitimate centrality of his philosophy in Western Catholicism.

Ironically mainstream

Whereas Hull traces the contemporary crisis more or less to the first millennium, and Rowland (following the *Communio* scholars) to the sixteenth century, Fr Cekada adopts (perhaps ironically!) a more mainstream traditionalist position by tracing present problems to the distortion of the liturgical movement inspired by St. Pius X, which was, he believes, hijacked by theological Modernists and liberals of various stripes, whose often contradictory approaches (by turns antiquarian and archly modern) culminated in the Pauline Reform, which Catholics, over the last 40 years, have either abandoned, suffered with or – in some cases – embraced. Cekada is a thorough scholar, who has done as much as anyone to highlight the theological differences between the pre-Conciliar Missal (codified by St. Pius V) and the Missal of Paul VI and, in doing so, to prove that these differences cannot easily be reconciled. In addition to numerous articles, he contributed the illuminating introduction to *The Ottaviani Intervention* and has published a fine study, *The Problems with the Prayers of the Modern Mass*. His latest work is the culmination of decades of research and it will surely now stand as the definitive traditionalist critique of the New Missal.

The opening chapter of *Work of Human Hands* explores the doctrinal motives behind the study. As a sedevacantist (though one who makes, in this book at least, only a few attempts to prod his readers to accept this position), Cekada believes that the New Missal is opposed to authentic Catholic teaching, not only in its typical celebration in the

average parish (most traditionalists would agree), but in its essence, and he marshals an impressive array of evidence to support this conclusion.

Having explored the doctrinal motives for choosing the traditional Mass (and rejecting the idea that it is or can be a ‘mere preference’), Fr Cekada proceeds to explore the liturgical movement, going back to Dom Gueranger in the nineteenth century, to Lambert Beauduin and others in the early twentieth, through to Jungmann and Bugnini. In this list, while Cekada regards Dom Gueranger as something of a hero, he sees the others as responsible for corrupting the movement. I found this chapter quite enlightening, if at times too neat (Dom Gueranger inclined toward a ‘medievalism’ every bit as arbitrary as, if not as ultimately destructive as – because more coherent than – Jungmann’s archeologism). I would suggest that readers (and this book deserves many), in order to obtain the fullest picture, should read Chapter 2 of *Work of Human Hands* in light of Chapter 15 of Hull’s work, which also explores aspects of the pre-conciliar liturgical movement.

Alien spirits

The most outstanding and convincing aspect of Fr Cekada’s work, extending what he achieved in *The Problems with the Prayers of the Modern Mass*, is to show how alien to one another are the spirits animating the two missals. What has been removed from the New Missal is every bit as revealing as what has been added, and it is hard not to conclude – as Cekada does – that the New Missal was calculated to change the behaviour, attitudes and beliefs of the Catholic population.

For this reviewer, these three excellent works raise as many questions as they answer. How do we know a legitimate reform when

we see it, or recognise a legitimate development of doctrine? How do we know a corruption? Who has authority to argue that Thomism should not have pride of place in Catholic philosophy? If, as Fr Gabriel Bunge has argued, popes have previously argued for the retention of the custom of making the sign of the cross from right to left (as Eastern Christians do to this today) with three fingers joined; and if, as Henry Chadwick shows in his history of the Early Church, Rome early on condemned the practice of communicating the faithful under one kind (a practice which, centuries later, in response to heresy, became mandatory in the Roman Rite), how do we judge which practices are essential and which are not, which rulings to follow and which to ignore, which ones harm and which protect the faith once delivered to the saints? For the first millennium the Church offered a variety of sometimes conflicting answers to such questions; in the second, especially after the Gregorian reform, the authority of Rome was increasingly regarded as the *only* test of authentic development, doctrinal *and* liturgical (as, some Catholics would argue, it always had been, albeit *implicitly* and *potentially*). Newman himself saw a close connection between the exercise of this authority in the doctrinal and liturgical spheres, as his discussion of the practice of communion under one kind demonstrates. Is Newman’s position on Rome’s role in guiding and guarding authentic development still valid in the liturgical sphere, however, in light of what we have seen since the Second Vatican Council, with Rome’s infamously conflicting (and impossible to reconcile) positions on altar girls, administration of communion, among a host of other practices? It has certainly been seriously tested by the experiences of many Catholics, both Eastern and Western.

Latin ... as I please

David Daintree* whimsically turns his attention to the Latin adjective.

To our delight - and I hope I can persuade you to share my enthusiasm - the adjective has several features that not only make it unburdensome, but actually aid us in appreciating the richness of the language and expanding our working vocabulary.

Of course this is an attitudinal matter: if we groan under the weight of yet another learning task we might be overwhelmed, but if we examine the adjective discerningly we shall rapidly recognise it as a friend and not a foe.

Firstly the Latin adjective can be used to qualify a noun - a situation we recognise in English - but it can also serve as a noun on its own. In effect Latin adjectives actually are nouns and the term adjective better reflects their mode of use, their function, rather than their formal category. And they all belong to the first three declensions, too, so that if you have really done your homework properly and learned those declensions you will have nothing else to do!

To illustrate, *terrestris* can mean terrestrial, as we would expect, but it can also stand alone and mean a person who lives on the earth. *Pauper* actually retains the double option in English: it can mean just poor or a poor person. *Albus* means white, but an *album* is a white thing that you can stick your photos in.

Secondly, most of our characteristic adjectival endings derive from Latin, so that we can reconstruct the Latin endings from our knowledge of English

- or of course work the other way. This can be tremendously helpful for vocabulary building. For example all English adjectives (or nouns) ending in -al have their origins in the Latin termination -alis-e. Observe that this is a lovely two-termination form: -alis is both masculine and feminine. How good is that?

Here are some more examples set out in a table for ease of inspection.

English	Latin	Example
<i>al</i>	<i>alis-e</i>	<i>generalis, specialis</i>
<i>ous</i>	<i>osus-a-um</i>	<i>famosus, lacrimosus</i>
<i>ive</i>	<i>ivus-a-um</i>	<i>nativus, festivus</i>
<i>ent</i>	<i>ens-entis</i>	<i>frequens, differens[†]</i>
<i>ate(d)</i>	<i>atus-a um</i>	<i>desperatus, literatus[†]</i>
<i>ible</i>	<i>ibilis-e</i>	<i>horribilis, terribilis</i>
<i>able</i>	<i>abilis-e</i>	<i>stabilis, probabilis</i>

It should be pointed out that two of the above examples (both marked with daggers[†]) are participles. So here is another blurring of the categories (to put it negatively) or simplification (if one prefers to be more optimistic, as is indeed justified in this case): nouns, adjectives and participles are in most respects effectively the same thing. *Amator*, *amans*, and *amorusus* can all mean 'lover', albeit with perhaps some subtle difference of tone, but little else. The English word *servant* comes from Latin *servans*, a present participle quite properly and conventionally being used as a noun.

The commonest adjectives from Anglo-Saxon, as one would expect, stand aloof from the Latin words. *Fast*, *late*, *big*, *small*, *strong* do not directly help us with our Latin, but each has a 'doublet' of Latin origin. The examples I gave all have their doublets: *rapid*, *tardy*, *grand*, *exiguous*, *potent*. This provides us with another example of the layered richness of English, a feature that is even better illustrated by 'triplets', groups of three

words of similar but not usually identical meaning that give the writer such wonderful opportunities for nuancing his work. Some example: *ended*, *finished*, *consummated*; *started*, *commenced*, *initiated*; *brave*, *valiant*, *valorous*; *plentiful*, *copious*, *abundant*. I invite you to analyse, by their endings, how the words in these groups have been adapted directly from the Latin. After just a little

practice identifying the Latin origins of huge numbers of English words becomes so simple as to be automatic. I often lead my students through a randomly selected page of an English dictionary as a simple exercise in sensitising their eyes and minds to the mass of Latin that swarms just beneath the surface of our native tongue.

Next time we shall look at the subjunctive.

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